
Africa in World Politics and the Political Economy of Postcoloniality

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Introduction

Scholarly analyses of the history of Africa and its contributions in global affairs have, over the centuries, generated debate. Two dominant paradigms in this continuing discourse on the African imagination can be delineated as follows. The works of Eurocentrists such as Hegel (1830) contend that Africa is fundamentally a place that ‘...has remained cut off from all contacts with the rest of the world; it is the land of gold, forever pressing in upon itself, and the land of childhood, removed from the light of self-conscious history and wrapped in the dark mantle of night.’ The metaphors of ‘childhood’ and pervasive ‘darkness’ enunciated by Hegel in the early 19th century would subsequently metamorphose into the imperial project of the ‘Whiteman’s burden’ and ‘civilizing mission’ into the ‘heart of darkness.’ It is within this fragment of Western philosophical teleology of progress that we can grasp the horrendous violence that was unleashed against non-western societies, like Africa, in the form of slavery, colonialism, apartheid and related forms of denial of humanity and subjection. That Hegel himself recognized that Africa ‘is the land of gold’ is pertinent, as the entanglement of the continent into the circuits of global coloniality has revolved around the pillage of its human and material resources.

The second related dominant representation of the African subject asserts that the continent and its postcolonial states constitute domains of marginality, institutional failure, criminality, rising anarchy, piracy, and brutalization of the human body that threaten not only the continent and its people, but also ‘civil order’ and the international community (Reno 2000; Rotberg 2003; Chabal & Daloz 1999). Mbembe (2001a:3) argues that, within this genre of Africanist theorization, Africa is portrayed as ‘...a headless figure threatened with madness and quite innocent

of any notion of center, hierarchy, or stability....a vast dark cave where every benchmark and distinction come together in total confusion...a bottomless abyss where everything is noise, yawning gap, and primordial chaos.' This state-centric perspective as enunciated by General Smuts claims: 'The political system of the native was ruthlessly destroyed in order to incorporate them as equals into the white system. The African was as good as a potential European; his social and political culture was bad, barbarous, and only deserved to be stamped out root and branch... (so that) ...the native can be accepted as an equal citizen with full political rights along with the whites' (Mamdani 2002:5). While we do not contest, from an empirical perspective, some of the descriptions in this canonical paradigm of 'state failure', 'primordial chaos', fragmentation of authority and the 'instrumentalization of disorder' (Chabal & Daloz 1999) unleashed by the African potentate elite on their subjects, the problem with this mode of analysis is that it is not only reductionist, but, even more fundamentally, it legitimizes external interventionism by major powers in Africa's so-called ungovernable spaces, thereby reinforcing the domination of the continent as well as persistent predation, and pillage of its people and resources. With approximately five decades of political independence, Africa remains behind in almost all the indices of human development and security ranging from maternal and infant mortality, access to education and healthcare, as well as the challenges of indebtedness to Western financial institutions, and global inequity. The unequal structure of power distribution and hierarchy of state actors in global politics increasingly marginalizes Africa in the international system. As I argue in this chapter, at the root of the simultaneous processes of Africa's domination, incorporation and extraversion in world economy are the twin dilemmas of colonial legacies, structures of global inequity as well as entrenchment of predatory elites that appropriate state power for personal gains, thereby unleashing violence in the postcolony.

Although Africa's incorporation into the global economy and international society predates the era of formal colonization in the late 19th century, it is important to note that the Berlin Conference of 1884-85 remains the fulcrum of Africa's partition and subordination under European colonial rule. It was not until the 1960s that African states, through concerted nationalist struggles, regained their independence from colonialism. Conscious of the challenges of nation-building and artificiality of inherited colonial boundaries, the ideological rivalries of the Cold War, as well as their weak and dependent economies, African states adapted the 1963 Organization of African Unity (now African Union) Charter which emphasizes the principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of each state. Furthermore, as Clapham (1996, 1999) observed, the OAU Charter not only recognized the sovereign equality of member states and the respect for the territorial integrity of each other, but also the '...inalienable right to independent existence; the peaceful settlement of disputes; and an unambiguous condemnation of subversive activities carried out by one state against another' (Clapham 1999).

Apart from defining their identity as autonomous actors in international society through the OAU, African states were also active members of the Non-Aligned Movement. Their involvement in the Non-Aligned Movement can partly be explained by their desire to assert sovereign autonomy from the divisive ideological super power rivalry of post-World War II. However, the internal institutional weaknesses of African post-colonial states, their dependence for economic survival on the hegemonic colonial powers, increasing indebtedness, coupled with the entrenchment of authoritarian regimes and the privatization of state power by the ruling elites all contributed significantly to the gradual erosion of the legitimacy of African states. The Cold War rivalry and major interventions in African crisis areas such as the DR Congo (formerly Zaire) post-independence conflicts, the Angolan civil war, the decolonization struggles in southern Africa as well as the Ethiopia-Somali Ogaden conflicts exacerbated the process of post-colonial state disintegration in these regions. For scholars such as R.H. Jackson (1990) and Christopher Clapham (1996), the failure of African states to effectively exert control over their territorial boundaries, along with their dependence on external powers for economic survival, indicates that their sovereignty is only at the juridical realm rather than being an empirical reality. African states, they argue, lack empirical sovereignty on the grounds that their very existence in international society derives its legitimacy from recognition by the international community.

While Jackson and Clapham's perspective on African state juridical sovereignty provides us with a glimpse into the dilemmas of postcolonial statehood, their conceptualization neglects the dominant role of inequities in the structural distribution of power and hierarchy in world politics. Thus, in order to effectively comprehend the challenges of African post-colonial states in world affairs, this chapter contends that it is imperative to examine not only the legacies and practices of European colonial rule in Africa, but also the persisting predatory strategies of African rulers (more often than not supported by Western patrons and institutions), the pillage of African resources by Western multinational corporations, and the support for authoritarian regimes, exemplified by the late Mobutu Sese Seko of DR Congo (formerly Zaire). Belgian colonial legacies of repression followed by the intervention of major powers in post-colonial DR Congo along with the plunder of its resources by national, regional and diverse global actors provides us with a glimpse for comprehending how the structures of power and hierarchy in world politics systematically incorporates Africa into the world economy and undermines the sovereignty of African states. I draw on Bourdieu's concept of *habitus* as an analytical tool to unpack the complex structured processes of domination and exploitation that is entrenched through power hierarchies at national and global levels.

This chapter contends that an interrogation of the subordination of Africa in world politics must necessarily bring on board not only the insertion of the continent into the global economy through the complex processes of the trans-

Saharan trade routes, the establishment of coastal trading posts by European countries, the emergence of the market-driven trans-Atlantic slave trade and the consequent intensification of violence and 'social death' that these unleashed, but even more importantly, the late 19th century parcelling and demarcation of boundaries, territories and redefinition of sovereignties along with the subjection of the people under colonial rule. The rise of the potentate in the postcolonial epoch has neither fundamentally altered the structures and hierarchies of ideological and political domination, nor Africa's insertion and subjection in the global economy (Bourdieu 1977, 1985). What is currently repackaged as democratic transition following the imposition of the neo-liberal agenda of the Structural adjustment program and its conditionalities, further entrenches the subordination of Africa and its people in an ever increasingly complex system of global domination. The processes of globalization in the world economy driven by the Bretton Woods International Financial Institutions (IFIs), technological transformations driven by private capital in hegemonic states, along with the rampant thirst for, and extraction of, Africa's mineral resources all deepen the unequal insertion of the continent in the world economy. The increasing rise of violent insurgencies and transnational crime in the form of arms trafficking, money laundering, piracy, child soldiering, narcotics and human trafficking in some of these enclave economies are not inherent pathologies of postcoloniality, but rather the emerging transformative phases of Africa's dual insertion and extraversion in the new global division of labour and subjection (Bayart 1993, 2000). In the words of Bayart, 'Africa's contemporary political struggles and wars are not the consequences of a radical rupture ... but are symptomatic of a historical line of continuity, namely, a practice of extraversion. They are not an expression of the marginalization of Africa within the world economy but of older dynamics ... generated by the manner of its insertion into this world economy'.

The chapter is divided into three related sections. The introduction in the first section sketches a theoretical framework by drawing from Bourdieu's theory of habitus (Crossley 2001) that will help unravel the mechanisms of ideological, economic, political and cultural domination inscribed through Europe's colonial 'entanglement' (Mbembe 2001a) with the African native, and sustained for decades, under the aegis of the postcolonial potentate. The goal here is to situate, within a conceptual and historical context, the parameters for a clearer interrogation of the crisis of postcoloniality in Africa. The second section provides specific examples on the complex challenges of postcoloniality in Africa by examining diverse forms of contested sovereignties as played out in Nigeria and the Great Lakes region (particularly DR Congo), patterns of predatory resource extraction, the role of transnational actors, insurgency violence and the implications for state coherence. The third section concludes with some remarks on the imperatives of reconstituting institutional technologies of power in the African postcolonial state to serve the social needs and livelihoods of the citizenry, rather than being a

mechanism of corporeal *commandement*, ‘perpetual brutalization’ (Mbembe 1992; 2003) and warfare against the innocent multitude by the potentate.

Habitus and Subjection in the Postcolony: A Theoretical Framework

An analysis of the crises of postcoloniality in Africa must necessarily begin with conceptual clarification not only of the notion of the postcolony, but also its entanglement in the global hierarchy of power and practices of colonial subjection. The notion of postcoloniality and African subjectivity has been extensively debated by several scholars (Radhakrishnan 1993; Quayson 2001; Geschiere 2009). A clear definition of the concept of postcolony, for the purpose of our discussion in this chapter, has been provided by Mbembe who asserts that it signifies a:

...specifically given historical trajectory – that of societies recently emerging from the experience of colonization and the violence which the colonial relationship involves. But the postcolony is also made up of a series of corporate institutions and apolitical machinery that, once in place, constitute a distinctive regime of violence (against the citizenry). In this sense, the postcolony is a particularly revealing, and rather dramatic, stage on which are played out wider problems of subjection and its corollary, discipline (Mbembe 2001a:102).

Mbembe’s perspective on the postcolony describes the practices and strategies by which African rulers abuse state power and unleash violence against the citizenry. The case of Mobutu’s regime, as I show later in this chapter, was based on the criminalization of state power, including, the appropriation of state resources for personal grandiosity, patronage as well as violence to extract ‘obedience’ from the citizenry under the pretext of ‘nation-building’ (Mbembe 2001b, 2002, 2003; Young and Turner 1985). However, it is pertinent to indicate at the outset that grotesque corruption and the pillage of state resources were not just the hallmark of the regime, but also complicity with external patrons and Western powers such as Belgium, France and the USA in the expropriation of national resources for the benefit of local and global elites who had stakes in the perpetuation orchestration of the Mobutu carnival (Grovogui 2002).

However, in the broader context of the African postcolonial state, the key question that still remains unanswered by Mbembe’s theorization on the postcolony is: why does the subject population continue to accept and even celebrate the regime of the potentate? In other words, how can we understand the sources of ‘structured hegemony’ (Gramsci 1971) that entrenches mutual zombification in the postcolony and simultaneously deepen its insertion and extraversion in the hierarchy of global capital? I argue, in this context, that Bourdieu’s theory of *habitus* fills this analytical gap in explaining the strategies and practices of power in the postcolony, as exemplified by Mobutu’s regime in DR Congo (formerly Zaire). I argue that Bourdieu’s theory of *habitus* and social field provides us with relevant insight into the *raison d’être* for the corporeal enthronement of convivial domination

and subjection in the African postcolony, as well as an understanding of the structured incorporation of the post-colonial state in the world economy. According to Bourdieu, '...the social world can be represented as a space (with several dimensions) constructed on the basis of principles of differentiation or distribution constituted by the set of properties active within the social universe in question i.e. capable of conferring strength, power within that universe, on their holder. Agents and group of agents are thus defined by their relative positions within that space' (Bourdieu 1985:724). The notion of field in Bourdieu's theorization refers to:

...a network or a configuration of objective relations between positions. These positions are defined objectively in their existence and in the determinations that they impose on their occupants, agents or institutions, by their current and potential situations...in the (wider) structure of distribution of different currencies of power (or of capital), possession of which provides access to specific profits that are up for grabs in the field, at the same time, by their objective relations to other positions (domination, subordination, equivalents etc.). In highly differentiated societies, the social cosmos is constituted by the sum of these relatively autonomous social microcosms, spaces of objective relations which have a logic and a necessity that is specific and irreducible to those that govern other fields (Jackson 2008:166).

Thus, at the root of colonial entanglement with the African native is not only the imposition of political and economic domination, but even more fundamentally, ensuring that the dominated subjects recognize the immense 'disciplinary' violence that can be unleashed in the event of 'disobedience'. It is this structured system of hierarchy and fields of power, backed by the machinery of imperial state violence that defined the colonial state project, which, in the context of King Leopold's Congo, was metaphorically described as 'Bula Matari' or the rock crusher (Young 1994). As discussed later, the violence in the DR Congo which erupted in the mid-1990s demonstrates how the postcolonial state unleashes violence against the citizenry (Turner 2007; Jackson 2002; Vlassenroot 2002). Thus, even in its postcolonial moment under the African potentate, the state that was inherited from European colonial powers has not fundamentally been altered in terms of coercion, subjection and the deployment of the technologies of power. The concept of field as theorized by Bourdieu, therefore, helps not only to unpack the mechanisms by which domination, pillage and subjection are entrenched, but also why these processes persist, even after decades of political independence in Africa. The notion of *habitus* in Bourdieu's theoretical approach refers to 'durably installed generative principle of regulated improvisation' that constitute the engine of social, political and cultural action (Bourdieu 1977; Jackson 2008:164). Thus, for Bourdieu, objective structures do, indeed, exist, but, even more fundamentally, he insists that 'our comprehension of these structures and our orientation towards them (and other fields of power) is mediated through our habitus' (Jackson

2008:164). As a basis for practice, *habitus* not only animates the action of collective actors, but also individuals, and is central in the production and reproduction of systemic hierarchies in power relations. As Jackson (2008:164) cogently puts it:

Habitus is [simultaneously] constituted by conscious and unconscious learned experience on the one hand, and by cumulative impact of practices on the other ... The effect of the habitus is to provide the actor with an ingrained set of orientations that influence not only in the intellect but also in the physical relationship of the social actor to the external world. Acquired through a process of inculcation (and embedded practices), the disposition of the habitus become second nature and generates understandings and expectations which in turn set the parameters for strategies of social action.

Fatton (2011) further provides us with a clarification on the concept of *habitus* as a '...system of dispositions acquired through experience that shapes particular behaviour at particular historical moments' and that while *habitus* should not be confused with habit or political culture, '...it simultaneously structures and is structured by historical realities, ...grounded in the material matrix of a particular period.' As I show later in the chapter, the Belgian colonial encounter with the native population in the Congo Free State was shaped by the structures of domination entrenched for the extraction of rubber and other mineral resources. At independence, the elite who inherited power also received their education within the context of the Belgian colonial system and thus, their world view, knowledge, perceptions and orientations were grounded within the practices of the colonial hierarchy of inequality and domination. It is no wonder that the post-colonial state in DR Congo, in particular, and Africa in general has not fundamentally changed.

From the above, it is clear that the concept of *habitus* not only illuminates why entrenched structures and practices of presidential grandiosity, obscene pillage of public resources and predatory violence in the African postcolony acquire the currency of normalcy, but also how the postcolonial potentate accentuates the insertion of the continent and its subordination in the hierarchy and fields of global division of labour. I argue that the authoritarian potentate which controls state power in postcolonial Africa under the façade of globalist canons of neo-liberal democratization and economic reforms, serves not only its own elite-driven interests through reciprocal conviviality with the erstwhile colonial powers, but also unleashes arbitrary violence and repression that further disempowers the citizenry (Appadurai 1998). For example, during Obasanjo's regime (1999-2007) in Nigeria, the Minister of Finance, Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala (then a high ranking official in the World Bank hierarchy) renegotiated Nigeria's debt in which Nigeria made a cash payment of approximately \$18 billion to the London and Paris Club of Creditors. It is a classic instance of wealth extraction and transfer from a postcolony to the global North under a market-driven neo-liberal agenda, which

pauperizes the citizenry. Similarly, as Michela Wrong reveals, when the Mobutu regime was chased from power by Laurent Kabila and the insurgency movement in 1997, Mobutu's personal fortune of approximately \$14.5 billion was equal to the total foreign debt of the country (Wrong 2001). Even when the International Financial Institutions and Western powers knew that Mobutu was pillaging the financial resources of DR Congo into Swiss banks for personal gain, they continued to provide loans and aid to the kleptocratic regime (Grovgoui 2002). As the bulwark of anti-communism during the Cold War, President Mobutu was a direct beneficiary of U.S, French and Belgian financial, military and diplomatic support, even though his policies glaringly plunged the country into the abyss and continuing violence that has caused the death of about 6 million people. Both Obasanjo and Mobutu in their different spaces of social and political action in the postcolony reveal important dimensions of the behaviour and kleptocratic practices of the potentate in terms of grandiosity, arbitrariness in the use of power, convivial zombification of the state and subjection of the citizenry.

In the section that follows, I turn to a discussion of the structured practices of post-colonial elites and its implications for Africa in world politics. Specifically, I examine Belgian colonial rule in the Congo, particularly Mobutu's predatory rule, to show how the practices of *habitus*, as displayed in the Mobutu regime of grandiosity, exacerbated the entrenchment of violence in DR Congo. Thus, state collapse and violence in the Congo are symptomatic of the contradictions of sovereignty in world politics, where African post-colonial states may have juridical autonomy, but still lack the capacity to ensure internal cohesion, political stability and development, as a result of the structured hierarchy of inequities in the international system (Grovgoui 2002; Ayoob 2002, 2010). Comparative examples will also be drawn from Nigeria, especially on the role of transnational corporations, the state and elites in resource extraction to support my arguments on the impact of global economic forces in the incorporation of African countries within the world economy.

Contested Sovereignty, Resource Extraction and Transnational Violence in Africa

Recent literature and debates on the postcolonial state and violence in Africa have focused on the linkage between resources and the rising tide of identity politics as well as predatory insurgency that challenge sovereign authority of the centralized state (Nzongola-Ntalaja 2002; Fearon & Laitin 2003; Ross 2006). While scholars like Zartman (1995), Rotberg (2003) and Young and Turner (2002) conceptualize the phenomena of state failure in Africa from the perspective of ethno-nationalist and identity challenges to postcolonial autocracy that undermine the nation-building project, scholars such as Reno (2000), Willet (2005), and Vlassenroot (2002) suggest that the phenomenon of insurgency violence in African postcolonial formations

represent a specific modality of predatory extraction and profiteering not only at local, but also regional and international levels. The economics of war paradigm is anchored in the fundamental premise that militant groups that engage in the illicit extraction of mineral resources such as diamonds, gold, coltan, and lumber have networks and markets not only within their zones of operation, but are linked with the larger global commodity markets. According to Ballentine and Sherman (2003), the ascendance of neo-liberal globalization and the

...replacement of state-led development with market-driven free trade have created new and abundant opportunities for more systematic forms of combatant self-financing... (in which) ...natural resources ...become a major source of war revenues, contributing to a vicious cycle of poor governance and conflict. The ability of combatants to transform these captured assets into revenues and war material has been facilitated by a parallel increase of their access to poorly regulated global trade and investment markets, both licit and illicit, through often overlapping business, criminal, and diaspora networks.

In postcolonial Africa, the increasing phenomenon of insurgency against the state ranging from the Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda to the former Revolutionary United Front in Sierra Leone, Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger-Delta in Nigeria (MEND), the Alliance for the Liberation of Congo, and so forth are all symptomatic of contestations, not only over issues of identity, citizenship, and economic resources, but also territorial sovereignty and political power. As Susan Willett (2005) perceptively puts it, the emerging political economy of violence

...suggest that African conflicts are the function of the power hierarchies of the global system and more to do with resource control and economic survival than with struggles over ...ethnicity, religion or ideology (albeit these variables do, indeed, factor into some of the conflicts). War in Africa, in all its complex manifestations, functions as an important means of social reordering and transformation- an axis around which new social, economic and political relations are formed at the local and global level.

While communities are displaced and turned into refugees supported by humanitarian agencies, insurgency and predatory elites as well as their clandestine sponsors in the global North profit from African wars. For example, it is estimated that between 1992 and 1996, Charles Taylor made approximately \$450 million per year and through French companies supplied about a third of France's hardwood requirement. Similarly, during the violent Angolan civil war in which thousands of civilians were killed and others maimed by landmines, Jonas Savimbi's UNITA was largely financed by the diamond conglomerate De Beers. It is estimated that during the conflict, UNITA controlled about 60-70 per cent of Angola's diamonds, and made about \$3.7 billion from illicit diamond sales and investments (Duffield 2000:82).

The war in eastern DR Congo represents another classic illustration of Africa's political economy of networked wars driven by a complex of enclave economies, predatory elites, warlords and insurgents at local, regional and transnational levels. However, to clearly unravel the complexity of the Great Lakes crisis, and specifically the DR Congo war, we must interrogate the historical processes of state formation in the region, paying close attention to the impact of King Leopold's entrenchment of a coercive colonial state that for the last two hundred years has unleashed violence against the populace. Above all, King Leopold II under the aegis of Congo Free State, set the pace for the systematic plunder of the Congo through what Nzongola-Ntalaja (2002) describes as partition and pillage. Mobutu Sese Seko's over thirty years of authoritarian rule, supported by Western powers (especially Belgium, France and the US) and the subsequent emergence of Laurent Kabila's short-lived regime (supported by Western powers and regional states such as Uganda, Rwanda, Angola and Zimbabwe) all intensified the plunder of DR Congo's natural resources and the simultaneous insertion and extraversion of the state in the global economy. As Turner (2007) puts it: 'Pillage of Congo's resources is not just a manner of speaking. It is a reality.'

As the monarch of Belgium, King Leopold II once canvassed that 'Belgium needs a colony', and though he considered places such as Taiwan and Guatemala, he settled for a vast territory in Central Africa which he named 'Congo Free State'. As Turner put it, 'This new state was Leopold's property' that '...had to pay for its own colonization, and produce a profit for those backers Leopold had found, in Belgium and elsewhere. It did so, and even financed prestige projects in Brussels, including the Royal Museum of Central Africa, a veritable monument to colonialism' (Turner 2007). Extraction of 'red rubber' through the imposition of colonial taxation became the primary mechanism of exploitation, terror and labour discipline in the colony. As Turner cogently describes this process, the Free State established monopolies for extraction of ivory and wild rubber and organized a system of taxes in kind:

In forest areas, each village had to bring a certain number of kilos of ivory or raw rubber, or risk punishment. As each village used up stored ivory and killed off nearby elephants, hunters had to roam further. Similarly, as each village exhausted nearby supplies of latex-bearing plants, villagers were forced to range further and further into the forest. The (ever) expanding circumferences eventually overlapped, meaning that men of several villages were competing for the small amount of remaining rubber or ivory. As villages failed to meet their quotas, punishment escalated. Many Congolese lost their lives (Turner 2007:27).

Another important aspect of colonial state formation in the Great Lakes region is the movement of the population, particularly under Belgian rule, from Ruanda-Urundi into eastern Congo. Colonial stereotypes of 'suitable' populations and 'hard working' Africans entered the Belgian narrative of population and labour

recruitment. Hence the Luba of Kasai as well as the Banyarwanda of Hutu extraction were recruited in their thousands to work in the copper industry of Katanga. Also, in the pre-colonial epoch, independent Tutsi aristocrats that refused to submit to the Rwabugiri monarchy settled in the Mulenge plateau of South Kivu, thus setting the stage for the emergence of a Banyamulenge identity in eastern Congo. A third important aspect of the colonial state formation in the Congo is the introduction of the Native Authority system under Belgian Indirect Rule. According to Turner (2007), Belgian colonial policy of territorialization of ethnicity which involved using ‘...ethnicity as an organizational variable in creating administrative units...reinforced the sense of ethnic identity on the part of these communities’. Those communities who had their Native Authority entrenched their presence as Indigenes while those who weremigrants became Settlers. Thus, as Mamdani (2001) persuasively argues, the narrative of autochthony entrenched through the politicization of indigeneity by the colonial state ‘...set in motion a process with the potential of endlessly spawning identities animated by the distinctions indigenes and nonindigenes, and polarizing them. This indeed set the context in which political violence unfolded in Africa, colonial as well as postcolonial.’ In addition to the struggles over the control of mineral resources and territory, the question of citizenship became a critical variable in the eastern DR Congo war (Mamdani 2001; Turner 2007; Lemarchand 2009). In his incisive analysis of the impact of Belgian colonial policy on identity formation and citizenship crises in contemporary eastern DR Congo, Vlassenroot (2002) asserts that Belgian colonial policy not only transformed the pattern of territorial organization, but also introduced new ways of using economic space in its colonies. Like the British system of indirect rule, the Belgian version of colonial *commandement* (Mbembe 2001a) was anchored in restructuring, integrating and controlling rural society through the Native Authority system supervised by traditional authorities. Thus, rural communities that were considered indigenes were entitled to their own Native Authority, while those that werenon-indigenes, were not. Herein, therefore, is the root of the pervasive autochthony conflicts in the Great Lakes. The Banyamulenge whose antecedent is traced to Rwandaphone Tutsis were not given a Native Authority. Their citizenship in DR Congo remains a contentious aspect of the conflict in the Great Lakes Region (Dunn 2009; Mamdani 2001; Prunier 2009).

Following the overthrow of the Mobutu regime, DR Congo gradually descended into anarchy as other insurgency groups from the Kivu region challenged the Kabila regime in Kinshasa, and strived in the hinterland to carve out swathes of territory for the extraction of mineral resources, especially diamonds, gold and coltan, a rare metal found in the Kivus (columbite and tantalite mixed with cassiterite) – an essential ingredient in the manufacture of rocket engines, satellite engineering armaments and particularly mobile phone technology (Jackson 2002). But what led to the implosion of the Mobutist state? Like other African

authoritarian regimes such as Siad Barre of Somalia and Mengistu of Ethiopia, at the end of the Cold War in 1990 Mobutu lost his strategic relevance to his Western benefactors. Following the accumulation of arrears of \$70 million, the IMF and other donors suspended loans and economic assistance to the country. As spiralling inflation drove the economy to a standstill, the regime in Kinshasa could neither pay its public servants (including the military) nor meet its obligations for providing social services and above all, security, for its citizenry. In the words of Lemarchand (2009:218):

Plausible though it is to detect historical continuities between the horrors of the Leopoldian system and Mobutu's brutally exploitative dictatorship, or between the sheer oppressiveness of Belgian rule and the excesses of the successor state, in the last analysis, Mobutu himself ... must be seen as the determining agent(s) behind this vertiginous descent into abyss. What set Mobutu apart from other neopatrimonial rulers was his unparalleled capacity to institutionalize kleptocracy at every level of the social pyramid and his unrivalled talent for transforming personal rule into a cult, and political clientelism into cronyism. Stealing was not so much a perversion of the ethos of public service as it was its *raison d'être*. The failure of the Zairean state was thus inscribed in the logic of a system in which money was the only political tool for rewarding loyalty, a system that set its own limitations on the capacity of the state to provide public goods, institutionalize civil service norms, and effectively mediate ethno-regional conflicts.

As Mobutu fled the Congo into exile with debilitating cancer, Laurent Kabila and his AFDL insurgents marched into Kinshasa as the new President but the historic Leopoldian logic of predation and pillage persisted. Laurent Kabila's insurgency, it must be noted, was not just logistically sponsored by Uganda and Rwanda, it was also bankrolled by transnational corporations such as American Mineral Fields (AMF), Banro Resource Corporation and American Diamond Buyers. A UN Panel of Experts on 'Illegal Exploitation of Natural Resources and Other Forms of Wealth of the DR Congo' revealed that from November 1998 to April 1999 approximately 2,000-3,000 tons of cassiterite and about 1,000-1,500 tons of coltan were exploited and removed from eastern Congo. Once coltan and cassiterite are separated and packed in oil drums, the product is '...ready for export and final sale on the international market- buyers in London, Brussels and Amsterdam are the prominent destination...' (Jackson 2002). High-ranking officers in the Ugandan Peoples Defense Forces (UPDF) such as Generals Salim Saleh (President Museveni's brother) and James Kazini were all involved in the looting of Congo's mineral resources during the war for personal enrichment and further intensification of the conflict (Jackson 2002; Turner 2007:41). The table below, for example, reveals how Rwanda and the top echelon of its army that were involved in the invasion of DR Congo boosted the export of gold, cassiterite, coltan and diamonds between 1995-2000, even though the country does not have any significant quantities of these mineral resources.

Table 3.1: Rwanda's Mineral Production, 1995- 2000

Year	Gold production (kg)	Cassiterite production (tons)	Coltan production (tons)	Diamond exports (US \$)
1995	1	247	54	—
1996	1	330	97	—
1997	10	327	224	720, 425
1998	17	330	224	16, 606
1999	10	309	122	439, 347
2000 (to Oct.)	10	437	83	1,788, 036

Sources: Coltan, cassiterite and gold figures derived from Rwanda Official Statistics (No. 227/01/10/MIN); diamond figures from the Diamond High Council. All figures originally appeared in the UN Panel of Inquiry Report, 2001. The table is extracted from: Stephen Jackson 2002, 'Making a Killing: Criminality and Coping in the Kivu War Economy', *Review of Africa Political Economy*, 93/94, p.525.

The phenomena of kleptocracy, clientelism and elite predation of national wealth in postcolonial Africa is not restricted to Mobutu and Kabila's Congo. In countries such as Cote d'Ivoire, Somalia, Sudan and Ethiopia, to mention a few, militarism and one-party dictatorships have been entrenched from the 1960s into the early 1990s with devastating consequences for the citizenry. Kenya's presidential election debacle of 2007-08, for example, degenerated into ethnic cleansing in which approximately 1,500 people lost their lives and thousands were displaced as refugees in the Rift Valley. Under the postcolonial regime of impunity, power has remained unaccountable to the citizenry, in spite of the claims of democratization and elections. The entrenchment of impunity, elite-driven violence and predation in postcolonial Africa not only undermines national cohesion but also destroys human capital and the prospects of development. As the table below reveals, Sub-Saharan African countries that have been affected by years of violent conflict or dictatorship generally have a low level of life expectancy (mostly less than fifty years, with the exception of Eritrea, Sudan and Togo). Gross National Income per capita in 2002 is also below \$550, except for Cote d'Ivoire and Uganda, which stood at \$687 and \$1,383 respectively. These two cases could be explained by their high level of dependence on external development assistance to finance their annual budgets. The table also reveals that countries which have experienced insurgency violence and predatory pillaging such as Cote d'Ivoire, DR Congo,

Liberia, Mozambique and Sierra Leone all have a life expectancy below forty five years, and are part of the highly indebted poor countries (HIPC).

Table 3.2: Selected Statistics for Sub-Saharan African Countries Affected by Conflict

Country	GNI per capita \$ 2002	Life expectancy 2002-05	FDI \$m 2002	ODA \$m 2002	External debt as % of GDP	Debt service as %of exports
Algeria	523	40	1,312.1	421	90	10
Burundi	110	41	0.0	172	168	59
CAR	277	40	4.3	60	102	—
Chad	203	45	900.7	233	64	—
Cote d'Ivoire	677	42	—	1,000	82	—
DR Congo	100	42	31.9	807	153	—
Eritrea	190	53	21.0	230	82	5
Ethiopia	100	45	75.0	1,307	108	10
Guinea	447	49	30.0	250	106	14
Guinea Bissau	170	45	1.0	59	344	—
Liberia	285	41	-65.1	52	414	1
Mali	230	48	102.2	472	83	7
Mozambique	220	38	4,05.9	2,058	128	6
Niger	180	46	7.9	298	83	—
Rwanda	230	39	2.6	356	83	15
Sierra Leone	130	34	4.7	26	185	—
Somalia	177	48	-0.2	351	—	—
Sudan	333	56	681.0	51	1,211	—
Togo	293	50	74.7	12	—	—
Uganda	1,383	46	74.8	1,233	71	7

Source: Data selected from the Least Developed Countries Report UNCTAD 2004. Table is extracted from: Susan Willet, 2005, 'New Barbarians at the Gate: Losing the Liberal Peace in Africa'. *Review of African Political Economy*, 106, p. 577.

An analysis of postcolonial African elite kleptocracy, resource violence and networked conflicts that degrade the local community through commodity insertion into global trade must necessarily incorporate the intractable oil conflict in Nigeria's Niger Delta. As a former British colony administered through the system of Indirect Rule, postcolonial Nigeria continues to experience identity conflicts not only over oil resource re-distribution, but also sectarian, religious as well as Indigene versus Settler conflicts over land, territory, and control of political

power. Since the 1990s, the Nigerian state along with oil transnational corporations have been vigorously challenged by diverse ethnic militia groups fighting for 'resource control' and environmental rights. These insurgency groups include the Egbesu Boys of Africa, Movement for the Survival of Ogoni People, Ijaw Youth Council, the Niger Delta People's Volunteer Force, and the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (Obi 2001; Agbu 2004, 2008; Omeje 2004, 2008). The most violent militia group in the Niger Delta that has inflicted enormous damage to the export capacity of crude oil by the Nigerian state is the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger-Delta (MEND). As an amalgam of armed militia groups in the Niger Delta, MEND represents a '...metaphor of a decentralized broad alliance of local resistance...and a growing threat to the hegemony of the Nigerian federal state, the extractive interests of oil companies and the energy security of the world's powers' (Obi 2008). It is estimated that between 1999-2004, assaults on oil infrastructure by insurgency groups in the Niger-Delta amounted to \$6.8 billion in lost revenue to the Nigerian government. From 2005-2008, damages and lost oil revenues amounted to roughly \$4 billion (Watts 2008). According to Watts (2007) and Obi (2000, 2009), the interrelationship between the democratic process and violence was complicated as political incumbents, candidates and political parties armed youths and militias in the contest for access and control of power at local and state levels. Thus, the instrumentalization of violence and the criminalization of power find their convergence in the pillage and predation that persists in the Niger Delta (Watts 1999, 2004b). The alliance between the Nigerian state, its governing elites and their strategic sector allies entrenches the hegemony of capital and profit in the oil industry to the detriment of the Nigerian populace, particularly the oil-producing minorities of the Niger Delta. The claim by the Nigerian federal government, especially under the Obasanjo regime (1999-2007) that militia groups in the Niger-Delta are 'terrorists' plays into the Western narrative of 'war against terror' and undermines the possibilities of peaceful resolution of the conflict through dialogue.

Conclusion

Africa's incorporation into the global economy and the subsequent imposition of colonial rule and the plunder of Africa's human and material resources significantly altered social, economic, territorial and political relations on the continent. While Mbembe's perspective on the contradictions of postcoloniality where, as he argues, the postcolonial elite along with the citizenry are engaged in mutual zombification characterized by grotesque presidential grandiosity and its acceptance by the citizenry throws some light on the practice of domination and subjection, it does not clearly explain why such hegemony persists. As stated earlier, Bourdieu's theory of habitus denote the inscription of systematized practices, behaviours and habits in the exercise of power in the postcolony legitimated through transnational structures into the global system of exchange and domination help us to

comprehend and explain the contradictions of political power in postcolonial Africa. While in the case of DR Congo, we observed that the enthronement of the Leopoldian predatory rule was not fundamentally altered under Mobutuism or the Kabilas, the intervention of regional actors, foreign powers, corporations and regional elites in search of profits through pillage in eastern DR Congo has exacerbated the crises of postcoloniality in the Great Lakes. Although Mobutu and his acolytes, indeed, fit into Mbembe's description of presidential grandiosity and the banality of power, Mobutu's predation and pillage of Congo's resources would not have been possible without the active support and complicity of France, Belgium and the U.S. along with transnational corporations that continue to plunder the country. In their daily struggles for survival, most Congolese citizenry have been exposed to poverty, pillage, insurgency warfare, displacement, rape and extermination. They have, for decades, been turned into refugees in their own country and their socio-economic livelihood disrupted. In the case of Nigeria's Niger-Delta, it has been argued that the intensification of petro-violence and pillage by the federal government under both military and civilian regimes along with oil multinational corporations is indicative of a new modality of the instrumentalization of resource violence at local, national and global levels with implications for sovereignty, territoriality, citizenship and human rights. From the civil wars in Sierra Leone, Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia, and Sudan to DR Congo and Nigeria's Niger Delta it is increasingly evident that the insertion of African postcolonial states into the emerging system of globalized coloniality is intensifying violence and state disintegration while simultaneously profiting corporate interests, local elites and their clientele.

The resolution of this dilemma of violent globalized coloniality necessarily calls for a fundamental reconstitution of the logic of the postcolonial state where power is not only devolved to local communities through genuinely robust and vibrant democratic institutions and practices, but there is conscious empowerment of the citizenry through broad-based programs of civic engagement in local processes of institution building. Simply put, African peoples at local, regional and national levels as well as community-based groups whether they represent ethnic, religious, trade unions, students, gender or youth agendas must be empowered to design platforms of active participation and involvement in decision-making processes, within the framework of a proposed agenda of reconstituting the institutions of state power in the postcolony. This requires a conscious effort on the part of civil society groups and communities to build transparent (from the bottom up) institutions of democratic accountability that are representative of the interests and aspirations of the citizenry in African states. Curbing presidential grandiosity, corruption, resource pillage and predation in Africa must, therefore, involve all segments of the society. It is through this process of deliberate opening up of the political space for active participation and engagement by society and its groups that legitimate and vibrant democratic

institutions can be built from the bottom up and ensure accountability to the citizenry. As the recent experiences of elections in Nigeria, Kenya, DR Congo, Zimbabwe, and Cote d'Ivoire suggest, electoralism as practiced in the current democratization agenda is not enough to ensure accountability and curb impunity. Failure to take the path of building institutions of accountability that will check impunity will only expose Africa and its peoples to the rapacious pillage of the potentate elite and the deepening of subjection to a complex globalized system of coloniality.

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