

Introduction

Competing Conceptions of Good Governance

Introduction

What is ‘good governance’? Who determines what is good and bad governance? What yardsticks are applied? And why are these yardsticks applied only to Africa?¹

Issa Shivji 2007

Good governance refers to the concept of ruling well, a broad aim to which we assume most, if not all, rulers are committed.² It is ‘essentially contested’³ and has been interpreted in radically different ways.⁴ The most famous of these interpretations, the one that put good governance on the map, so to speak, is the version developed in Washington by the World Bank at the end of the 1980s and subsequently adopted by the development industry as part of fiercely contested pro-market reforms. This *conception* of good governance – which I refer to variously as the good governance agenda and the international conception of good governance – was a response to contingent policy dilemmas and a particular ideological moment.⁵ Whilst it has been subject to internal

¹ Issa G. Shivji, “The Mo Ibrahim Prize: Robbing Peter to Pay Paul,” *The Citizen*, November 1, 2007, www.pambazuka.org/governance/mo-ibrahim-prize-robbing-peter-pay-paul.

² Governance, as defined by the World Bank means ‘the traditions and institutions by which authority in a country is exercised for the common good’, see: Daniel Kaufmann, Aart Kraay, and Massimo Mastruzzi, “The Worldwide Governance Indicators: Methodology and Analytical Issues,” SSRN Scholarly Paper (Rochester, NY: Social Science Research Network, September 1, 2010), 3, <http://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=1682130>.

³ W. B. Gallie, “Essentially Contested Concepts,” *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 56 (1955): 167–98; Antony Anghie, “Decolonizing the Concept of Good Governance,” in *Decolonizing International Relations*, ed. Branwen Gruffydd Jones (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006), 114, www.dawsonera.com/abstract/9780742576469.

⁴ Anghie, “Decolonizing the Concept of Good Governance,” 114.

⁵ Mamadou Dia, “A Governance Approach to Civil Service Reform in Sub-Saharan Africa” (The World Bank, 1993), <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/1994/06/698310/governance-approach-civil-service-reform-sub-saharan-africa>.

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debates,⁶ it broadly defines good governance as accountability, transparency and a clear divide between the public and private spheres.⁷ In certain times and places, rulers' aspirations to the concept of good governance in general have come to align with this more narrow, historical formation. This book considers such a moment of alignment when leaders in Yoruba-dominated southwest Nigeria and international development donors saw eye to eye. Through in-depth empirical study of how this particular conception of good governance was contested on the ground, this book responds to the call from the Nigerian political scientist, Raufu Abdul Mustapha, to 'rethink the good governance agenda'.⁸

To be precise, my aim is not to critique the good governance agenda – this has already been done⁹ – but to learn from the ways that this conception of good governance has been contested on the ground. My analysis takes seriously what Nigerian voters and politicians actually do in order to render unequal power accountable and transparent. Central to the politics of good governance in both theory and practice is the shifting emphasis given by different actors to its epistemic, social and material dimensions. Against a backdrop of donor policy and political ideology that foregrounds its epistemic dimensions – that is, the technocratic, knowledge-based requirements of good governance as a managerial exercise – this book argues for a renewed focus on governance as a socially embedded activity.

It is worth noting at the start that the advocates of the good governance agenda do not accept that their term is only one of a multitude of possible

⁶ M. Doornbos, "'Good Governance': The Rise and Decline of a Policy Metaphor?," *Journal of Development Studies* 37, no. 6 (August 2001): 93–108, <https://doi.org/10.1080/713601084>.

⁷ Rita Abrahamsen, *Disciplining Democracy Development Discourse and Good Governance in Africa* (London: Zed Books, 2000).

⁸ Abdul Raufu Mustapha, "Rethinking Africanist Political Science," in *The Study of Africa: Disciplinary and Interdisciplinary Encounters*, ed. Paul Tiyambe Zeleza, vol. 1 (Dakar: CODESRIA, 2006), 12.

⁹ Abrahamsen, *Disciplining Democracy Development Discourse*; Doornbos, "Good Governance"; Tara Polzer, "Corruption: Deconstructing the World Bank Discourse," *Development Studies Institute (DESTIN) Working Paper*, 2001, 01–18; Merilee S. Grindle, "Good Enough Governance: Poverty Reduction and Reform in Developing Countries," *Governance* 17, no. 4 (October 1, 2004): 525–48, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0952-1895.2004.00256.x>; Anghie, "Decolonizing the Concept of Good Governance"; Thandika Mkandawire, "Good Governance': The Itinerary of an Idea," *Development in Practice* 17, no. 4/5 (August 1, 2007): 679–81; Gerhard Anders, *In the Shadow of Good Governance: An Ethnography of Civil Service Reform in Africa*, Afrika-Studiecentrum Series (Brill, 2009), <https://openaccess.leidenuniv.nl/bitstream/handle/1887/18537/ASC-075287668-304-01.pdf?sequence=2>; Oluwakemi Damola Adejumo-Ayibiowu, "An Afro-Centric Critique of the Discourse of Good Governance and Its Limitations as a Means of Addressing Development Challenges in Nigeria" (PhD thesis, University of South Africa, 2018).

conceptions of good governance. For the practitioners, policy makers and consultants tasked with designing and implementing ‘governance reforms’, good governance represents the convergence on a set of distilled universal principles which can be applied anywhere.¹⁰ Whilst politics is open to disagreement, so the theory goes, governance is a technical matter that can be done better or worse regardless of the overall goals that that society chooses for itself.¹¹ To the extent that the good governance agenda designates certain political principles as ‘good’ or valuable, these are deemed to be so universal as to be beyond debate: accountability, transparency and a strict division between the public and private sphere.¹² Especially where governance is poor, even if we do not all agree on the details, the good governance agenda is said to provide a blueprint for improvement. Thus, in practice, good governance has been treated as an uncontroversial set of best practices which can and should be adopted by reform-minded leaders anywhere.

This is pure fantasy. By exploring the politics of good governance in southwest Nigeria from its pre-colonial institutions to the rapid transformations in the twenty-first century, we see that the good governance agenda is just one, highly specific and remarkably pro-market conception of what counts as good governance. Moreover, it relies on particular understandings of the state, the individual and democracy which by no means enjoy consensus, even in the countries that fund the international institutions like the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and bilateral institutions that have been instrumental in promoting the good governance agenda in poorer countries. Just as the World Bank’s ideas are but one possible way of thinking about good governance, the indigenous ideas of good governance through which donor ideas were refracted are only one of a number of competing conceptions of good governance in southwest Nigeria. There is no more one homogeneous, monolithic ‘African’, ‘Nigerian’ conception or even ‘Yoruba’ conception of good governance than there is a Western one or a British one. Indeed, that is why we have democracy, because we do not agree.¹³

¹⁰ Alison J. Ayers, “Beyond the Imperial Narrative: African Political Historiography Revisited,” *Decolonizing International Relations*, ed. Branwen Gruffydd Jones (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006), 158.

¹¹ Polzer, “Corruption: Deconstructing the World Bank Discourse.”

¹² Daniel Kaufmann, Aart Kraay, and Massimo Mastruzzi, “Governance Matters VIII: Aggregate and Individual Governance Indicators, 1996–2008,” Policy Research Working Paper, Development Research Group (Washington, DC: World Bank, June 29, 2009), <http://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=1424591>.

¹³ Issa Shivji warned against such a false impression of consensus on the desirable form of democracy in 1991. At a gathering of “leading African social science and legal scholars”

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This chapter introduces the broad conceptual assumptions behind much of the political science study of politics in Africa: that African political systems are dysfunctional because they are too embedded in social and material relations. It presents the good governance agenda's technocratic vision of how to fix African politics, situating this vision in a longer 'epistocratic' political tradition that emphasises the knowledge-based, epistemic dimensions of governance. Oyo State, southwest Nigeria, along nearby with Lagos and Ekiti, are then introduced as examples of 'home grown good governance states' where governance reforms were not imposed by donors through conditionality but actively adopted by the government itself. Thus, a study of the Lagos model of good governance in Oyo State presents a unique opportunity for re-evaluating the social, material and epistemic dimensions of good governance through tracing how a domesticated version of the good governance agenda was contested in electoral competition between 2011 and 2015. The chapter starts with a brief overview of the history of good governance in Nigeria, to contextualise some of the tensions and reference points that structured political competition during this four-year window. It then considers the methods and methodologies we can use to study competing conceptions of good governance and asks how an empirical study of politics 'on the ground' connects to more theoretical debates in political theory. It concludes with a summary of the three key ambitions of the book and sketches how these are addressed in the following chapters.

1 Theorising Good Governance

In terms of empirical scope, this book focuses on Nigerian politics after the return to democracy in 1999. Known as the Fourth Republic, it has been a time of great hope¹⁴ quickly followed by bitter

in Harare, most of the participants "agreed that democracy was the central question" but "their perspectives on democracy were different and even contradictory." Yet he feared that this "contradictoriness" was lost with the subsequent narrowing of the debate to constitutions and multi-partyism:

even the *perception* of the contradictory nature of perspectives on democracy may be disappearing, as one particular perspective presents and is presented as *the* perspective. (Issa G. Shivji, "Contradictory Class Perspectives in the Debate on Democracy," in *State and Constitutionalism: An African Debate on Democracy*, ed. Issa G. Shivji, 1st ed., Human Rights and Constitutionalism Series (Mount Pleasant: Harare, Zimbabwe: South African Political Economy Series (SAPES) Trust, 1991), 253, <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015034641350>.)

¹⁴ Dapo Olasebikan, *Democracy in Action: The South West Experience* (Lagos: WEPKOM, 2002).

disappointment.¹⁵ Whilst the battle for elections and civilian government had been won, by the early years of the twenty-first century, Nigerian political scientists decried elections as a ‘charade’¹⁶ and the dividends of democracy were in short supply. For the almost 50 per cent of Nigerians living in poverty,¹⁷ the 2004–14 boom did little to improve their socio-economic situation.¹⁸ With the country freed from dictatorship and the ready explanations for Nigeria’s woes in the increasingly distant past – namely, colonialism and structural adjustment – commentators and scholars started to identify the source of Nigeria’s ongoing dysfunction as something intrinsic and deeply rooted.

From the turn of the millennium, a profound pessimism increasingly took over the Nigerian public discourse. Whereas historically the opposite of good governance has been some politically defined structural force – whether colonial domination,¹⁹ or traditionalism,²⁰ or dependency on an unequal global economy,²¹ or even multi-party democracy²² – now the problem is seen as corruption born of the personal greed of politicians and ordinary citizens alike. Unlike earlier periods, there was scant critique of inequality as a product of capitalism itself, nor a platform for radically redistributive politics. Commentators struggled to identify an

¹⁵ Tukumbi Lumumba-Kasongo, “Preface,” in *Liberal Democracy and Its Critics in Africa: Political Dysfunction and the Struggle for Social Progress*, ed. Tukumbi Lumumba-Kasongo (London: Zed Books, 2013).

¹⁶ W. Alade Fawole, “Voting without Choosing: Interrogating the Crisis of ‘Electoral Democracy’ in Nigeria,” in *Liberal Democracy and Its Critics in Africa: Political Dysfunction and the Struggle for Social Progress*, ed. Tukumbi Lumumba-Kasongo (London: Zed Books, 2013).

¹⁷ Eniola Akinkuotu, “With 87m Poor Citizens, Nigeria Overtakes India as World’s Poverty Capital,” *Punch*, June 26, 2018, sec. News, <https://punchng.com/with-87m-poor-citizens-nigeria-overtakes-india-as-worlds-poverty-capital/>.

¹⁸ A. Carl LeVan, Matthew T. Page, and Yoonbin Ha, “From Terrorism to Talakawa: Explaining Party Turnover in Nigeria’s 2015 Elections,” *Review of African Political Economy* 45, no. 157 (July 3, 2018): 6, <https://doi.org/10.1080/03056244.2018.1456415>.

¹⁹ Nnamdi Azikiwe, “Respect for Human Dignity: An Inaugural Address Delivered by His Excellency Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief, Federation of Nigeria” (Government Press, November 16, 1960).

²⁰ Olufemi Taiwo, *Africa Must Be Modern: A Manifesto*, Paper back edition (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014).

²¹ Yusufu Bala Usman, “The Central Role of Corruption in a Dependent Capitalist Economy: The Nigerian Experience” (NISER Ibadan Fourth Distinguished Lecture Series, NISER Public Lecture, University of Lagos, Akoka, Lagos, Nigeria, May 5, 1983).

²² Jibrin Ibrahim, “The Political Debate and the Struggle for Democracy in Nigeria,” *Review of African Political Economy* 13, no. 37 (December 1, 1986): 38–48, <https://doi.org/10.1080/03056248608703698>; Jibrin Ibrahim, “Democratic Transitions in Africa: The Challenge of a New Agenda,” in *Democratization Processes in Africa*, ed. Chole Eshetu and Ibrahim Jibrin (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1995), 120–30.

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ideological component in political competition, conceptualising Nigeria's political landscape instead in ahistorical and apolitical terms.²³ Nigerian politics was seen as suffering from a quasi-moral sickness, part of a 'cancer of corruption' afflicting the whole African continent.²⁴ A book titled *Corruption in Nigeria* published in Port Harcourt in 2002 captures this profound sense of failure and resignation: whereas at Independence Nigeria had been 'a beacon of hope for the black race ... to boldly enter into the path of modernity', this sense of possibility had, the authors argued, been extinguished by 'militant materialism', 'avarice and self-destructive greed' and a 'culture of rabid accumulative instinct'.²⁵ More broadly, scholars argued that Nigerian political culture was a 'culture of corruption' in which even those who suffered from governance failures were complicit in 'everyday deception'.²⁶ What mattered under these circumstances was engineering a transformation from corruption to good governance. Whilst the tools of this transformation might be secular and bureaucratic, the shift itself would have to take place in the soul of Nigerian society.

This book does not endorse this account of Nigeria as rotten to the core. However, it is important to note that the dominant scholarly literature on politics in Africa in the 1990s and 2000s reinforced this pathologising self-image. Corruption was explained with reference to the 'neo-patrimonial'²⁷ nature of the Nigerian state, said to be the 'institutional hallmark'²⁸ and 'core feature'²⁹ of politics in Africa.

²³ Niyi Odebo, "Lack of Ideology, Bane of National Growth," *Punch*, September 23, 2013, www.punchng.com/news/lack-of-ideology-bane-of-national-growth/; Muideen Olaniyi, "Aso Rock, Government Houses Kill Politics of Ideology in Nigeria – Masari," *Sunday Trust*, September 15, 2013, <http://sundaytrust.com.ng/index.php/feature/58-sunday-interview/sunday-interview/14369-aso-rock-government-houses-kill-politics-of-ideology-in-nigeria-masari>.

²⁴ Elizabeth Harrison, "The Cancer of Corruption," in *Between Morality and The Law: Corruption, Anthropology and Comparative Society*, ed. Italo Pardo (Ashgate, 2004), 135–54.

²⁵ C. U. Akani, "Overview: Political Economy of Corruption in Nigeria," in *Corruption in Nigeria: The Niger Delta Experience*, ed. C. U. Akani (Enugu, Nigeria: Fourth Dimension Publishing, 2002), 2–4; C. U. Akani, *Corruption in Nigeria: The Niger Delta Experience* (Enugu, Nigeria: Fourth Dimension Publishing, 2002), iv.

²⁶ Daniel Jordan Smith, *A Culture of Corruption: Everyday Deception and Popular Discontent in Nigeria* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010).

²⁷ Atul Kohli, *State-Directed Development: Political Power and Industrialization in the Global Periphery* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 394–95.

²⁸ Goran Hyden, "The Governance Challenge in Africa," in *African Perspectives on Governance*, ed. Goran Hyden, Bamidele Olowu, and H. W. O. Okoth-Ogendo (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2000), 26.

²⁹ Michael Bratton and Nicolas van de Walle, "Neopatrimonial Regimes and Political Transitions in Africa," *World Politics* 46, no. 4 (1994): 459, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2950715>.

Neo-patrimonialism provided an academic framework for the anxieties and moral panics around corruption in post-structural adjustment Africa and became the World Bank's default concept for explaining African states' inability to perform proper governance functions.³⁰ In so doing, it contributed to an image of politics in Nigeria as devoid of substantive, let alone multiple and competing, visions of good governance. More importantly for this study however, the power of the neo-patrimonialism literature came from its ability to capitalise on and amplify deeply rooted assumptions about what good politics looked like and how power should be exercised. In the pro-democracy literature of the 1990s and 2000s, and the governance reform interventions they gave rise to, the diagnosis of neo-patrimonialism served as the flip side of the good governance agenda, the latter reflecting the same concerns in 'more diplomatic language'.³¹ The rest of this section revisits these two complementary terms and considers the underlying assumptions about politics, the state and society that they helped cement.

To practitioners and scholars working today, both these terms may sound a little dated. Neo-patrimonialism has been subject to extensive critique³² and attempted clarifications,³³ with even the scholars who championed its use quietly questioning its analytical worth.³⁴ So too, good governance is no longer the ubiquitous buzzword it was in the

³⁰ Brian Levy and S. Kpundeh, *Building State Capacity in Africa: New Approaches, Emerging Lessons*, World Bank Institute Development Studies (The World Bank, 2004), <http://elibrary.worldbank.org/doi/abs/10.1596/0-8213-6000-0>.

³¹ Al-Jurf Saladin, "Good Governance and Transparency: Their Impact on Development," *Transnational Law & Contemporary Problems* 9 (1999): 193.

³² Aaron deGrassi, "'Neopatrimonialism' and Agricultural Development in Africa: Contributions and Limitations of a Contested Concept," *African Studies Review* 51, no. 3 (2008): 107–33, <https://doi.org/10.1353/arw.0.0087>; Thandika Mkandawire, "Neopatrimonialism and the Political Economy of Economic Performance in Africa: Critical Reflections," *World Politics* 67, no. 3 (July 2015): 563–612, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S004388711500009X>.

³³ Gero Erdmann and Ulf Engel, "Neopatrimonialism Reconsidered: Critical Review and Elaboration of an Elusive Concept," *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics* 45, no. 1 (February 2007): 95–119, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14662040601135813>; Anne Pitcher, Mary J. Moran, and Michael Johnston, "Rethinking Patrimonialism and Neopatrimonialism in Africa," *African Studies Review* 52, no. 1 (2009): 125–56, <https://doi.org/10.1353/arw.0.0163>; Daniel Bach, "Patrimonialism and Neopatrimonialism: Comparative Receptions and Transcriptions," in *Neopatrimonialism in Africa and Beyond*, ed. Daniel Bach and Mamoudou Gazibo (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013), 25–45, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203145623>.

³⁴ Jean-François Médard, "L'État et le politique en Afrique," *Revue française de science politique* 50, no. 4 (2000): 854; Marianne Kneuer, Andreas Mehler, and Jonas Sell, "Conference Report: Neopatrimonialism, Democracy, and Party Research: The German and International Debate – In Remembrance of Gero Erdmann (1952–2014)," *Africa Spectrum* 50, no. 2 (August 25, 2015): 113–23.

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1990s and 2000s: as early as 2001, scholars were writing of its ‘decline’.³⁵ New terms like ‘politically smart locally led’ development³⁶ and political-economy analysis have looked set to take its place.³⁷ However, both good governance and neo-patrimonialism were central to donor and scholarly studies of Nigeria in the period under study (1999–2015)³⁸ and both remain part of the ‘common sense’ regarding governance in Africa. Over thirty years on from the World Bank’s original *Governance and Development* pamphlet,³⁹ the Council of Europe,⁴⁰ the Brookings Institution⁴¹ and the British Institute of Directors⁴² all made public statements about the importance of good governance. In each case, the term had different inflections and was used variously to refer to corporate leadership, regulatory structures in Europe and pro-poor growth in Africa. Similarly, despite extensive critique, the term ‘neopatrimonialism’ retains a central place in the vocabulary of the study of politics in Africa: the first chapter in the 2019 Routledge Handbook of Democratisation in Africa is ‘Neopatrimonialism and Democratisation’.⁴³ A recent article touting ‘innovations to the literature on administrative corruption’ employs ‘a neo-patrimonialism framework’

³⁵ Doornbos, “Good Governance,” 93–108.

³⁶ David Booth, “Introduction: Working with the Grain? The Africa Power and Politics Programme,” *IDS Bulletin* 42, no. 2 (March 1, 2011): 1–10, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1759-5436.2011.00206.x>.

³⁷ OECD, “Donor Approaches to Governance Assessments: 2009 Sourcebook” (OECD DAC, 2009), 14.

³⁸ The biggest donors operating in Nigeria in the 2000s and 2010s – USAID, DFID, the World Bank, UNDP and the European Union – all ran major good governance programmes. Inge Amundsen, “Good Governance in Nigeria: A Study in Political Economy and Donor Support,” Discussion, Norad Reports (Oslo: Norad, 2010), 35–40.

³⁹ The World Bank, “Governance and Development” (The World Bank, April 30, 1992), <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/1992/04/440582/governance-development>.

⁴⁰ “Good Governance Essential for Authorities to Successfully Tackle COVID 19,” *Council of Europe – Newsroom*, June 22, 2020, www.coe.int/en/web/portal/full-news/-/asset_publisher/5X8kX9ePN6CH/content/good-governance-essential-for-authorities-to-successfully-tackle-covid-19.

⁴¹ Djeneba Doumbia, “The Role of Good Governance in Fostering Pro-Poor and Inclusive Growth,” *Brookings* (blog), July 1, 2020, www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2020/07/01/the-role-of-good-governance-in-fostering-pro-poor-and-inclusive-growth/.

⁴² Daniel Thomas, “City Executives Lead Corporate Governance Drive,” *Financial Times*, June 29, 2020, www.ft.com/content/5d419540-46ff-4bc2-9bbe-16cc149561cc.

⁴³ Staffan I. Lindberg and Rachel Sigman, “Neopatrimonialism and Democracy,” in *Routledge Handbook of Democratization in Africa*, ed. Gabrielle Lynch and Peter VonDoepp (Abingdon: Routledge, 2019); see also: E. Remi Aiyede and A. Afeaye Igbafe, “Institutions, Neopatrimonial Politics and Democratic Development,” in *The Palgrave Handbook of African Politics, Governance and Development*, ed. Samuel Ojo Olorunboba and Toyin Falola (New York: Palgrave Macmillan US, 2018), 503–21, https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-349-95232-8_30.

to study corruption in seventeen African countries.⁴⁴ To borrow a term from Giorgio Blundo and Olivier de Sardan, we can say that these terms have been ‘sedimented’ into the fabric of development thinking.⁴⁵ In the past twenty years, the progressive extension of economic methodologies to questions of democratic accountability through principal-agent models⁴⁶ has built on the conceptual foundation laid by the good governance agenda and neo-patrimonialism discourse. Moreover, the twin concepts of neo-patrimonialism and good governance formed a conceptual framework that continues to structure debates about what is wrong with politics in Africa and how it should be improved.⁴⁷ To unpack this conceptual foundation, we must first look at the way in which neo-patrimonialism rests on the separation of governance into its social and rule-based dimensions and then how good governance offered a technocratic solution.

Neo-Patrimonialism: The ‘Revenge of Society’

The idea of neo-patrimonialism has its roots in German sociologist Max Weber’s work on different forms of political authority. According to Weber, legal-rational authority describes bureaucratic states where authority was exercised according to rules (sometimes termed rational-bureaucratic). This found its paradigmatic expression in the nineteenth century Prussian state, which was the first to build a civil service based on meritocratic appointments and strict bureaucratic procedures. By contrast, in patrimonial states, authority derived from the personal power of individual leaders and states is run as if they were private households.⁴⁸ By the mid-twentieth century, a few post-colonial African states – bar perhaps Haile Selassie’s imperial regime in Ethiopia – were considered

⁴⁴ Eduardo Araral, Anton Pak, Riccardo Pelizzo, and Xun Wu, “Neo-Patrimonialism and Corruption: Evidence from 8,436 Firms in 17 Countries in Sub-Saharan Africa,” *Public Administration Review* 79, no. 4 (2019): 580–90, <https://doi.org/10.1111/puar.13023>.

⁴⁵ Thomas Bierschenk and Jean-Pierre Olivier de Sardan, *States at Work: Dynamics of African Bureaucracies* (Boston: Brill, 2014).

⁴⁶ Timothy Besley, *Principled Agents?: The Political Economy of Good Government* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

⁴⁷ For discussion of how the same underlying neopatrimonial assumptions are rehabilitated via different headline concepts see: Portia Roelofs, “Spurious Politics or Spurious Concepts? Moral Populism, the Political Marketplace and the Role of Large Grant-Funded Research Centres in Knowledge Production” (CPAID/CRP Seminar Series, London School of Economics, 2018).

⁴⁸ Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, ed. A. M Henderson and Talcott Parsons (New York: Oxford University Press, 1922).

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true examples of this traditionalist form of rule.⁴⁹ In the 1970s, scholars of politics in the Global South added ‘neo’ to describe non-traditional contexts where patrimonialism was intertwined with elements of bureaucratic, rule-bound authority.⁵⁰ The resulting concept of neo-patrimonialism was applied first to the Ahidjo dictatorship in Cameroon by Jean-François Médard⁵¹ and subsequently to the vast majority⁵² of African states.⁵³ Modernisation theory stated that as states became independent and went through a process of political modernisation, the influence of social relations and personal rule should ebb. In ‘neo-patrimonial’ states, this process was thought to have stalled: the bureaucratic elements either only existed in limited ‘pockets’⁵⁴ or were merely a façade.⁵⁵

By the 1980s, many scholars of politics in Africa were bewildered as their hopes for the new nations were dashed and the state was ‘losing its modernist shine’.⁵⁶ The political and economic turmoil in the aftermath of the oil price hikes of 1972 and 1979, combined with the fact that many celebrated independence era leaders had entrenched themselves as increasingly authoritarian rulers for life, led to disillusionment with the key concepts in political analysis on the continent: the state (and its associated formal institutions such as political parties)⁵⁷ and class.⁵⁸ Neither state-building nor class formation had proceeded in the smooth linear way predicted by modernisation theory and Marxist analysis

⁴⁹ Robert H. Jackson and Carl Gustav Rosberg, *Personal Rule in Black Africa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), 120–26; quoted in Bach, “Patrimonialism and Neopatrimonialism,” 25.

⁵⁰ S. N. Eisenstadt, *Traditional Patrimonialism and Modern Neopatrimonialism*, Studies in Comparative Modernization Series, ser. no. 90-003 (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage, 1973), 15.

⁵¹ Jean-François Médard, “L’État Sous-Développé Au Cameroun,” *Année Africaine* 1979 (1977): 39.

⁵² Daniel Bach notes that according to Bratton and Van de Walle only a handful of African states did *not* deserve the neo-patrimonial label: Botswana, the Gambia, Mauritius, Senegal and Zimbabwe; “Patrimonialism and Neopatrimonialism,” 33.

⁵³ Bach, “Patrimonialism and Neopatrimonialism,” 33.

⁵⁴ Nicolas Van de Walle, *African Economies and the Politics of Permanent Crisis, 1979–1999* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 128.

⁵⁵ Daniel C. Bach and Mamoudou Gazibo, *Neopatrimonialism in Africa and Beyond* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2012).

⁵⁶ Mustapha, “Rethinking Africanist Political Science,” 2.

⁵⁷ Bach, “Patrimonialism and Neopatrimonialism,” 32.

⁵⁸ This sense of what Thomas Callaghy describes as “surprise and bewilderment” at the “decline of the state” in Africa a quarter century after independence is captured in two edited volumes published in 1986 and 1987 respectively: Patrick Chabal, David Anderson, and Carolyn Brown, *Political Domination in Africa*, vol. 50 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); Zaki Ergas, ed., *The African State in Transition* (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 1987), <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-349-18886-4>.