



# Where Is Uhuru?: Reflections on the Struggle for Democracy in Africa

*Issa G. Shivji*

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The neoliberal project, led by the IMF and World Bank, promised to correct many of the distortions in the African postcolonial environment and pledged to engineer liberalization and expand democratic space through competitive multiparty elections. Decades later, few people, if any, can testify to the success of the envisaged reforms. Instead, neoliberalism failed to guarantee a sustainable basis for freedom, rights and prosperity. This compilation shows that the reform period opened the continent to greater privation by a more emboldened local political class who, under pressure from or by acquiescing to foreign imperialist forces, undermined the struggles for democratic transformation and economic empowerment. Examining the rewards of multiparty politics, the dividends from a new constitutional dispensation, the processes of land reform, women's rights to property, or the Pan-Africanist project for emancipation shows that all have suffered severely. Through these essays, Issa Shivji calls for a new, Africa-centered line of thinking that is unapologetic of the continent's right to self-determination and sets out examples of how such thinking should proceed.

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