

Colonial Experience and Postcolonial Underdevelopment in Africa

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In this paper, we analyze the connection between the history of colonial rule and postcolonial development in Africa. We focus on the fact that many African colonies were governed by indirect rule. Under indirect rule, indigenous people are divided into two groups: a privileged ruling group and an unprivileged ruled group. Our model assumes that the ruled group cannot observe how their deprived resources are divided between the metropolitan ruler and the ruling group. In this economy, a large level of exploitation by the metropolitan ruler yields distrust among indigenous groups and creates a negative effect on postcolonial economic and political development.