

The place of the african petty bourgeoisie research paper

[Government](#), [Colonialism](#)



29th May

Abstract

African leaders have failed the very people who put them into power. Over the past years, cases of betrayal by the petty bourgeoisies have been rampant across Africa. What this paper seeks to find is the people to blame for the miseries of Africans. The researcher aims to discuss in details the place of the African petty bourgeoisies using available literature into the topic. This paper also offers a conclusion into the topic with a possible solution to the end of the ill practice.

Introduction

It has widely been said that African leaders have failed so much in their leadership starting from the time they took leadership from the white colonizers. Most of the African leaders who took over from the white minority bargained for power on individual or regional basis at the expense of the entire country's benefits. They have ever since continued to immerse wealth while the common man suffers in ignorance. This paper therefore seeks to examine the place of the African petty bourgeoisie.

The main points to be discussed are: Failure of regional organizations, Fear of African leaders, the failures of the African rulers, boundaries and nature of the negotiated independence

Body

The expression 'African petty bourgeoisie', refers to the post-independence African leaders (Walter, 1975). It includes those who led Africa into

independence and others who took over the leadership roles; either by military force or other. They are also referred to as the African intellectuals. Most of them were those who had benefited in the overseas education for African students during the colonial period (Walter, 1975).

The African intellectuals failed their people: Africans who came back as intellectuals failed the very people who took them overseas to study the western wisdom. These leaders have failed to lead Africa into actualizing the hopes of the people in their call for independence.

Otieno (Otieno, 2006), notes that one of the limitations to African leadership was the nature of the negotiated independence. He says that “ the petty bourgeoisie were reformers and not revolutionaries”, which could also be seen as one of the major limitations. This means that they took an easy stance to negotiate for their independence rather than insisting for their voices to be heard.

As it were, this so-called ‘ diplomacy’ was the drive for their consent with the ‘ dividing’ terms of independence that the colonial powers insisted on (Otieno, 2006). For instance, the national boundaries were symbols of the imperialism and had been criticized by these African intellectuals, as well as other sympathizers. But these boundaries only remained because they belonged to different powers. For example,

Kenya belonged to the British while Tanganyika belonged to the Germans. These territories negotiated their independence differently and attained it at different times. However, it is doubtful if these colonialists would have

wanted these boundaries broken. This is because they were not fully leaving (Thomton & John, 1998).

They were only leaving the mainstream leadership to the Africans, but hoping to run them, their resources and control their leaders to their benefits. In other words, they still hoped to retain their territories (Thomton & John, 1998).

The failures of the African rulers are not only attributable to their weakness. They have, in themselves, failed to act decisively in matters that involve their people. These petty bourgeoisies, in their divided state, became aware of the opportunities that their positions could offer. Faced with the choice of trying to bring Africa together amidst ethnic ambitions sparked by the balkanization set in motion by the departing colonialists and that of being “compradors” to the international capitalist system and staying in power, the latter was/is an easier to make.

Their failure to question the validity of the imperialism-imposed ‘national’ boundaries in spite the fact that this was a shared sentiment between the Pan-Africanists is one such failure. “ They maintain themselves as a class by fomenting internal divisions, and by dependence on external capitalist powers. These policies are antithetical to Pan-Africanism. History since independence confirms that the interests of the African petty bourgeoisie are as irreconcilable with genuine Pan-Africanism as Pan-Africanism is irreconcilable with the interests of international capitalism” (Thomton & John, 1998).

These leaders were afraid, aware of the determination of the colonial powers, to lose face before those very powers lest the leadership positions be denied them. They had to keep up the good behavior for their own gains and they did it in silence, without any sign whatsoever of dissent. Also, because of this weakness, even in the post colonial period, they have kept on dancing to the tune of the superpowers (Zari, 2000).

They have let themselves be used. Luwezi (Luwezi, 2006) says, “ The capitalist super-powers, directly and indirectly, individually and collectively, guarantee the existence of the African petty bourgeoisie as a ruling class and use them to penetrate and manipulate African society.”

Failure of regional organizations, for instance the African Union (AU) has also led to African miseries: AU has occasionally failed to take decisive actions for the sake of the civilian Africans. For example, in Otieno’s review the heads of state unanimously voted to support the bid of the Kenyan government to pull out of the Rome Statute in the name of protecting the 2007/08 post-election violence suspects; it has failed to cooperate with the International Criminal Court (ICC) with the warrant of arrest for Sudan’s (now Northern Sudan) president, El-Bashir; it also failed to take a clear stand in the Libya stalemate until the NATO air-strikes took heightened its bombings (Otieno, 2006).

These cases show that the African leaders have also helped the foreign nations act against their continent, on their behalf because they have failed to act on time or not at all. The same case is happening in Somalia: If the AU members do not send soldiers for AMISOM (African Union Mission on

Somalia) the international community will be forced to step in solve African problems. Regional organizations have, in fact, become a platform for the heads of states to protect each from taking responsibility for their actions (Otieno, 2006).

Conclusion

As we have seen, African petty bourgeoisies have been on the rise since independence. The cause for this is African misdoings and the: African miseries can only be blamed on the political elite who care less for the very people who brought them to power (Otieno, 2006). This exploitation will only stop with the democratization of the African leadership and the emergence of development minded leaders.

Revision Summary:

I have proof read the paper and revised it according to the comments given by the grader: I have looked at the in-text citation: citing appropriately using the APA format where information that is not from my own thinking is separated from the thoughts of other authors through the in-text citation.

The paper has also been revised with regards to grammar: correcting the grammatical mistakes and the wrong word choice that initially existed.

All the sources provided in the reference list have been properly cited.

Tools used in the revision: I used the internet together with some primary sources to make the necessary corrections and to satisfy the demands of the grader (Refer to the reference list).

Since the grader had no problem with the content of the paper, all I did was re-read what was initially there and using my knowledge of grammar, corrected the grammatical mistakes that were made initially.

References

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