

# **Fundi Wa Afrika: Toward a New Paradigm of the African State<sup>1</sup>**

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## **Abstract**

In this article, we argue that the nature of the state in Africa, its elites, and relations with Western countries are the root causes of the African predicament.<sup>2</sup> This predicament puts Africa at the lowest level of economic, political and social development in the world. One striking feature of the African predicament is that the ruling elite constitutes less than 10 per cent of the population. This group enjoys full citizenship rights, such as freedom from hunger, disease, fear and conflict. The rest of the population lives at the mercy of the elite. This majority lives in the countryside while the elite is concentrated in the cities. Most of the aid that is given to African countries by the West goes to help the elite and the modern sector. To understand the African predicament, one must analyze the African pre-colonial, colonial and neo-colonial states. Successive historical processes such as slavery, colonialism and neocolonialism contributed in creating the present African state which reflects neither the Western state, nor African values.

We argue that this Leviathan is a monster that acts as an agent of exploitation of the African people by both African rulers and the West. The present crisis facing the African state, which manifests itself through AIDS, conflict, foreign debt, eugenic population policies, and underdevelopment, makes it impossible for the African state to attain autonomous development. The present state is not conducive to development because its nature -- an exogenous structure without Africans' needs at heart -- and its relationships with the West do not allow autonomous, democratic development. In reality the African state has been constructed in such a way that dependency beneficial to the West is inevitable. The way out of this predicament is to replace the present African state with the still functional African indigenous institutions to create a state that can be both autonomous and democratic. Such a development cannot occur short of a reawakening of the African people, hence the introduction of *Fundi Wa Afrika*.<sup>3</sup> This process must be carried out by Africans themselves because it determines their destiny. Africans must create the new state because they know best what their needs are. They must do it alone because this problem is one of internal African housekeeping, one that can only be tackled by Africans without any outside assistance or intervention.

## **Introduction**

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<sup>2</sup>West here does not imply that the Western society is homogeneous. It is made up of people of different classes, gender, religion, races and sexual orientations. Similarly, Africa is not viewed as homogeneous.

<sup>3</sup>Meaning 'builder', 'tailor' in the Kiswahili language of East and parts of Central Africa.

We begin with the intriguing question of Africa's paradox and predicament<sup>i</sup> and the Africans, earlier raised by Walter Rodney:

In order to understand present economic conditions in Africa, one needs to know why it is that Africa has realized so little of its natural potential, and also one needs to know why so much of its present wealth goes to non-Africans who reside for the most part outside of the continent.<sup>ii</sup>

Indeed, why is it that a continent so richly endowed with natural resources and minerals is consistently rated as the poorest in the world? Why is it that, contrary to what pertains in the rest of the world, Africans are still struggling for their basic human, political, economic and social rights? Why is it that one-and-a-half century after the abolition of slavery the African is, everywhere, still in bondage, a perpetual servant and beggar, hewer of wood and drawer of water for the rest of the world? We argue that the nature and structure of the indigenous African state have been determined by various exogenous processes, namely the trans-Atlantic slave trade, mercantilism, imperialism, colonialism and neocolonialism.<sup>iii</sup> These exogenous processes have cumulatively led to the creation of an African leviathan, a dysfunctional monster without any historical, cultural and ethnic substance and reality whose main function is to exert political control and domination, and to maintain economic exploitation over the African people.

As a result, the contemporary African state is inherently autocratic and unable to lead to autonomous, self-centered and self-sustainable development. We conclude that the total overhaul of that state in its present form is a necessary (but insufficient) condition for the building of a new African state. This ideal African state (*Fundi Wa Afrika*) builds on the (still functional) remnants of the African indigenous institutions and draws ideological inspiration from the political thought of African thinkers such as Claude Ake, Steve Biko, Amilcar Cabral, Cheikh Anta Diop, Frantz Fanon, Kwame Nkrumah, and Thomas Sankara. The building of such a democratic and developmental African state as an instrument of people's power is a historical necessity if peace and securities -- as prerequisites of a genuine and thorough African re-wakening and revival -- are to prevail henceforth on the continent. By introducing the concept of *Fundi Wa Afrika*, we are introducing nothing less than a new paradigm in the study of African politics.<sup>iv</sup> The analysis of the African predicament can only be understood in relation to the "New Scramble for Africa," a process leading to the depletion of Africa's human resources through the simultaneous onslaught of population control policies, AIDS, wars and a captive and servile leadership. *Fundi Wa Afrika* can help counter this debilitating process and offers a way out of the African predicament.

It is argued that throughout history, Western interests have been consistent as far as Africa is concerned. They come down to access to markets, cheap labor and raw materials. These interests are the first priority of Western countries. The African state has been shaped to meet these goals. As a result, African needs such as self-reliance, democracy and continental unity cannot be met by the present state. If Africans' needs are to be met, Africans will have to restructure the state to reflect these needs. They must do this alone. Democracy is understood here in the "traditional African concept of a person both as an individual and as a social being."<sup>v</sup> In this study, we adopt Charles Tilly's concise definition of the state:

Let us define states as coercion-wielding organizations that are distinct from households and kinship groups and exercise clear priority in some respects over all other organizations

within substantial territories.<sup>vi</sup>

### **Theories of the African state: A Critical overview**

One of the theories that was widely used to study African politics and society was modernization theory which developed among North American scholars in the early fifties. The basic premise behind this approach was that “African societies are in the process of becoming ‘modern’ rational entities in which efficiency and scientific logic replace traditional values and belief systems.”<sup>vii</sup> In the political arena, modernization theory focused on changing African institutions. The basic view of this approach was that African states would follow a pattern of development similar to that of the West. Its major flaw was to treat African societies as though they had no history. It also assumed that their indigenous institutions were an obstacle to modernization. If followed, the modernization path would dis-empower Africans since it assumed that their culture and values were a cause of underdevelopment. Since 1960 economic and political development in Africa has followed the modernization trajectory, in spite of the theory’s shortcomings. Dualist approaches (derived from modernization theory) have also been popular in studying African politics. African societies are arbitrarily divided between modern/traditional, urban/rural, industrial/agrarian and capitalist/pre-capitalist. Goran Hyden’s “economy of affection” as well as Mahmood Mamdani’s *Citizen And Subject* can be seen in this light. The crisis facing the African state, Mamdani argues, can be understood by examining the divide between rural and urban, and between citizen and subject in historical perspective.<sup>viii</sup>

To counter the modernization approach, dependency theory developed among scholars from the developing world focusing on Latin America who were analyzing the root causes of underdevelopment. According to this approach, Africa’s predicament can be explained by external factors, especially by the world capitalist economy. Africa was integrated into the world economy as a source of raw materials and cheap labor, and as a market outlet. As a result of a historical process of exploitation (through mercantilism, imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism), the development of the capitalist metropolis (the center) was seen as organically linked to the underdevelopment of the Third World (the periphery). Africa, it was argued, cannot develop unless it de-links from the world capitalist economy. One cannot understand the African political arena without understanding the socio-economic constraints that African states face within this unequal system.<sup>ix</sup>

African scholars developed the statist approach. It focused on the state and its actions in understanding the African predicament. For such scholars who view the state as the primary socio-economic force, on the continent one must study African leadership styles, state institutions and its relationship to its subjects. In particular, they argue that African leaders “have created structures of domination that have enabled them to misuse their offices to reap personal gains at the expense of the pressing needs of the bulk of the population.”<sup>x</sup>

The political interaction framework assumes that “the state-society relationship is central to understanding the political dynamic of Africa today” and perceives politics as “a set of transactions, the manifestation of the exercise of choice by multiple actors within existing parameters.”<sup>xi</sup> In this approach, power, competition and authority are key to understanding African

politics. African politics and political interaction are constrained by the (geographical, climatic and ecological) environment. They are also constrained by under-population and the historical inheritance (artificial political boundaries, external dependence and institutional dualism). This multi-disciplinary perspective purports to explore the diversity of contemporary Africa in terms of constraints, possibilities, and alternatives.<sup>xii</sup>

In the introduction to an edited volume on collapsed states in Africa, I. William Zartman traces state collapse to different periods. The first round was against colonialism, while the second was a younger generation who fought to overthrow the independence movement generation. This second round has continued into the 1990s. None of all the sixteen case studies in this volume address the need for Africans to reconstitute the state based on pre-colonial institutions and the positive and still functioning aspects of the contemporary African state.<sup>xiii</sup> Our study differs from Zartman and similar analyses of the state because it does not dwell on its collapse but on its nature and how it influences its relationship with its subjects. It does not view the post-colonial state as legitimate because of the way it was created in such a way as to exclude the majority. Leonardo A. Villalon takes Zartman *et. al.*'s argument further. Villalon posits that the African state is at a critical juncture which refers to three components: First, elites find themselves forced to make reforms as a result of pressures for change on the state. Second, the choices made during the critical juncture can be understood as constrained by past choices. Finally, "the concept of a critical juncture suggests that choices made and actions taken in this period will shape the nature of the state and of state-society relations for some relatively significant time to come."<sup>xiv</sup> In *The Politics of Africa's Economic Recovery*, Richard Sandbrook traces Africa's economic problems to poor leadership and corruption. He superficially touches on the state when he argues that "a more self-reliant strategy, under the aegis of a reconstituted and democratized developmental state, may therefore constitute the brightest prospect for African prosperity."<sup>xv</sup> According to Sandbrook, Africa's recovery lies in reducing the size of the state and promoting liberal democracy.

S.N. Sangmpam traces the problem of the state in the developing world to over-politicization (the use of force by powerful groups to maintain their hegemonic status). It also refers to the use of political offices for economic purposes where there are no boundaries between the political and economic arenas. In such situations, election results are meaningless because they are not respected by the losers who often use force to achieve their goals. According to Sangmpam, "overpoliticization clearly distinguishes the third world state from the capitalist democratic state of the West."<sup>xvi</sup> He does not examine how the nature of the state affects its actions, domestic, and international development.

William Reno developed the concept of 'shadow state' by which he refers to "a very real, but not formally recognized, patronage system that was rigidly organized and centered on rulers' control over resources".<sup>xvii</sup> In the same vein, the French *École de Bordeaux* led by Jean-François Bayart rejects approaches that focus on the state. They argue that African political analysis must rather concentrate on the subtle and covert (yet efficient) methods of resistance and protest developed by the oppressed masses, thus depicting African societies as active subjects (rather than passive objects) of history.<sup>xviii</sup> The most sophisticated theoretical elaboration of this approach is unquestionably that of Bayart, whose historical sociology of the African state ... which begins with an analysis of pre-colonial and colonial social political formation...leads to a conception of the "tuber-state" (*État-rhizome*), namely a state deeply rooted in the social terrain on which it is built and from which many

offshoots grow.<sup>xix</sup> In *The Criminalization of the State in Africa*, Bayart *et. al.* stress the potentially positive and systemically functional role played by such otherwise disruptive and dysfunctional factors as war, crime, corruption, witchcraft and economic dependence in contemporary African politics. Indeed, Bayart goes as far as to argue that war has, in fact, become *the* dominant mode of state formation in contemporary Africa: “Perhaps what is really at stake in these conflicts is less the disintegration of the state, but the opposite, its formation.”<sup>xx</sup>

In *Africa Works*, Patrick Chabal and Jean-Pascal Daloz provide a superficial analysis of contemporary African politics. Although they claim that their approach is both comparative and historical, their discussion leaves much to be desired. For them, the present crisis in Africa results from modernity. Their paradigm which they call “political instrumentalization of disorder” is a new and improved version of modernization theory.<sup>xxi</sup> “Disorder,” according to the authors, is an essential characteristic of African states viewed as a “system of patrimonialism and an acute degree of apparent disorder, as evidenced by a high level of governmental and administrative inefficiency...”<sup>xxii</sup> African culture, and personality are core determinants of African politics and state action. The authors compare Africa to the West even as they claim not to do so. They argue that the state in Africa has not been adequately institutionalized in the society. Chabal and Daloz fail to address the crisis facing the African state in three ways. First, by ignoring Africa’s pre-colonial state institutions, they present Africa as a continent where “disorder” is the norm rather than the exception. Second, by assuming that Africa is developing, they fail to address the complex domestic and international factors that shape the African state. Finally, in condescending and patronizing manner they present “disorder” as the ordinary trajectory that African states must follow. In the process, they totally ignore the impact of international actors on the nature of the state and its actions.

Claude Ake differs by pointing out that the development that has been taking place in Africa has been detrimental to the people. It has followed the modernization approach by trying to build Africa in the image of the West, thereby ignoring its culture, tradition and history.<sup>xxiii</sup> In their edited volume, Adebayo Olukoshi and Liisa Laasko discuss the re-constitution of the Nation-State. For them it must begin with a recognition of the diverse cultures involved. The crisis facing African states cannot be solved “simply or solely by resort to Western forms of liberal democracy.”<sup>xxiv</sup> A reconstituted state, they argue, will function from below rather than from an authoritarian top-down method. Citizenship and citizenship rights must be revised in a scenario where borders disintegrate as people choose where to live based on ethnicity. The state’s reconstitution cannot occur without African governments recapturing economic control from Western agencies.<sup>xxv</sup>

In *Africa and the International System*, Christopher Clapham examines the impact of personal rule on African states. According to him, African rulers have devised ways of survival. He argues that “since the security of African rulers was often particularly at risk, they felt the need to make use of their control over states in distinctive ways, the most characteristic of which was the construction of the ‘monopoly state’.”<sup>xxvi</sup> Monopoly states were characterized by weak economies and bureaucracies. The state was identified with the leader and political opposition was not common.

In *The African Colonial State in Comparative Perspective*, Crawford Young provides a detailed analysis of the complex factors that shaped the African state. He concludes that the crisis facing the African state “lies in this lethal combination of the colonial state heritage, the failed

vision of the integral state, and the prebendal realities of political management.” Young asks: “can a new state be invented that sheds the debilitating traditions of the past?”<sup>xxvii</sup> The present study attempts to answer the above question by focusing on features in pre-colonial Africa that could be incorporated in a reconstituted (rather than “invented”) African state.

All the above approaches assume that the African state is a viable institution that meets Africa’s needs. They assume that scholars must work within the framework of the African state as it currently exists. All of the approaches (except Claude Ake, Crawford Young, dependency theory and Olukoshi & Laasko), assume that Africa must develop by following the path previously followed by the West. These approaches ignore Africa’s culture, environment, history and tradition and how these are reflected in the present African state. Following the Statists’ approach, *Fundi Wa Africa*’s main focus of analysis is the state.<sup>xxviii</sup> It examines the nature of the African state, how it was shaped, whose values shaped it and how this affected the state’s relationship with its subjects. Unless this core (the state) is examined fully, African studies will continue to deal with form rather than substance.

Thus, if the Japanese state reflects Japanese values, the American state American values, or the French state French values, why should the African state be any different? Are African values authoritarianism, conflict, corruption, dependency, disorder, hunger, and war? In order to meet the specific priorities and needs of the Africans, the state must be reconfigured by retaining its positive (and adequately functioning) elements and by incorporating the still functional remnants of indigenous African institutions.<sup>xxix</sup> In essence, the nature of the African state determines the framework of its economic, political and social interaction with the (sub regional, regional and international) environment. Such an approach implies that the state becomes the main unit of analysis and the central focus of our study. Our study presents a brief analysis of the indigenous, colonial and post-colonial state in Africa, beginning with the indigenous.

### **Indigenous African political Systems and institutions**<sup>xxx</sup>

In indigenous African states, power and authority varied from highly centralized (kingdoms and empires) to highly decentralized structures of governance. According to Ayittey, decentralized societies had village assembly and council of elders. But in centralized states the chief was the head, though subordinate to a king. Chiefs had inner and privy councils which advised them on political matters pertaining to good governance. A council of elders advised members of the inner or privy council. The village assembly was made up of commoners<sup>xxxi</sup>. Political leadership was based on popular consultation. A vibrant civil society existed which acted as a check on leaders behavior. The leaders were their subjects’ servants and could only rule for as long as the people allowed it. Chief’s opinion’s were not the only ones because “if the majority of the headmen opposed that position, however, the chief had to abide by their decision...”<sup>xxxii</sup>

The indigenous state was autonomous in that it had an economic base, was an international actor, and was free to run its own affairs. The state’s economic base depended on the control of long-distance trade routes.<sup>xxxiii</sup> The nation’s wealth was protected and corruption was unacceptable. People rose against kings who mistreated them such as Khalifa who was “weak - minded and used to shoot arrows at his people and kill them for sport.”<sup>xxxiv</sup> Leaders were viewed as political, as well as moral ones who could save their subjects when faced by catastrophes. States such as the Oyo empire relied on tribute from neighboring states. But when that tribute ceased, it led to state collapse in the 1830s.<sup>xxxv</sup> A state’s wealth was also acquired through the tributes that the

chief's subjects paid. African chiefs' right to levy tithes and taxes was based on the principle that they were the trustees of the land on behalf of the community.

The state's nature and needs were shaped by its subjects. Power was decentralized which made it possible for leaders to rule and for the subjects to participate fully. Each person had some degree of participation in political life "for political organization was an aspect of the social life in which everyone participated."<sup>xxxvi</sup> Power was not the sole goal of the leaders. The indigenous state was democratic because every member of the society could have a say in how it was run. Some states were not democratic. Democratic states were based on a bottom-up approach as opposed to a top-down, authoritarian one. Most important of all was the fact that the state was institutionalized in the society. If development is defined as a society's capacity to dealing with its environment in order to enhance its standard of living then, without a doubt the precolonial state was developed.<sup>xxxvii</sup>

Indigenous states had their weaknesses. They relied on lineage for choosing leaders. This eliminated some members of the society who did not belong to particular lineages from ruling. Not all states were democratic. Indigenous forms of slavery were practiced in most state societies such as Ghana, Mali and Songhai. This institution was later subverted and superseded by the trans-Atlantic slave trade. Furthermore, some indigenous states lacked detailed knowledge both of their surroundings and foreign relations. Such information could have saved them from conquest through anticipation and adequate preparation.

The trans-Atlantic slave trade permanently changed relations between the leaders and their subjects. During this period many farms were left unattended as populations fled from slave raiders in search of security. Mass population displacement occurred as groups fled from one region to another. This process changed the demographic make-up of certain states. "The Bapende people who live today on the river Kasai in the Congo (Kinshasha) were once on the coast of Angola, but had to flee from the Portuguese slave-traders."<sup>xxxviii</sup> Religious institutions were also affected, since they were used to force people into slavery. Leonard Barnes notes that "slavery had continuously disrupted the traditional forms of African social order. By the 1860s most indigenous institutions had substantially rotted in the face of it"<sup>xxxix</sup> The confusion was marked by increased conflict between states, and within states. Conflict also arose between classes, as the upper classes (aristocracy) were never enslaved. Africans realized that they could make a profit selling other Africans "and this was enough to encourage them to go out and wage war."<sup>xl</sup> Moral decay also contributed to the fall of families and the rise of leaders whose sole base was the chaotic and predatory state produced during slavery. After the fall of the Oyo empire many royal families were destroyed; as a result, anarchy ensued and self-appointed leaders emerged.<sup>xli</sup> The new rulers' sole interest was their own aggrandizement and survival, unlike previous leaders who had acted as their societies' trustees. After slavery, the state increasingly relied on coercion (rather than consensus) to govern.

The state was no longer viewed as morally superior on the basis of cultural and religious values. The divide between the rulers and their subjects widened as the former progressively lost legitimacy. The state lost its autonomy because long-distance export trade replaced inter-African trade. Foreign trade did not bring any valuable items into Africa except weapons of physical and moral destruction such as rum and arms.<sup>xlii</sup> Thomas goes as far as to assert peremptorily (and amazingly) that "the introduction of those two wonderful American crops, maize and manioc [cassava] also did something to compensate Africa for whatever loss it suffered in population by

being implicated in the Atlantic slave trade.”<sup>xliii</sup> The slave trade also introduced various European powers that competed for slaves and support from the African rulers: English, Danes, Dutch and the French had various trading outposts from the gold and ivory coasts to the slave coast.<sup>xliv</sup> Arab states also got involved in the African slave-trade.

African leaders were active in the Atlantic slave-trade. They signed treaties with slave traders and allowed slave forts to be built on their own land. African leaders also participated actively by selling prisoners of war as slaves. They abused political and religious powers by sending their own people into slavery. As a result the vibrant civil society that existed before slavery was destroyed. Subjects were afraid of their leaders. The African majority lost trust and confidence in their ability to counter their leaders’ action. Chiefs and kings would also raid their own countries at night for slaves.<sup>xlv</sup> Ignorance and witchcraft became the order of the day as African states were shut off from developments in other countries. There was no innovative thinking, invention, creation, or cultural development that could have improved society. *Fragmentation* of families, groups, institutions, and states tore apart the very fabric of African society. African lives were governed by mistrust and fear. Africans turned against each other in an effort to understand and explain what was happening to them. Chinweizu asserts that “during the first four centuries of the Euro-African connection, Africa’s feudal societies stagnated or decayed whereas the feudal societies of Europe transformed themselves into industrial powers.”<sup>xlvi</sup> African institutions stagnated. People lost faith in them since they were used to subjugate them. The only institutions that thrived were those involved in supplying slaves. The structure of the society was radically changed because laws that had protected people were corrupted to enslave them. Social decay became the order of the day.<sup>xlvii</sup>

Africans participated in their own destruction in three ways: First, slavery would not have been possible without a close cooperation between Europe and the African ruling elite. Walter Rodney makes this point when he argues that “for nearly the whole period of the Atlantic slave-trade in West Africa (and in East Africa), there were many Africans who were also prepared to sell their fellow men in exchange for European manufactures such as cloth, pots and pans, beads and fire-arms”.<sup>xlviii</sup> European colonies profited from Africa’s labor “this large labor force would not have been available to the Europeans in the Americas without the cooperation of African kings, merchants, and noblemen.”<sup>xlix</sup> Except in Angola where the Portuguese went inland, everywhere else African middlemen helped the Europeans. Second, Africans such as King Alfonso believed that by adopting Christianity the Portuguese would treat them as equals. They also thought that Europeans would be cooperative once Africans abandoned their culture, history and tradition. Third, “one of the most important things is to recognize the very painful and unpleasant fact that there were Africans who aided and partnered the Europeans in enslaving other Africans.”<sup>l</sup> The African state was greatly weakened, making it an easy prey for European conquest in the 19th century. The structure of economic exchange between African states and European ones did not end with the abolition of slavery. Slaves were replaced by raw materials which brought little profit to African states. The choice of the African elite (as it was during slavery) is the same: to serve as agents of exploitation or be overthrown by others who are more willing to do so. The pattern continues in contemporary Africa as it did during slavery when “the Europeans began to help one faction to depose a ruler and install another, and to bestow honors, titles and recognition upon those whose rule they found it in their interest to support.”<sup>li</sup> Since slavery the African state has been weakened as its “resources and effort are employed, with no lasting reward to Africa, for the permanent profit and



power of the West.”<sup>lii</sup>

As a result of slavery, new social structures developed which affected the state. First, Islam and Christianity which were spread by Arab and Western slave traders or missionaries became political forces. A predatory economy that relied on piracy and tributes developed leading to the economic growth of the southern Mediterranean.<sup>liii</sup> The beginning of the decline of the countryside started during this period. Before slavery, urban and rural economies had complemented each other. Slavery resulted in the emergence of new states: Kanem-Bornu, Kayor in Senegambia, Dahomey, Angola, Changaine south of the Zambezi.<sup>liv</sup> These states did not provide a consistent economic base since they relied on slavery. The nature of the state that emerged after slavery was totally different from the pre-colonial state. First, the state had lost its autonomy. Second, inter-African trade was replaced by slave trade. Third, the leaders lost their legitimacy as they were divorced from their subjects. Fourth, civil society ceased to act as a check on rulers’ behavior because coercion replaced consensus as a method of governance. Fifth, power (achieving it, and maintaining it by any means) became the sole goal of the rulers rather than meeting their subjects’ needs. Finally, since slavery was taking place in coastal areas and urban centers, the rural sector stagnated falling into backwardness and moral decay. It was this decay that paved the way for Africa’s conquest by Europe by making it possible for Africans to truly believe that Western civilization was in every respect superior to theirs

### **The Colonial State in Africa**

The Berlin Conference (November 1884-February 1885) officially recognized various European colonial domains in Africa. The state’s economic base which changed during slavery to an export-oriented one, was maintained under colonialism. Different export crops – such as cotton, coffee, cocoa, tea, groundnuts, palm oil and rubber – were introduced in the colonies to service the colonial powers’ economies. The colonial state was all powerful, and its power was not only absolute, but also arbitrary.<sup>lv</sup> African states’ conquest by colonial powers resulted in lopsided development, since African labor was concentrated in plantations that serviced European needs. Colonial policy’s priority in Africa was not economic production based on Africans’ needs. As a result indigenous food production was neglected as African labor was mobilized for plantation work. Africans were forced into this situation by the need to pay heavy hut and poll taxes. In essence, colonialism was an extractive process at the highest profit.<sup>lvi</sup> The role of the state was also destructive since people were no longer mobilized for their own production but for the needs of the colonial powers.<sup>lvii</sup> The colonial state relied on violence and coercion. Power meant everything for the actors in the colonial state. As a result, democracy was alien to such a state.<sup>lviii</sup> In the Congo, the colonial state under the Belgians murdered Congolese, and plundered their indigenous economy so as to force people to work for it. Piles of chopped hands became a familiar sight. Violence was the core of the colonial state. It was used to force people into reserves leaving the best land for Europeans. “Whenever we remember Hitler’s 6 million Jews and the gas chambers of Dachau, we should in fairness also remember the most Christian King Léopold II’s 10 million Congolese of a half-century earlier, and his pyramids of chopped-off hands and feet.”<sup>lix</sup>

The role of the African state in the society also changed during colonialism. It no longer served its subjects’ interests. Instead it became a dominating force. The colonial state lacked three

essential attributes which are to be found in modern states: namely sovereignty, nation, and external actor.<sup>lx</sup> These three attributes became the rallying cry for the liberation movements. In so doing, liberation movements ignored the pre-colonial African institutions as a basis for reconstructing the African state. Their development model was either the Western one or the Soviet Union. They failed to address the decline in the rural sector. African priorities such as freedom from hunger and disease, self reliance, and democracy were in conflict with the aims of the colonial powers. The latter wanted African labor, resources and its markets. Throughout “the nine tenths of the sixty-year period the aims of colonial governments were not those which Africans would have chosen for themselves, and their policies were not such as would have been recommended by planners of African development.”<sup>lxi</sup> As result, a lack of initiative developed among Africans. They no longer dared to think, to create and to innovate after getting used to being other peoples’ servants. Their role in the colonial state was not to initiate but to obey. Yet, it is in such creative thinking that Africans must engage in order to re-create a state that meets their needs. This colonial legacy was bequeathed to the post-colonial state.

The colonial state was generally based on centralized authority. Strong governments were encouraged so as to attract and protect foreign investment. The state that developed during colonialism reflected neither Western values, nor African ones. Africans did not develop an affinity for the new institutions, since they were used to oppress them. But their own institutions were disapproved of by colonial powers. There was no enduring institutional support from which the African state could draw on. One of the most striking effect of the colonial state especially where direct rule was imposed was the destruction of pre-colonial civil society.<sup>lxii</sup> Civil society was never recreated during colonialism. Instead, the state was further alienated from the people. Colonial education and Christianity alienated most Africans from their environment. Islamic and Christian institutions were superimposed on indigenous African institutions. The latter were used by the colonizer to its own advantage, as traditional chiefs were maintained while made accountable to colonial authorities. Thus, Shaka Zulu’s well organized and disciplined regiments were subsequently used to recruit labor for South Africa’s white farms and mines.

In 1960 Francophone Africa’s independence was more the result of French goodwill and magnanimity than of the pressure of African nationalist movements. Through the linkage established between the accession to international sovereignty, the signing of model cooperation agreements, and the wholesale adoption of the French constitutional model of the Fifth Republic, France managed to institutionalize its political, economic, monetary and cultural preeminence over its former African colonies.<sup>lxiii</sup> As Chinweizu notes, “the new African administrators had signed agreements to uphold these conventions before they were allowed to enter into their new offices. They had promised to uphold ‘international law and morality’ (whatever that is); promised to join the United Nations and to abide by its rules and recommendations; promised not to expropriate foreign companies even if they robbed Africa poor.”<sup>lxiv</sup> African states could not be allowed to industrialize by their former colonizers because “this would involve not only overtaking but displacing the established exporters of manufactured goods (...)”.<sup>lxv</sup> They continued to be exporters of raw materials. Thus, “Independence” basically comes down to a mere Africanization of colonial institutions, leaving intact the basic structure of the colonial state. This explains the fundamental nature of the post-colonial state, to which we now turn.

## The Post-Colonial State in Africa

How did African rulers who inherited the colonial state shape it to meet the needs of their subjects? First, except in Algeria, Mali, Congo/Zaire, Tanzania, and Guinea the elite that inherited the state was chosen by the colonial powers so that the latter's interests would be preserved. In Nigeria, the British chose rulers from the north instead of the south, who were more nationalistic.<sup>lxvi</sup> In Kenya, Kenyatta was chosen over Dedan Kimathi; in Congo, Mobutu was chosen over Lumumba. In Cameroon, Ahmadou Ahidjo was chosen over André-Marie Mbida whom the French viewed as too nationalistic.<sup>lxvii</sup> Hamani Diori was chosen over Djibo Bakary in Niger. For the then French President Charles de Gaulle, a colony had seceded if it liberated itself without French support (as Guinea did in September 1958), while if the French had blessed it, it was sovereign.<sup>lxviii</sup>

In retrospect, African independence appears as a mere Africanization of the colonial system. It also led to an integration of the African elite into the political system.<sup>lxix</sup> The elite maintained centralized states "in which powers are vested in the executive with no tradition of party government or opposition."<sup>lxx</sup> Such a state was not democratic because it forced its subjects to submit to its power by obeying its rules. Instead of uniting diverse groups in state-building, the post-colonial state relied on rhetoric to protect itself from the majority of the people.<sup>lxxi</sup> Political power became personalized, blurring the divide between a ruler and the state. The West's priority was stability rather than democracy. Stability of a state's leadership ensured a profit for any foreign investment involved. Leaders justified one party rule as a priority for maintaining stability. Popular opposition was brutally crushed since it would 'destabilize' a country's economy. Most investors did not question whether a country was democratic but whether it was stable.<sup>lxxii</sup> Various foreign agencies controlled the economy while African leaders opted for political power. But the rulers became more corrupt as they kept part of the proceeds for themselves in a game that was controlled by the West. The state's legitimacy was under attack as it faced economic crisis. Various authors have dealt with the economic crisis facing African states in the 1980s, a subject which need not detain us here.<sup>lxxiii</sup> The colonial state was a violent and brutal state, while the post-colonial state is also brutal, but in a manipulative way.

Various reasons (notably an excessive population) were given as African states' failure to develop. Population control programs were introduced with the support of African rulers. The proportion of fertile land that is set aside for the production of flowers, tea, pineapples, cocoa, coffee, or peanuts as opposed to food production was never questioned. Nor was the presence of diverse game parks that force communities to compete for rare land. Africa's core problem was presented as its rapid population growth. A recent *Economist* article notes that "groups that carry on population or birth control projects are particularly controversial. Some are paid to carry out sterilization programs in the poor parts of the world because donors in the rich world consider there are too many people there."<sup>lxxiv</sup> The African personality was also seen as the reason for the states' failure to develop. Africans were characterized as irrational, lazy, and lacking initiative which was crucial in development.<sup>lxxv</sup> In an effort to open the African state further to foreign exploitation, and to 'save' its economies the World Bank/IMF introduced structural adjustment programs which were, *inter alia*, aimed at reducing the size and power of the state. The debt crisis facing these economies provided the first opportunity for international financial institutions to meddle into African states' affairs. But the World Bank/IMF policies did not improve the state of the African economies. The evidence of African economies' performances in the 1960s and 1970s was

certainly not as bad as these institutions presented them to be.<sup>lxxvi</sup>

In the name of liberalization, the state was further weakened and alienated from the majority's needs. World Bank/IMF imposed cutbacks were so severe that school enrollment, and health facilities dropped in some countries.<sup>lxxvii</sup> Africans, especially in the rural sector need more, not less state. Development as advocated by the World Bank/IMF meant more foreign agencies meddling in African affairs and controlling African economies. It also meant further exploitation of the African people. Africans have been marginalized in their own development because various Western agencies have taken over African development.<sup>lxxviii</sup> The World Bank/IMF policies do not work within a democratic polity because their implementations require authoritarian rule: "The primary concern is with development, not with democracy (...) Nationalism is the potentially most dangerous ideological and social force confronting SAP. It draws on the history of resistance to foreign political domination, cultural humiliation, and economic exploitation."<sup>lxxix</sup>

Like its predecessor the colonial state, the post-colonial state was externally determined. The African people were never consulted as to whether they wanted liberal economies or not. Africa opened itself up and became like an international market place where any firm, agency, group or person would go in and out without any restriction. A self-centered elite which has failed to learn from the mistakes of the past is forced to adopt SAPs. This elite is benefitting from the process.<sup>lxxx</sup> As a result of the crisis that developed from SAP imposition, international financial institutions and non-governmental organizations have progressively become the major political actors in Africa, thus deepening the crisis facing African states.<sup>lxxxii</sup> Olukoshi and Laakso note that "the crisis of the Nation-State in Africa, therefore, is as much a crisis of politics and institutions as it is a crisis of the economy and society itself."<sup>lxxxii</sup> The sole purpose of the West and its agencies in Africa is not to introduce democracy to African but to buy cheap and sell dear.

The negative conditions facing Africans were accentuated by the post-colonial state in various ways. First, the rulers who inherited the state did not alter it to meet African needs: African unity, self-determination, freedom from conflict, fear, and hunger. Those who attempted to transform these states -- such as Patrice Lumumba, Modibo Kéita, Thomas Sankara, and Samora Machel -- were eliminated. Second, by Africanizing colonial institutions, these leaders further opened the African state to Western exploitation. Education, which is one of the most important factors in socializing people for innovation was used to alienate Africans. Third, since most of the leaders were chosen or supported by the West, they did their best to appropriate the state and steal from it as fast as possible. Because the West does not have permanent friends, but only permanent interests, these leaders could be replaced at any time. In an attempt to pay foreign debts, they have neglected the needs of their subjects. Fourth, these leaders ignored indigenous institutions which could have been shaped into modern state institutions. Fifth, an autonomous and vibrant civil society did not develop. Sixth, even the ruling elite of a country like South Africa that attained majority rule in 1994, an elite that had suffered more than any other in Africa; that had keenly observed what had happened in the rest of Africa; that could have learned from the rest of Africa, even such an elite *failed* to radically transform apartheid institutions. South Africa became a showcase and springboard of the West into the rest of Africa, thus completing the cycle.<sup>lxxxiii</sup> Now, Africans are fed up, angry and hungry. They are living in sub-human conditions and the frustration builds up each day: "I am telling you the whole of Africa is waiting to erupt. When a man has nothing to lose, you have to be afraid of him."<sup>lxxxiv</sup> Hence the need for *Fundi wa Afrika*, to which we now turn.

## **Fundi Wa Afrika**

*Fundi Wa Afrika's* basic premise is that Africans alone can reconstitute their states on the basis of their own needs and values. It uses history to demonstrate that the African state was radically and permanently altered after slavery to service the needs of the West. The first step toward liberation according to *Fundi wa Afrika* is for Africans to recapture their economies. Such a development implies Africans' control over the continent's resources. According to *Fundi Wa Afrika*, African states are not yet free from their former colonial powers because they do not control the resources within their borders. Africans of every shade and generation must realize that the only way they will get out of chronic poverty is by controlling Africa and its resources. Political power without economic power is totally meaningless for the majority of Africans. Any other plan is only a distraction which draws Africans' energy away from constructive purposes to dependency and destructive efforts. Africans must also realize that the West has nothing to offer them except more poverty. An astute observer of Western societies, the French publicist Alexis de Tocqueville observed as far back as 1835 that:

If we reasoned from what passes in the world, we should almost say that the European is to the other races of mankind, what man is to the lower animals; – he makes them subservient to his use; and when he cannot subdue, he destroys them.<sup>lxxxv</sup>

As Barnes argues,

NATO countries are no longer able to give; they cannot give at all, in the sense of behaving with a measure of yielding differences in those whose value-systems differ from their own. Nor can they give at all, in the sense of showing generosity united to calculations of their own advantage. Beyond a punch in the face from their power they have nothing, therefore, to offer anybody.<sup>lxxxvi</sup>

African countries and Africans will finally self-destruct as Andreski notes,

In any case, so long as the birth rate remains at the present level, war, famine and disease will continue to play the role of checks to population growth with increasing efficacy. Which of these checks to population will be more important will depend on the circumstances; and we might see either endemic warfare (internal or external) [as has happened in Angola, Congo, Eritrea and Ethiopia] or harsh despotisms holding down their subjects in such misery and degradation that the victims of disease, hunger, terror and crime will be sufficiently numerous to compensate the high birth-rate<sup>lxxxvii</sup>

When African countries try to industrialize, Western countries place restrictions on their exports of manufactured goods. When an African country has been able to industrialize (as in South Africa), a white minority controls the economy.

The second step toward liberation is for Africans to connect the rural sector (where the majority lives) with the urban sector on the basis of African values. We argue that no people can develop within a foreign culture. If Africans are to control their destiny they must do so within their own culture. Africans have to read again their history to borrow what worked in pre-colonial Africa and merge it with Western institutions. Indigenous institutional mechanisms, such as checks-and-

balances on leaders' powers would benefit contemporary African states. Traditionally, African leaders who failed to satisfy their subjects' needs would simply be removed from power. Civil society organizations must be based on the African reality. Decentralization of political power must be integrated into the present state system. African leaders should take a leaf from the rural sector to learn what past institutions could work in contemporary Africa. Thus, the Ruwenzururu -- a peasant guerilla movement of the Bakonzo and Bamba on the Uganda-Zaire border active from 1962 to 1980 -- organized peasant communities into popular assemblies with supervisory powers over state functionaries. The village assembly -- which included all adult villagers -- had the right to appoint, censure or acclaim the chief, without any state interference or intervention.<sup>lxxxviii</sup> According to *Fundi wa Afrika*, Africans must realize that only their efforts will change the conditions facing them. The people must know that "if we stagnate it is their responsibility and that if we go forward it is due to them too that there is no such thing as a demiurge, that there is no famous man who will take the responsibility for everything, that the demiurge is the people and the magic hands are finally the hands of the people."<sup>lxxxix</sup>

Once the political arena has been demystified through political awareness, Africans will identify with a reconstituted state because it will no longer be used to exploit them. Such a state becomes theirs. It is at their service. This liberating awareness becomes a driving force for improving the conditions facing them. It also removes the dependency syndrome from which every African suffers. Instead of Africans killing and hating each other, they are forced to engage in constructive activities. The African state must be shaped by its environment, culture and reality. *Fundi Wa Afrika* does not assume that culture is constant. It understands culture to be a dynamic force that changes according to the conditions facing it. It does not assume that all African culture is valuable, just like all Western culture cannot be assumed to be useful. Africans as any other society must rely on the best of their culture to recreate the state. Mimicking the West only exacerbates Africa's poverty as is currently happening under the guise of "liberalization," "globalization," and the "promotion of civil society." Africans must ask: whose civil society is created? Whose globalization? Whose liberalization? They will discover that all this is a ploy to exploit them further. By focusing on the rural sector, the African state will stop the rural-to-urban migration which has left the rural sector in stagnation. Production must be focused on domestic needs rather than being export-oriented. Such an orientation implies that the first priority would be -- like in any other modern state -- to meet people's needs.

The third step toward liberation is a transformation of the educational system. Western education in Africa works against Africans by alienating them from their environment. It presents Africans as people without history, some dependent people who were always so until Western colonialism and Christianity saved them. This misinformation must be countered if Africans are to be free. Africans must learn their history, and in so doing they will discover that their liberation depends only on them. Civic education will play a very active role not in creating a distortion of the Western state in Africa but in creating an African state. Such an educational system would focus on encouraging students to be innovators, and educators rather than passive consumers of information. It can integrate African oral tradition, music, history with science and technology to prepare Africans on the basis of their environment and the conditions facing them. Such an education would be centered around African culture and values so that the end product is not a caricature of the Western person in Africa but an African in Africa. The abridged and

popularized version of the 8-volume UNESCO *General History of Africa* can be used as a starting point for teaching history. Universal education must be developed throughout Africa. No society can develop without its youth. Any keen observer visiting Africa from Cape Town to Cairo will be shocked by the number of idle youth. According to *Fundi Wa Afrika*, any plan that condemns a society's youth to social and moral decay as the World Bank/IMF plans have done must be replaced.

The fourth step calls for adequate leadership. Throughout African history, African leaders played active roles, whether as heroes or as collaborators during slavery or colonialism. The system of collaboration continues today. The new leadership's first priority like any other in a descent society must be to meet its subjects' needs. Any leadership that does not fulfill this role is Africa's enemy. Future leaders must govern by "the people and for the people, for the outcasts, and by the outcasts. No leader, however, valuable he [or she] may be, can substitute himself [or herself] for the popular will."<sup>xc</sup> Hence the need for Africans to do this without any foreign interference, since the only leaders that are vetted by the West are those who serve its interests.

Fifth, any system that condemns women to violence, poverty and disease must be overhauled. Since slavery, women have been the majority in the rural sector. Every policy has benefitted the modern sector, therefore, leaving women out. Women hardly occupy decision-making positions. No transformation can take place without guaranteeing women an equal role in the society. Under World Bank/IMF structural adjustment programs, poor women have been the most affected by state's cuts on health care, education and employment.<sup>xcii</sup> Women have also been affected by globalization because they are the worst paid in the new world economic order. "Jobs take on the characteristics identified with female employment: a minimum level of skills, low wages, and limited possibilities for promotion."<sup>xciii</sup>

Sixth, under globalization, African countries must be selective in their trade policies. In such an arrangement, they can develop their human resources behind protective barriers.<sup>xciii</sup> What has been practiced by the World Bank and IMF in Africa would be unacceptable in any other society. These institutions have forced Africa to adopt: "a dogmatic view of the 'free market' policies that are not practiced in any part of the industrial world and were never practiced either in the nearly 200 years of industrial capitalism."<sup>xciv</sup> The World Bank and IMF have become 'experts' on what is best for Africa. The World Bank is free to set up institutions at will in Africa with or without government consent.<sup>xcv</sup>

Seventh, the African debt must be totally written off, and a moratorium on debt repayment declared. The ordinary African men, women and children cannot be held accountable *ad vitam aeternam* for a debt incurred by their elites in pursuit of their own enrichment, and without their people's consent. It is the African leaders themselves who must be made personally accountable for repayment of the debt incurred vis-à-vis their Western lenders and overlords. In this sense, it can be truly said that Africa and Africans owe absolutely nothing to the West. If anything, it is the West which owes African reparations for the millions of human lives lost and billions of mineral wealth plundered and revenues extracted during five centuries of European predation and exploitation through slavery, imperialism, colonialism, neocolonialism and globalization.

Finally, one cannot discuss the reconstitution of the African state without examining the various fragments that exist in Africa. First, there is the divide between the indigenous and the modern sector. Second, a divide exists between various African states with different colonial

experiences and traditions. Third, Africans must seek Africans in the diaspora who have the same goals to reconstitute the state. Those Africans in the diaspora who support the new state could settle in Africa if they wish to. Fourth, a divide exists within the African continent between rich and powerful states (such as Egypt, Nigeria and South Africa) and poor and weak ones (such as Djibouti and Gambia). Different African states must unite in a United States of Africa. Such a development will create internal markets for African goods, and thus employment. Barnes notes that without political unity among African states there can be no united Africa. There can be no balanced drawing of the black world--in short, no positive policy and hence no African renaissance.”<sup>xcvi</sup> Kwame Nkrumah correctly observed in the early sixties that:

We are Africans first and last, and as Africans our best interests can only be served by uniting within an African Community (...) We in Africa have looked outward too long for the development of our economy and transportation. Let us begin to look inwards into the African Continent for all aspects of its development (...) We in Africa have untold agricultural, mineral, and water-power resources. These almost fabulous resources can be fully exploited and utilized in the interest of Africa and the African people, only if we develop them within a Union Government of African States.<sup>xcvii</sup>

By insisting on Africans managing their own affairs, *Fundi Wa Afrika* does not assume that all Western countries’ goals are to exploit Africans. It simply demands of Africa’s friends and foes alike to let it be. Africa must solve its problems in the African way: “Their [problems] solution is Africa’s responsibility and Africa’s alone, since none but the sons [and daughters] of African soil can say what constitutes a solution.”<sup>xcviii</sup>

## **Conclusion**

Indigenous African states were based on African culture and tradition. A vibrant civil society existed which acted as a check on leaders’ behavior. Power was decentralized which made it possible for leaders to rule and for the subjects to participate fully. Power was not the sole goal of the leaders. The indigenous state was based on a bottom-up approach as opposed to a top-down, authoritarian one. Most important of all was that the state was institutionalized in the society since it was determined by the needs and values of its members. But the trans-Atlantic slave trade permanently transformed the relationship between the rulers and the ruled. African states were isolated from the international community for four centuries, resulting in social and moral decay. It was this ignorance which explains why some Africans responded with awe and wonder when, after using African resources, Europeans arrived as the ones who would “save” them from their own “destruction.”

The pattern set during slavery was accelerated through colonialism as foreign powers used Africans in their own land for the maximum profit of the West. Independence was nothing but the Africanization of colonial institutions. How can Africans expect such institutions to meet their needs? The elite that inherited the colonial state opted for political power as diverse Western agencies took control of the African economies. Caught between Western agencies and a predatory ruling elite who is out to plunder the wealth of Africa, the African people have been left in disease, poverty and war. As it did during slavery, the West rewarded leaders who served it well. In the same



way as the abolition of slavery was used by diverse Western agencies as an excuse to meddle into African affairs, the present African predicament offers an opportunity to the international financial institutions to shape and control the African economies. This pattern will continue until Africans realize that the only option left to them is to recapture their economies. They have to create states that are based on their own culture and values. Africans must make their own homes because no one else will do it for them, as the foregoing discussion abundantly demonstrates. Hence, the urgent need for *Fundi Wa Afrika*.

#### Endnotes

1. In this study, “Africa” refers to all 54 states on the African continent, as per the current membership of the Organization of African Unity (OAU). African states vary greatly in size, natural resource endowment and population. However, the appalling socioeconomic conditions facing the majority of the population (conflict, high infant mortality rates, disease, poverty and unemployment) and the scandalous privileges enjoyed by the ruling elite (excessive wealth, foreign bank accounts, children studying abroad, and families shopping in Paris, London or New York) are much the same throughout the continent. By “African” we mean any person who identifies as such and whose primary loyalty is to Africa.
2. Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (Washington, DC: Howard University Press, 1981), p. 20.
3. A process excellently analyzed and abundantly documented by W. Rodney, *op. cit.*
4. By ‘paradigm’ we mean, following Thomas Kuhn, a model of scientific practice that some particular community acknowledges for a time as supplying the foundation for its further practice and attracting a group of adherents away from competing modes of scientific activity. At the same time, this new paradigm is sufficiently open-ended to leave to this group all sorts of problems to resolve. Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 3rd edn., 1996), p. 10.
5. George Nzongola-Ntalaja, “The State and Democracy in Africa,” in G. Nzongola-Ntalaja & Margaret C. Lee (eds.), *The state and Democracy in Africa*. (Trenton, N.J: Africa World Press, 1998), p. 11.
6. Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital and European States, AD 990-1992* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1992), p. 1.
7. Naomi Chazan, P. Lewis, R. Mortimer, D. Rothchild & S.J. Stedman, *Politics and Society in Contemporary Africa*. (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 3rd edn., 1999), p. 15
8. Mahmood Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996).
9. Chazan *et. al*, *op.cit.*, pp.18-21; see also Fernando Henrique Cardoso & Enzo Faletto,

*Dependency and Development in Latin America*. (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1979).

10.

12. Chazan *et. al.*, *op. cit.*, pp. 23-32.

13. I. William Zartman (ed.), *Collapsed States: The Disintegration and Restoration of Legitimate Authority* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1995).

14. Leonardo A. Villalon. "The African State at the End of the Twentieth Century: Parameters of the Critical Juncture," in *The African State at a Critical Juncture: Between Disintegration & Reconfiguration*, Leonardo A. Villalón & Phillip A. Huxtable (eds). (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998), p. 7.

15. Richard Sandbrook. *The Politics of Africa's Economic Recovery*. (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 20.

16. S. N. Sangmpam. *Pseudocapitalism and the Overpoliticized State*. (Brookfield, VT: Avebury, 1994) p. 5.

17. William Reno, *Warlord Politics and African States* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998), p. 2.

18. Jean-François Bayart, Achille Mbembe & Comi Toulabor, *Le Politique par le Bas en Afrique noire: Contribution à une Problématique de la Démocratie*. (Paris: Éditions Karthala, 1992); for a similar approach see also, James C. Scott, *Domination and the Art of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1990).

19. Jean-François Bayart, *L'État en Afrique: La Politique du ventre*. (Paris: Fayard, 1989); translated as the *The State in Africa: The Politics of the Belly* (New York, NY: Longman, 1993).

20. Jean François Bayart, Stephen Ellis & Béatrice Hibou, *The Criminalization of the State in Africa* (Oxford & Bloomington: James Currey/Indiana University Press, 1999), p. 44.

21. Patrick Chabal and Jean-Pascal Daloz. *Africa Works: Disorder as Political Instrument* (Oxford & Bloomington, IN: James Currey/Indiana University Press, 1999), p. xviii.

22. *Ibid*, p. xix.

23. Claude Ake, *Democracy and Development in Africa* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 1996).

24. Adebayo O. Olukoshi & Liisa Laasko (eds.), *Challenges to the Nation-State in Africa*. (Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 1996), p. 33.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 36.

26. Christopher Clapham. *Africa and the International System: The Politics of State Survival* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 5.

27. Crawford Young, *The African Colonial State in Comparative Perspective* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994), p. 292.

28. It should be noted that our approach departs from the Statist approach in that (a) it analyzes the creation and evolution of the African state (from pre-colonial to colonial and post-colonial), (b) it shows how internal and external events and actors in Africa shaped the state and its leadership and (c) it prescribes what the ideal state and its leadership (as determined by African themselves) should be.

29. For a detailed study of these institutions, the reader is referred to George Ayittey. *Indigenous African Institutions*. (Ardsley-on-Hudson, NY: Transnational Publishers, 1991).

30. Indigenous African states did not follow the same pattern in state formation. Each differed depending on conditions facing it, resource availability, military strength, leadership style, population, types of state and its size.

31. George B.N Ayittey. *Africa Betrayed*, (New York: St Martins Press, 1992): 38; see also G.B.N Ayittey *Indigenous African Institutions*.

32. I.A. Shapera, *Handbook of Tswana Law and Customs*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1955), p.78. Quoted in Ayittey, *Indigenous African Institutions*, p.41.

33. Lars Sandstrom, *The Exchange Economy of Pre colonial Tropical Africa*, (London: C. Hurst, 1974).

34. Robin Law, *The Oyo Empire C.1600-C.1836: A West African Imperialism in the Era of the Atlantic Slave Trade*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), p. 37.

35. Sunstrom, *op. cit.*, p.64.

36. K.A Busia, *The Challenge of Africa*, (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1962), p.69.

37. According to Walter Rodney, "A society develops economically as its members increase jointly their capacity for dealing with the environment" (*op. cit.*, p. 4).

38. Walter Rodney, *West Africa and the Atlantic Slave Trade* (Dar-es-Salaam: East African Publishing House, 1970), p.16.

39. Leonard Barnes. *African Renaissance* ( London: Victor Gollancz, 1969), p. 19.

40. Walter Rodney, *West Africa and the Atlantic Slave Trade*, *opt. cit.*, p. 8.

41. J.F.A Ajayi, "The Aftermath of the Fall of the old Oyo," in J.F.A Ajayi & M. Crowder (eds), *History of West Africa*, vol II (London: Longman, 1974 ), pp.151-52.

42. However, some authors (such as Fernard Braudel), counter the critics of slavery by highlighting the numerous contributions of Europe to Africa: "(...) maize, cassava, American beans, sweet potatoes, pineapple, guava, ducks of Barbary, turkeys, geese, pigeons (...) And let's not forget Christianity, often welcomed by Africans as the means to acquire the vital strength of the God of the white man" (Fernard Braudel, *Civilisation Matérielle, Économie et Capitalisme, 15ème-18ème Siècle; vol.3: Le Temps du Monde*. (Paris: Armard Colin, 1979), p.552 (translated from the French by Guy Martin, as elsewhere in this article).

43. Hugh Thomas, *The Slave Trade: The History of the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1440-1870* (London: Papermac/Macmillan, 1998), p.796.

44. *Ibidem.*, p.56.

45. Rodney, *West Africa and the Atlantic Slave Trade*, p.10.

46. Chinweizu, *The West and the Rest of Us: White Predators, Black Slavers and the African Elite* (New York, NY: Vintage Books, 1975), p. 30.

47. Rodney, *West Africa and the Atlantic Slave Trade*, p.16.

48. Ibidem.; p.7.

49. Thomas, *op.cit.*, p.793.

50. Rodney, *West Africa and the Atlantic Slave Trade*, p.7.

51. Chinweizu, *opt. cit.*; pp.36-7. Leaders who meet the West's needs are rewarded through debt forgiveness, occasional state visits to the White House, honorary degrees from Western institutions, Western leaders' visits to their countries and military support. In this spirit, during Bill Clinton's 1998 visit to Africa, Uganda's Yoweri Museveni and Rwanda's strongman Paul Kagame were hailed as a new brand of future African leaders. What is troubling is the role of these "new leaders" in the Congo crisis; in this regard, see: "Many Armies ravage rich land in the 'first world war of Africa' Ian Fisher & Norimistu Onishi, *New York Times*, (February, 7, 2000), p.1, 8-9; on Africa's "new leadership", see Marina Ottaway, *Africa's New Leaders: Democracy or State Reconstruction?* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1999).

52. Ibid., p. 31.

53.B.A Ogot (ed.), *General History of Africa: V Africa from the 16th to the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries* (London: James Currey, 1999), p.19.

54.Pathé Diagne, “African political, economic and social structures during this period,” in B.A Ogot (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 22.

55.Claude Ake, *Democracy and Development in Africa*. (Washington DC: The Brookings Institution, 1996), p. 2.

56.Ayittey, *op. cit.*, p.83; on the economic history of Africa., see also: A.G Hopkins, *An Economic History of West Africa* (London: Longman, 1973); Paul Tiyambe Zeleza, *A Modern Economic History of Africa* (Dakar: CODESRIA Book Series), vol.1: The 19th Century (1993); vol. 2: *The 20th Century* (forthcoming); Jean Suret-Canale, *Afrique Noire occidentale et centrale; vol. 2: L' ère coloniale, 1900-1945* (Paris: Éditions Sociales, 1964 ).

57.Claude Ake, *A Political Economy of Africa* (Harlow, UK: Longman, 1981), p. 29.

58.Stanislaw Andreski. *The African Predicament: A study in the Pathology of Modernisation*. (New York: Atherton Press, 1968).

59.Chinweizu, *op. cit.*, p.25; On the Congo Free State’s genocidal policies, see Sven Lindqvist, *Exterminate all the Brutes* (New York: The New Press, 1996); David Lagergren, *Mission and the State in the Congo* (Uppsala, 1970), on King Léopold II and the Congo, see also Adam Hochschild, *King Leopold’s Ghost* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1998).

60.Crawford Young. *The African Colonial State in Comparative Perspective* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), p. 43.

61.Barnes, *op. cit.*, p.21.

62.Busia, *op. cit.*, p.70.

63.See Guy Martin, “Francophone Africa in the Context of Franco-African Relations,” in John W. Harbeson & Donald Rothchild (eds.), *Africa in World Politics: Post-Cold War Challenges* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2nd edn., 1995), p.167; G. Martin, “Continuity and Change in Franco- African Relations,” *The Journal of Modern African Studies* vol. 33, no.1 (March 1995), pp.1-20; and G. Martin, “France’s African Policy in Transition: Disengagement and Redeployment,” Paper presented at the African Studies Interdisciplinary Seminar, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (3 March 2000).

64.Chinweizu, p.164.

65.Stanislaw Andreski, *The African Predicament: A study in the Pathology of Modernisation*, (New York: Atherton,1968)p. 212.

66. Chinweizu. p.165

67.Guy Martin, *op.cit*

68.Brian Crozier, *The Morning After: A Study of Independence*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1963), pp. 17-18.

69. Ake, *Democracy and Development in Africa*, p. 4.
70. K.A. Busia, *The Challenge of Africa* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1962), p. 66.
71. Adebayo O. Olukoshi & Liisa Laakso (eds.), *Challenges to the Nation-State in Africa* (Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, 1996), p.14.
72. K.A. Busia, *opt. cit.*; p.67. See also Irene Gendzier, *Development Against Democracy: Manipulating Political Change in the Third World*. (Washington DC: The Tyrone Press, 1995).
73. Thandika Mkandawire, "Crisis and Adjustment in Sub-Saharan Africa", in Ghai, D., (ed), *IMF and the South: Social Impact of Crisis and Adjustment*, (London: Zed Books, 1991), see also World Bank, *Africa's Adjustment and Growth in the 1980s*, (Washington DC, 1989); World Bank, *Sub-Saharan Africa from Crisis to Sustainable Growth. A Long-Term Perspective Study*, (Washington DC, 1989).
74. "Sins of the secular missionaries," *The Economist* (29 January-4 February 2000), p. 27. In Kenya's Machakos district population centers have been created within a radius of forty kilometers of high-schools. Kenyans are paid a small fee to bring others to get contraceptives. Some of these children are as young as 13 years of age.
75. Barnes, *opt. cit.*; p.11.
76. Olukoshi & Laakso (eds.), *op. cit.*, Introduction, p.18.
77. As a result 70% of school age children in Niger are not in school. *Pan African News Agency*, [Http://www.Africannews.org/pana/news/109991103/feat1.html](http://www.Africannews.org/pana/news/109991103/feat1.html). For a detailed analysis of the impact of SAPs on women the reader should refer to Pamela Sparr (ed.), *Mortgaging Women's Lives: Feminist Critiques of Structural Adjustment* (London: Zed Books, 1994); Fantu Cheru, "New Social Movements: Democratic Struggles and Human Rights in Africa," in James Mittleman (ed.), *Globalization: A Critical Perspective* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1996), pp.
- 145-164. See also, Mueni Wa Muiu "Hegemony and Globalization: Re-colonizing Africa in the 21<sup>st</sup> century," paper presented at the Conference on *Globalization & Third World Development in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, University of Georgia, Athens, GA (9-11 April 2000).
78. Ake, *opt. cit.*, p.122-23, see also Mueni Wa Muiu, "Hegemony & Globalization" *op. cit.*
79. Bjorn Beckman. "Empowerment or Repression? The World Bank and the Politics of African Adjustment," in *Authoritarianism Democracy and Adjustment: The Politics of Economic Reform in Africa* (ed) Peter Gibbon, Yusuf Bangura & Arve Ofstad. (Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet 1992), pp. 87, 92.
80. Mueni Wa Muiu "Hegemony & Globalization", *op. cit.*
81. For a detailed study of non-governmental organizations, the reader is referred to Thomas G. Weiss & Leon Gordenker (eds), *NGOS, The UN, & Global Governance*, (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1996).
82. Olukoshi & Laakso, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

83. Mueni Wa Muiu, "Hegemony & Globalization", *op. cit.*
84. Williams Sassine, Guinean novelist, interviewed by Manthia Diawara in *In search of Africa* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), p. 53.
85. Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, translated by Henry Reeve (London: Longmans, 1889), p. 337. See also Moana Jackson, "Impact of globalization on marginalized societies and the strategies by indigenous people" (Maori Legal Service, Aotearoa/New Zealand), p.2.
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88. Mahmood Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject*, pp 197-200, 206-7.
89. Frantz Fanon. *Les Damnés de la Terre* (Paris: François Maspéro, 1961), p. 159.
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91. Mervat Hatem, "Privatization and the Demise of State Feminism in Egypt" pp.40-60 in Pamela Sparr *op.cit.*, See also Fantu Cheru. "New Social Movements: Democratic Struggles and Human Rights in Africa" in Mittleman, *op. cit.*, pp. 45-164.
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95. Editorial, *Southern Africa Political and Economic Monthly*, Vol.2,no.10, July 1989, (Harare, Zimbabwe) quoted in Adebayo Adedeji, "An African Perspective on Bretton Woods" in *The UN and Bretton Woods Institutions: New Challenges for the Twenty First Century*, p.63.
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