ASPJ Africa and Francophonie

3rd Quarter 2013 Volume 4, No. 3

Opposition Coalitions and the Democratic Ouster of Dominant African Parties
Lessons from the Kenya Elections of 2002
Patrick O. Asingo, PhD

Globalization and Trade Initiatives in the Arab World
Historical Context, Progress to Date, and Prospects for the Future
Susan L. Sakmar, JD, LLM

The Afghan Model More Than Ten Years Later
An Undiminished Relevance
Col Géraud Laborie, French Air Force

The Politics of Market Reform
Altering State Development Policy in Southern Africa
Shaukat Ansari

(Re)Drawing the African Map
A Critique of the Idea of Secessionist Deficit in Africa
Oumar Ba

Religion and Politics in Arab Transitions
Barah Mikaïl, PhD

AIR & SPACE POWER JOURNAL

AIM HIGH . . . FLY-FIGHT-WIN

http://www.au.af.mil/au/afri/aspj/apjinternational/aspj_f/Index.asp

ASPJ Africa and Francophonie
3rd Quarter 2013 Volume 4, No. 3

Editorial

Articles

Essay

Governance and Democratic Transition

Africa doesn't need strongmen; it needs strong institutions.
—President Barack Obama
Address to the Ghanaian Parliament
11 July 2009

The social and political unrest in the North African countries of Tunisia (December 2010), Egypt (January 2011), and Libya (February 2011)—dubbed the Jasmine Revolution and then the Arab Spring—was the expression of deep frustration with centralized political systems unwilling to meet the social and economic challenges facing their countries. It summarized citizens' dissatisfaction with corrupt and failing governments. Successive Tunisian, Egyptian, and Libyan governments have deprived average people of their basic rights. High unemployment, the inflated cost of food, lack of freedom of speech, and poor living conditions—coupled with the confiscation of state wealth by small elites and their clienteles through corrupt systems—sparked revolts in Africa and the Middle East.

In authoritarian governments, as in communist states of yesteryear and today, the states control citizens by political authority and its security apparatus. The distinction between the wealth of the state and its rulers is blurred; the political class maximizes its personal benefits to the detriment of society. According to World Bank estimates, $1–1.6 trillion are lost globally each year to corruption; however, "when countries tackle corruption they increase their national incomes by as much as four times in the long term. Business can grow as much as 3% faster, and child mortality can fall as much as 75%."[1] Furthermore, the *Africa Progress Report 2013* notes that "Africa loses twice as much to corruption as it receives in foreign aid" but that "good governance will help Africa out of poverty, joblessness and inequality."[2] Since they acquired their freedom in the 1960s, most African states have been governed by either autocratic or semiautocratic regimes. Nevertheless, Africa is far closer to realizing its considerable potential in both economic development and social progress. The major impediment remains a lack of governance that would permit Africa to transform its economies and societies.

Simply put, the concept of governance—the lawful control over the affairs of a political unit, such as a nation—describes certain forms of interaction between the state and society. Good governance recognizes the integrity, rights, and needs of everyone within the state. It offers a way of managing power and policy, while government serves as an instrument to do so. The United Nations emphasizes that "good governance has 8 major characteristics. It is participatory, consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive and follows the rule of law. It assures that corruption is minimized, the views of minorities are taken into account and that the voices of the most vulnerable in society are heard in decision-making. It is also responsive to the present and future needs of society."[3] In democratic nations, a government's main objective is to serve its people through institutions and good governance. Government is merely an instrument for the purpose of governance.

The Arab Spring and the dethroning of Zine al-Abidine Bin Ali, Hosni Mubarak, and Mu'ammar Gadhafi, leaders of three of the most solid and stable authoritarian regimes of North Africa, offer two lessons. First, governments that are either unable or unwilling to respond to their citizens' needs and to make transparent decisions will lead their countries to broader failures, corruption, violence, hunger, and poverty—and to their demise. Second, in wave after wave of protests, the emerging, empowered youth in the developing world have shown that there is no return to autocracy, bad governance, and corruption.

Rémy M. Mauduit, Editor
Air and Space Power Journal–Africa and Francophonie
Maxwell AFB, Alabama

Notes

1. "Corruption: Lack of Integrity or Honesty—Especially Susceptibility to Bribery," World Bank, 2013, http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/EXTABOUTUS/0,,contentMDK:23272490~pagePK:51123644~piPK:329829~theSitePK:29708,00.html?argument=value.

2. Mantsadi Sepheka, "Africa: Governance Gets New Emphasis at Economic Forum," AllAfrica, 16 May 2013, http://allafrica.com/stories/201305161182.html.

3. "What Is Good Governance?," United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, 2013, http://www.unescap.org/pdd/prs/ProjectActivities/Ongoing/gg/governance.asp.

Opposition Coalitions and the Democratic Ouster of Dominant African Parties

Lessons from the Kenya Elections of 2002

Patrick O. Asingo, PhD*

Two decades after the onset of the third wave of democratization, the African political landscape is still replete with dominant parties operating within the framework of competitive multiparty systems. Some of these parties seem so entrenched that even relatively free competitive elections have not been able to shake their political bases. Botswana, for example, is widely regarded as "the longest-enduring and most stable liberal democracy in (Southern) Africa."[1] Yet, despite this impressive record of democracy, the Botswana Democratic Party has won all successive elections and has ruled the country since independence in 1965.[2] Relatedly, Chama cha Mapinduzi has proved hard to remove from power in Tanzania due to its deep roots among the masses.[3] Similarly, the Cameroon People's Democratic Movement raised its parliamentary strength from 44 percent in the first Cameroonian multiparty elections in 1992 to 58 percent in 1997 and, ultimately, to 76.5 percent in 2007.[4]

Even in countries where grand old parties lost the founding multiparty elections, the opposition parties that took power became dominant. In South Africa, the African National Congress (ANC) has prevailed since the first all-inclusive elections of 1994.[5] In Zambia, the Movement for Multiparty Democracy—which defeated the country's independence party,

---

*The author is a lecturer in political science at the University of Nairobi. He holds an MA and a PhD in political science from the University of Kansas and a BA and an MA in political science from the University of Nairobi. His research and publications deal with African politics, elections, voter behavior, and public policy. His publications include "Policy Salience and Voter Turnout: An Analysis of Contemporary US Presidential Elections," *Baker Center Journal of Applied Public Policy* 2, no. 1 (Fall 2008): 52–67. Dr. Asingo presented an earlier version of this article at the Midwest Political Science Association Conference in Chicago on 13 April 2012. He wishes to thank everyone who participated in that conference, especially those who offered feedback.

the United National Independence Party in 1991—also assumed preeminence in the country's political scene. In Senegal, Abdoulaye Wade—supported by a section of the opposition parties as a coalition candidate—polled only 30 percent of votes in the first round of the 2000 presidential elections against 41.3 percent garnered by the incumbent president Abdou Diouf. In the second round, Wade enlisted the support of the other key opposition leader, Moustapha Niasse, and won by 58.5 percent. Once in power, however, Wade strengthened his Senegalese Democratic Party, making it an invincible monolith.[6]

The emergence, survival, and dangers of dominant parties are well documented in the literature.[7] For instance, party dominance has the negative effect of promoting authoritarian tendencies. In Uganda and Namibia, for example, Yoweri Museveni and Sam Nujoma capitalized on the power of the National Resistance Movement and the South West Africa People's Organization, respectively, to engineer constitutional amendments that allowed them to extend their presidential tenures to three years.[8] However, similar attempts by Bakili Muluzi and Frederick Chiluba to lengthen their presidential terms failed in Malawi and Zambia, respectively.

In addition, one-party control tends to stifle intraparty democracy, as reflected in the incessant power struggles in South Africa's ANC that resulted in the party's recalling former president Thabo Mbeki. Such posturing would have proved suicidal if the ANC had encountered strong opposition. Similar struggles have occurred in the increasingly preeminent Movement for Multiparty Democracy in Zambia, leading to several new splinter parties, which, as expected, have not had a significant effect on subsequent elections.[9] Moreover, South Africa's experience under the ANC shows that one-party dominion can also undercut democracy by discouraging political participation because of the absence of institutionalized uncertainty about election outcomes. In this regard, the hegemony of the ANC has received blame for the plummeting voter turnout in South Africa over the years.[10]

A concomitant trend in African party systems involves the increasingly fragmented nature of opposition parties. Most African party systems are characterized by one large party, with small and highly volatile parties that wither away after losing elections.[11] In dominant African party systems, fragmentation of opposition parties usually attracts blame for successive electoral victories of incumbent hegemonic parties. For instance, William Tordoff has noted that "the failure of opposition parties to unite behind a single candidate ensured the return of the incumbent presidents and ruling parties in elections in Kenya in 1992 and 1997, Gabon in 1993 and 1998, and Tanzania in 1995 and 2000."[12] Opposition disunity has also been faulted for its perennial loss in Botswana since independence.[13] In short, "in most African states, the opposition is destined to be simply that: eternally the opposition, never in power. It is here that abuse of incumbency can emerge."[14]

As a corollary to these developments, people often suggest the opposition coalition as a model for defeating the controlling African parties. One usually draws empirical support for this model from the Kenyan elections of 2002, in which a coalition of opposition parties, formed two months prior to the elections, defeated the incumbent Kenya African National Union (KANU), which had ruled for four decades since independence.[15] Indeed, "the National Rainbow Coalition of Kenya that defeated the well-entrenched ruling Kenya National Union in the 2002 elections is seen by many opposition supporters as a model to be emulated if the National Resistance Movement and its likely presidential candidate Museveni are to be ousted from power."[16]

Broadly stated, scholars who subscribe to this view contend that "the lessons learned from the 2002 Kenyan elections are many and could strengthen democracy movements elsewhere in Africa."[17] In particular, "opposition parties can win elections—provided they are not rigged—if they form a coalition and unite behind a single presidential candidate as happened in Kenya."[18] Other scholars have put it even more succinctly: "Generally, only when the opposition is able to unite in electoral or post electoral coalitions can they manage to assume power. Kenya is perhaps the archetypical example of this."[19]

Although the claim that an opposition coalition would likely result in the defeat of dominant African parties is logically compelling, it has not undergone thorough examination. Neither has any systematic study demonstrated that the formation of an opposition coalition caused KANU's defeat. Therefore, the role that opposition unity played in KANU's loss remains unclear. Consequently, the main research question becomes, can an opposition coalition guarantee the defeat of a premier African party? More specifically, did KANU lose elections primarily because of opposition unity, or did local contextual factors such as economic conditions contribute to its defeat? Can Kenya's election experience in 2002 be replicated in other sub-Saharan African countries? To answer those questions, this article (1) provides a brief background and the context of the 2002 elections, (2) examines whether the voting patterns in those elections are consistent with the assumptions of the opposition-coalition thesis, (3) tests whether the prevailing economic living conditions at the time of the elections also had a significant influence on voting patterns, and (4) discusses the implications of the election results for opposition coalitions in Africa.

The Kenya Elections of 2002: Background and Context

At independence in 1963, Kenya had a parliamentary system of government headed by the executive prime minister and characterized by federalism, bicameralism, and multipartism. Within the first six years of independence, these institutions were systematically dismantled and supplanted with centralized one-party authoritarianism. The first president, Jomo Kenyatta, used political rather than legal means to create and sustain a de facto one-party autocracy. By 1970 he had turned Kenya into a unitary state with a unicameral legislature and a powerful executive president. Although the law still allowed multipartism, political maneuvering ensured that only the ruling party—KANU—existed. However, his successor, Daniel Toroitich arap Moi, took the legal route and created a de jure one-party state through a constitutional amendment in 1982. This scenario persisted until the restoration of multipartism in 1991.[20]

These changes notwithstanding, Kenya remained in a unique league of a few African countries that held elections every five years since independence, even at the peak of authoritarianism in the 1970s and 1980s. Contrary to the perception that few turnovers occurred in Africa before the 1990s, evidence shows a very high number of them, especially for parliamentarians even under authoritarian regimes—notably Kenya, Zambia, Tanzania, and Sierra Leone.[21] For instance, the legislative turnover in Kenya in the 1960s and 1970s sometimes approached 62 percent.[22] Elections in the one-party system in Zambia, though, were more competitive and resulted in the defeat of more incumbents than under the multiparty system.[23] Nonetheless, Robert Jackson and Carl Rosberg note that "Kenya

[was] probably the most unrestricted of Africa's one-party democracies, where [parliamentary] elections regularly result in a high level of participation and a large turnover of elected politicians."[24] However, the presidential elections were largely of the "no contest" variety.

The rebirth of multipartism in 1991 presented KANU with the first real prospect of losing elections. Kenya adopted the first-past-the-post electoral system with the additional requirement that the winner of a presidential contest receive at least 25 percent of the votes cast in at least five of Kenya's eight provinces. Nonetheless, KANU won both the first and second multiparty elections in 1992 and 1997. Two arguments account for KANU's victories. The first maintains that it succeeded through electoral fraud.[25] Yet, no one has either subjected this argument to rigorous scholarly analysis or backed it with credible evidence beyond speculation. With respect to the 1997 elections, for instance, the *New York Times* draws evidence from both domestic and international observers:

> The truth is that Mr. Moi did not need to resort to crude methods to win. . . . The wily 74-year-old veteran of Kenyan politics triumphed with tactics familiar to any machine politician from urban America—gerrymandering, dividing his opponents along ethnic lines, and making sure voter registration favored his party. . . .
>
> But while the playing field favored the governing party, the irregularities and logistical problems reported at the polls were not widespread enough to skew the results.[26]

The second argument holds that disunity among opposition parties led them to split the votes, thus enabling KANU to win.[27] Advocates of this view argue that in 1992 and 1997, KANU won because of the lack of a united opposition front. Indeed, "One of the main reasons KANU has never lost an election is because the opposition has never managed to unite under one presidential candidate."[28]

Taking the cue, James McKinley observes that

> the biggest reason for Mr. Moi's victory is the tribal nature of Kenyan politics. . . . The anti-Moi vote was split among four main challengers, all of whom had strong support in their home regions but had made few inroads elsewhere.
>
> In essence, the President faced four regional parties based on tribal loyalties. The major ethnic groups voted overwhelmingly for their kinsmen: the Kikuyu for Mr. Kibaki, the Luo for Raila Odinga, the Luhyia for Michael Kijana Wamalwa, and the Akamba for Charity Ngilu.[29]

The elections of 2002 provided yet another opportunity for the opposition to dislodge KANU from power. To begin, Moi had exhausted the maximum two-term limit imposed by the constitutional reforms of 1991 and was therefore ineligible for reelection. The fact that Moi had prevented the emergence of a potential successor from within the party's rank and file during his 24 years as president further reinforced KANU's perceived vulnerability in 2002. Thus, even senior KANU leaders had little or no influence beyond their own constituencies. Moi believed that he could choose anybody from within KANU and use his influence to successfully market the choice to Kenyans. However, he did not foresee the possibility of revolt against his choice, let alone the prospect that Kenyans would reject his choice. In any case, no one within KANU ever questioned his decisions and actions during his 24 years in power.

As part of his succession strategy, Moi orchestrated KANU's merger with the National Development Party (NDP), led by Raila Odinga. Although Odinga saw this move as a chance to ascend to the presidency, Moi used the merger as a twin strategy to contain Odinga while ensuring that KANU remained in power. He believed that Odinga, who had finished third behind him and Mwai Kibaki in 1997, would bring his support base to the KANU fold and boost its chances of retaining power. As it turned out, the merger was a miscalculation on the part of both Moi and Odinga. Neither of them succeeded in using the merger to carry out his real intentions. When Moi anointed Uhuru Kenyatta (son of the first president) as the preferred successor and KANU's presidential candidate, Odinga led former NDP legislators, together with some KANU loyalists, in rebelling against Moi. They then bolted from KANU and formed the Liberal Democratic Party.[30]

Meanwhile, NDP's merger with KANU sent the other opposition parties back to the drawing board. As a counterstrategy, Kibaki, Wamalwa, and Ngilu formed an opposition alliance—the National Alliance of Kenya (NAK). That alliance and the Liberal Democratic Party formed the National Rainbow Coalition (NARC), through which they fielded parliamentary candidates and fronted Kibaki as the presidential candidate. In doing so, they were united and guided purely by the quest to remove KANU from power rather than an ideological congruity. Kibaki won with 62 percent of the votes against 31 percent for Uhuru Kenyatta. NARC also won 125 of the 210 elective national assembly seats against KANU's 64.[31]

One should note that the empirical foundation of the opposition-coalition thesis rests on the fact that although Moi won both the 1992 and 1997 elections, he received only 36.6 percent and 40.4 percent of the vote, respectively, while the pooled share for the top-three opposition presidential candidates was 62.5 percent in 1992 and 49.9 percent in 1997.[32] In essence, Moi won both elections not because of his popularity but because of opposition disunity. Hence, one assumed that if opposition leaders formed a coalition, they would merge their core support bases and consolidate their votes in favor of NARC. The support bases are the provinces from which each of the coalition leaders (Kibaki, Wamalwa, and Ngilu) derived the bulk of their 1997 support, which coincides with the province predominantly occupied by each leader's ethnic group. In this regard, Kibaki's Kikuyu ethnic group comprises 94 percent of Central, Wamalwa's Luhya forms 86 percent of Western, and Ngilu's Kamba makes up 54 percent of the Eastern provinces.[33]

Opposition Coalition and the Presidential Election Results

The process of testing whether an opposition coalition can significantly influence the democratic ouster of dominant African parties and, by extension, whether it significantly influenced KANU's defeat in 2002 involves projecting the likely outcome of the 2002 elections and comparing it with the actual outcome. One must base the projections themselves on the strength or level of support for all opposition parties or candidates, as measured by their most recent electoral performance before forming the coalition. Table 1 shows the percentage of votes obtained from each province by the incumbent party's presidential candidate and his four main opposition challengers in the elections of 1997.

Table 1. Percentage of presidential votes by province in 1997

Candidates	*Nairobi*	*Coast*	*North Eastern*	*Eastern*	*Central*	*Rift Valley*	*Western*	*Nyanza*
Moi	20.6	*63.1*	*72.9*	*35.3*	5.6	69.4	46.0	23.5
Kibaki	*43.7*	12.7	21.1	28.2	*88.6*	20.9	1.4	15.1
Odinga	16.2	6.1	0.3	0.7	0.7	2.2	2.0	*56.6*
Wamalwa	6.8	2.8	4.6	0.7	0.3	6.2	*49.4*	1.6
Ngilu	10.9	9.4	0.5	33.3	3.0	0.7	0.5	1.7

Source: Wachira Maina, "What Tyranny of Numbers: Inside Mutahi Ngunyi's Numerology" (Nairobi: Africa Centre for Open Governance, n.d.), 6, accessed 10 May 2013, http://www.africog.org/sites/default/files/Tyranny%20of%20Numbers_final.pdf.

Table 1 shows Moi as the preferred presidential candidate in four provinces (Rift Valley, Eastern, North Eastern and Coast) and the second-most preferred in the other four provinces (Central, Nairobi, Nyanza, and Western). Kibaki, on the other hand, was the most preferred candidate in Central and Nairobi; the second-most in Rift Valley, Coast and North Eastern; and the third-most in Nyanza, Eastern, and Western. If we take the provincial voting patterns as the ordering of provincial preference and assume that the 2002 elections involved transitive voting without Moi, then Kibaki still could have won in five provinces (Rift Valley, Nairobi, Central, Coast, and North Eastern) without opposition unity. Since transitive voting requires consistency, the preference ordering in table 1 suggests Kibaki as the most preferred candidate in Nairobi, Central, North Eastern, Coast, and Rift Valley provinces in the absence of Moi.

However, the situation becomes complicated with the entry of Uhuru Kenyatta into the scene as a new political player. For many observers, he was "a political non-entity sneaked into parliament and then into the cabinet after failing to win the Gatundu South parliamentary seat in 1997."[34] He had no political capital other than his biological links with the first president and Moi's unexplainable fixation with him as his successor. Therefore, Kenyatta could only hope to inherit Moi's political base.

On the basis of the 1997 election results aggregated at the provincial and national levels, I forecasted two possible presidential-election outcome scenarios in a contest between the incumbent party—KANU—and a joint opposition candidate. I assumed that the level of support for each of the 1997 opposition candidates would be the same or better in 2002 and that each of them had the capacity to marshal his supporters behind the joint coalition candidate. To project the likely performance of a joint opposition candidate, the 1997 provincial vote shares of each of the three opposition leaders (Kibaki, Wamalwa, and Ngilu) were combined and applied to the actual number of valid votes in the 2002 elections. I assumed that opposition unity or, at best, opposition unity and a split in KANU were the major factors that drove KANU out of power. Odinga, third in the 1997 elections, had already merged his party—NDP—with KANU and thus became a member of the incumbent party. However, he later led a revolt that caused a split in KANU, the splinter group aligning with the Kibaki-Wamalwa-Ngilu axis.

Accordingly, the outcome scenarios for the two presidential elections of 2002 involve (1) a contest between a KANU candidate and a joint-opposition-coalition candidate without factoring in the split in KANU and (2) a presidential contest between a KANU candidate and a joint-opposition-coalition candidate, taking into account the split in KANU. Table 2 presents the aggregated actual and projected provincial votes (see also fig. 1).[35] Since both the incumbent-party candidate (Uhuru Kenyatta) and the joint-opposition candidate (Mwai Kibaki) in the 2002 elections came from Central province, where each was expected to draw the bulk of his support, I further assumed for the purposes of projecting the results that each candidate would receive 50 percent of the votes in that province.

Table 2. Projected and actual results of the 2002 presidential election

Province	Unity without Split		Unity with Split		Actual 2002 Votes	
	Kenyatta	*Kibaki*	*Kenyatta*	*Kibaki*	*Kenyatta*	*Kibaki*
Nairobi	134,568 (36.8%)	224,523 (61.4%)	79,449 (20.6%)	299,282 (77.6%)	76,001 (20.8%)	279,705 (76.5%)
Coast	252,330 (69.2%)	90,795 (24.9%)	230,087 (63.1%)	113,038 (31.0%)	121,645 (33.4%)	228,915 (62.8%)
North Eastern	90,991 (73.2%)	32,568 (26.2%)	90,618 (72.9%)	32,941 (26.5%)	83,358 (67.1%)	34,916 (28.1%)
Eastern	372,048 (36.0%)	650,051 (62.9%)	364,814 (35.3%)	650,051 (62.9%)	270,225 (26.1%)	749,654 (72.5%)
Central	508,943 (50.0%)	508,942 (50.0%)	508,943 (50.0%)	508,943 (50.0%)	306,012 (30.3%)	701,916 (69.0%)
Western	318,932 (48.0%)	340,858 (51.3%)	305,643 (46.0%)	354,147 (53.3%)	143,101 (21.5%)	506,999 (76.3%)
Nyanza	679,846 (80.1%)	156,169 (18.4%)	199,455 (23.5%)	636,600 (75.0%)	64,471 (7.6%)	521,052 (61.4%)
Rift Valley	1,034,136 (71.6%)	401,526 (27.8%)	1,002,371 (69.4%)	433,301 (30.0%)	769,242 (53.3%)	624,501 (43.2%)
Total	3,391,794 (57.8%)	2,405,432 (41.0%)	2,781,380 (47.4%)	3,028,303 (51.6%)	1,836,055 (31.3%)	3,647,658 (62.2%)

Data from European Union Electoral Observation Mission, *Final Report: Kenya General Elections, 27 December 2002* (Belgium: European Union Electoral Observation Mission, 2003), 72, http://aceproject.org/regions-en/countries-and-territories/KE/reports/Kenya%20-%20EU%20rep02.pdf.

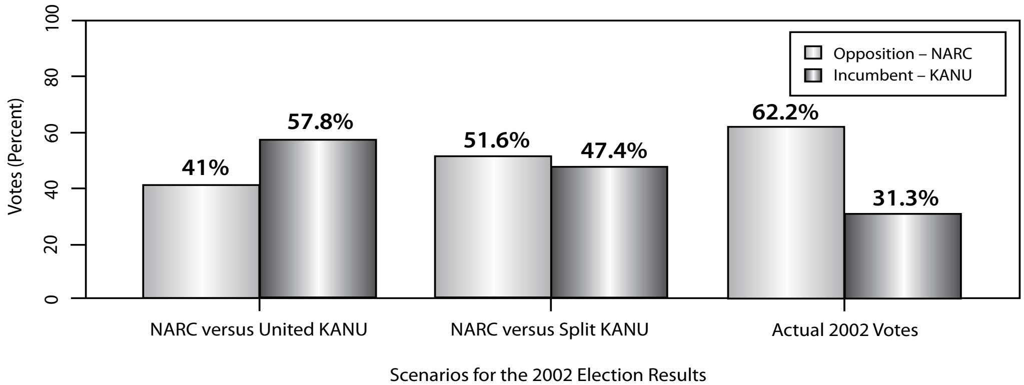

Figure 1. Projected and actual presidential votes in the Kenyan Elections of 2002. (Data from European Union Electoral Observation Mission, *Final Report: Kenya General Elections, 27 December 2002* [Belgium: European Union Electoral Observation Mission, 2003], 72, http://aceproject.org/regions-en/countries-and-territories/KE/reports/Kenya%20-%20EU%20rep02.pdf.)

The results show that if the incumbent party KANU had stayed united with Kenyatta as its candidate, he would have defeated the joint opposition candidate, Kibaki, by a margin of nearly 17 percent. In fact, even if Kibaki had gotten all of the Central province votes, he would still have lost to Kenyatta in the polls. These calculations likely informed KANU's strategic decision to merge with one of the key opposition parties—NDP—in the run-up to the 2002 elections. The presidential results of 1992 and 1997 show that KANU's performance steadily improved as the combined vote share of serious opposition candidates diminished. Indeed, although the opposition votes exceeded KANU's by more than 27 percent in 1992, the gap reduced to 18 percent in 1997. Either KANU's popularity increased, perhaps due to disillusionment with the opposition, or it became better and smarter at election fraud. Whatever the case, the results suggest that the mere coming together of the opposition as it existed then could not have enabled it to defeat KANU.

Notably, the split in KANU boosted the opposition vote tally by about 10 percent of all the votes cast while diminishing KANU's share by nearly the same margin. Thus, a united opposition still would have defeated a divided KANU but by a very narrow and statistically insignificant margin of 4.2 percent (x^2 = 0.20; a =0.56). Such a small margin is risky in the new and emerging democracies since the incumbent can easily stuff the ballot box and "catch up." Since the narrow opposition victory margin is far less than that in the actual 2002 elections, factors other than opposition unity and the split in KANU must have exerted an even greater influence on those results.

To explore these results further, I disaggregated the data depicted in figure 1 at the provincial level and calculated the differences between actual and projected votes for the KANU and NARC presidential candidates. The projected votes represent those for a united opposition against a split in KANU (fig. 2).

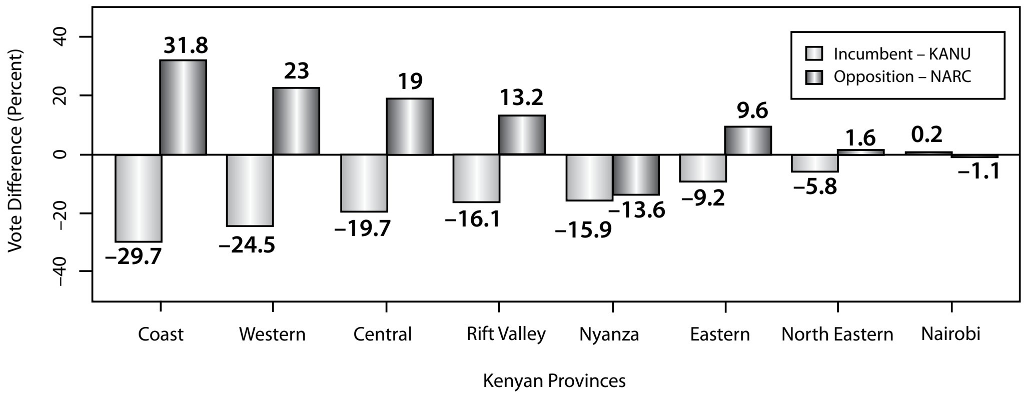

Figure 2. Differences between projected and actual presidential votes in 2002. (Data from European Union Electoral Observation Mission, *Final Report: Kenya General Elections, 27 December 2002* [Belgium: European Union Electoral Observation Mission, 2003], 72, http://aceproject.org/regions-en/countries-and-territories/KE/reports/Kenya%20-%20EU%20rep02.pdf.)

Figure 2 shows that the 2002 voting pattern in Nairobi is largely consistent with my projections and, by extension, with the expectations of the opposition-coalition thesis. Nairobi voters seem to have viewed Uhuru Kenyatta as another Moi and literally transferred the latter's 1997 support to the former in 2002. Moi received 20.6 percent, but Kenyatta's share came to 20.8 percent. Moreover, Kibaki got 76.5 percent—nearly the same as the 77.6 percent total vote share for the four opposition candidates in 1997, including Odinga. Notably, though, Kibaki would have won in Nairobi even without opposition unity, as he did in 1997. That is, opposition unity did not make him win; it simply increased his margin of victory.

At the other end of the spectrum, Coast province voters shattered the coalition thesis by substituting the projected KANU results with those of the opposition. It seems that some sort of transitive voting occurred so that a significant proportion of the 63 percent majority who voted for Moi in 1997 evidently shifted support to the second-preferred candidate, Kibaki, rather than the unknown Uhuru Kenyatta. Voters are typically risk averse and "prefer to minimize costs than to maximize benefits."[36] Tellingly, KANU suffered the greatest loss in Coast province, yet no major coalition player came from there. Hence, the results suggest that the opposition-coalition thesis is inadequate as an explanation for the 2002 voting patterns in Coast.

In Nyanza, both KANU and NARC scored considerably below the projected values and, by extension, failed to live up to the assumptions of the coalition thesis, largely because of NARC's failure to incorporate a small opposition party—Forum for Restoration of Democracy–People (FORD-P)—which had significant support in the province. The thesis appears to have been further despoiled in Western province, where Kibaki substantially increased his vote tally from a paltry 1.4 percent in 1997 to 76.3 percent in 2002. Yet, even Wamalwa—the coalition's point man in the province—managed only 49.4 percent during his candidacy in 1997! Thus, even if Wamalwa's vote share had transferred to Kibaki, he would have received only 50.5 percent. It is hard to believe that Wamalwa could market Kibaki's candidacy to his supporters more easily than his own in 1997. These results show that something else, beyond the mere coming together of the opposition, influenced voting patterns.

The Opposition Coalition and the Parliamentary Election Results of 2002

Are the patterns observed in the presidential elections replicated in parliamentary elections? Figure 3 shows the distribution of the net trade-off of parliamentary seats in each province by KANU and NARC. It displays the difference between the seats gained and/or lost by KANU or NARC in each province in 2002 relative to their strengths in 1997. If a party lost more seats than it gained in a province, then it would have a negative score and vice versa—a difference expressed as a function of the total number of seats in that province. Since NARC did not exist in 1997, its seat change is the difference between its share of seats won in 2002 and the combined share of seats won by its major affiliates (the Democratic Party, NDP, FORD-Kenya, and Social Democratic Party) in the 1997 elections.

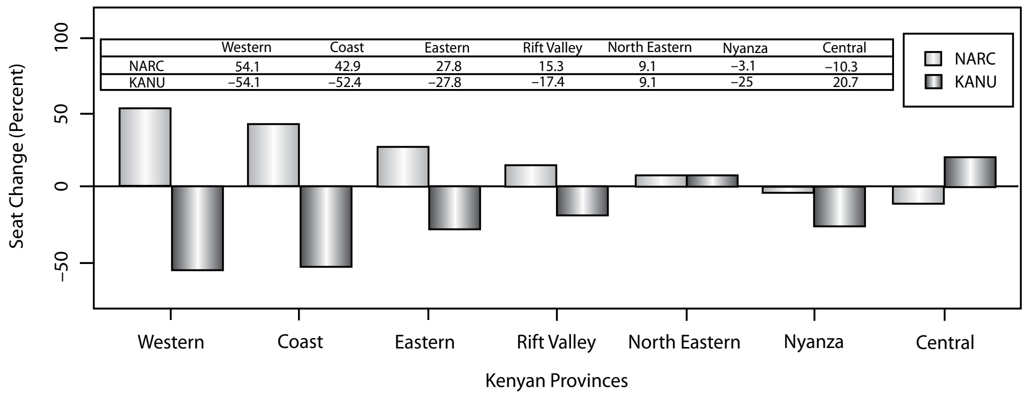

Figure 3. Changes in KANU and NARC seats in the elections of 2002. (Seat changes calculated by the author from data in European Union Electoral Observation Mission, *Final Report: Kenya General Elections, 27 December 2002* [Belgium: European Union Electoral Observation Mission, 2003], 73–102, http://aceproject.org/regions-en/countries-and-territories/KE/reports/Kenya%20-%20EU%20rep02.pdf.)

NARC was expected to derive support from the four provinces from which each of its coalition leaders had greatest support, as already explained. However, figure 3 shows that of these provinces, only Western acted in accordance with expectations and voted out KANU from 13 of the 15 parliamentary seats it held in the province. On paper, it may appear that Wamalwa managed to swing his Western province base behind NARC. Yet, the magnitude of the Kibaki victory in Western seems to stretch beyond Wamalwa's influence there. In fact, table 1 shows that he did not have a great deal of support from the province when he was a candidate in 1997. Besides, the split in KANU does not seem to have played a significant role in securing NARC's victory since only three legislators shifted from KANU to NARC and managed to retain their seats. Clearly, factors other than opposition unity were at play.

Although Eastern province gave NARC additional seats, voters in the lower region of the province, dominated by the Kamba ethnic group, demonstrated impulsive voting patterns and an eccentric appetite for fringe parties. Yet, this region was Ngilu's political bastion in 1997. It transferred seven seats from KANU to NARC and further redistributed four seats among the smaller parties. In essence the resolve for change was great but not equally matched with an enthusiasm to support NARC. In the non-Kamba regions, KANU lost several seats, gaining only one seat, ironically, from the Democratic Party headed by Kibaki, the NARC presidential candidate.

In Nyanza and Central provinces, though, the combined vote tally of the coalition partners in 2002 did not match the sum of their individual efforts in 1997. In Nyanza, NARC retained all 21 seats in the Luo region while KANU lost 10—mainly in the non-Luo areas—to FORD-P, a small party with a base in the province. Thus, KANU's heavy loss there was a result neither of its split nor opposition unity but of the rise of FORD-P as a strong party with a base in Nyanza. Similarly, since Central province is Kibaki's political turf, few people expected NARC to lose seats to KANU. Nonetheless, the elections presented Central province voters with a dilemma since the KANU candidate was also from their province. Because KANU had not won any seats there in 1997, those it gained in 2002 came largely at the expense of NARC. The fact that the core support bases of one of NARC's coalitions did not deliver any additional seats, instead losing those previously held by affiliate parties in the province, further undermines the utility of the opposition-coalition thesis in explaining the huge increase in NARC's parliamentary seats in the 2002 elections.

Perhaps more interesting is the behavior of voters in what I call the "outsider provinces" like Coast, which did not have a notable linchpin in the coalition. Yet, its voters heavily punished KANU by shifting nine of its 21 seats to NARC and another three to fringe parties. In the end, NARC displaced KANU as the majority party in the province. Thus, neither the split within the party nor opposition to the unity of the coalition can explain KANU's loss of seats in Coast.

The Opposition Coalition and Voter Turnout

Figure 4 reveals the change in provincial voter turnout in the 1997–2002 general elections. Turnout reflects "the total number of people who cast their votes as a proportion of all those who, according to the electoral laws as of the time of voting, are eligible to vote."[37]

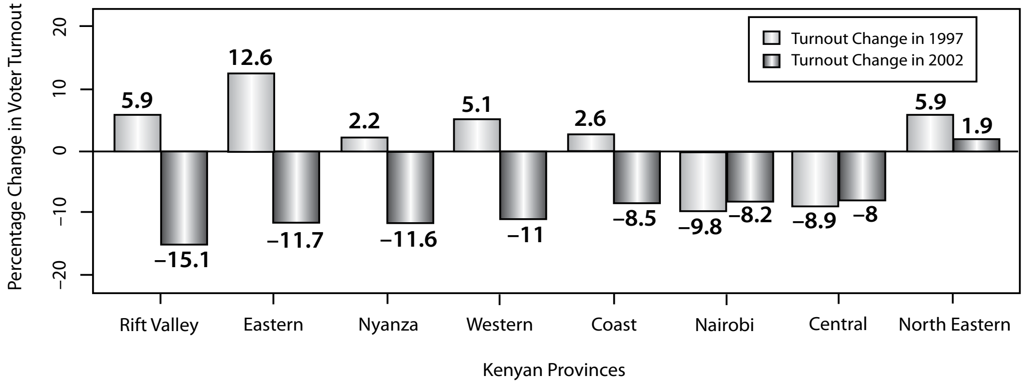

Figure 4. Changes in voter turnout in the Kenyan elections of 1997 and 2002. (Changes in voter turnout calculated by the author from data in European Union Electoral Observation Mission, *Final Report: Kenya General Elections, 27 December 2002* [Belgium: European Union Electoral Observation Mission, 2003], 72, http://aceproject.org/regions-en/countries-and-territories/KE/reports/Kenya%20-%20EU%20rep02.pdf.)

Interestingly, in 1997 voter turnout increased considerably in nearly all the provinces except Central and Nairobi. In these two provinces, Kenneth Matiba—who ran second to Moi in 1992 and had huge support there—decided to call for a boycott of the 1997 elections. Some of his supporters may have heeded his call and abstained. The greatest increase in voter turnout occurred in Eastern, where for the first time a female candidate, Charity Ngilu, mounted a credible presidential campaign. This showing may have energized her support base, consisting mainly of her native Kamba ethnic group.

But in 2002, voter turnout declined in all provinces except in sparsely populated, semiarid North Eastern. The fact that voter turnout increased everywhere in 1997 but decreased everywhere in 2002 lends credence to the view that the election results of 1997 may have been inflated through ballot-box stuffing to secure a win for Moi.[38] Yet, if that in fact occurred, how does one explain why Moi did not inflate the 2002 results as well, given his frantic efforts to impose a preferred heir—even at the risk of splitting KANU? Moi's succession strategy betrayed an attempt to install a puppet president and continue to rule from behind the scenes.[39]

Of particular interest to this study is the fact that, as shown in figure 4, the greatest decline in voter turnout took place in Rift Valley, Eastern, Nyanza, and Western provinces. Rift Valley is the home province of the incumbent Moi—no longer eligible to contest the 2002 elections. Because he had held power for 24 years, most of his supporters in the vast province may have become so used to him that they could not imagine voting for another candidate. The low voter turnout there seems to have affected KANU more than NARC. Boasting the highest number of registered voters, Rift Valley has always been the core of KANU's support, so everyone expected that the KANU candidate would receive more votes from the province. Not only did Rift Valley record the greatest decline in turnout in the entire country (15.4 percent) but KANU's vote share also declined by 16.1 percent while NARC's rose by 13.2 percent. In fact, the vote margin between KANU and NARC in Rift Valley actually declined by nearly 30 percent—from 39.4 in 1997 to a mere 10.1 in 2002 (see table 2).

These observations imply that even the incumbent president could not mobilize his support base to vote overwhelmingly for his preferred successor in 2002. This fact further buttresses my argument that leaders not contesting an election have difficulty mobilizing their supporters to vote for another candidate. When one bows out of a race, a completely new set of electoral choices and dynamics emerges that may be convoluted by transitive voting. This occurs in places where the leader not contesting the election is the most preferred candidate and where the one expected to benefit from his or her nonparticipation is not the second-preferred. Consequently, strategic choice of a joint candidate demands one who has a large support base so that even if turnout in the core bases of coalition partners declines, that person can still mount a credible challenge to the incumbent. Otherwise, the opposition coalition can favor the incumbent by depressing voter turnout.

Economic Voting as an Alternative Explanation of the KANU Defeat in 2002

If the opposition-unity thesis does not provide a complete account of why KANU lost, how well does economic voting theory fare? This study treats the latter as "any change in a voter's support for parties that is caused by a change in economic perceptions."[40] I adopt the broad economic-voting assumption that people's living conditions determine their voting behavior and expect, for example, that the higher the incidence of poverty in a constituency, the lower its support for KANU.

The number of constituencies in each province is mostly smaller than the threshold of 30 cases needed for parametric statistical analysis.[41] Consequently, I follow the exemplary nonparametric bootstrap approach of John Fox, which blends bootstrapping with Peter J. Huber's estimation of robust regression.[42] This process yields the same intercepts and slopes that would result from robust regression, with standard errors adjusted to correct for bootstrap samples. In short, "bootstrap provides reliable statistical inferences for small samples, irrespective of the distribution type."[43]

I used the data on relevant economic variables from the Central Bureau of Statistics.[44] Specifically, *poverty incidence* is the percentage of the population of a constituency whose consumption lies below the poverty line. *Poverty gap* measures how much further, on average, the poor people in a constituency fall below the poverty line. It is the difference between the poverty line and the mean incomes of those living below that line, expressed as a percentage of the latter. The value of the variable ranges from zero (the poverty line) to 100 (the highest poverty level). *Income inequality* refers to the extent to which incomes are dispersed in the population or concentrated among only a small number of people. *Voter turnout* represents the percentage of registered voters in a province or constituency who voted in the 2002 elections (the Electoral Commission of Kenya reports these figures). *Candidates* refers to the number of contestants for a parliamentary seat.[45]

Table 3 shows results of a nonparametric bootstrap regression of various economic variables on the percentage of votes that KANU parliamentary candidates of 2002 obtained in various constituencies across six provinces, with the exception of Nairobi and North Eastern, which I omitted since they have just eight and 11 constituencies, respectively.

Table 3. Determinants of KANU's parliamentary votes in the elections of 2002

	Western	*Central*	*Eastern*	*Coast*	*Nyanza*	*Rift Valley*
Number of Candidates	-2.40	4.94***	-4.75***	0.12	0.31	-2.20
	(1.03)	(4.49)	(3.30)	(0.11)	(0.29)	(1.03)
Voter Turnout	2.43***	0.32	0.76	1.35***	0.73	0.19
	(3.12)	(0.68)	(1.41)	(5.63)	(1.47)	(0.63)
Poverty Incidence	-0.51	-1.33***	-0.81*	-0.04	-0.06	-0.80*
	(1.00)	(5.54)	(2.31)	(0.24)	(0.24)	(2.05)
Poverty Gap	-1.28*	-0.27**	0.52#	0.16	-0.28	-0.14
	(2.29)	(2.70)	(1.68)	(0.29)	(1.40)	(.40)
Income Inequality	-4.06*	-0.88**	-0.77	-0.01	-0.32	-0.44
	(2.31)	(2.59)	(0.54)	(0.02)	(0.57)	(0.80)

Table 3. Determinants of KANU's parliamentary votes in the elections of 2002 (continued)

Original Observations	24	29	36	21	32	49

Entries are nonparametric bootstrap statistics for robust regression based on 2,000 bootstrap samples. The t-values, in parentheses, are based on Huber's robust standard error estimates. Significance: 0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '#' 0.1.

As indicated in table 3, poverty incidence, voter turnout, income inequality, number of candidates, and poverty gap are significant predictors of the votes received by KANU parliamentary candidates in the 2002 elections. However, their influence varies by province. For instance, in Central, Eastern, and Rift Valley, constituencies with low poverty incidence tended to give more votes to KANU parliamentary candidates and vice versa, regardless of whether the party won the seat or not. In the Kabete constituency, which has the lowest national poverty incidence, the KANU candidate received an impressive 34.9 percent of votes although he did not win the seat. KANU, however, won the Limuru and Kiambaa seats, which had the second- and the third-lowest poverty incidence in the province.

One can argue that these seats are concentrated in parts of Central province, where the KANU presidential candidate enjoyed support. However, even in Rift Valley, KANU lost three seats in districts with the highest poverty incidence in the heartland of incumbent president Moi's Kalenjin ethnic group—Marakwet East, Engwen, and Baringo East. In fact, the latter borders Moi's Baringo Central constituency but had the worst poverty in the province. In contrast, Keiyo South, which had the least destitution among the Kalenjin-populated constituencies, gave the KANU candidate 83 percent of the votes.

Two other measures of living conditions—income inequality and poverty gap—further influenced KANU's performance in Western and Central. As one would expect, constituencies with high inequality levels in these provinces were more supportive of KANU. Moreover, people living significantly below the poverty line seem to attribute their predicament to KANU and therefore rejected that party.

The number of candidates for a parliamentary seat had sharply contrasting effects on the vote shares of KANU candidates in Central and Eastern. Although the large number reduced those vote shares in Eastern province, it increased the shares in Central. Evidently, candidates in Eastern province emphasized KANU's failures, thereby chopping off that party's support. Indeed, KANU candidates tallied more than 70 percent of the votes in each of the three constituencies in Eastern province that had fewer than five candidates. But their votes hardly rose above 50 percent in the rest of the province where there were more than five. Thus, an opposition coalition could have worked in favor of KANU in Eastern since it reduces the number of contestants who would cut off KANU's support.

I also examined the effects of various measures of economic living conditions as well as voter turnout on KANU's share of the presidential vote in 2002. Results of the nonparametric bootstrap regression (table 4) show a slight difference in the factors that motivated people's choice of presidential and parliamentary candidates. Although income inequalities and poverty gap exerted varying degrees of influence on the decision to support or reject KANU's parliamentary candidates in different provinces, they had no statistically significant effect on the party's performance in the presidential race in all six provinces. In Western, Central, and Eastern, the incidence of poverty greatly undercut support for KANU's presidential candidate to the extent that constituencies with extreme indigence tended to limit support for that candidate and vice versa. In Central and Eastern provinces, the prevalence of poverty led to reduced support not only for KANU's presidential candidate but also for its parliamentary contenders.

Table 4. Determinants of KANU's presidential votes in the elections of 2002

	Western	*Central*	*Eastern*	*Coast*	*Nyanza*	*Rift Valley*
Voter Turnout	-0.16	-3.24***	-0.89	0.60	-0.08	0.72*
	(0.23)	(6.11)	(1.39)	(0.85)	(0.89)	(2.06)
Poverty Incidence	-0.11**	-0.87*	-0.95**	0.19	0.01	-1.15
	(2.75)	(2.07)	(2.79)	(0.41)	(0.20)	(1.92)
Poverty Gap	0.23	0.29	0.62	1.13	0.01	0.06
	(0.52)	(1.53)	(1.82)	(0.76)	(0.20)	(0.17)
Income Inequality	0.07	0.16	-0.26	-6.75	0.16	-1.24
	(0.19)	(0.33)	(0.23)	(1.56)	(1.45)	(1.06)

Entries are nonparametric bootstrap statistics for robust regression, based on 2,000 bootstrap samples. The t-values, in parentheses, are based on Huber's robust standard-error estimates. Significance codes: 0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05.

Finally, although high voter turnout had no significant effect on the share of votes received by KANU's parliamentary candidate in Central and Rift Valley provinces, it has statistically significant but contrasting effects on support received by the party's presidential candidate there. More specifically, high turnout tended to diminish KANU's presidential votes in Central province but increased them in Rift Valley.

Conclusions: The Opposition Coalition Thesis and Implications for Democracy in Africa

The study's findings indicate that the opposition coalition had only partial influence on the defeat of KANU. Voters showed substantial shift in support from KANU to NARC both in terms of the redistribution of legislative seats and votes for the presidential and parliamentary candidates in key coalition regions like Western province. Similarly massive shifts, however, also occurred in Coast province, notwithstanding the fact that all of its key politicians were in KANU. This situation significantly weakens the unity-split hypothesis.

Moreover, the study found that economic factors such as the incidence of poverty, the poverty gap, and income inequality also affected the performance of KANU in the presidential and parliamentary elections. Yet, their influence is not consistent across the provinces, suggesting the need for deeper inquiry into exactly what led to KANU's massive loss in 2002. These results, though, need further investigation since data-availability problems hindered the study.

The opposition-coalition thesis assumes that defeating incumbent parties is a necessary condition for democracy—an argument consistent with Adam Przeworski's definition of the latter as "a system in which parties lose elections" as well as Samuel Huntington's turnover rule, whereby a country is considered democratic if it has had three successful electoral turnovers.[46] For Przeworski, democracies are distinguished by the presence of a competing party that loses the elections rather than the presence of a winning party. Yet, in some countries with open political competition, citizens are content with one dominant political party that wins elections fairly. In Tanzania, for example, the ruling party—Chama cha Mapinduzi—has not encountered a credible challenge despite political liberalization. Similarly, the Botswana Democratic Party has held power since independence in 1965, courtesy of credible electoral victories. Consequently, democracy can exist even when parties do not lose elections. One should not necessarily view democratic electoral contests as those between one unpopular incumbent party and popular opposition parties that share ideology, vision, and interests—and whose only fault (disunity) causes split votes during elections.

In most cases, when African opposition parties coalesce to defeat the incumbent, the rationale is that the latter is less democratic. Yet, there is nothing democratic about the coalition itself. Not only does it have the potential for letting the elite impose unpopular leaders on society, but also it undermines political parties as institutions and degrades the electoral discourse to personality-based instead of issue-based contests. Moreover, the coalition depresses voter turnout among supporters of other would-be candidates who opt to support a joint candidate, thus undercutting political participation and democracy. Kenya's experience shows that fixation with the defeat of the incumbent can result in a coalition built on quicksand, which gives rise (if it ever wins) to an unstable government.

The notion that opposition unity is necessary to defeat dominant incumbent parties presupposes that the burden of deciding who should govern—or the sort of leadership desirable for society—lies with political elites rather than the masses. In the context of Kenya's elections of 2002, the overarching assumption has maintained that voter mobilization against incumbent KANU occurred top-down. That is, after elite-level negotiations created the NARC coalition, the voters neatly fitted into the elite political designs and promptly ratified the deal at the ballot box. Nonetheless, studies demonstrate that voters are more than passive clients of elite institutional designs—that they interminably resist such designs that they do not approve. In other words, "voters are not lumps of clay waiting to be molded."[47] They do not simply approve elite decisions at face value but often question, scrutinize, and even make contrary decisions.

If an opposition coalition wishes to succeed in dislodging the incumbent, the choice of the joint presidential candidate must be strategic. Otherwise, voters might not neatly fit into the elite political designs and could fail to seal the deal at the ballot box. In Kenya, for instance, the choice of Kibaki as the joint opposition presidential candidate was based on the fact that KANU had already selected a candidate from the populous Kikuyu ethnic group. Thus, the coalition needed a joint candidate who would share Kikuyu votes with KANU's choice and then top them with votes from strongholds of the other opposition leaders. However, since the opposition coalition seeks to remove the incumbent by presenting a joint candidate and since the choice of that candidate must be a strategic rather than an electoral process, the coalition risks subverting democracy. In the first place, if parties and their leaders pursue identical agendas, then why not merge those parties into one? Rather than persuade opposition blocs to form preelection coalitions, one should encourage the development of broad-based, institutionalized political parties built on ideologies, programs, and policies that offer a clear alternative to those of the incumbent.

Notes

1. Neeter Misra-Dexter and Judith February, eds., *Testing Democracy: Which Way Is South Africa Going?* (Cape Town: Institute for Democracy in South Africa, 2010), 13.

2. Alex Thomson, *An Introduction to African Politics*, 3rd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2010), 102–3.

3. Godfrey Mwakikagile, *Nyerere and Africa: End of an Era* (Pretoria: New Africa Press, 2007), 660.

4. John Mukum Mbaku and Joseph Takougang, eds., *The Leadership Challenge in Africa: Cameroon under Biya* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2004), 427–50.

5. Tom Lodge, *Politics in South Africa: From Mandela to Mbeki* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2003), 153–75.

6. Tarik Dahou and Vincent Foucher, "Senegal since 2000: Rebuilding Hegemony in a Global Age," in *Turning Points in African Democracy*, ed. Abdul Raufu Mustapha and Lindsay Whitfield (New York: James Curey, 2009), 13–29.

7. Misra-Dexter, *Testing Democracy*.

8. Peter Batchelor and Kees Kingma, eds., *Demilitarisation and Peace-Building in Southern Africa*, vol. 2, *National and Regional Experiences* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2004), 10.

9. Localizada Autor, ed., *Regional Surveys of the World: Africa South of Sahara, 2003* (London: Routledge, 2003), 1147.

10. Antoinette Handley, Christina Murray, and Richard Simeon, "Learning to Lose, Learning to Win: Government and Opposition in South Africa's Transition to Democracy," in *Political Transitions in Dominant Party Systems: Learning to Lose*, ed. Edward Friedman and Joseph Wong (New York: Routledge, 2008), 196.

11. Michelle Kuenzi and Gina Lambright, "Party System Institutionalization in 30 African Countries," *Party Politics* 7, no. 4 (July 2001): 437–68; and Nicolas Van de Walle, "Presidentialism and Clientelism in Africa's Emerging Party Systems," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 41, no. 2 (June 2003): 9.

12. William Tordoff, *Government and Politics in Africa* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002), 117.

13. Gladys Mokhawa, "All That Glitters Is Not Diamond: The Politics of Diamond Dependence and Abundance in Botswana," in *Resource Politics in Sub-Saharan Africa*, ed. Mastthias Basedau and Andreas Mehler (Hamburg: Institute of African Affairs, 2005), 105–20.

14. Heather Deegan, *Africa Today: Culture, Economics, Religion, Security* (London: Routledge, 2009), 93.

15. Stephen N. Ndegwa, "Kenya: Third Time Lucky?," *Journal of Democracy* 14, no. 3 (July 2003): 145–58; Paul J. Kaiser and Wafula Okumu, *Democratic Transitions in East Africa* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2004); Staffan I. Lindberg, *Democracy and Elections in Africa* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006); and Mwakikagile, *Nyerere and Africa*.

16. Roger Tangri and Andrew M. Mwenda, "President Museveni and the Politics of Presidential Tenure in Uganda," *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 28, no. 1 (January 2010): 40.

17. Ted Dagne, *Kenya: Current Conditions and Challenges Ahead*, CRS Report for Congress RL34378 (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2010), 13, http://fpc.state.gov/documents/organization/139250.pdf.

18. Mwakikagile, *Nyerere and Africa*, 638.

19. Lindberg, *Democracy and Elections in Africa*, 80.

20. Patrick Asingo, "The Political Economy of Transition in Kenya," in *The Politics of Transition in Kenya: From KANU to NARC*, ed. Walter O. Oyugi, Peter Wanyande, and C. Odhiambo-Mbai (Nairobi: Heinrich Boll Foundation, 2003), 15–48, http://www.ke.boell.org/downloads/ThePoliticsofTransitioninKenyaPublication.pdf.

21. Lindberg, *Democracy and Elections in Africa*, 11.

22. J. Gus Liebenow, *African Politics: Crises and Challenges* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), 230.

23. Daniel N. Posner, *Institutions and Ethnic Politics in Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 171.

24. Robert H. Jackson and Carl G. Rosberg, "Personal Rule: Theory and Practice in Africa," in *Africa: Dilemmas of Development and Change*, ed. Peter Lewis (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1998), 38.

25. Merilee S. Grindle, *Challenging the State: Crisis and Innovation in Latin America and Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 178; and Godwin R. Murunga and Shadrack Wanjala Nasong'o, eds., *Kenya: The Struggle for Democracy* (Dakar, Senegal: Codesria, 2007), 315.

26. James C. McKinley Jr., "Kenya's Leader Wins a 5th Term, but Opposition Candidates Gain," *New York Times*, 5 January 1998, http://www.nytimes.com/1998/01/05/world/kenya-s-leader-wins-a-5th-term-but-opposition-candidates-gain.html?pagewanted=all&src=pm.

27. Kaiser and Okumu, *Democratic Transition*, 46.

28. M. P. Parker, *Aspirants: Webster's Quotations, Facts and Phrases* (California: ICON Group International, 2008), 6.

29. McKinley, "Kenya's Leader."

30. Asingo, "Political Economy," 15–48.

31. Ibid.

32. Kaiser and Okumu, *Democratic Transition*, 45.

33. Alwiya Alwy and Susanne Schech, "Ethnic Inequalities in Education in Kenya," *International Education Journal* 5, no. 2 (2004): 266–74, http://ehlt.flinders.edu.au/education/iej/articles/v5n2/Alwy/paper.pdf.

34. Asingo, "Political Economy," 33.

35. Data analysis for this article utilized R. See R Development Core Team, *R: A Language and Environment for Statistical Computing* (Vienna, Austria: Foundation for Statistical Computing, 2008), http://www.R-project.org.

36. Dean Keith Simonton, *Greatness: Who Makes History and Why* (New York: Guilford Press, 1994), 61.

37. Patrick O. Asingo, "Policy Salience and Voter Turnout: An Analysis of Contemporary U.S. Presidential Elections," *Baker Center Journal of Applied Public Policy* 2, no. 1 (Fall 2008): 58, http://trace.tennessee.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1001&context=utk_bakecentpubs.

38. David W. Throup, *Kibaki's Triumph: The Kenyan General Elections of December 2002*, Elections in Africa Series, Briefing Paper no. 3 (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, June 2003), 8.

39. Asingo, "Political Economy," 36.

40. Raymond M. Duch and Randolph T. Stevenson, *The Economic Vote: How Political and Economic Institutions Condition Election Results* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 41.

41. Louis Cohen, Lawrence Manion, and Keith Morrison, *Research Methods in Education*, 5th ed. (New York: Routledge, 2003), 93.

42. John Fox, "Appendix: An R and S-PLUS Companion to Applied Regression" [2002], http://cran.r-project.org/doc/contrib/Fox-Companion/appendix.html.

43. György Bárdossy and János Fodor, *Evaluation of Uncertainties and Risks in Geology: New Mathematical Approaches for Their Handling* (Berlin: Springer-Verlag, 2004), 35.

44. Central Bureau of Statistics, *Graphic Dimensions of Well-Being in Kenya: Who and Where Are the Poor? A Constituency Level Profile*, vols. 1 and 2 (Nairobi: Central Bureau of Statistics, 2003).

45. For technical discussions on the measurement of poverty incidence, poverty gaps, and income inequalities, see ibid.

46. Adam Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market: Political and Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 10; and Samuel P. Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), 266–67.

47. Thomas D. Willet, ed., *Political Business Cycles: The Political Economy of Money, Inflation, and Unemployment* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1988), 372.

Globalization and Trade Initiatives in the Arab World

Historical Context, Progress to Date, and Prospects for the Future

Susan L. Sakmar, JD, LLM*

The forces of globalization during the past two decades have been particularly powerful, but for many reasons, countries in the Arab region have not participated in globalization to the extent found in other parts of the world.[1] Whereas most areas worldwide experienced a significant increase in global trade as a percentage of total gross domestic product (GDP) between 1980 and 2004, trade ratios in the Arab region actually declined during that period.[2]

In its *Economic Developments and Prospects* report of 2007, the World Bank found that "a legacy of protectionist trade and exchange rate policies" hindered the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) area's ability to expand trade and that the "region maintained the highest level of tariff protection in the world outside of South Asia."[3] These factors led the World Bank to conclude that countries in the MENA had all fallen behind in terms of "global trade and investment integration."[4]

At the start of the new millennium, many people inside and outside the Arab region began to question whether efforts should be made to better integrate the Arab world into the changing global economy.[5] Notably, Saudi

---

*The author is a visiting assistant professor and an Andrews Kurth Energy Law Scholar at the University of Houston Law Center. Formerly, she was an adjunct professor of law at the University of San Francisco School of Law. Professor Sakmar received a BSc from the University of Colorado–Boulder, a JD from the University of San Francisco School of Law, and an LLM in international law from the Georgetown University Law Center. Her research areas include global natural gas markets, energy, international trade, and Middle East economies. She is licensed to practice law in California and was an attorney in San Francisco prior to teaching.

This article first appeared in the *University of San Francisco Law Review* as Susan L. Sakmar, "Globalization and Trade Initiatives in the Arab World: Historical Context, Progress to Date, and Prospects for the Future," *University of San Francisco Law Review* 42, no. 4 (Spring 2008): 919–39. Reprinted with permission.

oil minister Ali Naimi publicly recognized the benefits and challenges that globalization brings to the Arab world:

> We are transitioning to a global marketplace where traditional national borders are increasingly meaningless for the transfer of capital and ideas. The operative word for the future is interdependence. We are being drawn closer together by expanding global trade and investment. *Those attempting to "go-it-alone" in this new global economy will risk being left behind.*
>
> Globalization holds the promise of a better way of life for the world's people. But realizing this promise will not always be easy. We will be faced with tradeoffs as we try to balance economic growth, quality of life, the environment, culture and tradition.[6] (emphasis added)

In an effort to enhance Arab participation in the world's trading regime, in 2003 President George W. Bush proposed an initiative for a Middle East Free Trade Area (MEFTA) to promote trade, development, and economic growth in the Arab region.[7] The MEFTA initiative called for the United States to take a series of graduated steps with Arab countries ultimately aimed at creating a regionwide free trade area by 2013.[8] The proposed steps included (1) US assistance in acceding to the World Trade Organization (WTO); (2) expanding the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) program for eligible countries; (3) establishing trade and investment framework agreements (TIFA); (4) establishing bilateral investment treaties (BIT); (5) negotiating comprehensive free trade agreements (FTA); and (6) eventually "melding" all of the FTAs into a MEFTA.[9] The MEFTA initiative also called for the United States to provide financial and technical aid to countries for building trade capacity.[10]

This article discusses (1) whether external trade intervention, such as the proposed MEFTA initiative, will lead to greater economic integration of the Arab world into the multilateral trading regime and (2) whether MEFTA can serve as the catalyst to enhance intraregional trade and investment.[11] Part 1 of the article provides historical background related to trade and globalization in the Arab world and discusses the historically low global and intraregional trade and investment ratios found in the MENA. Part 2 offers a detailed analysis of the United States' MEFTA initiative, including its policy goals and components. Part 3 analyzes the potential economic impact on the MENA region of external trade intervention, such as WTO accession and the MEFTA initiative. It first addresses the possible effect of WTO accession on the MENA and then examines the potential economic impact that the MEFTA initiative might have on Arab trade with the United States. Lastly, part 3 considers whether that initiative could spur an increase in intraregional trade and investment. The article concludes that external trade intervention, such as WTO accession and the MEFTA initiative, offers a dynamic opportunity for the Arab region to better integrate into the world economy. Although the WTO supplies the forum for the multilateral trading regime, the promise of MEFTA comes from its potential to encourage economic and policy reforms within the Arab area that might ultimately result in strengthened trade ties, both internationally and intraregionally.

Historical Context: The Arab Region's Historically Low Trade Ratios

The Forces of Globalization Leave the Middle East Behind

As Renato Ruggiero, former director-general of the WTO, succinctly stated, "A powerful confluence of forces drives globalization."[12] Some of these forces reflect government policies, and others seem to have a life of their own. The forces of globalization since the end of the Cold War have been particularly dramatic, leading many to question why the Arab region has not participated in globalization to the degree found elsewhere.[13]

By the early 2000s, international institutions began to recognize that the Middle East was largely missing out on trade-related growth.[14] According to United Nations statistics at the time, "the [Middle East's] share of world exports peaked at 12% in 1981, but dropped to less than 5% in 2001. Regional trade has been particularly low. In 2001 it accounted for 8% of the region's total trade, compared to nearly 75% for Europe and 50% for Asia. And [United Nations] statistics reveal [that] the Middle East attracted only 0.7% of global foreign direct investment throughout the 1990's."[15]

In its *Economic Developments and Prospects* report of 2007, the World Bank found that the MENA countries had "entered the new millennium at a significant deficit with respect to most other regions of the world in terms of its integration into the world economy."[16] The volume of trade increased in most regions of the world over the prior two decades, but trade in the MENA region declined.[17] The ratio of trade to GDP fell from an average of 100 percent in 1980 to about 60 percent by 2000.[18] Oil dominated regional exports, and "only a few countries had established growing non-oil export sectors."[19]

The MENA also attracted only a negligible share (a mere 0.3 percent) of the world's foreign direct investment.[20] Although many factors affect the level of trade, the World Bank concluded that the MENA region's ability to expand trade was "disadvantaged by a legacy of protectionist trade and exchange rate policies."[21] It further found that "the [MENA] region maintained the highest level of tariff protection in the world outside of South Asia, with simple average tariffs in MENA averaging almost 19 percent."[22]

The MENA maintained high nontariff barriers, such as price-control measures, import licenses, and quota requirements.[23] In addition, several factors increased the costs to trade, including "technical barriers to trade, customs, and administrative procedures, and costly and inefficient backbone services, such as transport, logistics, ICT [information and communications technology] services, and finance."[24]

Arab Trade with Europe and the United States Is Low

An extensive study of trade in the Arab countries reveals "considerable evidence that these countries trade significantly less than countries with similar incomes and geographic proximity to trading partners in other parts of the world."[25] In a paper presented to the World Bank, Jeffrey Nugent, professor of economics at the University of Southern California, used a gravity-model specification to find that the Middle East traded under its potential in the mid-1990s.[26] Professor Nugent "obtained shortfalls in trade with respect to Europe and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which he ascribes to a variety of causes, including low oil prices, high tariff barriers, poor telecommunications, capital and exchange controls, and . . . trade diversion effects."[27]

Other studies using a gravity-model specification also found that almost all Arab countries were far below their estimated export potential with the European Union.[28] One such study examined 15 Arab countries' exports to Europe and concluded that, on average, they were 33.5 percent lower than they would be, assuming that their export behavior to the European Union market is identical to that of any European Union country.[29]

One reaches the same conclusion with respect to Arab trade with the United States. An economic study of 2005 that examined the bilateral trade of six MENA countries (Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Egypt, Jordan, and Syria) with the United States found that they "seriously underexploited their trade potential with the United States."[30] The study concluded that "in particular . . . the United States is a major untapped market for Jordan, Morocco, Syria, and Tunisia, while Algeria and Egypt 'overexport' to the United States."[31]

Intraregional Trade Is Low

Several studies in 2005 found that Arab countries do not trade enough among themselves. One discovered that intraregional trade between Arab countries was nearly four times less than expected.[32] Another used a comprehensive gravity model that included both policy and institutional factors to explain the trade shortfalls of the MENA region.[33] Researchers estimated the model "with panel data techniques based on recently assembled panel data on bilateral trade flows and the relevant explanatory variables for over 150 countries for the years 1970, 1975, 1980, 1985, 1990, 1995, 1997 and 2000."[34] This study verified that MENA trades too little, both intraregionally and with countries outside the region.[35]

The United States' Middle East Free Trade Area Initiative

In 2003 the United States, under the Bush administration, proposed establishing a US MEFTA by 2013.[36] Under the MEFTA initiative, the United States would engage countries in the MENA in a step-by-step process designed to facilitate trade relations with the United States.[37] The initiative envisioned that these steps would lead to the negotiation of comprehensive bilateral FTAs between the United States and all countries in the region.[38] The United States would then combine these into a single overarching arrangement (i.e., MEFTA) between the United States and the area as a whole.[39] The following sections provide background on the reasoning behind the MEFTA initiative and the step-by-step approach under it.

Key Indicators of US Economic Ties to the Middle East

US trade with the Middle East is a small share of its total trade, in 2005 accounting for only 4.1 percent of all US exports and 4.6 percent of all US imports.[40] These low numbers indicate that on the basis of economic size alone, "the Middle East is not a region on which the United States would normally be expected to focus."[41] US interest in MEFTA is not primarily economic; rather, it reflects "geopolitical and security considerations" related to the United States' war on terror and the Middle East's strategic position as a key supplier of oil and gas.[42] The MEFTA initiative also reflects the United States' policy perspective that the Middle East needs an economic component as part of a comprehensive strategy to address the numerous conflicts it faces.[43]

Background on the Middle East Free Trade Area Initiative

Just a year and a half after the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 on the World Trade Center, the Bush administration proposed the MEFTA initiative as part of a plan to fight terrorism through the use of trade-policy mechanisms designed to encourage economic growth and democratic reforms in the Middle East.[44] MEFTA incorporated an idea debated in Washington at the time—using trade as a tool to fight terrorism. For example, prior to the announcement of MEFTA, policy analyst Edward Gresser argued that the Arab world had been the "blank spot" on the Bush administration's trade agenda and that this "undermin[ed], rather than support[ed], the war on terrorism."[45] Gresser noted the "economic crisis affecting almost all of the western Muslim states," observing that these states had "seen their share of world trade and investment collapse since 1980."[46] This resulted in "stagnant growth and falling income" as well as "unemployment, political tension, and rising appeal for religious extremists."[47] He further argued that "a strategic initiative for the Muslim world could end, or at least ease, the tilt."[48] Gresser called for an initiative "analogous to programs now available for Central America, the Andean nations, and Africa" in order to promote "growth and creation, and so reduc[e] the attraction of radicalism and religious fundamentalism."[49]

Brink Lindsey of the Cato Institute argued for an initiative that could generate immediate results to supplement the Bush administration's pursuit of FTAs, which take longer to negotiate.[50] He proposed a short-term initiative: legislation that would "grant temporary duty-free, quota-free access to the U.S. market for exports of selected Muslim countries."[51] Lindsey maintained that this shorter-term program would prove the United States' "commitment to the region, thereby providing a jump-start for the longer, arduous process of negotiating FTAs."[52]

The policy objectives suggested by Gresser and Lindsey were later supported by the *9-11 Commission Report*, which included the following recommendation: "A comprehensive U.S. strategy to counter terrorism should include economic policies that encourage development, more open societies, and opportunities for people to improve the lives of their families and to enhance prospects for their children's future."[53] In summary, the premise of the United States' MEFTA initiative was that an economic boost to the region could help alleviate the poverty, weak institutions, and corruption believed to make some countries vulnerable to terrorist networks.[54]

On 23 June 2003, at the World Economic Forum in Jordan, US trade representative Robert Zoellick offered further details on the initiative.[55] In terms of eligibility, the Bush administration's MEFTA initiative is open to "'peaceful' countries that seek an increased trade relationship with the United States and . . . 'all those countries that are prepared to participate in economic reform and liberalization.'"[56]

Ambassador Zoellick outlined a six-step process or "roadmap to MEFTA" for Middle East countries to become part of MEFTA.[57] These steps included (1) the United States assisting countries in joining the WTO; (2) participating in the GSP; (3) entering into TIFAs; (4) entering into BITs; (5) entering into FTAs with the United States; and (6) eventually "melding . . . subregional FTAs into an historic regional [MEFTA]."[58] The ambassador also indicated that "the final element" of the MEFTA initiative included the United States providing financial and technical aid to fund the building of trade capacity in the region.[59] As envisioned, MEFTA would ultimately cover 20 countries in the MENA.[60]

The Step-by-Step Middle East Free Trade Area Initiative

World Trade Organization accession. It is the United States' position that Arab countries that join the rules-based system of global trade by accession to the WTO will be better able to take advantage of the benefits of open markets and globalization.[61] At the beginning of the new millennium, nine countries in the MEFTA were members of the WTO: Bahrain, Cyprus, Egypt, Israel, Kuwait, Morocco, Qatar, Tunisia, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Over the past seven years, three additional MEFTA countries have joined the WTO: Jordan, Oman, and Saudi Arabia (see table).

Table. Entities covered by the MEFTA initiative: Progress toward a bilateral free trade agreement with the United States

MEFTA Entity	*WTO Membership*	*GSP*	*TIFA*	*BIT*	*FTA*
Middle East					
Bahrain	1995	—	2002	2001	2006
Cyprus	1995	—	—	—	—
Egypt	1995	Yes	1999	1992	—[a]
Gaza Strip/ West Bank	—	—	—	—	—[a]
Iran	Negotiating	—	—	—	—
Iraq	Negotiating	Yes	2005	—	—
Israel	1995	—	Yes	Yes	1985
Jordan	2000	Yes	Yes	2003	2001
Kuwait	1995	—	2004	—	—
Lebanon	Negotiating	Yes	2006	—	—
Oman	2000	Yes	2004	—	2006
Qatar	1996	—	2004	—	—
Saudi Arabia	2005	—	2003	—	—
Syria	—	—	—	—	—
UAE	1996	—	2004	—	Negotiating
Yemen	Negotiating[b]	Yes	2004	—	—
North Africa					
Algeria	Negotiating	Yes	2001	—	—
Libya	Observer	—	—	—	—
Morocco	1995	—	Yes	1991	2006
Tunisia	1995	Yes	2002	1993	—

Source: Data from WTO/Office of the US Trade Representative; adopted from Mary Jane Bolle, *Middle East Free Trade Area: Progress Report*, CRS Report for Congress, RL32638 (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2006), 14, table 2, http://www.hsdl.org/?view&did=464705.

[a]Goods are eligible for US free-trade benefits under a 1996 amendment to the United States–Israel Free Trade Area Implementation Act of 1985, Public Law 104-234, 110 Statute 3058 (1996) (codified as amended at 19 *United States Code* ‘ 2112 note [2000]), if coproduced with Israel, Jordan, or Egypt in a qualifying industrial zone in compliance with rules of origin requirements, or wholly produced in the Gaza Strip / West Bank.

[b]The WTO General Council established a working party to examine Yemen's request for accession in July 2000. The fourth meeting of the working party took place in November 2007, at which time the government of Yemen highlighted its determination to address the WTO accession requirements in 2008 in order to become a member in 2009.

In April 2000, Jordan became the 136th member of the WTO six years after establishing a working party under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and with significant assistance from the United States.[62] Jordan's accession was hailed as a "historical moment" and "a turning point in the continued development of the Jordanian economy."[63] In November 2000, the Sultanate of Oman became the 139th member of the WTO after concluding negotiations that began in 1996.[64] In December 2005, Saudi Arabia became the 149th member of the WTO after almost 12 years of negotiation.[65] Saudi Arabia's accession was a historic day for the WTO and brought to the "multilateral table" the 13th-largest merchandise exporter and the 23rd-largest importer.[66] Given its position as the "swing" energy producer and its historical lack of transparency, Saudi Arabia is perhaps the most significant Arab state to join the WTO. All but one of the remaining MEFTA countries (Algeria, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, and Yemen) are in the process of negotiating their accession to the WTO.[67] The only exception, Libya, has been granted observer status but has not yet started the accession process.[68]

As a practical matter, however, WTO accession takes years, and the United States has recognized that it is not an immediate answer to US security concerns related to the Arab region.[69] As former US trade representative Charlene Barshefsky acknowledged, "Programs of a more immediate nature" are "critical to bring economic and job growth to [the MENA] region to provide hope and a counterweight to a large growing, relatively well educated but unemployed population."[70] Barshefsky also recognized the need for greater economic integration in the region by stating that "we need the kind of relief that may help these countries integrate one with the other."[71]

Continuation of the Generalized System of Preferences. The short-term plan under MEFTA includes continuation of the GSP, which allows duty-free entry into the US market for at least 3,500 products from 140 developing countries.[72] As of 2006, only eight of the 20 countries covered under MEFTA were eligible for GSP benefits: Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Oman, Tunisia, and Yemen.[73]

The GSP provisions of the United States' Trade Act of 1974 also limit product preferences on the basis of import sensitivity.[74] GSP provisions specifically exclude from tariff preferences certain textiles and apparel, watches, footwear, handbags, luggage, wallets and briefcases, work gloves and other leather wearing apparel, steel, glass, and electronics.[75] Because these are important export categories for MEFTA countries, imports under GSP represent only a small fraction (0.2 percent for 2005) of all imports from the MEFTA region.[76]

Trade and investment framework agreements. TIFAs "establish a framework for expanding trade and for resolving outstanding disputes."[77] Since the MEFTA initiative was announced in 2003, the United States has negotiated new TIFAs with eight countries: Iraq, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Yemen (see table above).[78] Nearly three-quarters of the MEFTA entities now have TIFAs with the United States.[79] The MEFTA entities that do not include Cyprus, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, Iran, Libya, and Syria (see table above).[80]

Bilateral investment treaties. "Bilateral investment treaties (BITs) oblige governments to treat foreign investors fairly and to offer them legal protections equal to those afforded domestic investors. BITs make the business climate more attractive to U.S. companies."[81] Since the announcement of the MEFTA initiative, the United States and Jordan have approved a BIT.[82] Subsequently, the United States now has BITs with more than one-quarter of the MEFTA entities: Bahrain, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Morocco, and Tunisia (see table above).[83] The following MEFTA entities do not have BITs with the United States: Algeria, Cyprus, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, the UAE, and Yemen.

Free trade agreements. Since implementation of the MEFTA, the United States has completed FTAs with Bahrain, Morocco, and Oman, and an FTA with the UAE is under negotiation.[84] FTAs were already in effect for Israel and Jordan.[85] Some people have questioned the effectiveness of these FTAs, and in light of the MENA region's historical reluctance "to engage in . . . fundamental systemic changes," some skepticism is probably warranted.[86] Some have also questioned the benefits of FTAs in light of the relatively modest trade and investment links between the Arab countries and the United States.[87]

Although some skepticism might be warranted, it is important to note that the FTAs with Bahrain, Morocco, and Oman are particularly striking because of their "comprehensive and deep character."[88] Unlike other FTAs, these new ones require liberalization for trade in all goods, including agriculture, and for many services and foreign direct investment.[89] The requirements of the FTAs are enforced by dispute-settlement agreements backed by the possibility of the suspension of trade concessions or preferences, payment of monetary assessments by violators of FTAs, or both.[90]

The "deep character" of these FTAs is significant because, with the exception of the Gulf Cooperation Council, most previous agreements signed by Arab countries—both with the European Union and among themselves—generally dealt only with tariffs and quotas.[91] Although tariffs in the region have been reduced, Arab countries "have failed . . . to deal effectively with non-tariff barriers and the liberalization of services and investment."[92]

One can make a strong argument that the deep nature of the United States' FTAs in the MENA presents a unique opportunity for the Arab states to implement additional policy measures, both individually and collectively.[93] Thus, "the promise of the [FTAs] comes from the ability to use them as a catalyst for increased economic benefits by improving regulatory rules and systems at home and facilitating integration with the rest of the region and the world."[94]

Creation of a Middle East free trade area. As Ambassador Zoellick outlined, the MEFTA initiative envisions the "eventual melding of [the] subregional FTAs into an historic regional Middle East Free Trade Area."[95] The difficulty of ultimately establishing one MEFTA has been recognized.[96] Furthermore, the ambassador noted, at the time, that a MEFTA "will not be created in a month, a year, or even five years. But America is committed for the long haul, through a step-by-step strategy for progress that will help nations build free, dynamic economies and rising standards of living for all."[97]

The final element that Ambassador Zoellick observed in the MEFTA initiative is "the [United States'] provision of financial and technical aid to help countries develop the capacity to take part in negotiations, implement trade agreements, and build the legal and entrepreneurial infrastructure to partake in the benefits of open markets."[98] To fund trade-capacity building under the MEFTA, "the Middle East Partnership Initiative [MEPI] will help target more than $1 billion of annual funding from various U.S. Government agencies and encourage partnerships with private organizations and businesses that support development."[99] The MEPI "is also aimed at increasing educational opportunities, strengthening civil society and rule of law, and supporting small business."[100] The MEPI received an estimated $294 million in funding between fiscal years 2002 and 2005.[101] For 2005, total funding for US trade-capacity building was $1.3 billion, of which Middle East countries received $236 million or 18 percent.[102]

The Economic Impact of External Trade Intervention

As the World Bank's *Economic Developments and Prospects* report for the MENA region notes, "The relationship between openness to international trade and income growth is almost axiomatic. . . . Economies with greater openness to international trade experience higher rates of economic growth, as a result of both higher investment levels and sustained gains in productivity."[103] Perhaps of greater significance to the Arab region is the ancillary benefit that "greater openness also can motivate the overall reform agenda."[104] Over the past several years, countries in the MEFTA have "embarked on [a variety of trade] reforms [designed] to liberalize their trade regimes and remove the many existing impediments to greater trade."[105]

The Impact of Accession to the World Trade Organization

Since the beginning of the new millennium, three MENA countries have joined the WTO: Jordan, Oman, and Saudi Arabia.[106] As a result of WTO accession, MENA countries as a whole have made significant progress in tariff reduction since the start of the decade.[107] In particular, Jordan made substantial commitments in trade reform as a condition of its accession to the WTO in 2000 and implementation of the US FTA in 2001.[108] Tariffs decreased by about half from an average of 23 percent in 2000 to less than 12 percent by 2005.[109]

The most recent Arab member of the WTO, Saudi Arabia, was admitted in 2005.[110] To meet WTO requirements, that country revised many of its protective trade policies, particularly with respect to import licensing, customs valuation and fees, standards and technical regulations, and legislation for intellectual property rights and patent registration.[111]

Relative to the world, tariff reform by MENA countries since 2000 has been higher than that in any other region but Europe and Central Asia, ranking in the top 62nd percentile of countries worldwide.[112] Despite the progress made by MENA countries in the WTO, that organization's recent reports indicate that more structural reforms need to occur.[113] For example, in 2006 the WTO conducted its first-ever trade-policy review of the UAE.[114] That review found that the UAE's generally liberal economy had grown by an average of 6 percent per year over the past decade and 9 percent between 2003 and 2005.[115] Despite some diversification, however, the UAE remains dependent on crude oil and gas exports for a significant share of its national income.[116] The WTO secretariat noted that "internal barriers to trade, resulting largely from the absence of a competition policy, institutional weaknesses, and restrictions on foreign participation in the economy, are impediments to doing business in the UAE and are hindering the diversification into services, a sector that is rapidly becoming a strategic priority."[117]

The Middle East Free Trade Area Initiative's Potential Impact on Arab Trade with the United States

The relatively small value of bilateral trade between Arab countries and the United States implies that the economic impact of MEFTA will be marginal. Since the United States has historically charged very low duties on imports from Arab countries (just over 0.5 percent in 2003), it is unlikely that MEFTA will significantly increase exports from Arab countries to the United States.[118] Rather, the more probable result of tariff reductions under MEFTA is that imports from the United States will increase.[119]

Focusing exclusively on the effects of eliminating tariffs on goods, however, runs the risk of seriously understating the impact of the MEFTA agreements, especially the FTAs. Some argue that "the additional effects of reducing non-tariff barriers and the liberalization of services trade and foreign investment should not be ignored" and that "simulations of these additional effects suggest they could be large."[120] For example, estimates using Tunisia and Egypt indicate that "liberalization of foreign investment in services that is generalized to all trading partners could boost welfare by almost ten percent of GDP."[121]

Simulation models often assume that the structure of trade will remain unchanged, which can lead to misleading results.[122] For example, the International Trade Commission's analysis of the US-Jordan FTA completely missed the explosion in Jordan's exports of clothing to the United States as a result of special trade concessions that the latter granted Jordan.[123] Indeed, this FTA offers valuable insight into the effect that stronger trade and investment relations can have on economic development. As a result of the various trade agreements between the United States and Jordan, the latter's exports to America "grew from $13 million in 1999 to $412 million in 2002, created over 30,000 direct new jobs, and attracted over $200 million in new investment from 11 different countries."[124] Recent data is even more impressive: "Jordanian exports to the US increased from $72.8 million in 2000 to a stunning $1.267 billion in 2005."[125]

General trade data also suggests that the United States' exports to and imports from the MENA region have increased since the announcement of MEFTA: "Between the end of 2002 and the end of 2005 . . . U.S. exports to [the MENA] countries grew by 56% while U.S. imports from these entities nearly doubled."[126] The greatest growth in US imports from the MENA occurred in petroleum and natural gas.[127] Imports of nonmetallic mineral manufactures, medicinal and pharmaceutical products, and organic chemicals also increased.[128] Goods making large contributions to the growth in US exports to the MENA region included transport equipment, road vehicles, electrical and nonelectrical machinery, nonmetallic mineral manufactures, telecommunications, and scientific instruments.[129]

The Middle East Free Trade Area Initiative May Lead to Increased Intraregional Trade

According to the Bush administration, the six-step MEFTA initiative seeks to address political, economic, and humanitarian objectives to help Middle East countries become "'sustainable trading partners.' The hope is that each of the successive steps involved in negotiating TIFAs, BITs, and FTAs might help induce internal changes in the laws and regulations of the various countries."[130] Further, one of the stated goals of MEFTA was to encourage intraregional trade.[131] Prior to the announcement of the initiative, such trade accounted for only 8 percent of the total trade in the region.[132] The United States intended to "focus efforts on improving this number," noting that "strong regional ties often lead to rapid expansion in trade flows and economic growth."[133] Thus, the United States hoped and expected that, "as [its] bilateral trade ties expand in the region, . . . trade *among* the countries of the region [would] also grow and expand" (emphasis in original).[134]

The Arab countries that have signed agreements with the United States should use them as an opportunity to enhance regional integration by extending the MEFTA provisions and coverage to each other. They should also use the agreements to leverage trade and investments liberalization with other trading partners. Extension of the MEFTA provisions throughout the region will probably produce a measurable increase in intraregional trade. At this point, it is unclear whether the Arab countries will apply the MEFTA provisions intraregionally and whether the potential for increased intraregional trade under MEFTA will emerge.

Conclusion

The Arab world has enjoyed spectacular rates of growth for the past four years. High oil prices have spurred this growth, but intensified global trade linkages have undoubtedly also contributed. When President Bush announced the MEFTA initiative in 2003, the stated goal called for concluding the plan in a decade—by 2013. This was ambitious at the time, and the United States has recently indicated that the overall objective of MEFTA "was not to meet the deadline but to push the reform process in the region along."[135] Scholars generally agree that the MEFTA initiative is a step in the right direction and that its deep nature presents a dynamic opportunity for Arab countries to implement economic reforms that will allow the region to better integrate into the multilateral trading regime. It remains to be seen whether countries in the MENA region will continue to move the reform process along, but Arab countries that do not embrace the changes necessary to compete in the new global economy will "risk being left behind."

Notes

1. See Robert Z. Lawrence, *A US–Middle East Trade Agreement: A Circle of Opportunity?* (Washington, DC: Peterson Institute for International Economics, 2006), 28–29.

2. Ibid., 29, 30, table 2.2. "Between 1980 and 2004, global trade in goods and services as a percentage of GDP increased by 32%." Ibid., 29. However, trade ratios in the Arab region in 2004 were the same as those in 1980; in some cases, they had even decreased. Ibid., 30, table 2.2.

3. World Bank, Middle East and North Africa Region, *2007 Economic Developments and Prospects: Job Creation in an Era of High Growth* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2007), 74, http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTMENA/Resources/EDP_2007_REPORT_Aug7.pdf.

4. World Bank, *MENA Development Report: Trade, Investment, and Development in the Middle East and North Africa; Engaging with the World* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2003), 92, http://www-wds.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2003/10/03/000094946_03092504152661/Rendered/PDF/multi0page.pdf.

5. Ibid., xv (describing "why engaging with the world is so vital for the [Arab] region"); Lawrence, *US–Middle East Trade Agreement*, 1; and Ali Naimi, Saudi oil minister, "Globalization and the Future of the Oil Market" (address to the World Affairs Council of Northern California and Council on Foreign Relations at the Bankers Club of San Francisco, 23 May 2005), in *Middle East Economic Survey* 48, no. 22 (30 May 2005).

6. Naimi, "Globalization."

7. See Mary Jane Bolle, *Middle East Free Trade Area: Progress Report*, CRS Report for Congress, RL32638 (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2006), 1, http://www.hsdl.org/?view&did=464705; and "Middle East Free Trade Area Initiative: U.S. Regional Plan to Spur Economic Growth," Office of the United States Trade Representative, March 2004, http://www.ustr.gov/about-us/press-office/fact-sheets/archives/2004/march/middle-east-free-trade-initiative-us-regional-.

8. Bolle, *Middle East Free Trade Area*; and "Plan to Spur Economic Growth."

9. Robert B. Zoellick, "Global Trade and the Middle East" (speech at the World Economic Forum, Dead Sea, Jordan, 23 June 2003), http://www.ustr.gov/archive/Document_Library/USTR_Speeches/2003/Global_Trade_the_Middle_East.html.

10. Ibid. The United States would "help countries develop the capacity to take part in negotiations, implement trade agreements, and build the legal and entrepreneurial infrastructure to partake in the benefits of open markets." Ibid. See also Bolle, *Middle East Free Trade Area*, 9 (indicating that "the final step in the Bush Administration's plan is trade-capacity building to help countries realize more fully the benefits of open markets").

11. This article was originally presented at an economic conference entitled the International Conference on Globalization, Economic Reforms, Aid and Democracy in the Arab World, held at the Arab Thought Forum in Amman, Jordan, on 3–4 February 2008.

12. Tim Kennedy, "Experts Assess Saudi Arabia's Effort to Join the World Trade Organization," *Washington Times* (special international report), 22 September 2000, http://www.internationalspecialreports.com/middleeast/00/saudiarabia/6.html.

13. Lawrence, *US–Middle East Trade Agreement*, 27–28.

14. E. Anthony Wayne, assistant secretary for economic and business affairs, "Creating Free and Dynamic Economies in the Arab World" (remarks to the International Arab Banking Summit, Montreal, Canada, 25 June 2003), http://2001-2009.state.gov/e/eeb/rls/rm/2003/21945.htm.

15. Ibid.

16. World Bank, Middle East and North Africa Region, *2007 Economic Developments and Prospects*, 73.

17. Ibid.

18. Ibid.

19. Ibid.

20. Ibid., 74.
21. Ibid.
22. Ibid.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid., 74–75.
25. Lawrence, *US–Middle East Trade Agreement*, 29.
26. Ibid. Although a detailed discussion of international economics lies beyond the scope of this article, "the gravity model of trade predicts that the volume of trade between any two countries will be positively related to the size of their economies (usually measured by GDP) and inversely related to the trade costs between them." Roberta Piermartini and Robert Teh, *Demystifying Modelling Methods for Trade Policy*, WTO Discussion Papers no. 10 (Geneva, Switzerland: World Trade Organization, 2005), 37, http://www.wto.org/english/res_e/booksp_e/discussion_papers10_e.pdf.
27. Lawrence, *US–Middle East Trade Agreement*, 29.
28. Ibid., 31.
29. Ibid.
30. Ibid., 31–33.
31. Ibid., 33.
32. Ibid.
33. Rania S. Miniesy and Jeffrey B. Nugent, "Explaining the Trade Shortfalls of the MENA Region" (unpublished paper presented at the MEEA-ECOMOD Conference: Middle Eastern and North African Economies: Past Perspectives and Future Challenges, Free University of Brussels, 2–4 June 2005), http://www.ecomod.net/sites/default/files/document-conference/ecomod2005-mena/Nugent.doc.
34. Ibid., [1]. A "panel . . . data set is one that follows a given sample of individuals over time, and thus provides multiple observations on each individual in the sample." Cheng Hsiao, *Analysis of Panel Data*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 1. See generally Manuel Arellano, *Panel Data Econometrics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003) (indicating that panel-data econometrics uses both time series and cross-sectional data sets that have repeated observations over time for the same individuals, such as workers, households, firms, industries, regions, or countries). The numerous variables included, among many others, GDP, bilateral trade between countries, distance between countries, and physical size of the country. See Jeffrey B. Nugent, "Why Does MENA Trade So Little?" (unpublished paper presented to the Middle East Region Group at the World Bank, 30 August 2002), 14–15, http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTMNAREGTOPTRADE/Resources/Nugent.pdf.
35. Miniesy and Nugent, "Explaining the Trade Shortfalls."
36. Bolle, *Middle East Free Trade Area*.
37. Lawrence, *US–Middle East Trade Agreement*, 2.
38. Ibid.
39. Ibid.
40. Bolle, *Middle East Free Trade Area*, 4.
41. Lawrence, *US–Middle East Trade Agreement*, 4.
42. Ibid., 5; and Bolle, *Middle East Free Trade Area*, 4.
43. Bolle, *Middle East Free Trade Area*, 1–2; and Lawrence, *US–Middle East Trade Agreement*, 2–3.

44. Bolle, *Middle East Free Trade Area*.

45. Edward Gresser, *Blank Spot on the Map: How Trade Policy Is Working against the War on Terror*, policy report (Washington, DC: Progressive Policy Institute, February 2003), [1], http://www.dlc.org/documents/Muslim_Trade_0203.pdf.

46. Ibid.

47. Ibid.

48. Ibid.

49. Ibid.

50. Brink Lindsey, *The Trade Front: Combating Terrorism with Open Markets*, Trade Policy Analysis no. 24 (Washington, DC: Cato Institute, 5 August 2003), 3, http://www.cato.org/sites/cato.org/files/pubs/pdf/tpa-024.pdf. The CATO Institute is a nonprofit public-policy research foundation.

51. Ibid.

52. Ibid.

53. National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, *The 9-11 Commission Report: Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States* (New York: Norton, 2004), 379.

54. Lindsey, *Trade Front*, 2.

55. Zoellick, "Global Trade and the Middle East."

56. Bolle, *Middle East Free Trade Area*, 9.

57. Zoellick, "Global Trade and the Middle East."

58. The GSP is "a program designed to promote economic growth in the developing world by providing preferential duty-free entry for up to 5,000 products when imported from one of 127 designated beneficiary countries and territories." "Generalized System of Preferences (GSP)," Office of the United States Trade Representative, accessed 3 April 2013, http://www.ustr.gov/trade-topics/trade-development/preference-programs/generalized-system-preference-gsp. See also Zoellick, "Global Trade and the Middle East."

59. Zoellick, "Global Trade and the Middle East."

60. Countries in the Middle East include Bahrain, Cyprus, Egypt, the Gaza Strip / West Bank, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen. North African countries include Algeria, Libya, Morocco, and Tunisia. Bolle, *Middle East Free Trade Area*, 14, table 2.

61. Bureau of Public Affairs, US Department of State, *Middle East Free Trade Area Initiative*, 2006, http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/68344.pdf.

62. "Jordan Becomes 136th Member of the WTO," press release, World Trade Organization, 11 April 2000, http://www.wto.org/english/news_e/pres00_e/pr174_e.htm (reporting that Jordan became a member of the WTO in 2000 after first establishing a working party under the GATT in January 1994). "The working party on Jordan's accession to the GATT/WTO was established under the GATT in 1994 and was transformed into a WTO working party in 1995." Ibid. See also US Agency for International Development (USAID), USAID in Jordan, accessed 23 April 2008, http://www.usaidjordan.org/aboutus_subsub.cfm?id=71&section=history. ("USAID cooperated closely with Jordanian counterparts to help facilitate Jordan's accession into the World Trade Organization [WTO] and implement needed policy reforms.")

63. "Jordan Becomes 136th Member of the WTO" (quoting Dr. M. Halaiqah, chief negotiator and secretary-general of the Ministry of Industry and Trade of Jordan at the General Council Meeting).

64. "WTO's General Council Approves Accession of Oman," press release, World Trade Organization, 10 October 2000, http://www.wto.org/english/news_e/pres00_e/pr194_e.htm (reporting that the Sultanate of Oman will become the 139th member of the WTO on 9 November 2000).

65. "WTO General Council Successfully Adopts Saudi Arabia's Terms of Accession," press release, World Trade Organization, 11 November 2005, http://www.wto.org/english/news_e/pres05_e/pr420_e.htm (indicating that Saudi Arabia had been negotiating its membership in the WTO since 1993).

66. "Welcoming Address by the Director-General to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia," news item, World Trade Organization, 11 November 2005, http://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news05_e/stat_lamy_11nov05_e.htm.

67. "Members and Observers," World Trade Organization, 27 July 2007, http://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/whatis_e/tif_e/org6_e.htm (listing the member countries of the WTO and the dates of membership).

68. "Libya Given Green Light to Negotiate WTO Membership," news item, World Trade Organization, 28 July 2004, http://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news04_e/libya_stat_27july04_e.htm. Libya applied to become a WTO member in December 2001, and the WTO General Council agreed to set up a working party to examine its application on 27 July 2004. Ibid. "As an applicant country, Libya [is also] an observer to the WTO during the membership negotiation." Ibid.

69. The Arab region includes Bahrain, Cyprus, Egypt, the Gaza Strip / West Bank, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, the UAE, and Yemen. Bolle, *Middle East Free Trade Area*, 14, table 2.

70. "Analysis: US–Middle East Free Trade Zone," National Public Radio broadcast, 3 June 2003, http://www.npr.org/programs/totn/transcripts/2003/jun/030603.barsh.html (explaining that the United States created a duty-free program for Jordanian-Israeli goods to enter the United States and negotiated an FTA with Jordan to assist with WTO accession).

71. Ibid.

72. Bolle, *Middle East Free Trade Area*, 7.

73. Ibid. "GSP limits country participation on the basis of: (a) per-capita income, and (b) participation in the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)." Ibid.

74. See 19 *United States Code*, secs. 2101–495 (2000). See sec. 2461 (giving the president the authority to "provide duty-free treatment for any eligible article from any beneficiary developing country," taking into account various factors). Import sensitivity refers to the "vulnerability of a domestic industry to *injury* from foreign competition" (emphasis in original). "Glossary," Institute for Trade and Commercial Diplomacy, 2004, http://www.itcdonline.com/introduction/glossary1_ghij.html.

75. Bolle, *Middle East Free Trade Area*, 7n12.

76. Ibid.

77. Robert B. Zoellick, "A Return to the Cradle of Free Trade," Office of the United States Trade Representative, 23 June 2003, http://www.ustr.gov/archive/Document_Library/Op-eds/2003/A_Return_to_the_Cradle_of_Free_Trade.html.

78. "Trade & Investment Framework Agreements," Office of the United States Trade Representative, accessed 6 April 2008, http://www.ustr.gov/Trade_Agreements/TIFA/Section_Index.html. This list erroneously omits Oman, which signed a TIFA with the United States on 7 July 2004. See "United States and Oman Sign Trade and Investment Framework Agreement," press release, Office of the United States Trade Representative, 7 July 2004, http://www.ustr.gov/about-us/press-office/press-releases/archives/2004/july/united-states-and-oman-sign-trade-and-invest.

79. Bolle, *Middle East Free Trade Area*, 10. TIFAs were already in place (prior to 2003) with Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Israel, Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia. Ibid., 10, 14, table 2.

80. Ibid., 14, table 2.

81. Ibid., 8.

82. Ibid., 10.

83. Ibid.

84. Ibid. The United States and the UAE launched negotiations in March 2005. See "Plan to Spur Economic Growth."

85. Bolle, *Middle East Free Trade Area*, 10.

86. Robert Z. Lawrence, *Recent US Free Trade Initiatives in the Middle East: Opportunities but No Guarantees*, Faculty Research Working Paper Series no. RWP06-050 (Cambridge, MA: John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, December 2006), 3, http://www.iie.com/publications/papers/lawrence1206.pdf.

87. Ibid.

88. Ibid., 4.

89. Ibid.

90. Ibid., 4, 19.

91. Ibid., 4–5.

92. Ibid., 5.

93. Ibid. Some policy measures that Lawrence suggested include domestic reforms to improve the regulatory environment for businesses, greater regulatory transparency, improvements in customs procedures, and better intellectual property protection. Ibid., 23.

94. Ibid., 5.

95. Zoellick, "Global Trade and the Middle East."

96. Lawrence, *US–Middle East Trade Agreement*, 19 (noting that "even aside from the obvious political problems of achieving a single MEFTA that includes Israel and all the Arab countries, there are numerous institutional barriers to its full realization"). See also ibid., 55–77, for a more detailed discussion of the issues related to creating a single MEFTA.

97. Zoellick, "Global Trade and the Middle East."

98. Ibid. One should note that for some reason both Bolle and Lawrence treat trade capacity as step six, whereas Ambassador Zoellick's speech identified trade-capacity building as an "element" and not a step. See Bolle, *Middle East Free Trade Area*, 9; and Lawrence, *US–Middle East Trade Agreement*, 2.

99. Zoellick, "Global Trade and the Middle East." MEPI is the program for building trade capacity used by MEFTA. See ibid.

100. Bolle, *Middle East Free Trade Area*, 9.

101. Ibid.

102. Ibid.

103. World Bank, Middle East and North Africa Region, *2007 Economic Developments and Prospects*, 73.

104. Ibid.

105. Ibid., 75. For example, additional countries from the MENA region (Jordan, Oman, and Saudi Arabia) have acceded to the WTO, and numerous bilateral and regional trade agreements have entered into force in the region. Ibid. As a result of the various trade agreements, MENA countries made significant progress in reducing tariffs. Ibid.

106. Ibid.

107. Ibid.

108. Ibid.

109. Ibid.

110. Ibid., 76.

111. Ibid.

112. Ibid., 77.

113. "A Generally Liberal Economy Whose Performance Could Further Improve with Structural Reform," press release, World Trade Organization, 24 and 26 April 2006, http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/tpr_e/tp263_e.htm.

114. Ibid. "Trade Policy Reviews are an exercise, mandated in the WTO agreements, in which member countries' trade and related policies are examined and evaluated at regular intervals." Ibid.

115. Ibid.

116. Ibid.

117. Ibid.

118. Lawrence, *US–Middle East Trade Agreement*, 106; and Lawrence, *Recent US Free Trade Initiatives*, 16.

119. Lawrence, *Recent US Free Trade Initiatives*, 16.

120. Ibid.

121. Ibid.

122. Ibid.

123. Ibid., 17.

124. Wayne, "Creating Free and Dynamic Economies."

125. Lawrence, *Recent US Free Trade Initiatives*, 17.

126. Bolle, *Middle East Free Trade Area*, 6.

127. Ibid. During this time period, petroleum and natural gas prices and traded volume increased, affecting imports. Ibid.

128. Ibid., 6–7.

129. Ibid., 7.

130. Ibid., 10 (quoting transcript of Background Press Conference Call to Discuss Proposed Mideast Free Trade Area Announced by President Bush, 9 May 2003).

131. Wayne, "Creating Free and Dynamic Economies."

132. Ibid.

133. Ibid.

134. Ibid.

135. Gary G. Yerkey, "Bush's Plan to Create Mideast Free Trade Area by 2013 Could Take Off This Year," *International Trade Reporter* 23 (19 January 2006): 103.

The Afghan Model More Than 10 Years Later

An Undiminished Relevance

Col Géraud Laborie, French Air Force*

On 10 November 2001, Northern Alliance forces captured Mazar-i-Sharif, thereby accelerating the fall of the Taliban regime one month later. With this significant victory (the first since the beginning of Operation Enduring Freedom), the entire world saw images of Western horse-mounted military in the midst of cavalry commanded by Gen Abdul Rashid Dostum, Afghan warlord and US ally during the operation. One year later, this involvement of special forces alongside the Northern Alliance, supported by the coalition's airpower, gave birth to the concept of the "Afghan model"—theorized and popularized by US Army War College researcher Stephen Biddle.[1]

What is the legacy of the Afghan model more than 10 years later? Has it seen use in other theatres of operation? Does it still have relevance for future conflicts? To answer these questions and to understand its main principles, we should return to the very beginning—to its premiere use in Afghanistan. Analysis of recent conflicts shows that this model came into play in 2003 during Operation Iraqi Freedom in northern Iraq before it reemerged in Libya during Operation Unified Protector. Based on these three examples, this article describes the characteristics, advantages, and limitations of the Afghan model. As the operations indicate, this strategy, which relies primarily upon airpower, remains perfectly relevant and has high coercive value when forces use it under the correct condi-

---

*The author received his commission from the French Air Force Academy in 1992. A tactical transport pilot with several deployments overseas, including Chad and Afghanistan, he is also a graduate of the French Test Pilot School and spent six years as an experimental test pilot in the French Flight Test Center, where he took part in the development of aircraft programs such as the Airbus A400M. Colonel Laborie completed his professional military education in the United States, where he was a distinguished graduate of the Air Command and Staff College, Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama. He was also the first individual from a non–Anglo Saxon country to graduate from the School of Advanced Air and Space Studies at Maxwell. His command tours include two years at the head of the "Touraine" tactical transport squadron, which he led during Operation Unified Protector in Libya.

tions. We should fully acknowledge the Afghan model and integrate it within our armed forces' range of strategic options.

The Birth of a Concept: Afghanistan, October 2001–March 2002

The concept of the Afghan model emerged in the early weeks of Enduring Freedom. In the wake of the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 (9/11), the National Security Council offered President George W. Bush two options concerning Afghanistan. The first, presented by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, drew upon a conventional approach involving the deployment of five divisions several months before initiating the attack against the Taliban regime. The second, suggested by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), proposed bringing down the regime through a combination of US airpower, special forces, and Afghan allies. The Pentagon dismissed the latter, recalling inconclusive experiences of the Vietnam War when special forces along with indigenous tribal allies unsuccessfully attempted to hold back the stream of troops and supplies passing through the Ho Chi Minh Trail. However, in the case of Afghanistan, the plan caught the attention of Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld for several reasons. First, it enabled a quick response in line with the expectations of the White House and Americans traumatized by the magnitude of the terrorist attacks launched upon them. Landlocked and isolated Afghanistan was ill suited to a massive troop deployment requiring the negotiation of transit and basing agreements with neighboring countries. The Soviet invasion of December 1979, launched from the USSR's central Asian republics, didn't suffer from any such limitation. Moreover, the CIA's plan relied upon airpower with far greater lethality and precision than that employed in Vietnam. Using airpower alongside special forces equipped with portable laser designators able to provide precise coordinates from the Global Positioning System granted new possibilities widely underestimated in 2001. Rumsfeld, however, having anticipated this scenario, had initiated in-depth reform of the US military, perceived as too heavy and not taking full advantage of its technological superiority.[2] The concept of "shock and awe," developed in 1996 by several researchers from the National Defense University, drew notice from the secretary of defense due to its combination of speed, precision, and firepower able to paralyze the adversary with a minimum amount of force.[3] This concept would find in Afghanistan its first full-scale application but with a ground segment limited to special forces.

The Pentagon finally accepted the CIA's plan, mainly because of the geographic and diplomatic obstacles that Afghanistan presented—as well as the political necessity of acting quickly. The CIA could also rely on strong relationships with the Northern Alliance that it had established in the months preceding 9/11. The rest is history: the air campaign began on 7 October, attacking the rudimentary Taliban air defense network and the command and control (C2) infrastructure. On 15 October, US special forces joined Northern Alliance troops preparing to attack main Taliban strongholds—particularly Mazar-i-Sharif. Having no vehicles, they used ponies—a means of transportation most appropriate to negotiate the narrow trails in the Afghan mountains. One by one, entrenched positions defending the city succumbed to the combined action of the coalition's aviation assets and General Dostum's fighters. The fall of Mazar-i-Sharif on 10 November marked the beginning of the end for the Taliban regime, which abandoned its last stronghold in Kandahar on 6 December, after a campaign that lasted only 60 days.

In November 2002, Biddle published the first description of the Afghan model's main characteristics, including both its advantages and limitations as displayed in the first months of that year.[4] The coalition's reliance on Afghan allies to finish the job and kill al-Qaeda troops entrenched in Tora Bora or in the Shah-e-Khot Valley (Operation Anaconda) did not prove as successful as expected. In the second case, the poorly motivated Afghan fighters who were supposed to dislodge the enemy and push him out of the valley withdrew at the first sign of trouble, thus leaving US troops to confront a determined enemy by themselves.

Application in Iraqi Kurdistan, March–April 2003

Although the first months of Enduring Freedom are relatively well documented in France, one cannot say the same for utilization of the Afghan model in northern Iraq during the spring of 2003. Once again, the geographic circumstances and diplomatic environment forced the Pentagon to reproduce the Afghan modus operandi. The plan that US Central Command (CENTCOM) had established for the fall of Saddam Hussein called for the 4th Infantry Division to deploy in northern Iraq from Turkey. By mid-March, the command finally realized that in spite of intense diplomatic activity, Turkey would neither join the coalition nor authorize the opening of a northern front from its borders. In extremis, Gen Tommy Franks decided to use special forces to pin down the 13 Iraqi divisions that Saddam had deployed to cover the northern borders. For CENTCOM the danger lay in seeing those divisions redeployed to the south, facing

Kuwait, by the time the Iraqi dictator realized that the threat from Turkey had vanished. CENTCOM then decided to commit 48 teams of 12 personnel each from the 3rd and 10th Special Forces Groups, which, supported by coalition airpower, had infiltrated the Kurdish Peshmergas in an attempt to undertake the role initially designed for the 4th Infantry Division.

This task proved extremely difficult. The 50,000–70,000 Kurdish militia troops were brave and well motivated but only lightly armed. Unable to conduct an offensive, they preferred tactics that consisted of carrying out costly frontal assaults against 70,000–110,000 troops of the Iraqi regular army and 20,000 in the Republican Guard. On 23 March, US special forces from the Joint Special Operations Task Force–North (JSOTF-N) infiltrated via air pathways without vehicles or communications equipment (which remained stuck in Turkey). Strikes were guided mainly by radio, without data links. Neither was air support up to the task undertaken in Afghanistan. The coalition had based its air assets in the Persian Gulf, far from northern Iraq. In the absence of bases in Turkey, naval air assets on carriers stationed in the Mediterranean Sea offered the only available option although they were far away as well and had limited capabilities.

However, US special forces carried out the three objectives assigned to them: pinning down most of the Iraqi divisions on the Green Line dividing Iraqi Kurdistan from the rest of Iraq, destroying training camps of the Ansar al-Islam terrorist group, and stabilizing the towns of Mosul and Kirkuk. Distributed along the Green Line in groups consisting of one team of 12 men and one US Air Force combat controller attached to a unit of 100–300 Peshmergas, special forces used field knowledge and their Kurdish allies' intelligence to direct air strikes on Iraqi units. During the 16-day operation, Saddam's troops could not counter such action. Effectively guided by the combat controllers, airpower finally offset the Kurdish allies' numerical, material, and tactical disadvantage.

Nevertheless, JSOTF-N sometimes enjoyed success by only a narrow margin and at the cost of collateral damage; thus, during the Battle of Debecka Pass, two US teams and their allies narrowly escaped annihilation by an Iraqi motorized company reinforced with large numbers of armored vehicles. Hampered by poor weather conditions, an F-14D fighter mistakenly bombed the wrong position, killing 17 Kurdish combatants. Special forces survived only because Javelin antitank missiles repelled the enemy's armored vehicles. Mercifully, weather conditions improved on the following day, enabling the special forces to destroy the Iraqi column. JSOTF-N faced another major challenge—lack of intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) devoted to its own activity since the US advance in the south had priority. The coalition, therefore, lost track of the elite Nebuchadnezzar Division while the latter managed to redeploy in the center of Iraq and face the attack conducted through the Karbala Gap.

The Afghan model, of course, is not without risk. Even if one could rightly describe its application in northern Iraq as a success for the coalition, that operation also revealed its limitations, mainly related to scarce air-based assets.

The Afghan Model : Antidote to Mission Creep in Libya

As the Iraqi example shows, special forces can act as an effective catalyst for airpower only with significant presence on the ground. The JSOTF-N included no fewer than 600 troops alongside the Kurdish Peshmergas. With significantly fewer personnel, the clandestine services alone could not have conducted an operation of this magnitude. Given the associated risks of loss and the fact that special forces are too numerous to remain invisible, their government must acknowledge that using them could have political ramifications.

Although this aspect posed no particular problems for the White House, either in the case of Afghanistan or Iraq, it appeared far more problematic for France and Great Britain during Operation Unified Protector. United Nations Security Council resolution 1973 authorized "all necessary measures . . . to protect civilians and civilian populated areas under threat of attack in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, including Benghazi, while excluding a foreign occupation force of any form on any part of Libyan territory."[5] As assessed by members of the coalition, the statement was ambiguous enough to allow active support for the Libyan opposition. Nevertheless, since the resolution excluded ground troops, such support drew solely upon air and sea assets, leaving little possibility of closely coordinating with the insurgents.

In the early weeks of the operation, the use of special forces was officially limited to providing advice to the National Transitional Council. However, special forces from Qatar and the United Arab Emirates as well as France and the United Kingdom deployed alongside insurgents during the fall of Tripoli at the end of August. Their role suggests an application of the Afghan model in which, as Jean-Christophe Notin explains, "the organization put in place by the French Special Operations Command greatly facilitates the observation to destruction process."[6] Why this change? Was it the result of a deliberate strategy implemented by the coalition from the beginning of Unified Protector, or was it an adjustment to the circumstances at hand? The first analyses of the campaign conducted against Mu'ammar Gadhafi incline toward the second reasoning. After toppling the offensive on Benghazi by loyalist forces, the coalition faced a risk of mission creep, visible toward the end of April. A study conducted at that time by the Paris-based think tank Fondation pour la recherche stratégique (Foundation for Strategic Research) had already illuminated the limitations of the insurgency, which alone could not force the enemy to concentrate and maneuver and thus present a more vulnerable target to airpower. It also suggested deploying tactical air control parties of the special forces to increase the effectiveness of air strikes.[7] In light of scant evolution on the Brega and Misrata fronts, recourse to the Afghan model seemed the obvious thing to do, as also acknowledged by the political powers of the coalition's most determined states. It is symptomatic that in spite of the helicopter and fighter-bomber assaults intended to unblock the coastal towns, critical help for the insurgency came from the Nafusa Mountains, where Western and Arab special forces had been particularly active since the spring of 2011. As explained by a study of the Royal United Services Institute, the special forces had extensive roles for the Berber insurgents, including providing weaponry and equipment by land and by air, forming and training the insurgents to prepare them for the assault on Tripoli, integrating the ground offensive with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's air campaign, and providing intelligence and guidance for strikes.[8]

Given the risk of mission creep, the coalition employed its special forces in a fashion that increasingly came to look like the Afghan model in order to compensate for the pro-Gadhafi forces that were adapting to an air campaign insufficiently integrated with the insurgents' actions. Thus, the Libyan example confirms the undiminished relevance of the Afghan model more than 10 years after its development. It also highlights one of the paradoxes of airpower in the case of Unified Protector—that airpower meets political requirements by marking and solidifying one's determination from the very first hours of operations without committing ground troops. Nevertheless, it is truly effective on a military level only if a ground segment can catalyze its effects and help the insurgency succeed.

The Afghan Model under the Magnifying Glass: Strengths and Weaknesses

Based on the examples of Afghanistan, Iraq, and Libya, one can define the principal characteristics of the Afghan model and explore both its benefits and limitations. One can simplify the model to the following triptych: airpower and special forces used in partnership with indigenous forces to conduct air-land operations. The special forces act mainly as a catalyst for airpower, permitting local partners to win in spite of numerical or material disadvantage. During the battle for Mazar-i-Sharif, the Northern Alliance won even though its 2,000 soldiers faced 5,000 well-entrenched and better-equipped Taliban troops. Special forces can also perform several tasks beyond directing the strikes, such as forming, guiding, or providing technical advice and intelligence to the indigenous command. The concept of full-spectrum targeting most appropriately captures all of the effects made possible by this model. That is, lethal air assets guided by the special forces strike opposing forces, and nonlethal assets provide intelligence and supply weaponry or food. Morale, military capabilities, and the population supporting local allies come under protection while the enemy's morale, C2, and military capabilities become targets to destroy. The psychological impact of the air weapon on the adversary is all the stronger, given that the latter cannot counter its effects, as proven by the accounts of Taliban prisoners captured during Enduring Freedom.[9]

Several requirements affect the Afghan model's three components and determine its limitations. In terms of airpower, the success experienced in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Libya should not make us forget that acquiring and maintaining air supremacy are an essential prerequisite to applying this model—one that could involve a long and costly (and thus prohibitive) campaign against an enemy with a strong air defense. Debates reported in the media about a potential military intervention in Syria offer a good example.[10] Without air supremacy, this model simply becomes inapplicable. However, even the presence of air supremacy does not guarantee success. Local allies and special forces remain particularly vulnerable when outnumbered by better-armed enemy troops, as reflected by the Battle of Debecka. Flawless air support must compensate for such disadvantages. To avoid unpleasant surprises, one must possess high-endurance ISR capabilities; thus, one often finds a highly sophisticated air component used in conjunction with rather primitive ground troops. According to a study conducted by the RAND Corporation, the first months of Enduring Freedom demanded far more data links than the more conventional Iraqi campaign of 2003.[11]

Providing support to friendly forces also calls for genuine knowledge of close air support—both its lethal and nonlethal aspects. The guided weaponry not only should be precise but also should offer adjustable lethality as a function of the enemy's ability to adapt. Having experienced the destructive effects of allied airpower on their exposed vehicles, as in Tarin Kowt on 18 November 2001, Taliban troops established carefully prepared and concealed defensive positions that the 2,000-pound Joint Direct Attack Munitions could not fully reduce. Moreover, during Anaconda, conducted in March 2002, US forces deployed by helicopter to objective "Ginger" were constantly set upon by al-Qaeda militants extremely well entrenched in positions that resisted several consecutive strikes.[12] Unified Protector also confirms this need for a wide range of weaponry covering the entire spectrum of destructive effects. In the Libyan case, limited-effect munitions such as laser-guided inert bombs struck an enemy spread across an extremely dense urban environment without causing collateral damage. Indeed the Royal Air Force used highly accurate Brimstone munitions so intensively that the service almost depleted its stock.[13]

Regarding nonlethal assets, one must employ strong tactical-transport aviation to infiltrate and supply special forces and possibly supply indigenous allies—witness the Nafusa Mountain campaign in Libya. Precision airdrop systems can compensate for the absence of secured landing strips and isolation of friendly troops.[14] To these, one must add assets inherent to any air campaign: C2, in-flight refueling, combat search and rescue, and so forth. Clearly, then, air forces should master all air-centered courses of action, which limits the number of air forces able to apply the Afghan model autonomously or at least to have a decisive role within a coalition that applies it. Requiring such a significant air component could restrict the appeal of a model whose ground segment seems to involve so few human and material resources. Obviously, operating within a coalition offsets certain shortcomings.

In terms of the ground segment, special forces should master all of the techniques and procedures for close air support. However, their role goes far beyond guiding strikes. Anaconda highlighted the limitations of airborne ISR capabilities. Specifically, even though the 100-square-kilometer operations area had come under intensive observation for one month, half of the enemy positions remained undetected before the operation began. Therefore, troops within contact range should deploy to compensate for such limitations when the local geography is challenging, as in the case of the mountainous terrain in much of Afghanistan and the urban environment in which modern conflicts increasingly take place. Special forces offset as many of the sensors' limitations as possible by conveying intelligence—either firsthand or from indigenous allies. Of course, this works both ways, allowing allies to benefit from intelligence collected by airborne sensors. The first analyses of Unified Protector clearly point out that Western special forces assumed this role during the rebel advance on Tripoli.[15]

Special forces should also include linguists and regional experts able to interact with local partners quickly and effectively. While US teams in Afghanistan relied on CIA contacts with the Northern Alliance, several weeks passed before Arab and Western special forces could build an effective partnership with Libyan allies because of geographic dispersal and the lack of a unified command.

The third component of the Afghan model is the availability of ad hoc allies. The model's success depends upon the presence of relatively credible indigenous troops, both on a political and military level. The choice of this local partner is not a neutral one. In a conflict involving different insurgent groups opposing a common enemy, one must consider the balance of power that will dictate the country's future governance before supporting one group to the detriment of the others.

The level of military credibility is not necessarily a decisive criterion in the choice of the local ally if it is offset by a strong capacity to commit enough potential fighters. Experience shows that one can adapt to a wide range of situations. The potential combatant does not need to possess previous military training if he can be taught the necessary basics of combat in areas out of enemy range. Coalition forces may also supply equipment by air if necessary, as occurred during the Nefusa Mountains campaign. Once the combatants are ready to fight, special forces provide guidance, ensure the coordination of air strikes, and help synchronize actions of ground troops with the air campaign plan. Against all odds, armed pastry chefs can overcome professional soldiers.[16]

However, one must know the tactical limitations of indigenous partners because they cannot necessarily understand and carry out complex maneuvers when confronted by a sophisticated enemy. Special forces in limited numbers will always find themselves vulnerable after a sudden rout of their allies. A successful Afghan model must have parties that share more or less common strategic objectives. On the one hand, overthrowing the Taliban regime in the early weeks of Enduring Freedom or bringing down Gadhafi provided such shared interest necessary for mutual success. On the other hand, both Tora Bora and Anaconda reveal the danger of not having enough ground troops to compensate for an Afghan ally poorly motivated to hunt down al-Qaeda's foreign fighters—during wintertime and in a particularly mountainous environment.[17]

Implications for Air Forces

The Afghan model is far from a panacea to modern conflicts. Its successful use depends upon specific criteria, and indigenous allies who depend on foreign air support may find themselves at risk, just as special forces commandos may become vulnerable if their local partners withdraw. The model may also require a certain amount of strategic patience before it produces effects. However, because it can be quickly implemented, compared to a more conventional campaign, the model optimizes airpower's inherent attributes of rapid power projection, reach, agility, ubiquity, firepower, and flexibility. Still, the Afghan model does not assure peace after the campaign has ended—consider, for example, the Taliban's return to Afghanistan, the deteriorating situation in northern Iraq during the months following the fall of Saddam, and the uncertain future of Libya.[18]

Nevertheless, the campaign in Libya has proven the Afghan model's validity and relevance. Its inherent role as catalyst for airpower helps increase its strategic value. On both the political and financial levels, the Afghan model involves lower costs than conventional campaigns. It does not necessarily solve conflicts by itself, but such is the case for all military interventions, conventional or not. The Afghan model appears replicable within the arc of crisis where subsist many hostile totalitarian regimes that remain vulnerable to a determined insurgency. In the opinion of US strategists, the withdrawal from Iraq, the death of Osama bin Laden, and a reduction in the public deficit prompted President Barack Obama to adopt new strategic guidelines that contrast sharply with those of the past decade. Now more exacting in terms of the nature and place of its military engagements, the United States seeks credible partners able to share the security burden, particularly when its vital interests are not at stake. The Afghan model offers a way to take best advantage of American air supremacy with minimal involvement.

At a time when France is making capability choices, one must recognize that some remain wary of the Afghan model and may even reject it. References to it as proxy interventionism reflect an underestimation of the political and military involvement that this model requires. Its limitations are pointed out regularly to the detriment of the model's coercive value although it can increase the effectiveness of military interventions whenever circumstances require support from a local partner without massive deployment of ground troops. A recent article points out the potentially harmful effects it might have on the evolution of the composition of armed forces: "Moreover, this model . . . could account for cuts in the format of ground forces."[19] Such criticism tends to overlook the conditions necessary to implement the Afghan model, which are particular enough to reduce the temptation to apply it regularly.

Denying our armed forces a tool with proven coercive value would be all the more detrimental if they already have all elements required to use it. We should preserve the model's attributes, such as the knowledge related to close air support, shaped in Afghanistan and proven in Libya, and the strong air component integrated within a wide framework of joint special forces able to form, train, and provide advice to foreign partners. Of course, an air force must offer the necessary framework to apply the Afghan model, including C2, ISR, and both lethal and nonlethal assets. All of these elements exist and have proven their worth. We should now acknowledge their symbiotic character within the Afghan model and fully integrate the latter with the range of our armed forces' strategic options. As some of the model's best advocates observe, "Future planners must consider the model as a primary option, rather than an emergency procedure."[20]

Notes

1. Stephen Biddle, *Afghanistan and the Future of Warfare: Implications for Army and Defense Policy* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, November 2002), http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/download.cfm?q=109.

2. Frederick W. Kagan, *Finding the Target: The Transformation of American Military Policy* (New York: Encounter Books, 2006), 293.

3. Harlan K. Ullman and James P. Wade, *Shock and Awe: Achieving Rapid Dominance* (Washington, DC: Center for Advanced Concepts and Technology, 1996), xxiv–vi.

4. Biddle, *Afghanistan and the Future of Warfare*.

5. United Nations Security Council, Resolution 1973 (2011), 17 March 2011, 3, http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/1973.

6. Jean-Christophe Notin, *La vérité sur notre guerre en Libye* [The truth about our war in Libya] (Paris: Fayard, 2012), 471.

7. Philippe Gros, *De Odyssey Dawn à Unified Protector: Bilan transitoire, perspectives et premiers enseignements de l'engagement en Libye* [From Odyssey Dawn to Unified Protector: Transient performance report, prospects, and first lessons of the engagement in Libya], note no. 04/11 (Paris: Fondation pour la recherche stratégique, April 2011), 18, http://www.frstrategie.org/barreFRS/publications/notes/2011/201104.pdf.

8. Michael Clark et al., *Accidental Heroes: Britain, France and the Libya Operation*, Interim RUSI Campaign Report (London: Royal United Services Institute, September 2011), 11–12, http://www.rusi.org/downloads/assets/RUSIInterimLibyaReport.pdf.

9. Maj Gen Charles J. Dunlap Jr., *Shortchanging the Joint Fight? An Airman's Assessment of FM 3-24 and the Case for Developing Truly Joint COIN Doctrine*, Air University Monograph (Maxwell AFB, AL: Air University, 2008), 41, http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA475806&Location=U2&doc=GetTRDoc.pdf.

10. See reactions following the loss of a Turkish fighter: "Syria's Downing of Turkish Jet Demonstrates Sophisticated Air Defense," *Seattle Times*, 26 June 2012, http://seattletimes.com/html/nationworld/2018535968_syria27.html.

11. Benjamin S. Lambeth, *Air Power against Terror: America's Conduct of Operation Enduring Freedom* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2005), 352, http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2006/RAND_MG166-1.pdf.

12. Biddle, *Afghanistan and the Future of Warfare*, 37.

13. Clark et al., *Accidental Heroes*, 6.

14. Ibid., 11; Notin, *Notre guerre en Libye*, 391–92; and Jean-Marc Tanguy, *Harmattan: Récits et révélations* [Harmattan: Stories and revelations] (Paris: Nimrod, 2012), 51.

15. Clark et al., *Accidental Heroes*, 12; and Notin, *Notre guerre en Libye*, 470–71.

16. Notin, *Notre guerre en Libye*, 526.

17. Richard B. Andres, Craig Wills, and Thomas E. Griffith Jr., "Winning with Allies: The Strategic Value of the Afghan Model," *International Security* 30, no. 3 (Winter 2005–6): 34.

18. According to Richard Andres, the situation in Iraq had to do with the actions of the 101st Airborne Division after combat ended. See his article "The Afghan Model in Northern Iraq," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 29, no. 3 (June 2006): 414–17, http://www.essentialcellbiology.com/journals/pdf/papers/FJSS_A_176539_P.pdf.

19. "Les limites de l'interventionnisme par délégation" [The limits of intervention by delegation], *Défense et Sécurité Internationale*, no. 87 (December 2012): 10–11.

20. Andres, Wills, and Griffith, "Winning with Allies," 159.

The Politics of Market Reform

Altering State Development Policy in Southern Africa

SHAUKAT ANSARI*

Introduction

South Africa's transition from a racially exclusive apartheid state to a liberal democracy—referred to as a "double transition" to denote the economic dynamics behind the political transformation—has attracted the attention of a substantial number of researchers from a variety of disciplines.[1] The topic of radical transformation in the African National Congress's (ANC) official position on state developmental policy has aroused perhaps the greatest interest among scholars. Prior to 1994, few observers would have predicted that the white minority in South Africa would relinquish its formal rule predicated on racial domination while avoiding the initiation of structural transformations involving a fundamental reorientation of existing social relations. Yet, the end of apartheid and the liberation movement's victory did not result in the transformation of capitalist social-property relations. In fact, upon taking power, the ANC implemented a homegrown, neoliberal structural adjustment program that opened South Africa to foreign economic interests and propelled the country down a path of market liberalization.

Explanations offered by scholars to account for this policy shift within the ANC can be roughly divided into two competing models. According to the first one, the South African government's ability to maneuver was severely restricted by structural constraints imposed by international and domestic business interests in a post–Cold War environment. The fact that

*The author is a doctoral candidate at the University of Toronto in the Department of Political Science. His research focuses on the subfields of international development and critical political economy with a special emphasis on sub-Saharan Africa. His dissertation examines the politics of market liberalization in postapartheid South Africa in an attempt to explore the role played by international and domestic actors in the country's political and economic transformation. He obtained his master's degree in political economy from York University.

developing states needed to create a favorable business climate to avoid the prospect of large-scale capital flight limited the options available to them.[2] This capital-logic model draws much of its inspiration from Fred Block's classic study on the relation between class power and the state apparatus within the context of capitalist social-property relations. Block argues that state managers, while exercising a substantial degree of autonomy in relation to each capital fraction, must nonetheless formulate policies in accordance with the general interests of the capitalist class as a whole. They must do so because the latter can constrain state policy through various structural mechanisms, which are employed based on each firm's perception of the overall level of business confidence.[3] In other words, in the era of economic globalization, South African state elites had little choice other than to modify their developmental goals in order to retain scarce capital and attract foreign direct investment.

The second model posits that the ANC was already a convert to neoliberalism by the time the transition had completed because international financial institutions (IFI), along with the business community, had employed a tactic known as "soft conditionality." The latter involves deploying a cadre of technocratic professionals to influence the policy process by targeting members of the ANC and engaging them in policy dialogue as a way of highlighting the efficiency of market reforms.[4] Scholars have employed this model to account for market reform in a wide variety of national settings in which states had previously assumed an interventionist role.[5]

Such explanations, however, fail to account for the implementation of state-led Keynesian and developmental policies in other national contexts by liberationist or left and socialist governments that came to power and carried through their reforms despite the concrete reactions of the capitalist class to the deterioration in business confidence. To illustrate this point, one need only examine the example supplied by Block in his study. In the case of Chile, the election of the socialist candidate Salvador Allende was met with hostility from the domestic and international business community, which immediately began to attack the nation's currency in conjunction with other tactics, such as capital flight and disinvestment. However, the Allende government, committed to its economic program of redistribution, pushed ahead with the reforms; in the absence of complete capitulation by the regime, conditions for a military coup emerged. Furthermore, co-optation of state officials by the IFIs—implied by the soft-conditionality model—has failed to bring about economic moderation in other national contexts in which a socialist and liberation movement and struggle have overthrown repressive regimes—witness Nicaragua after the Sandinista revolution, which eventually culminated in US-sponsored armed rebellion.[6]

Divergence between state-policy formulation in the South African case and those in the above examples, both of which can be characterized as revolutionary or radical transitions, makes the former a particularly useful study of the dynamics of market reform in specific posttransition countries, given that South Africa meets the criteria required to serve as a deviant case study.[7] This article, therefore, explores why the ANC—in light of the history of other liberation and revolutionary movements—adopted a homegrown structural-adjustment program favoring economic liberalization rather than a radical nationalist or Keynesian state-led model as formulated in the Freedom Charter and the Reconstruction and Development Program. It argues that the transition to market liberalization in South Africa upon the ANC's ascent to power occurred through the deployment of soft conditionality by the IFIs but that other conditional variables shaped the outcome of this strategy. Such variables included the nature of apartheid's extra-economic surplus-extraction relations, which directly fused the state's coercive apparatus with the economic sphere, thereby obscuring the class dimension of the black population's oppression.[8]

One may summarize the causal analytical model informing this thesis as follows:

Surplus regime based on extra-economic racial exclusion

X ↓ **Y**

IFI intervention ⟶ economic liberalization / neoliberal transition

This model illustrates the interactive relationship between South Africa's extra-economic surplus-extraction regime under apartheid and the ability of technocrats from the World Bank and other IFIs to intervene in the ANC's economic policy making and successfully guide the outcome along neoliberal lines. The table below shows the importance of the above variable interaction in shaping the posttransition economic regime in South Africa compared to other revolutionary/liberation movements.

Table. Conditions for successful external economic intervention in revolutionary regimes

	Previous Surplus	*External Intervention*	*Economic Transition*
South Africa	Extra-economic surplus extraction based on violent racial exclusion around production for export	Soft conditionality; IFIs targeted state officials with policy dialogue; threat of capital flight	Negotiated settlement; free-market capitalism consolidated
Chile	Absence of violent racial exclusion as an accumulation strategy; surplus extraction based on production for export and around domestic capital	Capital flight; devaluation of the currency	Free-market transition through military coup
Nicaragua	Accumulation based on agro-production for export dominated by foreign capital; absence of violent racial exclusion and segregation	Initiation of policy dialogue by the World Bank; foreign aid	Transition secured by soft military campaign and contra war

The specificity of South Africa's surplus-extraction regime is illuminated through this contrast with political transitions in two other developing countries, both of which also threatened the stability of the dominant social class. The South African state's underwriting of racial exclusion under segregation and, later, apartheid was designed to secure conditions favorable to domestic and international mining capital; however, it unintentionally ensured that the political consciousness of the South African liberation movement would develop along lines that led it to prioritize the political element of oppression over the economic. This trajectory thus created a potential space for international actors, such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) technocrats, to operate and influence the economic transition by framing the neoliberal growth regime as a model that promotes abstract market liberty free from state repression.

This article hypothesizes that the independent causal variable behind South Africa's shift to market liberalization in 1996 is the external influence exerted by IFIs during the 1980s and 1990s, up until the formulation of the Growth, Employment, and Redistribution (GEAR) document. However, as stated it also considers a number of conditional and interactive variables, including the extra-economic nature of the surplus-extraction regime under apartheid and the strengthening of the precapitalist landed classes by the South African state that this entailed. Further, the article examines the manner in which international actors deployed and framed the neoliberal project. It maintains that if the above antecedent variables had not existed, then external intervention by IFIs either would have failed or would have had to assume a more violent form in order to attain the desired objective, as in the other cases involving revolutionary and social change. The remainder of this article discusses the significance and implications of South Africa's economic transition, examines some of the competing theories in the literature that attempt to explain the shift in policy by the ANC, and then outlines an alternative argument.

The Significance of the African National Congress's Shift

The liberation struggle that mobilized large numbers of black South Africans against the institution of apartheid arose from recognition that the material deprivation facing the majority of the population had its origin in economic structures as well as political and legal policies. Segregation became institutionalized and consolidated in South Africa during the nineteenth century to meet the labor demands of British mining capital. The fixed price of gold in the international market and the large capital outlays necessary for production called for an ultraexploitable workforce that had to secure its own reproduction largely outside the market sphere.[9] Apartheid, or separate development, arose in 1948 under the Nationalist Party as an institutional mechanism that responded both to the needs of the manufacturing sector in the face of massive import-substitution industrialization after the Second World War and to the class unrest generated by the process of urbanization. This period, during which national manufacturing capital became dominant, marked the beginning of a system of racial Fordism that linked mass production and consumption for the minority white population. However, it treated black Africans as a production cost to be continuously pushed down and excluded as a potential market from the wage goods produced under the banner of state protection.[10]

Early documents formulated by the liberation movement indicate that the leadership of the organization understood that control of economic resources was an important condition for the majority population's emancipation. For example, sections four and five of the 1955 Freedom Charter state that "the mineral wealth beneath the soil, the banks and monopoly industry shall be transferred to the ownership of the people as a whole; all other industries and trade shall be controlled to assist the well-being of the people."[11] Furthermore, the Reconstruction and Development Program document, which the ANC had drafted in cooperation with the South African trade unions, clearly envisioned postapartheid South Africa as a social democracy in which redistribution to meet basic needs would take priority over economic growth. The latter would occur primarily through measures based on Keynesian demand principles as well as the nationalization of strategic industries. Adoption of the GEAR document, drafted by the ANC with the input of World Bank technocrats, represented a significant departure from the liberation party's previous policy principles. One may view it as a victory for advocates of the Washington Consensus and those who had repeatedly promulgated the inevitability of the market.

The above economic transition was also significant because of its social impact. Although the ANC ran on a platform that advocated redistribution and socioeconomic change, a few years after implementation of the market-oriented GEAR policies, the situation for most black South Africans remained extremely dire. For example, by the end of 1996—the year that marked the unveiling of the GEAR document—per capita income for white South Africans was nearly nine times higher than that of blacks. Furthermore, the increase in income that the black population did experience was concentrated within the top 10 percent of black households while the bottom 40 percent saw a 21 percent reduction. This period also witnessed a decline in private-sector investment and an upturn in the unemployment rate—two developments that stood in sharp contrast to the GEAR document's projections.[12]

The acceleration of social inequality in postapartheid South Africa raises some important questions about democratic and economic transitions in general. Under what circumstances and conditions does a revolutionary movement or party, struggling against colonial or political domination, adopt economic policies that would seem to override the larger goals of redistribution and social equality? Is the root cause of such a transformation in policy found in a society's internal social dynamics, or does the broader geopolitical and economic environment frame the agenda and structure the policy space for national movements? Or does the answer reside in a complex interaction of domestic and international variables? An examination of the trajectory of postapartheid South African economic policy may provide answers to these questions in a manner that allows us to better understand the social and economic dynamics driving political change and democratic transitions in a wide variety of contexts. For this reason, such a study holds special significance. The next section critically examines competing theories that seek to explain the transformation in the ANC's economic program and then offers a counterargument to the puzzle that builds on the critical international scholarship on political economy. Specifically, this study supplements the rich, historical, institutional literature that arose from the debate over the appropriate level of analysis to employ when examining epochal change and economic transitions.[13]

Structural Constraints and the International Political Environment

One very influential model that scholars have employed to explain the transition from apartheid to neoliberalism in South Africa is premised on the constraining effects of the geopolitical environment and of domestic and international business interests. This strand in the literature invokes an argument similar to the critical international-relations thesis put forward by Susan Strange in her pioneering work on the interconnections among states, power, and the broader political economy. She notes that structural power refers to the process by which certain states and economic actors operating in the global arena shape the institutions and design the regime of rules that broadly govern interactions in the international sphere. They do so in a manner that allows them to circumscribe the range of policy choices available to those states and agents subordinately embedded within these structures.[14] Extension of this general argument to the specific case of South Africa has enabled its proponents to draw attention to the limited options facing politicians in a peripheral economy dependent on the cooperation of domestic and international capital. Scholars reasoning from this position thus claim that market forces in the post–Cold War environment were of such strength that even the most ardent socialists had to alter their behavior to survive the new economic requirements imposed on developing nations.

For example, Adam Habib and Vishnu Padayachee point out that "the balance of power between the GNU [Government of National Unity] and domestic and foreign economic actors was configured in favor of the business community" and that "the defining features informing the capabilities of these two actors is the mobility of capital in the contemporary world, and the increased competition among countries for foreign investment."[15]

Similarly, Richard Peet advances a thesis firmly grounded within the reality of structural economic constraints (e.g., investor responses on the Johannesburg stock exchange to unsavory policies like the threat of nationalization) in conjunction with an argument which posits that a neoliberal discourse permeated the globe and exhausted all counterhegemonic ideologies.[16] Furthermore, Padayachee points to the "absence of a rigorous debating tradition" within the ANC, the political-conservative shift in the international environment during the 1980s, and the demise of a viable economic alternative that accompanied the fall of the Soviet Union. He suggests that these factors allowed South African capital and the media to influence the policy-making arena in a manner that made it impossible for the ANC to resist the neoliberal project.[17]

Although this capital-logic model highlights several important international pressures facing the new South African government, it does not provide an adequate explanation of why the ANC, given its history as a liberation movement, succumbed with such speed to the neoliberal transformation. As previously noted, similar structural constraints have been imposed on other radical or revolutionary parties and movements (e.g., Chile under Allende) but have failed in bringing about the desired economic transformation in the absence of violent means. In addition, James Hentz has shown that the National Party laid the groundwork for potential capital flight preceding the transition to democratic rule. It did so by implementing a wave of privatization decrees of previously state-owned assets—a political measure designed to facilitate the mobility of capital prior to the ANC's ascent to power.[18] It follows that, had the ANC possessed a clear understanding of the political dimension underlying the National Party's economic policy, government officials could have reversed this course through a series of nationalizations upon assuming power, thereby reestablishing state control over the economy. In other words, their failure to do so calls for an explanation outside any reference to the politically imposed structural constraints. Similarly, it was certainly not inevitable that the ANC would abandon state-led strategies of industrialization and development as a result of the changing geopolitical environment brought about by the demise of Soviet-style socialism. The government could have adopted a number of developmental strategies that also would have been compatible with the accumulation needs of private capital—for example, selective state intervention in the economy along the lines of the East Asian export-led industrialization model with an emphasis on initial labor repression.

The main shortcoming of the structural constraint and capital-logic model is its emphasis on international exogenous factors to the exclusion of an analysis emphasizing internal social and political dynamics that take into account the historical underpinnings of the South African state. To understand why the ANC came to fetishize the market and accept the machinations of capital as an economic inevitability rather than a political strategy, one must understand the endogenous social conditions that shaped the context in which the political consciousness of the liberation movement evolved. However, before exploring this dimension behind the economic transition, it would be fruitful to examine a second competing model that raises several intriguing points about the policy shift within the ANC. Scholars have successfully employed this model to explain the adoption of neoliberal reforms in other developing nations with a history of statist economic policies.

Soft Conditionality and the South African Transition

This second influential argument concentrates on the role played by IFIs in lobbying for market liberalization along neoliberal lines. In many ways, it is more convincing than the structural-constraint model because it posits that active intervention and co-optation by external actors over a period of years were necessary to alter the politics of the ANC in the area of developmental policy. The account starts from the premise that resourceful and determined technocrats within the IFIs were interested in participating in the policy-making process in postapartheid South Africa both before and during the transition. It then outlines the causal mechanism by which these technocratic experts brought about the eventual shift in the ANC's development position—specifically, by deploying their superior resources and knowledge of economic issues to leverage the government's development policy in the direction of market liberalization.

Such IFIs as the World Bank have successfully employed the above tactic, known as a "soft sell" approach, in other large countries with a strong tradition of sovereignty and state-guided economic policies. For instance, Mitu Sengupta observes that one can attribute India's adoption of market liberalization in 1991, after decades of statist intervention, to the IFIs' penetration into elite policy-making circles within the state bureaucracy. She notes, however, that these agencies employed a strategy geared towards targeted dialogue in an effort to influence and build domestic support for market reforms, as opposed to the hard-sell approach of conditionality.[19] According to Sengupta, the World Bank's method of intervention in India began as a hard position in line with the approach of President Lyndon Johnson's administration in the 1960s, during which time aid was tied to a number of conditions such as currency devaluation but evolved to a softer method throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Citing John P. Lewis, who served as director of the United States Agency for International Development, Sengupta contends that this strategic form of intervention sought to identify the economic ministries' civil servants and bureaucrats sympathetic to liberalization and market reforms. It then supplied them with ample resources (e.g., technical data, presentations, and reports) so that they could effectively confront their opponents within the state.[20] Sengupta also writes that targeted dialogue of this type may at times supplement official conditionality and that such a strategy prevents IFIs from losing relevance in an era when private capital flows have at times replaced bilateral lending. Further, it has enabled the World Bank to maintain a presence in large countries that can resist more overt forms of economic intervention in an era of globalization and private capital flows.[21]

Judith Teichman also draws a distinction between the above two forms of intervention, maintaining that IFIs deployed the softer method of external penetration in a number of Latin American countries throughout the 1980s. The size and autonomy exercised by these states compelled technocrats within the World Bank and IMF to adopt policy dialogue as the preferred instrument for bringing about market reforms. They reached this goal by constructing interpersonal networks and relationships of trust with key state officials—again, through presentations and technical data—to help them push through the desired neoliberal policy prescriptions. Much like the Indian case, the key strategy by the World Bank in Latin America called for identifying clusters of civil servants and bureaucrats sympathetic to neoliberalism and then employing its vast resources to ensure ideological victory over more traditional, statist-oriented colleagues.[22]

Justifiably, several scholars have pointed to the role played by IFIs in influencing economic policy in South Africa before and after the official fall of apartheid, hence building on previous scholarship that documents the tactic of soft sell in other national contexts. Patrick Bond points out that a number of brainstorming events and corporate scenarios planned and organized by representatives of the business community sought to cement a social contract among the ANC, the National Party, and big business to secure transition to conventional supply-side economics in the postapartheid setting. For example, Bond states that the political retreat of the ANC came about through "consensus formation in cozy seminars sponsored by business-oriented think-tanks, of which Anglo-American, Old Mutual/Nedcor and Sanlam stand out."[23] Furthermore, in conjunction with elite policy-planning scenarios and exercises, the World Bank succeeded in fostering the belief that no real alternative to neoliberalism existed, given the realities of economic globalization. It did so by issuing economic-policy publications and generally diffusing developmental knowledge to key bureaucratic policy makers such as Finance Minister Trevor Manuel. In addition, Bond notes that the IMF secured an important victory in shaping postapartheid economic policies when the transitional interim government accepted an $850 million loan officially designated for drought relief, which came with a number of stringent austerity conditions, such as wage decreases and deficit reduction.[24]

Ian Taylor and Paul Williams also endorse this position, contending that the ANC, in the midst of economic turmoil in South Africa, became gradually convinced of the virtues of neoliberalism by a cadre of World Bank economists and big-business representatives who met with top government officials—including Nelson Mandela—to "bolster the hegemony of neoliberal ideas in South Africa through consensual means."[25] Moreover, Taylor and Williams assert that the World Bank's influence on the ANC through targeted policy dialogue was especially effective because the latter lacked a large, independent economics research department. Such a resource would have allowed the organization to counter the supply-side, trickle-down discourse emanating from the business think tanks and IFIs, thus making the ANC leadership less susceptible to such dominant ideas.[26] Margaret Hanson and James Hentz offer a similar argument, positing that conditionality and financial coercion are not a sufficient condition when it comes to explaining the sustainment of neoliberal reforms to sub-Saharan African countries and that the continuity of such policies flows from the ownership of these ideas by national governments which come to accept them as their own. According to this model, the intervening variable between financial coercion and economic policy change that conditions the development of domestic ownership of neoliberalism is internal coalition formation. Further, in South Africa the ANC aligned itself with domestic and foreign capital, thus reinforcing the neoliberal discourse of the World Bank and the internalization of such ideas by policy elites.[27]

The soft-conditionality model explains an important dynamic behind South Africa's postapartheid developmental trajectory since, as Bond writes, it delves "beyond issues of structure and into the particular way in which agency (ANC leadership) was shaped."[28] Nonetheless, as a sole explanatory variable, it also possesses several shortcomings of note. For one, the South African case differs in important respects from the traditional national contexts in which the soft-sell tactics of IFIs have been successfully employed. As mentioned above, in the latter cases the strategy deployed by the World Bank involved intervening in an internally divided state-capitalist bureaucracy—as in India and specific Latin American countries—by offering technical and ideological support to civil servants and bureaucrats who already favored market reforms. In other words, intervention in this context occurred in countries already capitalist, albeit with a strong tradition of statist direction and economic ownership. In South Africa, though, IFIs were dealing with a revolutionary party encompassing broad societal groups operating largely outside the country's legal framework and whose political assumptions had therefore not been shaped by the same institutional and economic norms. As previously stated, attempts at co-optation along the above lines—in similar situations such as Sandinista Nicaragua—proved unsuccessful in altering the revolutionary movement's guiding principles, resulting in violent coercion.

Additionally, in both India and Mexico—two countries where the World Bank employed soft-sell tactics—the political leadership faced a balance-of-payments crisis that demanded some type of economic response. Consequently, IFIs could leverage the leadership's need for additional loans as a means of pushing for liberalization and market reforms. South Africa, on the other hand, was unique in that its external debt had not reached a debilitating level; thus, the tactic of "hard sell" and conditionality could not be used to reinforce policy dialogue and push through structural adjustment in the same manner as in the former cases. Overall, the main flaw with the soft-conditionality model as an explanation for South Africa's neoliberal transition is that it describes what happened during this period without adequately explaining why the shift occurred. That is, it fails to convey why the ANC leadership was so susceptible to the IFIs' influence and so quick to adopt their neoliberal prescriptions and align itself with representatives of the business community, in light of the emancipatory goals of the movement and South Africa's political and economic conditions. The conventional explanation, which does attempt to answer this question within the confines of this model, holds that the ANC's economic department was underdeveloped and hence unable to compete with the World Bank's resources and knowledge. Such an explanation, however, ignores the fact that a revolutionary grassroots liberation movement would not necessarily have to compete with IFI resources as long as the leadership properly identified and acted against the economic roots of its constituent's oppression.[29] The following section thus attempts to fill this gap in the literature by providing a satisfactory answer to the above question.

Class Formation, Ideology, and Surplus Extraction in South Africa

To understand why the ANC leadership succumbed so quickly to the soft sell and targeted policy-dialogue tactics of the IFIs and business community, one must examine the social-property relations that structured both the social formation and the South African state and how this in turn affected the political consciousness of the liberation movement. At this point, it would also be helpful to introduce the distinction between economic and extra-economic surplus extraction, whose relevance Robert Brenner highlighted in his seminal article on the transition from feudalism to capitalism in medieval England. According to Brenner, the central distinction between feudal and capitalist social-property relations is that under the former mode of production, surplus is extracted from the producers through directly coercive means, whereby the dominant class relies on judicial institutions and a military apparatus to reproduce exploitative rule, thus fusing the economic and political realms.[30] The logical corollary of such social-property relations is the emergence of certain ideologies—for example, religion—as the dominant spheres in society, justifying and legitimating the transparent surplus-extraction relations between the dominant and exploited classes. Under the pure form of the capitalist mode of production, however, surplus-extraction relations are opaque, and thus the economic moment becomes dominant on a very general level as the law of supply and demand seems to exert itself as an external and neutral law over the entire social structure.[31]

In South Africa, the mining industry largely determined the economic relations that structured the social formation. In order to counteract the negative effects of the fixed price of gold and the high capital costs on profitability, British mining capital moved to secure a cheap labor force for its operations. Creation and reproduction of such a low-cost labor force entailed the establishment of certain conditions that could be maintained only through the presence of an extra-economic element in the capital-accumulation process. The latter manifested itself through several discriminatory practices, such as the employment of color bars, and further involved the consolidation of a racist ideology that justified the relegation of African laborers on the reserves to ensure their social reproduction independently of the wage relation. As Frederick Johnstone has argued, the racial aspect of this legitimating ideology conceals the class character of the black population's oppression, thereby obscuring the economic source of exploitation as it existed in the production process by projecting it into the judicial and political spheres.[32] Furthermore, the deliberate strengthening of the tribal and precapitalist classes in the countryside meant that capitalism did not exist in a near-pure form in the South African social formation; rather, it coexisted with precapitalist modes of production while subordinating them to its requirements. In this context, the historical absence of abstract legal and market equality for the black population resulted "in their oppression being experienced as a racial/national oppression," which in turn "had its effects upon the political line and forms of struggle adopted, tending to give the organizations a more reformist character."[33]

Thus, the manner in which the specific institutions of segregation and apartheid distorted and concealed class interests that were refracted through the South African state also limited the consciousness of the liberation movement in crucial ways and created the potential for its corruption by external actors.[34] However, one should note that the adoption of market liberalization by the ANC did not flow mechanically from the structural features of South African social property relations under apartheid. As previously mentioned, early documents drafted by the movement persuasively argued that private monopoly over strategic resources was connected to the oppression of black South Africans. Successful execution of IFIs' soft-sell strategy depended, therefore, on a second crucial, conditional variable—namely, the manner in which advocates and leading institutions framed the discourse of neoliberalism. David Harvey contends that the rise of the neoliberal project in the United States and Britain, as well as its dominance over competing economic models and ideologies, required both the construction of consent, in addition to coercion, and the internalization of certain values by the larger population as "common sense." This, in turn, demanded the active marshaling of concepts such as freedom and liberty to the neoliberal cause. In this context, the idea of freedom took on a certain connotation—specifically, the embodiment of negative liberty, defined primarily as the absence of interventionist and regulatory state policies. Labor flexibility, specialization, and capital mobility were framed as actions that offered a greater variety of choice not only to employers but also to workers—a discourse carefully constructed by business associations and think tanks.[35]

In light of South Africa's legacy of segregation and apartheid and the role played by the state in the accumulation process through extra-economic means, it is not surprising that the neoliberal discourse outlined above would resonate with large sections of the population. For example, in a study of the strategies employed by advertisers in postapartheid South Africa, Eva Bertelsen shows that advertisements aimed at black consumers consistently appropriated the language of struggle and redefined democracy as individual liberty to promote the freedom to consume as its most important hallmark.[36] Such sentiments also resonated with the ANC leadership, some of whom—such as Minister of Housing Joe Slovo—believed that the overthrow of apartheid and racism would also mean the overthrow of economic oppression, given South Africa's legacy of apartheid and extra-economic surplus extraction.[37] For this reason, neoliberal discourse—promoted by the IFIs—intersected with specific domestic variables and institutions to produce the postapartheid economic transition.

Conclusion

This article has attempted to explain the economic shift that took place within the ANC's policy-making circles—one that underscores the crucial role played by IFIs in facilitating the neoliberal transition—while taking into account the failure of these international actors to effect economic change in other countries where radical or revolutionary movements had come to power. Through comparative analysis, it demonstrated that the crucial, conditional variable—which can account for the difference in outcomes between the South African case and the other two countries—was the presence in the former of an extra-economic element in the accumulation process, underwritten by the South African state. This element shaped the liberation movement's goals along lines that led its leaders to prioritize the national and racial dimensions of their oppression, thus making them susceptible to the neoliberal ideology that framed freedom in market terms. The article also reasoned that the absence of certain crucial variables in the South African case indicates that IFI intervention was likely not sufficient on its own to generate a transition to market liberalization, as in the case of India and specific Latin American countries. Principally, this analysis showed that the tactic of soft sell employed by the World Bank and the business community depended upon the existence of domestic social conditions for its success and that those international factors alone probably would not have ensured the economic transition. This conclusion should encourage further research within the field of international relations that focuses on the interaction between exogenous and endogenous social and political variables, with the aim of shedding further light on the nature of political and economic transitions in developing and postcolonial societies.

Notes

1. Edward Webster and Glenn Adler, "Toward a Class Compromise in South Africa's 'Double Transition': Bargained Liberalization and the Consolidation of Democracy," *Politics and Society* 27, no. 3 (September 1999): 348.

2. Adam Habib and Vishnu Padayachee, "Economic Policy and Power Relations in South Africa's Transition to Democracy," *World Development* 28, no. 2 (February 2000): 253.

3. Fred Block, "The Ruling Class Does Not Rule: Notes on the Marxist Theory of the State," *Socialist Revolution* 7, no. 33 (May–June 1977): 15.

4. Patrick Bond, *Elite Transition: From Apartheid to Neoliberalism in South Africa* (Pietermaritzburg, South Africa: University of Natal Press, 2000), 53–89. See also Hein Marais, *South Africa, Limits to Change: The Political Economy of Transformation* (Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press, 1998).

5. Mitu Sengupta, "Making the State Change Its Mind—the IMF, the World Bank, and the Politics of India's Market Reforms," *New Political Economy* 14, no. 2 (June 2009): 182; and Judith A. Teichman, T*he Politics of Freeing Markets in Latin America: Chile, Argentina, and Mexico* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 58.

6. John A. Soares Jr., "Strategy, Ideology, and Human Rights: Jimmy Carter Confronts the Left in Central America, 1979–1981," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 8, no. 4 (Fall 2006): 63.

7. According to Arend Lijphart, deviant case studies are of "single cases that are known to deviate from established generalizations. They are selected in order to reveal why the cases are deviant—that is, to uncover relevant additional variables that were not considered previously, or to refine the (operational) definitions of some or all of the variables." Thus, the theoretical value of deviant case studies is based on the fact that while they may weaken the initial proposition, they nonetheless "suggest a modified proposition that may be stronger" although the "validity of the proposition in its modified form must be established by further comparative analysis." Lijphart, "Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method," *American Political Science Review* 65 (September 1971): 692.

8. David E. Kaplan, "The South African State: The Origins of a Racially Exclusive Democracy," *Critical Sociology* 10, no. 2 (October 1980): 92.

9. Frederick A. Johnstone, *Class, Race and Gold: A Study of Class Relations and Racial Discrimination in South Africa* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1976), 19–20.

10. Harold Wolpe, "Capitalism and Cheap Labour-Power in South Africa: From Segregation to Apartheid," *Economy and Society* 1, no 4 (1972): 445.

11. Richard Peet, "Ideology, Discourse, and the Geography of Hegemony: From Socialist to Neoliberal Development in Postapartheid South Africa," *Antipode* 34, no. 1 (January 2002): 67.

12. Gillian Hart, *Disabling Globalization: Places of Power in Post-Apartheid South Africa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 20.

13. See, for example, Robert Brenner, "The Origins of Capitalist Development: A Critique of Neo-Smithian Marxism," *New Left Review* 104 (July–August 1977): 25–92; Robert A. Denemark and Kenneth P. Thomas, "The Brenner-Wallerstein Debate," *International Studies Quarterly* 32, no. 1 (March 1988): 47–65; Andre Gunder Frank, "Development and Underdevelopment in the New World: Smith and Marx vs. the Weberians," *Theory and Society* 2, no. 4 (Winter 1975): 431–66; Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World System*, vol. 1, *Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century* (New York: Academic Press, 1974); and Ellen Meiksins Wood, *The Origin of Capitalism* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1999).

14. Susan Strange, *States and Markets* (London: Pinter Publishers, 1988), 24–26.

15. Habib and Padayachee, "Economic Policy and Power Relations," 254.

16. Peet, "Ideology, Discourse," 71.

17. Vishnu Padayachee, "Progressive Academic Economists and the Challenge of Development in South Africa's Decade of Liberation," *Review of African Political Economy* 25, no. 77 (1998): 444.

18. James Jude Hentz, "The Two Faces of Privatisation: Political and Economic Logics in Transitional South Africa," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 38, no. 2 (June 2000): 212.

19. Mitu Sengupta, "From 'Hard Sell' to 'Soft Sell': The IMF, World Bank and Indian Liberalisation," *World Affairs* 14, no. 1 (Spring 2010): 114.

20. Ibid., 119.

21. Sengupta, "Making the State," 183.

22. Teichman, *Politics of Freeing Markets*, 59.

23. Bond, *Elite Transition*, 55.

24. Ibid., 178.

25. Ian Taylor and Paul Williams, "Neoliberalism and the Political Economy of the 'New' South Africa," *New Political Economy* 5, no. 1 (March 2000): 26.

26. Ibid.

27. Margaret Hanson and James J. Hentz, "Neocolonialism and Neoliberalism in South Africa and Zambia," *Political Science Quarterly* 114, no. 3 (Fall 1999): 480.

28. Bond, *Elite Transition*, 53.

29. There are, in fact, a number of examples of left-leaning and socialist governments. The Arbenz administration in Guatemala and the Sandinistas in Nicaragua, for instance, have come to power lacking a compa-

rable scope of economic experience and resources in relation to international organizations; nonetheless, those governments implemented specific policies they considered necessary to alleviate social inequalities. One should also note that the ANC received wide support from left-leaning and Marxist economists who collaborated to produce the Marco-Economic Research Group (MERG) report. The fact that the report was eventually discarded further tended to diminish the explanatory appeal of any argument which posits that the ANC simply could not compete with the economic ideas emanating from the World Bank and the business community.

30. Robert Brenner, "Agrarian Class Structure and Economic Development in Pre-industrial Europe," *Past and Present* 70 (February 1976): 35.

31. Michael Burawoy, "Toward a Marxist Theory of the Labour Process: Braverman and Beyond," *Politics and Society* 8 (September 1978): 301.

32. Johnstone, *Class, Race and Gold*, chap. 1.

33. Kaplan, "South African State," 92.

34. This position is an extension of Brenner's thesis that social property relations, once established, set very strict limits on the possible type of economic development. (See his article "Agrarian Class Structure.") Such limits arise from the reality that economic and political actors in any given social formation are always enmeshed in a series of social relationships with one another. Thus, even if individual actors attempt economic or social change, such changes can never be adopted on a general level so long as certain institutional and social-property constraints remain in place. In a similar vein, one cannot treat political struggles against specific social-property regimes as homogeneous movements equally susceptible to external economic forces. Rather, they tend to show different degrees of resistance based on where they locate the source of their oppression, which is always akin to the surplus-extraction relations in which they were enmeshed and from which their resistance arose.

35. David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), chap. 2.

36. Cited in Hart, *Disabling Globalization*, 25.

37. Sagie Narsiah, "Neoliberalism and Privatisation in South Africa," *GeoJournal* 57, no. 1–2 (2002): 5.

(Re)Drawing the African Map

A Critique of the Idea of Secessionist Deficit in Africa

Oumar Ba*

On 9 July 2011, the Republic of South Sudan became an independent country. This redrawing of the African map represents just one of very few instances of such an occurrence five decades after the independence years and of a conflict with a secessionist agenda leading to the birth a new state. A growing body of literature holds that Africa has a "secessionist deficit" and that the "weak sovereignty equilibrium" of its states hinders the continent's stability and development.[1]

Although the argument that Africa has a secessionist deficit is empirically sound, it has also served as ammunition for some other scholars to call for more secessionism in Africa. This article critiques such a position and challenges the idea that splitting large states and redrawing the African map offer the best solution for conflict resolution. Toward that end, the first part of the article presents the main thrust of the debate about the secessionist deficit, and the second examines other commentators' call for a redrawing of the map by allowing more entities to secede and become sovereign states. Finally, it rebuts the idea that secessionism in Africa has successfully ended conflicts by discussing two cases in which secession has ended with the birth of new states—Eritrea and South Sudan.

The Secessionist Deficit Debate

Pierre Englebert and Rebecca Hummel observe that Africa has experienced fewer secessionist movements over the past 40 years than any other place in the world. They claim to establish Africa's secessionist deficit empirically and explain

*The author is a PhD student in the Department of Political Science at the University of Florida. For comments about this article, he wishes to thank the participants in the Research Seminar in Politics workshop at the University of Florida's Department of Political Science. He is also grateful to Levar Lamar Smith for his suggestions. Mr. Ba presented a version of this paper at the Midwest Political Science Association's annual conference in April 2012.

why they believe it exists.[2] One might ask, however, what the authors compare the deficit to and whether they envision a threshold or tipping point at which one can claim that the number of secessionist conflicts above or below deviates from the norm.

Englebert and Hummel note that "Africa offers a significant material premium to internationally recognized sovereignty, tilting the odds for elites in favor of staying within the state, even if they do not immediately benefit from power at the centre."[3] The cases of secession in Africa are a function of variations in the relative rewards of sovereignty. Their article concludes that "Africa's weak sovereignty equilibrium has contributed to its failure to develop."[4]

During the past four decades, only 10 of 48 African countries have experienced secessionist movements whereas 30 of them have suffered nonsecessionist conflicts. Interestingly, Englebert and Hummel associate North Africa with the Middle East.[5] Given the fact that North Africa's colonial history resembles that of the rest of the continent and that state formation and consolidation after independence have followed the same path, one wonders why the authors exclude this region from their analysis. In fact, the conflict between Morocco and the Polisario Front over the Western Sahara would have proven valuable to their study, but they have not included it in the data of African countries.

Englebert and Hummel's data indicates that "since 1960, 44 percent of domestic conflict years in the Middle East and North Africa, 47 percent of those in Asia, and 84 percent of those in Europe have had separatist content, as against 27 percent in sub-Saharan Africa."[6] They point to the resilience of Africa's decrepit states, explaining that local elites pursue interests for access to weak national and local institutions that offer more benefits from seeking separatism and recognition.

According to the authors, Eritrea's separation from Ethiopia in 1993, which they identify as the only successful case of secession, is actually more of a case of decolonization (granted, they wrote their article before the birth of South Sudan). Their data contains inaccuracies, however—witness their assertion that the secessionist conflict in Casamance ended in 2001 when in fact it continues to this day.

As mentioned above, Englebert and Hummel maintain that Africa has weak sovereignty equilibrium, noting that "African elites do not embrace their state out of nationalist sentiments, but out of necessity. Then they produce nationalist discourse to legitimate this choice and to undermine opponents, thereby simultaneously generating nationalism and subnational polarization."[7] They believe, therefore, that the weakness of the state presents advantages for African elites and citizens, allowing them to engage in predation without accountability. Furthermore, the low odds of international recognition prevent regional elites from breaking away, especially those excluded from central power.

Although the data shows that, compared to other regions of the world, Africa does in fact have a secessionist deficit, Englebert and Hummel do not convincingly justify their assertion that its elites are less nationalistic than others and that such sentiments in Africa are based on necessity and predation.[8] Moreover, it is true that an emphasis on national sovereignty has made international recognition scarce; consequently, some entities have achieved de facto but not de jure statehood.[9] Nevertheless, the difficulty of attaining such recognition does not explain why African elites would not engage in secessionist conflicts. At best, it could only account for the fact that such ethnic strife tends to last for a very long time.

Englebert and Hummel argue that "in Africa, political violence usually provides the means of fighting for (re)insertion into the system by marginalized and excluded groups. It does not represent attempts to challenge, reform, revolutionize, or break away from the state."[10] According to this reasoning, African elites have extremely low incentives to engage in secessionism. If that is the case, then one might wonder how and why secessionist conflict arises in the continent. The authors offer two possible explanations. First, secessionist movements claim a separate colonial existence, using the international recognition of sovereignty in their favor (as occurred in Eritrea, Western Sahara, Cabinda, Somaliland, and to a lesser degree in Casamance, South Sudan, and Katanga). The second explanation involves the timing of secessionist claims, the two secessionist movements occurring in Africa during the 1960s and the 1990s.[11]

This notion of a secessionist deficit raises certain questions. Why do the marginalized communities not secede instead of attempting to reintegrate into the system? Englebert and Hummel demonstrate that secessionist conflicts rarely attain their goals, but why would that be a lesser factor than the supposed greed of African elites who would rather maintain their ties to the state for their own benefit rather than break away, as argued by the authors? In light of data indicating numerous conflicts in Africa but relatively few of a secessionist nature, why don't the warring factions include a secessionist component in their agenda? Will secessionist conflicts help end the many wars in Africa? Finally, how does the idea of a secessionist deficit relate to arguments that favor dividing Africa?

The Case for Dividing Africa

Englebert and Hummel conclude that "African countries are maintained so that they can be taken apart," guaranteeing their weakness and thereby "facilit[ating] the exploitation of state power by political elites for their own personal strategies of accumulation."[12] If one can attribute the weakness of African countries to an elaborate project led by African elites, then one would also expect that the emergence of South Sudan as a sovereign country would have given a stronger voice to those who make the case for the further division of African countries and that the international community should prove more willing to recognize the sovereignty of new political entities. In that sense, some individuals have intensified their calls for more secessionism in Africa.

G. Pascal Zachary writes that "Sudan has been successfully split into two independent countries," urging "more African nations [to] divide, secede, splinter, or otherwise scramble the old colonial borders."[13] At this point, though, we do not know whether or not the split between Sudan and South Sudan has been "successful." On what criteria does the author base his assessment? How does one evaluate success in such a situation? Although the independence of South Sudan has consecrated the end of the longest ongoing civil war in Africa, it remains to be seen whether the two neighboring countries can coexist peacefully. Furthermore, no one knows how this new landlocked, fragile country will fare in terms of becoming a viable nation that can meet the basic demands of its citizens. Rather than relying on a mere percentage of the referendum votes in favor of independence, one should take those factors into consideration when judging the success of this division. Therefore, calling for more secession in Africa, based on the uncertainty of the case of South Sudan, remains problematic.

Zachary claims that "letting these [African] countries reform into smaller nations might actually reduce conflict, increase economic growth, and cost less in foreign aid."[14] But how might this occur? The author seems to forget that smaller countries are not necessarily more stable. In fact, Rwanda and Guinea Bissau are among the smallest in Africa. Moreover, Zachary recommends that the Eastern Congo integrate with Rwanda and join the developing region of East Africa. Additionally, granting international recognition to Somaliland and Puntland "would open a flow of assistance to these countries."[15] This assertion, however, focuses on foreign assistance as one of the benefits that accompanies recognition as independent states—a paternalistic view of international relations that places African countries at the receiving end of foreign aid. Worse, this proposal deliberately avoids addressing the fact that such recognition would also open the gates for Western corporations to do business in those newly independent countries.

Too Big Not to Fail

Another implication of the concept of a secessionist deficit in Africa involves a call for the international community to acknowledge that the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is not a state but an illusion: "The international community needs to recognize a simple, albeit brutal fact: The Democratic Republic of the Congo does not exist. All of the peacekeeping missions, special envoys, interagency processes, and diplomatic initiatives that are predicated on the Congo myth—the notion that one sovereign power is present in this vast country—are doomed to fail. It is time to stop pretending otherwise."[16]

The DRC, bordered by nine countries, does indeed consist of 67 million people from more than 200 ethnic groups, but those facts do not invalidate its existence—no more than a country's status as a failed state would render it nonexistent. Jeffrey Herbst and Greg Mills declare that "Congo has none of the things that make a nation-state: interconnectedness, a government that is able to exert authority consistently in territory beyond the capital, a shared culture that promotes national unity, or a common language. Instead, Congo has become a collection of peoples, groups, interests, and pillagers who coexist at best."[17] This list of requirements for a nation-state poses some problems, especially the contention that a "shared culture" and "common language" are essential components of a nation-state. The authors also argue that the outlying parts of the DRC are better integrated with its neighboring states, overlooking the fact that parts of any country form zones of border dynamics in the sense that borders do not merely serve as lines of demarcation. Indeed, borders also function as zones of integration for territories that belong to different political entities, forming regions of interconnectedness and shared features that often differentiate them from the rest of the political entities to which they belong. Thus, it is not so much that the outlying parts of the DRC are disconnected from the rest of the country as that those regions are also connected to nations bordering the DRC.

In any case, does this lack of connectedness warrant a call for those regions to secede from the DRC? Herbst and Mills diagnose the DRC's illness as follows:

> The many combatants in today's Congo have little incentive to form a united country; they benefit from the violent chaos that ensures that so many can pick at the country's resources. The international community does not have the will or the resources to construct a func-

> tional Congo. Nor do neighbors want one Congo, as many find it easier to deal with a plethora of ungoverned parts over which they can exert influence. Rwanda, Angola, and Uganda, for example, have all intervened to protect their security interests over the past decades.[18]

Wouldn't resolving the conflict end the problem and pave the way to reconstruction of the Congolese nation-state? How would dividing the DRC end the struggle?

Herbst and Mills made a similar recommendation in 2003: "Given the immense human tragedy, it is time to ask if provinces such as the Kivus and Katanga (which are themselves the size of other African countries) can ever be improved as long as they fall under a fictional Congolese state. . . . The international community should say, plainly and simply, that the DRC is not a sovereign state."[19] The authors fail to identify "the international community" and to tell us why it has the legitimacy to issue the decree that "the DRC is not a sovereign state." Actually, it would be easy to imagine that that authors' solution must come from the West. In fact, Herbst and Mills advise that "a solution to Congo's troubles is possible with a re-imagined approach. The West could start by making development and order its first priority in the Congolese territory, rather than focusing on the promotion of the Congolese state. . . . Instead of continuing to spend billions of dollars on putting Congo together, the international community could regionally address actual security and political problems."[20] Clearly, they approach the issue only from the perspective of the West spending money in Congo, not of Western companies benefiting from the conflict. Furthermore, Herbst and Mills seem to confuse the failure of the state and incapacitation of the government with the inexistence of the Congolese nation—an "imagined community," according to Benedict Anderson.[21] The DRC does in fact exist as a nation although one could make the case to some extent that it is a failed state.

Obviously, in terms of political geography of the African states, size does matter. Herbst and Mills discuss the exceptionally poor economic performance of large countries, which have suffered the consequences of ethnic conflicts: "The chronic problem facing the DRC, Ethiopia, and Nigeria has been that ethnic divisions have been serious enough to prompt civil war."[22] Again, however, one must point out that the large size of those countries has not necessarily prompted instability and ethnic strife. Africa offers many examples of sizable states that have not failed and of small ones that struggle to retain the most basic features of a functioning country.[23]

A Rebuttal to Calls for Redrawing the African Map

Only two cases of secessionist conflicts in Africa have resulted in the birth of a new nation: Eritrea in 1993 and South Sudan in 2011. Arguably, it is too early to assess whether the independence of South Sudan has ended the long-term civil conflict and to what extent it has helped stabilize the region. Clearly, relations remain tense between Sudan and its new neighbor, and the ongoing separatist war affects many areas of Sudan, including South Kordofan and the Nubian mountains. One can hardly conclude, therefore, that the birth of South Sudan represents a case of successful conflict resolution.

Many of the arguments criticized thus far in this article view secessionism in Africa as a practical solution to conflict, but one must exercise caution and verify empirically whether or not that has been the case. Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler look askance at taking discourse about secessionist movements at face value: "Self-determination is presented as the solution to the challenge of peaceful coexistence between distinct peoples. The global public not only accepts this message but reinforces it."[24]

Indeed, the populations of South Sudan do not have a common identity, given the civil war within South Sudan as well as between South Sudan and the North. Moreover, the discovery of oil fields in South Sudan during the 1960s gives the secessionist conflict an economic component.[25] The Eritrean secession is also linked to natural resources although they appear superficially motivated by deep-rooted assertions of identities.[26] Collier and Hoeffler explain that Eritrea was the richest region of Ethiopia, enjoying per capita income almost double that of the rest of the country. Consequently, secession from Ethiopia also became a case of "tax exit."[27] Additionally, to view secessionist movements as cries for social justice would be reductionist. Oftentimes, they contain some elements of "resource grab" or the "fantasies of diasporas settled in rich countries."[28]

Moreover, Eritrea is not a culturally homogeneous population; in fact, none of the secessions called for will result in homogeneous political and cultural entities. Commentators who desire more secessions in Africa, based upon what they deem a successful one in South Sudan, must bear in mind the case of Eritrea, whose "population includes three major religious groups, five ethnic groups, nine official languages, and three official writing scripts. Further, the creation of the country split its major ethno-linguistic group, the Tigrini, into a majority living in Ethiopia and a minority in Eritrea."[29] Collier and Hoeffler also warn that "secessions in low-income countries may carry some dangers. Secession commonly reduces ethnic and religious fractionalization without eliminating it: the quest for an ethnically pure society is a chimera. Our results suggest that a reduction in ethnic and religious fractionalization is likely to increase the danger of civil war rather than diminish it."[30]

Further, although it is true to some extent that Eritrea earned its independence from Ethiopia after a long, heroic struggle, one must remember that sovereignty has not brought peace but merely "transformed a civil war into an international war, with a huge escalation in human and economic costs. It also has created a nation of 50 million people without direct access to the sea."[31] Furthermore, Eritrea has become one of the most brutal authoritarian regimes in Africa and has been involved in many other conflicts in the region. In fact, the United Nations Security Council imposed sanctions on Eritrea for its support of the insurgency in Somalia, and, according to the International Crisis Group, "Eritrea has fought, directly or indirectly, with Ethiopia, Yemen, Djibouti, and Sudan."[32]

Conclusion: Redrawing the Map and Reimagining the Boundaries?

Jeffrey Herbst writes that "the fundamental problem with the boundaries in Africa is not that they are too weak, but that they are too strong."[33] As something meant to provide and ensure stability, however, a boundary can never be too strong. The same logic applies to boundaries in Africa. Although most of them were arbitrarily drawn, the fact that they endured after nations gained their sovereignty has saved Africa from the chaos that followed the independence of the Indian subcontinent, for example. One must not rule out consolidation of the borders in Africa ipso facto, but proposals for redrawing the African map as a means of enhancing stability are not convincing because doing so will likely create more fragile, landlocked, nonviable states. Data shows that no secessionist movement in Africa resulting in the creation of a new state has either resolved conflict or led to more stability in the country or the region.

Notes

1. Pierre Englebert and Rebecca Hummel, "Let's Stick Together: Understanding Africa's Secessionist Deficit," *African Affairs* 104, no. 416 (July 2005): 399–427.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., 399.
4. Ibid., 400.
5. Ibid., 399.
6. Ibid., 400.
7. Ibid., 411.
8. Ibid.
9. Nina Caspersen, *Unrecognized States: The Struggle for Sovereignty in the Modern International System* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2012), 11.
10. Englebert and Hummel, "Let's Stick Together," 417.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid., 424.
13. G. Pascal Zachary, "After South Sudan: The Case to Keep Dividing Africa," *Atlantic*, 11 July 2011, http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2011/07/after-south-sudan-the-case-to-keep-dividing-africa/241705/.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.
16. Jeffrey Herbst and Greg Mills, "There Is No Congo: Why the Only Way to Help Congo Is to Stop Pretending It Exists," *Foreign Policy*, 18 March 2009, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2009/03/17/there_is_no_congo.
17. Ibid.
18. Ibid.
19. Jeffrey Herbst and Greg Mills, *The Future of Africa: A New Order in Sight?* Adelphi Paper 361 (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2003), 73.
20. Ibid.
21. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 2nd ed. (London: Verso, 2006).
22. Herbst and Mills, *Future of Africa*, 19.
23. Christopher Clapham, Jeffrey Herbst, and Greg Mills, eds., *Big African States* (Johannesburg: Wits University Press, 2006).
24. Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler, "The Political Economy of Secession," in *Negotiating Self-Determination*, ed. Hurst Hannum and Eileen F. Babbitt (Lanham MD: Lexington Books, 2006), 37.
25. Ibid., 49.
26. Ibid.
27. Ibid.
28. Ibid., 53.
29. Ibid., 49.
30. Ibid., 52.
31. Ibid., 53.
32. International Crisis Group, *Eritrea: The Siege State*, Africa Report no. 163 (Brussels: International Crisis Group, 21 September 2010), [i], http://www.crisisgroup.org/~/media/Files/africa-horn-of-africa/ethiopia-eritrea/163%20Eritrea%20The%20Siege%20State.pdf.

33. Jeffrey Herbst, *States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), 253.

Religion and Politics in Arab Transitions

Barah Mikaïl, PhD*

Islamist parties, excluded from the political sphere for much of the last decade, are now coming to the forefront of Arab politics. The electoral victories of Ennahda in Tunisia and the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt suggest that the future of Arab politics will be dominated by decision makers with faith-based political agendas. But the part that religion should play in the new political orders of Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya, and how its involvement might be shaped in law and practice, remain the subject of controversy and debate.

The role of religion in Arab politics will be determined by the people of the region. Religious parties and movements cannot be excluded from the political process. But the success of faith-based movements at the polls can exacerbate social tensions. Recent electoral results seem to indicate that strict secularism will not be an option for the new Arab states in the near future. It is yet to be seen which formula of faith-based politics emerging democracies will adopt, on the spectrum between Iranian-style theocracy or Turkish religion-inflected secularism.

The line between religion and ethnicity, culture and tradition is not always clear. It is important, however, to distinguish between religions, such as Islam and Christianity, and faith-based political ideologies, such as Islamism and funda-

---

*The author is a senior researcher at the Fundación para las Relaciones Internacionales y El Dialogo Exterior (FRIDE), a Madrid-based think tank for global action, which analyzes key debates in international relations. A specialist in geopolitical issues regarding water, he is part of a project dedicated to the study of politics and religion and their interactions in contemporary conflicts. Prior to joining FRIDE, he was senior researcher on the Middle East and North Africa and on water issues at the Institut de Relations Internationales et Stratégiques (IRIS) in Paris (2002–10), where he directed the master's degree program in international relations and all seminars on the Middle East, North Africa, and geopolitical issues concerning water. He worked at the Secrétariat Général pour l'Administration (French Ministry of Defence), supervising the Paris-based Collège Interarmées de Défense's training program on water issues (2005–7). Dr. Mikaïl is also a lecturer at the Institute for European Studies of the Université Paris 8 Saint-Denis. He is a member of the editorial boards of the French academic journals *Revue internationale et stratégique* and *Confluences Méditerranée*. He holds a PhD in political science from the Université Paris 8 Saint-Denis, an MA in political science from the Université Paris Dauphine, and an MA in international relations and an MA in Arab and Islamic civilizations from the Université Marc Bloch.

This article first appeared as Barah Mikaïl, "Religion and Politics in Arab Transitions," Policy Brief no. 116 (Madrid: FRIDE, February 2012). Reprinted with permission from FRIDE.

mentalist Christianity. Whereas religion is a matter of personal identity, ideologies serve a political agenda. This policy brief will explore the role of religion and faith-based ideology in Arab transitions. And it will try to draw some lessons from other countries and regions on the different roles religion can play in a society's path towards democracy.

Religion in North African Transitions

Long before the "Arab Spring," religion was recognized as a major force in Arab politics. The electoral results of 2011 confirm that (relatively) free elections in the Arab world show strong public support for political Islam, as already seen in Algeria in 1990, Egypt in 2005, and the Palestinian territories in 2006.

In 2011, new Islamist parties emerged, and previously established ones consolidated their positions. In Tunisia, Ennahda won the greatest number of parliamentary seats. In Egypt, the Muslim Brothers and several Salafist parties together accounted for two-thirds of the Legislative Assembly. The role of Islamist forces in Yemen remains uncertain, but their influence in Libya is clear. In Jordan and Morocco, Islamist political actors are gaining in importance. The victory of Morocco's Justice and Development Party in the country's 2011 elections led to the appointment of the country's first Islamist prime minister.

The fact that it has a Muslim majority does not mean that the Arab world must automatically embrace Islamist rule or reject secularism. Islamists are benefiting from their former exclusion and/or persecution by ousted leaders. The search for strong alternatives to the old regime has encouraged people to support faith-based parties. Islamist movements' history of opposition to and persecution by the recently toppled authoritarian regimes has given them credibility and legitimacy, which they used effectively during their electoral campaigns. Meanwhile, liberal and secular parties may have lost ground for not opposing the former leaders strongly enough.

For decades, leaders from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) controlled the religious sphere in their countries, either by influencing religious leaders, as in the case of al-Azhar in Egypt and the Muftis in Saudi Arabia and Syria, or by direct interference, as in Iraq under Saddam Hussein, as well as in Jordan, Algeria, Morocco, and Libya. But efforts to eradicate religious-based political parties and the instrumentalization of religion did not diminish religion's popular appeal. In the public imagination, religion became the trademark of movements that challenged authoritarian rulers, who persecuted them out of fear. These religious groups' defiant stance brought them a popularity that was further augmented by their charity and social work. Islamists presented their charity activities as filling the gaps left by the government's neglect. For them, this was evidence that religious movements were best able to provide relief for social and economic ills, as expressed in the Brotherhood slogan "*Al-Islam Houa al-Hall*" (Islam is the solution). So when the Arab Spring began to sweep through the region, Islamist parties could make a case that they were the only credible alternatives to authoritarian power. This image—combined with access to foreign funds, mostly from Qatar and Saudi Arabia—gave the Islamists an advantage in the ensuing elections.

The current Islamist momentum does not necessarily mean that religious precepts are set to dominate the Arab world. In Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya, tensions between secular and Islamist actors still exist. Many secularists and liberals doubt the Islamists' democratic commitment while Islamist parties continue to try to reassure their domestic opponents and the international community of their democratic credentials. In Tunisia, Ennahda insists on a fundamental role for religious rules in the country, even as secular parties reject this direction. But parliamentary debates on the future Tunisian constitution must begin before concrete issues are decided. In Egypt, too, efforts to draft a new framework for governance are under way. The Muslim Brothers control the parliamentary committees for external affairs (diplomacy, defense, and energy), and Salafis are at the head of the committees for economy, education, and religious affairs. This suggests that Egypt will most likely evolve towards more conservative rules and an Islamization of social life. In Libya, the National Transitional Council has insisted from the outset on the importance of Sharia for the country, which may give some indication of the influence Islamists are likely to have on Libya's future.

Drafting a new constitution gives new deputies the chance to determine the degree to which religion will affect their country's future political, legal, and social system. New provisions will have to comply with international law as well as taking into account the rules of Islam. This should allow a break with former authoritarian laws while ensuring, as far as democratically possible, compliance with Islamic values. Achieving this balance will be a very tough challenge. Even under previous nominally secular regimes, some social issues were based on the rules of Islam—for example, inheritance, polygamy, family code, and minority rights, with particular implications for women's rights. In the current debates, the most contentious issues include the right to sell and drink alcoholic beverages, women's wearing of the veil, suspension of activities during prayers, religious instruction, and respecting freedom of belief.

Western partners typically view a strict separation between state and religion as a necessary prerequisite for a democratic political system. But this vision is not viable in the MENA context, where religion cannot at the moment be excluded from the public sphere. The divide between faith-based and secular political actors in the Middle East is an illusion. Progressive and nominally secular parties do not isolate themselves from religious beliefs. Any attempt to definitively exclude religion from public and political life would be met with harsh public criticism. Neither is secularism necessarily desirable for the region since religion can serve as a powerful force for national cohesion—for example, in providing common ground between conservatives and liberals. This is due in part to the fact that, in Islamic belief, affiliation to the Islamic community (Umma) transcends any ties to a nation-state.

Religion and Transition: International Experiences

Past international experiences provide some lessons on how to balance the democratic rule of law with religious norms and traditions. They can also shed some light on the underlying pitfalls of this process. But drawing conclusions from past transition processes is risky since countries in transition rarely undergo exactly analogous processes. So while some common points can be identified, it is important to be aware of the specificity of each individual nation.

Transition to Democracy Often Leads to Modernization, but Modernization Does Not Have to Come through Secularization

In the former Yugoslavia, excluding religion from the political sphere did not lead people to abandon their religiously informed political views. When the Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia disintegrated, formerly coexisting communities found in religion a common marker to fuel their mutual animosity. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croats were automatically identified as Catholics, Orthodox as Serbs, and Muslims as Bosnians. Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore all went through transition processes without completely excluding religion from the political sphere. In Turkey, despite Ataturk's secular orientation, Islam remains a strong reference point both for the population and for the incumbent AK Party.

The Degree of Religiosity of a Society Will Influence the Role Religion Plays in a Transition, but a Strong Role for Religion Does Not Necessarily Impede the Consolidation of a Democratic Order

Authoritarian regimes abolished ideological trends informed by religion, but a healthy democracy allows for a wide range of views. In Indonesia, the post-Suharto period since 1998 has enabled greater tolerance of religious beliefs, including in politics, even though the situation remains fragile due to regular violence and the marginalization of some religious communities. But pluralism, however imperfect, lets Indonesian political parties refer to religious beliefs. In South Africa, political parties take account of Christian (African Christian Democratic Party) and Muslim (al-Jama'ah) values in defining their programs. In Poland, Catholicism plays an important role in society, and the Catholic Church has popularity and prestige. Some political parties, such as the Catholic-National Movement and the National People's Movement, refer specifically to Christian values. A high degree of religiosity in some societies—for instance, Mauritania and Pakistan—has enabled a greater number of parties with platforms based on religion to appear during transition. Even in predominantly nonpracticing societies, parties with religious perspectives can have some appeal (see, for example, the Albanian Christian Democratic Party, the Slovenian People's Party, or the Christian Democratic Union in Latvia). But the chances of success for such parties are higher in very religious and/or conservative countries. In Turkey, a politically secular country, it took eight decades before a religious-based party took power.

Minorities' Attempts to Achieve Political Gains during Transition Processes May Lead to Segregation into Religiously Defined Communities, including through Territorial Fragmentation, Which Can Increase the Risk of Sectarian Tensions

The risk of segregation is especially high when minorities and communities are based on religion (such as Shi'a groups in a mostly Sunni environment or Protestants in a Catholic environment), on language (like Berber languages and Arabic, or Flemish and French), or on ethnicity (Kurds in an Arab or Turkish environment, or Tutsis among Hutus). This situation has occurred in Iraq, where the transition process since 2003 has brought about a territorial separation between mostly Sunni Kurds and Sunni and Shi'a Arabs. In Turkey, Kurds are still fighting for their rights and have formed their own political parties. The Turkish State continues to refuse their demand for recognition of their distinctive ethnic identity. In Northern Ireland, tensions still exist between Catholics and Protestants. In Afghanistan, the current chaotic transition period has not allowed national ethnic and religious communities, like the Shi'a Hazaras and Sunni Pashtuns, to build shared perspectives. In Nigeria, violent confrontation between Christians and Sunni Muslims is common. The more a country opens itself to pluralism, the more its communities are likely to try to strengthen their positions. This can eventually result in animosity and mutual tension. So to allow pluralism to succeed and avoid sectarian conflict, it is important that countries spend sufficient time on mutual confidence-building and take determined political steps to ensure peaceful coexistence.

Religious Issues Are Often Closely Linked with Power Politics, and Various Actors Use Religion to Enhance Their Own Political Power

In the 1980s in Latin America, the Catholic Church played a key role in transitions from authoritarian regimes to democracy. The church initially supported the National Reorganization Process in Argentina (1976–83). It kept its distance from Pinochet's rule in Chile but stayed closer to popular movements for change in El Salvador. National churches even mediated between conflict actors in Argentina, Chile, El Salvador, and Guatemala. In Turkey, the ascendency of the Gülen movement, an influential Sufi Islamic brotherhood, shows religion as a powerful prop for the political ambitions of theologians.

Some conservative governments provide financial support to religious institutions in order to enhance their countries' influence through these groups' proselytizing activities. Evangelical organizations in Latin America have converted 30 percent of Guatemalans, 20 percent of Brazilians, and 10 percent of Venezuela's inhabitants to Evangelical Protestantism. Many of these groups receive funds from the United States and other governments. Saudi Arabia funds Islamic religious centers and mosques around the world—for example, in Argentina, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Kosovo. Iran is said to be developing its influence through financing Shi'a-related initiatives in, for instance, Senegal, Iraq, and Afghanistan.

Cultural and Religious Determinism Is a Myth

Prosperity and strong religiosity are not incompatible, and no religion or belief is more favorable to peaceful transition to democracy than another. Genuine democratization does not unavoidably mean the triumph of secularism. Similarly, theories that consider Islam as by nature incompatible with progress, pluralism, and democracy are mistaken. Political parties that base their programs on religious considerations are not opposed to wealth, prosperity, the free market, or liberalism. Christian Democrats in Chile, Germany, Ireland, Poland, and Spain as well as Islamic parties in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Turkey generally promote healthy economic perspectives and growth. With globalization, economies have become interconnected, and countries have had to minimize the impact that religious considerations have on their political and economic decisions. Some predominantly Christian Western European countries like Greece, Portugal, and Spain and some Eastern European countries, such as Poland and the Czech Republic, performed well during and after their transition periods. Other similarly religious European societies, such as Albania, Bulgaria, and Romania, encountered more difficulties. Israel's economy does well, independently of religious considerations. In the Muslim world, the economies of Bangladesh, Egypt, and Tunisia are struggling, whereas Indonesia and Malaysia are thriving. In Christian Brazil, Shinto/Buddhist Japan, and Muslim Singapore, transition and modernity have succeeded without any direct link to the country's majority religion.

Conclusion

Religion has a big part to play in the MENA region. Religious leaders and influences dominate in Tunisia and Egypt, and the same thing could occur in Libya and Yemen. Elections in Morocco have confirmed the ascendancy of Islamist leadership in that country. Lebanon may stand as an exception even though religion is a strong referent for its 18 coexisting communities. For now, Western-style secularism is not a realistic option in these countries. Integrating religious principles into a genuinely democratic order will be among the greatest challenges for these societies in the decades to come.

This does not mean, however, that religion will remain the dominant political factor in the long run. Religious parties have benefited from their status as strong alternatives to former regimes, but without the contrast of the authoritarian regimes they have replaced, they will be judged on their results. If they succeed in charting a better path for their countries, they may hold power for years. But if they fail, they will be held accountable. The next round of elections in the young Arab democracies will be a strong indicator of the likely longevity of the Islamist political current. The funds that the international community makes available to countries in transition may also determine the success of the currently emerging Islamist rulers. And it could affect their policies, depending on whether the international community insists on conditionality in return for its aid.

The objectives and ideological and political influences of these parties may cause them to adopt any of a range of political models, from the so-called Turkish model, where religious freedom is guaranteed even though a religious party is in power, to a theocratic model such as that of Iran. That said, in the decades since the Iranian Revolution, societies have evolved considerably, and so has Islamist ideology itself. Popular demands for change have been based on standards that include the recognition of religious and political pluralism. An increasing majority of the population in many Arab countries is young, and few of these young people seem eager to merge politics and religion at an institutional level. So evolution towards a Saudi or Iranian model is possible, but rigid theocratic structures seem unlikely to prevail in the long term.

The most urgent challenge for the MENA region is building new and modern states that guarantee citizenship and human rights, including freedom of belief. To ensure the success of this endeavor, the new leaders need to aim for transparent and fair parliamentary debates. And they must heed the international community's advice and recommendations on peaceful transition and good governance, the maintenance of free and open democratic processes, and the improvement of economic conditions.