AFRICA

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"[T]he more distant the experience of military rule, the greater has been society's reconciliation to the reality of democracy as the only game in town."

Nigeria's Two Decades of Zero-Sum Democracy

EBENEZER OBADARE

Now and again, as one political crisis or another has threatened to rend the fabric of the Nigerian Fourth Republic since its founding with the return to democracy in 1999, the knee-jerk response from a section of the intelligentsia and the political class has been to drool openly about the prospect of military intervention. The following, written by a leading newspaper columnist in August 2009 as President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua's administration wallowed in mediocrity, is typical of such fantasizing:

> It should be obvious by now that Nigeria's problems are more complex and fundamental than the question of leadership. Perhaps we can now begin to think the unthinkable. [Unless] there is a structural reconfiguration of Nigeria, the only avenue for visionary and transformative leadership left to the nation is through the odd military intervention.

The author of these words was hardly a lone voice in the wilderness. About the same time, and no doubt sharing the columnist's perplexity, former Information Minister John Nwodo, speaking at a security summit in one of the eastern states, called on an audience that included the top brass of the army to "show interest in the political situation in the country."

As is perhaps to be expected from a society that had languished for so long in the grip of military rule—until the return to civilian rule in 1999, the military had been in power for a combined total of 28 years—Nigerians (or is it just the Nigerian

elite?) have developed a love-hate relationship with soldiers. The barbarity of military despotism (see General Sani Abacha, who ruled from 1993 to 1998) is seared into the public imagination and preserved by popular culture in music and urban lore.

Paradoxically, though, few condemnations of civilian politicians fail to include an allusion to the corrector with the horsewhip. Painful experience of military rule notwithstanding, the myth of the man on horseback, the exacting but benevolent agent who will ride out of the barracks and set a wayward political class straight, maintains a puzzling grip on the Nigerian mind.

While its ghost lingers, the diminished appeal of this myth may be the signal achievement of Nigeria's two decades of democracy. This is not to say that people are totally happy with their lot under democratic rule; as a matter of fact, most recent polls show a worrying level of disenchantment. At the same time, it would seem that, overall, the more distant the experience of military rule, the greater has been society's reconciliation to the reality of democracy as the only game in town.

POWER SHIFT?

The 2015 presidential election was a watershed in the evolution of the Nigerian Fourth Republic. For the first time, there was a relatively peaceful transfer of power from an incumbent, Goodluck Jonathan of the People's Democratic Party (PDP), to a challenger from the opposing party, Muhammadu Buhari of the All Progressives Congress. For the credibility of the democratic process, nothing was more important. Just as the "power shift" that saw former military ruler Olusegun Obasanjo

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elected president in May 1999 was heralded for the ethnoreligious symbolism in the ascension of a southern Christian, the second coming of Buhari, another former military ruler, was hailed as cementing the multiparty character of Nigerian democracy.

Buhari's election came as a relief to those who worried that the PDP's control of state power at the federal level since 1999 suggested that the country had effectively become a one-party state. Yet it was not enough to mollify others who thought that the real emergency confronting the democratic process was not the delayed transfer of power from one group of elites to another, but its failure to ameliorate the living standards of the majority of Nigerians.

Of course, charges of elite hijacking of the democratic process are not specific to Nigeria. They chime with broader criticisms of capitalist democracies that have become louder and more trenchant across the Western world over the past decade. However, such criticisms take on special resonance in the Nigerian context.

Nigeria is a petro-state. Since economic power in petro-states ultimately flows from barrels of crude oil, the political class has incentives to put the imperatives of cartel interests before the needs of domestic civil society. Political scientists agree that unfettered access to oil cash was a key factor in the character and duration of military rule in Nigeria. Because unaccounted-for oil revenue was an impetus for political centralization, democratization raised hopes that power would be decentralized (if only on paper) and opportunities would emerge to reimagine the state—primarily to reduce its dependence on oil, but ultimately to release it from the clutches of a predatory elite.

While it is questionable whether these goals have been achieved, the lessons about the protean character of elite politics could not be clearer. The specter of elite power stalks the Nigerian political landscape, simultaneously exploiting and deepening the crisis of under-institutionalization. Yet a quick survey of the democratic process over the past twenty years shows that to harp excessively on that power is to underestimate both the way elite and popular politics fuel and feed off each other, and the extent to which elite-subaltern interaction is shaped by powerful cultural forces.

The myth of the man on horseback maintains a puzzling grip on the Nigerian mind.

To observe these forces at work, there is hardly a better place to look than the (so far unsuccessful) campaign to stamp out corruption in public life.

CULTURE OF CORRUPTION

In his inaugural speech as president of the newly founded Fourth Republic in May 1999, Olusegun Obasanjo described corruption as "the greatest single bane of our society today," and expressed regret at witnessing "the full-blown cancer it has become in Nigeria." Even as he promised to tackle corruption "head-on at all levels," he also predicted that it would resist: "The beneficiaries of corruption in all forms will fight back with all the foul means at their disposal."

As it happens, Obasanjo was right. By the late 1990s, Nigeria had secured an unwanted reputation as one of the most corrupt countries in the world, coming dead last (first being least corrupt) or thereabouts in successive global rankings by Transparency International. Although most Nigerians accepted that corruption had become rampant in public life, if not every facet of society, they were equally convinced that this was due in no small part to the nature of military rule. Obasanjo echoed this conviction when he claimed in his speech that "one of the greatest tragedies of military rule in recent times is that corruption was allowed to grow unchallenged."

Among the most important (and most controversial) achievements of his administration was the establishment in 2003 of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) under the leadership of Nuhu Ribadu, a police official. For anticorruption activists and the general public, the EFCC was the institutional symbol of a deep-seated desire to see the ogre of graft finally slain. Ribadu executed the commission's mandate ("to rid Nigeria of economic and financial crimes and to effectively coordinate the domestic effort of the global fight against money laundering and terrorist financing") with gusto. For a brief period, fear of the EFCC was the beginning of wisdom among the political class.

But this golden era would prove to be short-lived. The EFCC was gradually undermined by accusations that it was nothing more than a political weapon carefully aimed at the heart of the opposition. Whether Ribadu's scales of justice were indeed tilted proved a moot point, however. As

Obasanjo had predicted, corruption fought back with a vengeance.

By the time of the Umaru Yar'Adua and Goodluck Jonathan administrations (2010–15), the EFCC had been so politically neutered that it was just another damaged structure on Nigeria's vast bureaucratic landscape—the latest institutional casualty of the country's long struggle to rein in corruption. Ribadu himself did not survive unscathed. He was removed from the EFCC in 2007 and dismissed from the Nigerian Police Force the next year, then forced into exile in January 2009 following a reported attempt on his life.

A detailed account of the reasons behind the EFCC's political emasculation is beyond the scope of this analysis. But it is worth taking note of the light it throws on elite politics in Nigeria, and the questions it poses about effective mechanisms for tackling corruption. In his brilliant account of Ribadu's rise and fall as anti-graft czar, the Nigerian scholar Wale Adebanwi writes: "The politics of corruption in Nigeria involves . . . political manoeuvres to perpetrate and hide corruption as much as the mobilization of anticorruption campaigns and the unveiling of scandals and sleaze in the struggles within and between power elite formations." The fate of both the EFCC and its executive chairman who almost single-handedly made the anticorruption cause the focal point of the Obasanjo administration is testimony to the truth of this statement.

Yet it would be a mistake to assume that corruption and its politics are the business of the elite alone. The state, the political elite, and the wider public are almost equally implicated. If the irony of vigorously vilifying graft while hoping to harvest its fruits is lost on most Nigerians, this is largely because corruption, far from a preserve of the elite, is the essential lubricant of the system of patronage that binds the elite and the commoners in Nigeria's social economy. Everywhere in the country, corruption casts a shadow on routine interactions—in schools, courthouses, hospitals, police checkpoints, and multiple bureaucratic spaces. The average Nigerian expects to have to pay a bribe for access to any public service officially categorized as free.

The sheer ubiquity of corruption suggests that a new approach to anticorruption initiatives is needed. Despite the EFCC's example, the standard approach remains largely institutionalist. The real question is whether something apparently so ingrained in and central to everyday social interaction can be eradicated by setting up a single institution, even one as powerful as the EFCC.

After twenty years of democratic rule, there is scant evidence that Nigerians are any closer to an answer. Overwhelming support for Buhari's anti-incumbent presidential candidacy in the 2015 election was driven to some extent by the popular desire to have at the head of the executive branch someone whom experience had shown could be trusted not to plunder the exchequer. In this, bar a few missteps, the people's wish has been more or less gratified. The fact that corruption remains a serious problem only goes to show that it is hardly one for a single institution or administration to solve. We might even argue that anticorruption institutions are useless so long as social attitudes and cultural norms in the wider society favor or reward such practices.

AN UNRECONSTRUCTED STATE

Corruption is far from the only arena in which progress has been tenuous. The Nigerian state also remains, all told, impervious to reconstruction.

On the eve of the democratic transition in 1999, the intelligentsia's most damning indictment of the state was that, following decades of military despotism, it had fossilized into an arbitrary force suspended above civil society. Given this grim diagnosis, reconstruction of the state was both an ethical and a political imperative.

The first signs were not too promising. In November 1999, six months into the new democratic dispensation, soldiers apparently acting on the orders of Obasanjo carried out a retaliatory assault on Odi, an Ijaw community in oil-producing Bayelsa state, sacking it and killing an estimated 2,500 people. An unremorseful Obasanjo later insisted that the villagers had invited retaliation by launching an unprovoked attack on troops conducting peacekeeping operations in the area. For many observers, the sheer brutality of the reprisals against defenseless citizens served as a tragic reminder that the Nigerian state was a leopard that had yet to change its spots.

Today, almost twenty years since the Odi invasion, the Nigerian state still enjoys more or less the same power in relation to society that allowed it to mistreat its citizens with such impunity. More disturbingly still, the state-society dynamic remains such that even when ordinary people have a sense of belonging to the nation, it is of an attenuated type. For many people, therefore, fealty to the "primordial public" continues to trump obligation

to the "civic public," consistent with the Nigerian sociologist Peter Ekeh's influential theory. For Ekeh, one enduring legacy of colonialism is that many Africans remain loyal to their ethnic identities at the expense of the nation.

To be sure, Nigeria's government is not quite the uncivil state of old, thanks in part to democratic strictures. If it is still sometimes heavy-handed (witness the casual molestation of private citizens by police and army personnel, par for the course in many urban spaces), that is because it retains almost exclusive control over the levers of oil revenue.

Even so, it is difficult to ignore the reality that the state is now largely demystified, particularly in terms of control over the means and methods of violence. Its failure to deal decisively with organized challenges to its authority has eroded some of its old swagger. The reaction to both the Niger Delta and Boko Haram insurrections exemplifies this demystification.

Although it was short-lived, the presidency of Yar'Adua will be remembered for at least one thing: in 2009, he proposed the idea of a general amnesty for Niger Delta militants who had battled Nigerian troops to a standstill and made oil production a fraught business. After Yar'Adua died in office, his successor, Goodluck Jonathan—no doubt also sensing an opportunity to do well by his Ijaw co-ethnics—ran with the scheme and put additional flesh on its bones. To put things in perspective: the same state (granted, it was then under military rule) that had punished the writer and environmental activist Ken Saro-Wiwa's middle-class resistance with a hanging in 1995, after he led protests against the Shell oil company's activities in the Delta region, was offering an olive branch to elements who had repeatedly blurred the distinction between resistance and criminality.

What explains the government's change of tactics? A charitable strand of analysis holds that the embrace of amnesty was dictated by a genuine desire to have peace in the troubled region so that oil production could proceed untrammeled. Quite possibly this was the case, but there is also more than a kernel of truth in a different interpretation: that the military, after years of chronic disinvestment and corruption, had lost its monopoly on the use of violence.

This became tragically clear after the Boko Haram insurgency began in 2009. The military has struggled to muster the force, technical wherewithal, and logistical savvy required to dislodge these jihadists who moved rapidly to impose their will on vast territories across the northeastern states. This ineffectiveness, along with the ideological resolve of the insurgents, accounts for the prolongation of the Boko Haram insurgency. Overall, the conflict has claimed tens of thousands of lives, including victims of atrocities reportedly committed by the Nigerian military.

FRAGMENTING CIVIL SOCIETY

The existence of Nigerian democracy is mainly due to mobilization by a resurgent civil society. Following the cancellation of the June 1993 presidential election by the military regime of Ibrahim Babangida—after the votes were cast but before the official results were announced—Nigeria descended into a political crisis from which, arguably, it did not fully emerge until the return to democratic rule in May 1999. Rightly seen as a move designed to keep the military in power, the annulment set the stage for a showdown between the state and civil society that would dominate the next six years. Although civil society was beaten down, especially during the Abacha era (1993–98), the subsequent elections and the restoration of civilian rule suggested that it had effectively won the war. Abacha's death in June 1998 eased tensions and cleared the way for democracy's return.

Yet even in its moment of triumph, civil society could not afford to take a victory lap. Before the unprecedented coalition of workers, students, journalists, professionals, religious groups, and prodemocracy activists had achieved its overarching goal of defeating the military, ideological and personal fractures started to pull it apart. The Campaign for Democracy, the organization that spearheaded the opposition to military rule and held the feet of the Babangida regime to the fire until it caved in to popular demands to yield power, split into two bitterly opposed factions in February 1994 and was never the same thereafter. Furthermore, as the military withdrew into the barracks, opening up new spaces within the state, many civil society activists embraced the opportunity to implement policy ideas that they had previously advocated. Due in no small measure to the unique constraints of the state terrain that they had overlooked, many of them could not stay true to their aspirations.

The world in which civil society activists had campaigned for the restoration of democratic rule in the early 1990s was radically different from

that in which the new civilian regime awoke in 1999. Even more fundamental changes came as the twentieth century gave way to the twenty-first. Globally, the engine of change was the revolution in information technology, which expanded the public arena by altering both the principles and modalities of agitation. In other words, in a mutually reinforcing dynamic, both the arenas in which popular forces advocated for change and how they went about it underwent radical transformation.

At the same time, the public sphere in Nigeria was being reshuffled and reconstituted in other important ways. By the early 2000s, after being hounded and undermined by successive military rulers for most of the 1980s and 1990s, the university system had lost much of its power as the center of what the American sociologist Edward Shils, writing in a different context, described as "radical criticism of existing society."

Over the course of the Fourth Republic, Nigerian universities have become a hotbed of intermittent strikes and labor disputes—one estimate puts the total number of working days lost to various strike actions called by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) over this twenty-year period at a staggering 1,281. On the face of it, frequent strikes would suggest a certain organizational vitality. However, in ASUU's case, they point to a poverty of fresh ideas within the union, itself proof of a deeper malaise within the ivory tower.

The ASUU is emblematic of the decline of trade unionism in general. The Nigeria Labor Congress (NLC), once a key ally of the intelligentsia, emerged from the military era distinctly the worse for wear, its heroics during the struggle against despotism a distant memory. It was drained by the military's assaults on its rank and file and co-optation of its leaders.

Both ASUU and the NLC had been veritable redoubts of expertise and progressive activism. Their travails, combined with consolidation of the media, created a notable breach in the emergent public sphere.

RELIGIOUS CHARISMA

As academics and trade unionists have declined in social and professional prestige, a new axis of authority has emerged, centered on religious organizations and agents. Religious groups, especially

Everywhere in the country, corruption casts a shadow on routine interactions.

mainline Protestant churches, played a key role as part of the civic coalition that pressured the military to relinquish power. As the political ecology changed, so did the church as an institution. Over the past two decades, the most important development in the history of the church in Africa, if not in the whole of the global South, has been the emergence of charismatic Pentecostalism. In Nigeria, not only is Pentecostalism currently the most visible and ebullient expression of Christianity; its impact on other Christian denominations, the Islamic competition, and the domain of popular culture in general has been profound.

The ascendance of Pentecostalism as the dominant form of Christianity in Nigeria coincided with the return to democracy. Its rise has affected both the state and civil society in almost equal measure. Some of the most influential political figures in the Fourth Republic have been self-confessed Pentecostals. These include two presidents (Obasanjo and Jonathan) and the current vice president, constitutional lawyer Yemi Osinbajo, who is also pastor of a Lagos-based church. It is symbolic that the most momentous civic events of the past twenty years have either featured or been instigated by prominent religious figures.

For good or for ill, politics in the Fourth Republic has been more or less superintended by powerful Pentecostal pastors, among them Enoch Adeboye of the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG), Tunde Bakare of the Latter Rain Assembly, and David Oyedepo of the Living Faith Church, also known as Winners' Chapel. Leading Pentecostal pastors have joined with powerful politicians to create a theologico-political elite, and Pentecostalism has become a stabilizing force for Nigerian democracy.

Pentecostal leaders, strategically positioned between state and civil society, produce and disseminate spiritual "texts" (prophecies) that ground events in metaphysical frames beyond the reach of democratic politics and institutions. Following Obasanjo's victory in the 1999 presidential election, Pastor Bakare stirred controversy by prophesying: "Obasanjo is not your Messiah, he is King Agag and the prophetic axe will fall upon his head before May 29, 1999." Obasanjo went on to complete two terms in office.

Pentecostalism's power grab has not gone unnoticed, or unchallenged. At least in the western part of the country, its success has undoubtedly

inspired a charismatic form of Islam energized by the tactical imitation of Pentecostal repertoires of worship including emotional prayer, night vigils, an emphasis on spiritual warfare, and services on Sundays.

All in all, the evidence so far would seem to suggest that Christianity, at least in its Pentecostal iteration, has outflanked Islam, its historical rival for political power and influence in Nigeria. Both Pentecostal presidents, Obasanjo and Jonathan, wore their religious identity on their sleeves, the latter more ostentatiously. Both Muslim presidents, Yar'Adua and Buhari, have been forced to make political moves that suggest recognition of the power of Pentecostalism and the Pentecostal elite.

Yar'Adua performed what has become de rigueur for Fourth Republic politicians—a pilgrimage to the RCCG camp on the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway to genuflect before Pastor Adeboye and seek his political blessing. In his unsuccessful 2011 presidential campaign, Buhari's choice of running mate was Pastor Bakare. In 2015, after flirting briefly with the idea of running with Bakare again, Buhari eventually settled for a different Pentecostal pastor. Tellingly, Osinbajo had to secure Adeboye's approval before he could accept Buhari's nomination.

When Pentecostal pastors themselves are not running for office, they still have a say in who does, dominating the narrative about the entire political process. With the exception of its role in the making of the Same Sex Marriage (Prohibition) Act of 2013, however, it's not entirely clear that Pentecostal influence has translated into actual policy.

ACHILLES' HEEL

Buhari's 2015 presidential campaign pivoted on two cardinal promises—bringing the Boko Haram insurgency to heel and reviving a comatose economy. Without going into detail, he promised to make Nigeria "one of the fastest growing economies in the world" and create at least 5 million jobs by 2019.

Not only did Buhari, to no one's surprise at all, fail to create anything like that many jobs; according to the National Bureau of Statistics, by the end of the third quarter of 2018 the ranks of the unemployed had risen by 3.3 million, to 20.9 million. The jobless rate currently stands at 23.1 percent. On balance, these numbers reflect the Buhari administration's economic ineptitude. Yet this record, and worries about the president's advancing years (he turns 77 in December) and overall poor health, did not prevent Buhari from winning a second term in the February 2019 election.

The financial shenanigans of individual administrations (of which there have been many) warrant special condemnation, and some have postured about fiscal prudence more than others. But it is worth keeping in mind that a petro-state is a perpetual hostage to the volatility of the international oil market, and even the most sincere and adept administrations have been limited in what they can do.

Since 1999, Nigeria has alternated between spells of surplus and scarcity in tandem with the rise and fall of oil prices. The failure to steer the economy away from reliance on a single unpredictable commodity remains the country's Achilles' heel. Due to its oil dependence—the Nigerian state as we know it would not exist without oil revenue—politics tends to take on aspects of warfare. And to the extent that politics is the only game in town, it is a game played on a winner-take-all basis.

Short of a drastic rethinking of the country's economic fundamentals, political competition in Nigeria is destined to remain a lethal business. No one knows how long Nigerian democracy, wedded as it is to the long-term global prognosis for the fossil fuel, can survive if the economy continues to sputter. The good news is that fewer people believe that the man on horseback is in possession of a magic wand. ∎

South Africa's Precarious Black Middle Class

ROGER SOUTHALL

The growth of the black middle class has been one of the most notable manifestations of social change in South Africa since the end of apartheid in 1994. Under apartheid, an ideologically driven program of white supremacy and institutionalized racial segregation, the black middle class was subject to heavy containment and control by the ruling National Party (NP) government. Today, this class has taken a prominent place in the political sphere, the economy, civil society, and the media.

Social Mobility Today

Ninth in a series

Entry into the middle class has become the ambition of black South Africans whose life chances were previously restricted by poverty, poor schooling, and general lack of opportunity. Becoming middle class implies access to a wide array of social goods that were long denied to the majority of ordinary people in South Africa on account of the color of their skin: white-collar employment, a regular salary, a decent education, formal housing, and the everyday material comforts which in many societies are taken for granted.

The African National Congress (ANC), the party in power since 1994, has been rewarded with the support of black South Africans who have enjoyed upward social mobility. However, the aspirations of others have been frustrated, and the party has encountered as much growing dissatisfaction among the black middle class as within the wider society. This became increasingly evident in recent years—particularly during the presidency of Jacob Zuma from May 2009 to February 2019—as the ANC found itself mired in corruption scandals and the economy stalled.

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Zuma's successor as president, Cyril Ramaphosa, has embarked on a major exercise in housecleaning as he seeks to restore economic growth and reverse the tide of corruption. To the extent that he succeeds, he will retain the backing of large segments of the black middle class. However, he will also find himself treading on toes belonging to its political, bureaucratic, and business elements that had hitched their wagon to Zuma.

RACE AND FREEDOM

White rule was founded on violence: the military suppression of South Africa's indigenous inhabitants, the importation of slaves or indentured workers from Asia (notably India), the appropriation of land as white penetration extended far beyond the original Cape Colony, and the subjection of subordinated peoples to despotic labor regimes in which they were devoid of political rights well after the abolition of slavery.

White supremacy was further secured by deliberate strategies of divide and rule. The diverse communities under white rule eventually were denominated as Africans, Indians (or "Asians"), and "Coloureds," the latter comprising a mélange of descendants of the different communities that had arrived in the Cape over time. Each "racial" community established its own traditions of compliance with and resistance to white rule, shaped by culture, religion, and differences in opportunity.

Collaboration across these communal lines started gaining political salience in the 1950s, when the ANC played a leading role in forging an anti-apartheid Congress Alliance that crossed racial lines, based on an ideological commitment to "nonracialism." This ideal found expression in the 1955 Freedom Charter, a people's manifesto calling for democracy and liberation: its preamble asserted that South Africa "belongs to all who live in it." Subsequently, the opposition's commitment to nonracialism waxed and waned in competition

with Africanism—whose proponents held that the struggle for freedom on the African continent could be led only by black Africans.

Starting in the early 1970s, Black Consciousness emerged: a set of beliefs that white domination could be countered only by a political movement constructed around an inclusive sense of black identity that would unite all communities subjected to racial humiliation and oppression. Black Consciousness was never incompatible with nonracialism, which came to the forefront in the 1980s as the ANC, from exile, reestablished its ideological and political hegemony over the popular struggles against apartheid.

It was a commitment to nonracialism that guided the ANC during its 1989–94 negotiations with the NP for a democratic transition and an end to apartheid. Indeed, nonracialism and its emphasis on racial equality provided the foundation for the post-apartheid constitution and for South Africa's contemporary democracy. In recent years, however, there has been a trend toward increasing assertion of particular racial identities, most notably among Africans, many of whom are middle class. Africans have increasingly begun to appropriate the term "black" for themselves.

There is never any one politically correct way of grappling with South Africa's racial diversities, but today, in official documentation and popular consciousness, "black" has come to mean "African" (though the terms are often used interchangeably). Consequently, Indians and Coloureds tend to be denominated separately. There is much irony in this, given the official commitment to moving away from the formalized racial differentiation that prevailed under apartheid. Nonetheless, when we refer to the "black middle class" today, we are referring to what in former years tended to be described as either an "African elite" or an "African middle class."

WESTERNIZING MISSIONS

The origins of today's black middle class can be traced to the scattered educational efforts of Christian missionaries of different nationalities and denominations, which accelerated in the early nineteenth century. Saving souls demanded the promotion of literacy and the teaching of English so that earthly sinners could read the word of God—a mission that became a commitment to spreading "civilization." Missionaries encouraged adoption of the key elements of a Westernized lifestyle, ranging from style of dress and eating habits to housing

based on the nuclear family, and jobs as farmers, artisans, or wage laborers suited to the early industrial age, all underpinned by rigid conformity to Western norms of morality and deportment.

To ensure that this Westernizing project endured, missions formed their own communities, usually on land they owned. The education they offered was available only to a tiny minority of Africans, typically drawn from families of local chiefs or the better-off peasantry. South Africa's first census, conducted in 1911, found that only 7 percent of Africans could read or write, virtually all of whom would have been mission-educated. The mission schools, and the handful of secondary institutions they established, produced the small cohort of Africans who became a local elite of ministers, teachers, lawyers, and journalists, as well as the clerks, interpreters, and agricultural administrators who staffed the lower ranks of the colonial state's "native administration."

The colonial state had little interest in developing this black middle class. It left African schooling to the missions and denied Africans entry to the universities. In this respect it reflected the prejudices of the white population. Educated Africans were left in no doubt about their subordinate status in the colonial hierarchy. Within their own communities, however, schooling brought both material rewards and social respect, so those who obtained an education undoubtedly constituted an African elite.

It was a tiny elite. In 1946, there were no more than 18,000 "professionals and salaried personnel" in an African population of nearly 8 million. It was also an elite that endured much frustration, for while the privileged few had been taught to aspire to Western standards of "civilization," they were simultaneously subject to political exclusion and economic subordination. Only a handful who met certain property or educational qualifications were entitled to vote; within the professions and even in churches, they were subject to discriminatory pay levels. Such frustrations drove the black African elite and middle class to play a leadership role in the ANC, which was formed in 1912 at a gathering in Bloemfontein of African chiefs, professionals, businessmen, traders, clerks, and others.

SEPARATE AND UNEQUAL

Until the middle of the twentieth century, the ANC was fundamentally conservative and respectful of white authority, pursuing modest objectives and seeking incremental constitutional conces-

sions from the white state. This was to change after the NP won power in 1948 and launched its project of apartheid to counter tendencies toward racial integration. From that point on, the state erected ever greater obstacles to black urbanization and sought to reverse the flow of black Africans to the towns that had sprung up as the country industrialized. Blacks now faced an increasingly complex maze of racial restrictions.

In response, the ANC underwent a process of political radicalization. Young leaders in the generation of Nelson Mandela and Oliver Tambo pushed aside their conservative elders. Throughout the 1950s they spearheaded mass protests and mobilization, while forging links with organizations of other subordinated racial groups through the Congress Alliance. The state responded by ratcheting up political repression. By the early 1960s, the ANC leadership had either been jailed or fled into exile, and South Africa had become a police state.

For the African middle class, the 1950s and 1960s were decades of heightened frustration. During World War II, the military conscription of white skilled workers had increased opportunities for black upward mobility in industry. Now the state was attempting to reverse the process. Worse, in 1953, with the Bantu Education Act, the state sought to take control of the mission schools and impose a new curriculum deliberately designed to maintain black subordination. Yet this was the era when elsewhere on the continent, African nationalist movements were moving into government and enjoying the fruits of independence. In 1960, British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan told the South African Parliament that the country should heed the "winds of change."

The intransigent NP government refused to consider any prospect of racial equality. However, in a bid to legitimize and stabilize its political domination, from the early 1960s it began to cloak apartheid in the language of "separate development." Africans, it said, would not be denied their political rights, but they would be allowed to exercise those rights only within their tribal communities. To that end, the state devolved "self-government" to eight (later ten) ethnic "homelands." Replete with chief ministers, cabinets, parliaments, and civil services, these local governments were designed to satisfy the political aspirations of the African middle class and to secure its compliance.

Opportunities for upward social mobility have been reshaped and expanded under the ANC.

Despite being a blatant exercise in divide and rule, the homeland project met with a degree of success. From the mid-1960s on, the homelands produced growing numbers of African public servants, teachers, and nurses, as well as a proto–business class promoted by official policy. Only a minority bought into the apartheid state's gospel of separate development. Most were politically pragmatic, and simply pursuing available opportunities to earn a living and establish careers, while viewing the liberation struggle from afar. But once the apartheid state began to founder and the homeland regimes found themselves facing protests in the 1980s, the political loyalties of this homeland-based middle class became increasingly available for recruitment by the ANC.

Similar dynamics were at work in urban areas. After rapid growth in the 1960s, the economy entered a long period of decline characterized by much-reduced rates of growth, falling investment, skilled-labor shortages, and the increasing mechanization of industry. Despite the government's reluctance to admit the inevitability of a permanent presence for blacks in the cities, the demands of the economy required it to massively increase access to education. The number of black children in schools jumped from 2.7 million in 1970 to over 8 million in 1988. Universities were opened in the homelands, and to a limited extent blacks were admitted to universities that previously had been reserved for whites only.

Although still concentrated in law, teaching, medicine, and nursing, the black middle class also began to penetrate the lower levels of the corporate sector as managers. Even so, despite an easing of restrictions on blacks in urban areas, as well as the state's devolution of administrative responsibilities to black local authorities, multiple obstacles, such as lack of capital, still prevented the black middle class from entering the economic mainstream. No wonder, then, that this emergent middle class played a significant role in popular protests against apartheid in the 1970s and 1980s—and that the bulk of this class came to identify its interests with those of the ANC.

COMMANDING HEIGHTS

Numerous theoretical and methodological controversies dog efforts to define and count today's black middle class in South Africa. However,

there is no dispute that while it remains relatively small both in absolute terms and as a proportion of the total South African population, which now stands at 58 million, it has experienced substantial growth as a result of the democratic transition, the removal of apartheid-era racial barriers, and the policies pursued by the ANC.

The ANC itself recently estimated that the black middle class had grown to some 6 million by 2018 (though it did not disclose how it reached that figure). One major international survey concluded that some 25 percent of blacks identified as middle class in 2013.

What matters rather more than numbers is the manner in which opportunities for upward social mobility have been reshaped and expanded under the ANC. Four mutually supporting policies stand out.

The first is known as political deployment. The ANC still used a quasi-Marxist ideological language of revolution when it assumed power after winning the 1994 elections. Its professed aim was to establish political hegemony by capturing the "commanding heights" of state and society, to which end it needed to "deploy" committed and qualified "cadres" to take positions in government, public services, and the economy.

For many within the black middle class, survival and class position remain precarious.

During its early years in office, it was constrained in this project both by the terms of the transition, which initially guaranteed white public servants their jobs, and human resource limitations, namely the lack of suitably qualified and appropriately educated blacks—a legacy of apartheid. As time passed and the ANC became increasingly entrenched in power, the pace of political deployment increased across all three levels of the state—at the national level, across the nine provinces, and in the nation's 278 municipalities. Similarly, state-owned enterprises (SOEs), which account for about 15 percent of South Africa's gross domestic product, were staffed by ANC "deployees."

Politically, deployment was a necessity: the ANC needed to satisfy its constituency. Economically, its impact became problematic as politicized demands for jobs led to a decline of skills in state institutions. Worse, deployment brought ANC factional battles into those institutions, a tendency that was to become increasingly pronounced under Jacob Zuma's presidency. His followers used the ANC's deployment committees to instigate extensive purges within the party and to place their appointees in a wide variety of state positions. This culminated in a project of "state capture," whereby government contracts and resources were diverted into the private hands of politically connected cronies.

The second ANC policy initiative was known as employment equity. This too was politically essential. The ANC was attempting to transform a hitherto white-dominated state and economy, and its goal in the name of nonracial democracy was to make them demographically representative of South African society. A flurry of laws in the mid-1990s expanded the organizational and employment rights of all workers, a majority of whom were black.

Then, in 1998, the Employment Equity Act prohibited "unfair discrimination" on 19 grounds—notably including race, gender, and disability—and compelled employers to draw up plans for affirmative action, with numerical goals for equitable representation and time frames for achieving them. Firms employing over 50 people now had to submit annual reports on the composition of their workforces. Compliance became a requirement for securing government contracts.

The overall effect has been dramatic. Over the past 25 years, the public-service sector and SOEs have indeed become more or less demographically representative. Within the private sector, while progress has been significant, especially at lower levels, the pace of change proved considerably slower. The common complaint of many employers is that there are not enough adequately educated and skilled workers available, and that the government's demands are unrealistic and discourage investment. Meanwhile, black entrepreneurs and managers complain of de facto marginalization within the mainstream business sector.

EMPOWERMENT DEALS

Businesses have also had to respond to the ANC's third policy initiative, black economic empowerment (BEE). Under apartheid, the heavily protected economy fell under the sway of a small number of huge conglomerates. They welcomed the transition to democracy, which offered the prospect of a relaxation of numerous government restric-

tions and profitable entry into the global economy. Nonetheless, although they were pleased to see the NP go, large-scale businesses still had to adjust to democracy.

The first phase of BEE aimed to forge a political settlement between business and the country's new rulers. The chosen route was to strike a series of deals whereby state institutions, private banks, and the conglomerates themselves transferred debt-funded assets, including subsidiaries and shares in major companies, to ANC luminaries and appointed them to boards, while also making commitments to boost black participation in the management hierarchy. The basic idea was that the shares would be paid for by dividends from a rising stock market while black appointees helped establish political relationships with government. But this program fell apart during the Asian financial crisis of 1997–98. Since black share ownership had been funded by borrowed money, black debts mounted as share prices collapsed, and the first phase of BEE went belly-up.

A second phase followed, launched in response to the cries of those who had been burned by the market's collapse and the complaints of black business lobbies about continuing white domination of the private sector. The new phase began when the ANC government under President Thabo Mbeki adopted the recommendations issued in 2000 by a Black Economic Empowerment Commission. These called for setting guidelines, goals, and obligations that the private and public sectors would be required to meet over a ten-year period. Companies scrambled to set higher targets for black ownership, recruitment, and skills development, which were formalized in a flurry of voluntary "empowerment charters" drawn up by various business sectors.

The government later sought to consolidate these initiatives with the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act of 2003. It established a series of Codes of Good Practice concerning equity ownership, management, and employment, to which each sector was required to conform.

Although the impact of BEE continues to be debated, complaints abound that the economy remains dominated by "white monopoly capital." These protests grew louder during the presidency of Jacob Zuma, who significantly altered the empowerment strategy promulgated by his predecessor. Under Mbeki, who served as president from 1999 to 2008, the government's strategy was to push large-scale companies yet simultaneously collaborate with them. Although government-business relations were often fractious, there was always a shared belief in the free-market economy. But critics denounced this approach as "neoliberalism," which gave Zuma a basis for rallying support from black business groups and trade unions, and within the ANC, for a far-reaching "economic transformation."

Once in power, Zuma sidelined the unions. His administration systematically diverted state contracts, many of them hugely inflated, to politically connected business cronies (notably an immigrant family from India, the Guptas) through manipulation of the public tendering system. BEE was misused to legitimate this kind of cronyism, which came to be known in South Africa as "tenderpreneurship" and was the ruination of the major state-owned corporations. As they decended into gross dysfunction and debt, they dragged the economy down with them.

STRATIFIED SCHOOLS

A vast expansion of educational opportunities for the mass of ordinary black South Africans, engineered by the ANC, constituted a fourth stream of policy that opened new avenues of upward social mobility into the middle class. This reform of the nation's educational system helped create the social backdrop for the drama unfolding in the government and economy.

Under apartheid, schooling was racially segregated. White schools enjoyed extensive privileges including high-quality instruction and well-appointed facilities. Black schools, meanwhile, were forced to cope with appalling teacher-to-student ratios and grossly inadequate facilities. From the moment it took power, the ANC embarked on a mission to unify the racially divided public educational system.

This policy has met with considerable success in terms of providing education for all, boosting school attendance, and overcoming racial disadvantages. In class terms, however, the picture is more complicated. To equalize resources, black schools at the bottom of the hierarchy, in African townships and the former homelands, have been more heavily funded by the state. Former white schools at the top of the pack have accordingly been forced (and encouraged) to rely more heavily on fees paid by parents—although, contradictorily, the state has declared that no child should be prevented from attending a local school because of an inability to pay.

Since white schools continue to offer better-quality education, black parents have made strenuous efforts to place their children in them—in some cases by moving from black townships to formerly segregated white residential districts. The associated costs have not prevented the schools from becoming a crucible for black upward mobility, but they do place a heavy burden on parents seeking to consolidate their families' entry into the middle class.

The dynamics of the educational system have been further complicated by the rapid expansion of private schooling, a trend that caters both to whites drifting away from public schools and to black aspirations for better options. It is clear that the former white schools and the burgeoning private educational sector offer the best guarantee for entry into the university system—which is itself highly stratified. The former white universities occupy the top places in the hierarchy.

There is enormous hunger for education among South Africa's black population. This yearning is largely instrumental: education is viewed as the route to a better life and upward mobility. The ambition for most is a white-collar job and employment security.

Yet for many, the route to employment lies through channels and opportunities fashioned by the ANC. The party has opened up the school system, the public service, and the allocation of public contracts to blacks, and the black middle class has been the primary beneficiary of its rule. For many, though, class position and even survival remain precarious.

POLITICIZED OPPORTUNITY

Today's black middle class is buffeted by numerous pressures. Entry into the middle class comes with multiple costs. Many aspire to own their own homes—and mortgages, upkeep, local taxes, and private security all need to be paid for, as do the cars, school fees, and consumer items that are associated with the good life.

In addition, black middle-class South Africans are subject to what is colloquially termed the "black tax": the social obligation of those with regular incomes to support less well-off relatives in a country where many go to bed hungry. Such demands inhibit the capacity of the black middle class to save, putting its members at a relative disadvantage to whites, many of whom get an initial boost on the road to home ownership or higher education from parents, trusts, or other accumulated capital assets.

All of this occurs in a society that is bombarded with advertising encouraging people to spend. The poverty from which so many blacks have come predisposes some to demonstrate their success through conspicuous consumption, which often leads to indebtedness.

The precarity of daily existence for so many black middle-class South Africans is heightened by dependence on political connections. Many rely on employment in the public service and are unsure of their ability to survive in the more competitive private-sector economy. Although union membership offers a reasonable degree of protection, their job security often remains subject to the whims and preferences of politicians. This accounts for their ambiguous relationship with the ANC.

The party is widely appreciated for having massively expanded opportunities for upward social mobility. Yet the politicization of opportunity has led to serious divisions within the ANC. Under Zuma, appointments to numerous state positions and the allocation of contracts at all levels of the state were dependent on political favors. Corruption allowed many in the new black middle class to flourish as never before.

Today, confronted by the need to revive an economy whose growth has slumped to less than 1 percent per year, Ramaphosa has embarked on a program of reform. Its principal target is the SOEs, which became hopelessly indebted and dysfunctional as a result of the cronyism and "state capture" condoned by Zuma. To restructure these enterprises and return them to financial health will require the dismissal and prosecution of corrupt managers, cancellation of fraudulently awarded contracts, and retrenchment of bloated staffs. It is a necessary and unavoidable program but it will come at a considerable cost to the livelihoods of a large segment of the black middle class.

Ramaphosa enjoys the support of black South Africans who long for a capable and honest state, yet his reform agenda is opposed by many inside the ANC who benefited from Zuma's kleptocracy. This is fueling noisy conflicts within the party as it enters the campaign for the May 2019 elections. How the black middle class votes—whether it opts to back Ramaphosa, restore Zumaism, or defect to the opposition—will play a major role in determining the fate of South Africa. ∎

Congo's New Citizens' Movements and Kabila's Exit

Marta Iñiguez de Heredia

The election held in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) on December 30, 2018, marked just the second peaceful transfer of power in the nation's history. The first was in 1960, when the anticolonial movement and a changing international context forced Belgium to grant independence, leading to the creation of the Republic of Congo-Léopoldville (which later became the DRC).

This time around, President Joseph Kabila had finally agreed to step down as required by term limits after nearly two decades in power. He had already stayed on for some two years past the expiration of his last term. His departure ultimately was the result of political pressure led by grassroots pro-democracy movements that have emerged in the past few years.

However, the outcome of the election points neither to the end of Kabila nor to a reduction of pressure from these opposition groups. The official results unexpectedly gave the presidency to Félix Tshisekedi, the son of a former opposition leader, Étienne Tshisekedi. This outcome was widely perceived not as reflecting the actual vote totals, but rather as the product of secret negotiations aimed at ensuring that Kabila's influence endures behind the scenes. Amid allegations of vote-rigging, opposition to Tshisekedi is already strong, signaling that the elections may have changed the face of power but not the new balance of forces.

THE OCTOPUS WARS

Joseph Kabila, also known as "Kabila fils" (junior), took power in 2001 after his father, the president and former guerrilla leader Laurent-Désiré Kabila, was assassinated. In his early years in government, the son was praised by international donors for his apparent commitment to peace, and he helped build trust among the country's warring parties. But he ended up being widely despised for his complicity in the continuation of armed conflict and for taking an authoritarian path. These choices by Kabila led to the rise of the new opposition movements, which can be seen as a form of demilitarization of the struggle for democracy after the Congo wars that lasted from 1996 to 2003 and left millions dead.

The Congolese historian Isidore Ndaywel è Nziem has compared those wars to an octopus. They were ignited by a coup against the dictator Mobutu Sese Seko in 1996, but soon morphed into what has been called Africa's World War, with severe social, political, and economic consequences. Some of its immediate origins were to be found in the exhaustion of Mobutu's 32-year-old regime, the geopolitical transformations brought by the end of the Cold War, and the 1994 genocide in neighboring Rwanda.

The DRC had sunk into an economic crisis while Mobutu governed on a divide-and-rule basis, deepening tensions and inequalities among regions, classes, and ethnic groups. During the Cold War, the United States made Mobutu one of its privileged military and economic aid recipients, since he was perceived as committed to containing the spread of communism in central Africa. But after the fall of the Soviet Union, Washington no longer saw the notorious dictator as a desirable ally. Instead, it turned to rising leaders in the region such as Paul Kagame of Rwanda and Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, who epitomized the kind of strong but reformist leaders it now wanted to promote.

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The end of the Cold War unleashed a new wave of popular struggles in Africa, seeking the transformation of military and authoritarian regimes into multiparty democracies. At first, it seemed unlikely that Mobutu's regime would be swept away.

A turning point came in 1994, when Mobutu agreed to harbor hundreds of thousands of refugees from Rwanda, including many government and military officials who had been complicit in the genocide. Some of them soon threatened to return to Rwanda and oust Kagame. Congolese opposition politicians and army officers, led by Laurent Kabila, formed a coalition with Rwanda and Uganda. They staged a coup against Mobutu in 1996. Thousands of young people and peasants, including women, joined the rebellion in hopes of forcing change. Laurent Kabila took power seven months after it started.

However, the armed conflict soon began again, metastasizing into a war that pulled in eight other African countries. Some of them were backed by foreign powers including Britain, France, and the United States. These alliances, as well as transnational networks of military and business elites, served various political, security, and economic interests. Rwanda and Uganda exerted influence over the DRC government through the armed groups they supported. They also took over key military posts and border positions, and exploited Congolese natural resources from minerals to coffee and land. It was not until Joseph Kabila took over from his father that the possibility of peace was seriously envisioned.

LOST YEARS

In Kabila's early years in government, he appeared to donors to be the man who could lead the country to peace and postconflict reconstruction on the terms they favored. About a year after he took office, the main warring parties reached a power-sharing agreement and a transitional government was formed. A new constitution was approved in a December 2005 referendum. In 2006, the country held its first general election since independence 46 years earlier. The United Nations, the European Union, and other donors supported the transition, and the EU covered 80 percent of the election costs.

The election was hotly contested, including by force of arms. Supporters of Kabila and those of his challenger, former warlord Jean-Pierre Bemba, clashed in the streets of Kinshasa, the capital. Kabila was declared the winner and retained the

support of international donors despite allegations of fraud. Democratization, state reform, and economic liberalization were seen as fundamental steps to position the country for recovery, and Kabila still seemed committed to all of them.

But he did not follow through as expected. Instead, he played the reform card to his advantage and that of other elites and foreign investors. The liberalization of the mining and oil sectors facilitated the rise of Kabila's entourage to a privileged position, but failed to raise living standards for the general population. Reform of the military ended up creating a powerful praetorian guard for Kabila while he turned different sections of the army against each other, making sure that none was strong enough to rebel against him. He did little to rid the army of corruption or of its ties to the DRC's ongoing internal armed conflicts, especially in the eastern provinces. By then, he had already shown signs of an increasing authoritarian turn.

The murder of human rights activist Floribert Chebeya in June 2010, after he was summoned to police headquarters in Kinshasa, came to epitomize the repressive character of the Kabila regime. Rights activists, opposition leaders, and journalists were persecuted. The decentralization process and local elections agreed to as part of the transition were not carried out.

Three main dynamics explain the continuation of armed conflict in the DRC despite the presence of one of the UN's largest peacekeeping forces. First, both Kabila and Kagame continued a proxy war through different armed groups. Each president benefited politically and economically. This situation persisted until about 2013, when international and regional partners increased pressure on Rwanda to stop meddling in the DRC.

Second, armed groups became a tool commonly used to advance the agendas of different actors—elites, traders, political movements, and ethnic groups. In some cases they have served the struggle for democracy and social change, but they have also been responsible for its further militarization. Stalled economic development and political stasis made violence the preferred means for advancing interests ranging from anti-Kabila resistance to control over natural resources. Militias have protected civilians from other armed groups, the army, and the police.

Despite all this, Kabila won another term in the 2011 election. The EU and other donors did not support any other candidate, but nor did they finance the election. All the major international

observation missions reported that they had witnessed vote fraud. Frustration with this outcome and the persistence of armed conflict prompted new groups to rise up and demand the end of the Kabila era.

The strategies Kabila adopted to avoid stepping down at the end of his term in December 2016 inadvertently consolidated this new democratic wave. His gambits included a proposal to amend the constitution in order to redo the census, which would have taken years to finalize. These stalling tactics provoked protests across the country.

The government responded with harsh repression, which drew international condemnation that forced Kabila to retreat. In late 2015, however, he unleashed the decentralization process that had been paralyzed for the past nine years. It entailed the creation of 15 new provinces, with all the administrative chaos that implied.

When elections finally took place in December 2018 after a delay of more than two years, tensions were high. To many experts, the official results revealed a "Putin-Medvedev strategy"—that is, a de jure transfer of power to a weak placeholder, while Kabila retains de facto power that may eventually allow him to reclaim the presidency, just as Vladimir Putin did in Russia in 2012 after switching places with Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev in 2008.

Congo has long had a healthy culture of voluntary associations.

The National Electoral Commission (CENI) inexplicably postponed the announcement of the presidential election results while Tshisekedi and Kabila met privately. But it released the results of the legislative and provincial elections even before the compilation process had finished.

Tshisekedi appeared to be well behind Martin Fayulu, who had led in public opinion polls ahead of the election. In fact, leaks of CENI results and those of the Congolese Episcopal Conference, which ran the largest local electoral observation mission, showed that Fayulu had won by an ample margin, with around 60 percent of the vote. But according to CENI's official results, released January 10, Tshisekedi won with 38.6 percent of the vote, trailed by Fayulu with 34.8 percent. Fayulu filed an unsuccessful challenge to those results at the Constitutional Court.

Kabila's Common Front for Congo coalition won a solid majority in the parliamentary elections, taking 70 percent of the seats—while Tshi-sekedi's party, the Union for Democracy and Social Progress, failed to win any seats. Kabila's coalition also won a majority in the provincial elections, allowing it to elect the president of the Senate. That could relegate the president to merely formal functions.

CHANGE AGENTS

The lack of progress on development, democracy, and peace under Kabila motivated new social movements to spring up to oppose his attempts to extend his hold on power. Dismal Congolese living standards did not improve during his presidency. According to the latest UN human development indicators, 90.5 percent of the DRC's citizens can be categorized as working poor, living on less than $3.10 per day. The country has one of the world's richest reserves of minerals, but most of the population has seen little benefit.

The security situation has also deteriorated. The northeastern territories of Beni and Ituri, as well as central Kasai province, recently witnessed a series of massacres. Although the details are murky, several investigations have found that the Kabila government was responsible for them, in an attempt to put down local opposition and rebellions. This violence has boosted the number of displaced people to levels unseen for two decades—there are now some 4.5 million in the DRC—and driven living standards even lower.

Many young people have come to believe that their aspirations for the future are doomed. They see themselves as trapped in the same place as their parents, struggling to survive every day. Now many have stepped forward to organize for change. While the initiators of these movements have tended to be educated urban dwellers, if not members of the middle class (such as professors, lawyers, and professionals working for international agencies), their rapid spread throughout the country demonstrates their ability to rally widespread support.

They have done so by opting for what can be called a "third way," choosing neither to take up arms nor to form yet another political party. Instead, they have followed the example of many in Africa since what should be known as the Afro-Arab uprisings began in Tunisia in late 2010—organizing in alternative forms, from the bottom up, and demanding change in peaceful ways.

All across Africa (and this began even before the Tunisian uprising), new social movements staking claims for democracy and development have staged protests and uprisings, organizing largely outside the traditional structures of political parties and unions. This regional phenomenon has multiplied Congolese groups' contacts, legitimacy, visibility, and support.

Struggle for Change (LUCHA), for instance, was formed in 2012 by a group of youths in Goma, in eastern Congo, after a surge in violence developed into one of the main crises the Kabila government and the UN mission in the DRC have faced since the postwar transition. A contingent of renegade soldiers from an armed group that struck an agreement with the government in 2009 to be absorbed into the army claimed that the terms of the deal were not being fulfilled. Backed by Rwanda, this faction seized control of the city of Goma, despite the UN force stationed there.

LUCHA was organized in response to this crisis. But it decided at the time to focus on the lack of a basic necessity: clean drinking water. It held this up as a symbol of what the DRC could be—the country has one of the largest reserves of water in Africa—and to highlight the failures of its leaders and international actors, especially the UN, development agencies, and NGOs.

LUCHA has grown since then into a national movement with international reach. Others like Filimbi and Compte à Rebours, which formed to press Kabila to leave power and to demand democracy, have followed suit despite limited resources. They do not have large institutional infrastructures, but rely on their members to find ways to organize protests and performances, whether that means meeting in someone's backyard or in a room offered by a friendly group.

The performative approach to protest has been a common trend in Africa's new social movements, which count many artists and musicians among their members. In the DRC, protests and campaigns have featured special visual elements, music, and other performances. Social media is another primary tool they rely on. The Kabila government cut off the country's Internet connection on many occasions in an attempt to suppress the influence of these movements. Yet such heavy-handed reactions have only strengthened them.

The new movements have managed to create real momentum, with offshoots and protests rapidly spreading across the country. They have articulated an agenda for change in ways that have generated consensus and mobilization among people of different ages and backgrounds—rural and urban, elites and working class. By taking the lead in the opposition to Kabila's efforts to cling to power, they have given fresh impetus to the project of renewing democracy in the DRC. They have also emerged as a powerful force in relations with international donors like the United States and the EU, pushing them to respond to Kabila's human rights violations.

This success, however, has come at a cost. Many members of these groups have ended up in jail, in exile, or dead. One of the most visible leaders of LUCHA, Luc Nkulula, died in suspicious circumstances when his house was set on fire in June 2018. His fate came to symbolize the high price of activism.

Kabila seems to have left everything neatly stitched up to maintain political and economic control.

Yet the very existence of these groups marks a new era in Congo's history of democratic struggle, which goes back to the colonial era and leaders like Simon Kimbangu, who founded an independent church that challenged the moral pretensions of the colonizers, and Patrice Lumumba, who finally led the country to independence and became its first prime minister before he was assassinated in 1961. The contemporary pro-democracy movements have a social base and strong international support. Some of their actions have been sponsored by the US Agency for International Development. Their leaders have received prizes from Western institutions, delivered talks at top Western universities, and drawn coverage in the Western media. After protests demanding elections and Kabila's departure were harshly repressed in 2015 and 2016, the United States and the EU imposed sanctions on government officials.

In many respects, however, this support has gone no deeper than the surface. It was not a secret that the favored 2018 presidential candidate among donors and UN experts was Kabila's own chosen successor, Emmanuel Ramazani Shadary. The international actors most involved in the DRC preferred political continuity to change. After all, the economic policies that Kabila put in place to consolidate power for him and his entourage have

also benefited economic interests those donors represent—by shifting control over Congolese resources out of the country.

A LIVING TRADITION

Although the rapid rise of democratic movements is tied to the country's specific circumstances of recent years, Congo has long had a healthy culture of voluntary associations and discussion of political alternatives. It is a common mistake to think of the DRC as a country where there is no civil society and no political ideologies or movements. But as the economist Mbaya Kankwenda, the historian Herbert Weiss, and others have noted, the country's history and culture of social and political association traditionally provided the means to survive, resist, and air critical views. It is also thanks to civil society that years of war have not resulted in a much worse humanitarian catastrophe.

Congolese civil society includes not only the larger institutions such as churches and unions, but also rural and credit cooperatives, workers' cooperatives, and issue-specific associations. The Catholic Church was what the Congo expert Thomas Turner calls one of the foundations of the tripartite power system that colonization imposed, along with the administration and corporate interests. And yet, as in most colonial and postcolonial contexts, its institutions were often subverted for the purpose of advancing multiple political agendas from the grassroots. Local churches played a double role throughout the colonial period, commonly serving as a safe harbor (whether with the full knowledge of its leaders or not) where people plotted strategies of resistance against their exploitation by companies and landlords.

More recently, the Church both backed and opposed Kabila. While it gave him support, especially in his early years as president, it sharply criticized his reluctance to hold elections and openly accused him of rigging the results of the December 2018 vote. As in colonial times, the Church has often played the role of local authority, especially in remote rural areas where the state administration could not reach, while serving as an umbrella organization for the provision of multiple services such as education, health, and mediation of violent conflicts and political disputes.

The ongoing state of conflict brought a boom in international aid, which spawned local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) dedicated to all sorts of issues. The aid influx facilitated the growth of an already rich fabric of cooperatives, associations, and civil society groups by giving them access to funding, allowing them to bypass both the government and the Church to deliver social services. Thanks to these funds, many groups could build hospitals, schools, and infrastructure for transportation or water sanitation, all of which would have been impossible to expect from the government. Even beyond the reach of this international funding, the associative tradition has remained robust. Cooperatives and other associations including women's groups and religious organizations help people cope with shortages of basic necessities.

Yet it would be wrong to see these associations as purely survival-orientated. They also provide a means of articulating political demands and alternatives, sometimes indirectly. LUCHA first emerged not with a call to overhaul the political system and deliver real democracy, but with a demand that the state fulfill its promise to bring clean water to Goma, a city on the shore of Lake Kivu, one of the Great Lakes of East Africa. For its one million citizens, lacking access to water has always been the most vivid example of the paradoxes and problems they face daily.

When the provincial government finally launched an initiative to pump water from the lake, the pumps malfunctioned. The government and an NGO involved in the process blamed each other for the debacle. LUCHA seized on this as a symbolic moment that represented both the corruption of the government and the self-serving, ineffective activities of NGOs. Far from addressing the deep causes of poverty in the DRC, they contribute to perpetuating it. LUCHA members started putting up posters with a simple demand: "Goma wants water." The slogan soon appeared on cars and T-shirts. Demonstrations featured the bottles people use to fetch water from the lake and carry it home.

Goma did not get tap water until 2016. But activists were able to link this campaign with a broader critique of the political situation in the DRC and the need for social change and democracy. It became a stepping-stone many young people crossed over to join that cause. This momentum gathered force in opposition to Kabila's clinging to power, and drew international support through networks to other social movements in Africa and beyond.

NEW WAVE

The rise of the new pro-democracy movements was essential to finally delivering the DRC's long-

deferred change of government. However, Kabila seems to have left everything neatly stitched up to maintain political and economic control over the country. His newly installed successor, Tshisekedi, has already signaled an antagonistic approach to these movements.

This is a new chapter in the history of democratic struggle in the DRC, and the activists are still far from achieving their goals. Still, what the last round of elections has shown is that the pro-democracy groups have helped bring about more than Kabila's exit. They have reset the balance of forces between the government and civil society. One of their most important successes was persuading the Congolese people to mobilize publicly. For the past two decades, the persistence of armed conflict has absorbed the attention and energy of most, if not all, social groups in the country.

Much of the political agenda of the new movements has centered on demands to enhance the quality of democracy by opening up avenues of public participation, as well as to enact development and economic redistribution policies. Until recently much of their activity took place within the confines of the territories and provinces, keeping to traditional channels of communication with the government and international organizations. Now they have made their demands more visible, mobilizing youth in all provinces and generating a common call for change.

The example of the Afro-Arab Spring, which inspired many protests and uprisings throughout Africa and the world, has given the Congolese movements a greater degree of legitimacy and lent more people the confidence to join them. International donors have begun to support the pro-democracy groups, even if only on the surface. And the activists have expanded their agenda to encompass issues of nationwide concern, which has strengthened and enlarged their appeal. The new movements that emerged after LUCHA was created in 2012 have continued to grow, and so far they have avoided creating rivalries among themselves.

Perhaps one of the most important changes that the rise of pro-democracy groups has brought to the DRC is a demilitarization of politics. The elections in 2006 and 2011 were overshadowed by violence, including armed rebellions. The pro-democracy movements that rose up soon after the 2011 elections to challenge Kabila have taken a nonviolent path, viewing armed resistance as ineffective and counterproductive.

The DRC's challenges remain gigantic in all political, social, and economic areas. In response, the new Congolese citizens' movements are advancing a political agenda for democracy and development. They are also demonstrating a different approach to making political claims. This is not just a nonviolent approach, but one independent of political parties and traditional organizations.

The new movements have revived a historic demand of Congolese society—one that cost Lumumba his life. They insist that democracy cannot merely be a question of elections; it must allow for genuine popular participation and extend to all aspects of life in the DRC. The new pro-democracy movements may not seek to enter the arena of official politics, but they have made clear their intention to continue struggling for social and economic justice. ∎

> "[T]urning the page on decades of conflict and underdevelopment in the Horn of Africa will require . . . democratization and the institutionalization of transparent, accountable governance."

The Eritrea-Ethiopia Thaw and Its Regional Impact

MICHAEL WOLDEMARIAM

In a televised address on June 20, 2018, Eritrean President Isaias Afwerki announced his intention to dispatch a delegation to Ethiopia. The mission was the first official high-level diplomatic contact between the Eritrean and Ethiopian governments in over a decade, and marked the beginning of a rapid thaw in relations that effectively ended Africa's most intractable interstate rivalry. By early July, Isaias was playing host to Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali in the Eritrean capital of Asmara, where the two leaders issued a landmark statement declaring: "The state of war between Ethiopia and Eritrea has come to an end." A week later, Isaias embarked on a reciprocal visit to Addis Ababa.

The resumption of people-to-people ties proceeded briskly from that point. Flights and telephone connections between the two countries were reestablished almost immediately. By September, the heavily militarized frontier was no more as border crossings reopened and trade ties were revived. In three short months, the accumulated discord of decades was swept away.

The rivalry between Eritrea and Ethiopia is part of a saga nearly 70 years old. After their land was federated with Ethiopia in 1952 and annexed almost a decade later, Eritrean nationalists waged a long struggle for national liberation. Victory came in 1991, when Eritrean rebels allied with insurgents in the neighboring Tigray region to unseat the Marxist regime of Mengistu Hailemariam and formalize Eritrean statehood.

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These victorious rebel groups—the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF)—then installed themselves as the rulers of Eritrea and Ethiopia, respectively. They fell out in 1998 over border and economic issues, leading to a two-year war that left more than 100,000 dead. Despite a peace agreement that formally ended that conflict, the two countries remained at loggerheads until last year's diplomatic breakthrough.

The rivalry between Eritrea and Ethiopia had ramifications that extended far beyond the narrow confines of their bilateral relationship. Since ruling elites in each country had long regarded the other as the primary external threat, their mutual enmity came to define their foreign policies toward the entire Horn of Africa and other countries with interests in the region.

Eritrea's tensions with Sudan, Djibouti, and Somalia, and its broader international isolation, largely derived from the feud with Ethiopia. Meanwhile, Ethiopia's troubles with Egypt and the Gulf states were worsened by the frictions with Eritrea. The Horn's eight-country regional political bloc, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), was also affected: the dispute between two of its leading members led to years of institutional paralysis and dysfunction.

Given the centrality of the Eritrea-Ethiopia rivalry to regional dynamics, the rapprochement has prompted high expectations that it will have positive spillovers into the surrounding neighborhood. The public narrative conveyed by the international community, eager for some stability in this volatile corner of Africa, is that the summer thaw of 2018 could be a transformative moment for the Horn—a catalyst for a new era of regional peace and prosperity.

At a September 2018 follow-up meeting of Eritrean and Ethiopian leaders in Riyadh, United Nations Secretary General António Guterres declared, "There is a wind of hope blowing in the Horn of Africa." Moussa Faki Mahamat, chairperson of the African Union Commission, called the rapprochement "a major and historic contribution to the stabilization and sustainable development of the Horn of Africa region." Abiy has predicted that regional integration will be the new engine of progress in the Horn.

In many ways, developments on the ground bear out this enthusiasm. The region's leaders have sustained a flurry of diplomatic activity over the past year, shuttling between their capitals at what sometimes appears to be an almost frenetic pace. While the pageantry and symbolism of these visits on their own have been enough to change the tenor of the Horn's usually cutthroat brand of politics, they have yielded tangible achievements. Several of the region's most serious disputes, once considered intractable, have lost their sharper edges.

Yet the construction of a new regional order in the Horn of Africa will not be straightforward. Peace, in this context, comes with caveats. Just as the Eritrea-Ethiopia rapprochement has blunted old cleavages, so too has it exacerbated tensions, both within the region's states and between them. At the very least, these areas of friction will make a new era of peace and development in the Horn, anchored in regional integration, extremely difficult to achieve.

The reality is that turning the page on decades of conflict and underdevelopment will require something that many of the region's leaders are unwilling to fully embrace: democratization and the institutionalization of transparent, accountable governance in their countries. The Horn's history of endemic crisis is deeply structural, grounded in the character of ruling elites and their relationship with the people they govern. The current constellation of governments in the Horn, some of which are autocratic and insecure, presiding over fragile domestic political settlements, looks like a shaky foundation for a new regional order.

The region's center of gravity, Ethiopia, has achieved rapid but easily reversible progress in building a democratic order; the rapprochement with Eritrea would not have occurred otherwise. There are signs in neighboring states—Sudan, for

Abiy's sweeping reforms in Ethiopia can be a catalyst for political transformation in neighboring states.

instance, where massive street protests in recent months have ended the 30-year reign of President Omar al-Bashir—that meaningful political change may be in the offing. But some savvy incumbent leaders are leveraging a new brand of geopolitics to forestall popular pressure for reform.

NEW PLAYER

The thaw in relations between Eritrea and Ethiopia in the summer of 2018 was closely tied to far-reaching internal changes in Ethiopia earlier that year. In February, a rising tide of popular protest provoked a crisis within the ruling Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) that culminated in the resignation of Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn. A few weeks later, the deeply divided coalition elected 42-year-old Abiy Ahmed as Hailemariam's replacement.

Abiy's selection represented a major redistribution of political power within the EPRDF: he had been chosen over the objections of the TPLF, the hitherto dominant member of the four-party coalition. The outcome was made possible through a fair bit of subterfuge and last-minute coalition building between Abiy's Oromo People's Democratic Organization and the Amhara National Democratic Movement (ANDM). These two parties nominally represent the two largest ethnic groups in the country.

While the EPRDF has made some impressive gains in the domain of economic and social development, it chose to forge a highly autocratic political order when it seized power in 1991 after a protracted armed struggle. Abiy acted swiftly to undo this governance model, releasing political prisoners, welcoming back exiled opposition figures, and generally expanding civil and political liberties at all levels. The old national security state, once the instrument of repression, has been defanged. Many of its key personalities have been dismissed.

Changes in economic policy have taken longer to congeal, but Abiy's government appears keen to drop the statist orientation of its predecessor and is openly contemplating liberalization of key sectors such as telecommunications, commercial aviation, and electricity. The new prime minister also made major adjustments in the realm of foreign policy.

On the question of Eritrea, however, there was no decisive policy shift by the Abiy admin-

istration—at least not one significant enough to explain the dramatic diplomatic breakthroughs of June 2018. The crux of the Eritrea-Ethiopia rivalry concerned Ethiopia's commitments under the Algiers Agreement, the 2000 treaty that formally ended the last Eritrea-Ethiopia war. It set in motion an arbitration process whose April 2002 verdict required Ethiopia to relinquish some of the border territories that had been the ostensible cause of the war and that it had controlled by force of arms.

Ethiopia initially rejected the verdict but eventually came to accept the idea of returning the territories, provided that Eritrea agreed to engage in dialogue on normalizing ties. Eritrea, for its part, insisted that Ethiopia must withdraw from the occupied territories in full before any talks could occur. The early June 2018 announcement by Abiy's new administration that Ethiopia would comply with the Algiers Agreement, while notable, did not constitute an unambiguous departure from the Ethiopian position under Hailemariam.

To his credit, Abiy demonstrated real initiative and innovation in his approach to Eritrea, particularly at the level of political and diplomatic tactics. His conciliatory public tone and his decision to engage the United Arab Emirates as a facilitator were helpful. None of this was easy and it entailed significant political risk. But the decisive factor was not so much what the new prime minister did as the simple fact that he was not his predecessor.

To a large extent, the Eritrea-Ethiopia rivalry was rooted in the mutual enmity of the dominant parties in each country, the EPLF—renamed the People's Front for Democracy and Justice in 1994—and the TPLF. The 1998 war was in many ways an intimate conflict, since these two parties had forged close bonds in the previous struggle against Ethiopia's Marxist regime. The rupture created serious bitterness and lasting sentiments of betrayal that made reconciliation difficult. The end of the TPLF's dominance offered the possibility of a partner in Ethiopia that the Eritrean government could trust—and a face-saving opportunity to declare victory while at the same time making key concessions on the border issue that would unlock the impasse.

Isaias has dropped the demand for a unilateral Ethiopian withdrawal from Eritrean territories that had underpinned his policy on the conflict for nearly two decades. Ten months after the June 2018 thaw, Ethiopia remains in control of these territories, including the flashpoint village of Badme,

even as the normalization of ties between Addis and Asmara has rapidly progressed—an approach the Eritrean leadership had rejected for years.

PEACE DIVIDENDS

Whatever the cause of the Eritrea-Ethiopia rapprochement, there is no doubt that it has diluted tensions along the shared frontier and opened a new chapter in bilateral relations. The specter of war no longer looms over the two countries.

People-to-people relations have resumed with relative ease, generating a burgeoning ecosystem of cross-border trade in everything from staple goods to electronics. Despite limited resources, transportation links are being rehabilitated. Relations between Abiy and Isaias appear warm and collegial, though a lack of transparency surrounding the rapprochement and the delay in negotiating formal cooperation instruments have drawn some criticism.

The dividends of the rapprochement extend beyond the realm of the binational relationship. Ethiopia's strategic conundrum has long been that it is the most populous landlocked country in the world, which imposes a major structural constraint on the growth and vitality of its economy. The solution, which has always been easier said than done, is regional economic integration that enhances its access to ports in neighboring countries and trade corridors connecting it to the region and the world. In this regard, peace with Eritrea, which has a long Red Sea coast, made perfect sense.

Yet the rapprochement was only one piece of the puzzle. It had to be converted into a regionwide political settlement that would create the impetus for deepening the integration of Ethiopia and all the neighboring economies. Three by-products of the Eritrea-Ethiopia thaw have diminished tensions in the broader region and built momentum for the political and economic order Addis wants to forge.

The first has been Eritrea's reabsorption into the regional political system. Under Prime Minister Meles Zenawi (1995–2012), and later under Hailemariam (2012–18), Ethiopia used its diplomatic heft to isolate Eritrea within the region and the international system more broadly. Partly as a result, Eritrea had lukewarm-to-chilly relations with its other neighbors, was barred from reentry into IGAD, and was subjected to a UN Security Council arms embargo and numerous investigations at the UN Human Rights Council.

Eritrea's diplomatic fortunes rapidly changed after the rapprochement with Ethiopia. In June 2018, Somali President Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed (known as Farmajo) resumed bilateral relations with Asmara, and in September he entered into a tripartite cooperation agreement with both Eritrea and Ethiopia. In September, Djibouti and Eritrea resumed high-level diplomatic contacts and agreed to work together to resolve a boundary dispute that had kept them at loggerheads since 2008. In November, the UN Security Council made the momentous decision to end the Eritrea sanctions regime.

In December, Isaias traveled to Kenya for consultations with President Uhuru Kenyatta. In March 2019, another tripartite cooperation agreement was signed—this time by Eritrea, Ethiopia, and South Sudan. Meanwhile, Eritrea, Ethiopia, and Kenya convened a three-way summit in Asmara. Eritrea's reabsorption into the regional system has not been seamless—it remains estranged from both IGAD and the African Union—but its relationships with the neighbors are much improved.

SOMALI RESET

The second area of progress has been in Ethiopia's relations with Somalia. Ethiopian elites—whether under the monarchy, the Marxists (who ruled from 1974 to 1991), or the EPRDF—have long viewed Somalia as a source of existential security threats. This is partly a reflection of the historical structure of political authority in Addis, which was dominated by a succession of leaders who represented the interests of the Christian highlands and maintained tenuous control over the Somali-populated periphery. Worried that Mogadishu might stoke discontent in the Somali borderlands, Addis at times has intervened in Somalia in a way that undermines the authority of its central state.

Abiy has sought to rebalance the relationship, viewing Somalia not simply as a nest of security threats but as a neighbor that offers the potential for mutual economic gains. He has sought to help strengthen Farmajo's domestic political authority by signaling possible reductions in Ethiopian support for many of the central government's rivals in the states of the Somali federation. For his part, Farmajo has indicated in public statements that he regards Abiy as a qualitatively different kind of Ethiopian leader.

Other factors that have strengthened relations between Addis and Mogadishu include reforms bringing stability to Ethiopia's restive Somali region, as well as the real possibility that the African Union peacekeeping mission that has long propped up Somalia's government may be phased out. But the Eritrea-Ethiopia rapprochement played a role as well—the tripartite cooperation pact brought all three governments closer together. Moreover, the diminution of the Eritrean threat has given Ethiopia the space to use a lighter touch in Somalia. Although Eritrea had not been a player in Somalia for years, the specter of Eritrean involvement in 2005 provoked a highly destructive Ethiopian intervention.

ARAB INTERESTS

The third major dividend of the rapprochement has been a change in the tenor of relations between Ethiopia and the Middle Eastern states that are increasingly important strategic stakeholders in the Horn of Africa. One major pillar of Ethiopian foreign-policy thinking, dating back to the imperial era and again rooted in the historic structure of the state, was that the linkage between Eritrea and Arab powers posed a potent challenge to Ethiopian interests.

Under the EPRDF, this concern manifested itself in, among other things, Ethiopia's 2008 decision to break diplomatic relations with Qatar, then a key ally of Eritrea. The issue took on renewed significance in 2015, when the Emiratis built a military base in southern Eritrea that became the fulcrum of their operations against the Houthi rebels in Yemen.

The prospect of a hostile Eritrea under the Emirati umbrella threatened to disrupt a political and military balance between Eritrea and Ethiopia that had long favored the latter. Ethiopian diplomatic protests in the Gulf largely fell on deaf ears; the Emiratis offered rhetorical assurances but signaled no willingness to reconsider their relationship with Eritrea. In this increasingly tense strategic environment, a major clash in June 2016 between Eritrean and Ethiopian forces reportedly left hundreds of troops dead.

The rapprochement has changed this entire dynamic. Responding to Abiy's overtures, the UAE leveraged its relations with the Eritrean government to help facilitate the Eritrea-Ethiopia thaw, which in turn has opened the door to cooperation between Addis and the Saudi-Emirati axis. In June 2018, while the UAE was acting as a mediator, it injected $1 billion into Ethiopia's ailing financial system and a further $2 billion into other

sectors of the Ethiopian economy. It is now possible (but by no means certain) that the Emiratis will assist in financing Abiy's regional integration agenda, particularly in the area of transportation infrastructure, the connective tissue of any such effort in the Horn of Africa. Farther afield, Riyadh and Abu Dhabi are working to bridge the divide between Ethiopia and Egypt over Nile water issues, though without much success so far.

Ethiopia's relations with the Saudis and Emiratis do not appear to be exclusive. In March 2019, Abiy visited Qatar, a long-standing Gulf player in the Horn that is at odds with Riyadh and Abu Dhabi. Complementarity and cooperation, rather than competition, now appear to be hallmarks of Ethiopia's relations with key Gulf states.

INTERNAL RIFTS

These shifts have hardly been seamless. Although the thaw has diminished the volatility of a number of regional fault lines, it has also exacerbated other disputes, both within and between the Horn's key states.

In Ethiopia, the rapprochement has further widened rifts within the ruling coalition. This is no small matter, since party and state have been virtually indistinguishable for decades. The TPLF, formerly the dominant party in the ruling EPRDF, maintains a long list of grievances against Abiy.

In three short months, the accumulated discord of decades was swept away.

Some of this undoubtedly is a result of the psychosis associated with having held power for so long only to lose it to a former subordinate. Some of it is related to the political campaign the prime minister has waged against the TPLF—his supporters argue it was necessary in the face of sabotage, but others believe it has been gratuitous at times. In November 2018, the arrest of a number of Tigrayan officials on corruption and rights-abuse charges, and an associated documentary on state-run television, prompted the TPLF to accuse Abiy's administration of selective targeting. There are policy differences as well, on economic matters and the orientation of Ethiopian federalism.

Abiy's ally within the ruling front, the ANDM, has perhaps even tenser relations with the TPLF, owing in large part to a dispute over the status of the territories of Welkait and Raya. Under Ethiopia's old system these territories belonged to the Amhara-dominated provinces of Gonder and Wollo, but in 1995 they were included in the Tigray Regional State on the grounds that their population was majority Tigrayan. Now that there has been a rebalancing of power in Addis, the ANDM is pressing its case for a return of the territories.

This is an incredibly complex dispute, with claims and counterclaims that go deep into the murky waters of history and identity in northern Ethiopia. It is also explosive: over the past year, regional militias in both Amhara and Tigray have sought to boost their military capabilities while engaging in covert activity. Populist winds in both regions—part of a nationwide surge in ethnic nationalism—make de-escalation difficult.

In this context, the Eritrea-Ethiopia rapprochement has been profoundly unsettling for the TPLF, sharpening the security dilemmas it faces and complicating any hope for accommodation with its rivals within the EPRDF. The narrative advanced by much of Tigray's political class is that the rapprochement was designed to encircle the TPLF (and by extension Tigray), in order to keep it in check or even dismantle it. Although this view is somewhat reductionist, it is not unreasonable to think that one element of the thaw was the mutual desire of Abiy and Isaias to corral the TPLF.

In December 2018, Asmara closed the main border crossings between Eritrea and Tigray, just as the movement of goods from the Amhara region into Tigray was being disrupted. These events may have been unconnected but likely underscored for TPLF elites the political squeeze they were facing on their northern and southern frontiers.

MUTUAL SUSPICIONS

Another set of internal fissures is emerging in Eritrea. Since a crackdown in 2001 that obliterated political freedoms and inaugurated an era of austere autocratic control, the country's ruling elites have argued that reform is impossible given the Ethiopian threat. With the country in a state of emergency, they asserted, the times were too dangerous to erect the pillars of a democratic order and implement the 1997 constitution.

The most notable outcome of this perpetual crisis was a system of compulsory, low-wage national service of indefinite duration, which facilitated rights abuses and contributed to the outmigration of hundreds of thousands of Eritreans. The Ethiopian rapprochement, by eliminating the pre-

text for autocracy, raised hopes that the government would initiate much-needed political and economic reforms. But nearly ten months after the initial thaw, neither the president nor his key lieutenants have signaled any willingness to do so.

Dashed expectations are now manifesting themselves in increased refugee flows, a surge of online antigovernment activism, reports of internal dissent within the ruling party, and even heavy criticism of the rapprochement on the grounds that it is jeopardizing the country's hard-won sovereignty. Eritrea may be at a critical juncture, as the unstoppable force of popular discontent meets the immovable object of an entrenched African strongman.

The rapprochement is also making waves in the internal politics of Somalia, where the tripartite agreement with Eritrea and Ethiopia initially encouraged Farmajo—inadvertently or perhaps by design—to pursue a more aggressive strategy for handling recalcitrant states in the Somali federation. The ongoing feud between Mogadishu and the regions over the balance of power within Somalia's federal architecture hinders efforts to reconstruct government institutions and defeat al-Shabaab, the Islamist insurgency.

Farmajo's efforts to interfere in state elections have dangerously widened the chasm. In December 2018, the federal government nearly provoked a major crisis in South West State when Ethiopian troops operating under the auspices of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) arrested Mukhtar Robow, the front-runner in that state's presidential election, clearing the way for Mogadishu's preferred candidate.

These tensions have also caused ruptures between Somalia and its neighbors, particularly Kenya. Nairobi's strategic interests in Somalia are varied but the maintenance of a friendly buffer region along the border is paramount. It has supported Ahmed Madobe's administration in the state of Jubaland, and worried that the tripartite arrangement would bolster Farmajo at the expense of Jubaland and its other interests. Those fears were heightened by rumors that Isaias aimed to create a narrower alternative to IGAD that would exclude countries like Uganda and Kenya, and eventually circumscribe Kenyan influence in Somalia.

In early March 2019, Nairobi launched a diplomatic broadside against Somalia over an ongoing dispute related to their maritime border. That same month, Kenyan troop movements in Somalia suggested a possible reduction in Kenya's commitment to AMISOM, which is propping up the federal government in Mogadishu.

One other set of interstate tensions has emerged on Eritrea's frontiers. While Djibouti and Sudan do not view the Eritrea-Ethiopia rapprochement in zero-sum terms, they have concerns. Both countries are traditional Ethiopian allies that have their own distinct points of discord with Asmara. They were unsettled by Abiy's embrace of Isaias and the latter's reemergence on the regional stage.

Djibouti has an ongoing dispute with Eritrea over the border region of Ras Doumeira and the status of prisoners of war captured during clashes between the two neighbors in 2008. It took umbrage at calls from Addis and Mogadishu for lifting sanctions against Eritrea in the summer of 2018. Since the sanctions were partially related to that dispute, Djibouti complained that its allies had encroached on its prerogatives and disregarded its national interests. Djiboutian President Ismaïl Omar Guelleh, who has feuded with Abu Dhabi over the commercial management of the Djibouti port, is also said to be worried about Emirati influence on the rapprochement.

Ethiopia has achieved rapid but easily reversible progress in building a democratic order.

Sudan closed what at the time was Eritrea's sole open land border in January 2018, citing Eritrean interference in its domestic affairs—a move that largely severed their relations. Asmara, for its part, still resents Djibouti and Sudan's alignment with Ethiopia's previous government.

Some of the tension between Eritrea and its neighbors has been papered over by Abiy's diplomatic efforts and the resumption of high-level contacts with Djibouti. Eritrea's relations with Sudan could improve with al-Bashir's ouster. But for now, the mutual suspicion among the leaders of Eritrea, Djibouti, and Sudan persists, and has bled into relations with Ethiopia. The most striking signal of this new reality is a small but perceptible realignment of Sudanese—and to a lesser extent Djiboutian—policy toward Egypt, perhaps the only player in the Horn with which Ethiopia has seemingly irreconcilable differences.

SUSTAINING PEACE

There is much to appreciate about the Eritrea-Ethiopia rapprochement, both on its own terms

and in its regional effects. Yet the reconfiguration of relations in the Horn of Africa has produced contradictions that must be resolved for a new era of peace and development, anchored in regional integration, to be realized. Although the flurry of diplomatic activity suggests that a regional political bargain might be possible, critical questions must be asked: A bargain for whom? And to what end?

After the Cold War, the Horn, like much of Africa, witnessed a dramatic transformation that brought a new generation of political elites to power. Through a rehabilitated IGAD and other mechanisms, they too proposed to remake the regional order in a way that would enhance cooperation and secure peace and development. Those efforts were a dismal failure. Sudan fell out with its neighbors. Eritrea and Ethiopia went to war. The crisis in Somalia was left to fester and metastasize.

Why the halcyon days of the early 1990s gave way to chronic crisis is not hard to figure out. Elite pacts between regional leaders presiding over shaky and untenable domestic political settlements cannot deliver sustainable peace and prosperity in the Horn. Healing the internal and external rifts that cut across the region requires fostering and institutionalizing a genuine culture of peace, one that is deeply at odds with the personalistic, autocratic rule that has long been entrenched in many of the region's capitals.

If a new regionalism that attempts to circumvent basic questions of transparent, accountable, and representative governance is doomed to fail, what are the prospects for democratic change across the region? Abiy's sweeping reforms in Ethiopia, the Horn's center of gravity, can be a catalyst for political transformation in neighboring states. The de facto independent republic of Somaliland already has an established democratic political tradition. Sudan is certainly ripe for systemic change, as shown by the popular protests that have unseated al-Bashir. In Eritrea and Djibouti, long-ruling strongmen are approaching the twilight of their careers.

These countries will have to move forward on their own, but what transpires in Ethiopia can cre-

ate an enabling environment. First, Abiy's achievements must be consolidated through transparent and orderly national elections—and, over the longer term, the emergence of a durable national consensus. If the Ethiopian experiment works, the demonstration effects throughout the broader region will be great. But given the fragmentation of the Ethiopian state, the new populist environment, and the proliferation of ethnic violence in various regions of the country, it will not be easy.

Second, Addis will have to employ its diplomatic weight to reinvent the Horn's old regionalism and bring issues of good governance to center stage. Do Abiy's liberal inclinations stop at Ethiopia's borders, or do they encompass the broader region? Does his administration, amid Ethiopia's multiple internal challenges, have the bandwidth to pursue a truly progressive foreign policy?

There are constraints far beyond Addis's control. The region is now an arena of competition for great and middle powers alike, each seeking to cultivate local allies and extend its influence. The Horn's current strongmen, much like their predecessors, are leveraging these alliances to forestall much-needed political change. In this context, the influence of the Gulf states is particularly pernicious, since they engage in a brand of diplomacy that is personalist, cash-based, and opaque.

For this last reason, it will be Sudan, rather than Ethiopia, that truly tests the limits of the Horn's democratic potential. A popular uprising has brought down an autocrat, but it remains a distinct possibility that the country's security elites will thwart a democratic transition. In this effort, they could well be aided by any number of Middle Eastern states—Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE are likely candidates—that are keen to snuff out democratic revolutions in the Arab world and have the resources to do so. Rivalries between these players and Qatar and Turkey could also throw Sudan's nascent transition into chaos.

Where the chips will ultimately fall in the Horn is hard to say. The Eritrea-Ethiopia rapprochement carries great promise, but the road to a better regional order will be long. ∎

"Ideally, the free movement of goods and services should coexist with the free movement of people."

Pan-African Aspirations Drive a New Free Trade Pact

CHRISTOPHER CHANGWE NSHIMBI

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) agreement, which will soon take effect, is not a new idea but a step ahead in a historic project that springs from the aspirations of past and present leaders to unite Africa. This project has faced many obstacles; at times it has been derailed. Its would-be implementers overlooked elements crucial to making it materialize. They should no longer ignore the logic of bottom-up integration and people at the grassroots, such as cross-border traders, who put this logic into action and contribute to African unity.

African integration is a phenomenon that can be approached from two different perspectives: top-down or bottom-up. The first foregrounds engagement and cooperation among the 55 member nations of the African Union (AU). The second focuses on the realities and processes of integration on the ground. Despite their practical contributions to integration, grassroots actors and activities are sometimes hampered by policies crafted in the name of binding the continent together.

Four factors—political liberation, the desire for African unity, globalization, and the greater leverage that comes from presenting a united front in international affairs—drive Africa's pursuit of integration.

The first goes back to the colonial period, which aroused the Pan-African vision of setting the continent free and securing the right of its people to self-determination. Africans had been subjected to slavery and forced labor in their own land, which was forcibly expropriated. The European colonizers justified this exploitation by claiming that they had an obligation to civi-

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lize indigenous African peoples. This obligation, according to the colonizers, corresponded with their commercial, missionary, and economic ventures. Resistance was tantamount to violating natural law and justified the use of force and wars of conquest.

Africans, however, insisted on their humanity. They could reason and had the right and capability to govern themselves. Colonial domination and repression motivated subject peoples to seek emancipation—and African unity.

After African countries started gaining political independence, their leaders inscribed those aspirations in instruments of continental integration, such as the 1963 Charter of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the 1991 Abuja Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community. But the path was not smooth. Postindependence prosperity waned. Faced with underdevelopment, hard economic times, and global stagnation associated with the oil crisis of the 1970s, African nations used their platform at the United Nations to join with other parts of the global South to demand a New International Economic Order. Among other things, they called for rights to regulate multinational corporations in developing countries, improved terms of trade, tariff reductions by developed countries, and more development assistance. Ultimately, the NIEO cause made no concrete progress.

Disappointment with what was perceived as the failure of international financial institutions to accurately diagnose Africa's developmental challenges led to the approval of the Lagos Plan of Action for the Economic Development of Africa at an OAU conference in Lagos, Nigeria, in 1980. The Lagos Plan emphasized self-reliance, contrary to the World Bank's advice that Africa should look outward and formulate policies to integrate its in-

dustries into the global economy. The OAU built on the Lagos Plan when it enshrined its commitment to establishing an African Economic Community in the Abuja Treaty. Continental free trade would be a key feature of this project.

FORKS IN THE ROAD

The path to the Abuja Treaty was fraught with internal disagreements. This was a legacy of divergent views among the founding fathers of independence concerning the best way to unite Africa. Nations that had formed the Casablanca Group—including Algeria, Egypt, Ghana, Guinea, Libya, Mali, and Morocco—advocated the political unification of all the independent states. Ghanaian President Kwame Nkrumah, a Pan-Africanist and architect of the OAU, argued that pooling the resources of Africa's independent countries in an integrated plan would greatly benefit their mutual development. This, he said, was the only way Africa could industrialize to levels comparable with the West. Nkrumah envisioned a confederal government and an economic union with a common African currency managed by a central bank.

In contrast, the Monrovia Group—including Ethiopia, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Togo, Tunisia, and Zaire—favored a moderate approach to African integration that would not require political union. In 1961, the Monrovia Group convened a conference that approved a Charter of the Organization of African and Malagasy States. This eventually became the basis for the OAU Charter when the OAU was established in 1963. Its aims included promoting African unity, solidarity, and cooperation, while eradicating the remnants of colonialism. The OAU was also committed to coordinating and harmonizing member states' economic policies.

In 2002, the OAU transformed into the African Union. This was more than a rebranding exercise. Now that the OAU's major goal of liberating parts of the continent still under colonial rule had been largely achieved, Africa needed to refocus its energies. An indicator of the shift was the exclusion from the AU's Constitutive Act of clauses barring intervention in the affairs of a member nation that violated the rights of its citizens. Instead, the AU committed itself to intervention as well as democratic institutions and principles, popular participation, and good governance.

> *Xenophobia threatens the project of African unification.*

Through agencies it has since established to implement development programs (such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development), the AU works for unity and promotes continental trade, economic stability, and peace. The keywords in the AU's policies are "self-sustaining development" and "self-reliance." It aims to look within and transform Africa through integration, while also becoming a more effective participant in the global economy.

TANGLED REGIONS

International trade and financial flows, the movement of labor across borders, and advances in information and communications technology—these interconnections define globalization and modern globally networked society. In the last three decades of the twentieth century, Africa's participation in these activities became marginal. The decline in its share of global trade was evident in its exports, which dropped from 3.5 percent to 1.5 percent of the world's total exports between 1970 and 1999.

Such weaknesses drive AU member states to unite in order to strengthen their capacities and bargaining power, so that they can effectively participate in globalization and muster greater influence in international affairs. Of course, Africans have recognized the imperative to cooperate and integrate ever since the colonial era. But global developments now generate opportunities and challenges that are better managed if countries jointly address them.

Regional blocs are increasingly becoming actors in international affairs. The momentum to integrate the African continent and its subregions accelerated in response to examples like the European Union. African countries wanted to better position themselves as a unified bloc able to negotiate with the EU and other major regions and global actors.

In 2017, the Africa-EU triennial summits, which lacked a unified African representative, were upgraded to summits between the EU and the AU. This is only one of several Africa-EU partnership platforms. The EU engaged with North African countries in the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, which was relaunched in 2008 as the Union for the Mediterranean; there is also a South Africa–EU Strategic Partnership. The EU's current focus in these forums is largely on stemming migration

from Africa to Europe. To this end, it pours funds into programs to develop migrants' countries of origin and transit in the hope that this will discourage them from heading for Europe.

The EU has redefined the continent's existing regional groupings, such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC), by entering into economic partnership agreements with them—and with subregions within them. These are essentially trade agreements. In June 2016, the EU signed an agreement with six SADC member states. It is still negotiating one with six other members together with countries in the Horn of Africa, the Indian Ocean, and Central Africa. Critics of these pacts argue that they add up to an EU attempt to undermine Pan-Africanism—a divide-and-rule strategy to guarantee continued European access to Africa's resources.

Other global actors seem to be positioning themselves for the implementation of the AfCFTA. Besides the large increase in its trade with Africa in the past decade, China has expanded its presence on the continent through the construction of physical infrastructure, which may link up to its global Belt and Road Initiative. Chinese enterprises run huge cross-border infrastructure development projects including ports, railways, and roads meant to facilitate transport and boost trade in Africa. China has drawn criticism for investing in countries that have poor human-rights and governance records, without requiring accountability. Some see its actions as a new form of colonization through debt-trap diplomacy, whereby countries that fail to repay Chinese loans are forced to surrender control of resources and infrastructure—as happened in 2018 with a port in Sri Lanka.

But the AU does not lack agency or its own objectives. It develops policies and formulates legislation that member nations adopt to guide continental and regional integration.

Africa may have more regional organizations than any other continent. At least 15 of them are economic communities. Others are dedicated to river-basin resource sharing, peace and security, and environmental affairs. Most of the 55 member states of the AU belong to multiple organizations, resulting in a spaghetti bowl of regionalism.

This complicates African integration. It makes coordination and resource allocation difficult,

Informal traders contribute to processes of regional integration from the bottom up.

leads to conflicting objectives, and renders some of the organizations redundant. It also explains why political will for integration is often lacking. Member states tend to honor only those regional or continental commitments they perceive as most beneficial to their own interests.

Rationalization is among the proposed solutions to the tangle of affiliations. Consolidating some of these groups might help them focus on the goal of unity. The AfCFTA constitutes Africa's major effort to rationalize the multiple trade regimes among the regional communities by creating a single economic area that will be based on common trade rules.

The AU has recognized only eight regional economic communities as the building blocks of African integration. It plans to construct the AfCFTA and eventually the African Economic Community on this foundation. The Abuja Treaty maps out a detailed six-stage process through which the AU aims to achieve this goal by 2028.

HIGH HOPES

The AfCFTA will create a common market for goods and services that includes all 55 African countries in the AU. African heads of state and government decided to create the AfCFTA in 2012 and launched negotiations in June 2015. The talks leading up to the agreement marked the first phase, covering trade in goods and services. Further negotiations continue in a second phase focused on investment, competition policy, intellectual property rights, and possibly e-commerce.

After three years and 10 rounds of negotiations, the final text of the AfCFTA was presented at the March 2018 AU summit in Kigali, Rwanda, where 44 member states signed the agreement. While it was just the beginning of the ratification process, the signing was in itself a significant achievement, marking a major step toward African unity—even though the two largest economies in Africa, Nigeria and South Africa, declined to sign the pact at the Kigali summit. Five more countries, including South Africa, signed on at a July 2018 summit in Nouakchott, Mauritania. The South African Parliament ratified the agreement in December 2018. At the time of writing, Nigeria still had not signed.

On April 2, 2019, the process reached an important milestone when Gambia's parliament approved the deal, making it the 22nd country to

ratify AfCFTA. AU member states had agreed that the pact would become binding after 22 of them ratified it. The agreement will take effect 30 days after the AU has received all 22 instruments of ratification.

When it comes into force, the AfCFTA will cover a total land area (excluding island states) of approximately 11.7 million square miles, measuring some 5,000 miles from north to south and 4,600 miles from east to west. The members will have a collective gross domestic product of $2.5 trillion and a market of 1.2 billion people. Africa's youthful population is projected to double to 2.4 billion by 2050.

The AfCFTA will ease intra-African trade by progressively lowering tariffs from the current level of 6.1 percent. Tariff liberalization initially will be applied to 90 percent of goods. The other 10 percent, including sensitive goods to be listed by individual countries and regional communities, will be addressed later. The agreement also calls for continental harmonization and convergence of standards and procedures to facilitate trade.

Estimates based on studies conducted by the African Trade Policy Center at the UN Economic Commission for Africa project that the AfCFTA will boost trade within Africa by over 50 percent, or about $35 billion, by 2022. Intra-continental trade will rise from the present range of about 12-16 percent of Africa's total trade to levels comparable with other regions of the world, such as the EU (64 percent) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (24 percent).

Larger markets are likely to draw investment to regional infrastructure development. More efficient trade will enhance the global competitiveness of African markets, create employment opportunities, and improve social welfare. Africa will be positioned to achieve greater product diversification and industrialization, a goal that has long proved elusive, as well as peace and stability resulting from greater trade and other joint economic and infrastructure arrangements.

ADVERSE EFFECTS

Yet it is questionable whether implementation of the AfCFTA will be entirely smooth. A lack of political will hampered progress toward previous regional goals. Disparities among African countries in economic development, technology, physical infrastructure, and human resources raise the further question of how the benefits of integration will be distributed. Stronger economies are likely to benefit more than weaker ones, since they will attract more trade and investment. Will benefits be distributed to the losers of integration?

Some studies suggest that about two-thirds of intra-African trade comprises manufactured goods, whereas most of Africa's trade with the rest of the world consists of raw-material exports and imports of finished goods. Nearly 90 percent of Africa's trade is with the world outside the continent. Contrast this with the EU, for example, where nearly two-thirds of total trade is intra-regional.

Optimists say this is Africa's century. But they base this on the robust GDP growth (second only to Asia's) recorded in the first dozen years of the twenty-first century, largely driven by revenue from exporting raw materials. That commodities boom coincided with renewed calls for Pan-Africanism or an African renaissance from the likes of former South African President Thabo Mbeki.

With the AfCFTA, Africa may have a more solid basis for a renaissance. It is at last poised to diversify its external trade and grow a balanced export base including agricultural and manufactured goods. The shift to exports that are less dependent on commodities has the advantage not only of guaranteeing stable trade; it will also help create jobs that are more labor intensive.

Another aim of the trade agreement is to expand business opportunities for micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which account for about 80 percent of businesses in Africa. The Protocol on Trade in Services calls for improving their export capacity, whether they are in the formal or informal sector (though it is somewhat vague as to how this will be done). Since most African countries export raw materials, lowering tariffs on trade within the continent will create opportunities to add value and produce intermediate goods that can be channeled into regional value chains. This will give SMEs a chance to penetrate global markets in the long run.

Notwithstanding these prospects for widespread benefits, the AfCFTA probably will have adverse effects on small economies and less developed countries, if Africa's experience with structural adjustment programs that accompanied market liberalization in the 1980s and 1990s is any guide. Firms exposed to greater competition are prone to downsize and outsource certain functions or hire workers on temporary contracts without benefits or legal and social protections.

Tariff liberalization is likely to hurt economies that have limited productive capacities. Most de-

veloping countries in Africa depend on tariffs for government revenue. The AU will have to decide how to deal with such challenges.

It might consider how other regions of the world devised solutions based on their own experiences. The EU devotes over a third of its total budget to its structural and cohesion funds, intended to assist less developed regions and reduce disparities in wealth, income, and opportunities among the EU's member nations.

Further potential AfCFTA challenges relate to implementation. Poor infrastructure, lengthy customs procedures, and non-tariff barriers to trade—such as import bans and licenses, or unreasonable product labeling and packaging standards—are among the obstacles the AfCFTA seeks to address. It must also contend with an overall lack of harmonization and standardization of policies, programs, and procedures.

BORDER CROSSINGS

Transnational labor mobility will be integral to the continental free trade area. Some services that are going to be traded across nation-state borders will require people to go along with them. Ideally, the free movement of goods and services should coexist with the free movement of people.

With the AfCFTA, Africa may have a more solid basis for a renaissance.

A protocol on Free Movement of Persons, Right of Residence, and Right of Establishment was introduced alongside the AfCFTA at the March 2018 AU summit in Kigali. Article 14 of the protocol calls for free movement of labor among AU member states. The provision derives from the Abuja Treaty, which sets out a vision of labor exchanges between African countries, from those with labor surpluses to those facing shortages.

However, only 30 countries signed the Free Movement Protocol in Kigali. That was 14 fewer than signed the AfCFTA at the same summit. International migration within Africa is politically sensitive—all the more so when it involves the migration of unskilled and semiskilled workers.

It is also important to note that more international migration occurs within Africa than to destinations outside the continent. These flows are mostly between proximate states, and concentrated in the eight regional economic communities. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has the highest level of intra-regional migration.

Migration within Africa is largely driven by disparities between regional hegemons and their neighbors. Nigeria accounts for about 75 percent of total ECOWAS GDP, while South Africa generates about 61 percent of the SADC's GDP. Contrast this with Namibia, for example, whose share in the latter group's GDP is just 1.8 percent, or less developed countries like Malawi, 59 percent of whose population lives in extreme poverty.

The marginalized populations who work in the informal sector in most African countries tend to gravitate toward the more prosperous regional hegemons as they search for opportunities. Many of them, including cross-border traders, are entrepreneurial.

While some countries and regional groupings increasingly recognize informal cross-border trade, others continue to ignore it. And some countries criminalize such trade, treating it no differently than underworld activities such as trafficking in drugs, small arms, and humans.

Intra-African traders and migrants also face hostile receptions from poorer citizens in some countries. Migration sometimes triggers xenophobic outrage in host communities when people fear that foreigners are stealing the jobs of locals. Political leaders may encourage such fears. On March 26, 2019, for example, African foreign nationals including Malawian truck drivers were attacked by locals in Durban, South Africa, ahead of national elections in May. About 350 Malawians fled their homes for shelter in town halls and police stations; some returned to Malawi. This kind of xenophobia threatens the project of African unification, undermining social cohesion at the grassroots and policy convergence at the continental level.

GRASSROOTS TRADERS

Informal cross-border traders deal in various goods, ranging from primary agricultural products to manufactured items, industrial goods, and services. Most of their trading activities, however, are not captured in official statistics. This leads some scholars and policy makers to assume that they are dealing in illicit contraband.

But these traders make a positive contribution to society. They generate income and employment, help sustain local livelihoods, and contribute to poverty alleviation. Because they tend to be self-

employed, they create work for themselves, and some employ family members and relatives. They may also employ other people, such as porters and drivers to help load and transport goods. Most of these traders have risen out of extreme poverty. Their earnings allow them to build houses and pay their children's school fees and other bills.

Informal traders contribute not only to the countries where they operate but also to processes of regional integration from the bottom up. They source and then distribute goods among members of regional economic communities. Studies conducted in the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), for instance, show that they have established elaborate distribution networks that extend beyond the region—and to remote areas that formal businesses cannot reach.

Data that indicate intra-Africa trade is low tell only one side of the story. It would be higher if informal cross-border trade were included. COMESA and the East African Community (EAC) both recognize the potential contribution informal traders can make to integration. Data from COMESA show that they account for approximately 30 percent of the region's total trade.

COMESA and the EAC run an initiative called the Simplified Trade Regime, which helps traders adhere to rules of origin for the goods in which they deal. Most informal traders are semiliterate or illiterate and have difficulty with complex customs documents and procedures. Countries that participate in the program exchange tariff concessions and create a common list of qualifying goods. Traders can obtain simplified certificates of origin and customs documents. Desk officers at the borders help them complete forms and answer trade-related questions.

Women comprise about 70 percent of informal cross-border traders in Africa. The dominance of women in the informal sector reflects their limited access to formal work. Women tend to be less educated and take poorly paid jobs that require little or no skills. High levels of unemployment among men may push their female relatives to seek work in the informal sector to support their families. If not well managed, the AfCFTA is likely to exacerbate these conditions.

RISK AND REWARD

While the AfCFTA promises great economic benefits for Africa, there may also be social costs. If countries aggressively liberalize their markets, some people will lose their jobs—and most of them will fall to the margins in the informal sector. This is what happened after most African countries implemented structural adjustment programs in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Unlike people already operating in the informal sector, new entrants may not have coping strategies to fall back on.

Informal workers face many difficulties, including arbitrary confiscation of merchandise, harassment, and other forms of abuse, not to mention the lack of job security and benefits. But the AfCFTA might ease their plight: by reducing tariffs, it could encourage them to formalize their businesses and gain the same protection as formal firms.

Many people who dwell in African borderlands engage in cross-border vocations. But some of them cannot afford the fees to obtain national passports, let alone the African passport launched by the AU in 2016. To date, that passport is only accessible to African elites. And even for them, it is no guarantee of free movement. A Nigerian tycoon known as Africa's richest person, Aliko Dangote, alleged at a 2018 AU trade summit that a member state had denied him a visa.

There is a seeming contradiction in the common identity championed by the African Union. While its policies give the impression that the group is a united actor in international affairs, the criminalization of informal cross-border traders by most member states and xenophobic attacks on them in some countries raise doubts about African unity. Yet the cross-border activities of these traders help integrate African economies from the bottom up. Despite the challenges they face, people on the ground are always on the move and cannot be constrained.

As the continental free-trade area takes shape, it will inevitably face teething problems. A key to success will be persuading stakeholders at all levels—from micro to macro—of its legitimacy. Constant consultation and communication is essential to realizing Africa's long-standing ambition to unite. ∎

Momentum Builds for the Restitution of African Art

SYLVESTER OKWUNODU OGBECHIE

Recent events have crystallized the debate over African cultural patrimony in the collections of Western museums. First, in November 2017, French President Emmanuel Macron gave a speech at the University of Ouagadougou in Burkina Faso in which he endorsed the repatriation of African artworks and artifacts from French museums to their respective countries of origin. Macron was responding to a growing controversy in France over the fate of objects taken from African countries during French colonial rule. Arguing that these objects should be made accessible to Africans in their own countries and not only in the capitals of Europe, Macron called for "the conditions to be met" within the next five years for their temporary or permanent return.

More recently, in December 2018, the long-gestating Museum of Black Civilizations (MCN) finally opened in Dakar, Senegal. Decades earlier, Léopold Sédar Senghor, the pan-Africanist philosopher and first president of Senegal, had crafted the original vision for the museum, which he saw as a vital step toward reclaiming African cultural identity in the postcolonial era. Taken together, the MCN opening and Macron's stance on repatriation signal a new phase in postcolonial Africa's struggle for equality and fairness in the international cultural sphere.

Macron's speech received global attention and prompted museums and African countries alike to revisit the vexed issue of what to do with objects looted during the period of Western colonization. At the Berlin Conference in 1884–85, European powers (with the United States as a signatory) partitioned Africa among themselves. King Leopold II of Belgium, a principal organizer of the conference, secured control over the Congo and executed a brutal policy of resource extraction that killed an estimated 10 million Congolese people—and resulted in the wholesale removal of cultural

treasures to the Royal Museum for Central Africa in Tervuren. Similar campaigns such as the British invasion of the Kingdom of Benin in 1897 and France's consolidation of its colonies, especially in West Africa, allowed Western museums to accumulate massive collections of African cultural patrimony, including the Benin bronzes and spoils from France's Dakar-Djibouti Ethnographic and Linguistic Mission in the early 1930s.

In March 2018, building on his speech, Macron commissioned a report from scholars Felwine Sarr of Senegal and Bénédicte Savoy of France on how to best implement the return of thousands of African objects held in French museums. Published on November 21, 2018, the 252-page report is intended to serve as a nonbinding roadmap for bilateral agreements between France and certain African countries on the repatriation of their cultural patrimony.

The report lays out an argument for restitution based on France's colonial history and indicts European museums for becoming—wittingly or not—the public archives of a colonial system of appropriation and alienation. It calls for French museums to produce thorough inventories of all sub-Saharan African cultural patrimony and related documentation in their collections, to be shared with all affected African countries, which could then make claims for the return of specific objects. The report further recommends that France return all claimed artworks to these countries.

Days after the report's release, Macron displayed his resolve to follow through on its recommendations by agreeing to the Republic of Benin's demand for the return of 26 artworks, including nineteenth-century iron figures of King Glele looted by French troops during the 1892 invasion of the Kingdom of Dahomey, which are currently on display in the Louvre. These pieces are examples of a key point made by the Sarr-Savoy Report: the sheer volume of African artifacts in French and other European museum collections reveals the rationalized system of exploitation through which colonial authorities

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systematically plundered African societies. As with the exploitation of African natural resources from the colonial period onward (and of Africans as slaves for centuries before), Western countries never acknowledged that Africans have a right to their own bodies or resources. Macron's public support for restitution therefore represents a major step forward in the campaign for African ownership and stewardship of cultural patrimony.

THE PROTECTION PLOY

Whether or not French museums actually return African objects to their countries of origin, the Sarr-Savoy report and Macron's initial pledge of restitution have forever changed the debate. Many African countries immediately reiterated claims for the return of their cultural patrimony. However, some European museum officials and governments met the report with indignation and warned that Macron's actions threaten to empty their museums of important holdings. They argued against permanently returning artworks, though some museum officials suggested loaning African objects to their countries of origin as a compromise. Western museums favor loans over actual restitution because this allows them to set the conditions for how such works should be repatriated. By asserting their authority in this manner, they revert to colonial mindsets that deny Africans agency over their own cultural heritage.

Colonial mindsets deny Africans agency over their own cultural heritage.

In October 2018, the Benin Dialogue Group, comprising Nigerian and European museum officials, announced an agreement for European institutions to "loan" the Benin bronzes to Nigeria upon the completion of a new museum in Benin City. While it stipulated that such "loans" do not imply that African countries are waiving their demands for permanent repatriation of looted cultural objects, it nevertheless was a tacit acknowledgement that Western museums have some intrinsic rights to the contested artworks.

The Benin Dialogue Group's conclusions reflect the principal argument against restitution: that African countries do not have the necessary infrastructure to securely safeguard and exhibit these artworks. The idea that Africans cannot be trusted to protect their own heritage has long been a fundamental tenet of the Western museum oligarchy that essentially controls a global system of cultural valuation, clinging to its hoard of artifacts plundered mainly from African and other indigenous peoples across the world. This favorite ploy of apologists for the existing museum power structure is not only arrogant—it amounts in many ways to crass racism.

Dakar's Museum of Black Civilizations rebuts this argument in the most spectacular fashion. The sprawling edifice is a world-class institution in both its architecture and its operational protocols. It is one of several similar museums under construction in various parts of Africa that are designed to house, among other treasures, artworks restituted from Western museums.

The MCN directs attention to the fact that African cultural patrimony consists of more than the figurative sculptures and ritual objects that constitute most of the current African holdings in Western museums. The preservation of intangible heritage (songs, dance, performance, and other aspects of culture) is also important in the project to recover Africa's cultural memory in the postcolonial era. The MCN thus represents a major advance toward realizing visions of an Africa with a strong cultural identity, complex heritage, and shared values. In an interview with *Le Monde* in 2016, Hamady Bocoum, the director of the new museum, said the MCN is focused on collaborating with other institutions in Africa, cultivating international partnerships, and highlighting the works of living African artists.

If the MCN heralds a new era, Berlin's Humboldt Forum seems to be stuck in the past. The administrators of this new museum, scheduled to open at the end of 2019 with a collection that includes many looted African artifacts, so far have been intransigently opposed to demands for restitution. The Humboldt complex, arguably the largest and most ambitious cultural project in Germany, is key to the government's plans to recover the lost architectural and civic history of the capital; it is a reconstruction of the Berlin Palace, which was demolished after being heavily damaged by Allied bombing in World War II. The museum is designed to consolidate the collections of Berlin's Ethnological Museum (formerly located at Dahlem) and the Museum of Asian Art.

Germany has long been accused of a lack of transparency regarding its colonial history in Africa, which despite its short duration was one of the bloodiest. The genocide perpetrated by German

colonists against the Herero and Namaqua peoples in what is now Namibia, with a combined death toll over 150,000, was a clear precursor to Nazi atrocities, but has not been properly accounted for in a similar manner. Given the Humboldt's relative silence on the issue, critics accuse it of effacing German culpability for colonial crimes, including the dispossession of African cultural patrimony.

The Humboldt claims that the history of colonialism will be one of its main subjects, but a lack of adequate funding for researching the provenance of African objects in German collections suggests that the museum is not making this a priority. There are, however, ongoing efforts in Germany to more carefully attend to the disposition of artifacts acquired during the colonial era. In 2018, the German Museums Association published a code of conduct titled *Guidelines on Dealing with Collections from Colonial Contexts*, but it mostly emphasizes loans and cooperation with source countries rather than outright repatriation of artworks.

WHO OWNS THE IMAGE?

The Sarr-Savoy Report argues that the return of African cultural objects could herald a new economy of exchange in which the African continent would no longer be seen as a mere site of predatory extraction. Building on Macron's speech, it generated fresh momentum behind calls for restitution. Meanwhile, the MCN's plans to collaborate with other African institutions and highlight different forms of tangible and intangible African cultural patrimony speak to a new movement among scholars and culture workers to redefine the continent's heritage on its own terms.

These are all positive developments, but another issue is at stake beyond whether and how to restitute or repatriate African artifacts and artworks. There is an equally important question concerning ownership of the intellectual property rights to these objects in the digital age. The future of wealth lies in the control of such rights to specific cultural properties, and African countries should benefit from the revenues they produce. These include image rights, licensing rights for various purposes, and protocols for the dissemination of important information about returned artworks.

Of what use would it be if Western museums return African artworks in their collections to African counterparts but retain the ability to authorize digital reproductions that are indistinguishable from the original? This would diminish the value of the actual objects, since viewers are more likely to encounter them online than they are to visit African museums and see them in person.

The growth in circulation and consumption of digital media adds urgency to these questions about who owns the image encoded in photographic and digital representations of artworks. As image banks become more prevalent and influential, it will be necessary to question why the endless appropriation of African art never benefits the descendants of its original producers and owners. Instead, Africans have been subject to ever-compounding losses, from the looting of the continent's art during the colonial period to its display and sale within the museum and gallery spaces of the global art market, and now to the monetization of images of these works in the contemporary global media. Finding ways to halt this continuous process of dispossession must be central to further discussions about the ownership, restitution, and repatriation of African cultural patrimony. ∎

Everyday Life in a Post-Slavery Society

SANDRA E. GREENE

What is it like to be a slave descendant in the country that most recently abolished slavery and that is ranked among the highest for prevalence of slavery in the world? How do female slave descendants navigate their social positions while being disadvantaged in many ways by both their genealogies and gender?

These are the questions that frame Katherine Ann Wiley's *Work, Social Status, and Gender in Post-Slavery Mauritania*. Yet they are just as pertinent for societies that abolished slavery more than a century ago. The United States abolished most forms of legal slavery in 1865; Mauritania abolished slavery in 1981. The possibility for comparison is what makes this book particularly intriguing. Similarities exist, but there are also quite profound differences.

In all such places, the slavery past has had a profound impact on the everyday lives of slave descendants today. In Mauritania, as in the Americas, those who are of obvious sub-Saharan African descent are assumed to be of slave descent, even though this sweeping generalization is not accurately applied to all. The majority of these people, in both Mauritania and the Americas, have been (and in Mauritania are still) excluded from powerful political positions.

In Mauritania, most slave owners controlled relatively small numbers of enslaved women, men, and children. This was also slavery's most common form in the United States, even though images of large plantations (found also in this book) erroneously dominate our understanding of American slavery. In most places, the descendants of enslavers and the enslaved have largely shared the same language and culture, while urbanization provided slave descendants everywhere with opportunities for wealth accumulation that did not exist in the rural areas where they once lived. Deeply held patriarchal ideas influence gender relations in all societies, as do certain religiously influenced values and norms.

That is where the similarities end, however. Today, elite Mauritanians (known as Bīẓān) base their status more on descent from Muslim Arab and Berber ancestors rather than solely on race. Those of slave descent (Ḥarāṭīn) are also defined not just by their race—they tend to have darker complexions—but also by what others know of their genealogies.

This is a society where social identities rooted in relatively rural slave relations and notions of descent are not easily shed even in an urban environment. Life in post-slavery Mauritania reveals a great deal about the different ways the slavery past can intersect with cultural norms and particular historical developments to generate a range of societal and individual ideas about social status, gender relations, and work in former slave societies.

Work, Social Status, and Gender in Post-Slavery Mauritania
by Katherine Ann Wiley
Indiana University Press, 2018

NEW IDENTITIES AND VALUES

Mauritania is a poor country, wracked by periodic droughts. The vast majority of Mauritanians have found themselves increasingly impoverished by environmental changes. The government responded in the late 1960s and through the mid-1970s by seeking assistance from the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. The policies recommended by these two bodies, known as structural adjustment, were implemented by the Mauritanian government but only exacerbated the plight of the majority. Agricultural production, the mainstay of the economy, continued to decline. Prices increased, as did unemployment and the gap between the haves and the have-nots.

This is where Wiley's story of everyday lives begins. How have people coped given the dire circumstances in which they found themselves? How have slave descendants, specifically women slave descendants, navigated these difficult waters, given their already quite disadvantaged positions as

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both women and as members of a socially despised group?

Wiley, an assistant professor of anthropology at Pacific Lutheran University, answers these questions by examining the lives of a number of Ḥarāṭīn women and their families who reside in the southern town of Kankossa, some 430 driving miles from the capital, Nouakchott. Kankossa, however, is no ordinary town. Established in the 1950s as a base for a French colonial agricultural station, it provided—in contrast to most other Mauritanian towns—employment opportunities for the Ḥarāṭīn outside the master-slave relationship.

Wiley writes that "while in some ways performing low-status work such as manual labor at the Colonial Institute of Fruit and Citrus reproduced Ḥarāṭīn's low social rank" by reinforcing the notion that they were best fitted for manual labor, "their involvement in the institute gave them possibilities for getting ahead, such as earning an income. . . . Employees were paid fair wages or at least more than they might have earned elsewhere." These gains accrued largely to Ḥarāṭīn men, but women ultimately found ways to benefit as well.

By working at the institute's date farms, a number of Ḥarāṭīn men learned that they could legally claim the land on which they had established rudimentary homes and gardens. This provided them with an opportunity to gain both social and economic security, independent of their masters as well as the French. As the drought hampered both the institute's work and Mauritanian agricultural efforts, wage labor became even more important. Food was increasingly imported and expensive due to the decline of local agricultural production.

Eventually, the institute closed and Ḥarāṭīn men in Kankossa began to migrate to other areas where there were more jobs. Some Ḥarāṭīn women left as well, but the many who remained in Kankossa found themselves now heads of their households, working more intensively to support their families. Women had worked before the migration, but their labor as cooks, wet nurses, and farmers was denigrated as manual work, suitable for them alone. More respectable women's work—financing caravans, serving as healers and midwives—was the preserve of more elite Bīẓān women. But whatever work they did, and whether they were Ḥarāṭīn or Bīẓān, all women were necessarily defined as the dependents of men according to local interpretations of Islam.

Forced to become heads of households, Ḥarāṭīn women (and even some Bīẓān women) began to enter the marketplace not as dependent workers but as independent entrepreneurs. This allowed them to develop new understandings of themselves, which they used to construct alternative social hierarchies and ideologies that mixed old values with new ones. Some have begun to redefine their new forms of work as socially and economically quite respectable.

Interestingly, these reconfigured values are in conformity with and deeply influenced by the neoliberal policies and values promoted by the Mauritanian government—the same policies that have increased the gap between the haves and the have-nots. Women's work in the marketplace is deemed more worthy than labor performed within the household; time spent at work is valued over leisure; individualism is emphasized over older group identities that structurally devalued both slave descendants and women.

At the same time, Ḥarāṭīn women have embraced older notions about proper Islamic feminine comportment. This they strive to embody through their choice of clothing, while also embracing a new social identity, Khaẓarīn, which distances them from other Ḥarāṭīn women as "people who can claim markers of social worth" based on "older valued characteristics—wealth and respect—and also new ones—long held freedom [from slavery] and education." In other words, they construct new identities and norms by consciously mixing the new with the old.

Social identities rooted in relatively rural slave relations are not easily shed even in an urban environment.

WOMEN OF KANKOSSA

To give substance to her understanding of the opportunities and challenges faced by the Ḥarāṭīn women of Kankossa, Wiley describes in wonderful detail the daily lives of five different women as seen through her interactions with them. She discusses, for example, how Toutou, her best friend in Kankossa, uses jokes to assert her status, critiquing prevailing hierarchies while also challenging men to live up to older values. She describes the material exchanges that occur at Meimouna's wedding to illustrate how such exchanges are used

to assert social rank. Her discussion of Lakhasara's market strategies and the conversations that occur at Leilah's veil boutique demonstrates the ways in which Ḥarāṭīn women maintain the elevated economic status they have achieved while also asserting the importance of local Islamic values.

Although Wiley focuses largely on the daily lives of these Ḥarāṭīn women, the men in their lives as well as the few Bīẓān women and men with whom they interact are not left invisible in this book. They too are differentiated by personality, status, and wealth. This, in turn, provides a fuller perspective on Kankossa society and a deeper understanding of the women themselves: of how they have used their social ties to selectively embrace older values while also generating new identities as they take advantage of opportunities often forced on them by external circumstances.

As slave descendants, these women have managed to redefine themselves for themselves. And they have challenged the larger society to rethink some of the social, economic, and cultural values that have been in place for so long. As they embrace individualism, and as they distance themselves from other, poorer slave descendants by redefining themselves as Khaẓarīn, we can only wonder what additional changes may be in store for them and Kankossa as a whole. What we do know is that these women slave descendants will likely continue to help shape that future. ∎

March 2019

INTERNATIONAL

China-Europe Relations

March 12—The European Commission, the EU's executive body, issues a report calling China "an economic competitor" and a "systemic rival promoting alternative models of governance." The warning reflects concerns over rising Chinese influence in Europe. More than a dozen EU member states have agreed to host Chinese infrastructure investments as part of the globe-spanning Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

March 23—Chinese President Xi Jinping joins Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte at a signing ceremony in Rome for a memorandum of understanding on a framework for Italy's participation in the BRI. Italy, mired in a recession, becomes the largest Western nation to sign on, ignoring cautions from the EU and the US. The deal calls for cooperation across a range of sectors and gives a state-owned Chinese company a role in managing ports in Genoa and Trieste.

AFGHANISTAN

March 12—Peace talks in Doha, Qatar, between US envoy Zalmay Khalilzad and representatives of the Taliban end after more than 2 weeks without a deal. However, both sides say they made progress and plan to meet again. The discussions have focused on the timeline for a US troop withdrawal, predicated on a Taliban pledge not to harbor terrorist groups that would use the country as a base for international operations. Meanwhile, fighting continues. The Taliban March 11 killed or captured an entire unit of more than 50 Afghan soldiers in an attack on an army base in the northwest.

ALGERIA

March 11—President Abdelaziz Bouteflika issues a statement that he is dropping his bid for a 5th term and will leave office before the end of April, ending a 20-year authoritarian reign. An announcement that he would run for reelection had provoked massive street protests in recent weeks. Bouteflika, 82, has not spoken in public since suffering a stroke in 2013 that left him paralyzed, and is seen as a figurehead for other elites ruling behind the scenes. The protests continue, demanding the ouster of his entire regime.

March 26—Army Chief of Staff Ahmed Gaid Salah says Bouteflika should be declared unfit and removed from office.

BRAZIL

March 12—Two former police officers are arrested on charges of assassinating Marielle Franco, a Rio de Janeiro councilwoman and prominent Afro-Brazilian gay rights activist, in March 2018. Her supporters believe she was targeted because of her human rights advocacy and criticism of police brutality.

March 21—Former President Michel Temer is arrested on charges of taking bribes in a sprawling corruption scandal involving the state-owned oil company Petrobras. It has already resulted in the conviction of 1 other former president, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, and other business and political leaders.

ISRAEL

March 25—With Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu at his side in the White House, US President Donald Trump signs a proclamation recognizing Israeli sovereignty over the Golan Heights, which Israel seized from Syria in the 1967 Arab-Israeli War. The move, which reverses decades of US policy, is seen as timed to boost Netanyahu's prospects in Israeli elections in April.

KAZAKHSTAN

March 19—Nursultan Nazarbayev, 78, announces his resignation as president after 30 years of authoritarian rule. However, he will retain influential positions as head of the ruling party and chairman of the national security council. The speaker of the upper house of parliament, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, is named acting president. Nazarbayev has led Kazakhstan since 1989, when it was still part of the Soviet Union.

MOZAMBIQUE

March 14—Cyclone Idai floods vast stretches of the country, killing hundreds and cutting off hundreds of thousands of others. The port city of Beira is devastated, and the death toll is expected to rise. The cyclone also hits neighboring Malawi and Zimbabwe.

NEW ZEALAND

March 14—A gunman espousing white nationalist views attacks 2 mosques in Christchurch, killing 50 worshippers with a semi-automatic assault rifle and posting a live video of the attacks on Facebook. He is arrested at the scene and charged with murder the next day.

March 20—Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern announces that the government will move quickly to pass legislation banning military-style semiautomatic weapons, assault rifles, and associated ammunition magazines and parts. She says the government will buy back such weapons already in the hands of the public, following a model instituted by Australia after a mass shooting in 1996.

SLOVAKIA

March 30—Zuzana Caputova, a pro-Western liberal lawyer, wins a presidential election with 58% of the vote in a runoff against the populist ruling party's candidate, and will be the nation's 1st female president. She entered the race after joining protests against the February 2018 murders of journalist Jan Kuciak, who had investigated political corruption, and his fiancee.

THAILAND

March 24—The country holds its first general election since a 2014 coup installed a military junta.

March 27—An opposition coalition led by the Pheu Thai Party, whose government was ousted in the 2014 coup, says it has won a majority in the lower house of parliament, though official results will not be released until May. But a party loyal to Prayuth Chan-ocha, the head of the junta, also claims victory.

TURKEY

March 31—In local elections held nationwide, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) appears to lose control of Ankara and Istanbul, suffering its heaviest electoral setback to date despite his frenetic campaigning. The AKP challenges the results in both cities, claiming irregularities.

UNITED KINGDOM

March 29—On the day Britain was supposed to leave the EU, Parliament for the 3rd time rejects the exit agreement negotiated by Prime Minister Theresa May, despite her promise to leave office if her Conservative Party backed it. The EU has extended the deadline to April 12, but both sides have intensified preparations for the possibility of a chaotic exit with no deal in place. ∎

20°

PORTUGAL   SPAIN

*Madeira Islands
(Portugal)*

Rabat ✪

Algiers ✪   Tunis ✪
TUNISIA   *Mediterranean Sea*

GREECE   ITALY   TURKEY

CYPRUS   SYRIA   IRAN

LEBANON
ISRAEL

30°

*Canary Islands
(Spain)*

MOROCCO

JORDAN   IRAQ   KUWAIT

BAHRAIN
QATAR
U.A.E.

Laayoun ✪
**WESTERN
SAHARA**
(occupied by
Morocco)

ALGERIA   LIBYA   EGYPT   Cairo ✪   *Suez
Canal*

Nile R.

Red Sea   SAUDI
ARABIA

S A H A R A   *Lake
Nasser*

20°

MAURITANIA
Nouakchott ✪   **MALI**

NIGER

CHAD   Khartoum ✪   **ERITREA**   Asmara ✪
White Nile   *Blue Nile*

YEMEN   *Gulf of Aden*

Senegal R.

Dakar ✪   Bamako ✪   Niamey ✪
SENEGAL
GAMBIA   *Niger R.*   **BURKINA
FASO**   *Lake Chad*

SUDAN   **DJIBOUTI**   Djibouti ✪

10°

Banjul ✪
Bissau ✪   **GUINEA-
BISSAU**   Ouagadougou ✪   **BENIN**   Ndjamena ✪
GUINEA   *Volta R.*   **TOGO**   **NIGERIA**
Chari R.   **SOUTH
SUDAN**   **ETHIOPIA**   Addis
Ababa ✪

10°

Conakry ✪
Freetown ✪   **SIERRA LEONE**   **IVORY
COAST**   **GHANA**   Porto-
Novo ✪   Abuja ✪   *Benue R.*   **CENTRAL
AFRICAN REPUBLIC**   Juba ✪   **SOMALIA**

Monrovia ✪   Yamoussoukro ✪   Lomé ✪   Lagos ✪
LIBERIA   Abidjan ✪   Accra ✪   Malabo ✪
CAMEROON   Bangui ✪   *Lake
Rudolph*   Mogadishu ✪

Equator   **EQUATORIAL GUINEA**   Yaoundé ✪   *Congo R.*   **UGANDA**   **KENYA**
SÃO TOMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE   Kampala ✪   Nairobi ✪

0°   São
Tomé ✪   Libreville ✪
GABON   **DEM. REP.
OF CONGO**   **RWANDA**   Kigali ✪   *Lake
Victoria*   0°

Brazzaville ✪   **BURUNDI**   Bujumbura ✪
CONGO REP.   Kinshasa ✪   *Kasai R.*   Dodoma ✪   **TANZANIA**   *Pemba*
Zanzibar

Cabinda
(Angola)   *Lake
Tanganyika*   Dar es Salaam ✪

ATLANTIC   Luanda ✪   *Lake
Nyasa*

10°   **OCEAN**   **ANGOLA**   **MALAWI**   **COMOROS**   10°
Moroni ✪

Lilongwe ✪
ZAMBIA   *Zambezi R.*

Okavango R.   Lusaka ✪   **MOZAMBIQUE**   **MADAGASCAR**   Antananarivo ✪

Harare ✪   Antananarivo ✪

20°   Windhoek ✪   **BOTSWANA**   **ZIMBABWE**   *Mozambique Channel*   20°

NAMIBIA   Gaborone ✪   *Limpopo R.*   Mbabane ✪   Maputo ✪
Pretoria ✪   **SWAZILAND**

Vaal R.   **LESOTHO**   **INDIAN**
Maseru ✪   Maseru ✪

AFRICA

✪ **National capitals**   *Orange R.*   **SOUTH AFRICA**   **OCEAN**

• **Other cities**   Cape Town ✪

0 200 400 600 800 Miles   *Cape of
Good Hope*

© Current History

Tropic of Capricorn

20°   10°   0°   10°   20°   30°   40°   50°