

TOPIC 1: THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC SYSTEMS IN THE PRE-COLONIAL INSTITUTIONS IN AFRICA

COMPETENCY: The learner appreciates pre-colonial social and economic systems by analysing their structures and how they can be used to address current societal challenges.

Learning Outcomes:

The learner should be able to:

- a) assess the importance of the clan in pre-colonial societies as the foundation of shared values, heritage and governance. (u, v, a)
- b) analyse the role of age groups in promoting social harmony so as to understand his/her role in the community. (gs, v, u)
- c) evaluate the role of initiation ceremonies instilling pride and a sense of identity to appreciate being a member of a particular society. (u, v, a)
- d) analyse the role of African traditional religion in pre-colonial societies as a means of preserving societal knowledge and values. (u, v, gs)
- e) examine the role of pre-colonial production in ensuring the survival of pre-colonial African societies and how this knowledge can be applied to address current societal challenges. (gs, v, u)

SUGGESTED TEACHING AND LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- a) Learners brainstorm the concept of a clan. Through questioning and explanation, the class reaches a common understanding of what constitutes a clan.
- b) Learners form groups to discuss their respective clans and generate a list of clans represented in their group.
- c) Learners, in groups, use textbooks, the internet, and other sources to search for the roles and significance of clans in African traditional societies.
- d) Learners, in groups, share ideas on the potential impact of the absence of clans on their community and country.
- e) Learners participate in a project to identify a community problem related to the neglect or misunderstanding of clan laws. They research its causes, engaging with a clan leader to explore solutions.

- f) Learners, in small groups, search using textbooks and online resources, for the roles of age groups in traditional African societies.
- g) Learners, in groups, identify their own age groups and analyse their roles in promoting harmony and responsibility within their communities
- h) In groups, learners identify initiation ceremonies in their own communities and other parts of Uganda. They discuss the activities involved and the value of each activity.
- i) Learners, in groups, analyse the contributions of initiation ceremonies to traditional African societies and present their insights to the class.
- j) Learners prepare an interview guide and visit a local community to interview elders about the practices, rituals and beliefs in African traditional religion within their community and write a report.
- k) Learners create a journal on the role of age sets or other society social structures, which is then presented and discussed in class.
- l) Individually, learners draw a comparison table showing the features of traditional African religion and their own religion, focusing on beliefs, values and rituals. They then display the tables in the classroom for peer review.
- m) Learners, in groups, search specific pre-colonial economic activities using textbooks, the internet and other sources and analyse the role of these activities in societal survival and write a report
- n) Invite a guest speaker or a panel of teachers to discuss a predominant pre-colonial economic activity in the area and its contribution to the survival of their community.

Sample Assessment Strategies

Observe learners' ability to:

- a) demonstrate their understanding of the concept of the clan by: i) analysing historical data to make informed personal decisions. ii) applying logical reasoning to assess historical facts. iii) clearly and effectively communicating insights into the historical and cultural roles of clans. iv) collaborating in group activities, presenting arguments, and supporting them with evidence.
- b) Converse with learners to assess their ability to sustain a logical discussion on the role of age groups in any community. Take note of: i) their listening and comprehension levels. ii) their confidence in explaining issues clearly.
- c) Evaluate the relevance, accuracy and coherence of the report created by learners focusing on the identified problem in the community and suggesting a solution. Assess the relevance, accuracy and the coherence of the

contributions of initiation ceremonies given by learners from the traditional African societies

CLAN

A clan is a group of families that share common traditions, beliefs, norms, customs and ancestral background. Historically, clans were often large extended families that were united by blood relations, and they typically lived in the same area or region. These clans were represented by totems of animals, plants, birds, etc and names given to people. In many cultures, clans were important social structures, and members often supported each other through various aspects of life, such as protection, inheritance, and community activities. Most of the pre-colonial societies were socially organized on the clan basis. This took the form of animal types or names, plant species, etc. like in Buganda; there was the elephant clan, lion, grasshopper, etc. Clans in Busoga include the Balwa, Ibaale, Igembe, etc. Bunyoro clans include; Abaami, Ababito, Abacwa, Abagweju, etc. Acholi people have over 50 clans including Payira, Padibe, and Pajule, etc. Teso clans include Irarak, Ikuruka, Inyakoi, Igoria, Iworopom, etc.

IMPORTANCE OF THE CLAN IN PRE-COLONIAL SOCIETIES

1. Clans strengthened unity in pre-colonial societies. Clans were composed of individuals who shared a common ancestor, which created a strong sense of kinship. In Buganda for example, all members who Mbogo (buffalo) clan traced their origin from one man called Kayiira. This kinship was central to the formation of identity within the clan. By being part of a larger clan family, individuals felt connected not one another. Besides, members of the same clan in some societies such as the Lunda of Congo, Angola, and Zambia, Zulu of S. Africa among others, were not allowed to get married to each other. This led to inter-clan marriages which strengthened social cohesion within a wider community. This unity made pre-colonial members to work together to support one another and uphold the traditions of their ancestors.
2. Clans provided administration in the pre-colonial African societies. Leadership within the clan was typically held by elders or chiefs, who were responsible for maintaining order, resolving disputes, and making decisions for the welfare of the group. These leaders referred to as chiefs, elders, or headmen, were deeply respected for their wisdom, experience, and ancestral knowledge. In some societies such as Shona of modern Zimbabwe, the clan leaders known as

Mbopos had significant control over the community and their authority extended beyond their clan to include neighboring clans sometimes. In many societies, the clans formed the parliamentary councils or clan councils that assisted the king's chiefs to administer society. These clan councils formulated laws that governed the society and equally advised the kings and chiefs on how to administer the society. This was more prominent among the Kikuyu, Iteso and Acholi people.

3. The clans promoted culture and preserved it. Clans were key in preserving oral traditions, which were central to African culture. Elders within the clan acted as storytellers, passing down the history, myths, legends, proverbs, and genealogies of the clan to the younger generation. These stories helped to instill a sense of identity and continuity, teaching younger members of the clan about their ancestral roots, values, and customs. Besides, clans acted as guardians of cultural customs and norms. They ensured that societal values, such as respect for elders, hospitality, communal living, and respect for nature, were upheld. Clan leaders had the responsibility of ensuring that the community adhered to the rules and customs that were integral to their cultural identity. This role was particularly important in societies with strict taboos such as the Sotho, Dogon, Igbo, Kikuyu, etc, where breaking cultural norms could lead to social excommunication or punishment.
4. The clan promoted trade among the pre-colonial societies. Clans helped establish and manage local markets where goods were exchanged. Among the Akan clans for example, markets were often located near major rivers or important trade routes, such as the market towns of Kumasi and Elmina. The Yoruba clans of southwestern Nigeria, particularly the Oyo and Ife, were well known for their organized markets. The Yoruba clans established vibrant marketplaces where agricultural products, pottery, cloth, salt, palm oil, and trade goods from surrounding regions were exchanged etc. More so, clans established and controlled trade routes, especially in areas where trade across regions was necessary for the movement of goods like salt, iron, gold, and other commodities. For instance, certain clans among the Nyamwezi, Kamba, Yao etc established trade routes during long distance trade in E. Africa. These would manage the passage of traders and goods across rivers, mountains, or deserts, ensuring the smooth flow of trade. By controlling these routes, clans promoted trade, creating more opportunities for goods to move across vast distances within the region.

5. The clans promoted communal work in pre-colonial African societies. In pre-colonial African societies, clans played a vital role in promoting communal work, which was essential for the survival and prosperity of the community. In many societies such as the Nama of Namibia, Akan of Ghana, Yoruba of Nigeria among others, during planting and harvest seasons, clan members would come together to clear land, plant crops, and harvest the produce. This collective effort ensured that crops were planted and harvested efficiently, helping to ensure food security for the entire community. In pastoral communities such as the Fulani of west Africa, clans could organise grazing journeys far away from their community as a way of searching for water and pasture for their animals. These communal activities often involved rotating labor, where different families or households within the clan would work together on each other's fields. This cooperation promoted unity and shared responsibility.
6. Through the clan system, conflicts and disputes were settled. One of the key features of pre-colonial African clan systems was the central role of elders in conflict resolution. Clan leaders such as Eze of the Igbo, Nkosi of the Zulu, Nana of the Akan among others respected for their wisdom, experience and knowledge of customary laws, were responsible for mediating disputes within the clan. Their role was to listen to all parties involved, understand the context of the conflict, and propose solutions that were fair and in line with the traditions of the community. Because clan leaders were seen as impartial and just, their decisions were respected and widely accepted by clan members. Their involvement in conflict resolution promoted a sense of shared responsibility for maintaining peace and harmony within the clan.
7. Clans promoted and played a role in enforcing social norms and customs. Elders and respected figures within the clan ensured that members adhered to societal rules, fostering a sense of discipline and respect for communal values. This was done through teaching these norms, enforcement of customary laws using punishments, acting as role models and conflict resolution through restorative justice. It was the role of clan elders to see that such norms were never violated by any one at any time.
8. Clans helped to reduce on inheritance disputes among Africans. In many African societies, inheritance was determined through clan lines. Property, titles, and social positions were passed down through family lineage, ensuring the continuity of wealth and status within the clan. For example, among the Banyoro, Omukama was meant to come from the Babiito clan

9. Clans provided social safety for their members. In times of need, whether due to illness, famine, or external threats, clan members could rely on one another for assistance, resources, and protection. For example, whenever the Payira clan among the Acholi were threatened by external attacks, members came together and defended themselves as a clan. This ensured the continuity of African societies
10. Clans provided spiritual guidance to their members. Clans often had spiritual leaders or religious figures who guided their members in matters of faith, ritual practices, and traditional beliefs. These spiritual leaders were key to maintaining harmony and peace within the clan.
11. Clan provided education which was very important for one's orientation into the society. Education within African clans was often informal but vital. Knowledge was passed down through stories, practical skills, and ceremonies, and children learned essential survival skills, ethics, and customs from their clan members.
12. Clans helped to preserve cultural land for generations. Clans were often responsible for the stewardship of land, which was considered a communal resource. Land was managed by the clan elders, who allocated it among members based on customary practices and needs. In Buganda for example, every clan has its ancestral land such as Mugulu, the ancestral land for Mbogo (buffalo) clan.
13. Clans instilled moral values and ethical guidelines in their members, teaching respect for the elderly, care for the young, and a deep sense of community responsibility. This moral foundation guided individuals' behavior and interactions with others.
14. Collective Memory and History: Clans acted as the custodians of history, with elders passing down the stories and experiences of past generations. This collective memory helped maintain a sense of continuity and identity, even in times of turmoil or change.
15. Conflict and War Leadership: In times of war or external conflict, clan leaders often emerged as military strategists. They would lead their people in battle, ensuring that the clan's interests were defended and its honor preserved.

DISADVANTAGES OF CLANS IN PRE-COLONIAL AFRICAN SOCIETIES

1. They promoted rivalries among African societies. In many African societies such as the Acholi, Iteso, Masaai, etc., different

clans could engage in rivalries, sometimes spanning generations. These rivalries could escalate into violent conflicts, destabilizing the community. Clans often competed for resources, power, or status, leading to destructive cycles of conflict that harmed social harmony and prevented cooperation among different groups.

2. Clans led to stagnation of innovation. The emphasis on clan loyalty and adherence to clan traditions could limit individual creativity and innovation. For example, many clans among the Nandi such as Kipkenda, Kiboiis, Mooi, Kipkamoriet, Kipsirgoi resisted the construction of Uganda railway during the last decade of the 19th century which slowed down the work and made it very costly. Besides, new ideas that conflicted with clan practices or norms were often resisted, even if they had the potential to benefit the broader society. This resistance to change could stifle cultural, and technological advancement, as clan practices took precedence over progress.
3. Clans promoted social inequalities based on lineage, age, or gender. Certain families or individuals within a clan held more power or influence than others, leading to unequal access to resources or opportunities. For example, in Buganda society, clan headship was hereditary along certain families and it was purely under men. The head of bushbuck clan (Ngabi) was always Nsamba from the first Nsamba. This denied others a chance to lead and left younger or less affluent members with little say in communal matters.
4. In many African societies, individuals who did not belong to any particular clan were often marginalized or excluded from important social, cultural, and political activities. These non-clan members were sometimes viewed as outsiders or strangers, which could result in their disenfranchisement or lack of access to clan-based resources such as land, inheritance, or protection.
5. Gender Inequality and Patriarchy
Clans in pre-colonial African societies were often structured along patriarchal lines, which resulted in the marginalization of women. Men typically held the positions of authority within the clan, while women were relegated to secondary roles. This gender inequality reinforced patriarchal norms and limited women's participation in decision-making processes, social roles, and leadership positions.
6. Rigid Social Structure
The clan system in many African societies created a rigid social structure, where one's identity and role were largely determined by clan affiliation.

This inflexibility made it difficult for individuals to move beyond the confines of their clan and pursue personal aspirations or change their social position. As a result, individuals' life chances could be significantly limited based on the clan into which they were born.

7. **Clan Loyalty Over National Unity**
Clans sometimes prioritized loyalty to their own group over the broader needs of the entire community or nation. In times of conflict or crisis, loyalty to the clan could undermine national unity, as people were more likely to support their clan's interests rather than working together for the greater good. This clan-based loyalty could weaken collective efforts to address larger societal challenges.
8. **Limited Mobility and Opportunities**
Clans often restricted the mobility of their members, particularly in terms of marriage, work, or residence. Individuals from different clans were sometimes discouraged from marrying outside their group, leading to social and economic isolation. This restriction of social mobility limited opportunities for individuals to seek new experiences or forge alliances outside their immediate clan network.
9. **Internal Clan Conflict**
While clans were designed to promote unity within the group, they were not immune to internal divisions. Disagreements over leadership, resources, or ideology could cause friction within the clan itself. These internal conflicts often weakened the clan and could lead to division, fragmentation, or even violence within the group.
10. **Exploitation of Younger Generations**
In some cases, the hierarchical structure of the clan system could lead to the exploitation of younger members. Younger individuals were expected to obey elders and contribute labor or resources to the clan without question. This could limit the opportunities for younger members to assert their independence or pursue personal goals, leading to resentment and dissatisfaction.
11. **Clan-Based Favoritism**
Clans sometimes fostered a system of favoritism, where resources, such as land, wealth, or political positions, were allocated based on clan affiliation rather than individual merit. This favoritism created a system of privilege for certain clan members, often leaving others in the group marginalized or

deprived. It also perpetuated inequality and could hinder merit-based advancement within society.

12. Overemphasis on Clan Identity

The strong focus on clan identity could lead to an overemphasis on tribal or familial loyalty at the expense of broader community or national identity. This divisive approach could undermine the sense of solidarity needed for larger societal cooperation, particularly during times of external threats or conflict. The focus on clan membership could overshadow the need for unity across different groups within the broader community.

13. Conflict Over Resources

Clan-based competition for resources such as land, water, and grazing areas could sometimes result in conflict. As clans fought for access to these essential resources, tension and violence between them often escalated. These resource-related conflicts could destabilize local communities and hinder collective progress, as clans focused on protecting their own interests rather than working collaboratively.

14. Cultural Insularity

Because clans were often self-contained and isolated from one another, they could foster a sense of cultural insularity. Members of different clans may not share or exchange ideas, leading to cultural stagnation. This insularity could also result in ignorance or intolerance of other cultural practices, limiting opportunities for intercultural dialogue and cooperation.

15. Excessive Control Over Personal Lives

Clan leaders or elders often had significant control over the personal lives of their members, particularly in matters such as marriage, employment, and social behavior. This excessive control could restrict personal freedom and autonomy, as individuals were expected to prioritize the interests of the clan over their personal desires. Such control could also breed resentment and limit individual expression.

16. Inter-Clan Violence and Wars

Clan rivalries sometimes escalated into inter-clan violence or even wars, especially in resource-rich areas or politically significant regions. These conflicts often led to the destruction of lives, property, and livelihoods, leaving communities destabilized. The recurring violence between clans prevented the development of peaceful and cooperative relationships between neighboring groups.

17. Inefficiency in Governance

In some pre-colonial African societies, the governance structures based on clan systems could be inefficient and fragmented. Clan leaders often had limited authority outside their own clan, and decision-making could be slow and cumbersome due to the need to consult with multiple elders or factions within the clan. This inefficiency made it difficult to implement policies or respond swiftly to emerging challenges.

18. Dependency on Elderly Leadership

Clans often relied heavily on the leadership of elderly individuals, which could sometimes stifle progress and growth. While elders brought wisdom and experience, their decision-making authority was sometimes slow and resistant to change. This dependence on elderly leadership, without allowing for younger people to assume leadership roles, could lead to stagnation and hinder the dynamism of the community.

19. Ethnic and Clan-Based Discrimination

In some cases, clans within the same ethnic group or larger society could discriminate against each other based on historical differences, rivalries, or power struggles. This form of ethnic and clan-based discrimination exacerbated existing social divides, contributing to tensions and creating a climate of fear or hostility that could undermine social cohesion and peace.

POTENTIAL IMPACT OF THE ABSENCE OF CLANS IN THE COMMUNITY AND COUNTRY

- 1) Lack of clans may lead to loss of cultural identity. Clans are often a significant part of the cultural heritage of a community. Without them, there may be a loss of traditional customs, rituals, and practices that define the unique identity of a group.
- 2) Lack of clans may lead to breakdown of Social Cohesion. Clans serve as a unit that bonds people together. Without clans, individuals might feel disconnected, leading to a breakdown in community solidarity which may slow down growth and development
- 3) Lack of clans may weaken social support systems. Clans often provide mutual aid in times of need like famine and diseases. In the absence of clans, individuals may struggle to find the same level of social support and assistance which may increase helplessness among people
- 4) It may weaken the transfer of knowledge from one generation to another. Clans play a crucial role in passing down ancestral knowledge, wisdom, and

customs. Without them, younger generations might lose touch with important traditions.

- 5) It may lead to erosion of traditional leadership. Clan leaders often play an integral role in resolving disputes and guiding the community. Their absence might lead to a void in leadership and the potential rise of disorganized or fragmented governance.
- 6) Lack of clans may affect accountability. The clan system often instills a sense of accountability among its members, as behavior is monitored within the group. Without clans, individuals might experience a lack of communal oversight, leading to increased irresponsibility or individualism.
- 7) It may lead to decline in community cooperation. Clans promote cooperation among their members for common goals, such as economic or social development. The absence of this system could lead to less collective action and more individualistic approaches to challenges.
- 8) It may weaken economic networks. Many traditional clans have established business and economic ties. Some clans in Buganda for example have established projects such as hotels on their ancestral land. This helps to ensure the flow of resources within the community. Without clans, economic transactions might become more impersonal and fragmented.
- 9) Lack of clans may bring about political instability. In some communities like Acholi, Teso, Bunyoro, etc., clans are integral to the political landscape, influencing local governance. Without them, there might be a power vacuum or political instability as new systems of authority struggle to gain legitimacy.
- 10) Lack of clans may also weaken conflict resolution mechanisms: Clans often mediate conflicts between their members, ensuring that disputes are settled within the group. Without this mechanism, the community might turn to more formal or adversarial means of conflict resolution, which can be divisive.
- 11) Lack of clans may lead to cultural assimilation pressure. In the absence of clans, there may be an increased pressure for individuals to assimilate into the dominant culture, losing their unique customs and practices in the process.

AGE-SETS/ GROUP

An age group refers to people of the same age who had initiated at the same time. In the pre-colonial African setting, age grouping was a system of social

organisation in which people were graded according to their ages with each age group having its own leaders who were chosen basing on merit and experience. These age-sets/ groups were of two types, namely; the senior and junior age grades. The age set system was very common among the Kenyan Masaai, Akamba, Galla, Tanzania's Yao, Uganda's Sabiny, Bagishu, etc.

ROLE OF AGE GROUPS IN PROMOTING SOCIAL HARMONY

- 1) Age groups defended the societies from foreign attacks like among the Iteso the senior age group fought or protected the society from Karamojong warriors or Karamojong cattle rustlers. Among the Masai and Kikuyu boys in the junior age sets were trained warriors who defended their societies from any external attacks.
- 2) Among age-groups, they also assisted in maintenance of law and order. Some age groups enrolled as soldiers. Among the Banyoro, young men between 20-25 years of age were enrolled as the "*Abarusura*" while in Buganda the age group of 18-24 was enrolled as the "*Abambowa*". Senior members of the senior age set served as judges over the society disputes.
- 3) Age sets provided effective administration of the African societies. Many African societies such as the Iteso, senior age group assisted in the administration. The Emorimori for example administered the elder's council which led to smooth running of the society
- 4) The age groups helped to provide provisions for their societies. Senior age groups were responsible for various expeditions that is; hunting, fruit gathering, trade delegations for both consumption and trade purposes. Senior age groups among the Banyoro for example used to sell the game whereas among the Alur, used to hunt elephants for ivory that they exchanged with Bunyoro for iron implements and salt.
- 5) Age groups provided entertainment to the society. The junior age group offered entertainment in the society specially to guests or visitors. They also offered entertainment during social celebrations such as marriages, crop harvests as it was among the Iteso and Bagishu. In fact, among the Bagishu, they entertained the visitors using '*Kadodi*' dance.
- 6) Age sets provided education to the society. The senior age groups were responsible for educating the young in the junior sets as a way of preparing them for adulthood. Among the Kikuyu of Kenya for example, the youth went through education of intensive initiation as they were prepared with adulthood responsibilities. It should be noted that education involved a lot of life skills and intensive instructions.

- 7) The age set system encouraged division of labour among Africans. The junior age group always offered labour services especially on community functions. They did the cooking in burial ceremonies, voluntary cleaning of wells and roads. In Gishu the senior age sets did the supervisory role.
- 8) Age sets promoted trade and commerce. In this aspect of social life, the various age sets contributed equally. The junior age sets always collected the trade materials while seniors engaged in the exact transactions. This was more common among the Nyamwezi, Yao, Akamba, etc. It should be noted that the junior age groups facilitated pre-colonial caravan trade acting as porters, carriers and guards.
- 9) Age sets promoted African culture and customs. Through age sets, there was promotion of African rituals and cultures that were preserved and taught to the young ones. Among the Kikuyu, Sabiny and Bagishu for example, circumcision was emphasized and the senior age sets always prepared the young one for it.
- 10) Age sets were also used for expansion of African societies. In societies like the Galla, age groups were used for expansion of the Galla community. Every age set that became of age (*after 5 years*) was encouraged to break away and get another settlement thus the expansion of the Galla community.
- 11) Age groups provide a foundation for social order. By categorizing individuals into age groups, societies established clear roles and responsibilities for each group, ensuring that everyone understands their position within the broader social framework. This clear demarcation minimized confusion and helped to prevent conflicts over roles and expectations among African societies.
- 12) Helped to uplift social welfare among African societies. In many African communities, different age groups were assigned distinct roles. For example, younger members were responsible for tasks like gathering food, assisting the elderly, or learning the trades of their elders. Older age groups took on leadership roles, offering guidance and making important decisions for the community. This division of labor ensured that each group contributed to the collective welfare.
- 13) Age groups created a system where mutual respect between generations was encouraged. Elders were highly respected for their wisdom and experience, while younger people were encouraged to respect and learn from those older than them. Among the Galla for example, the young ones were expected to add a title while addressing the elders' names. This system of respect ensured societal harmony by preventing generational conflict.
- 14) Age sets helped in the promotion of social responsibility. Age groups taught individuals the importance of social responsibility. From a young age, individuals learnt to contribute to their community, whether through labor, leadership, or social service. As individuals grew within their age groups, they

came to understand their role in sustaining the collective well-being, promoting a sense of duty and belonging.

- 15) Age groups also strengthened collective identity. Belonging to an age group helped reinforce an individual's identity as part of a larger collective. The shared experiences and challenges that members of the same age group faced created a sense of friendship and solidarity. This collective identity fostered social harmony by ensuring that individuals feel connected to their community.
- 16) Age groups participated in conflict mediation and resolution. Age groups played a significant role in conflict mediation. In traditional African societies, age groups often provided the structure through which conflicts were resolved. Elders within the community, usually from older age groups, mediated disputes between younger individuals, ensuring that harmony was maintained. This helped prevent the escalation of conflicts and ensured that issues are dealt with fairly.
- 17) Age groups facilitated leadership Development. Age groups provided a structure for leadership development. Younger individuals were mentored by older members, learning the skills necessary for leadership. This gradual process ensured that leadership was passed down in a way that maintained continuity and stability, as future leaders were well-prepared to take on their roles with respect for tradition and the needs of the community.
- 18) Age groups encourage active participation in community affairs. Younger groups contributed through physical labor or creativity, while older groups took on administrative, spiritual, or decision-making roles. This active involvement ensured that all members are engaged in the social, political, and cultural life of the community, which was crucial for maintaining social harmony.

NEGATIVE ROLE OF AGE GROUPS IN AFRICAN TRADITIONAL SETTING

1. Age groups in pre-colonial African societies promoted strict hierarchical power structures where older individuals held most of the authority. This hierarchical system created a situation where younger people had limited power or agency, reinforcing an unequal distribution of social power. The power imbalance led to situations where older generations could make decisions for younger members without considering their views, stifling young people's autonomy and voice. Among the Masai of Kenya, the word of the elders was final
2. In many African societies, age groups were rigid and inflexible, with strict expectations of participation and conformity. Those who did not conform to the norms and rituals of the group—such as failing to undergo specific

initiation rites—were often excluded. Among the Bagishu and Bakonzo of Uganda for example, all those young men who failed to undergo circumcision were seen as social misfits that no one could associate with. This exclusion could leave individuals without a sense of belonging or access to important community resources and networks, thereby increasing social division and resentment.

3. Age groups in pre-colonial African societies were linked to patriarchal structures that oppressed women. While men often controlled leadership positions within these age groups, women were relegated to subordinate roles. Among the Itesots, the council of elders for example was purely for men. This was the same case across many societies such as Turkana of Kenya. This gendered hierarchy restricted women's ability to participate fully in social, political, and economic activities, reinforcing systemic gender inequality and perpetuating the marginalization of women in these communities.
4. Age groups often imposed rigid roles upon individuals based on their stage in life. This structuring of roles frequently strangled personal freedom and individuality. Young people for example were expected to fetch water, firewood and carry weapons for warriors during wars among the Baganda of central Uganda. Young people were expected to adhere to specific cultural and social norms, sometimes leading to frustration or rebellion when they sought to express their personal desires or ambitions. The rigid roles imposed by age groups limited personal growth and freedom of thought.
5. In many pre-colonial African societies, age groups were highly traditional and often resistant to change. The older generation, which held the majority of leadership roles within age groups, was often slow to accept new ideas, innovations, or changes in societal norms. In some societies such as the Nandi of Kenya, elders could not even allow foreigners to come closer to their borders and those that attempted were killed on orders of Orkoiyot. This resistance to change could prevent societies from progressing, limiting technological, educational, and social advancements, and leaving communities vulnerable to external influences or changes.
6. Age groups could also reinforce cultural rigidity, with elders placing an undue emphasis on tradition and the preservation of old customs. While tradition is important for cultural continuity, the excessive focus on maintaining traditional practices within age groups led to the suppression of more progressive or adaptive cultural elements. Among the Karamojongs, Masai and Turkana for example, it was hard for young people in those societies to go to school when western education was introduced. This was because, by tradition, they were expected to move with cattle looking for water and pasture. This

cultural rigidity limited flexibility, preventing societies from evolving and adapting to new challenges and opportunities.

7. Age groups in pre-colonial African societies sometimes contributed to social stratification, creating divisions not just between generations but also within generations. Individuals of different age groups could be ranked according to social status, wealth, or other criteria, leading to further inequalities within the community. These class divisions contributed to the social fragmentation of African societies, undermining their sense of unity.
8. Age groups were dominated by older individuals, which often resulted in the lack of adequate representation for the younger generation in important community decisions. Since the elderly held the majority of power in the decision-making processes, the perspectives and needs of younger people were often overlooked. Among the Nyamwezi of Tanzania for example, all the members of Wanyampala (council) were elders. This lack of representation led to social discontent and a growing divide between the younger and older generations.
9. Age groups placed a lot of work on the youths without proper compensation. The youths provided labour services to the community at a free cost. Among the Itesots for example, the Junior Aturi (age group) was supposed to look for firewood, community work, cooking during burials, fetching water, among others.
10. Age sets caused endless tribal conflicts in pre-colonial Africa. In many African societies, once an age set was initiated, it moved to a separate geographical area/location where an independent life was started with their youthful leaders. Among the Galla of Kenya for example, every age set initiated had to move to another area for settlement. This put them into endless conflicts with the original occupants of that land which conflicts spent years.

INITIATION CEREMONIES IN AFRICAN TRADITIONAL SOCIETIES

Initiation was a traditional social custom performed to both men and women as a transformation from childhood to adulthood or from being a junior into a senior adult. It was followed by a specific ceremony that included a big gathering, eating, dancing among others. Each society had its own rituals as initiating children into adults that is; among the Kikuyu, Bagishu, Masai initiation took a form of circumcision. Among the Karamajong boys were initiated after when they were proved to protect cattle from wild animals.

Initiation is a way of getting admitted to a community or a society for individuals. In this aspect, initiation is a name that represents a new stage of life for the individuals. After a certain period of time, individuals attempt to change the life style they live because of some strongly-established traditions, customs or rules. Therefore, there will be need of some transition ceremonies that to join and be a member of the society or to be a part of it. These ceremonies are organised to make Africans ready for the society that they live in.

EXAMPLES OF INITIATION CEREMONIES IN AFRICA

1. Acquiring Cattle

In many cultures, cows play an important role. In Africa specifically, cattle play an important role in proving you can provide for a family. In the Bantu-speaking tribes of South Africa, Swaziland and Zimbabwe, a man must work for his father until he can grow a substantial herd of cows. Only then can he get married. Unfortunately, this has caused men to have to wait until their 40s to finally find an official wife and has left many women waiting.

2. Bull Jumping

In Omo Valley, Ethiopia, when a young man is of age to get married, he must first prove he is handy and skillful. He does this by undressing and running naked over the backs of a line of prize bulls four times. If a person successfully completes this initiation ritual, he passes into manhood and will be allowed by his community to marry.

2. Circumcision

In South Africa, Xhosa boys who are becoming men are circumcised without an anesthetic. They are then sent away to live in the bush in a structure made by their elders, for up to about two months with only a blanket and a few other supplies. This traditional practice, as with others in this list, has come upon criticism in modern times as sometimes the circumcisions are spoiled, leaving the lives of the young men in danger. Traditionally, the practice of sending youth out of the community as they enter adulthood is meant to be used to educate them about their new roles in the group as adults. In African communities, this meant teaching the youth about the rules and taboos of their society, what their moral and social responsibilities were, and what their calling in life should be. Some initiation rites have come to focus on survival against all odds, which has placed lives in danger.

3. Fattening Rooms

In Nigeria, being obese as a woman is considered highly attractive. It is thought that only people who are well off can afford to feed their wives a lot of food. An overweight woman is considered to be a sign of both wealth and health for her and her husband. But most people are not naturally as fat as rich men in this area of the world would like. In order to compensate for the difference and add on some kilograms before their wedding day, brides-to-be of the wealthy are sent off to “fattening rooms.” Here, they are fed large amounts of food, and they basically eat, sleep, and pass the time. Women can spend six months in fattening rooms, leaving transformed for their new lives of luxury.

4. Sexual Cleansing

Adolescent girls in Africa, just as boys, undergo rites of passage into adulthood. In Malawi's southern region, girls can be sent from their villages to a camp to be taught how to please their future husbands in bed, by older women in the community. Upon return to their communities, they are encouraged to have sex with a man in order to complete their initiation, even at the age of 10. This is called “sexual cleansing” by those who encourage it, and in regions where it is practiced, it is a deeply entrenched tradition that has lasted generations. However, new movements are encouraging young women to fight back for their freedoms and providing support for them to finish school, rather than get pregnant early and be married at a young age.

5. Birth Charts

Babies born into African communities also undergo certain rituals. One is having a birth chart drawn up. A birth chart details a person's talents as well as their personality traits. Having this chart done can help parents choose a name for their child. The information discovered can lead to a name that is said to suit the new human. If their name matches their birth chart, it is said that the person will remain focused on their life's work, by being reminded of it each time their name is called out.

6. Female Circumcision

In some African cultures, female circumcision is performed as a rite of passage into adulthood. The practice is commonly carried out by groups like the Maasai in Kenya. The act involves cutting off part of the clitoris, or even all of the external genitalia of an adolescent girl. However, many NGOs and UNO are

discouraging this practice and many countries including Uganda have declared it illegal.

7. Courtship Dances

Some tribes like the Wodaabe of Niger have men dress up and wear makeup to attract the attention of female judges. This is done as part of an annual festival that has men dance for the women, and show their teeth. Those with the best moves, the fanciest dress, and the whitest eyes and teeth are said to have the best chance of finding a mate, at least for that night.

8. Flogging

Some groups also whip their men into adulthood. The Fulani people of Nigeria are said to flog young men to prove how brave and tough they are, and how much pain they can really endure. Following the flogging ceremony, which takes in a public ring, those who did well are allowed to marry the person of their choosing.

8. Cloth Wrapping

A slightly less harmful tradition is that found in Igbo, eastern Nigeria. It involves wearing a piece of expensive cloth through the streets. When a young man is of marrying age, he is “investigated” by the local community to see to what degree he is an eligible bachelor. Those who meet the right criteria for eligibility are allowed to purchase an expensive piece of cloth, which they wear parading through the community as a sign of passing into the age of marriage.

Other practices include; circumcision, bodily cuttings, tattoos, removal of teeth, piercing of earlobes, and lip plugs were some of the varied initiation practices that were exercised

THE ROLE OF INITIATION CEREMONIES IN INSTILLING PRIDE AND A SENSE OF IDENTITY AMONG AFRICANS

1. Initiation ceremonies are rituals that marked the transition of an individual from one stage of life to another. Whether from childhood to adulthood, from an outsider to a community member, or from one social role to another, these rites often symbolized a profound personal or societal transformation. In many pre-colonial societies such as Nandi, Kikuyu, Bugishu, Shona, Zaramo, among others societies, initiation ceremonies carry deep cultural, spiritual, and psychological significance.

2. They led to the preservation of cultural identity. They ensured the continuity of traditions and customs, passing down knowledge, values, and spiritual practices from generation to generation. Among the Africans of Eswatini for example, there was a practice of lisango and liguma where younger men sat with older men, and younger girls with older women, to receive wisdom and advice. Lisango and liguma were also designed to reinforce different gender roles, responsibilities and status between boys and girls. In this way, initiation ceremonies helped individuals connect with their cultural heritage and understand their place within the larger community.
3. Initiation ceremonies promoted social cohesion and community building. Initiation ceremonies served as communal events that promoted togetherness among the people. They brought people together, creating a sense of belonging and solidarity. During the imbalu ceremony among the Bagishu, many communities come together and celebrate one's entry into adulthood. By participating in these rituals, individuals bond with others who share similar experiences, strengthening the social fabric of the community. These ceremonies often involve collective celebrations, dances such as akadodi in Bugishu, feasts, or communal prayers, all of which reinforce the unity of the group.
4. They provided confidence to the new members of the community to confront their new challenges without fear. Initiation ceremonies had a profound impact on the individual himself. They often involved challenges trials, or tests such as jumping over the backs of the bulls among the Omo of Ethiopia, hunting and killing animals among the Khoisans, staying in the bush among the Shona, etc., that required participants to confront their fears, doubts, and weaknesses. Overcoming these challenges resulted in a strong sense of accomplishment, self-confidence, and personal growth.
5. They promoted both spiritual and religious aspects of life. In many cultures, initiation ceremonies held deep spiritual or religious importance. They were seen as a way of aligning the individual with divine forces. Among the Edda people of Nigeria for example, the initiation of the baby (itu elu) involved the presentation of the baby to a masquerader representing Egbela spirit. The masquerader threw the baby four times up and downward and thereafter, the baby was presented to its sponsor who ran up to the gate of the home and washed the baby in water mixed with the herbs put in the pot at the gate. This is an initiation ceremony that shows that the baby has been fully dedicated into Egbela spirit for protection and prosperity. Through these rituals, initiates

sought blessings, protection, or guidance from ancestral spirits. Such ceremonies often involved prayers, offerings, or other sacred practices designed to purify or empower the individual.

6. These ceremonies were very important in both identity formation and self-understanding. Initiation ceremonies played a crucial role in the formation of personal identity. For young people, particularly adolescents, these rituals provided a framework for understanding themselves in relation to their community and the larger world. Among the Xhosa of S. Africa for example, a young initiate secluded himself from the rest of the community and spent a given period of time in the bush. During this time, he reflected on his life and discovered himself. It was a moment of reflection on one's own purpose and role within the group, helping to clarify values and personal goals.
7. Initiation ceremonies also served to define and clarify social roles and expectations. Through these rituals, individuals gained understanding of what was expected of them within their community. During the visiting of the bush in Buganda for example, girls were taught their roles as adult females by their aunts whereas at the same time, boys were taught their roles as adult males and future husbands. Among the Chagga of Tanzania, girls were given a set of instructions in the duties of the wife to her husband, family and the community at large. Whether it was the responsibilities of an adult, a spouse, or a leader, initiation ceremonies were a way of communicating societal norms and values. They provided a sense of direction and purpose for those undergoing the rite.
8. These ceremonies helped to promote resilience and perseverance among the Africans of the pre-colonial societies. The challenges presented during initiation ceremonies often tested the strength, resilience, and endurance of individuals. Clitoridectomy among the Chewa people of Zambia, physical fighting among the Maasai young boys before they became Morans (Junior warriors), hunting among the Fulani of Nigeria, among others were some of the trials Africans went through. These trials such as were designed to build character and empower the participants. By undergoing physical, emotional, or mental hardships, individuals gain a sense of their own inner strength and capacity to overcome obstacles, which often lasts a lifetime.
9. Initiation ceremonies promoted moral and ethical guidance. Through storytelling, teachings, or symbolic acts, initiates were often introduced to the moral code and ethical standards of their society. These rites often included lessons about courage, integrity, respect for elders, and compassion for others. In Himba of culture of Namibia for example, both male and female initiates

underwent a rite of passage that focused on teaching moral and ethical conduct within the community. For girls, the lessons included respecting elders, understanding the importance of marriage, motherhood, and being a responsible member of society. For boys, the focus was on leadership, protecting the community and maintaining a strong ethical character. The Himba initiation emphasized community interdependence, the importance of family, and the moral duty to care for the environment and livestock. All this moral and ethical guidance contributed to the development of a well-rounded and responsible adult.

10. Initiation ceremonies helped in the Preservation of Social Order. During these ceremonies, elders clearly defined roles and responsibilities of the initiates within the community. Among the Zulu of South Africa for example, young initiates during the Ukuhlolwa initiation ceremony were taught their community roles, respect, and responsibility. They were still taught the significance of family, loyalty, and honor. Elders imparted lessons about discipline, the role of men in upholding the law and traditions, and the importance of maintaining good moral character. This helped to maintain harmony and reduce conflict. They provided a structured system for passing on knowledge, leadership, and social expectations, ensuring that each generation can carry forward the traditions and values of the society.
11. They fostered a sense of pride. As initiates successfully underwent various tests and rituals, they became proud of their accomplishments. The ceremonies served as a public recognition of their efforts and resilience, making them feel valued and accepted. Among the Maasai of Kenya during Eunoto ceremony for example, when young Maasai successfully won the tests that included physical challenges like hunting or proving their ability in mock battles, they became very proud. A big feast was organised to celebrate their achievement. This boosted their self-esteem and motivated them to contribute positively to the community.
12. Initiation ceremonies led to acquisition of full rights to an individual. When a person completed these initiation ceremonies, he/she was allowed to enjoy the full privileges of the group he/she had joined. Among the Wamwere people of Kenya for example, when a child who did not perform the 'Unyago' (tribal initiation) died, it was not given the burial rights. This was because such a child was not yet regarded as a human being. But with performing the Unyago rite, the child automatically acquired the status of an adult and received full rights at burial. The same applied to Ezza and Edda people of Nigeria.

13. Led to full integration of an individual into the Community. Initiation integrated one into the community. The person became a full-fledged member of the community. Among the Ndebele of Zimbabwe for example, boys typically underwent circumcision and then received education about their roles within the community, including leadership, protection, and moral conduct. Girls on the other hand were taught about domestic responsibilities, marriage, and motherhood. Upon successful completion of these rites, initiates were recognized as adults and fully integrated into the Ndebele community, where they could now contribute to the social and cultural life of the group.
14. Initiation ceremonies promoted hygiene among Africans. With particular reference to circumcision, major benefits at that time were seen as improved lifetime genital hygiene, elimination of phimosis (inability to retract the foreskin) and prevention of penile cancer on top of many other hygienic benefits such as removing the bad odour. Besides, as part of the educational process, initiates are taught about personal hygiene and the importance of maintaining cleanliness in daily life. This included washing hands, maintaining body hygiene, keeping living spaces clean, and understanding how hygiene contributed to health. Among the Xhosa people of South Africa, initiates were secluded from the public and elders focused on teaching them personal hygiene as part of the daily routines during the seclusion period. The initiates were taught the practice of regular bathing, wearing clean clothing, and maintaining personal cleanliness as a reflection of self-respect and maturity.
15. Initiation ceremonies helped to control promiscuity in Women. Initiation ceremonies, particularly for girls, often included teachings on sexual morality, emphasizing the importance of chastity, modesty, and appropriate sexual behavior. Elders and initiates taught girls that sexual activity should be confined to marriage and that a woman's worth is often tied to her purity and sexual conduct. Women were also taught that engaging in sex abuse brought shame not only to themselves but also their community and the society at large. Among the Chewa people of Zambia for example, female initiates were taken into seclusion from where senior members of the community taught them sexual manners and emphasized the sacredness of sex which must only take place in marriage.
16. Initiation ceremonies promoted traditional education in Africa. During initiation, children were given a lot of instruction by the senior members of the community. They were taught marriage and family matters, they were taught survival techniques, they were taught leadership roles, they were taught their

traditions, cultures and norms, they were taught the geography of their areas, among others. Among the Pygmy people of central Africa for example, the initiation involved young boys being sent into the forest to learn hunting and survival skills, while girls were taught domestic and medicinal skills. Both boys and girls were introduced to the values of cooperation, respect for nature, and mutual responsibility within the community. This helped people to fully function well in their communities

17. Initiation ceremonies earned initiates respect. Initiates were given respect on completion of their tests and trials. In many African cultures such as the Yoruba of Nigeria, Itesots of Uganda, Bemba of DRC among others, an individual was not considered a full member of society until they have undergone initiation. After completing the ritual, the initiate was seen as an adult and therefore granted the respect and privileges associated with adulthood. Besides, during initiation, initiates were taught the values, customs, beliefs, and traditions that are central to their community. This turned them into experts of knowledge which earned them respect from community members. More importantly, any African initiation ceremonies involved physical challenges—such as circumcision, seclusion, fasting, or tests of endurance. These physical rites were designed to prove that the initiate had the strength, stamina, and resilience necessary to take on adult responsibilities. Successfully undergoing such trials earned the respect of the community, as the individual was seen as brave, mature, and capable of handling difficult situations.
18. It helped people to identify their future marriage partners. During initiation ceremonies, particularly those that involved communal gatherings, both males and females from various families or villages often came together. This provided a chance for young men and women to interact, get to know each other, and establish relationships. Among the Bagishu of Uganda for example, dancing akadodi was a way in which youths met and started dating. Such social interactions played a significant role in identifying compatible marriage partners.
19. Initiation ceremonies were sources of entertainment among Africans. Music, particularly drumming and singing, was a vital part of many African initiation ceremonies such as imbalu among the Bagishu in Uganda. Drums, rattles, and other traditional instruments were played during various stages of the ceremony, creating rhythm and excitement. The beats of the drums and the melodies of the songs were meant to energize the participants and elevate the

communal spirit. During the celebrations, the community engaged in traditional dances such as akadodi that allowed the initiates to showcase their skills and express joy. Big feasts now accompanied these ceremonies and these brought together family, friends, and the wider community. Some cultures such as the Omo of Ethiopia even had physical challenges that entertained the community while also testing the strength, bravery, and resilience of the initiates during the ceremonies. These involved wrestling, running, or endurance of trials. These activities provided entertainment for the spectators, while also showcasing the physical prowess of the young men, marking their readiness for adulthood.

20. They helped the initiates to acquire many gifts that made them rich. In some cultures, the gifts given during the ceremony were a way of acknowledging the initiate's courage, endurance, and dedication throughout the rites. The initiates could receive special clothing, jewelry, beads, cattle, land or ceremonial items as a tangible symbol of their successful passage through the ritual. Among the Zulu young boys were given gifts including clothing, weapons (such as spears and shields), and beads. These gifts signified the initiate's readiness to protect and provide for their family and community. The girls on the other side who underwent umemulo initiation ceremony received receive gifts such as traditional jewelry, beads, and special attire that represent their readiness for womanhood and potential marriage. These gifts helped African youths to have where to start from in life

DISADVANTAGES OF INITIATION CEREMONIES IN PRE-COLONIAL SOCIETIES

1. **Health Risks of Circumcision and Other Procedures.** One of the most significant disadvantages of initiation ceremonies was the health risks involved. In many African cultures such as Bakonjo of Uganda, Bemba of Zambia, Zulu and Xhosa of South Africa, etc., initiation ceremonies for boys involved circumcision and other physical alterations. While these procedures were intended to mark the transition to manhood, they posed significant health risks, especially if they were performed under unsanitary conditions. Infections, excessive bleeding, and even death resulted could happen at any time during circumcisions. The absence of proper medical facilities and trained professionals increased the likelihood of complications.
2. Sometimes they caused psychological trauma. Initiation ceremonies often involved significant physical and emotional stress. For some individuals, the

rituals could be psychologically traumatic. The pressure to endure pain and hardship in the name of tradition such as female circumcision among the Maasai and Kikuyu of Kenya, and Somali of Somalia, skin cutting among the Himba of Namibia etc., caused long-lasting effects on the mental health of some initiates. Those who did not wish to undergo initiation were coerced into participating, leading to feelings of anxiety, fear, and emotional distress.

3. Initiation ceremonies promoted gender inequality. In many African societies, initiation ceremonies reinforced traditional gender roles and perpetuated gender inequality. For example, the initiation of boys often emphasized their role as protectors, warriors, and providers, while girls' initiation rites focused on their duties as wives and mothers. The female Maasai, Somali, Gusii, and Nigerian tribes that practiced FGM for example, deprived women of their sexual pleasure while leaving men untouched. Among the Suri people of Ethiopia, girls were marked with cuttings in the face which increased their suffering. Among the Baganda of Uganda, girls were taught to listen and obey their husbands during their initiation whereas boys were told to show manhood at home. All these rites among others increased the inequality between the two genders in the African traditional settings
4. It led to discrimination of people. Initiation ceremonies were powerful social rituals that put immense pressure on young individuals to conform to the expectations of their community. Those who failed to undergo the ceremony or chose not to participate were always seen as outcasts, leading to feelings of exclusion and isolation. In some cases, such as the Maasai of Kenya, individuals were even ostracized or ridiculed for rejecting initiation, creating a sense of alienation. This pressure to conform to societal norms could be particularly harmful for those who did not identify with the traditional gender roles or societal expectations imposed by the ceremonies.
5. These ceremonies put an economic burden on families. In some cultures, such as the Zulu of S. Africa where circumcision was compulsory, initiation ceremonies required significant economic investment. Families had to pay for traditional attire, sacrifices, beads, local brew, gifts, and other costs associated with the ceremony. As a result, the cost of initiation created stress within families and placed a financial strain on those who could least afford it. The pressure to provide a lavish ceremony, especially for boys and girls who were expected to undergo these rites, could lead to unnecessary debt.
6. Some ceremonies were just enforced on some people. Initiation ceremonies often required participants to undergo procedures or rituals that they may not

want to do. There was always little room for personal choice, and individuals were pressured to follow the traditions of their community. When it came to FGM among the Somali for example, there was no negotiation on the side of the minor. comfortable with. This sometimes caused rebellion against traditional customs.

7. Some rites caused too much pain. In all these rites such as circumcision, face cuttings and enlargement of mouths done by some tribes such as the Mursi and Surma of Ethiopia, the non-application of anaesthesia worsened the pain. After the rite, the complications from the mutilation of the female genital part, produced great difficulty to some women during urination and delivery, especially where the rite was observed in its strict form

ROLE OF AFRICAN TRADITIONAL RELIGION IN PRE-COLONIAL SOCIETIES

African Traditional Religion was the way Africans understood and worshiped their god. This religion was found in almost all the activities of the African man such in all ceremonies, agriculture, etc. This religion had no founder and that is why it is called traditional religion. It placed emphasis on virtues, values, and morals. African Traditional Religion as a term encompasses the various religious systems and practices of different ethnic groups across Africa, each with its own unique customs, rituals, beliefs, and deities. However, despite the differences, there are common features that tie these traditions together, such as a focus on the worship of deities, reverence for ancestors, belief in spiritual forces, and a deep connection with nature and the universe.

GENERAL FEATURES OF AFRICAN TRADITIONAL RELIGIONS

1. African Traditional Religions believed in a Supreme Being or God, who was considered the creator and ruler of the universe. This God was often seen as distant yet involved in the affairs of the world. He was called by various names such as the Igbo called Him Chineke, Yoruba called Him Olodumare, Itesots called Him Edeke, Kikuyu called Him Ngai etc. He was believed to be the creator of heavens and the earth. Many African societies believed that this Supreme being created and went away. He does not interfere in people's activities anymore and therefore, all those that wanted to meet Him had to pass through other divinities.

2. Ancestors were highly respected in African Traditional Religions. It was believed that the spirits of ancestors continued to influence the living, offering guidance and protection. Many rituals and offerings were made to honor them. Ancestral spirits were the souls of deceased family members, elders, or important figures from a community's past. They guided, protected and influenced the lives of their descendants. They included amatongo among the Zulu, Abosom among the Akan of Ghana, Nommo among the Dogon of Mali among others.
3. Sacred Spaces were highly respected. Africans placed a lot of importance on sacred spaces where spiritual activities took place from. These could include shrines, forests, rivers, mountains, and even certain objects that were considered to hold spiritual significance. Among the Baganda of central Uganda for example, there was Omuti gwa Nakayima, a sacred tree where Baganda went to pray and their prayers were always answered. No one was allowed to ease himself in such places or show any disrespect. Those that disrespected such places always ran mad or even died if they had not caused calamities to their families
4. ATR was characterised by rituals and ceremonies. These served to connect individuals with the divine, seek blessings, and maintain social order. These included rites of passage such as birth (*Imbeleko ceremony of the Ndebele*), marriage, death, agricultural ceremonies, and seasonal festivals. Such festivals were always followed by prayers, worship and sacrifices offered by a religious leader
5. Divination was also widely practiced among the Africans. Divination was a practice used to communicate with the spiritual world. Through various methods, such as casting lots, reading signs in nature, or consulting spiritual mediums, ATR practitioners sought to understand the future or resolve problems. Divination was also carried out by religious leaders such as Akomfo among the Akan of Ghana, Babalawo among the Yoruba, etc. These diviners also interpreted dreams, visions, and other signs to gain insight into the spiritual world. The guidance received through this divination helped individuals in personal and communal matters, such as solving conflicts or determining the best time for rituals.
6. Sacrifice and Offerings were always offered. Sacrifices and offerings to spirits, ancestors, and gods were central to ATRs. These offerings included animal Sacrifices like chicken, goats, or cows whose blood or meat was offered to the gods. More so, food offerings like fruits, yam, honey, and palm wine were common offerings Yoruba of Nigeria offered to Orishas. Among the Alur of Uganda, libation such as pouring of water, local wine, or other drinks to honor

ancestors and gods was carried out. These and so many other sacrifices were offered to express gratitude, seek favors, or appease spirits.

7. There existed traditional healers and medicine men in ATR. ATRs included a belief in traditional healers who had the spiritual power to diagnose, treat, and heal physical and spiritual ailments. Traditional healers included herbalists such as dibia in Igbo culture who specialised in the use of plants, roots, leaves, and natural substances to treat physical and spiritual ailments. There also existed spiritual healers such as Sangoma who were highly revered spiritual healers in Southern African cultures, especially among the Zulu, Xhosa, and Swazi people. These served as spiritual mediators between ancestors and the living. Their knowledge of healing was believed to come from their spiritual connection to ancestral spirits.
8. There was spirit possession among individuals in ATR. Individuals, particularly priests or mediums, may become possessed by spirits, ancestors, or deities during rituals, enabling them to communicate with the spiritual realm on behalf of the community. During the Bondo initiation in Sierra Leone for example, some girls experienced possession by the spirit of their ancestors, which was interpreted as the ancestors' approval of their initiation and their readiness for adulthood.
9. ATR included religious specialists. ATRs often had religious specialists who performed important religious duties and mediated between the spiritual world and the people. These included Priests and Priestesses who were the religious leaders responsible for performing rituals, making offerings, and maintaining the sacredness of temples, shrines, or other holy places. There was also diviners who interpreted messages from the spiritual world to guide the community. They used various techniques such as reading natural signs, casting divining tools (e.g., casting bones or using cowrie shells), and communicating with spirits and ancestors. Others included ritual experts, medicine men and women, etc.
10. There was a belief in the Afterlife. Many African Traditional Religions included a belief in an afterlife, where individuals continued to exist after death in the spiritual world. This belief reinforced the importance of living ethically and maintaining strong ties with ancestors.
11. Symbols played a significant role in ATRs. Objects such as masks, statues, amulets, and sacred symbols were used in rituals to represent spiritual beings, to protect individuals and even to communicate with the divine. Such symbols included the Sankofa bird of the Akan people that symbolized the importance of learning from the past to build a better future. Djembe, (talking drum) of the Yoruba, Mali, Ghana etc which was a symbol of communication with the divine

and with the ancestors. It represented the voice of the community and the ability to convey messages across the spiritual and earthly realms.

12. Africans believed in many gods and spirits. African Traditional Religions often featured a belief in a many of gods and goddesses, each associated with different aspects of life, nature, or specific geographical regions. Among the Banyoro of Uganda for example, under Ruhanga, there was wamara-god of plenty, mugizi-god of rain and muhingo-god of war. On top of that, each clan and family had its favorite god to whom sacrifices were offered for appeasement. Among the Yoruba people, there was Oshun, goddess of love and Shango, god of thunder. These gods were considered powerful, but they are also believed to have their limitations and interact with human beings in various ways.
13. There was a strong connection between spiritual forces and the natural world. ATR often emphasized the interconnection between humans and the natural world, which was seen as infused with spiritual energy. Certain plants and trees were considered sacred in many African cultures. They were seen as the homes of spirits or gods, and their leaves, bark, or fruits was used in rituals to invoke the divine. In the Yoruba tradition for example, the Iroko tree was sacred and believed to be inhabited by powerful spirits. Among the Akan, the palm tree and its fruit, palm oil, held spiritual significance and were often used in rituals and offerings to deities and ancestors. Many African spiritual practices were centered around the respect and veneration of nature.
14. Moral and Social Order: African Traditional Religions were closely intertwined with the community's social and moral order. Religious beliefs dictated the way individuals lived, interacted with each other, and related to the spiritual world. All those that lived contrary to religious beliefs were considered social misfits and when they died they ended up becoming evil spirits.

ROLE OF THE AFRICAN TRADITIONAL RELIGION IN PRE-COLONIAL SOCIETIES

1. African Traditional Religion was the foundation of African cultural values and practices. ATR was the backbone of African traditional practices upon which many African cultures built their identity, including language, art, music, and rituals. Cultural practices such as ancestral worship, sacrifices and offerings, rituals for Healing, use of sacred objects and symbols, music, dance, and drama among others were all rooted in ATR. Therefore, ATR helped to preserve the history of African people, passing down stories, beliefs, and values through generations. Through ATR, Africans maintained a connection to their ancestral

roots, and cultural practices continued to be taught and respected by younger generations.

2. ATR enhanced moral and ethical standards that governed the behavior of individuals and communities. Rituals and ceremonies in ATR were not just spiritual practices but also served to promote morals, for example, during community rituals such as initiation ceremonies, individuals were taught the moral responsibilities they will carry as adults. These rituals often involved teachings about honesty, respect, loyalty, and communal duty. Through teachings, myths, proverbs, and rituals, ATR instilled values such as respect for elders, hospitality, honesty, and communal responsibility. These values fostered harmony, cooperation, and social order within the community. The spiritual teachings of ATR shaped the behavior of individuals and guided them in making decisions that promoted the well-being of the entire community.
3. ATR promoted a sense of community and social cohesion. Religious practices and festivals were deeply communal and served as occasions for individuals to come together, bond, and celebrate their shared beliefs. These events often involved singing, dancing, feasting, and collective worship, all of which enhanced social cohesion. The Mbuti people of DRC for example conducted communal sacrifices and dances to honor their forest spirits. These practices united the tribe in seeking blessings and maintaining a harmonious relationship with nature. Whether was a harvest festival, an initiation ceremony, or a community-wide prayer for blessings, these gatherings allowed people to experience the unity of the community in a shared spiritual experience. These practices were instrumental in ensuring that people feel connected to one another and to their ancestral and spiritual heritage.
4. ATR promoted healing and well-being in pre-colonial societies. ATR played a critical role in the physical, mental, and spiritual healing of individuals. Traditional healers, known as sangomas in Southern Africa or dibia in Igbo culture, were an essential part of African societies. They used herbal remedies, spiritual practices, and divination to diagnose and treat diseases. ATR also provided spiritual healing, addressing not only physical illness but also emotional and spiritual imbalance. Healing practices within ATR were holistic, addressing the whole person—body, mind, and spirit.
5. ATR promoted preservation of African nature and the environment. In many pre-colonial African societies, certain natural sites, such as forests, rivers, and

mountains, were considered sacred. These places were often protected by local communities because they were believed to be inhabited by spirits or ancestors. People avoided cutting down trees, hunting, or engaging in activities that could harm these sacred sites. For example, sacred forests that were considered sacred were seen as places of worship, and harming them was taboo. This practice played a significant role in conserving biodiversity in these areas.

6. ATR provided mechanisms for protecting individuals and communities from spiritual and physical harm. Through rituals, sacrifices, and offerings, people sought to appease gods, spirits, and ancestors to ensure their protection from evil forces, sickness, misfortune, and other harmful elements. Protective charms, amulets, and talismans were also used to shield individuals from wicked spirits and bad luck. Among the Shona people of Zimbabwe for example, nhanga (protective charms) were worn by individuals for spiritual defense. The belief in spiritual protection strengthened individuals' sense of safety and security.
7. ATR provided divination and guidance to pre-colonial societies. Divination was a crucial aspect of ATR, used to seek spiritual guidance in times of uncertainty. Various methods, such as casting bones, reading cowrie shells, or interpreting dreams, were used by diviners to communicate with the gods and ancestors. Divination helped individuals and communities to make decisions about important matters, such as marriage, health, and agriculture. According to Mende people of Sierra Leone for example, there was the Kpu diviners who were deeply knowledgeable in the use of plants and herbs for spiritual guidance and healing. The Kpu used tools such as herbs, roots, leaves, and divining stones. The diviners also used bones or shells to interpret messages from the spirits. The Kpu communicated with the ancestral spirits to reveal important messages or guide the community through difficult circumstances. This provided a sense of direction and reassurance, helping people navigate life's challenges with the wisdom of the spiritual realm.
8. ATR preserved traditional knowledge and wisdom. ATR was the custodian of traditional knowledge, including history, morals, geography, agriculture and medicinal practices among others. ATR included many rituals that aligned with the nature, such as harvest ceremonies, planting rites, and seasonal festivals. These rituals were designed not only to honor the gods and ancestors but also to teach the community sustainable practices for using natural resources, ensuring that knowledge about agriculture, geography science etc., was passed down. This

knowledge was passed down orally through stories, proverbs, songs, and rituals. ATR is therefore not only a spiritual system but also a repository of valuable cultural wisdom that informs every aspect of life. The preservation of this knowledge ensures the continuity of African cultures, maintaining a link to ancestral wisdom and practices.

9. ATR promoted peace and reconciliation in pre-colonial African societies. Rituals of reconciliation, forgiveness, and atonement were common in many African traditions. Diviners, and spiritual healers played the role. Through rituals, divination, and consultations with spirits, they received spiritual guidance on the best course of action to restore peace and settle conflicts. In times of dispute or after violent events, communities would engage in rituals that included sacrifices to their gods such as Igwe among the Igbo, Kaagen among the Khoisan, etc, aiming to cleanse the community of negative energies and restore peace. These acts of sacrifice were not seen as punitive but as restorative and reconciling, helping to reset relations. In cases of deep personal or communal conflict, purification ceremonies were performed to remove bad blood or negative influences. These ceremonies helped individuals reconcile their differences and foster mutual understanding. The rituals often involved prayers, the use of sacred herbs, and communal gatherings that brought together individuals from opposing sides to unite in spiritual and social healing
10. ATR Provided leaders to pre-colonial societies. In most societies, religious leaders were the same political leaders. Religious leaders were considered to be possessive of special powers that gave them the strength and wisdom to man their societies well. They were therefore trusted with political roles in various communities. Among such societies included the Nandi with Orkoiyot, Ashanti with Asantehene, Oba of Benin, etc. These leaders were believed to be the direct descendants of the gods and their leadership therefore was essential for the prosperity of the kingdom. They performed regular sacrifices and offerings to appease the gods and ancestors. Their words were final and became law since they were seen as divinely inspired.
11. ATR provided an avenue through which Africans communicated with their ancestors, spirits and with their gods. Through special rituals such as sacrifices and offering of foods, drinks, animals, birds etc., Africans invited the ancestors to intercede on behalf of the living. The offerings were believed to appease the ancestors and keep them favorably disposed towards their descendants. In some

societies such as the Yoruba of Nigeria, the gods were invited through the use of sacred palm nuts. The diviner connected with the spiritual realm and communicated with the ancestors and gods on behalf of the individual. They could cast small objects (bones, shells, stones) to provide messages from the spirits or gods. This process allowed individuals to receive spiritual advice or guidance for their life situations.

12. It provided an avenue in the celebration of African life. ATR emphasized the significance of rites of passage which were moments that brought people together in celebrations. These included birth and naming ceremonies which were joyous moments because the birth of a child was celebrated with naming ceremonies, initiation ceremonies which were celebrated with elaborate rituals, including sacrifices to ancestors, prayers for fertility and prosperity, among others. Besides, many African societies celebrated the changing seasons, agricultural cycles, and harvests through rituals, festivals, and dances. These events were a form of worship and celebration of life. All these and so many other celebrations provided moments of joy in the pre-colonial African societies
13. ATR provided answers to abstract events. ATR offered answers to questions about the purpose of life, human existence, and the nature of the world. In ATR, there were myths that provided answers to questions about the origins of the world and humanity. For instance, in the Yoruba tradition, Olodumare (God) created the world and entrusted humans with the responsibility of maintaining it. This provided a deeper understanding of the purpose of life and provided answers to questions about existence in that society. Besides that, Africans believed in the ancestral spirits to be present and actively involved in the lives of their descendants. When individuals sought answers to various abstract events, they were encouraged to consult their ancestors through rituals, prayers, or divination. This made Africans to have a holistic living
14. African traditional religion provided solutions to various calamities in the society. Natural calamities such as droughts, floods, famines, and plagues were often seen as the result of spiritual disharmony. ATR provided spiritual answers to these events by calling upon the gods, ancestors, or nature spirits to restore balance and intervene in the situation. When a calamity like a drought or a plague occurred, communities would often turn to spiritual leaders or diviners to diagnose the cause. These leaders would perform rituals and sacrifices to appease the gods or ancestors, asking for their intervention. For example, in some

communities such as the Baganda, sacrifices would be made to the gods of rain to bring an end to a drought, or to appease nature spirits believed to be causing imbalance. In times of disease and epidemics such as small pox, diviners or spiritual leaders were consulted to identify the spiritual cause. These leaders used methods like casting sacred objects, reading signs in nature, or interpreting dreams to uncover whether the illness was caused by ancestral anger, witchcraft, or misbehaviors. Such remedies among others provided Africans with hope

DEMERITS OF AFRICAN TRADITIONAL RELIGION

1. ATR promoted gender inequality. Gender inequality was deeply rooted in many ATR systems. Religiously, men held higher religious offices positions of authority, such as priests, spiritual leaders, or elders, while women were downgraded to secondary roles. For example, in Ndebele society, women went to the bush to collect herbs whereas men were the herbalists. Besides, in some ATR, there were sacred places that were gender-segregated. Men had access to certain sacred spaces or be responsible for particular rituals such as offering sacrifices, while women were relegated to supportive, or less "sacred" roles. This promoted the idea that women's spiritual roles were less important than men's roles. This disparity reflected and reinforced patriarchal values in many pre-colonial African societies such as Ankole, Yao, Fulani etc.
2. Overemphasis on Ancestral worship affected progress in science and technology. In many African traditional belief systems, natural phenomena were often explained through spiritual or supernatural causes, such as the will of ancestors. While this provided important moral and spiritual guidance, it might have constrained the development of more scientific explanations based on observation, experimentation, and empirical evidence. For example, illnesses such as epilepsy, mental illness, measles among others among the Igbo of Nigeria, Banyoro of Uganda, Shona of Zimbabwe etc were attributed to ancestral anger rather than biological causes, which could have hindered the development of modern medicine or public health strategies.
3. Unlike major world religions, ATR lacked a universal system of beliefs and practices. Each ethnic group or community had its unique religious traditions, gods, and rituals. Baganda for example believed in Lubaale, Kikuyu believed in Engai, Khoisan believed in Kaagen, Bakong of DRC and Angola believed in Nzambi, Basuto believed in Modibo, etc. This diversity made it difficult to form unified religious or social movements. Furthermore, the absence of universal principles meant that social cohesion between different African communities

could sometimes be undermined, as there was no single religious framework to unify the continent.

4. There was the abuse of power by many religious leaders. In ATR, the religious authority was often highly centralized in specific leaders such as kings in Oyo empire of Nigeria, Zulu kingdom of S. Africa, Kingdom of Ndongo Angola, Nandi of Kenya etc. These religious leaders acted as political leaders with titles such as Orkoiyot of Nandi, Mukuru of Zulu, Asantehene of Asante, Ooni of Ife in Nigeria, etc. This centralization sometimes led to the abuse of power by these religious leaders, who could control not only the spiritual but also the social and political lives of their communities. Religious leaders often had enormous influence, and their decisions were rarely questioned. This concentration of power could lead to corruption, exploitation, and the suppression of dissenting voices.
5. There were many incidents of human sacrifices and bloodshed. Many ATR practices involved rituals of sacrifice, some of which required the shedding of animal or, in extreme cases, human blood. In the Kingdom of Dahomey for example, human sacrifice was carried out as part of royal rituals, especially during the reigns of the Fon kings. The Efik people of Nigeria also carried out human sacrifices specially to honor the gods and to appease the spirits of the ancestors. This practice was also associated with royal rituals, including the enthronement of new kings or during important agricultural ceremonies. The practice of human sacrifice, though rare, was believed to appease gods or ancestors, but it led to the loss of human life. morality of these practices became increasingly questioned over time.
6. It created the fear of divine retribution. ATR often promoted a view where any wrongdoing from established religious norms would attract divine punishment. Among various tribes such as the Zulu, Basoga, Zaramo of Tanzania, Igbo of Nigeria, etc, violation of sacred rituals or taboos, disrespecting the king or chiefs, neglecting ancestors among others were punishable by only gods. While this strengthened social order, it also created a culture of fear. Individuals lived in constant fear of offending the gods or ancestors, which could lead to guilt, anxiety, and even suspicion. This fear-based approach to morality silenced individual creativity and freedom of expression.
7. There was exploitation of the marginalized people in ATR. In some ATR systems, individuals who were considered “marginal” or different—such as people with disabilities or outsiders were often believed to be cursed or under the influence of malicious spirits. Among the Maasai of Kenya and T.Z for

example, individuals with albinism were thought to bring misfortune or were linked to witchcraft. These individuals faced discrimination, exclusion, or mistreatment based on their perceived spiritual status. ATR practices did not always provide a clear means of integrating these people into the social fold.

8. ATR lacked written scriptures. One significant limitation of ATR was its reliance on oral traditions rather than written scriptures. While oral traditions were powerful tools for transmitting knowledge and religious beliefs, they were victims to distortion over time. Important religious practices and teachings could be forgotten, changed, or misinterpreted, especially when passing through generations. The absence of written scriptures meant that ATR lacked a standard reference, making it more vulnerable to changes and inconsistencies.
9. There was a limited access to religious knowledge. In many African societies, knowledge of ATR was often confined to a small group of religious specialists, such as diviners, herbalists, and priests. While these individuals were revered and respected, the knowledge they possessed was not always accessible to the general population. This created a hierarchical system where only the trained could fully understand or practice the religion. Such limitations could lead to ignorance or misunderstanding of religious practices and beliefs.
10. ATR rituals had massive control over daily life. Many African pre-colonial societies were heavily ritualistic, with ATR rituals impacting every aspect of daily life. These included rituals for marriage, birth, death, and even farming. While such rituals helped to maintain order and unity, they also placed considerable pressure on individuals to conform to specific religious expectations. People's lives were often dictated by an overwhelming number of rites and ceremonies, which could restrict personal freedom and autonomy.
11. ATR promoted social divisions within the African communities. In some ATR systems, religious beliefs played a role in social stratification, where certain families or groups were believed to be closer to the gods or ancestors. These groups often held higher social status and received more benefits from the community. This created an inequality, as individuals from less "spiritually favored" families or lineages were marginalized or excluded from key religious and social privileges.
12. ATR failed to address certain forms of social injustice. While ATR provided moral guidelines and promoted social harmony, it did not always effectively address all forms of social injustice. In many cases, the religion supported existing power structures, including the domination of one group over another. This could include the oppression of women, slaves, or lower-status individuals

who were viewed as less spiritually advanced or deserving of respect. The religious system, while offering spiritual explanations for social order, did not always challenge these inequities.

ROLE OF PRE COLONIAL PRODUCTION IN ENSURING THE SURVIVAL OF PRE COLONIAL AFRICAN SOCIETIES

Before the arrival of European colonialism, Africa had a diverse and thriving economy, marked by unique systems of production, trade, and resource management. Contrary to the often European biased texts, pre-colonial Africa's economic activities were complex, deeply rooted in social, political, and cultural contexts. These activities not only catered to local communities but also involved many other foreign players from Africa and beyond which was fundamental in the development of African societies.

SPECIFIC PRE COLONIAL ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

1. Agriculture was highly practiced across the continent. Agriculture was the primary economic activity for the majority of pre-colonial African societies. The fertile lands across the continent provided a wide variety of crops, such as millet, sorghum, yams, cassava, and maize, which were cultivated for both subsistence and trade. Agricultural practices in pre-colonial Africa were adapted to the varied climates of the continent. In the rainforests of Central Africa, for example, slash-and-burn techniques were common, while in drier regions like the Sahel, people practiced irrigation and terrace farming. This adaptability allowed communities to thrive in diverse environments. Among the Berbers of North Africa particularly in Morocco and Algeria for example, there was dryland farming and irrigated agriculture. They grew crops like wheat, barley, and olives, and utilized advanced irrigation techniques to manage water in arid environments. This was not the case with farming in Kikuyu where land was very fertile with enough supply of rainfall.
2. There was also livestock farming across the continent. Cattle, goats, sheep, and camels were essential not only as sources of food but also as symbols of wealth and social status. Livestock was used in religious and cultural practices, and in some societies, they were central to the concept of communal wealth. The Maasai were perhaps one of the most well-known cattle-herding tribes in East Africa. Cattle were central to their social structure, and the wealth of an individual or family was measured by the size of their cattle herd. Among the Fulani people who spread across West Africa

(including countries like Nigeria, Senegal, Guinea, and Mali), their wealth was closely tied to the size of their cattle herds. Most of these practiced nomadic pastoralism where they moved with their cattle from one place to another.

3. Fishing was one of the most important economic activities in many pre-colonial African societies, particularly along the coastlines and in the river valleys. The Nile, Niger, Zambezi, and Congo Rivers, as well as the Atlantic and Indian Ocean coasts, were vital sources of fish for both consumption and trade. Many tribes carried out fishing to supplement their diet. For example, the Dinka were known cattle keepers who also practiced in fishing in river Nile as a way of supplementing their diet. The Wolof of both Senegal and Gambia particularly those living along the coast of Senegal and the Gambia River, were active fishermen. They fished using boats, nets, and traps and were heavily involved in the fishing trade, exporting fish throughout West Africa. In some regions such as Buganda in Uganda, fish were smoked or dried for preservation, providing an important source of protein and a key commodity in local markets.
4. Trade was highly developed and connected. Long before the arrival of European colonizers, Africa had well organised trade systems. These included the Trans-Saharan Trade that connected North Africa to the interior of West and Central Africa through the Sahara Desert. It involved the exchange of commodities between Mediterranean civilizations and sub-Saharan Africa. It involved pre-colonial tribes such as the Berbers, Tuareg, Arabs, Soninke, Mandinga, Fulani, Hausa, Songhai among others. There was the E. African LDT that involves moving long distances from the interior to the coast and from the coast to the interior of E. Africa. It involved tribes such as the Nyamwezi, Yao, Akamba, etc. There was the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade that involved African kingdoms such as the Kingdom of Kongo, Benin, Ashanti, Oyo, Dahomey, and various ethnic groups along the West African coast. This trade attracted many foreign traders such as the European traders and colonial powers such as the Portuguese, British, Dutch, French, and Spanish. These and so many other trade systems enabled the exchange of salt, gold, ivory, slaves, and other commodities, and contributed to the growth of powerful trading kingdoms such as Ghana, Buganda, Mali, and Songhai.
5. The production of crafts was an integral part of pre-colonial African production system. Many African societies specialized in the production of tools, pottery and leather goods. The Berbers of North Africa especially in

Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia for example were specialised porters who were known for their distinctive pottery-making traditions using hands, often using traditional methods passed down through generations. They produced a variety of pottery items, including bowls, jugs, and decorative pieces. These crafts were used in daily life, but they also played a role in religious and cultural ceremonies. The famous brass and bronze works of Benin, the intricate beadwork of the Zulu, and the wood carvings of the Yoruba all testify to the rich tradition of craftsmanship in pre-colonial Africa.

6. In many regions, the production of textiles was an essential part of the economy. Cotton, barks of trees and other fibers were turned into thread and woven into clothes, often dyed in vibrant colors. The production of cloth was not only an economic activity but also a form of artistic expression. African textiles, such as the kente cloth of the Akan people, shukas of the Maasai, Lubugo of the Baganda and the mud cloth of the Dogon, were highly valued and prized for their quality and were often used for ceremonial purposes, including weddings and other important events. They were also important for trade and played significant roles in social and religious life such as wedding, coronation and burial ceremonies
7. Iron working was one of the most important phase in African production. The Iron Age in Africa began around 1000 BCE in various parts of the continent such as Nok in Nigeria, and the craft of ironworking became central to many African societies. Banyoro of Uganda, Yoruba of Nigeria, Mande of Mali, Guinea, and Senegal, Mossi of Burkina Faso among others were renown iron workers who produced all forms of iron implements such as hoes, pangas, spears, etc. Iron tools were used for farming, hunting, and warfare, while iron weapons such as swords, knives, and spears were crucial for defense and expansion.
8. Mining was also carried out by certain groups of people. Various groups engaged in extracting valuable minerals and metals, such as gold, iron, copper, salt, and diamonds. The Mali Empire particularly during the reign of Mansa Musa for example was one of the largest producers of gold in the whole world. The Ashanti people of now Ghana were renowned for gold mining and the golden stool symbolized their wealth. They mined gold from rivers and by digging shafts into the earth. Other resources included diamonds and copper. These resources were used for local consumption, trade, and ceremonial purposes. Mining was often carried out using traditional

techniques, and the minerals were critical to the development of ancient African civilizations.

9. Salt production was also widely practiced in pre-colonial African societies. Salt was highly valued for its uses in food preservation, flavoring, and even as a trade commodity. In many regions of Africa, salt was just as valuable as gold, and its production and trade were central to the economy of several societies. There are several prominent African societies that produced and supplied salt. These included Bunyoro of Uganda, Hausa of Nigeria, Tuareg and Berber of N. Africa. Among others. These extracted gold from salt pans from underground deposits and lakes such as L. Katwe.
10. Raids were also carried out in various pre-colonial tribes. Pre-colonial African tribes often engaged in raids for various reasons, such as acquiring resources, expanding territory, capturing slaves, gaining wealth, among others. These raids were part of the social, economic, and political systems of many African societies. The Zulu Kingdom, particularly during the reign of Shaka Zulu for example was known for its frequent raids. These raids were for gaining control over neighboring groups and their resources and acquire cattle. Other tribes that were known for raids included the Karamojong of Uganda, Maasai of both Kenya and Tanzania, Ndebele of S. Africa, the Fulani of Nigeria, Senegal, Guinea, and Mali, the Nyamwezi of Tanzania etc. Out of these raids, these societies acquired a lot of power and wealth
11. Hunting was carried out widely across the continent. Hunting played an important role in many pre-colonial African societies as a means of subsistence, sport and as a cultural practice. Hunting practices varied across the continent, depending on geography, climate, available wildlife, and the specific needs of different tribes. For many African communities, hunting was not only about acquiring food but also involved spiritual and social elements, with some tribes viewing hunting as a rite of passage or as an integral part of their cultural identity. Some of the most prominent hunting tribes included the Khoisan of Botswana, Namibia, South Africa, and Angola, Pygmies of Congo, Himba of Namibia, etc. These were very skilled in tracking and hunting small and large game, including antelope, zebra, and buffalo, using clever techniques such as poisoned arrows, digging pits for large animals and using other traps. Hunting was typically a communal activity and successful hunts were celebrated.
12. Food gathering was also an essential part of life for many pre-colonial African tribes, especially those who lived in regions where farming or

pastoralism was not widely done. These groups such as the Khoisan of southern Africa, Pygmies of Congo Basin, Hadza and Sandawe of Tanzania among others gathered a wide variety of wild plant foods including roots, berries, tubers, honey, seeds and seeds, other natural resources depending on the season and geographical location. They used digging sticks to unearth tubers and roots, and baskets and bags to collect edible plants. They also had specialized knowledge of which plants were safe to eat and which were medicinal. For these groups, food gathering was an important means of supplementing their diet

ROLE OF PRE-COLONIAL PRODUCTION IN ENSURING THE SURVIVAL OF PRE COLONIAL AFRICAN SOCIETIES

1. It made pre-colonial societies self-sufficient. In pre-colonial Africa, societies were largely self-sufficient, relying on various production methods to meet their needs. The production systems were rooted in the environment, cultural practices, and social organization. In agriculture, pastoralism, mining, and craftsmanship, African societies demonstrated a remarkable capacity for adapting to local conditions and sustaining themselves through these productive activities. The societies such as Ankole of Uganda, Fulani of Nigeria, Maasai of Kenya etc that had cattle, used those very cattle for their self-sufficiency.
2. Pre-colonial production made agriculture the Backbone of Pre-Colonial African Economies. Agriculture was perhaps the most crucial production activity for pre-colonial African societies, with crops like millet, sorghum, maize, yams, cassava, and rice cultivated in different parts of the continent. The fertile soils in regions such as the Nile Valley and West Africa supported extensive farming systems that produced not only food but also raw materials for trade and various cultural practices.
3. Pastoralism allowed societies to adapt to different climatic conditions, particularly in arid and semi-arid regions. The mobility of pastoralists, such as the Maasai and the Tuareg, enabled them to find grazing grounds for their herds, ensuring that their livestock thrived. This adaptability was crucial for survival, especially during periods of drought or seasonal change.
4. Fishing became a vital source of proteins and sauce for many tribes along the coast and in river valleys. Fishing was a vital form of food production for many African societies, particularly for those living along coasts, rivers, and lakes. Societies such as the Fang in Central Africa, Basoga in Uganda, Dinka and Shilluk in Sudan and the Shona in Zimbabwe among others, utilized rivers and

lakes for sustenance. Fishing not only provided protein but also supported trade with inland communities.

5. Pottery was central to many African societies, providing essential containers for cooking, storing food, and carrying water. Potters, often women, created beautifully crafted vessels that were both functional and artistic. Pottery production was a key economic activity for societies in regions like Central Africa and the Horn of Africa, where pottery was integral to both domestic life and trade.
6. Textile production provided clothes to pre-colonial African tribes. The weaving of clothes, particularly in West Africa, was highly developed, with societies like the Ashanti and the Yoruba excelling in producing fabrics for local use and trade. These textiles provided clothes such as lubugo in Buganda that were used for many functions such as clothing people, coronation of new leaders, weddings, burial ceremonies, among others
7. Mining led to wealth generation in pre-colonial African societies. Mining was a significant source of wealth for many African kingdoms, especially in West Africa. The kingdoms of Ghana, Mali, and Songhai were built on the wealth generated from gold, which was traded across the Sahara to North Africa and beyond. Gold mining ensured the economic stability of these societies, enabling them to develop sophisticated political systems and military forces.
8. Iron working was an advanced craft in pre-colonial Africa, with societies such as the Nok, the Bantu, and the Mande peoples mastering iron smelting techniques. Iron was used to produce tools, weapons, and agricultural implements, which were essential for both survival and defense. The production of iron tools revolutionized agriculture and warfare in many regions.
9. Food preservation techniques, including drying, smoking, and fermenting, were crucial for ensuring food security in pre-colonial African societies. In regions with seasonal variations in food availability, the preservation of surplus harvests was a strategy for survival during times of scarcity, such as during dry seasons or droughts. In West Africa, dried fish and meat were often stored in woven baskets or hung. The Fang people in Central Africa smoked meat, such as beef, goat, and sheep whereas the Maasai fermented milk products, such as yoghurt and sour milk, which were preserved in clay pots or skins. These fermented dairy products could be stored for extended periods. Dried cassava or millet among the Acholis and Langi of Uganda could be preserved for months, ensuring that food was available during off-seasons.

10. Pre-colonial trade played a key role in generating significant wealth and revenue for African societies, fostering economic prosperity, and enabling the growth of powerful empires and kingdoms. The trade networks were interconnected, stretching across the African continent and beyond, linking African societies with Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. Through the exchange of goods such as gold, salt, ivory, and slaves, pre-colonial African trade facilitated the accumulation of wealth by various local people and leaders such as Tippu Tip, Nyungu Ya Mawe, Mirambo, Msiri, etc
11. Pre-colonial production systems promoted the division of labour. The pre-colonial production systems in Africa played a significant role in promoting the division of labor, which was essential to the functioning and survival of African societies. The division of labor in these societies was shaped by a combination of economic activities such as agriculture, trade, craftsmanship, and governance. Among the pastoral societies such as the Maasai in East Africa and the Fulani in West Africa for example, men were generally responsible for herding, protecting livestock, and leading the community's pastoral activities whereas women were responsible for the daily care of the household, including tasks such as milking the animals, processing milk into products like butter and cheese, and creating leather goods. Women also often played a role in maintaining the homestead and providing food for the family. Children's labor was divided based on age and gender. Younger boys helped with the herding of smaller livestock, while girls were involved in domestic chores and assisting women with animal care.

NEGATIVE ROLE OF PRE-COLONIAL PRODUCTION IN ENSURING THE SURVIVAL OF PRE COLONIAL AFRICAN SOCIETIES

1. Production was over-dependent on climate and environmental conditions. The agricultural and pastoral production systems in pre-colonial African societies were heavily dependent on favorable climate conditions. Droughts, unreliable rainfall, floods, and other natural disasters often resulted in crop failures and livestock losses. In regions where agriculture was the backbone of the economy such as the Yoruba and Igbo of Nigeria, Kikuyu and Chagga of Kenya, Shona of Zimbabwe, Zulu of S. Africa, among others, poor weather patterns could lead to food shortages, famine, and widespread hardship. This explains why famine was always rampant in pre-colonial societies and why African societies were always migrating from place to place in search for food.
2. The pre-colonial production system also left pastoral societies victims of environmental changes. Pastoral societies, such as the Maasai and the Fulani,

were similarly vulnerable to environmental changes. Overgrazing and land degradation were common problems when pastoralists did not manage grazing lands effectively. As herders moved large herds across vast areas, they sometimes caused the land to become overgrazed, leading to a loss of pasture and soil fertility. This depletion of land resources could reduce the availability of grazing space, leading to lower livestock productivity.

3. The system ignored technological development in production. While pre-colonial African societies were skilled in certain areas of technology such as iron working, many lacked the technological advancements that could improve agricultural production or diversify economic activities. Tools and methods for farming, mining, and crafts were often rudimentary, which slowed production efficiency. In agricultural societies, the reliance on manual labor and basic tools such as hoes, axes, and pangas meant that large-scale or mechanized farming was impossible. This reduced the ability to produce surpluses, and societies remained vulnerable to famine
4. The system made pre-colonial systems of production victims of pests and disease. In many African societies, the focus was often on one or a few staple crops making it hard to withstand the outbreak of a given pests such as caterpillars, weevils, among others. The Kingdom of Kongo for example heavily relied on crop cultivation focusing on cassava or yams whereas Itesots of Uganda relied on millet. Relatedly, societies that depended on cattle alone were also victims of diseases such as foot and mouth disease and anthrax. This explains the unending food crises in pre-colonial Africa.
5. The systems promoted social inequalities and the exploitation of labour. The division of labor in pre-colonial African societies cemented existing social hierarchies, which led to unequal distribution of resources and power. This explains why in many societies, men occupied positions of power, including roles as chiefs and priests. Men also controlled property, land, and economic resources, while women's roles were primarily domestic, focused on childbearing, food production, and household management. In many societies such as Nyamwezi of Tanganyika, Zulu of S. Africa, Herero of Namibia among others, there also existed a small elite class that controlled large amounts of land, livestock, and trade. The rulers, chiefs, and their families often enjoyed privileges such as luxury goods, better living conditions, and access to resources whereas the majority of people were commoners who had less access to resources and wealth. This exploitative system was because of African production system

6. It promoted slave labour. Slavery was practiced in many pre-colonial African societies such as the kingdom of Dahomey in modern Benin, Ashanti in modern day Ghana, Zulu in modern day S. Africa, Fulani and Mandinka Societies (West Africa) among others. The form and scale of slavery varied greatly across different regions and cultures. Slaves in these societies were typically captured through warfare, acquired through trade, or as a result of debt. The role of slaves also varied, with some serving in domestic roles as it was in Buganda of Uganda, while others worked in agriculture as it was in Zulu of S. Africa, military as it was in Dahomey, or other industries like mining. The use of enslaved labor created divisions within societies, where slaves had no access to rights or economic participation. Additionally, external slave raids led to the disruption of local communities and families, often destabilizing the productive capacity of entire regions.
7. The systems promoted inherent internal conflicts among pre-colonial tribes. Inter-tribal conflicts were common among pre-colonial African societies, as different ethnic groups struggled for control over resources, trade routes, and acquire slaves. These conflicts included endless Dahomey's attacks against its neighbors such as the Fante and the Akan-speaking peoples, Shaka's wars on his Nguni neighbors, Yoruba kingdoms of Oyo, Ife, and Ijebu fighting one another, Kwavi Maasai fighting Purko Maasai, etc. These conflicts were caused by a combination of economic, social, and cultural factors, as well as the desire for dominance in the region. The Yoruba kingdoms for example fought over trade routes to the coast and agricultural lands. These endless conflicts weakened pre-colonial societies
8. There was soil degradation and Resource Exhaustion. Agricultural practices in many pre-colonial African societies were not always sustainable. In particular, the methods of farming that were employed often led to soil degradation over time. The practice of slash-and-burn agriculture as used in many pre-colonial societies such as Kikuyu and Chagga of Kenya of Kenya, Zaramo, Ngindo, Wamatumbi of Tanganyika among others, while effective in the short term, contributed to the depletion of soil fertility. As the land was repeatedly used for farming without proper soil management, it became less productive, leading to declining yields. As the soil became exhausted, agricultural production could no longer sustain the growing communities, leading to food shortages hence endless migrations and conflicts
9. The systems had over-reliance on subsistence farming. In many pre-colonial African societies, agriculture was primarily geared towards subsistence rather

than surplus production for trade. Farmers focused on producing enough food to feed their families and local communities, with little surplus to engage in broader markets or stimulate economic growth. Without significant agricultural surplus, trade was limited, and societies could not generate the wealth needed for the development of other sectors such as manufacturing, mining, or large-scale industrial activities. As a result, many pre-colonial African economies remained largely stagnant, with agriculture at the center but without the diversification needed to promote wider economic growth.

10. Pastoralism practiced by some societies limited settlement development. Many pastoral societies in pre-colonial Africa followed a nomadic or semi-nomadic lifestyle, moving with their herds in search of better grazing land or water sources. These included the Maasai of Kenya and Tanzania, Fulani of Nigeria, The Berbers of North Africa, especially in Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia among others. While this allowed for flexibility in response to environmental changes such as drought, it also limited the development of settled agricultural communities or urban centers. Nomadic pastoralism discouraged the development of infrastructure and other forms of social organization that were typically associated with more settled societies. Without permanent settlements or towns, pastoral societies lacked the institutions needed for long-term development, such as market which also hindered trade

HOW THE KNOWLEDGE OF PRE-COLONIAL AFRICAN PRODUCTION SYSTEMS CAN BE APPLIED TO ADDRESS CURRENT AFRICAN SOCIETAL CHALLENGES?

Pre-colonial African production systems were diverse and deeply rooted in the environments and cultures of the various African societies. These systems, which included agriculture, pastoralism, mining, and trade among others were designed to meet the needs of their communities while maintaining harmony with the environment. Despite the disruptions caused by colonization, the knowledge rooted in these traditional production systems remains relevant today. In fact, reexamining and applying certain elements of these systems can provide valuable knowledge into addressing modern African challenges such as food security, climate change, poverty, economic inequality, and environmental degradation as seen below

1. Incorporating traditional farming methods, such as crop rotation, agroforestry, and organic farming, can help modern African societies boost food production

in an environmentally sustainable way. One of the most pressing challenges facing contemporary Africa is food security. Many African countries are still facing hunger and malnutrition despite being rich in arable land. Pre-colonial African agricultural systems were often based on sustainable and diversified farming practices, which can offer important lessons today. For example, many African societies practiced mixed farming, combining crop cultivation with animal husbandry. This system ensured that the soil was refilled with nutrients, and it created a diversified food base that could withstand crop failures caused by pests or weather changes. Incorporating traditional African farming systems would not only increase food security but also reduce the reliance on chemical fertilizers and pesticides, which can degrade the soil and harm ecosystems.

2. There's need to develop the growing of African traditional climate-resilient farming practices. Pre-colonial African communities often employed farming techniques that were well-suited to their local environments. For instance, the use of drought-resistant crops, such as millet and sorghum, was widespread in semi-arid regions such as northern Uganda. These crops were cultivated in ways that minimized water use and were better adapted to the region's climate. Today, with the increasing threat of climate change and more frequent droughts, Africa can benefit from revisiting these resilient farming techniques. By promoting the cultivation of drought-tolerant crops and the integration of traditional weather prediction knowledge, Africa can build more climate-resilient farming systems that reduce vulnerability to changing weather patterns. Pastoralism and Livestock Management
3. Need to revive the conservation of biodiversity using African traditional way. Many pre-colonial African societies understood the importance of maintaining a balance with nature and conserving biodiversity. For example, some communities practiced sacred trees and hunting regulations, where specific trees or species were protected and considered taboo for exploitation. These systems helped preserve natural habitats and wildlife. In the face of widespread biodiversity loss today, especially in Africa's rapidly expanding agricultural and industrial sectors, revisiting these conservation practices could help in protecting endangered species and ecosystems. Implementing community-based conservation initiatives, which are based on traditional environmental knowledge, could help maintain biodiversity while empowering local communities to manage their natural resources sustainably.
4. Resource management and sustainable land use. In pre-colonial Africa, land was always seen as a communal resource, and its use was carefully managed

according to traditional systems of land tenure. These systems prevented overuse of resources, ensuring that the land could sustain future generations. Traditional land management practices included rotating grazing areas, fallowing agricultural plots, and using fire as a tool to manage vegetation. Today, Africa faces the challenge of land degradation due to urbanization, deforestation and poor agricultural practices. Applying the knowledge of pre-colonial land management systems could be vital in reversing land degradation. By returning to communal land management and sustainable agricultural practices, Africa could restore degraded lands, prevent desertification, and improve the overall health of its ecosystems.

5. Building social cohesion through cooperative labor. Pre-colonial African societies often relied on cooperative labor for agricultural production, hunting and building infrastructure. Community-based labor systems ensured that large-scale tasks, such as harvesting or constructing buildings, were completed efficiently, and everyone participated according to their abilities. In modern Africa, where unemployment rates are high, particularly among young people, promoting cooperative labor could be an effective way to create jobs and foster social cohesion. By reviving traditional labor-sharing practices, communities can collaborate to tackle major development challenges, such as infrastructure development, food production, and environmental conservation.
6. Trade and economic integration. Pre-colonial African societies were engaged in extensive trade networks, both locally and across the continent. These included Trans-Saharan Trade which connected the West African kingdoms such as Ghana Empire, Mali Empire, and Songhai Empire in the West, and the Berber traders and Arab merchants in the north to North Africa to the Mediterranean world. There also existed Indian Ocean Trade the Indian Ocean trade network that connected the East African coast with the Arabian Peninsula, Persia, India, and Southeast Asia. It involved the E. African coastal city states such as Kilwa, Zanzibar, Mombasa, Sofala, etc. There existed the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade that involved African societies along the West African coast, such as the Ashanti, Dahomey, and Oyo Empires, as well as European traders such as the Portuguese, British, Dutch, French, and Spanish. Today, Africa faces challenges in regional integration and intra-continental trade. By studying pre-colonial trade routes, economies, and cooperative systems, African nations could strengthen regional trade and reduce dependence on external markets.
7. There is need to construct modern infrastructures that imitate the trade routes of the past if Africa is to stimulate economic growth and reduce poverty. Pre-

colonial Africa had a variety of trade routes that facilitated the exchange of goods, cultures, and ideas, linking different regions of Africa and beyond. These trade routes covered long distances, passing through deserts, rivers, and seas, and they were essential for the development of ancient African civilizations. They included Trans-Saharan Trade Routes that connected sub-Saharan Africa with North Africa and the Mediterranean world. The main trade route connected the Ghana Empire, Mali Empire, and Songhai Empire in the west to the Berber traders and Arab merchants in the north. There was also the long distance caravan trade routes such as the northern trade route controlled by the Kamba, central trade route controlled by the Nyamwezi and southern trade route controlled by the Yao. These routes connected traders to a number of modern countries such as Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Congo, Sudan, Rwanda, Burundi, Zimbabwe, etc. The continental roads and railways need to be reconstructed connecting all African countries to facilitate the exchange of goods, ideas and cultures. This will boost growth and development on top of promoting unity

8. The pre-colonial production systems remind us to go back to vocational education and apprenticeship. In pre-colonial African societies, vocational education and apprenticeship played a crucial role in passing down essential economic skills and knowledge from one generation to the next. Apprenticeship was the primary system through which young people learned practical skills that were essential for survival, economic prosperity, and the functioning of their societies. Young people would learn trades, crafts, and various skills through direct, hands-on experience under the guidance of a skilled adult. Among the pastoral societies of the Maasai, Fulani among others, young boys learnt looking after cattle from their fathers. Among the hunting communities such as the Khoisan, the young learnt hunting from their elders. Among the trading societies such as the Berbers, Nyamwezi, Swahilis, etc, the young learnt trade from the elders. All this learning was practical and hands on. This made the pre-colonial youths to grow with a lot of skills that helped them to survive in future. If modern young Africans are taught vocational through apprenticeship, the whole continent will have highly skilled man power and the continent will become a center of innovation and creativity.
9. There's need to empower our women so that they actively involve in production. In many pre-colonial African societies, women played critical roles in economic activities. Women had control over certain aspects of production, and their labor was vital for the community's survival. They participated in activities such as agriculture, trade, craftsmanship among others. In pre-colonial societies such as

Basuto of southern Africa, Nama of Namibia, Banyoro of Uganda among others, women were heavily involved in planting, weeding, harvesting, drying, grinding, milling, and preserving foods, while in pastoral societies such as the Maasai, Fulani, and Nuer, women played roles in herding, milking, and caring for smaller livestock and goats, sheep, and poultry. Women were also highly skilled in craftsmanship particularly in textile production and pottery. In West Africa, for example, women played a central role in weaving fabrics like kente and in making clothes for the family and for trade. Today, women in Africa face barriers to economic empowerment, including limited access to land, education, and capital. Revisiting the pre-colonial understanding of gender roles in production could help empower women by acknowledging their contributions and ensuring they have equal access to resources. This could help reduce poverty and promote sustainable development.

10. Africans actively participated in the production of traditional herbal medicine that helped to restore their health. Pre-colonial African societies had a rich tradition of using plants, herbs, and other natural resources for medicinal purposes. Traditional healers such as Sangomas of S. Africa played a key role in maintaining the health of their communities, using herbal knowledge passed down through generations. This system was often holistic, addressing physical, spiritual, and emotional well-being. In the face of modern health challenges, such as the spread of diseases and poor healthcare infrastructure, there is potential in combining modern medicine with traditional health practices. By preserving and integrating traditional medicinal knowledge, Africa could create more effective and culturally relevant healthcare solutions.
11. There's need to strengthen local economies through resource-based enterprises. Many pre-colonial African societies engaged in resource-based industries such as mining as it was in Mwenemutapa, old Ghana kingdom etc, weaving as it was Shona (Zimbabwe), Chaga (Tanzania), and Kikuyu (Kenya), pottery, and metalworking as it was in Bunyoro of Buganda. These industries created economic opportunities, promoted local craftsmanship, and supported trade networks. In the modern context, reviving and modernizing these industries can stimulate local economies and create jobs. By supporting artisan industries and encouraging innovation within traditional craftsmanship, African societies can develop sustainable economies that are less dependent on external markets and foreign aid.
12. There's a need to promote sustainable and inclusive development. Pre-colonial African societies promoted inclusive economic development through a variety

of systems that emphasized community participation, shared resources, and collective responsibilities. Land for example was considered a communal resource rather than a privately owned commodity. Land was usually distributed and cultivated by extended families or village communities. These communal land tenure systems ensured that all members of society, especially the most vulnerable, had access to the resources needed for survival. These economic practices not only facilitated sustainable development but also fostered social cohesion, equity, and resource distribution across different sections of the population. Therefore, to ensure long-term economic growth, African governments should put into place inclusive practices that will ensure that Africa's economic growth does not come at the cost of others.

NB:

1. Let's endeavour to work together in the interpretation of history syllabus
2. Let's try to interpret this document well. For example, where the learning outcome is EVALUATE, let's try to evaluate by giving two sides of the topic
3. Let's attempt to provide contextual examples to make history advanced at this level
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