

POLC42

Topics in Comparative Politics

African Politics

Week 8: Identity: ethnicity, race, gender, and religion in African politics

Recap

- Clientelism, patrimonialism, and neopatrimonialism
- Neopatrimonialism as “the core feature of politics in Africa” (Bratton and Van de Walle)
- Variation

On what basis is patronage typically distributed in Africa?

Identity in politics

- Multiplicity of identities:
 - Ethnicity
 - Gender
 - Language
 - Nationality
 - Race
 - Religion
 - Economic class and social status

Identity in politics

- Political benefits of identity:
 - Informational shortcut
 - In-group loyalty
 - Out-group antagonism
 - Organization
 - Defined population segment
- → Convenient source of political cleavage

Why is ethnicity the most politically salient identity in Africa?

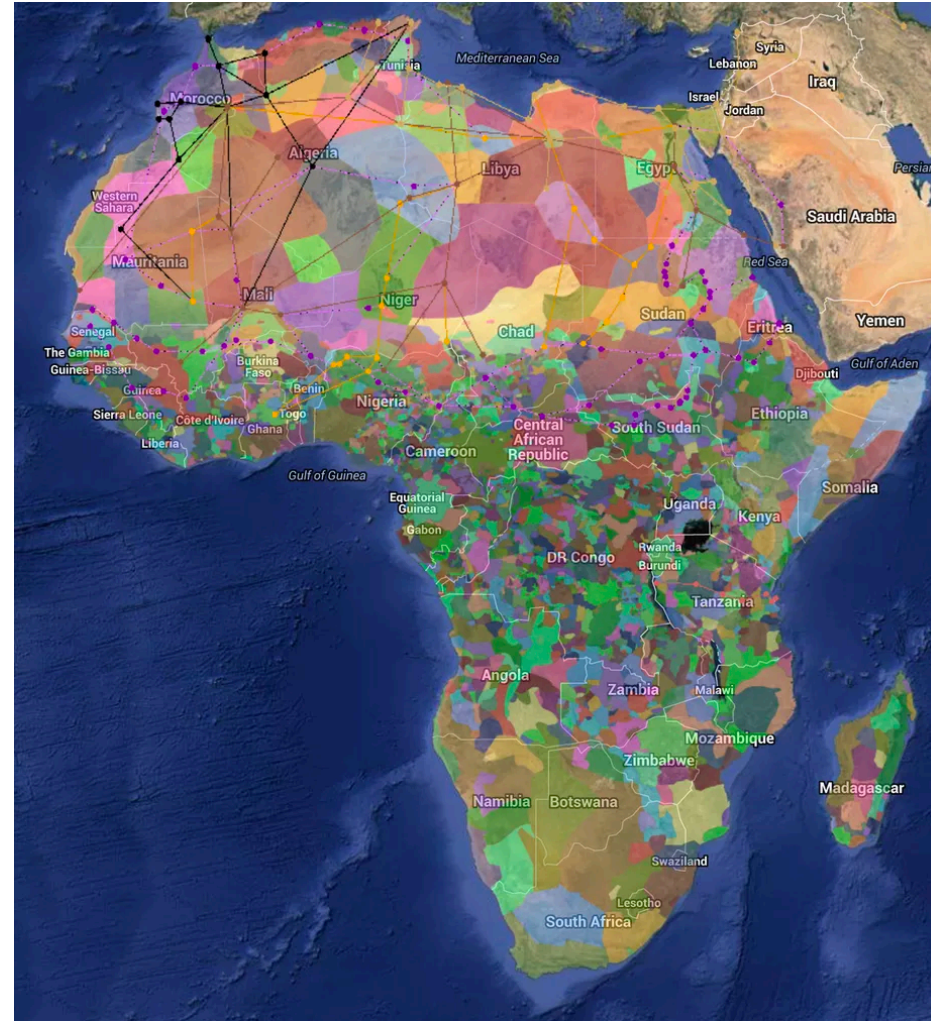
Plan for today

- Ethnicity and ethnic politics
- Race and politics
- Religion and politics
- Gender and politics

Ethnicity

- Weber: “a subjective belief’ in “common descent ... whether or not an objective blood relation exists”
 - Weber, Max. 1968. *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*. New York: Bedminster Press.
- Sense of distinctiveness (importance of ethnic boundaries)
- Minimal scale requirement
- → Ethnic groups: all descent-based groups based on ascriptive identities
- Ethnicity, nationality, and race

Ethnicity in Africa



<http://worldmap.harvard.edu/africamap/>

Ethnic fractionalization

- Negative association between ethnic fractionalization and:
 - Economic growth
 - Government public goods provision
 - Access to patronage
 - Access to foreign aid
 - Societal trust
 - Civil peace
 - Democratic stability
 - Quality of governance

Is this relationship deterministic?

• HAPPY •
Canada
DAY

What is responsible for the political salience of ethnicity?

Scholarly perspectives

- Primordialism
- Instrumentalism
- Constructivism

Primordialism

- Ethnicity as a timeless essence

Instrumentalism

- Politics as “slicing the national cake” →
 - Desire to maximize group returns
 - Need for political dominance
- Ethnicity as situational
- Incorporation of ethnicity into materialist paradigms

Constructivism

- Ethnicity as a collective human act of creative invention

Origins of ethnicity in Africa

- Colonial invention and manipulation:
 - Mamdani: “[m]ore than any other colonial subject, the African was containerized, not as a native, but as a tribesperson.” →
 - Chiefs and indirect rule
 - Customary law
 - Creation of new ethnic identities:
 - E.g. Mijikenda and Luhya in Kenya in the 1920s and 1930s
 - Preferential treatment for some ethnic groups:
 - E.g. Tutsi in Ruanda-Urundi, Kikuyu in Kenya



Origins of ethnicity in Africa

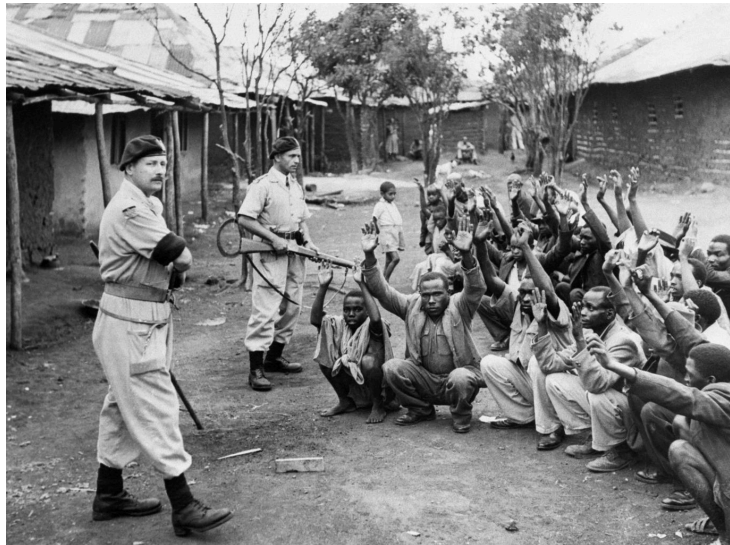
- African agency during the colonial period:
 - Ranger: “European classifications and inventions of race, or tribe or language in effect created a series of empty boxes, with bounded walls but without contents. It was all very well to write of ‘the Ndebele; or ‘the Kikuyu,’ but to give meaning to that identity was a much more complex and contested business.”
 - Ranger, Terence. 1993. “The Invention of Tradition Revisited: The Case of Colonial Africa.” In T. Ranger and O. Vaughan (eds.) *Legitimacy and the State in Twentieth Century Africa*, Basingstoke: Macmillan.
 - Defense against colonial rule

Origins of ethnicity in Africa

- Colonial experience and ethnicity—the mechanisms:
 - Promotion of processes of ethnic invention and imagining through the categorization and administration of Africans as tribespeople
 - Encouragement of a sense of difference and competition through:
 - The growth of (real and perceived) economic and social inequalities
 - The association of ethnic groups with the ownership and control of particular geographic areas

Origins of ethnicity in Africa

- Invention and manipulation of ethnicity by independence-era and postcolonial African politicians:
 - Creation of new ethnic identities:
 - E.g. the Kalenjin in Kenya in the 1950s
 - Ethnic nationalism



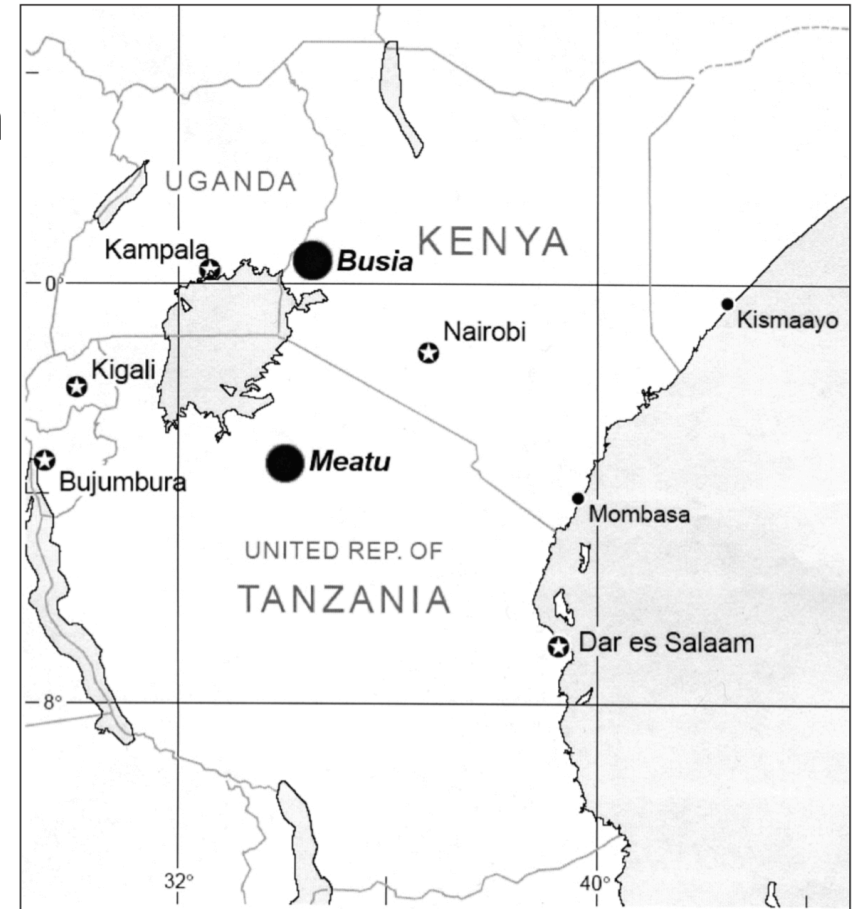
Political benefits of ethnicity

- Informational shortcut
- In-group loyalty
- Out-group antagonism
- Organization
- Defined population segment

What are the consequences of
political mobilization of ethnicity?

Consequences of varied political salience of ethnicity: evidence from Kenya and Tanzania

- Miguel:
 - 2 areas with similar ethnic composition
 - Low political salience of ethnicity and more extensive public goods provision in Tanzania
 - High salience of ethnicity in Kenya and more limited public goods provision



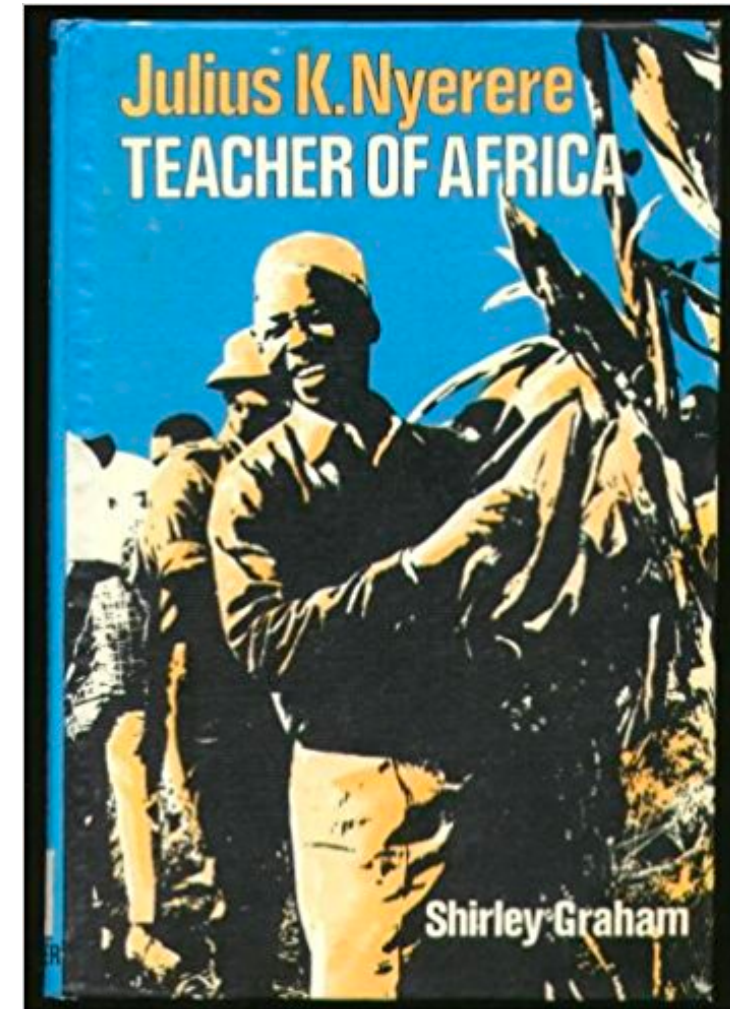
Consequences of varied political salience of ethnicity: evidence from Kenya and Tanzania

- Implications:
 - Political salience of ethnicity vs. ethnic fractionalization
 - Posner (2004): “[T]he political or social salience of a cultural cleavage does not follow axiomatically from the fact that the cultural cleavage exists.”

What explains the variation in the political salience of ethnicity?

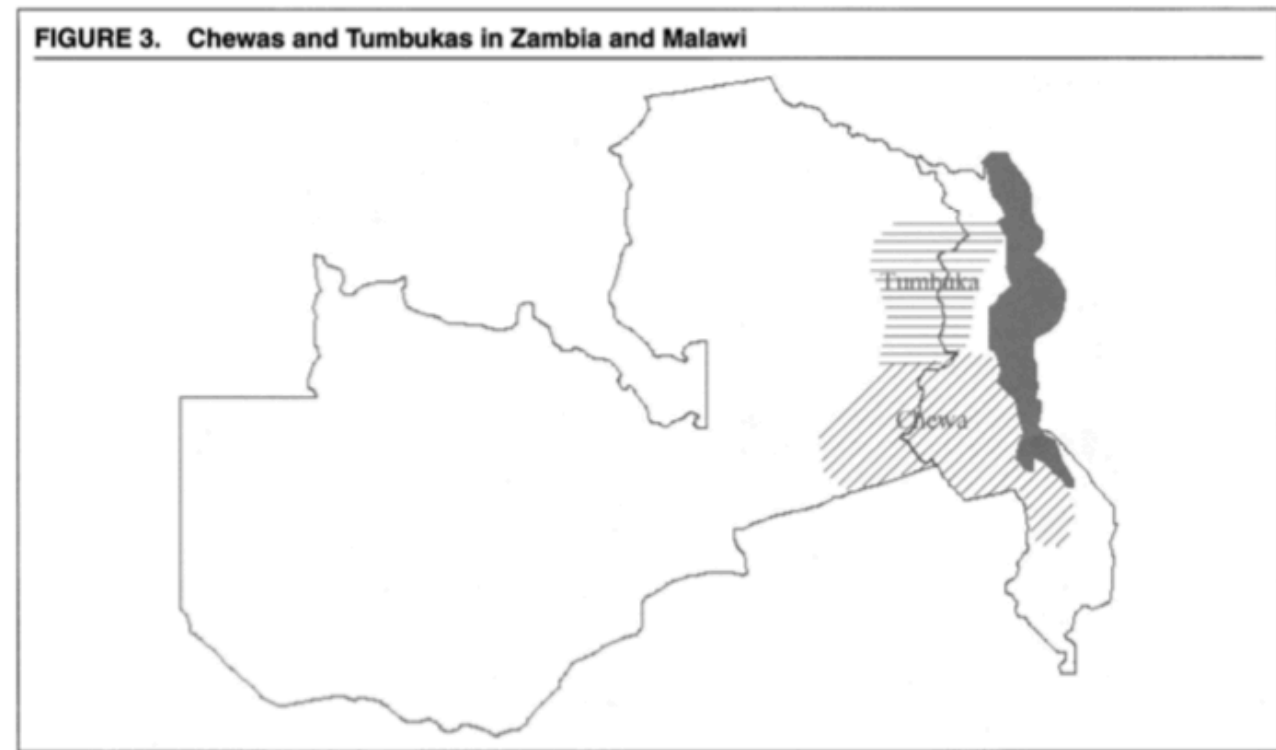
Variation in the political salience of ethnicity: evidence from Kenya and Tanzania

- Miguel:
 - “[T]he Tanzanian nation-building approach has allowed ethnically diverse communities in rural Tanzania to achieve considerable success in fund-raising for local public goods, while diverse communities in the nearby Kenyan region typically fail.”



Variation in the political salience of ethnicity: evidence from Malawi and Zambia

- Posner (2004):
 - Arbitrary colonial-era division of the Chewas and Tumbukas between Malawi and Zambia
 - Antagonistic Chewa-Tumbuka relationship in Malawi
 - Chewa-Tumbuka alliance in Zambia
 - Why?

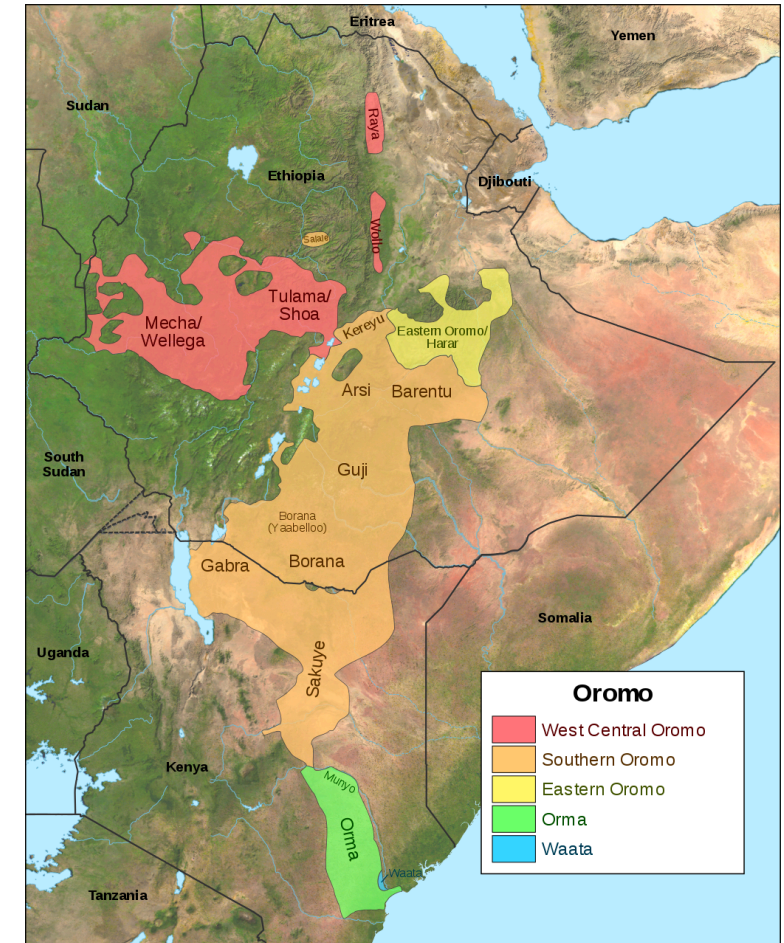


Variation in the political salience of ethnicity: evidence from Zambia

- Posner (2005):
 - Identities as situational and instrumental
 - Individuals as utility maximizers
 - Institutions as parameters that determine the salience of identities
 - The political salience of ethnicity vs. language in one-party and multi-party Zambia
 - Posner, Daniel N. 2005. *Institutions and Ethnic Politics in Africa*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Variation in the political salience of ethnicity: evidence from Northern Kenya

- Hierarchically layered ethnic identities:
 - Superordinate: Borana, Gabbra
 - Subordinate: Borana clans (e.g. Karrayyu, Worrjidda), Gabbra phratries (e.g. Algana, Gar)



Variation in the political salience of ethnicity: evidence from Northern Kenya

- Parliamentary vs. district elections
- Mohammed Ali (Abshiro, Karrayyu Borana) vs. Ukur Yatani (Gar Gabbra)



Objectives of political mobilization of ethnicity

- Elections and governance
- Autochthony and indigeneity

Autochthony and indigeneity

- Similar discourses:
 - The need to safeguard 'ancestral lands' against 'strangers' who 'despoil' the patrimony

Autochthony

- Tool of dominant / majority groups
- Migration and 'sons of the soil'

Ivoirité: autochtony in Côte d'Ivoire

- Economic success and immigration under Félix Houphouët-Boigny
- Struggle for power between Henri Konan Bédié and Alassane Ouattara following Houphouët-Boigny's death
- Political potency of the discourse of (Southern) Ivorian autochthony
- Civil war: 2002-2007 and 2010-2011



Indigeneity

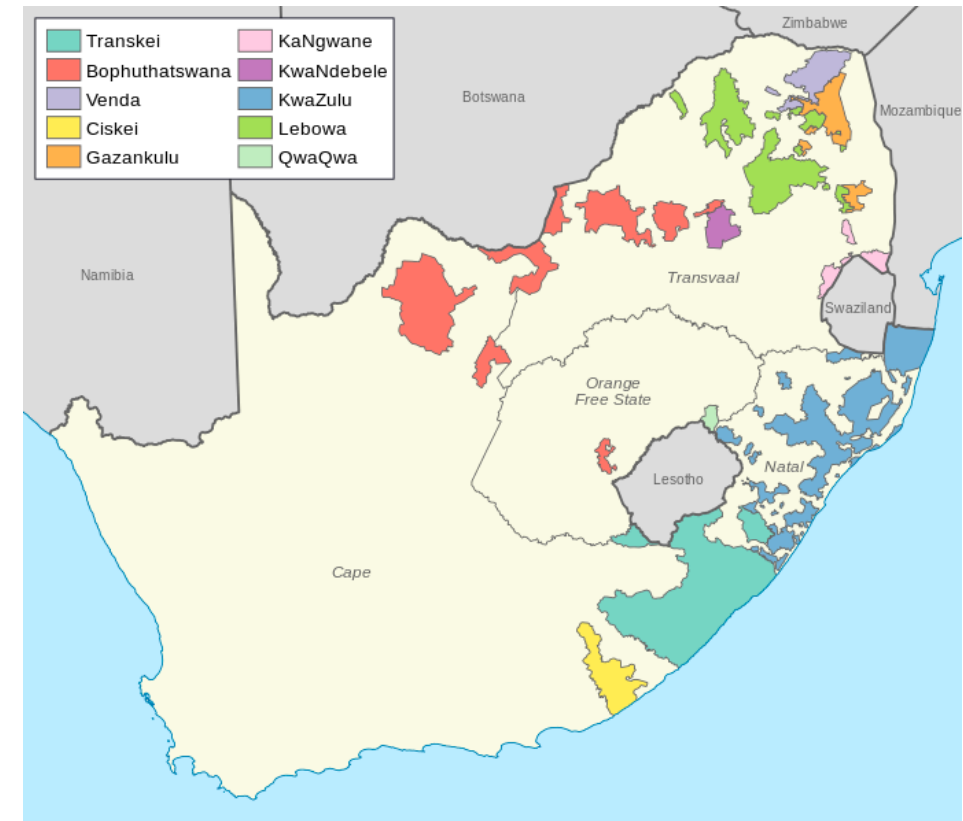
- A ‘weapon of the weak’
- Political mobilization of the Il Chamus in Kenya → official recognition as an underrepresented minority
 - Little, Peter D. 2016. “A Victory in Theory, Loss in Practice: Struggles for Political Representation in the Lake Baringo-Bogoria Basin, Kenya.” *Journal of Eastern African Studies* 10 (1): 189–207.



Kahoot!

Politics of race in Africa: South Africa

- Dutch settler colonialism from the 17th c.
- British colonization, Great Trek, and Boer Republics
- Boer War (1899-1902) and the Union of South Africa
- 1948 election and the National Party
- Apartheid
- Homelands / Bantustans



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Bantustans_in_South_Africa.svg

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boer_Republics#/media/File:BoerGriquaRepublics.svg

Politics of race in Africa: Darfur

- de Waal:
 - Migration and livelihoods
 - (North) Sudan and South Sudan and the formation / adoption of the contemporary Arab and African identities
 - Elite 'Arabization' (or 'Sudanization') in Darfur and emergence of Arab suprematism
 - Adoption of African identity by non-Arab Darfurians



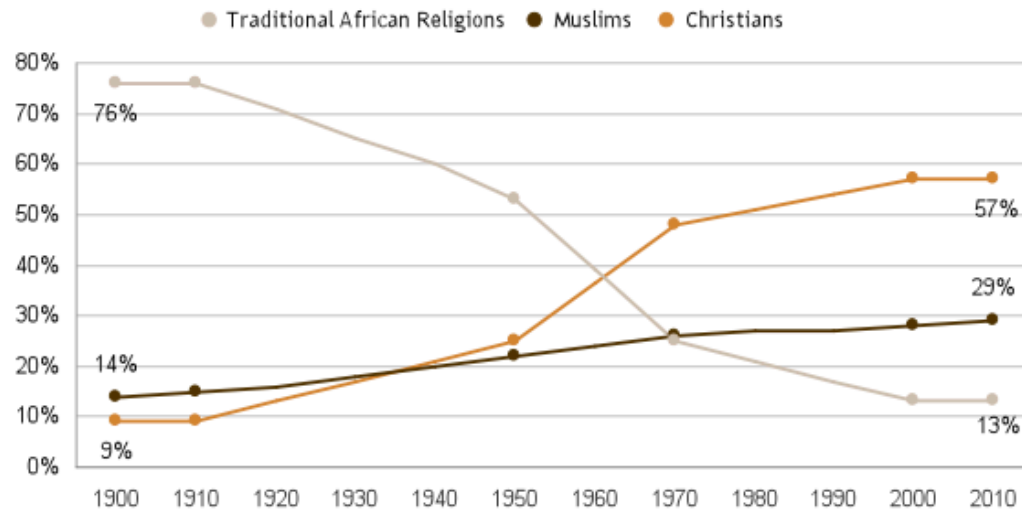
The Desert: Bedeyat, Meidob, etc.

A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Farms	A	Farms	A	Farms	A	Farms	A
A	Farms	A	Farms	A	Farms	A	Farms
Farms	A	Farms	A	Farms	A	Farms	A
A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A

The South: Fertit, Dinka, etc.

Religion in Africa

Growth of Islam & Christianity in Sub-Saharan Africa Since 1900

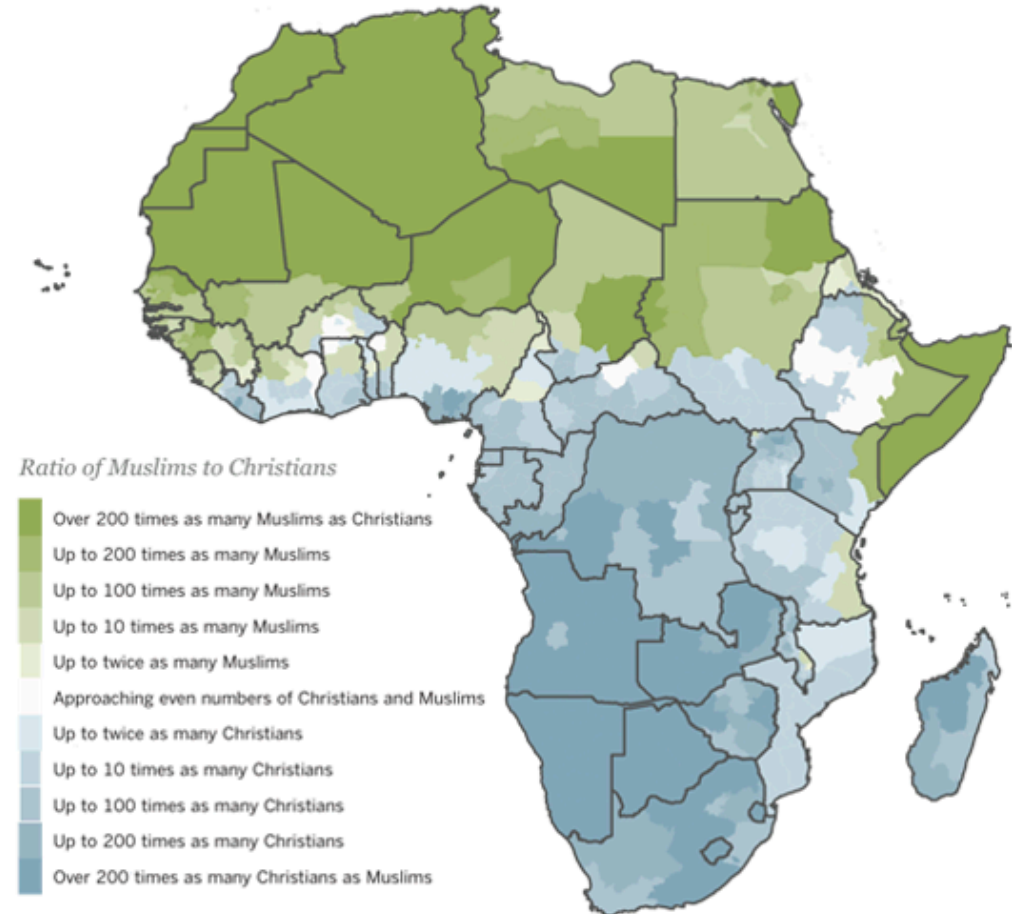


Source: World Religion Database. Historical data draw on government records, historical atlases and reports of religious organizations at the time. Later figures draw on U.N. population estimates, surveys and censuses.

Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, April 2010

Muslims and Christians in Africa

This map shows the ratio of Muslims to Christians in each country and province. The north is heavily Muslim, and the south is heavily Christian.



Sources: censuses, demographic and health surveys, and the World Religion Database

Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, April 2010

Religion and politics in Africa

- Schatzberg:
 - “Most Africans understand that ‘politics’ and ‘religion’ are parts of the same terrain: that power flows between the visible material world and the invisible spiritual world; and that the political kingdom contains a politically significant spiritual terrain. Moreover, intelligent and gifted politicians know the contours of this terrain and are comfortable traversing it in either its material or spiritual manifestations. They understand that in their culture power is unitary and cannot be divided into separate boxes.”
 - Schatzberg, Michael. 2001. *Political Legitimacy in Middle Africa: Father, Family, Food*. Bloomington and Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press: 74.

What is the political role of religion in Africa?

Religious movements in politics in Africa

- Maxwell:
 - Zimbabwe Assemblies of God, Africa (ZAOGA) and the Zimbabwe African National Union - Patriotic Front (Zanu-PF) regime
 - “Catch the Cockerel before dawn”
 - Reproduction of neopatrimonialism within ZAOGA
 - Internal contestation



<https://www.herald.co.zw/first-lady-opens-zaoga-hospital/>

Politicization of religion in Africa

- Maxwell:
 - Pentecostalism as means of social control

Politicization of religion in Africa

- Uganda's Anti-Homosexuality Act 2014 & 2018 and elite manipulation of social anxieties

- Sadgrove, Joanna, Robert M. Vanderbeck, Johan Andersson, Gill Valentine, and Kevin Ward. 2012. "Morality Plays and Money Matters: Towards a Situated Understanding of the Politics of Homosexuality in Uganda." *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 50 (01): 103–29.



Politicization of religion in Africa

- Cross-cutting cleavages and mobilization of religious vs. ethnic allegiances

Politicization of religion in Africa: evidence from Northern Kenya

- 2007 parliamentary elections in Laisamis Constituency:
 - Joseph Lamasolai Lekuton (Ariaal) vs. Abubakar Godana Hargura (Saale Rendille)



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The New York Times Magazine

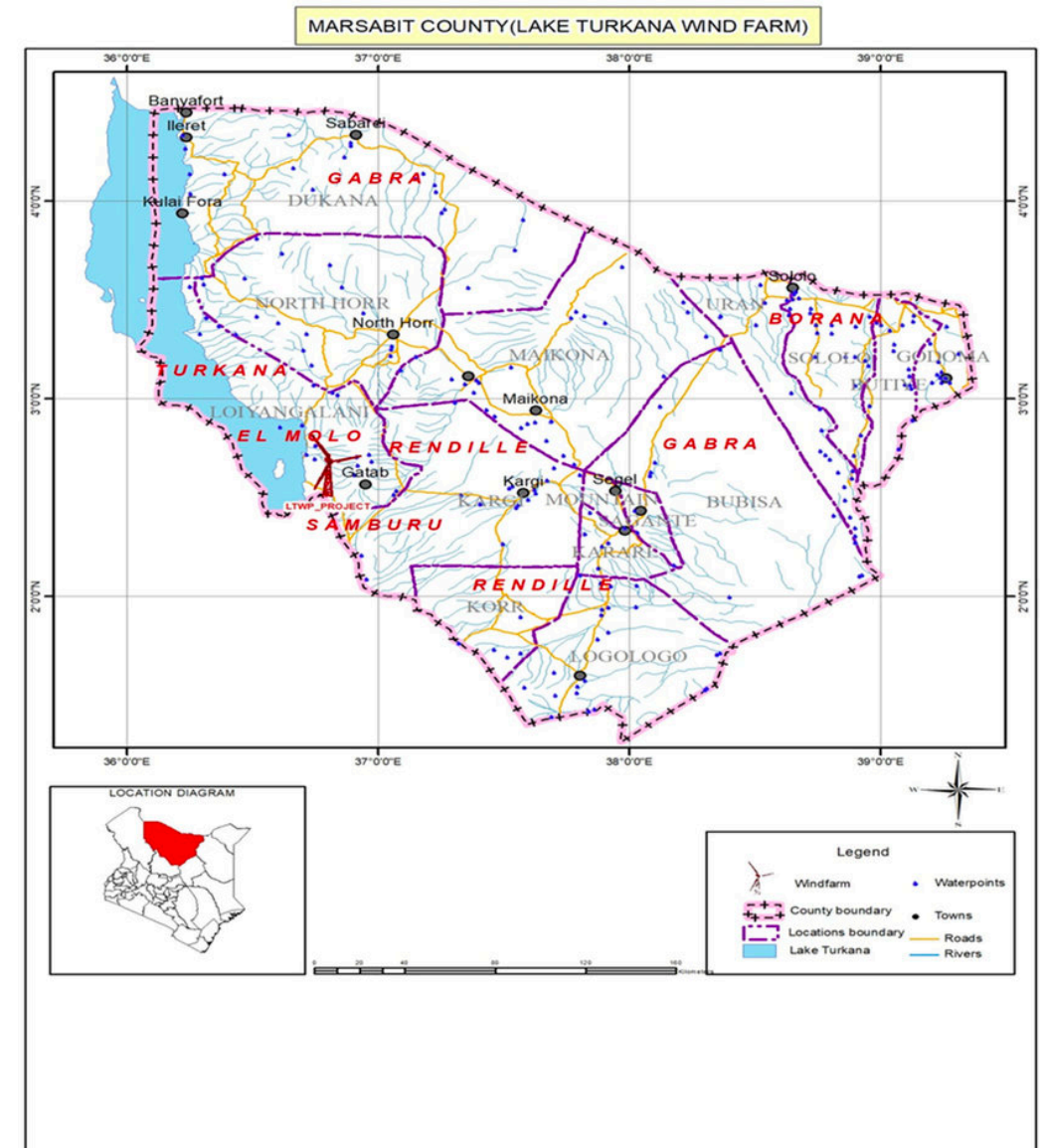
Magazine

The African Front

By JOSHUA HAMMER DEC. 23, 2007

<https://www.nytimes.com/2007/12/23/magazine/23kenya-t.html?nytmobile=0>

Achiba, Gargule. 2019. "Navigating Contested Winds: Development Visions and Anti-Politics of Wind Energy in Northern Kenya." *Land* 8 (7): 1-29.



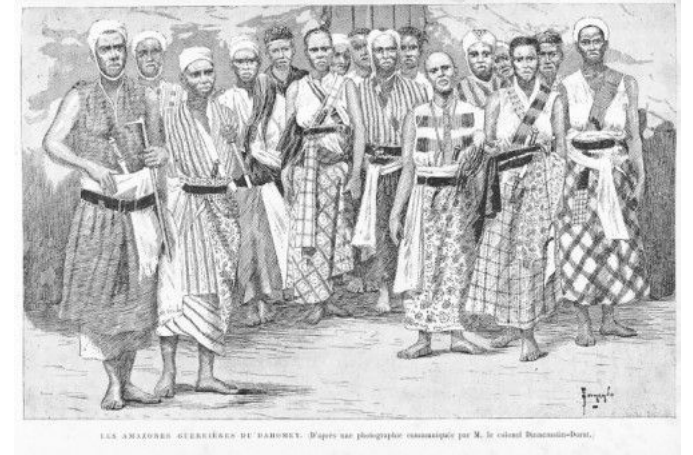
Politicization of religion in Africa: evidence from Ethiopia

- Oromo nationalism and other centrifugal forces in Ethiopia
- Ethiopia's ethnic federalism project
- Osmond:
 - Waaqeffannaa association, return to (neo)traditional religion, and invention of tradition
 - Osmond, Thomas. 2004. "Waaqeffannaa: une association religieuse d'Éthiopie entre nationalisme ethnique et idéologie afrocentriste." *Politique africaine*, 94(2), 166-180.



Women and politics in Africa: historical legacies

- Precolonial gender roles:
 - Fluidity and division of roles
 - Variation:
 - Matrilineal societies
 - Dahomey Mino
 - Complementarity vs. subordination
 - Changes over time:
 - E.g. Sokoto Caliphate



<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/dahomeys-women-warriors-88286072/>

Women and politics in Africa: historical legacies

- Colonialism:
 - Imposition of European 19th c. gender norms
 - Indirect rule
 - Provision of formal education, agricultural equipment, and incentives to produce cash crops to men
- Early postcolonial period:
 - Formal franchise, but societal norms

Women and political activism

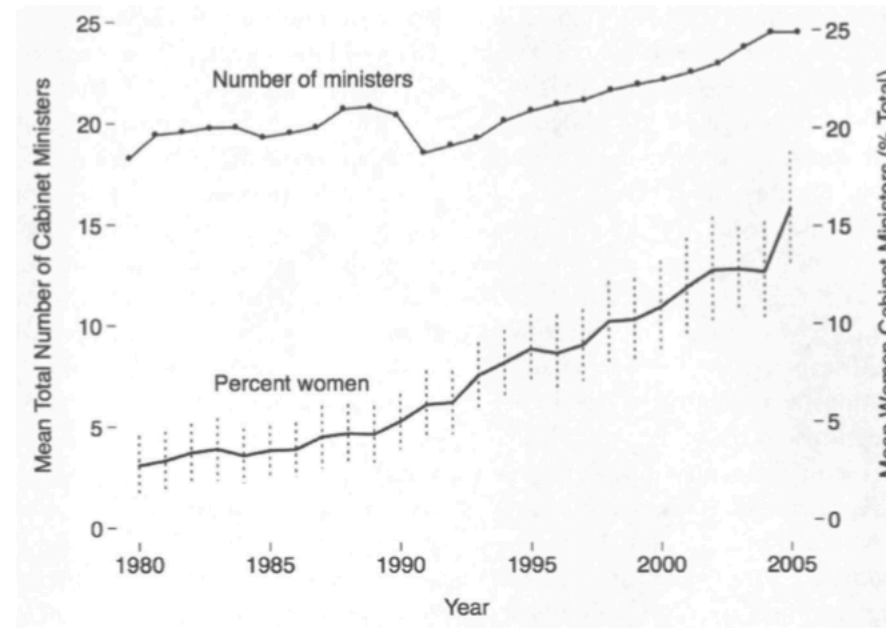
- Wangari Maathai
- Green Belt Movement, 1977
- Nobel Peace Prize, 2004



<http://www.womenaid.org/press/info/development/greenbeltproject.html>

Women in formal politics

FIGURE 1 Women in African Cabinets, 1980–2005



Arriola, Leonardo R., and Martha C. Johnson. 2019. "Executive Cabinets Ethnic Politics and Women's Empowerment in Africa: Ministerial Appointments to Executive Cabinets." *American Journal of Political Science* 58 (2): 495–510.

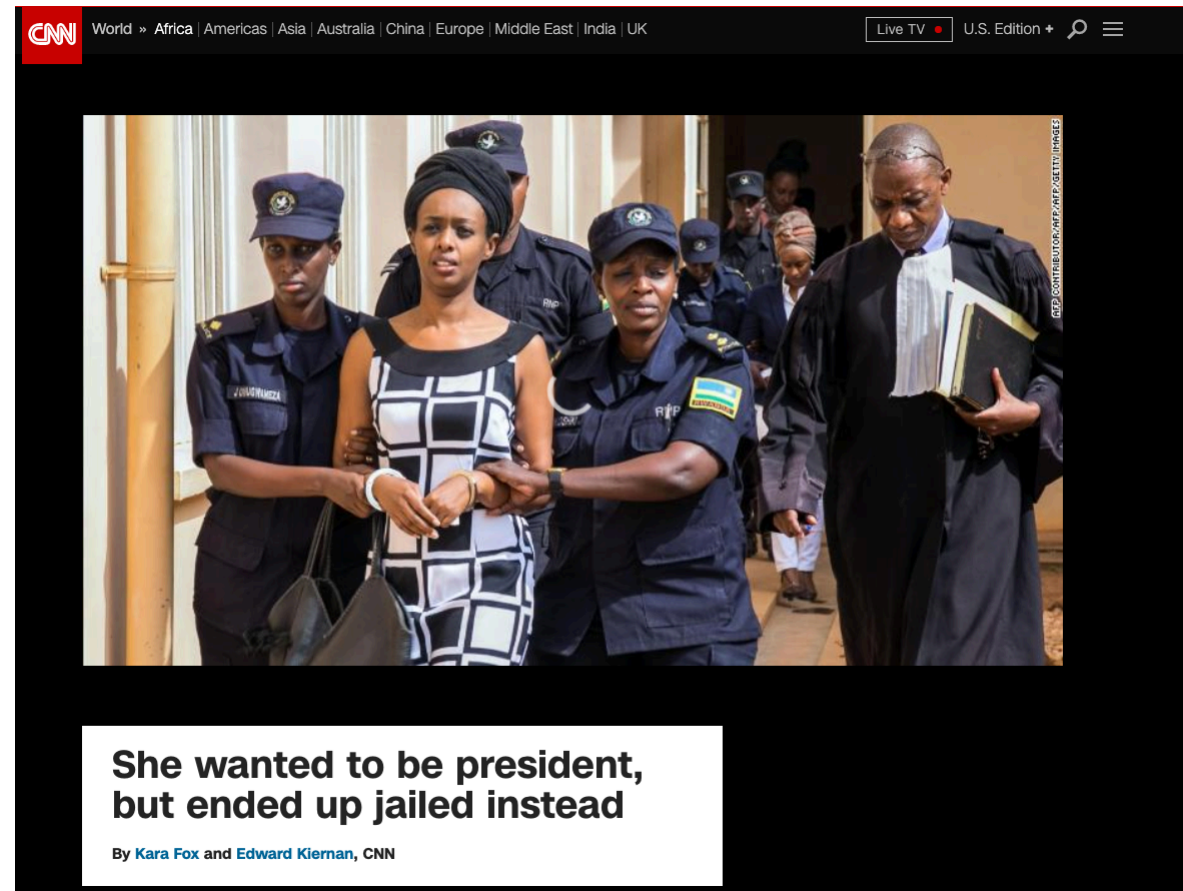
Women in formal politics

- Heads of state (excluding acting):
 - Ruth Perry, Liberia, 1996-1997
 - Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, Liberia, 2006-2018
 - Joyce Banda, Malawi, 2012-2014
 - Sahle-Work Zewde, Ethiopia, 2018-
- Heads of government:
 - Elisabeth Domitien, CAR, 1975-1976
 - Sylvie Kinigi, Burundi, 1993
 - Mame Madior Boye, Senegal, 2001-2002
 - Maria das Neves, Sao Tome and Principe, 2002-2004
 - Aminata Toure, Senegal, 2013-2014



Women in formal politics: the case of Rwanda

- 68% of MPs
- Diane Rwigara's presidential campaign in the 2017 election



<https://www.cnn.com/2018/08/28/africa/hfr-rwanda-diane-rwigara-asequals-intl/index.html>

Under what conditions are women more likely to acquire political influence?

Political influence of women

- Arriola and Johnson:
 - “[W]omen's share of cabinet appointments is significantly lower in countries where leaders must accommodate a larger number of politicized ethnic groups, but it rises with higher levels of democracy and greater representation of women in parliament.”
- Why?

Why is ethnicity the most politically salient identity in Africa?

Kahoot!