

## **Clamouring for Autonomy: Political Corporatism against Dissent and International Nongovernmental Organisations in Post 2000 Zimbabwe**

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**Abstract:** Evidence shows that the state in Zimbabwe has upheld the use of political corporatism against dissent since the 1980s. At the beginning of the new millennium, the state in Zimbabwe merely saw/perceived/considered the African continent's anti-dissent and anti-international nongovernmental organisation stance as a an ideological clash. Several African states have been criticised for excessive use of repression following the failure of opposition groups to gain political power. This paper argues that political corporatism is common in Africa. It also argues that post 2000 state in Zimbabwe is not an exception under the circumstances in applying repression on political dissent and on international nongovernmental organisations. The paper uses extant literature from the 1980s when writers began to analyse the concept political corporatism within the African context and argued that it is a product of colonialism. Post 2000 literature is used to bring forth the doubled-edged uses of international nongovernmental organisations (INGOs) by the West for political and soft power interests. The paper provides a non-neoliberal grounded argument for the rationale for political corporatism/repression against political dissent and INGOs in post 2000 Zimbabwe. The case of Zimbabwe is rarely interrogated from this perspective.

**Keywords:** dissent, imperialism, international nongovernmental organisation, Neoliberalism, repression, soft power

### **Introduction**

The use of political corporatism against dissent in general and international nongovernmental organisations in particular in post 2000 Zimbabwe did not deviate from its use in Africa in general and its own since 1980. Like anywhere in the African continent, the post 2000 state in Zimbabwe used political corporatism as governmentality against neoliberal ideology. Critics have argued that there is a need to understand political corporatism in the African context. Hence, the aim of this paper is to demonstrate that the state in post 2000 Zimbabwe was not unique in its rationale for applying political corporatism against politically dissenting groups and international nongovernmental organisations within its territory. To achieve this objective, this article is guided by the following main question: Was the state in post 2000 Zimbabwe unique in applying political corporatism towards international nongovernmental organisations (INGOs) and those of alternative views?

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### **Background of the study**

The state in post 2000 Zimbabwe has arguably manifested features of authoritarianism such as the brutal use of state machinery, violence and arms to repress other political parties. It has been criticised the Western media, pro neo liberal democracy formations in Zimbabwe for failure to defend property rights, the creation of electoral irregularities, the refusal to transfer power to the winning opposition party, the gross violation of human rights and the failure to maintain peace, among others. This has shaped the interaction between the post 2000 Zimbabwean state and the international nongovernmental organisations (INGOs). Typical of an authoritarian state, the post 2000 Zimbabwe's formal and informal rules did not allow for the prevalence of democratic values (Brooker 2009:233–269). Most critical is that it exerted a tight grip on political activity to the point that society lost the ability to resolve or challenge the ruling ZANU PF decisively. This led to the creation of a nation of gullible citizens who accepted a national ideology that was biased in favour of those wielding power (Kamrava 1998:64). Notably the post 2000 state in Zimbabwe maintained a strong control of all the arms of the state and ensured that all practices that may threaten its grip to power were heavily guarded against by both practice and decision in favour of the state (Magaloni 2010:753). Examples of these were the courts, electoral commissions and systems, the judiciary and the military. Such practices were extended towards the use of political intelligence in government departments, parastatal organisations, trade unions and NGOs for monitoring where the government systematically repressed and rooted out any efforts expressed to challenge the state. At this stage, the post 2000 state in Zimbabwe had to contain the encroachment by neoliberalism that views INGOs as within the broader civil society.

Grounded on Anglo-American liberal-democratic theory, neoliberalism centralises political participation, rights, and the rule of law and democratic participation freedom of speech, of the press, of assembly, and of worship, and in the protection of minority rights under majority rule (Veltmeyer, 2008:229). This understanding strongly underlies the manner in which INGOs approach authoritarian states. INGOs place themselves in a space between the individual citizen and the state, but with the aim of exerting pressure on an authoritarian state to perform its responsibilities towards its citizens more adequately and promptly. Their position emerges from the liberal position towards civil society that sees it (civil society) as a challenge to bad governance and violation of human rights amongst others (Kamat 2000; Veltmeyer 2008). This paper is based in this context. The paper argues that the manner in which authoritarian state in post 2000 Zimbabwe dealt with INGOs did not deviate from how Africa has been dealing with political dissent and INGOs. Africa is aware that INGOs pay lip service to fair elections. In this instance, the Western nations and INGOs are behind African democratic parties in their international projects aimed at permanently subduing ideologies, influence and economic ties from the nations from the East. INGOs have been known to support whichever political party is in power at the time in order to survive hence Daniel Arap Moi, former president of Kenya said:

“Politics is not like football, deserving a level playing field. Here, you try that, and you will be roasted”- (Marquez 2016:3).

## **Methodology**

This paper is based on a review extant literature on views by prominent writers on political corporatism in Africa particularly in the 1980s, 1990s to capture the deep anti – democracy justification in Africa that has dovetailed to the present. The review of the literature gives credence to post 2000 views for the application of political repression/political corporatism on neo-liberal influenced political dissent and its agents namely international nongovernmental organisations (INGOs) in Zimbabwe. Most recent literature was accessed to argue that of late INGOs have been perceived as disguised agents and instruments of Western nations` soft power in Zimbabwe as elsewhere particularly in Eastern Europe and the Middle East. Without resorting to any use of field narrative data, the paper demonstrates that the post 2000 state in Zimbabwe`s rationale for using repressive governmentality was within its quest for defending its autonomy against neo liberal forces. Such classification of literature used justifies the use of literature on political corporatism/repression and authoritarianism from Schmitter`s 1974 coinage of the concept corporatism. Nyang`oro`s, Shaw`s and Wiarda`s analyses of the origins and development of political corporatism in Africa in the 1980s; Kamrava`s and others critiques on authoritarianism in the 1990s; Davenport`s wide researches on repression in the 1990s to post 2000 literature.

## **Conceptual Framework**

### **Political Corporatism**

Political corporatism is a top-down approach and manifest through typical features of authoritarianism (Howell (2003, Dore 1990, Schmitter 1974, Alpermann 2010 and Pinto 2012). It is a control strategy exercised by the state on society and any organisation in its territory (Howell 2003). It allows the state to exercise more power and decisions in the formation and accreditation of representative organisations (Dore 1990). It can be argued that political corporatism upholds an authoritarian bias by nature as the state imposes its interests on societal organisations because of its top – down approach (Schmitter 1974). Other apparent traits of authoritarian bias typical of political corporatism in favour of the state manifest in the form of tight regulation of organisations, partisan organisations with limited autonomy as well as constricted in the extent they may express the interests of those they represent (Howell 2003). Within this realm, political corporatism is viewed as synonymous with political repression to refer to all state directed actions against persons, organisations and any forces viewed as posing fundamental threat to the existing power relations and key state policies on the basis of their perceived political disposition (Davenport 1995). Unlike societal corporatism where participant organisations have a high degree of autonomy, political corporatism is when the state creates and controls interest organisations (Jessop 1990; Schmitter 1974). Political corporatism provides the state space to exercise authoritarianism and operate as a tight institution with a focus on unity, discipline and cooperation of all social groups (Unger and Chan 1995). This then implies that in using political corporatism, the state is at liberty to ensure only those organisations that are compliant with its policies and mandate may be free to operate (Alpermann 2010; Pinto 2012). Davenport`s (1995) has commonly

used the term to refer to repression, repressive behaviour and negative sanctions in the hands of the state. Political corporatism, under the circumstances, acts as a double-edged sword, on one hand, it provides the state with the political latitude and unencumbered scope to shape the political contours and the nature of the relationships with INGOs, on the other hand, it provides the convenient tool for repression.

### **Political corporatism in the African context**

Proponents of political corporatism have raised concern over the application and implications of the concept mostly studied within the lenses of Western Europe, Latin America, Iberian and Anglo-American social sciences being generalised across the world (Nyang'oro 1983, Shaw 1982; Wiarda 1981). It may be argued that it is appropriate to understand the concept in terms of the dominant political-cultural, economic, historical and geographical space in which it is being scrutinised because it is specific thereto (Nyang'oro 1983; Wiarda 1981). Nyang'oro (1983) and Wiarda (1981) argue that the application of political corporatism in Africa needs specifically African lenses to avoid being entangled in a maze of definitions that are unrelated to Africa's situation. Political corporatism as a concept may be conceptualised within the context of developing nations with a clear recognition that Africa is tied to the colonially imposed capitalist mode of development that internally compounds the prevailing relations among peripheral nations and the unavoidable influences of the global capitalist system (Shaw 1982). This invokes the need to study political corporatism in Africa as a product of the political and economic development realities characterised by stagnation and minimal to zero industrial production since the 1960s or *uhuru* (Nyang'oro 1987). Critiques argue that the increase in oil mining due to technology in countries such as Nigeria, Gabon, Algeria, Libya and Congo did not bring any significant improvements in the structure of production in their economies (Nyang'oro 1987). There appears a strong link between post-colonial African political leadership and the prevalence of political corporatism in what emerged as organic statism typical in Europe and Latin America. Organic statism may be conceived as a model of politics that integrates all elements of society into one unit under a powerful authoritative and interventionist leadership of the state (MacIntyre 1994). Thus political corporatism fits in well with an organic state in that only those interest groups created and partisan to the state may be allowed to operate in the country. In both organic statism and authoritarian regimes corporatism is used as an instrument of eliminating opposition groups or political parties thereby leaving only partisan groups to interact with the state in specified means (Levy 2006; One can identify that the state recognises those interest groups that remain organised in a vertical functional hierarchy and reporting to state appointed leaders. In the context of authoritarian developing nations, it is observable that political corporatism is exclusionary of civil society with tighter control and repression. It may also be inclusionary with the state remaining undoubtedly dominant but allowing more scope for societal input via state approved associations (Dorman 2001). The failure of the post-colonial state to deliver on a majority expectation led to the adoption of both consent building and coercion tactics for survival. In the process, building and maintaining hegemony such that in the end, in a Gramscian sense, the ruling class's dominance through consent and consensus building fast transformed into "coercion and gradually, direct domination became the rule of the day (Kebede, 2005). Evidence shows that political

corporatism is dominant in Africa's state-centric systems where regimes, bureaucracies and parties, presidents and officers have been salient in running states. This is compounded by the governance challenges brought about by Global Financial Institutions' (GFI) structural adjustments and liberal democracy (Nyang'oro and Shaw 1989). One may note that structural adjustments inevitably lead to devaluation, deregulation and privatisation that erode the dominance of the state by allowing new alliances around private capital leaving the state vulnerable to domestic opposition (Shaw and Nyang'oro 1989). In such cases, political corporatism emerges as a tool for restoring both socio-economic and leadership security. Such background literature highlights the African state and its governance apparatus that is used to set the parameters within which political corporatism directed at political dissent and international nongovernmental organisations (INGOs). The paper uses this literature to analyse the Zimbabwean state and its relationship with INGOs

### **The African state's anti-dissent and anti - INGO stance**

As a pragmatic viable option to achieve the end of colonialism, the West started promoting its culture of democracy as the ideal culture (Owalabi, 1994). Hence, many post-colonial African countries were compromised into adopting models of governance whose operational parameters were prescribed by their former colonial masters (Oyekan, 2009). The states that were formed in Africa after decolonisation were mostly shaped by a continued though indirect influence of European powers that came to be called neo-colonialism – a term coined by Kwame Nkrumah (Davidson, 1994). In its manifest form, neo-colonialism inherited the structures of colonial despotism (Mamdani, 1996) that resulted in the newly independent African states as dysfunctional colonial artefacts. In many African states, this led to a reconfiguration and Africanisation of the state structures. One of the most notable characteristics of the post-colonial African state was, however, the continued display of totalitarian propensities of the state, a display that had been equally pervasive during the colonial era. African scholars such as Ake (1996) describe the situation as “disappointing” that violence dovetailed into the present in African governance. The continued use of violence to institute power did not, however, come as a surprise since most, if not all, of the African states had no interest in advocating not just political transformation but also economic transformation, whose economic benefits would be accessible to all and sundry (Ake, 1996). The insinuation that those other bureaucracies particularly Western are more inherently attuned to the needs of their nations than African ones is rather troubling. Western bureaucracies are just as guilty in terms of insensitivity to their people's needs. For example, how does one justify projects like National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) in a society where rampant unemployment, homelessness, very low literacy levels, poor sanitation and hygiene, hunger and war are juxtaposed with staggering wealth in the hands of a miniscule percentage of the population? Gaining political power and independence meant the reorganisation of the state through a reformative process aimed solely at unifying and centralising the nation.

The post-colonial political transformation in African states was, thus, devoid of economic content and did not take the economic interest of the ordinary citizens into account (Mamdani, 1996). African states allowed for the presence of political parties and social movements to operate under specified conditions

requiring registration, being apolitical and declaring the nature of their activities (Mukandala 2001). The separation of political parties and social movements noted in the post independent era and the dictated requirements remained a common practice in African states. As will be explained in this paper this practice became more effective in the control of civil society including INGOs in Africa. President Mugabe's view of INGOs and the MDC political party was a well-informed strategy that had long been practiced as a way of neutralising social movements as well as weakening civil society in general. Such a strategy can be criticised for the development of personal rule, one-party authoritarianism, the drafting of constitutions typical of colonial regimes with a tightened bureaucratic control of all state apparatus typical of colonial rule (Mukandala 2001). The quest to neutralise the opposition may morph into an obsession with it protruding into repression backed by state machinery blinded by internalised insecurities.

The early African states went further to ban social movements and civil society, detain and or even assassinate their leaders, criminalise them and their activities, co-opt some social movements to ensure one-party rule prevailed (Mukandala 2001). Mukandala should note that US has an arguably unparalleled history of political repression – targeted assassinations, detention (without trial) of political opponents (e.g. Black Panther), Occupy Movement, War Veteran groups, anti-war activists and anti-nuclear proliferation activists (Boykoff 2008). Southern African ruling parties are still perpetuating the same practices. The formation of Party Youth league from which militias are recruited, Women's league and War veterans association in the case of Zimbabwe are a good example. For ZANU PF these structures are handy when the party is experiencing challenges. These are run in a manner that they affront INGOs and any element of civil society, any rival political party, monitor social movements, and most importantly make it "easy for the single party and the great leader to emerge" (Mukandala 2001). The MDC and INGOs were matters of concern to the Zimbabwean state as each epitomised the liberal democracy and civil society that African leaders sought to keep under control all the way from *uhuru* (independence). The logic here is that the Zimbabwean state was fully aware of the threat INGOs/civil organisations posed through fighting for constitutional change as in Kenya; for democratic changes in Algeria; and the extraction of oil between Nigeria's state and Shell in the Delta (Mukandala 2001). One can challenge Mukandala as one not recognising the hostile agendas of Western-based groups that sponsor 'opposition groups' in Africa like philanthropist George Soros' sponsorship of African opposition groups invariably anti-government, Carnegie Foundation's training of 'civil society' groups and dispatching them to Africa as religious leaders and lawyers. None of such activities are tolerated in any Western country. The state in Zimbabwe has not diverted from how most African states seem to view the opposition political parties and INGOs (civil society). The literature on how African states and others have legislated against NGOs is consistent with the continent's practice let alone the world. Sub-Saharan Africa as a whole has imposed prohibitions and restrictions covering registration, nature of operations, monitoring, specific activities and funding (Global Trends in NGO Law 2011). The reactions and responses by African governments in taking such measures could be considered legitimate for purposes of self-preservation and a quest for autonomy given the enormity of the onslaught from outside forces.

Another factor in line with President Mugabe's Africanist and Third World reaction to INGOs in Zimbabwe was that he saw them and liberal democracy as part of "the international capitalism and ideologically presented as globalisation [to restructure international capitalism in Zimbabwe in the interest of the USA, UK, WB and IMF]" (Mukandala 2001). Mugabe's understanding of INGOs does not ignore how these institutions are part of and used by the USA and Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to replace national governments which are resilient and determined to defend their sovereignty, resources and interests of their citizens. In this instance, the USA and CIA seek to replace such governments by obedient ones that will execute the USA agenda under the pretext of neoliberal democracy (Watzal 2017). Contrary to their generally accepted roles, INGOs such as developmental, humanitarian, environmental work it can be argued that they were created for the sole purposes of executing CIA-American political goals in other nations privately (Watzal (2017). Further, contrary to the innocence INGOs artificially project their international record displays how they are de facto arms of Western intelligence agencies and governments playing central roles in destabilising nations (Draitser 2015). The state in post 2000 Zimbabwe opted to stand its ground against what it foresaw as forces meant to terminate its rule and support a neoliberal puppet government in the form of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC).

The link between INGOs and the quest for democracy in Zimbabwe may be understood within the scope of the West's reaction to the end of colonialism and a realisation that the need for resources from the Third World countries should prevail. The West opted "to step its cultural imperialism and promote its democratic culture as the ideal culture" (Oyekan 2009). Such Afro-centric thinking leaves one to conclude that Mugabe's repugnance of INGOs and democracy in Zimbabwe as vehicles for unending exploitation is valid. In reality, no critic in their common sense can argue that Western NGOs are innocent of any political motives. When INGOs shift from philanthropy and doing good to confront states, they place themselves in invidious political confrontations with them. Under such circumstances, it is common cause that the responses by such states to protect themselves are reasonable, justifiable, defensible and just within the understanding that the state is a legal being with a right to its sovereignty.

In many African countries post-independence leaders seemed to enjoy almost absolute and unfettered rule over their subjects as they exercised exclusive monopoly over government structures and tight political control by retaining not only the command nature of the colonial state but also its ultimate reliance on brutal force. Additionally, this was accompanied by highly exploitative practices that, largely, paved the way for the predatory character of many post-colonial African regimes, and the prevailing culture of impunity (Joseph, 1999). In a similar vein, African leaders grossly abused their powers by monopolising state resources, government bureaucracies and parastatals involved in the buying and marketing of agricultural and mineral commodities, to mention but a few (Gordon and Gordon, 2001). Some incorporated and co-opted civil society into party-structured ancillary organisations to serve as mechanisms of surveillance and control devoid of participation and voice (Young, 1994).

The foregoing discussion suggests that many, if not all post-colonial African states regarded liberal democracy as a Western ideology whose goal was nothing other than the promotion of capitalism in Africa (Sachikonye, 1995). This view is attested to by the fact that the adoption of liberal democracy as a precondition for aid and development loans to finance locally pressing demands in their respective countries (Bayart, 1999). This situation signaled the emergence and evolution of a new political model that was interpreted as one most desirable in countries where notions of democracy were once unheard-of. It is notable, however, that despite the seeming promotion of democracy in the Third World by the West, this is done in ways that promote and serve the West's own interests (Hipler, 1995). It is in this light that from an African perspective, the general pattern evolving is that Western democracy has thus far not emerged as the ideal for Africa given the numerous challenges that have been attendant in the evolution of democracy in Africa (Tar, 2010). The choice of Western models did not go well with African people who saw the extension of modes of exploitation in form of neo-colonialism. What has made democracy a dirty word to most African states is the fact that they discovered that the West's clamour for 'democracy' in Africa is disingenuous. It turns out that democracy is a euphemism for Western interests across the world through use of soft power. Of primary importance is the African state's awareness of the use of soft power being the ability of developed nations to persuade other and or manipulate events in one country without use of force or coercion in order to achieve politically desirable outcomes. In this practice, developed nations have remained in the background and ensuring that it becomes heavily populated by civil society and INGOs (Draitser 2015). In order for powerful nations, individuals and institutions to execute their patrons' agenda in other countries, they fund INGOs under the guise of democracy, promotion development, and human rights. A case in point is Hong Kong where soft power was used in using prominent academics and organisations such as Occupy Central Movement funded by the National Endowment for Democracy (NED) and the US government who have been pushing for democracy in that part of China (Draitser 2015).

Literature shows that the majority if not all of the post-independence leaders in Africa were concerned with ensuring that power and domination were concentrated and centralised by the state. By taking over the administrative systems of the colonial state, they acquired the state's policing, military and security forces that allowed them to intimidate and eliminate the growing number of opposition forces. In this manner, the co-optation of various autonomous organisations, the banning of contesting political parties and the legitimising of the ruling party as the only one within a new single-party state became common features of many African states.

Notably, for a considerable length of time 1950s – 1980, Western powers demonstrated a posture of indifference towards human rights issues and democracy in Africa. Arguably, this was done not only to avoid jeopardising the economic and strategic interests that the West had, but also to facilitate its obsessive search for allies against 'communism' (Ake, 1991). It was at the demise of the Cold War when these concerns fell away that the West found itself free to bring its African policies into greater harmony with its perverted notion of democracy.

Thus, the former colonial masters, anxious for advantage with the new leaders, embraced the idea of partnership in development and gave post-colonial regimes in Africa their support (Ake, 1991). This led



to intensive dialogue between the West “and the one-party/authoritarian state officials” (Mukandala 2001). At this stage, it is fair then to point out that the wave of democracy President Mugabe was resisting in post-2000 Zimbabwe “has its roots in the restructuring of the international capitalist system that has been going on more noticeably since the late-1970s” (Mukandala 2001). Margaret Thatcher who inaugurated the ‘Greed is good’ mantra and Ronald Reagan were at the helm of this ideological position, the World Bank (WB) and International Monetary Fund (IMF) provided the funding whilst the transnational corporations and international capital were implementers in the imposition of economic structural adjustments (Mukandala 2001). It is ironical that the ZANU PF leadership was already fighting for majority rule in Rhodesia, and then signed the Lancaster agreement in 1979 (during the reign of Margaret Thatcher) that led to majority rule in Zimbabwe. It had a whole decade of observing the political effects of the project in Third World countries and especially in neighbouring Zambia from 1980 to 1990. President Mugabe remained in power and encountered the political effects of the project in the third and fourth decade since its implementation. Before considering the Afro-centric views towards liberal democracy, a summary of how the West has justified the implementation of neo liberal democracy in Africa is presented. The West has argued and convinced African nations that neo liberal democracy is an effective development path. Neoliberal democracy allows for the free market system; movement of capital in and out of countries at will requiring transparency and flexibility, uncontrolled prices and labour, shrinking the state, role and function and deregulated the economy and only pursue policies boosting production (Gray 1998 and Mukandala 2001). Euro-centric views on liberal democracy justify it in Africa as an ideal model that provides space for launching, addressing, and seeking to redress the effects of SAPs (Mukandala 2001). It creates room for political participation and in policy formulation. It promotes accountability, efficiency in national public affairs and internationally. It replaces politics with rationality in the public sphere. The whole package refers to good governance, which is expected to be operationalised in a free market policy environment. Arguably, a system threatens the state power base by leading to crises in which human conditions become core in political expressions as is common in developing countries (Gray 1998). The deteriorating socio-economic conditions in the 1990s after Zimbabwe’s adoption of SAPs contributed to political contestation in which the pro neo liberal opposition party were challenging the incumbent nationalistic state.

It is arguable, therefore, that the West regarded democracy as one of the most critical items on the African agenda from 1980 onwards. In post-1980 Africa, authors writing from an Afro-centric stance proposed arguments against liberal democracy as a useful model for African states (Barkan, 1994). It became apparent to many an African critic that the political theories propounded by liberal democracy were by and large incompatible with African circumstances as it is Western value-laden, alien to their social spheres and did not seem to bring meaningful development apt for nations emerging from decades of protracted colonial rule (Oyekan 2009). It is also notable that given the ambiguity of democracy as a system of governance, this system can be criticised for its failure to co-opt idiosyncratic needs of Africa and its diversity of culture (Derryck, 1999). Some African scholars argued that, irrespective of the kind of democracy that is at play in Africa, this political model is not only an imposition but also an unnecessary attribute of African life since its occurrence cannot be located in the African historical context (Omotola, 2009; Nnoli, 2003). The unsuitability of liberal democracy lies in its Western

origin and development and its close link with capitalism that are at odds with African socialism (Omotola, 2009, Nnoli, 2003). It is in this light, therefore, that some writers not only object to the uncritical importation of liberal democracy but also doubt the need to impose an alien philosophy and model of governance on other nations (Ake, 1996). These thinkers accentuate their argument with the consideration that liberal democracy has more of an economic bias at the expense of other variables in human existence (Saul, 1997). In this discourse, Omotola (2009) and Nnoli (2003) have it all twisted. The authors regurgitate the age-long Western generated myth that democracy is a historically alien concept in Africa. This falsehood was exposed long back. The late Zimbabwean historian, Stanlake Samkange ('African Saga'), for instance clearly cites accounts written by early European travellers and missionaries who described the intricate consultation procedures they observed their African 'hosts' following in resolving day-today issues. It is for that reason that chiefs or kings (Izinkosi) had advisors (indunas). Several historians have also established that in times of emergency (e.g. war, famine, disease and epidemics) African leaders had the prerogative to rule by decree. A nation that faces an existential threat cannot afford the luxury of the version of democracy advocated by the West because it is simply suicidal. After all Western leaders do rule by decree in times of emergency. US presidents invoke 'national security' to fight 'communism', 'war on terror', and others wars they deem fit. Rule by decree is not exclusive to the West. So too, consultation is not exclusive to the West. These are primordial and historical artefacts undergirding African logics of rule. Arguably, when African states so within their sovereignty, the West indicts them for violation of Human Rights.

It is worth noting that despite the general reservation most African scholars have against Western liberal democracy, they nevertheless concede that the attempt by Africa to democratise and strengthen its institutions was right. It is therefore argued that the dilemma for Africa has been its failure to separate the aim of liberal democracy and its manifestations in accepting it (Oyekan, 2009). However, as for neoliberal democracy's usefulness in Third World countries in particular, it is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for development, mainly because democracy too often extends those very vices genuine development in Africa should eradicate such as class domination, poverty, inequality and uncertainty about the future (Saul, 1997). Certain factors are identified as constituting the basic limitations for democratisation in Africa. Lack of basics for constitutional democratic politics, high poverty levels, maximum cultural fragmentation, insufficient capitalist leanings, lack of the requisite civic culture, weak and more bureaucratic middle classes compared to entrepreneurial middle classes, easy and vulnerable co-optation into authoritarian political structures, the existence of embryonic working classes except in a few cases such as Zambia and South Africa (Joseph, 1999). Thus in light of these factors, Ake (1993a) concludes that the political arrangements of liberal democracy make little sense in Africa. Another rationale for this position is that liberal democracy's failure to make sense in Africa stems from its assumption of individualism that is mostly at odds with associational life in Africa that is based on a collective social sense (Ake, 2000). One may concede to an analyses by Larok (2011) who argues that collective social sense (social nature of human beings) is central in African democracy. Ake and others also view it that it offers more effective political participation than that offered by liberal

democracy that prioritises individualism. There is thus downplaying of the significance of the collective in liberal democracy and this is achieved through focusing on the individual whose claims are ultimately placed above those of the collective (Ake, 2000). It therefore becomes clear that “Western democracy” does not serve the interest of Africa but is also unsuitable for Africa as it is also “tyrannically imposed” by former colonial powers that ignore Africa’s contextual variables such as traditional forms of governance in favour of their ideological cause (Nyongesa, 2012). For example, other critics argue that the conditions created by liberal democracy [can] never co-exist with popular democracy African states (Mukandala 2001). Short of declaring that the West should keep their hands off African affairs, Gray (1998) argues that instead of pushing reforms through an ideological tool, the West should have at least opted for negotiation and clearer political changes.

The conclusion by Ake is convincing in that although liberal democracy disempowers people by ejecting some of the qualities of a popular democracy, a popular form of democracy is more likely to empower the people by ensuring that everyone participates as part of an interconnected whole in promoting the common good (Ake, 2000). In this regard, a six-point antithesis of liberal democracy in Africa is presented by arguing that, first, liberal democracy is a hollow concept as it claims that key decisions are based on popular involvement. Second, liberal democracy is mere hegemonic class rule because it does not necessarily dislodge the dominant ruling class. Third, liberal democracy entrenches capitalism since it opposes the adoption of alternative political and economic models. Fourth, the adoption of liberal democracy in the post-colonial period in Africa makes possible the exertion of Western pressures and domination. Fifth, liberal democracy entrenches the status quo: in democratic transitions, it is the choices made by those enjoying governmental and social power that are most influential when faced with challenges to their dominance. Sixth, liberal democracy comes with policy and institutional limitations in that, while its core institutions and practices rest a free play of ideas and interest, certain substantive policy outcomes are ruled out whilst others are kept intact (Ake, 2000). Arguably Africa’s alternatives to neoliberal democracy lies rediscovering its ideological position. Neoliberalism takes Africa back to colonialism as they lose their autonomy to the West. Rediscovering of a viable political ideology of Africa means understanding that neoliberalism is just but one of the several ideologies they can embrace. The onus is on Africa to return to Socialism or implement a modified version of. This Marxist- Socialist ideology liberated Africa from the shackles of colonialism. Eastern Europe cannot be underestimated in this regard as it provided military training and other logistics leading to liberation of Africa through armed struggles. The first African nationalist leaders had a vision that failed to develop beyond their life spans. It can be stressed that Julius Kambarage Nyerere’s Ujamaa philosophy, K. Nkrumah’s Scientific Socialism, Kaunda’s Humanism, and pro African ideas of Jomo Uhuru Kenyatta and Milton Obote could be used as the foundation to a new African ideology. Currently the East is failing to unite against neoliberalism since fragmenting from the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics since 1991. Nations such as Pakistan are battlefields for ideological wars while the Middle East is fails to recognise that only political unity and solidarity among themselves will preserve their natural resources and bring peace in the region. Africa should reject the violent ideology

of neoliberalism that is so sly and gives the impression that those nations that resist it are grossly abusing of Human Rights. Another alternative for Africa is to break away from the international capitalist order that perpetuates inequality, poverty and insecurity in all forms. It can be argued that post 2000 Zimbabwe is in a dilemma and stands as a test case for Africa. On one hand succumbing to neoliberalism is viewed as a betrayal of the African cause and the gains made under Robert Mugabe's reign. On the other hand, resisting neoliberalism plunges the nation into deeper economic woes as global financial institutions (World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and World Trade Organisation) and the World Health Organisation continues to tighten economic conditions until there is a change of regime. Admittedly, the choice for Zimbabwe is not easy taking into account that former president Robert Mugabe's turn Eastern policy is still intact.

Although fundamental freedoms, political liberties and civil rights are routinely limited in many African countries, ordinary Africans in many of them do not agree that police brutality, torture, extra judicial killings and accessing power through violence are African values worthy of appropriation (Nyongesa, 2012). Thus for scholars the much-talked about dismal performance of most of the African leaders is merely a reflection of the fact that democracy as it is practiced in Africa is still problematic, in comparison to how it is construed and practiced in Western countries (Jotia, 2012). The arguments in this section clearly spelt out the rationale for antagonistic relations between the African state and pro neoliberal democracy per se and its agents of such as INGOs. The INGOs are viewed negatively for their surrogate roles and only their agenda puts the poor African states in a desperate need for humanitarian crisis solutions. There is evidence that other African states have used authoritarian legalism just like the revulsion displayed by President Mugabe against INGOs making it a trend. The withdrawal of state repression against dissent and INGOs in post 2000 depends on the dissenter organisations and individuals. The state has a right to use force in its territory. The law binds citizens, and the state enforces the law and order. It can be argued that when anti-state behaviour is displayed in a manner that causes chaos in any country, the state is compelled to restore order by any means it deems appropriate.

### **Conclusion**

Political corporatism in Africa cannot be best understood from a euro-centric perspective. The concrete capitalist mode of production imposed on Africa determines the rationale for the use of political corporatism. A continent that lost lives, human resources, had its natural development stagnated would not allow its gains to be lost easily. What emerges from the discussion is that political corporatism in the African continent is a tool for power retention or political longevity exercised by all states in the world. Where political corporatism is used in cohort with the imperialist and capitalist west, it is neither a challenge nor violation of Human Rights. African states adopted repression as a tool for ridding themselves of the remnants of colonialism. They further went on to use it for the maintenance of order and restoration of it in cases where adverse forces had destroyed them. The spread of neoliberal

democracy in Africa has also seen states resorting to political corporatism as an anti-neoliberalism tool to keep away from a new form of colonialism. Political corporatism for Africa and Zimbabwe in particular has remained a tool and strategy for eliminating political opposition and fighting foreign ideology. In Zimbabwe just as in any African country, political repression has served to avoid well-calculated regime change preceded by the 1991 economic structural adjustment programmes (ESAPs). The socio-economic misery that emanates from the implementation of ESAPs had seen the citizens unhappy with the state and ready for a new opposition party. The rise of NGO activities in political advocacy in support of neoliberal policies did not leave African states free from the use of repression. When the post 2000 state in Zimbabwe resorted to the use of repression in its defence, the West did not hesitate to label it totalitarian and gross violator of Human Rights. What emerged from this discussion is that the state in post 200 Zimbabwe was not unique in its application of political corporatism against dissent and international nongovernmental organisations in its territory.

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