PLS 343
Politics of Sub-Saharan Africa

Week 9, Lecture 1:

Politics of gender

Recap

- Historical sources of the contemporary prominence of collective identities, especially ethnicity, in African politics

- Political salience of collective identities as a result of political strategies adopted by politicians (and their constituents)

Plan for this week

- Politics of gender
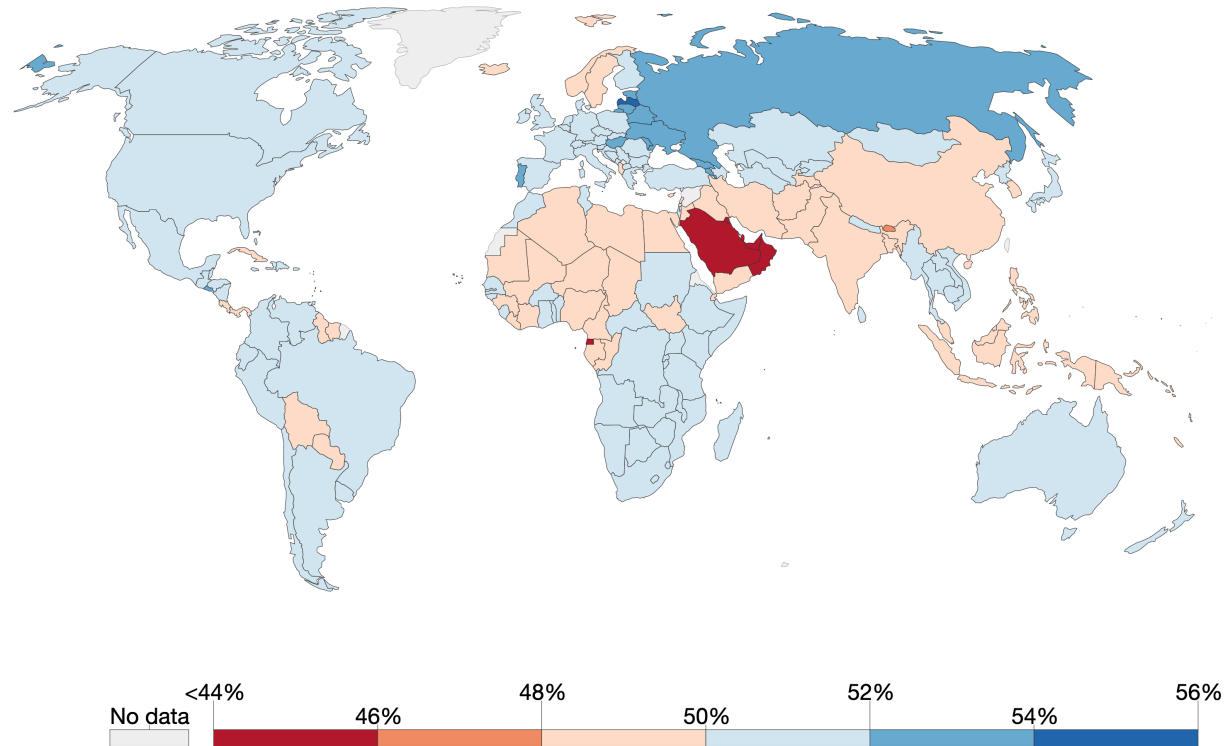- Politics of religion

Plan for today

- Politics of gender:
  - Historical legacies
  - Political participation, representation, and influence
  - Effects of greater political involvement of women

Gender as the basis of minimum winning coalitions
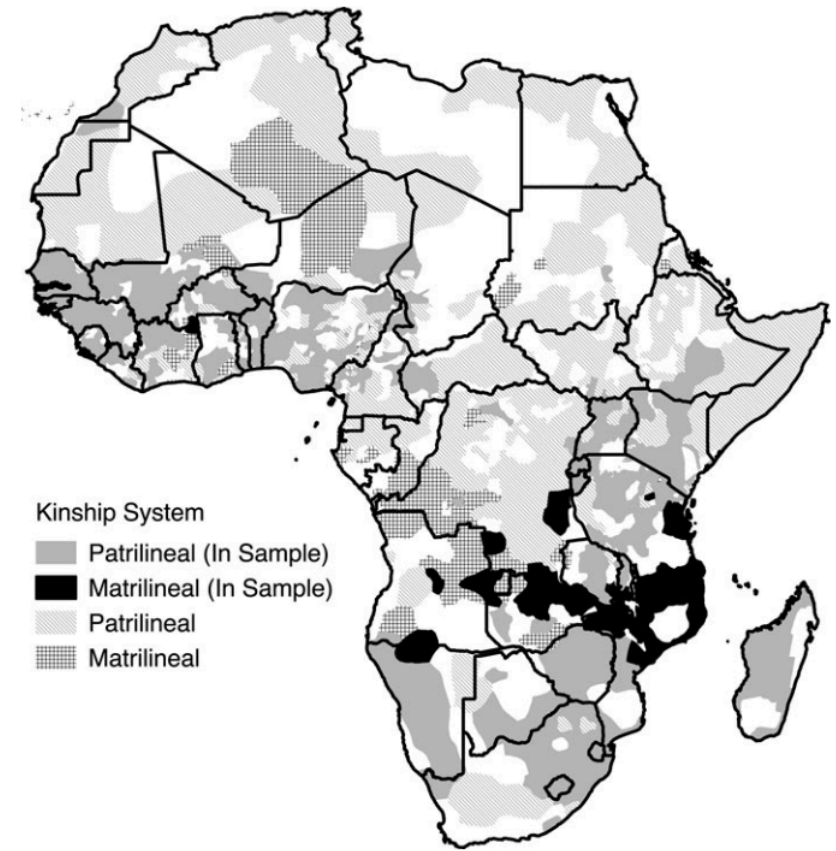
Share of the population that is female, 2017

Historical legacies

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

Kinship System

- Patrilineal (In Sample)
- Matrilineal (In Sample)
- Patrilineal
- Matrilineal

Source: Robinson, Amanda Lea, and Jessica Gottlieb. 2021. "How to Close the Gender Gap in Political Participation: Lessons from Matrilineal Societies in Africa." *British Journal of Political Science* 51(1): 68–92.

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:
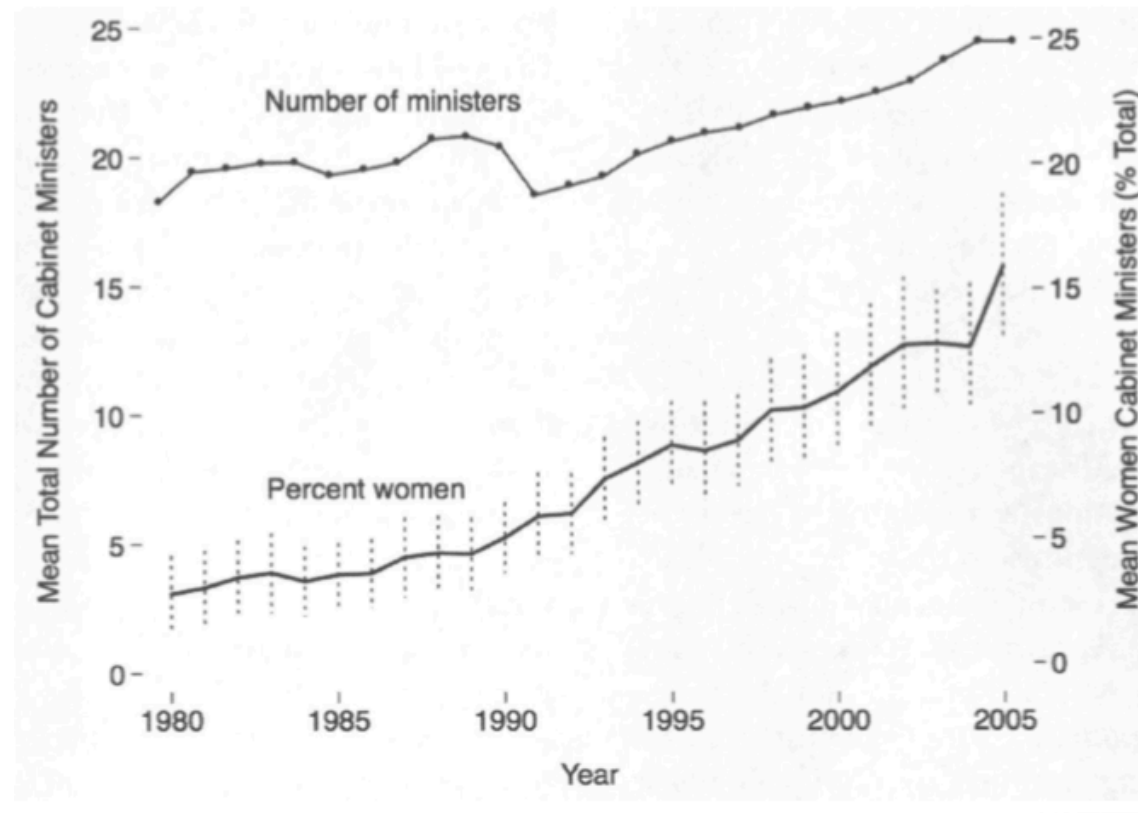 - Formal franchise, but societal norms

Women and political activism

- Wangarĩ Maathai

- Green Belt Movement, 1977

- Nobel Peace Prize, 2004

THE GREEN BELT MOVEMENT AN ANSWER TO THE FUEL WOOD CRISIS

ENERCONOMISE START WITH LITTLE BUT START NOW

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-

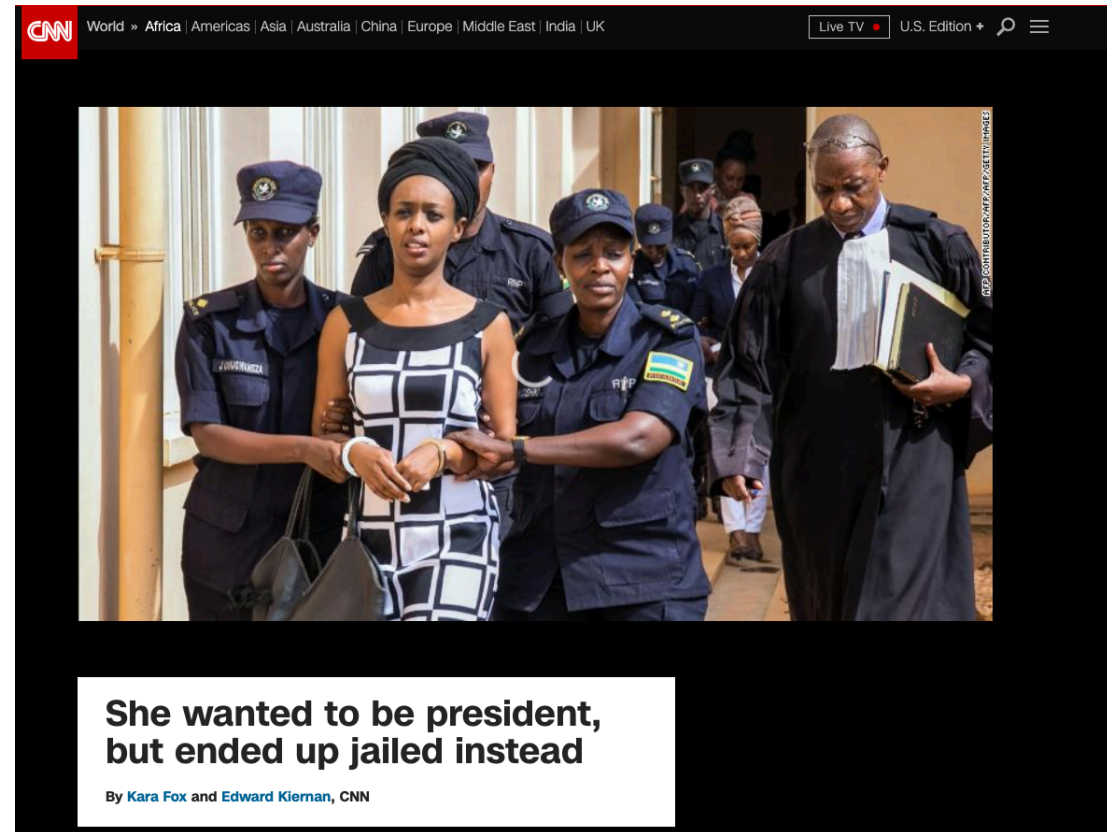https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ellen_Johnson_Sirleaf

Women in formal politics

- 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
  - Saara Kuugongelwa-Amadhila, 2015-
  - Rose Christiane Raponda, 2020-
  - Victoire Tomegah Dogbé, 2020-

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saara_Kuugongelwa

Women in formal politics

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

She wanted to be president, but ended up jailed instead

By Kara Fox and Edward Kiernan, CNN

Women in formal politics
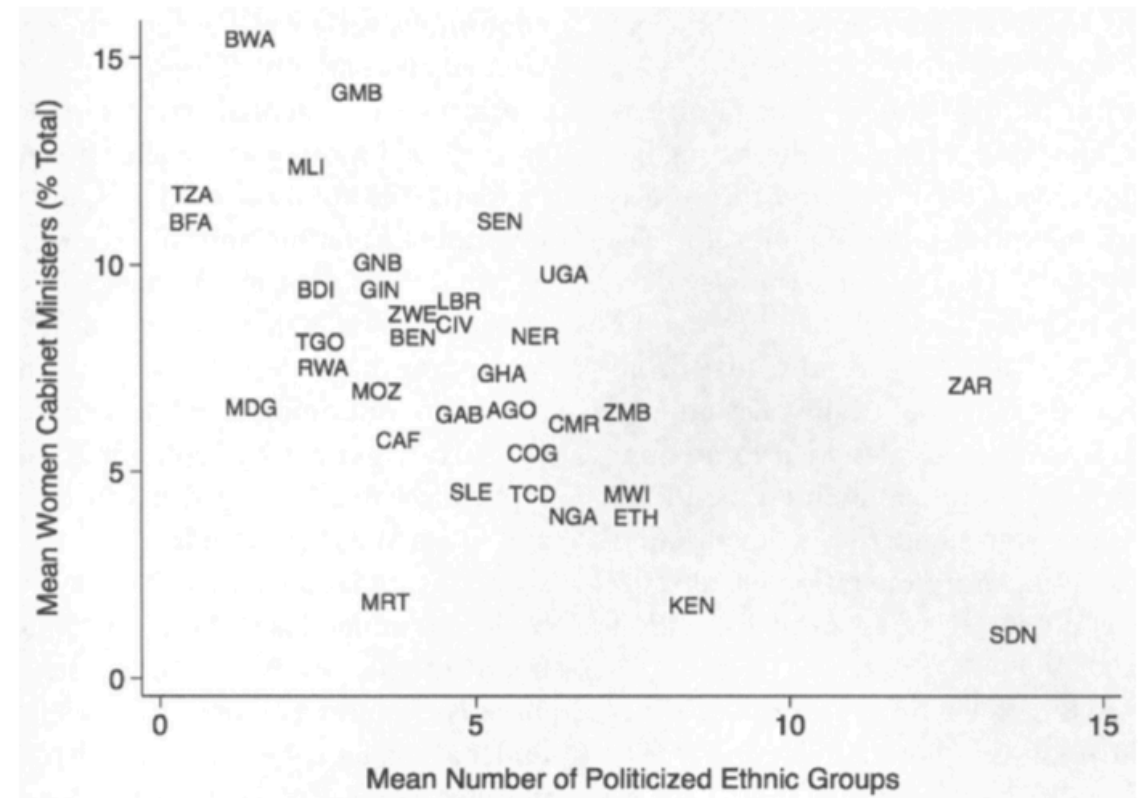

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q26z2wPVKb0

Political influence of women according to 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."

  - Arriola, Leonardo and Martha Johnson. 2014. "Ethnic Politics and Women's Empowerment in Africa: Ministerial Appointments to Executive Cabinets." *American Journal of Political* Science, 58 (2).

FIGURE 2 **Ethnic Politicization and Women in African Cabinets**

Mean Women Cabinet Ministers (% Total)

Mean Number of Politicized Ethnic Groups

Effects of women's political participation

- Greater political attention to women's policy preferences

  - Gottlieb, Jessica, Guy Grossman, and Amanda Lea Robinson. 2018. "Do Men and Women Have Different Policy Preferences in Africa? Determinants and Implications of Gender Gaps in Policy Prioritization." *British Journal of Political Science* 48(3): 611–36.

- Stability and peace

- Fewer human rights abuses

- Confidence in democratic institutions

- Better working environments for women

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from Africa in Transition and Africa Program

A Step Forward for Women in African Politics

Ethiopia's Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed walks with the newly elected President Sahle-Work Zewde, as they leave House of Peoples' Representatives in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on October 25, 2018 *Tiksa Negeri/Reuters*

Blog Post *by* Guest Blogger for John Campbell

October 25, 2018

Takeaways

- Growing political participation and influence of women, but limited political salience of gender as a collective identity