

Political Myths of the African Great Lakes Region

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INTRODUCTION

What are political myths and from where do they arise? Why is it important to know and understand the conditions affecting civilization and political culture? My research topic is political myths of the African Great Lakes region, situated in the area of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi. Today, this region is being destroyed by numerous conflicts. Political myths in the region affect not only politics, but also international relations. These are used as a means to gain as well as keep political power by politicians who continually create new myths to manipulate society. Knowledge and understanding of the conditions affecting civilization and political culture is necessary to help resolve regional conflicts and the tragic social-economic situations existing inside these countries.

The aim of this study is, to present political and other myths that have the most impact in this region, as well as to try to determine the influence these myths have on the creation of internal policies for these countries and their international relations. More often than not, political mythology of Sub-Saharan Africa and the African Great Lakes region is of little interest to most states or nations, but is of great interest to the local groups holding political, economic and business power, as well as the local mafia groups and their criminal activities. These myths create a serious barrier to the socio-economic progress of these societies. Political myths are used to both gain and keep political power and are widely used for the control of important political issues. I conclude that the region's political mythology is characteristic of most poor and dysfunctional countries. World powers use such

ABSTRACT

Political myth in the region is used by the politicians and rebels alike. Through the suitable planet of mythology they all try to gain and retain their power and financial profits. In other words, political mythology of the African Great Lakes is largely serving the interests of not only the states and nations, but also small groups that hold both political and economic power, as well as organised criminal groups. This kind of mythology is, therefore, characteristic of poor, underdeveloped countries troubled by conflicts. While the political superpowers use myths to justify their control over others, poorer nations use them to explain failures and social inequalities. Importantly, political myth of this region should not be perceived only negatively. We should remember that thanks to the faith in myth the continent shook off the yoke of colonialism. Without a doubt, nowadays, in the era of globalisation, this area needs new challenges, the new political myths which will guarantee the process of integration of the local communities. The good knowledge of this sphere of reality will allow us, the representatives of different civilisation, to better understand the political and economic dimension of the modern-day changes in the region of the African Great Lakes.

Keywords: political myth; political culture; decolonisation; Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda, Rwanda; Burundi

political myths to justify their rule over others in numerous spheres of social life. In a similar way, dysfunctional mythology is used to justify failures and social inequality in poor nations. Problems surrounding this formulated topic will be my primary subject not only in respect to Polish political science literature, but in an attempt at a comprehensive presentation of issues of political myths acting in this region which are the subject of my interest.

The subject of my article is political myths in the region of the African Great Lakes which includes such countries as the Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda, Rwanda and Burundi¹. The goal of this lecture is to present the origins of the modern-day political myths as well as their dimension on the area that is the object of my interest. The main political

¹ This is not a geographic designation. It is a political designation. This concept has been defined and outlined for the African Great Lakes region. See: B. R. Rubin, A. Armstrong, G. R. Ntegeye, *Regional Conflict Formation in the Great Lakes Region of Africa: Structure, Dynamics and Challenges for Policy*, Nairobi 2001. , J. Vorrath, *Political Trends in the African Great Lakes Region*, Washington 2011, p. 1-12. http://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/Political_Trends_Great_Lakes.pdf [02.01.2016], A. Shyaka, *Konflikty międzynarodowe w Afryce Wielkich Jezior Afrykańskich i sposoby ich rozwiązywania*. Rozprawa doktorska napisana pod kierunkiem Prof. dr hab. M. J. Malinowskiego, Gdańsk 2001.

myths chosen by me are: the ethnic myth, the founding myth of freedom, the myth of democracy, the myth of prosperity and all the myths based on beliefs and religions that are inspiration for collective political ideas. The main thesis of my lecture is based on two issues. First of all, in order to understand the political mechanisms and aims of countries in the African Great Lakes region, we need to understand the origins of development and the contemporary form of political mythology which was formed on the basis of culture, the civilisation in the region. Second of all, the African political myth works both as a tool for legitimacy for local governments and as a justification for specific policies or policy directions in the area, regarding countries and social groups.

Important aspect is the definition of political myth according to the European and North American political scientists; myth in the African social science concepts; political myth – an attempted synthesis and implications; the development of political myths during the pre-colonial period; political myths of the colonisation period; political mythology during the post-colonial period; the contemporary political myths of the African Great Lakes region.

First issue is definition of political myth according to the European and North American political scientists. I will start by presenting the definition of political myth as viewed by selected European political scientists. Special attention should be given to the definition provided by Maciej Szczerkowski. Thinks that political myths create an unreal image of reality in the consciousness of the society and people who devise them. Political myth is a specific kind of political idea based not on the empirical or rational knowledge, but instead on an instinctive belief in statements related to the world of politics².

Tadeusz Biernat defines political myth as irrational, emotionally motivated way of perception and evaluation of political reality. Biernat shows the connection between myth and politics. He noticed that myth is absorbing everything, including all the half-truths and falsehoods. He indicates that politicians are using myths because of their self-serving nature, and know that it is much easier to control people through emotions rather than using physical force only³.

Stanisław Filipowicz said that *myth is the word that is often used when ignorance is stigmatised*. He thinks that many basic political ideas are, in a way, immersed into the primal wisdom of myth. What is the main role of the politics if it is not shaping a certain order and fighting with chaos? The battle between order and chaos, good and evil is the main focus of the narration of myth and political discourse. Filipowicz points out that the symbolic language of myth is virtually always linked with the feeling of sanctity, the image of sacrum⁴.

Bronisław Malinowski believes that myth is an essential component of the human civilisation. It is not a fairy-tale but constantly present force. It is not an intellectual explanation or an artistic imaging but rather a pragmatic form of the primal faith and moral wisdom. In other words, myth,

regardless of whether it is the tale of a prehistoric man or the myth of a present-day religion like Christianity, is not just a story for the believers but, as Malinowski rightly points out, it is reality^{5,6}.

According to Mircea Eliade and Ernst Cassirer: myths present the simplified world⁷. Myths tell the stories. They use faith instead of knowledge. Political life is constantly mythologised, thus making it unable to serve its function beyond the domain of myths. Eliade states that the existence of myth is conditioned by the repetitiveness of motives from previous cultures⁸. Georges Sorel whose opinions were for many years crucial for the research in the field of political mythology, thought that without using myth, which was perceived by him as a big irrational idea, you cannot influence other people. Only myth, through its availability, legibility and emotionality, is able to control crowds and force them to act⁹.

The works of the North American political scientists define political myth as follows Joseph Campbell, justifying an important role of myths for the society, emphasised that they need some organising images which would integrate and bind together, for a specific aim. The nation has to focus on a common goal in order to work as a single force. Myth is not entirely irrational, it can serve very rational purposes. Campbell define myth as experience of life¹⁰.

Christopher Flood indicates that there is a clear difference between traditional and modern ways of experiencing myth. While the traditional societies treated myth as a tool for revealing the hidden reality nowadays, the activity of creating myths has become a sophisticated process using state-of-the-art technology¹¹. Michael John Parentid shows the connection between political myth and political culture. Is the enormous gap between what US leaders do in the world and what Americans think their leaders are doing is one of the great propaganda accomplishments of the dominant political mythology¹².

Another issue I would like to discuss is political myth in the African concepts. In Africa, we can find a lot of content describing myth but only as a general term used by culture, anthropology, ethnography, and so forth. Political myth, however, has not yet taken its rightful place in the African political science. The African political scientists have not yet created their own definition of political myth, using the work of western scholars in their research, including the above mentioned. Nevertheless, they all agree that the problem of political myth should be treated much more seriously in Africa. Wole Soyinka¹³, Ayi Kwei Armah and Chinua Achebe¹⁴

⁵ B. Malinowski, *Mit, magia, religia*, Warszawa 1990, p. 298.

⁶ B. Malinowski, *Myth in Primitive Psychology*, New York 1926, p. 145.

⁷ E. Cassirer, *Mit państwa*, p. 313.

⁸ M. Eliade, *Sacrum, mit, historia*, Warszawa, p. 117.

⁹ T. Biernat, op. cit., p. 40.

¹⁰ J. Campbell, *Potęga mitu*, Kraków 1944, p. 23.

¹¹ Ch. Flood, *Political myth : a theoretical introduction*, New York 2002, p. 13.

¹² M. Parentid, *History as mystery*, San Francisco 1999, M. Parentid, *Land of idols : political mythology in America*, New York 1994.

¹³ W. Soyinka *Myth, literature, and the African world*, New York 1976.

² M. Szczerkowski, *Mity, rytuały, symbole a żołnierz polski w przestrzeni politycznej II wojny światowej*, Toruń 2013, p. 6.

³ T. Biernat, *Mit polityczny*, Warszawa 1989, p. 58.

⁴ S. Filipowicz, *Mit i spektakl władzy*, Warszawa 1988, p. 53.

wrote, on many occasions, about the need of myths in political discourse. The lack of its own definition of political myth is a serious obstacle while writing about the political scene of the continent, including the region of the African Great Lakes.

Myth is defined as follows by the social scientists in Africa. According to Jones Jaja myths are constructions designed to interpret the reality, presenting the African way of thinking, behaviour and the method of distributing certain values such as knowledge or philosophical and moral truths¹⁵. Ayi Kwei Armah thinks that myth is an invaluable source of information for psychosocial links which are ready to make the effort in order to build more conscious future. Every time the society is in the state of decay, only the understanding of myth can bring the new social agreement. John Aning and Joseph Nsiah indicate that political myth is a collection of tales, it is a history that legitimates not only the political power but the state as well. They show that crises in the African societies may require changing the myth in the country¹⁶.

The review of the most important concepts of myth may indicate a certain correlation of findings as well as differences regarding the definition. Let us try and standardise the definition of political myth in the modern sense of the word. Political myth is connected with politics. We could say that it is the domain of the people on the political stage, a form of intellectual short-cut, slogan, something that absolves its followers of thinking and acting. I would say that the easiest definition for it is an arranged pattern of collective thinking and collective conduct of the specific community. In my opinion, political myth is an irrational and false element of political awareness based on the tradition and beliefs, which justifies the political actions. Political myths shape the political awareness of each person, and influence the degree and shape of this awareness for future generations. Myth is a useful tool of politics because it imposes undisputably a specific way of thinking, creating not only patterns of social behaviour but also a foundation for the language of authority. In practice, the language of politics uses the magic of words and gestures, the symbols. It allows to lay foundations for the great political projects.

We have to keep in mind that political myth is not only a part of a specific statehood (the state) but also of smaller and bigger social groups. Political myths are present even on the transnational level, for example: the myth of a united Europe – the European Union. In summary the definition of political myth is ambiguous, and defined differently by anthropologists, sociologists and by other social sciences. By researching the contemporary political myth it is easy to notice the differences among scholars in understanding and

¹⁴ Ch. Achebe, *The oral tradition by Society for the Study of Myth and Tradition*, New York 1992.

¹⁵ M. J. Jaja, *Myths in African concept of reality*, International Journal of Educational Administration and Policy Studies, Nigeria 2014, Vol.6(2), p. 9-14. [http://www.academicjournals.org/journal/IJEAPS/article-full-text-pdf/308626642821\[01.01.2016\]](http://www.academicjournals.org/journal/IJEAPS/article-full-text-pdf/308626642821[01.01.2016])

¹⁶ J. Aning, J. Nsiah, *Political Myth and Achebe's Arrow of God*, Journal of Science and Technology, Ghana 2014, Vol. 32 (2) p. 68. [http://www.ajol.info/index.php/just/article/viewFile/81391/71565\[01.01.2016\]](http://www.ajol.info/index.php/just/article/viewFile/81391/71565[01.01.2016])

construction of the definition of “political myth”. This definition divided researchers. There are proponents who believe that it is a synthetic representation (according to Sorel) of a linguistic phenomenon, the semiological theory of myth (Barthes¹⁷) or story (Malinowski, Eliade). Researchers of different scientific disciplines such as: the anthropologist Malinowski, the philosopher Eliade and Cassirer as well as the political scientist Biernat all agree that the existence of myth depends on the social functions which are performed. Maciej Szczurowski emphasises that political myths are expressions of the political culture of specific social groups, specific nations. Political culture is, on the other hand, part of the culture which is identified with civilisation. Thus, in order to understand the political mythology of the nation or the community we need to carefully learn it, paying special attention to its spirituality¹⁸.

The important question is when were the first myths created and where can we find them? The first myths were created in the primal societies as a result of abstract reasoning. The development of the initial forms of politics marked the beginning of political myths. Political myth is the “child” of political culture, which is why myths differ from each other. They are present on all the continents, in all the countries, in “Old” and “New” alike.

The next issue which is the development of political myths during the pre-colonial period. The origins of political myths in the region of the African Great Lakes can be found in the pre-colonial era. During this period, myth functioned in the African populations in two spheres of its construction and interpretation. The first sphere was the reality surrounding people who lived there which consisted of such elements as flora, fauna and the geographical elements. The second sphere was represented by the rich African spirituality, supernatural elements and metaphysical phenomenon¹⁹. Based on those two areas the rich mythology was created, along with its symbolism. The mythology was also used for political purposes like managing the internal and external policies. Shamans and witch-doctors played an essential role in this irrational part of political process which influenced the myths, and is visible even today.

Most of the populations in the pre-colonial Africa were societies that used an oral tradition²⁰ in which myth was a conservative element, worshipped by them. This caused the deformation of facts. The primal myths, symbols and rituals had the power to combine and consolidate the group values. Myth was connected with politics even in tribal societies, where it was a powerful weapon during intertribal fights, forging alliances and separating family groups from larger political entities²¹. In my opinion, myth is a tool used by the African leaders to strengthen their power. It had inner relationship with political ideology even before the period of colonisation, which means it changed from myth in the traditional sense to political myth. During the pre-colonial era, the myth of freedom raised to the status of the founding

¹⁷ R. Barthes, *Mitologie*, Warszawa 2000, p. 239.

¹⁸ M. Szczurowski, op. cit., p. 21.

¹⁹ G. Parrinder, *African mythology*, London 1968, p. 16.

²⁰ T. Falola, T. Fleming, *African Civilizations: From the pre-colonial to modern day*, USA p. 2. <http://www.eolss.net/sample-chapters/c04/e6-97-09.pdf> [19.01.2016]

²¹ G. Parrinder, op. cit., p. 16.

myth. It was perceived in a special way, not only as all the rights and freedoms a person can have, but also as the tribal territory. Those societies understood freedom mainly as an unrestricted ability to commune with the reality that surrounded them. The region of the African Great Lakes during the pre-colonial era was not familiar with the definition of democracy as we know it today. We can, however, assume that there were certain elements of the modern-day myth of democracy by observing the way in which the primal tribal societies functioned. Democracy was used to elect some of the tribal leaders by the majority of community, although this position was usually inherited. In the political practice of this region, the myth of prosperity was a frequent element. It occurred when a chieftain, a politician mobilised his people in order to move into a new area by promising them prosperity in their new place. In exchange, he received gifts. In conclusion, during the pre-colonial period the primal political myths were associated with the faith in supernatural forces. Native religions, sorcery and beliefs are all inspirations for the creation of myths that are used for political power in tribes, and other activities of this nature.

Another issue which is Political myths of the colonisation period. The political mythology of the African Great Lakes region during the colonisation period is characterised mainly, by the abandonment of its tribal dimension in favour of the superior state policy and the nation-state mythological sphere. It should be stressed that the colonisers created the borders of countries in a ruthless and ill-considered way which destroyed the existing tribal territories. The term homeland was no longer connected with tribe. The colonial authorities in the area of the African Great Lakes not only strengthened the divisions among the indigenous population, but also used the "race" to do specific tasks²². The local population was segregated into Tutsi, Hutu and Twa. Colonialism caused the ethnic myth to become extremely dangerous, and used as the justification for genocide. This ethnic myth is very influential even today, just like the other myths of the colonisation era, and they all still create fear. This proves that, although colonialism was the source of progress, it was also a form of enslavement. That is why we can definitely use the term yoke of colonialism²³.

During the colonial period the myth of freedom was redefined. Freedom was no longer perceived as an unrestricted ability to commune with nature, instead it was symbolised by the desire to get rid of the colonialists. During the battle for freedom the African leaders mobilised their followers under the flag of the common nation state, and it was the myth of state, the myth of freedom that united the African people, and brought them independence. The colonisers did not teach the Africans what democracy is. Instead, they were shaping the myth of democracy in order to convince the local societies that their authority, systems and political values are the best. The question is, whether the democracy as defined by the Europeans is fair? Fifty per cent plus one imposes its will, fifty per cent minus one vote. The fairer form of governing is to reach a consensus, just like in

the European Union. The policy of the colonisers influenced the existence of the local myths. The process of shaping myths which were directed against the colonisers was very important. Before the organisation of modern national movements, independence movements, the reactions against the colonial compulsion were different and often achieved the level of myth. Christianity was to a large element of the colonial project²⁴. Some of the methods of Christianisation are good examples, for instance the Bible as the reflection of the myth of white man. The Bible presented several customs, like polygamy or sacrifices, valued by the Africans that were challenged by the missionaries and colonisers who imposed their own laws²⁵. In summary, the colonial administration, priests and different missionaries of the Catholic

Church became bringers of the new religion and the new culture at the same time. That included the new political mythology of the West European sphere of civilisation. The Roman Catholic religion is, even today, identified with the myth of white man. The leaders of the Church were using native songs and dances to impose the new religion²⁶.

Next issue is postcolonial political mythology. At the beginning, I would like to emphasise that I am aware that the accuracy of the term "post-colonial", used by me, has been doubted by political scientists, historians and other representatives of social sciences and humanities. It is my hope that in the course of discussion on my lecture you will refer to this problem. The modern-day relations with the countries in the region are taking the form of neo-colonialism. Significant changes in the area of the African Great Lakes occurred in the middle of the 19th century and were associated with the fall of colonialism. They also largely influenced the political mythology of the region. The dominant political tool used by the independent states was the negation of colonialism and the European policy of conquest²⁷. The main political doctrines refused the notion of cultural inferiority and stressed the need to involve societies in the process of reshaping the socio-political system created by the colonial powers. In the post-colonial era, statehood was built, initially, on the basis of the myth of liberation from colonialists. However, the myths of freedom, prosperity and the ethnic myth also returned²⁸. The domain of myths was used to explain economic failures by the post-colonial authority that justified them as a result of the wrong colonial policy. One of the most important myths of the decolonisation period was the founding myth of "freedom". Freedom during the post-colonial era meant liberation from colonialism, negation of everything that was alien. The postcolonial objective was to destabilise the intellectual, social and economic theories that were the basic elements of Western thought, such as rationalism and the rule of law, through which the colonial powers "perceived", "understood" and "knew" the world.

The creation of independent structures of the state was largely connected with the creation of the new irrational sphere of politics. The aim was to concentrate communities

²² R. Vorbrich, *Plemienna i postplemienna Afryka. Koncepcje i postaci wspólnoty w dawnej i współczesnej Afryce*, Poznań 2012, p. 217.

²³ J. K. Stearns, *Dancing in the Glory of Monsters. The collapse of the Congo and the Great War of Africa*, New York 2012, p. 8, p. 25-32.

²⁴ O. Táiwò, *How Colonialism preempted modernity in Africa*, Indiana 2010 p. 51.

²⁵ K. Shillington, *History of Africa*, London 1989, p. 290-301.

²⁶ P. Englebert, K. C. Dunn, *Inside African Politics*, London 2013, p. 97-98.

²⁷ R. Vorbrich, op.cit., p. 275.

²⁸ J. K. Stearns, op.cit., p. 8.

around the programmes focused on state-building, proposed by the ruling elites. One of the tools of this policy was the new type of political mythology which suited the needs at that time. In general, it mostly rejected the mythology of the colonisation period and returned to the roots of the myths, namely the pre-colonial mythology. It was largely based on tribal identity which eventually caused polarisation of the local societies and eruption of intense economic conflicts, especially armed ones, motivated ethnically. During the post-colonial period the myth of prosperity was also used. In order to justify wars different myths were created, such as the myth of the "lost paradise" that was supposed to come after the decolonisation of Africa.

The decolonisation process in the region of the African Great Lakes gave rise to new political myths, among which the most important seems to be the myth of freedom. The term "freedom" was first used by the outgoing colonial powers. They were stating perversely that by leaving the colonies they are giving the Africans back their freedom. At the same time, actions were taken to make the new states economically dependent on the old colonies that did not want to lose profits from the exploitation of valuable deposits of natural resources in the region and foreign companies. Hence, there are past stages of the modern-day neo-colonialism.

Another important problem is The contemporary political myths of the African Great Lakes region. It is important to know how the Africans in the region understand freedom? What is their definition of it? Do they think they are free now? Nowadays, we are facing neo-colonialism in the region. Despite the fact that the countries in the area are independently, political powers still make them economically and politically dependent on them. Laurent Desire Kabila was an example of a politician who was using the myth of freedom. During his attempt to depose the regime of Mobutu Sese Seko he recruited the society by using the slogan of the myth of "freedom". "fight with me. This is war for freedom, for liberation.", he said. But did this act of overthrowing Mobutu Sese Seko and the subsequent Laurent Desire Kabila's leadership help to bring back freedom²⁹? Did Congo manage to free itself of the international corporations and the US policy? During the period of decolonisation the states were fighting for political freedom united. Rebels, political leaders they are all fighting for profits from the exploitation of deposits of natural resources. Freedom is a myth which is manipulated by politicians who want to gain and retain power.

Apart from the myth of freedom, the myth of democracy is also present. Europeans after the decolonisation used the democratic system as an example. However, during the colonisation they did not teach the Africans about it. What kind of democracy can we find in the region? Politicians in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda are all misusing their power. They change Constitutions for their own personal benefits and always rig elections. The governments of the above mentioned countries use tortures, repressions and assassinations of the members of the opposition³⁰. They do not respect the Constitution and do

²⁹ Ibidem, p. 8-9.

³⁰ W. Gierszewska, *Uganda: arbitralne aresztowania i nadmierne użycie siły wobec opozycji*, <http://www.pcsa.org.pl/products/uganda-arbitralne->

not adhere to it. Is this the kind of democracy we wanted to impose on Africa³¹? There is no democracy in the region.

Democracy is a political myth. A myth, thanks to which the African leaders are gaining development funds and benefit from the international organisations. It should be noted that nowadays the ethnic myth is still vivid. Today, politicians manipulate this myth in order to get an advantage and the support of the particular ethnic groups, at the same time stirring up antagonisms. For instance, Lambert Mende Omalanga was doing this in the "Tetela" tribe, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, to gain political support³².

Another important problem is faith which is inspiration for political myth. Through colonialism Christianity largely embedded itself in Africa and blended with tribal traditions. In this way, many religious factions were created in the area of the African Great Lakes. Religious leaders that, for example, preach the "Gospel of Prosperity", during the church ceremonies instruct their believers to vote for certain politicians and explain which one is good. At the same time they choose the politician that is funding their activity. This cooperation between politics and religion has a strong influence on society and the choices it makes³³. During this political ritual, religious leaders use myths, songs and dances. All that to affect community. The important point is the creation of the myth of "wealth and prosperity". There are many deposits of valuable resources in the region, especially in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo, such as coltan used in the production of phones, weapons, computers, medical and electronic equipment. There are also other resources like gold, diamonds and copper. In theory, it is a wealthy land³⁴. The myth of "wealth" prevails. Wealth remained in the hands of the postcolonial cartels. The Democratic Republic of Congo is the example of the neo-colonial country. The West is still using its political and economic influences, and is gaining profits from the deposits of natural resources.

This brings me to the conclusions. The argumentation in the proposed thesis has been presented well. The basic thesis of my lecture focused on two issues. First of all, in order to understand the political mechanisms and aims of countries in the African Great Lakes region, we need to understand the origins of development and the contemporary form of political mythology which was formed on the basis of culture, the civilisation in the region. Second of all, the African political myth works both as a tool for legitimacy for local governments and as a justification for specific policies or policy directions in the area, regarding countries and social groups. The aim of my lecture has been fully achieved. I presented the origins of the modern-day political myths as well as their dimension on the area that is the object of my interest. The main political myths chosen by me were: the ethnic myth, the founding myth of freedom, the myth of

aresztowania-i-nadmierne-uzycie-sily-wobec-opozycji/ , PCSA [25.01.2016]

³¹ P. Englebort, K. C. Dunn, *Inside African Politics*, London 2013, p. 203-207.

³² J. Kowalski - interview with missionary [27.01.2016]

³³ W. Gierszewska, *Afryka: Ewangelia dobrobytu w Afryce*, <http://www.pcsa.org.pl/products/afryka-ewangelia-dobrobytu-w-afryce-/>, PCSA [30.01.2016]

³⁴ J. Bannon, P. Collier, *Natural resources and Violent Conflict. Options and Actions*, Washington 2003, p. 201-203.

democracy, the myth of prosperity and all the myths based on beliefs and religions that are inspiration for collective political ideas. I tried to determine the influence of political mythology on the internal policies of the states in the area.

In my opinion, political myths, despite our past experiences, are still fulfilling our need to understand a cause and effect relationship, still answering our difficult questions. Even if it is impossible to understand the entire world through mythology, this deformed image is much easier to accept than reasonable explanations of political experts. Even if the answers are simplified or even off-topic they are still a substitute for knowledge. Thanks to them, we feel that we know and understand something.

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