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### State-Building in Africa: Prospects and Challenges

#### 1<sup>st</sup> International Social Scientists Conference

(Dar es Salaam, March 4<sup>th</sup> -7<sup>th</sup>, 2019)

#### *Second Announcement and Call for Papers*

Dear Colleagues,

**On March 4<sup>th</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup>, 2019 in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania** The Mwalimu Nyerere Memorial Academy and the Institute for African Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences will hold the 1<sup>st</sup> **Social Scientists Conference** titled “**State-Building in Africa: Prospects and Challenges.**” The Conference will take place on the premises of the Mwalimu Nyerere Memorial Academy in Dar es Salaam along the Indian Ocean. The working language is English.

The deadline for paper proposals (in the form of abstracts **within 300 words** in English) is **November 1, 2018**. The proposals should be sent **directly** to the respective panel convener(s) who is (are) to inform the applicant about his (her) application's fortune by **November 15, 2018** – the date by which the panel conveners are to submit their compiled panels to the Organizing Committee.

The information to be submitted alongside with the paper abstract includes full name, title, institutional affiliation, full mail and e-mail addresses, telephone and fax numbers.

The Conference registration fee in Tanzanian Shillings is 200,000/=, equivalent to \$100 and Tsh 100,000/=equivalent to \$50 for students and for citizens of African states residing in Africa. The registration fee is to be paid in cash onsite upon arrival. The fee for an accompanying person is Tsh 100,000/=equivalent to \$50. The Conference participants working for the Mwalimu Nyerere Memorial Academy, the Institute for African Studies and their official partners are waved from registration fee.

The Organizing Committee can assist in booking accommodation, but independent reservation is encouraged. Please note that early hotel reservation is strongly recommended.

Queries regarding Conference-related academic issues (program, panel convening, etc.) should be sent by e-mail for the Conference Organizing Committee to two addresses, to the attention of Dr. Jason Nkyabonaki, The Mwalimu Nyerere Memorial Academy (jason.mnma@yahoo.com; tel.: + 255 712 007 009/ +255 784 632 888) and Prof. Dmitri Bondarenko, Vice-Director for Research, Institute for African Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences (dbondar@hotmail.com; tel.: + (7 495) 697 2022; fax: + (7 495) 697 1954). All the technical queries (regarding letters of invitation, visas, accommodation, etc.) should be addressed to Dr. Jason

Nkyabonaki only to the e-mail address as above.

The Organizing Committee would appreciate your familiarizing the members of your research/teaching unit, as well as all interested colleagues, with the present Announcement.

If you see that your prospective paper's topic does not fit any particular panel listed below, please, send your paper abstract to Dr. Jason Nkyabonaki and Prof. Dmitri Bondarenko to the e-mail address as above for its possible scheduling for Free Communication Panel.

## **PANELS ACCEPTED FOR THE CONFERENCE**

**(In the alphabetical order of titles)**

### **Panel 1. A Nexus of Africa's Bureaucracy and National Development**

Convener: *Jason Nkyabonaki* (The Mwalimu Nyerere Memorial Academy, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania); e-mail: [jason.mnma@yahoo.com](mailto:jason.mnma@yahoo.com)

The government machinery is entrusted with a duty of serving and preserving the public good. The contractual base of the citizens and the political class is managed by the bureaucratic class as enshrined by Max Weber. The bureaucracy is an engine to development of a particular state and is assumed to be ethical, permanent and apolitical and self-giving for the rest of the civilians. In Africa, the bureaucracy is looked at from different angles whereby some scholars view the bureaucracy as a curse while others see it as a necessary evil. The panel welcomes the papers that deal with the issues of the public sector management, service delivery, public policy, public service ethos and development in Africa. Also, the discourses and progressive approaches of the bureaucracy towards nation building are welcome for deliberation in this panel.

## **Panel 2. Afro-Shentrepreneurs: Rethinking Women Entrepreneurship in a Global Context**

Convener: *Ellie Paris-Miranda* (University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth, USA);  
e-mail: [ellieparismiranda@gmail.com](mailto:ellieparismiranda@gmail.com)

Entrepreneurship has been defined as “The New Women’s Movement” and women are stepping away in unprecedented numbers from traditional household gender roles to the challenges of starting their own businesses in every sector imaginable, contributing to both household incomes and growth of national economies as “job-making entrepreneurs” (Forbes, 1) Without exception, African, African diaspora, and African descendant women are changing trends of higher unemployment rates, long-term unemployment, gender pay gap, racial barriers, and patriarchal structures –, which have insisted on the supremacy of men over women and have been the primary factors responsible for keeping women economically, politically, socially, emotionally, and psychologically oppressed —, to embark upon entrepreneurial activities. In the United States, where most data are available, women of color are reported to be the fastest-growing group of business owners. Between 1997 to 2017, companies owned by this group of shentrepreneurs grew from 114% to 467% (American Express Open, 5). In Africa, two countries are leading the race with the highest percentage of women business owners in the world. In the first place is Ghana (46%) and right after Russia, is Uganda (33%) taking the third place, according to the MasterCard Index of Women Entrepreneurs (MIWE) (2018). However, despite that female entrepreneurship is today a popular topic of research for scholars around the world, who investigate “the processes by which some women become entrepreneurs of this nature, the consequences of doing so, the psychological and contextual factors that facilitate or inhibit their entrepreneurial activity, and whether these processes, consequences, and influential factors differ from their male counterparts” (Jennings and Brush, 662), little has been researched and written about the experience of African, African diaspora, and African descendant women entrepreneurs in an international context. The panel

aims to explore the unique experiences of the African, African diaspora, and African descendant women entrepreneurs in a global context. Understand the social barriers and economic challenges faced by this group and the strategies used to combat both gender inequality and racial discrimination is also the objective of this study. How these women can build positive and sustainable relationships in Africa and with Africa, and consequently, how they contribute to Africa's development are the main goals of my research.

### **Panel 3. Alternatives for African Agriculture and African Post Modernity**

Conveners: *Gary Littlejohn* (University of Bradford, UK); e-mail: work@garylittlejohn.com; *Carol Thompson* (Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, USA); e-mail: Carol.Thompson@nau.edu

After decades of externally generated 'solutions' for African agriculture, at least one of which will be examined during this panel, there is now emerging not simply resistance to such generalised approaches but rather a series of relevant African alternatives to foster appropriate development for the very varied circumstances prevailing in different parts of Africa. Given the varieties of social institutions, agro-climatic zones and the irregular 'signal' of ENSO events affecting the whole of eastern Africa, such approaches are not only intrinsically interesting, but are far more likely to result in sustainable, locally tailored development outcomes.

These initiatives are taking place within a rapidly changing global agricultural system in which the dominance of North American grain exports is being rapidly replaced by the resurgence of Russian agriculture to a level whose likely impact has not been seen since 1913. This has implications for emergency food aid, for the prospects of agricultural exports by African countries, and for food sovereignty. Hence there is a need for contemporary analysis of such African initiatives that examines their potential for resilience in the face of dramatic changes, including growing infrastructural investment from China and ongoing demographic growth

in Africa for the next few decades, in contrast to the prospects of a steep demographic decline in the societies of the developed world. While Russia is an exception to this predicted trend, it is unlikely that its population growth will keep pace with the increase in its agricultural production, and so Russian exports will probably continue to have a growing influence on global markets.

#### **Panel 4. Fixing Sub-Saharan Africa's Tragedy within the Liberal Context**

Convener: *Olatunji Olateju* (Lagos State Polytechnic, Ikorodu, Lagos, Nigeria); e-mails: o.olateju@mylaspotech.edu.ng, olaolateju@yahoo.co.uk

Considering the emphatic assertion of liberal scholars that liberal democracy remains the panacea for stable democracy and conflict resolution in multi-ethnic states, one should have expected that such states in sub-Sahara Africa should by now be free of ethnically impelled violent political conflicts. This has been rarely so in the sub-continent. Most of the post-colonial sub-Sahara African states remain in quagmire. Though some scholars allege 'indigeneity' citizenship and politics of belonging as responsible for the life-snubbing violence. This in essence, refers to the conflict between the notion of liberal citizenship and the primordial notion of ethnic citizenship as constantly rupturing the cohesiveness of the state and its ability to mediate in the conflicts and homogenise the divergent ethnic groups.

The panel invites scholarly papers from researchers, public officers, NGO activists and scholars with interests in resolving sub-Saharan Africa's tragedy. The paper should be with a view to finding solutions to what is wrong with the postcolonial sub-Sahara African states especially in search of stable democracy, togetherness, economic progress and security in all ramifications.

#### **Panel 5. Language Policy and Nation Building in Post-Colonial Africa**

Conveners: *Ekkehard Wolff* (University of Leipzig, Germany); e-mail:

ekkehard.wolff@gmx.de, *Russell H Kaschula* (Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa); e-mail: r.kaschula@ru.ac.za

The relationship between nation building and language policy in Africa is generally fraught with a legacy of the continents past experience with European colonialism, namely the uncritical imposition of a ‘one-size-fits-all’ policy, which pursues the Herderian notion of one nation, one language, one state. In the post-colonial African states, exoglossic languages were, as a rule, selected for this purpose by politicians. The underlying policies for both language and development are based on three interrelated ideological and political positions, which hitherto were assumed to be helpful for the necessary post-colonial nation building, sociocultural transformation and economic development in the newly independent states, but have failed to serve these purposes, if not having become abortive in the cases of ‘failed states’ in Africa. The three central positions were the following.

1. The unquestioned import and imposition of the 19<sup>th</sup> century European concept of a largely *homogenous* “nation state”.
2. The requirement of overcoming Africa’s essential *ethnic, cultural and linguistic plurality and diversity*, which is being viewed, in the still dominant perspective of the former colonial powers, as a potential (or factual) source of national strife in terms of particularism and secessionism (‘tribalism’).
3. The strategy was ideologically supported by a *Northern/Eurocentric distrust in and disrespect for recognized multiethnicism, multiculturalism and multilingualism* (being, however, an essential feature of the Global South).

Retrospectively, we can state that the persisting (neo-) colonial ideological positions sketched out above have, over more than half a century of liberation from colonialism, slowed down Africa’s sociocultural modernization and economic development, including the failure to initiate European-type nation building in terms of national identities, national cultures, national literatures, all based on one particular “national” language of, however, foreign origin. On the contrary, the language policies associated with these ideological positions result in the majority

of the populations being excluded from any political decision making, as the exoglossic language often remains the preserve of the ruling elite, thereby acting as a gate-keeper within all realms of society, from education, the workplace, to politics. This panel seeks to create an understanding of the historical and ideological context, within which language planning has taken place in Africa (Bangbose, 1991; Alexander 1992).

The panel will therefore argue for the development of integrated language policies in order to ensure the maintenance of cultural identity while creating economic prosperity for indigenous language speakers (Grin 1994), based on the affirmative recognition of Africa's multilingual, multicultural and multiethnic heritage. The real questions that are posed in this panel would be the following:

- Can Africa experience an economic revival or renaissance that benefits the poor though the use of a hegemonic exoglossic language such as English?
- What would the role of indigenous languages be in Africa against the backdrop of the hegemony of English in the globalized world?

This panel will argue that language planning in a globalized world, and particularly in Africa, should be multi-dimensional, involving various role-players in local as well as national government and the economy. It should be a meaningfully engaged process with both a bottom-up and top-down approach in order to actualise the individual within the context of local and national economic growth (Alexander 1992).

### **Panel 6. Popular Economies in Africa: Nation-Building between Global Capitalism and Local Practices**

Conveners: *Daria A. Zelenova* (National Research University Higher School of Economics, Institute for African Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow, Russia); e-mail: [d.zelenova@gmail.com](mailto:d.zelenova@gmail.com); *Dmitri M. Bondarenko* (Institute for African Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences, National Research University Higher School of Economics, Russian State University for the



Humanities, Moscow, Russia); e-mails: dbondar@hotmail.com, dmitrimb@mail.ru

In the last 30 years after the introduction of economic practices and ideologies of neo-liberalism in many African countries, the idea of “self-reliance” and economic empowerment associated with social uplifting of the poor has become a dominant concept and essentially the backbone of many state policies.

In the academic literature a popular vision of contemporary African urban city dwellers as “heroic entrepreneurs” (de Soto, 2000) which should take their destiny in their own hands is challenged from the left by the thinkers who find it unfair to place responsibility on the poor to solve the problems of structural unemployment, exploitation and inequality which were caused by neoliberal policies. At this panel we would like to foster the debate which looks closer at this dilemma and discuss popular economic practices of the urban dwellers in the context of nation-building in African countries. In this context, we would like to discuss what are the citizens’ expectations and local economic responses to the global financialization associated with neoliberal policies.

We welcome ethnographically and theoretically informed contributions dealing with the contemporary popular economic practices in the African cities.

Key issues to be discussed at the panel in the context of nation-building:

- New forms of mutual help groups in the context of financialization;
- Problems of risk and indebtedness;
- Informal money making (ponzi schemes, gambling, multi-level marketing schemes);
- The dichotomy of formal (visible) and informal (invisible) in considering everyday economic activities of the urban population.

### **Panel 7. Post-colonial Nation-building and Historical Memory in Africa in the Time of Multiculturalism**

Convener: *Dmitri M. Bondarenko* (Institute for African Studies of the Russian

Academy of Sciences, National Research University Higher School of Economics, Russian State University for the Humanities, Moscow, Russia); e-mails: dbondar@hotmail.com, dmitrimb@mail.ru

In postcolonial states, the task of nation-building modeled on the European nations of the Modern Time was and continues to be set, despite immense difficulties, explainable, besides all the rest, by differences between the European and African (and Asian) traditional political cultures, social institution, value systems and so on. However, today, in the West itself they have to try to move away from the concept of nation established by the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, first of all due to the French revolution. Now the Western states have to seek solutions to a completely different problem – of supporting their citizens' unity at preservation of cultural diversity brought by migrants from all over the world. Not a single cultural identity based on a single value system and dominating over local and particular identities, but equitable coexistence of many cultural identities is accentuated nowadays as a new basic national value, as a source of national development in the present conditions of intensive globalization. Respectively, globalization – socio-cultural, political, economic – questions the future of the nation-state as a form of political organization and of the concept of sovereignty as the foundation of its legitimacy. It should not be overlooked that the nation-state is a historical event, what means that it appears in specific historical conditions and disappears with their change. In the form in which the nation-state is known to now, it formed in Europe and North America in the Modern Time and flourished in the 19<sup>th</sup> –20<sup>th</sup> centuries, being adequate to the realities of the world of industrial capitalism and cultural nationalism. Other trends, related to globalization and postindustrialism, dominate in the world nowadays. Not surprisingly, the Modern-Time European concept of sovereignty as the main attribute of nation-state, that sees a separate nation-state as the basic unit of international relations, is in crisis, too. Evidently, in the postindustrial and postmodern world, we will see the birth of the postnation-state, based on refusal from national sovereignty (but not independence) as the state's

main attribute in favor of transstate governance institutions. In parallel, a global transnational culture will be forming, that will not abolish but unite national cultures. While in the past, nations appeared in the result of bringing into conformity of cultural and political identities, nowadays they may not coincide again: Today, to be a member of a nation means, among other things, to be tolerant to co-citizens with other cultures. In such a situation, cannot the position of the majority of postcolonial countries be promising? In most of them, the main dividing line runs between cultures of the autochthonous peoples, the differences between which are not as great as between the cultures of natives and migrants – the main ‘cultural actors’ in the present-day Western countries. Today, this question does not have a valid response, including in view of the unclear prospects of multiculturalism in the West, which continues to play a leading role in the global socio-cultural processes.

**Panel 8. State Building, States, and State Transformation in Africa: Legacies, Impacts, Consequences and Solutions**

Conveners: *E.C. Ejiogu* (University of Nigeria, Nsukka); e-mail: e.c.ejiogu@gmail.com; *Ngozi E. Chukwu* (University of Nigeria, Nsukka); e-mail: ngozi.chukwu@unn.edu.ng; *Ngozi I’Aronu* (University of Nigeria, Nsukka): e-mail: ngozi.idemiliaronu@unn.edu.ng

In contrast to the pan-European world, the trajectory of state building in Africa is not only unique, it is also peculiar and almost uniform in character. With the exception of perhaps one case – Imperial Ethiopia – and maybe another – Liberia – all of Africa’s contemporary states are products of systematic intervention by European powers that sat around at the Berlin Conference in 1884-5 and carved up and allocated the continent as colonial territories to themselves that they consequently molded obnoxiously into their respective colonial projects. In each case, that process, which balkanized Africa’s distinct peoples, national and

territorial boundaries equally disrupted indigenous state systems and structures as well. All of those were to such extent that what emerged and exist, as countries in contemporary Africa are supra-national states. The legacies of that intervention evidenced on the one hand by those supra-national states themselves include on yet the other hand, the persistence of political instability due in the main to the clash of the old-age social authority patterns prevalent in the distinct nationalities that were carved into those supra-national states, poor governmental performance, etc. still plague Africa and distinct peoples. Given that the state is the engine that drives every institutional and segmental component of society and their associated activities, the implications of the persistent legacies. Thus, the persistence of such those legacies and their impact on the courses of state transformation and myriad other socio-economic activities in African societies with all their serious implications and consequences merit vigorous attention and interrogation by scholars. It is in that light that this panel solicits abstracts for paper sessions that will to examine pertinent issues on the subject matters from different perspectives and ramifications. Submissions are solicited in the following and all other related areas: (i) Colonial State building in Africa, (ii) Contemporary African states and the burdens of colonial legacies, (iii) State transformation and elections in Africa, (iv) Tackling the legacies of the colonial state in Africa, (iv) the political economy of state transformation in Africa.

**Panel 9. Traditional Cultures and Nation-building in Sub-Saharan Africa in Globalization Era**

Convener: *Marina Butovskaya* (Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology of the Russian Academy of Sciences, National Research University Higher School of Economics, Russian State University for the Humanities, Moscow, Russia); e-mail: [marina.butovskaya@gmail.com](mailto:marina.butovskaya@gmail.com)

Currently, the global tendencies in the development of cultural and economic

processes are witnessed all over the world and Africa is of no exception. Under general tendencies of intensive nation-building actively stimulated by governments of many African countries with multiethnic composition, it is highly important to envisage the ongoing transformations and changes of traditional cultures in Sub-Saharan Africa. It is of special interest for anthropologists, sociologists, psychologists to investigate the wide spectrum of variations in adaptations of traditional societies to globalization pressure, and to reveal the roots of high selectivity in acceptance of modern technologies and innovations, as well as general peculiarities in these processes. In current panel, we are planning to discuss a broad range of questions in this respect. Particularly: how the globalization effects traditional religious beliefs and moral norms; what changes are currently observed in tribal practices, including life-cycle ceremonies; how globalization influences the process of Christianization and Islamization in rural areas; how the tribal communities adjust nowadays to monetary economy; whether globalization stimulates the transformations in identity of representatives of traditional cultures towards more broader national identity. Finally, we would like to discuss the positive and negative aspects of globalization in nation-building in Africa.

### **Panel 10. Using Indigenous Knowledge to Promote Sustainable Development in Africa**

Convener: *Geoffrey I. Nwaka* (Abia State University, Uturu, Nigeria); e-mail: [geoffreynwaka@yahoo.com](mailto:geoffreynwaka@yahoo.com)

As we seek to achieve the new Sustainable Development Goals in Africa, indigenous knowledge may prove to be the “the single largest knowledge resource not yet mobilized in the development enterprise”. Critics liken the current pattern of development in the continent to building a house from the roof down, as all the institutions of modernization appear to be suspended over societies that have no firm connection to them. Some blame state failure and the governance crisis on

“the structural disconnection between formal institutions transplanted from outside and indigenous institutions born of traditional African cultures” Marshall Sahlins has also emphasized the need for all peoples “to indigenize the forces of global modernity, and turn them to their own ends”, as the real impact of globalization depends largely on the responses developed at the local level. How can Africa engage with globalization, and address the continent’s many development challenges by drawing on local human and material resources for greater self-reliance and sustainable development? With growing global interdependence, Africa stands to gain from global science and international best practices; but indigenous knowledge offers a model for rethinking and redirecting the development process, and a way to involve, enable and empower local actors to take part in their own development. Researchers and development agents, who often assume a knowledge or capacity vacuum in Africa, should instead try to tap into indigenous knowledge for locally appropriate ways to achieve more inclusive and participatory development. The panel considers how indigenous knowledge and practice can be used in support of good governance and sustainable development. We welcome papers that deal with various aspects of the indigenous knowledge movement in Africa. Topics include, but are not limited to the following:

- Indigenous knowledge , traditional institutions and good governance;
- Indigenous knowledge, informal justice system and conflict resolution;
- Indigenous knowledge, health and wellness;
- Indigenous knowledge and agricultural and natural resource management;
- Indigenous knowledge and local response to climate change;
- Indigenous knowledge, the informal sector/informal finance/entrepreneurship;
- Local content in education; the language question, and curriculum reform;
- Indigenous knowledge as response to Western knowledge dominance.