

# POLS 329 A

# Comparative African Politics

Classes 13 and 14:

Politics of identity: ethnicity, nationality, autochthony, indigeneity,  
and race

# Recap

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

# Kahoot!

# 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?

# Collective identities and the politics of identity

- Collective identities:
  - Ethnic
  - Gender
  - Linguistic
  - National
  - Racial
  - Religious

# Next two weeks

- Politics of identity:
- Ethnicity, nationality, autochthony, indigeneity, and race
- Gender and religion

What is ethnicity?

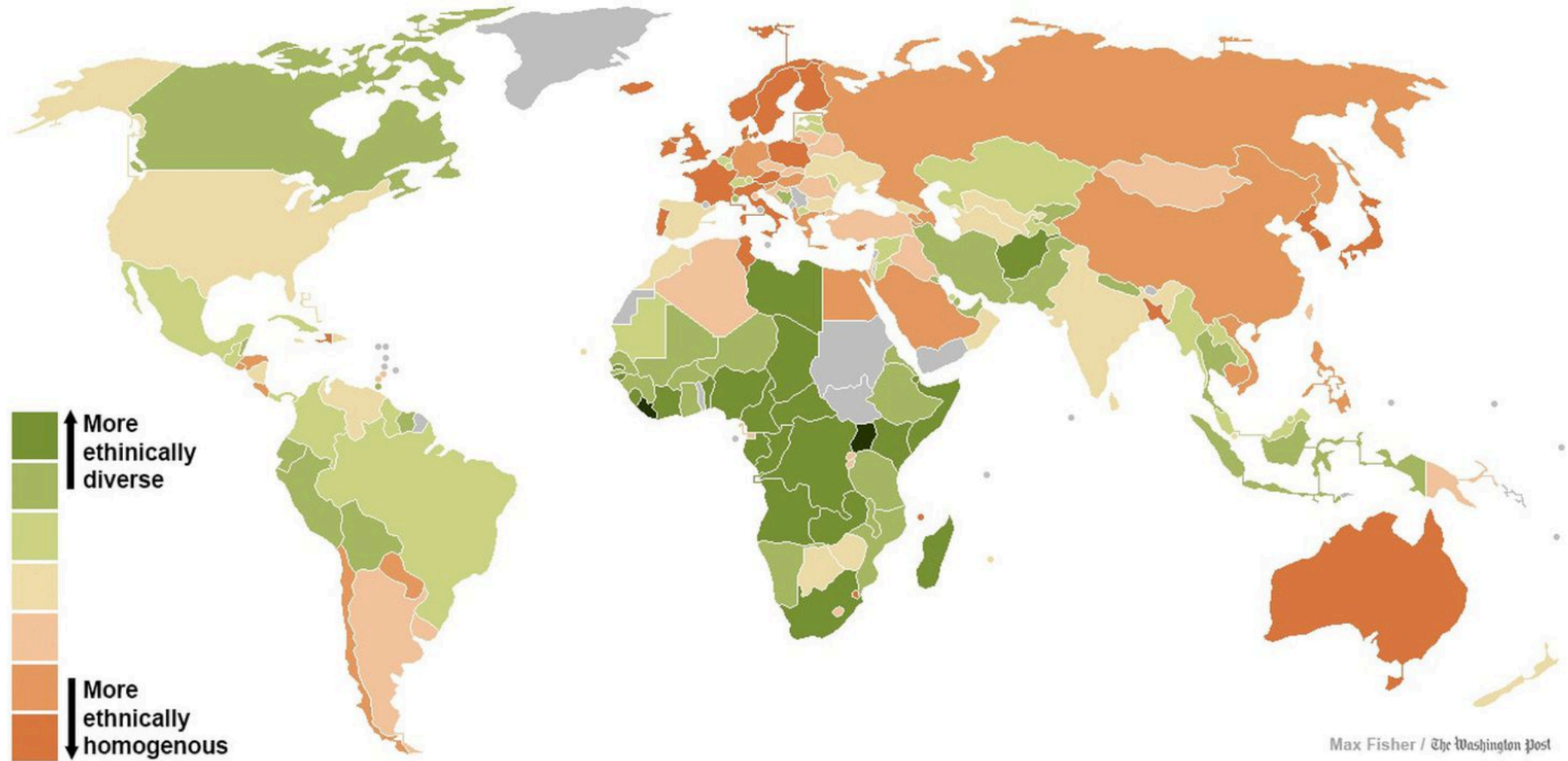
# Ethnicity

- 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

# Ethnic fractionalization



# 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?





# 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

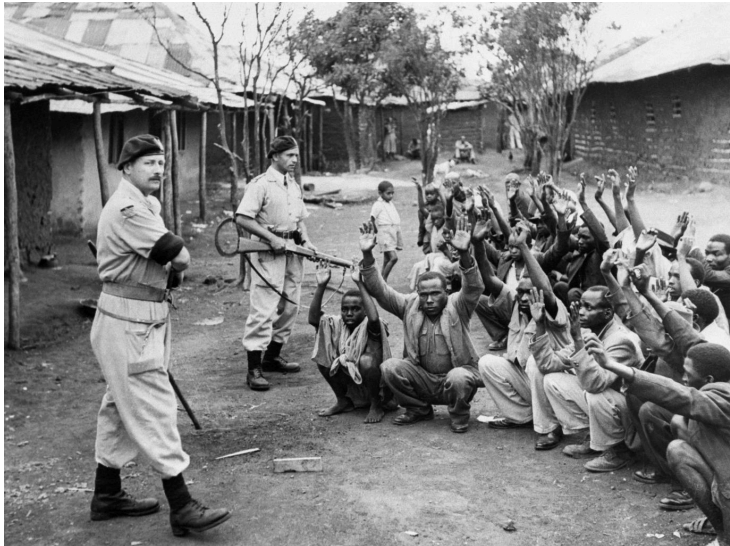
- African agency during the colonial period:
  - Ranger: “European classifications and inventions of race, or tribe or language in effect created a series of empty boxes, with bounded walls but without contents. It was all very well to write of ‘the Ndebele; or ‘the Kikuyu,’ but to give meaning to that 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





# Benefits of ethnic identity mobilization

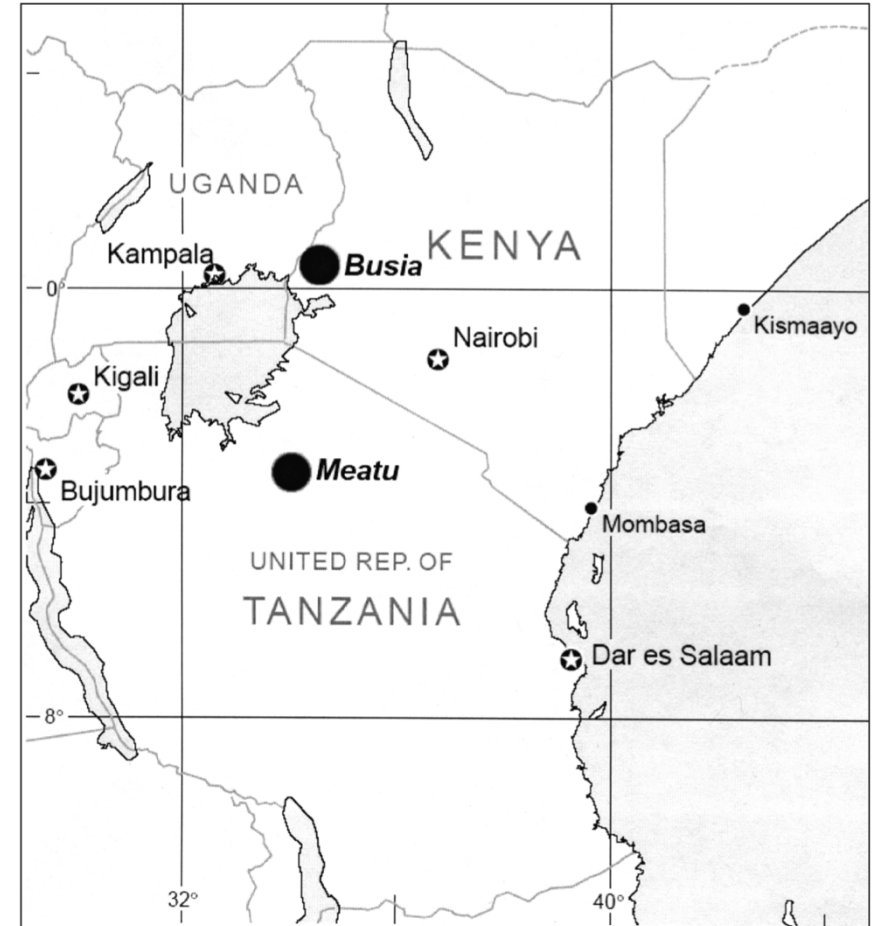
- Jóhanna Birnir:
  - “A stable but flexible information shortcut for political choices.”
    - Jóhanna Kristín Birnir, *Ethnicity and Electoral Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007).
- Coordination facilitation
- Solidarity
- Accountability
- Promise credibility enforcement
- Exclusion of non-coethnics
- Limitations on identity switching



What are the consequences of political mobilization of ethnicity according to Miguel?

# Consequences of political mobilization of ethnicity according to Miguel

- Natural experiment
- Political salience of ethnicity:
  - High in Kenya
  - Low in Tanzania
    - Edward Miguel, "Tribe or Nation?: Nation Building and Public Goods in Kenya versus Tanzania," *World Politics* 56, no. 3 (2004): 327–62.



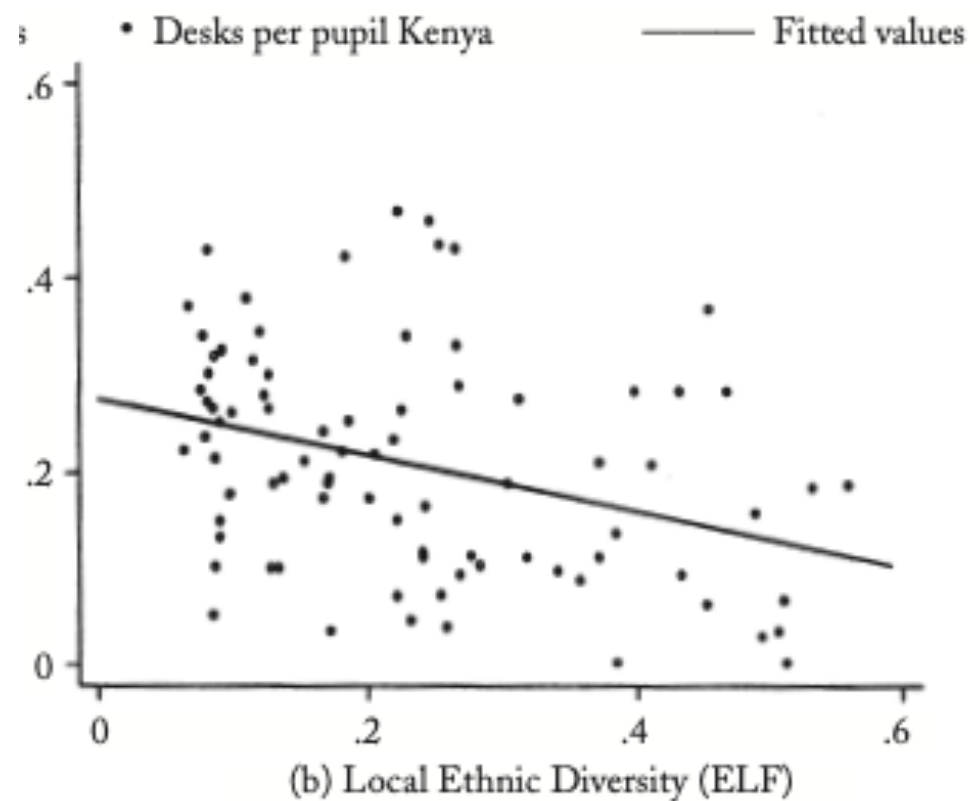
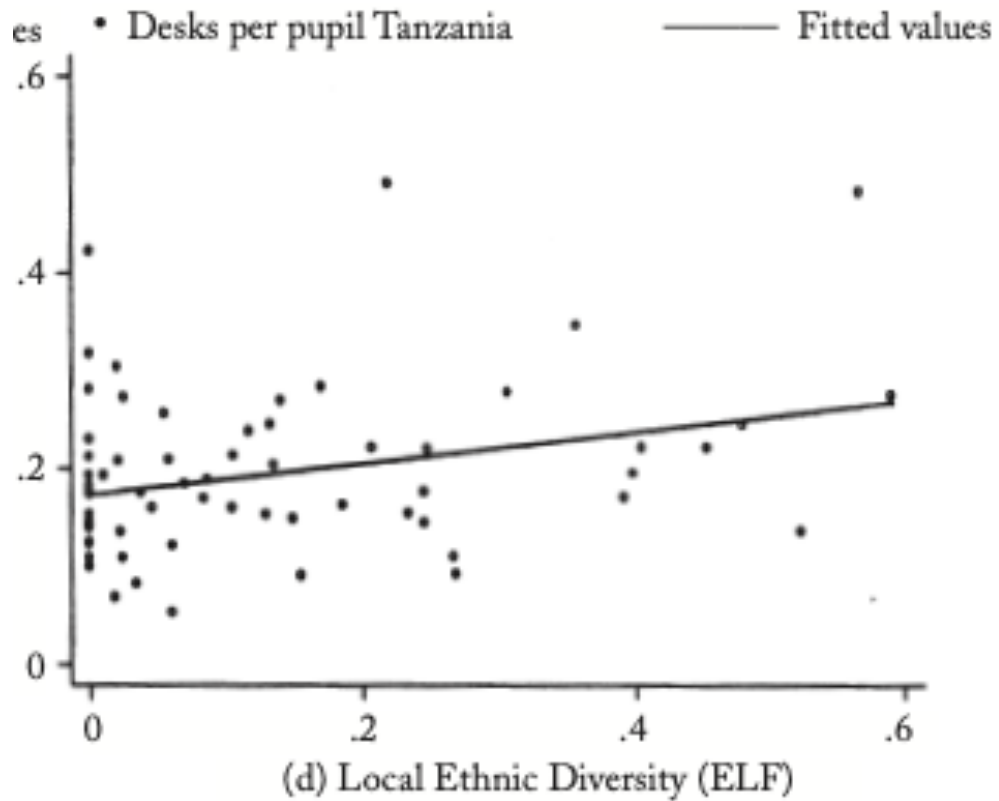


# Consequences of political mobilization of ethnicity according to Miguel

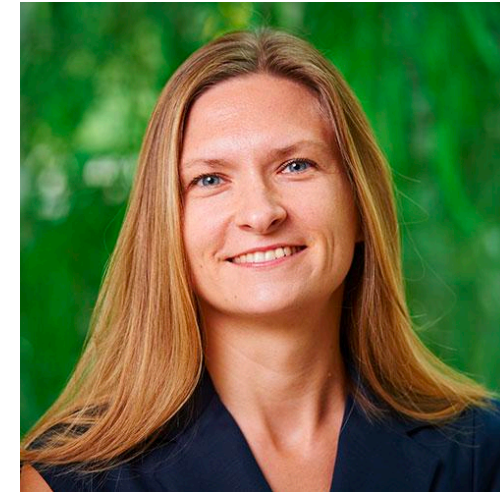
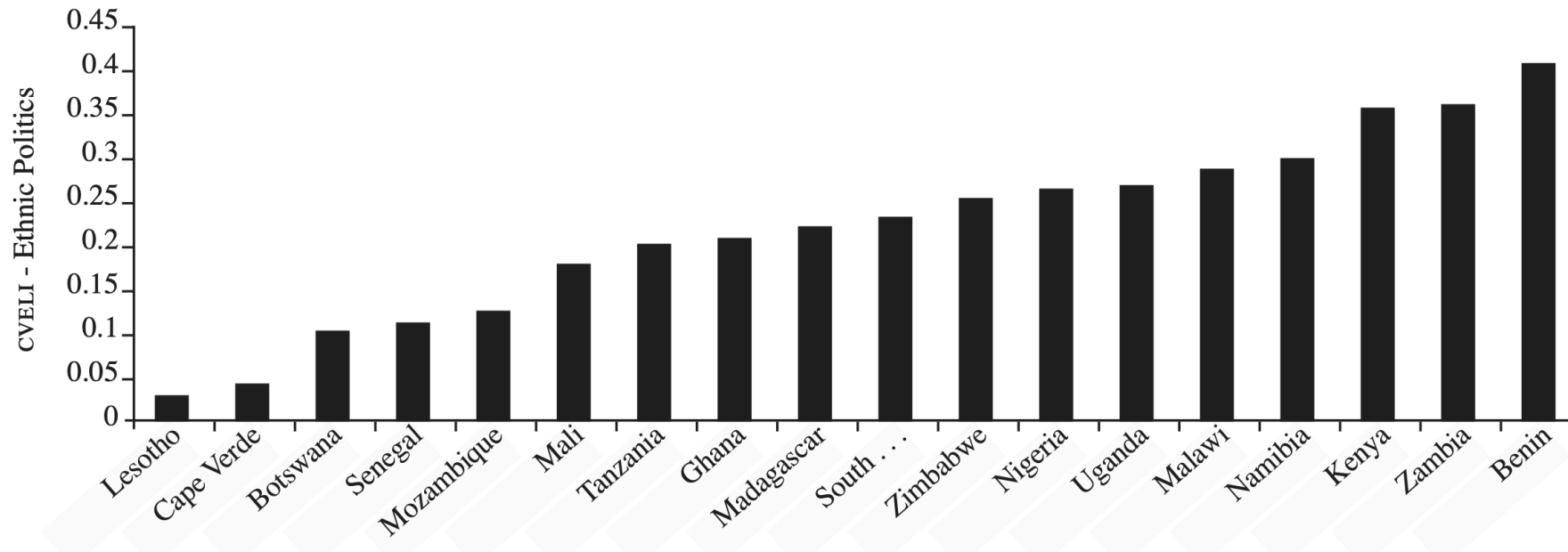
- Kenya:
  - Jomo Kenyatta, Kikuyu
  - Ethnic favoritism
  - Political mobilization of coethnic ties
- Tanzania:
  - Julius Nyerere, Zanzaki
  - Equitable distribution of government resources
  - Nation-building



# Consequences of political mobilization of ethnicity according to Miguel



# Variation in the political salience of ethnicity

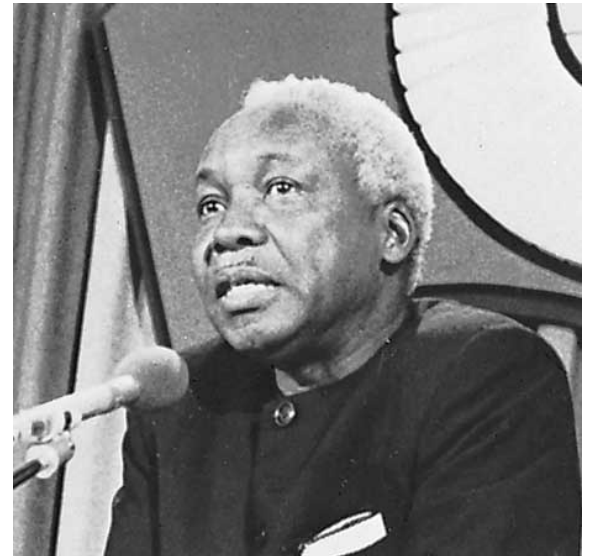


Dominika Koter, "King Makers: Local Leaders and Ethnic Politics in Africa," *World Politics* 65, no. 2 (2013): 187–232.

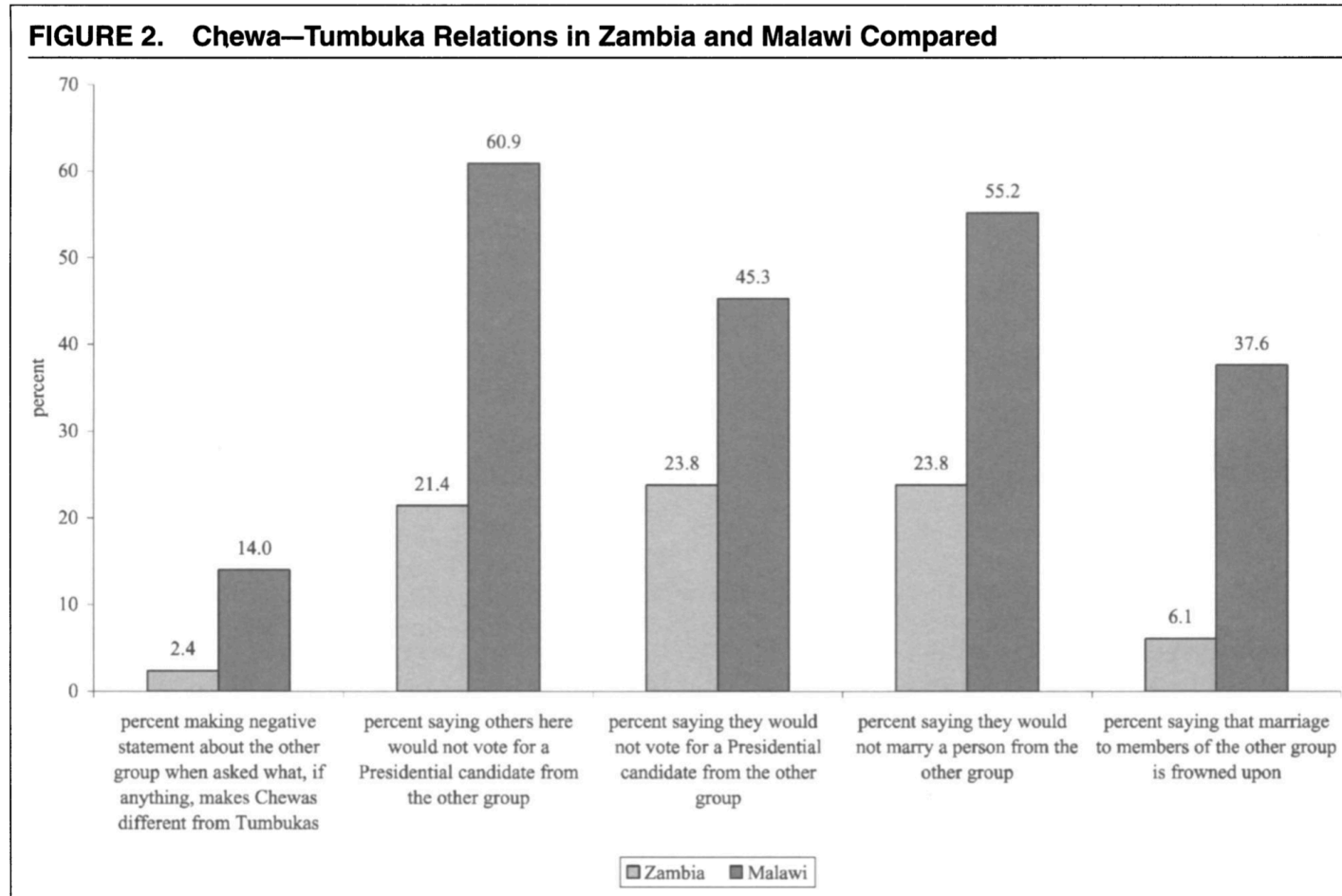
What explains the variation in  
the political salience of  
ethnicity?

# Variation in the political salience of ethnicity according to Miguel

- Kenya:
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# Variation in the political salience of ethnicity according to Posner

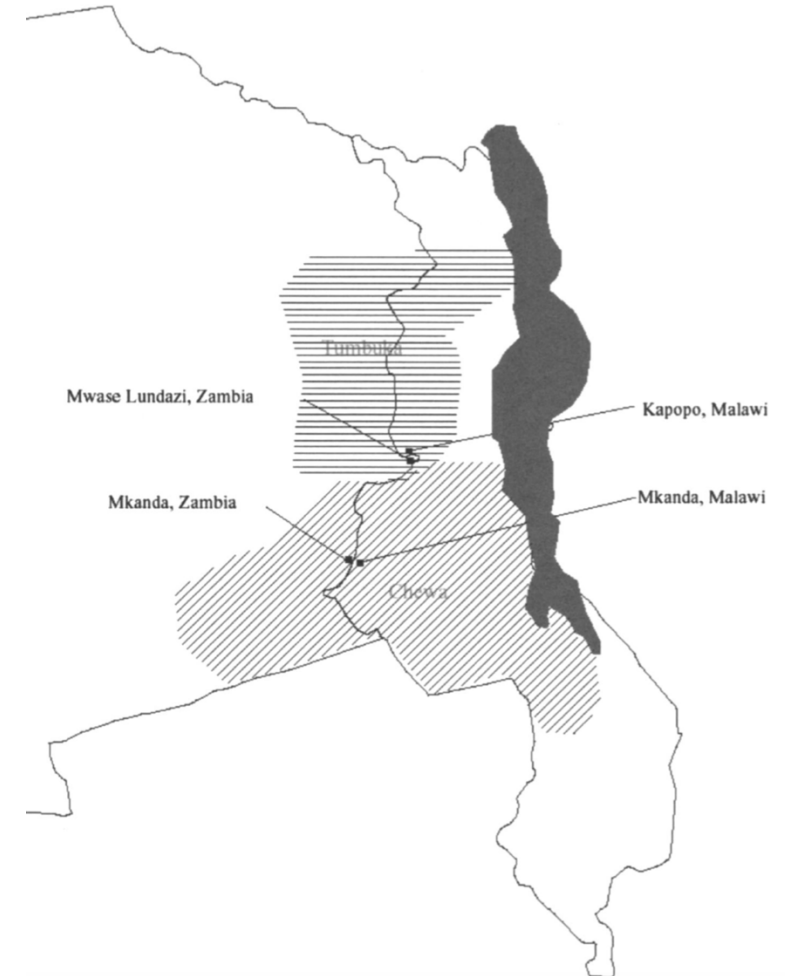


Daniel N. Posner, "The Political Salience of Cultural Difference: Why Chewas and Tumbukas Are Allies in Zambia and Adversaries in Malawi," *The American Political Science Review* 98, no. 4 (2004): 529–45

What explains the variation in the political salience of ethnicity according to Posner?

# Variation in the political salience of ethnicity according to Posner

- Malawi:
  - Hastings Banda, Chewa
  - Ethnic favoritism
  - Antagonism towards Tumbukas
- Zambia
  - Search for influence
    - Daniel N. Posner, "The Political Salience of Cultural Difference: Why Chewas and Tumbukas Are Allies in Zambia and Adversaries in Malawi," *The American Political Science Review* 98, no. 4 (2004): 529–45





# Variation in the political salience of ethnicity: evidence from Zambia

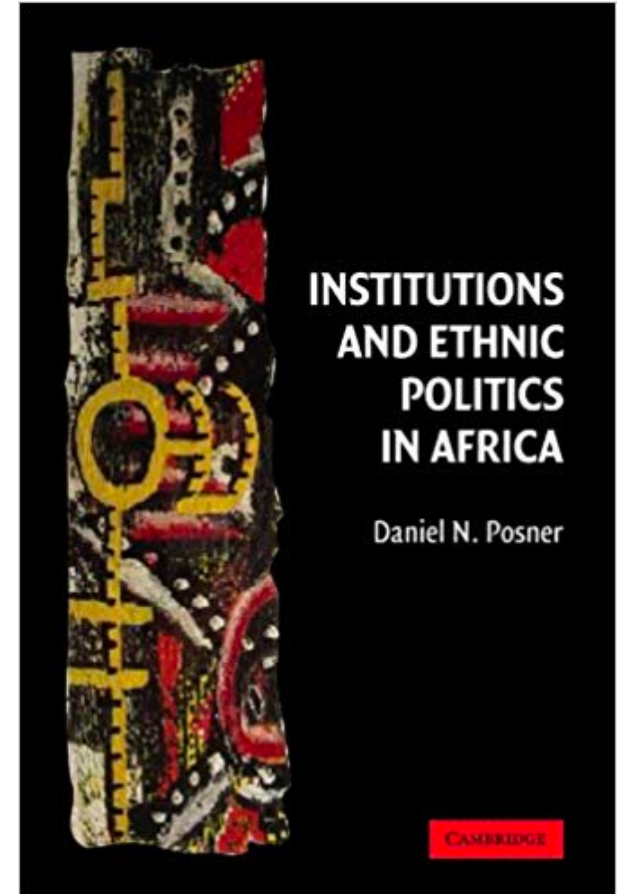
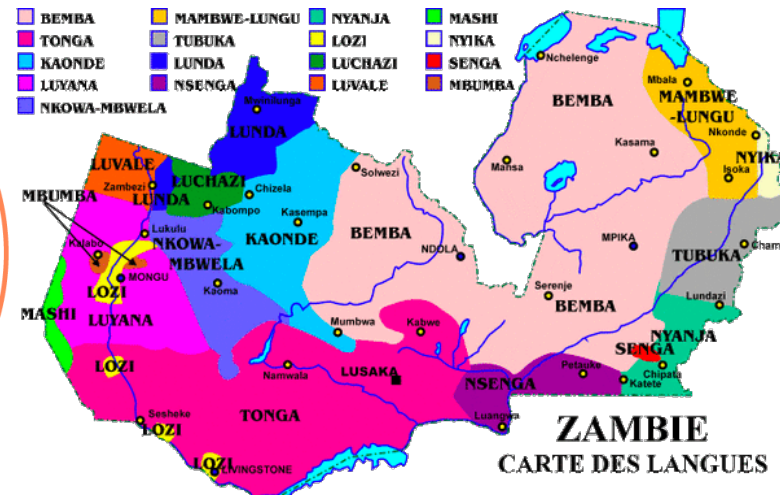
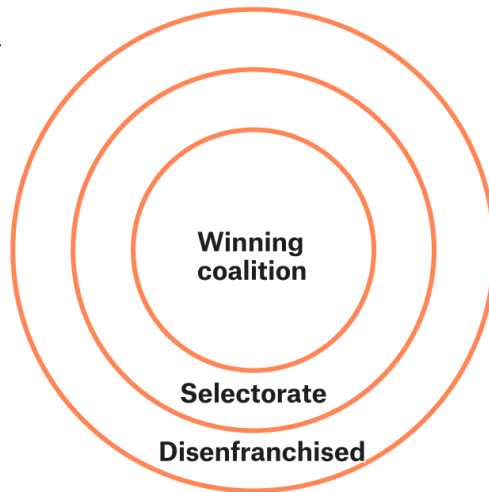
- Posner (2005):
  - Identities as situational and instrumental
  - Individuals as utility maximizers
  - Institutions as parameters that determine the salience of identities
  - The political salience of ethnicity vs. language in one-party and multi-party Zambia
    - Posner, Daniel N. 2005. *Institutions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

How do politicians choose  
between different identities  
that they can mobilize?

# Mobilization of ethnic and linguistic identities in Zambia

- Political salience of (smaller) ethnic identities under authoritarian rule →
- Political salience of (larger) linguistic identities in democratic Zambia

- Minimum winning coalition (William Riker)



William H. Riker, *The Theory of Political Coalitions* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962).

Daniel N. Posner, *Institutions and Ethnic Politics in Africa* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

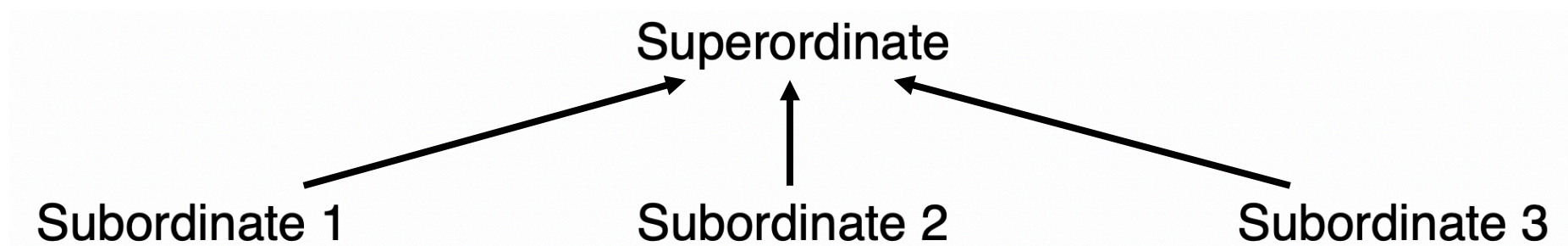
# Mobilization of ethnic and linguistic identities in Zambia

- Instrumental mobilization of collective identities
- Situationality of the political salience of collective identities

If a politician has more than one ethnic identity, which identity will she mobilize?

# Mobilization of hierarchically layered ethnic identities

- Hierarchically layered ethnic identities:
  - Superordinate
  - Subordinate



# Mobilization of hierarchically layered ethnic identities in Kenya

- Electoral districts:
  - Moyale:
    - Superordinate: Borana (dominant)
    - Subordinate: Karrayyuu, Warraa Jiddaa
  - North Horr:
    - Superordinate: Gabbra (dominant)
    - Subordinate: Algana, Gar
  - Marsabit:
    - Multiethnic
- Candidates:
  - Mohammed Ali (Abshiro), Karrayyuu Borana
  - Ukur Yatani, Gar Gabbra



What explains political  
leaders' choices to mobilize  
specific identities in Marsabit?



# Mobilization of hierarchically layered ethnic identities in Kenya

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# Politics of 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.



# Politics of race in 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 supremacism
  - Adoption of African identity by non-Arab Darfurians

- Waal, Alex de. "Who Are the Darfurians? Arab and African Identities, Violence and External Engagement." *African Affairs* 104, no. 415 (2005): 181–205.



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.

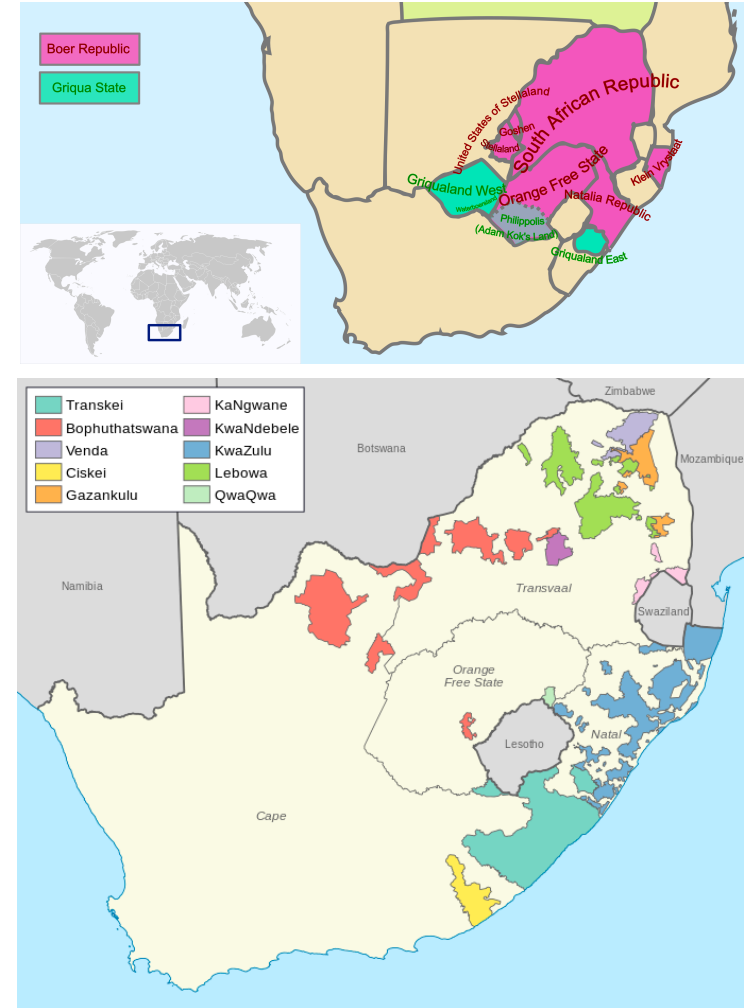
<https://www.oxfamamerica.org/explore/stories/whats-the-difference-between-sudan-and-south-sudan/>

# Politics of race in South Africa

- Dutch settler colonialism from the 17<sup>th</sup> 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

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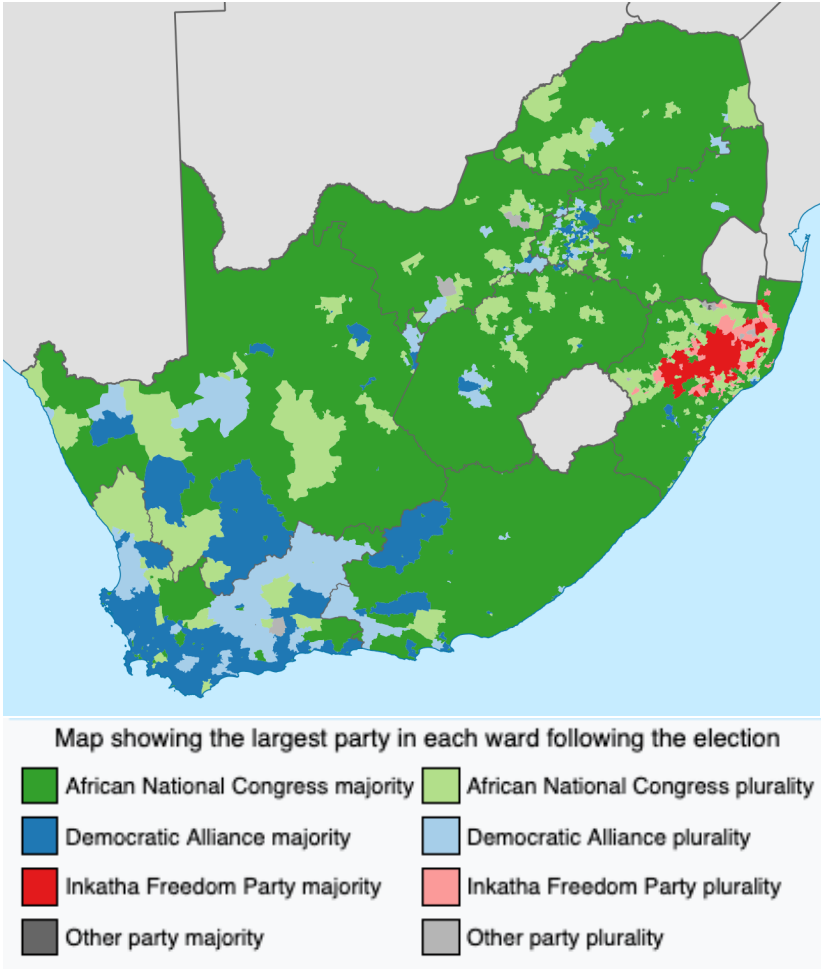
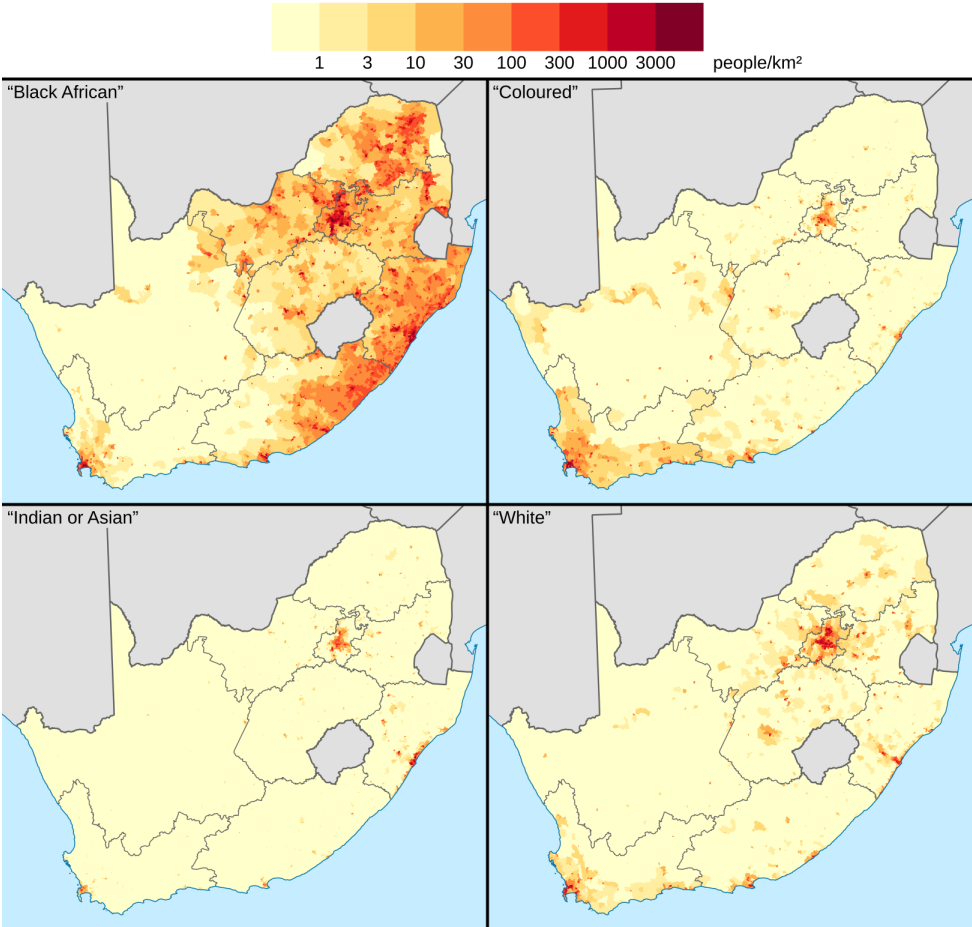
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# Politics of race in South Africa

Density of "population groups" in South Africa according to Census 2011

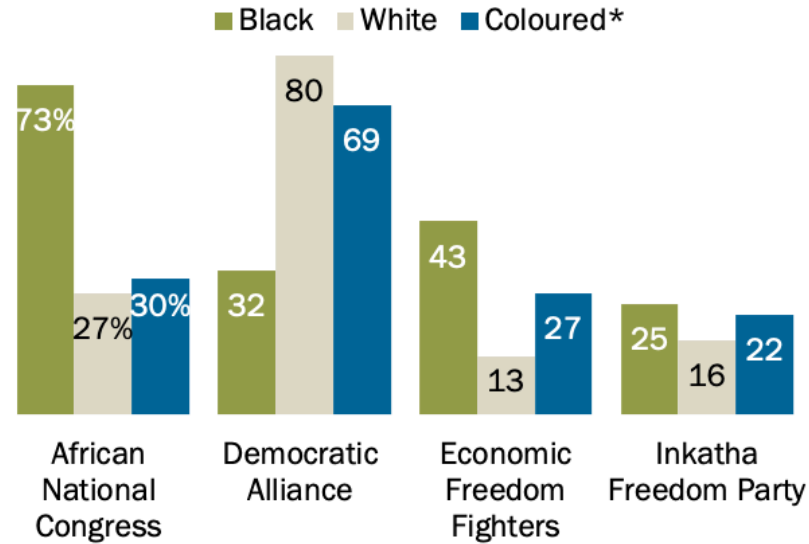




# Politics of race in South Africa

## ANC is the most favored party among black South Africans

*% who have a favorable view of ...*



\* The question was asked as “coloured,” a term used in South Africa for multiracial people.

Source: Survey of South African adults, conducted May 21-Aug. 10, 2018. Q18RSAa-d.

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Are South African elections a racial census? If so, why?