

CDDRL

WORKING PAPERS

Number 147
November 2013

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The Tortuous Trajectories of Democracy and the Persistence of Authoritarianism in Africa

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Abstract

This paper offers a systematic account of political regime changes in Sub-Saharan Africa from 1996-2010. Are democratic transition processes a variance of a singular domestic politico-institutional model (political protest, political mobilization, and democratization), as Michael Bratton and Nicolas van de Walle (1997) claimed, or do other variables matter in democratic transition processes? What conditions create and maintain democracy in Sub-Saharan Africa? Combining qualitative and quantitative methods, this paper examines the development of Sub-Saharan African political regimes, contrasting the pre and post-Cold War periods (1960-1989 and 1996-2010) to understand their determinants. It focuses on the new transformations observed since the beginning of the twenty-first century, assessing recent regime history and examining the factors (political, governance, economic and international) that have contributed to democratic development in some states and autocracy in others. The findings show that democratic transitions are not only the variance of the Bratton and Van de Walle model, which downplays economic and international variables. The process is mainly, but not always, determined by domestic politico-institutional factors. Foreign intervention and economic conditions are also important determinants of democratization in Sub-Saharan Africa in the post-Cold War era.

I. Introduction

Following the initial democratic openings in the early 1990s, democracy and good governance in Sub-Saharan Africa¹ experienced significant decline in the ensuing two decades (Diamond, 2009; Van de Walle, 2009). In many countries, including Kenya (2007-2008), Zimbabwe (2008-2009), Gabon (2009), Niger (2010), Cote d'Ivoire (2010-2011), and Mali (2012), electoral competition has been characterized by violence and/or military intervention following flawed elections or situations in which incumbents refused to relinquish power after losing at the ballot. While a number of countries remained on the path towards democratic consolidation following the end of the Cold War, many remained either purely autocratic (for example Angola, Cameroon, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan, and Uganda) or had mixed regimes which permitted limited electoral competition (for example Tanzania and Kenya). This raises the question, why did some African countries experience democratic transition and consolidation in the two decades following the end of the Cold War while others did not, and what are the political regimes trajectories and transition processes? Are democratic transition processes a variance of a singular domestic politico-institutional model (political protest, political mobilization, and democratization), as Michael Bratton and Nicolas van de Walle (1997) claimed, or do countries have other democratic transition processes? What conditions create and maintain democracy in Sub-Saharan Africa?

Scholars have analyzed the democratization process in Africa during the 20th century through case studies, thematic analysis, and cross-national comparisons (Bratton and Van de Walle, 1997; Diamond and Plattner, 1999, 2010; Gazibo, 2005; Posner and Young,

¹ Hereafter Africa.

2007; Bratton, 2007; Diamond, 2008; Joseph, 2008; Van de Walle, 2010; Peiffer and Englebert, 2012; Opalo, 2012; Bates and al. forthcoming). Bratton and Van de Walle's 1997 seminal work provides a useful framework for analyzing the democratization process in Africa², focusing mainly on political and institutional factors while downplaying economic and international ones. They consider a three-step democratic transition process: political protest, political liberalization and democratization³. They argue that the experiments⁴ of all the African countries are the variance of this singular model. The approach of Bratton and Van de Walle, while suitable for analyzing the short 1990-1994 transition period, is limited when we consider the evolution of African political regimes more broadly. This paper proposes a better approach by analyzing democratization in Africa over two periods -1960-1989 and 1996-2010)."

This study proposes a systematic account of political regime changes in Africa between 1996-2010 through institutional, international and economic approaches. Echoing Bratton and Van de Walle, the institutional approach facilitates understanding of domestic consideration inherent to the stability or transition of political regimes, including the role of institutions, political actors, governance, and the context shaping rules of the game. Contrary to Bratton and Van de Walle, economic and international factors are emphasized rather than downplayed. The economic approach allows an understanding of the historical and economic drivers of regime change. By covering a longer period (over 50 years), the

² Bratton and Van de Walle (1997, page 41) present their approach as follow: "As should be abundantly clear, we favor an explanation of regime transitions based on *domestic political* considerations".

³ Bratton and Van de Walle, p. 98. They argue that the experiments of all the African countries are the variance of this singular model.

⁴ Precluded transitions with the absence of the three steps; failure to democratize; liberalization without democratization; democratization without protest; democratization, and liberalization followed by political protest

paper considers factors that were not observable over the 1990-1994 covered by Bratton and Van de Walle. The role of international actors is considered as empirical evidence shows that some new democratic transitions (Liberia for example) were driven by international actors that have imposed a democratic package with the peace framework.

This paper systematically compares all of the 48 Sub-Saharan African states⁵, contrasting the pre and post Cold War periods (1960-1989 to 1996-2010) to provide new insights on the development of African political regimes emphasizing. It establishes a typology and classification of African political regimes, and uses a contrasted comparative method and eclectic theoretical approaches analyzing the evolution and trajectories of political regimes. The variation-finding comparison explores the similarities and differences between the different trajectories in terms of political, governance, economic, and international factors. It also renews the typology of democratic transition processes. The work mainly focuses on the 1996-2010 period, as this is the most critical period with new developments providing original findings complementing the existing literature on the third wave of democratization in Africa, period not systematically covered by most scholars.

The findings show that democratic transition processes are not only the variance of the politico-institutional model proposed by Bratton and van de Walle (1997). Recent history of political regimes and empirical evidences show that new models have evolved, emphasizing the role of international factors (Peiffer and Englebert, 2012) but also the domestic ones on the long term (Table A). In terms of political factors, uninterrupted

⁵ South Sudan is not covered as it becomes independent after the period analyzed.

democratic regimes were already performing slightly better than other political regimes during the years 1960-1988, most of which were authoritarian. The overall performance of uninterrupted democracies sustained during the years 1996-2010. Democratic regimes outperformed authoritarian regimes in statistically significant ways over various measures of political liberalization such as political participation, executive recruitment, and executive constraint. In terms of economic factors, uninterrupted democratic regimes have more economic freedoms; higher literacy rates; better life expectancy at birth; higher gross domestic product and gross national income per capita growth rate than the other forms of political regimes, with statistically significant results compared to uninterrupted democracies, except for income.

The overall performances of uninterrupted democracies were already better from 1960 to 1998, and sustained during the years 1996 to 2010. In terms of governance factors, uninterrupted democratic regimes are performing better than the other forms of regimes during the years 1996-2010 for all variables (governance effectiveness and regulatory quality, voice and accountability, rule of law, political stability, and control of corruption), with statistically significant results. Finally, in terms of transition processes, findings show two additional models, foreign-led democratization and slow moving/incremental democratization presented.

Table A: Democratic Transition Processes in Sub-Saharan Africa		
Key drivers of democratic transitions/periodicity	Short-term/rapid transition (first elections are democratic)	Long-term transition (first elections are not democratic)
Domestic factors	<p><i>The Bratton and Van de Walle model</i> (1) Political protest → (2) Political liberalization → (3) Democratization</p> <p>Key drivers of democratic transitions: Domestic social forces and politico-institutional factors are sufficient to explain the transition.</p> <p>Example: Benin, Cape Verde, and South Africa</p>	<p><i>The slow moving or incremental democratization model</i> (1) Liberalization (Competitive authoritarianism or interrupted democracies) → □ (2) Slow moving or incremental development of democratic institutions through contestation, participation, competition until a critical juncture → (3) Democratic election</p> <p>Key drivers of democratic transitions: The historical development of competitive and participative institutions combined with the strategic role of political actors under critical juncture.</p> <p>Example: Senegal and Ghana</p>
International factors	<p><i>The Foreign-led democratization model</i> (1) Internal conflict → (2) International conflict resolution and intervention with a democratic package → (3) Democratic election</p> <p>Key drivers of democratic transitions: International actors are necessary but not sufficient to explain democratic transition Example: Liberia, Sierra Leone and Comoros</p>	<p><i>The slow moving international supported democratization model</i> International actors as facilitators through democratic conditionality, democratic assistance (training of the civil society, funding of project, military support, contribution through capacity and institutional building), diffusion effect.</p> <p>Key drivers of democratic transitions: A synergic role between international and domestic actors</p>

Hereafter, the paper proceeds as follows: Section II proposes a brief literature overview of the literature related to regime changes, with a focus on democratization in comparative and African politics. Section III provides an explanation of the methodological framework of this paper, namely the combined qualitative and quantitative approaches. It also presents independent and dependent variables, including

the typology and trajectories of African political regimes: uninterrupted democracies, transitional democracies, authoritarian reversal, and uninterrupted authoritarianisms. Section IV presents the empirical findings with regard to the institutional, economic and international determinants of democratization in Africa. Section V concludes.

II. OVERVIEW OF THE RELEVANT THEORIES

After gaining independence in the early 1960's, most African political regimes switched from pluralistic or multi-party systems to authoritarian and one-party systems. From the 1970s to the late 1980s, almost all of the 48 Sub Saharan African countries were authoritarian⁶. The third wave of democratization, which began in Southern Europe⁷, spread to Latin America and Eastern Europe following the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union, swept through Sub-Saharan Africa (Van de Walle, 2009). Between 1990 and 2010, this process produced contrasting results. Some were successful democratic transitions or consolidations⁸. Others were unsuccessful, and became characterized by authoritarian stability, limited electoral rights or hybrids of both⁹. Scholarly literature on democratization in comparative politics can be categorized into four main theoretical approaches: structural, strategic, socio-economic, and institutional perspectives¹⁰.

Structural theories posit that social and economic structures matter more than methodological individualism in explaining democratization. Thus structures, rather than intentionality, shape political outcomes. One of the leading approaches is the

⁶ Botswana and Mauritius were the only exception given Freedom House data.

⁷ Portugal, Spain and Greece for example.

⁸ Benin, South Africa, Cape Verde, and the Seychelles for example.

⁹ Sudan, Somalia, Equatorial Guinea, Chad, Gabon, Zimbabwe for example.
approaches.

modernization theory (Lipset, 1959; Diamond, 1992; Przeworsky, et al. 2000, 2004) considering that socio-economic development will bring or sustain democracy¹¹. Another structural theory is the Marxist perspective. Kay (1975) describes the opposition between the agrarian and bourgeois structures leading to democratization. Other scholars use structural factors such as natural resources (Ross, 2001) or country size (Dahl and Tufte, 1973) to explain why certain countries have democratic trends. Structural theories are limited because of their incoherence when applied in Africa. In fact, countries with similar socio-economic structures regularly produce contrasting outcomes. For example, both very poor and rich countries are either democratic¹² or authoritarian¹³.

Strategic approaches prioritize methodological individualism mattering over structural forces. In other words, actors and interests shape political outcomes. For example, O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986) consider elite interactions, namely the bargaining between hardliners and soft-liners, as the generator of transition from an authoritarian rule to a potential form of democratic regime. Other scholars such as Medard (1982), Joseph (1987), Lemarchand (1988), Bayard (1989) and Diamond (2010) use strategic concepts to portray how the interests and strategic behavior of political leaders prevent transition. Failure to democratize is then explained by factors such as such as “big men”, political clientelism, informal politics, prebendal politics, neopatrimonialism, patrimonial appropriation, and strategic redistribution of state resources.

Social approaches sometimes integrate a structural perspective while emphasizing that

¹¹ The factors included industrialization, urbanization, growth in national income, and education.

¹² Benin and South Africa for example.

¹³ Guinea and Angola for example.

social-class structures shape political outcomes. For example, Moore (1966) considers that no democracy is possible without the bourgeoisie. On the other hand, Rueschemeyer et al. (1992) thinks that the density of the working class rather than the bourgeoisie is the main factor leading to democracy.

For quantitative and economic approaches, an increasing number of experts use economic and statistical models and tools to explain democratic transition or the relation between political regimes and economic factors (Haggard and Kaufman 1995; Acemoglu and Robinson 2006; Bates and al, forthcoming).

There are also more eclectic theories such as the politico-institutional approaches: institutions, whether formal or informal, and actors shape political/democratic outcomes within specific contexts. Scholars such as Bratton and Van de Walle (1997); Gazibo (2005); Posner and Young (2010); Bratton (2010); and Teorell (2010) use variables such as elections, political parties, parliamentary systems, national conferences, separation of powers, ancient regimes (i.e. military, settler, one-party regime, etc.), and structure of processes to explain democratization in Africa.

This study incorporates institutional, international and economic approaches to propose a systematic account of political regime changes in Sub-Saharan Africa, 1996-2010. The institutional approach allows understanding of domestic considerations inherent to the stability or transition of political regimes, including the role of institutions, political actors, governance, and the context shaping the rules of the game. The role of economic

and international factors is emphasized to understand historical and external drivers of democratization mistakenly downplayed by Bratton and Van de Walle in their transition model. Factors that were not observable in 1990-1994 by Bratton and Van de Walle are explored over 50 years as this paper contrasts data from 1960-1989 to 1996-2010 periods.

III. RESEARCH DESIGN AND DATA

This paper combines a systematic statistical analysis of all African countries, with case studies of new transitions¹⁴ to advance a comprehensive analysis of political regime developments. Variation-finding comparisons provide a unique contrasted comparative method to classify African countries, establish a typology of trajectories and explain why certain countries succeed (democracies) when others fail (authoritarian regimes)¹⁵.

3.1. Dependent Variables: Trajectories of African Political Regimes

A typology of African political regimes is created by using the current nature of political regimes (democratic versus authoritarian) and the evolution of these regimes (uninterrupted or interrupted/transitional) from 1996-2010. Freedom House political rights and civil liberties data is used and complemented by the polity score for the current state of political regimes.

¹⁴ A full-length research paper will be analyzing case studies.

¹⁵ The types of political regime are defined in the section related to the trajectories of African political regimes.

3.1.1. Freedom House and Polity IV Data

Freedom House data has been criticized for providing a maximalist definition of democracy including problems of conflation, measurements and aggregation procedures (Munck and Verkuilen, 2002: 28). Despite this criticism, Freedom House is used to measure the key dependent variable for the purposes of consistency with existing works on democratization in Africa (see Bratton and van de Walle 1997; Diamond and Plattner 1998; Diamond 2008)¹⁶. Furthermore, Freedom House data allows for longitudinal analysis of a wide array of countries due its coverage of over 186 countries since 1972.

Despite being dominantly used in political science, Polity IV's measure of democratization has been criticized for its "minimalist definition of democracy, omission of participation, conceptual logic, problem of redundancy and inappropriate aggregation procedure" (Munck and Verkuilen, 2002: 28). These criticisms aside, components¹⁷ of Polity IV are used as a historical dependent variable since it lends itself to longitudinal analysis (over 50 years) for Sub-Saharan Africa. Polity IV provides strength in "offices and agenda setting, clear and detailed coding rules, test of intercoder reliability and a comprehensive empirical scope" (Munck and Verkuilen, 2002: 28).

3.1.2. Trajectories of African Political Regimes

¹⁶ Bratton and Van de Walle (1997) also used Freedom House data and the present work aims to provide an internally coherent critic to their democratic transition model. It is then logical to use the same dataset in order to avoid criticism related to the pertinence of the analysis.

¹⁷ Regulation of participation, competitiveness of participation, regulation of chief executive recruitment, competitiveness of executive recruitment, openness of executive recruitment, executive constraint, executive recruitment, political competition.

The four categories of trajectories are presented in the Table 1: Uninterrupted democracies, transitional democracies, authoritarian reversal and uninterrupted authoritarianism.

Table 1: Classification of African Political Regimes

Nature of the evolution	Type of political regimes	
	Democracies	Authoritarianisms
Uninterrupted regimes	Uninterrupted democracies n=13	Uninterrupted authoritarianism n=21
Interrupted/Transitional	Transitional democracies n= 4	Authoritarian reversal n=10
Total	17	31

An uninterrupted democracy is a regime that has shifted from an authoritarian set of political structures to a democratically elected government during the third wave of democratization, and has maintained or sustained uninterruptedly the set democratic institutions for over 10 years from 1996-2010. The political system is characterized by a fair level of political rights and civil liberties, as well as free, fair, participative, and competitive elections to choose the government. Uninterrupted democracies remain in that category unless there is an undemocratic change of government (military coup, unconstitutional seize of power, refusal of a leader to accept defeat to elections) or a drastic rollback of key civil and political rights. An uninterrupted democracy can also be liberal (higher level of civil and political rights with a democratically elected government) or electoral (democratically elected government, but lower level of civil and

political rights than liberal democracies). It is important to note that uninterrupted democracies include both democratic survival and consolidation. Consolidation refers to “processes through which acceptance of a given set of constitutional rules becomes increasingly widespread, valued, and routinized” (Haggard and Kaufman, 1994: 6) where survival implies that the democracy is uninterrupted, but not necessary because political actors accepted constitutional and democratic rules.

An uninterrupted authoritarianism or authoritarian regime is a regime that has been ran by a government not selected through a free and fair electoral process from 1996-2010. It rules with a set of institutions characterized by a controlled, limited or inexistent political participation and competition and level of civil and political rights.

A transitional democracy is a regime that shifted during the years 2000-2010 from an authoritarian set of political structures to a new democratically elected government under other similar electoral, civil liberties, and political rights conditions than uninterrupted democracies. Considering a country as a transitional democracy does not mean that the political system will remain democratic or consolidate. It is then important to distinguish transition to democracy to survival of a new democratic regime.

An authoritarian reversal is a regime that was once considered a democratic transition¹⁸ or an uninterrupted democracy, but has been interrupted by an unconstitutional seize of power which has shifted to an authoritarian set of procedure. Another selection criteria is the level of civil and political rights, no matter government formation.

Table 2: Political Regimes in Africa 1996-2010

¹⁸ In conformity to Bratton and van de Walle (1997) conception: “A **transition to democracy** occurs with the installation of a government chosen on the basis of one competitive election, as long as that election is freely and fairly conducted within matrix of civil liberties, and that all the contestants accept the validity of the election results” Bratton et van de Walle (1997: 13).

Political Regimes in Africa 1996-2010			
Uninterrupted democracies (n=13)	Transitional democracies (n=4)	Authoritarian reversals (n=10)	Uninterrupted authoritarianisms (n=21)
<i>Liberal for 10+ years</i> Cape Verde Mauritius South Africa Sao Tome & Principe Ghana (8+)	<i>Electoral</i> Comoros <i>Oscillating</i> Lesotho Liberia Zambia	<i>Classical reversal pattern</i> Central African Republic Congo (Brazzaville) Madagascar Mozambique Burundi Kenya Nigeria <i>Unidirectional reversal</i> Gambia <i>Oscillating</i> Guinea Bissau Niger	<i>Competitive authoritarianisms</i> Congo D.R. Djibouti Guinea-Conakry Tanzania <i>Hegemonic electoral authoritarianisms</i> Angola Burkina Faso Cameroon Chad Côte d'Ivoire Ethiopia Gabon Togo Mauritania Rwanda Uganda Zimbabwe <i>Non-competitive authoritarianisms</i> Equatorial Guinea Eritrea Somalia Swaziland Sudan

Following the above-mentioned criteria, Table 2 shows the trajectory of African political regimes for the period 1996 to 2010 used for this analysis. As presented, Freedom House scores of political rights and civil liberties (1996-2010) are combined to polity score (2010) to classify countries in two main criteria: The first is type of regime (democratic or authoritarian), and the second is whether the regimes was uninterrupted for all the period considered (Uninterrupted democracies, uninterrupted authoritarianisms) or if the regime

made a transition from another type (transitional democracies, authoritarian reversal).

Table 2 reveals that 27% Sub-Saharan African countries are uninterrupted democracies, whether liberal for over 10 years, electoral for over 10 years or oscillating between liberal and electoral democracies. 8% are transitional democracies. 21% are authoritarian reversals, either a classical one-way pattern, or a unidirectional reversal, or also oscillating between democracy and authoritarianism. 44% are authoritarian, whether competitive; hegemonic electoral, or non-competitive authoritarianism.

3.2. Key Independent Variables

Political factors: Political factors tested in a systematic comparative historical perspective were regulation of participation, competitiveness of participation, regulation of chief executive recruitment, competitiveness of executive recruitment, openness of executive recruitment, executive constraint, executive recruitment, political competition¹⁹. These political factors are important contrasts in the pre and post Cold War period to not only assess the role of historical factors and path dependence but of critical juncture and strategic interventions. The goal is to explore whether the trajectories for the 1996-2010 period are a logical and systematical explanation for the 1960-1989 period. In other words, to become democratic in 1996-2010, should a country already

¹⁹ These variables are extracted from Polity IV. The goal here is to systematically assess the historical importance of specific political factors in shaping the post Cold War trajectories of democratic transitions. The question of endogeneity is not a problem here as the goal is not to explore the causal role of political factors, but to analyze how they have historically evolves since the decolonization for each category of political regimes. Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson (2010) use this historical method to explain the contrasted performance between prosperous and poor countries.

have better regulation of participation, competitiveness of participation, regulation of chief executive recruitment, competitiveness of executive recruitment, openness of executive recruitment, executive constraint, executive recruitment, political competition, or is the 1990-1994 period and contingent factors prominent? The similarities and differences in terms of political factors between the four categories of political regimes are tested through a between-effect regression, with uninterrupted democracies as reference.

Governance factors: The World Bank uses a six-indicator aggregation in the Worldwide Governance Indicators²⁰: Governance effectiveness, voice and accountability, political stability, regulatory quality, rule of law, and control of corruption. For the purposes of this study, the indicator voice and accountability are excluded. Governance effectiveness and regulatory quality are merged since they measure the same variable.

Economic and international factors: Indicators selected here are the following: GDP per capita growth, GDP per capita growth non-oil exporters, GNI per capita, GNI per capita non-oil exporters, index of economic freedom, human development index, poverty gap at \$2 a day, literacy rate, life expectancy at birth, mobile cellular subscriptions (per 100 inhabitants), internet users (per 100 inhabitants), press freedom score, and net ODA received per capita. These indicators are selected because of their important place in the academic debate of democratization (Lipset, 1959; Przeworsky et al. 2000, 2004; Haggard and Kaufman, 1995; Acemoglu and Robinson 2006; Radelet, 2010; Bates and al, forthcoming).

3.3. Control Variables

²⁰ For more information, visit: <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index.asp>

Natural resources are the main control variable, especially since oil export countries are considered hindered to democratic transition because of the Dutch disease (Ross, 2010). Oil exporters are countries that make up 30% or more of total exports (International Monetary Fund, 2012). Countries in this category by 2010 include: Angola, Cameroon, Chad, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, and Nigeria. Most of the time, results are tested with and without oil exporters included in the sample. Except for the GDP per capita and the GNI per capita, the two results are presented only if they are different. Non-oil resource rich countries (primary commodity rents exceeding 10 percent of GDP) have also been tested to control, but the results appear to be inconsistent compared to oil exporters. For that reason, the main control variable is of oil exporters.

3.4. Quantitative Methods

Classification of political regimes is based on the years 1996-2010, and the comparative exploration will contrast the period 1960-1988. The years 1996-2010 have theoretical importance as a distinct phase in African political change and limited number of systematic studies explores this period²¹. Moreover, Bratton and Van de Walle (1997) focus on the previous period (1988-1994). These analyses are contrasted to data on African political regimes from the years 1960-1989. The data used to construct these analyses comes from several sources: Freedom House (political rights and civil liberties); Polity IV (Polity); the World Bank World Development Indicators (GDP and some social

²¹ The paper builds on the work of Bratton and Van de Walle, but goes further by exploring the post-transition developments, analyzing the trajectories/paths of African political regimes after the 1988-1994, taking two years lag to focus on 1996-2010. The idea is to see the behavior of African political regimes during that new period; to see if the successful transitions were maintained or sustained; to explore the new transitions, whether from authoritarianism to democracy, or interruption of democracies, as well as to explore the evolution of countries that stayed uninterruptedly authoritarian.

indicators); the World Bank Governance indicators, Ross (Natural resources), Toerell, the International Monetary Fund (African Economic Outlook, Oil export), Diamond, Heritage Foundation, and the Human Development Index. Comparisons are presented between four types of regimes: uninterrupted democracies, transitional democracies, authoritarian reversal, and uninterrupted authoritarianisms.

Between-effects regression models are used to estimate the mean differences in key variables regime type. The between-effects estimator takes the average value of a variable across the years and runs a regression on these means. Results show mean differences for the past 15 years (1996-2010) by regime type. 2 two-tailed tests are used to determine significance. Descriptive statistics are used to provide an indication of significant differences between the different categories of regime.

The choice of between-effects regressions allows determining whether there are significant differences between regimes during a timeframe. In addition, further examination as to whether these outcomes are new versus systematic in the past are explored while sustaining the same category of countries, although they were not yet democratic. The analysis allows systematic observation of statistically significant differences in political regimes, governance, and economic outcomes during the post Cold War era.

3.5. Qualitative Method

Cases studies²² will also be since it allows empirical observation and exploration of the unanticipated, unknown, or ignored. Using case studies, this paper will meticulously analyze empirical data, which allows identification of new trajectories neglected. The case studies for the new transitions explores on Liberia, Sierra Leone and Comoros; Senegal and Ghana; Lesotho and Zambia to propose new transition models. These cases are interesting as their first post Cold War election did not lead to democratic regimes, but democratized later. The paper explores the macro and micro-processes that have led them to democratize, looking at international, economic, institutional, temporal, structural, and strategic factors, with the goal of identifying the keys drivers of regime change and democratic transitions. Specifically, we explore the context, and within it, we look at the historical role of international actors, civil society, political institutions, and political leaders. This article's qualitative method section focuses on the specific case study of Sierra Leone, as it is the ideal type of a successful foreign-led democratization. The paper analyses factors such as political mobilization; political liberalization; the founding elections; internal conflicts; international conflict resolution and intervention with a democratic package; competitive institutions; critical participation of the civil society.

IV. EMPIRICAL RESULTS

4.1. Empirical Results 1: Political Factors and African Political Regimes

Using between-effects regressions, significant differences between the regimes (average for the past 15 years) and second, it examines whether some political priors are systematically different for these regime types. Significant coefficient

²² This full presentation of the case studies will be developed in another paper only analyzing the new transitions in Africa. In this paper, cases studies will be mainly be used as empirical illustrations.

estimates on the dummy variable indicate that political factors for uninterrupted autocracies are significantly different from uninterrupted democracies. The means of political factors variables by regime type are presented in the table 3.

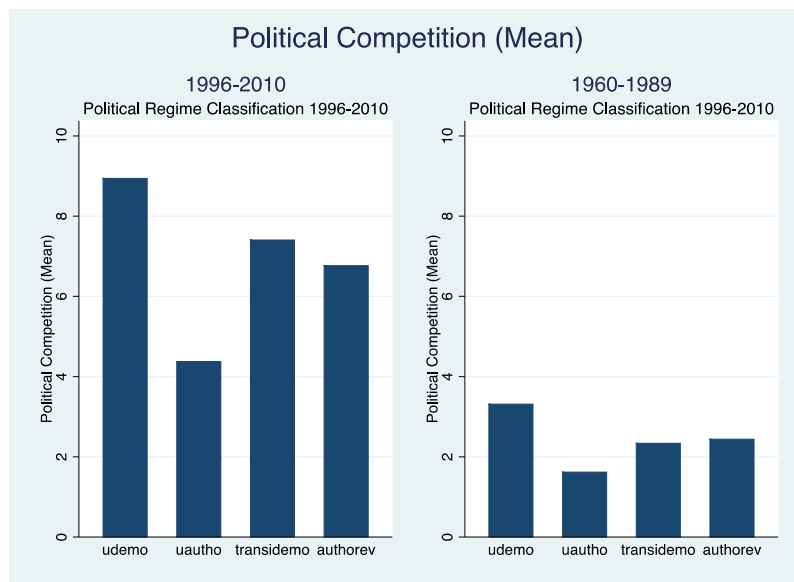
Table 3: Descriptive Statistics by Regime Type from 1996-2010 Political Factors				
Variables	Uninterrupted democracies	Transitional democracies	Authoritarian reversals	Uninterrupted authoritarianisms
Regulation of participation	2.58	2.34	3.7	3.228*
The competitiveness of participation	4.093	3.34*	3.06***	2.56***
Regulation of chief executive recruitment	2.553	2.347	2.04***	1.995***
Competitiveness of executive recruitment	2.55	2.378	2.269	1.464***
Openness of executive recruitment	4	4	4	3.85
Executive constraint	5.76	5.297	3.959***	2.614***
Executive recruitment	7.38	6.894	6.12*	4.653***
Political competition	8.94	7.349	6.156***	4.513***
Note: the star (*) indicates a mean difference that is statistically significant * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001, two-tailed tests Uninterrupted democracies are the comparison category for significance testing				

Findings show that uninterrupted democracies outperform other political regimes with statistically significant results (except for transitional regimes). The next section will focus on three main political factors: political competition, executive constraints, and executive recruitment.

4.1.1. Political Competition

A comparison of political competition in 1996-2010 versus 1960-1989 shows that higher levels of political competition during 1960-1989 are associated with successful democratic transition in 1996-2010. For example, political competition scores of uninterrupted authoritarian regimes are the lowest during 1960-1989 for institutionalization political competition and higher for government restrictions to political competition than other regime types. The political competition scores of transitional democracies and authoritarian reversals were quite similar during each time period even though transitional democracies performed better. Additionally, uninterrupted democracies historically outperformed the three other categories. It is particularly the case of Cape Verde and Mauritius. These results suggest that an early presence of political competition and institutionalization matter in enabling a democratic transition²³.

Table 4: Political Competition and Political Regimes in Africa: 1960-2010 (Without Oil Exporters)



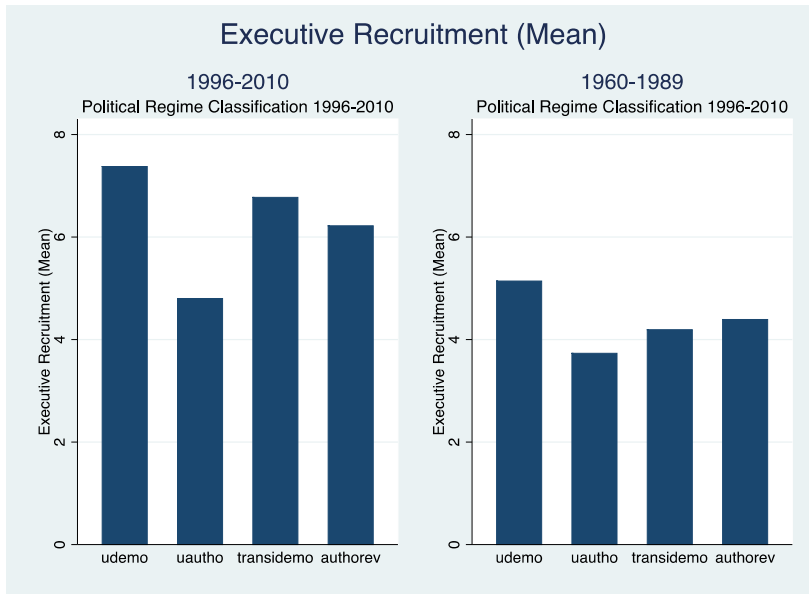
²³ An exception to that rule is the Gambian case, where an early high level of political participation did not avoided a reversal to authoritarianism.

From 1996-2010, uninterrupted democracies had political competition before the third wave of democratization. In Senegal for example, as other leaders were institutionalizing the one-party rule, President Senghor allowed creation of a three party-system, and the historic leader of this party was president-elect in 2000, after a free and fair election. Similar examples exist for other uninterrupted democracies.

An interesting observation is the improving scores of uninterrupted authoritarian regimes. One may ask: At what level of political competition can we assess the breakdown of an authoritarian regime's effect on a democratic transition? Political competition is very important but not a sufficient factor in explaining the transition. Other major factors such as executive recruitment and more importantly, executive constraints, have determining roles. These factors, depending on the level of institutionalization in executive recruitment and constraints on power, will allow executives to rule either personally or according to the rule of law. High competition under personal rule is still controlled by the executive, whereas under a democratic rule of law, competition may lead to a change. How open, regulated, institutionalized, and competitive is executive recruitment in African political regimes?

4.1.2. Executive Recruitment

Table 5: Executive Recruitment and Political Regimes in Africa: 1960-2010



No matter the procedural process, a determining factor for democratic transitions is the selection mode of the executive. Predictably, uninterrupted and transitional democracies performed better than authoritarian ones. Similarly, transitional democracies and authoritarian reversals have an average score that are insignificant to each other.

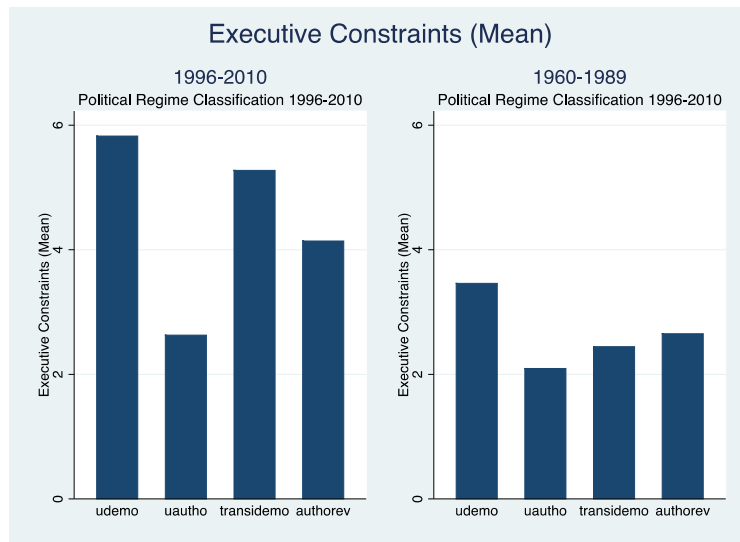
An important observation is the role of prior history. Countries that were uninterruptedly democratic during 1996-2010 already had a better performance in terms of executive recruitment for the period 1988-1960. In uninterrupted authoritarianisms, executive recruitments were either unregulated, or structured to ensure the control of the rulers' favorite candidate²⁴.

4.1.3. Executive Constraint

²⁴ In Cameroon for example, President Ahmadou Ahidjo arranged the constitution to ensure the then Prime Minister Paul Biya would replace him after his resignation.

Horizontal responsibility is an important factor in determining the extent of a country's democratization or authoritarianism. If in all types of political regimes there is executive constraint, the checks and balance system will significantly increase in democratic countries. A striking observation here is the significant increase of the executive constraint score for the uninterrupted and transitional democracies. In fact, there is significant increase in the score of transitional democracies, which initially (during 1960-1988) were similar, and even lower than the ones of authoritarian reversals. Now, it is almost comparable to uninterrupted democracies. The high score of authoritarian reversals suggest that they will also be likely to redemocratize since the level of constraint on the executive is quite high. In fact, countries such as Kenya, Niger, and somehow Nigeria seems to be incrementally reconnecting with the democratic tradition.

Table 6: Executive Constraints and Political Regimes in Africa 1960-2010 (Mean)

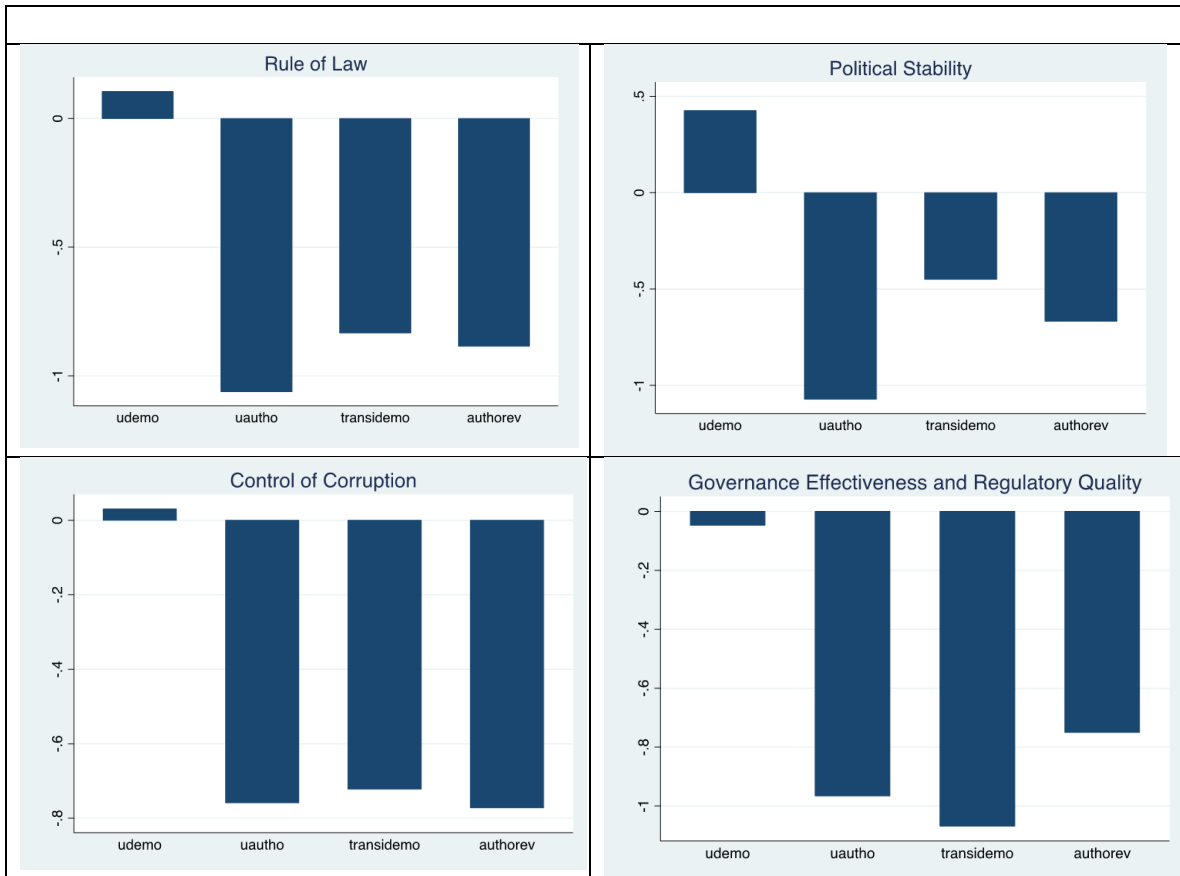


4.2. Empirical Results 2: Governance Indicators And African Political Regimes

The World Bank uses an aggregation of six indicators: Governance effectiveness, voice and accountability, political stability, regulatory quality, rule of law, and control of corruption. For the purposes of this study, we excluded voice and accountability and merged governance effectiveness and regulatory quality since they measure the same variable. Compared to authoritarian countries, uninterrupted democracies have the strongest score in all World Bank indicators, with statistically significant results when compared to uninterrupted authoritarianisms. Is democracy the driver or the consequence of good governance?

Table 7: Descriptive Statistics by Regime Type from 1996-2010 – Governance Factors				
Variables	Uninterrupted democracies	Transitional democracies	Authoritarian reversal	Uninterrupted authoritarianism
Governance effectiveness	-0,052	-1.103***	-0.933***	- 1***
Voice and accountability	0.298	-0.365***	-0.733***	- 1.155***
Political stability	0.423	-0.45*	-0.807***	-0.976***
Regulatory Quality	-0.034	-1.032***	-0.99**	-0.947***
Rule of Law	0.104	-0.833***	-0.925***	-1.059***
Control of Corruption	0.029	-0.722**	-0.832***	-0.853***
(Combined) Governance effectiveness and regulatory quality	-0.047	-1.067***	-0.812***	-0.977***
Note: * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001, two-tailed tests Uninterrupted democracies are the comparison category for significance testing				

Table 8: Governance Indicators (Mean) and Political Regimes (1996-2010)



In terms of rule of law and political stability, only uninterrupted democracies have a positive governance score. The worst performers are uninterrupted authoritarian regimes, followed by authoritarian reversals, and transitional democracies. If the rule of law's performance is probable, the originality of these results lies in the fact that democratic countries are statistically significantly more stable than authoritarian ones, contrary to the common perception. Both for the control of corruption and effectiveness of governance, democratic countries outperform authoritarian ones with statistically significant results. Though, it does not imply that democratic countries are uncorrupt, but that they are less corrupt and have better mechanisms to prevent or react to corruption.

4.3. Empirical Results 3: Economic Factors and African Political Regimes

Table 9: Descriptive Statistics by Regime Type from 1996-2010 – Economic factors

Variables	Uninterrupted democracies	Transitional democracies	Authoritarian reversal	Uninterrupted authoritarianism
GDP per capita growth	2.646	3.093	1.01	2.68
GDP per capita growth non-oil exporters	2.649	3.093	0.734	1.419
GNI per capita	5574.7	1021.132**	1097.688**	2643.93***
GNI per capita non-oil exporters	5573.95	1021.132**	823.35**	1301.09***
Index of economic freedom	58.08	48.75*	51.36*	50.578**
Human development index	0.339	0.358	0.379	0.39
Poverty gap at \$2 a day	26.27	41.24	42.59*	33.92
Literacy rate	69.88	64.595	52.81	61.34
Life expectancy at birth	58.48	51.346*	50.773**	52.372**
Mobile cellular subscriptions (per 100 inhabitants)	33.75	11.67**	15.27**	15.54***
Internet users (per 100 inhabitants)	7.688	1.634**	2.591**	2.258***
Press freedom score	19.974	24.849	25.722	39.014**
Net ODA received per capita	97.315	63.03	44.065*	44.662**

Note: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.001$, two-tailed tests**
Uninterrupted democracies are the comparison category for significance testing

Uninterrupted democracies perform better than uninterrupted authoritarianisms for the following variables: Index of economic freedom*, life expectancy at birth*, GDP per capita average annual growth rate, GNI per capita (constant 2008 US \$ PPP), Internet users, mobile subscription rates*, and literacy rates.

For variables such as the index of economic freedom, internet and mobile subscription rates, literacy rate, and life expectancy at birth, results are statistically significant, using

uninterrupted democracies as the reference group. Other variables have been tested without statistically significant results.

GDP per capita average annual growth rate

Table 10: GDP per Capita Average Annual Growth Rate and African Political Regimes: 1960-2010

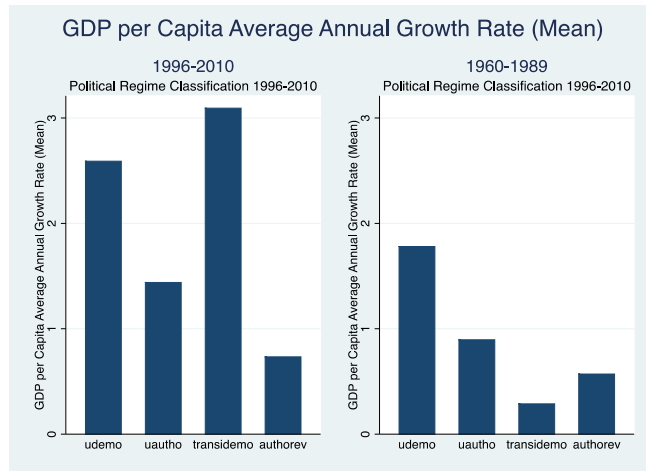


Table 11: GDP per Capita Average Annual Growth Rate and African Political Regimes: 1960-2010 (Low Income Countries: GNI <1006 US \$)

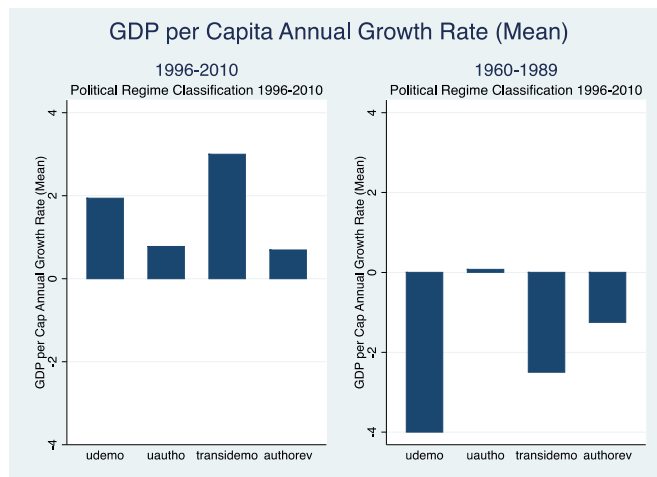
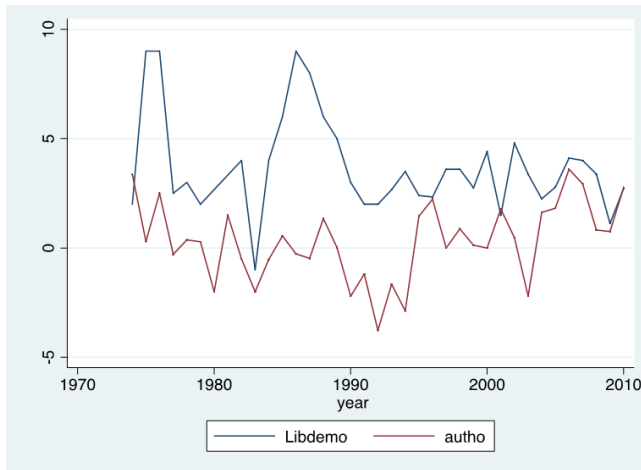


Table 12: GDP per Capita Average Annual Growth Rate and African Political Regimes (Liberal Democracies and Authoritarianisms)



Observation of the GDP per capita rate provides interesting variations between regimes. Uninterrupted democratic countries were more efficient during 1960-1988 as well as 1996-2010. On the other hand, transitional democracies produced their worst economic performance during 1996-2010. Uninterrupted authoritarian regimes and authoritarian reversals were respectively second and third in rank of performance. However, during the period 1996-2010, countries that went from authoritarianism to transitional democracies outperformed all the other types of regimes, including uninterrupted democracies.

This observation leads to two conclusions. First, aside from oil-exporters, a country with faster economic growth is more likely to become democratic, especially if economic growth is not from exploitation of limited natural resources such as oil or diamonds. In this context, the emergence of a dynamic civil society, related to the political competition observed in the previous sections, combined with better governance, and executive recruitment selection institutionalization and constraints, will significantly contribute to democratic transition. Second is the good performance of transitional regimes or new democratic countries. For the worst performers during 1960-1988, becoming democratic

boosted their performance. As a result, one can conclude that it is better to stay or become democratic than authoritarian, even if it is subject to variations, and although exceptions do exist (Rwanda for example), results are politically significant given the limited systematic observations. These observations confirm the statements of scholars such as Radelet, Przeworski, Lipset, Bates et al., and contradict scholars such as Acemoglu and Robinson.

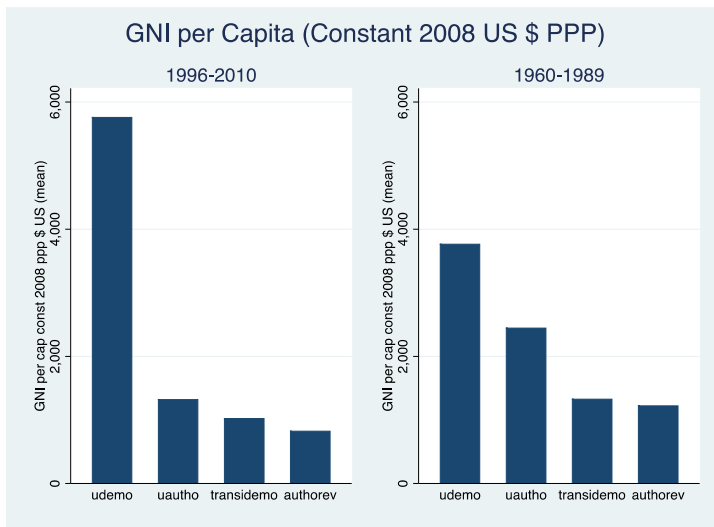
Another important observation that confirms the above conclusions is the comparison of the average GDP growth rate per capita for low-income countries. Uninterrupted and transitional democracies were the worst performers during the years 1960-1988, and are better performers during 1996-2010. For poor countries, it is better to be democratic than authoritarian, in terms of average GDP growth per capita for the period 1960-2010, excluding oil exporters²⁵.

Finally, if we focus exclusively on uninterrupted liberal democracies over the course of the last 35 years, the overall performance of democratic regimes was almost systematically better each year than authoritarian regimes.

GNI per capita

Table 16: GNI per Capita (Constant 2008 US \$ PPP) and African Political Regimes

²⁵ Angola, Cameroon, Chad, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Nigeria.



Although the average GNI per capita (constant US PPP) of transitional democracies, authoritarian reversals, and uninterrupted authoritarian regime has decreased (when comparing 1960-1989 to 1996-2010), the average GNI for uninterrupted countries has substantially increased. Between uninterrupted democracies, there are some variations (Cape Verde, South Africa, and Mauritius are top performers). However, this observation does not provide clarification of the relationship between the GNI and democratic development, even if uninterrupted democracies are correlated to a higher GNI per capita.

4.4. Illustrative Case Study: Foreign-Led Democratization in Sierra Leone

This section proposes an illustrative case study of foreign-led democratization in Sierra Leone as an ideal-type of a post-conflict democratic transition in Africa. Could free and fair elections and successful democratic transition have occurred in Sierra Leone without the driving force and intervention of foreign actors? The use of the new institutional analysis in an historical perspective shows that foreign-interventions (peace agreements, intervention of African regional organizations and the United Nations) were the main

drivers of democratization in Sierra Leone even though domestic political and institutional factors were still important. This case study explores the strategic role of political leaders, structuring constraints of political institutions, and the window of opportunity offered by the critical juncture (Lomé Peace Agreement; United Nations Mission) which allowed bifurcation from an authoritarian regime to a democratic transition.

4.4.1. Historical Context: The Institutionalization of Authoritarian Practices and Political Liberalization Under Civil War

The political history of post-colonial Sierra Leone began democratically with Milton Margai²⁶ winning the 1962 first general election. Upon his death, his brother, Albert Margai in 1964, replaced him and established an authoritarian rule. Siaka Stevens²⁷ won the second democratic election in 1967 and in conformity to the constitution, was asked to form a new Government. However, Margai's friend, Brigadier David Lansana, conducted a 1967 military coup. As a result, the first democratic political alternation did not occur and Stevens went to exile in Guinea. Surprisingly, Stevens was installed into power after a counter coup in 1968 and became the artisan of the one-party system and violator of constitutional order. Upon receiving power, he perverted the political system by abolishing the multiparty system and creating a one-party state. Moreover, when he resigned in 1985, he unconstitutionally granted presidency to Major General Saidu Mohmo, who continued to oppress the opposition until being overthrown in 1992 by Captain Valentine Strasser. Thereafter, the political history of Sierra Leone has been

²⁶ Leader of the Sierra Leone's People Party

²⁷ The opposition leader from the All People's Party (APC)

associated to military coups, authoritarian practices, political violence, and civil war for three decades. Other coups or coups attempts followed in 1968, 1971, and 1992. Earlier failures of Sierra Leone's democratization are explained by the behavior of self-interested political leaders that perverted democratic and constitutional orders.

Following the end of the Cold War in 1992, Sierra Leone's political liberalization went through a constitutional referendum that reinstated a multiparty system²⁸. Despite the new constitution democratically reorganization political institutions, violent and authoritarian practices persisted. In 1996, students unions, women groups, and civil society organizations protested against authoritarianism and requested elections. Another military coup ousted the president and Ahmad Tejan Kabbah from the People's Party became the first elected president of Sierra Leone. But was soon ousted in May 1997 by Lieutenant Colonel Johnny Paul Koroma²⁹ before being reinstated in March 1998, and being forced to later share power with Foday Sankoh, leader of the RUF in 1999.

4.4.2. Regional Intervention to Resolve Conflict and Restore Democracy:

Regional dimensions of Sierra Leone's civil war included Liberia, Libya and Burkina Faso who trained rebels, provided mercenaries and financial support, and supplied a base for attacks. Nigeria, Cote d'Ivoire, Togo, Ghana, the Organization for African Unity (OAU), the Economic Community Of West African States (ECOWAS), and the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) were also involved in finding peaceful solution or providing pro-governmental troops. The Abidjan

²⁸Article 26, The Constitution Of Sierra Leone, 1991.

²⁹ Head of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC)

Peace Agreement³⁰ was signed and guaranteed by regional agreements from the ECOWAS and the OAU.

Even though Freedom House reports Sierra Leone becoming democratic after the 1998 forceful reinstallation of the previously elected president, the democratic transition was truly effective after the 2002 presidential elections were organized, a context where the United Nations had its biggest peacekeeping mission with over 17,000 troops³¹. Under the pressure of regional and international organizations, the Lomé Peace Agreement³² played a significant role in ending civil war in Sierra Leone.

4.4.3. Foreign-Intervention and Democratization

The United Nations Security Council first established the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL) in 1998³³. Soon after, the United Nations extended its mission of democratic development as illustrated by the 2001 Report of the Secretary General presented to the United Nations Security Council³⁴. Furthermore, the United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone (UNIOSIL) was created by the United Nations in order to help the National Electoral Commission ensure credible elections. The

³⁰ The agreement proposed amnesty to RUF fighters, remove South African mercenaries executive outcomes recruited by the Government from Sierra Leone, and end attacks

³¹ Nicolas Van de Walle. 2008. *Peacekeeping in Sierra Leone: The Story of UNAMSIL; Making Liberia Safe: Transformation of the National Security Sector* (Funmi Olonisakin et al.) <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/64443/nicholas-van-de-walle/peacekeeping-in-sierra-leone-the-story-of-unamsil-making-liberia>.

³² 1999 Peace Agreement Between the Government of Sierra Leone and the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone.

http://www.usip.org/files/file/resources/collections/peace_agreements/sierra_leone_07071999.pdf

The Lomé Peace Agreement is guided by democratic principles.

³³ The situation concerning Sierra Leone Resolution 1181 (1998) adopted by the Security Council at its 3902nd meeting, on 13 July 1998. Available online: <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/3b00f15b10.html>.

³⁴ Available online: United Nations Security Council. 14 March 2001. Ninth report of the Secretary-General to the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N01/284/81/IMG/N0128481.pdf?OpenElement>.

mission of the United Nations troops was not solely peace restoration but also conduct of free and fair elections and contribute to restoring authority of the Government and the rule of law, necessities in the emergence of a democratic regime.

Foreign intervention in Sierra Leone was twofold: regional interventions (ECOWAS, ECOMOG, OAU and West African countries) and international intervention (United Nations and Western countries). Both played an important role in funding multiple initiatives and providing support to African and international organizations. But here we will focus on the role of the African regional organizations and the United Nations as they were directly related to democratization. However, during the ongoing civil war, it was the role of foreign actors that was determinant in stabilizing the country and allowed successful democratic transition through free and fair presidential elections in 2002. The decade-long civil war resulted in over 50,000 deaths and was officially declared over.

Conclusions

The decline of democracy and accountable governments (Diamond and Plattner, 2010) in Africa is statistically illogical as quantitative analysis shows that, when compared to non-oil authoritarian countries, African democratic regimes are more efficient in terms of governance and economically more prosperous. These results are supported by concrete qualitative and quantitative data comparing the 50-year evolution (1960-2010).

It is important to classify political regimes with regards to their nature (democratic or authoritarian), and the evolution of their nature in time (uninterrupted or

interrupted/transitional), especially for the years 1996 to 2010, as it offer a period long enough to explore the behavior of the different types of political regimes before (1960-1989) and after (1996-2010) the main transition period analyses by Bratton and Van de Walle (1997). The classification of the political regimes has led to four types of political regime: (1) Uninterrupted democracies (whether liberal, electoral, or oscillating between liberal an electoral democracies); (2) transitional democracies (whether electoral or oscillating between electoral democracies and authoritarianism); (3) authoritarian reversals (whether classical reversals, unidirectional reversals, or oscillating between democracies and authoritarianisms); and (4) uninterrupted authoritarianisms.

In terms of political factors, uninterrupted democratic regimes were already performing slightly better than other political regimes during the authoritarian dominant years of 1960-1988l. During 1996-2010, they outperformed authoritarian regimes with statistically significant results for all the variables tested such as political participation, executive recruitment, and executive constraint. The empirical evidence suggests that domestic and political factors are a prominent explanation of most variation between African political regimes. As affirmed by Bratton and Van de Walle, factors that have contributed to create uninterrupted democracies were mainly political. However, the trend is not exactly the same for the new transitions, especially the countries that became democratic after 1994. The democratic transition in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Comoros for example are better explained by international factors and the imposition of such framework in cease-fire agreements than the domestic dynamic.

In terms of governance factors, uninterrupted democratic regimes are performing better than other forms of regimes during the years 1996-2010 for all the variables analyzed (governance effectiveness and regulatory quality, voice and accountability, rule of law, political stability, and control of corruption), with statistically significant results. Except for the merge indicator of governance effectiveness and regulatory quality, transitional democracies also performed better than other regimes. Overall, democratic regimes have higher regulatory quality; higher control of corruption; higher political stability and higher governance effectiveness than other regimes.

In terms of economic factors, uninterrupted democratic regimes have more economic freedoms; higher literacy rates; better life expectancy at birth; higher gross domestic product and gross national income per capita growth rate than other regimes, with statistically significant results compare to uninterrupted democracies, except for the income. The overall performance of uninterrupted democracies was already better from 1960-1998 and sustained during the years 1996-2010. A striking observation here is the drastic increase in the performance of transitional democracies in terms of gross domestic products, of which outperformed uninterrupted democracies. Unsurprisingly, authoritarian reversals had the worst growth rate per capita.

In terms of foreign-led democratization, the illustrative case study of Sierra Leone shows that the presence of international actors changed the balance of power in favor of prodemocratic domestic forces by both intervening to reinstate ousted presidents and interrupting the vicious circle of military coups and political violence. Moreover, the

United Nations integrated the conduct of free and fair elections as one of its main goals for presidential elections. The case study explored the strategic role of political leaders, the structuring constraint of political institutions, the window of opportunity offered by the critical juncture (Lomé Peace Agreement; United Nations Peacekeeping troops), which has allowed bifurcation from an authoritarian regime to a democratic transition due to intervention of foreign actors.

As a result of these observations, it can be concluded that more participative, competitive, and democratic institutions play a critical role in political, governance and economic outcomes (North, 1990; Levi, 2001; Hall and Taylor, 1997; Pierson, 2004; Diamond and Plattner 2010). The findings show that the creation of democracy is associated to prior competitive or participative experience; political and civil rights; economic freedoms; and the development and strengthening of democratic, participative, and educational institutions aiming to increase fair representation of citizens. In some cases, international actors impose democracy through peace agreements ending conflicts as well as prevent or restore it diplomatically, or coercively when interrupted. The survival and consolidation of democracy is associated with economic growth and the institutionalization of political participation, political competition and of the recruitment and control of political leaders. Democratic interruption, authoritarian reversal and persistence are associated with low income; abundant natural resources (especially oil export); weak and failed states; controlled, limited or inexistent political competition, participation, political and civil rights, and absence of effective mechanism of horizontal accountability. All in all, political, institutional, and international (in case of conflict) factors are prominent in

explaining democratic transition, while economic, institutional, and political factors are prominent in explaining the survival or consolidation of democracy. In the upcoming papers, we will use the Markov transition model, logistic and non-parametric regressions (Lowess and Kermel), Granger causality test, and cases studies of comparative interest to further develop empirical investigation at country levels.

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