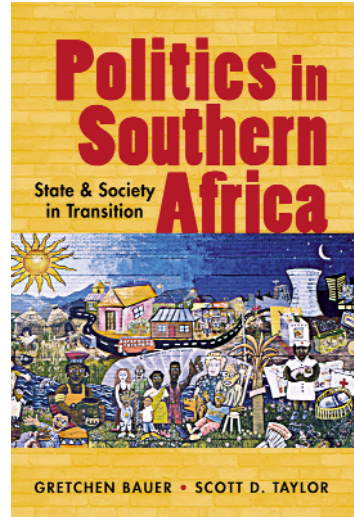


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# Politics in Southern Africa: State and Society in Transition

Gretchen Bauer and Scott D. Taylor



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# Contents

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<i>Acknowledgments</i>	ix
<i>Map of Southern Africa</i>	xi
<b>1</b> Introduction: Southern Africa as Region	<b>1</b>
Southern Africa as a Region	3
Theory and Southern Africa	8
Country Case Studies	11
Organization of the Book	15
<b>2</b> Malawi: Institutionalizing Multipartyism	<b>19</b>
Historical Origins of the Malawian State	21
Society and Development: Regional and Ethnic Cleavages and the Politics of Pluralism	25
Organization of the State	30
Representation and Participation	34
Fundamentals of the Political Economy	40
Challenges for the Twenty-First Century	43
<b>3</b> Zambia: Civil Society Resurgent	<b>45</b>
Historical Origins of the Zambian State	48
Society and Development: Zambia's Ethnic and Racial Cleavages	51
Organization of the State	53

	Representation and Participation	59	
	Fundamentals of the Political Economy	68	
	Challenges for the Twenty-First Century	75	
<b>4</b>	<b>Botswana: Dominant Party Democracy</b>		<b>81</b>
	Historical Origins of the Botswana State	83	
	Organization of the State	87	
	Representation and Participation	93	
	Fundamentals of the Political Economy	101	
	Challenges for the Twenty-First Century	104	
<b>5</b>	<b>Mozambique: Reconstruction and Democratization</b>		<b>109</b>
	Historical Origins of the Mozambican State	113	
	Society and Development: Enduring Cleavages	119	
	Organization of the State	121	
	Representation and Participation	125	
	Political Economy and Development	134	
	Challenges for the Twenty-First Century	136	
<b>6</b>	<b>Angola: Peace and the Predatory State</b>		<b>139</b>
	Historical Origins of the Angolan State	142	
	Society and Development: The Long War and Its Aftermath	146	
	Organization of the State	153	
	Representation and Participation	158	
	Fundamentals of the Political Economy	163	
	Challenges for the Twenty-First Century	164	
<b>7</b>	<b>Zimbabwe: State and Society in Crisis</b>		<b>169</b>
	Historical Origins of the Zimbabwean State	173	
	Society and Development: The Politics of Racial and Ethnic Pluralism in a Postsettler Society	179	
	Organization of the State	183	
	Representation and Participation	188	
	Fundamentals of the Political Economy	197	
	Challenges for the Twenty-First Century	200	

<b>8</b>	<b>Namibia: Limits to Liberation</b>	<b>205</b>
	Historical Origins of the Namibian State	208
	Organization of the State	214
	Representation and Participation	220
	Society and Development: Enduring Cleavages	228
	Fundamentals of the Political Economy	232
	Challenges for the Twenty-First Century	233
<b>9</b>	<b>South Africa: Contending with the Contradictions</b>	<b>237</b>
	Historical Origins of the South African State	241
	Apartheid and Its Legacy: Enduring Cleavages in Politics and Society	242
	The Politics of Transition and Negotiation	245
	Organization of the Postapartheid State	249
	Representation and Participation	256
	Fundamentals of the Political Economy	268
	Challenges for the Twenty-First Century	273
<b>10</b>	<b>The AIDS Crisis in Southern Africa</b>	<b>277</b>
	A Staggering Impact on the Region	278
	An Epidemic Waiting to Happen?	287
	The Way Forward	295
<b>11</b>	<b>Women and Politics in Southern Africa</b>	<b>303</b>
	Women in the Precolonial and Colonial Periods in Southern Africa	305
	Women in Nationalist Movements: The Struggle for Independence and Representation	310
	Women in Recent Political Transitions	315
	Increasing Women's Political Representation	319
	Women's Movements in the Region	322
	Women in Southern Africa: Present and Future Challenges	324
<b>12</b>	<b>Southern Africa's International Relations</b>	<b>329</b>
	Southern African Regional Institutions and Issues	331
	Southern Africa in Africa	336

Globalization and Southern Africa	340
The Zimbabwe Dilemma	347
Conclusion	350

**13** Conclusion: Meeting Regional Challenges 353

<i>List of Acronyms</i>	359
<i>Bibliography</i>	363
<i>Index</i>	385
<i>About the Book</i>	404

# 1

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## Introduction: Southern Africa as Region

**In a number of recent formulations,** the African state has fared quite badly. It has been variously described as “criminal” (Bayart, Ellis, and Hibou 1999), as being “in chaos” (Ayittey 1998), or as having achieved a condition of “instrumentalized disorder” (Chabal and Daloz 1999). Further reports contend that the state has suffered so great a deterioration in Africa that anarchy and collapse prevail on the continent—a situation bordering on “statelessness” in which states are on the brink, at best, and societies exist without viable states, at worst (Kaplan 1994, 2000). Although a number of these analyses suggest that African states have failed due to a combination of internal corruption, depraved leadership, and a hostile external environment, but can be restored (Zartman 1995), one recent analysis suggests that the origin of African state dysfunction in the contemporary period is rooted in geography and dates to the *precolonial* era, thus conforming to a centuries-old pattern of neglect of the countryside. According to Jeffrey Herbst (2000), precolonial political authorities lacked the incentive and capacity to project power beyond central cities; colonialism exacerbated the phenomenon, and hence the scope of the contemporary African state is limited geographically. As a result, sovereignty—indeed “stateness”—remains elusive. Another investigation attempts to portray Africa’s predicament as normal (Chabal and Daloz 1999). In this view, the norm in Africa is a “vacuous and ineffectual” state, characterized by endemic corruption and neopatrimonialism; liberal democratic state models and forms of government are fundamentally incompatible with African culture, Western notions of civil society are inapplicable, and the state is merely an instrument for depraved elites.

We regard this Afropessimist literature as deeply problematic.<sup>1</sup> The danger of much of this work lies chiefly in the attempt to paint Africa with

one brush, sweeping aside any empirical observations from this vast continent that might challenge Afropessimists' dismal assumptions and their equally dire conclusions. At the same time, it is hard to argue that pessimistic views of African state and society are not based at some level on observable realities, such as genocide in Rwanda, grisly civil war in Liberia and Sierra Leone, state collapse in Somalia, and embedded corruption in Nigeria. Rather, our point is that the writings of Kaplan, Chabal and Daloz, and Ayittey tend to obscure important regional and subregional distinctions and confirm Western preconceptions—and misconceptions—about the African continent.

Notably, much of the “evidence” for the dire assessments of Africa comes from West Africa, a region that has seen more than its share of tragedy and upheaval in four decades of independence. In that historically volatile region, there are today credible signs of stability and potential for renewal.<sup>2</sup> However, even while ignoring countervailing evidence from within West Africa itself, the message of these works is that what applies in West Africa obtains throughout the entire continent.<sup>3</sup> One of the goals of this book, then, is to challenge such assumptions and to illuminate Africa's political, economic, and social diversity by focusing on the distinct regional character of southern Africa.

The African continent represents a vast area of the globe. Africa is three times the size of the United States. Its population of 800 million people is nearly equal to that of the Americas, north and south. Its people reside in fifty-four countries and speak over a thousand different languages, many of which represent distinct cultures. African history—ancient and modern—is remarkably diverse, and its contemporary political and economic structures also vary widely. Quite simply, as Chris Allen (1995) has argued, “there are many Africas.” Yet the impulse of both those unfamiliar with Africa and many scholars and practitioners is to treat Africa as a monolith. This use of “Africa” as convenient shorthand is particularly destructive and misleading, especially in the case of the Afropessimists, who attempt to extrapolate from a few countries a “theory” of African politics.

Even many African politics textbooks, which tend to be more evenhanded in their appraisal of Africa's problems and prospects, struggle to strike a balance between targeted analyses of specific countries and overgeneralizations of conditions on the continent (Tordoff 1996; Khapoya 1998; Chazan et al. 1999; Schraeder 2000; Gordon and Gordon 2001; Thompson 2001). Texts that examine Africa as a whole are quite useful in providing a broad introduction to a continent unfamiliar to many audiences. At the same time, certain common factors that do exist, such as the universality of colonialism and the preponderance of underdevelopment or maldevelopment, have led to a monolithic, undifferentiated approach to the study

of African politics and society,<sup>4</sup> an approach that tends to obscure important regional distinctions.

### ■ Southern Africa as a Region

Southern Africa is one of the areas of the African continent that warrants systematic treatment as a region.<sup>5</sup> As Sandra MacLean observes, “regions are almost always more than geopolitical divisions; they are also ‘social constructions,’ i.e., processes based on shared interests and intersubjective understanding.” And, although both political boundaries and identities can shift over time,

it is well established that the region of southern Africa does exist empirically. As Vale states, “the notion of Southern Africa—like the notion of Europe—is a single and indivisible one.” To be thus identified, a particular area or group of states must, over time, develop a sense of “regionness.” There are various levels of this quality, determined largely by the degree to which the empirical and socially constructed attributes are entrenched and combined. (1999, 947)<sup>6</sup>

Building on this notion of regionness, it is possible to identify a number of common empirical and socially constructed attributes within and across states and societies in southern Africa. Indeed, given the many shared attributes and experiences, analysis of the countries as part of a regional bloc is a potentially fruitful and revealing exercise.

First, many of the contemporary states of southern Africa share a common colonial and early postcolonial history. The region was initially settled by the Portuguese on both coasts, in what is now Mozambique and Angola, and by the Dutch in South Africa. However, with the exceptions of Angola, Mozambique, and Namibia (which was under German rule), much of the territory had fallen under British imperial domination by the end of the nineteenth century. Although Portuguese, Afrikaner (Dutch), and German influences continue to play a role in one or more of the states of the region today, the Anglo linguistic, legal, political, and economic heritage remains a common feature for most.

Moreover, for nearly all of southern Africa, colonialism lasted far longer than elsewhere on the continent. In five countries—Angola, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Namibia, and South Africa—liberation movements were forced to resort to armed struggle to attain independence. Each of these movements was marked by at least a rhetorical commitment to socialism. In the context of the Cold War, the stated commitment to socialist principles generated intense interest in the region among external actors. It also fueled apartheid South Africa’s campaign of regional destabilization against neighboring countries, the effects of which were borne by all the



countries in southern Africa. This extended colonialism—and the resort to war to obtain independence—have had profound and lasting effects on social, political, and economic developments in the region, which are elaborated in the country chapters of this book.

Second, the presence of large white settler populations, or at least settler interests, emerges directly from the region's unique history and represents a key feature of many of its states. Each of the five aforementioned states that underwent violent struggles for liberation had an expansive settler population. Although whites fled Angola and Mozambique on the eve of independence, their continued prominence in many countries, including South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Namibia, and to a considerably lesser extent in Botswana and Zambia, has been a double-edged sword. These states face severe and potentially destabilizing disparities of wealth and resources between rich and poor. Of course, there are wealthy black elites; however, a disproportionate share of wealth and productive capacity is owned and controlled by a "nonindigenous" white minority, a situation that has contributed to lingering tensions. There are also significant numbers of other "nonindigenous" groups, particularly Indians, who occupy important economic strata. How these countries incorporate racial and ethnic minorities affects their prospects for long-term stability.

At the same time, paradoxically, it can be argued that the white presence in southern Africa has improved the development prospects for the region. Whereas some settler regimes in Africa, such as in Kenya and Algeria, abandoned the continent in the 1960s, their southern African counterparts held on much longer. White-ruled regimes in Zimbabwe (until 1980), Namibia (until 1990), and South Africa (until 1994) used their tight control over resources and international access to provide a strong infrastructure and relatively sophisticated international economies that were inherited by black governments at independence.<sup>7</sup>

Third, southern Africa is politically and socially interconnected and interdependent. Although the region cannot be described as culturally homogeneous, the peoples of southern Africa are interrelated to a significant degree. The first inhabitants of the region were the Khoisan, whose descendants still live in parts of Namibia, South Africa, and Botswana. In the early centuries of the common era the Khoisan were joined, and substantially displaced, by successive waves of peoples from the north, as the Bantu migrations dispersed peoples throughout Africa. These Bantu-speaking peoples were agriculturalists, as well as pastoralists, who brought with them techniques of smelting iron and other metals. Their descendants are found today throughout southern Africa—for example, the Chewa in Malawi, the Bemba in Zambia, and the Xhosa and Zulu in South Africa, among many other groups. In the nineteenth century the accelerated arrival of Europeans and the formal onset of colonialism in southern Africa and

elsewhere meant the imposition of arbitrary boundaries that typically divided ethnic groups across colonial borders. With few exceptions, the colonial-era map of Africa is unchanged, and therefore connections remain between peoples across those same borders: there are Batswana in Botswana and South Africa, Basotho in Lesotho and South Africa, Ovambo in Namibia and Angola, Shona in Zimbabwe and Mozambique, and so on.

Connections among the peoples of southern Africa are also fostered by a regionwide migrant labor system, which is another artifact of European settlement and colonialism. With the discovery of diamonds and gold in the future South Africa in the late 1800s, there emerged a migrant labor system that brought workers from throughout the region to the mines in South Africa. Before and after independence foreign migrant workers also crossed borders to work in mines in Namibia, Botswana, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. As they crisscrossed the region, mineworkers participated in a cross-fertilization of ideas and experiences across national borders, leading in some cases to an early organization of workers or the rise of nationalist movements. Southern Africans also crossed regional borders in search of educational opportunities. During the colonial period, for example, a number of southern African leaders (as well as other privileged elites) attended Fort Hare College in South Africa, the first university for blacks in the region. Much later, many black Namibians, with no tertiary-level educational opportunities in their own country, would flock to South African universities—and then return home imbued with tactics gleaned from South Africa's liberation struggle.

Liberation struggles also fostered interconnectedness among peoples and states of the region. Many of those fighting for independence in their own countries were forced to spend long periods of exile in neighboring countries. Countries like Angola, Mozambique, and Zambia, which gained their independence first, became havens in the 1970s and 1980s for rebel movements that were attempting to end minority rule in South West Africa (Namibia), Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), and South Africa. Thus, tens of thousands of Namibians spent decades in Angola, many South Africans flocked to Zambia, and Zimbabwean rebels established staging areas in Mozambique, to cite but a few examples.<sup>8</sup> In the process, these young exiles were also able to compare experiences from home and contemplate a common southern African future. Moreover, throughout these same years of struggle, the independent countries of the region were united in a political body known as the Frontline States (FLS), formed in an effort to isolate apartheid South Africa and bring an end to white minority rule in the country.<sup>9</sup>

Fourth, as in much of the rest of Africa, countries in southern Africa are currently undergoing processes of political and economic transition. Although nearly every state in the region claims to be democratic, the

degree to which democracy exists varies widely, in part reflecting the varied experiences of transition and the difficulty of inculcating and consolidating democracy. Botswana, of course, is typically cited as one of the most democratic countries in Africa, with a history of peace and stability and democratic elections since independence in 1966. Namibia and South Africa, since their respective transitions in 1990 and 1994, have received widespread acclaim for their democratic constitutions and respect for the rule of law. Zambia and Malawi, following a pattern familiar to much of the rest of Africa, made transitions in the early 1990s from decades of single-party rule by presidents-for-life (de facto in Zambia, de jure in Malawi) to multiparty political systems. In Zimbabwe, the question of democratic rule hangs in the balance, as President Robert Mugabe, in office since 1980, has employed ruinous and often violent strategies to undermine a democratic opposition movement and continue his tenure in office by authoritarian means. Finally, the Lusophone states took divergent paths in the 1990s. In Mozambique, a successful transition from three decades of war to peace in 1992 made way for a vibrant period of reconstruction and development. In Angola, an end to decades of war was only accomplished after the death of rebel leader Jonas Savimbi in early 2002. An initially cautious cease-fire has since given way to a steady, if uncertain, movement toward economic and political transition in that country.

In addition to the nearly regionwide turn to democracy, the states of southern Africa share a unique feature in Africa: none has been the victim of a military coup. In fact, even coup *attempts* are rare, making southern Africa truly exceptional on the continent in this regard.<sup>10</sup> This may suggest a level of stability or at least a respect for and expectation of civilian rule that does not prevail throughout Africa. Moreover, the region is also characterized today by relative peace. With the exception of Zimbabwe, each of the other countries has, at the moment, manageable levels of social conflict and internal security and cohesion—again, a factor that differentiates the south from nearly every other zone in Africa. This peace and stability should bode well for future economic development and the sustainability of social and political movements attempting to achieve greater democracy.

Economically, there is considerable variation among southern African countries. That variation stems from a host of factors: population size (Botswana and Namibia have fewer than 2 million people, South Africa has more than 45 million); resource endowment (Botswana, Namibia, and South Africa have diamonds and other valuable minerals, Angola has diamonds and oil; by contrast, Malawi grows tobacco and Mozambique cashews and prawns); location (Botswana, Malawi, Zambia, and Zimbabwe are landlocked while the others have ample access to the sea); decades of war versus peace and stability; and so forth. In 2001, per capita gross

domestic products (GDPs) (at purchasing power parity) in the region ranged from U.S.\$11,290 in South Africa, whose industrialized economy dwarfs all of the others, to U.S.\$570 in Malawi (United Nations Development Programme 2003). Taken together, however, the economies of southern Africa are among the strongest on the continent, and the potential for future collective growth and development is enormous.

Despite this relative economic strength, however, with the exception of Botswana and Namibia, all of the countries of southern Africa adopted some form of neoliberal economic reform, often referred to as structural adjustment programs (SAPs), in the 1980s and 1990s. Designed and implemented by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund,<sup>11</sup> these programs are intended to spur a process of fundamental economic transformation. SAPs were imposed across the continent beginning in the 1980s, when African states proved unable to recover from the collapse of global primary commodities prices, declining terms of trade, and rising debt levels. When they were introduced, however, adjustment programs were envisioned as a short-term series of measures that would restore Africa's economic health (World Bank 1981); in the third decade of adjustment, it is apparent how erroneous these rosy projections were. Moreover, although the programs themselves have been modified over the years in response to intense criticism, and lack of tangible and sustainable success (Mkandawire and Soludo 1999), they continue to adhere closely to an orthodox neoliberal economic model that regards state involvement in the economy negatively (World Bank 2000). Given the substantial economic role played historically by southern African states, this process of transformation has proved particularly unsettling and painful for many. The interconnectedness of this region has meant that economic difficulties in one country are keenly felt in neighboring states.

Indeed, regional proximity and economic interconnectedness have produced harmonies as well as tensions. A formal institution through which states attempt to mitigate conflict and promote economic and political cooperation is the Southern African Development Community (SADC). The SADC itself underwent a notable transition in the 1990s when it transformed itself from the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (itself made up of the members of the Frontline States grouping), into the Southern African Development Community, with South Africa at its core. Owing partly to South Africa's membership and its ability to play a hegemonic role given its far more developed economy, the SADC is today regarded by many as the most viable regional economic community in Africa (McCarthy 1999).<sup>12</sup> Although one of three (somewhat redundant) bodies concerned with regional trade relations, the SADC also represents a forum for regional cooperation on a large range of nontrade issues including politics, transport, gender, and health.

In sum, the histories, prevailing political, social, and economic conditions, as well as the fates of each of the countries of southern Africa are profoundly linked. This book attempts to regard them as such.

### ■ Theory and Southern Africa

Southern Africa has been examined through multiple theoretical lenses, each of which offers some insight on the politics of the region as a whole, or of its constituent parts. International relations theories are particularly suited to the former, and scholars have employed variations on realist, liberal, and Marxist approaches to the study of the region (Vale 2001). Operating at a lower level of abstraction, scholars of comparative politics have relied generally on related theoretical tools, such as the modernization, dependency, and statist approaches, as well as on pluralist models that emphasize societal actors (Chazan et al. 1999). Each of these theories and their various permutations have been employed to explain political and economic phenomena in independent Africa as a whole, though they have often come to conflicting conclusions about the nature of the politics in and of Africa.

Dependency and underdevelopment, for example, which have their intellectual origins in Marxism, were particularly helpful in conceptualizing the world as a system of states, in which the less-developed regions, including Africa, were unalterably relegated to the global periphery (Rodney 1974; Wallerstein 1974). Such perspectives, which elevate the notion of structure, had some validity: surely the marginal position from which African states entered the world stage—namely as economically backward, primary commodity exporters—helps to explain the contemporary African predicament (Leys 1994). These approaches, however, neglected too many factors. Like the structuralist theories within the international relations subfield, such as neorealism, which regarded the position of states as a result of power relations, the dependency tradition tended to ignore that power may also reside in states of the so-called periphery (as well as being vested in actors other than states).

In short, structural theories rely on material capacity and suggest that material attributes or endowments (whether wealth or power) determine political behavior (Finnemore and Sikkink 2001). In this view, African states are at the mercy of more powerful states in the developed north. Yet this is not consistently the case, and structuralist approaches are largely incapable of explaining the variation and change that defines political life, at both the international and national levels. An emphasis on *agency*, on the other hand, can help offset several of these shortcomings.

Depending on whether the level of analysis is international relations or at the state level, individual states or individual economic or political actors

may be considered agents. If we examine first the role of the *state* as agent, the “power” that southern African states project in an international system is far more nuanced than structuralism allows. Structuralist theories are hard-pressed to explain, for example, how South Africa has used its “middlepowermanship” to effectively negotiate international accords to its benefit and at the expense of both its less-developed neighbors and *developed* countries (I. Taylor 2002). In a different way, Zimbabwe—and its neighbors—have resisted multiple forms of pressure from far more “powerful” developed states to remove President Robert Mugabe and to fashion a power-sharing arrangement between the ruling party and the embattled (but internationally appealing) opposition party (International Crisis Group 2003b). Throughout the 1990s, chronically poor Zambia was able to play its various donors and lenders off one another to its advantage (Rakner, van de Walle, and Mulaisho 2001). Botswana has defied many of the neoliberal tenets of “globalization” by successfully enacting and adhering to a state-centric, “developmentalist” model.

Moving more squarely into the realm of comparative politics, statist approaches reassert African (state) agency by proclaiming a greater role for the state, particularly concerning development questions and domestic affairs. They regard the state “as a primary motor force behind social and economic occurrences on the continent” (Chazan et al. 1999, 21). Of course, many African states lack bureaucratic capacity, or even legitimacy; yet whereas the state may be “weak by any conventional measure of institutional capacity . . . it remains the most prominent landmark on the African institutional landscape” (Bratton 1989, 410). In the statist view, African states are themselves actors, and their attributes, behaviors, and shortcomings help to explain problems of development and democracy.

Another theoretical framework frequently employed by Africanists is one that emphasizes the preeminent role of “one individual (the strongman, ‘Big Man,’ or ‘supremo’)” in African politics (Bratton and van de Walle 1997, 62). In this category, Robert Jackson and Carl Rosberg’s *Personal Rule in Black Africa* (1982) was a prominent early example, and analyses that emphasize the ubiquity of neopatrimonial rule in Africa and the neopatrimonial nature of the state are certainly part of this tradition (Clapham 1982; Bratton and van de Walle 1997). Such “personalist” approaches are difficult to categorize using the agent-structure dichotomy introduced above, but their prominence in Africanist scholarship demands that we address them briefly here. In fact, such approaches fit rather uncomfortably in an agent-structure framework: on one hand, they *reduce* African politics and economy to the individual—the “big man”—claiming that he is responsible for political outcomes, attitudes, and behaviors. Hence they are in one sense the ultimate expression of agency. On the other hand, such approaches *deny* Africans in general any agency whatsoever, by

suggesting that such neopatrimonial behaviors are immutable, deeply culturally embedded, and in effect *genetic*, thus giving them a structural quality. Such determinism is fundamentally at odds with our approach, which regards politics in southern Africa as dynamic rather than preordained.

The diversity of African politics demonstrates the necessity of utilizing different theoretical lenses to analyze political, economic, and social phenomena on the continent. We argue for balance, though, not for conceptual muddling. Neopatrimonialism, for example, may offer theoretical parsimony, but as Chazan and colleagues (1999, 23) point out, “politics in Africa (as elsewhere) cannot be reduced so easily to the activities of actors on the national scene.” Quite simply, despite his significance, Mugabe does not *define* Zimbabwe, nor did Nelson Mandela, who practically embodied the first five postapartheid years, define South Africa. Thus, such reductionist emphasis on the “big man” (and arguably the culture of corruption he inspires) is inadequate to understanding contemporary Zimbabwe and President Robert Mugabe without reference to structural variables as well. Likewise, women’s participation in southern African politics is constrained by what we might label *structural* biases against women, but reliance solely on structural factors denies women the agency they so obviously possess, evidenced by the gains of women politicians and activities of women’s movements. As Alexander Wendt argues, “it is impossible for structures to have effects apart from the attributes and interactions of agents” (1999, 12). At bottom, the lesson to be drawn is that agency and structure, and how they interact, are important in the study of African politics.

Agents not only shape their environment, but they are shaped and constrained by domestic and international influences as well. Thus there are clear limits to exclusively agent-based approaches, which tend to treat “collective understandings as simply epiphenomena of individual action and deny that they have causal power or ontological status” (Finnemore and Sikkink 2001, 393). This is the basis of constructivist approaches, which may offer a corrective to prevailing theories (Ba and Hoffman 2003, 21); indeed, we find a number of helpful insights in this literature.<sup>13</sup> Among the most helpful contributions of the constructivist research program is its emphasis on learning.

Southern Africa has been shaped by agents and structural forces. External practices are not always simply imposed without adaptation on an African tabula rasa. Exogenous ideas are “endogenized” when they encounter “local” African norms and traditions (Magnusson 2002). Hence the influences on southern Africa are broadly international (for example, neoliberalism, globalization, democratization), domestic (local norms and traditions, including those of both democracy and authoritarianism), as well as regional (states, their leaders, and societies observe and are affected by

one another in the regional context). Politics, economics, and society in the region are explained, therefore, as Bruce Magnusson (2002, 2) argues, “by the work (the practice) involved in the articulation of ideas, norms, and context among communities within the territorial state and across territorial lines.” Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink (2001, 407) describe this practice as “learning”: “The mechanisms that lead to learning include interaction (with domestic and international actors), comparison (with prior national experiences and with other countries’ experiences), reflection (including internal debates and self-criticism) and personnel change.”

The case study chapters reveal that in southern Africa, as elsewhere, there is learning across a range of social, political, and economic issues as regional norms and ideas shift in response to various exogenous—and endogenous—stimuli, continuing the process MacLean (1999), in the vernacular of constructivism, labels the “social construction” of southern Africa. Examples of such learning include emerging regional ideas about the symbolic and practical role of land, what it means to be African or southern African, and evolving norms of constitutionalism and presidentialism, to name a few. As Chazan and colleagues (1999, 23) suggest in endorsing their “political interaction framework,” “by looking at the interaction of social forces, economic activities, formal institutions, and prevalent values, we may better grasp the meaning and direction of the diverse patterns that have evolved in Africa since independence.”

Like Chazan and colleagues, we apply an eclectic theoretical approach in this book, and attempt to capture the diversity—and consistency—within the region. Indeed, whereas we employ a common framework for analyzing the countries, the research questions, and hence the emphases, in the chapters are varied. Nonetheless, each of the chapters explores the relationship between history, ideas, and institutions, broadly emphasizing economic development and democratization issues and seeking to identify the variables that enhance or retard the opportunities for their realization in the region. On the whole, the chapters serve to illuminate the tension between agent-based and structural explanations in Africa. Therefore, we draw on the theoretical literatures that privilege structure, state, and individual agents to inform the analysis of southern Africa’s political, social, and economic transformations.

## ■ Country Case Studies

States of southern Africa could be analyzed in several possible ways. For example, on the basis of trade relations, such as those that are Southern African Customs Union members and those that are not. Or they could be divided by degree of democracy or level of economic development. They might also be categorized by European language and cultural influences:



predominantly Anglophone versus predominantly Lusophone. An alternative approach to analyzing the region might not privilege states at all, and instead weigh its *people* more heavily (Vale 2001, 28). Clearly, myriad other possibilities exist, and the choice of grouping or organization depends on which factors are emphasized. Thus, while recognizing the value of other possible criteria, this book divides the countries of southern Africa largely according to historical experience, with attention to recent political transitions. As such, we have grouped them in the following way.

Malawi and Zambia were the first states in the region to gain their independence from colonial rule and are distinct in the region for the way in which their economic and political trajectories, after independence, mirror closely those of the rest of sub-Saharan Africa rather than southern Africa. Like other countries in sub-Saharan Africa, Malawi and Zambia experienced significant political transitions in the early 1990s. Botswana also achieved independence in the 1960s from Britain and, like its counterparts, emerged under conditions that were both optimistic and uncertain. Yet in many ways, Botswana defies categorization, given its unique position in southern Africa and indeed in Africa as a whole. Botswana is one of the very few countries in Africa to have experienced both stable multiparty democracy and relative economic prosperity since independence.

The Lusophone countries, Mozambique and Angola, form a logical pairing based on historical criteria, although their paths have diverged in recent years. Each attained its independence in 1975, only to plunge immediately into protracted war. Mozambique and Angola struggled bitterly to achieve first their independence from Portugal and then, only recently, the peace that will allow them to develop and possibly catch up to some of their more developed neighbors. The postsettler societies of Zimbabwe, Namibia, and South Africa are the final grouping of states. These were the last countries in the region to attain their independence, and only after years of heightened struggle. All three countries contend today with the legacies of decades of oppressive white minority rule.

Malawi and Zambia are the subjects of Chapters 2 and 3. Both countries were colonized by the British, or British interests, in the late 1800s, were referred to as Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia, respectively, and for the last ten years of colonial rule were part of the Central African Federation (together with Southern Rhodesia). Following the emergence of nationalist movements, the two countries gained their independence, largely peacefully, with the majority of other African countries in the early 1960s. Shortly after independence, moreover, both countries became one-party states led by presidents with a seemingly unbreakable hold on power: Malawi's Hastings Banda, as self-proclaimed president-for-life, and Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia, who faced no competition when he went to the polls every five years. While Malawi was clearly the more repressive of the

two polities, Zambia was also intolerant of political dissent and permitted little autonomous societal organization. One significant difference between the two regimes was their stance toward apartheid South Africa and, by extension, the region. While President Kaunda in Zambia was one of the founders of the Frontline States organization, established to unite the region against South Africa, the Banda regime in Malawi was one of the very few friends of the apartheid state. Moreover, Zambia also allowed regional liberation movements fighting the South African regime to locate exile camps within its borders.

More recently, however, the two countries' political and economic paths have again converged. By the late 1980s both countries were experiencing economic crisis, though of somewhat different origins. Economic deprivation combined with the long-standing political repression led, in both countries, to calls for political liberalization. First in Zambia, and just a few years later in Malawi, the once all-powerful executives bowed to domestic and international pressure and agreed to an opening of their political systems. Transition elections were held first in Zambia in 1991 and then in Malawi in 1994, in both cases bringing new political parties and new leaders to power. In the decade or so since, however, the optimism and promise of those transitions have faded. Neither country has been able to effect major economic revival despite significant reform programs, and elected presidents Frederick Chiluba and Bakili Muluzi became increasingly inclined toward antidemocratic behaviors reminiscent of the tactics of their predecessors. In 2001, both considered using extraconstitutional measures to extend their terms of office, though neither was ultimately successful in that endeavor, in large part because of civil society's opposition.

Yet in a paradoxical way, Zambia and Malawi are in many respects further advanced along the democratic path than their southern African neighbors. Whereas all of the other countries profiled in this book are still led by first-generation liberation movements cum governments, Zambia and Malawi represent a noteworthy, if flawed, second generation. Their liberation governments were replaced a decade ago; while this has not resulted in flourishing democracies per se, it has seen the flourishing of opposition parties in these countries and the maturation of civil societies that have diminished tolerance for authoritarian politics. Thus, even though the immediate democratic future is uncertain, the longer-term political development of these states has much to commend it. In sum, these two countries form an important part of the region. Although their politics sometimes conforms to the rest of Africa, their experience may provide a blueprint—to be followed or avoided—for the rest of southern Africa.

Chapter 4 examines Botswana, considered by many observers to be an exceptional case in Africa. Like Zambia and Malawi, Botswana was also colonized by the British, though many argue that British colonial rule in

Botswana was particularly mild and allowed for a significant degree of continuity of traditional rule, in particular the institution known as *kgotla* (an assembly of all adult males in the community). Moreover, like Zambia and Malawi, Botswana achieved independence relatively peacefully under the leadership of the Botswana Democratic Party. That party has remained in power ever since, despite regular elections every five years. At the same time, Botswana has experienced smooth leadership transitions, with one president stepping down before his term of office expired. Botswana has also been a singular economic success story in Africa, experiencing among the world's highest economic growth rates after diamonds and other minerals were discovered in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Moreover, revenues generated from the country's mines and cattle ranches (the primary source of wealth accumulation before diamonds were discovered) have been used judiciously to invest in the country's infrastructure and human resource base, earning Botswana the distinction of being one of the few "developmental" states—or at least a state with developmental characteristics—in Africa. In one way, however, Botswana is all too much like its neighbors in the region, having the second highest HIV infection rate in the world in 2002 (UNAIDS 2004). Still, Botswana stands out for its progressive response to the HIV/AIDS crisis, among other things making antiretroviral drugs available to all Botswana who need them.

The two Lusophone countries, Mozambique and Angola, are analyzed in Chapters 5 and 6. Although much joins these two countries to their southern African neighbors, Mozambique and Angola are appropriately considered apart. Both were colonized by Portugal, a backward European power that imposed a particularly harsh colonial rule and refused to quit when other European powers were abandoning their colonial empires. Indeed, liberation movements in both countries fought for more than a decade until a military coup brought down the regime in Portugal and independence was finally granted to Portugal's African colonies. But the fighting continued in both countries, as rebel movements challenged new governments, in Mozambique until 1992 and in Angola until 2002. In both countries there was substantial sponsorship of hostilities and combatants by a host of external players, including Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) and South Africa, the United States, the Soviet Union, Cuba, and others. In a more constructive international role, the United Nations sought to broker peace agreements in the early 1990s and facilitate transitions to peace in both countries. In Mozambique they were successful. In Angola they were not; peace was only achieved in Angola a decade later.

Chapters 7, 8, and 9 address the postsettler societies of Zimbabwe, Namibia, and South Africa. These countries share one of the most significant features of the region, namely enduring and recalcitrant settler regimes; as a result, independence or black majority rule was only obtained

decades after the rest of the sub-Saharan African countries had achieved it. In all three, liberation movements were forced to resort to armed struggle, even war, to gain independence. Namibia and South Africa are particularly closely related; indeed, Namibia was the *de facto* colony of South Africa for seventy-five years. Many of these linkages, economic and sociocultural, continue to the present. Zimbabwe, meanwhile, differs in some important ways from the rest of southern Africa, but it also shares many characteristics within this trio of states. The similar legacies include the ascension to power of the leader of the independence movement (who has proved intractable in the Zimbabwe case), gross and lasting disparities in land and resources, and the promotion of reconciliation without accountability. Each legacy has profound consequences for the future trajectories of these states. Zimbabwe's method of belatedly facing these challenges has proved aggressive, corrupt, and ultimately destructive. Nonetheless, Zimbabwe's decline serves as a warning, as all three countries face some common challenges in the twenty-first century, although Zimbabwe must also confront the challenge of reconstruction.

## ■ Organization of the Book

In order to facilitate comparison across cases, this book adheres to a similar format for each of the country chapters. First, the chapter identifies the key themes that help to define contemporary politics and society in the country. Then it provides some historical background, from the precolonial period, through colonialism and the struggle for independence, until final decolonization was achieved. What follows is an examination of enduring racial and ethnic cleavages, an important, often defining characteristic in a region where seven of eight states are multiethnic, and where six of eight experienced significant white settlement. Each chapter also offers a careful delineation of the different branches of government and the extent to which they act as a check on one another. After covering the realm of high politics and institutions, the chapter turns back to the role of civil society actors, before turning to the fundamentals of the political economy. Each country chapter concludes with an examination of the most pressing challenges to state and society in the twenty-first century.

Chapters 10, 11, and 12 treat issues that transcend state boundaries in southern Africa: the AIDS crisis, gender and politics, and southern Africa's international relations with Africa and the world. AIDS and gender are also subnational issues that relate to "deep politics." Although these are, or should be, of concern to states, these chapters offer at least a partial corrective to Peter Vale's indictment of approaches that neglect people (2001). Southern Africa's international relations, meanwhile, speak to supranational issues and also move beyond the limitations of the state and state-centric analyses.

Chapter 10 examines perhaps the most significant threat facing the region, namely the AIDS epidemic. Indeed, the countries with the highest HIV infection rates in the world are the countries of southern Africa. The rapid spread of HIV throughout the southern African region means that decades of development progress are being undone; already, life expectancy rates have plummeted to below preindependence levels. The HIV epidemic in the region threatens not just the social fabric, but also political stability and the prospects for economic growth and recovery.

Chapter 11 investigates gender and politics in the region. Gender intersects nearly every other issue, from political participation to social organization, and women fill much of the space created by weak state capacity in the region. Indeed, permeating gender relations in the region and enlisting the support of women will be essential to stemming the AIDS tide. More broadly, this chapter touches upon the way in which the role of women has been transformed over the decades in the region—from the precolonial period, through colonialism, and into the independence period. In particular the chapter focuses on the role of women in politics in contemporary southern Africa, where a number of countries have achieved among the highest representations of women in national political office in the world.

Chapter 12 explores southern Africa's international relations by analyzing economic and political linkages within the region, and strategic interactions between the region and the rest of Africa, and between the region and the world. Thus the chapter focuses on such regional institutions as the SADC, pan-African structures such as the African Union and the New Partnership for African Development initiative, and international relationships centered around trade, debt, and aid regimes. Southern Africa, principally through the efforts of South Africa, has taken a leadership role in these processes.

Chapter 13 concludes the book. Although the countries of southern Africa face entrenched problems and challenges—both individually and collectively—southern Africa is in many ways the most dynamic and most promising region on the African continent. In this concluding chapter we outline the lessons derived from explicit study of southern Africa, and we outline avenues for future research and analysis, which the region deserves, and social science demands.

## ■ Notes

1. Among the works cited, Ayittey 1998, Chabal and Daloz 1999, and Kaplan 1994 and 2000 are most readily identified as part of this Afropessimist genre.
2. West Africa's history of military coups and authoritarian rule is noteworthy, as was the destabilizing and largely unforeseen ethnomilitary conflict in Côte d'Ivoire, which began in September 2002. Although Nigeria remains fragile, worth noting are the "success stories" in West Africa: Senegal, Ghana, and perhaps Benin

and Mali as well as and the markedly improved prospects for Liberia beginning in 2003.

3. This is particularly the case with Robert Kaplan (1994). The Great Lakes region served as the basis for a similar continentwide condemnation in another journalist's account (Richburg 1997).

4. One text that does not take an explicitly regional approach, but nonetheless succeeds in capturing the diversity of the continent by categorizing African regime types, societies, and the like, is Chazan et al. 1999.

5. This book focuses exclusively on continental southern Africa, and therefore ignores the island states of Madagascar, Mauritius, and Seychelles. Neither do we engage in any systematic examination of Lesotho or Swaziland, although references occasionally are made to these states. Lesotho and Swaziland are surrounded by South Africa geographically, as well as politically and economically. Although the systems differ, these enclave states are unalterably tied to South Africa. Though Tanzania is a member of the Southern African Development Community, and is occasionally included among southern African countries, we regard its connection to East Africa as far more significant.

6. East Africa, North Africa, the Horn of Africa, West Africa, and arguably Central Africa also warrant attention on a regional basis. The specific countries one might include in any one of these regions, however, is to some degree a matter of interpretation, and overlapping affinities are clearly possible.

7. Ironically, in what some are describing as "the new white trek to the north," white South African farmers today are being offered land in neighboring countries in return for teaching agricultural and other skills to rural peasants (Legum 2000).

8. Wars in the region may have had a similar impact. As a result of Mozambique's civil war, nearly 1 million Mozambicans became refugees, for nearly a decade, in neighboring Malawi. Over the years, war in Angola similarly drove many Angolans to neighboring Namibia.

9. The Frontline States comprised Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Zambia, and Zimbabwe, as well as Tanzania. Malawi, which supported the apartheid regime in South Africa, was not part of the Frontline coalition.

10. Africa has experienced more than ninety-five successful coups d'état (Howe 2001).

11. Zimbabwe's program was suspended in 1997 due to noncompliance. South Africa designed its program internally, albeit following substantially on the International Monetary Fund and World Bank model (Padayachee 1997).

12. The SADC is not without a number of problems, however, including South Africa's *reluctance* to play the role of regional hegemon (see Oden 2001 and Chapter 12 in this volume).

13. As Martha Finnemore and Kathryn Sikkink (2001, 393) maintain, constructivism is simply "a framework for thinking about the nature of social life and social interaction, but makes no claims about their specific content. . . . Agents and structures are mutually constituted in ways that explain why the political world is so and not otherwise." It does not provide "substantive explanations or predictions of political behavior until coupled with a more specific understanding" of structures and agents; thus we need to consider it alongside other approaches. See also Wendt 1999 for applications to international politics.