

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN--MADISON  
Department of History

Spring 1983

History 573-1  
Mr. Brown  
Tuesdays 9:55-11:55

5108 Humanities  
263-1842

Military Rule in Modern Africa

Nearly two-thirds of post-colonial Africa has fallen under military rule or been threatened by army coups, since 1960.

Military expenditures are furiously competing with spending on social needs and developmental programs in numerous former colonies in Black Africa and elsewhere in the once Colonial World.

Arms sales are a multi-billion dollar business which finds its principal markets in "developing" countries; and the arms race in the "Third World" is a major contributor to slow economic growth, political and social disorder, regional wars, and a massive debt problem that frightens the masters of the world's credit markets, designed to keep the global economy afloat (precariously). In short, the militarization of the post-colonial world has grown into a global phenomenon, with many ramifications, which threatens survival of humanity as surely and uncontrollably as the specter of nuclear holocaust. Indeed, it is increasingly possible, even probable, that an armed confrontation involving "Third World" nations will touch off the Last World War. (Note for example, the Falklands War, the Lebanese crisis, wars in the Horn of Africa . . . and Namibia's liberation struggle.)

This prospect, alone, helps to focus attention on the mushrooming "time bombs" in the Southern Hemisphere.

In 573-1 we will analyze aspects of this phenomenon--historically, contemporaneously and comparatively--mainly within the context of Black Africa, with side-glances at Latin America and South Asia. After a brief survey of present conditions in Africa, with special reference to its monumental development struggle, and the roles of the Global Arms Race and International Debt Problem in fashioning the world with which Africans must contend, we will turn to a short survey of the colonial roots of Africa's dilemmas.

Patterns of conquest and colonial rule will be briefly analyzed to discern their lasting impact on African political culture, administrative procedures and institutions, economic orientations, and inherited military/police establishments (with their special forms of recruitment, training, discipline, deployment, promotions, remunerations, and historic roles in "maintaining public order" in Africa and elsewhere in the Colonial World).

Finally, (and for the larger part of the seminar) we will examine certain military takeovers and subsequent periods of army/police rule in selected African states, comparatively and in some detail. We will be searching the case study narrative analyses of causes and effects-for evidence of broad historical patterns and transnational contemporary issues.

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In sum, we will attempt to impose some conceptual order (however imperfect) on seemingly chaotic and episodic events. We will formulate tentative, nuanced, multi-faceted hypotheses--hence frustratingly imprecise and maddeningly unreliable in predictive value. Necessarily, ours must be provisional, hypothetical responses to searing, intractable, and brutally pragmatic questions.

But, then, perhaps two or three among us, in the semesters, years, and careers to come, will recall what we do in 573-1 this Spring, and put to the test. . . in the field . . . our painfully assembled theories, educated guesses, hopeful hunches, and haunted dreadings.

Most reading will be individually organized and directed toward producing the research essay which each member will develop in stages (and collegially) over the term. Student backgrounds will differ, of course; hence, to provide a common base from which all of us will set out together, a few books and articles will be read in common and discussed generally during the first few weeks of the term (or Part I). Paperback copies of some of them have been stocked in two campus bookstores for the convenience of those who might wish to buy them. The four texts which will play major roles in Part I are:\*

Kenneth Fidel (ed.), Militarism in Developing Countries (UBS)

Irving Louis Horowitz, Beyond Empire and Revolution: Militarization and Consolidation in the Third World (Brown's)

Claude Ake, Revolutionary Pressures in Africa (UBS)

Robert A. Jackson and Carl G. Rosberg, Personal Rule in Black Africa (Brown's)

Grades will be based (65%) on the research essay and (35%) on participation in seminar discussions.

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<sup>INTERNETED</sup>  
\*International students should attend the first class session before buying any books.