

The Social Politics of Business in Africa

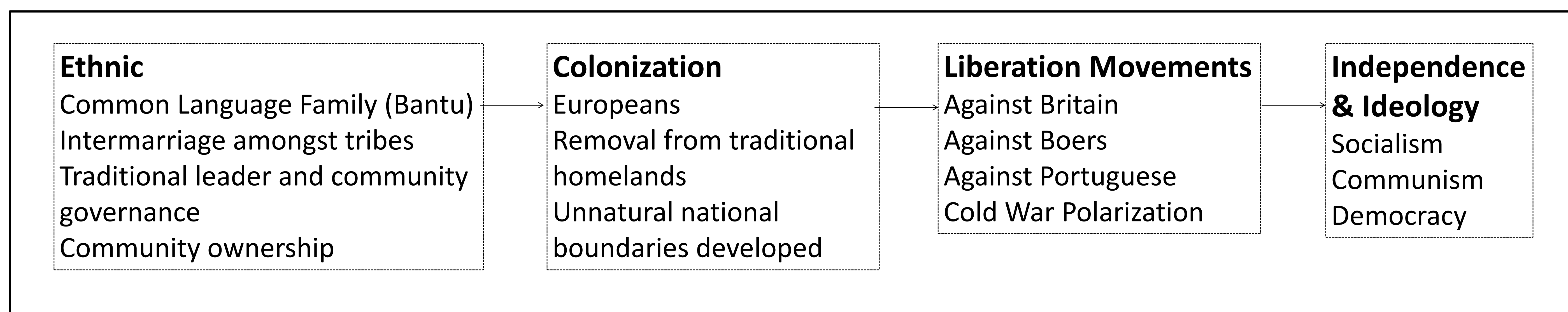
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Abstract

One global view of Africa is as a hidden, fragmented continent. In many circles like business, however, there are well-connected, interwoven networks spanning the social, business, and political spheres, as well as the continent. For example, the presidents of countries in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) today fought in struggles against colonial systems and are considered comrades, and several of them lead major economic systems. This has implications for economic development and dynamics in Africa. This poster introduces the context upon which further research is based.

A Stratospheric View of Social Politics in Major Southern African Countries

Evolution of Complexity of Social Politics



Examples of Complex Social Politics at Work in Last Fifty Years

- Many ethnic tribal relationships spanning country boundaries remain. Traditional kingdoms still have some sovereignty.
- Common struggle against colonialism. Angola and Mozambique fought against Portuguese while South Africa, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Tanzania, Malawi, etc., pushed against the British.
- Zambia and Tanzania supported and allowed liberation movements from other southern African countries, e.g., South Africa, Zimbabwe, to operate within country.
- Intermarriage still at work. Nelson Mandela married wife, Graca, of former liberation leader and president of Mozambique, Samora Machel. Sister of Swaziland King Mswati III married King Goodwill kaBhekuzulu of the Zulu Nation in South Africa.
- Several liberation movements like ANC and ZAPU were affiliated and/or received support from Russia and/or China. Liberation movements of socialist and communist affiliation became dominant parties under democracy, e.g., ANC (South Africa), MPLA (Angola), Zanu-PF (Zimbabwe), mixing ideologies. Members of these parties have become the political, social, and economic leaders in society.

Current Context

Dominant political parties drive the relational economies, limiting access to (better) opportunities and controlling succession. The old guard of the liberation movements (a brotherhood) still leads several of the dominant political parties, impacting economic dynamics. The next question is, "How will these relational economies evolve?"



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