

1776		X						X
1777		X						
1778	X	X			X	X	X	
1779	X	X			X	X	X	
1780	X	X	X			X	X	
1781	X					X	X	
1782	X					X	X	
1783	X					X	X	
1784	X					XX	X	
1785	X				X	XX	X	
1786	X					XX	X	
1787	X					XX	X	
1788	X					XX	X	
1789	X					X		
1790	X		XX	X	X	X	X	
1791	X		X			X		

Tableau N° II : (1815--1830)

1815	X	X			X		X	
1816	X	X		X	X	X	X	
1817	X				X	X	X	
1818	X		X		X	X	X	
1819	X		X		X	X		
1820	X			X		X		
1821					X	X		
1822	X				X	X		
1823	X							
1824	X				X			
1825			X					
1826								
1827								
1828								
1829								
1830			X					

## الجيش والسياسة

### في افريقيا السوداء

خير الدين حمادي

موجز

تكاد المكتبة الجزائرية تخلو من الدراسات الخاصة بهذا الموضوع. اللهم إلا  
 ناب السيد مولود حمروش «الظاهرة العسكرية بافريقيا السوداء» الذي أصدرته  
 شركة الوطنية للنشر والتوزيع - 1981.

موضوعنا هذا ما هو الا محاولة لفهم العلاقة بين الجيش والسياسة في دول  
 افريقيا جنوب الصحراء. إن افريقيا السوداء تعاني من التدخلات المستمرة للجيش  
 ، دواليب السياسة، الى الحد الذي أصبح فيه ثلث القارة - وهذا في وقت من  
 الأوقات - تحت الحكم العسكري، وذلك بسبب كثرة الانقلابات.

الموضوع بعدما يتعرض لطبيعة الأنظمة السياسية الافريقية وقدرة الجيوش  
 لافريقية على التدخل في شؤون هذه الأنظمة - وهذا رغم بساطة تركيبة هذه  
 الجيوش ونلة عدد أفرادها - يتطرق الى أسباب تدخل الجيش في السياسة وعزمه على  
 القيام بانقلاب عسكري ضد السلطة الحاكمة. وقد حصرنا أسباب التدخل في  
 عوامل عدة منها: الرشوة داخل أجهزة الحكومة، الصراعات داخل القيادة المدنية  
 الحاكمة. الصراعات الجهوية والقبلية ، طالما أن المجتمعات الافريقية لا زالت في  
 أغلبها ذات تركيبة عشائرية، الجذور الاجتماعية لقيادة الجيش وعلاقة ذلك  
 بالانقلابات ، لان هناك من يعتقد بأن العسكريين الذين ينتمون الى الطبقات الدنيا

أكثر استعداد من غيرهم لإحداث التغيير، الأزمات الاقتصادية، فشل برامج ومشاريع الحكومة المدنية، التدخل الخارجي لإزاحة الأنظمة المعادية للغرب وسياساته، وأخيرا الطموح الفردي لقادة الجيش.

بعدها نتساءل: هل تدخل الجيش في السياسة عمل من أجل المصلحة الوطنية أم من أجل ضمان مصالح الجيش فقط؟ وهذا قبل أن نخرج بالحديث على شروط وأشكال انسحاب الجيش من الحكم. ذلك أنه، وكما سبقت الإشارة، فإن صغر حجم الجيوش الأفريقية لا يمكنها من إدارة المؤسسات المدنية والعسكرية في آن واحد. لهذا يعتمد العسكريون - وهذا في غالب الحالات لا كلها - إلى الوعد بالعودة إلى الحياة السياسية المدنية في أجل مسمى.

وقد انتهينا إلى القول بأنه حتى وإن توفرت الشروط الموضوعية لانسحاب الجيش من السياسة. أو حتى إن انسحب الجيش بأي شكل من الأشكال، فإن ذلك لا يعد ضماناً لعدم عودة القوات المسلحة إلى حلبة الصراع السياسي. من هنا فإن التعرض لدور الجيش في السياسة داخل المجتمعات الأفريقية هو جزء من عملية فهم الوضع السياسي للقارة التي ننتهي إليها، والتي يجب أن تحظى بعناية المتخصصين في جامعاتنا ومعاهدنا.

## THE ARMY AND POLITICS IN BLACK AFRICA

By : KHIRDINE HAMADI

Military coups in Africa have the capacity to bring down governments and to apply pressure on authorities. There is no doubt that African officers now control many African states. In fact they played a direct political role at sometime in at least thirty out of forty African states. Today over a third of the African states are under military domination.

The military performance has been in recent years under comparative analysis, to compare nations and arrive at general conclusions. This paper is an attempt to discuss theories of military takeovers. their causes, answers the question: are military regimes nationalists in nature, or self interested groups. In other words: do they prove that they are really against virtually all social evils when they get to the seat of power, and finally examines the conditions and forms of military withdrawal from position of power.

According to Odetola there are three major points of view with respect to the role of armed forces in the modernization and development of Third World countries. The first suggests that the military is incapable of making real efforts towards building political institutions

eventhough they are modernizers<sup>1</sup>. Zolberg and others expressed doubts in various forms, and in varying degrees on the ability of the military to bring about political stability and stimulate economic development. The second view asserts Revolution is the only mechanism by which development and reform can be brought about and that the regular military are the principal obstacles to this process in developing nations. The third view asserts that the military politicians in the Third World make the best and perhaps the only reliable managers of social change. This view is a highly controversial one. It had indeed been responsible for the generation of the second view which came as a reaction to it<sup>2</sup>.

According to Samuel Decalo there are two schools of thought regarding the causes of military takeovers in Africa. The first «tends to stress societal and structural weaknesses, institutional fragility and low levels of political culture.»<sup>3</sup>. That is to say that the most important causes of military intervention in politics are not military but political which pull the armed forces into the power and legitimacy vacuum. The second school relies on organization theory in attributing to African military hierarchies certain characteristics of professionalism and nationalism that impel them to move into the political area and to rescue the state from the grip of corrupt and self seeking political elites<sup>4</sup>.

Analysis by socialists and marxists scholars tend to consider right wing officers scoundrels. «Officers who espouse leftist policies are of course defenders of the legitimate aspirations of the oppressed people and can therefore do no wrong»<sup>5</sup>. In Roger's Murray view **Militarism in Africa**. 1966, only the military of Congo Brazzaville, because of its marxist orientation at that time, was truly developmental. Gutteridge; **Military Institutions and power in the new states**. 1965, entertains high hopes that the African military will be more effective than political parties in podernising their societies.

## AFRICAN SYSTEMS AND MILITARY POWER

It is important to describe the types of African political systems and the growth of the military which became a major source to power in post independent Africa.

Markovitz examines two types of systems now establishing roots in Africa. In the first «business class, the civil service, technocrats, the liberal professions and the army and police are in power. » This system existed in the early years of independent Ghana, Senegal and Ivory Coast. In the second «efforts are made to create a mass following», such as in Tanzania where «peasant--based movement is led by a highly articulate ideologically sophisticated vanguard». Also in Zambia where the «skilled workers of copper mines have aligned themselves with small farmers in a regime that seems to be furthering its objectives with small farmers in a regime that seems to be furthering its objectives economic and social development.»<sup>6</sup>.

As for the armies which have more advantages in the first type there are two categories in Africa:

Those nations who through long colonial experience have acquired some level of these skills through the training of its citizens in Britain and France, and secondly those more or less neglected nations like Ethiopia. It is not bieng argued that colonialism is the explanatory variable since after all Liberia was not so colonised. This essential factor is the external contact which gives some opportunity for training and which may have been obtained through other avenues that are not necessarily colonial<sup>7</sup>

The African armies had at Independence little public prestige and lacked sophisticated military equipment because «they were created originally by the colonial powers not to defend the inhabitants against foreign attack but to help foreigners cōquer the country»<sup>8</sup> They were not national armies and had not taken part in the struggle for independence.

African armies are generally small armies and only a few of them have complexity of organization. By 1968 only the Nigerian, Ethiopian and Zairian armies were over 25000

in strength. Their type of training, quality of organization and level of experience are nowhere near those of industrialized nations. Nevertheless their role in politics is very great. Unlike political parties; they are disciplined, better organised and able to move into action:

Between January 1963 and the end of February 1966 there were fourteen significant cases of political intervention by the military. By early 1968 there had been nineteen successful military coups, and by the end of 1970 the total number of relevant major incidents in Africa in eight years was near thirty<sup>9</sup>.

## THE CAUSES OF MILITARY TAKEOVERS

the question which could be raised is: Why all these military takeovers occurred in post independent Africa. Many causes were identified with the African experience:

1 – The widespread government corruption provides a case in point, as this has been the most commonly cited complaint of army leaders moving against their civilian counterparts in political office. The charge of corruption is usually used by the military forces, but it is believed that there are other factors causing military intervention in politics, such as intra-elite cleavages, regional-ethnic conflicts, economic crisis, failure of such attempts by civilian government, and external intervention.

As for Intra-Elite cleavages such as in Ghana when the «Nkrumahist coalition started cracking under the stresses of economic recession and ever-growing isolation of the group around the supreme leader from its natural social base»<sup>10</sup>. Or such as in Mali where the contest within the state bureaucracy between the well armed military and the civilian who were supported by secret police, resulted in an action by the Malian army (19 November 1968). In Benin and Sierra-Leone «the struggle was for the spoils and power of public offices, between two alliances of politicians with comparable programmes and social clienteles»<sup>11</sup>.

2 – The second factor causing military coups is regional-ethnic tribal conflicts. This confrontation was used as a justification by the military regime in Benin after December 22, 1965 coup, in Sierra-Leone after the second coup on March 23, 1967. In Nigeria, Togo and Congo Brazzaville it was more clearly defined:

... regional cleavages in the political system... present in the officers corps also asserted the claims to political leadership of the neglected north against the elites of the more privileged southern coastlines<sup>12</sup>.

Finally in Liberia the advancement of the Krahn both in the military and in other posts has caused much popular resentment which gave Sergeant Doe the opportunity to lead «15 fellows mainly of his own Krahn Tribe to overthrow President William Tolbert»<sup>13</sup>.

It is believed that ethnically influenced alignments among officers did have political significance from time to time. However Bebler in his argument believes that the «relation between regional ethnical cleavages and military intervention is rather weak and less important than is popularly believed.»<sup>14</sup>.

3 – In relation to ethnic division, social origins of military elites and the pattern of recruitment seem to have effects. Shils, E: **The Military in the Political Development of the New States**, 1962. Claims that the lower class origins of the new officers in the less developed societies make them painfully aware of the distance which separate them from the powerful. When these officers accede to power they become unsympathetic to big businessmen and conservative politicians and that by implication they will be favourable disposed to the redistribution of wealth. Whereas Finer **The Man on the Horse Back: The Role of the Military in Politics**, 1962, argues that social origins have little to do with an officer's political loyalty. Odetola concludes his assessment to the Ghanian, Ethiopian and Congolese examples:

The strong support that the Rawlings in Ghana, Mengistu in Ethiopia and Ngouabi in Congo Republic have declared for the lower and working classes is not so much a reflection of lowly origins as an attempt to remove the tarnished image of the military brought about by the acts of the previous ruling military elites<sup>15</sup>.

4 – As for economic crisis as a factor in military takeovers, the last civilian Nigerian government provided us with a good example which shows the effects of economic difficulties on the political life of African countries. These difficulties were considered by «Talking Drums» magazine as a factor in the Nigerian coup:

With the fall in revenue the country's debts increased and President Shagari's government introduced import restrictions in April 1982 and further tightened them at the beginning of 1983. However by May 1983 trade debts had grown to 5 billion and Nigeria had to go to international banks to seek the rescheduling of 2 billion dollars of these debts<sup>16</sup>.

However, generally speaking severe economic difficulties alone did not precipitate coups. Military coups also occur in the absence of economic difficulties such as in Libya 1969 and could be avoided for a long period of time in a country like Guinea where the economic situation had been quite miserable for a long time and even the 3rd April 1984 military coupmakers have denounced Sekou Toure's regime as a «bloody and ruthless dictatorship marked by widespread corruption»<sup>17</sup> but there was no mention to economic crisis in Guinea as a factor in the coup.

5 – Another factor seems to be the failure of such attempts by civilian government. Many African regimes were ambitious to transform their societies to industrialize them and to reduce dependence on the West as well as to achieve international influence. But these ambitions were never transformed into reality, which brought the military to intervene. For instance the real tragedy of the Nigerian coup against President Shagari is that civilian government has failed to take roots or to establish an economic or social system which the Nigerian people could seem to protect or defend<sup>18</sup>.

6 – The sixth factor and at the same time the common accusation made by coupmakers is corruption. The military government always claims to be stamping out «rampant corruption» such as in Liberia where Doe's regime has proved that «it is just as corrupt as the previous regime»<sup>19</sup>. In Ghana when the Rawlings and his co-conspirators seized power on December 31, 1981, they accused the Limman government of corruption and mismanagement, but since the coup, not a single minister in that government has been sent to court on corruption charges or other criminal charges and as mentioned before the Guinean new military regime has accused Sekou Toure of corruption.

7 – The question of external environment has been raised by some scholars and observers. Bebler for instance counts four main aspects on the subject: external general political climate, external economic climate, direct foreign intervention or subversion and contagion of military groups. According to Bebler the first two:

have been brought to the fore by those who claim that the military coups against Nkrumah and Keita were staged and (or) teleguided by western powers and were a part of a much wider international conspiracy against radical and leftist regimes<sup>20</sup>

However, the coup of Benin and Sierra Leone for instance 1967 can not be a result to that international conspiracy simply because they occurred in unimportant countries. Indeed they did not change the foreign policy of the two countries. Also Ghana where Nkrumah was loudly attacking western imperialism and neocolonialism to a degree annoying the western powers, but the latter publicly remained silent despite their encouragement to the opposition. However it is believed that:

External contagion also contributes to the proliferation of direct military intervention in politics, while the theories of great powers conspiracies so far have lacked supporting (scientific) evidence<sup>22</sup>

8 – Finally we may add to these factors the personal ambitions of some military officers that could serve as a strong motivation for the army's intervention in politics<sup>23</sup>.

The general conclusion for the causes of military

takeovers can be that economic problems, corruption, political and social schism and general disillusionment have combined to create the climate in which coups can successfully take place.

However carrying out the argument about the causes of military takeovers does not explain the real motivations of the military to intervene in politics. As well as having the capability to intervene does not mean the ability to rule the country.

## DO AFRICAN ARMIES INTERVENE ON NATIONALIST GROUND

Military takeovers occur when the coupmakers find the unexistence of alternative source of authority in the society ruled by civilians. According to Zolberg:

Many may have the desire not only to upset the incumbent authorities but to remake the regime in their own image, but few have the capability to pursue the latter goal<sup>24</sup>.

Lucian Pye: *Armies in the Process of Political Modernization*, 1962 claimed that the military possesses rational and achievement norms and above many other organizations in Third World societies. Pye further claimed that because of these values the military can speak more convincingly than most other institutions about the changes a society requires to defend itself. But what operates in the mind of almost all coupmakers is not the question of being motivated by national interest but purely selfish interest. In Ghana in 1966, the leading officers reacted to government plan «to consign the special Soviet and East German trained and equipped presidential (body) guard regiment»<sup>25</sup>. The first of the 1966 coups in Nigeria seemed to be against the

«imminent threats to (the soldiers) careers, mainly from northern Nigerian and civilian leaders»<sup>26</sup>. In Sierra Leone the coup was staged in April 1968 for pay raises to compensate for sharp increases in the cost of living. In justifying the takeover, a spokesman gave the reasons: «The army and the police have been ignored and were subject of nepotism and blatant victimization». Whereas in Congo Kinshasa the coup prevented the removal from command position of a small group of officers, while the first Sudanese coup of 1971 sought to forestall elimination of all communists. The second was to prevent the massacre of anti-communist officers. Finally in Uganda, the 1971 coup was to prevent the arrest and removal of several officers accused of corrupt practices.

In all these examples and many others, African armies have been acting as self interested groups not as nationalist armies. Their goal was to improve the conditions of the armed forces themselves.

The post coup budgets reflect the new sense of national priorities. The armies' share of state revenue is rising sharply everywhere in Africa. In Congo Kinshasa the military regime received 25 billion out of 150 billion congolese francs (1/6 of the state revenue). In French speaking Africa, in 8 out of 15 states, the army was provided with between 15 and 25 percent of their resources<sup>27</sup>. With the exception of Togo and Upper Volta the only two unusual cases of significantly positive advances under military rule, African armies have been acting without any guarantee to solve problems of corruption, inaptitude, economic crisis and so on. Indeed they have no capability to rule. Many of the military regimes «proved no more stable in office than the civilian regimes they displaced»<sup>28</sup>. Some were shaken or even displaced as a result of counter coups by another group or section of the army. Markovitz describes the army's inability:

After every african coup, the military has turned naturally to civil servants for immediate aid in sustaining its rule... and to keep the country running...

severe limitations on the size and the training of the relatively tiny officer corps make such an alliance a necessity<sup>29</sup>.

Because of this incapability to rule in the absence of elements of continuity of military regimes, most of them made commitments to return to civilian rule. Some armies run their states successfully, but disengaged from politics, whereas others retraced or postponed their commitment such as the liberian regime of President Doe, who postponed the return to civilian rules to 1986 and has not done yet<sup>30</sup>.

### CONDITIONS AND FORMS OF MILITARY WITHDRAWAL FROM POLITICS

The question of military disengagement from politics is the most serious one. The army can not run the state for long, because it has to legitimize itself, which seems rather more difficult. However the army wants to pull out of the government to give way to civilians to rule the state, but it always set up its conditions to handle over power. These conditions were described by Hansen and Collins as follows:

1 - There should be a reasonable ground of assurance that the personnel, policies or ideologies removed in the previous regime will not be reinstated.

2 - There should be a reasonable ground to think that the incoming administration will not constitute a constraint on the corporate interests or the interests of the leadership of the army.

3 - The army would need to be sure of a safe exit and that there should be no prosecution or persecution after it had left the scene.

4 - There should be a reasonable assurance that the leaders of the coup, their lives and property will not be endangered by the incoming administration<sup>31</sup>.

However meeting these conditions is not a guarantee against further military involvement in politics. But as soon as these conditions are met, military withdrawal is more likely to occur.

Military withdrawal from politics takes three main forms examined widely by C. Welch:

1 - Voluntary withdrawal, due to divisions within the military and for pressure from civilians. This depend on how strong public attachment to civilian institutions is<sup>32</sup>.

2 - Conscious civilization of the military government, making it indistinguishable in the long run with a government, with more ordinary origins. As mentioned before African armies are small and unable to run the state without alliance with civilians. For instance the Nigerian and Sierra Leone armies constituted respectively 0.02% and 0.06% of the total population, can only fill a few top administrative posts.

This has made the army's task more difficult. Some African armies tried to disengage from politics have had to come back as soon as their quondam political enemies came within sight of regaining power. Some other armies elected to remain in power have been rejected either by popular revolts or further military revolts that have intervened in politics. This dilemma of whether the army's role in politics be indirect or direct even without legitimacy made African armies seem to be undecided whether they stay in power or go.<sup>33</sup>

3 - Overthrow of the military dominated regime leading directly to a civilian controlled government, as appears to be happening after the last coup in Sudan. The two groups most likely to overturn military dominated regimes are militant groups (particularly trade unions and students) and junior officers<sup>34</sup>.

The most successful military disengagement was in Ghana when the National Liberation Council which took power on the overthrow of Nkrumah in February 1966, handed over to the elected civilian administration of Dr. Busia in August 1969. Before the hand over to the civilian administration, careful plans were made to fulfil the conditions. First, there was a decree which prevented certain

number of people, particularly those prominent in the government overthrown by the military, from holding public office in the new republic. Second, the policies of the previous regime were discredited through the actions of carefully and well orchestrated public commissions.

Finally, what could be said is that the army is not always keen on maintaining the seat of power. As said before it is just a self interest group acting to secure its interests. However, unless conditions are met for a successful military withdrawal, African armies will keep leaving their barracks and intervene in politics.

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## CONCLUSION

Military intervention in Black Africa is more the rule than the exception. The coups happened with little regard to the types of political structure or ideology and were also unrelated to the sieze and effectiveness of the armies.

As noticed the coups were not all the same. Some of them were simply strike actions where the army acted as a trade union to defend its immediate interests. Other coups have been actions by sections of the army identifying with sections of the political spectrum and invading government to further the cause with which they identify.

However, whatever the nature and motivations of coups, military intervention in politics is not a substitute for the will of the people which can only be expressed through the democratic and electoral process.

## NOTES

1 - Huntington made a distinction between modernization on the one hand and development on the other. According to him is a phenomenon which involves the building of political institutions that will far outlast military ru les. See «Political Development and Political Decay» *World Politics*, April 1965.

- 2 - For details see Olatunde Odetola : *Military Regimes and Development*, a comparative analysis in African societies, (Suffolk, Chancer press Ltd., 1982) pp. 4-6.
- 3 - S. Decalo, *Coups and Army rule in Africa* (London, Yale University press, 1980) p. 7.
- 4 - *Ibid*, pp. 7-12.
- 5 - See Henry. L. Bretton, *Power and Politics in Africa*, (Longman, 1973) p. 226.
- 6 - I. L. Markovitz, *Power and Class in Africa*, (London, Prentice Hall, 1977) p. 320.
- 7 - O. Odetola, *Op-Cit.*, p. 62.
- 8 - I. L. Markovitz, *Op-cit.*, p. 306.
- 9 - W. F. Gutteridge, *Military Regimes in Africa*, (London, Muthuen & Co Ltd., 1976) p. 1.
- 10 - A. Bebler, *Military Rule in Africa*, (Praeger Publishers-Second printing, 1975) p. 105.
- 11 - *Ibid*, p. 107.
- 12 - Ruth. First, *Africa South of the Sahara*, (Europe publication Ltd, Twelveth edition, 1982) p. 20.
- 13 - See the article «Liberian Revolution Founders», *West Africa*, N° 3281, 9 June 1980, p. 1005.
- 14 - A. Bebler, *Op-cit.*, p. 108.
- 15 - Odetola, *Op-cit.*
- 16 - See the article «Nigeria the Humbling of a Giant», *Talking Drums*, 9 January 1984, p. 756.
- 17 - See the article «A Down Descends, a Myth Broken», *West Africa*, 9 April 1984, p. 756.
- 18 - E. Yakpo, «The Real Tragedy of the Nigerain Coup» , *Talking Drums*, 16 January 1984, p. 6.
- 19 - The Liberian Revolution Founders, *Op-cit.*, p. 1007.
- 20 - A. Bebler, *Op-cit.*, p. 123.
- 21 - There are some indications that France and USA were concerned about Benin's second coup of December 1969. They tried to reverse President Apitay's decision to establish diplomatic relations with China, when they failed, they contacted General Soglo to the coup. Apitay government had already an American offer of \$5 million loan if it changes its decision, and so what Soglo did after the coup, but had not received the loan.
- 22 - A. Bebler, *Op-cit.*, p. 138.
- 23 - S. Decalo, *Coups and Army Rule in Africa*. (Yale University press Ltd, 1982) p. 20.
- 24 - A. Zolberg, *Creating Political Order*, (Rand McNally Company, 1966).
- 25 - Henry. L. Bretton, *Op-cit.*, p. 277.
- 26 - *Ibid*.
- 27 - *Ibid*, p. 222.
- 28 - Ruth. First. *Op-cit.* p. 25.
- 29 - L. Markovitz, *Op-cit.*, p. 311.
- 30 - «The Second Wind for the Soldiers», *West Africa*, 16 April 1984, p. 803.
- 31 - For details see E. Han & P. Collins, « Revolution in Ghanæ» *African Affairs*, (79-314-1980) p. 6.
- 32 - Finer's remark which was quoted by Claude Welch suggests that where public attachment to civilian institutions is strong, military intervention in politics will be weak... By the same token where public attachment to civilian institution is weak or nonexistent, military intervention will be strong.
- 33 - Claude, Welch, Jr., The Possiblity of Military Withdrawal from Politics, in Michael. F. Lofchie (ed), *State of Nation*. (California University Press, 1973) p, 233.
- 34 - For further details about the forms of military withdrawal from politics see chapter 10 by Claude. E. Welch. Jr., in *The State of Nation*, *Op-cit.*, pp. 217-235.