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Reconstructing the Authoritarian State in Africa

Edited by
George Klay Kieh, Jr.
and Pita Ogaba Agbese

ROUTLEDGE

Reconstructing the Authoritarian State in Africa

Authoritarianism has been a staple of the African landscape since the dawn of independence on the continent in the 1950s. In addition, until the inception of the "third wave of democratization" on the continent in the 1990s, the overwhelming majority of the African states were authoritarian. This was evidenced by the state's routine violation of the political rights and civil liberties—the right to organize political parties, and the freedoms of assembly, association, of the press, and of speech, among others. To make matters worse, by and large, the majority of the African states failed to provide the basic needs of the majority of their citizens—jobs, education, health care, etc. In other words, the majority of the African states visited double deprivation on their citizens: the deprivation of political rights and the deprivation of social and economic rights. Using six of Africa's perennial authoritarian states—Cameroon, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Liberia, Rwanda, and Uganda—as case studies, the book examines the nature and dynamics of authoritarianism and suggests some ways for addressing the pathologies of the phenomenon.

The book uses the democratic state reconstitution model as its theoretical framework. The central argument of the model is that addressing authoritarianism requires a multidimensional process that transcends the political realm. The rationale is that although politics is at the core of authoritarianism, however, the phenomenon is shaped and conditioned by a confluence of cultural, economic, and social forces. Accordingly, the state reconstitution process should seek to address all of these dimensions in order for a stable democratic state to be constructed.

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Preface

The advent of the so-called "third wave of democratization" in Africa in 1990 witnessed the bubbling of euphoria among various sectors of African societies and those with academic and policy interests in the region. The emergent belief among these excited constituencies was that authoritarianism was in its "death throes," and that Africa was on the verge of a "democratic take-off." However, this sense of optimism underestimated the recalcitrance and the opportunistic proclivities of authoritarianism, particularly its ability to adapt to, and manipulate events. Characteristically, the authoritarian states in Africa were able to develop modalities for massaging and eventually derailing political liberalization. For example, the authoritarian African States permitted the legal registration of opposition political parties and the consequent establishment of multi-party systems. However, the authoritarian states took control of the processes by ensuring that, *inter alia*, opposition parties were obstructed in their efforts to function; the electoral processes were manipulated and elections were rigged. So, on the surface, the various authoritarian African States gave the impression that they were engaged in the process of democratization (political), but in reality, they maintained the essence of their repressive apparatus.

Clearly, the various authoritarian states are "ticking time bombs" that could explode into violent civil conflicts at some point. As the Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, and Rwanda have shown, over time, authoritarian states lose their abilities to contain the resistance to the maladies of a repressive political order. That is, authoritarian states cannot maintain their stranglehold over the body politic indefinitely. This is because the oppressed are actively engaged in the process of resisting the "modes of containment," which authoritarian states usually institute to keep them in check. Clearly, authoritarian states are anathema to the welfare and well-being of the vast majority of the peoples of Africa; hence, they need to be deconstructed, rethought, and democratically reconstituted. In short, authoritarianism is an anachronism that has run its course! It was never relevant to the development of Africa, when the wave of independence began sweeping across the continent beginning in the 1960s, and it is not relevant now!

Against this backdrop, what steps need to be taken to democratically reconstitute the authoritarian state in Africa? It is this question and its attendant implications for

peace, stability, prosperity, and democracy in Africa that motivated the study that culminated in the writing of this volume.

The research project benefited from the generous support of the Ford Foundation. We are grateful to the Board of Directors of the Ford Foundation for awarding us a research grant that enabled us to assemble a team of African scholars to try to tackle the critical challenge of the rethinking and democratic reconstitution of authoritarian states in Africa. The grant funded the research for each of the country studies and the holding of an international conference in Accra, Ghana, where the research findings were initially presented and discussed. Thereafter, the contributors undertook additional work and wrote the final drafts of their chapters. At the Ford Foundation, we are especially grateful to Professor Julius Ihonvbere, the former Program Officer in the Governance Program, former Special Advisor to the President of Nigeria for Policy, and currently Secretary to the Edo State Government, Nigeria, for working with us in the development of the research project. Also, we appreciate the usual cooperation and support of the African Center for Democratic Governance (AFRIGOV), based in Abuja, Nigeria, for managing the grant. Particularly, we would like to thank the late Professor Aaron Gana, the former Executive Director of AFRIGOV, for his usual intellectual, moral, and other support. We would like to thank the contributors to this volume for conducting the research, presenting their initial findings at the international conference, and revising their papers (which later on became chapters) based on our comments and those from the participants at the international conference. We would also like to thank Ryann Ruyan, Graduate Assistant, the Department of Political Science and Planning at the University of West Georgia, for assisting us with the preparation of the bibliography for the book.

Finally, as this volume argues, the post-colonial state in Africa is incapable of shepherding the critical process of holistic democratization, due to its nature, character, and mission. Hence, it is imperative that a new kind of state be developed in Africa—a democratically reconstituted state. It is this new state that would invest in human needs and respect the fundamental human rights of all groups and individuals.

1 Introduction

The tragedies of the authoritarian state in Africa

George Klay Kieh, Jr. and Pita Ogaba Agbese

Introduction

The decolonization process in Africa witnessed the colonial powers transferring an authoritarian state construct to the first generation African leaders. Fashioned in the image of the colonial state, the post-colonial construct retained the nature, mission and character of its colonial progenitor. In terms of its nature, the post-colonial state in Africa is a by-product of the historical and cultural proclivities of colonialism and imperialism. In essence, the post-colonial state in Africa by its design reflects the interests of neo-colonialism and imperialism. Accordingly, the primary *raison d'être* of the post-colonial state is to create and maintain a conducive and enabling environment in which foreign-based capitalists and the advanced capitalist states can promote their economic and political interests. Also, the post-colonial state in Africa has a multidimensional character described variously as "repressive, exploitative, prebendal, neo-patrimonial, predatory, criminalized and vampirish," among others.[1] Given the specific circumstances, one or a combination of the dimensions of the character of the post-colonial state may become ascendant.[2]

Significantly, the first generation African leaders had the opportunity to shepherd the process of deconstructing, rethinking and democratically reconstituting the post-colonial state in Africa. Regrettably, with very few exceptions—e.g., Ghana and Tanzania—the first generation leaders chose to retain the colonial state in its post-colonial form. Accordingly, the post-colonial state in Africa retained all of the features of its colonial predecessor. According to Claude Ake, the first generation African leaders were not interested in the democratic reconstitution of the post-colonial state "because they lacked a democratic agenda."[3] Moreover, the succeeding generations of African leaders equally failed to make the democratic reconstitution of the post-colonial state the epicenter of the state-building project. Hence, over the past five decades of independence, the post-colonial authoritarian state has enveloped Africa in multifaceted crises of underdevelopment—cultural, economic, environmental, political, security, social, etc.

Against this backdrop, this chapter has seven major objectives. First, it will discuss the evolution of the post-colonial authoritarian state. Second, it will

examine some of the major tragedies that the post-colonial state has engendered—the multifaceted crises of underdevelopment. Third, the chapter will discuss the nature and dynamics of the "third wave of democratization" and its resulting impact on authoritarianism in Africa. Fourth, it will discuss the focus and objectives of the book. Fifth, the chapter provides the conceptual framework for the book. Sixth, the theoretical framework for the book is presented. Seventh, the chapter will present the summaries of the constituent chapters of the volume.

The evolution of the authoritarian post-colonial state

The authoritarian post-colonial state in Africa was fashioned by the colonial and imperialist powers and bequeathed to Africa at independence. The post-colonial construct is substantively similar to its predecessor. Julius Ihonvbere provides an apt description of the glaring similarities between the two constructs:

> The post-colonial state was a continuation of the colonial state with very minimal changes, mostly in terms of personnel rather than structures, functions and relations to civil society. Thus, it remained as interventionist, exploitative, and repressive as its predecessor. It is therefore inappropriate to expect good governance, transparency, social harmony, respect for human rights, adherence to the rule of law, and political stability in social formations presided over by weak and non-hegemonic elites.[4]

In essence, the post-colonial state retained the authoritarian characteristics of the colonial state. For example, the mission of the post-colonial state is to create a conducive atmosphere for the private accumulation of capital by the metropolitan-based owners of multinational corporations and other businesses and their local African clients, including state managers. In performing its mission, the post-colonial state tramples on the rights and freedoms of the African peoples. That is, because the post-colonial state is an illegitimate formation detached from the people it rules, the post-colonial state primarily relies on coercion and other repressive methods to promote the interests of the ruling class (the internal wing consisting of state managers and local entrepreneurs, and the external wing comprising the owners of metropolitan-based multinational corporations and other businesses).

The post-colonial state has a multidimensional character. For example, like its colonial progenitor, the post-colonial state is violent and repressive. As Claude Ike asserts, "At independence, the form and function of the state in Africa did not change much for most countries in Africa. State power remained essentially the same: immense, arbitrary, often violent, always threatening…".[5]

Another feature is the post-colonial state's predatory proclivity. The state, for example, likes to collect taxes and other fees from its citizens, but does not provide services. Instead, the resources of the state are used to enrich the members of the ruling classes. For example, while the masses lack the basic necessities of life, the members of the ruling classes and their families live in

opulence. This is because the state provides propitious conditions in which the members of the ruling classes and their relations can engage in the predatory accumulation of wealth at the expense of the subaltern classes (working, peasantry, *petit bourgeois*, the unemployed and the lumpen). In other words, the state is analogous to a "buffet service in which the members of the ruling classes and their relations 'eat all they can eat' for free."[6]

Similarly, the post-colonial state is exploitative. This is demonstrated in several ways. For instance, it pays low wages to civil servants; these wages are woefully inadequate to meet the basic needs of these civil servants and their families. Also, in some cases, the state does not pay civil servants regularly. In this vein, civil servants are usually unpaid for several months. Meanwhile, the upper echelon of the public bureaucracy pillages and plunders the state's coffers, while telling civil servants the "state has no money." Also, the state facilitates the exploitation of workers in the private sector by multinational corporations and other foreign-owned businesses. Characteristically, these workers are paid abysmally low wages. But, when they protest, the state employs the full battery of its repressive apparatus to cow them into submission.

Also, the state has a neo-patrimonial dimension to its character. Essentially, recruitment to the public service is based on personal connections and patronage rather than on merit. State managers employ their relatives, friends, cronies and others to occupy various positions in the public sector, including ministries, autonomous agencies, the police, the military and security services.

Each particular dimension or a combination thereof of the state's character is usually ascendant, depending on the special set of circumstances. For example, the prebendal aspect of the state's character might be dominant in a particular circumstance. At other times, the violent and repressive dimensions might dominate. Alternatively, the exploitative and repressive elements might be most apparent. Anyway, no matter which dimension is dominant at a given time, the fact remains that the character of the post-colonial state is intrinsically anti-people, anti-democracy and anti-development.

The tragedies of authoritarianism

The horrendous performance of the post-colonial state in Africa is vividly captured by the multifaceted tragedies it has engendered. Culturally, in many cases, the post-colonial state has polarized ethnic groups. That is, rather than promote peaceful coexistence, and a sense of nationalism and patriotism based on allegiance to a common patrimony, the post-colonial state usually pits one ethnic group against another. Given the lack of a democratic agenda and therefore legitimacy, state managers tend to seek refuge in the provinces of their respective ethnic groups. Accordingly, the state has become ethnicized: the polity has become the exclusive province of a particular ethnic group usually associated with the incumbent president. The other ethnic groups are then banished to the periphery of the society. The emergent "us" against "them" struggle has, and continues to be designed for the achievement of two major goals. First,

the incumbent president relies on his or her ethnic group for support, against the backdrop of the loss of national support. For example, the incumbent president fills the major positions in the state bureaucracy, the military, police and security establishments with the members of his or her own ethnic group. By so doing, the incumbent president believes that his or her regime would be secured. Second, the incumbent regime uses ethnic manipulation as a vehicle for foiling the development of class solidarity among the members of the subaltern classes. By orchestrating "ethnic differences," the incumbent regime is able to prevent members of the subaltern classes from various ethnic groups from forming the bonds of solidarity that are exigent for waging a struggle against the ruling class.

In the economic realm, the African masses are enveloped in mass abject poverty and very low standard of living. For example, at the dawn of the twenty-first century, 323 million Africans lived on less than $1 a day.[7] According to the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest incidence of poverty in the world, and unlike almost all other regions of the world, poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa has been rising over the last decade.[8] For example, of the world's 1.2 billion people who live on less than $1 a day, 24.3 percent are in Sub-Saharan Africa.[9] To make matters worse, Africa has the second most unequal income distribution next to Latin America.[10] The Gini coefficient for Africa as a whole is 44 percent.[11] By the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century, mass poverty remained ensconced on the landscape of the political economies of African states: about 51 percent of the people in Sub-Saharan Africa lived on about $1.25 per day.[12] Similarly, about 388 million people in the region lived on about $1 a day.[13]

The economic crises generated by the authoritarian state in Africa are exacerbated by high debt and the attendant debt servicing. Substantial portions of the export earnings of African states are devoted to paying the interests on the usually odious debts owed to the Bretton Woods institutions (the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank), the advanced capitalist states (United States, Japan, Germany, France, Britain, etc.) and the major capitalist commercial banks. Similarly, the neo-liberal agenda being championed by the United States and the Bretton Woods institutions is making the economic crises worse, by, among other things, forcing loan-seeking African states to dismantle their respective "social safety nets." That means, African states with welfare programs are removing subsidies for such human needs as education, health care, public housing and public transportation. Additionally, the privatization ethos and the associated "rolling back of the state" is creating more hardship by selling critical public corporations such as utilities to private companies. In turn, these private firms are charging high fees, which poverty-stricken Africans cannot afford.

In terms of the environment, degradation is prevalent. This has been occasioned by an assortment of factors. The imperatives of poverty have forced scores of Africans to rely on the felling of trees as a source of survival. The trees are then used to make coal. As well, the lack of viable reforestation programs is leading to the destruction of valuable species of trees. In addition, logging companies are exploiting the forests of various African states for profit-making

reasons. These companies, mainly foreign-based, are cutting logs and processing them into timber for export. Again, the lack of viable national reforestation programs is causing massive destruction of scores of species of trees. Furthermore, scores of Africans are using various bodies of water for multiple purposes—from "laundry marts" to lavatory facilities. The use of bodies of water for various purposes, especially as lavatory facilities, is causing health problems. This is because many Africans use the water that serves as a lavatory facility for cooking and drinking purposes as well. Similarly, the air is being polluted by myriad activities—from the emission of carbon dioxide gas by dilapidated automobiles to smog by various industrial activities. These activities have been identified as the major causes of the emergent phenomenon of "global warming." For example, in various West African countries—Ghana, Liberia, etc.—the temperature is consistently hot and humid both during the dry and the rainy seasons. Historically, the temperature has been relatively cooler during the rainy season.

Politically, the authoritarian post-colonial state has occasioned numerous problems. At the base is the primacy of the "cult of the presidency." The president in African states is deified: he or she is considered omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent. Hence, his or her edicts are to be obeyed and not questioned. Moreover, the president is above the law. That is, the law is for the mere mortals, not the "presidential demi-god." The "cult of the presidency" is manifested in several leadership styles that Robert Jackson and Carl Rosberg have variously referred to as "The prince, the autocrat, the prophet and the tyrant."[14]

The related problem is the centralization of power in the hands of the president. Despite the existence of the legislative and judicial branches, the president wields the greatest amount of power, which is unchecked by the formal institutional mechanisms. As Richard Sandbrook notes, "The strongman, usually the president, occupies the center of political life."[15] With unlimited and unchecked powers, the president has *carte blanche* to do whatever he or she pleases. For example, he or she can order the minister of finance to provide any amount of money for his or her use, outside of the approved annual state budget and the legislative process. Similarly, he or she can use the state's resources for private purposes, including placing government vehicles and homes at the disposal of his relatives and friends.

One of the major tragedies of the authoritarian state in Africa is the bastardization of the multiparty system. In authoritarian states like Burundi, Ethiopia and Zimbabwe, there are several *de jure* political parties; but, in reality, there is one de facto *party*—the ruling one. Under this arrangement, the ruling party, given its suzerainty over the state apparatus, controls the electoral process. For example, during the 2005 Egyptian Presidential Election, the incumbent, President Hosni Mubarak, used his control over the state machinery to bring fabricated charges against his major opponent. The ostensible goal of President Mubarak was to use the state's legal process as a cover under which to prevent his main opponent from contesting the presidency.

Another major political problem is the vitriolic violation of political rights and civil liberties by the various authoritarian states and their regimes. For

example, in 2011, the Angolan government used excessive force to crack down on anti-government protests.[16] More broadly, the Angolan government continues to impose restrictions on the rights to freedom of expression, association and assembly, despite strong guarantees, protecting these rights in the country's 2010 constitution.[17] Similarly, in Egypt, Remy Essam, a 23-year-old charismatic singer, guitarist and songwriter, who became famous during the Tahrir Square protest as "The singer in the square," was detained and tortured by the Egyptian military after President Hosni Mubarak was deposed from power by a popular mass uprising.[18] In Equatorial Guinea, because there is no independent judiciary, the government therefore conducts arbitrary arrests, and denies detainees due process.[19] For example, detainees are usually held indefinitely without telling them the charges against them.[20] In Ethiopia, the government continued to severely restrict basic freedom of expression, association and assembly.[21] Hundreds of Ethiopians were arbitrarily arrested and detained, and remain at risk of torture and ill-treatment.[22] Also, the government continued its attacks on the political opposition and dissent.[23]

The authoritarian state has made the use of violence a routine method employed to deal with both perceived and real opponents. In the continent's various authoritarian states, the incumbent regimes harass, intimidate, imprison, kill and force into exile scores of citizens, who are either perceived as posing a threat or who are engaged in legal pro-democracy activities. Undoubtedly, enveloped in a morass of illegitimacy, authoritarian regimes are paranoid about opposition activities, which they fear could destabilize and end their reign. So, as Arthur Nwankwo posits, "The state apparatus, especially in its dictatorial genre…, its institutional and structural agencies of terror are, more often than not, geared towards the preservation of the regime, its personnel and privilege."[24]

In terms of security, the authoritarian state has focused primarily on regime maintenance and survival to the detriment of the security—physical and human—of the vast majority of the citizens. The regime has constructed a dialectical relationship between its security and that of the citizenry: in order for the incumbent regime to be secure, the vast majority of the citizens must be insecure. This finds expression in the fact that the citizens are the principal targets of the state's coercive apparatus. In order words, the caches of weapons that are purchased by the various authoritarian states are intended to "protect the regime" from the citizens. Accordingly, the regime does not hesitate to unleash brute force, even in very minor cases. Clearly, given the illegitimacy of the authoritarian states, virtually every action undertaken within the mass public is taken very seriously by the incumbent regime.

The other security crisis that has been occasioned by the authoritarian state is the human one. Because the state is fundamentally preoccupied with regime survival, substantial portions of the annual national budgets and other funds are allocated to the military and security establishments; these financial resources are then used to purchase weapons and logistics and to cover personnel costs. Accordingly, very little state resources are allotted to human security—education, health care, etc. Importantly, the ruling classes believe that their respective

regimes are better secure, if they give priority to the military and security establishments than to the needs of the citizens.

In the social arena, the problems are legion. For example, in 2000, the beginning of the twenty-first century, 185 million Africans were undernourished; 273 million had no access to safe drinking water; and 299 million were without access to adequate sanitation.[25] Also, life expectancy on the continent stood at 46.3 years; and the adult literacy rate was 63.2 percent.[26] The overall Human Development Index (HDI) for Africa during this period was a paltry 0.465, the lowest in the world.[27] Over a decade later, the situation has gotten worse. For example, in 2011, about 240 million Africans were undernourished.[28] Approximately, 328 million Africans did not have access to safe drinking water.[29] About 572 million Africans did not have acceptable sanitation.[30] The literacy rate was about 60 percent.[31] However, the life expectancy improved to 52.2 years.[32] During the same period, the HDI for the African Continent was a dismal 0.463, less than what it was at the beginning of the new millennium.[33]

Interestingly, the ruling classes, their families and friends are unaffected by the social crises occasioned by the authoritarian state for several reasons. First, the members of the ruling classes have substantial sums of stolen money and wealth from the state. Therefore, the members of the ruling classes use their ill-gotten wealth to buy the "material comforts of life"—clean drinking water, access to sanitation, etc. Second, the members of the ruling classes and their families do not use the social services in Africa. For example, the children of the members of the ruling classes attend school in metropolitan countries such as the United States and the United Kingdom. Moreover, the members of the ruling classes and their families get medical attention from the developed states—the United States, Britain, Germany, etc. Third, the members of the ruling classes and their families have access to vast amounts of food; hence, they are able to eat as many meals per day as they desire. Accordingly, they are insulated from malnourishment and the associated diseases.

"The third wave of democratization," authoritarianism and the crises of underdevelopment in Africa

In 1990, the "third wave of democratization" incepted in Africa. Like a whirlwind, the "third wave" swept through the continent amid mass weariness with authoritarianism and the multifaceted crises of underdevelopment. The "third wave" raised high hopes among the members of the continent's subaltern classes. On the political front, the "third wave" occasioned the processes of political liberalization (the opening up of the "political space") and democratic transition (the holding of democratic multiparty elections). Clearly, these twin developments broke the stranglehold of authoritarianism on the continent. In the socio-economic realm, "reformed peripheral capitalism" became the mode of production that was reified as the panacea to the continent's perennial problems of mass abject poverty, unemployment and the lack of other basic human needs, among others.

After more than two decades, progress has been made in the efforts to establish liberal democracies on the continent. This is evidenced by the fact that the number of liberal democracies has increased from three—Botswana, Gambia and Mauritius—in 1990 to nine in 2012.[34] However, authoritarianism remains a staple on the African political landscape. For example, 23 African states had hybrid regimes (mixture of liberal democratic and authoritarian), and 22 countries had authoritarian governments.[35] Several factors have accounted for the persistence of authoritarianism on the continent. First, there is the lack of commitment to the establishment of liberal democracy on the part of the majority of the ruling classes. This is because liberal democracy and its attendant institutions, procedures, rules and processes would impose restrictions on the African local ruling classes' perennial proclivities of the lack of accountability and transparency in the conduct of state affairs. Thus, the members of the local ruling classes "speak the language of liberal democracy" but "practice the art of authoritarianism." This is designed to placate the United States and other Western powers that have made the so-called commitment to liberal democracy the litmus test for receiving foreign aid, and as part of the broader ensemble of the "new world order."

Second, political institutions remain quite weak, and democratic procedures and processes have yet to be institutionalized. In other words, democratic politics has not been institutionalized. This is because there is the lack of commitment on the part of the local African ruling classes to dismantling the authoritarian architecture that has provided the framework for the unbridled exercise of power, the violation of the law with impunity, and the use of state power as the instrument for the predatory accumulation of wealth.

Third, central to liberal democracy is the artificial dichotomy between politics and economics. The former is left to the political arena, while the latter is under the purview of "the market." While some progress has been made to democratize the "political space," the "market" has not been able to democratize the economic sphere. Hence, economic inequities and inequalities and their attendant prevalence of mass abject poverty, unemployment and the other basic human needs deficit persist. In this vein, liberal democracy with its emphasis on political rights and freedoms has little relevance to the subalterns whose material conditions have gotten worse, in spite of the "third wave of democratization."

At the global level, the world capitalist system has undermined the establishment of liberal democracy on the continent through its various undemocratic modes of "North–South" interactions. For example, under the "system of unequal exchange," the bedrock of the international trading order, African states, as part of the global periphery, are still receiving less for their raw materials, while being required to pay more for manufactured goods from the core states. This continues to lead to the fact that African states are earning less for the sale of their raw materials—agricultural products, oil and minerals. This means that even if the government of an African state was committed to democratization, it would be hamstrung by the inadequacy of financial resources to help improve the material conditions of the subalterns. Clearly, the improvement of the

material conditions of the subaltern classes is pivotal to the success of democratization on the continent. Similarly, the United States and the other core states that are professing to be the champions of democratization on the continent and in the world have failed to match their rhetoric with practice. For example, the United States has criticized the Zimbabwean government for being authoritarian, but has supported the authoritarian governments of Ethiopia, Rwanda and Uganda, among others. Thus, American democracy promotion on the continent is only targeted at countries such as Zimbabwe that are adversaries of the United States.

The focus and objectives of the book

The book revolves around the authoritarian states in Africa. Using six African states—Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Liberia, Rwanda and Uganda—as case studies, the volume examines the travails of the post-colonial state-building project under an authoritarian architecture. Overall, the six countries were selected because they provide excellent representation of the genre of African states that have the opportunity for a new beginning, particularly the democratic reconstitution of the authoritarian state and addressing the challenges of socio-economic development. In the case of Cameroon, it had the opportunity, and still does to democratically reconstitute the state after the dictatorial regime of Ahmadou Ahidjo, the country's first president. As for Egypt, the country has the opportunity to end the cycle of "false starts" and "missed opportunities," especially after the mass uprising that led to the ouster of the Mubarak regime. Similarly, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) had the opportunity after the removal of the autocratic and kleptocratic Mobutu regime to democratically reconstitute the state, and to use the country's vast material and human resources to promote human-centered democracy and development. In spite of the turmoil that has characterized the post-Mobutu era, the DRC still has the opportunity to democratically reconstitute the state. In the case of Liberia, the Sirleaf regime, which came to power in 2006, after two civil wars (the first civil war was in 1989–1997, the Taylor regime ruled the country from 1997–2003, and the second civil war was from 1999–2003), and was re-elected in 2011, has an opportunity to provide the requisite leadership in ending the country's history of perennial authoritarianism and the crises of underdevelopment. As well, in Rwanda, the Kagame regime has an opportunity, following the genocide, to shepherd the process of democratically reconstituting the state, and building a new society based on, among others, ethnic pluralism and tolerance. Also, in Uganda, the Museveni regime had the opportunity to shift the country's path from authoritarian rule—the Obote autocracy, Amin's murderous regime and the tragedies of Obote's "second coming"—to a democratic one based on real democracy in which people have actual decision-making powers, and their basic human needs are addressed.

As a result, the book has two major objectives. First, the various chapters probe the nature and dynamics of authoritarianism in Africa. Second, the chapters

suggest ways in which the various authoritarian states covered in the book can be democratically reconstituted.

The conceptual framework

The book's conceptual framework is anchored on two major concepts: authoritarian state and democratic state reconstitution. An authoritarian state is a construct or formation in which either a single leader or a small group of leaders uses the power of the state to marginalize, suppress and oppress the political, economic, social and other rights of the majority of the citizens through the use of an assortment of the state's coercive instruments such as the military, security forces and the police.

Democratic state reconstitution is a holistic process of transforming both the portrait—nature, character, mission and domestic political economy—and spheres of the state—cultural, economic, political, religious, security, social and gender relations—so that the interests of the citizens can be served, including addressing issues of human welfare, political rights and civil liberties and the promotion of pluralism and tolerance.[36]

The theoretical framework

The book uses the democratic state reconstitution model as its theoretical framework. The framework is based on several major pillars. First, the state's portrait needs to be changed. For example, the nature of the state needs to reflect the cultural and historical experiences of the various ethno-communal groups that make up the overwhelming majority of the states in Africa.[37] Similarly, the mission of the state should be to promote human-centered democracy and development that includes the respect for political human rights, the rule of law, accountability and transparency, free, fair and competitive elections and addressing the material well-being of the citizens so that they can live fuller and richer lives. In this vein, the state's character should be inclusive, participatory, consultative, tolerant, protective, productive, development-oriented and law-abiding, among others. Moreover, the domestic political economy should be hoisted on the promotion of social justice, fairness, gender equality, decentralization, participation and empowerment and an equitable distribution of societal resources, among others.

Second, the various spheres of the state—cultural, economic, political, religious, security and social—should be transformed and democratized, so that no individual or group would be privileged at the expense of others. For example, at the core of economic reconstruction is the importance of the state being both productive and protective. In performing its productive function, the state would invest in revenue-generating activities for the benefits of all of the citizens. As for its protective role, as John Mukum Mbaku argues, "[The state would be] one that provides society with an enabling environment for the creation of the wealth needed to effectively confront poverty and deprivation."[38] In terms of the reconstitution of gender relations, it would revolve around issues such as the equality

of opportunities and access, and the inclusion of women in the societal decision-making processes at various levels. This is because as Patricia Williams aptly asserts, "Women are critical to the democratization and development enterprise…"[39] As well, political reconstitution would entail the respect for the political rights and civil liberties of individuals and groups, the supremacy of the rule of law, "checks and balances," accountability, transparency, the holding of regular free, fair and competitive elections and the functioning of a robust civil society. In the case of religious reconstitution, it would involve, among others, the separation of church and state, and the promotion of pluralism, sensitivity and tolerance for various religions and sects. Security reconstitution would focus on the state providing protection for the liberties and properties of the citizens from the agencies of the state, private individuals, groups and entities, as well as external actors. In the social domain, reconstitution would emphasize the state providing education, health care, decent housing for those who cannot afford it, public transportation and the access to clean drinking water and acceptable sanitation for the citizens.

The organization of the book

The book comprises eight chapters. In Chapter 1, George Klay Kieh, Jr. and Pita Ogaba Agbese discuss the evolution, mission, character, modus operandi and tragedies occasioned by the authoritarian post-colonial state in Africa. Their basic argument is that the post-colonial authoritarian state is the continuation of the colonial construct in a different form. In other words, the post-colonial state retained the features of its colonial progenitor, as reflected in the mission and character. Kieh and Agbese then examine some of the methods the post-colonial state has used to foster authoritarianism—repression, co-optation, harassment, intimidation, imprisonment, banishment into exile, assassination, manipulations, etc. They then decipher some of the multifaceted tragedies—cultural, economic, etc.—that have been engendered by the authoritarian state in Africa. This is followed by an examination of the nature, dynamics and outcomes of the "third wave of democratization" as the panacea to authoritarianism and its multifaceted crises of underdevelopment. Next, the focus and objectives of the book and the summaries of the various chapters are discussed.

In Chapter 2, John Mukum Mbaku deciphers the ways in which authoritarianism has hampered the transition to democratization in Cameroon. On the political front, he identifies the "politics of unification," the lack of a people-driven constitutional-making process that would set the rules of the political system, the lack of effective institutional mechanisms to manage the state in the context of the diverse population, the state's reliance on the use of force and the centralization of power as the major obstacles fashioned by the imperatives of authoritarianism. Economically, there is the lack of a serious national development plan; the lack of a credible system of rules for regulating the economic system and widespread corruption in the public sector. Mbaku then offers some suggestions for ending the suzerainty of authoritarianism: (1) the imperative of democratic

constitution-making; (2) the centrality of constitutionalism; (3) the need to develop effective institutions and their attendant processes; and (4) the development of a serious national plan that would promote economic and social development.

Tukumbi Lumumba-Kasongo examines the development of the Congolese state and the factors that occasioned the collapse of the authoritarian "Mobutuist state," and offers some suggestions for the democratic reconstitution of the construct in Chapter 3. Lumumba-Kasongo posits that during the colonial era, both the Congo Free State and the Belgian Congolese State were designed primarily to serve the interests of metropolitan capitalism, rather than those of the colonized Congolese people. Turning to the post-colonial epoch, he argues that as a consequence of its authoritarian foundation and orientation, violence—mutinies, coups and civil wars—has been the *deus ex machina* in the state-building project in the Congo. Specifically, Lumumba-Kasongo discusses the Lumumba, Mobutu, Kabila I and Kabila II regimes. He argues, among other things, that the Lumumba regime made concerted efforts to democratically reconstitute the state; but the efforts were thwarted by the forces of imperialism in collaboration with their internal puppets; ultimately, Lumumba was assassinated. During the Mobutu era, authoritarianism in its post-colonial phase was consolidated, evidenced by the privatization and criminalization of the state and the centrality of tyranny as the bedrock of the governance system. Regarding the Kabila I regime, Lumumba-Kasongo asserts that Laurent Kabila was not given a chance by the imperialist powers to democratically reconstitute the state. He then discusses the challenges being encountered by the regime of Joseph Kabila. Lumumba-Kasongo then proffers some suggestions for the democratic reconstruction of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. His central recommendation is that the DRC should adopt the social democratic model as its framework for state-building. Under this architecture, he then proposes several specific measures. First, there is a need to learn from the experiences of traditional African systems of management and governance. Second, structural transformation is imperative. Third and related, he postulates that the rules of governance must be democratized. Fourth, he argues that socio-economic development must emphasize the welfare of the Congolese people.

In Chapter 4, Hamdy Abdel Rahman Hassan discusses the Egyptian variant of authoritarianism. Using "pharonism" as the analytical model, he examines the state-building project in Egypt. He posits that the "pharonic" model is an ideal framework for understanding the nature and dynamics of authoritarianism in Egypt under the Nasser, Sadat and Mubarak regimes. He argues that Egypt experimented with democratization from 1923 to 1952. However, the project was aborted by the military coup led by the Free Officers in 1952. Under both military rule and its civilianized form under Nasser, authoritarianism was consolidated. For example, Nasser organized the Arab Socialist Union as the sole legitimate political party (the Arab Socialist Union remained so until 1976). Similarly, under the Sadat regime, Egypt remained an authoritarian state. Confronted by the changing dynamics of the Egyptian Society, the Mubarak regime

took some token steps towards democratization. However, the Egyptian state essentially remained authoritarian—what Hamdy calls "the tragedy of pluralism without democratization." Also, he examines the nature and dynamics of the mass uprising that led to the ouster of the Mubarak regime in 2011, the military interregnum and the country's first democratic presidential election. Finally, he suggests the need to rethink the Egyptian State: (1) the "pharonic core" of the state's governance architecture needs to be changed, and replaced with a system of democratic governance; (2) the need to formulate and implement a democratic constitution and its associated constitutionalism; and (3) the importance of promoting pluralism as an integral part of the larger project of democratization.

Alaric Tokpa addresses three major issues in his discussion of the Liberian state in Chapter 5. First, he examines the evolution of the Liberian state. He identifies the various forces and factors that have shaped the state-building project. Second, he deciphers the failed efforts of the Doe military regime (1980–1986), the Doe civilian regime (1986–1989), the transitional regimes (1990–1997), the Taylor regime (1997–2003), the National Transitional Government of Liberia (2003–2005), and the current Sirleaf regime (2006–) to democratically reconstitute the state. Tokpa then offers some suggestions for democratically reconstituting the Liberian state. His central postulation is that democratic state reconstitution in Liberia should take place under a social democratic model. Based on this overarching framework, he specifically suggests the following: (1) the synergy of procedural and substantive democracy; (2) the establishment of a mixed economic system; (3) the promotion of social welfare, including economic security for all; (4) the respect for fundamental human rights; (5) the establishment of a functioning and competitive multi-party system; and (6) the establishment of a "balance of power" system among the three branches of the government.

In Chapter 6, Jean-Marie Kamatali explores the forces, factors and dynamics of state-building in Rwanda. He begins by discussing the system of governance in Rwanda during the pre-colonial era. He maintains that efforts were being made to develop a democratic governance architecture, but the process was aborted by colonialism. He identifies colonialism as the culprit responsible for sowing and nurturing the seeds of authoritarian state-building in Rwanda. Turning to the post-colonial epoch, Kamatali asserts that the highlights of the period are Hutu domination of the polity; the 1994 genocide; and post-genocide state-building. Kamatali argues that the Rwandan state needs to be democratically reconstituted, if it is to serve as the crucible in which a stable, peaceful and prosperous post-genocide polity can be built. Specifically, he suggests: (1) the ideology of ethnic hatred needs to be obliterated; (2) the need to establish political democracy based on the rule of law; and (3) the formulation and implementation of an economic development plan that accords primacy to the bridging of the gap in wealth and income between the "haves" and the "have-nots."

In Chapter 7, Maude Mugisha interrogates the state-building project in Uganda spanning the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial periods. With a focus on the post-colonial epoch, she examines the "tugs and pulls" of the state-building project during the various regimes that have presided over state power,

including the current Museveni government. She observes that while the Museveni regime has made some progress in terms of socio-economic development and the political empowerment of women, much still needs to be done in terms of the establishment of democracy, and the promotion of social and economic development based on equity and equality. In terms of the democratic reconstitution of the state, she argues that the citizens would be the major actors in the process. But, in order to effectively perform their role as the principal architects of the new democratic Uganda state, the citizens would need to develop their knowledge bases about the issues of governance through the critical process of civic education.

In Chapter 8, George Klay Kieh, Jr. and Pita Ogaba Agbese attempt to draw the lessons offered by the various chapters both in terms of the diagnoses of the crises engendered by the authoritarian state in Africa and the solutions offered to address them. First, Kieh and Agbese summarize the nature and dynamics of the tragedies of the authoritarian state in Africa—undemocratic governance, corruption, the lack of human security, etc. Then, they weave together the various suggestions that are offered to address these issues.

Conclusion

The chapter has attempted to address seven issues. First, the chapter discussed the evolution of the authoritarian post-colonial state in Africa. The basic argument is that the authoritarian state is a continuation of the colonial state. This is reflected in the mission and character of the authoritarian post-colonial state. In terms of its mission, the authoritarian state is designed to create a favorable environment for the private accumulation of capital by the members of the ruling classes and their external patrons. As for the character of the authoritarian state, it is multidimensional–repressive, neo-patrimonial, etc. At given conjunctures, one or more dimensions of the character may be ascendant.

Second, the chapter historicized the evolution of the post-colonial state in Africa. It began with a discussion of indigenous state formation on the continent prior to the imposition of colonial rule. Then, the chapter interrogated the nature and dynamics of the resulting colonial state.

Third, the chapter examined the tragedies occasioned by the authoritarian state. In the cultural realm, the authoritarian state has fostered ethnic polarization and conflicts to the advantage of the incumbent regimes. Environmentally, there are various problems that manifest the pervasiveness of degradation. This includes land, water and air pollution and their attendant impact on human survival and the ecosystem. On the economic front, mass poverty abounds, to the extent that the vast majority of Africans are living perilously. Politically, the authoritarian state has created, among other things, "the cult of the presidency," the centralization of power, the manipulation of multipartyism and the reliance of the state on brute force in its dealing with the various segments of the society. In the security realm, physical and human securities are neglected in the interest of regime security. Socially, authoritarianism has engendered malaise in all areas—life expectancy, access to health care, literacy rate, etc.

Fourth, the chapter deciphered the travails of the "third wave of democratization," which commenced in 1990. After more than two decades, some progress has been made in terms of breaking the authoritarian stranglehold on the continent's various states. For example, the number of liberal democracies have increased from three prior to 1990 to nine in 2012. However, the majority of the states on the continent are hybrid and authoritarian.

Fifth, the chapter discussed the book's conceptual framework. The framework consists of two major terms: authoritarian state and democratic state reconstitution. The framework provides the ideational roadmap for the various chapters in the book.

Sixth, the theoretical framework for the book was also provided. The framework provides the analytical crucible that is used by the various chapters to offer suggestions for democratically reconstituting the state. That is, each of the chapters used the framework as the trajectory for tackling the Herculean task of democratic state reconstitution.

Seventh, the book summarized the various chapters. Specifically, it articulated the foci of the various chapters, their major findings and their specific roadmaps for democratic state reconstitution.

Finally, despite the tenacity of the authoritarian state in Africa, history shows that the people always prevail in the end. Continual mass organization, mobilization and sustained pressure would eventually force African authoritarian states in Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Liberia and Rwanda and elsewhere to democratize. The various pro-democracy groups in these various states need to form broad-based coalitions that are linked to ordinary citizens at the grassroots level. With such a formation, these groups need to wage a concerted struggle for holistic democratization based on a democratically reconstituted state. The current authoritarian state needs to be deconstructed, rethought and democratically reconstituted in its totality—culturally, environmentally, economically, politically, etc. The fixation with political liberalization would not be enough to build new democratic states. Instead, the democratic reconstitution of the state must be a fundamental and holistic project that seeks to change structures, rules, values, processes and power relationships in the interests of the vast majority of Africans.

Notes

1 For a discussion of the multidimensional character of the African state, see Pita Ogaba Agbese, "The Political Economy of the African State," in George Klay Kieh, Jr. (ed.), *Beyond State Failure and Collapse: Making the State Relevant in Africa* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2007), pp. 45–46; George Klay Kieh, Jr., "Introduction: The Terminally Ill Berlinist State," in George Klay Kieh, Jr. (ed.), *Beyond State Failure and Collapse: Making the State Relevant in Africa*, (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2007), pp. 3–21; and George Klay Kieh, Jr., "The State in Africa," in George Klay Kieh, Jr. (ed.), *Africa and the Third Millennium* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2008), pp. 53–85.

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3 See Claude Ake, *The Marginalization of Africa: Notes on Productive Confusion*,

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16 See Human Rights Watch, *World Report 2012* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 2012), p. 98.

17 Ibid.

18 Ibid., p. 85.

19 Ibid., p. 126.

20 Ibid.

21 Ibid., p. 133.

22 Ibid.

23 Ibid.

24 Arthur Nwankwo, *African Dictators* (Enugu, Nigeria: Fourth Dimension Publishing, Ltd., 1990), p. 38.

25 See United Nations Development Program, *Human Development Report, 2011* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

26 Ibid.

27 Ibid.

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29 See David Jolson, "328 Million Africans Without Safe Drinking Water, But Hope Survives," *Global Health*, March 23, 2011, p. 1.

30 See Edmund Smith-Asante, "Over 572 Million Africans Don't Have Proper Sanitation," *Environmental News Ghana*, April 23, 2012, p. 1.

31 See SIL International, *Facts About Literacy* (Dallas, TX: SIL International, 2012).

32 See World Health Organization, *Global Health Observatory Data Repository* (Geneva: WHO, 2011).

33 See United Nations Development Program, *Human Development Report 2012* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 130.

34 See Freedom House, *Freedom in the World: Historical and Comparative Data, 1972–2012* (Washington, DC: Freedom House, 2013).

35 See The Economist's Intelligence Unit, *The Index of Democracy, 2010* (London: The Economist, 2010).

36 See Pita Ogaba Agbese and George Klay Kieh, Jr., "Introduction: Democratizing States and State Reconstitution in Africa," in Pita Ogaba Agbese and George Klay Kieh, Jr. (eds.), *Reconstituting the State in Africa* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), p. 19.
37 See George Klay Kieh, Jr., "Reconstituting the Neo-Colonial State in Africa," *Journal of Third World Studies*, 26(1), 2009, p. 44.
38 John Mukum Mbaku, "Making the State Relevant in African Societies," in John Mukum Mbaku (ed.), *Preparing Africa for the Twenty-First Century* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate Publishing, 1999), p. 317.
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2 The state and Cameroon's stalled transition to democratic governance[1]

John Mukum Mbaku

Introduction

Despite its extreme ethnic, linguistic, religious and geographic diversity, Cameroon had, until the late 1980s and early 1990s, managed to maintain a degree of peaceful coexistence that was envied by many of its neighbors. In fact, while its neighbors were embroiled in destructive ethnic conflict, military coups and other forms of political violence, Cameroon managed to remain peaceful, despite the added contradictions imposed on the country by first German, and then French and British (English) colonial rule. Reunification in 1961 between the former UN Trust Territory of Southern Cameroons under British administration and the *République du Cameroun* (the former UN Trust Territory of Cameroons under French administration, which had gained independence on January 1, 1960) produced a polity that consisted of an extremely assertive Anglophone minority and a domineering Francophone majority with a proclivity for centralization. The unified country, which took the form of a "federation," existed peacefully, not due to the adoption, by the relevant stakeholder groups (i.e., those whose lives were to be regulated by the rules chosen) through democratic (bottom-up, participatory, inclusive and people-driven) constitution making, of mutually beneficial governance structures, but as a result of the government's dependence on a highly centralized, repressive and autocratic governmental system inherited from the French colonialists (the so-called Gaullist system). It was such a governance system, characterized by extremely repressive police institutions such as the BMM (Brigades Mixtes Mobile) and SEDOC (Service de documentation), that enhanced the ability of Ahmadou Ahidjo, the nation's first head of state, to maintain the semblance of peaceful coexistence of population groups from 1961 until his retirement in 1982.[2] In addition to foreclosing, to the people, all avenues of peaceful protest, Ahidjo used the enormous resources made available to him through government regulatory activities in the economy to bribe competitive elites, co-opt politically dominant and influential ethno-regional elites, neutralize them, force many of them into exile and imprison some who challenged his repressive and authoritarian political policies.[3] In other words, the political stability achieved by the country during this period of its history was not based on the acceptance, by the relevant stakeholder groups, of a set of institutional

arrangements, which they had selected to regulate their socio-political interaction, provide them with a peaceful means to resolve conflict and enhance their ability to create the wealth that they needed to meet their various obligations. Like their colonial predecessors, Ahidjo and later, Paul Biya, who inherited the presidency of Cameroon in 1982 through a peaceful and constitutional transfer of power,[4] used the coercive force of the state to force the people into compliance and maintain what appeared to be a peaceful post-independence society.

By the mid-1980s, a combination of domestic and international events had forced a bust in Cameroon's peaceful bubble. Domestic discontent and disgust with the extremely centralized and highly oppressive and exploitative Gaullist system (i.e., the highly centralized political system with a very strong executive president, which had been established by the 1960 constitution, with the latter based on and closely resembling the French constitution of 1958), as well as monumental changes in the global political economy (notably, the end of apartheid in South Africa and the cessation of superpower rivalry following the end of the Cold War), in addition to the debilitating effects of economic recession and the wave of people-centered pro-democracy demonstrations that were sweeping the continent, forced authorities to, albeit reluctantly, initiate institutional reforms.

Although the reforms introduced by Paul Biya's government in 1990 could be considered minor and relatively insignificant, the benefits to the people came from the fact that for the first time since reunification in 1961, the central government in Yaoundé was now willing to engage in some form of dialogue with most of the country's relevant stakeholder groups about their views on governance and the economy. For many years, anyone who attempted to criticize the government or engage it in a dialogue on issues of importance to governance and macroeconomic performance, was considered subversive, unpatriotic and severely castigated.[5] In fact, quite often, such government critics were imprisoned or forced into exile. Those who suggested that government could function more effectively and efficiently and be more relevant to the lives of Cameroonians if it were decentralized, were considered separatists and publicly condemned. Despite the fact that the 1961 reunification constitution set up a federal system of government in Cameroon, and granted the English-speaking part of the country a significant level of political and economic autonomy, the central government in Yaoundé moved quickly to reject the idea and eventually established a highly centralized and oppressive governmental structure that many Anglophones came to regard as a new "colonial master." For one thing, Anglophones and others who advocated strict adherence and fidelity to the federalist ideal (i.e., political and economic autonomy for each of the two states that formed the federation) were considered secessionists. By the late 1980s, many of these castigated individuals had joined their fellow Cameroonians to embark on demonstrations to force the government to undertake institutional reforms to improve governance. Thus, when the government agreed to engage popular forces in peaceful discourse about the future of governance in the country (instead of resorting to its traditionally oppressive methods), this was considered a significant step in the right direction.

Paul Biya and his government, at the urging of the emerging opposition (and to a lesser extent, the international community), legalized multiparty politics in Cameroon in 1990. Unfortunately for Cameroonians, the transition initiated by the opposition was hijacked by the incumbent government and manipulated to allow Paul Biya and the ruling Cameroon People's Democratic Party (CPDM) to continue to maintain a monopoly on power. The democratic openings made possible by the institutional reforms implemented as a result of campaigns by the opposition, led by Ni John Fru Ndi's Social Democratic Front (SDF), have not produced any further deepening and institutionalization of democracy in Cameroon. In fact, today, Cameroon is yet to institutionalize the participatory, transparent, accountable and people-driven form of governance (i.e., democratic governance) that Cameroonians have been fighting for since the late 1980s. The extent of the country's democratization has been limited to the staging of elections, all of which have been *won* by the incumbent and his ruling CPDM party. Although several international observers, including the Washington, DC-based National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI), have argued that administration of these elections by the government (as opposed to an independent electoral commission) was opportunistic (usually designed to ensure victory by the incumbent), Paul Biya's government has usually declared itself winner regardless of the actual poll results.

After the 1992 presidential election, which many observers believed was rigged in favor of Paul Biya and the CPDM,[6] popular forces (especially in the Anglophone provinces where the people were violently protesting the "theft of Fru Ndi's victory") again demanded that the government engage all of the country's relevant stakeholder groups in a national dialogue on state reconstruction through democratic (i.e., people-driven, bottom-up, participatory and inclusive) constitution making. Many of these demands came from Anglophones who believed that a democratic constitution-making process could afford them the opportunity to redefine their relationship with the rest of the polity and choose rules that allowed them to maximize their values. While some Anglophones desired secession and formation of an independent and sovereign nation, the majority, at least at this time, preferred a decentralized and loose political system that granted the Anglophone provinces significant political and economic autonomy. Such a system, they believed, could only be designed through the effective and full participation of the Anglophone masses in compacting the federal constitution. Thus, they called upon the government to provide the facilities for democratic constitution making[7] so that all the relevant stakeholder groups could participate in the process of compacting constitutional rules capable of effectively managing diversity in the country and providing the wherewithal for sustainable development. The government, however, opted for a return to the rules-compacting scheme of yesteryear, in which the process was top-down, non-participatory and elite-driven, with relevant stakeholder groups not provided the facilities to participate. The result of the government's imposed- and directed-constitution-making effort was the 1996 constitution, which turned out to be a merely amended (with the "work" carried out entirely by civil servant

Professor Owona) version of the 1972 constitution. Through this process, Paul Biya re-enforced the already highly centralized Gaullist system of government; enhanced his monopoly on power; forced a regression in the country's transition to democratic governance; destroyed the country's embryonic democratic experiment; and dashed the hopes of Anglophones for self-determination within a unified Cameroon polity. It is important to mention here that the 1972 constitution was an amended version of the 1961 constitution, with the latter being a copy of the 1960 constitution of the *République du Cameroun*. Thus, the 1996 constitution is essentially a copy of the 1960 constitution, with several changes made to further strengthen the power of the presidency. In 2008, the National Assembly amended the 1996 constitution to allow Biya to contest the 2011 presidential elections.

Today, Paul Biya's government in Cameroon remains as authoritarian as ever and, the government refuses to acknowledge that there exists a governance problem in the country or that existing institutional arrangements cannot effectively accommodate the people's demands (especially those of the Anglophone minority) for increased participation in governance and the economy. As Anglophones and other politically and economically marginalized and excluded peoples and communities seek to increase their participation in governance, Biya and the CPDM government have continued to employ the state's coercive apparatus to disenfranchise these population groups and push them to the periphery of the political system. During the last several years, many of the leaders of the disenfranchised groups have been forced into exile, with some of them now living and working in the United States, Canada, Western Europe, Middle East and in several African countries, notably South Africa, Zambia, Botswana, Nigeria, Zimbabwe and Kenya.

The primary objective of this chapter is as follows: I employ a constitutional political economy approach[8] to determine the source of many of Cameroon's present political, social and economic problems. I also look at why the opposition, led by the Social Democratic Front, has been unable to successfully spearhead the country's transition to democracy.

The rules selected in an earlier period (i.e., constitutional rules) form the foundation for the social arrangements within which all members of the society will make choices and interact with one another. Since the rules determine the incentive structures faced by participants in economic (e.g., entrepreneurs) and political (e.g., civil servants and politicians) markets, they also determine the outcomes expected from these markets. However, the *process* through which the rules are compacted determines the nature of the rules and how effective they would be in meeting the needs of the society in question in general, and in adequately constraining the behavior of state custodians (i.e., civil servants and politicians), in particular. Hence, one way to determine the source of Cameroon's present economic, social and political problems is to examine its institutional arrangements and how they were developed. In other words, how was the country's constitution compacted and by whom?

The main thesis of this chapter, then, is that many of the country's present social, political and economic problems can be traced to the political economy

of reunification and the failure of the country's founding fathers to insist on a democratic, people-driven, participatory constitution-making process to produce the rules that came to govern the new nation as a federation in 1961. Back then, those who compacted what came to be called the *Foumban Accords* or the 1961 federal constitution, did not take seriously the country's historical heritage and provide appropriate structures to manage it. Had these founding fathers taken cognizance of this diverse heritage and invested in a *democratic constitution-making process* (which would have provided all relevant stakeholder groups the facilities to participate fully and effectively in constitution making), the outcome would have been institutional arrangements that allowed all of the country's population groups to maximize their values and govern themselves properly and effectively. Instead, as will be seen later, the job of compacting the constitutional rules at reunification was relegated to a few urban-based elites who appropriated a document based on the French Constitution of 1958 and imposed it on Cameroon's population groups. Such a foreign document, with no grounding in the realities of what is Cameroon, could not have been expected to provide the wherewithal to effectively manage the country's diversity or enhance the ability of all population groups to maximize their values and use their talents and resources productively to create the wealth that they need to confront mass poverty and deprivation

Today, as they have done during the last 50 years, Cameroon leaders continue to pre-occupy themselves with efforts to impose uniformity on all groups and effectively eliminate the country's diversity. Thus, instead of providing an institutional environment that enhances the democratic management of diversity, the Biya government, like that of its predecessor, Ahmadou Ahidjo, has busied itself with unity and national integration, not through free and voluntary association as would be provided for in a people-compacted constitution, but through force. The blind refusal of the government to recognize and come to terms with the country's heritage and to provide institutional structures for the effective management of such a heritage remains the most important obstacle to peaceful coexistence, as well as sustainable economic growth and development, in the country. Many Cameroonians want the government to provide the country with participatory, transparent and accountable governance structures, those that would allow them to be Anglophone or Bamiléké, Widekum, Bamoum, Bakossi, Bassa, Beti-Fang, Foulah, Peuhl, Tikar, Duala, Bakweri, etc., and still be Cameroonian. In other words, what they desire is a loose, voluntary association of groups that enhances the ability of each individual/group to maximize his/its values. That is, some form of *constitutional federalism*, although, as described by many Anglophone Cameroonians, the system being advocated appears to be more of a confederation than federation. Nevertheless, the critical issue is that these groups desire significant decentralization and devolution of power away from the center in Yaoundé and in favor of regional and local political jurisdictions. While many Anglophone groups prefer that such devolution of power be carried out within a *constitutional federal system*, the majority of Francophones, especially those who hold leadership positions in the Biya regime, prefer devolution within the existing centralized system.

Given its diversity, a genuinely democratic Cameroon must abandon the highly centralized and oppressive governmental system inherited from the French and institute, through democratic constitution making, a set of institutional arrangements that reflects that diversity and the preferences, as well as the customs, traditions, desires and expectations of the relevant stakeholder groups. Unless Cameroonians arm themselves with such institutional arrangements, they are not likely to be able to deepen and institutionalize democratic rule and achieve the kind of peaceful coexistence that comes from the willingness of people to live together peacefully.

Reunification and the creation of authoritarianism in Cameroon

In voting, in a UN-supervised plebiscite, to form a union with *La République du Cameroun* (the UN Trust Territory of Cameroons under French administration, which had gained independence on January 1, 1960 and taken the name *République du Cameroun*), the people of British Southern Cameroons expected the new political arrangement to be a loose, voluntary association in which they would retain significant political and economic autonomy. Perhaps more important was the fact that they expected to retain their traditions of open political debate, a free press and a legal system based on English common law, as well as an economic system that granted traders and producers significant levels of economic freedom, as well as encouraged and actually supported entrepreneurship. Unfortunately, many constraints were to make the realization of such a political system impossible. Thus, the opportunity made possible by reunification was not utilized to build and eventually institutionalize democracy in Cameroon. Instead, the country's new leaders used it to develop and impose on the people institutional arrangements that allowed these elites to entrench themselves politically and proceed to plunder the national economy for their own benefit and that of their benefactors.

It is important to note here that British Southern Cameroons exhibited significant levels of cultural, economic, political, ethnic and social diversity. In fact, great diversity in political opinion is evident in the heated debates that preceded the plebiscite of 1961—the southern-based Cameroon People's National Convention (CPNC), led by Dr. E.M.L. Endeley, campaigned vigorously for federation with Nigeria, while J.N. Foncha's northern-based Kamerun National Democratic Party (KNDP) opted for reunification with *La République du Cameroun*.[9]

Why did Cameroonians fail to establish, at Foumban in 1961, constitutional rules that could have provided a strong and viable foundation for deepening democracy and eventually institutionalizing the latter in the country? First, Ahmadou Ahidjo and his French supporters were not interested in dismantling the Gaullist political system already in existence in *La République du Cameroun* and replacing it with one that could have enhanced the ability of the other partner in the union (British Southern Cameroons) to maximize its values. Leadership in

La République du Cameroun did not appear to be interested, then, in establishing a democratic system in the new federation. Both Ahidjo and his government, as well as his French handlers, were quite satisfied with the 1960 constitution—the foundation for the institutions in that new country—and were not interested in participating in a process that could have significantly altered those institutional arrangements.[10]

Second, as has been claimed by several scholars,[11] the Southern Cameroons delegation to the constitutional negotiations in Foumban was inexperienced, financially handicapped and poorly counseled. Third, the other partner in the proposed union, *La République du Cameroun*, was already an independent country with well-established and internationally recognized institutional arrangements and, unlike British Southern Cameroons, had access to significant amounts of resources from France. However, the British, who as colonial administrators of record, were supposed to prepare the territory for eventual independence, literally abandoned the Southern Cameroons delegation and did not provide it with the wherewithal to negotiate and secure an effective political arrangement with *La République du Cameroun*. Fourth, many Southern Cameroonians had been convinced by the KNDP, the dominant political party in the territory, that union with Nigeria would subject them to further marginalization by a domineering and economically and politically more advanced Nigerian citizenry, especially the Igbos. Such fears, some authors believe, may have contributed to the significant vote in favor of reunification with *La République du Cameroun*. Such overwhelming support for reunification weakened the negotiating power of the Southern Cameroons delegation at the so-called Foumban constitutional "talks" and made it quite difficult for Southern Cameroons to significantly affect the nature of the Foumban agreement.[12]

Fifth, the constraints imposed by the United Nations on the Southern Cameroons, as conditions for the territory's independence, negatively affected the territory's ability to secure the type of agreement that would have been favorable to the maximization of its values. In fact, the Southern Cameroons delegation could not have used the threat of exit as a weapon against opportunistic behavior by the other partner in the Foumban constitutional negotiations since UN conditions for independence precluded the territory's existence as a sovereign entity. The independent *République du Cameroun*, on the other hand, could have abandoned the negotiations, retained its laws and institutions and continued its existence as an independent and sovereign country. Under such an action, the Southern Cameroons would have been forced to either join Nigeria or remain a colony until Britain and the United Nations could resolve the situation. It was quite clear, even to the casual observer, that Southern Cameroons would not be able to engage in negotiations from a point of strength and, as a result, would be unable to secure a mutually beneficial social contract or have much impact on the nature of the reunification constitutional compact.

Sixth, struggles for power between the two main opposition political parties in Southern Cameroons—CPNC and the KNDP—enhanced Ahidjo's ability to weaken both of them, marginalize their leadership at the national level and

effectively destroy the autonomy of the territory they represented. Seventh, *La République du Cameroun*'s ruling elites, as mentioned earlier, did not want to weaken their established institutional arrangements and undertake the type of democratic constitution making that would have enhanced the ability of the people of Southern Cameroons to select rules and set up a federal system that enhanced the maximization of Southern Cameroons values.

Of course, not all constituencies in *La République du Cameroun* were satisfied with the country's institutional arrangements—that is, those made possible by the 1960 constitution. This is evidenced by pervasive political violence in the immediate post-independence period and the presence of a large contingent of French soldiers in the new country. The decision by Ahidjo's government to allow France to keep part of its colonial army in what was now an independent country was indicative of the extremely high level of dissatisfaction with laws and institutions that were perceived by popular forces as alien, repressive, exploitative and designed to provide members of the ruling coalition and their benefactors with many privileges.

Finally, one cannot call what took place in Foumban, "constitutional negotiations." In addition to the fact that the entire proceedings lasted only 90 minutes, no real dialogue was undertaken, with each side given the opportunity to articulate its ideas and challenge those of the other. In his address to the conference on July 21, 1961, John Ngu Foncha, leader of the Southern Cameroons delegation, is said to have stood before Ahidjo and his French handlers like a scared and seriously ill-prepared school boy facing a sadistic, rigid and stern schoolmaster, afraid of being scolded, or worse, thrashed. He appeared timid and afraid to express himself, failing to protest, in the harshest terms, what was basically an effort to deprive the Southern Cameroons of the opportunity to secure a union agreement that would guarantee their political and economic autonomy. Like their leader, none of the other members of the Southern Cameroons delegation seized the opportunity to challenge the document (which turned out to be the 1960 constitution of *La République du Cameroun* with very minor modifications) that had been presented to them for review and approval. In fact, none of them suggested that the proceedings be postponed to give them enough time to: (1) examine the document thoroughly; (2) secure additional technical assistance, including translation services since the document was in French, a language none of them spoke or understood, so they could better and more effectively articulate and elaborate their position; (3) consult with and seek the full and effective participation of the relevant stakeholder groups in the Southern Cameroons; and (4) develop a working draft constitution, with the help of relevant stakeholder groups in Southern Cameroons, from which the delegation could more effectively negotiate and be able to challenge any efforts by Ahidjo's delegation to force them into a non-viable institutional arrangement. There does not appear to be any evidence to indicate that the Southern Cameroons delegation came to the Foumban negotiations with a prepared constitutional draft, at least one that had been compacted in consultation with popular forces. The government of the Southern Cameroons had never really engaged all of the territory's

relevant constituencies in a dialogue on the expected nature of the political and economic relationship between the two partners. It was simply assumed that the union would be a loose association of political equals with each allowed to retain its institutions and perhaps, more importantly, its autonomy. Unfortunately, at Foumban, the Southern Cameroons delegation did not or was unable to fight hard enough to secure such a political arrangement.[13]

As a result of the Southern Cameroons' weak negotiating position, *La République du Cameroun* was forced to make only nominal changes to its laws and institutions in order to enter the federation. As Southern Cameroonians would later discover, they were forced to abandon virtually all of their institutions and adopt those of *La République du Cameroun*. As explained by Professor Kofele-Kale,[14]

> [i]t was often difficult to tell in many instances where the eastern state [that is, La République du Cameroun, which took the name East Cameroon in the new federation; the Southern Cameroons became the federated state of West Cameroon] jurisdiction left off and where that of the federal government began. The lines were blurred, and this only reinforced anglophone perception of francophone domination.

Exactly what kind of federation was established through the Foumban Accords? Most Southern Cameroonians (who after the 1961 reunification were known as West Cameroonians) thought that the Foumban Accords had created a two-state federation, with each state granted significant political and economic autonomy. Important to West Cameroonians was the belief that they would be able to retain many of the institutions (e.g., free press, decentralized decision making in the public arena, English common law, etc.), which they had inherited from the English. Thus, they did not expect reunification to subject them to the Francophone proclivity for highly centralized decision making. What kind of union, then, was compacted in Foumban in 1961? As illustrated by a few examples given below, whatever it was, it did not protect the autonomy of West Cameroon.

Shortly after reunification between British Southern Cameroons and the independent *La République du Cameroun*, the former began to suffer from the effects of its failure to negotiate effectively for a more viable political arrangement. For example, on December 20, 1961, less than three months after the federation came into effect, the new President, Ahmadou Ahidjo, issued decree No. 61-DF-15, dividing the country into six regions. The new law, which made West Cameroon one of six political regions, effectively abrogated the state's autonomy as provided for in the 1961 constitution. In fact, a Federal Inspector, who had more power than the local political leaders, headed each region. In the case of West Cameroon, that meant that the Federal Inspector could (and did) over-rule decisions made by the state's chief administrator—the prime minister, a clear violation of the spirit of federation. From this point onward, West Cameroon remained a *federated* state in name only. Ahidjo, using loopholes in the federal

constitution, which, as has been mentioned earlier, was actually the 1960 constitution of *La République du Cameroun*, summarily abrogated the federation and established a highly centralized, repressive and exploitative administrative system in the country. Officially, the death of the federation came in 1972 with decree No. 72-DF-270, which abrogated the federal arrangement and established a unitary system and changed the name of the country from the Federal Republic of Cameroon to the United Republic of Cameroon. It is important to note here that the action by Ahidjo was actually unconstitutional since Article 47(1) of the 1961 constitution contained the appropriate procedure to amend the constitution and specifically and expressly prohibited any changes that constrained or impaired the "unity and integrity of the federation."

Despite proclamations to the contrary, Ahidjo never intended to establish and maintain within Cameroon, a democratic (i.e., participatory, accountable and transparent) system of government that enhanced the ability of the different population groups to maximize their values. In other words, he never intended to establish a functioning federal system in Cameroon. This is evidenced by several of the policies that he adopted shortly after reunification in 1961. Four of them stand out. First, through presidential decrees, he abrogated any traces of decentralized decision-making processes resulting from the 1961 constitution and created a highly centralized political system that was more powerful than that expected of the Gaullist model. In fact, the concentration of power in the center in Yaoundé, specifically in the hands of Ahidjo, was so thorough and complete that his ministers could not even initiate any policy without the president's approval.[15] Second, in an effort to sustain the highly repressive and authoritarian political system, Ahidjo adopted the so-called *planned liberalism* development model, which significantly increased the government's power to control the allocation of resources. With the enormous resources made available to the government through planned liberalism, Ahidjo established an elaborate patronage system that allowed him to reward those who supported the government and punish its detractors.[16] He cultivated a highly paid and privileged ethno-regional client network that enhanced his ability to monopolize political power in the country. This was a sophisticated patronage system with Ahidjo as its head or grand baron. Below him were several ethnic barons, with the latter serving as spokesmen for their respective ethnic groups or, in the case of such politicians as Solomon T. Muna, Nzo Ekah Nghaky, Egbe Tabi and others, spokesmen for the Anglophone minority. Each baron secured the support of his constituency for Ahidjo and, in exchange, was rewarded handsomely—such rewards usually included public projects for the respective constituency and a chance for the baron to engage in personal enrichment.

What was the composition of such networks? As argued by Kofele-Kale,[17] Ahidjo created and utilized governing "networks and coalitions that included, in varying combinations, leaders of critical southern and western ethnic groups, his own northern allies, businessmen, traditional chiefs and magnates, and members of the country's intelligentsia." Biya used a similar approach to governance. While the core of Ahidjo's ruling coalition was made up of *fideles* from the

North (his home region), the majority of Biya's closest advisors were old friends and coethnics from the South. It must be noted, however, that at least during the early years, Biya did rely very heavily on two Dualas, William Eteki Mboumoua and François Sengat Kuo.[18]

Third, through what can be called "governance by decree," Ahidjo was able to outmaneuver his political rivals by regularly appointing academics and civil servants to public positions, effectively blurring the divide between politics and administration.[19] He regularly "purchased" his major opponents, appointing them (through presidential decree) to positions that allowed them to share generously in the spoils system. Fear of losing such lucrative positions usually kept such individuals in line and prevented them from joining the opposition, which at this time had been forced underground.

Fourth, by creating and sustaining a highly repressive and suffocating political machinery in Cameroon, Ahidjo effectively eliminated virtually all forms of opposition to his rule. During his tenure in office, Ahidjo often argued that multiparty political competition would plunge the country into ethnically motivated civil war and that his rule was what prevented the country from degenerating into anarchy.[20] However, as argued by some scholars, Ahidjo could not be classified as a simple dictator, à la Idi Amin, eager to accumulate and abuse power. Instead, as maintained by these scholars, he was a highly skilled and pragmatic politician who not only managed to keep Cameroon peaceful and engaged in productive pursuits from 1961 to 1982, but produced a polity that was the envy of many of its neighbors. As argued by a long-time student of Cameroon political economy, Victor T. LeVine,[21]

> … it was Ahidjo's tactics that made the difference in the final analysis. He treated his opponents firmly, sometimes harshly, but made sure that even his bitterest enemies had both the chance of joining his side and of actively sharing in the perquisites of rule. That he was never vindictive is to his credit: Mbida was repeatedly offered various portfolios, Okala came out of prison to become an ambassador, and several former UPC leaders have taken high and well-paying jobs in the government. The style of the regime appears to have been actively reconciliationist, pragmatic and tactically consistent.

Biya and the promise of a new and democratic dispensation

In 1982, Ahidjo resigned from office and handed the apparatus of state to his prime minister, Paul Biya, through a peaceful and constitutional process. There has been a lot of speculation as to why Ahidjo resigned his position as president of Cameroon. While ill-health continues to dominate the reasons advanced for the resignation, it is also argued that by resigning but retaining leadership of the country's single political party, the CNU, Ahidjo expected to control the government from behind the scenes. This is evidenced in the fact that shortly after leaving office, Ahidjo tried, although unsuccessfully, to assert the primacy of the

CNU over the government. It was soon clear that he was not willing to remain the elder statesman that he had indicated he would be when he retired from office in 1982.[22]

Biya came into office in 1982 promising to implement reforms to rid Cameroonian society of the corruption and excesses of the Ahidjo regime. He promised Cameroonians that he would open national political and economic spaces for increased and more effective participation by all citizens, especially hitherto marginalized and excluded ones. In addition, he assured Cameroonians of greater press freedom and opportunities for them to engage in public debate about problems that affected their lives and which were of importance to them, as well as participate in the formulation and implementation of policies to deal with these problems. His vision, he told fellow Cameroonians, was to create a new society in which all the country's population groups could maximize their values and contribute effectively to national development.[23]

During the first year of Paul Biya's presidency, Cameroonians enjoyed a significant level of press freedom, a private press emerged and foreign magazines were allowed into the country without any attempt by state censors to excise articles considered damaging to the "national interest." A certain level of tolerance appeared to be developing, and Cameroonians suddenly found themselves able to offer the government constructive criticism of its policies. Even students at the nation's universities were not harassed by security forces (as was the case during the Ahidjo regime) when the former engaged in discussions of political and economic issues affecting the country.[24]

The most important indicator of the new government's tolerance for competitive political opinion came in its reaction to a manifesto issued by a group of political, business and civic leaders from the Anglophone North West province during the New Deal Congress (of the ruling Cameroon National Union party, which later became the CDPM) in March 1985. In the document, the central government in Yaoundé was taken to task for policies, which, since 1961, according to the authors, had effectively turned the Anglophone part of the country into a "colony." That Biya's government allowed the document to be transmitted to the masses represented a significant advancement in political discourse in the country. Perhaps more important is the fact that the authors were not considered or labeled subversive elements and severely punished. Thus, for the first time since single-party rule was introduced into Cameroon in 1966, the annual political congress was not used solely to showcase party officials and sing the praises of the president but to tackle issues critical to the people.[25]

The questions many Cameroonian intellectuals were asking at the time were: Was this the beginning of a truly new political dispensation in the country? Had the ruling coalition finally decided that it was time to grant Cameroonians the power to determine their own destiny? Or was this a carefully crafted program to gain legitimacy for Paul Biya and his government and help the president achieve the levels of power and control of Cameroon's institutions that had previously been held by Ahidjo? As the evidence has since shown, Biya was not on a mission to make government more relevant to the lives of Cameroonians; nor

was he attempting to open up national political spaces for increased participation by popular forces. He, instead, was engaged in a systematic process to consolidate his control of governance structures in the country.[26] But, didn't the government provide Cameroonians with a significant level of press freedom?

A closer examination of press freedom in Cameroon at the time would reveal that its exercise was only allowed and tolerated by the government if the criticisms were directed at the regime of former president, Ahmadou Ahidjo, and the many policies that were now blamed for all of the country's political, economic and social problems. During the early years of Biya's presidency, there were rumors circulating to the effect that Ahidjo would attempt to recapture the presidency, possibly through a military coup conducted by military officers who were still loyal to him. In fact, in 1984, Biya's government claimed that it had uncovered evidence of an attempted coup involving the ex-president. Shortly after that, Biya began to aggressively encourage critics of the former president so that they could intensify their attacks of the *ancien régime*. Thus, as has been indicated by many scholars (see, e.g., *West Africa*, September 5, 1983, p. 2049), press freedom at this time in Cameroon was employed primarily as a tool for power consolidation by the president rather than for state reconstruction and the institutionalization of democracy. As has been so eloquently stated by one observer, press freedom in Biya's Cameroon "starts where condemnation of the Ahidjo regime is concerned and ends where criticism of the Biya era begins."[27]

As part of his so-called "democratization" effort, Biya also introduced a form of competitive politics borrowed from Julius Nyerere's Tanzania and Jomo Kenyatta's Kenya. Like its counterparts in Kenya and Tanzania, the single-party political system formed the core of this approach to competitive politics. Thus, Biya retained the single party which had been introduced by Ahidjo; however, he changed the party's name from the Cameroon National Union (CNU) to the Cameroon People's Democratic Movement (CPDM). How was the new system to operate? Within the single party, multiple candidates could run for public office. The idea was to create competition within the single party while allowing the Political Bureau to have and exercise significant power over national politics. According to Biya's new plan, Cameroon voters would have the opportunity to select from several candidates, all of whom would be allowed to compete for elective office within the framework of the CNU. Implementation of the process was actually undertaken following the formation of the CPDM as successor to the CNU in 1985. The new approach was used to elect individuals to leadership positions in the party, and in the legislative elections of 1987 and 1988.

While within-party competition resulted in the selection of many new faces to political positions within the country, all the candidates, as in the past, were screened and approved by the Political Bureau of the CPDM. In other words, the new reforms did not bring into national political space any members of the opposition or individuals who did not belong to a political party. Instead, they provided the government with the wherewithal to get rid of its political rivals and still appear to critics of the regime as supporting political competition. In fact, according to Professor Joseph Takougang,[28] in the 1988 legislative

elections, all candidates had to undergo a tedious, highly complex and complicated clearance process that started at the local level and ended with ultimate approval of the final list of candidates by the Central Committee of the ruling party. After the elections, President Biya and the CPDM remained firmly in control of the apparatus of government. Thus, despite the purported reforms, government remained corrupt, oppressive and completely out of touch with the needs of the majority of Cameroonians. As many of the country's citizens would later discover, while criticisms of former president Ahidjo were welcomed and encouraged, any statements or activities that were not in support or praise of the incumbent government were not only discouraged but their authors or perpetrators were punished severely.

In the fall of 1983, as part of his reform movement, Biya modified Article 7 of the constitution to allow more than one candidate to stand for the presidency of the country; that is, to challenge him for the leadership of the country. Was this the beginning of a genuine effort to democratize Cameroon politics and eventually institutionalize democratic governance in the country? A close examination would reveal that the president did not intend to further the cause of democratization. Although Article 7 had been modified allowing Cameroonians other than Biya to run in a presidential election, the actual process of qualifying for participation was so complicated that it was not likely that anyone but Biya would qualify. For example, under the new rules, an individual intending to run for president was expected to present to the electoral commission a petition signed by 500 public officials (50 from each of the 10 provinces). Those who were qualified to sign the petition included members of the National Assembly, provincial governors, traditional chiefs, divisional officers and members of the Central Committee of the CDPM. In addition, a prospective candidate had to have resided in Cameroon continuously for five years. Since virtually all the individuals qualified to sign the petition had been appointed to their jobs by presidential decree (usually on recommendation from the party) and owed their jobs to the president and the CPDM, it appeared unlikely that such public servants would voluntarily engage in behavior that could result in the loss of their jobs and privileges. Signing a petition to allow someone to challenge the president would be seen as a sign of disloyalty and ungratefulness. Such action would usually have resulted in immediate termination. It was not surprising that in presidential elections, Biya remained unchallenged; in other words, no individual qualified under the amended Article 7 to challenge him for the presidency.[29]

As argued by Professor John Mukum Mbaku,[30] the most important indication that Biya's so-called reform was actually a farce is given by the fact that the president (1) made no attempt to engage all Cameroonian constituencies in a national debate on governance and the economy; and (2) did not dismantle the anachronistic and excessively oppressive institutions set up by Ahidjo and used effectively to oppress Cameroonians. In fact, by the mid-1980s, Biya had begun to resort to the same repressive tactics that Ahidjo had employed to silence and/or destroy his critics. Many of the draconian laws passed during the 1960s and 1970s to restrict freedom of expression, including those against public discourse,

were not repealed. Instead, Biya's government used those laws to arrest and punish citizens who spoke out against corruption, abuse of power and public malfeasance. For example, in 1991, Pius Njawe and Célestin Monga were arrested and detained for writing a newspaper editorial considered by the government to be insulting and disrespectful to the president. As late as 1990, Cameroonians were still being arrested for attempting to form political parties. On May 20, 1990, six people were killed by security forces in the North West provincial city of Bamenda for supporting the launching of the Social Democratic Party, an activity that was considered by the Biya government as illegal, subversive and not in the interest of the country.[31]

Multiparty politics return to Cameroon

In the late 1980s, many Cameroonians began to realize that the Biya government did not intend to bring about a democratic dispensation in the country. At this time, a "pro-democracy" movement was sweeping Africa, and Cameroonians, especially those who historically had been marginalized and pushed to the political and economic periphery, began to agitate for what they believed were long-delayed institutional reforms to introduce multiparty politics in the country. Many of these individuals and groups did not see multiparty politics as an end in itself, but as a framework through which democracy could be deepened and institutionalized in the country. The government's use of force to prevent the formation of opposition political parties and other organizations for popular participation finally convinced citizens that Paul Biya and his regime were not interested in making competitive politics a reality in Cameroon.

Such realization, in view of the monumental changes that were taking place in global politics (especially the demise of apartheid in South Africa, the end of superpower rivalry, following the disintegration of the Soviet Union, and the collapse of several authoritarian regimes in the continent) did not deter students, women, the unemployed and other historically marginalized groups from continuing their struggle for democratization and the establishment of more inclusive governance structures. This persistence by the country's pro-democracy groups, worsening economic conditions and pressure from the international donor community, especially from the country's traditional benefactors—France and the European Union (and to a certain extent, the United States)—eventually forced Biya to legalize competitive politics in the country. Thus, on December 19, 1990, President Paul Biya formally legalized multiparty politics in Cameroon. Shortly afterwards, several political parties emerged and became operational. One must note here, however, that the law legalizing political competition still favored the president and his political party.

Although formation of political parties to challenge the ruling CPDM for control of the state was now legal, President Biya and the CPDM were still in firm control of resource allocation and with the state's enormous resources, he was able to silence the regime's critics, either through bribery, intimidation or co-optation into the CPDM.[32] From the end of 1990 until the presidential

elections of 1992, members of the armed forces and other paramilitary forces were used regularly by the government to prevent peaceful protest and other anti-government activities throughout the country. In addition, as many as 300 people, mostly members of the opposition, were said to have been killed during this period.[33] Thus, after legalizing political parties, the government set out to terrorize the masses and create conditions within the country that made it virtually impossible for them to exercise the rights granted by the new law. Hence, the country's popular forces were unable to effectively challenge the president's continued monopolization of political power. In addition to actual oppression by the security forces, the president also employed press censorship, denial of publishing privileges for independent newspapers that did not support the government position, and the restriction of the ability of publishers to distribute their papers, to make it virtually impossible for the opposition to disseminate their viewpoints.

The incumbent government also attempted, often quite successfully, to hijack programs initiated by the opposition to make certain that implementation did not undermine the president's control of the country. Perhaps, an important example is the opposition's call in 1991 for a Sovereign National Conference (SNC) to develop the political principles on which the country's post-Cold War constitution would be based. The opposition saw the SNC as offering all of the country's constituencies an opportunity to provide significant input into the design of a constitution that would enhance their ability to live together peacefully and have more control over their resources. Perhaps more important was the opposition's belief that the SNC would provide an appropriate environment and framework for the resolution of many issues and conflicts (e.g., the Anglophone problem; allocation of natural resources, especially the oil in the Anglophone South West province; the privatization of important public enterprises, including the Cameroon Development Corporation; and the issue of language, as well as the educational system in both parts of the country) that remained a threat to the health of the polity.

In response to the call for an SNC, the president took two actions that severely handicapped the opposition and reduced its ability to challenge the administration. First, Biya called for early elections and promised to appoint the next prime minister from the party that won the largest majority in the new national assembly. As has been argued by Professor Takougang,[34] despite the fact that the president's "concessions fell short of the opposition's call for a Sovereign National Conference, it gave the appearance that the president was prepared to break the political stalemate." By implication, of course, the offer by the president to appoint the next prime minister was an indication that he did not plan to give up the government to the opposition, even if his party, the CPDM, did not win the election. The country's most important opposition party, the SDF, decided to boycott the March 1992 legislative elections, insisting that an SNC be held before any elections could be conducted in the country.

Paul Biya's CPDM party won the March 1, 1992 elections, capturing 88 seats in the 180-member legislative assembly. That victory, however, fell short of the

91-seat majority that it needed to rule the country. The president, thus, moved quickly to secure such a majority by forming an alliance with the *Mouvement pour la défense de la république* (MDR), which had captured six seats in the election, all of them coming from the Far North Province. To appease the Anglophone masses and prevent them from further destabilizing his new government, Biya appointed Simon Achidi Achu, the first English-speaking prime minister in the country's post-reunification history. Although many observers saw the appointment as an attempt by the president to improve his image among the Anglophones, others argued that the choice of an Anglophone from the North West Province as prime minister was designed to divide the two Anglophone provinces and weaken their ability to challenge his control of Cameroon. Up to this point, the two Anglophone provinces—the Northwest and the Southwest—had mounted an almost unanimous opposition to Biya's continued monopolization of Cameroon's political space. Thus, Achidi Achu's appointment was seen as an effort to weaken the united effort by the former West Cameroon against the president.

The president took other actions that significantly weakened the opposition and reduced the latter's ability to move the democratization project forward. He continued to bribe and co-opt members of important opposition parties with offers of lucrative public appointments. In fact, the UNDP (*Union nationale pour la démocratie et progrès*), which had won 68 seats in the March 1992 legislative elections, lost two of its high-ranking officials to Biya's November 1992 cabinet. Before appointing Hamadou Moustapha (Vice President of the UNDP) and Issa Tchiroma Bakary (Secretary-General of the UNDP) to his cabinet, Biya never consulted with the UNDP's executive council. The appointments significantly reduced the viability of the UNDP as a challenger to Biya's control of government in Cameroon.

Many observers saw the president's refusal to create an independent electoral commission to design the rules and administer elections in the country as an effort to make it much harder for the opposition to compete effectively for capture of the government. During the legislative and presidential elections that were held in March and October 1992 respectively, the president placed the job of conducting the elections in the hands of a National Assembly that was composed primarily of CPDM members and served at his pleasure, and the Ministry of Territorial Administration.

The decision by Paul Biya to allow his administration and a legislature controlled by the ruling CPDM to organize and carry out the elections, especially given the president's past efforts to prevent the opposition from participating effectively and fully in governance, raised a lot of questions about the fairness of the electoral process. As mentioned already, the largest opposition party in the country, the SDF, refused to participate in the March 1992 legislative elections because its leaders believed that the government was manipulating the process to guarantee a win for the president. The SDF leadership cited, for example, the fact that as many as 11 of the 13 members of the Vote-Counting Commission for the presidential election were either CPDM members or were from the president's ethnic group.[35]

In presidential elections conducted in October 1992, Biya received 39.9 percent of the votes, compared to 35.9 percent for Ni John Fru Ndi of the SDF. However, opposition parties and international observer teams, including the Washington DC-based National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI), accused Biya and the CPDM of electoral fraud and other irregularities that negatively affected the opposition. Even the Cameroon Supreme Court, which was given the job of formally proclaiming the results of the presidential election to the nation, and which traditionally has sided with the president, admitted publicly that the process had been overwhelmed with irregularities. It, however, declined to launch an investigation to uncover and prosecute anyone who had engaged in rules subversion, claiming that it had only been empowered by the law to announce the results of the election. Additional evidence of complicity by Paul Biya and his CPDM party in electoral fraud was provided by George Achu Mofor, a former governor of the East Province and brother of Biya's prime minister, Simon Achidi Achu. In announcing his resignation from the Biya government, Mofor told the press that the Minister of Territorial Administration had instructed provincial governors in writing that each one of them had to make certain that the CPDM candidate received a minimum of 60 percent of the vote in their province. According to the former governor, the ministerial instructions indicated that each governor could use any means available to him to ensure victory for the CPDM candidate.[36]

Second, while refusing to call for a Sovereign National Conference as demanded by the opposition, Biya opted for a government-controlled Tripartite Conference (October–November 1991), which ensured that the CPDM remained the ruling party and Biya the head of state. The conference's main goal, like that of the SNC proposed by the opposition, was the design of a new post-Cold War constitution for the country. Unfortunately, the conference was an elite-driven and controlled affair that failed to provide facilities for all relevant stakeholder groups to participate in state reconstruction.

By the early 1990s, monumental changes in global politics, notably the decision by Cameroon's traditional benefactors to link foreign aid to the pace of democratization in the country, made it necessary for Paul Biya to either join the pro-democracy movement or be politically destroyed by it. He reluctantly joined the movement and by doing so, effectively hijacked the country's democratization project and has since been manipulating it to allow him and the CPDM party to continue to monopolize political power and the allocation of resources. Through electoral fraud, intimidation, repression, suffocation of civil society, bribery and co-optation of important opposition elites, and other unsavory practices, he has managed to remain in office and continues to plunder the country's economy to enrich himself and his supporters.[37] In 2008, Paul Biya, who had already served the constitutional two-term limit, instructed a parliament dominated by his CPDM party to change the constitution so he could remain in office. That year, the National Assembly amended the country's constitution, allowing Biya to contest the presidential election of 2011, which he won and subsequently received another seven-year term in office. Today, Cameroon's government

remains distant and irrelevant to the lives of citizens; government is as intolerant and repressive as ever; the press is still not free and Cameroonians are still not able to freely and openly discuss political and economic issues of importance to them, without risking arrest and incarceration; the Anglophone Question (i.e., demands for a re-evaluation of their relationship with the rest of the polity) remains unresolved; the country has still not provided the legal safeguards that can effectively preserve individual liberties; and Paul Biya remains the "overlord" of a highly repressive and totally intolerant political system. In other words, despite more than ten years of struggles by the opposition, the rule of law has yet to be institutionalized in Cameroon, as the country's democratization project has not progressed beyond the conduct of elections.

The 1996 constitutional exercise as an example of the failure of the Cameroon transition

Is today's Cameroon a democracy? Some observers, especially those, who belong to the ruling CPDM, would say that Cameroon is a democracy for two main reasons. First, it regularly holds multiparty elections. Second, it has a new constitution. Unfortunately, that a country has a written set of rules does not necessarily imply that it enjoys *constitutional governance* (i.e., government based on a system of rules chosen in an earlier period). Similarly, the fact that a country regularly holds multiparty elections (as does Cameroon since 1992) does not necessarily mean that it practices *democratic governance* (characterized by a significant level of transparency and accountability and by full and effective participation of popular forces). The relevant questions to ask here are: Who designed the constitution? What process governed the selection of these rules? Was the process participatory, inclusive, people-driven and bottom-up or was it top-down, elite-driven and controlled? Were the relevant stakeholder groups enfranchised and provided facilities to participate fully and effectively in the rules selection process (i.e., constitution making)? Regarding elections, how fair and free are such elections? Do ruling elites abide by the results of these elections? Who supervises the conduct of these elections? A thorough examination of what has occurred in Cameroon since 1990 would reveal that despite the fact that the country's political system has undergone significant and monumental changes, the governmental system remains authoritarian. In other words, the country is yet to deepen and institutionalize democracy.

But what about the argument that the country now has a fully functioning competitive political system with regular multiparty elections in which several opposition parties regularly participate? Granted, multiparty elections do take place in Cameroon. However, the institutional environment within which these elections take place remains undemocratic. For one thing, as already mentioned, most of the institutions associated with democratic governance (e.g., a free press, an independent judiciary, professional and well-constrained army, etc.) have yet to be established and sustained in the country. In other words, democracy cannot be deepened in Cameroon until the people have dismantled and effectively

reconstructed and reconstituted the anachronistic and dysfunctional state structure established with the help of the French.

A critical requirement of a democratic system of governance is that after an election has been concluded, national elites abide by the results. In Cameroon, this has not always been true. For example, shortly after the 1997 municipal elections, the government moved quickly to circumvent the will of the people. The opposition had performed very well in the country's provincial headquarters, winning seven out of ten municipal councils. The government took several measures that effectively rendered the results invalid. First, it appointed so-called Government Delegates to serve as overseers of the municipal councils. By providing each council with a government-appointed Chief Executive Officer, the government effectively subverted the will of the people. In other words, the government refused to abide by the results of the elections. Second, the government also appointed its supporters as financial controllers of the councils with instructions to report, not to council members, but directly to the Minister of the Economy and Finance. Finally, by limiting the councils' powers to make policy and forcing them to report, not to the people they were elected to serve, but to the Ministry of Territorial Administration, the government effectively abrogated the concept of decentralization, which had been the main reason for the creation of local governmental jurisdictions.

Thus, after all these years, Cameroon has not yet institutionalized democracy and the government remains authoritarian. An authoritarian regime has been defined as a government that is not adequately and effectively constrained by the law (i.e., the constitution). Changing such an approach to governance requires fundamental constitutional changes.[38] Since 1960, Cameroonians have not been able to engage in democratic constitution making to compact for themselves, the kind of rules that would have minimized political opportunism, enhanced wealth creation and promoted peaceful coexistence. In other words, Cameroonians still do not have the type of governance structures that would have enhanced the institutionalization of democratic rule.

Beginning in 1991, the opposition took advantage of the limited political openings made possible by changes in global politics, pressure from France and other benefactors, as well as that from several constituencies within the country, to push for a Sovereign National Conference. The hope was that the SNC would provide an environment capable of enhancing the ability of all Cameroonians to kick-start democratic constitution making in the country. The result, the opposition hoped, would be a set of rules compacted by the people themselves and designed to maximize their values. As already mentioned, President Biya rejected the call for an SNC and instead opted for a government-controlled Tripartite Conference. The latter, like the opposition's proposed SNC, was expected to deal with constitutional issues. Participants at the government-sponsored conference chose a Technical Committee on Constitutional Matters (TCCM) and charged it with the job of providing the outline for the country's new constitution. The TCCM, which consisted of seven Francophones and four Anglophones, was actually constituted by the government and was being asked to do a job that

the opposition believed belonged to all Cameroonians and which should have been undertaken through an SNC. As has been argued by several authors,[39] the relevant stakeholder groups (i.e., those whose lives would be regulated by the rules chosen) must be the ones to determine the political principles on which the constitution would be based, otherwise the final document is not likely to reflect their customs, aspirations, values, cultures and expectations for the future. Considering the fact that since the decolonization period, the Cameroon people have never been offered the opportunity to engage, in a democratic way, in discussions about the kind of government that they want, how they want to be governed, how they want to relate to each other and the government, and how they want their resources to be allocated, a Sovereign National Conference was seen as providing just such an opportunity for the people to engage freely and publicly in discussions about governance. Relegating such an important task to a government appointed committee was, at the least, a terrible mistake.

The TCCM, which met irregularly between November 1991 and February 1992, had a lot of problems. First, there was virtually no agreement between the minority Anglophones and the majority Francophones over the issues that the committee was supposed to consider. For example, while the Anglophone members of the TCCM believed that meaningful decentralization and devolution of power could only be undertaken within a federal system, the Francophones argued in favor of devolution of power within a centralized, unitary governmental system. Within such a system, the Francophones argued, certain powers would be devolved to provincial and local authorities. In other words, the Francophones argued in favor of maintaining the status quo. In February 1992, the proceedings of the TCCM were suspended because of the parliamentary elections scheduled for a few months later. Shortly afterwards, the government published a document that it said was a draft that had been unanimously agreed upon by the committee and which preserved the main features of the centralized unitary system of government. Against the background of the controversy generated by the release of what the opposition believed was a fraudulent draft report, another committee was created by presidential decree in 1993 and charged with the task of compacting a new constitution. It was given only two weeks to solicit public opinion and incorporate it into a draft constitution that was then to be presented to the president. While claiming to be seeking public opinion, the new committee continued to work on the draft supposedly left by the TCCM. Then, in November 1994, after almost nine months of silence, the president appointed yet another committee and asked it to review a document published in December and labeled *Proposals of the President of the Republic for a Revision of the Constitution*. Claiming that the process was totally bogus and designed to prevent any public discussion of constitutional issues, most of the Anglophone members of the committee publicly resigned. However, the committee presented the president with a draft constitution, which he subsequently submitted, to parliament in November 1995. On January 18, 1996, the president signed the document as *Law No. 06 of 18 January 1996 to Amend the Constitution of 2 June 1972*. In other words, there had not been any

constitutional exercise in Cameroon from 1991 to 1996. The government had simply amended the 1972 constitution and, again, deprived Cameroonians of the opportunity to engage in state reconstruction through a democratic process. The "new" constitution reaffirmed Biya's authoritarian rule, except that now, it was within a multiparty environment.

Democratic constitutionalism: the first step to consolidating and institutionalizing democracy

In a conversation with Femi Falana, Esq., President of the Committee for the Defense of Human Rights, Lagos, Nigeria, on June 23, 1999, Professor Julius O. Ihonvbere, then Program Officer at the Ford Foundation in New York, asked the veteran civil rights activist what he thought about constitutions and constitutionalism in Africa. Mr. Falana replied as follows:

> Any constitution that does not emerge from widespread consultations with all nationalities and interest groups cannot be regarded as legitimate. The basis of constitutional legitimacy must now be measured by the extent to which the masses were part of the process of compacting the constitution.[40]

Since independence and reunification, Cameroon has engaged in five constitutional exercises—1960, 1961, 1972, 1996 and 2008. None of these could remotely be considered to have been undertaken as described above by Falana. As a consequence, while these have been legal documents, they have usually failed to gain the legitimacy that derives from full and effective consultation of the relevant stakeholders (all nationality, ethnic and interest groups). Although a constitution is very important to governance, one must remember that how such a social contract is compacted is even more critical. For, as articulated by Falana, unless the process is participatory, inclusive, bottom-up and people-driven (i.e., democratic), the outcome is not likely to be considered legitimate by those whose lives are to be governed by it nor would it reflect the desires, aspirations, cultures, customs and traditions of these groups. A constitution, no matter how elaborate and comprehensive it may be, is not likely to engender good governance and, hence, advance democracy, if the masses do not share ownership; do not understand it; do not know about it; did not participate in its compacting; and do not have faith that their leaders would not consider it an annoyance to be discarded as soon as the opportunity presents itself.[41]

Cameroonians, especially those from the English-speaking provinces, who have suffered significantly during the last several decades from opportunistic laws and institutions (especially those that have not adequately constrained the state), recognize and appreciate the importance of a well-crafted constitution. It is no wonder that virtually all Anglophone interest groups have been pushing for an SNC, which they believe would provide the country with the appropriate enabling environment to engage in democratic constitution making and compact the kind of constitution that can form an appropriate foundation for

the construction of the country's post-Cold War institutions. Unfortunately, the incumbent regime in Yaoundé remains unwilling to yield to this point and surrender to the country's nationality, ethnic and interest groups, the right to choose their own rules.

As mentioned earlier, a participatory, bottom-up and inclusive constitution-making process would allow Cameroonians to effectively reconstruct the post-colonial state and provide themselves with institutional arrangements that enhance the deepening and institutionalization of democracy. However, there are other benefits. First, such a democratic constitution-making process enhances the acceptability of the outcome. Second, it greatly improves the ability of the masses to be aware of and understand the various provisions of the constitution.

Third, democratic constitution making can serve as a framework to (1) mobilize popular forces and enhance their ability to participate in governance; (2) resolve major conflicts between population groups (e.g., the Anglophone problem) and allow such groups to publicly air their differences without engaging in violent mobilization; (3) reform governmental structures and make them more efficient and relevant to the lives of those they serve; (4) enhance the ability of historically marginalized and excluded groups to participate in politics and develop a sense of belonging; (5) revive the spirit of open public debate, which had been destroyed by colonialism and post-independence authoritarianism; (6) revitalize and rehabilitate the media, which should be called upon to report the proceedings of such constitutional exercises; (7) provide an important outlet for Cameroonians, especially those who had been abused by the *ancien régime*, to engage in a cathartic denunciation of those who had imprisoned, tortured, exploited and marginalized them; (8) cultivate within the country, a culture and tradition of reliance on open debate, dialogue and consensus, instead of resorting to violence in resolving political, economic and social conflicts; (9) reduce public cynicism about and alienation from government; (10) minimize the probability of military intervention in politics by entrenching within the constitution, clauses that make such behavior extremely difficult to undertake; and (11) empower civil society so that it can more effectively check government excesses, as well as improve civil society's ability to participate more effectively in the deepening of democracy.

Fourth, an inclusive and people-driven constitution-making process enhances the ability of citizens to recognize the constitution not only as the law of the land, but also as the rallying point for the defense of the country's democracy. Finally, a participatory constitution-making process may be the first real effort to engage all of the nation's relevant stakeholders in a national debate on governance and the choice of both an economic and a political system.

What amazes students of Cameroon political economy is that after more than 50 years of reunification, the government has not yet engaged all the country's citizens in a serious open discussion about constitutionalism and constitution making. The latter remains, as it was in the 1960s, a job set aside exclusively for urban-based elites (civil servants, lawyers, university professors and other highly educated individuals), most of them carefully selected by the government. All of

these so-called constitutional committees have, without exception, usually reduced the process to the copying of some foreign constitution and adjusting it to meet the needs of the ruling class. Consider the fact that the 1960 constitution was a copy of the French Constitution of 1958; the 1961 constitution for the federation was the 1960 constitution, adjusted to accommodate the union with British Southern Cameroons and enhance the ability of the president in Yaoundé to abrogate the fundamental rights of Southern Cameroonians; the 1972 constitution was the 1961 constitution, amended to abrogate the federation and establish the unitary state, as well as significantly increase the powers of the presidency; the 1996 constitution was an amended version of the 1972 constitution, adjusted to reflect the era of multipartyism, while keeping intact the president's enormous powers; and the 2008 constitution was an amended version of the 1996 constitution, designed specifically to accommodate Biya's thirst for power and to grant him immunity from all crimes committed while in office. Through all these elite-directed manipulations, the highly centralized and repressive state has remained intact.

Professor Julius O. Ihonvbere[42] argues that the "articulation of clear principles and mechanisms would enhance the quality of the process of constitution making and help the stakeholders to evaluate progress of their work." The government's failure to engage the masses in this important first step (i.e., articulation, in a systematic and meaningful way, of the political principles on which the constitution would be based and the mechanisms to guide its construction) and the opposition's inability to force the government to do so, has left Cameroon's transition to democratic governance stalled and in political limbo. Today, as Cameroonians look back at the achievements of the last several decades, they cannot count democratic constitution making and the practice of constitutional government as one of them. This important step is yet to be fully exploited to provide the country with the enabling environment to move its democratization project forward.

The SDF and the failure of the Cameroon democratization project

The opposition in Cameroon has, since the late 1980s, not been able to force the kinds of institutional changes that could have deepened democracy and significantly enhanced governance. Like its counterparts in other parts of Africa, Cameroon's opposition remains fragmented and has apparently lost most of the dynamism that made it a critical force in the country's politics from the late 1980s to the early 1990s. I shall briefly examine some of the problems that have plagued the opposition and significantly constrained its ability to force positive change in the country. Following this, I then take a look at the Social Democratic Front (SDF), Cameroon's most important opposition party.

First, Cameroon's opposition capitalized on the failures of past policies (including the structural adjustment programs) and mobilized the masses, most of whom were suffering from extremely high rates of poverty and deprivation, against the incumbent government. Unfortunately, the new opposition failed to

come up with viable alternatives to existing policies. Second, the opposition has tended to over-personalize all the issues. It has centered its campaigns on personalities instead of issues and, as a consequence, character assassination, involving charges and countercharges about corruption and the misuse of public funds, has been at the center of most discourse. Thus, according to the opposition, the crisis of governance in Cameroon derives from Biya's incompetence and opportunism and not from the absence of democratic institutions. It is no wonder that most opposition parties have, since the late 1980s, been obsessed with ousting Biya from office and capturing the apparatus of government. The implication, of course, is that once Biya is eliminated from the scene, inefficiency and ineffectiveness in the bureaucracy will fall significantly and the economic and governance crisis will be over. Third, the opposition has been more concerned about winning the approval of Western nations, donors, lenders and international election monitors, than with securing the loyalty and support of domestic constituencies. Finally, and most importantly, is the fact that the opposition does not appear to have any well-articulated social project nor is there a well-defined ideology. Most of the opposition parties have as their single most important objective, the capture of the presidency and have not put forth a well-articulated plan on how they intend to reconstruct and reconstitute the highly centralized, anachronistic, corrupt and oppressive neo-colonial state and make government more efficient and relevant to the lives of Cameroonians. Today, many Cameroonians consider the majority of opposition political parties instruments for the advancement of their opportunistic leaders and not structures for the transformation of the country. Most of these parties have no well-articulated platforms or social projects and, as a consequence, have not been able to respond effectively to opportunism by the ruling party. These parties have one overriding objective—to capture the presidency and other high political positions for party leaders. Hence, the belief by the masses that the opposition is opportunistic with primitive accumulation by its leaders, not social, political and economic transformation, as their main goal (see, for example, the discussion below on the SDF).

The Social Democratic Front, led by Ni John Fru Ndi, has been at the core of Cameroon's pro-democracy movement since the party's founding in 1990. In fact, the party is recognized today as the heart of the country's opposition movement. Although it has achieved significant success in mobilizing the people to agitate for change in the country, it has not been able to either capture the apparatus of government or force the incumbent government to bring about the kinds of economic and political transformations that could have significantly advanced the country's democratization project.

In the early 1990s, the SDF was so popular, especially among historically marginalized and excluded individuals and groups, that many observers believed that it was just a matter of time before the party replaced the CPDM as the ruling party. Yet, it is now more than 20 years since the party was launched and the presidency of Cameroon is still out of its reach. What happened? Why wasn't the party able to translate its popularity into electoral wins? According to Ihonvbere, Mbaku and Takougang[43] the SDF's failure to capture political power

in Cameroon is due primarily to a series of miscalculations made by its leadership. For one thing, the party's executive committee failed to make strategic calculations and provide itself with well-thought-out strategies to deal with the incumbent government's expected opportunism and recalcitrance. Thus, in many instances, the SDF was unable to adequately respond to the government, as in the case of the hasty and poorly conceived decision to boycott the March 1992 elections, a policy that was not even discussed thoroughly with the rank-and-file of the party. Below, I take a look at some of the miscalculations that have doomed the SDF to perpetual opposition status.

The anti-government demonstrations generally referred to as the Ghost Towns represent the first miscalculation for the SDF and the opposition. The Ghost Towns occurred in 1991 and represented a series of economic boycotts that the opposition believed would force the government to yield to their demands for a Sovereign National Conference. While the concept was, in principle, quite an effective way to pressure the government, the SDF in particular and the opposition in general, made two crucial mistakes. No effort was made to produce an effective alternative or contingency plan to deal with any counter-action that might have been taken by the incumbent government. In addition, the boycotts were not well organized, coordinated and focused. As described by one observer,[44] "most of the actions undertaken were characterized by a great deal of spontaneity rather than by planned policy." The opposition had expected that the government would respond to the strike action with its usual police and military brutality, a policy that would have attracted the wrath of donors and other international actors (e.g., foreign investors) and caused a collapse of the regime. Biya's government, however, opted for a "wait-and-see" approach, forcing the opposition's strategy to fail. Since there had been no alternative plan in case the government did not resort to violent confrontation, the opposition was unable to respond effectively to the government.

The next serious mistake that the SDF made was the decision of the party's executive to boycott the March 1992 legislative elections. Most observers of the Cameroon political scene argue that Paul Biya was so weak politically at this time that had the SDF challenged his regime, it would have won the majority of seats required to allow it to control the legislature. At the least, Ni John Fru Ndi and the party would have had an opportunity to have a direct impact on politics and governance in the country. The SDF's decision to boycott the election was based on two critical arguments: it opposed the conditions under which the election would be conducted (the administration had complete control of the process); and the party believed that an SNC had to be held before the country could engage in any elections. In addition, some SDF executives and those of several other opposition parties believed that the boycott would discredit the elections and make the results unacceptable to the international community and, in the process, severely damage the credibility of the Biya regime. The government would then be left with no choice but to conduct new elections. This time, the SDF believed, the elections would be preceded by an SNC and conducted under conditions more favorable to the opposition. Unfortunately for the SDF

and other opposition parties, there was no significant condemnation of the results of the elections by the international community. Perhaps most damaging to the SDF was the fact that its absence contributed significantly to the CPDM's narrow victory—the incumbent party won 88 of 180 seats. As discussed earlier, an alliance of the CPDM and the MDR which won six seats enabled Biya to secure the necessary number of seats to form a government.

When the October 1992 presidential elections arrived, the SDF decided to participate, having realized that the actions it had taken during the March elections were in error. The fact that the October 1992 elections were conducted under the same rules as those in March posed a lot of questions regarding the leadership of the SDF.[45] Why did the party participate in the October elections even though the administration had not reformed the electoral system as requested by the opposition, changed the conditions under which the election was to be conducted or agreed to hold an SNC prior to the electoral exercise? How could the SDF easily sacrifice its principles in order to participate in the October 1992 elections or were party leaders simply being pragmatic?[46]

While the problems and miscalculations described above did contribute significantly to the party's failure to capture the government of Cameroon and move the country's democratization effort forward, the most serious shortcoming of the party, like many other opposition parties in Africa, is the absence of a clear, well-articulated, coherent and properly specified policy that adequately and effectively addresses Cameroon's most intractable and serious socioeconomic problems. For example, since it was founded in 1990, the SDF has really never confronted, in a bold and clear manner, the Anglophone problem. This is ironic, considering the fact that Anglophone treatment by the Francophone-dominated central government was partly responsible for the founding of the party. Like its counterparts in other parts of Africa, the SDF has occupied itself with one prime objective—that is, to replace Paul Biya and the CPDM and take control of the governmental apparatus.[47] Little effort has been made by party leaders to provide a clearly defined strategy for social, economic and political transformation, especially one that deals effectively with the frustrations, desires, expectations and hopes of the country's popular forces. As accurately portrayed by an editorial in one of the nation's newspapers, "[t]he SDF was founded and operated over the last eight years with the exclusive objective of capturing power at the national level. So singular was the party's determination that it never really developed a program of government."[48]

Other contributing factors to the stalled transition in Cameroon

In addition to the problems discussed above, one can add the quality of leadership as a contributing factor to the failure of Cameroon's opposition parties, including the SDF, to unseat Paul Biya and the CPDM and advance the country's transition to democratic governance. The leader of a political movement, especially one that seeks to transform a society, must be an individual who

understands, sympathizes with and shares the ideological convictions and visions of the people that he (or she) will serve once he (or she) comes to power. A leader with no vision for the future or one with ideas that do not reflect the concerns, values and interests of the people is not likely to capture the support of the majority of the voters. If the movement's leadership is clueless as to the nation's needs or is severely divided on what policies to undertake, it is likely to fail to make a significant impact on national politics. Since 1990, the SDF has been a very popular political movement in Cameroon. Yet, due to a divided and highly fractured leadership, it has not been able to form a consensus on most issues critical to the several constituencies occupying the country's political space. The party's actions during the so-called Tripartite Conference, organized as a counter to the opposition's proposed SNC, is an example in point. Party officials were unable to produce a well-articulated response to the government. Some officials argued that the opposition should not attend the conference because it was designed to enhance the ability of the administration to hijack the transition and manipulate it to its advantage—in other words, the administration's objectives were opportunistic. Others argued, however, that despite its shortcomings, the conference offered the SDF and other opposition parties an opportunity to engage in discourse with the government, articulate their ideas in a national forum and implement some of their policies. Although the party eventually sent representatives to the conference, the leadership was so divided that its delegation failed to have any significant impact on the conference's agenda. Its participants were subsequently withdrawn. It is important to caution here that disagreements among the leaders of a movement about policy issues do not necessarily spell doom for the organization. Despite such conflict, leaders of a well-managed organization should be able to reach consensus on major policy issues, especially on those crucial to their constituents. In the case of a political party, it is critical that its policymaking body achieve consensus and present the public with well-articulated, consistent and clear policies.

Granted, the Tripartite Conference was an opportunistic arrangement designed by the Biya government to divide the opposition and enhance the ability of the incumbent to continue to maintain a monopoly on power. What is surprising is that the country's most important opposition party, the SDF, and its leadership were unable to anticipate such opportunism and prepare an adequate response to it. For one thing, a well-articulated and well-thought-out plan could have allowed the SDF to respond very effectively to the administration's opportunism and neutralize Biya's efforts to divide and sow seeds of asunder in the opposition. Perhaps more damaging to the SDF was the fact that despite the failure of its policymaking body to reach a consensus on the decision to attend the conference, it nevertheless went ahead and did so, only to withdraw before the conclusion of the proceedings. The inability of the party leadership to take decisive action and one based on consensus, seriously damaged the party's public image and put into question its readiness to serve at the highest levels of government.

Although the SDF came to be a national movement, whose main objective could be inferred to be to transform the country socially, politically and economically and provide it with more effective governance structures, the motivation

for its founding was the cruel, repressive and exploitative treatment of the Anglophone minority by the Francophone-dominated central government. Thus, many Anglophones looked to the party to lead the region's efforts to restore its political and economic autonomy. Unfortunately, during its entire existence, the SDF has not been able to produce a satisfactory policy on the Anglophone Question.[49]

The inability of the SDF to reach consensus on the Anglophone Question and other issues eventually created significant strains within the leadership and contributed to the view by the public that the party hierarchy had no vision and was unable to come up with well-articulated, coherent and clear policies for economic rehabilitation and the restoration of democracy in the country. In other words, the SDF had no well-articulated social project and was not yet ready to rule Cameroon. By the mid-1990s, many of the ideological disagreements within the party's leadership had resulted in several defections, dismissals and resignations. Ben Muna, a party bulwark, resigned in 1995; S. Asanga, a founding member, was expelled in 1994; and in July 1998, 10 of the party's 43 representatives in the National Assembly resigned. These and other problems crippled the party and severely impeded its ability to have greater influence on national politics in Cameroon.

Despite its internal problems, the SDF could have enhanced its ability to influence national politics by cooperating with other opposition parties. In fact, such cooperation was attempted in 1991, when the National Coordination of Opposition Parties and Associations (NCOPA) was formed to call for an SNC. It also organized the Ghost Towns projects. However, the organization began to disintegrate when, in the midst of the failure of the Ghost Towns to force Biya's government to call an SNC, the leadership was unable to agree on what to do next. In fact, at the beginning of the 1991 school year, alliance members could not agree on whether to call for a boycott of classes as a way to force the government to call an SNC. Although the SDF supported the boycott, the Cameroon Democratic Union (CDU), whose leader, A.N. Njoya, had at one time been the minister of education, opposed it. Eventually the boycott was approved after significant arm-twisting by the SDF, but it was basically ineffective.[50]

In March 1992, the SDF and several opposition parties boycotted the legislative elections. However, the UNDP, a relatively important opposition party, decided to participate. Although the SDF and its allies argued that participation would validate the legitimacy of the Biya regime, the UNDP leadership believed that taking part in the municipal elections would grant the party the opportunity to influence public policy and the transition from within the government.[51] What is important to note here is that the inability of the opposition to reach a consensus and present a united effort against the Biya regime has allowed the latter to continue to dominate Cameroon politics.

Finally, the political skills of President Paul Biya and the support of France for Biya's government have also been very instrumental in limiting the opposition's ability to force change in Cameroon. During the early years of the prodemocracy movement, Biya's political skills, which had been developed under

Ahidjo, proved very useful. In 1990, despite opposition from party hardliners, Biya issued Law No. 90/056 legalizing the formation of political parties. This action was critical because it bought him time, as well as gained respect for his government from the international donor community, which had made it clear that it would no longer tolerate authoritarian rule in the continent. Of course, as already mentioned, instead of resorting to force, as had been common in the past, to deal with demonstrators during the Ghost Towns project, he chose a "wait-and-see" approach and, in the process, severely weakened the opposition. Again, Biya outsmarted the opposition when, after the 1992 presidential elections, he decided not to arrest opposition leader Ni John Fru Ndi (whose followers were demonstrating against what they believed was a stolen victory), but placed him under house arrest. He carefully cultivated the support of the military and key civil servants by providing them with generous compensation packages and working conditions. Professor J.-G. Gros[52] argues that support by military and security forces has been the single most important domestic factor responsible for the inability of the opposition to topple the government and move the transition forward.

As a political strategy, Biya also used public resources to co-opt important opposition leaders and weaken the ability of the opposition to lead the country's democratization effort. One of the president's most successful strategies to weaken the opposition was the offer of financial incentives totaling 500 million CFA francs to be divided among all opposition parties that participated in the March 1992 legislative elections.[53] The goal was to invite the formation of many opposition parties and in the process weaken their ability to challenge the CPDM.

The president has taken several other actions that have rendered the opposition unable to effectively challenge his government. These include (1) the refusal to provide the country with a truly independent electoral commission; (2) calling snap elections, with the opposition having almost no time to organize and articulate their platforms; (3) denying the opposition access to the national media; (4) creating new administrative districts that favor the incumbent CPDM; (5) refusing to engage the Cameroonian people in democratic constitution making, a process that could produce institutional arrangements that would enhance democracy and, hence, accelerate his ouster from government; and (6) the use of patronage to neutralize the opposition.

In 1990, French President François Mitterand informed the country's former colonies in Africa that they would have to undertake political liberalization, including the introduction of multiparty politics, freedom of the press and an independent judiciary, if they planned to continue to benefit from French development aid.[54] Such a proclamation had a positive impact on the continent's struggling pro-democracy movement. The change in policy, by Cameroon's most important benefactor, provided the opposition with a very important opportunity to influence national politics. However, despite this change of attitude by France, the government in Paris was later to serve as the main obstacle to the collapse of the Biya regime and the advancement of democracy in Cameroon. In fact, France's support to the Biya regime in the early 1990s was very crucial to

the regime's survival and the inability of the SDF and other opposition parties to force any significant change in national policies. During the Ghost Towns project in 1991, the Cameroon economy had deteriorated to the point where many people believed it was just a matter of time before the president fled the country in disgrace and allowed the opposition to rescue the people. However, financial subventions from France saved the day and allowed Biya to retain the critical support that he needed to stay in power.[55] And, in 1994, when Biya badly needed resources to meet the country's financial obligations to the IMF, the French were there to offer help. Earlier, in 1992, after what many SDF militants called the "stolen" presidential election,[56] the United States and other developed democracies criticized the Biya regime for its complicity in the elections and for the state of emergency it had imposed on the Anglophone Northwest Province. France, however, publicly expressed support for the regime.

It has been argued that continued French support for the Biya regime may be based on the fact that Paris does not trust Fru Ndi and the Social Democratic Front. Since Cameroon is a very important anchor for France's geopolitical interests in the region, French authorities do not believe that an Anglophone president in Cameroon would provide them with the wherewithal to continue to maximize their interests. Fru Ndi, they believe, could jeopardize their dominance in the region by seeking and establishing closer relations with the United States and/or Britain.[57] There may be some truth to such concerns since, on several occasions, Fru Ndi has indicated that he would pull Cameroon away from the French camp in an effort to establish closer ties with the United States and other countries.[58] Of course, US help for Fru Ndi during the 1992 presidential elections only increased French fears about the possible loss of their influence in an SDF-controlled Cameroon. Thus, the tolerance by France of certain political excesses by the Biya government, instead of supporting true democratization in the country, may be due to this fear of losing its dominance in the region.

Today, Cameroon's transition remains stalled. While there are many reasons for this state of affairs, the most important is the fact that the opposition has been unable to force the kind of change that would have created the enabling institutional environment for the transition to move forward. Part of the reason for the opposition's failure to force change in Cameroon is the fact that it is fractured, lacks leaders with vision, especially a vision that reflects the people's own view of the future, and the continued support provided the Biya regime by France. Such support has enhanced the ability of Biya and his ruling CPDM party to divide the opposition and make it much more difficult for the SDF and other opposition parties to function effectively as an instrument of political, economic and social transformation.

Losing the reform momentum of the 1990s

The Biya regime, supported by various opportunistic opposition leaders, as well as foreign benefactors, such as France, has succeeded in destroying the momentum for institutional reforms that gave birth to what were once dynamic political

movements, such as the SDF. As a consequence, Biya's regime is still firmly entrenched in Cameroon political economy. To get a better understanding of the extent to which Biya has thoroughly thrashed the opposition and remains firmly in control of the apparatus of government in Cameroon, one needs to briefly examine political happenings in the country since the presidential elections of 1992.

One of the most important features of the 1996 constitution was that anyone serving as president of Cameroon would be limited to two terms of seven years each in office. In presidential elections held in October 1997 and which were boycotted by the major opposition parties (the Social Democratic Front [SDF]; the *Union nationale pour la démocratie et le progrès* [UNDP]; and the *Union démocratique du Cameroun* [UDC]), Biya won with 92.9 percent of the votes cast. International observers, however, pointed to several irregularities, which, they argued, made the election results suspect. Despite these criticisms, Biya took the oath of office and settled in for another seven-year term as president of the Republic of Cameroon.

Between 1997 and 2004, Cameroon political economy was characterized by significant increases in bureaucratic corruption, severe deterioration in the living standards of many citizens, especially those located in the rural areas and the Anglophone provinces, and a stiff rise in random violent criminal activity. During this time, Transparency International consistently ranked Cameroon as one of the most corrupt countries in the world.[59]

In presidential elections held in October 2004, Biya, as expected, was re-elected to the presidency of Cameroon. The main question arising out of the 2004 elections was whether Biya would try to change the country's constitution to allow him to run for a third term in office. If the constitution was to be amended, that job would fall in the hands of parliament—the *Assemblée Nationale* (National Assembly). In the parliamentary elections of 2007, Biya's ruling CPDM party held 140 of the 180 seats in the National Assembly. During a New Year speech to the nation in January 2008, Biya indicated his interest in running for a third term as president and, hence, it was now left to the CPDM-dominated parliament to provide the wherewithal for him to do so. Virtually all opposition leaders condemned such a move on the part of the president and encouraged parliament not to oblige the president. However, by April 2008, parliament had completed its work and amended the country's Constitution, allowing Biya to run for a third term as president of Cameroon during the presidential elections held in 2011. He won those elections and was subsequently inaugurated as President of the Republic of Cameroon. At the end of his present term in 2018, Biya would have served as president of Cameroon for nearly 40 years.

Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed Cameroon's stalled transition to democratic governance and shown that the inability of the Social Democratic Front, Cameroon's main opposition party, to successfully lead the country's transformation has been

due to many factors. Some of them include poor and fractured leadership, political miscalculations, rivalry within the party and between the party and other opposition parties, Biya's political acumen and strong French support for the government. I also argued in this chapter that the most important first step towards successful institutionalization of democracy is state reconstruction through people-driven, participatory and inclusive constitution making. Unless such a process is undertaken, Cameroon will not be able to provide itself with the enabling environment to deepen, consolidate and institutionalize democracy.

The discussion in this chapter indicates that the early 1990s offered the SDF and other opposition parties in Cameroon the best opportunity to capture the government and proceed with the country's democratization effort. However, as the defeat of the Diouf government in the 2000 elections in Senegal indicates, the opposition was still able to overcome obstacles and constraints that were remarkably similar to those faced by the SDF in Cameroon. The opportunity to capture the government and make the changes necessary to introduce and sustain democratic rule in Cameroon still exist, although success would require a lot of organizing, mobilizing and strategizing. Despite the fact that the incumbent regime now feels invisible and unstoppable, it is still corrupt, inefficient, repressive and continues to suffer erosion in its legitimacy. In fact, the problems that propelled the opposition, especially the SDF, to such popular admiration as it enjoyed in the early to mid 1990s, have not yet been effectively and fully addressed. The Anglophone Question remains unresolved; poverty rates continue to increase, especially among women, rural dwellers and inhabitants of the urban periphery; HIV/AIDS continues to spread and threaten national survival; and the brain drain that began in the mid 1980s has not yet abated. In fact, in recent years, even poorly educated Cameroonians, many of whom previously could find work as occasional laborers in various peripheral activities in the urban areas, are now opting to exit to Nigeria and other neighboring countries. Perhaps more important is the fact that the government has not yet engaged the people in a discussion on the constitution and state reconstruction to provide more transparent, accountable and participatory governance structures. As a consequence, the country remains governed by the same antiquated, anachronistic, oppressive and corrupt institutions inherited from the colonial state. Of course, the economy continues to deteriorate and the state's relationship with popular forces remains extremely tenuous. Thus, the opposition still has an opportunity to positively impact change in the country. However, to take advantage of such an opportunity, the opposition must be willing and able to avoid the mistakes of the past and provide the country with a vision that reflects the interests, expectations, goals and concerns of the people. What Cameroon needs before it can proceed with its democratization effort is an enabling institutional environment, for democracy cannot be institutionalized within the country's existing laws and institutions. A dismantling and reconstruction of the state through people-driven, participatory and democratic constitution making must be undertaken before any further deepening of democracy can be effected.

In 2008, Paul Biya successfully had the country's Constitution amended to allow him to run for a third seven-year term as president. He won the 2011 presidential election and was subsequently inaugurated as President of the Republic. Biya's continued monopolization of power in Cameroon has had a significantly negative impact on the country's democratization project, as well as other institutional reforms, especially those associated with cleaning up corruption and significantly improving wealth creation. Although the opposition was unable to prevent parliament from amending the Constitution to allow Biya to contest the 2011 elections, it was hoped that it would still be able to prevent Biya from capturing power in 2011 and prolonging the tyranny that Cameroonians have been subjected to during virtually all of the last 50 years. However, to succeed, the opposition would have had to unite and present to the Cameroonian people an agenda that reflects the people's interests and values and provides effective long-term solutions to the problems that continue to plague the country. Unfortunately, the opposition was unable to effectively challenge Biya's candidacy and, as a consequence, Biya and his CPDM party will continue to monopolize legislation in the country until at least 2018.

Notes

1 This chapter reflects only the present considerations and views of the author, which should not be attributed to either Weber State University or the Brookings Institution. An earlier version of this chapter was published in *African and Asian Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 3 (2002), as Cameroon's Stalled Transition to Democratic Governance: Lessons for Africa's New Democrats.

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17 Kofele-Kale, "Ethnicity, Regionalism, and Political Power," op. cit., p. 23.
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30 Mbaku, "Political Opportunism and Policy Reform in Africa," op. cit.
31 Takougang, "Cameroon at the Democratic Crossroads," op. cit.
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53 NDI (1993), *Assessment of the October 11, 1992 Election in Cameroon*, op. cit.

54 J.A. McKesson, "Crisis in France's African Policy," *African Commentary* (December/January), 1991, pp. 44–47; J.A. McKesson, "France and Africa: The Evolving Saga," *French Politics and Society*, Vol. 11 (Spring), 1993, pp. 55–69.

55 N. Van de Walle, "The Politics of Non-reform in Cameroon," in T. Callaghy and J. Ravenhill (eds.), *Hemmed In: Responses to Africa's Economic Decline* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995); Gros, "The Hard Lessons of Cameroon," op. cit.

56 Supporters of the Social Democratic Front had argued that their candidate, Ni John Fru Ndi, had actually won the election and that the incumbent president, Paul Biya, had stolen the election from Ndi by bribing members of the vote-counting committee and also the Supreme Court, whose job it was to announce and certify the official results, to certify Biya as the winner.

57 T.N. Fonchingong, "Multipartyism and Democratization in Cameroon," *Journal of Third World Studies*, Vol. 15 (Fall), 1998, pp. 119–136.

58 Gros, "The Hard Lessons of Cameroon," op. cit.

59 For example, among all the countries ranked by Transparency International in 1998, Cameroon came in last, representing the country perceived by investors and other entrepreneurs as the most corrupt in the world. See, e.g., *Corruption Perceptions Index 1998* (Berlin: TI, 1998).

3 Rethinking state formation and the post-colonial political experience in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Tukumbi Lumumba-Kasongo

> The emerging countries are engaged in the task of political development and nation building, and their success in this undertaking is largely dependent on the rate, direction, and quality of social change that they can effect.[1]

Introduction

This chapter is divided into seven parts. In the first part, which is this introduction, I raise general issues related to the topic of the chapter, elaborate on its objectives, and discuss the importance of this topic. It also discusses the perspectives, approaches, and brief theoretical framework on the African state. The second heading is on the paradigmatic elements of the *problématique* of the colonial and the post-colonial state. The third section is on the colonial question in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The fourth heading deals with the post-colonial politics, the national agenda under the first and the second Republics, and Belgian economic paternalism. The fifth section is on the rise and the end of Laurent-Désiré Kabila. The sixth section is on the regime of Joseph Kabila and the prospects for laying the foundation for democratically rethinking the Congolese State. And the last section is on what is to be done to construct democratic state in the DRC. For historical reasons, through the chapter, I use the names Zaïre, Congo, and DRC interchangeably depending on the period and the political context that is being analyzed.

How can we understand the imperatives and constraints related to the development and the collapse of the post-colonial political formation in the DRC, the causal relations between the major actors, the people, and the state apparatuses, and their implications in quality of change that was produced? How have the external and internal social and political forces and their interests and goals interacted to produce political rules, institutions, and the national politics?

In general terms, in this chapter, I examine the development of politics in the DRC with a particular emphasis on the nature of various political regimes that have occurred in the post-colonial period, their main goals, elements of their political ideologies, their policies and politics of human and material mobilization, their processes of consolidating their power, their policies of distribution of

value systems, and their international relations. In studying these political configurations, one must also include the dynamics of the society at large. Gender and social classes' relations, their interests and aspirations, people's cultural/ethnic compositions, and their actions or reactions toward political regimes are classified as an important part of a political analysis. The main issues to be raised and discussed about political regimes concern the identification of the dominant characteristics of the political culture of the petty bourgeoisie in the post-colonial politics and their ideological base.

Within the current dynamics of the world economy and its contradictions as they are reflected in the extreme weakening of the African conditions, some of the most important factors that have influenced the nature of the post-colonial state formation at large, include various forms and the levels of marginalization of Africa, the selective integration of sub-Saharan Africa into the international global economy, overexploitation of Africa's raw materials, her exclusion from serious trade talks and agreements, and the intra and interstate challenges such as ethnicity and gender inequality. The rise of the fourth and fifth worlds in Africa is clearly another indicator of something that went wrong on the continent.

Political development, as used in this context, is an inquiry to deal with the dynamics of the political situation that goes beyond the technicality and legalism associated with state formation. The post-colonial political configurations are fused with political alliances, and personal, ethnic, and social class intrigues, and the national and international power struggles. These configurations have produced several clearly articulated phases of political development, each with its dominant actors, its ideological base, its agenda, and its supportive forces. But I am not interested in studying these phases as autonomous from the main structures of the political system and regimes. My goal is to examine them within relational or interactive perspectives. In short, I am interested in examining how the mechanisms, strategies, and objectives for the establishment of the state have been in the DRC.

In analyzing the characteristics of the political elites, elements of their vision, and the nature of the national agenda, as the policy base, for rethinking or reconceptualizing the post-colonial African state, I also pay particular attention to the personality politics of the Congolese political leadership such as Patrice Emery Lumumba, Joseph-Désiré Mobutu (Sese Seko Kuku Ngbendu wa Zabanga), Laurent-Désiré Kabila, and Joseph Kabila. I do not make a psychological analysis of their personalities but frame and analyze the elements of their personality within the context of their national political agenda, their ideological and political choices, and broad international context. I identify the general rules that have governed their behaviors and the political and social structures in which they have functioned. Furthermore, the political, social, and historical conditions related to personality politics in the DRC have produced an extreme kind of privatized state. This dimension will also be elaborated in the chapter.

Rethinking the processes and mechanisms of constructing or re-constructing a contemporary state historically is, first of all, an intellectual and analytical

exercise to reconstruct the political past in its totality with the intention of dialectically linking this past to the present using theories of causal relations among phenomena. Second, one must identify and analyze the general and central rules and the dominant ideology that have been used to promote a given vision. That is to say that the question of the kind of society it is, what it has been, or ought to become, is part of my normative perspectives in localizing the arguments. What kind of state and what kind of citizenry have been produced? From this perspective, the rethinking about the Congolese State is essentially an ideological and political-philosophical inquiry. One needs to identify and analyze the central rules that govern a country or a state, their functions, and their social, policy, and political implications. Third, the question of whom and what have been involved in these processes of deconstruction, reconstruction, or invention should be systematically dealt within its historical and global perspectives. A critique of historical imperatives should be used as tools to correct the past social memories of colonialism. The issues related to the above questions are historically and empirically organized. The relationships between the above dimensions are methodologically complementary.

Although paradigms to study various aspects of political development in the DRC may be generalized across different case studies, especially on the basis of the location of Africa in international relations and political economy, this specific case has some ideological and historical particularities that make it relatively different within the context of the global colonization paradigms. On the basis of historical particularities, it should be stated that all the major phases of the state formation and political development in the DRC have been produced by higher level of institutionalized violence. Stages of the state formation in the DRC have operated within a high level of unpredictability both in terms of the transfer of power from one regime to another, as well as in terms of its circulation among various contenders.

This kind of violence has been reflected in the policies and politics of various political regimes as historically they have been ruling the country and the people. Political violence in the Congo has manifested itself in various processes of the surplus accumulation or expropriation of surplus value, militarized and personalized management style, the brutal elimination of political elites and leaders, marginalization of the girls/women and the gender and social cleavages, and the rise of the social and popular movements. These various forms of violence have led to a generalized situation of extreme political instability, which is inherent to the structure of the Congolese peripheral capitalist state.

The centrality, in contemporary world affairs, of the "Congo Free State" (1885–1908) with its various formative phases and naming: the Belgian Congo (1910–1960), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (1960–1965), the Republic of Congo-Kinshasa (1965–1971), Zaire (1971–1997), and the DRC since 1997, has made some scholars and people articulate that uncontrolled military or political disputes over this territory by imperialist Europe and the United States or their local or regional representatives could lead to World War III. This observation is based on the view of many that whoever can control the Congo and its

immense natural resources would be able, to a large extent, to control the entire sub-Saharan Africa. It is the third largest country in Africa, the size larger than all Western European countries together or one-third of the United States West of Mississippi and eighty times larger than the size of Belgium. Its estimated population is approximately 67,757,577 people as of 2011. The Congo has been perceived and defined in the foreign policies circle among many political elites in the West or the North as "a geological accident." Geo-politically and culturally, Africa meets herself in the Congo. It has boundaries with more than nine countries. It is the gateway to Southern Africa.

Congolese politics has been permanently central in world affairs since the period of the so-called Congo Free State (1885–1908). As will be discussed later, the processes of the Congolese state formation have been among the most debated issues in the history of contemporary world politics, since the Berlin Conference of November 1884–January 1885. The agenda of the Berlin Conference was literally focused on the situation of what became the "Congo Free State."

To rethink the Congolese post-colonial state is an effort of reconfiguring or critically reviewing how this state was conceived; what forces have been behind its formation; what its agencies and agents have been; what role, if any, it has been playing in global capitalism and international relations, and how to think about change. In short, what was the mission of this state vis-à-vis the African people and the international political economic forces, and how did it accomplish it? However, it should be noted that I am not interested in only simplistically assessing, using the classical input-output analytical models, what this state has or has not done or achieved. I am interested in understanding the dynamics of the post-colonial state in its historical and sociological context with its contradictions. That is to say that rethinking in this case is a combination of both an historical analysis and a reflective discourse.

The DRC symbolically and politically was present at the atomic era with its uranium used to fabricate the first atomic bomb, which the United States used as the final solution to end the war against Japan. As intended, this action led to almost total physical destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan in 1941 with the devastated human and ecological consequences which no scientists and politicians were able to predict. It led to the disappearance of the old state apparatuses though the Japanese history and traditions prevailed. The Congolese State was involved more than most states in Africa in international military and political struggles and operations between the capitalist world under the leadership of the United States and its allies and the socialist/communist orbit of power under the activism of the Soviet Union and its allies. Its geo-political location and immense natural resources/raw materials have made the Congo the center of the debates in international affairs.

In the post-colonial Congo, the nature of the violence related to the state has manifested itself in mutinies that occurred in July 1960, secessionist movements in the Oriental Kasai and Katanga, and the disappearance and assassination on January 17, 1961 of Patrice-Emery Lumumba, the first elected Prime Minister of the

Democratic Republic of the Congo. The military invasion of the DRC by Burundi, Rwanda, and Uganda on August 2, 1998 and the assassination of President Laurent-Désiré Kabila on January 16, 2001 are some of the symptoms of the violence related to state formation. Some people talk about these conditions as forming the "curse" of the Congolese history and people. Who decided that its resources should be considered in apocalyptic or eschatological terms as a "curse"?

More than 50 years later, after the dropping of the atomic bomb in Japan, the peripheral Congolese post-colonial state, the most supportive instrument of global capitalism during the Cold War in Africa, totally failed the African people with a higher level of corruption ever found in most parts of the contemporary world. Toward the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s, the Congolese post-colonial state collapsed and disappeared. Statistical data for, or about, the Congo became inexistent also from the databases of the global institutions and world economic reports. The Congo as a country and people hardly survived as a collective cultural and sociological entity. They entered into a new phase of the survival, which is characterized by chaotic informational and informal stage of societal building.

Although at the global and national levels the political consequences of the Cold War and its based political behaviors of intimidation and the competition over natural resources have not disappeared yet in the DRC, as discussed later, the liberation of Zaïre, which was renamed the DRC in May 1997 by the forces associated with the late Laurent-Désiré Kabila and the forced exile of Mobutu to Morocco where he died in 1997, mark the last important symbols that characterize the end of the Cold War.

Furthermore, it should be emphasized that the processes of the state formation in the DRC has been, to a certain large extent, different from other African colonial cases. In addition to the classical model of the Leopoldian model for economic and political control, which was focused on highly individualized and personalized ambitions within the current dynamics of corporate globalization known through its restructuring and reform policies, the Congolese State since the establishment of the "Mobutuization of the state and politics" did develop strong tendencies and characteristics of being the most privatized public entity than most states. It also embodied tendencies of extreme personalization. What does a private state mean? What are the main objectives of a private state in a public space? How does a private state deal with the demands in the public sector? Is the private state an adequate concept in political science to analyze and understand the dynamics of the African state?

I examine theoretically the arguments of a private state, using the DRC as an illustrative case. I conceptually and analytically link this notion to the dominant paradigms of international capitalism and the factors that have promoted the privatization of the state. I argue that, despite particularities of the state formation as cited earlier, it is safe to conclude that the post-colonial state in the Congo is essentially "a microcosm of a peripheral capitalist state par excellence." This state is international, militaristic, extremely dependent, and accommodationist in nature, the most important factors which have contributed to its privatization.

By and large, the study of the post-colonial state formation, its policies and politics, and their social implications in the DRC is a complex inquiry to examine the impact of the dynamics and contradictions of the global capitalism at the peripheral economy and society, and their institutions.

On the basis of the above reasoning, the questions of what and who have ruled in DRC, and how those who govern have established the rules and institution of governance, cannot be fully examined, appreciated, and understood in using technical or legalistic formulaes. Governance is a power relations concept. It implies how state and society interact to produce actions or policies for the benefits of either some concrete individualistic interests or for the benefits of social interests at large. It is about the mechanisms of the management of the political system and distribution of the values in a given society. It is more than the establishment of constitutions, political parties, and mechanisms of the political control.

General analytical perspectives and approaches

My perspectives and approaches are informed by an epistemological premise that truths in sciences have normalizing and regulating functions. They must be in the service of human progress and societal building. That is to say that the truths have the correcting sociological and historical capabilities.

Within the prescribed intellectual framework, the state as a social phenomenon is a historically constructed entity. This construction always embodies an ideology or some belief systems. State, like social class, is neither biology nor physiology. It is a construction that emerges out of social contradictions with specific interests and objectives.

The qualitative analysis is mainly shaped by an historical structuralist approach that stipulates that systems, social phenomena, or social institutions do not function randomly. They have a certain coherent relational logic that is related to the role and the nature of each element within such a system. The system is not just the sum of its elements. In terms of its dynamics, it is more than what is tangible or what can be seen and touched. In order to understand why a system behaves the way it does, we have to ask the questions of the origins of its elements, examine the nature of the relationship among them, and discuss the nature of the interactions between the system itself and other phenomena within or around its larger environment.

All the elements of social systems or the subsystems interact dynamically with one another. Performing to reach their various objectives, the elements are maintained through a complex process of historical configurations. The behavior of an actor is determined by the dynamics of the subsystems, the systems, and the environment where one is located. This thinking considers the dynamics of the local conditions as being as structurally energetic as those of the global system. On the basis of the critical theory, which emphasizes the need to join empirical investigation with a critique of reality, there is a need to assess the way in which dominant ideologies are constituted and mediated through specific

cultural formations. This way of thinking goes beyond the cybernetics and the logic of functionalist scholarships.

My holistic approach puts emphasis on change. Things do not just happen. There are laws (historical laws) that force or pull phenomena toward certain directions. It is important to identify and analyze the nature of these laws. Another element of the discourse is that we cannot change what we do not know or understand. The ultimate objective of knowledge is change. Contradictions are not all the time or always pathological. We have to distinguish between primary contradictions and secondary contradictions. I argue that if contradictions are well studied, they can also serve as a foundation for paradigm shifts.

Thus, I argue that in general terms, the peripheral African state in its current form of extreme fragility like the case of the DRC cannot be and is not an agent of positive social change because this state was created to essentially advance the interests of the metropolitan capitalism. This is far from articulating any form of conspiracy theory. This state has the essential tendencies and characteristics of monopoly and tyranny.

Paradigmatic elements of the **problématique** *of the colonial and the post-colonial state: a short overview*

Ibn Khaldun, a classical philosopher and historian, who knew well the general philosophy of traditional African states, kingdoms, and empires, defines the state in the following terms:

> The state is thus, natural and necessary because society is natural and necessary, and because society cannot continue to exist except through the state. It is true that man [*sic*] did exist prior to the formation of the state, but his existence was more animal-than human-like. Through the state man expresses his peculiarly human nature, namely his rational power as against the vegetative desires that motivated the establishment of the community of necessity, and the violent animal motives of transgression and over-reaching that resulted from the community of luxury. We can call this third and the final stage in which men [*sic*] have come to live the community of the state.[2]

The state was created from the relationship between, or interplay of, necessity and its natural character, vegetative needs, animal appetites, human reason, and in some cases, the divine Law. From this perspective, one cannot study the state and understand it without also considering the human as part of the universe. His/her body and soul are also closely linked to the rest of the physical-perceptible world or the world of becoming, and to the world of intelligences. The state represents part of the world of intelligence. As Ibn Khaldun stated:

> Human society is intimately related to the natural environment within which it grows. The land, its latitude, its fertility, and the type of food it produces; the air, its temperature, and humidity; and the seasons—all exercise an

> influence on society: they determine the action of man [*sic*] and set limits to what he can do. Internally, they determine man's physical qualities: his color, character, temperament, and humors. Externally, they condition his ability to control nature and to form cultural institutions, and the degree of his success in cultural endeavors.[3]

How do the above definitions of the state, which contain evolutionary and natural characteristics, help explain the Congolese State? What are the elements that constitute the essence of being an African state? In this regard, Ann Kelleher and Laura Klein stated:

> Europeans used their version of the state to achieve worldwide dominance. Its highly centralized organizational structure was capable of concentrating a large-scale of human and material resources over long periods. During the colonial era European State spread worldwide and became the primary institution for people to interact internationally. Since states have been, and many people think still are, the most powerful decision makers affecting international events, learning about current world issues begins with analyzing the nature of the modern state.[4]

For the purposes of this analysis, four major characteristics of the state are defined: (1) a concise territory with determinant boundaries that should be effectively controlled. This is also called land or physical resources. In this confined land, the population has to be defined and classified culturally and economically according to the criteria of the ruling powers; (2) a government that is the executive organ of the state. It makes decisions and regulates behaviors of people, makes laws, and enforces them. Historically, it is the most visible phenomenon in international affairs, especially in diplomacy and world economy. It claims to use force legally. Its legitimacy in terms of forcing or persuading the people to believe in its action is based on its performance; (3) the loyal population. This is what is called citizenry. Citizenry is defined not as a divisible entity. Citizens must speak common language(s) and have common nationalistic and patriotic identity; and (4) having the recognition by, and of, other states. This can be summarized in the notion of sovereignty of the nation-state. In principle, this state has the right to make its internal/domestic laws without necessarily asking any permission from others, or having a consensus with others. It has, in its territoriality, a jurisdiction to act and speak on behalf of the people who inhabit such a space. It has autonomy to conduct its foreign policies according to the aspirations of its citizens or its leaders even if neighbors may not be happy for them.

In Europe these characteristics were developed through excessive political violence, invasions, and wars. For instance, Napoleon Bonaparte of France who redefined and unified Germany in 1806 for the first time in banning the first *Reich*, as he forced hundreds of principalities into a confederation of thirty states. The contemporary characteristics of the state in Europe are also the result of the political evolution of the 1648 Westphalia peace accord after the end of the

thirty-year war. What is the situation in Africa and how have these characteristics been developed over time in Africa?

African states, including Ethiopia and Liberia, which were not formally colonized by the European powers, are not the products of internal evolutionary or natural development à la Khaldun or revolutionary processes and struggles à la Lenin or Mao. They are the products of colonial and neo-colonial configurations of powers. As such, African states, as well as contemporary states elsewhere, are in their behaviors and structures essentially the reflections of the dynamics of the world politics as defined through the European powers and their political history.

This state was created by the then emerging European powers to foster their interests through mercantilism and global capitalism as viewed and articulated by the European monarchs in the Berlin Conference of 1884–1885. So it is an instrument of international capitalism par excellence. The colonial powers conceived and established an Africa that would be politically ruled, militaristically controlled, and economically and culturally exploited by the European invaders. Territory or land was divided arbitrarily. King Leopold II of Belgium, for instance, was given what was known as the "Congo Free State" as his personal property.

All the boundaries, which are part of the definition of the contemporary African state, were artificial. In addition, these boundaries were not accepted by the imperialists as fixed entities that would support the internal evolution of cultures and foster their stability. In most countries, those boundaries were drawn several times depending on the political configurations of the politics in the North and international relations. In many countries, even around the 1950s at the beginning of the Cold War when colonial experiences had become relatively mature, the issues related to boundaries' questions were still raised by the European authorities. Some African groupings between two or more countries have had experiences of sharing more than two colonial experiences in their social settings, and organizations and political economy in various periods. After independence, these groupings were likely to challenge the contemporary state if any political opportunity arose.

However, despite the artificiality of the state, the boundary question did not lead to major wars among different social and ethnic groupings, as was the case after the political independence. Despite the militaristic character of the colonial power in dealing with the boundary issue at large, the flexibility of the African culture and its tolerance base were instruments of temporary peace. There were also internal mechanisms and traditions to deal with the claims related to the boundary issue. The issue of the native citizenship associated with land was not strictly codified or legalized before the second stage of colonization after World War I and the Great Depression. The British and German administrations, for instance, used the so-called indirect rule. But many laws in Anglophone Africa, for example, despite reforms, have their origins not in the African traditions, but rather in the Indian Codes that were developed during the nineteenth century to help resolve disputes in the multiethnic Indian subcontinent.[5]

The Belgian administration, for instance, used an eclectic system with elements of both direct and indirect systems depending on the period. With these

models, colonial powers used and exploited the existing African system of powers as agencies of new governance. This situation gave the impression that the colonial administrations did allow constructed or imagined flexibility of various cultures to coexist and flourish according to their own norms. The appearance of preserving the indigenous structures did not have any traditional legitimacy in the eyes of native societies, as the new governance did not lead to a fundamental questioning of their nationalities or customary laws or ethnic/sociological citizenship.

The colonial state was militaristic in essence; any territorial boundary question was also met with military forces. As alluded previously, between the 1920s and 1930s, some state reforms were introduced to make colonial systems more effective in exploitation of labor and raw materials. This situation required new definitions of power systems: (1) customary authority; and (2) civic colonial code. The systems of control of native systems of governance were instituted. However, in the case of the Belgian model, each ethnic grouping was ruled differently according to different sets of rules. In the Belgian Congo as well as in Rwanda and Burundi, the introduction of the ethnic identity card did have an impact among groupings but also in the way the so-called indirect rule was organized.

Despite differences among colonial states, all of them were structurally fashioned as Euro-centric dominated entities, philosophically and culturally alien to Africa, and economically capitalistic. As Claude Ake wrote:

> Since the colonial state was called upon by the peculiar circumstances of the colonial situation to carry out so many functions—indeed to do everything—it was all-powerful. It needed to be all-powerful not only to carry out its mission but also to survive along with the colonial order in face of the resentment and the hostility of the colonized.… The power of the colonial state was not only absolute but also arbitrary. For instance, the colonial governments made the colonies produce the commodities they needed.[6]

The African state, like any state, has to have a population that should produce labor and be controlled and from which a loyalty must be required. This population was essentially perceived and defined as laborer and taxpayer. From the colonial ethnography, the African populations were defined as "tribes," which were perceived to be irrational, religious, and emotional as opposed to Europeans who defined themselves as nations and people that were rational, secular, and logical. It is well known how the European powers intentionally, vigorously, and viciously destroyed the African being in renaming it.

In the Belgian Congo, all Africans were called *nègres*, an insulting political name for blacks and *macaques* (which literally meant *singes* [monkeys]). However, despite the efforts to annihilate the African cultural identities (languages, rituals, worldviews, religions) and their histories, the Africans succeeded in general to make various claims and maintained many plural functioning loyalties. The triple heritage notion (Africanity, Christianity, and Islamism) of Ali

Mazrui that he developed in his Public Television programs in the 1980s vividly depicts this historical and cultural legacy.

The African colonial conditions, despite their internal dynamics, were not intended to create the viable states in which Africans would be total citizens. Despite the differences in the ways colonial politics were articulated and with few exceptions from the colonial administration's point of view, all Africans in states South of the Sahara were legally defined as subjects. The notion of civil citizenship is relatively new within the context of colonization. But Africans in their regions, localities, and old political structures did not perceive and define themselves as subjects. They defined themselves according to the classification that was reflected in their traditions, customs, and the hierarchy of powers. Despite efforts of the colonial powers to use or to codify some elements of the traditions and customs, especially in the so-called indirect rule within the imposed Western paradigms, the historical dual citizenship claims and practices were not totally destroyed. During the colonial and the post-colonial periods, the majority of the Africans defined themselves as citizens of both their own social groups and nations. Europeans defined Africans using civil laws in relationship to their labor. The full development of the notion of citizenship as a legal definition or status of people with certain social and political rights, duties, and responsibilities came only late in the colonial experiences as Africans were reclaiming their citizenry through popular movements or various forms of negotiation.[7]

In short, the colonial state was essentially a state of violence, of exploitation, of alienation and of deconstruction of Africa and reconstruction of the Western power systems and their dominant economies. In other words, the colonial state destroyed traditional African state systems and their political economies and replaced them with European ones in the context of a dominant (European) and subservient (African) relationship.

One of the characteristics of the colonial and the post-colonial state formations in the DRC is the excessive privatization of the state. How did it happen? The post-colonial experiences in Africa at large have produced three forms of privatized state. This first form of privatization of the state is associated with the early rise of nationalism in Africa. The state as a private domain also meant the law of exclusion of people who were perceived directly or indirectly as anti-nationalists or dangerous to particular ideologies of the new regimes. At the same time, most states, as controlled by heads of state, were also partially active in the public sector. Social services, such as education and medical services, were either given freely or had low costs.

The second form of privatization of the state in the post-colonial era is associated with multinationals and international financial institutions. Although multinationals have worked with and through the states in the areas of laws, labor policy, tax, etc., in order to accumulate their capital, they superimposed themselves as supra-states agencies with power to challenge the claims of the states. They developed corporate privatization state mechanisms. Corporate in this context is used not only for describing the institutional driving force of an

increasingly globalized capitalism (multi and cross-national corporations) but also for depicting what appears to be a more general tendency toward supra-national economic and political organization at the expense of the state power and identity.[8]

The third form of privatization of the state, which is related to the second one, is associated with the militarization of the African politics and power struggles. Militarization is part of the ethos and structures of the global capitalist economy. Colonization, for instance, was essentially a militaristic operation. With the end of the Cold War era, arms are smuggled and sold easily and cheaper than significant amounts of foods in open markets in most parts of the world. Within the framework of globalization, the market for the arms has become a veritable lucrative business, a money making enterprise. The rise of the private and ethnic militianization of African politics has been one of most visible and complex characteristics of the post-Cold War politics in Africa, which needs to be critically studied further. The privatization of the state in the DRC is the product of the dynamics of the colonization. The colonial question localizes its imperatives.

The colonial question: a personalized and paternalistic model of governance

Did decolonization succeed in destroying the structures of both the colonial administration and of large private financial enterprises in the Congo? How did a newly sovereign Congo react to, or attempt to deal with, Belgian economic paternalism?

As clearly stated earlier, I am interested in discussing the colonial question in relationship to two phenomena: (1) the dynamics of the colonial political economy and (2) the question of the nature of its state. I do not expand on specificities on how Leopold II managed the Congo on a daily basis. However, I briefly examine a short portrait of the so-called Congo Free State in order to link it to the dynamics of political colonization of the Congo with the main objectives of demonstrating how different and how exploitative the politics of colonization were. I am interested in reconstructing the bigger political picture of the Congo. And one cannot do this adequately without analyzing the nature of the political and economic relationship of colonialism. Thus, I also emphasize that the colonial state formation was essentially an economic enterprise.

The region named the Belgian Congo was ruled and managed with a level of brutality that could not be associated with any historically known "civilized" organization of governance. One cannot understand it fully without linking it to the dogmas of the political economy. The power relations were basically the efforts of the ruling class to simply, purely, and brutally extract resources from the richest African soils. The violence, described in the first section as part of the state formation in the Congo, started with the fact that the Congo was given to King Leopold II as his personal property, literally a piece of real estate[9] as a result of the partition of Africa at the Berlin Conference. The conference was convened by Otto Von Bismarck of Germany between November 1884 and

January 1885, who had the ambition of making Germany a bigger player in international relations.

After difficult negotiations, persuasive arguments, and compromises among the European monarchs, especially between Bismarck and Leopold II about their so-called humanitarian approaches to the so-called civilizing mission, the territory known as the Congo was given to Leopold II as his own property. He ruled the country as an autocrat and did not create any political and economic entities in the Congo that could be even partially beneficial to the Africans. His goal was not humanitarian in terms of establishing a country that would be able to promote social progress within its own environment as claimed.

The basis of Leopold's policy was the creation of trading companies in collaboration with private capital to exploit resources. Thus, the foreign financial groups in Belgium under his direct supervision were to mobilize the surplus to be used for colonial occupation and capital formation. This policy based on state monopoly of the ownership of means production also favored the creation of large capitalist enterprises, which exploited mineral and agricultural resources of the colony for the state. In short, the Leopoldian model was run with the strong cooperation of the multinational corporations until the intervention of the Belgian government.

The nature of the "Congo Free State" can be summarized in the role and objectives of the king. As Jean-Philippe Peemans stated:

> His role was crucial if only because he built a state apparatus in the colony which had features of the mercantilist epoch (monopoly of exploitation of the natural resources, extreme harshness of the methods used to mobilize manpower resources, confusion between private and public uses of state money) while at the same time, he largely utilized resources provided by that policy of "primitive accumulation" to lay down the infrastructures which prepared the ground for profitable investment. After 20 years of rather painful efforts, he had financed not only the external economies required by further investment, i.e. the construction of railways and use of water-ways, but he had also largely financed the expeditions which led to the discovery of rich deposits of non-ferrous metal in Katanga.[10]

Although Peemans appears to believe that the colonization of the Congo was purely a political adventure because colonial affairs did not operate according to the classical economic logic, his description of the role of the king is relevant. The king's political ambition was strongly linked to his capitalist adventurism and ambition. According to Peemans, the Congo as a private property was not well managed with clear political and institutional rules. However, massive labor exploitation and heavy taxation provided huge benefits to the king and private companies in Belgium. The "Congo Free State" (King Leopold II's empire) and the *Campagnie du Katanga* (CK) created the *Comité Spécial du Katanga* (CSK) to manage their common enterprises. Two-thirds of the benefits from the CSK went to the state and one-third to the CK.

Annexation can be considered as a result of absolutism of Leopold's philosophy; he was not respecting even the minimum principles of free trade. A forced labor system, which resulted in native revolts, too many abuses, and a weak economy, influenced the Belgian government to sign the treaty of concession with Leopold II. To save capitalism, the Belgian, the British, the French, and the United States governments intervened in the Congolese tragedy. But the damage was already done. Between 1885 and 1908, it is estimated that in the Congo about 10 million Africans were killed and many other millions tortured in an extreme unequal direct power relationship management model of governance. As already mentioned, the Leopoldian model of governance was absolutely autocratic. The Congo was his own property, a source of his political prestige and economic gain.

The final treaty of the annexation of Leopold II's domain in transferring his personal property to the state was accepted by the Belgian Senate on September 9, 1908. The Belgian government (parliament) passed the law in October 1908, which became known as the Charter, setting forth the principles that would henceforth govern the new colony. In November 1908, the "Congo Free State" ceased to exist, at least in law. Thus, the Congo became the Belgian Congo with the king as the head of state, who continued to rule by decree,[11] though his decrees had to be countersigned by the Belgian minister of the colonies. The king consulted an Advisory Colonial Council—appointees who were ordinary conservative, older men who had achieved within the Belgian aristocracy and bureaucracy.

The king's representative in the colony was the governor-general, who had the authority to issue administrative ordinances that had the power of law. The Congolese government was a highly centralized system and hierarchically organized. The country was politically and administratively divided into provinces, districts, territories, "*chefferies*," "*postes d'état*," and villages. These political units were not autonomous. They depended politically on the government of Leopoldville, the capital of the Congo, where the most important decisions about the country were taken by the Belgians.

Starting in 1910, the Congo was ruled by a complex trinity of church, state, and private companies. The Catholic Church provided limited formal education based on the concept of "*pas d'élite, pas de problème*" ("no elite, no problem"). It created a new basis for Western Christian morality and its value system through which Africans were expected to be "pacified" and were also forced to respect the newly established authority, law, and power. The state was to establish the so-called peace and order through military and administrative means. This state was absolutely powerful and arbitrary in the formulation and implementation of its policy and in its behavior. With these two attributes, it attempted to create one of the largest reservoirs of labor in colonial Africa. It should be noted that the area of formal education was given to the Catholic Church as the responsible institution for granting instruction to the so-called "uncivilized" people in exchange for its total freedom to convert Congolese to Catholicism. The Catholic Church through an agreement between the Vatican and the Belgian state became the agency of colonial socialization.

It should be noted here that the gender relations, which were regulated by the principle of *pas d'élite, pas de problème* reflected serious unequal power relations between men and women that were established during the colonial and the post-colonial political development in the DRC. Until the 1948 educational reforms, which allowed the establishment of secondary schools and the *Athénées* (public high school system), the Christian missionaries, both Catholics and Protestants, established two educational systems, one for the girls and another for the boys. In terms of curriculum, these two systems were qualitatively different. At large, girls were trained in home economics (*écoles ménagère*s) with the main purposes of educating girls to become "good wives," loyal to their husbands as Christians are supposed to be to Church. In many of these schools, the French language was not taught as well as other courses in liberal arts such as physics, mathematics, biology, etc. In short, girls were not taught to think critically and write logically in the French language.

Until 1955, the system of higher education in the Congo was not destined to produce professional women with University degrees. One of the implications of this policy is that in the post-colonial power structures, women as citizens have been absent despite the fact that there have been many educational reforms between 1955 and now, which were intended to improve the schooling of girls. Consequently, the first and the second generalizations of the Congolese political elites have been predominantly males.

The social inequality and injustices that I have discussed above were even more pronounced in the structures of the private corporations, which were dominated by the mining sector. Like the military sector, the mining sector was considered as a man's area, as it involves the utilization of physical labor and heavy migration.

The private companies were expected to invest, expropriate properties, develop industries, and control resources. They were to exploit the human and natural resources for the benefit of the metropolis and provide money to the administration to sponsor the policies. The administration was very weak at the beginning, but determinedly divided the country culturally and politically in order to be able to rule it.

Despite the potential competition among Belgian financial groups that had interests in the colonial economy through the founding of the *Union Minière du Haut Katanga* (UMHK) in 1906 by the CSK, the state used its full powers, through different kinds of constraints and pressures, to undertake large public works, mobilize a large volume of cheap human labor for mines and large plantations, and foster exports. It used unlimited coercive forces to appropriate resources.

Belgian financial groups dominated investments and control over the colonial economy. *Société Générale* (SG), the largest financial institution in Belgium, and one of the holding companies in the UMHK, held almost two-thirds of its investments. In the UMHK, voting rights were allocated as follows: the CSK 35 percent; Tanganyika Concessions Ltd. maintained 20 percent; the SG 7 percent; and the CK only 1 percent. As documented elsewhere, this monopoly of finances

by Belgian private companies created social and ideological conflicts between colonialists and colonists based on their specific relations to the colonial political economy at large. Liberals believed in opening up the Congo for international trade and foreign investments. Socialists believed in forming and implementing policies that were intended to improve African social conditions. For them, the emancipation of the Congolese was possible through the improvement of their social conditions, the rise of social consciousness through the establishment of trade unions, and the support of working class movements.

After World War II, though the Belgian state firmly believed in its policy of maintaining a "special" status for the Congo within the world system, the internal ideological social class conflicts in the metropolis, the defeat of the French in Indochina in the mid-1950s, the emergence of new social movements, and the intensification of various forms of struggles in the colonies in Africa, including the Congo, forced the ruling elite (the Belgian bourgeoisie) to reformulate an economic policy in an attempt to:

1 Improve the living conditions of at least those workers in the main urban areas and the most important industries;
2 Develop a petty bourgeoisie of clerks, low ranking civil servants, and teachers in the primary schools; and
3 To increase state involvement in the maintenance and development of the colonial system.

At the same time, the economic situation in the metropolitan countries demanded more raw materials to feed their industries, especially after the imperialist wars of 1914–1918 and 1939–1945, and it also required the promotion of some freedom in trade relations and more incorporation of the Congolese economy into the Belgian economy. Taxes and borrowing were increased to ensure the financial and military stability of the colonial empire. By the time of independence in 1960, the colonial state had accumulated 9 billion Bf (Belgian francs) in loans, for the most part in the form of bonds, which were owned by private subscribers in Belgium. This capital-intensive economy building based on exports provided some limited benefits to the newly emerging African petty bourgeoisie. However, this class was not incorporated as property owners or investors in the economy's productive sector. The question of the African peasantry was neither systematically nor consistently well articulated in this economy.

The rural economy was generally neglected during several periods of colonization. However, there was a development of an agricultural surplus for export before 1890, again between 1910 and 1915, and yet again around 1945. This was possible because of the unlimited supply of labor (forced labor) at subsistence wages and the low prices paid to peasants for their agricultural commodities. This situation was also due to the colonial economic policy in the Congo, which favored the establishment of giant industrial mining companies at the expense of local food production and local trade based on agricultural production. In short, the political economy of the Congo was characterized by the

extensive proletarianization of the adult male labor force, marginalization of the female population, the accumulation mechanisms associated with compulsory cultivation of export crops, and economic inequality. By the end of the 1950s, the Belgian state had created a strong peripheral capitalist economy in the Congo. The Belgian bourgeoisie, which represented only 1 percent of its population, controlled 95 percent of stock capital, 82 percent of production enterprises, and 70 percent of production materials.[12]

To be more efficient in exploiting human and natural resources, and based on the ideology of their "civilizing mission," the Belgian state produced a colonial system of education that was focused primarily on primary, vocational, technical, and religious types of education, which were intended to provide needed human resources for the mining companies and the lower ranks of the colonial bureaucracy. This educational system, mainly managed by the churches, created the largest "middle class" in sub-Saharan Africa and a relatively stable working class by African standards. This class played the role of intermediary between the masses and the colonial administration. However, it did not develop any of the characteristics of an autonomous working class with solid similar sociological attributes. It was not well politicized, and thus did not have any common political vision or objectives.[13]

In addition, there was a small class of *évolués* ("evolved ones"), known also as the black bourgeoisie, which was created in 1948 by Buisseret, the Governor-General of the colony. This class had special privileges and services within the colonial administration but did not have equal rights or the same treatment as the Belgian ruling class. The intent was to separate and dissociate this class from the masses so that it would become the local advocate of the existing power structure. Its relationship with the ruling class was that of client-patron. The struggle for independence was also partially the result of antagonistic relations between this class, the Belgian administration, and the governing elite.

Central institutions as the colonial bureaucracy, banks, and import-export firms dominating the colonial society were essentially alien, and their development did not contribute much to the development of the indigenous population. The colonial bureaucracy and economic policies were destructive forces instead of contributing to the emancipation and decolonization of the natives as claimed.

Post-colonial politics, the national agenda, and Belgian economic paternalism

The elements of the national agenda and Belgian economic paternalism

The colonial state in the Congo was essentially sexist, racist, and a relatively powerful political machine. It functioned like a semi-kingdom and partially as a secular political entity. In the 1950s, its participation in all businesses in the Congo was estimated at about 70 percent of the Congolese portfolio of 34.9 billion francs (Bf). By the end of the 1950s and the early 1960s, because of the

fear of nationalization, Belgian private and semiprivate companies made massive withdrawals of capital (capital flight) from the Congo and pushed maximum exports with reduced imports in anticipation of a new government's restrictive policies after independence.[14]

The philosophical assumptions of the so-called *mission civilisatrice* ("civilizing mission") and the method of gradual change were questioned on the day of independence as reflected in Lumumba's speech. His historical account of the past was not appreciated by the former colonial political ruling class. The Belgian delegates, including the late King Baudouin, were embarrassed.

How did Lumumba's critical public statement affect new political and economic relations after the ceremonies held on June 30, 1960? This statement by itself did not have any immediate direct impact on the political economy of the Congo and its governance system. However, it created a mindset, which provoked more questioning about the nature of the rules to govern the newly independent state and its role in international relations.

As mentioned, in the political roundtable conference, which was held in Brussels between January 20 and February 20, 1960, both Congolese and Belgian leaders adopted resolution 14, which provided for a separate economic roundtable conference to discuss economic problems in the Congo. With the exception of Jason Sendwe and Moïse Tshombe, many other major Congolese leaders, like Patrice Lumumba and Joseph Kasavubu, refused to attend the economic conference, which was held between April 26 and May 16, 1960 in Brussels. They were not pleased with the approach of separating economic discussions from political discussions. The meeting was dominated by Katangan interest groups. Their argument can be summarized in these terms:

> A Katangan common front emerged, demanding that the CSK portfolio be split into equal parts, one for the province of Katanga, one for the Congo state, and one for the *Compagnie du Katanga*. The Province would undertake itself to adapt the statutes of the CSK to the new situation. The CSK would administer the lands of the new province and retain all personnel without distinction and with their rights. In this case, the private partners, the *Companie du Katanga*, would receive one third of the shares in the UMHK, thus, acquiring together with those already held, 248,403 out of a total of 414,000 voting shares thereby avoiding a take-over by Congolese state control. Obviously, the Katangan plan coincided with interests of private foreign investors.[15]

Before and after the June 30, 1960 celebration of independence, as reflected in the dominant ideological tendencies of the Congolese actors that negotiated for the independence in roundtable in January 1960, the African political elite was divided between the federalists, the secessionists, the accommodationists, and the nationalists. They wanted to pursue their various forms of decolonization policies to fit their political consolidation efforts and agendas. And the dominant class in Belgium wanted to retard any process that could support positive

changes in the country. The speech of Patrice Lumumba, on June 30, 1960, set up the motion of the national agenda. His depiction of how the colonial administration perceived and treated Africans, who were considered savages based on racism and ignorance, embodied some elements to be incorporated in the national agenda; as he stated:

> I ask my friends, all of you who have fought unceasingly at our side, to make this thirtieth of June, 1960, an illustrious date that will be indelibly engraved upon your hearts, a date whose meaning you will teach your children with pride so that they in turn will tell their children's children the glorious story of our struggle for freedom … We are proud of this struggle amid tears, fire, and blood, down to our very hearts, for it was a noble and just struggle, an indispensable struggle if we were to put an end to the humiliating slavery that had been forced upon us. We have been the victims of ironic taunts, of insults, of blows that we were forced to endure morning, noon, and night because we were blacks. Who will forget that a black was addressed in familiar form, not because he was a friend, certainly, but because the polite form of address was to be used only for whites. We cannot forget the burst of rifle fire in which so many of our brothers perished, the cells into which the authorities threw those who no longer were willing to submit to a rule where justice meant oppression and exploitation.[16]

The Katanga secession, which was proclaimed in July 1960, was strongly defended by Belgian interests as much as possible. Their view was that an independent Congo would be a dependent partner with the private companies that were actually running the national economy. The decision of the Belgian government to ratify the resolution made in June 1960 is an indication of a generalized common attitude of the Belgian state vis-à-vis the Congo. As Wolf Radmann stated:

> On June 27, 1960, three days before Congolese independence, the Convention was ratified by decree of the Belgian government without any provision for the division of the CSK assets other than the shares of the *Compagnie du* Katanga. The remaining two-thirds of the portfolio were to be in trust by the Belgian government pending expiration of concessions in 1990. This trust account amounted to about 23.8% of the voting shares of the UMHK, a minority control faced with a coalition of Tanganyika Concessions Ltd., *Compagnie du* Katanga and *Société Générale de Belgique*. The convention did, however, deprive an independent Congo of the possibility of controlling the powerful CSK organization and private control—at least for the time being—of UMHK.[17]

The first Congolese government led by Patrice Lumumba neither had enough time nor international political support to pursue its nationalistic approach in

dealing with the economic situation. The secessionist movements, the political struggle among the new leaders, and the effect of the Cold War and Western interests, all contributed to weaken the state's power in its efforts to take up any serious economic issues, especially the role of foreign capital and its management. The new Congolese government operated under the old economic and administrative structures. Belgian private interest groups feared that Lumumba would nationalize foreign companies, including the giant UMHK. He was considered a political threat to Western economic and political interests. After his assassination on January 17, 1961 in Katanga, with the collaboration of the CIA and Mobutu, neither Cyrille Adoula, the prime minister between 1961 and 1964 (popular in Washington and Brussels), nor other governments after him (like Evariste Kimba's government, nominated by President Kasavubu between October and November 1965) felt seriously committed and obligated to deal comprehensively and aggressively with the question of the role of the UMHK in the national economy. Adoula tried but was unsuccessful because of his lack of strong political commitment. Prime ministers were mainly concerned with state building. This was considered to be the prerequisite for building an independent nation.

The first step toward establishing new economic relations between the Congo and Belgium was the decision made by the Congolese government on November 29, 1964 to expropriate by decree, without compensation, all the holdings of the CSK and dissolve it under new Congolese laws. Though this decision was at first rejected by Paul-Henri Spaak, the Belgian Minister of Foreign Affairs (a former Secretary of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization [NATO] and a leading member of the Socialist Party), on February 6, 1965, an agreement was reached and signed. The portfolio was then released to the Congo, and Tshombe, the Prime Minister, received a check of 92,420,000 million Bf from the UMHK in dividends and interest accrued to the Congo since 1960. The new state, as part of the same deal, had to assume liabilities for other obligations of the colonial state. The public debt of the colonial state was about 9 billion Bf or $536 million. *Le Fond Belgo-Congolais d'Amortissement et de Gestion* (FBCAG) was established for the purpose of servicing this debt, including payments of interest and redemption of principal. The Congolese government was to pay a monthly installment of 25 million Bf or $6 million annually, and the Belgian government was to pay 17.5 million Bf monthly or $4.2 million annually. According to the accord signed in March 1965, the *Fond* would take care of $246.5 million to be paid in forty years with 3.5 percent annual interest. How was this deal perceived by both states? Why should a newly independent country pay colonial debts? What would be the impact of paying this debt in a fragile national economy? And what was Tshombe's political agenda for accepting such a deal?

Why did Tshombe decide to make this deal? A few factors should be taken into account here. After being the leader of a secessionist movement, Tshombe probably wanted to project a new image that would make him more acceptable as a national political leader. Furthermore, he wanted to consolidate his power at

home through the support of international institutions. Moise Tshombe was also a businessman in Elizabethville (now Lubumbashi) who opted to work in close cooperation with Western capitalists. He believed in capitalism and its laissez-faire principle as an economic model that could stop a radical leftist nationalism (such as that of Lumumba) by some members of the Congolese elite. However, he did not do much to change the structure of the Congolese political economy.

Joseph Désiré Mobutu formally came to power on November 24, 1965 by the second military *coup d'état*. He was not new to the *milieu d'affaires belges*. Whatever the real political motives were, Mobutu decided in 1966 to give a new image to the political economy of the Congo. At the time, the Congolese State was receiving about 75 percent of its foreign exchange earnings and about 60 percent of its exports from the mining sector. He decided to change the role of the UMHK in an independent Congo. Before Mobutu, this company was a relatively autonomous institution with its own agenda, rules, and structures, which were strongly linked to Belgium and its international financial basis. It was referred to as *un État dans un État* (a state within a state).

In his speech on June 30, 1966, Mobutu declared that political independence meant nothing as long as it did not include economic independence. Earlier in the same year, he imposed new taxes on copper and marketing policies. As indicated by Radmann:

> By decree-law of June 7, 1966 the Congolese government made it compulsory for all foreign based companies whose main activities were in the Congo to establish their head office there by the end of the year. Under the same date, the so-called Bakajika law provided full employment by the state of all land, forest and mining rights conceded or granted before June 30, 1960, without any mention of compensation.[18]

After many attempts to renegotiate with the Belgian elite about the status of the UMHK, on December 31, 1966, the Congolese government officially announced its decision to expropriate the UMHK and transfer its assets to a new company effective January 2, 1967. The newly created company was called the *Société Générale Congolaise de Minérais* (GECOMINES). The Republic of Congo then increased its participation to 60 percent of the shares. The remaining 40 percent were to be offered to the public. Politically, GECOMINES became, de facto, a state-owned company. The state would control all investments in, or any projects associated with, the company, and it would control the decision-making process for the growth of the company and the direction of its operations.

This political decision affected several aspects of the paternalistic economic relations between the Congo and Belgium. However, it did not displace or fundamentally alter Belgium's role in the international economic system or its role in the Congo. Despite the expropriation of the UMHK, the Belgian government provided Mobutu with $70 million in economic aid between 1966 and 1967. One of the most important questions was who should manage the GECOMINES and who could invest in it?

After negotiations with the *Société Générale de Minérais* (SGM), another subsidiary of the powerful *Société Générale de Belgique*, the SGM accepted managerial, marketing, and commercial duties in the new company. It would receive a commission of 4.5 percent of the value of all sales. In 1969, another agreement was reached whereby the government extended the managerial role and marketing power of the SGM for twenty-five years. In 1970, the name of the company was changed to the *Société des Carrières et Mines du Congo* (GECAMINES). In 1972, a structure of more political control was introduced in which the administrative board was abolished, and the GECAMINES was brought under the direct control of the head of state (the president). The director general and the assistant director general were still both Belgians. In 1974, the compensation agreement in favor of the SGM changed from 6 percent of annual sales for fifteen years to a fixed sum of $100 million, regardless of fluctuations in the production and marketing mechanisms of minerals. Some of the aspects of national agenda discussed in the above section will be clarified further through the politics of Mobutu's authenticity.

A national project in the Democratic Republic of the Congo under Mobutu

As noted earlier, various processes of the state formation in the DRC were influenced by, and focused more on, the style of governance, and the ideology related to the personality of the political figures (Leopold II, Kasavubu, Lumumba, Tshombe, Mobutu, Laurent Kabila, and Joseph Kabila) than on institutional building. In this section, given the centrality of Mobutu's political role in post-colonial state formation in the DRC, the focus is, although briefly, on some dominant elements of his political project. Who was Mobutu? How did he emerge in the political affairs of the DRC? What did he represent in the political history of deconstruction and construction of the DRC and in the dynamics of the international political economy? The goal is not to examine Mobutu's autobiography. However, some of his major biographical elements may reflect his ideological base and, thus, should help identify the foundation of his power and power relations. This section specifically examines how his political project through the politics of authenticity was used as a means of building his power base—a phase of state formation.

One cannot fully appreciate the economic, sociological, and political meanings of the post-colonial state formation for the majority of people in most parts of Africa without linking the vision of the political elites, if any, and their policy of people's mobilization to their so-called national projects. These national projects, which were born during the Cold War era, were strongly ideological. In most cases, these projects include the attempts to control political apparatuses, the state's efforts to participate in the economic activities in the country, governmental responses to the local demands about development or people's requests of welfare programs, and the pressures from multinationals to internationalize further capital in the new politically decolonized countries.

Thus, various aspects of the national projects were articulated within the framework of the military and political struggles between the United States and its allies and the Soviet Union and its allies. The politics of neutrality was either rare or it was considered as a betrayal (negative isolationism) to development or social progress. The major ideological components of these projects were African socialism, Afro-Marxism-Leninism, Africanized capitalism, traditional nationalism, liberalism, and national militarism. Mobutu produced one of the most complex national projects in Africa in his thirty-two years of his presidency.

Joseph Mobutu studied in the Catholic schools in Equatorial province. He spent seven years in the 1950s in the *Forces Publiques* ("Public forces"/colonial army) school in Luluabourg, where he was trained as an accountant and in administrative secretarial services. By schooling and practices, he claimed to be a Catholic Christian though, as it was known later, he was one of the strongest believers in African magic or *juju* practices, *nganga*, and sorcery among the Congolese politicians, according to the testimony of his former Ambassador and Minister of Information, the late Dominique Sakombi Inongo, a born-again Christian, who was the Minister of Information during the presidency of Laurent-Désiré Kabila.

Immediately after leaving the *Forces Publiques*, Mobutu engaged in journalistic works in Léopoldville toward the end of the 1950s, where he met Patrice Lumumba who was an emerging politician, who had formed his political party, *Mouvement National Congolais* (MNC; the Congolese National Movement) in 1958. Mobutu was attracted to Lumumba's ideas of nationalism and total political independence. Both were "*évolués*," members of the black petty bourgeoisie class that the colonial administration created as an intermediate class between the indigenous African people and the European power. They were called "*les ayants droits*," that is to say the African cadres with the cards that allowed them to attend certain regularized events and in the high places and with access to some limited privileges, which were arranged for, and given to, the "negroes." Many *évolués*, including Lumumba, were frustrated because they did not have full entitlements as compared to those given and received by the Europeans. They were not fully assimilated into the Belgian bourgeoisie living standard.

Mobutu attended the *Exposition Universelle* (universal exposition) of Brussels in 1958 as a journalist. In early 1960, at the time of the roundtable conferences on the question of independence, Mobutu was living in Brussels (Belgium) having further training in journalism. He was among those Congolese who welcomed Patrice Lumumba when he went, after being released from prison, to attend the roundtable conference. Lumumba appointed him as his personal secretary before inviting him to his first government as the secretary of state attached to the office of presidency. By personal relationship or professional association, he was a member of the ruling party, the *Mouvement National Congolais Lumumba* (MNC/L). He was also appointed by Lumumba as the head of the new army (the Congolese National Army). While in Belgium, he was associated with the Belgian intelligence unit (*La Sûreté Belge*), the Belgian state, and business sector.

As noted earlier, the processes of the Congolese state formation were extremely weak. The DRC came into the business of self-governance without any solid political experience. The Belgian colonial power and its institutions did not prepare the establishment of the phase of self-determination. In July 1960, the army mutinied. The Congolese soldiers wanted to be promoted. But the structure of the new army was still the same as before the independence with Belgian military officers at the top and, at the bottom, the Congolese soldiers as subjects and proletarians. Power struggles between the prime minister and the president combined with secessionist movements in Kasai and Katanga made the political situation volatile. Lumumba was already accused of being sympathetic to socialism and the pan-Africanism of Kwame Nkrumah.

The United States had identified Mobutu as someone who could never became a socialist or left-wing nationalist. The decision to kill or to force Lumumba out of office was reached in Washington, DC in August 1960 when the CIA sent an emissary to talk with the CIA's Bureau Chief in Léopoldville. Thus, Mobutu was given guarantee for full support from the United States to take the control of the army, rule the country, eliminate Lumumba, and make sure to crush or control any possible influence of socialism in the country and later in the region.

Between November 24, 1965, when Mobutu took power through a second military *coup d'état*, and his forced exile on May 16, 1997 when he left Kinshasa, he ruled the country in close collaboration with the Binza group and its associates until the emergence of struggle for multiparty politics and popular movements in the 1990s. This group was composed of the few Congolese who studied at Université Lovanium, various universities in Belgium, and France in the early 1960s, and who first joined the government led by Cyrille Adoula after Mobutu made his first military *coup d'état* on September 14, 1960.

Not for the feeling of guilt in his involvement in the assassination of Lumumba but for the need of political survival and mobilization, as a Machiavellian political strategist, he rehabilitated Patrice Lumumba as the National Hero as one of the starting points to consolidate his power on June 30, 1966. The real process of personalization of the state started on May 20, 1967, when Mobutu created his Revolutionary Popular Movement (*Mouvement Populaire de la Revolution*) as the only political party in the country. Mobutu did not call it a single party, but a national party because for him, a single party implies an opposition; and yet in his constructed empire, no formal opposition was allowed or tolerated. This is the beginning of the establishment of a tyrannical and monolithic apparatus of the state on which he based his power for more than three decades.

From institutional, performance, and structural points of view, there is a consensus that this state could not be legitimized without having the local support. Thus, in order to cement his power, as articulated by his political advisors, most of which were Europeans, he carved a faulty and unhistorical African concept inspired by the *Négritude* of Léopold Sedar Senghor of Senegal, that is authenticity as a way of attempting to transform himself into literally being a "Muntu deity."

This process contributed to the consolidation of his power as a maximum ruler. Mobutu claimed that he was trying to re-introduce and follow the metaphysics of the Bantu philosophy. However, despite serious challenges to the state apparatuses through rebellions, uprisings, various forms of protests, and revolutionary leftist movements, this state survived. He had a relatively strong internal political base in the country and full military and financial support from the Western powers until the early 1990s.

In October 1971, Mobutu announced his politics of "authenticity" with much fanfare, national and international publicity, and personal pride. Authenticity was one of the most publicized forms of nationalism in Africa. As articulated in official government documents and speeches delivered by Zaïrean authorities, it was a political ideology of the *Mouvement Populaire de la Revolution* (MPR). It was a state ideology. It was also referred to as Zaïrean authentic nationalism, which was an instrument of state action and policy. What were the objectives of the MPR?

Its most important proclaimed objectives can be summarized as follows: (1) to increase agricultural and industrial production; (2) to advance the politics of large-scale projects; (3) to improve conditions for individual well-being; (4) to unite the Zaïrean people; and (5) to promote democratic liberties, and exalt national intellectual and cultural values with respect to promoting the effective freedom of Zairean women and youth. The argument was that all this could be possibly achieved only in the union of all Zaïreans for dynamics (national energies) and the *Grandeur de la République* ("Power of the Republic") (*Mouvement Populaire de La Révolution*, 1967). The *Grandeur de la République* was Mobutu's slogan to sell his philosophy of authenticity. With this slogan, he projected his ideas that by 1980, Zaïre would be ranked number one in economic development.

As an ideology of the MPR, authenticity also served as a cultural and a philosophical basis for the state's actions and policies. When the advocates of this movement had some difficulties defining it, however, it was argued that authenticity was not a literal effort to revive the African past in a modern society; instead, it served as a cultural and historical reference to the past. Mobutu described how "Congolese society was," and his own role in this new political activity, when he captured power, stating:

> We, unfortunately, have found our Congolese train in a bad shape. But for us, it was even worse than that. It was not because of the bad state of the railroad system, or machinist (operator) was drunk or the wagons were not fixed, but in our 1965's train, everything was broken into pieces, we had to put these different parts together to be able to ride this train again.[19]

The classical argument that Mobutu always advanced to try to win international support for his dictatorial practices was that ever since 1965, when he came to power, he promised to achieve two important goals: building the nation and state, and peace and stability. Through cultural nationalism, he planned to

achieve his task of creating new institutions that would lead to a strong state and a peaceful and united country.

What is authentic Zaïrean nationalism? It can be defined at several levels. At the administrative level, it meant symbolic reforms within the structures of regional administration. Reforms that were made included changing the names of colonial units and restructuring the number of existing administrative units. At the time of independence, there were six provinces. In 1963, the number of provinces increased to twenty-one, including the City of Kinshasa, which had a special autonomous status as both a region and the capital city of the Congo. After the military *coup d'état* of 1965, Mobutu re-mapped the country in reducing the number of the provinces to twelve in April 1966 then to eight in December 1966.

Mobutu decided to restructure the provinces in order to control national politics through a highly centralized power with unusual strong security apparatuses, which were established at almost every corner of the country. The country's name was changed from the Congo to Zaïre. The name of the national currency changed to Zaïre and the name of the Congo River was also changed to Zaïre. Province became region, district became sub-region, territorial unit became zone, and the village became locality. While these reforms gave an impression of decentralization of power, in practice and reality, within the logic and structure of the military regime, all major appointments, promotions, and allocations of resources were directly made in Kinshasa. These administrative reforms were strongly supported by the slogan of this cultural nationalism. Mobutu himself defined his authenticity in these terms:

> We are now embarking on our cultural liberation, the re-conquest of our African, Zaïrean soul. We people of black skin (race) have had imposed on us the mentality of quite a different species. We must become once again authentic Africans, authentic Blacks, authentic Zaïreans.[20]

At the cultural level, authenticity was conceived as an intellectual decolonization process and a search for African cultural identity. Did it literally mean a return to African culture and traditions? An attempt to answer this question clearly was never easy, even for Mobutu himself. In his speech before the 28th General Assembly of the United Nations in New York City on October 4, 1973, he said:

> The Zaïrean experience has been forged on the anvil of a political philosophy which we call authenticity. This is awareness on the part of the people of Zaïre leading them to look to their origins, to delve deeply into values of their ancestors in order to determine those which make for their own harmonious and natural development.

When Mobutu promoted his authentic Zaïrean nationalism in October 1971, he announced his new cultural nationalist program as the "return to authenticity."

Because of the confusion of defining the concept and the difficulty of actualizing this concept of returning to the past into policy, he had to explain before the MPR Congress of May 21–24, 1972 what authenticity meant again, as he said: "Authenticity consists of becoming aware of our character, our own value, of basing our action on the fruits of the nation, in order to make our action be truly ours and truly effective."[21]

Here, the word "return" was deleted from his political discourse. What it probably meant was that in becoming whatever Zaïreans could be, the people would have to first regain the lost elements of African culture. Culturally, authentic nationalism meant self-discovery, or discovery of African culture within one's social context. It was defined by several well-known Zaïrean philosophers of authenticity as "the search of self, re-definition and the self-recovery for the need of self-realization."[22]

To promote the idea of self-discovery, Christian-European names were dropped by a presidential decree, starting with Mobutu himself, who changed his name from Joseph-Désiré to Sese Seko Kuku Ngbendu wa Zabanga. All Belgian and European names of cities, towns, streets, boats, newspapers, and schools were replaced by African names. Belgian names on monuments and historical sites were all changed. In the school system, civic and political education centered on the *Manifeste de la N'sele* (Manifesto of N'sele) replaced the Christian religion. Thus, a war was waged against Christianity, especially Catholicism that was perceived by the state as a representative of imperialism par excellence.

The Catholic Church, as one of the powers that ruled the Congo, was offended by the new political approach and program undertaken by Mobutu. The closing down of some seminaries and schools of theology was a step toward openly combating Christianity, as well as an attempt to decrease its cultural and philosophical influence throughout the country. Whether or not this confrontation was taken seriously by Mobutu and the Catholic Church, it appeared to be more of a power struggle than an ideological and cultural movement. Mobutu feared that his power and authority could be undermined or challenged by the influences, structure, and hierarchy of the Catholic Church at home and abroad.

At the political level, despite difficulties in defining authenticity in clearly articulated expressions, some elements of this nationalism can be identified. First, this nationalism claimed to reject both capitalism and communism as foreign ideologies. Zaïre's political elite then opted neither for the left nor for the right, and their position was called "positive neutrality." Second, this nationalism was theoretically intended to guarantee fundamental liberties and to operate and advance revolution within the state in the economy, finances, the workplace, social sectors, culture, and the arts as well as in African politics and at the international level. Whether or not these nationalist expressions were genuinely incorporated into public policy formulation and implementation is a very different story. Mobutu was one of the richest capitalists in the world and his regime was an absolutist organization without any small space for fundamental liberties.

At the economic level, what did authenticity mean? As already discussed in another section, the economy of Zaire was structured for the export of raw

materials, mainly copper, cobalt, industrial diamonds, uranium, and to a lesser degree, rubber, timber, coffee, palm products, cocoa, and tea. Copper alone accounted for one-half of government revenues and nearly two-thirds of its foreign exchange earnings. The economic boom at the end of the 1960s and the early 1970s created a wrong impression, advanced by the military government that the economy would continue to improve in terms of increasing the production of raw materials and their marketing, if it were under the control of the nationals through Zaïreanization. By this logic, it was argued that the control of the economy by Zaïreans, based on principles of the African social relations, which are dominated by the philosophy of the extended family system, would make the process of social distribution of wealth among the people much easier. How was economic policy interpreted through the politics of authenticity?

Strong propaganda was orchestrated by the state to promote the idea of self-sufficiency in both economic production and consumption. Thus, on November 30, 1973, amid rising mineral prices, Mobutu announced a program aimed at transferring a great deal of Zaïrean wealth in foreign hands to the Zaïreans. The Zaïreanization of the economy was a policy that shaped the national economy and it also complicated, to a certain extent, relations between Zaïre and foreign powers. Most foreign companies were turned over to Zaïreans as the new managers, by a presidential decree. The *délégué*(*e)s* ("representatives") and *acquéreurs* ("new property owners") were chosen by the government among clients and friends. The most important criterion for acquiring new properties or managerial position was or became an active membership in the MPR. Thus, the sector concerned with the distribution of small enterprises such as plantations, farms, and fisheries, which had been predominantly under the control of Belgians, was given to Zaïreans. Most previous owners did not receive any compensation. The major political objective behind Zaïreanization was to enlarge the size of the African middle class, or petty bourgeoisie that would strongly support the regime. This was an attempt to create a new political base for the regime. In principle, according to the state, Zaïreanization was also supposed to ensure the economic independence of the country. It meant the control of the economy by Africans. However, it only took less than two years before Zaïreanization totally collapsed.

By 1974, after an assessment of the impact of this policy on the performance of the national economy, and after receiving heavy pressure from foreign donors, the state decided to undertake another "radical alternative," known as nationalization. This new approach meant the transfer of Zaïreanized properties to the state, as indicated by Scott F. Bobb:

> On December 30, 1974, in the face of falling production figures and criticism from the international financial community, the Zaïrean government granted a partial retrocession, allowing up to 40 percent of the ownership of the Zaïreanized properties to be returned to the foreign owners. The proportion was increased to 60 percent nine months later. However, the government did retain ownership of what were considered vital industries, namely in the energy, timber, and large-scale transportation sectors.[23]

As already examined, according to Kambembo, Kazadi, and Mpinga, who were members of the Political Bureau (the senior policy-making body of both the MPR and the government), and philosophers of authenticity, nationalization meant a state policy intended to liberate the national economy from all external and internal constraints.

The basis for consolidating economic and political relations is culture. Education, as a powerful agent which promotes culture, was the domain most affected by this new policy. In 1974, an educational reform agenda was established, following the sweeping nationalization of higher education in 1971. Mobutu called for a total re-examination of the school's monopoly on education by the European system, advocating at a time even a "de-schooled" society. The main objectives of the new educational reform can be summarized in five main goals, as described by Galen Hull:

> (1) to achieve universal basic education of six years by 1980; (2) to increase the professional emphasis of secondary and higher education so that they can provide the nation with trained personnel necessary for development; (3) to act so that the school is no longer the sole means of advancement in society; (4) to establish the government's control over the entire educational system, including schools run by churches, replacing religious instruction with political and civic education; (5) to introduce a year of mandatory national service before entrance to the university.[24]

The attempt to "Africanize" the curricula at all levels of the school system not only displaced the inherited Belgian programs but also removed the Western philosophy of education from the learning process. With the introduction of four national African languages (Kikongo, Kiswahili, Lingala, and Tshiluba), French, the official and administrative language, was also negatively affected. However, until the end of the 1970s, the Belgian government continued to provide the largest share of foreign assistance for recurrent expenditures in the education system. Its aid primarily provided for the salaries of Belgian teachers and administrators. School, especially the university, became firmly the ideological apparatus of the state. Though de-Zaïreanization occurred quickly after 1974, the Europeans, especially the Belgians, did not regain control over culture or education. Mobutu succeeded in creating a Mobutuist educational system, in terms of both its underlined ideology and its political objectives.

In principle, according to the ideology of the state, Zaïreans were supposed to stop looking at the Europeans as the source of their cultural system and social values. That is to say that Western worldview and its ethos should no longer generate the ideas and ideals about the society to be built in Africa.

However, post-authenticity in the Zaïrean politics and economy reflected major philosophical and political contradictions worth briefly discussing. The politics of authenticity was characterized by the failures of both Zaïreanization and nationalization to reach the intended state's objectives, the most important of which was claimed to be the building of an independent Zaïre.

The oil crisis of 1973, mismanagement of state enterprises (parastatals), corruption at all levels of social and state structures, political nepotism, the fluctuation in the prices of primary Zaïrean product exports, such as copper, diamonds, and coffee, and the lack of political will of the state to foster positive change characterized the general situation in Zaïre between 1973 and 1990. Between 1965 and 1969, for instance, the rise in the price of copper was 39,000 to 85,000 Bf a ton; in 1972, it fell to 47,000 Bf a ton. Between 1975 and 1979, there was a relative improvement in the export market for copper, cobalt, diamonds, and coffee. However, the debt service took over 20 percent of Zaïrean exports. Furthermore, it should be added that Zaïre lacks processing facilities for copper; so much of it was refined in Belgium.

As indicated earlier, despite authenticity, the GECAMINES, a newly state-owned company, depended very much on the management and marketing of the SGM. The contract for the recruitment of expatriates was made between the SGM and the recruiting agent. Furthermore, despite nationalization, until 1974, the materials/products from the GECAMINES were all delivered directly to the SGM, which was responsible for marketing and delivering them to clients. The financial price of this kind of linkage was high. The SGM was financing the GECAMINES operations by giving provisional advances to the company. In principle, the SGM was supposed to assist the GECAMINES in becoming more self-sufficient in marketing and refinery. Its daily operations and the outcome of this responsibility reflected a different story, however.

In the early 1980s, the managing director of the GECAMINES was still a Belgian named Robert Crem. He also became the head of a newly created state-owned company: the National Trading Company, or the *Société Zaïroise du Commerce* (SOZACOM). The objectives of the new company were to harmonize and supervise commercial transactions by the state or parastatal businesses. It was also intended to oversee the purchasing of equipment of constructions, and ensured that the most competitive conditions in terms of quality, price, and transport were achieved. It was a state marketing agency for minerals and had contracts with *La Société Générale de Minerais*. About 80 percent of the contractual engagements of the SOZACOM were treated or transformed at the Belgian-owned *Métallurgie d' Hoboken-Overpelt*.[25] When Robert Crem was fired, he was replaced by another Belgian with close ties to the SG.

To illustrate further how the Zaïrean economy still depended heavily on foreign financial capitals, and technological and technical input, an example from the oil business is provided. Sixty percent of Zaïre Fina (the national oil company) was owned by the Belgian Oil Company, Petrofina, while the Zaïrean state owned 40 percent. Petrofina invested in the new oil wells near lakes Mobutu and Tanganyika as well. As of 1987, there were about ninety Zaïrean wells with an annual production of around 1.7 metric tons. Petrofina also controlled Zaïre-Sep, which was an oil product storage and transport company.

Until 1990, in the area of textiles, for instance, the Utexafrica Group, which has been Zaïre's main textile producer, was comprised of five companies of a group under the Belgian Company, Texaf SA. This is a Belgium-based holding

company that invests in the industrial, finance, and property sectors in the Zaire. The Company focuses its activities on the economic development of the country by investing in projects from various areas, such as agro-industrial, energy, construction, and tourism. Other Belgian textile companies, like the UCO Engineering SA-NV, provided funds to modernize the thirty-year-old Utexafrica Group. A Belgian group, Alcatel, invested in the rehabilitation of Kinshasa's telecommunication network in the 1980s.

Despite Zaïreanization and nationalization, the Zaïrean economy was still, until the total collapse of the state, a heavily unbalanced export-import type of economy whereby more than 80 percent of the country's bilateral and multilateral economic relations were with the industrial countries, especially Belgium and Luxemburg. Belgium and Luxemburg have occupied a vital role in this economy. For instance, Zaïre's total exports to Belgium and Luxemburg have increased yearly from $385 million in 1982, $420 million in 1983, $463.5 million in 1984, $500 million in 1985, $582.3 million in 1986, and $768.5 million in 1987 and 1988, while Zaïre's exports to other European countries between 1982 and 1987 were about $80–85 million annually.[26] In the same period, Zaïre's imports from Belgium and Luxemburg constantly increased from $156.6 million in 1982 to $338.5 million in 1988. It is clear that trends in export-import were not much affected by political nationalization. For instance, Belgium and Luxemburg's trade with Zaïre in the same period was more than 50 percent of all trades between Zaïre and all other African countries combined until recently.

The DRC is also one of the largest producers of industrial diamonds: until recently, about 6 million carats were produced annually. During the dispute between Zaïre and De Beers Central Selling Organization, which controlled more than 80 percent of the world's rough diamond outputs in the 1980s, Belgians were prepared to intervene and try to win the marketing contract.

Another important factor in post-colonial political economy of the DRC is the foreign debt crisis. In 1997 (the year the regime changed), the DRC had accumulated about $14 billion in foreign debt. Since the middle of the 1970s, Zaïre has spent over 25 percent (or $700 million yearly) of its revenues on external debt-servicing. Until 1985, Zaïre was the third country in sub-Saharan Africa, after Côte d'Ivoire and Nigeria, to accrue such a high interest rate on its loans.

As a result, in addition to other budgetary problems, Zaïre started to experience enormous balance of payment deficits. In the 1980s, the debt crisis began to be evaluated by investors and donors as an alarming problem, both in terms of the inability of the government to pay interest on its loans, respect for the debt schedule payment, and potential internal social consequences. In 1987, the Paris Club accepted a rescheduling of Zaïre's loan repayment of $884 million and extended it for fifteen years, with a six-year grace period. Following the usual problems between Mobutu and the Belgian media, in 1988, the Belgian government announced that Belgium was willing to reduce Zaïre's payment obligations with respect to the estimated 43 billion Bf ($1,171 million) in bilateral debt. The plan involved cutting the repayments on a 4 billion Bf ($109 million)

government-to-government loan by one-third, and rescheduling repayment over fourteen years on about 17 billion Bf ($463.2 million) in government-guaranteed commercial debt. Belgium was among the first donors in the industrial countries to ease the debt problems of Zaïre by forgiving repayment of 1 billion Bf in direct state's loans and by rescheduling payment terms for a further 15 billion Bf in loans as of 1988.

Mobutu had solid and deep personal relations with most of the powerful leaders of the Cold War Era such as all the French presidents and prime ministers from Charles de Gaulle to Jacques Chirac, Mao Zedong of China, Indira Ghandi of India, the United States presidents such as Nixon, etc. He supported presidential and legislative elections of his friends in France and the United States. His relationship with the George Bush family even has a personal character, as George Bush Sr. had apparently adopted some of Mobutu's children (the film *Mobutu the King of Zaïre*). It should be noted that George Bush Sr. was a CIA officer in the DRC when Mobutu was created to be the most powerful political figure in the Congo. On his last trip to the United States in 1989, then President George Bush introduced Mobutu in the White House as the most valued friend of the United States and one of his best friends.

With authenticity, he articulated one of the most sophisticated neo-patrimonial and clientilist regimes in the world during the Cold War Era with the relationship being defined on the principles of selling and buying, rewards and punishment schemes, egocentricism and self-aggrandizement, domination and partnership. His regime can be characterized by what Manuel Castells has called a "predatory state" or a "vampire state." This state was entirely patrimonialized by political elites for their own personal profit.[27] The state was appropriated by an individual with firm support of the highly dependent class of the local political elites. The position of predation here means the utilization of power to extract goods, cash, or labor.[28]

This predatory state had the support from Mobutu's primordial attachments, specific ethnic groups and clans in and from the Equatorial province and their associates, African intellectuals from all regions of the country who represented various ethnic groups, the members of the Binza groups, European and the American political and business elites both Whites and Blacks, Eastern European leaders such as Nicolas Ceaucescu of Romania, and the African head of state admirers of his model. He used bribery, brutal force/coercion, psychological intimidation, and skilled diplomacy to consolidate his power and sell his regime to the world. He made sure at the national level that none of his relationships were defined as permanent. He was indeed truly a political situationist who created the illusion that mechanisms of power circulation are easy and could be opened to all who believed in Mobutuism. Although he gave an impression that the nature of his relationship with the United States, France, and Belgium was more horizontal than vertical, in reality, these relationships can be qualified to be those of patron and client although not necessarily of master and slave.

His regime also shared some common characteristics with a prebendal state in its engagement forcefully and publically in a variety of bribes and donations

from various interests, which constituted a "widespread state informal economy." He also cared more about how his images and his policy and politics were perceived in the West than in Zaire.

His national project was the process through which he built and promoted his own glory and not the glory of the state. He was the keenest defender of neo-Western imperialism during the Cold War Era in Africa. Despite his personal glory, he cannot be compared, for instance, to great imperial power in Japan ["Japan is the only country whose monarchy has been monopolized by a single dynasty throughout recorded history"[29] or to political figures such as Louis XIV of France (1638–1756) or Frederick the Great of Prussia (1712–1782), who clearly identified their personal interests or interests of their houses with those of the states. And these political figures fought many other powers in Europe in the name of the aggrandizement of their powers. In this regard, he did not have any significant vision for building a nation-state.

The civil society and political control

As I indicated elsewhere,

> the relations between civil society, society at large, and the state are complex, because in principle each domain should be independent from the others, and at the same time each has to have a special operational interaction with the others. Each should have a different mission.[30]

As Larry Diamond states:

> Civil society is conceived here as the realm of organized social life that is voluntary, self-generating, (largely) self-supporting, autonomous from the state, and bound by a legal order or set of shared rules. It is distinct from "society" in general in that it involves citizens acting collectively in a public sphere to express their interests, passions, and ideas, exchange information, achieve mutual goals, make demands on the state, and hold state officials accountable.[31]

Despite the fact that civil society has historically acquired a certain degree of autonomy from the state and also has its own space, it developed in Europe, not as a parallel system to the state, but rather as part of the dynamics of the state in its relationship to the means of production.[32] As Axelos has explained:

> Civil society embraces the whole material intercourse of individuals within a definite stage of the development of productive forces. It embraces the whole commercial and industrial life of a given stage and, insofar, transcends the state and the nation, though, on the other hand again, it must assert itself in foreign relations as nationality, and inwardly must organize itself as state. The word "civil" society emerged in the eighteenth century,

> when property relationships had already extracted themselves from the ancient and medieval community society. Civil society as such only develops with the bourgeois; the social organization evolving directly out of production and commerce, which in all ages forms the basis of the state.[33]

Mobutu was very afraid to create a hegemonic class, with which he would have shared power and which also was needed to create a nation-state based on a critique of history and adoption of clearly articulated national ideology and vision. He was hungry for information and as such he was engaged fully in collecting all sorts of information about his clients in order to control them. He penetrated families of his "acolytes." Through speeches and policies, he made it clear not to allow the development of any possible effectively functioning civil society in the DRC in a form comparable, for instance, to Nigeria even at its worst dictatorship. At large, some of the Nigerian media, for instance, have in most cases been consistently critical of the behaviors, policies, and politics of their political elites regardless of the degree of hostility from the regimes.

Under Mobutu, the phenomenon that is called civil society as perceived and defined in the West as a relatively free zone of the public domain or public discourse, did not practically exist in the country. With his totalitarian and authoritarian methods and style of ruling, Mobutu succeeded to create a "monistic" political community highly hierarchical with a very weak upper middle class base, which was manipulated at his mercy. But at the same time, as I alluded elsewhere, one of the reasons why Mobutu remained in power for more than thirty years was partially because he had a relatively stronger social base at large than what one would have imagined. Initially, people believed that he was a unifier and peace-loving political leader.

Some forms of opposition to his regime, within the context of an extremely weak civil society in the period in which he was implementing authenticity, came from the Catholic Church. But as I indicated earlier, it was very much a power struggle base of opposition rather than an ideological struggle.

Until he was forced out of the office and fled the country in May 1997, his regime was ideologically, and also in policy terms and behaviour, militaristic. Even when Mobutu presented his candidacy in "civilian presidential elections with civilian uniforms," he never dropped his title of general and then later acquired another title of marshal. He directly controlled the army, especially the elite presidential guard, with his close superior officers from his Equatorial province—an ethnic or regional dimension that should not be neglected in the analysis about the Second Republic.

However, it should be emphasized that since 1965, when he came to power, despite his effort in reorganizing the army, he never was capable militarily of defending himself and his regime against the Congolese challengers, who wanted to topple his regime. During the Mulelist Revolution in 1963–1965, and Shaba I and Shaba II's invasions in 1978 and 1979 consequently, he was defended by the French, Belgian, and the Moroccan armies. Many top officers in his regime were either from the Ngwande ethnic group or associated or related

with it from the Equatorial province. With few exceptions, he did not fully trust military officers from other ethnic groups.

For many years, he was the only individual with the grade of general of the army. Although he ruled with the strong support of the army, the police, and high cadres of the intelligence agencies, he neither promoted nor produced a well-elaborated professional army like those in some countries in South America in the same period. He only gave the appearance of creating a military class, which could protect its interests at any time.

While in the sectors of public administration, higher education, and his political party structures the criteria for promotion were based on strategic calculation, in the army and intelligence agencies, ethnicity prevailed. Another domain that Mobutu had firm control over was public finance. He and elements of his close family firmly controlled the mining sector. All Central Bank governors were personally and directly related to him.

Constitutional experiences in state formation in the DRC

The contemporary states are generally supposed to be governed by the spirit and laws of the land and their supportive political institutions. These laws, whether or not they are written as codes of law or general legal framework, are the instruments that in principle protect individuals and collective rights, societies at large, maintain stability, and promote social values and progress.

In the post-colonial politics in the Congo, one of the major characteristics of the Congolese crisis is the ambiguity of its basic laws to articulate clearly the division of power and the general rules that ought to govern society at large. The first step of state formation in the Congo was the phase of the extreme form of privatization and personalization of the state. After the end of the so-called Congo Free State in 1908, and the established status of the Congo as the personal property of the king, the "Colonial Charter provided the supremacy of law as enacted by the Belgian Parliament. Yet, in practice, it was the King, who under ministerial responsibility, legislated by decree."[34] It was only in 1964 that the Congolese produced their "independent" Constitution.

The Fundamental Law, which served as the first Congolese Constitution, was based on the Belgian Constitutional Monarchy. This Law was voted by the Belgian Parliament and sanctioned by the king on May 19, 1960. Its legal system was founded both on the Belgian civil system and what was called "Tribal" law. However, after the 1960s, the Congolese national political elites produced several constitutions and amended them often after the Basic Law to fit their political agenda and political taste. They wanted to make some political reforms mainly as a means of consolidating their power. Thus, the constitution was the first issue that was touched on in various periods of the post-colonial Congolese politics. The DRC is a case where most of the constitutional changes or revisions or amendments in the post-colonial era occurred under one single regime with three exceptions: (1) the 1964 Constitution; (2) the drafted Constitution of November 1998, which President Laurent-Désiré Kabila approved; and (3) the 2005 Constitution.

As noted earlier, the Fundamental Law, the first Congolese Constitution, was similar in many ways to the Constitutional Monarchy of Belgium. In this Constitutional Monarchy, the monarch had in principle very limited practical powers although his role in a constitutional crisis could be substantial. It established a unitary state with some elements of "federal parliamentary form of government" with a bicameral legislature that comprised a House of Representatives based on direct and proportional representation (Chamber) and a Senate with an equal representation from each of the six provinces. The president would be elected directly by the people through universal suffrage. He/she was considered the symbol of the unity of the Congo and the key figure of the constitutional structure. His/her functions resembled essentially those of a constitutional monarch, including the power to appoint and dismiss his/her ministers, although they had to be invested by the parliament.[35] The prime minister was elected from among the deputies (the members of the Chamber). The powers were shared between the central and the six provincial governments, and between the Chamber and the Senate, and between the prime minister and the president.

After independence, inspired by Monarchic Constitution, the president behaved as a weak monarch. But the relationships between the head of the government and the head of the state were dangerously ambiguous. For instance, the president could dismiss the prime minister and the prime minister could also dismiss the president with the vote of two-thirds of members of the parliament. This is exactly what happened in reality with the power struggle between President Joseph Kasavubu and Prime Minister Patrice E. Lumumba in July and September 1960.

The 1964 Constitution was well debated among the political elites. In addition, it was believed that this constitution should address the causes of the Congolese crisis, which was also partially located in the nature of the inherited Basic Law. It retained the bicameral parliament and gave it both legislative responsibilities and the power to approve the president's appointment or dismissal of the prime minister. Many scholars believe that this 1964 Constitution reflected, to a large extent, the people's aspirations and desires. Despite the political instability, politicians were then very close to their constituencies, which brought their inputs into the constitutional debates. The division of power in this constitution became clearly articulated with the implications for "good" governance.

This Constitution of Luluabourg, as it was known, provided for an executive president who coexisted with a cabinet government, under a prime minister. Thus, despite political crisis, the Congo produced its first constitution, which was approved through a referendum that took place between June 25 and July 10, 1964. This constitution was promulgated in July 1964 by President Joseph Kasavubu. It formalized the primacy of the presidency.

For more than thirty years, the Mobutu regime was defined and shaped by the principle stated as "*après moi, c'est le deluge*" ("after me, there is deluge"). He produced the most sophisticated form of clientilist regime in Africa. As it is articulated in this chapter, Mobutu was a maximum ruler, who effectively used Machiavellian strategies to rule, but his neo-patrimonial rulership was different

from those described by René Lemarchand who distinguishes five models of polities in Africa, namely: (1) ethno-regional hegemonies; (2) totalizing polities; (3) neo-patrimonial rulerships; (4) factionalist state systems; and (5) liberalized transitional polities.[36]

How were his principles, the form of his regime, and his strategies reflected in the constitution making in the DRC? After the 1965 military *coup d'état*, Mobutu increasingly assumed legislative powers as well. He produced the 1967 Constitution in which he replaced the bicameral parliament with a unicameral National Assembly, which had little formal or real power because of the power given to the president to rule by executive order, which carried the force of law. This was the beginning of the process of setting up institutions of political control in the country. Some scholars believe that the source of this new constitution was clearly a direct inspiration from General de Gaulle's French Constitution.

In 1974, Mobutu amended the 1967 Constitution, which was also revised in 1978. He produced another constitution in 1981. In June 1988, he revised the 1981 Constitution in which it was stipulated that the President of the *Mouvement Populaire de la Révolution* was by right the President of the Republic according to Article 36 (paragraph 1). This constitution was also amended in 1990. In April 1994, the so-called "Transitional Constitution" was promulgated. Although this constitution contains many similar definitional elements related to the division of power, citizenship, territoriality, etc., to the Constitution of Luluabourg (1964), the Transitional Constitution was not a photocopy of the 1964 Constitution. The 1964 Constitution was essentially framed within the logic and criteria of a federalist state, while the Transitional Constitution defined the Congolese state as firmly unitary.

Despite Mobutu's strong political resistance to the idea of the national conference, with visible and relatively well-organized internal pressures from the national political oppositions, social and popular movements, international organizations and foreign powers, the conference, which started in 1991, finally produced in August 1992 a draft of the constitution to be used for the period of transition to multiparty democracy. For the first time under Mobutu's presidency, the Transitional Act of August 1992 created a parliamentary system. The draft of the constitution was adopted by the "Sovereign" National Conference on November 18, 1992.

Although the draft of the Transitional Constitution that was produced by the National Conference was neither approved by the people nor implemented, for the purposes of this chapter, it is important to identify some of its general characteristics. These characteristics reflect either the nature of the struggles of power in the country under the Mobutu regime or the history of the Congolese political elites or the nature of the Congolese political culture and that of civil society. What were the elements of the vision embodied in this constitution, if any? This constitution officially recognized both the utilization of the name Zaïre and the Congo throughout the document. The constitution was perceived and defined as the law to be used as a working document in the transitional period. It

had 113 articles that were divided into the following titles: Territory and Republican Sovereignty; Fundamental Rights of Individuals and Duties of Citizens; Organization and the Exercise of Power; Provincial and Local Institutions; Public Finances; International Treaties and Accords; and Final Dispositions.

It should be emphasized that with this constitution, the question of the colonial boundaries as stipulated by the Basic Law were recognized and maintained. In addition, Zaïre (Congo) was defined as a unitary, indivisible, democratic, and secular republic. In the transition, four institutions were defined as vital: (1) the Presidency; (2) the High Council of the Republic; (3) the Government; and (4) the Courts and Tribunals.

Despite the fact that Mobutu resisted the National Conference and also the fact that he had also lost the people's confidence and support, the presidency, the most important arena of power, as articulated in this constitution, showed that there was a continuity between a strong and personal presidency that Mobutu created as a claimed soldier and a dictatorial executive president and the inspiration of the new political leadership. The president was not only to represent the nation; he/she was defined as the chief of the armies and should preside over the Superior Defense Council and High Council of the Republic. Furthermore, the president would appoint and dismiss by ordinance and under the proposition(s) of the government and approval by the High Council of the Republic, the ambassadors, high officers of the armies, the top functionaries and directors of the public administration. In principle, this constitution rehabilitated the centrality of the power of the presidency in the political history of Mobutu and his regime.

Laurent-Désiré Kabila captured political power in Kinshasa (DRC) on May 17, 1997. He subsequently banned all political parties, with the exception of the Alliance for Democratic Force for the Liberation of the Congo (ADFLC). He auto-proclaimed himself president of the country by a Decree Law of May 28, 1997, which contained fifteen articles. Between that date and the time he was assassinated on February 16, 2001, Kabila governed the country by decrees with non-elected members of the government either in provinces or districts or in Kinshasa. To a certain extent, the country was ruled as in a state of emergency.

The power was centered in the president. The office of presidency was also personalized. This model does not fit the client-patron of Mobutu. The following articles define the centrality of the president. In Article III, it is stipulated that "the institutions of the Republic are the president of the republic, the government, the courts, and tribunals." Article IV states that "the president exercises the legislative power by decree-laws deliberated by the council of ministers." Article V defines the power of the president as "the chief executive and the chief of the armed forces; he exercises his powers by decrees; and he has rights to mint money and to issue paper-money in accordance with law." This decree was going to cease to function upon the elaboration, production, and the ratification of the new constitution. Laurent-Désiré Kabila's government was only struggling to survive. However, within the framework of the planned pluralist general elections that were intended to take place in April 1999, he announced on May 29, 1997 a program for making constitutional reform.

In March 1998, the work of a newly established Constitutional Commission with Anicet Kashamura, a member of the old generation of the Congolese political elite as its president, began. In November 1998, Kabila approved a new drafted constitution. It awaited ratification by a national referendum.

Importantly, between August 2, 1998 and 2003, the DRC was in a war of invasion (a neo-imperialist war) by its neighbors, namely Rwanda and Uganda, and also Burundi, and their Congolese cronies, and the masters of the global capitalist system, who had perceived and defined the Congo since the nineteenth century as an international colony, which needed to be exploited because of its extraordinary mineral deposits. Most of the efforts of the government of Laurent-Désiré Kabila focused on how to liberate the country and the people from the violent foreign occupation and pillage. However, there were some efforts to establish some political institutions. In February 2000, President Kabila set up an advisory committee of thirty members to draw up plans for a legislative assembly despite the complaints from the opposition political parties. This committee's main responsibility was to define who would be eligible to sit in an assembly of three hundred people. There were about 15,000 candidates. People freely submitted their *dossiers* until February 21, 2000. Some of the criteria for the selection of candidate include how the candidates saw their role, their projects, and their capacity to demonstrate nationalism and patriotism. The government thought that this process would lead to the beginning of "democratization" despite the continuation of the war. The oppositions also insisted that this move violated the Lusaka Peace Accord of July 10, 1999.

On July 1, 2000, President Kabila announced the names of 240 members of the transitional parliament which included some names from the then occupied territory. And on July 10, 2000, he named the remaining 60 members. These new members of the transitional parliament had a responsibility to debate the constitution before the referendum on it. However, members of the unarmed opposition parties indicated that they did not intend to participate in this process because, although the ban on political parties was, in principle, lifted in January 1999, political parties were not allowed to function yet. The 350 selected members of this parliament were to conduct debates on the new document before the end of 2000. The draft document tended to emphasize people's independence, national development, and democracy.

It would be difficult to appreciate and understand Kabila's approach to constitution making and the mechanisms for building political institutions without understanding how he came to power, and how he ended his political life in a short period of time. Notwithstanding the intention of the government and the Congolese people, these efforts could not be genuinely actualized as long as more than one-third of the country was occupied by Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi, and their Congolese cronies.

The rise and the end of Laurent-Désiré Kabila: towards the struggle to redefine Congolese politics

General historical perspective

A new process of the state formation started to take place with the rise of Laurent-Désiré Kabila who arrived in Kinshasa on May 17, 1998 as a liberator and a savior. People expected him to solve all their educational, economic, social, and political problems at once; a task that was practically impossible to accomplish in a short period. There was no "grace" period.

The first tool of state formation that he used was a leftist national ideology in the processes of political choices and public confidence building. Political reforms were not going to change the political culture of poverty and the total economic and political bankruptcy the country had. One needs a revolutionary mobilization of the people with a clearly articulated national agenda to build the national institutions. This is what Kabila was trying to do in a very complicated international political environment dominated by the supremacy of capitalists and their liberal economic principles, the rise of ultra and ethnic nationalism, remilitarization of Africa, and a general political refiguration of the world politics of the post-Cold War.

One cannot understand fully the coming to power of Kabila by using only the paradigms explaining the crisis of the Congolese civil society alone. He mostly operated from extra-parliamentarian and social movement spheres. However, civil society and social movements have been active in forcing or negotiating political reforms in the DRC since the 1960s. The Eastern Provinces (North Kivu and South Kivu) in the DRC were known for their lack of loyalty to the one-party state that Mobutu established when he took power by a military *coup d'état* in November 1965. They participated in several social uprisings and movements against Mobutu. The local militias in Maniema, for instance, such as Mayi-Mayi, Simba, etc., have their roots in the local resistance movements in Kivu provinces. They were part of larger militia and political movements that have been characterized as the second independence movement in the DRC, which was led by Pierre Mulele of Kwilu province. Their goal was to establish a unified nationalist government with leftist-oriented policy in Kisangani (Stanleyville). They ideologically aimed to rehabilitate Patrice Emery Lumumba. All the movements associated with the second independence struggle were essentially anti-Mobutism, anti-West, and anti-imperialism. They were temporarily crushed by the direct military intervention of the United States, Belgium, France, and their African allies to save their client regime in 1965, 1978, and 1979. As compared to other regions in the Congo, the militias in Kivu have been systematically more visible and active in various forms of struggle to acquire land and protect their ethnic social and political system than many other social groups.

Throughout the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, Laurent-Désiré Kabila fought Mobutu's regime, operating from Uvira and South Kivu. He had socialist, Maoist, and nationalist political tendencies. He came to power in a coalition

called the Democratic Alliance for the Liberation of the Congo that was formed in 1996 from Uganda, Rwanda, Mayi-Mayi, the National Council of Resistance and Democracy of the late General Kisase Ngandu, and several other revolutionary movements.

In this process, Uganda and Rwanda claimed and articulated a proposition, in search for the national security formulas in their common and long borders with the DRC, that if Kabila were to capture Kinshasa, their security problem would likely be solved militarily and permanently. This security problem has become an international issue. Two important phenomena made Kivu very insecure. First, militarization of the region as local groups decided to protect themselves against external forces. This phenomenon intensified as the genocidal tendencies produced inside Rwanda started to also spread in Kivu with indiscriminate killings in refugee camps by the RPF (Rwandan Patriotic Front) as well as with Interhamwe. In these refugee camps in Kivu, there were the former members of the Rwandese army and the Hutu militias. Another aspect of the conflict was the coalition of Interhamwe with the Mobutu army.

Each entity that became part of the Kabila-led alliance had its own agenda. What all members had in common was anti-Mobutuism and discourse, but they did not have a collective principle upon which to form a post-Mobutu government that would emerge out of the *heteroclite* organization. The Banyamulenge, the Tutsi Congolese, had lost their civil citizenship granted to them by the citizenship law of 1981. For them, their main objective was to have a sympathetic government in Kinshasa that would give them back their Congolese citizenship. It should be mentioned that the 1991 National Conference of Democratic Forces, which took place in Kinshasa despite the fact that Mobutu attempted to hijack its agenda, opposed this law. Here again there is the question of redefining Kivu and the place of Banyamulenge within the cultural diversity of Kivu. As I stated earlier, the region's borders were drawn several times. History testifies that there was a small group of sub-ethnic Tutsi in what became the Congo in the nineteenth century. It should also be mentioned that the 1959 political revolt in Rwanda also forced the Tutsi out as refugees in the Kivu provinces.

After its formation in September 1996, the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of the Congo, without meeting any strong military resistance, captured power in Kinshasa on May 15, 1997. At the beginning of the organization, a number of African countries such as Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Liberia, Zambia, and Uganda, gave material support. Angola even contributed troops, and Tanzania later provided the "Alliance" with training personnel. It became almost an African project to end more than thirty years of the brutal Mobutist dictatorship. Joseph-Désiré Mobutu Sese Seko WA Zabanga went into exile in Morocco, where he died the same year. Like the Shah of Iran, Mobutu's good friends, the U.S., France, and Belgium did not want him in their countries. A major saga of the legacy of Cold War politics was closed down.

Then came a new war of invasion that was launched barely after Kabila came to power. As previously stated, this war in the Congo was essentially a foreign neo-imperialist war with African puppet actors. The creation of the Rally of

Congolese Democracy (RCD) was set up after the military aggression had occurred. Kabila made the decision to end the nature of the military cooperation between Rwanda and the Congo and transformed it into diplomatic relations on July 24, 1998. The evacuation of the Rwandans started on July 27, 1998. The current crisis in the Great Lakes Region exploded with the military invasion of the DRC by Uganda and Rwanda with the military support of Burundi, although Burundi insisted that it is not part of this plot.

On August 2, 1998, there was a violent military coup attempt in Kinshasa immediately after Kabila came back from Havana, Cuba. This invasion was strongly supported by the Western powers and their mercenaries. It derailed the process of the state formation in the Congo. Three scenarios were projected in the Western orbits of power. The initial plan related to this invasion was to eliminate Kabila's regime and establish another government that would likely be sympathetic to the interests of the Western powers and which would also provide "a final solution" to the security problems in the Eastern part of the DRC. The second plan was to divide the country so that the Congo could solve permanently the population density problem of Rwanda on some ethnic or sociological lines. And the last plan was to put the DRC under the mandate of the United Nations Administration with Masire (former president of Botswana), like Bernard Kouchner (the French foreign affairs minister under President Sarkozy) in Kosovo, as its governor, until the institutions of governance were created and elections finalized. It should be emphasized that Washington never trusted Kabila even at the time of the formation of the alliance that took power in Goma and later captured Kinshasa. Washington's plan was to see Mobutu's cronies return to Kinshasa.

In general, United States foreign policy toward Africa is essentially influenced by the racism of the American society vis-à-vis the black people. However, this racism can be either amplified or attenuated depending on what a given country can provide to the world economy or its strategic location at a time in international and regional relations. The U.S. unconditional support of Rwanda was due primarily to two main factors: (1) a sense of guilt and sympathy about the genocide of Tutsi and moderate Hutu of 1994 as the Clinton Administration decided to ignore pleas for genocide; and (2) some human rights basis of Clinton's foreign policy. Yet, this basis has been the weakest and most unpredictable principle in the history of the United States foreign policy since World War II. The United States wanted to correct its past attitude and mistakes, and change its international image, as it did not make any effort to stop the genocide even when the Clinton Administration was well informed about its preparation and its initial execution. It wanted the whole world to know about its new position. Kofi Annan, then in charge of the Peace Management Operations of the United Nations, preferred to support the peace process and its operations in Kosovo and not in Rwanda.

The question of why Kabila was assassinated is still unanswered, as the investigations undertaken by the Congolese government did not produce the final evidences though a few people were arrested. He was not an ordinary member of

the Congolese petty bourgeoisie. His autobiography, his historical actions against the regime of Mobutu for about thirty years, his national political discourses and his policy framework between April 1998 and January 2001 testify that his approach to the question of the Congolese national project was going to be challenged by the interests of West and multinationals.

Until August 2002, these invaders and their Congolese cronies and puppets occupied almost half of the country which was divided by three groups, namely the Congolese Rally for Democracy, the Wamba dia Wamba's branch, and the so-called Congolese Liberation Movement that is located in Bunia, northeast of Kisangani, near the borders with Uganda. The Vice President of Wamba's group created his own military branch in 2001. Dr. Onusamba replaced Dr. Ilunga, with his branch of the Rally that was located in Goma in the Eastern part of the Congo. Another movement was created later, led by Jean-Pierre Bemba, the son of a late Mobutist millionaire in the Equatorial province. Bemba and Wamba's groups wee both sponsored by Museveni of Uganda. The Rally in Goma was sponsored by Kagame of Rwanda. They all claimed to advance the goals and mechanisms of liberal democracy. Finally, starting in September 2002, after the signing of several peace accords, which were not respected, the official Rwandese soldiers started to pull out of the Congolese territory. However, the consequences of their invasion in the processes of the state formation must be examined beyond their total exit.

Kabila's national project was a still-born one. The process of so-called reconciliation of the Congolese was a complicated one because what happened in the Congo was not a civil war. It was not only about power sharing or so-called democratization. It was a neo-imperialist invasion with a clear political remapping plan of the country, which was intended to be beneficial to the demands of the international political economy and its representative Congolese cronies. Museveni, Kagame, and their associates, as it was well documented, became richer in their pillage in the Congo than they were before occupying the country. The exploitation of natural resources reached the level of anxiety that forced the United Nations to set up a commission to investigate the atrocities committed by the invaders and murders. The report of the commission is well known by all, after being submitted to the Secretary-General of the UN.

Laurent-Désiré Kabila's political performance: a comment on a process and not the achievements

It is neither fair nor can it be scientifically correct to examine comprehensibly Laurent-Désiré Kabila's performance or achievements with quantitative measurements, or to clearly identify his policy positions on ethnicity, religion, gender, civil society, etc. He did not have any opportunity to test his revolutionary political intelligence, and his policy and ideology of development. He tried to produce a new basis for building new hope and a national pride.

What I intend to do, in this section, is to identify and discuss generally the elements of his social project, his efforts to deal with corruption, and the few

decisions that he made to set up the motion for social change. This is what I have characterized as a comment on a process.

Kabila inherited a political culture that was the most corrupt one on the face of the earth. The state apparatuses were all dysfunctional. And, furthermore, he was essentially managing the war and not the country in an international atmosphere that was very hostile with solid *prise de position* (taking side), as the Western powers had been involved in the war as the sponsors and supporters of the pseudo-rebellion and investors. During the invasion, about 40 percent of the country was occupied by the Ugandan and Rwandan regular armies. This territory was administered on behalf of the Ugandan and the Rwandan regimes by a mixture of Congolese puppets (the Congolese Rally for Democracy in Goma, the so-called Liberation Movement of Wamba dia Wamba in Bunia, and the third movement led by Jean-Pierre Bemba in the Equatorial province), foreign business cliques, and the families and friends of Museveni and Kagame, all of whom plundered the occupied territory.

Laurent-Désiré Kabila was not a saint and was not aspiring to be a so-called puritan leader *à l'Américaine*. He was in a political struggle in which only the best strategist would survive. During his presidency, he hardly ever compromised on what he believed to be against his ideological convictions and the "best interests" of the DRC. But in the realm of politics and policy, sometimes strategic compromises are necessary tools for advancing agendas. Critics from some elements of the civil society, which were not part of the government in the process of building of transitional institutions, were not given enough consideration. More and more at the time he was assassinated, he was almost alone with only some support from his inner circle, which had some visible elements of ethnic domination (Baluba from Katanga called Balubakat versus other ethnic groups). Thus, his national ideological base became fragile with tendencies of exclusion.

Regardless of what the West, its African puppets, and their media, and biased human rights organizations perceived as a "raw dictator," Laurent-Désiré Kabila was honored by many Congolese people the world over for having dared to say no to many symbols of imperialism. For instance, he decided to make the English and French languages two administrative languages, challenging the Francophone traditions that dominated in the country. Thus, the Congolese passport was written in three languages including the Kiswahili.

In my view, he is being remembered in history by most Africans, even those who disagreed with him, as a revolutionary who fought neo-colonialism for more than thirty years to rehabilitate Lumumbaism; and as a nationalist who had a commitment to restore dignity and pride among the Congolese people. He insisted, before taking power and after, to build a nation where at last the people can have material comfort and feel proud to be Africans.

What were the elements of Kabila's ideology? The Western media and their leaders, and intellectuals who support rebels, called Kabila another dictator. Yet no single Western country was or became democratic at the time of war. For many years in the struggle, Kabila combined several ideological elements in his

political discourse, which included Maoism, Marxism-Leninism, Lumumbaism/nationalism, and populism. He believed in popular democracy and not in procedural democracy or representative democracy, *à l'Americaine*.

It is clear that President Kabila had an ideological platform that was intended to shape his policy. In his short-lived presidency, he undertook some important policy reforms. He had a sense of history or consciousness about the forces of history and wanted to start a Congolese history as it was left in 1961 when Lumumba was killed. Thus, the old name of the Democratic Republic of the Congo was re-introduced. The Congolese franc was introduced as the new currency.

Although the country was still in the middle of war at the time of his assassination, his regime created People's Committees, a sort of neighborhood community's organization through which people organized their interests and their political articulations. People also governed themselves through these committees. Inside the Popular Committees, elections were organized in the controlled governmental territory. Each area was conceived to be a self-sufficient production unit. However, it is immature to make a good and fair assessment of what these committees achieved. Even his critics should recognize that in a context where the liberal globalization is against the local market, this self-sufficient pragmatic political and economic unit tends to function better than the dynamics of the formal economy. This bottom-up approach to development should be appreciated in a developing economy.

He fired 3,000 lawyers in Kinshasa as a process of cleaning up the system of corruption. The regime formed a 300-member transitional national assembly and decentralized the location of the institutions of power, which was previously concentrated in Kinshasa.

The confidence and pride that Kabila introduced to the majority of Congolese cannot be compared to any material benefits. The state of mind and the sense that something positive was going on in the country provided a support system that can be attributed to the momentum of revolutionary ideas and sentiment, and social reconciliation.

Kabila was faced with various difficulties of creating a transitional government. First of all, the Alliance, when it took power in Kinshasa, did not have any sufficient ideological cadres to do the job. It had to rely mainly on the Congolese Diaspora (a vast number of intellectuals who fled the country during the period of the fearful Western-sponsored dictatorship of Mobutu) to set up the motion of change in almost nonexistent state apparatuses. The recruitment was somewhat random and strategic, and not ideological.

Second, his regime had the task of inventing the wheels of governmental institutions. Third, the people's expectations were very high, while the means of satisfying them were almost nonexistent. And fourth, from the world system point of view, the Western capitalist opposition to Kabila was perhaps only second to Fidel Castro of Cuba.

The legacy of unity and social progress of Kabila and Lumumba shall be consolidated by the promotion of the national political dialogue, the development of

transitional modalities that can lay the foundation for the construction of democracy, the continuous defiance of the recent policies and politics of re-colonization of Africa, the establishment of social democracy, and the promotion of pan-African agenda.

Kabila understood more clearly the intrigues of imperialism and its neo-colonial ramifications than most (if not of all) of those who were fighting to have and control the state power in the DRC. It should be emphasized that he had a vision for the people of the DRC and the African people at large. Unfortunately, he was not given any chance to actualize his ideals.

The regime of Joseph Kabila and the prospects for democratic state reconstitution

Joseph Kabila came to power on January 26, 2001, following the assassination of his father President Laurent Kabila. The younger Kabila was the compromise candidate chosen by the late President Kabila's organization from a list of contenders. President Joseph Kabila inherited the neo-imperialist war. Hence, his major challenge was to develop ways of managing and eventually resolving the war. A major step was taken in 2002 with the holding of the Inter-Congolese Dialogue and the signing of a peace agreement in Sun City, South Africa. Under the agreement, a transitional government was established with Joseph Kabila as president. Also, there were four vice presidents—two from the major rebel groups, and one each from civil society and the government. The transitional government was charged with, among other things, providing the leadership for the development of the modalities that would lead to the end of the war and the holding of democratic elections. A UN Peacekeeping force was charged with the responsibility of providing security during the transitional period.

In December 2005, a national referendum was held to approve the new Congolese Constitution. The results indicated that the majority of the electorate approved the new constitution. However, criticisms were made against the process leading to the holding of the national referendum. With the approval by the people of the new constitution, the new stage was set for the holding of national elections in mid-2006.

On July 30–October 29, 2006, the Congo held its first multiparty elections since independence in 1960. Joseph Kabila, in a run-off, won 58.05 percent of the presidential elections within a coalition/alliance between his party, People's Party for the Reconstruction and Democracy. This is the beginning of the Third Republic, which started after the elections of the senators on January 18, 2007. The elections of the members of the National Assembly were completed earlier on July 30, 2006.

Despite these steps, the DRC remains engulfed in conflict and extreme poverty. Clearly, it would be a Herculean task to end this conflict soon and set into motion the modalities for the building of a new democratic Congolese society. Although the holding of democratic elections was critical to this process, however, it has not addressed yet the sources of conflict in its socio-economic

manifestations. What is required is the continuation of genuine dialogue among all of the major sectors and segments of Congolese society. The dialogue should focus on the various causes of the civil conflict and the war within the structures of the state, the economy, and those of the traditions.

What is to be done in building democracy in the DRC? Rethinking the Congolese State

The first question is what kind of democracy should we talk about? And how can or should it be constructed? The goal in this chapter is to examine and understand the nature of the state in the DRC within the dynamics of the international political economy. This state has to be moved into the public domain. It is the political space where people should meet with their needs, their dreams, ideas, and their resources. However, the Congolese experience shows that there is a struggle among those who have been fighting for power to re-create the Leopoldian notion of state as a personal property of certain individuals and their sponsor institutions, and the people.

The Congolese State has to be reconceptualized, if it is to meet the challenges of social and popular movements because despite its claims of legalism, sovereignty, and independence, in its current form, it is highly dependent on the capitalist world that is dominated by the North and extremely weak in international relations. It cannot produce a program that can consistently and systematically promote a comprehensive agenda of social progress. It has produced many misleading, weak, or ad hoc projects of the so-called development.

Within the existing nature of the world system, the Congolese State is basically an instrument of accumulation of the global economy. It is the dynamics of this economy that determines in a large measure the behaviors and laws that govern the African states. This state behaves as an alien to most of its people. An exclusive and alien state cannot produce a comprehensive project of development.

Congolese can also reconceptualize the state in owning it through the process of renaming it according to Africa's own objective conditions. Renaming is a cognitive and social process. They should change the rules and structures of the state through social, popular, and democratic movements. I am not convinced that through the current form of "autocratic multipartyism" or a hegemonic party politics as practiced in many countries, or total liberalism, Africans would be able to own their states. Here I have suggested that we critically and carefully examine another option that is associated with the notion of welfare state as an alternative form of democracy that can help reconceptualize the state. Given the nature of the African society, which is essentially communitarian with a high level of its tolerance of differences among various people and nations, it is possible to learn more things from a social democratic approach to development than from an individualistic capitalist model of development.

Another option of reconceptualizing the state in the DRC is through social or popular revolution of radical change of the structures of the African economies

within pan-African perspectives. And the last option of reconceptualizing the state is to examine it from a revival of Mwalimu Julius Nyerere's African perspective, which is to say from the dynamics of the African traditions, culture, ethos, and theories of management and governance.

I am convinced that Africa is capable of governing herself effectively and of producing states from within her own dynamics, if the old state apparatuses, laws, and paradigms are dismantled through popular movements, democratic processes, internal and regional alliances of power, and innovative initiatives. In the twenty-first century, Africans must forcefully examine how to promote the notion of strong welfare states that can take care of people's needs and be responsible and accountable for their actions. As Julius Nyerere said:

> In advocating a strong state, I am not holding brief for either an overburdened state or a State with a bloated bureaucracy. To advocate a strong state is to advocate a state, which, among other things has power to act on behalf of the people in accordance with their wishes. And in a market economy, with its law of jungle, we need a state that has the capacity to intervene on behalf of the weak. No state is really strong unless its government has the full consent of at least the majority of its people; and its difficulty to envision how that consent can be obtained outside democracy. So a call for strong state is not a call for dictatorships either. Indeed, all dictatorships are basically weak because the means they apply in governance make them inherently unstable.[37]

Africa has to reinvent its own polyandry with relevant and appropriate elements of republicanism, democracy, and liberalism with a strong and consolidated basis of economic nationalism.

Finally, how to democratically reconstruct the Congolese State? As I have clearly indicated in this chapter, the Congolese people came out of more than thirty years of tyranny not as a collectivity of citizens with rights, duties, and obligations of people, who belong to a single and coherent social system of production and governance. Most of the people who survived the Mobutu regime did so as individual members of primordial arrangements, notably the ethnic groups, clans, syncretic and messianic religions (like that of Maman Olangi), and active participants of the informal social and economic system. In this informal sector characterized as *le monde d'en bàs* most people here have been reduced to maneuvering sellers of anything and beggars. It should be noted that 65 percent of the Congolese population are under the age of 35. In a situation where there is total lack of jobs, these people form a dangerous lumpen social group. Although the primordial arrangements, which have taken the place of the state apparatuses, have been dynamic for the survival of most people, within the context of a weak peripheral capitalist economy, these arrangements have become instruments of super-exploitation and of an extreme form of underdevelopment out of which no social vision is possible. In other words, the parasitic nature of the Congolese society, which is the symptom of the failed and criminal

state, is the most devastating subsystem of peripheral capitalism that is contributing to the paralysis of the society at large.

The question of what kind of democracy is essentially a developmental question. What kind of democracy can be socially and politically relevant and functionally and economically productive for the majority of the Congolese people? What are the values and the significance of representative democracy in a situation of extreme poverty and misery?

The dominant form of democracy that has been adopted in most African countries has been liberal democracy known also as representative democracy or multipartyism. It is characterized by individual rights, political competition, and procedural respect for the rules of law. It can be summarized as what Dahl has characterized in a broad sense by:

1 An extensive competition among individuals and organized groups.
2 A highly inclusive level of participation in the selection of leaders and policies.
3 A high level of civil and political liberties (with all kinds of freedoms).

It is "a political system, separate and apart from the economic and social systems to which it is joined."[38] Larry Diamond *et al*. refer to democracy as a political system that supplies regular constitutional opportunities for changing the governing officials, and that permits the population to influence major decisions by choosing the holders of political offices.

Can the exigencies of this democracy even in its rudimentary form with an appearance of an electoral process be practically functional and conducive to economic productivity, and equal distribution of national resources in a country which is bleeding from the results of Mobutu's tyranny, structural economic exploitation, social malaise due to deep poverty, and consequences of neo-imperialist war for five years with casualties of about 5 million people dead?

In a situation where there is an extreme poverty, almost total lack of social, political, and technological infrastructures, the nonexistence of mechanisms for talking about collective security, and fragile perceptions about what the adoption of liberal democracy is would very likely be a mockery of democracy itself. What is needed, as articulated earlier in this section, is the re-construction of a strong, visionary, nationalistic and positively interventionist state on behalf of people, especially the majority of the weak and poor. I agree with Amuwo when he said:

> Africa has to take her own destiny into her own hands through a two-pronged battle to put a welfare state that would gradually whittle down a warfare state: the latter as the war of some against many, both domestically and globally. To this, African Presidents and Heads of State would profit by revisiting the 1980s Lagos Plan of Action (LPA) that was hastily abandoned by the continent's political leaders because of the displeasure of the donor community at what they perceived as a "radical" blueprint.[39]

Conclusion

The chapter has addressed several major interrelated issues relating to the rise and dynamics of the authoritarian post-colonial Congolese State. Using the colonial state designed by Belgian imperialism as the crucible, the chapter deciphers the nature and features of this colonial state construct. In terms of its nature, the colonial Congolese State was a foreign construct designed to serve the imperialistic interests of Belgium. Characteristically, the colonial state was repressive and exploitative. At independence, the colonial state was transformed into a neo-colonial one. It is the neo-colonial Congolese State that has, and continues to set the parameters within which the various Congolese regimes have operated. The Lumumba regime tried to reconstitute the state, but this was opposed by Western imperialism. Eventually, Lumumba was deposed and murdered. Subsequently, the Mobutu regime was imposed by the West. For more than three decades, Mobutu presided over an authoritarian state that served Western interests, while neglecting those of the Congolese people. Ultimately, the Mobutu regime was removed from power in 1997 by a coalition under the leadership of Laurent-Désiré Kabila. He was never given a chance by the West to reconstitute the Congolese State. Kabila was assassinated in 2001; he was replaced by his son, Joseph Kabila. The Kabila II regime succeeded to end the enduring war of invasion and established a "fragile new political order" with the full support of the United Nations system.

After more than thirty years of authoritarianism punctuated by two additional civil wars, two secessionist movements (Kasai and Katanga), profound social corruption, and the erosion of the institutions (though the new regime is rebuilding some), in the long run, the Congolese State needs to be rethought and democratically reconstituted. The new democratic state must transcend the realm of establishing and promoting political rights and freedoms (although these are important)—the preoccupation of the emerging liberal democratic state in Africa—and accord primacy to addressing the social and economic needs and conditions of the poor and marginalized in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In order to achieve this, the reconstituted Congolese State must be nationalistic, democratic, and interventionist on behalf of the Congolese people. In essence, the Democratic Republic of the Congo needs a new democratic welfarist state that makes the well-being of the people its central priority. For further information about the welfarist state, see Tukumbi Lumumba-Kasongo's article entitled: "The Welfare State Within the Context of Liberal Globalisation in Africa: Is the Concept Still Relevant in Social Policy Alternatives for Africa," *African Journal of International Affairs/Revue Africaine des Relations Internationales*, Volume 9, Numbers 1 and 2 (2006). Elections, though important, are not enough to address in a systematic manner the social problems faced by the Congolese society and state in a global context of savage capitalism.

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4 State versus society

Rethinking the state in Egypt

Hamdy Abdel Rahman Hassan

Introduction

Tyranny, injustice, and imbalance between the ruler and the ruled were the salient features of the pharaonic political relationship in Egypt. It was Gamal Himdan who explained the nature of the central state in the context of ancient Egyptian civilization. He believed that Egypt's hydraulic society produced a social contract which was based on the Nile water.[1] This contract between the ruler (Pharaoh) and the ruled dictates that "Give me your land and hard labor, and in return I will give you my water."[2] It was not strange that absolute autocracy was the natural feature of pharaonicism.

According to Himdan, pharaonicism, as an ideology and a way of life in ancient Egypt, was based on several major pillars: (1) the King or Pharaoh, who was at the top of Egypt's power structure, had the following essential characteristics: he was the epicenter of the political hierarchy; and as the lord-king, he used his hegemonic role to legitimize his authority; (2) the theocratic class, which included the chief priest and the most prominent clergymen; (3) the landocracy, which included all the land-owners; (4) the bureaucracy, which included all civil servants who were employed by the state; and (5) the huge class of peasants or the land-slaves.

The Pharaoh was the head of the state both nominally and actually. He was the Chief Judge in peace, the Commander-in-Chief in war, the Head of the Treasury, the High Priest of every temple, and the Controller of all temples' properties. Pharaonic rule in early times was based on a personal relation, because of the position of the Pharaoh as a King and as a God. It was possible for every Egyptian, whether he was rich or poor, to approach the God and make his complaints. But when these ideas were transformed into the Greek concept of government, the result was transforming the personal element of the pharaonic rule into the soulless domination of state control.

It is noteworthy to mention that pharaonic relationship depended not only on the Pharaoh as a tyrant, but also on the acceptance of his authority by the ordinary people. Thus, popular attitudes towards the state in Egypt gave the ruler, whether he was a king or a prince or a president a pivotal role in the political system. All fundamental structural shifts and transformation in Egypt since

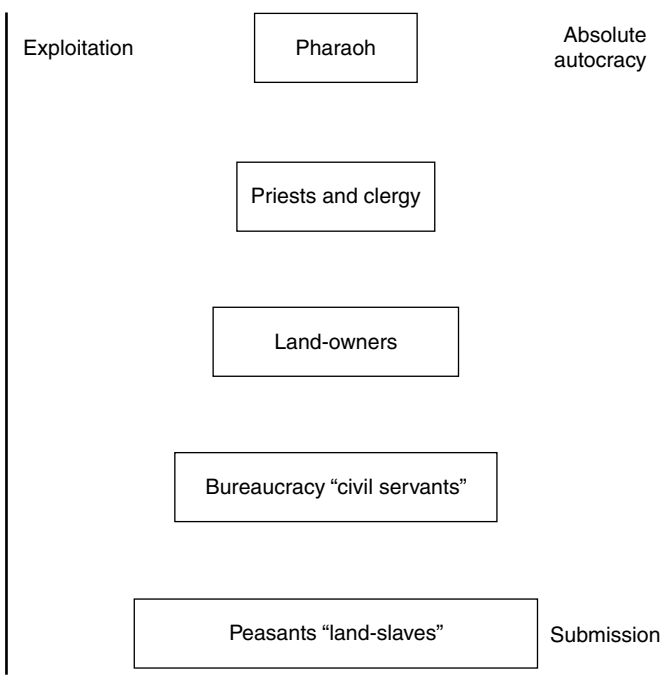

Figure 4.1 The structure of political pharaonicism in Ancient Egypt (source: designed by the author).

the period of Muhammad Ali (1804–1848) have been undertaken from the top, as was the case with the 1952 coup and Nasser's rise to power, President Sadat's 1976 democratization decree, and President Hosni Mubarak's politics of controlled liberalization.

The chapter will focus on the dynamics of the Egyptian mode of authoritarianism during the presidencies of Gamal Abdel Nasser (1952–1970), Anwar Sadat (1970–1981), and Hosni Mubarak (1981–2011). In the first part of the chapter, I will discuss the transition from liberalism under the monarchy to authoritarianism under the Nasser regime. Both the second and the third parts examine Egypt's brand of liberalization and the tensions between the traditional mode of authoritarian governance and the push for democratization during the tenures of Presidents Sadat and Mubarak. The fourth section examines the nature and dynamics of the popular uprising that led to the ouster of the Mubarak regime. The fifth part seeks to shed light on the main factors that have, and continue to serve as obstacles to democratization in Egypt. The sixth section of the chapter offers some suggestions for transcending authoritarianism and for establishing a democratic state in Egypt after the ouster of Mubarak in a successful popular revolt.

In this vein, the chapter seeks to achieve two main objectives. The first one is to analyze the process of democratization in Egypt, which began with tactical political openings whose goal was to sustain rather than transform autocracy. Both the Sadat and Mubarak regimes were able to follow a survival strategy by putting into place policies that could be considered liberal. Second, the chapter attempts to present a holistic perspective about the future of the Egyptian state.

From liberalism to Nasserism

Egypt since its independence in February 1922 has struggled for real democracy. The constitution of 1923 established a democratic parliamentary system similar to that of many contemporary European states.[3] It stated that the people were the source of all powers. It also included a number of important democratic principles such as separation of powers, ministerial responsibility, and freedom of the press as well as a wide range of civil and individual liberties. But this democratic experience ended with the advent of the military in July 1952. Unfortunately, the period 1923–1952 was characterized by constant political instability. The Wafd Party, which was the unchallenged majority party during this period, was not able to remain in power for more than eight years. Thus, minority parties ruled over the rest of the period.[4] All in all, we may argue that the liberal experience failed to solve the socio-economic problems of the country in addition to its failure in obtaining complete independence from Britain.

After the collapse of the monarchy in 1952, the free officers decided not to share power and instead established an authoritarian regime. On January 16, 1953, they promulgated a law banning all political parties. During the period 1962–1976, the Arab Socialist Union (ASU) was the sole, legitimate political party.[5] The regime monopolized all political activities and suppressed all forms of opposition, secular and religious. Some scholars argued that the crucial factors of the legitimacy and survival of the regime came from Nasser's charismatic appeal. However, Nasserism failed to institutionalize itself as an ideology that could ensure its long-term durability and mobilize the social forces that had benefited from its founder's policies.

It was clear that Nasser's regime, by the late 1960s, faced a number of crises, chief among which was a participation crisis. This crisis manifested itself in three forms:

1 The suppression of political dissent on both the right and the left. Nasser had established a one-party system as a means of reforming political life.
2 The accumulation of power in the hands of one set of elites, the military, and more particularly in the hands of one man, Nasser.
3 The de-politicization of political relations: The ruling elites had a non-political view of politics. Political action was seen as an instrument for social and economic development.[6]

The military defeat suffered by Egypt during the Arab–Israeli War of June 1967 forced the regime to re-examine its strategy. In 1968, Nasser reshuffled the ASU and promised to liberalize all political structures and institutions, as evident in the declaration of March 30, 1968. Nasser extremely curtailed all civil liberties during his rule. Many scholars agree that Nasser's regime (1952–1970) was the most significant since Muhammad Ali, with regards to the modernization and secularization of Egypt. Nasser had his own "modernized" formula for legitimacy, which enhanced secularism in the country.[7]

It was very obvious that Nasser sustained a very personalized type of rule. The recruitment of elite members in Egypt during his rule was embedded within a network of unofficial loyalties, which turned the political system into an entity that was based on personal considerations rather than institutionalized norms. The recruitment process guaranteed a certain degree of political and ideological homogeneity within the ranks of the elites. The objective criteria for inclusion within the ranks of the elite receded, thereby pushing personal loyalties to the fore. This had inevitable repercussions on the technical and professional efficiency of the state apparatus. Against this backdrop, institutional regulations and regulated political competitiveness diminished considerably. The political elites headed by the ruler himself and owing him personal allegiance were not subjugated to any kind of official supervision.[8]

Egypt under Sadat: transition from above

Following Nasser's death in 1970, his successor, President Anwar Sadat, tried to legitimize his rule using three slogans: the rule by law; government by institutions; and political freedom. Sadat himself spearheaded the critique of the ruling ASU by issuing the October 1974 Manifesto, which basically outlined his regime's plans to liberalize the Egyptian polity, as a major departure from the Nasser regime. So, with the official adoption of a policy of economic and political liberalization, Egypt witnessed the dawning of a new political climate. The issue of democracy became a public concern, which the system could not afford to ignore any longer.[9]

The shift towards political liberalization

The first signs of an evolution towards a competitive democracy in Egypt appeared in January 1976, when President Sadat appointed a Committee for the "Future of Political Action." The Committee's main task was to study the issue of establishing forums, their role in consolidating democracy, and their effect on the future of political action in Egypt. After the holding of 16 meetings by the committee between February 2, and March 9, 1976, four basic trends emerged from the discussion:

1 The majority of the members of the committee opposed multipartyism, and instead advocated for the establishment of fixed forums within the ruling Arab Socialist Union.

2 A smaller group also supported the continuity of the ASU, but favored the establishment of changing opinion forums to increase the party's effectiveness.
3 Some members of the committee supported the establishment of a multiparty system as the best formula to achieve real democracy.
4 A residual minority view favored the establishment of forums inside and outside of the ASU.

In March 1976, President Sadat decided to allow the establishment of three political Manabirs (Forums) within the framework of the ASU, to represent the right, the center, and the left. Three political forums were consequently established: The Liberal Socialist Forum (the right), Egypt's Arab Socialist Forum (the center), and the Nationalist Progressive Unionist Forum (the left). All of the three forums participated in the November 1976 parliamentary election (see Table 4.1 for the results). It was the first competitive election since the military came to power in 1952. Competing political programs and views were proffered to the Egyptian voters. Many political groups, including individuals from the Old Wafd and Muslim Brothers, participated in the election campaign as well.[10]

Another step that followed the "formative" stage was when Sadat unilaterally decided on transforming the political forums into full political parties. In 1978, another three parties were established: The New Wafd Party (NWP), the National Democratic Party (NDP), which was established by Sadat to replace Egypt's ruling ASU, and the Socialist Labor Party (SLP). Thus, the democratization debate that followed the October 1973 war with Israel revealed one important aspect about the transition toward multipartyism in Egypt: The liberalization decision came from the regime's top—from Sadat himself.

This orientation was in favor of some of the more democratic measures. Related to this was the fact that Sadat was confident enough to have all these developments under his control. Moreover, the public environment in Egypt, especially at the level of the intellectuals, was advocating and urging for political liberalization.

Table 4.1 The results of the 1976 parliamentary election in Egypt

Organization	*Candidates*	*Elected seats*	*% in the Assembly*
Egypt's Arab Socialist Forum	527	280	81.8
Liberal Socialist Forum	171	12	3.6
Nationalist Progressive Unionist Forum	65	2	0.6
Independents	897	48	14.0
Total	1,660	342	100.0

Source: Ali E. Hilal (ed.), *The Democratic Evolution in Egypt, Issues and Discussions* (Cairo: Maktabat Nahdat Al-Sharq, 1986), p. 267.

The return to authoritarianism

It is interesting to note that the democratization process under Sadat suffered many obstacles and faced crucial challenges. For example, in 1977, the food riots and demonstration against Sadat's economic policies engulfed the entire country.[11] President Sadat responded to this threat by a series of decrees, which repressively curtailed political freedoms, and civil liberties, which had grown slowly, but steadily during his previous years in power.

Following the Egyptian-Israeli Peace Treaty, which was signed in March 1979, the relationship between President Sadat and the opposition continued to deteriorate. The end result was the adoption of new measures by President Sadat designed to further curtail the right to form political parties. Also, the Sadat regime banned "communists," "religious extremists," and those who held public office prior to the 1952 revolution from holding public office or participating in public activities. On June 7, 1979, President Sadat engineered new elections in order to guarantee an overwhelming majority for his own party. He rigged the election by utilizing every conceivable administrative and material pressure to achieve this goal.[12] In order to keep a facade of democratic rule, he arranged for 29 seats to be won by the Socialist Labor Party (see Table 4.2 for the results). The confrontation between the Sadat regime and the opposition reached its peak when the president arrested all opposition leaders and journalists from the right to the left in the notorious September 1981 crackdown. Obviously, the crackdown dealt the process of democratization in Egypt a serious setback.

In sum, we can notice that the personalized character of governance persisted throughout the rule of Sadat, who managed to prevent the emergence of any organized opposition within the ranks of the political elites, notwithstanding the disagreement voiced by some of their members. Sadat succeeded in purging the ranks of the political elites by ostracizing the pro-Nasserist ideological faction. The elites, quite aware of their inability to intervene in the decision-making process and to voice any kind of opposition, turned into silent and docile individuals. The president's powers were cemented by the 1971 Constitution, which augmented presidential hegemony over every other institution. The president thus stood on top of executive authority. For example, he presided over the

Table 4.2 The results of the 1979 parliamentary election in Egypt

Party	*Candidates*	*Elected seats*	*% in the Assembly*
National Democratic Party	362	330	88.7
Socialist Labor Party	182	29	7.7
Liberal Social Party	87	3	0.9
Nationalist Progressive Unionist Party	34	0	0.0
Independents	1,192	10	2.7
Total	1,857	372	100.0

Source: Ali E. Hilal (ed.), *The Democratic Evolution in Egypt: Issues and Discussions* (Cairo: Maktabat Nah dat. Al Sharq, 1986), p. 269.

Ministerial Council, whose head, the prime minister, was appointed by the president. The president made the ultimate decision regarding the appointment of the cabinet ministers. Also, the president was entitled to assume the presidency of the ministerial council, to summon extraordinary cabinet meetings, and to preside over its sessions in the presence of the prime minister.

Importantly, the president's authority was interlinked with legislative authority. Thus, he had the right to issue decrees, which had the effect of the law. As per the constitution, the president had direct authority to issue resolutions and to sign agreements after obtaining the approval of a two-thirds majority of the legislative council. Thus, enormous powers were vested in the presidency. Frequent cabinet reshuffles during the Sadat era were a reflection of his attempt to reinforce and augment his hegemony, which stands as proof to the marginal role played by the political elites in the decision-making process during his era.[13]

Despite Egypt's move towards political liberalization since the mid 1970s, the presidency has remained the most dominant institution. The president had enormous constitutional and legal powers in a society that has a long tradition of a paternalistic political culture. It was clear that almost all of the influential bodies of the state machinery were affiliated with, and subordinated to the presidency, either formally or informally. In order to implement any project in Egypt, it had to be endorsed by the presidency. As Ayubi notes, "any important policy or project must normally have the blessing of the president before it can proceed with a reasonable prospect of success."[14]

One can describe the Sadat years in power as tumultuous, punctuated by the war with Israel (1973), prolonged military tension with Israel (1970–1973, 1974–1978), economic upheavals, including bread riots in 1977, and the isolation from Egypt's Arab allies (1978–1980). President Sadat responded to these challenges by frequently employing coercion. For example, the Sadat regime arrested opponents and brought tanks into the streets when the regime's power was threatened.[15]

President Sadat succeeded in transforming the presidential establishment into a sort of presidential monarchy. He formed a kind of royal family of influential relatives in his entourage. He also resurrected the traditional legitimacy by insisting on his role as the lord of the Egyptian family. But how did Sadat ensure his longevity and survival in power? He was actually able to consolidate his power through the building of a strong clientelist network of politicians allowed to enrich themselves by often illicit manipulation of the economic opening his policies afforded.[16]

Mubarak's rule: the quest for democracy and stability

The maiden steps towards political liberalization

Upon ascending to the presidency after President Sadat's assassination in 1981, President Mubarak took some steps designed to turn the wheels of governance

from authoritarianism to democratization. One major measure was his decision to release political prisoners. Another measure was the call for national reconciliation, especially among Egypt's polarized political factions. Significantly, President Mubarak re-inaugurated the process of political liberalization. In doing so, he won considerable goodwill from all Egyptians.

However, President Mubarak's first test was his handling of the 1984 parliamentary election.[17] The election was conducted for the first time in Egyptian history according to the proportional representation electoral system. Five political parties contested the elections: The ruling National Democratic Party (NDP), the Liberal Socialist Party (LSP), the New-Wafd Party (NWP), the Socialist Labor Party (SLP), and the Nationalist Progressive Unionist Party (NPUP). Interestingly, President Mubarak inexplicably allowed his government to mobilize the country's huge bureaucracy, in order to produce a crushing victory for the ruling NDP. According to the results, President Mubarak's ruling NDP won 87 percent of the vote and all but 58 of the 448 elected seats (Table 4.3 shows the results). Clearly, the regime's tactics plus the electoral law that favored the ruling party restricted the representation of certain parties, by allowing only the NWP to get a foothold in the People's Assembly.

The second parliamentary elections during Mubarak's presidency were held on April 1, 1987, following the Commissioners of the High Constitutional Court's ruling that the election law was unconstitutional. For many scholars, the 1987 election was an important step in the democratization of Egypt. According to the final results, the opposition share of the elected seats in the parliament rose from 13 percent in the 1984 elections, to 22.32 percent, while the number of seats held by the ruling party decreased from 87 percent to 77.78 percent.

The 1987 election witnessed a de facto recognition of the political opposition forces, such as the Muslim Brothers and the Egyptian Marxists, which had been denied participation in the political process. Under the umbrella of the SLP coalition, the Muslim Brothers participated in the election and won seats in the assembly.

In his inaugural address, following the taking of the oath of office for a second term as the President of Egypt in October 1987, President Mubarak said,

Table 4.3 The results of the 1984 parliamentary election in Egypt

Party	*Valid vote*	*%*	*Elected seats*	*%*
NDP	3,756,359	72.99	390	87
NWP	778,131	15.12	58	13
SLP	364,040	7.07	0	0
LSP	33,448	0.65	0	0
NPUP	214,587	4.17	0	0
Total	5,146,565	100.00	448	100

Source: Abdel Monem Said Ali, "Democratization in Egypt," *American Arab Affairs*, (22), 1987, p. 18.

> Democracy is a firm fact on which no one can cast doubt. Democracy is not only essential in itself but also predicts stability and ensures prosperity. It is a requisite for the growth of the economy and the welfare of the people. The regime is for every one and the opposition is an indivisible part of it because Egypt is the homeland of all Egyptians.[18]

However, the opposition parties continued to complain about the election law, the rigging of the parliamentary elections, and governmental pressures throughout the 1987 election. The opposition raised these issues in the courts. Apparently, in response to the grievances of the opposition, President Mubarak dissolved the People's Assembly and called for new election in November 1990. However, the major political parties and groups boycotted the election (see Table 4.4).[19]

The outcome of the 1995 legislative election saw the ruling NDP emerge with its largest number of seats ever in the People's Assembly.[20] A cardinal feature of this period was that the Egyptian government tightened its control over society in a variety of ways, thus reducing the people's ability to influence politics.

A major development occurred in July 2000, when Egypt's Supreme Constitutional Court declared that the country's parliament was illegitimate. So both the 1990 and 1995 elections were considered unlawful. This action by the constitutional court confirmed the opposition's claim that the ruling NDP used illegal means to win the various elections, including rigging. Also, Egypt's judiciary made it difficult for the ruling NDP to rig elections in the future by ruling that there was no reason for requiring that elections be completed in a single day. Also, the constitutional court overturned a controversial 1999 law that restricted the participation of non-governmental organizations as election monitors.

The year 2000 witnessed the first parliamentary election in Egyptian's history to be held under full judicial supervision. However, the NDP, as usual, was easily able to secure the overwhelming majority in the People's Assembly—388 of

Table 4.4 The results of the 1990 parliamentary election in Egypt

Party	*Candidates*	*Elected seats*	*%*
NDP	439	255	58.2
NPUP	28	6	1.4
NP	33	–	–
The Young Egypt	19	–	–
The Greens Party	19	–	–
Democratic Unionist Party	3	–	–
NDP independents	800	95	21.7
Opposition independents	1,335	82	18.7
Total	2,676	438	100.00

Source: Wahid Abdel Majid and Nevine Musa'ad (eds.), *The 1990 Elections for the People's Assembly: A Study and an Analysis* (Cairo: Al Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies, 1992), p. 200.

the 454 seats (87.8 percent).The NWP won only seven seats; the NPUP won six seats; and the Nasserites won three seats, in addition to five of the independents who were allied with them. The LP, on the other hand, won only one seat. Independents won 37 seats. Among these independents there were 17 members of the Muslim Brotherhood.

Again in the 2005 parliamentary election, the NDP won its expected victory, obtaining a total of 311 seats. The Muslim Brotherhood obtained a total of 88 parliamentary seats, by far the strongest showing by an Egyptian opposition party in half a century. And even more striking was the rate of success: 61 percent of the 144 candidates it nominated won.[21]

Clearly, political pluralism flourished to some extent during the early years of Hosni Mubarak's presidency. However, the persistence of the one dominant party system failed to improve the regime's performance and efficiency in solving Egypt's development problems. It was apparent that the ruling NDP ruled for the sake of ruling. Thus, there is no chance of a real rotation of power in Egypt.[22] Many opposition leaders requested President Mubarak on several occasions to keep himself aloof from the NDP and become the president of all Egyptians.[23]

The return to authoritarianism

The role of the security establishment

The military institution is one of the basic components of the Egyptian state structure.[24] In spite of its relative decline as a major source of power for the ruling elites during the Mubarak era, this was by no means an indication of the waning of its influence on the political system, given the fact that the president himself was a member of the armed forces. The decreasing representation of the army among the ranks of the ruling elites was accompanied by its increased influence in other civilian domains. The military institution was undeniably a cornerstone of the system. It was expected to intervene in times of severe crises, which represented serious challenges to the ruling regime, as was the case in 1986, when the army intervened to crush the rebellion of the Central Security Forces. The army also displayed its willingness to stand up to any potential threat posed by militant Islamic groups.

The police and security forces, on the other hand, were the first lines of protection and security for the regime. However, in case of their failure to accomplish this mission, the armed forces stood out as the last defense line. It should be noted, however, that the security forces performed their task in protecting the regime under the rule of the martial law. This role was not restricted to quelling militant groups, but to include the suppression of any peaceful protests organized by various political and social actors.

In view of the special role played by the military in the Egyptian political system since the first spark of the revolution was lit, one of the major challenges facing the democratization efforts in Egypt presently and in the future is the

critical development of the relationship between the civilian sector and the army, as well as the role each of them played in reinforcing the legitimacy of the regime, and in preserving social and political stability.

Since the 1970s, the Egyptian military has had an expanding role in the economic sphere in Egypt. President Hosni Mubarak had a vision of the beneficial role the military could play as an engine for economic growth and development. This led to what Robert Springborg refers to as a "horizontal expansion in the role of the military into the national economy."[25] The military's role in Egypt's economy is represented in four primary sectors: military industries, civilian industries, agriculture, and national infrastructure.[26]

On the other hand, because of its lack of deep public support and genuine political legitimacy, the Mubarak regime depended heavily on the military. For example, the military provided President Mubarak with security, support, and guarded his interests in the society. As a result, many officers came to play an increasingly important role, enriching themselves and becoming more and more vital parts of the state elites.[27]

Political and administrative corruption

The phenomenon of political corruption in Egypt is characterized by several traits.[28] At the core is the fact that corruption has become an integral part of the working mechanisms in a number of state institutions, due to the inability of the management to audit the lower echelons of the administrative structure. Another reason is the involvement of some of the highest political and administrative officials in corrupt practices.

The predominant atmosphere of political corruption has enabled some social groups to exert their influence on a number of state institutions, making direct and indirect use of these relationships to prosper from some illegal activities such as the trade in expired and inedible food products, or the evasion of custom duties, etc. Perhaps the most important manifestation of obscenity of wealth in the years of President Mubarak's rule was the source of this wealth. The sources of personal wealth in Egypt were no longer associated with mediation (such as trading, entrepreneurship, and brokerage), as was the case during the early years of the open doors policy, but rather the seizure of state funds had become the most important source for personal enrichment in Egypt.[29]

Moreover, corruption became a general trend that was not restricted to central institutions, but extended to local authorities as well. It also was not limited to governmental institutions, but its tentacles reached nongovernmental entities, such as parties, syndicates, and voluntary organizations. Furthermore, a multiplicity of factors reinforced corruption, such as the lack of mechanisms of accountability, the receding respect for the law, as well as the deteriorating economic conditions of a large number of state employees. The impotence of popular control mechanisms, as well as the trend to take this phenomenon for granted, and above all the weak levels of morality, all contributed to the exacerbation of the problem.

Personal enrichment without cause never stopped during the past 20 years. Outright corruption, as well as deficiencies in the regulation of public and private sector business practices, provided great opportunities for enormous fortunes in a short time span. This led to increased anger and frustration among the poor Egyptians.

In the light of the above, one could note that widespread political and administrative corruption had its negative repercussions manifested in the widening social and economic gap, the exhaustion of national resources, and the erosion of the basis of legitimacy of the political regime. All of these factors contributed to the creation of an environment that was favorable to the growth of political and social opposition forces, which rejected the *status quo* and sought radical change.

The state and the international system

The nature of the relationship which connects the Egyptian state to the international system is one of the major determinants of the role the state plays in the development process. A number of elements are of great importance: The implementation by the Egyptian state of an economic reform program, since the early 1990s, as per the recommendations of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, has made Egypt's relationship with the IMF a major factor in deciding the role played by the state in the economic and social development process. The IMF's policies called for, among other things, the withdrawal of the state from the economic and social spheres, through the adoption of a number of measures such as the reduction or the removal of subsidies, the privatization of the public sector, etc. The implementation of those policies represented a source of social tension and political instability, especially in view of the persistence of political and financial corruption, as well as the increased economic and social gap.[30]

Egyptian-American relations represent another important element of the external environment that is affecting economic and political developments in Egypt. Notwithstanding the fact that Egyptian policies and practices are not always congruent with the American agenda, still one could say that the two countries are adamant in cherishing a special relationship. The American administration combines the use of the "carrot and the stick" in its relations with Egypt.[31] The significance of the Egyptian-American relations is attributed to the role played by the United States in the area, and to the regional importance of Egypt. The complexity of these relationships is emphasized by the American attempt to define Egypt's regional role within the framework of its own agenda or at least to neutralize the Egyptian role. The Egyptian government, on the other hand, attempts to preserve a minimum amount of freedom to allow for the adoption of some positions that are not necessarily compatible with the American agenda.

Critically, the economic reform program opened the door to the ownership of local assets by multinational corporations, which had negative repercussions in

view of the inefficiency of state institutions in managing the privatization process. Also, state institutions failed to guarantee the needed transparency throughout the whole process, which made the state accountable for the negative effects of the economic reforms.

Another element is the sensitivity of the Egyptian economy to regional and global instabilities, especially the sectors which depend mainly on revenues, such as the remittances sent by Egyptians working abroad, as well as the revenues generated by the oil sector, the Suez Canal, and the tourism sector. For example, the process of globalization imposes on Egypt and the "Global South" in general several major challenges. In addition, information technology limited the capacity of the regime to keep a lid on its domestic practices. The diffusion of the values of democracy, on the other hand, generated internal and external pressures for the democratization of the system. The interaction with the forces of globalization rendered the task of developing the policies, institutions, and systems of states an absolute necessity to be able to enhance their efficiency and effectiveness.

The state and political parties and civil society organizations

The nature of the relations between the state and political parties and the civil society sector is another major determinant of the role of each of these actors in the process of political development in Egypt.[32] During the Mubarak era, most of the political parties acquired their license to practice politics through law-suits, after their applications had been denied by the Committee in Charge of Party Affairs. This represented a clear indication of the role played by this Committee in hampering the formation of new parties. However, the judiciary continued to play a pivotal role in the arduous struggle to establish a functional multiparty system in Egypt. The challenge of establishing a functional multiparty system was reflected in the fact that the number of existing political parties, which then amounted to 24, was not an indication of a real multiparty system, due to the extreme imbalance between the ruling NDP, on the one hand, and the other political parties, on the other. Reference should also be made to the limitations imposed on the other political parties, as well as to the unhealthy relationship between the NDP and the opposition. The financial support obtained by some of these parties from the state represented a major source of money, which allowed them to survive. However, the financial dependence on the state adversely affected these political parties' independence.

The relationship, which connects the state to the interest groups, is an indicator of the degree of democratization. The greater the independence of the interest groups from the state, the higher the level of democratization and vice versa. A number of interest groups exist in Egypt, such as the labor unions, the professional syndicates, the business associations, and the student movement, to name but a few. The relationship between the state and the trade unions, for example, was predicated on the total dependence of the unions on the state. The

relationship between the state and the professional syndicates, on the other hand, faced some real challenges during the Mubarak era, as reflected in the emerging role of the Muslim Brotherhood in a number of important syndicates, beginning in the mid 1980s. However, the Syndicate Democratization Law in effect put an end to the role played by the Brotherhood in those syndicates, which inevitably meant the curtailment of their independence from the state. As to the nature of the relations between the state and the businessmen associations, these were determined by the nature of those associations, in terms of the social origins of the membership, as well as their stance towards the policies and strategies adopted by the state.

The state and the nongovernmental organizations

The state's policies towards NGOs did not undergo any fundamental changes. Accordingly, the state carried on with its control policies towards NGOs within the framework of a set of restrictive laws, which closely monitored the establishment of those organizations. Also, the laws allowed the state, represented by the Ministry of Social Affairs, to censure the activities of NGOs, to dissolve them, to confiscate their funds, or to merge two organizations into one. This case was particularly important because it was symptomatic of the larger issue of democratic development in Egypt.

The arrest of Saad Eddin Ibrahim, Director of Ibn Khaldun Center for Developmental Studies, on June 30, 2000, was considered by many analysts as a direct assault on Egypt's fledgling civil society. The arrest sent shock waves through the community of human rights groups, professional syndicates, and other NGOs. If the regime could have done this to Saad Eddin Ibrahim—and got away with it—it could have done it to anyone.[33] Clearly, the arrest reflected the burgeoning intolerance of the Mubarak regime of alternative sources of power and influence in the Egyptian polity.

The state and the political Islamic movements

The Mubarak regime distinguished between the Muslim Brotherhood, as a moderate group, which abhors violence, and other extremist militant groups in opposition to the ruling regime. Thus, the regime adopted a conciliatory approach towards the Muslim Brotherhood, while dealing with the militant fanatic groups with an iron fist policy.[34] From the mid 1990s, however, the ruling regime deviated from its earlier approach towards the Brotherhood, under the pretext that the Brotherhood is cultivating relations with the militant groups. Thus, the regime embarked on undermining the Brotherhood's influence in all professional syndicates, and outlawed its participation in the parliamentary election of 1995. Moreover, confrontation between the state security forces and the Brotherhood escalated. Clearly, the nature of the relationship between the Muslim Brethren and the Mubarak regime was one of the major determinants of the future of political and democratic developments in Egypt.

Finally, the lack of independence of civil society organizations from the state, as well as the state's concern with restricting the movement of these organizations to the confines of the political and legal framework defined by the ruling regime, undoubtedly had a negative impact on the role played by these organizations in the development process in general, and in political development in particular.

The 2005 national referendum and elections: missed opportunities

In early 2005, the Mubarak regime had another opportunity to reverse the tide of authoritarianism and set Egypt on the path to democratization. The Mubarak regime could have used the national referendum held in May 2005 to reform Egypt's entire political system by stripping it of its pharoanic core. But, disappointingly, the referendum focused on Article 76 of the constitution to allow multiple candidates to contest the presidency. However, there were two major restrictions. The central one was that the National Electoral Commission had the authority to review the list of presidential aspirants, and to disqualify those it wants to. The other restriction was that as of 2011, parties that fielded candidates for the presidency had to secure a minimum of 5 percent of the seats in parliament during the 2005 election, and had to be in existence for a minimum of five years. But these provisions were antithetical to democracy. This is because the National Electoral Commission should not have been given such discretionary powers that were used to disqualify candidates who posed a formidable challenge to Mubarak. Another reason was that the five-year threshold of existence made it difficult for new political parties that were driven by national exigencies to emerge and contest the presidency.

With the opportunity for genuine political reforms squandered by the Mubarak regime, Egyptians went to the polls in September 2005, to elect a new president based on the "multiple candidates provision" passed by the national referendum, and a new parliament. As expected, the incumbent, Hosni Mubarak, President and Flag Bearer of the ruling NDP, "won" a "landslide victory" with 88.6 percent of the votes for a fifth consecutive six-year term. Ayman Nour (The Tomorrow Party) and Noaman Gomaa (NWP) garnered 7.6 percent and 2.9 percent respectively. Voter turnout was a low 23.9 percent. The presidential race was criticized for a variety of reasons. A major criticism was that the National Electoral Commission, serving as a handmaid of President Mubarak and the ruling NDP, disqualified 20 presidential aspirants, including those who could have made the race competitive. For example, Taalat Sadat, a nephew of the late President Anwar Sadat, was not allowed to contest. Also, the Muslim Brotherhood was banned. Additionally, independent candidates were restricted. Similarly, some of the major opposition parties, including the leftist Tagammu Party and the Nasserist Party, boycotted the election arguing that since the entire electoral process was fraught with fraud perpetrated to give President Mubarak an advantage, the outcome of the voting for the president was therefore a foregone conclusion. Another problem was that international monitors were not allowed to observe the election.

The obstacles to democratization before 2011

Egypt is a "presidential state," which is characterized by the dominance of the presidency. All authoritative and influential bodies of the state machinery were subordinated to the presidency, ether formally or informally. It seemed that the old paternalistic and pharaonic relationship in Egypt perpetuated the hegemony of the Egyptian presidency. Almost every Egyptian ruler is aware of this cultural and historical element. For example, President Sadat himself affirmed his role as a pharaoh in the political system, by asserting,

> Abdel Nasser and I were the last Pharaohs. Did Abdel Nasser need any written rules to follow? I don't need such rules either! The rules, which you are talking about, have been issued for our successors. Ordinary presidents such as Mohammed, Ali and Omar will follow us. And of course, they will need these rules.[35]

No doubt, President Sadat believed that the democratization project was solely dependent upon the whims and caprices of the President of Egypt. Accordingly, during his tenure, he tried to control the totality of the political arena by establishing his own laws, such as the "Shame Law" and the "Law Protecting Social Peace." Thus, President Sadat believed that he was the giver of democracy; hence, the process of democratization had to be designed and controlled by him. For example, once he warned his political opponents that "democracy has sharp teeth." In other words, the democratization process could be used to facilitate and achieve authoritarian ends.

Significantly, the legal basis for the continuation of pharaonic rule in Egypt was provided by the 1971 Constitution. The constitution gave the president an enormous amount of authority comparable to that of a tyrant. Even when the constitution was amended in May 1980, the pivotal role of the president was further enhanced. For example, according to the amended Article 77 of the constitution, "The term of the presidency shall be six Gregorian years, starting from the date of the announcement of result of the plebiscite. The President of the Republic may be re-elected for other successive terms." President Mubarak, the incumbent, enjoyed this amendment evidenced by the fact that he was the President of Egypt for 30 years. President Mubarak's tenure was the longest in Egyptian history, since the reign of Mohammed Ali.

Despite the national referendum that was held in May 2005, the ruling party (NDP) maintained its hegemony over parliament. Also, the presidency retained its domination over the parliament. Presidential domination was facilitated by the fact that Hosni Mubarak was the president of both the republic and the ruling NDP; hence, he chose NDP candidates for the People's Assembly. Given the ruling party's control over the electoral machinery, it was usually a foregone conclusion that the NDP would "win" the overwhelming majority of the seats. This meant then that the Assembly, despite its enormous constitutional powers, was a mere rubber stamp in the hands of the president and his executive.

Moreover, presidential supremacy was enhanced by the control over the policy-making apparatus. According to the constitution, the president determined the general policies. He also had a great influence over the military institution. Thus, any new public project in Egypt had to obtain presidential endorsement, prior to its implementation.

In essence, presidential suzerainty in Egypt during the Mubarak era was maintained by a confluence of factors. At the base was the continued vital role played by the President of the Republic in the political processes, predicated, in addition to the constitutional and legal frameworks, on a very important base of power, namely the leadership of the ruling NDP, a fact that cemented his hegemony over both the legislative and the executive authorities.[36] Demands were repeatedly made for the tenure of office of the president to be limited to two consecutive terms. However, these demands were practically ignored. The main justification was the absence of an acceptable alternative.

Second, the opposition parties insisted that the president relinquish his leadership of the ruling NDP. The rationale was that by simultaneously serving as the head of state and the head of the ruling party, the latter enjoyed an advantageous position in the political arena over the other political parties. Characteristically, the proposal was rejected. This state of affairs forced some of the elites to join the ruling party. However, these elites took the step based on necessity, rather than a commitment to the ideals of the ruling party. As Abdel Salam Noweir notes, "It rather reflects the [ruling] party's ability to lure members of the elite into becoming leading elements."[37]

Apart from this, another important issue that remained in the spotlight and raised doubts more often than not was President Mubarak's insistence on not having a vice president since he assumed power. His basic justification was the difficulty in locating a suitable candidate for that post. This rationale raised fears of the possibility of the eruption of an eventual power struggle in a post-Mubarak dispensation. Interestingly, President Mubarak dismissed these fears as irrelevant, asserting that the proper mechanisms for the transfer of power had been explicitly defined by the constitution.[38]

The Lotus revolution: the end of the Mubarak era

Over the past few years, Egypt has witnessed new types of collective protest movements such as the Egyptian Movement for Change (Kefaya). The movement came into existence in December 2004. This movement was able to raise the ceiling of protest by criticizing the president, his family, his son, and all the ministers.

In February 2011, President Hosni Mubarak was forced to step down following nationwide protests demanding his ouster, and calling for political and economic change. It was clearly evident that, after the escalation of public protests in most Egyptian cities, the Egyptian army decided to support the legitimate demands of the people, and took over the government. In spite of the high ceiling of popular demands, as the massive protests raised the slogan "The people want

to overthrow the regime," the army decided to intervene in order to protect the basic foundations of the Egyptian state.

A revolution or a populist coup?

Obviously, we were facing a typical case of nonconstitutional change of Egypt's government system, as a result of popular will. The Egyptian army took over the government after President Mubarak resigned. A number of military decrees were issued to suspend the constitution and dissolve both houses of parliament (People's Assembly and Shura Council). In addition, the army vowed to hand over power to a civilian government, after holding free and fair presidential and parliamentary elections.

However, it was an oddity to have seen Egyptians from all walks of life support this populist coup carried out by the Egyptian army! Perhaps the answer is quite simply related to two important issues. First, the vast majority of Egyptians trust the military, which they consider a driving force to serve the national interests. The image of President Gamal Abdel Nasser's Army, which had met the aspirations of the masses in 1952, still dominates the hearts and minds of all Egyptians. The second issue has to do with the implications of ousting President Mubarak, who was considered the last big Pharaoh. This could be explained by the fact that over the last three decades, Mubarak's regime was able to eliminate the organizational structures and institutions of the opposition. On the other hand, the popular uprising, which lasted for more than two weeks, was not able to produce a unified leadership. This then meant that the uprising lacked the presence of effective organizational structures.

The Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) conducted some important constitutional and legal changes that were opposed by the former regime's elites. For example, in March 2011, the SCAF issued a decree easing the conditions for the formation of political parties. The new legislation required parties to amplify the number of their members to reach a minimum of 5,000, with at least 300 members from 10 Egyptian provinces. A legal commission decided on the parties' applications within a period of 30 days. If any investigations were required for the applying party, the application was then referred to the Supreme Administrative Court. If no inquiries shore up about the party, and the founders did not receive a response in 30 days, then the party was automatically accredited. Under the old law, political parties had to wait for a response within 90 days from a commission consisting of the head of the Shura Council, a number of ministers, and three judges.

However, it was clear that the SCAF was able to avoid any real attempt to dismantle the pillars of Mubarak's regime. The military council under the leadership of Field Marshal Tantawi insisted on holding both parliamentary and presidential elections before drafting a new constitution. This decision contributed to the political polarization between Islamists and liberals. Further, the revolutionary forces failed to agree on a unified road map for the transition in the post-Mubarak period.

After a long process of negotiations with the main political forces, SCAF in September 2011, introduced, for both houses of parliament, a mixed electoral system that is comprised of individual candidate (IC) districts and proportional representation (PR) lists. In the People's Assembly, two-thirds of the 498 seats (332 seats) will be elected through the PR system, and one-third (166 seats) will be elected through the IC system. The country has been divided into 83 IC districts and 46 PR districts. The average size of the People's Assembly multi-member districts is 7.2 seats per district, while the two-member majoritarian districts are much larger in size. Up to ten seats will be appointed by the SCAF.

As indicated in Table 4.5, the parliamentary election, which ended in February 2012, resulted in Islamist parties gaining a large majority in each house. In the People's Assembly, both the Muslim Brotherhood and the Salafists secured a combined 70 percent of elected seats. In the Shura Council, they won a combined 83 percent of elected seats.

The revolution versus the "deep state"

Although the majority of analysts viewed the results of the first round of the post-January 25, 2011 presidential elections as a disastrous worst-case scenario, a closer look would show that the results were in fact a reflection of the current balance of power in Egypt. Despite the fact that the electoral process witnessed some violations and shortfalls, the overall results seemed fair and transparent. The Islamists and the revolutionary forces received a voting majority, while some sectors of society chose to elect the former regime's candidates, in search of security and stability. However, breaking from a record of military leadership since 1952, Mohammed Morsi became Egypt's first civilian president in June 2012, after a run-off election. Some chose to accept the results as a direct

Table 4.5 The results of the 2012 parliamentary election in Egypt

Party	*% of votes*	*PR seats*	*IC seats*	*Total seats*
Democratic Alliance for Egypt (led by the Freedom and Justice Party)	45.2	124	101	225
Islamist Bloc (led by the Al-Nour Party)	25.0	93	32	125
Al-Wafd Party	8.2	39	2	41
Egyptian Bloc	6.8	33	1	34
Reform and Development Party	2.0	9	1	10
Al Wasat Party	1.8	9	0	9
Other parties	5.8	24	5	29
Independents	5.0		25	25
Total elected	100.0	332	166	498
SCAF appointees	0	0		10
Total				508

Source: compiled by the author based on: http://www.elections2011.eg/index.php/results.

product of a democratic process that has to be acknowledged and respected, while others elected to reject the results, condemn the process, and hold on to the legitimacy of the revolution.

However, the main challenge facing the revolution has to do with the "deep state": the networks of the Mubarak regime's officials and military appointees, who still hold office. This was evident when judges appointed by Mubarak allowed Ahmed Shafiq to run in the presidential election, acquitted dozens of police officers charged with killing protestors, and acquitted Mubarak's sons and the Interior Ministry deputies of wrong-doing. Finally, such judges were responsible for dissolving the parliament. The concept of the "deep state" was discussed, perhaps remotely, by some analysts as a way of understanding the progression of events in Egypt from the 1952 revolution up until post-January 25, 2011. The term, which originated during the Ottoman Era, refers to a series of alliances related to military and security establishments, which is aimed at the preservation and autonomy of the current regime. The allegiances consequently form a state within the state, working discretely to guarantee its dominance over state apparatus.[39]

The presence of the concept of the "deep state" in Egypt can be traced back to the rise of the Free Officers in 1952. Two years after the Free Officers took power, they were described as the secret committee that was ruling Egypt. There is no doubt, in this sense, that Hosni Mubarak's alleged scheme to pass on power to his son upset the allegiances of the "deep state," especially the military establishment. Consequently, this led such allegiances to use the popular protests to abort the inheritance scheme, in favor of the continuity of the former regime.

Moreover, the "deep state's adherents" have also been able to shift the blame of the lack of security and economic downturn to the protesters and the revolution. This has eventually led many groups to oppose the revolutionaries and the revolution and even consider them unrepresentative of the population, and as agents of chaos.

On June 14, 2012, Egypt's Supreme Constitutional Court (SCC) made two important rulings that will have a profound effect on the country's political future. The Parliament was dissolved, as one-third of the parliamentary seats reserved for individual candidates were deemed unconstitutional. The Political Isolation Law was also rejected by the court, giving former regime figure Ahmed Shafiq the go-ahead to face the Brotherhood's Mohamed Morsi in the June 16–17, 2012 presidential run-off.

The SCC, like its "deep state" counterpart in Turkey, has staged a "post-modernity coup" as illustrated by Steven Cook.[40] The court exceeded its authority by dissolving the first popularly elected parliament after the revolution.

What happened in Egypt prior to the presidential election should be considered a complete *coup d'état*, which will reverse the path of democratic transformation. However, it should not be considered a traditional military coup, as it is a post-modernity one. We could notice that Egypt has repeated, with some modification, the Turkish coup, which took place on February 28, 1997. This new type of coup is characterized by three basic features. First, the army does

not directly perform the coup but does so through its civilian allies, as demonstrated by the case of the HCC in Egypt. Note that the deposed President Mubarak had appointed all the court's judges. Second, an alliance of secular civil forces overrode the popular will, as happened in the denouncement of the elected parliament. Third is the creation of split and division among all political forces through a deconstruction process. The slogan here is to disturb in order to discover and rule. This post-modernist coup is a harsh response of the "deep state" in Egypt to the "Facebook revolution."

The SCC was clearly involved in the power struggle between the junta and the new freely elected president in Egypt. For example, on July 10, 2012, the SCC issued a ruling suspending President Mohamed Morsi's decree by reinstating the People's Assembly. The verdict was obviously politicized and confirmed that the SCC remained a tool of the former regime. The judiciary for over a year and a half did not satisfy the people's expectations. The Mubarak trial, the killings of demonstrators' cases, and the crisis of the accused Americans on the issue of foreign funding were clear evidences that the judiciary needs a comprehensive reform.

In a sudden and surprising decision, on August 12, 2012, President Morsi removed the top military generals, including Tantawi, the minister of defense, and Anan, the chief of staff. He also cancelled the SCAF's Complementary Constitutional Declaration, which was announced days before he was declared the new president of Egypt. Morsi then issued new constitutional amendments, according to which he maintains full powers over the military. This move was enabled by the SCAF's failure to maintain security in Sinai, after a terrorist attack on a police station in North Sinai on August 6, 2012. The incident led to the dismissal of the Egyptian chief of intelligence, along with other senior security figures.[41]

The drafting of a new constitution was considered the greatest challenge facing President Morsi, after regaining all his powers. Egyptians had hoped that the constitutional panel would have produced a democratic document suitable for the new Egypt. Unfortunately, there was lack of consensus regarding the drafting process. For example, the liberal and civil forces accused the Islamists of monopolizing the process. But, according to Nathan Brown,

> There [were] some critical areas that still ha[d] to be ironed out, but the real hurdles for a viable outcome [laid] less in the text of the constitution itself than outside of it: in the short term, the search for consensus may prove elusive; in the long term the problems may lie much more in the act of giving general constitutional provisions precise institutional and legal meaning.[42]

After much debate and the associated conflicts, the constitutional referendum was held. About 41 percent of the 45 million eligible voters participated. About 14 million people (77 percent) voted in favor, while 4 million (23 percent) voted against. Some of the notable constitutional changes are: (1) the limitation of the

presidential tenure of office to two six-year terms; (2) the supervision of all elected by the judiciary; and (3) making it easier for aspirants to compete in presidential elections. However, some segments of the society criticized the Constitutional reforms for not being extensive enough.

Rethinking the state in Egypt: some suggestions for the pursuance of genuine democratization

Clearly, the "Pharoanic Egyptian State" needs to be rethought and reconstituted. The overarching goal must be to establish a new democratic state. In order to achieve the overall goal of establishing a democratic political order in Egypt, several specific reforms must be instituted. At the core must be the teaching and dissemination of the values and principles of liberalism and human rights throughout the society in a consistent and integrated manner. This is because democracy requires a democratically minded populace. Egyptian social institutions such as the family, the educational system, and the bureaucracy should be at the forefront of inculcating new democratic values.

Another important change must be the respect for fundamental human rights by the government and its agencies. Among other things, Egyptians should have the right to organize political parties; freely express their views; the press should have the full freedom to practice the craft of journalism, especially the publication of stories and commentaries on the political process without fear of recrimination from the government; and there should be freedom of religion based on the respect for theological and doctrinal pluralism.

In addition, the necessary reforms must be undertaken as preconditions for bringing a sure end to the rising spiral of violence and corruption in the country. These problems are deeply rooted in the fabric of the body politic, and serve as major impediments to the democratization project.

Moreover, the president of Egypt should not simultaneously serve as the president of the ruling party, because it gives the ruling party a distinct advantage over other political parties in terms of access to public resources. Alternatively, although the president has a partisan political base, as the national leader, he should transcend such narrow political allegiance in the interest of the country.

In the socio-economic realms, reforms should be instituted that would help create employment opportunities; combat corruption; address spiralling poverty; and improve the standard of living of ordinary Egyptians. Clearly, improving the material conditions of ordinary Egyptians is critical to the establishment and maintenance of long-term stability and the broader democratization project.

Finally, central to the reform must be the initiation and the fostering of dialogue between and among the various ideological blocs. This is important for the development of a new political culture based on the respect for political pluralism and its attendant diversity of views and opinions. Drawing from past experiences, the suppression of political views is detrimental to stability. This is because those whose views are muzzled may resort to the use of extra-legal means.

Conclusion

We can imagine the following three scenarios for the future of politics and government in Egypt after Mubarak. The first scenario is to achieve partial reforms, which maintain the interests of the army and the national economic elite. Perhaps that will ensure the continued flow of American funds to Egypt. Also, these reforms would maintain the strategic options of the Egyptian state, which is loyalty to the West and Israel. However, the biggest problem here is that the demands of the vast majority of Egyptians are of an economic nature. The economic demands of removing injustices and alleviating poverty are more urgent than the political demands of freedom and human rights protection. Accordingly, this scenario may lead to a full-fledged revolt that results in the actual fall of the regime, after the destruction of its organizational structure and intellectual property.

The second scenario is to achieve a Western-style democracy, following the American recipe. In this case, the United States will try hard, as it did in Eastern Europe, to induce elements of the Egyptian opposition in order to produce a new class of political elites, who are loyal to the West. It seems that the success of this scheme will lead Egypt to follow the example of Iraq.

The third scenario is a compromise between the first and second, where the new Morsi regime would implement its plans for partial or conditional reforms. This could lead to the radical and anti-Western elements being prevented from gaining access to power in Egypt. In this path, I think, Egypt would follow the Turkish model, particularly with regards to the role of the political Islamic movements.

In any case, what the Egyptians have done is unprecedented. They were able to overthrow a despotic regime in a relatively peaceful and spontaneous manner. This represents a fundamental step towards the long path of change. There are still many challenges ahead. Will the Egyptians be satisfied with the populist coup that saved them from the Mubarak regime? Or will they complete their revolution until they achieve the desired democratic society?

Finally, there is a dire need to rethink and democratically reconstitute the Egyptian state with the overall goal of replacing authoritarianism with democracy. However, in order to achieve this goal, several reforms must be instituted, including the teaching and dissemination of democratic values in social and political institutions; the promotion of the respect of human rights; the end of the executive branch's control over the electoral process; and the provision of social and economic opportunities for ordinary Egyptians.

Notes

1 Gamal Himdan, *The Personality of Egypt: A Study on the Genius of Place* (Cairo: Dar al-Hilal, 1993) (in Arabic); Nazih Ayubi, "Government and the State in Egypt Today," in Charles Tripp and Roger Owen (eds.), *Egypt Under Mubarak* (London: Routledge, 1989); Karl A. Wiyyfogel, *Oriental Despotism*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957); and Ahmad Sadeq Saad, *Social and Economic History of Egypt:*

In the Framework of the Asiatic Mode of Production (Beirut: Ibn Khaldun, 1979) (in Arabic).

2 Himdan, ibid., p. 53.

3 For more discussion see Hassan Youssef, "The Democratic Experience in Egypt," in Ali E. Hilal (ed.), *Democracy in Egypt: Problems and Prospects, Cairo Papers in Social Science, Vol. 1*, 2nd edn. (1983), pp. 27–34; and Ali E. Hilal, *Government and Politics in Egypt: The Parliamentary Period, 1923–1952* (Cairo: Maktabat Nahdat Al-shark, 1977), chapter 1 (in Arabic).

4 Margaret A. Murray, *The Splendour That Was Egypt* (London: Book Club Associates, 1973), p. 57.

5 Nasser established two mass political organizations prior to the ASU. The first was called the Liberation Rally in 1954. It was followed by the National Union in 1956. In fact they acted as mobilization instruments for the ruling military junta.

6 See Ali E. Hilal, "The Transformation of the Party System in Egypt, 1952–1977," in Hilal, *Democracy in Egypt*, op. cit., p. 16.

7 Ideologically, Nasser rejected the notion of a theocratic state without rejecting Islam altogether. He supported an eclectic formula based on Egyptian nationalism, Arabism, Islam, and socialism. For more details about Nasser's ideology, see Derek Hopwood, *Egypt: Politics and Society 1945–1981* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1982), pp. 84–104.

8 Maissa al Gamal, *The Political Elite in Egypt: A Case Study of the Cabinet Elite* (Beirut: The Center for the Study of Arab Unity, 1993), pp. 51–56.

9 "The October Paper" was an ideological document presented by Sadat on April 18, 1974, that was intended as a guideline for national action until 2000. It stated,

> I reject the idea of an artificial division of the people by establishing political parties, and I also reject the idea of a one-party system which imposes its tutelage upon the people … Hence I am in favor of maintaining the Arab Socialist Union as a sound framework for national unity, in which all groups can express their legitimate interests and views. The Arab Socialist Union must become a melting pot for differing points of views.

See "The October Working Paper," presented by President Mohamed Anwar el-Sadat (Cairo: The Egyptian Ministry of Information, the State Information Service, 1974).

10 See Ali E. Hilal, "Parliamentary Elections in Egypt: From Saad Zaghlol to Hosni Mubarak," in Ali E. Hilal (ed.), *The Democratic Evolution in Egypt: Issues and Discussions* (Cairo: Maktabat Nahdat AI-shark, 1986), pp. 265–268 (in Arabic).

11 These riots and demonstrations left an estimated 79 people killed, 1,000 wounded, and some 1,250 jailed. See Raymond William Baker, "Sadat's Open Door: Opposition From Within," *Social Problems*, 28(4), 1981, p. 381.

12 See Hilal, "Parliamentary Elections in Egypt," op. cit., pp. 268–269.

13 Himdan, op. cit., pp. 107–128.

14 Ayubi, op. cit., p. 2.

15 For more details about the tumultuous decade of Egypt under Sadat, see Kirk J. Beattie, *Egypt During Sadat Years* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 60–79.

16 The patrimonial and arbitrary hand of Sadat was illustrated by his murkier decisions made in the year before his assassination to forbid the sale of meat in Egypt for a month, to bury the pharaonic mummies in Egypt, and the attempt to force Egyptian shop owners to open for business on European hours (9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.) rather than Egyptian hours (9:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m. and 5:00–9:00 p.m. with a break during the hottest part of the day). See Hamdy A. Hassan, "Political Leadership in Egypt: The Case of Holt Democracy," in Francis Nwonwu and Dirk Kotz (eds.), *African Political Elites* (Pretoria: Africa Institute of South Africa, 2008), p. 47.

17 See: Ali E. Hilal (ed.), *The People's Assembly Election, 1984: A Study and Analysis* (Cairo: The Center for Political and Strategic Studies, 1986), chapter. 2.

18 President Hosni Mubarak, 1987 Inaugural Address, Cairo, Egypt.
19 See Wahid Abdel-Majid and Niveen Mossad (eds.), *The People's Assembly Election, 1990: A Study and Analysis* (Cairo: The Center for Political and Strategic Studies, 1992), pp. 200–201 (in Arabic).
20 The NDP held 417 seats, the NWP 6 seats, the NPUP 5 seats, the Muslim Brotherhood 1 seat, the Liberal Party 1 seat, the NP 1 seat, and the True Independents 13 seats. See *Arab Strategic Year Book, 1995* (Cairo Al-Ahram Center For Political and Strategic Studies, 1996), p. 386.
21 Amr Al-Shobky, "Legislative Elections in Egypt: Indicators and Consequences," *Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies*, Issue 46, 2005.
22 For more discussion, see Mona Makram-Ebeid, "From Single Party Rule to One Party Domination: Some Aspects of Pluralism Without Democracy," in Loper Garcia and Gema Munoz (eds.), *Elections, Participation and Transitional Politics in North Africa* (Madrid: International Instituto de Cooperation com el Mundo Arabe, 1991).
23 On August 29, 1995, the leaders of the opposition parties and representatives of other political forces issued their demands for political reforms in Egypt. See Ibrahim Shukry *et al*., *Letter to the President*, Cairo, 1995.
24 Egypt maintains a large and professional army, which numbers 450,000 personnel. The active Military Reserve: 254,000 and active Paramilitary Units: 405,000. See Egypt Military Strength at: www.globalfirepower.com/country-military-strength-detail.asp?country_id=Egypt (accessed on October 29, 2012).
25 Robert Springborg, *Mubarak's Egypt: Fragmentation of the Political Order* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1989), p. 1.
26 Ibid., p. 107.
27 Since the rise of Islamic fundamentalism and political violence in the 1980s and 1990s, the military has intervened directly in the Egyptian society. Its power was extended by the emergency law, in place since 1981, which blurs the fine line that divides the military from the civil sphere in society. See Larry P. Goodson and Soha Radwan, "Democratization in Egypt in the 1990s; Stagnant or Merely Stalled?" *Arab Studies Quarterly*, 19(2), 1997, p. 9.
28 Hassanin Tawfik Ibrahim, *The State and Development in Egypt* (Cairo University: The Center for the Study of Developing Countries, 2000), pp. 240–256.
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31 Ibrahim, op. cit.
32 Maha Abdel Rahman, "Politics of 'Un-Civil' Society in Egypt," *Review of African Political Economy*, 29(91), 2002, p. 21.
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5 Rethinking the state in Liberia

Alaric Tokpa

Introduction

In the popular search for an appropriate state model, the beginning of the twenty-first century is an era of unrest and political uncertainty in Africa. At the same time, "history weighs heavily on the global periphery, producing conditions in many countries that are inhospitable to both democracy and social justice."[1] Evidently then, the complication of the period presents a challenge to social science scholarship, as hardly can any African country in this age predict with absolute certainty the future direction of its political transition. But through critical reflection on the past and careful review of the present situation, it is possible for serious thinkers in the social sciences to construct a reasonable trajectory about the thrust of current dynamics and the future possibilities of a particular country.

In the said regard, the intractable crisis of governance and power relations in post-war Liberia has recently increased the need to further investigate, understand and rethink the character of the Liberian state. From its very beginning more than a century and half ago until recent times, competition aimed at assuming authority over control of government, the central agency in the state, has continued to generate intense conflict in Liberia. The disharmony usually generated by this power rivalry has occasionally resulted in the violent overthrow of governments. But despite the history of violent interventions in Liberian politics, the plasticity of recycled politicians and political parasites, who continue to command overwhelming presence within the Liberian political class and, hence, the flexibility with which such players have continued to opportunistically comply with the corrupting influences of any government in power without concern for systemic improvement, leaves much to be desired in the quest for political change. Thus, from one administration to the other, the promise and possibility of the particular governmental form that would satisfy the expectation of improvement in the management of political and economic affairs in Liberia have remained elusive. Therefore, in addition to efforts made to describe the defects and shortcomings of successive governments, the examination of the character of the state promises to supply an improved understanding of the main reasons behind the imbalances in power relations and the crisis of governance in Liberia.

The need for rethinking the state in post-war Liberia becomes particularly urgent because all previous Liberian governments, and the present post-war Sirleaf government (because they all bear striking similarities) display uncritical attachment to the authoritarian state model[2] which has proven unworkable. Evidently, the settler state and the military bureaucratic state that replaced it in the late twentieth century essentially served the exclusive interest of the privileged political elite. The transitional administrations (1990–1997; 2003–2005) of the war years and the immediate post-war government that were expected to construct new beginnings in the late twentieth century and the beginning of the new millennium came to be defined by lack of appropriate standards, failure to establish new policy and institutional frameworks, unimaginable corruption and the concentration of wealth and power at the center of government. Moreover, the majority of the political elite who have recently attained national leadership through condemnation of the past and the attainment of success in electoral politics have hardly paid attention to the construction of substantively alternative forms of politics and policy goals within the state. They are not inclined toward departing from the authoritarian model. Hence, the pursuit of continuous attempts at rethinking the state in Liberia is a significant engagement.

Moreover, the popular resistance that called into question the legitimacy of West African governments in the beginning decades of the twenty-first century (i.e., Guinea, Ivory Coast) and the autodynamism and resilience of the mass protest movement that degraded and resulted in the overthrow of once entrenched North African leaders (i.e., Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali of Tunisia, Hosni Mubarak of Egypt and Muammar Qaddafi of Libya), and eroded the power base of once "unshakable" leaders such as Blaise Campaore of Burkina Faso at once intensifies the significance of rethinking processes of power assumption and transition, government duration and performance quality, the place of mass attitude toward undemocratic political structures, the orientation of the African military in the continual adjustment of power relations and, hence, the viability of the traditional twentieth century state model in Africa.

Through close examination of the historical character of the Liberian state, it is possible to rethink the state in Liberia and advance some useful suggestions for a better and relevant organization of state. Thus, the discussion on rethinking the state in Liberia attempts to answer three basic and interrelated questions. First, in the process of its evolution, what has been the nature, character or mission of the Liberian state? Second, what historical circumstances accounted for the failure and disintegration of the Liberian state? And third, in view of the fragility[3] of the post-war state, what alternative, practicable state model would be required in order to avert the devastating consequences of state crisis that have negatively impacted politics and society in Liberia?

Origins and historical development of the state in Liberia

The appreciation of the origins of any state is relevant to the proper examination of its characteristics and nature of development or backwardness. In the case of

West African countries, the colonial experience is relevant. In essence, "the colonial political system was based on an authoritarian state and its associated institutions and undemocratic processes … Disappointingly, the vagaries of colonialism remain an albatross around the neck of independent African states."[4] Just as Amos Sawyer observes,

> The direct involvement of former colonial powers in African governance has been integral to the configuration of governance institutions in ways constitutive of scales of governance rather than of distinct patterns of interaction characteristic of so-called state-to-state relationship … In the case of Liberia, the history of its involvement with the United States has bred among Liberians an unhealthy psychology of dependence…[5]

This uncritical path has partly accounted for the recurrent crisis of the state in Liberia. As will be shown below, the state in Liberia is nothing more than a rudimentary and laughable caricature of certain liberal democratic state principles of the United States. In its origin and growth, colonial and later state authorities in Liberia (lacking in originality) adopted replicas of American state symbols and structures which, even today, convey the impression that Liberia is an extension of the United States in Africa. Moreover, the uncritical transfer of assumptions from the American political system that followed have continued to define notions of state attributes in Liberia, regardless of the vast differences in context, historical experiences and location in the global arrangement of the world economy.

Already, it has been documented by various scholars that elaborate and rudimentary state structures existed throughout the African continent in pre-colonial times.[6] While the Trans-Atlantic slave trade and colonialism shattered and distorted some, others remained resilient and have survived even up to the present. Although most authority structures were undeveloped as compared to the complexity of state features normally exhibited in the contemporary sense, there were patterns of political administration and control that exemplified the essence of the modern state. For example, there were legislative, executive and judicial structures that thrived on sound participatory and democratic principles. A careful reconstruction of the history of earlier state forms in Liberia would reveal similar prototypes in operation.

In the year 1822, the American Colonization Society (ACS) established a colony in Liberia with the backing of the United States Government. The ACS was the main agency through which the repatriation of manumitted Africans and their descendants (victims of the Trans-Atlantic slave trade) was implemented. Having succeeded in securing a new homeland for the settlers, successive agents of the ACS structured institutions of governance without regard to the presence or interest of indigenous Africans, who had earlier inhabited the land area that is now Liberia. As the ACS withdrew from Liberia, it transferred political authority to the settlers who proceeded to construct a settler state to the exclusion of the indigenous majority. The later penetration of foreign capital, agricultural

plantations and extractive industries energized the emergence of a neocolonial, authoritarian state formation.

Hence, initially established as a public force for the protection and promotion of the interest of the settler colony, the incipient Liberian colonial state was led by white agents of the ACS, who administered the colonial enclaves from 1822 to 1839. In 1839, the Commonwealth of Liberia was established and administration was transferred to prominent citizens of the settler community. The latter provided leadership of the Commonwealth up to 1847, when the independence of the Liberian state was proclaimed. The establishment of an independent state implied superimposition of principles and practices of the modern state form on the indigenous African authority structures that had existed in pre-colonial Liberia. With this development, the settler state embarked upon a systematic process of domination, acculturation, co-optation and socialization that eventually led to the establishment and entrenchment of settler hegemony.

However, despite the political subordination and economic marginalization of indigenous Africans in Liberia, the settlers set into motion deliberate policy and efforts to recruit collaborators from among indigenous people, who would enhance the capacity of the settlers to rule while legitimizing the domination of the latter. In other words, the general politics of exclusion as practiced by the settlers was not insensitive to the strategic need to include indigenous collaborators, who became instrumental in the implementation of the settler agenda of assuring exclusive privilege to the minority elite through the monopolization of control over undemocratic state institutions.

As has been observed above, the penetration of the economy by international finance capital and multinational corporations in the twentieth century modified the outlook of the state. The settler state evolved into a neocolonial state, and the ruling elite started to rely more and more on the control of the state for the accumulation of wealth. But while the authoritarian state concentrated wealth and power in the hands of a minority ruling class, the mass majority of Liberians were at the same time economically marginalized and politically excluded. As political partners of international business, the ruling elite essentially tended to rely on state power as their means for the economic exploitation of Liberia. In the circumstances, the repressive policies, which the authoritarian state was required to exercise, induced mass discontent and popular struggles for democratic participation. The 1970s witnessed the era of mass organization that questioned the basis of the legitimacy of the undemocratic settler state. But despite the threat to settler rule, mass agitation was not a sufficient condition for the overthrow of the settler state. Meanwhile, the settler state lacked the moral authority and political will to proscribe the operations of the mass opposition.

The military intervention that ruptured the stalemate was unexpected. Once civilian agitation succeeded in depopularizing the repressive state, the military intervened on April 12, 1980 and established a dictatorship, taking advantage of the fragility and vulnerability of the settler state. But contrary to popular expectation, the military entrenched the authoritarian state structures, deepened the crisis of the state and eventually delegitimized dictatorial, army rule. Owing to

the failure of the military to disengage from politics and democratize Liberia, a new wave of opposition was set into motion against the military government. Youth and students (university, secondary, junior high and elementary), organized and led by the Liberia National Students Union (LINSU) played a crucial role in undermining the right of the military government to retain government authority. Added to the supportive activities of other Liberians at home and abroad, the military government was depopularized.

By the end of the 1980s, the intensity of repression practiced by the military government had invited civil war which led to the overthrow of the dictatorship and the collapse of the state in 1990. The war raged until 1996, when a ceasefire and commitment to democratic election was achieved. In July 1997, election was held with the aim of erecting a liberal democratic state and ensuring political stability. Charles Taylor, the head of the largest warring faction in Liberia, the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), was declared winner of the said election. But the excesses of the Taylor government were later confronted with the outbreak of another war in 1999, which led to repeated disintegration of the state in 2003. After a period of stubborn refusal to negotiate peace, a comprehensive peace agreement was signed in Accra, Ghana in August 2003. In the formula for power distribution and the procedure for the reconstitution of government that was agreed, electoral politics as mechanism for leadership transfer dominated as the strategy for peace building.[7]

In 2005, general and presidential elections brought to power Africa's first female president, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of the Unity Party who, in theory, was elected on liberal democratic principles but who, in practice, thrived on authoritarian standards. To all intents and purposes, officials and functionaries of the Unity Party-led government in post-war Liberia (at least by the middle of 2012) had demonstrated lack of technical competence or the intellectual ability required to elaborate an ideology of democratic transformation and display the political will necessary to provide the state a new beginning. It is such glaring shortcomings that continue to provide the rationale for rethinking the Liberian state.

In general then, it is possible to contend that the evolution of the state in Liberia has been conditioned by the imposition of ethnic proclivities on the very origin of the body politic, the limited development of local productive forces, the comparatively low level of domestic capital formation, the heavy reliance on the state for survival, the preoccupation of government officials with the accumulation of wealth, the global constrain on commodity relations, the timidity and conservatism of opportunistic politicians, who feel obliged to comply with foreign agendas, and as a consequence of all this, the inability of politicians to rethink and fashion a new form and substance of radical, progressive politics.

Meanwhile, it is interesting to note that the state in Liberia shares characteristics with the authoritarian state formations of other African countries that were formerly colonized, is affected by the same discourses that drive advocacy for progressive change and has seen the same forms of intervention (or even worse ones) against incorrigible authority structures in Africa. This makes it important

to also explore the nature and implication of the form of colonialism that was planted in Liberia—an undertaking that might enhance the appreciation of the character of the authoritarian state that determines the nature of governance and politics in the country. But much more than historicize the origin and development of the nature of an ever deepening crisis of state in Liberia, the crux of the matter here is the need to pay attention to rethinking the authoritarian state through the examination of how the lack of correct ideological orientation, institutional capacity, policy direction, legal framework, social linkages (state-society relations) and political will has threatened to continuously undermine stability in the country.

Nature of government, regime and the state in Liberia

At its most basic level, politics is about the exercise of power and the distribution of resources in society. The state, an organized political construct that operates through a government, is the permanent entity within which this organization of power relations and resource distribution take place. In general, government, the central agency through which the state executes its powers, determines the kind of public policies that are formulated, the administration of policy implementation, the regulation of the national economy, the conduct of foreign relations and the extent of public and social service delivery among the population of a country. Placed on a historical continuum, the display of similar forms and tendencies usually qualify different government administrations for classification into a typology of regime(s). Hence the appreciation of the nature (similarity and variation) of government and, by extension, regime forms are crucial for understanding the character of the state in history. For almost two centuries, government, regime and state in Liberia have remained invariably sectarian, elitist and authoritarian.

In principle, the state should function as an entity that relates to all sectors of a national population, mediate existing conflicts between unfriendly or hostile groups in society and seek to provide equal opportunity for all. Should the appearance of the state (as public force) take place in a society like Liberia where conflict and disagreement over government purpose for being comes to constitute the reality, the state should, of necessity, aim to become reconciliatory. But in Liberia, this is not the case. And that is the very problematic. Accordingly, it becomes a fatal mistake for the political class and citizens of Liberia to abandon the critical task of reconciling the antagonistic relations in post-war Liberian society to the authoritarian state as presently constituted. Concerning the logic of discarding such an incurable state that has experienced recurrent collapse within two decades and that still has the potential of caving in under the pressure of discontent from non-state actors and unconventional destabilizing forces, further explanation is necessary.

In order to properly understand the nature of politics in Liberia then, any scholarly discussion of the state in mere abstract terms would remain inadequate. A more useful construction of the discussion on state and politics will have to

proceed by acknowledging the fact that what is called the state is directed by individual human beings, who usually represent particular group interests in government and society. Such individuals usually appear at the center stage of constituting governments and assume authority over the administration of the affairs of the state. Preoccupied with the politics of exclusion and continuity for self-aggrandizement (as the Liberian experience illustrates), each successive government with similar attributes (essentially as expression of regime continuity) has normally adopted the poorly constituted backward procedures and practices of previous governments and state institutions. Such uncritical attitude toward governance completely detracts from the requirements for the progressive growth and development of the state.

A well established and documented concern has to do with the autonomous[8] position of the state relative to social classes in African societies. Once there come to exist conflicting classes and interests in society, the state will naturally emerge in order to mediate the differences or manage the disagreements between the opposing classes and groups. In theory, the state ought to hang above and remain autonomous of the conflicting classes in society, so that it can properly serve as agency of reconciliation. But in practice, the state is usually non-autonomous, since it represents certain class interests (usually the dominant ones) against those of others. For this very reason, the state can only be said to be relatively autonomous of social classes. That is why it has been difficult for the state to escape unbruised whenever major political crises take place in Liberia. Unless a new model of the state that contains the seed of public satisfaction and social harmony is introduced, enduring political stability will remain an illusion.

In Liberia, the divided powers and shared functions of government are distributed among the legislative, executive and judicial branches of government for the purpose of checks and balances. Ironically, as established in constitutional principle and through actual political practice, enormous power is allocated to and thus exercised by the executive branch of government, which subordinates and manipulates the legislative and judicial systems of the country. Since 1847 and throughout the history of public administration in Liberia, there has been no system of checks and balances, and the president has wielded extraordinary power in the management of the nation's affairs.[9]

So then, the attraction of executive privilege and prerogatives is the main reason for the intensification of the competing demand for power and control in the authoritarian state. Therefore, an important requirement for improving the nature of the state in Liberia will have to consider constitutional review, with particular emphasis on the reduction in the range of presidential powers and prerogatives, as well as compelling adherence to high standards in the performance of legislative and judicial duties.

At the level of the legislative function, attention to the interest and concerns of citizens ends with the announcement of election results. Once elected, most legislators pursue personal agendas rather than the issues of the electorate and their political parties of origin. Just as in the executive bureaucracy, most

senators and representatives in the legislature approach work as if they are conducting private business. Viewed in this way, accountability in public office has been on the decline and criminal activities have overcome much of government activity. Training in proper legislative functions and ethical standards remains critical to improving the quality of legislative service.

Another issue of importance is the logic of legislative representation which is based on geographic location and ethnic classification. Realistically, legislative representation exclusively based on ethnic consideration in Liberia today has become inadequate because it ignores the special concerns of major social economic categories such as the youth, women and workers. The situation must be corrected.

Concerning the justice system, the judiciary in Liberia is weak and inefficient. Where justice is said to be on sale, display of emotions and technical legal procedures by practicing lawyers rather than evidence and merit based arguments determine the outcome of most court cases. Combined with poor infrastructure, the lack of adequate training and constant media reports of a corrupt and brutal police system, the justice system stands in need of elaborate reform.

Successive governments in Liberia have related to constituent elements of the state as if those were private concerns. Rather than build interest in the improvement of the public bureaucracy, for example, every new government has shown more concern with replacing government workers with their own choice of employees and loyalists.

In the overall organization of government and economy in Liberia, ownership of private property, the subordination and exploitation of labor, high illiteracy and unemployment rates, poor attention to social and public service delivery, disregard for human rights and the lack of the agenda for departure from the old, established order are the observed realities. Only a thorough process of rethinking the state and steadfastness of purpose in the process of implementing new forms of state orientation can save the contemporary Liberian state from decay and another collapse. Incidentally, just as the public wealth of the country, all leading state institutions and officials are concentrated in the center of Monrovia, a capital city that is nearly surrounded by ocean and river and that is not more than two miles in width or three miles in length. This makes state officials and agencies vulnerable to the attacks of destabilizing forces if and when they do arise. And that is why, historically, it becomes very easy and quick for state institutions to come under attack during political conflicts in Liberia.

Invariably thus, the state in Liberia displays glaring tendencies of authoritarianism that reflect the nature of the state in most other African countries. Interestingly, the colonial and psychological roots of authoritarianism in Liberia are less understood because they have not received adequate attention. Hence one would have thought that with the proper interest, attitude, knowledge, authority and appropriate political will, state functionaries can cultivate the ability to deconstruct, redesign and construct anew the character and behavior of the regime and state institutions. But as we shall see later, such expectation remains an illusion. This makes it imperative to rethink the state in Liberia.

Counter-hegemonic discourse and the crisis of the Liberian state

The above framing of subject heading is in no way intended to suggest that counter-hegemonic discourse preceded the crisis of the state in Liberia. In fact, it was the crisis of the state that generated and gave fertile grounds to militant activism which, in turn, provided greater public exposure to the crisis of the state and induced popular opposition. Taking advantage of the space thus created by the unrepentant failure of the state, several mass organizations and social movements (now historically classed as the progressive movement in Liberia) emerged in the 1970s. Notable among national political organizations in the struggle for change then were the Movement for Justice in Africa (MOJA) and the Progressive Alliance of Liberia (PAL).[10] Backed by radical university and high school students together with unemployed youth and the dispossessed in the larger society, MOJA and PAL took the lead in defining the issues and language of political discourse in the 1970s. While a clear-cut, unambiguous articulation of political ideology and alternative program of governance was not evident in the period, two things are clear by now. One, the rhetoric of the period succeeded to discredit and depopularize the settler dominated government of William R. Tolbert. And two, mass desire for a change of the status quo was widespread. Hence, the settler controlled government could no longer continue to ignore the public sentiments reflected in opposition politics and lay exclusive claim to state control with confidence.

Not focused on the prediction of and preparation for how and when the settler dominated government would fall, the attention of the mass organizations was directed more toward the description and discussion of the weaknesses and shortcomings of the nondemocratic, neocolonial state than toward a discussion of the ideological orientation and social and economic programs of the new type of state that activists envisaged. There was no clearly articulated vision and ideology of the replacement state. However, based on assumptions about individual leadership orientation, exposure to revolutionary literature, political developments around the world, contacts with the activities of militant movements and organizations in other countries, several different ideological tendencies developed and could be detected in the ranks of the progressive movement. But as long as the common denominator remained opposition to the authoritarian state, attention was hardly paid to the concrete differences of ideological persuasions and the alternative program of a possible replacement state. Nevertheless, the rapid frequency with which mass support was generated for the progressive organizations of the 1970s threatened the settler dominated government. Almost immediately, a stalemate in which neither the government nor the progressive opposition was able to dismiss the other ensued. Taking advantage of the mass social anger and the national mood, the military struck on April 12, 1980, and succeeded in erecting a dictatorship after a bloody coup in which President Tolbert and other top government officials were killed. Despite their early accommodation in the army run government, progressive activists were never able to positively influence the direction of the militarily administered state. In

fact, the leaders of progressive activism in the period are in admission that the coup caught them unaware.

Despite the disassociation of the progressive movements with the organization, planning or execution of the 1980 coup and the fourteen year civil war, propaganda is entrenched among conservatives and significant sections of the ill-informed and unsuspecting public that the "progressives destroyed Liberia." Unable to substantiate with convincing evidence this allegation, critics of progressive politics (of the 1970s and early 1980s) in Liberia signal the contention that it was essentially the progressive agitation for political change and democratic participation that set into motion the chain of events that have given Liberia its late twentieth century and early new millennium political experience. What such critics hesitate to say, but which is implied in their disagreement with the need to struggle for political change, is that there is the need to maintain the status quo because the authoritarian state model is the best to which Liberia can aspire. What is clear, therefore, is that the failure of these critics to articulate a new, practicable vision of state formation quite unlike (and in justification of their opposition to) the democratic change of government that the progressives earlier proposed project them as conservatives who embrace the exploitative and oppressive nature of the authoritarian state whose stubborn hold on power bears major responsibility for the destruction of Liberia.

To be sure, it is possible to contend that the lack of unity and ideological clarity among the leaders of the progressive organizations negatively played out in the military controlled government that came to power after the overthrow of the settler administration on April 12, 1980, and contributed to the declining influence of progressive forces on the political scene. But what is also clear is that the progressive organizations gained popularity when their political activism coincided with the interest of the popular masses, namely, the need to recognize the political and economic rights of indigenous Liberians. For a moment, the achievement of this objective seemed to have been attained with the success of the coup which coincided with the discontinuation of mass interest in the traditional political activities of the progressive organizations.

Violent intervention and the antecedents of state disintegration

There are remote and recent causes for the recurrent collapse of the authoritarian state in Liberia. The remote causes are to be found in the political order, economic arrangement, philosophical system and legal principles upon which the Liberian state was erected and the social anger that was thus set on fire over time. So far, much has been said about this in the above discussion. The recent cause is to be located in the massive introduction of violence as the principal mechanism for political transition. In the latter case, the April 1980 *coup d'état* is a significant point of departure.

In the initial declaration that pronounced the bloody *coup d'état*, the military justified the intervention by accusing the settler administration of rampant

corruption, misuse of power and abuse of public office.[11] The said pronouncement captured the spirit of the political moment then in Liberia and induced popular acceptance and support for the coup. But almost immediately following the mass euphoria that welcomed the change of government, the military started to display deep affection for rampant corruption, misuse of power and abuse of public office. The excesses of the military continued for a decade, until its overthrow through the rebellion of an irregular army.

The crux of the matter is that the military intervention of 1980 succeeded because of the entanglement of the settler state in a crisis from which it could not extricate itself. However, contrary to popular expectation, the military dictatorship adopted the undemocratic tendencies and insensitivities of the authoritarian government that it overthrew and replaced. The violence and barracks regulation associated with the deepening of authoritarianism under military dictatorship quickly undermined the legitimacy of the military government. Thus emerged general agreement among Liberians at home and abroad that there was a need for the military to vacate the center stage of politics.

In sum, while promising constitutional reform, the military dictatorship ultimately manipulated the process of formulating a new constitution by guaranteeing itself more political space and impunity. While promising social and economic improvement, military rule heightened the suffering of the people. Similarly, the military raised high expectations about a possible disengagement from politics and the organization of democratic elections; but the military rigged the elections of 1985 and further superimposed itself on the society.

As it finally turned out, the interest of the army was not really to change the old order, but to make the old order accept within its midst those previously kept out.[12] Obviously then, the military adopted the authoritarian tendencies of the settler state it replaced. The undemocratic character of the politics was thus reflected in the deterioration of the economy and social circumstances of the Liberian people.[13] In addition, the repressive nature of the military regime rendered normal democratic opposition impossible. This was the perfect pretext which the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) used to launch the first civil war against the military regime. The first phase of the civil war in Liberia lasted from late 1989 to mid 1996.

Civil war, state breakdown and drawbacks of state reconstitution

Attempts at resolving the crisis of the Liberian state have been associated with mere restoration of government authority rather than critical reflection, rethinking and the progressive transformation of state. By analogy, this is a process that can be described as recoiling along the trajectory of intense confrontation and devastating crisis. For instance, after the military coup in 1980, attention turned to constitutional reform and democratic elections. But the constitution of the second republic guaranteed enormous powers for the president; while the military hesitated to disengage from politics and manipulated the elections of

October 1985 to justify its continuous hold on power. The need to restructure social and economic relations in the country was totally ignored. For the military leaders, central to the political process was their right to claim privileges once preserved for the settler elite without question.

So after the election of October 1985, attention turned away from political transition through electoral democracy to violent replacement of the military dictatorship. Thus on November 12, 1985, there was a real attempt to overthrow the government of Samuel Kanyon Doe. The said attack was launched from the neighboring country of Sierra Leone and led by Thomas Quiwonkpa, the former commanding general of the People's Redemption Council (the military junta that emerged after the 1980 coup). The attempt failed, and Quiwonkpa was killed. Due to the reprisal that followed against Quiwonkpa's kinsmen (Gios and Manos) mainly from Nimba County by Krahn supporters of Samuel Doe mainly from Grand Gedeh County, it became easier to recruit and train fighters from Nimba for a future rebel army. In late December 1989, the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) started a civil war. By 1996, six other warring factions (the Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia, INPFL, headed by Prince Y. Johnson; the Johnson-led faction of the United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy, ULIMO-J, headed by Roosevelt Johnson; the Kromah-led faction of the United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy, ULIMO-K, headed by Alhaji Kromah; the Liberia Peace Council, LPC, headed by George Boley; the Lofa Defense Force, LDF, headed by Francois Massaquoi; and the Central Revolutionary Council of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia, NPFL-CRC, sponsored by breakaway associates and former confidants of Charles Taylor, Tom Woewiyu, Lavela Supuwood and Sam Dokie) and the formal national army, the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL), had actively participated in the war and the transitional governments that were set up to help bring an end to the civil war. The professed aim of the war was to remove the military government and build a democratic order. The intensity of the war led to the collapse of the Liberian state in the early 1990s. After numerous failed attempts and ceasefire violations, a ceasefire was finally reached in 1996, as a result of which an election was held in July 1997. But the greed and oppressive tendencies of the Taylor government that emerged out of the July 1997 election were used as pretext to launch a second phase of the civil war. Two (twin) warring factions featured prominently in the latter war, Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) and the Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL). Similarly thus, the Comprehensive Peace Agreement of 2003 that led to the election of 2005 was preceded by the LURD-MODEL war that promised to replace the Taylor administration and build a democratic order.

It is noteworthy that in both the 1997 and 2005 post-war elections, there emerged a preoccupation with the restoration of national government and the attainment of peace and stability. While no constitutional reform was attempted in the period, certain constitutional provisions were suspended and emphasis was placed on democratic elections as the basis for attaining peace and stability. A new addition to the electoral process in 1997, however, was a shift from the

majoritarian (single member electoral district) system to proportional representation. Interestingly, Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Party took a majority of the seats in the National Legislature. As was earlier noted, his blatant disregard for the concerns of his opponents, who had recently led their own irregular armies, his lack of attention to the social and economic crisis that had been exacerbated as a result of war and the resort to the criminalization and privatization of the state created the pretext for another escalation of civil war.

Again, the negotiations that led to the end of the civil war in Accra in 2003 agreed on a power sharing arrangement, the reorganization of the army and security forces and the organization of democratic elections in October 2005. As before, no considerations were given to the structure of the Liberian economy and the implications of economic organization for the crisis of the state. Of course, this is a matter that did not claim the attention of the centers of power and social forces that converged to negotiate the peace. Nor did it constitute the concern of peace-brokers from other African countries (who themselves were representatives of authoritarian governments) or representatives from the international community (who were adherents of the neoliberal tradition).

Beside the Taylor era, which exemplified the only attempt at reinstating a duly constituted national government in the interwar years, the period spanning the first and second phases of the civil war was punctuated with the installation of one transitional government after the other. From the Interim Government of National Unity (IGNU), which was headed by Dr. Amos Sawyer (1990–1994) to the National Transitional Government of Liberia (NTGL) which was headed by Gyude Bryant (2003–2005), the constant formula in the search for peace was preoccupation with the disarmament of combatants, power sharing between armed and unarmed politicians, insensitivity to incompetent government administration and corrupt practices by the representatives of the various competing groups, the amassing of wealth by various factions and participants in the power sharing arrangements and the organization of elections. In fact, due to the tendency to provide appeasement for the largest faction and the strongest of the belligerents, a major strategy of the warlords was to approve power sharing arrangements, participate in these arrangements, but find ways to weaken the transitional governments at the center, while at the same time strengthening themselves on the periphery of such arrangements in preparation for the next breakdown, negotiation and power sharing arrangement. This accounted for several intermittent periods of no war no peace scenarios and the manipulation of peace negotiations by the heads of warring factions in Liberia. In all of the above circumstances, at no point were concerns raised about the need to rethink the character of the state. No proposals were made for such consideration nor were public debates encouraged in said direction. The various warring factions and political interest groups were mainly concerned with acquiring more power in future governments and/or extending their influences in said arrangements.

Obviously then, it is the crisis of the state that has led to the intensification of political competition in Liberia, the introduction of violence in politics and, specifically, the intervention by the formal military and irregular armies and the

devastation of civil war. This crisis of the state has originated in the authoritarian nature of the state. The failure to resolve the said crisis could only maintain a vicious cycle of violence in Liberian politics; while a successful resolution of the crisis cannot call for a return to the past.

Roughly described, the trajectory that led to the eventual breakdown of the state moved from disregard for fundamental constitutional rights, denial of popular participation in political and economic processes, government disinterest in public service delivery, governmental dysfunctionality and failure, lack of standards as well as the appropriate institutional and policy frameworks, mass disapproval of existing governmental administrations, violent challenge by non-state actors combined with disloyalty from certain state functionaries, and then the collapse of the state. Given this understanding, the post-war state reconstitution project must go beyond propaganda and mechanical reversal along the very same trajectory that seeks merely to reinsert Liberia into the general conditions of the immediate pre-war period, conditions that necessitated war anyway. The danger however is that, substantively, the pre-war domestic and foreign constraints on the Liberian state remain the same as in the post-war period. Incidentally, as long as the preconditions and institutional arrangements required for the acceptable functioning of Liberian governments in the contemporary global economy remain the same, the crisis of the state will continue to deepen.

The post-conflict Liberian state and governance in the neoliberal context

Upon the assumption of power in January 2006, the post-war administration of Ellen Sirleaf committed itself to providing leadership for the democratic reconstitution of the Liberian state, but soon realized that it lacked the capacity to do so. At best, it succeeded in reinstating the authoritarian state structure with the assistance of the international community. Committed to the implementation of neoliberal agenda[14] (i.e., the reordering of public expenditure priorities, deregulation, privatization, market liberalization, liberalization of inward direct foreign investment, competitive exchange rates, free trade in an unequal world) from its very beginning, every institutional policy development, attempt at public sector reform, governmental program development and electoral process involved heavy reliance on foreign prescription, donor funding and external consultancy. Creativity in the independent development of national programs and the political will to drive and direct donor support into alignment with governmental program priorities was not evident. Due to the lack of commitment and the political will to implement most governmental policy pronouncements on good governance, job creation, public service delivery, poverty reduction, improved security, rule of law, better human rights standards, gender mainstreaming, anti-corruption measures, land reform, public sector reform, environmental protection and decentralization, it can be contended that the government's positions on important national issues have been aimed at the mobilization of domestic legitimacy and the attraction of donor funding by appearing to be adherent to

programs already highlighted by international agenda for funding. And, if the tendency of the executive branch to hide information from other branches of government is not improved, future governments and generations could encounter obligations that could further undermine the capacity of the state to function effectively. By August 2011, for instance, even the Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee in the House of Representatives, 52nd Legislature, Republic of Liberia had not seen the agreement on the American training offered to the new Armed Forces of Liberia, while it is the constitutional responsibility of the legislature to raise and support the national army (see Article 34: Sections b and c, Constitution of the Republic of Liberia, 1986). Studied closely, the present situation in Liberia signifies the continuous inclination toward the further privatization and criminalization of the decadent authoritarian state.

Despite the experience of war, it is clear that weak and vulnerable countries such as Liberia are in danger of continuously relinquishing control of their destinies in the contemporary international system. The relations between them, the INGO community and powerful imperial powers continue to cement the age old relations of domination and subordination. Through the expertise of well paid consultants, who have cast and continue to recast the contents of imperial agenda in attractive, irresistible and confusing terms for the consumption of intellectually lazy and impressionable African elite, neo-liberalism continues to thrive mainly in post-war countries like Liberia. Therefore, even if a full assessment of the impact of the first post-war government on the democratic reconstitution of the state is considered early, it is reasonable to assert that the emerging trend indicates full commitment by the government to the uncritical implementation of the neoliberal agenda. This, in part, accounts for the inefficiency of the post-war government in Liberia. In other words, this means that

> In part, the state will become efficient when it protects its citizens against the risks and excesses of the free market, an action that will contrast sharply with the "incomplete" democratic politics of neoliberalism—a politics reduced to enhancing isolated individuals' solitary competitiveness in a Darwinian struggle.[15]

As a mockery of the democratic spirit, post-war politics in Liberia has shamelessly monetized the electoral process, overlooked the substantive relationship between politics and economics in good governmental management, downplayed the significance of work and education, completely ignored the role of the people as major stakeholders and agents of change but continued to glorify electoral democracy. This is a problem that is reflective of superficial commitment to abstract civil and political rights as divorced from social, economic and cultural rights. However, between democratic practices and other arrangements witnessed so far (political imposition by civilian or military elite), the consensus has emerged in Liberia that democratic mechanisms of power distribution and transfer is preferable.[16] But what form is this democracy to take in order to be meaningful and enduring. Between liberal democratic and social democratic

principles and practices, the contention of this chapter is that the construction of a people-centered social democracy is the appropriate way forward.

Rethinking the broken state in Liberia

At both the theoretical and practical levels, the two dominant possibilities that have historically presented themselves to the African post-colony (capitalism and socialism) are unworkable in Liberia at the present moment. As is generally acknowledged, the authoritarian state model is the political correlate of peripheral capitalism. Ironically, the dominance of capitalism on a global scale notwithstanding, the historical disregard for structural violence and the general insecurity of the Liberian masses, as well as the insensitivity of peripheral capitalism to the needs, interests and concerns of the majority of underprivileged Liberians have made the authoritarian state vulnerable to mass discontent and violent opposition. Thus challenged, the authoritarian state has demonstrated weakness and the lack of capacity to survive. Hence, the authoritarian state has been rendered obsolete.

On the other hand, both objectively and subjectively, the construction of a socialist state does not register as an immediate possibility in Liberia. While this observation does not seek to challenge the relevance and possibility of socialism as an ideal for the African post-colony, it is necessary for the theorizing of a new state model in Liberia to evolve from the Liberian experience and global reality. Liberia today is conditioned and constrained by an unfavorable international environment, the hypocrisy that has characterized the historical relationship of the United States of America with Liberia, the rudimentary level of development of productive forces, the absence of a strong, nationalistic business class, the low level of consciousness among the working class and the peasantry, the politicization of ethnicity through which violent opposition has recently been expressed, the unrepentant reliance on political power as an instrument of economic exploitation by a majority of the political elite, the pervasive presence of enlightened opportunists in the political bureaucracy, the ascendancy of patron–client relations in the peripheral capitalist framework as the hegemonic construct and the hopeless dependence of the masses on procedural democracy within the liberal peripheral capitalist framework. Further complicating the matter, there are power greedy reactionaries who, well tolerated by international powers, have accumulated tremendous resources through corruption and kleptocracy. These have remained determined to constitute centers of power at all costs. To counter them will require advanced and comprehensive forms of organization solidly based in the revolutionary intelligentsia and the masses of the Liberian people and consistently backed by progressive international solidarity.

Away from the universality of theory, two approaches now intensely compete for public attention and the dominance of the state within the Liberian context. First, the hegemonic discourse splits into advocates for the maintenance of the status quo (the conservatives) and reformists, who appear to be adherents of liberal capitalist tenets. The conservatives reflect the attitude and opinion that a

certain class of traditional politicians and their descendants should have perpetual entitlement to the political leadership of the country. This category comprises those who have been bred in the tradition of caucus politics and the cooptation of surrogates and sycophants. The limitation of the conservatives is that they seem oblivious to the changes occasioned by the passage of time and the dynamics of global developments. While they are not oblivious to the need for political inclusion once stability is assured under their rule, they remain insensitive to leadership responsibility for national economic development and the satisfaction of the aspirations and basic needs of the masses. Conservatism in Liberia would remain comfortable with presiding over a one party state or over a one party dominant state. Complementing this approach is the liberal petit bourgeois model, which desires superficial reform. While adhering to liberal democracy, they are threatened by political competition. For all intents and purposes, this group is inclined toward consensus leadership under the pretext of coalition politics that guarantees the distribution of jobs and privileges. Pressurized into democratic competition, their preference is for competition among the liberal elite core who, like the conservatives, have no agenda for progressive state transformation or substantive change in society. Given the opportunity to lead, both the conservatives and liberals may eventually achieve the same result. In varying degrees, they will move Liberia toward the regeneration of authoritarianism and strive to suffocate democratic politics, with horrendous consequences for the very survival of the state. As the Liberian experience in the late twentieth century demonstrates, their model of leadership will invite mass discontent and violent opposition.

What is interesting to note about the above categories is that their adherence to conservatism or inclination toward competitive elitism in the liberal democratic arena has mainly been based on their socialization, lack of political clarity and opportunism. It has not been based on the thorough understanding and adoption of political principles or ideologies. These categories have never concerned themselves with theoretical sophistication nor demonstrated the capacity for carefully worked out ideological positions by which their politics and programs would be guided and examined. Nevertheless, their flexible political intelligence, uncritical support for various regime types and abilities to find accommodation in various governmental arrangements have been so amazing that it has earned them the appellation of "recycled politicians" in Liberia. It is perhaps to these categories that Amos Sawyer refers when he observes that,

> In every Liberian community, there appears to be a standard list of individuals who are perennially available as "leaders." They are leaders for all seasons. If Liberia were declared a Marxist state, this group of "leaders" would present themselves as members of the central committee and presidium. And if the tide were to change and Liberia became a fascist theocracy, the same clique will constitute the "council of mullahs."[17]

Not only is it impossible for genuine, transformational leadership to arise from these categories in Liberia, it is clear that their nondedication to principles,

heterogeneous nature, opportunism, lack of vision and insensitivity to the aspirations of the masses of suffering Liberians have constituted the most effective threats that will eventually undermine their access to state power. Hence, the longevity of their political dominance in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and the early twenty-first century was based on their claim to juridical statehood, the weakness of the other constitutive elements of the peripheral capitalist state (i.e., the working class), the slow development of social movements in civil society and the subtle, indirect protection provided by the United States of America, particularly during the cold war years. On the contrary today, the development of a critical civil society (the human rights community, the media, the church, women's organizations, the student movement, the teachers' association, other nongovernmental organizations and community based organizations), the pervasive appearance of active opposition in the political arena and the introduction of violent opposition to nondemocratic rule have made the survival of the authoritarian state an impossibility. In addition, the status quo has come under direct challenge on two grounds in the political arena. The limitations of the ideological constructs under which Liberia has heretofore been governed; and, on that basis, the inability of the old order to provide good and democratic governance, which is the requirement for the future survival of the Liberian state.

Alternatively thus, the upsurge of a counter-hegemonic discourse and contention is reflected in the recent advocacy for social democracy. This pressure from below might make it impossible for the conservative and liberal democratic approaches to dominate in the long run. Given the limitations of procedural democracy observed elsewhere, it is the ascendancy of a social democratic program that promises to address the problems of insecurity and structural violence. This is the possibility before Liberia, the possibility for the survival of the Liberian state. But if it will succeed at all, what is to be the character of such a social democratic state? Basically, the social democratic state will have to be based on the mixed economy, requiring collaboration between the public sector and a vibrant private sector. This will require regulatory policies to ensure that the private sector operates in parameters that will support national economic progress and political stability.

Second, the social democratic state will have to be based on the practice of substantive democracy. This will imply the need to forge an intimate link between national economic progress (characterized by distributive justice) and a politically democratic regime. It is the achievement of such a balance that challenged the efficacy of both capitalism and socialism in the twentieth century. While economic growth under liberal capitalism was characterized by structural violence, attention to distributive justice under socialism was characterized by bureaucratic imposition. In the case of the former, political freedom was constrained by economic injustice; in the case of the latter, economic progress was divorced from political freedom.

In accordance with the above, then, the social democratic state will need to emphasize multiparty competition and civil liberties, the social welfare and

economic security of all groups, equal opportunity to all Liberians and the conditions for Liberians to attain their highest potentials. If the social democratic state truly appears, succeeding governments will have to perform as much as or better than the social democratic state in order to guarantee the survival of other regime types or state forms. The assumption here is that the achievement of a social democratic state will ultimately make the recourse to authoritarianism an unacceptable path.

In achieving the mission of the social democratic state, people-centered democratic governance should succeed to address social issues (i.e., education, health, electricity, water, housing, communication services, general security). Second, equal opportunity for all could create the conditions for mitigating ethnic conflicts in a society where ethno-political contestations have not approximated ethno-nationalism or the quest for political autonomy on the part of any particular ethnic group. Similarly, policies of religious freedom should be pursued with no favor to any particular religious category. This would address the tendency on the part of some to politicize religion for selfish political gains.

Conclusion

Central to the thrust of the preceding discussion is the contention that irrespective of the form it has assumed, the so-called developmental, military bureaucratic or liberal democratic state in post-colonial Africa has failed, while some like Somalia, Liberia and Sierra Leone experienced complete disintegration. Interestingly, despite its unique (American-like) colonial experience, the authoritarian character and behavior of the Liberian state typify the shortcomings of its West African neighbors who were victimized by French and British colonialism. What is even more chilling is the fact that, in a certain respect, the Liberian state almost demonstrates an incapacity to learn from experience and make advances as an independent entity. Incidentally, unless there is a progressive reorientation of the state in theory and practice, sporadic chaos or anarchy will continue to be the main features of the intense competition over the control of power and resources in the Liberian political arena. In order to avert this scenario, the deliberate dismantling of the authoritarian state, the articulation of a vision and mission of state that is progressive and people-centered, and the conscious construction of a social democratic state is the way forward. Through commitment to public service delivery, mutually beneficial public-private sectors collaboration, effective organization of national production, efficient regulation of the economy, the promotion of social cohesion, devotion to the pursuit of harmony between diverse centers of power in the nation-state and educated interaction with information and communication technology in the contemporary global environment, such a state would ensure development, political stability and lasting order.

However, while the development of an intimate link between the theory and practice of social democracy will remain cardinal to that possibility, the efficient practice of social democracy will have to be informed by an appreciable understanding of the essential elements of that progressive type of politics and

economics in West Africa. It would therefore require a blending of the politician and the academic. Ironically, the conceptualization, development and articulation of a cogent theory of social democracy (taking into consideration global inclinations, regional concerns and local reality) is an intellectual undertaking which the typical Liberian politician will hardly perceive as necessary or venture to undertake. On the other hand, the intellectual observer who may have the capacity to so theorize from reality might be unlikely to venture into taking social democratic theory into practice, due to the complicated and hostile nature of the Liberian political arena in which concepts and practices of the authoritarian legacy appear to have ossified and erroneously assume a place as if they were the normal, and even the best, nature of Liberian politics which should therefore be expected to endure. Given these considerations, only the politics of constructive collaboration at the domestic level, responsible commitment to becoming a better player and actual benefactor in the international system and ardent devotion to addressing public needs is likely to succeed.

In bringing it all together, it will be important for a combination of attention to increasing work opportunity, the construction of a reasonably just system of resource distribution and the best interest of the country (current and future) to constitute the heart of the conversation for collective progress. The negotiation of the form and substance of this type of politics is likely to succeed if the development of the design is conditioned to accommodate the perspectives, interests and concerns of all stakeholders, including well meaning politicians, the business class, women and youth, religious and traditional authorities, security forces, academics and other professionals, human rights advocates, civil society and the Liberian diaspora.

The above suggestion is not intended to be exhaustive, as essential criteria, for solving the crisis of the state in Liberia. Over time, any workable prescription becomes better when adjusted and improved given the dynamics of the political domain. Rather thus, the discussion for the construction of a relevant, social democratic political order in Liberia is aimed at constituting a new model of politics that has the potential to negate the nondemocratic and disruptive contents of authoritarianism that have continued to undermine political stability in the country. To be successful, however, any center of power that assumes control of government in the social democratic state should be required to conform to the obligation of attaining the objectives that will be circumscribed by the generally agreed goals of the state. Any attempt to allow the vagaries of elected authorities to exclusively determine the priorities and prerogatives of government would severely undermine the existence of the social democratic state in Liberia by relegating it to a transitory phenomenon.

Notes

1 Richard Sandbrook, Marc Edelman, Patrick Heller and Judith Teichman, *Social Democracy in the Global Periphery: Origins, Challenges, Prospects* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 35.

2 For full description and discussion of the characteristics of the authoritarian state in Africa, see Pita Ogaba Agbese and George Klay Kieh, Jr. (eds.), *Reconstituting the State in Africa* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); John Mukum Mbaku and Julius Ihonvbere, *Multiparty Democracy and Political Change: Constraints to Democratization in Africa* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, Publishing, 1998); George Klay Kieh, Jr. and Ida Rousseau Mukenge (eds.), *Zones of Conflict in Africa: Theories and Cases* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2002); Amos Sawyer, *The Emergence of Autocracy in Liberia: Tragedy and Challenge* (San Francisco: Institute for Contemporary Studies, 1992).

3 See "Liberia: UN Envoy Warns of Underlying Fragility Despite Progress," UN News Center, March 19, 2009. www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=30239&Cr=liberia&Cr (accessed June 10, 2012). In view of the war in neighboring Ivory Coast, the potential danger inherent in the future return of Liberian mercenaries from that war, the worsening economic conditions in Liberia and the lack of program to address the high unemployment rate, both the state of security and the security of the state need close attention.

4 Kieh and Mukenge, op. cit., pp. 24–25.

5 Amos Sawyer, *Beyond Plunder: Toward Democratic Governance in Liberia* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2005), p. 180.

6 See Chancellor Williams, *The Destruction of Black Civilization: Great Issues of a Race From 4500 B.C. to 2000 A.D.* (Chicago: Third World Press, 1987).

7 For a fuller understanding of the peace making formula, power sharing arrangement and peace building mechanisms that were agreed for post-war Liberia, see the Comprehensive Peace Agreement Between the Government of Liberia and the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) and the Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL) and Political Parties, Accra, Ghana, August 18, 2003.

8 For a full discussion of concepts on the autonomy, non-autonomy and relative autonomy of the state in Africa, see Claude Ake, "The State in Contemporary Africa," in Claude Ake (ed.), *A Political Economy of Nigeria* (Lagos: Longman, 1985).

9 Yarsuo Weh-Dorliae, *Proposition 12 for Decentralized Governance in Liberia: Power Sharing for Peace and Progress* (New Jersey: Africana Homestead Legacy Publishers, 2004), p. 1.

10 Both the United People's Party (UPP), from the Progressive Alliance of Liberia (PAL) and the Liberian Peoples Party (LPP) from the Movement for Justice in Africa (MOJA) succeeded in creating political parties in the early 1980s. They formed political alliance, Action for Peace and Democracy (APD) to context the 2005 elections. After the joint pronouncement of support for the 2011 presidential candidacy of Ellen Sirleaf, the Alliance shattered over electoral policy disagreement. But UPP and LPP have since ceased to function as critical opposition.

11 After Monrovia city was awakened to sounds of gunfire on the morning of April 12, 1980, the public radio pronouncement that announced the coup accused the deposed governmental administration of "rampant corruption, misuse of power and abuse of public office."

12 See Peter Anyang' Nyong'o (ed.), *Popular Struggles for Democracy in Africa: Studies in African Political Economy* (New Jersey: Zed Books Ltd., 1987), p. 130.

13 Ibid., p. 19. In his *Popular Struggles for Democracy in Africa* (pp. 19–20), Anyang' Nyong'o asserts that "there is a definite correlation between the lack of democratic practices in African politics and the deteriorating socio-economic conditions."

14 See John Williamson, "A Short History of the Washington Consensus," Paper commissioned by Fundación CIDOB for a conference "From the Washington Consensus towards a New Global Governance," Barcelona, September 24–25, 2004. In 1999, Williamson outlined the prescriptions, known as the "Washington Consensus," which reinforce capitalist economic practices in peripheral economies.

15 Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Heart* (New York: The Continuum International Publishing Group Inc., 2007), p. 11.

16 "Popular Opinion on Democracy in Liberia," Afrobarometer Briefing Paper No. 73, October 2009, p. 1. "A majority (72 percent) of Liberians prefer democracy to any other kind of government; Liberians resoundingly disapprove of non-democratic forms of governance (i.e., one-man rule, 88 percent; one-party rule, 81 percent; and military rule, 77 percent)." www.afrobarometer.org/index.php?searchword=liberia&ordering=&searchphrase=all&Itemid=37&option=com_search (accessed July 7, 2012).

17 Amos Sawyer, "Effective Immediately: Dictatorship in Liberia, 1980–1986," Liberia Working Group, Paper No. 5 (Bremen, Germany: Liberian Working Group, 1987), p. 22.

6 State-building in Rwanda

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Introduction

It was rightly asserted that the concept of a modern state with a clearly defined territory and permanent population under the control of a central government well organized and equipped to enforce the ban on social violence and to mobilize regularly public revenues, is a novel political arrangement brought to Africa by Europeans since colonization.[1] This does not mean, however, that before colonialism, the state, as an unavoidable feature of human societies,[2] was absent in pre-colonial Africa.

The features of state as a society's set of political institutions[3] have been observed in a number of pre-colonial African societies.[4] Strong kingdoms and empires such as Monomotapa, Ashanti, Congo, Buganda, Rwanda and Burundi that existed in pre-colonial Africa have been highly praised for their well organized states structures. Significantly, colonization came with a specific mission to destroy them.[5] With their independence, a new hope for state reconstruction began. Yet, with successive military coups, wars and dictatorships, a wave of destroying and rebuilding states has become a normal succession in these states' historical progress. Today, instability is observed even in those states that were praised because of their pre-colonial structures. It appears, therefore, that the phases of destroying and rebuilding African states have been succeeding each other as a vicious circle. The biggest question becomes, however, if this vicious circle can ever be broken. Why since the independence era, has the reconstruction of the state in a number of African countries become a problem?

This chapter focuses on Rwanda, one of the African states that had well developed political structures during the pre-colonial epoch. Specifically, the chapter will seek to address the following issues: (1) The nature, structure and dynamics of the pre-colonial Rwandan state; (2) the devastating consequences visited on the Rwandan state by Belgian colonialism; (3) the dynamics and challenges of state-building in the post-colonial era, including the 1994 genocide; (4) the efforts geared towards post-genocide state reconstruction; and (5) some suggestions for rethinking and reconstituting the Rwandan state for the overall purpose of constructing a democratic state.

The creation and building of the Rwandan state

Background

Many authors who wrote on the pre-colonial states in Africa in general and on Rwanda in particular, were surprised to notice how the pre-colonial Rwandan state was organized as a unitary state, hierarchically well structured and with political entities comparable to those found in modern states.[6] It was strongly argued that unlike the majority of African States, Rwanda was not an artificial creation of colonization.[7]

The pre-colonial Rwandan state was characterized by its historical expansion, the definition of its frontiers, the effectiveness of its central government and the efficiency of its military, administrative and socio-economic institutions. In essence, the pre-colonial state was a robust and effective construct that performed the functions of a viable entity.

The pre-colonial epoch

The history of statehood in Rwanda starts with the *Nyiginya* Kingdom. Before this kingdom that began at around the tenth and eleventh centuries,[8] the territorial make-up of the present Rwanda was divided into small villages, communities and kingdoms, with a political organization based on kinship. Interestingly, there was little interaction between and among these various spheres. The founder of the Kingdom of Rwanda was known as *Gihanga*.[9] The very starting point of the kingdom was a tiny territory known as *Rwanda rwa Gasabo* (Rwanda of *Gasabo*), located on the shore of Lake *Muhazi*, near the present capital city of Rwanda, Kigali. Its initial extension started as a confederation between *Rwanda rwa Gasabo* and four other small territories under Tutsi domination: *Bwanacyambwe, Buliza, Busigi* and *Busarasi*. In this confederation, the King of Rwanda, known as *umwami*, was the unifier of those autonomous territories governed by *abatware* (chiefs). In its initial days, the then still tiny Kingdom of Rwanda needed to be much unified to survive the military threats from the two most powerful kingdoms that surrounded it: the Kingdom of *Gisaka* and that of *Bugesera*.[10] In 1378,[11] the King, *Cyirima Rugwe*, put an end to the confederation by removing the autonomous chiefs of the federation from their respective offices and replacing them with his own appointed chiefs. From that period, Rwanda became an authentic autonomous state and started its phase of military expansion by conquering other kingdoms around it. Where military occupations were impossible, alliances with powerful kingdoms were made through negotiations and marriages.

In five centuries, Rwanda had become a large kingdom. For example, by the eighteenth century, the initial tiny territory *of Rwanda rwa Gasabo* had extended to a territory three times bigger than the present territory of Rwanda, stretching into the north to include a sizeable territory of present day Uganda; in the west, it included a large portion of the present day Democratic Republic of the Congo;

and in the east, the Rwandan Kingdom included small portions of land that are today located in Tanzania. In the south, however, a pact of non-aggression was signed with the powerful Kingdom of Burundi.[12] Throughout these centuries, succession to the throne was made within the royal family. This helped in consolidating the kingdom and making the centralization of the system a reality.

Among the main institutions that contributed to the development of the Kingdom of Rwanda into a unified and centralized state were the king and his entourage, the military bureaucracy and the institution of *ubuhake* or clientage. These state institutions cooperated in the pursuance of the policies of the Kingdom of Rwanda by, among other things, complementing the functions of one another.

The central government

The central government of the Kingdom of Rwanda consisted of the King, who although very powerful, had around him an influential entourage made of the Queen Mother, the *abiru* and the Council of the High Chiefs. The powers of the King (*umwami*) of Rwanda were both spiritual and human.[13] It was believed that the King received his powers from God. He was not a human being like others; instead, he was a super-human being. Also, he was the representative of God; the symbol of fertility of land; and the fecundity of cattle and the reproduction of his subjects. The veneration, loyalty and confidence reposed in the King by his subjects were strengthened by the religious atmosphere in which they were exercised. This aspect was considered as the cornerstone of the institution of the King as it legitimized the monarch's authority in the eyes of his subjects.[14] The King was the master of the earth and skies, the master of cows and drums and master of fountains and pasture.[15] The King was the absolute master of his subjects, because he was the sole and only master of land and cattle. Therefore, men also belonged to him, because he owned all their means of existence. Importantly, the King's liberalities provided the bases for what his subjects could have, what they could cultivate, breed and produce. So, in effect, man belonged to the King as well as his household, wives and children.[16]

As a consequence of the above-mentioned powers, the King was, in the eyes of the people, justified to exercise absolute powers. This went even as far as codifying that no act of the King could be termed as bad. Even taking the lives of his subjects was justified. But as most decisions of the King resulted from the information and influence of his advisers, the latter were the only ones the monarch was fearful of. This attitude, according to Donat Murego, was very dangerous as it cultivated among Rwandans the attitude of accepting injustice when it comes from authority, in order to avoid being accused of being the enemy of the powerful King.[17]

The emblem of the kingdom was a drum called *Kalinga*. The one who kept it was also regarded as the guardian of the country. This meant then that the *Kalinga* had to be well protected, so that it did not get captured.

The King was the only person allowed to introduce new rules, and to abrogate them. He could adopt permanent laws or short-term decrees. All this was done in

a solemn manner comparable to the practice found in modern states.[18] Although, in the eyes of the people, and according to the image cultivated by his entourage, the King was very powerful, the reality was that in practice his powers were limited. The Queen Mother and the *abiru* were two prominent figures who could limit the powers of the King.

The enthronization of a King had to go together with that of the Queen Mother. It was an obligation for the King to have a Queen Mother. In the case that the King's own mother was deceased, another Queen Mother was adopted for him. The Queen Mother had as a tradition, to come from a clan other than that of the King.[19] The Queen Mother was so important to the extent that she and the King were collectively addressed as *abami* (kings). She was the master of the palace. When the King was enthroned at a very young age, his powers were exercised by regency of the Queen Mother. Also, she exercised control over the King's personal security by, among other things, ensuring that his food was not poisoned. Additionally, she took steps aimed at thwarting all intrigues against the King. Besides the influence she had on the King, the Queen Mother had some independent and sometimes equal powers to those of the King. For example, she supervised the servants of the palace, and gave them in marriage. Furthermore, she was the manager of the economic activities of the court, and could have her own militia and cattle.[20] The powers of the Queen Mother lasted, however, until the death of the King with whom she was enthroned.

The third component of the central government was the *abiru*. The *abiru*, compared with the Egyptian Priests of the time of Pharaohs,[21] had a very important role. Usually three each from different clans (*abirus*) were the depositories of the "esoteric code" known as *ubwiru*, which was like the fundamental law of the dynasty. The *ubwiru* contained all the secrets about different ritual and traditions, on how the king was chosen, enthroned, exercised his powers and removed. As Jacques Maquet has observed,

> the traditional body was not unlike a constitution in a modern state, and the *abiru* institution can be said to have had a role similar to that of a supreme court judging whether a new rule is compatible with the fundamental charter of the country.[22]

This is even confirmed by many other authors such as Filip Reyntjens, who observes that *ubwiru* were a code, comparable to a constitution in modern state, and *abiru* played the role like that of a constitutional court.[23]

The fact that the *abiru* guided the secrets unknown to anyone, including the King himself and the Queen Mother, ensured for them a very influential role and place in the entourage of the King and the royal institution.[24] Before assuming their functions, the *abiru* had to take a special oath as a guarantee to keep the secrets of the esoteric code.[25]

The final component of the central government was the Council of Big Chiefs. This council was not an institution as such. Most of its members, known as "*abatware b'intebe*" (chiefs with seats), were not supposed to reside at the

royal court, as they were the heads of provinces. Yet, at their passage at the royal court, they were consulted by the King on some important questions.[26] One of the big chiefs acted as a prime minister, who besides his tasks of helping the King in administrating the Kingdom, had the responsibility of being blamed for any unpopular acts of the King.[27]

The military

In traditional Rwanda, the army was not only charged with the responsibility of fighting. Instead, it was designed as a rather vast corporation with various social duties and rights.[28] The army was therefore needed to fight in the defense and expansion of the country as well as to fulfill some important social responsibilities. Besides the formal military establishment, Rwanda also had several militias, all of which belonged to the King.[29]

As Alexis Kagame posits in the Code of the Political Institutions of Precolonial Rwanda,[30] the military organization was a grassroots social institution of Rwanda. Each Rwandan, whatever his or her conditions, including the King, had to belong to one or the other social army and had to have a military superior (Article 13). An army was, however, made up of patrileages rather than of individuals. A man was not affiliated alone to an army. Instead, he was in it together with his sons, married or not, his brother and sons, and his paternal uncles.[31] Social armies were intermediary institutions between the people and the King (Article 82). Pursuant to the organization of the social armies, every Rwandan was an immediate vassal of the King to whom he could seek recourse for protection against any injustice. For a subject to benefit from the justice of the King, he had to be assisted by his military chief, except in cases where the latter was a party to the case (Article 83). There could be only one social army per reign, but the King could approve the setting up of many social armies by influential chiefs (Article 14).

As soon as the new king was enthroned, all vassals attached to the Crown through the contract of pastoral serfdom, *ubuhake*,[32] had to bring their sons, who were not yet recruited in social armies of the previous reigns, to be recruited as the first company known as *itorero* (Article 16). This first company of the personal army of the King in which he was also a member was put under the command of the chief of the royal palace (*umutware w'urugo rw'umwami)* (Articles 16–17). To this company was, throughout the reign, added four or five other companies, each with a special name and under the command of a subordinate dignitary (*umutware w'Itorero*) appointed by the chief of the royal palace (Articles 19 and 22). The training given to the members of *itorero* included not only physical and warlike exercises, but also literary, poetry, artistic, self-control, argument and rhetorical exercises (Articles 25, 27 and 28).

After the training of the first company comprising the core cadres of the young army, the latter was increased by the recruit of new members throughout the country. New members could come from different social armies of previous reigns or directly from different kinships (Articles 29–32). Each recruit had to

give a cow to the chief of the royal palace as recognition of his authority (Articles 23 and 33b). Afterwards, the new army acquired customary legal personality and could be assigned to social duties exercised by similar institutions.

The chiefs of army in districts[33] had to proceed with the recruitment among the kinships under his command and to train them under the same regiment. Each of the new Tutsi recruits had to give a cow to the chief of the army as a sign of the recognition of his authority, while a Hutu had to give a food producing tax known as *amakoro*, as well as perform manual duties (Articles 35b and 37a). On some occasions, different armies under training were invited to the royal court for competition (Article 36).

In return for the benefits the army chief received from his subordinates, he was obligated to assist his subordinates (Articles 68–72). For instance, no case involving a military personnel could be heard before the King, if the applicant or the defendant was not assisted by his military chief. A subordinate without this assistance was considered as obstinate and a draft-dodger; therefore, he was considered as not worthy of the King's protection. The army chief therefore had the duty to protect his subordinates. This implied, of course, that the subordinates had to perform all of the duties required of faithful vassals (Article 72).

The King was the supreme patriarchal chief of all families or kinships[34] in Rwanda. He was, therefore, the eminent owner of all moveable and immoveable property shared by his immense family of Rwandans. As the common father of all his people, the King had to ensure that each member of his family peacefully possessed his personal property (Article 79). This justice was rendered under the rules of the social army.

In return for the high protection received from the King, each member of the army had to demonstrate absolute obedience to the King. This obedience to the authority of the King had to be reflected in each soldier's attitude towards the direct chief or other subordinates of the King. Any soldier who disobeyed any royal authority, even if the official occupied a lower rank, could face the death penalty (Article 84).

Administrative institutions

The King was the supreme chief of the civil administration. He exercised authority over zones inside the country, and delegated functions to the chiefs of the armies of the various provinces, which were subjected to military invasions (Article 331).

The interior zones of Rwanda were divided into civil districts known as *ibikingi* (Article 332). The term *ibikingi* could, however, also mean the localities conceded to the bovine armies[35] or sub-chieftaincies, or the pasture concessions to big cattle breeders (Article 248). At the head of each district, the king appointed two officials: the chief of land (*umutware w'ubutaka* or *umunyabutaka*) and the chief of pasture (*umutware w'umukenke* or *umunyamukenke*). The chief of land, who was most of the time a Hutu, had the responsibility for taxes

on food production, while the chief of pasture, who was most of the time a Tutsi, handled taxes on cattle (Article 333). In the district under their jurisdiction, the two officials enjoyed equal territorial authority, each in his material competence (Article 336). The two chiefs exercised their authority on inhabitants of the district without getting involved in the institution of the social army or bovine army (Article 337a). The chief of land was competent to judge in first instance, cases related to land ownership, while the chief of pasture was competent to decide in the first instance cases related to pasture. The appeals of the decisions made by the two chiefs were made to the King with the assistance of the chief of the army (Article 370).

Also, the district was divided into hills (*umusozi*). At that level, the cattle-and land-chiefs had only one subordinate, the hill-chief (*umutware w'umusozi*). On each hill, there were usually several neighborhoods. Each neighborhood was headed by one of the family heads chosen by the hill-chief called *umukoresha* (labor supervisor).[36]

The taxes on land were paid by every Hutu through manual drudgery (*corvée*) with his hoe or any other activity. The deputy chief of the district had to deliver to his superiors the number of cultivators required as taxation proportional to the number of inhabitants of his district; then, the rest had to cultivate for him (Article 354). Also, at the harvest, the chief required of his deputy a determined number of baskets of a given product. Every family had to deliver the required quantity to the deputy chief. The latter had, in turn, to deliver the quantity of tax required to the chief and retained the surplus for himself. The chief kept a third of the taxation and the remaining two-thirds were delivered to the Queen Mother (Article 357).

As far as the taxation on the cattle was concerned, the cattle chief of the district through his deputy, imposed on each cattle owner a given number of jars of milk to be delivered to the royal residence on determined days (Article 361). The chief or his deputy could not take their share of the taxation from the jars set to be sent to the royal court. They could rather reserve a number of cattle breeders for delivering milk specifically for each of them (Article 364).

The institution of ubuhake

The institution of *ubuhake* was defined as a contract of pastoral servitude by which a person known as *umugaragu* (servant), who had an inferior social prestige and was less well off, provided cattle to, offered his services to and asked protection from a person called *shebuja* (master), whose status was higher and whose wealth was greater.[37] If the offer was accepted, the man in the superior position bestowed on the one in the inferior position one or several cows. From that time on, they were in the institutionalized relationship of *ubuhake*. The institution of *ubuhake* has been compared with the notion of feudality, which existed in the European Middle Ages.[38]

The obligations of the *umugaragu* included to pay visit and respect his master, to accompany him whenever he was traveling or participating in military expedition, to carry the master's messages and to build or repair a part of the

master's fences or houses. Some of the obligations of the *umugaragu* were different, depending on whether he was a Hutu or a Tutsi.[39] Thus, the Hutu servant had to cultivate for the master and join the night watch in the master's enclosure. The Tutsi servant was mostly an advisor, messenger, informant and a companion. The *ubuhake* relationship was perpetrated even after the death of both parties. The *shebuja*'s heirs inherited their father's relationship of *ubuhake*, vis-à-vis his clients, and the client's heirs kept the cows granted to their father.

In exchange for the services of *umugaragu*, the *shebuja* owed him protection. This protection included material and legal support. For instance, the master provided milk for the servants' children, if their father's cows did not yield enough, and contributed to the payment of the bride-wealth, if the client and his lineage could not meet the expenses. If the client was murdered and his lineage was too weak to do anything about it, the *shebuja* had to demand justice from the King or even avenge his death by blood feud (*kumuhorera*). Also, if the servant died, his widow and children had to be helped by the master in case there was nobody from his family to take care of them.

The client's rights included enjoying the *usufruct* of the cattle granted to him by his master, which included the full rights of ownership over milk, the male increase of the cattle and the meat and skin of cows which had died or had had to be slaughtered. Also, the cows received from the master could be granted by the servant to somebody else by another *ubuhake* agreement in which the original client became a lord.[40]

The operations of the administrative apparatus of the kingdom demonstrated that the vertical and horizontal political institutions of pre-colonial Rwanda were well developed. The central government comprising the King, Queen Mother, *abiru* and the Council of High Chiefs was based on divinities and supported by strong military and administrative structures. The system of *ubuhake* reinforced also the whole system as it strengthened the links between the strong and the weak through a protective arrangement.

Another characteristic of the pre-colonial state system in Rwanda was its complexity. On a vertical level, the system linked every citizen to the highest institution of the monarchy through the machinery of social armies and *ubuhake*. The hierarchy was well structured to the extent that for a subject to get to a higher level, he had to do so through an intermediary. Each Rwandan was tied to a political structure through a kinship arrangement.

At the vertical level, the state system was maintained by the institution of the duality of chiefs in each district. The chief of pasture and the chief of land were independent of each other, but exercised their respective authority over the same territory. In this system, each chief acted as an informant for the king concerning matters of exactions or suspicious activities. Also, because both chiefs had the same subordinates, the King could ensure himself of a third source of information in case the two chiefs provided the monarch with contradictory or even coherent but suspicious information. This state structure was very efficient, and its impact was visible not only on state institutions but also on the totality of the social organization and the perceptions and beliefs of Rwandans.

The colonial era

With colonization, the state structure which was built for centuries through a process of trial and error, and around which the legal architecture of the Rwandan state was rooted,[41] was destroyed. Under the colonial rubric, which was imposed by German and Belgian imperialism, new political, economic, social and cultural tapestries were violently established.

At the Berlin Conference, Rwanda was put under the German zone of influence of East Africa. The act of German protection was made official in January 1897, by the giving of a German flag and a letter of protection (*schutzbrief)* by Captain Von Ramsey, military commandant of the region, to King Musinga of Rwanda. However, German colonialism did not last long: it ended with the defeat of Germany in World War I. Subsequently, the Supreme Council of Allies and their Associates decided in their meeting of May 6, 1919, that Great Britain be given mandate over Oriental German Africa. Belgium, which found itself excluded in this division despite its contribution in defeating Germany in Rwanda, entered into negotiations with Great Britain to get a mandate over Rwanda and Burundi. The Supreme Council confirmed this accord between Belgium and Great Britain in August 1919.[42] The Council of the League of Nations confirmed this mandate in July 1922. The Belgian mandate over Rwanda was put under the Type B category. The colonial mandate as defined by the Treaty of Versailles defined three types of mandates according to the degree of development of the people, the geographical situation of the territory, its economic conditions and similar other conditions. The Type B mandate was given to those communities where autonomy was not yet possible, and where a trustee was needed to administer their affairs. The major requirement was that the trustee administered the mandate for the benefit of the indigenous population and under the following conditions: (1) to guarantee the freedom of conscience and religion without any limitations except those commended by public order and good morals; and (2) the prohibition of some abuses such as the slave trade, trafficking of arms and alcohol, interdiction of setting up military or naval bases as well as giving military instructions to indigenous people, save when it is for reasons of police or territorial defense.[43] The period of Belgian mandate over Rwanda and Burundi ended with the approbation by the United Nations on December 13, 1946, of the tutorship over those territories.[44]

Significantly, colonialism had several negative effects on Rwanda. In terms of territory, Rwanda lost large portions of land, due to the sundry machinations of the colonialists and the imperialists. For example, the frontiers of pre-colonial Rwanda extended beyond the country's present borders. The frontiers as vaguely defined during the Berlin Conference took more into consideration Belgian, British and German interests rather than those of Rwandans. A case is that the present border between Rwanda and Uganda was decided taking into consideration the German interest of dominating Europe, and the British interest of being the first European colonial power in Africa. With this goal in mind, Germany did give in during the negotiations that led to setting up the frontiers between

Rwanda and Uganda,[45] annexing to Uganda, which was under British colonial rule, a large territory that belonged before to Rwanda. According to the first arrangement of July 1,1890, between Germany and Great Britain, the latter was misled on the existence of a mountain called "*Mfumbir*," which, for Great Britain, was rich in minerals. This mountain was, therefore, according to the arrangement of 1890, located within the Ugandan borders. When it was later found out that this mountain did not exist, a new arrangement was signed in 1909, under which Great Britain again took advantage of Germany, keen not to compromise British interests so as not to undermine its utmost objective of controlling Europe.

Great Britain therefore introduced new criteria of delimitations with reference to volcanoes. The line of delimitations was the summits of volcanoes. This arrangement was, however, also revised by the Convention of May 14, 1910, among Germany, Belgium and Great Britain. Article V of the convention provided that parties to it were guided by the principle that districts which previously belonged to Rwanda, should, if possible, be given back to Rwanda. Accordingly, the Ugandan region globally known as *Kigezi* had to be returned to Rwanda because before colonialism, the whole region was effectively under the administrative and political control of Rwanda. But again for the same reasons explained above, Germany did not want to even explore this possibility. As a result, Rwanda was robbed of its territory, and some of its people were made citizens of the present day Uganda.

Also, Rwanda lost a big part of its pre-colonial territory through several negotiations between Germany and Belgium. Before colonization, Rwandan territory populated by Kinyarwanda speaking people, extended beyond Lake Kivu to include in the South, territories inhabited by the *Hunde*, *Andandi* and *Havu* tribes, and in the North, the territory extending beyond the volcanoes and going up to Lake *Rwicanzige* (actual Lake Edward). With the August 1, 1885 declaration of neutrality of the Independent State of Congo, Belgium took the frontier between Congo and Rwanda, the 30th degree longitude east of Greenwich up to the height of 1°20′ latitude south; a straight line starting from the intersection of 30° of longitude east to 1°20′ of latitude south up to the northern extremity of Lake Tanganyika.[46] These frontiers took more than a half of the present Rwandan territory. It was only until the Convention of May 14, 1910, between Belgium and Germany, that the frontiers were revised. Yet, with this revision, Rwanda did not get back all of its territory which was taken by the August 1, 1885 declaration. With these new borders, Rwanda was stripped of the whole territory of the western part of Lake Kivu and the part beyond the volcanoes. By these territorial rearrangements, many Rwandan speaking people were also detached from mainland Rwanda.

Another major impact of colonialism on Rwanda was the destruction of the traditional system of governance. Administratively, the colonial powers of Rwanda advocated an indirect system of rule. This principle was accepted under German colonization,[47] and later by Belgian mandate and trusteeship.[48] The impact of German rule was not very profound, since it lasted for very few years.

So, it was Belgian colonialism that had its stranglehold over Rwanda for a long time. The Belgian Colonial Administration devised and implemented a system of indirect rule as the anchor of the totalitarian governance architecture. Under the system, the Belgian authorities wanted to conceal the fact that they were directly administering Rwanda. Accordingly, they sought to co-opt the Rwandan Monarchy and to use it as an instrument of governance. However, the Belgian Colonial Administration made sure not to make the King very powerful, so that he did not undermine colonial authorities.[49] Operationally, the system of indirect rule was, however, impossible in the context of the Rwandan monarchical system earlier. Significantly, under the Rwandan Monarchy, the powers of the King were both human and spiritual. These powers put him at the apex of the pyramidal social order. The legitimacy of the King was based on three dimensions of the sacred Monarchy of Rwanda: the first dimension was its symbolic meaning, incorporating the sacred characteristics of the royal functions. The second was its ideological framework, which legitimized the organization of social relations. Third, there was an institutional axis around which political life of the kingdom was built.[50]

Accordingly, the monarchy constituted a barrier to the system of governance envisaged by Belgian Colonialism. Angered by this outcome, the Belgian Colonial Administration made the determination that the weakening of the Rwandan monarchy was the best approach to be used in establishing the colonial state and its machinery. The first measure taken in March 1917 was designed to destroy the fundamental symbols of the monarchy. The colonial deputy prosecutor arrested many of the prominent figures of the Rwandan Monarchy. Furthermore, the deputy prosecutor requested authorization from his superiors to arrest the King on the charge of attempting to poison the Belgian Commander of the Rwandan Zone. After an investigation was conducted by the colonial administration, it was found that the King was innocent.[51] This accusation, however, achieved its intended goal of showing that the King was not as mystical as his subjects believed; and that colonial authorities were superior to him.

During the same period, the King was deprived of his powers to pronounce the death penalty.[52] This appeared as a serious check against the King's authority and an enigma for his subjects. In the perception of Rwandans, a king without the authority to decide the right of life and death for his subjects was no king. As a consequence, up to 1922, capital punishment continued to be applied without calling the attention of the colonial authorities.[53] Finally, in 1922, the Belgian Colonial Administration, as part of its broader strategy of undermining the authority of the Rwandan Monarchy, decided that the King should be assisted by a Belgian Resident Delegate in the performance of his judicial functions. The Resident Delegate had to verify, among others, compliance with the prohibition that the King could no longer impose the death penalty on his subjects.[54]

Later on, the King was deprived of the right he had on the property of his subjects. Accordingly, the social links the King had with his subjects were abrogated. As if this was not enough to significantly reduce the powers of the King, in 1923, the colonial authorities decided to restrict the King's power to

appoint or remove district chiefs as well as to appoint and remove the district civil servants. Under the colonially imposed new provision, in exercising any of the aforementioned functions, the King had to get the approval of colonial authority.[55] Similarly, in 1925, another restriction was imposed on the King's powers: he could never again practice the rites of *ubwiru*.[56] The resultant effect was that the spiritual and legitimation powers of the King were seriously undermined.

Having fully undermined the monarchy, the Belgian Colonial Administration turned its attention to choosing an ordinary Rwandan to become the King, since the incumbent refused to pander to the desires of the Colonial Administration. Accordingly, the incumbent King Musinga was replaced with his young, docile Catholic-trained son Charles Rudahigwa. The ceremonies of his investiture were not presided over by the *abiru*, but by the colonial administration and confirmed by the Catholic Church.[57] Interestingly, even with a King of its choosing on the throne, Belgian Colonialism remained determined to ultimately destroy the Rwandan Monarchy. An interesting case in point was from 1944 to 1946, when the Belgian Colonial Administration devised a plan to replace King Rudahigwa with a Rwandan technocrat, who was trained in Belgium; but the plan was thwarted by the King.[58]

Significantly, about ten years after imposing its colonial rule on Rwanda, Belgium had made great strides in its campaign to undermine and eventually dismantle the monarchy. However, despite the "successes" achieved in eroding the powers of the King, Belgian Colonialism did not succeed in convincing and forcing Rwandans to accept the dismantling of the monarchical system, especially the centrality of the King.

Undaunted by the continuing resistance to its plan to dismantle the monarchy, Belgian Colonialism continued the pursuance of its plan to impose total control over every indigenous institution in Rwanda. Hence, given the importance of the chieftaincy in the monarchical administrative structure, the Belgian Colonial Administration sought to bring traditional chiefs under the jurisdiction of the colonial state. The initial step taken by the colonial bureaucracy was trying to transform the chieftaincy into a conduit for "maintaining law and order" on behalf of Belgian Colonialism.[59]

Another step taken by the colonial apparatus was the abolition of the system of the triple hierarchy of chiefs: Under the new chieftaincy system imposed by the Belgian Colonial Administration, the chief of pasture (*umutware w'umukenke* or *umunyamukenke*), the chief of land (*umutware w'ubutaka* or *umunyabutaka*) and the chief of the army *(umutware w'ingabo*) were replaced by one chief.[60] With this imposition, the social structure under which the institution of the social army was constructed, was destroyed, thus leading to more confusion in the minds of Rwandans. Subsequently, the colonial administration "ethnicized" its new system of chieftaincy by deciding that all chiefs should be Tutsi.[61]

The third step was the limitation of the period[62] chiefs could spend at the royal palace. As explained earlier, chiefs could come and stay as long as possible at the royal palace. The decision to limit their stay to a maximum of 15 days

helped in widening the gap between the King and chiefs, by isolating the King and making chiefs dependent on the colonial authorities.

The fourth measure was the bureaucratization of the functions of the chiefs.[63] While the traditional system was based on personal considerations, bureaucratization consecrated the exercise of duties without regard to personal considerations. For example, chiefs were appointed or removed without any reference to their personal or family authority. Instead, the major criterion was the educational background and status of the aspirants for the chieftaincy. Furthermore, the link which attached traditional authorities to the ordinary citizens through the exchange of donations and gifts was suddenly replaced by the introduction of salaries, thereby making the chief accountable to his "Belgian superior," who paid his salary, rather than to his subordinates as was previously the case. Yet, as the salary was paid through forced work known as *uburetwa*, which was done only by Hutu, tension among the colonial authorities, the traditional authorities and the ordinary citizens developed step by step.

The fourth step was designed to make the chiefs unpopular. With the introduction of the new functions of the chiefs, including the supervision of public works, the chiefs came to rely on *uburetwa* from Hutu as the major source of their livelihood.[64] This contributed to making the chiefs very unpopular, as most people, mainly the Hutu, could spend almost an entire week working for the chiefs and performing public works duties, while spending very little time working for themselves and their families.

The gathering storm: the "1959 revolution" and the challenges of institution-building

Having polarized the Tutsi and Hutu, Belgian colonialism laid the foundation for the construction of a post-colonial state that was doomed to fail. The Hutu-Tutsi divide became the most important conflict on the eve of political independence. In 1959, frustrated by what they believed was a conspiracy between Belgian colonialism and the Tutsi, the Hutu launched a "scorch the earth campaign" against the Tutsi. Scores of Tutsi were killed; their properties were destroyed; and thousands of others were forced into exile to Uganda and other neighboring states.

Amidst the virtual "state of war" between the Hutu and the Tutsi, the Belgian Colonial Administration attempted to create new institutions as the "panacea." An Interim Decree was promulgated on December 25, 1959, to provide the legal framework for the new arrangement. The centerpiece of the new administrative system was the abolition of the dual system of administration between the colonial and traditional structures.[65] Article 24 of the decree stipulated that the King was the Head of State. Also, the position of head of government was created. Under the so-called "system of checks and balances," the head of government had to countersign the acts of the Head of State, in order for them to be valid. Sections 2 and 3 of this decree provided for a Council of State consisting of 44 members, who were directly elected, 3 representatives of business companies,

3 representatives of independent middle class, 3 representatives of employers and 6 notables. The King and the Council exercised legislative powers (section 3).

By the legislative ordinance of July 15, 1961,[66] the Council of the Country was replaced by the Legislative Assembly consisting of 44 members elected from the 10 territories of Rwanda. Thus, legislative power was exercised by the King as Head of State and the Legislative Assembly. Executive power remained in the hands of the King. The positions of prime minister and cabinet ministers were created. Following the referendum of September 1961, which voted against the monarchy, the Legislative Ordinance of October 1, 1961 abolished monarchy.[67] Immediately thereafter, the Legislative Ordinance of October 9, 1961 proclaimed the establishment of a republican form of government in Rwanda with the President as the Head of State, exercising executive powers.[68] The Legislative Ordinance was subsequently modified on May 20, 1962.[69] The new ordinance provided that legislative power was exercised collectively by the President of the Republic and the Assembly (Art. 14) and that the government was made by the president and ministers appointed by the former (Art. 28 and 29).

The post-colonial era

Background

Rwanda gained its independence from Belgium on July 1, 1962. It retained the governance architecture that it inherited from Belgium colonialism. The ruling elites were faced with several major challenges, including the Hutu-Tutsi divide. Unfortunately, rather than addressing the conflict, the ruling elites sought to institutionalize the divide. For example, a Hutu "ethnic ideology" was promoted that portrayed the Hutu as a majority ethnic group that had suffered from oppression for centuries. This ideology was promoted by *Parmehutu* (Party for the Promotion of Hutu Masses), the political party that dominated the struggle for the independence of Rwanda. *Parmehutu* professed as its ultimate goal the full liberation of the Hutu masses. Building on the proclamation it issued in May 1960, *Parmehutu* maintained that Rwanda needed full and complete independence from the colonialisms that history had superimposed on it: Tutsi colonialism and the European trusteeship.[70]

Thus, independence was, therefore, seen first and foremost as liberation against Tutsi domination. Interestingly, this conception of independence propounded by *Parmehutu* was supported by the Belgian authorities. As the Belgian Special Resident Representative in Rwanda put it in early 1960, "…we must take action in favor of the Hutu, who live in a state of ignorance and under oppressive influence. By virtue of the situation we are obliged to take sides. We cannot stay neutral and sit."[71] Thus, the stage was set for the continual existence of the state of polarization between the two groups.

The First Republic (1961–1973)

Gregoire Kayibanda, the leader of the Hutu-based *Pamethutu* party, became the first President of Rwanda. The governance structure was based on authoritarianism guided by a discriminatory ideology that favored the Hutu over the Tutsi. Under this architecture, the Kayibanda government established a "quota system"—90 percent for Hutu and 10 percent for Tutsi—as the basis for the allocation of societal resources and services in areas such as employment in the public sector and education. In other words, in each of these sectors, Hutu were automatically allotted 90 percent and Tutsi the remaining 10 percent. Importantly, the authoritarian governance structure was used to suppress the Tutsi. For example, the Kayibanda regime banned both UNAR and RADER, the two major Tutsi-based political parties as part of the deliberate strategy of preventing Tutsi from participating in the political process.

The resultant polarization between the Hutu and Tutsi regularly found expression in violent clashes between the two groups. Guided by an ideology based on hatred and discrimination, the Hutu used acts of violence as vehicles for exacting human and material damages on the Tutsi. Of course, the ultimate objective was the annihilation of the Tutsi.

After more than a decade of communal violence that diverted the country from pursuing a viable national development agenda, the military under the leadership of Major-General Juvenal Habyarimana, the Minister of Defense, overthrew the Kayibanda regime, thus ending Rwanda's "First Republic." Interestingly, Rwandan nationalists, who were interested in the construction of a democratic state based, among other things, on pluralism, the rule of law and the protection of human rights, entertained the hope that the coup could have set into motion the journey towards democratic state-building.

The Second Republic (1971–1994)

Initially, Rwandan nationalists were prepared to give the Habyarimana regime the opportunity to provide the requisite leadership that was exigent for the transition from authoritarianism based on an exclusionary ideology to democracy premised on pluralism. The Habyarimana regime did show some signs of undertaking such a transition. However, it later became apparent that the regime lacked the required political will that was critical to the transition. Accordingly, the regime took actions to even undermine its own efforts designed to "address the Hutu-Tutsi divide." For example, the regime capitulated to Hutu demands that the number of Tutsi in areas such as medicine and education be reduced. Taking advantage of the regime's malleability and subservience to the "discrimination project," the Hutu launched a violent campaign against the Tutsi in 1974. When the "dust settled," thousands of Tutsi had been killed.

Having capitulated to the "Hutu agenda," the Habyarimana regime became consumed with its "consolidation of power project." For example, in 1975,

President Habyarimana organized the *Mouvement révolutionnaire national pour le développement (MRND)*, as the sole political party. That meant that other Hutu-based political parties were not allowed to legally function. This action consummated the process of re-establishing an authoritarian system of governance in Rwanda. Three years later, the Habyarimana regime oversaw the drafting and approval of a new constitution that legitimized authoritarianism.

After almost two decades of political repression and socio-economic malaise, the Rwandan people became increasingly restless, especially against the background of the end of the "Cold War" and the emergent "wave of political liberalization" that was sweeping through Eastern and Central Europe, and gaining momentum in Africa as well. Unfortunately, the opportunity for Rwandans, irrespective of their ethno-cultural backgrounds, to form a common front in arresting the tide of authoritarianism was held hostage by the festering "Hutu-Tutsi divide."

Accordingly, beginning in 1990, Rwanda was enveloped in a "new wave of ethnic tensions." This state of affairs created a volatile political climate. However, the Tutsi, including those in the diaspora, saw the changing global and regional political climates as opportunities to press their claims for inclusion in the Rwandan body politic. One of the major actions taken by the diaspora Tutsi was the formation of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) as the political and military instrument for pressing Tutsi claims. With authoritarianism under siege, the Habyarimana regime reluctantly expressed its desire to end authoritarian rule by, among other things, "opening up the political space." In order to begin the process of political democratization, the regime appointed a National Committee. The committee was charged with the responsibility of drafting a "National Political Charter" based on the twin principles of democracy and unity. Despite these important first steps, the process got stalled as a result of the Habyarimana regime's unwillingness to democratize.

State collapse and genocide

Convinced that the Habyarimana regime was not really committed to the building of a new political order based on pluralism, the Tutsi-dominated Rwandan Patriotic Front decided to pursue the military option by invading Rwanda on October 1, 1990, from its base in Uganda. The invasion gave the Habyarimana regime the perfect opportunity to totally scrap its pretentious democratization agenda. Buoyed by the support of Hutu extremists, the regime launched a full-scaled "scorch the earth campaign" against Tutsi living in Rwanda. This strengthened the determination of RPF and the opposition parties and intensified the civil war between the government and the Rwandan Patriotic Front.

After about two years of death and destruction, the Organization of African Unity (now the African Union) brokered the Arusha Peace Accord on July 12, 1992. Among other things, the accord called for a ceasefire; the holding of political dialogue among the various stakeholders; the establishment of a transitional government of national unity and the intervention of an UN peacekeeping force.

Against this backdrop, the ceasefire went into effect on July 31, 1992, and political dialogue commenced on August 10, 1992. Also, the UN peacekeeping force was deployed to help monitor compliance with the ceasefire. For about two years thereafter, there were indications that the formal end of the civil war would at last provide Rwandans with the opportunity to design and implement a state-building project based on the tenets of democracy. However, this hope was shattered on April 6, 1994, when the airplane carrying Rwandan President Habyarimana and his Burundian counterpart, Cyprien Ntaryamire, was shot down. This sad event provided the pretext for Hutu extremists, who were opposed to democratic state-building, to implement their genocidal plan. So, the aftermath of the two presidents' death witnessed the genocide against the Tutsi and the mass killing of moderate Hutus by Hutu extremists led by organized "death squads." Correspondingly, the framework for peace collapsed as the civil war recommenced, and the genocide against Tutsi went into full speed. When the "wave of genocide" ended in July 1994, nearly one million Rwandans had been killed. Also, the Rwandan Patriotic Front defeated the remnants of the Rwandan Armed Forces and seized control of state power.

Reconstructing the post-genocide state: the making of sausages

It should not be surprising to realize that a state constructed based on institutions manufactured in haste, devoid of popular participation and anchored on an ideology based on ethnicity and victims' feelings ended by collapsing. This collapse was a challenge but also an opportunity; a challenge because the 1994 genocide and war resulted not only in the destruction of the state's human capacity but also in its institutional structures. On their way to defeat, the Hutu extremist government looted the government accounts, destroyed administrative and other useful records and took hostage millions of Rwandans with them into the Democratic Republic of the Congo. An opportunity because despite Rwanda's post-colonial history of authoritarian governance, social misery and economic malaise inflamed by an ideology of "hatred," the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) was given the opportunity to establish new sustainable pillars on which a new, democratic and inclusive state could be constructed.

In the absence of a universally tested and approved blueprint on how to build post-genocide and post-conflict societies such as Rwanda, the RPF has done so through trial and error. These trials and errors started with the emergency period that began from 1994 to 1999, and even continued in the development period that mainly started in early 2000. Many sectors went through this process, but the most important sectors to be discussed in this section are justice reconstruction, political and ideological reconstruction and economic reconstruction. As the old cliché about making sausages goes, the justice, political and economic reconstruction of post-genocide Rwanda was and still is, at some degree, like making sausages. Everyone wishes to see and consume the final product, but the process of making it can sometimes appear messy, brutal and uncertain.

Rebuilding justice in the post-genocide Rwanda

One of the biggest challenges the RPF faced immediately after taking power was how to bring justice to a society that had just experienced one of the most horrendous crimes in the world since World War II. How to try hundreds of thousands of people who were involved in genocide? Where to put them, given the fact that existing Rwandan prisons were not capable of containing this big number? Are Rwandan laws prepared to handle trials of such magnitude in terms of the seriousness of the crime and the number of suspects? Does Rwanda have the human and infrastructural capacity to handle this kind of justice? How to make sure the genocide and the crimes against humanity committed by the Habyarimana regime are not equated with the war crimes committed by the RPF soldiers during and after the group took power?

In search for solutions to these questions, the Rwandan government used trial and error, adopting solutions and adapting them according to negative or positive results they were producing. In the search for solutions to these problems, Rwanda refused the South African urge to set up a Truth and Reconciliation Commission with some form of amnesty. It opted rather for trial mechanisms in order to end a culture of impunity considered to be also the underlying cause of the 1994 genocide. The Organic Law on the Organization of Prosecutions for Offences Constituting the Crime of Genocide or Crimes against Humanity committed since October 1, 1990 was adopted in 1996.[72] This law focused on trying genocide cases and dealing with the above problems by including in this law specialized chambers of the existing courts, a classification scheme to separate the main organizers of the genocide from criminals with lesser degrees of responsibility, and a unique approach aimed at encouraging offenders to confess in exchange for substantially reduced sentences. The positive results of this law[73] were however overshadowed by the realities of the traditional Western approach and the criticisms of human rights organizations. The reality that it was likely to take another 80 years to try the 80,000 accused, who were still held in extreme prison conditions, and the criticisms levied by the international community against the trial conditions themselves, brought the Rwandan government to seek new means to adapt its "ending impunity" approach. A system combining retribution with the South African truth and reconciliation system was introduced. This system, known as gacaca courts, was introduced in 2001. Despite the numerous successes of this system that include the fact that "the courts have processed a large number of cases and significantly reduced the prison population that they have involved the local population in the process of justice for the genocide, and that some judges have delivered fair and objective judgments,"[74] it was harshly criticized by human rights organizations because of its lack of rights of defense safeguards, indifference to crimes committed by RPF soldiers and political interference in its implementation.

In addition to dealing with immediate justice problems related to genocide, the Rwandan government undertook a complete overhaul of the justice system. Following the adoption of the new constitution of 2003 in which Rwandans were

resolved, among others, to build a state governed by the rule of law, based on the respect for fundamental human rights, pluralistic democracy, equitable power sharing, tolerance and resolution of issues through dialogue,[75] the government adopted a new Code of Organization and Competence of Courts, a new Code of Criminal Procedure and a new system of *Abunzi* and legal aid was created to bring justice closer to the villages. These reforms did not stop, however, human rights organizations from observing abuses of justice and serious human rights violations. For instance, in its submission for the Universal Periodical Review for Rwanda, Human Rights Watch commended the Rwandan government for rebuilding the infrastructure of the judicial system, largely destroyed by the genocide, and enacting legal reforms aimed at reducing the number of courts and judges, improving the qualifications of lawyers and judges and affording due process to accused persons. However, it also expressed its continuing concerns about unfair trials; the abuse of the genocide ideology law to deter witnesses and lawyers' participation in the defense of genocide charges; other pressure on, and intimidation of, witnesses; corruption; and lack of judicial independence.

Political and ideological reconstruction

Rwandan history has been built around ethnicity and the vicious circle of ethnic victimization where being Hutu or Tutsi defined who should get or who should lose what, in terms of political or economic benefits. The victim mentality that developed out of this practice was aggravated by the poverty of the country with no sufficient resources to share among its people, thereby making the struggle to control the state apparatus the only way to ensure the survival of those in power, as well as those who share their ethnic and regional identity. This brought people to see their economic or political misfortune as ethnic or regional based and to place their future hopes on the expression, "they will see when it is our turn."

The difficult challenge the post-genocide state rebuilding had to face, therefore, was how to break the vicious circle of "it is our turn now" ethnic ideology. This meant how to eradicate in the minds of extremists Hutu the ideology of "Hutu power," and control the powerful Tutsi extremists in the RFP, who believed in "it is our turn now" ideology. Whether strategically planned or a result of taking advantage of perfect opportunities, President Kagame, after making it clear that ethnic politics cannot be the foundation of the new Rwandan state, and expressing it by removing ethnic mentions from identity cards, he openly undertook the destruction of any real or perceived Hutu ideology that may have been still existing. MDR, the party behind the 1959 revolution and the first republic as well as MRND, the party of the second republic and of the 1994 genocide, were formally banned, and all means were used to completely dismantle their roots. The country's symbols justifying the Hutu's inherent rights to rule the country, such as the old national flag, anthem and court of arms were removed and replaced by new ones less charged with Rwanda's violent ethnic history. The new administrative redistricting was also, to some extent, done with

the goal to reduce Hutu ideology as it was expressed in the regional terms. By 2010, ideology based on Hutu ethnic identity was significantly at its lowest level.[76] In the meantime, also President Kagame, slowly and with no drum beats removed from the RPF leadership and key political positions the majority of its elder members, and replaced them with young people less hardened by the ethnic victim mentality of their parents. Whether this was a strategy to clear the RPF of its members with "it's our turn now" ideology or if it is something else, history will tell. The reality was that by 2009 the faces of the RPF's leadership of the 1994 insurgency had radically changed.

The fear of seeing Rwanda falling into another ethnic based political ideology has been sometimes rightly or wrongly used by the government to silence political opponents. The US State Department's 2009 Human Rights Report on Rwanda concluded that the constitution provides for a multiparty system, but offers few rights for parties and their candidates; that parties are not able to operate freely; and parties and candidates face legal sanctions, if found guilty of engaging in divisive acts, destabilizing national unity, threatening territorial integrity or undermining national security; and that the government's enforcement of laws against genocide ideology or divisionism has discouraged debate or criticism of the government and resulted in political detentions.[77] The dismantling of MDR; the arrest and imprisonment of the first post-genocide president, Pasteur Bizimungu, and a number of other people for creating the PDR-Ubuyanja political party; the arrest and detention of the head of FDU-Inkingi, Victoire Ingabire, and the President of PS-Imberakuri, Bernard Ntaganda; the requirement for all parties to join the Forum of Political Organizations; as well as several threats to opposition newspapers were seen by some as the expression of silencing political opponents. The victory of the incumbent President Paul Kagame with 93 percent of the votes in the 2010 presidential election was seen also by some as another expression that the opposition does not have a voice in Rwanda.

Economic reconstruction

The economic reconstruction of post-genocide Rwanda has won almost unanimous praise in the international community. By the end of the 1994 war and genocide, Rwanda's GDP had dramatically declined by more than 40 percent.[78] The post-genocide government, aware that poor economy, overpopulation and scarce farmland and other resources were among the key causes of the 1994 genocide that led to state collapse, was determined to shift the foundations of the Rwandan economy from its dependence on subsistence farming to focusing on manufacturing and service industries, and eliminating barriers to trade and development. Investing in creating secure, safe and clean cities, undertaking land reform to favor collective exploitation of the land rather than divided exploitation, privatization of state enterprises to make them more profitable and stop their drain on government resources, zero tolerance for corruption at all levels of the government services, improving the collection of tax revenues and

reforming business laws to attract investors, made Rwanda one of the best examples of economic reforms in Africa.

Following these reforms, the GDP increased from 2.2 percent in 2003 to 7 percent in 2010.[79] Since 2002, the GDP growth rate has ranged between 3 and 11 percent per annum.[80] The 2010 Doing Business report compiled by the World Bank and the International Finance Corporation ranked Rwanda as the first sub-Saharan country to head the list as the top reformer since the first rankings in 2002.[81] Transparency International's Global Corruption Perceptions Index 2010 ranked Rwanda as the sixth least corrupt country in Africa.[82] Moving from one of the poorest and most devastated economies to one of the most prosperous on the African Continent came, however, with some cost to human rights and democracy, leading some to qualify President Kagame as the "authoritarian leader with a vision, or a benevolent dictator."[83]

Rethinking the state: some prescriptions

Clearly, the Kagame regime has made significant steps on political, social and economic state reconstruction. More still, however, needs to be done in order to achieve a post-genocide state based on democracy and development. Against this background, in this section, I offer some suggestions for rethinking and reconstituting the Rwandan State. The first and biggest challenge is the problem of ideology. Despite Kagame's effort to develop a new post-genocide ideology that moves away from the old ethnic based ideologies, it is still clear that the old ethnic virus that had eaten the fabric of the previous regimes has been kept alive in the minds of some engineers of the new post-genocide ideology, and is being expressed under new and less apparent forms. As explained earlier, post-independence Rwanda was dominated by an ideology developed by the Hutu, who were mainly frustrated by the injustice they endured during the pre-independence era. Today, there are some Hutu who still believe in this ideology. On the other hand a close look at the post-genocide Rwanda leaves one with the impression that there are some extremist Tutsi in the RPF leadership who still believe that the post-genocide ideology should be centered on the ideas of Tutsi victimization of 1959 massacres and 1994 genocide. This makes difficult any effort to develop a non-ethnic based ideology. As a matter of fact, if the argument that ethnicity was a creation of colonialism appears valid in explaining the history of Rwanda, then the realities of 1959 massacres and particularly the 1994 genocide, show that Rwandans have grown to accept such divisions as part of their contemporary political reality. If the Tutsi did not exist as an ethnic group in pre-colonial Rwanda, then the "Revolution of 1959" and the 1994 genocide made it a political reality. On the other hand, if Hutu identity did not exist in pre-colonial Rwanda, then it was created by the post 1959 regimes or as a corollary to the development of the Tutsi identity. The situation in Burundi, a neighboring country with similar ethnic divisions to Rwanda and which uses ethnic quota in awarding political and military positions makes it also difficult for Rwanda to leave ethnicity out of politics. Despite the difficulties Rwanda may face in this

endeavor, it is worthwhile and legitimate, however, to continue denouncing any Hutu based ideology but also remain very vigilant, in order to abort any attempt at developing any Tutsi based ideology. There is a need to continue investing more in the search for a common ground oriented towards the future rather than the past. Importantly, there is a need for the Kagame regime to identify and articulate an ideology based on inclusion, pluralism and equality, with which all Rwandans can identify. This is critical because neither a Hutu based ideology nor a Tutsi based one, declared or not, can serve as a sustainable basis for the future of the Rwandan State.

The second challenge is the imperative of building a democratic state with its attendant principles. One of the major tenets is the rule of law. In order for democracy to take roots, it cannot be based on the will of the politicians. Instead, it must be hoisted on a legal and transparent framework that would serve to guide the democratic enterprise. Only a democratic system based on the rule of law can escape from the manipulations and fraud of politicians, who are ever eager to keep power. Another principle is the respect for, and the promotion of political and civil liberties. Also, there is a need for a broader dialogue between the RPF dominated government, on the one hand, and opposition and civil society groups based both in and out of Rwanda, on the other. The central purpose of such a dialogue should be to discuss and lead the process of constructing a social, political and a constitutional compact that could serve as basis for the new Rwandan State. To be sustainable, Rwandan political and economic development needs to be shared by as many Rwandans as possible.

The third challenge concerns the country's perennial economic problems. Rwanda is one of the smallest, poorest and most densely populated countries in the world. The crux of the problem is that there exists a big gap in income and wealth between the poor, who mostly live in rural areas, and the urban based tiny rich minority that controls the national economic means. The continuation of this problem could jeopardize the rebuilding of the new state, because it would engender class based conflicts. The best way of addressing the class inequities is for Rwanda to either advocate regional economic integration, such as the East African Community, or the formation of a union, confederation or federation with its neighbors. The major advantage is that a larger politico-economic unit would be able to harness the resources that are necessary to address this problem.

Conclusion

This chapter has tried to examine the challenges of state-building in Rwanda from the pre-colonial to the colonial period. The findings show that state-building in Rwanda has suffered from several problems. Some of these problems were the result of colonialism while others were the results of the defects in the post-colonial state-building project. In the case of the pre-colonial Rwandan state, which was a well organized and effective construct, colonialism destroyed it, but failed to replace it with a new and sustainable one.

In the case of the post-colonial state, the "state-building engineers" made the critical mistake of designing a construct that was used as a vehicle to "settle old scores," rather than construct a democratic state based on such principles as pluralism, the rule of law and the respect for human rights. Accordingly, it was inevitable that such a limited vision would have led to state collapse; and this happened dramatically with the genocide and its attendant massacres of 1994.

The "engineers of the post-genocide state" assumed the mantle of national leadership against the background of the "victim mentality." This underscores one of the fundamental problems that have bedeviled the Rwandan State: The various phases of the state-building project have always been anchored on dominant ideologies, which state managers have used to exact revenge on behalf of their ethno-communal group. Clearly, the RPF led regime has tried to provide the required leadership in changing this culture, and replacing it by the "new political culture" addressing and resolving the country's perennial political, economic and social problems. The challenge, however, is how to make these economic and social achievements sustainable and root them in real democratic, pluralistic and human rights values. The stage President Kagame and his government will need to move from is the current embryonic level to a more mature and sustainable one. This stage is likely to be achieved if President Kagame uses this term of office to focus more on the democratic building of Rwanda as he did with the economic rebuilding, and if he respects the current constitutional requirements of two presidential terms.

Notes

1 See Robert H. Jackson and Alan James (eds.), *State in a Changing World: A Contemporary Analysis* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), pp. 136–156; Jean-Marie Kamatali, "International Law and Participatory Development: A Legal and Institutional Approach to Popular Participation in Development Projects," Doctoral Thesis, Karl-Franzens Universitat, Graz, 1998, p. 66.
2 See for more details Mancur Olsen, *The Logic of Collective Action* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965).
3 See W. Kornoblum, *Sociology in a Changing World* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1988), p. 77.
4 See M. Mamdani, *Politics and Class Formation in Uganda* (London: Heinemann, 1976), p. 21. See also notes from the Seminar on "The State and the Crisis in Africa: In Search of a Second Liberation" organized by Dag Hammarskjold Foundation, September 15–19, 1986, Development Dialogue, No. 2, 1987, pp. 8–10.
5 See Etienne Le Roy, "L'introduction du modele Europeen de l'Etat en Afrique Francophone, logiques et mythologiques du discours juridique," in C. Coquery-Vidrovitch and A. Forest (eds.), *Decolonisations et nouvelles dependances* (Lille: Presses Universitaires, 1984); and Etienne Le Roy, "La formation de l'Etat en Afrique, entre indigenisation et inculturation," in GEMDEV, *Les Avatards de l'Etat en Afrique* (Paris: Editions Karthala, 1997), pp. 9–10.
6 Louis De Lacger, *Ruanda, Vol. I* (Ruanda Ancien, Namur: Editions Grands Lacs, 1939), p. 61; Jean Francois Bayart, *L'Etat en Afrique, La politique du Ventre* (Mesnil-sur-l'Estrée: Editions Fayard, 1996), pp. 65 and 145; Rene Lemarchand, *Rwanda and Burundi* (London: Pall Mall Press, 1970), p. 26; Robert H. Jackson, "Sub-Saharan Africa," in Jackson and James, op. cit., p. 140.

7 Filip Reyntjens, "Pouvoir et Droit au Rwanda, Droit Public et Evolution Politiquem 1916–1973," Musee royal de l'Afrique Centrale, Tervuren, Belgique, Annales-Serie-8, Sciences humaines, No. 117, 1985, p. 30.
8 See Alexis Kagame, *Un abrégé de l'Ethno-Histoire du Rwanda* (Butare: Editions Universtaires du Rwanda, 1972), p. 39; L. Delmas, *Généalogies de la Noblesse du Rwanda* (Kabgayi, 1950); Bernard Lugan, *Histoire du Rwanda, de la Préhistoire à nos jours* (Paris: éditions Bartillat, 1997), p. 65.
9 Although some authors argue that this is a legendary name. See, for example, Lugan, op. cit., pp. 77–79; and Jan Vansina, *Le Rwanda Ancien, Le Royome Nyiginya* (Paris: Karthala, 2001), p. 61.
10 Lugan, op. cit., pp. 79–87.
11 This date is provided by Kagame, op. cit., p. 39; but according to Vansina, the reign of Cyilima corresponds to the period of 1506. See Jan Vansina, *L'évolution du royaume rwanda des origines à 1900* (Bruxelles: Académie Royale des Sciences d'Outre-Mers, 1962), p. 56.
12 For more details on wars and alliances which led to the expansion of Rwanda, see, Kagame, op. cit.; Lugan, op. cit., pp. 77–111.
13 See Vansina, *Le Rwanda Ancien, Le Royome Nyiginya*, op. cit., p. 54; and R. Lemarchand, "Rwanda," in his edited book *African Kingships in Perspective* (London: Frank Cass, 1977), p. 68.
14 Vansina, *Le Rwanda Ancien, Le Royome Nyiginya*, op. cit., p. 55; and Reyntjens, op. cit., p. 78.
15 Extracted from the poem "ibirahu" composed for King Yuhi III Mazimpaka; see Reyntjens, op. cit., p. 78.
16 De Lacger, op. cit., p. 108.
17 Donat Murego, "La Revolution Rwandaise 1959–1962, Essa d'interpretation," Thesis, University of Louvain, 1975, p. 116.
18 For details on the solemnity surrounding the promulgation and abrogation of laws and decrees by the King, see, J.M. Kamatali, "Ethnicity and Constitutionalism in Post-Genocide Rwanda," in J. Oloka-Onyango (ed.), *Constitutionalism in Africa: Creating Opportunities, Facing Challenges* (Kampala: Fountain Publishers, 2001), p. 105.
19 Traditionally, the King was from the clan of Abanyiginya, but his wife had to come from two other influential clans: Abakono and Abega.
20 Vansina, *Le Rwanda Ancien, Le Royome Nyiginya*, op. cit., p. 113.
21 P.D. Perugia, *Les derniers rois mages* (Paris: Editions Phebus, 1993), pp. 243–244.
22 J. Jacques Maquet, *The Premise of Inequality in Rwanda* (London and New York: Oxford University Press, 1961), p. 61.
23 Reyntjens, op. cit., p. 25.
24 Murego, op. cit., p. 122; and F.X. Hagenimana, *La séparation des pouvoirs et l'histoire constitutionnelle Rwandaise, mémoire* (Kigali, 1990), p. 21.
25 See J.M. Kamatali, "Ethnicity and Constitutionalism in Post-Genocide Rwanda," op. cit., p. 107.
26 See ibid.
27 Reyntjens, op. cit., p. 26.
28 This concept is used by Alexis Kagame, *Le Code des institutions Politiques du Rwanda Précolonial* (Bruxelles: Institut Royal Colonial Belge, 1952), p. 21.
29 For the list of the names of the eight most well known militias, see Kagame, *Un abrégé de l'Ethno-Histoire du Rwanda*, op. cit., pp. 197–198.
30 Since 1944, Kagame started collecting oral tradition on rules which governed political institutions of the pre-colonial Rwandan state. He presents these rules as a code. But the format of the presentation into articles is his invention. It is obvious that during the pre-colonial period those rules were not presented in numbered articles.
31 Maquet, op. cit., p. 110.
32 For more development on *ubuhake* see ibid.

33 For details on chiefs of armies on the district level see ibid.
34 The kinship was considered as the grassroots social cell in Rwandan politics. It was made of one isolated family with its autonomous fief or patrimony, or a group of families under a common ascendant, with a common fief or patrimony received by inheritance (Article 1).
35 Bovine army means all cows owned by the members of a social army (Article 198).
36 Maquet, op. cit., p. 102.
37 Kagame, *Le Code des institutions politiques du Rwanda Précolonial*, op. cit., p. 18.
38 Maquet, op. cit., p. 133.
39 See Maquet, op. cit., p. 130; and Murego, op. cit., p. 207.
40 Maquet, op. cit., p. 130.
41 See Kamatali, "Ethnicity and Constitutionalism in Post-Genocide Rwanda," op. cit.
42 T. Hyse, *Le Mandat Belge sur le Ruanda-Urundi* (Bruxelles: la Renaissance de l'Occident, 1930), pp. 5–8.
43 The Mandate of Type A concerned those communities previously under the Ottoman Empire, which were considered as having achieved a certain degree of economic development, to the extent that their existence, as independent nations, could have been provisionally recognized. The Mandate of Type C concerned those communities with small population density located far from centers of civilizations. Those communities were to be governed as integral parts of countries having mandate over them. See Reyntjens, op. cit., p. 43.
44 Cited by Murego, op. cit., p. 649.
45 Ferdinand Nahimana, *Le Blan est Arrive, le roi est parti, Une facette de l'histoire du Rwanda contemporain, 1894–1931* (Kigali: Presses de la Printer Set, 1987), pp. 37–48.
46 P. Jentgen, *Les frontières du Congo belge* (Bruxelles: IRCB, 1952), p. 15.
47 See R. Kandt, *Caput Nili. Eine empfindsame reise zu den Quellen des Nils, Berlin, Vol. 2*, 4th edn. (Berlin: Dietrich Reimer, 1919), pp. 225–226.
48 See Letter No. 303 dd.6.1.1920 of the Minister of Colonies L. Franc to the Governor-General at Boma, quoted by Reyntjens, op. cit., p. 65.
49 See Confidential Memorandum of the Minister of Colonies, L. Franck, dated June 15, 1920, quoted in Reyntjens, op. cit., p. 66.
50 Reyntjens, op. cit., p. 77.
51 J. Malfeyt, "Note sur le Rapport Politique du Rwanda," African Archives, AE/II No. 1847, par. 3288.
52 Rapport Politique du Rwanda, 1920–1921, p. 15.
53 See A. Des Forges, "Defeat is the Only Bad News: Rwanda Under Musinga, 1896–1931," Ph.D. Thesis, Yale University, 1972, p. 261; Kagame, *Un Abregé de l'Histoire du Rwanda*, op. cit., pp. 175–176.
54 Des Forges, op. cit., p. 238.
55 De Lacger, op. cit., p. 490.
56 Des Forges, op. cit., p. 309.
57 See Kagame, *Un Abregé de l'Histoire du Rwanda*, op. cit., pp. 174–183; Reyntjens, op. cit., pp. 86–90.
58 See Kagame, *Un Abregé de l'Histoire du Rwanda*, op. cit., pp. 217–218.
59 See P. Ryckmans, *Dominer pour servir* (Bruxelles: Universelle, 1948), p. 410.
60 See Kagame, *Un Abregé de l'Histoire du Rwanda*, op. cit., pp. 187–188; and Reyntjens, op. cit., pp. 113–116.
61 L. Classe, "Pour moderniser le Rwanda," *L'essort colonial et maritime*, No. 489, December 1930, p. 2.
62 See W. Kagambirwa, *Les Autorités Rwandaises face aux pouvoirs Européens à Nyanza 1900–1946* (Butare: UNR Mémoire de Licence, 1979), pp. 56–57.
63 Kagambirwa, op. cit., p. 106; Reyntjens, op. cit., pp. 129–148.
64 See M.C. Newbury, "Ubureetwa and Thangata: Catalysts to Peasant Political

Consciousness in Rwanda and Malawi," *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 14(1), 1980, pp. 102–106; and Reyntjens, op. cit., pp. 133–142.

65 Decret interimaire of December 25, 1959, on Political Organization of Ruanda-Urundi, Official Bulletin of Ruanda Urundi, 1960, pp. 25–72.

66 Legislative Ordinance No. 02/234 of 15/7/1961 on Institutions of Rwanda, Official Bulletin of Ruanda Urundi, 1961, pp. 1303–1315.

67 Article 2 of the Legislative Ordinance of No. 02/322 of October 1, 1961, Official Bulletin of Ruanda Urundi, 1961, pp. 1587–1588.

68 Article. 1 of the Legislative Ordinance No. 02/236 of October 9, 1961, Official Bulletin of Ruanda Urundi, 1961, pp. 1589–1590.

69 Legislative Ordinance No. R/93/29 on Institutions of Rwanda, Official Bulletin of Ruanda Urundi, 1962, pp. 470–476.

70 Cited by Lugan, op. cit., p. 405.

71 Declaration of the Special Resident, Colonel Logiest, in the course of the "reunion des cadres" of January 11, 1960, quoted by Lemarchand, *Rwanda and Burundi*, op. cit., p. 175.

72 The text of this law is available at www.preventgenocide.org/law/domestic/rwanda.htm (accessed on December 28, 2012).

73 It was observed that Rwanda has done more in this respect, in the ten years following the end of the conflict, than did the national courts of Germany, Italy and Austria from 1945 to 1955. See William A. Schabas, "The Rwandan Courts in Quest of Accountability: Genocide Trials and Gacaca Courts," *Journal of International Criminal Justice, ICJ* 3 4 (879) September 1, 2005, available on Lexis Nexis.

74 Human Rights Watch, *Universal Periodic Review: Rwanda*, July 5, 2010, www.hrw.org/en/news/2010/07/05/universal-periodic-review-rwanda (accessed on December 10, 2012); see also Office of the Prime Minister, *Government Report of 7 Years 2003–2010 of the Term of President Paul Kagame*, June 2010, where it was reported that out of 1,209,306 files Gacaca had when it started, by March 2010 it had completed 1,209,865 files or 99.95 percent of all files.

75 See Preamble of the 2003 Rwandan Constitution.

76 In September 2010 the Parliamentary Commission on Human Rights and Fighting against Genocide published a report showing that genocide ideology is diminishing in terms of its influence across the country. See *The New Times* of September 2, 2010. www.newtimes.co.rw/print.php?issue=14371&print&article=33155 (accessed on December 20, 2012).

77 See www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2009/af/135971.htm (accessed on December 20, 2012).

78 US Department of State, *Background Note: Rwanda*, www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2861.htm (accessed December 10, 2012).

79 See the Office of the Prime Minister, *Government Report of 7 Years, 2003–2010*, op. cit., p. xiii.

80 US Department of State, Background note: Rwanda, op. cit.

81 See www.doingbusiness.org/reports/doing-business/doing-business-2010 (accessed December 10, 2012).

82 See www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/cpi/2010/results (accessed December 10, 2012).

83 "Landslide Win Gives Rwanda's Kagame Another Term," NPR Morning Edition, interview of President Kagame by Renee Montagne. Audio and transcript of the interview available at www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=129122647 (accessed December 10, 2012).

7 Rethinking the Ugandan state

Maude Mugisha

Introduction

The state in Africa, like all states, is an organized instrument of the ruling class. Its specific characteristics as well as those of the African societies which it dominates are the result of the specific historical conditions of its emergence and development.[1] States in Africa have been changing over a period of time. The current varying situations of different states have been a result of the political, social, and economic dynamics that have characterized the nature of different communities and nations.

This chapter addresses the nature of the state in Uganda. It explains different aspects of the post-colonial state, including political governance, the economy, gender relations, ethnicity, religion, and security. These aspects are considered to be paramount in shaping the politics and nature of any state. Also, the chapter discusses the way forward for possible future courses of action. It recommends how the Ugandan state can be reconstituted and reconstructed to foster democratic governance and development. In particular, the chapter concludes by recommending that civic education should be enhanced in order to be able to develop a well-informed citizenry able to effectively participate in the affairs of their country and to shape its direction.

State-building

Pre-colonial states

The beginning of state formation in Uganda can be traced as far back as the period between the fourteenth and fifteenth century. Prior to the thirteenth century, Kintu, the first king of Buganda, is credited to have brought together a loose alliance of clans who lived in their own territories with clan heads as chiefs.[2] This process of state formation involved the gradual destruction of authority of the clans and the rise of the power of the king of Buganda (*Kabaka*) which was exercised through county (*Saza*) chiefs. A Baganda state brought together under the Kabaka, people of different clans, languages, and customs in a common territory and sharing a common language. The politics in these kingdoms of Buganda and Bunyoro before

colonialism were purely ethnic. The kings were specifically from an identified clan referred to as the "royal clan" and power succession was hereditary from one generation to another. "Buganda and Bunyoro were the only organized communities before colonialism."[3]

These communities were states in their own right. They were administered through traditional kings as kingdom heads. The succession of power in these kingdoms was hereditary. Therefore the question of power transition from one leader to another was not very much pronounced as kings were automatically determined. The King would only be succeeded upon his death and would be replaced by his eldest son. In both Buganda and Bunyoro, the transmission of authority from the center to the periphery was facilitated by hierarchical structuring of political relations. Both Buganda and Bunyoro were monarchies with some organized form of statecraft. The politics in these kingdoms were purely ethnic because kings or rulers had to always belong to the royal clan. The other clans would only serve as subjects to the kingdom and could only pay tribute to the king through county chiefs.

After these kingdoms had gained political might, they even conquered other areas outside their jurisdiction. This was mainly aimed at expanding their territory of influence and access to economic resources.

The colonial state in Uganda

With the genesis of colonialism, the colonialists first won control and reckoned with Buganda because they found it already organized and easy to mobilize. They (colonialists) introduced their ideologies which were fortunately appreciated and adhered to by the Kabaka of the time. This formed the foundation for the presence and dominance of colonial rule in Uganda. Buganda was later to be used by the colonialists to conquer other areas of their interest and the first target was Bunyoro and later other small communities of Ankole, Toro, Busoga, and Teso.

The colonialists had the intention of gaining economic territory. So they had to combine the kingdoms formed into a unified territory, which is the present day Uganda. This was done during the partition of Africa in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. During the formation of Uganda's boundaries, the specifications were mainly focused on the colonialists' economic interests and not people who were affected. It is also important to note that colonialism was dominated with aspects of violence because of resistance from the local chiefs. Whenever the colonialists found a conflict they always allied with one sect in order to secure a following.

The post-colonial Ugandan state

Background

On October 9, 1962, Uganda attained its independence from the British rule. The first post-Independence elections were held under a multiparty political system.

The main parties involved were: the Democratic Party (DP) and Uganda People's Congress (UPC). Uganda adopted a semi-federal constitution under which kingdoms were greatly recognized. The first post-colonial President of Uganda was at the same time the traditional King (Kabaka) of Buganda kingdom. This later resulted in a conflict of interest and the overthrow of the independence constitution and the president by the prime minister. Uganda became a republic under an executive president in 1967.

The Obote epoch

Milton Obote was the Executive Prime Minister of Uganda from independence in 1962 until 1967, when the republican constitution was introduced. In 1969, after an attempted assassination of Obote, political parties were banned and the government operated a one-party state. In 1971, the military government took over power under Idi Amin Dada who ruled Uganda until 1979 when his government was toppled.

Amin's era

On January 25, 1971, Colonel Amin deposed President Obote. Obote went into exile in Tanzania. Ugandans joyfully welcomed Amin. He was a larger-than-life figure and yet simple enough to shake hands with common people and participate in their traditional dances. He was charming, informal, and flexible. Amin was thought to be a nationalist (a person who supports his or her country above all else). His popularity increased when he got rid of Obote's secret police, freed political prisoners, and told Ugandans that he would hand power back to the people.

However, Amin's other personality soon began to emerge: that of a merciless, unpredictable, cunning liar. His "killer squads" murdered Obote's supporters and two Americans who were investigating massacres (large-scale killings). It was becoming clear that Amin's seeming friendliness and clowning were only a mask to hide his brutality.

In 1972 he savagely attacked the Israelis and the British, with whom he had been friendly. He did not like that these countries would not sell him weapons. Once Mu'ammar al-Qaddafi of Libya agreed to help, Amin immediately threw Israelis and 50,000 Asians out of Uganda. Uganda's economy was wrecked because Asian traders were suddenly forced to leave. The action also earned Amin a poor international image.

Amin's rule was characterized by human rights abuses and political repression. Amin used violence and terror to eliminate his real and imaginary enemies. There was no freedom of the media. During the dictatorship (1971–1979), a fearless investigative report on government could easily earn a writer a trip to the Nile River in the boot of a car.[4] The human cost of Amin's rule was huge—not only in terms of the loss of thousands of Ugandans, but also because of its dehumanizing (making people feel less than human) effects. Human life had become

less important than wealth. Most government funds were devoted to the armed forces and to Amin's safety. Health, transport, production of food and cash crops (easily marketable crops), industrial and manufacturing sectors, and foreign investments were neglected. Despite his growing poor reputation, Amin was elected chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), an organization of African nations, on July 28, 1975. In 1977, African countries blocked a United Nations resolution that would have condemned Amin for his gross violation of human rights.

Amin expelled Asian residents and launched a reign of terror against Ugandan opponents, torturing and killing tens of thousands. In 1976, he had himself proclaimed "President for Life." In 1977, Amnesty International estimated that 300,000 may have died under his rule, including church leaders and recalcitrant cabinet ministers.

By the late 1970s Amin's luck was running out. The economy was getting worse. Arabs were concerned about Amin's failure to show how Uganda was becoming an Islamic nation but also concerned about his killing of fellow Muslims. It was becoming difficult for Amin to import luxury goods for his army. To distract attention from the country's internal crises, Amin ordered an invasion of Tanzania in October 1978, supposedly because the latter planned to overthrow his government. Amin's army was forced back. Tanzanians and exiled Ugandan soldiers then invaded Uganda and continued their pursuit of Amin until his government was overthrown on April 11, 1979. Amin fled to Libya, but he later moved to Jidda, Saudi Arabia. There he spent his time reciting the Koran (the holy book of Islam), reading books, playing an accordion, swimming, fishing, and watching television—especially sports programs and news channels. He followed events in his homeland closely.

During Amin's regime, the system of governance was purely dictatorship. There was no political opposition in place and no parliament. All political power and decisions were vested in the executive arm of government and specifically the president. The president had absolute power. The Amin government was overthrown by the Uganda National Liberation Front (UNLF) with the help of President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania.

The interim period, 1979–1980

A month before the liberation of Kampala, representatives of twenty-two Ugandan civilian and military groups were hastily called together at Moshi, Tanzania, to try to agree on an interim civilian government once Amin was removed. Called the Unity Conference in the hope that unity might prevail, it managed to establish the Uganda National Liberation Front (UNLF) as political representative of the Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLA). Dr. Yusuf Lule, former principal of Makerere University, became head of the UNLF executive committee. As an academic rather than a politician, Lule was not regarded as a threat to any of the contending factions. Shortly after Amin's departure, Lule and the UNLF moved to Kampala, where they established an interim government. Lule

became president, advised by a temporary parliament, the National Consultative Council (NCC). The NCC, in turn, was composed of representatives from the Unity Conference.[5]

Conflict surfaced immediately between Lule and some of the more radical of the NCC who saw him as too conservative, too autocratic, and too willing as a Muganda to listen to advice from other Baganda. After only sixty-eight days with the apparent approval of Nyerere, whose troops still controlled Kampala, Lule was forcibly removed from office and exiled. He was replaced by Godfrey Binaisa, a Muganda like Lule, but one who had previously served as a high-ranking member of Obote's UPC.

The quarrels within the NCC, which Binaisa enlarged to 127 members, continued after Binaisa was made President. This was an indication that many rival and would-be politicians who had returned from exile were resuming their self-interests. Ugandans who endured the deprivations of the Amin era became even more disillusioned with their new leaders. Binaisa managed to stay in office longer than Lule, but his inability to gain control over a burgeoning new military presence proved to be his downfall.

At the beginning of the interim government, the military numbered fewer than 1,000 troops who had fought alongside the Tanzanian People's Defense Force (TPDF) to expel Amin. But in 1979, in an attempt to consolidate support for the future, such leaders as Yoweri Kaguta Museveni and Major-General (later Chief of Staff) David Oyite Ojok began to enroll thousands of recruits into what were rapidly becoming their private armies. Museveni's 80 original soldiers grew to 8,000; Ojok's original 600 became 24,000. When Binaisa sought to curb the use of these militias, which were harassing and detaining political opponents, he was overthrown in "a military coup" on May 10, 1980. The coup was engineered by Ojok, Museveni, and others acting under the general direction of Paulo Muwanga, Obote's right-hand man and chair of the Military Commission that took over power from Binaisa. Many Ugandans believed that although Nyerere did not impose his own choice on Uganda, he indirectly facilitated the return to power of his old friend and ally, Milton Obote. In any case, the Military Commission headed by Muwanga effectively governed Uganda during the six months leading up to the national elections of December 1980.

Shortly after Military Commission under Muwanga took power in 1980, Obote made a triumphant return from Tanzania. In the months before the December 1980 elections, he began to rally his former UPC supporters. Ominously, in view of recent Ugandan history, he often appeared on the platform with General Oyite-Ojok, a fellow Langi. Obote also began to speak of the need to return to a UPC one-party state.

The national election on December 10, 1980, was a turning point for Uganda. It was, after all, the first election in eighteen years. Several parties contested, the most important of which were Obote's UPC and the DP led by Paul Kawanga Ssemogerere. Most of Uganda's Roman Catholics were DP members, along with many others whose main concern was to prevent the return of another Obote regime. Because the Military Commission, as the acting government, was dominated by

Obote supporters (notably chairman Paulo Muwanga), the DP and other contenders faced formidable obstacles. By election day, the UPC had achieved some exceptional advantages, summarized by Minority Rights Group Report Number 66 as follows: Seventeen UPC candidates were declared "unopposed" by the simple procedure of not allowing DP or other candidates to run against them. Fourteen district commissioners, who were expected to supervise local polling, were replaced with UPC nominees. The Chief Justice of Uganda, to whom complaints of election irregularities would have to be made, was replaced with a UPC member. In a number of districts, non-UPC candidates were arrested, and one was murdered. Even before the election, the government press and Radio Uganda appeared to treat the UPC as the victor. Muwanga insisted that each party have a separate ballot box on election day, thus negating the right of secret ballot. There were a number of other moves to aid the UPC, including Muwanga's statement that the future parliament would also contain an unspecified number of unelected representatives of the army and other interest groups.

Polling appeared to be heavy on Election Day, and by the end of the voting, the DP, on the basis of its own estimates, declared victory in 81 of 126 constituencies. The British Broadcasting Corporation and Voice of America broadcast the news of the DP triumph, and Kampala's streets were filled with DP celebrants. At this point, Muwanga seized control of the Electoral Commission, along with the power to count the ballots, and declared that anyone disputing his count would be subject to a heavy fine and five years in jail.

Eighteen hours later, Muwanga announced a UPC victory, with seventy-two seats. Some DP candidates claimed the ballot boxes were simply switched to give their own vote tally to the UPC runner-up. Nevertheless, a small contingent of neutral election watchers, the Commonwealth Observer Group, declared itself satisfied with the validity of the election. Some Ugandans criticized the Commonwealth Observer Group, suggesting that members of the group measured African elections by different standards than those used elsewhere or that they feared civil war if the results were questioned. Indeed, popular perception of a stolen election actually helped bring about the civil war the Commonwealth Observer Group may have feared. The Uganda Peoples' Congress won the election with Milton Obote as the new President under a multi-party system of governance.

The Obote II era 1980–1985

Milton Obote, who had been ousted by Amin's 1971 military coup, returned to the presidency through the contested 1980 general elections. Obote called on the army to restore peace, but several military forces emerged instead to challenge his authority. Among the groups opposing Obote were Museveni's National Resistance Movement (NRM) and its military wing, the National Resistance Army (NRA).

The Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLA) mounted counterinsurgency operations in numerous areas. The army, whose ranks were filled with poorly

trained, poorly clothed, poorly fed, and irregularly paid foot soldiers, had almost no ability to sustain counterinsurgency operations. The government's inability to maintain discipline over the armed forces allowed many units to degenerate into unruly gangs. The military perpetrated numerous human rights violations and engaged in several illegal activities, including theft, looting, assault, and holding civilians for ransom. The death of the Army Chief of Staff, Obote's trusted and feared army commander Major General Oyite Ojok in December 1983 greatly demoralised an already weak and disgruntled army.

The UNLA's failure to defeat the NRA, which had emerged as the strongest antigovernment guerrilla group, widened the gulf between the army and the Obote regime. On July 27, 1985, Brigadier (later Lieutenant General) Basilio Olara Okello and a small group of UNLA soldiers overthrew the Obote regime. According to Okello, he launched the coup "to stop the bloodshed; to create conditions for viable peace, unity, development, and the promotion of human rights."[6] Under the new government, which ruled through a Military Council, General Tito Lutwa Okello became head of state, and Brigadier Basilio Olara Okello served as the chief of defense forces. To establish a coalition government, Tito Okello invited all political parties and guerrilla organizations to cooperate with the new regime. In August 1985, members of FEDEMU, FUNA, UFM, and UNRF agreed to this proposal, thereby gaining representation on the Military Council. However, this alliance of former enemies proved unable to govern Uganda. The NRA took advantage of the weak coalition government, established control over rural areas of southwestern Uganda, and overran several military garrisons west of Kampala and took over the government in January 1986.

The Museveni era, 1986–present

POLITICS

The National Resistance Movement (NRM) headed by Yoweri Museveni took over power on January 26, 1986. The NRM declared a four-year interim government, composing a broader ethnic base than its predecessors. The representatives of the various factions were nevertheless hand-picked by Museveni. The sectarian violence which had overshadowed Uganda's history was put forward as a justification for restricting the activities of the political parties and their ethnic/religious supporter bases. The non-party system did not prohibit political parties, but prevented them from fielding candidates directly in elections of representatives in its governance structures. The "Movement" system claimed the loyalty of many Ugandans at the time, and was the cornerstone of Ugandan politics for nearly twenty years.

The movement government tried to fight against politics and sectarianism based on ethnicity. The no-party ideology of the National Resistance Movement (NRM) government asserted that because of the low level of social and economic development in Africa, political parties would invariably degenerate into ethnic or religious factions with the attendant social strife that usually accompanies such factionalism.[7] In his book *Sowing the Mustard Seed*, Museveni

attributes Uganda's problems to sectarianism and socio-economic underdevelopment.[8] He argues that sectarianism and ethnicity are short term problems which are caused by the failure to identify the real interests of people. This has been the problem of African leaders.

A system of Resistance Councils (RCs), directly elected at the parish level, was established to manage local affairs, including the equitable distribution of fixed-price commodities. The election of Resistance Councils representatives was the first direct experience many Ugandans had with democracy after many decades of varying levels of authoritarianism, and the replication of the structure up to the district level had been credited with helping even people at the local level understand the higher-level political structures.

The first election under Museveni's governance was held on May 9, 1996. Museveni defeated Paul Ssemogerere of the Democratic Party, who contested the election as a candidate for the "Inter-Party Forces Coalition," and the upstart candidate, Mohamed Mayanja. Museveni won with a landslide of 75.5 percent of the vote from a turnout of 72.6 percent of eligible voters. Although international and domestic observers described the vote as valid, both the losing candidates rejected the results. Museveni was sworn in as president for the second time on May 12, 1996.

The main weapon in Museveni's campaign was the restoration of security and economic normality to much of the country. A memorable electoral image produced by his team depicted a pile of skulls in the Luwero Triangle. This powerful symbolism was not lost on the inhabitants of this region, who had suffered rampant insecurity during the civil war. The other candidates had difficulty matching Museveni's efficacy in communicating his key message. Museveni seemed to have a remarkable ability to relate political messages by using grass-roots language, especially with people from the south. The metaphor of "carrying a grindstone for leadership," referring to an "authoritative individual, bearing the burden of authority," was just one of many imaginative images he created for his campaign. He would often deliver these in the appropriate local colloquial language, demonstrating respect and attempting to transcend tribalistic politics. Museveni's fluency in English, Luganda, Runyankole, and Swahili often helped him forward his message.

Until the prospect for presidential election, Ssemogerere (Museveni's concurrent political rival) had been a minister in the NRM government. His decision to challenge the record of Museveni and the NRM, rather than claim a stake in Museveni's "movement," was seen as naive opportunism, and regarded as a political error. Ssemogerere's alliance with the UPC was anathema to the Baganda, who might otherwise have lent him some support as the leader of the Democratic Party. Ssemogerere also accused Museveni of being a Rwandan, a statement often repeated by Museveni's opponents because of his birthplace near the Uganda–Rwanda border, and his supposedly Rwandan origins (Museveni is an ethnic Munyankole, kin to the Banyarwanda of Rwanda), and his army of being dominated by Rwandans, which had included current Rwandan president Paul Kagame.

The second presidential election was held in 2001. President Museveni beat his rival Kizza Besigye, as he sailed through with 69 percent of the vote. Besigye

had been a close confidant of Museveni, and he was his bush war physician. They, however, had a fallout shortly before the 2001 election, when Besigye decided to stand for presidency. The 2001 election campaigns were a heated affair. The election culminated into a petition filed by Besigye to the Supreme Court of Uganda. The court ruled that the election was not free and fair, but declined to nullify the outcome by a 3–2 majority decision. It was held that the many cases of election malpractice did not however affect the results in a substantial manner. Justices Benjamin Odoki (chief justice), Alfred Karokora, and Joseph Mulenga ruled in favor of the respondents, while Justices Aurthur Haggai Oder (RIP) and John Tsekoko ruled in favor of Besigye.

THE ECONOMIC SPHERE

From 1986, the new Museveni government enjoyed widespread international support, and the economy that had been damaged by the civil war began to recover as Museveni initiated economic policies designed to combat key problems such as hyperinflation and the balance of payments. Abandoning his Marxist ideals, Museveni embraced the neoliberal structural adjustments advocated by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Uganda began participating in an IMF Economic Recovery Program (ERP) in 1987. Its objectives included the restoration of incentives in order to encourage growth, investment, employment, and exports; the promotion and diversification of trade with particular emphasis on export promotion; the removal of bureaucratic constraints and divestment from ailing public enterprises so as to enhance sustainable economic growth and development through the private sector; and the liberalization of trade at all levels. Museveni won praise from Western governments for his adherence to IMF structural adjustment programs, i.e., privatizing state enterprises, cutting government spending, and urging African self-reliance. In April 1998, Uganda became the first country to be declared eligible for debt relief under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative, receiving some US$700 million in aid.

Currently, the central economic problem is poverty. For example, the local people are deprived of shelter and food. Many people live below the poverty line. Uganda has adopted many anti-poverty programs but the financial problems hamper the government in implementing such programs. The government aims to eradicate the extreme poverty by 2017. Uganda's agricultural growth and development are the main areas of concern related to the poverty issue.

THE SECURITY SPHERE

Although Museveni headed a new government in Kampala in 1986, the NRM could not project its influence fully across all of Ugandan territory, finding itself fighting a number of insurgencies. From the beginning of Museveni's presidency, he drew strong support from the Bantu-speaking south and southwest, where Museveni had his base. Museveni managed to get the Karamojong, a group of

semi-nomads in the sparsely populated northeast that had never had a significant political voice, to align with him by offering them a stake in the new government. However, the northern region along the Sudanese border proved more troublesome. In the West Nile sub-region, inhabited by Kakwa and Lugbara (who had previously supported Amin), a number of rebel groups fought for years until a combination of military offensives and diplomacy pacified the region under the leader of Moses Ali who later gave up the struggle to become Second Deputy Prime Minister in the Museveni government. People from the northern parts of the country viewed the rise of a government led by a person from the south with great trepidation. Rebel groups sprang up among the Lango, Acholi, and Teso regions though they were overwhelmed by the strength of the NRA except in the far north where the Sudanese border provided a safe haven. The Acholi rebel Uganda People's Democratic Army (UPDA) failed to dislodge the NRA occupation of Acholiland, leading to the desperate chiliasm of the Holy Spirit Movement (HSM). The defeat of both the UPDA and HSM left the rebellion to a group that eventually became known as the Lord's Resistance Army, which would turn against the Acholi themselves and caused a lot of havoc in the region, killing and maiming people, young and old.

The NRA subsequently earned a reputation for respecting the rights of civilians—although Museveni later received criticism for using child soldiers. Undisciplined elements within the NRA soon tarnished a hard-won reputation for fairness. "When Museveni's men first came they acted very well—we welcomed them," said one villager, "but then they started to arrest people and kill them."[9]

THE SOCIAL SPHERE

Education in Uganda was started by Anglican and Catholic missionaries. Mission schools were established in Uganda in the 1890s, and in 1924 the government established the first secondary school for Africans. By 1950, however, the government operated only three of the fifty-three secondary schools for Africans. Three others were privately funded, and forty-seven were operated by religious organizations. Education was eagerly sought by rural farmers as well as urban elites, and after independence many villages, especially in the south, built schools, hired teachers, and appealed for and received government assistance to operate their own village schools which were later taken over by government.

Most subjects were taught according to the British syllabus until 1974. Before then British examinations measured a student's progress through primary and secondary school. In 1975 the government implemented a local curriculum, and for a short time most school materials were published in Uganda.

School enrollments continued to climb throughout most of the 1970s and 1980s, but as the economy deteriorated and violence increased at the time of Amin and his military rule, local publishing almost ceased, and examination results deteriorated. In short Ugandan education lost value and by 1990 adult literacy nationwide was estimated at 50 percent. By the time national resistance movement came to power Uganda's image on education was negative.

Improving education was important to the Museveni government. In order to reestablish the national priority on education, the Museveni government adopted a two-phase policy to rehabilitate buildings and establish minimal conditions for instruction, and to improve efficiency and quality of education through teacher training and curriculum upgrading. Important long-term goals included establishing universal primary education, free secondary education, and shifting the emphasis in post-secondary education from purely academic to more technical and vocational training. Overall, Uganda's educational system has greatly improved, challenges notwithstanding. For example, many foreign students were flowing in from neighboring countries for better education.

Perhaps Museveni's most widely noted accomplishment was his government's successful campaign against AIDS. During the 1980s, Uganda had one of the highest rates of HIV infection in the world, but by the year 2000, Uganda's rates were comparatively low, and the country stood out as a rare success story in the global battle against the virus. One of the campaigns headed by Museveni to fight against AIDS was the ABC program. The ABC program had three main parts: Abstain, Be faithful, or use a Condom.

GENDER RELATIONS

In Uganda, women's involvement in politics and decision making has always been very low as compared to men. Traditionally politics and decision making were a domain of men while women were regarded as home makers, simple minded and humble with the only responsibility of caring for their families (both husbands and children). Until recently women have now realized that they too have equal capacities as men and can equally participate in making decisions that affect them. Women have therefore started to actively participate in politics and leadership and have proved to be as competent as men and very instrumental in shaping the politics of the state. The policies that are being developed by various states are now more gender focused in that governments are now taking into account women's concerns. Women's rights are now more recognized as human rights than before. All this is a result of the involvement of women in politics.

Much as women have always been segregated from participation in politics, they have never been entirely absent from political leadership. In Uganda women's participation in politics and decision making can be traced as far back as the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Women are believed to have ruled as "kabakas" (kings) in the Buganda kingdom arrangements in the fifteenth century. In Ankole Kingdom in western Uganda, the only female gombolola chief was appointed by the British administration.

During colonialism, women formed voluntary associations, which were very instrumental in building capacities and competences for women to enable them to be more effective in political participation. For example, the associations facilitated the education of girls hence giving them the appropriate skills to be effective leaders. Various girls' schools in Uganda were established during the colonial era and these work hand in hand with the establishment of more clubs and organiza-

tions for women. The education of girls had a dual and contradictory function. It helped women to fulfill their functions better as wives, mothers, and guardians of the household and at the same time played a critical role in giving women the necessary skills for political action on issues that were of concern to women.[10]

The movement to improve women's participation in politics and promotion of women's rights was further strengthened with the establishment of the Uganda Council of Women (UCW) in 1946. The UCW was established basically to address women's concerns.

Though women were always poorly represented, they normally showed keen interest to participate in the political process. For example, in the legislative council of 1958, there were more women than men at many polling stations in northern, eastern, and western provinces of Uganda and there was heavy turnup of women at all the polling stations.

In general the participation of women in politics right from the colonial era has been very low. There were only two women in the 1962 National Assembly and also 1979–1980. In the urban and local councils, women made up only twenty-five of the delegates. During the dictatorship regime of 1971–1979, women's political participation was greatly suppressed. This regime was greatly opposed to the establishment of women's organizations. This retarded development of the women's movement in Uganda. The regime intensified the domination of women by men. Being a Muslim dominated regime, Muslim ideologies that disfavored women such as polygamy were greatly upheld.

Museveni was lauded for the affirmative action program for women, which brought in increased numbers of women in political governance both at the national and local levels. He appointed a female vice-president, Specioza Kazibwe, who served for nearly a decade. However, his progressive stance on gender equality was questioned when he resisted calls for greater women's land rights, especially on co-ownership in marriage and thwarted parliamentary debate on a much needed law – the marriage and divorce bill.

The promotion of gender equality in Uganda has largely been led by the women's movement. Women's organisations, mainly Action for Development, Uganda Women's Network, Forum for Women in Democracy and the Association of Women Lawyers (FIDA) and others, have set the pace and sustained momentum for gender equality. Creation of a ministry responsible for gender and women's issues early in the Museveni era greatly facilitated a more responsive environment for gender equality.

Suggestions for the reconstruction of the Uganda state

From the historic perspective, Uganda as a state has come very far and some of the challenges facing this state are inherited from its long trend of transition to its current state. The suggestions, therefore, for the reconstruction of the Uganda state centers on addressing the political, social, and economic problems of Uganda. Addressing the political challenge facing Uganda has resulted in a number of political conflicts that have caused unrest in different parts of the

country. Through democratization policy, Uganda is likely to address all the political unrest.

Poverty in Uganda is an important issue as an appreciable number of people in Uganda, specifically rural people, are below the poverty line. About 60 percent of the Ugandan people are poor and 30 percent are very poor. Women in Uganda are the poorest of the poor. The standard of living in Uganda is much lower than the rest of the world. Uganda also has low life expectancy literacy rates. Some of the major factors behind the poverty in Uganda are low income and low purchasing power of the people. Political and ideological factors should also be considered behind the emergence of poverty in Uganda. The attributes of poverty can be assorted on the basis of geography, urban or rural groups, vulnerable groups, and minorities. The overall poverty eradication strategy is based on the following principles:

The public sector's role is to intervene in areas where markets function poorly or would produce very inequitable outcomes. Where the public sector intervenes, it should use the most cost-effective methods, including the use of NGOs for service delivery where appropriate. Poverty eradication is a partnership and should involve the closest possible integration of the efforts of government with its development partners. Strategic public action for poverty eradication is established on four pillars: creating a framework for economic growth and transformation; good governance and security; actions which directly increase the ability of the poor to raise their incomes; actions which directly improve the quality of life of the poor.

Similarly, research on land shows considerable inequality, often resulting from administrative and political factors more than the operation of the market. The Land Act is designed to strengthen the land rights of the poor. Women's land rights need to be strengthened further; public sensitization for the purpose of the Land Act is needed; a cost-effective structure for land administration is needed; and the Land Fund needs to be operationalized, targeting the landless poor. The restocking program for rural livestock has the potential to reduce poverty by restoring economically valuable assets, provided mechanisms are identified to target the poor.

Good governance is increasingly recognized as a prerequisite to economic growth and development. In Uganda, consultations with the poor have shown that insecurity is among their most pressing concerns. Work by the Human Rights Commission, the Law and Order Sector Working Group, and the Governance Action Plan project has identified the main priority areas in this sector. Also, good governance involves making public expenditure transparent and efficient. Many reforms have been undertaken to make it harder to misuse public funds with impunity, including the establishment of the Ministry of Ethics and Integrity and the design of a new regulatory structure for procurement. Service delivery on the ground urgently needs improvement, as various surveys have shown. This is to be addressed by the introduction of results-orientated management, by pay reform designed to increase and simplify public sector remuneration, and by strengthening bottom-up accountability; communities must be able to hold service deliverers accountable through the Village Councils. Law and order is being addressed by the introduction of a sector-wide approach in which reforms proposed for the criminal justice sector will be evaluated. The poor reputation of the police needs to be

addressed by an improvement in service delivery. The relatively good reputations of local defense units (LDUs) and local council (LC) courts can be built upon.

Conflict resolution and effective support to conflict-afflicted areas are essential. Armed conflict has been a decisive factor in the impoverishment of the North and the East. In 1999 the internally displaced population of Uganda was estimated at 622,000, and in addition insecurity affects many people who are not actually displaced. So the successful resolution of conflicts is a necessary part of poverty eradication.

The democratization of Uganda has been pursued in a context of decentralization. The process involves the transfer of responsibilities to district level. Participatory work has shown that the most highly appreciated level is the Local Council 1 or Village Council (LC1), the level which is closest to the people. The implications of decentralization for ministries of central government have been reflected in the government restructuring, but the extent to which they are now ready to fulfill their new role needs to be assessed.

Public information is central to good governance and innovative methods of disseminating information should be explored by inter-sectoral cooperation. The special needs of the disabled require a community-based approach which deserves priority. Disaster management, which includes the handling of drought, floods, earthquakes, and conflict, requires both preparedness and response; the recently established Ministry within the Prime Minister's Office has prepared a national strategy.

Most Ugandans are self-employed, mainly in agriculture. This gives the Plan for the Modernisation of Agriculture a central role in poverty eradication. Despite the constraints of limited technology and market access, the potential of raising agricultural incomes is considerable. The PMA identifies six core areas for public action in agriculture: research and technology, advisory services, education for agriculture, access to rural finance, access to markets, and sustainable natural resource utilization and management. Employment outside agriculture can be promoted by microfinance, advisory services, and vocational training.

Feeder roads remain a central priority as in the 1997 PEAP, since when maintenance expenditure has tripled. Labor-intensive methods have been found to be financially cheaper than other methods of road-building and will contribute to employment generation.

The appropriate mix between national and international research needs consideration. The potential benefits of publicly provided advisory services vastly outweigh their costs. Strategy is now being reviewed. The advisory service must address issues relevant to poor farmers, using ideas developed by NGOs for low-input technologies which the poor can afford. The services need to address productivity-enhancing techniques for farmers at different levels of resources, drought-resistant crops where needed, nutritional issues, marketing, storage and processing, and soil conservation. Livestock, fisheries, and agroforestry will also be covered by the advisory services.

Sustainable resource use will be promoted by raising awareness, including the encouragement of communal initiatives to protect common property resources. Forestry needs to be promoted by a mixture of public protection and investment in private forests. Valley dam schemes will be reviewed; this is an important

priority for addressing the poverty of the Karimojong and the insecurity associated with cattle-rustling.

Energy for the poor will be promoted by encouraging the use of more efficient cooking technologies and by smart subsidies for rural electrification, which will encourage entrepreneurs to invest in power infrastructure in rural growth centers. This will make it easier for the rural poor to have their output processed, increasing their effective access to the market; it will also enable more households to gain access to electricity in their homes.

Conclusion

Uganda has gone through a unique process of state formation. Some stages have been more progressive while others have been retrogressive. There have been different players on the scene. The last sixteen years under the NRM Administration has witnessed positive developments in almost all sectors of the economy compared to the past regimes since independence.

However, a lot remains to be done to ensure sustainable peace and stability in Uganda. There is one aspect that can help much in rebuilding and reconstructing the state and that is civic education. Civic education can enable a citizen to be a conscious political player in his or her country governance. The government should therefore take civic education seriously as it enables the citizens to appreciate the values of dialogue, negotiation, compromise, tolerance, democracy, good governance, accountability, participation, rule of law. The big challenge facing Uganda is the growing culture of impunity, corruption and increasing political intolerance threating the hope for democracy and constitutionalism.

Notes

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8 Rethinking the authoritarian state in Africa

The lessons

George Klay Kieh, Jr. and Pita Ogaba Agbese

Introduction

As has been discussed, at independence, beginning in the 1950s, colonialism bequeathed to Africa an authoritarian state.[1] The state construct has been described variously as "absolutist," "repressive," "violent," "negligent," and "exploitative."[2] Regrettably, with few exceptions, the first generation of African leaders failed to provide the requisite leadership to dismantle, rethink, and democratically reconstitute the state so that it could serve as an engine of people-centered democracy and development. Hence, the authoritarian state was retained and acclimated to the changing dynamics of the post-colonial era.

Functionally, the authoritarian state is pivoted on, among others, the suppression of political rights and civil liberties, the concentration of powers in the hands of a hegemonic presidency and the accompanying subordination of the legislative and judicial branches (the lack of effective "checks and balances"), the prevalence of both *de jure* and de facto one-party systems, the lack of the rule of law and the resulting dominance of the "culture of impunity," the absence of a strong and independent judiciary, the lack of accountability and transparency, and an asphyxiation of civil society. Peter Lewis provides a poignant summation of the pedigree of authoritarianism in Africa:

> Historically, most African regimes have had little accountability to their people. As rulers, they have maintained political control largely through authoritarian institutions and patron-client networks … Authoritarian rulers have misused public resources … and refrained from providing crucial public goods needed for economic expansion.[3]

The domination of authoritarianism as the pervasive system of public governance on the African Continent has engendered the lack of democracy and development. In the case of the former, as has been discussed, Africa has been ruled by both civilian and military autocrats that have violated political human rights and suffocated the development of effective and robust public institutions. As for the latter, in the cases in which some authoritarian states have attempted to promote socio-economic development, the efforts have been undermined by the absence of legitimacy and mass support.

The "third wave of democratization" that was touted as Africa's "second liberation" has failed to live up to its bidding. This is because full blown authoritarianism has persisted in various countries on the continent (e.g., Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Sudan), and in others, the process of democratization has stalled. Consequently, the continent is littered with several semi-authoritarian or hybrid regimes (e.g., Burkina Faso, Egypt, Uganda). Correspondingly, the economic and social context of authoritarianism has not been transformed so that it can promote human-centered development.

In this vein, there is the urgent need to rethink the authoritarian African state beyond the holding of elections periodically. In other words, while elections are important dimensions for ending authoritarianism on the continent, they do not constitute the sufficient condition. Instead, As George Kieh argues, "…state reconstitution process must be both a holistic and comprehensive project that encompasses the fundaments … and the various spheres."[4] This means the transformation of the political core, as well as the socio-economic crucible in which the authoritarian African state operates.

Against this background, the purpose of this chapter is to map out the major lessons that can be used to rethink and democratically reconstitute the authoritarian African state, so that it can serve as the leader for shepherding the twin processes of people-centered democracy and development in Africa.

The lessons

The fundamentals

Democratic constitution

A democratic constitution is pivotal to caging the authoritarian demon that has terrorized Africa since the post-independence era. Such a constitution should be crafted based on popular participation. Specifically, to be credible and sustainable, the constitution-making or revision process should be process-driven and "bottom to top." This means that all citizens as well as groups should have the opportunity to participate in the formulation of the document.

In terms of its substantive contents, a constitution should map out the political, economic, social, religious, security, and cultural contours of a society. This should include the clear delineation of the various legal norms, and the associated institutions and process through which these norms would be implemented. As Julius Ihonbere asserts,

> Constitution-making [should be] used to articulate national dreams, educate the populace, draw attention to existing contradictions, and promote a new culture of tolerance, inclusion, participation, and democratization. The … constitution [should be] … seen as a road map that defines power and sets out new or alternative power arrangements. The constitution should also spell out the socio-economic, cultural and political rights of all citizens;

reassure disadvantaged constituencies like women and minorities, and provide a political roadmap for a new generation of Africans…[5]

Constitutionalism

While a constitution is epicentral to democratic governance, it is however meaningless if its various provisions are not operationalized through praxis. That is, the legal precepts spanning the various spheres that are enshrined in the constitution should found expression in their practical application to the ways in which a society is governed. The responsibility for doing so falls on citizens, civil society organizations, the government as a whole, public institutions, and public officials.

Ultimately, the primary driver of constitutionalism is the imperative of demonstrating the supremacy of the constitution by canonizing the popularly used expression of "a society that is governed by laws rather than men and women." This includes leaders and citizens alike being subjected to the norms of the constitution. As Stephen Holmes notes, "[a]s ordinary men, rulers too need to be ruled."[6]

Development agenda

Sustaining democratic governance in the context of a reconstituted state needs to transcend the making of political reforms. This is because although the centerpiece of authoritarianism is political, a functional and sustainable democratic order requires improvement in the material conditions of the citizens. At the core is the imperative of formulating and implementing a development agenda that has human welfare as its mainstay. Specifically, the development agenda would revolve around African states making investments in areas like job creation, health care, education, public transportation, public housing, and food security. The overarching purpose should be to create what T.H. Marshall calls "social citizenship."[7] This would entail the universal right of citizens to an extensive set of state-guaranteed social and economic provisions.[8]

Purging the core of authoritarianism

The purging of the authoritarian core would require the restructuring of the political sphere of authoritarian African states. One major dimension is the state's respect for political rights—the right to vote, the right to contest for public office once the qualifications are met, and the right to organize political parties and other groups, as well as the right of these political entities to operate freely within the ambit of the constitution without being suppressed by the state—and civil liberties.[9] This is because political rights and civil liberties are basic building blocks of a democratic state.[10] For example, as Freedom House argues, "Political rights enable people to participate freely in the political process…"[11]

Civil liberties span the broad gamut of political freedoms—assembly, association, movement, press, etc. Collectively, these freedoms constitute what Joseph

Siegle refers to as "part and parcel of a participatory competitive political environment."[12] This is critical because by creating a propitious environment in which various political forces can freely participate and express their views without the fear of recrimination from the state, the tendency for some to resort to extra-constitutional means such as coups would be minimized.

"Checks and balances" are also important in caging the authoritarian impulse. However, this would require the development of strong and vibrant public institutions that can monitor and check one another to ensure that no one entity becomes hegemonic. This would work by each public institution using its allotted constitutional and statutory powers to provide oversight (horizontal accountability). For example, as Torsten Persson *et al*. argue, "Checks and balances work by creating a conflict of interest between the executive and the legislature, yet requiring both bodies to agree on public policy. In this way, the two bodies discipline each other to the voters' advantage."[13] Horizontal accountability would then be complemented by vertical accountability. In the case of the latter, citizens and civil society organizations would help check the government through various modes, including elections and the provision of information to the general public about the activities of the government.

The related element is the need for transparency in the conduct of public affairs. Besides information that is critical to the security of an African state, the matters concerning the operation of a government should be opened to inspection and probing by citizens and civil society organizations. In part, this would help ensure that a government operates consistent with democratic tenets.

Another major mechanism that is required is the establishment and functioning of a multiparty system. In this context, political parties with varying ideological orientations should be allowed to be organized and to participate in the political process. Importantly, although these various political parties would compete periodically for power, their collective purpose must transcend the pathological fixation with state power. Instead, in spite of their ideological differences, these political parties must learn to work together in promoting the "general good" of an African state.

Similarly, the legitimacy of any government would require that it ascends to power through the holding of free and fair elections. That is, the totality of the electoral process—from voters' registration to the counting of the ballots—should be characterized by honesty and fairness. This would militate against violence both during and after elections, and help to establish the tradition of the orderly transfer of power from one elected government to another.

Also, the establishment of the rule of law would be critical, especially against the backdrop of the perennial history of the "culture of impunity" in both authoritarian and hybrid African states. This would entail the establishment of a new political culture in which everyone—citizens and public officials alike, including the president of the country—would be subjected to the constitution and statutes of an African state without any exception. Significantly, an independent judiciary is indispensable to the effective operation of the rule of law. Accordingly, efforts should be made to establish a judicial system with qualified judges and

other personnel, who are not beholden to the president and other public officials. In this way, the legal system would earn the trust and respect of the citizens as an impartial arbiter. This would then help to minimize the resort to violence as an alternative method for addressing conflicts.

Functioning democratic African states would require robust civil society consisting of various organizations covering various spheres of the society. In order to be effective and make meaningful contributions to the building of democracy, it is quite important for these civil society organizations to be independent, and free from the control of both the government and external forces.

Creating an enabling environment for sustainable democracy

The cultural sphere

Given the fact that the majority of Africa's authoritarian states are multiethnic, it is important for the democratically reconstituted state to shepherd the process of establishing ethnic pluralism. This would be characterized by, among others, mutual respect for, and sensitivity to the various cultures. The ultimate purpose would be to ensure peaceful co-existence between and among the various ethnic groups.[14]

Central to the promotion of ethnic harmony is the imperative of the state and its government not privileging any ethnic group. That is, the state should not be used as an instrument for ethnic domination—the outcome Kidane Mengisteab refers to as an "ethnic state."[15] Instead, the state should seek to treat all ethnic groups fairly, especially in the provision of public goods. In addition, access to positions in the public bureaucracy should not be mediated by ethnic affiliation. Instead, the qualified citizens of an African state should be able to obtain positions based on a system of merit.

The economic sphere

In order for the democratic state to address the welfare of the citizens, steps should be taken to address the perennial problem of corruption in the public sector. The foundational pillar would the transformation of the character and mission of the African state. In the case of the former, the state needs to be expunged of its criminal, exploitative, predatory, and negligent character.[16] As well, the African state's mission needs to be changed from the creation of an enabling environment in which the members of the ruling classes—consisting of state managers, relatively well-off business people, and the owners of foreign capital—can engage in the predatory accumulation of wealth to one in which addressing the welfare of the citizens is paramount.

Similarly, the democratically reconstituted African state should address the critical issues of mass abject poverty and deprivation that have made the subalterns in Africa live perilously on the margins of society. The key culprit is the peripheral capitalist political economy that is the dominant framework on the continent.

Hence, this framework should be transformed in ways that advance the material well-being of ordinary Africans, especially addressing their basic needs such as employment, education, health care, transportation, housing, and food. As *Pambazuka News* argues, "Poverty is a structural problem inseparable from power relations that have defined the making and re-making of [African] political economy and society over the last four decades—and magnified during the current one."[17]

Linked to the imperative of tackling mass poverty is the exigency of addressing the age-old problems of inequalities and inequities in wealth and income within various African states. This is critical to the pursuance of people-centered development. As Jose Antonio Ocampo, the former UN Under Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs notes,

> Ignoring inequality in the pursuit of development is perilous. Focusing exclusively on economic growth and income generation as a development strategy is ineffective, as it leads to the accumulation of wealth by a few and deepens the poverty of many.[18]

The problems of unemployment and underemployment are key issues that need to be addressed as well. In the case of the former, in spite of high growth rates, it remains a daunting challenge. The situation is particularly alarming for young people on the continent. For example, in 2011, Africans aged 15–24 comprised 60 percent of the continent's unemployed (about 40 million people).[19] Accordingly, ways would need to be found to generate employment, including addressing the grave problem of joblessness among the youth. The latter problem is characterized by sections of the employed Africans not earning enough wages to be able to meet their basic human needs, such as food, housing, and transportation. One solution would be for African states to establish minimum wages that are reflective of the cost of living in their respective societies. The thrust would be to design a wage structure that would enable the employed to earn sufficient wages to be able to address their basic needs,

The social sphere

Like the other spheres, the social one is loaded with several major challenges that have implications for sustaining democracy, once an African state makes the transition from authoritarianism. One of the key problems is the general sordid state of education. Against the background of the multidimensionality of the general educational problems on the continent, the solution would need to be comprehensive as well. This means that they would need to address issues like funding, access, qualified personnel, including teachers and school administrators, the provision of instructional materials, equipment, and the development of the infrastructure. The pivot is the imperative of African states making increased investments in public education to address these challenges.

Like education, addressing the continent's health care challenges would require the use of a multidimensional approach that would seek to address issues

such as access, the availability of trained and qualified health care professionals, drugs, equipment, logistics, and the infrastructure—hospitals, clinics, and other facilities. As Dan Kaseje suggests,

> An appropriate, robust and sustainable model for improvement in health system performance is essential in order to reverse the declining trends in health and development-status and break the vicious cycle of poverty and ill-health in Africa … A robust model for improvement would embrace all of the dimensions that are critical to health by addressing not only the risk factors of disease but also cross-cutting issues and linkages between health and employment, food security, nutrition, and financing for health.[20]

Importantly, given the diversity of the health systems across Africa, improvement would be contingent upon the convergence of commitment, expertise, and resources throughout the system.[21]

Housing is another major challenge across the African Continent. At the vortex is the challenge of the housing stock not keeping pace with the continent's population explosion. As Anna Kajumulo, the former UN Under Secretary-General and the Executive Director of UN-HABITAT, laments, "Most African countries have failed to tackle the multidimensional housing problems militating against the continent despite population explosion resulting in rapid growth of slums across the continent."[22] The housing crisis is framed by many major issues, including affordability, the inadequacy of the stock, and quality. In this vein, addressing the crisis would require both public and private efforts. The thrust of these efforts should be to construct adequate amounts of low-cost housing that are habitable and durable throughout an African state. In turn, this would address the crux of the housing problems.

The area of transportation requires attention as well. The overarching problem is that the transportation systems of most African states have not been able to keep pace with the burgeoning rate of increase in the population. To make matters worse, given the pervasiveness of poverty on the continent, the vast majority of Africans cannot afford to purchase private vehicles. Hence, they rely on both commercial and public transportation. In order to address the central challenge plaguing transportation, several major interlocking steps would need to be taken. Both the state and private businesses would need to invest in the transport sector. In addition, the sector's geographic scope would need to be expanded to cover the various regions of an African state.[23] Also, the transport sector would need to be integrated.[24] The improvement of roads by paving them would be key as well.[25] Then, the issue of transportation safety of all the modes should be stressed.[26]

Other lessons

Three other major lessons are quite instructive for the democratic reconstitution of the African state: the provision of clean drinking water and adequate sanitation,

and addressing the problem of food insecurity. In the case of the inadequacy of clean drinking water, it constitutes one of the major development challenges confronting the continent. And this has implications for public health.[27] At the heart of addressing this problem is making clean drinking water available to everyone, irrespective of the place of abode either through the pipe-borne route or pump-powered wells. The state would need to play a pivotal role in the provision of this major resource. One of the major reasons is that some private businesses have commodified water, and are selling it at prices that are not affordable for the members of the subaltern classes across the continent.

Similarly, poor sanitation remains an enduring challenge in various African states. The problem is even more acute in the various slum-based communities that have sprung up in urban centers around the continent.[28] In order to address this challenge, several issues need to be tackled, including the cleaning of communities, streets, and other areas on a regular basis, the safe disposal of garbage, the availability of an adequate supply of water, and addressing the broader problem of slums.

Food insecurity has become a major threat to the physical well-being and survival of many Africans. As the United Nations Development Program observes, "For too long, the face of [Africa] has been one of dehumanizing hunger…"[29] For example, in 2010, more than 218 million Africans suffered from hunger.[30] Similarly, 41 percent of the continent's population experienced chronic malnutrition.[31] Left unchanged, this could result in irreversible mental and physical disabilities in this and future generations.[32] In this regard, the efforts to address food insecurity should revolve around the critical issues of the availability of food, people's access to food and their use of food, as well as the stability of all three components.[33] The drivers of the process should include: the development of the agricultural sector for the ostensible purpose of increasing food production, the formulation and implementation of the appropriate public policies that would be supportive, the undertaking of various steps to address poverty, and the removal of the barriers to market access for small scaled farmers.[34]

Conclusion

The authoritarian African state that has been the mainstay of the African landscape since the dawn of the post-colonial era has proven to be an anathema to both people-centered democracy and sustainable human-centered development. Hence, the state needs to be deconstructed, rethought, and democratically reconstituted. The approach should be comprehensive by including the fundamentals—the formulation of a democratic constitution through the use of a process-driven method that is inclusive, the importance of constitutionalism, and the design and implementation of a development agenda that focuses on the material advancement of the African peoples.

Then, the political core of the authoritarian state should be dismantled and replaced with a democratic one that is anchored on the respect for political rights and civil liberties, the establishment of a system of "checks and balances"

anchored by strong and effective public institutions, the practice of accountability, transparency, and the rule of law with an independent judiciary playing the pivotal role as the arbiter, the establishment of a multiparty party system, the holding of free and fair elections at regular time intervals, and the establishment and functioning of a vibrant civil society that is independent of manipulation by both the state and external actors, including donors. Central to the political restructuring of the authoritarian African state should be the redistribution of power for the purpose of promoting equity and social justice. This should include the empowerment of citizens at the grassroots level, so that they can fully participate in shaping the decisions that affect their lives and communities.

The transformation of the authoritarian state would also require the creation of an enabling environment that is indispensable to sustaining democracy and development. In the cultural sphere, this would require the promotion of ethnic pluralism based on mutual respect and peaceful co-existence, and the fair treatment of the various ethnic groups within a state by the government. Economically, the vexatious issues of corruption, mass abject poverty, unemployment, and underemployment need to be addressed. In the social domain, the critical areas of education, health care, housing, and transportation need to be addressed. In addition, attention needs to be paid to the provision of clean drinking water and adequate sanitation, as well as addressing the challenge of food insecurity.

Notes

1 See George Klay Kieh, Jr., "Introduction: The Terminally Ill Berlinist State in Africa," in George Klay Kieh, Jr. (ed.), *Beyond State Failure and Collapse: Making the State Relevant in Africa* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2007), p. 9.
2 For a discussion of the major attributes of the colonial state that was transferred to Africa at independence, see Ibid., pp. 5–8.
3 Peter Lewis, "Growth Without Prosperity in Africa," *Journal of Democracy*, 19(4), 2008, p. 94.
4 George Klay Kieh, Jr. "Reconstituting the Neo-Colonial State in Africa," *Journal of Third World Studies*, 25(1), 2009, p. 43.
5 Julius Ihonvbere, "Beyond Constitution-making Experiences in Africa: Challenges and Prospects," Keynote Lecture delivered at the Conference on "Constitutionalism in Southern Africa," organized by the Southern African Institute for Policy Studies, Harare, Zimbabwe, July 24, 2000, p. 3.
6 Stephen Holmes, *Passions and Constraints: On the Theory of Liberal Democracy* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1995), p. 5.
7 T.H. Marshall, "Citizenship and Social Class," in Jeff Manza and Michael Sauder (eds.), *Inequality and Society* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 2009), pp. 153–154.
8 See Peter Dwyer, *Understanding Social Citizenship* (Bristol, UK: Polity Press, 2003), p. 4.
9 See Andrian Karatnycky and Raymond Gasti, *Freedom in the World: Political Rights and Civil Liberties* (Piscataway, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1999), p. 583.
10 Attracta Ingram, *A Political Theory of Rights* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 236.
11 Freedom House, *Freedom in the World, 2012* (Washington, DC: Freedom House, 2012), p.

12 Joseph Siegle, "Overcoming Dilemmas of Democratization: Protecting Civil Liberties and the Rights to Democracy," *Nordic Journal of International Law*, 81, 2012, p. 475.
13 Torsten Persson, Gerard Roland, and Guido Tabellini, "Separation of Powers and Political Accountability," *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 112(4), 1997, pp. 1163.
14 See E. Ike Udogu, "The Issue of Ethnicity and Democratization in Africa: Toward the Millennium," *Journal of Black Studies*, 29(6), 1999, p. 806.
15 Kidane Mengistead, "State-building in Ethiopia," in George Klay Kieh, Jr. (ed.), *Beyond State Failure and Collapse: Making the State Relevant in Africa*, (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2007), p. 108.
16 See Pita Ogaba Agbese, "The Political Economy of the African State," in George Klay Kieh, Jr. (ed.), *Beyond State Failure and Collapse: Making the State Relevant in Africa* (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2007), p. 45.
17 *Pambazuka News*, "The Political Economy of Poverty and Social Transformation of the Global South," Issue 579, March 29, 2012, p. 2.
18 Ernest Harsch, "Combating Inequality in Africa," *Africa Renewal*, 20(3), July 2006, p. 16.
19 See Khadija Patel, "Africa: Generation U-Africans' Era of Unemployment," *Daily Maverick*, August 1, 2012, p. 1.
20 Dan Kaseje, "Health Care in Africa: Challenges, Opportunities and an Emerging Model for Improvement," paper presented at The Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington, DC, November 2, 2006, p. 3.
21 Ibid.
22 Nasidi Adamu, "Africa: Countries Fail to Tackle Housing Problems—UN," *Daily Trust*, July 31, 2008, p. 1.
23 See Ambe Njoh, "Implications of Africa's Transportation Systems for Development in the Era of Globalization," Working Paper (St. Petersburg, FL: Department of Government and International Affairs, University of South Florida, St. Petersburg, 2007), p. 11.
24 Ibid.
25 Ibid.
26 Ibid.
27 See Lori Lewis, "Water in Crisis: Spotlight Rural and Urban Issues in Africa," The Water Project, www.thewaterproject.org/water-in-crisis-rural-urban-africa.php (accessed on January 8, 2013).
28 See Joseph Ngoms, "Water and Sanitation Problems Ravage Africa," *WaterSan Perspective*, February 7, 2013, p. 1.
29 United Nations Development Program, *Africa Human Development Report, 2012: Toward a Food Secure Future* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 9.
30 Ibid.
31 Ibid.
32 Ibid.
33 Ibid.
34 See Angela Mwaniki, "Achieving Food Security in Africa: Challenges and Issues," Working Paper, U.S. Plant, Soil and Nutrition Laboratory, 2005, pp. 3–5.

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