

A Critical Analysis of the Debate on State Failure in Africa

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Abstract

The focus of this study is to critically examine the Western debate on State failure in Africa. Western research Institutes and Agencies such as the Freedom House Annual Survey, the Fund for Peace Index and the World Bank Governance Matters have come to the conclusion that most African States have failed in the discharge of their statutory responsibilities. This is because they are unable and incapable of sustaining democratic institutions and protecting the lives and property of their citizens. As a qualitative research, data collected was through primary and secondary sources. The primary sources included discussions and interviews, while the secondary sources was literature review, Newspapers, official Bulletins and magazines. It was discovered that the State failure debate did not take into consideration Africa's Colonial and neo-Colonial experiences. Also the policy implication of this project is to ensure that the continent's political economy is within the control of the global capitalist system. We, therefore, recommend that African leaders should not be bothered about this development, but be concerned about the provision of good governance and human security.

Keywords: human security, state failure, global capitalist system, colonialism, prebendalism

1. Introduction

Africa's contact with the West indubitably created a condition of permanent contradictions and crises. The Atlantic slave trade of the fifteenth century and the epoch of colonialism did not lay a foundation for development. Rather, it precipitated a lingering bloody conflict, exploitation without redress and unrestrained appropriation of resources. This ignoble situation was ardently justified with a pseudo-scientific ideology of racism (Yeboah, 1997). Colonial incursion into Africa is the root of the continent's underdevelopment. The abolition of the Atlantic slave trade in the late nineteenth century coincided with the peak of European industrial revolution. The industries needed raw materials for the production of goods and foreign market. Following the industrial revolution in Europe, the needs of Europeans for regular external sources of agricultural and mineral materials for the new industries became acute.

The European states also desired foreign sources of food for feeding their increasing population and foreign markets; for the sake of their new industrial products, and the investment of their increasingly industrialized capital (Nnoli, 1978: xii). Lenin (1975) noted that colonial imperialist penetration and destruction of African political economy was in accordance with the exploitative and aggressive logic of expansion of capitalist production. Therefore, African experience was inevitable. The contradictions of capitalist production in Europe reflected in mass unemployment, desire for raw materials, under consumption and market to sell the industrial goods led to the scramble for Africa. This was moderated by the historic Berlin conference of November, 1884-1885 convened by Otto Von Bismarck of Germany. The General Act of the Powers of Berlin called for free trade and navigation rights for the merchants of all the powers (Okolo, 1987:15). It is against this backdrop that we can summarize that, the reason for the European scramble cannot be found in Africa and South East Asia but rather in the combination of the economic, social and political forces operating in Europe... (Uweche, 1991: 170). Extant literature such as Nkrumah (1963), Ake (1981), Lenin(1975), Aboribo (2012) and Rodney (1972) point to the common conclusion that *colonialism in Africa*, was to all intents and purposes not for the socio-political empowerment and benefit of Africans, but solely to tap the continent's natural wealth. The main colonizing powers such as Britain, Belgium, France, Germany and Portugal ensured a system of administration which facilitated the achievement of their colonial

mission and vision. This was through a colonial psychology that subjected Africans to ignoble status. The French policies of Assimilation and Association, and the Paternalistic programmes of Belgium and Spain were all geared towards the psychological humiliation and debasement of anything African. Africa was seen as a continent endowed with pre-logical mentality (Diop, 1974:24). These assumptions did not reflect African reality nor a result of objective study, but a

...process by which the colonizers attempted to create colonized societies and peoples who were politically disempowered, culturally defeated and programmed to feel inferior and deserving of domination (Falola, 2002:465).

The logic of psychological colonization was to defeat the self-pride and esteem of the African and this ultimately hastened the internalization of an inferiority complex. This socialization process upheld western contributions to knowledge as incontrovertible and absolute. Therefore, they have the manifest destiny to extend their skills and epistemological success to the backward races of the world. This was the alibi for the mindless disarticulation of Africa's pre-colonial and social formations. Marx(1986) noted that, the history of this disarticulation is written in the letters of 'blood and fire'. The advancement and expansion of the colonial agenda was through the colonial state. The colonial state was overtly interventionist, monopolized extra-legislative, judicial and executive authority. Whatever populist policy and programmes that were introduced was to cushion the environment for the acceptance of capitalist ethic and build an 'outwardly oriented economy' (Ekekwe, 186:32). The aftermath was that African economy acquired a dependent and an incoherent character. Ake(1981:38) noted that:

...colonialism brought about development; it was a very haphazard development, the development of enclaves which bore little relation to the other areas of the economy. The African economies became incoherent, incapable of auto centric growth, and dependent. The net effect of all this was that the escape route of the African economy from primary production was blocked.

With the forceful introduction of cash crops and western mannerism in all spheres of life, particularly in trade and commerce, taxation, education and marketing boards, Africa became a victim of imperialist contraption, responding to the dictates and whims of metropolitan Europe. Thus:

the capitalist penetration of African economies created some fundamental affinities between the African economy and that of the colonizing power. The controlled development in the interest of the metropole, which along with the expansion of colonial trade, meant structural links and structural interdependence (Ake, 1981:36).

This merciless exploitation of Africans should not be a source of worry because 'the origin of colonization is nothing else than enterprise of industrial interests, a one-sided and egoistic imposition of the strong upon the locale' (Nkrumah, 1973:19). One important instrument through which colonialism firmly entrenched itself in Africa, was through western education. It was also the ideological arsenal of the colonial state that greatly facilitated the acceptance of the capitalist assumption as natural and infallible. In all honesty, it was not programmed for any mental emancipation, self-assertiveness, but alienated the recipients from their immediate environment. This hastened the quick emulation of western capitalist ethic anchored on possessive individualism. While colonial education was preparing Africans to display 'upright characters' and unquestionably internalize western philosophy of life, it was unwittingly laying a foundation for its extinction. It was the forces unleashed on the colonies that galvanized Africans to a common action. This was the genesis of the nationalist movements in the 1940s. It emerged to assert African dignity, demand for self-rule, and out rightly debunk western superiority. In fact, this was taken for granted as it was assumed that with the granting of political independence all things would automatically take shape. By the 1940s, when nationalist activities reached an appreciable crescendo, European colonialists decided to incubate a class that will protect their imperial interest and legitimize their colonial continuity. This was the beginning of neo-colonialism. As Nkrumah (1973:316) opined, 'neo-colonialism is the worst form of imperialism. For those who practice it, it means power without responsibility and for those who suffer it, it means exploitation without redress'.

Through a neo-colonialist strategy, an effective penetration and control of African political economy was guaranteed. After all 'imperialism knows no law beyond its own interests' (Nkrumah, 1973:15). The 1960s heralded the emergence of African states into statehood. It was a symbolic victory of the nationalist movement directed by the nascent bourgeois class. It was this class that inherited the paraphernalia of governance from the departing colonialists. But by the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, African States were adjudged to have failed,

collapsed or weak by Western Agencies and Institutes.

2. Statement of the Problem

Since the failure of the United States of America military adventure in Iraq, Somali and the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack, there has been a heightened academic interest on the state failure debate. Interestingly, Africa is the focus of this project. It cannot be disputed that some socio-political problems do not flourish in the continent, but one is greatly apprehensive about the imperialist and policy implications of this project. Therefore,

- i. Why are the African States adjudged to have failed in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries?.
- ii. Why is the interest on State failure debate prominent after the incident of September 11, 2001 in the USA.
- iii. Why are Western Agencies and Research Institutes mainly concerned about State failure in Africa?

2. Objective of the Study

The main objective of this study is to critically examine the Western debate on State failure in Africa. The specific objectives are to;

- i. examine the objectivity of the state failure debate in Africa
- ii. examine its policy implications in Africa.
- iii. Show that it is part of the neo-colonial strategy to keep the continent in perpetual bondage.

3. Significance of the Study

The study is significant because of the following reasons,

- i. African crises cannot be understood without a comprehension of the continent's historical experience.
- ii. The policy implication of the State debate project is to deepen the continent's political economy into the global capitalist orbit;
- iii. The state failure debate is aimed at strengthening the firm grip of the industrialized countries on the global political economy which is part of their manifest destiny to rule the world.

4. Literature Review

There is a burgeoning interest in State failure, State collapse and weakness. This has given rise to a legion of literature. In fact, it is gradually becoming one of the 'urgent questions of the twenty-first century' (Rotberg, 2003:1). In this paper, we shall be concerned with State failure. Since the post WWII, States have increased tremendously in dimension and responsibility. They now constitute the building blocks of global stability. In 1914, in the wake of the decline of the Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian empires, there were fifty-five recognized nation polities. In 1919, John (2008:2) noted that there were

were fifty-nine nations. In 1950, those number reached sixty-nine. Ten years later, after the attainment of independence in much of Africa, ninety were nations. After many more African, Asian and oceanic territories had become independent and after the demise of the Soviet Union, the number of nations increased dramatically to 191. East Timor's independence in 2002 brought that total to 192.

The independence of South Sudan in 2011 brought the community of States to 193. States share equal status and saddled with onerous responsibility to protect their territory and the wellbeing of their citizens. Social contract theorists like Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679), John Locke (1632-1704) and J.J. Rousseau (1712-78), among others agreed that the civil society (state) had the capacity to make people freely pursue their affairs without any social encumbrance. According to Locke(1924)

the great and chief end of men's uniting to commonwealth and putting themselves under government is the preservation and protection of their property. The purpose of government was to secure human entitlements and ensure lives, liberties and the material possessions of all human beings.

Locke (2004) also posited that any government that derails in the performance of these social obligations should be dissolved and new one set up. In this case, popular welfare becomes a necessary condition that must be pursued by all governments. It was the Treaty of Westphalia of 1648 and the Montevideo Convention on the Rights and Duties of States of December 26, 1933 signed in Uruguay that further strengthened the powers and duties of the state. The state assumed an international personality with powers and sovereignty to protect its people and territorial boundaries. Article 1 states that the state as a person of international law should possess the following qualifications; (a) a permanent population, (b) a defined territory, (c) government; and (d) capacity to enter into relations with other states, government, constitution. These international Instruments gave the state the absolute right of self-determination, equality and the right of non-interference into their affairs. Marxist scholars are in agreement that the State is a historical creation mainly for the protection of private property. Hence, it will 'wither away'.

the state ... is in fact, the supreme coercive power in any given political society, but it is in fact used to protect those who own its instruments of production. The state expresses a will to maintain a given system of class-relations (Laski, 2004:111).

State power is important because of its influential utility. It has the capacity to influence people's behaviour through the authoritative allocation of values. As a goal-oriented institution, it is the basis of all the security, all rights and privileges in a society. State power, therefore, is the basis of all livelihoods. Thus state power must be greater than other powers if it is to be effective otherwise, other competing forces of power may severally interfere with its usefulness (Dukor, 2003:17). The all-powerful nature of the state has made it a prized institution in the society, and it is not uncommon that every political player wants to identify with it.

5. What is State Failure?

From the above we can see that a State as a political institution was not created to perform some very essential duties in the society, mainly the protection of life and property. State failure, therefore, is the inability of a State to fulfil its historical responsibilities. It is failure to promote human flourishing, reflected in a lack of capacity or a lack of political will, failure to provide public goods to their entire population rather than favouring one or other particular segment of it (Williams, 2000:3). It is an abdication of the responsibilities to promote and protect the Westphalian principles. Among others, these principles include,

- The right to monopolize control of the instruments of violence,
- The sole right to tax citizens
- The prerogative of ordering the political allegiances of citizens and enlisting their support in war.

A failed state, therefore, connotes a demonstration of incompetence and weakness to promote a good life arising from non-provision of the basic needs, and the fundamental tasks of a nation- state in a modern community. The aftermath, is State susceptibility to a high degree of dysfunction and vulnerability to competing and centripetal forces. In this situation, the State gradually degenerates and clings to primordial parochialism of ethnicity and other sectional interest for survival. Therefore, a failed state is a state under duress, incapable of performing the core functions with a 'development in reverse'. Some of the salient factors responsible for state failure included, but not limited to inability to control their borders, 'regimes prey on their own constituents, 'the growth of criminal violence', 'flawed institutions', and 'limited quantities of other essential political goods'(Rotberg,2003). 'The official authorities in a failed state face two or more insurgencies, varieties of civil unrest, different degrees of criminal discontent, and a plethora of dissent directed at the State and at groups within the state' (Rotberg,2003:). Wolff (2005) opined that it is 'the process of the gradual loss of de jure sovereignty, implies an inability of State institution to enforce a monopoly on the legitimate use of force visa-vis an existing population and across the entire territory within the internally recognized boundaries of a State. In a nutshell, a State can be said to have failed when it is utterly incapable of sustaining itself as a member of the international community. In the same vein, Zartman(1995) also stated that State failure 'occurs when the basic functions of the State are no longer performed as well as referring to a situation where the structure, authority (legitimate power), law and political order have fallen apart'. When a state is incapable of sustaining itself, it becomes a threat to international public stability. As the Political Instability Task Force stated 'state failure is an instance where central State authority collapsed for several years' (John, 2008:6). Based on the above definitions, African States were adjudged to have failed because they lost the capacity to fulfil the essential functions of a Westphalian State. While it may be true that Africans states have shown signs of State failure, nevertheless there is a lacuna in this assertion. This is because the State failure debate did not

address the colonial distortions and the imperialist domination in the continent. It also did not examine the effect of globalization on African political economy.

6. Theoretical Framework

The appropriate theory for this paper is Marxist Political Economy. This is has the, 'vital and important tool for understanding African politics and society(Shraeder,2004:112). Ake (1981) noted that the theory gives insight into the dynamics of the social world and treat problems concretely rather than abstractly. Radical or Marxist political economy is built on the foundation of dialectical and historical materialism. Dialectical materialism is hinged on the fact that the dialectical process in the material conditions of life gives rise to development. Therefore, development is a precipitate of social relations in the production process. This is not abstractly or metaphysically determined. After all, life is not determined by consciousness, but consciousness by life (Peek and Hartwick, 1999: 92). This is the essence of political economy which deals with the development of production relations in the interconnection with productive forces and the superstructure (Avsenev, et al 1985:15). An important aspect of this method is the historical materialism. History is made not through the manipulation and influence of some unseen forces, but through a dialectical process of production of material values. It is this process that explains the laws of the society's transition from one form of production to the other (Ilyin and Molyler, 1986:115). The materialist conception of history is anchored on the fact that the determining fact in history is the production and reproduction of real life. We make history, but in the first place, under very definite assumption. Among them the economic ones are ultimately decisive (Tucker, 1978:761). It is against this backdrop that Engels(1978:180-1) opined that 'political economy is essentially a historical science. It deals with a material which is historical that is, constantly changing; it must investigate the special laws of each individual stage in the evolution of production and exchange'. Political economy also studies and uncovers the impact of the productive system and economic structure on the social, cultural, political and other activities within the society (Thomas, 2010:23). The holistic foundation of this theory prompted Marx(1984:20) to declare that:

My enquiry led me to the conclusion that neither legal rules nor political forms could be comprehended whether by themselves *or on* the basis of a so-called general development of the mind, but that on the contrary they originate in the material condition ...that the anatomy of this civil society, has to be sought in political economy.

In this scenario, economic categories such as wage, price, and profit are treated as theoretical expression of historical relations of production, corresponding to a particular stage of development in material production (McLellan, 1980:184). The relevance of this theory to the study is that it exposes the imperialist undertone of the State failure debate. It will also expose the ardent desire by western countries, particularly the United States of America to protect their capitalist interest in Africa. More important is the fact that the theory lays emphasis on the historical foundation of a social phenomenon for an objective comprehension. Therefore, Africa's historical past will objectively examined to understand its present epoch.

7. The Nature and Structure of States in Africa

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), World Bank Governance Matters, the Freedom House Annual Survey and the Fund for Peace Index all declared that Africa is on the path of State failure. The 2008 World Bank Governance Matters which measured six governing dimensions between 1996 and 2007 noted that Africa is at the global centre of state failure. This is largely because it accommodated eight of the world's 20 least accountable territories, nine of the 20 most politically unstable and potentially violent territories, 13 of the least effective governments, eight of the 20 territories with the worst regulatory quality, 12 of the 20 territories where the rule of law was weakest and 11 of the 20 territories least able to control corruption (Williams, 2005:8). According to Lund (2009:14):

...using the criterion of being in the most failed group on at least two indexes, thirty-nine countries in the world are failed or at the risk of failure, or about twenty percent of the world's recognized States. Africa has the highest concentration by far with twenty-eight followed by Asia with six, Middle East three, and Caribbean with one.

This pale performance was re-enacted in the 2008 failed state index; computed by the Foreign Policy Magazine, and

the Fund for Peace (FFP). Among others, it noted that 'Africa was home to 22 of the world's 40 most failing states'. It is also important to mention that between 2005 and 2012 when FFP started publishing its failed state index; African countries have consistently occupied the topmost positions with Somalia coming tops in five years - 2008 to 2012. Ivory Coast came tops in 2006 out of 78 countries, and in 2007 Sudan took over. Surprisingly, Nigeria noted for its petrodollars from oil and gas occupied the 19th position in 2008, 15th position in 2009 and 14th position from 2010 to 2012. The conclusion of Western based Agencies to the effect that Africa contains the incubus of failure is based on infectious corruption, and loss of Statehood. This suggests an inability to

...provide that political good Security-to prevent cross-border invasion and infiltrations, and any loss of territory, to eliminate domestic threats, to or attacks upon national order and Social structure, to prevent crime and related dangers to domestic human security, and to enable citizens to resolve their disputes with the State and with their fellow inhabitants without recourse to arms or other forms of physical coercion (Rotberg, 2003:3).

While it is indubitable that State failure is not peculiar to Africa it '... is arguably more widespread, deeply rooted and pressing here than any other continent' (Williams, 2010:7). This accounts for its 'politics of belly' (Bayart, 1989), 'politics of Chaos' (Kaplan, 1994), 'disorder as political instrument' (Chabal and Daloz, 1999), prebendalism, neo-patrimonialism, and home to the world's most repressive regimes. Consequently, the continent is now portrayed as the most single risk in the global political order. Nigeria considered as the Giant of Africa was on the cusp of failure from the 1990s. This was because of its socio-political crises and insurgencies reflected in the activities of Niger Delta Militants and Boko Haram. According to Rotberg(2003:17).

Nigeria is a democracy under President Olusegun Obasanjo, but the historic rivalries between the east and west, south and north oil states and non-oil provinces, Christian and Muslim Communities, democracies and autocrats, and soldiers and citizens that bedevilled Africa's most populous State Since independence in 1960... are still there, seething below a surface calmed or smoothed by the presence of Obasanjo. Military dictators could re-emerge, inter-communal conflict could readily reoccur, and the north-south divide could once again become an obstacle to strengthening a State already softened by economic confusion, continued Corruption, and mismanagement... competition during the national election in 2003 could readily loosen the already faltered ties that keep Nigeria whole.

By 2013, Boko Haram has killed more than 12,000 people in Nigeria. According to the Global Terrorism Index of 2015, it was the deadliest terrorist group, killing more than 6,400 people in 2014 Apart from Nigeria, the political activities of President Robert Mugabe and Siaka Stevens of Sierra Leone have placed their countries on the precipice of failure. Mugabe's governance antics is characterized by official high-handedness '... seriously corrupt rule having bled the resources of the state into his own pocket, squandered foreign exchange, discouraged domestic and international investment, subverted the courts, and driven his country to the very brink of starvation'(Rotberg,2003:23). In Sierra Leone, Stevens put his country into a grave circumstance where the law of the jungles became dominant and 'Institutions of Government were broken or corrupted. The State became illegitimate, and a civil war over the spoils, encouraged and assisted from outside, turned failure into a collapse' (Rotberg, 2003:12). Today, almost all African Countries are on the abyss of State failure. According to Williams(2010:8) during the early stages of the 21st Century, Africa has provided many of the usual suspects on the lists of the world's failure States. The legendary corruption and misrule that have dotted the political landscape of Africa confirms Fanon's (1980:141) assertion that in underdeveloped countries no true bourgeoisie exists, there is only a sort of little greedy caste, avid and voracious, with the mind of huckster, only too glad to accept the dividends that the formal colonial power hands out to it. This get -rich-quick middle class shows itself incapable of great ideas or of inventiveness. It is important to note that in December 1998, the Central Intelligence Agency's Directorate of Intelligence in 2000 declared China, Egypt, India, Israel, Philippines and Sierra Leone as failed States.

8. A Critical Analysis of the State Failure Debate

It is glaring that from the perspective of Western-oriented Scholars and Agencies, African States have failed because of their inability to fulfil the essential requirements of a State. While it cannot be doubted that Africa is facing some profound socio-economic and political crises. Nevertheless, they are not enough to determine the failure of a State. As

we noted earlier, Western liberal scholars have in the Westphalia Treaty of 1648 and the Montevideo Convention of 1933 stated the attributes of a State. Interestingly, the States that were seen to have failed by Western Institutes and Agencies like Sudan, Nigeria, Somalia, Angola and Mozambique and others still retain their attributes of statehood. They still have their government in place, not annexed by any state for losing their territorial jurisdiction. They still possess a constitution which regulates their internal and external affairs, and most importantly they are still invited to global meetings and their pronouncements are recognised under international law and the Charter of the United Nations Organizations. Some of the crises plaguing Africa can be located in the colonial past. Mommsen (1977; 124) opined that the colonial relationship persisted after the establishment of formal political independence. We, therefore, contend that the State failure index does not objectively mirror the reality on ground. They are largely 'based on state-centric, a historical and de-contextualized perspective' (Nay, 2013:338). As Iniesta (2012:1), noted 'our ideas of the African States which gained independence in the 60s is a very distorted one...'. A thorough examination of the literature will reveal that they are addicted to this epistemological distortion, whose analytical lens is focused on the Weberian and Westphalia conception of absolute State authority. This conception paid;

too much attention to national state entities compared with globalized interests, cross-border dynamics, local state holders and a wide array of (potentially conflicting) social structures, such as traditional authorities, community based groups and informal economy networks (Nay, 2013:337).

The discourse on State failure in the continent is not historically correct, because it completely ignored the inherent link between Africa's colonial experience and the present epoch of neo-colonialism. The systematic disarticulation and externalization of pre-capitalist social formations have combined to suffocate the continent's economic development, yet; the role played by western colonial powers, Bretton Woods institutions and development agencies, all of which should also be held accountable for the challenges currently facing poor and unstable countries were downplayed (Nay, 2013:336). This is extremely important because Marxist political economy is hinged on the fact that the objectivity of any phenomenon is assured when its historical foundation is examined. This is because the nature and character of social production of goods and services overtime affect that society. In this scenario, those who own and control the means of production use it to advance and consolidate a favourable status quo. It is not amazing therefore that Western Powers hiding under the State failure debate have wanted to achieve their ultimate agenda which is the control of the productive activity of the world, particularly Africa. Within the prism of Marxist political economy, to control African economy is to dominate its political economy.

Therefore, State failure debate becomes a veritable means to an end. This explains why Western position is not holistic, peripheral and one-sided. Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire and Siad Barre of Somalia distinguished themselves in their dictatorial tendencies. They had a quantum leap in the control of their country's resources and building a personality cult. Interestingly, these rulers were products of Western incubation and 'development assistance' in Africa. Mobutu became '...the personalist embodiment of natural leadership during the cold war, he deployed the largess of his American and other western patrons to enhance his personal wealth, his heightened stature over his countrymen' (Rotberg, 2003: 12). In Angola Jonas Savimbi UNITA's factional leader became USA's cornerstone to an anti-communist strategy in Southern Africa, and he fabulously benefited from Western arms and sale of illicit diamonds. This seamless relationship between African dictators and the West was justified because of the exigency of the Cold War. Somalia was colonized by four powers; Italy, Britain, France and Ethiopia with varying colonial experiences. At independence, it was pellucid that the 'Nine million people with a strongly cohesive cultural tradition, a common language, a common religion, and a shared history of nationalism...' (Rotberg, 2003:11), was yet to dismantle its colonial hangover. This led to the emergence of Barre in 1969, but the contradictions consumed him in 1991. Barre was backed by the Soviet Union and then the United States in the destruction of government and democracy, abused his citizen's human rights... (Rotberg, 2003:11). Therefore, to talk of state failure in Somalia without the evolution of its political economy is to look at appearances and not reality. Mommsen (1977:134) noted that 'the confusion in Somali and other African countries is a direct consequence of the forced integration of the third-world economies with those of the metropolis, which took place in colonial and imperial times, and the policy of establishing metropolitan bridgeheads in the peripheral countries'. There is a poor appreciation of the continent's political economy, myriad variations such as natural endowment, population size, capacity, and the need to satisfy donor agenda. After all, he who pays the piper must dictate the tune. Somali state failed in the 1980s and collapsed, while Nigeria, Sierra Leone collapsed in the 1990s. This is not only a fallacy but a hyperbolic presentation. Nigeria cannot be on the same development pedestal with other countries because of obvious differing strength, challenges and experience. Nigeria has consistently occupied the position of state failure index from 2010, 2012 and 2013. This is in spite of its resilience and noticeable achievements like the recent Food and Agriculture (FAO) Award for its commitment to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs),

and efforts to tackle the terrorist menace. The blame for Somalia's failure or any African State should be laid on the door step of Western imperialist agenda.

It is worth reminding ourselves that it was the big NGO's who called for military intervention on Somalia in 1991, in order to facilitate their humanitarian work, the result was twenty years of war... and mismanagement in the central, Southern region of the country making Somalia the official one and only truly 'failed state' (Iniesta, 2012:8).

Nay(2013:329) opined that 'their research agenda is policy-oriented. It is primarily responding to the donor community's desire...'. In essence, a failed state will attract less attention from donor agencies, and Western support, while sustenance of State will enjoy unlimited global aid. This lies the ideological underpinning of the whole exercise. It is, therefore, not out of place that many scholars see the emphasis on state failure as the resurgence of the theory of modernization, and a clarion call for 'a textbook application of western democracy...' (Iniesta, 2012:8). Africa must pass through the critical epoch threaded by the West to be considered a member of the modern community as in Rostow's *The Stages of Economic Growth. A Non-Communist Manifesto* (1991) and Fukuyama's *End of History and the Last Man* (1992). Today, 'Africa is constructed or reconstructed as a representation of the West's negative image, a discourse that simultaneously, valorises and affirms Western superiority and absolves it from its existential and epistemological violence against Africa' (Babawale, et al, 2011:264). This Eurocentric approach which denies the historical trajectories and cultural distinctiveness of Africa prompted Chandler (2006) to aver that, it has legitimized western policy options, standards and normative goals such as... security sector reform as the model of liberal market democracies (Nay, 2013:333), and given the impression that Africa's priorities and salvation lies in conforming with the conditions of capitalist globalization. Marx, K. et al (1961:18) stated that:

the bourgeoisie, by the rapid improvement of all instrument of production, by the immensely facilitated means of communication draws all, even the most barbarian nation into civilization... It compels all nations, on pain of extinction; to adopt the bourgeoisie mode of production it compels them to introduce what is civilization into their midst ... to become bourgeoisie themselves in one word, it creates a world after its own image.

The reliance on market democracies and openness to international trade is reminiscent of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (WB/IMF) dictated Structural Adjustment Programme(SAP). The cardinal policy of SAP is the unreserved adherence to free market orthodoxy. It is a known fact that the introduction of SAP in more than 33 African countries including Nigeria asphyxiated the continent's socio-economic vein in all ramifications. But this externally induced pressure was not considered in state failure analysis. Apart from the above, the activities of transnational organizations, especially those in arms trade and precious minerals were ignored. The criminal activities of warlords in the wars of Liberia (1989-2003), Sierra Leone (1990-2001) and Guinea Bissau was sustained because of what Michael Ross called 'booty futures'. The sale of 'Bloody diamond' and other minerals to Western countries earned the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) of Sierra Leone, and the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) the sum of \$25-75 million per annum, the Jonas Savimbi's National Union for the Total Liberation of Angola (UNITA) whose internal war 1991-2001 led to the death of 700.00 people also earned the sum of \$200-600 million per annum (Williams, 2012:83). Between 1992 and 1998 alone UNITA, was estimated to have acquired cumulative revenue of about. \$2-3.5 billion '(Williams, 2012:84). In fact, President Ronald Reagan gave Savambi a Presidential treat each time he visited the United States. It was his death in 2002 that brought some relative peace in Angola. The incidence of warlordism, drug and human trafficking and illicit trade, which are hallmarks of state failure do not occur in a vacuum. Rather, they are financed and propped through a covert network of transnational actors that are residing in strong States.

Therefore, in a globalized world, it would be wrong to assume that the factors causing political instability and extreme poverty in so-called (failed) countries are confined to their national boundaries (Nay 2013:334).

It is imperative to state that the current research upsurge on State failure in Africa is not reflective of the altruistic effusion of the United States of America (USA). Indeed, it is just to enhance and solidify their policy of adventurism and manifest destiny to dominate the world. Right from the Simnoli war of 1918, successive governments in the USA have come to the conclusion that they must lead the world, because as James Madison averred 'the United States was not the workshop of the world, but the workshop of liberty' (Coker, 1989:20). Standing on a Pax Americana platform, President Reagan in 1980 declared that 'our nation ... was commissioned by history to be either an observer of

freedom's failure or the cause of its success. We in this country, in this generation ... are by destiny rather than choice the watchman on the walls of world freedom' (Coker, 1919:28). This explains to a large extent the reason behind the much advertised war on terror. After all,

...the Americans have remained convinced that they are responsible for what happens in the world at large, that their country has the inherent right, a sort of modern Manifest Destiny to intervene in other countries internal matter (Coker, 1989:18).

This lies the capitalist-imperialist undertone of state failure project. Mommsen (1977:42) asserted that capital needs the means of production and the labour power of the whole globe for untrammelled accumulation. It cannot manage without the national resources and the labour power of all territories. It is, therefore, not surprising that the September 11, 2001 attack on USA which took them unawares was linked to state failure, and as an emerging threat to their global hegemony. State failure, became '... a major enabler of international terrorist networks and therefore became a key focus of both scholarly analysis' (Wolff, 2005:3). In the eyes of USA and European Policy makers, state failure is a security threat that must be nipped in the bud because of its capacity to be used to attack and undermine Western interest. According to Jack Straw, British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, 'we cannot but be concerned of the implication of the human rights and freedom of those who are forced to live in such anarchic and chaotic conditions'. In 1995, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) created the State Failure Task Force which noted that state failure is a type of serious political crisis exemplified by events that occurred in the 1990s in Somalia, Bosnia, Liberia, Herzegovina and Afghanistan. For the European Union's 2003 European Society Strategy, it is 'an alarming phenomenon'.

The National Security Strategy of the USA observed that 'it poses as great danger to our national interests as strong states' (Albert, et al 2011:9). The National Security Paper in 2002 stated that 'America is now threatened less by conquering States than (it is) by failing states'. It must be emphasized that the urgent need to protect the national interest of the West presided over by USA necessitated the 'global concern' and publicity on State failure. Why was the same level of concern not demonstrated in Rwanda, Samuel Doe's Liberia, Mobutu's Zaire and Barre's Somalia? The only plausible alibi is that the anarchic rule of these leaders did not threaten the entrenched interest of the world's hegemon. It is against this backdrop that Chomsky (2006:10) noted that the debate on State failure is an 'ideological invention' used to legitimize intrusive US foreign interventions and strengthen American supremacy in the world'. This can be gleaned from the President Clinton's unequivocal assertion that the USA can resort to 'unlimited use of military power' to ensure 'unlimited access to key markets, energy supplies and strategic resource'. This should not surprise anyone because Frank (1975:70) stated that, militarism thus far from being a 'domestic measure', is a global capitalist system-wide one. Lenin (1975:88) also declared that the capitalist divide the world, not out of any particular malice, but because the degree of concentration which has been reached forces them to adopt this method in order to obtain profits. It was this desire to control key markets of the world that precipitated the attack on Iraq, neo-colonial manipulation of the third world countries. It is important at this juncture to note that the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack on the USA has become a justification to bring the world within the political orbit of the United States and its allies. Through the instrumentality of the Patriot Act of 2001, War on terror and its Intelligence units, the USA has asserted its dominance on the world. In fact, General Carter Ham, Commander of the United States African Command, has consistently harped on the fact that a 'network of Al Qaeda and its affiliates' may increase threats to States and regional stability, and 'as each day goes by, Al Qaeda and other organizations are strengthening their hold in Northern Mali' (Campbell, 2012). While this revelation may not be disputed, but the imperialist and expansionist undertone of this cannot be wished away.

The commitment to good governance and security in Africa is only a euphemism to save 'capitalists everywhere', and as David Rumsfeld and Paul Wolfowitz noted '...maintaining the dominance of US armed forces was necessary to prevent the emergence of a rival power' (Campbell, 2012:5). After all, it was the US in the 1980s that supported Osama Bin Laden and his allies to fight against the Soviet Union. Once the Soviet Union was down out of Afghanistan, the US Intelligence services formed against their allies' (Campbell, 2012:10). Indeed, 'US government channelled to the Afghan rebels over the next decade between \$3 billion to \$6 billion' to fight the defunct Soviet Union. (Gasper, 2001:1). In fact, President Ronald Reagan proudly called the Mujahedeen freedom fighters. Curiously, one of those non-Afghans recruited to fight was Osama bin Laden. It is against this backdrop that we can discern the 'concern' of US and its allies on African failed States. It is a mission to create a political condition that would facilitate resource exploitation and imperial expansion considering the fact that 25 percent of oil consumed in the US comes from the continent. Finally, the concept presupposes a terminal point of development; an end state which all States must arrive at. This conception negates the principle of continuum in State formation. Therefore; state failure in Africa can be seen as the

manifestation of the twists and turns of State building. The fall of the Roman Empire, European revolutions and industrialization where all phases of State formation over long period of time. Africa cannot be an exception, especially with the unassailable forces of globalization frontally confronting it. According to John(2008:10),

rather than insist that States need to be pigeon-holed as successful or failed, this framework allows for an assortment of state effectiveness along a continuum where conflict and violence , far from an aberration of State formation and development are an integral part of these processes. In this perspective, it is possible to process violence, war and non-state challenge not only as both 'development in reverse'... but as both reflective of the political economy of State formation in less developed economies and as history attests, the extent to which such contestations have potential to be developmental.

9. Conclusion and Recommendations

Africa has suffered untold excruciating pain for many centuries. Colonial imperialism consolidated at the Berlin conference was expressly for the unmindful exploitation of the continent's natural resources. Little or no attempt was made to lay a foundation for sustainable development, and the training of people who will ensure its socio-economic and political efflorescence. Whatever was African was vilified, derogated and destroyed. At independence in the 1960s, the educated elite that took over from the colonialists also inherited the contradictions of the colonial order. But by 1990s and the beginning of the twenty-first century, many Western Agencies and Research Institutes declared most African States as failed . While it is a truism that African leaders are yet to fulfil the expectations of independence, it must be stated that the present crises plaguing the continent cannot be divorced from its exogenous connections. The fratricidal conflicts which cost the continent well over \$700 billion in damages since 2000 alone (Williams 2012:1), must be located within the matrix of global capitalist contradictions. Therefore, state failure without an examination of the continent's political history cannot be objective. The variations in colonial experience, natural endowment and political resilience directly define the character of political economy today. Unfortunately, those who pontificate on state failure in Africa have refused to advert their mind to these facts. They have dogmatically accepted the conclusion that unless the continent adopts a state centric developments approach, failure will become imminent. It is against this backdrop that we can surmise that the state failure project lacks an empirical validity, and cannot be relied upon. It is deceptive, misleading and a sophistry calculated to create a niche for unwanted meddlesomeness in the guise of official assistance. According to John, (2008:24):

the criminalization of the state and its associated corruption at all levels in Africa 'is less a sign of state failure' than a mechanism of social organization that has to be related to the specific historical experiences, cultural repertoires and political trajectories of the sub-continent through which political power is disseminated and wealth re-distributed.

This is why Iniesta(2012:11) opined that 'we need more information' less sensationalism and more confidence in Africa's resurgence'. Since the 'US security is threatened by 'failed states' (Chomsky, 2006:90), it connotes that Africa must conform to Western prescriptions or be attacked.

Nevertheless, African leaders must be pragmatic and resourceful in their efforts to erase the stigma of criminality, neo-patrimonialism and backwardness in the governance of their continent. We, therefore, suggest that they should ensure the promotion of human security by strengthening democratic institutions, and deepen good governance in the continent.

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