

# Review of: "Against Jump-Starting Western-Type Democracy on Africa's Socio-Political Tarmac"

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My response takes the form of questions. First, is this article about the state or the regime? The criticism that colonial powers drew colonial boundaries is an origin story for the modern state in Africa, while the normative democratic theory argument is about the legitimacy of the regimes in those states. A state presents different regimes across time. The predatory theory of the state (Charles Tilly's theorization) might be a better starting point for discussion of the state and state-ness. State-ness matters because it is important for the degree to which regimes are legitimate by meeting human needs. Second, if regimes are the research focus, why not examine the differences in HDI scores across Africa to determine the degree to which different regimes present better or worse performance? Selectorate theory (Bueno de Mesquita) generates hypotheses about the relationship between regime type, goods provided and distributed by the state, and social outcomes. Normative democratic theory in isolation from the empirical reality measured by HDI seems a dead end.