

The Political Economy Perspective of the Theory of the Corrupt African State

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Abstract: The upsurge of interests in the decisive role of the state in economic development especially in Africa in the past three decades have raised questions about the distribution of power, how authority distorts the formal declarations of government policy and the composition of the public elites in sustaining their power, wealth and status. The character of the African state as the instrumental and decisive actor in development has been associated with the endemic and systematic levels of political corruption in most African states. In this paper, I present an analysis of the political economy perspective of the emergence of theorizing on the African state with emphasis on the corrupt African state, which provides an in-depth understanding to the study of the pervasiveness of political corruption in Africa. The political economy perspective of the corrupt African state examines the colonial legacies of the personalization of public office, the creation of administrative hierarchy through the concentration of political and authoritative functions, and a government that did not distinguish between decision-making and implementation roles. These colonial administrative structures inherited from the eve of independence, I will argue contributes to the political economy perspective of theorizing on the corrupt African state, where the state, the key instrumental actor for the extraction of resources for development, serves as the arena where state property and jobs are allocated in solidarities to domestic and foreign influence.

Keywords: Africaness, African State, Political Economy and Corrupt African State.

The Africaness of the Post- Colonial African State

In the 1950s and 1960s, when the structural-functionalist and system theory paradigms were in their heyday among comparativists, the state was seen as nothing more than a mechanism for processing societal demands by turning them into policies and as a medium for managing, regulating, and adjudicating the behavior of the citizenry. This approach was been described by Lemarchand as “antistatist” [1]. It assumed that variants of Western democratic organization could be effectively grafted into African and other developing societies and that the legacy of colonialism would be of no enduring consequences [2]. These scholars recognized the fragility of the new African states and their new political and economic institutions, but they assumed that Africa could follow the West and build strong, new nations from artificially created colonial states. The role of the state then was merely to pursue policies intended to result in political, social, and economic integration of disparate, constituent groups [3]. Despite the neatness of the structural-functional paradigm as a conceptual scheme, scholars quickly realized that it was seriously flawed, being static and ethnocentric. The model was a little help in understanding the dynamics of change in the Third world [4]. Despite the fact that state structures and agencies generally had deep roots in African society in the precolonial and the colonial periods, and that central institutions were the object of conflict and struggle during decolonization, observers paid little attention during the first years of independence to the state or state organs. Indeed, during most of the 1960s, the African state was virtually ignored. The state was perceived as an arena of sovereignty, of territoriality, and perhaps of nation-building, but it was not seen as an interconnectedness set of institutions with an existence of its own. Studies of parties, ideologies, and even of the civil service were carried out separately, and little effort was made to grasp the state as a critical actor in the public opinion [5]. Seven elements within this colonial inheritance of particular importance are: the incorporation of

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Africa into the international modern state structure; the imposition of arbitrary boundaries; the reinforcement of the non-hegemonic state; the weak link between state and civil society; the promotion of an African state elite; the building of specialist economies; and the absence of strong political institutions [6]. Sovereign African states were faced with the challenge that were usually haphazard conglomerations of dozens or even hundreds of ethnic groups with little historical precedent for shared political cooperation. Worse, some bore historical antagonisms that dated back to the era of the slave trade and that had been exacerbated or created by colonial “divide and rule” policies. Africa’s new leaders often described these subnational identities as “tribalism” and sought to replace tribal identities with allegiance to the new nation [7]. Political regime consolidation involved efforts to create new structures and relations of power. At the same time, regime consolidation involved efforts to re(subordinate) existing structures of societally based power to the state. These existing power structures were rooted in material conditions that were not transformed by granting independence in the 1960s [8]. By the early 1970s, the structural-functional and systems theory perspectives were vigorously challenged, mostly by the intellectual left. Some of the challengers questioned the ahistorical, ethnocentric orientation of these approaches and their failure to recognize the profound effect of the “weight of history” and the impact of colonial domination in the contemporary Third World. The initial assault was led by neo-Marxist adherents of the *dependencia*, underdevelopment theory and world systems schools of thought [9, 10]. Yet dependency and underdevelopment theorists like modernization theorists, tended to view postcolonial and ruling classes as remarkably unconstrained by the societies over which they sought to preside [8]. Despite their frequent dogmatism and bias toward economic determinism, these approaches highlighted the importance of history in determining the character of the political economy of underdeveloped societies, thus avoiding a serious pitfall of the structural-functionalist and systems theory approaches. Colonialism was found to have laid the foundation not only for the character of the relations of new states with the world community, but also for the broad outlines of their domestic political economies [4]. In the 1970s, the importance of the state was recognized, at least in part, by those who viewed these institutions as agents in the global arena. At this juncture, the state was conceptualized (and refined) as an instrument of capitalism exploitation [11]. Across the continent these new leaders of these nascent weak African states in the face of myriad of challenges had to rise above ideology and performance to propel their various states towards economic development for socio-economic transformation. The emerging form was that of a postcolonial state that boldly and systematically intervened in the economy in areas that had formerly been the exclusive preserve of the metropole. However, the postcolonial state’s capture of significant sectors of the economy did not necessarily mean that substantive changes were always made in the colonial nexus. The postcolonial state was forced to try to build a nation on the foundation laid by the colonial state without considering whether congruence existed between this system and the African nation-its social and ethnic groups-or even whether cultural similarities existed among the different units being ruled by the same government. Despite its weakness vis-à-vis the colonial state, at independence the postcolonial state was the preeminent institution in society. It was the largest employer of labor and had access to domestic resources and investment funds from abroad. It was not only a political institution but the most powerful economic force in society. With weak and underdeveloped private sectors, economic success became linked to access to the state’s resources [12]. Economic development was seen as the means by which the new African states sought to prove their legitimacy. However, the development agenda in many African countries have been undermined by several factors, including inept leadership, weak states, institutional impunity, massive corruption which have stifled their quest for socio-economic transformation. From this context therefore, one begins to examine the role of the state which is the institution that deals with the organization of power, from which various sets of political relations takes place with respect to the exercise of power, especially political power. In other words, the state is seen as the contemporary locus of power and authority, and the most inclusive social unit within which control is exercised [13]. By the early 1980s, there was substantial agreement among analysts regarding the importance of the state in Africa as the focus for the institutionalization of central power. There has been no consensus, however, on the meaning of the growing salience of state agencies. Indeed, the postcolonial state in Africa has been depicted, alternatively, as weak and powerful, as repressive and feeble, as fragile and absolutist, as dependent and autonomous, as expanding and collapsing [11]. These depictions of the postcolonial state sparked debates in academic circles about conceptualizing the state based on its “Africaness”. It is not easy to define the concept of “the African state” from among the many and diverse concepts of the state. While basing a definition on the concept of the state as generally perceived in political studies, an elucidation of the “Africaness” of the African state is also sought. Therefore, how the concept of the African state should be defined is dependent upon how Africaness is perceived, having firstly emphasized the relatedness of the state and society. Ekeh [14], pointing out that the postcolonial present has been fashioned by their colonial past, emphasizes African “uniqueness”, namely the Africaness provided by the colonial experience. Chabal [15] argues for the need to study the particular-that is, what is “African” in African politics- by means of universal concepts [16].

Theorizing on the African State

Neoclassical economics always admitted that “the existence of the state is essential for economic growth” [17], but the essential state was a minimal state, ‘restricted largely, if not, to protecting individual rights, persons, and property, and enforcing voluntarily negotiated private contracts’ [18]. In its minimal neoclassical form, the state could safely be left exogenous, a “black box” whose internal functioning’s were not a proper subject for economic analysis [19]. The circumstances in which the African state was formed and the activities it undertakes, the scales it operates, and the

political forces acting towards it made it hard to find clear-cut answers to its character due to its changing shapes. When pressed, a common response is to list the institutions that comprise the state, usually with a core set of institutions with increasingly vague boundaries [20]. The distinctive nature in which the African state was formed and the activities that it performs due to its changing nature in the post-colonial period to be shaped as a cohesive political unit distinctive from the Weberian-state, left it ignored by scholars for research. However, the late 1980s sparked debates among scholars in the United States especially in the field of Comparative politics about the direction of the field in the area of analysis of new data on the scope, and objectives and methods of research. This led to students of Comparative Politics focusing on a diverse of subject matters and research questions centrally related to politics. The largest number of articles focuses on democratic and state institutions, addressing aspects such as their nature and the process of decision making within them. A substantial amount of research focuses on political order and regimes, addressing questions about states, wars, revolutions, ethnicity, regimes, and democratization and thus exploring the processes that render the institutionalized decision making of democracies possible, or impossible, in the first place. Other research focuses on actors, such as social movements, interest groups, and citizens, going beyond the voters and politicians that are essential to democratic politics; on substantive outcomes, such as economic development, the welfare state, the development state, capitalism and neoliberalism, that are linked closely with the well-being of most of the world's population; and the processes, such as globalization and supranational integration, that have a growing impact on politics and even challenges the assumption that the nation-state is the dominant site of political power [21]. Comparative Politics therefore became a diverse field with vast scope of area studies and knowledge. In Africa, it led to the emergence in the field of studies in African Politics and theorizing on the African state in the early 1980s. Masahisa Kawabata in "*An Overview of the Debate on the African State*", 2006, presents a background to the theory of the African state in the early 1980s by identifying the following circumstances: (i) the new trend in research into African politics in Europe and the U.S in the early 1980s, which contributed to a movement to consider African politics not from the state but from "below", but it became the trigger for the reverse perspective in order to see the African state; (ii) the debate between the international financial institutions and the various African governments concerning the role of the state in economic development from the end of the 1970s through the beginning of the 1980s; debate in the mid-1990s arising from reflections on the phenomenon of the retrogression of the state brought about by increasing conflicts. In particular, the collapse of the state was discussed, the state theory with negative images such as the failed state, the collapsed state, the shadow state, the criminal state, and the disorder state erupted onto the scene, overwhelming the debate on the theory of the African state with pessimism [16]. Studies on the African state comprise of individual researches of the state based on certain themes and case studies, and studies on the comprehensive theory of the African state. Kawabata identifies two periods. The first period beginning from the 1980s to the mid-1990s involved themes such as ideology [22]; state formation [23]; role of the African state [24]; the developmental state [15]; politics from below [25, 26]; and the Crisis of the African state [27]. The beginning of the second period on theorizing of the African state according to Kawabata is symbolically marked by Hyden's work in "*Rethinking Theories of the state*" [28], in which he reviews the approach to the state in the Third World and Africa. This period beginning from the end of the 1990s to the beginning of the 2000 marks a new evolution in the theory of the African state involves the role of the state as an important actor [11, 29]; state institutions and organizations [11, 30, 31, 32, 33]. Eriksen [33] organizes theoretical perspectives on the African state into four categories: the civil society perspective, the culturalist perspective, the political economy perspectives, and the neo-patrimonial perspective [16]. The emphasis in this paper is placed on the political economy perspective of African states as important actors/instruments in the economic transformations of their societies.

The Political Economy Perspective of the African State

Political economy is about the sources of political power and its uses for economic needs. The sources of political power are coercion and legitimacy in varying combinations. Power can reasonably be seen as an objective in itself, so that both force and claims of legitimacy will be used so as to gain, retain and expand power. The study of this struggle of power is part of the subject of political economy. However, power is not just an end in itself: it can also be used to increase and to redistribute incomes. To further these objectives political power has two instruments: the provision of public and private goods financed by taxation, and the regulation of private economic activity. Political economy investigates how interests and institutions shape these policies [34]. The theoretical political economy perspective is critical in analyzing arguments that make state actions the principal impediment to development, the parallel development paths and effects in the comparative development case study of Nigeria and South Korea. States are not standardized commodities. They come in wide array of sizes, shapes, and styles. Some states may extract such large amounts of otherwise investable surplus and provide so little in the way of collective goods in return that they do indeed impede economic transformation. It seems reasonable to call these states predatory. Zaire might be considered an archetypal case of such a state. Those who control the state apparatus seem to plunder without any more regard for the welfare of the citizenry than a predator has for the welfare of its prey. Other states, however, are able to foster long-term entrepreneurial perspectives among private elites by increasing incentives to engage in transformative investments and lowering the risks involved in such investments. They may not be immune to rent-seeking or to using some of the social surplus for the ends of incumbents and their friends rather than those of the citizenry as a whole, but on the balance, the consequences of their actions promote rather than impeding transformation. They are legitimately considered

developmental states [35-37]. The East Asian NICs are usually cited as examples of this type of state [19]. In Africa, there were concerns about the states' capacity to penetrate society, regulate social relationships, extract resources, manage and appropriate them and design appropriate policies and institutions to spark growth and development. Also, questions were raised about the overall character of African states and their autonomies as instrumental actors, whose natures and impacts on interventions in society can shape institutional structures and bring about the necessary reforms in the post-colonial era. As African states, have become critical and necessary actors in economic transformation, promoting sustainable pro-poor growth accompanied by population increases, becoming competitive in the global economy, creating the conditions for better governance and the provision of public goods financed through rent-seeking, so also has the level of political corruption skyrocketed. Certainly, rent-seeking-conceptualized more primitively as corruption-has always been a well-known facet of the operation of Third World States [19]. In, *The State in Africa: The Politics of the Belly*, Francois Bayart echoes the political economy perspective of the relationship between access to the African state and economy. Bayart points out that access to the state are the means to accumulate wealth, and describe the state as being the area of "the politics-of-the-belly" (*la politique du ventre*) [16]. It is difficult to draw a clear distinction between the processes of private accumulation that take place both within and outside the state apparatus. The interlinkages and mutual dependencies are too numerous and multi-faceted. The accumulation process thus has not been smooth or cumulative, but often fragmentary and episodic. Without a firm, autonomous base of its own, without the security and social power that derive from property and the ownership of means of production, the aspirant bourgeoisie struggling to emerge out of the public sector has remained weak, hesitant, reluctant to take risks, unsure of its own long-term interests. Its insecurity had led it to rely on direct control of the state apparatus to keep in check any political and class challenges from below, over time stripping the government of any semblance of serving the public interest, exposing it instead as a crude instrument of class domination and advancement [38]. Theda Skocpol in *Bringing the State Back In: Strategies of Analysis in Current Research* [35], argued about how the early 1980s witnessed an upsurge of interests leading students of Latin America, Africa to examine the roles of state in constituting comprehensive political reforms, helping to shape national economic development, and bargaining with multinational corporations [35]. Concomitant to Skocpol's argument of the state as an actor or an institution to shape development, in Africa the state as an actor has also become a mechanism for the extraction of public resources for private gains by political elites/actors with authority to rule, accumulating public resources for their networks of patrons and clients. In Africa, the argument of the state as a critical actor helping to shape national economic development, and bargaining with international corporations has faced tremendous challenges due not only to colonial legacies but also the dysfunctional nature of building state institutions at both the national or local levels. The colonial period was largely instrumental in introducing modern western principles of official conduct and because colonialism had an undeniably powerful influence on political structures, policies and aspirations [39]. What many analysts describe as the growing "dysfunctionality" of the African state raises new questions about forces that have shaped, constrained, and compromised state power in the postcolonial context. What accounts for the "weakening of the African state and for forms of economic stagnation that belie expectations for dependent development? An important part of the answer lies in the analysis of how state power in Africa is grounded in societally based forms of power. Despite the images and the partial reality of externally imposed rule and rulers, the forms of domination and economic exploitation that have emerged in contemporary Africa have been shaped in decisive ways by the societies that rulers seek to govern [40]. The colonial experience contributed first to the emergence of a new idea of authority and the public service: authority no longer derived from the people, but came from above, was often illegitimate and exercised with brutality, and the public service offered significant opportunities for rapidly accessing material wealth and prestige [41, 42]. The overlapping of positions of power and the accumulation of wealth, already documented for the pre-colonial, intensified during the colonial period, in particular among the native collaborators [26]. The fact that the imposition of state control over colonized society was based on local patronage networks will have paved the way...to an unprecedented privatization of public privileges and the socialization of the arbitrary [43, 44]. The purpose is not to 'blame' wicked colonial rulers for corrupting innocent, but rather to address the varying mixture of impositions and rewards, constraints and opportunities, which made the state in Africa the focus of aspiration without engendering any widespread sense of loyalty or legitimacy [39]. Economic indicators of African states development from the early late 1960s to the present have received mixed reviews (successes and failures of African states development) with some African scholars such as Pierre Englebert arguing that African states' development have shown substantial variance. Englebert, "*State Legitimacy and Development in Africa*" 2000, argues that having established that states behave in significantly different ways according to their level of historical legitimacy, it is possible to estimate the actual impact of legitimacy on economic growth, partly as mediated through its effects on state capacity-in other words, to assess how much faster legitimacy states grow, keeping other relevant factors constant. In Africa, as elsewhere deficits of state legitimacy reduce political allegiance and weaken the power of the ruling elites, therefore raising the political returns of neo-patrimonial over development leadership [45]. A 2012 Joint Statement drafted by David Booth and Ole Therkildsen held in Copenhagen following discussions among researchers from five research programs stresses that African countries need economic transformation, to sustain pro-poor growth, to cope with population increases to become competitive in the global economy and-last but not the least-to create the conditions for better governance. The report stresses further that at first glance, Africa appears to be on the right track. For example, in a 2010 book *Emerging Africa: How 17 countries are leading the way*; Steven Radelet argues that many African economies have been growing

fast since the mid-1990s owing to the spread of democracy; improved policy-making; and the emergence of new political leaders who increasingly work together with donors. Such optimistic views are now becoming the new conventional wisdom about sub-Saharan Africa. They are appealing, because they reinforce the assumptions we all like to make good things together. The drafters of the report disagree stating “While economic growth in 17 countries is impressively high it is typically driven by natural resource exploitation, tourism and other services. This type of growth can happen without economic transformation-by which we mean a diversification of economic activities and livelihoods arising from improvements in the productivity of land and labor, and an increase in the technological capabilities of national firms and farms. Growth in itself does not pull masses of people out of poverty; poverty-reducing potential of growth depends on the type of economic activities driving that growth. And without economic transformation, spurts of high growth are unlikely to be sustained [46]. Such a varying degree of economic assessment of the political economy of development in Africa attest to the overall questions raised about the overall character of African states and their autonomies as instrumental actors, whose natures and impacts on interventions in society can shape institutional structures and bring about the necessary reforms in the post-colonial era. The arguments about African states capability to especially extract resource to bring about the much needed development stems from the imbalance results in available economic resources versus the levels of development and the successes and failures of development strategies pursued by the various African states. The lack of uniform or rather pessimistic view of the African states’ character from the political economy perspective culminates into various debates and theorizing of the African state. Emphasis in this paper is placed on the corrupt African state as an arena for the extraction of public resources for private gains.

The Theory of the Corrupt African State

The neo-patrimonial colonial legacies of the imposition of state control over colonized society, the generalized informal functions of the state in the areas of legal and regulatory texts and political declarations [47], and the varying degrees of the historical economic successes and failures of the political economy perspective of African states’ development raises concerns about how the character of the African state, as an instrumental actor, can bring about the necessary economic transformations. If the recent historical experience of Africa has guaranteed the political and economic centrality of the state, it has also shaped the way in which the machinery of government functions [39]. The centrality of the state as the instrumental actor, whose natures and impacts on interventions from the political economy perspective contributes to debates about theorizing on the African state. Attempts to theorize on the state and for that matter the African state based on the activity that state always perform and none that they have never performed, requires posing the following questions: Does a theory of the state require a theory of state failure? Who are the principals and who are the agents in the activities that states undertake? Are the principals restricted to state managers or do they include top advisors and other direct sources of policy inputs? Likewise, where does the boundary lie between (a) state managers as principals and (b) state employees as routine agents or executants of state programs and policies? [20]. Any attempt to answer these questions is to recognize an important element of theorizing on the African state concerns its hypertrophied character. In an extensively quoted article, Larry Diamond [48] defined the typical African state as a swollen state characterized by disproportionate development of the parastate sector following the nationalization of foreign companies established during the colonial period and by excessive expansion in terms of administrative personnel. According to Diamond the larger the state-the greater the proportion of resources it controls and economic activity it regulates-the greater will tend to be the level of political corruption [46]. The African states’ character also contributed to theorizing of the state as ‘The Politics-of-the-Belly State [48, 49]; The Predatory State [50-53], Rentier State [54, 55, 40]; the Shadow State [56-58]; the Warlord State [57, 59, 30]; the Class State [61-66, 56-67]; the development State [17, 37, 70, 59, 71-74]; the privatized State [75, 59, 76, 77]; the resource state [78, 79, 80-83]. Critically important to this paper is the theory of the corrupt African state. The theory of the corrupt African state by definition examines the character and policies of African governments where the state serves as the arena for corruption. Any reference to the character of the state as an arena for corruption is in reference to the institutions that comprise the state such as the political executive, legislature, judiciary, army, police, and public administration. For a few nations this hidden arena is only of marginal importance and, although worth of study, would not appreciably change an evaluation based on what takes place in public [84]. In Africa and elsewhere, it is the distribution of political power which serves to focus and structure corruption. Like interest group activity, corruption is often a remarkably good indicator of where political and administrative decisions are actually, as opposed to formally, made. Those seeking to influence or corrupt the political process are necessarily attracted to, and are dependent upon politicians, officials, judges with the power to make binding discretionary decisions. In a corrupt polity, the absence or triviality of corruption in particular institutions or processes can usually be regarded less as a sign of exemplary and unusual integrity than as a positive indication of political impotence. Abstinence or celibacy are perhaps less commendable when there is little or no respect of temptation. Thus, to serve that legislative corruption is less notorious than other forms in Africa is to say more about the role of legislatures than it is to say anything about corruption. Where legislatures exercise control over the process and content of law-making and where individual legislators can galvanize bureaucracy and redress constituency grievances, one would expect, as in the United States, to find relatively high incidence of legislative corruption. But the role of the legislatures in Africa has generally diminished and they have largely succumbed to the increasing power of executive government [39]. The institutional features in many of Africa’s majoritarian regimes in the executive-legislative relations

shows an executive dominating the legislature compared to a consensus model where there exists balance of power in executive-legislative relations. Robert Williams discusses the African state as an 'import-export agency' with its attendant problems of smuggling, shortages and currency manipulation. Where state enterprises dominate much of the formal economy, it becomes a way in which the private sector (domestic or foreign) can influence or evade policies. A number of writers, noting the centrality of the state and the prevalence of corrupt practices in most African societies, have examined corruption as an integral element in relations of political power, in which state property and jobs are allocated to ethnic or political supporters in intricate and sometimes far-reaching networks of patron-client relations. It is difficult to draw a clear distinction between the processes of private accumulation that take place both within and outside the state apparatus. The interlinkages and mutual dependencies are too narrow and multi-faceted. Party politicians offer security from official investigations, traders provide outlets for embezzled funds, cabinet ministers' accord monopoly favors to their select clients. Thus alongside instances of fierce competition there also exists much solidarity of the privileged, marking in at least some countries the early stages of a more distinct bourgeoisie-in-formation that is becoming of its interests as a class [38]. The effective impotence of the state is partly disguised or camouflaged by the weakness or even absence of countervailing forces or organizations. In most cases, political competition takes place almost entirely within the ruling civilian or military faction. Others forms of competition are precluded or discouraged by coercing or co-opting potential opponents, by creating one-party states, by emasculating or absorbing trading unions and professional organizations or by controlling or harassing the press [39]. On foreign influence, solidarities are extended to external economic actors including multinational corporations which may establish triangular partnerships with local middlemen and corrupt state officials in search of lucrative investments opportunities and new networks arrangements that materially benefits all those immediately involved, but often at the expense of national development [38]. Hence, the African state has become a vehicle for the privatization of state institutions for the plundering of natural resources for the development of African states' economies [50]. Bayart *et al. Criminalization of the African*, 1999, question aid donors assertions in the early 1990s of the advent of market-based democracies south of the Sahara, merits of good governance and an emerging African market hypothesizing that "In material terms, [this evolution], if it were to be confirmed, appears to be based on the occupation of the most dubious niches of international economic activity (various forms of trafficking, including of drugs; and the dumping of toxic waste, for example) and the unregulated exploitation of the mineral, oil, and wildlife resources of the sub-continent. Politically, it seems to take the form of the radical privatization of the state, the criminalization of the behavior of power holders, and even the transformation of factional struggle...into armed conflict, as has happened in Chad, Uganda, Angola and Liberia. Given the pre-eminence of the state in African politics and society, it is hardly surprising that there seem to be few alternative means of achieving individual or group goals and little prospect of calling government to account for its conduct of public affairs [50]. The dominance of African states' institutions in the formal economy which has contributed to theorizing of the corrupt African state, which according to researchers such as Harsch and Williams, serves as an arena where state property and jobs are allocated in solidarities to domestic and foreign influences has led Sarassaro to point to the importance of viewing corruption as an international phenomenon, in which there exist not only corrupt officials in Africa and other regions of the South, but also corrupting states in the North [38]. In conclusion, the political economy perspective of the theory of corrupt African state, where the state, an instrumental actor serving as the arena, where public officials extract public resources for both domestic and foreign solidarities requires that an effective way to study political corruption in Africa is to go beyond the principal-agent and institutional corruption models by providing alternative explanations to tackling political corruption as a development issue with emphasis on the extractive theory of political corruption. Due to the nature and character of the African state as an instrument for public officials to use state institutions to extract resources public resources for the private gains, attention should be paid to foreign institutions, that benefits most from political corruption, serving as counterparts and safe havens for looted and illicit transfers of public resources.

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