

EXTRACTIVE AND INCLUSIVE INSTITUTIONS IN AFRICA: THE CASES OF MADAGASCAR, MOROCCO, SENEGAL, AND BOTSWANA

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ABSTRACT. – **Extractive and Inclusive Institutions in Africa: the Cases of Madagascar, Morocco, Senegal, and Botswana.** The models of inclusive and extractive institutions within the economic and social systems of the countries are described by Daron Acemoglu, James Robinson and Simon Johnson in their works, rewarded with the Nobel Prize in Economics in 2024. The great majority of the states of Africa belong to the extractive model, with a weak state, a narrow elite dominating the institutions of power and spoiling the meager resources of the countries, which results in underdevelopment and chronic social and political instability, like in Madagascar. On the other hand, we have the inclusive model, with a strong state where the institutions are accomplishing their functions of security, protecting private property and enforcing a participative democracy, representing the best way into development and shared prosperity, like in Botswana. However, even in Africa each state is different, and various intermediary situations can be described between the two models, where the struggle between the power of the state and the power of society generates very particular cases, autocracy and democracy coexist in a peculiar combination at the top levels of power and this has also serious consequences on the economic and social situation of the peoples concerned, like in Morocco and Senegal.

Keywords: *Elites, Inclusive, Extractive, Cage of Norms, Corridor, Shackled Leviathan.*

As a geographer I had the opportunity to travel recently in several developing countries of Africa and Asia and compare their situation and way of life to that of the countries of Europe and North America that I have also visited.

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Besides the obvious and visible differences between the peoples' lives from developing and developed countries respectively, a staggering question remains to be answered: what is the cause of the significant differences between the living standards of some developing countries who are geographically situated on the same continent (Africa in this case) and shared a quite similar, if not common history in the last couple of centuries?

There is a very rich literature describing the causes and problems of economic development or underdevelopment of some countries. Among others, the best explanation I recently found was formulated in the writings of three winners (2024) of the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences: Daron Acemoglu, Simon Johnson (both from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology) and James Robinson (from the University of Chicago). Since I visited Madagascar, Morocco and recently Senegal (but not Botswana yet), I thought about presenting in this study some of the aspects of their history and recent development that could justify their present situation or at least to which might partially apply the theories formulated by the above-mentioned authors.

WHY NATIONS FAIL

The first book of Acemoglu and Robinson is denying the theories according to which the differences in the development of the countries are firstly due to geographical, cultural or religious factors. One of the best examples is represented by the two parts of the town of Nogales, situated on the two sides of the USA/Mexico border, while the other is South and North Korea. In both cases the two sides are situated in the same geographic area, having identical geographic environments, natural and human resources and, until recently, sharing a common history and culture.

The difference between the two sides can only be explained by the essentially different institutions that were formed during the later evolution of the neighbouring countries. While the evolution of Nogales, Sonora illustrates the consequences of the Spanish colonial system in Latin America, Nogales, Arizona is an example of the development of former colonies in North America, inhabited mainly by Anglo-Saxon Europeans. The key factor lies in the institutional system that is very persistent and hard to change.

Economic prosperity is generated by free enterprise, where people can work and do business in similar conditions, creativity and innovation are encouraged, there is security, property is guaranteed and everyone can participate in the decisions concerning the communities. These conditions are provided only by a strong state, capable of making and enforcing laws and preventing abuses. This is what they call an *inclusive institutional system*.

On the other hand, those countries where a parasitic elite takes advantage of its political and institutional power, using it to extract the meager resources in order to maintain its dominance, without consideration for the development of the country and mercilessly exploiting the large majority of the population, are called *extractive institutional systems* (the authors are avoiding on purpose the term *exploitation* because of its Marxist connotation).

The theory is by no means a justification of colonialism, since Acemoglu and Robinson are underlining that the seeds of extractive institutional systems were in most cases spread by the European conquerors who installed typically extractive institutions of which many countries were not able to get rid until today.

As for Europe, the differences between East and West are to be looked for in the late Middle Ages, especially in the long-term effects of the Great Plague. In the West, the lack of manpower caused by the plague resulted in higher wages and the disappearance of serfdom, while in the East, where the death ratios caused by the plague were lower, the landlords reacted by reinforcing the exploitation of the peasants. The free workers later helped the blossoming of the Industrial Revolution in the western part of the continent, while in the eastern half a “second serfdom” became predominant by the end of the sixteenth century.

Africa was the part of the world with the institutions least able to take advantage of the opportunities made available by the Industrial Revolution. For at least one thousand years, Africa has lagged behind the rest of the world in terms of technology, political development, and prosperity. It is the part of the world where centralized states formed very late and very tenuously. Where they did form, they were likely as highly absolutist as in Egypt, in Morocco, in the Congo, in Zanzibar, or in Madagascar. How African institutions evolved into their present-day extractive form sharply illustrates the process of institutional drift punctuated by critical junctures, but with highly perverse outcomes, particularly during the expansion of the slave trade. Absolutism transmogrified from completely dominating societies, with extractive economic institutions that merely captured all the agricultural output of its subjects, to enslaving people en masse and selling them to traders in exchange for guns and luxury goods destined to the elites. Long distance trade opportunities thus created a critical juncture toward pluralistic political institutions in Europe, while they also extinguished any hope of absolutism being defeated in Africa, where the substantial profits to be had from slaving led not only to the intensification of slavery, but also to intense warfare and the destruction of many institutions. In this context, within a few centuries, any process of state centralization was totally reversed and many of the African states had largely collapsed.

Subsequent European colonialism not only threw into reverse nascent economic modernization in parts of southern and western Africa, but also cut off any possibility of indigenous institutional reform. This meant that even outside of areas such as Congo, Madagascar, Namibia and Tanzania, the areas where plunder, mass disruption and even whole-scale murder were the rule, there was little chance for Africa to change its institutional path (Acemoglu, D., Robinson, J., 2013).

Even worse, the structures of colonial rule left Africa with a more complex and pernicious institutional legacy in the 1960s than at the start of the colonial period. The development of the political and economic institutions in many African colonies meant that rather than creating a critical juncture for improvements in their institutions, independence created an opening for unscrupulous leaders to take over and intensify the extraction that European colonialists presided over. The political incentives these structures created led to a style of politics that reproduced the historical patterns of insecure and inefficient property rights under states with strong absolutist tendencies but nonetheless lacking any centralized authority over their territories. The Industrial Revolution has still not spread to Africa because that continent has experienced a long vicious circle of the persistence and re-creation of extractive political and economic institutions (*idem*).

THE NARROW CORRIDOR

The second book of D. Acemoglu and J. Robinson is further developing the idea that liberty has beneficial effects on economic development, at least on the long term, but this time the accent falls on the balance between political liberty (or the power of society, as they formulate) and the power of the state. For the latter, the authors are using Thomas Hobbes's metaphor of the biblical sea monster called Leviathan. This entity is as old as the states themselves, born at the beginning of each nation's history, each time when a new state is being created. The Leviathan does not appear from nothing or by no means is a divine creation, but is the result of the necessity of order, to prevent the state of *warre* (or anarchy, in another formulation), a situation of "war of all against all, of every man against every man, where life is nasty, brutish and short" (Hobbes, Th., 2012).

However, the authors do not agree with Hobbes's opinion about the necessity of absolute power of the state. On the one hand, they enumerate a series of examples of functional societies (like the Tiv from Nigeria) where the state never existed because the people there were reluctant to accept any kind

of political power, or it only existed nominally (like in Montenegro or Lebanon), and the relations between people were regulated by a strong set of traditional norms and intergroup agreements (this is what they call the *Cage of Norms*). So, it turns out that stateless societies are quite capable of controlling violence and putting a lid on conflict, though this does not bring much liberty. If we add here the societies (like in many African countries) where the state is so weak that practically it only exists on paper (the *Paper Leviathan*), these are forming a larger category called the “*Absent Leviathan*”. On the other hand, there is a natural tendency of political power to abuse of its situation and evolve towards despotism. But this might does not make right, and it certainly does not make for liberty. Life under the yoke of the state can be nasty, brutish and short too, and this is what they call the *Despotic Leviathan*.

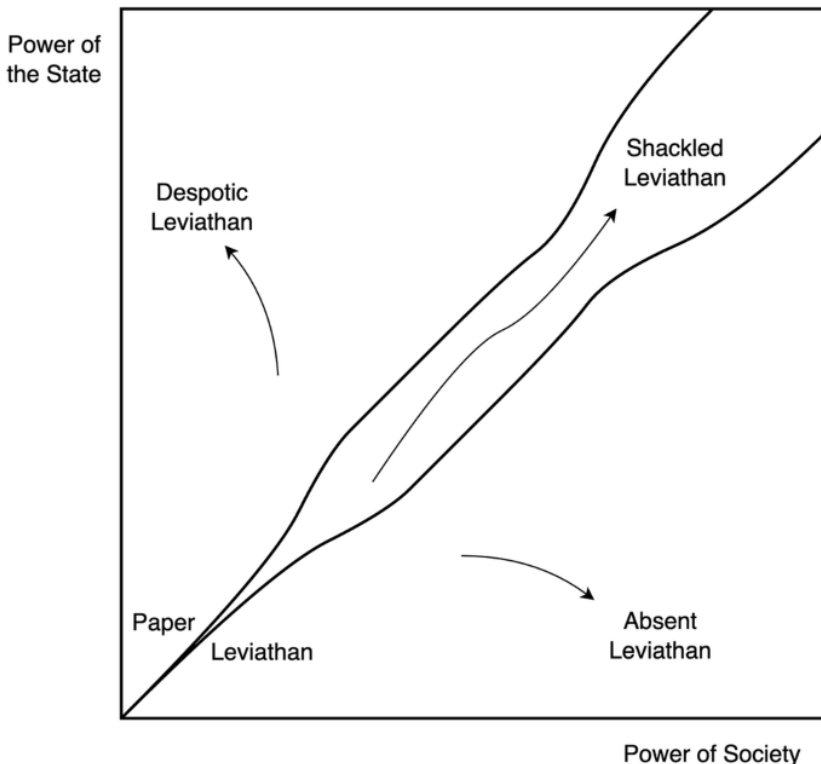


Fig. 1. The Narrow Corridor model
Source: Acemoglu, D., Robinson, J. (2019)

A very different type of Leviathan, a shackled one, emerges when there is a balance between its power and society's capacity to control it. The balance is the result of the constant struggle between the power of the state and the power of society, which are mutually "shackling" each other and generate the *Red Queen Effect* (another metaphor, taken this time from Lewis Carroll's book *Alice in Wonderland*), when this mutual control provides a stable and secure state that can resolve conflicts fairly, provide public services and economic opportunities, and prevent dominance, laying down the basic foundations of liberty. This is the Leviathan that people, believing that they can control it, trust and cooperate with and allow to increase its capacity. This is the Leviathan that also promotes liberty by breaking down the various cages of norms tightly regulating behavior in society, or shortly, the *Shackled Leviathan* (Acemoglu, D., Robinson, J., 2019).

The forces shaping the evolution of different types of society mentioned above can be represented on a simplified graphic model (in a system of two coordinates) illustrating the two main variables (Fig. 1): the horizontal axis shows *the power of society*, i.e. how powerful a society is in terms of its norms, practices and institutions, especially when it comes to acting collectively, coordinating its actions and constraining political hierarchy. The second (vertical) axis represents *the power of the state*. This is similarly combining several aspects including the power of political and economic elites and the power and capacity of state institutions. The cases where the first force is prevalent (the Absent Leviathan) are situated on the right /lower side, while the cases where the power of the state dominates (the Despotic Leviathan) appear on the left/upper side. The figure also shows that we can have capable states matched by capable societies. This happens in the *Narrow Corridor* in the middle where we see emerging the Shackled Leviathan. It is precisely in this corridor that the Red Queen Effect is operative, and the struggle of state and society contributes to the strengthening of both and can help maintain the balance between the two. The Red Queen – the race between state and society – does more than render both of them capable. It also reconfigures the nature of the institutions and makes the Leviathan more accountable and responsive to citizens. In the process, it transforms people's lives too, not just because it removes the dominance of states and elites over them, but also because it relaxes and breaks down the cage of norms, advancing individual liberty and enabling more effective popular participation in politics. Consequently, it is only in this corridor that true liberty emerges and evolves. Outside the corridor, liberty is curved either by the absence of the Leviathan or by its despotism (Acemoglu, D., Robinson, J., 2019).

The *Paper Leviathan* is a sort of state that is common in Latin America, Africa, and other parts of the world and is founded and supported by the weakness and disorganization of society. It combines some of the defining

characteristics of the Despotic Leviathan, in being unaccountable to and unchecked by society, with the weaknesses of the Absent Leviathan. It cannot resolve conflicts, enforce laws, or provide public services. The fragmented, ineffective nature of the Paper Leviathan has major consequences for liberty, in particular for the control of violence. Because of the way they use power, Paper Leviathans cannot have the monopoly of legitimate physical force as Max Weber defined it, this is why the state is just like “an orangutan in a tuxedo”: the tuxedo is the outward appearance of an orderly state with a functioning bureaucracy, even if it is used for looting the country and is often disorganized, while the orangutan is all the things the Paper Leviathan cannot and does not wish to control. These are societies with enormous inequalities and hierarchy, where there is no room for a Weberian state. Rather the government is a tool for controlling power and the law an instrument for stabilizing this unequal status quo.

According to Acemoglu and Robinson, this is also the characteristic form of state in sub-Saharan Africa, where the mechanisms underpinning the continued weakness and disorganization of the state operate with a vengeance. There are several factors that cause this weakness. On the one hand, the dense web of norms, mutual obligations and the remnants of the supporting institutions from the colonial era lived on. This cage of norms heavily shaped how post-independence politics worked and created a social environment that perpetuated the Paper Leviathan, blocking society’s ability to act collectively while at the same time stunting the state’s capacity. The more the Paper Leviathan exploited the network of mutual dependences and ethnic ties, the more it reaffirmed the cage of norms that these created in many African societies. Another factor weakening both state and society is the arbitrary nature of postcolonial countries. The ethnic and religious diversity, the very different stages of development and types of social organization, the lack of cultural unity generated a state of incoherence where there was little societal mobilization, and this made it particularly attractive for leaders to make discretionary use of the state and the law to maintain power. In essence, Paper Leviathan formed in the terrain left by colonial empires, which created weak states and weak societies and a situation wherein both were likely to perpetuate each other (*idem*).

POWER AND PROGRESS

The third book of Daron Acemoglu (having this time Simon Johnson as co-author) emphasizes on the effects of technological development on social inequality and on the political power structures. According to the authors, shared prosperity emerged because, and only when, the direction of technological

advances and society's approach to dividing the gains were pushed away from arrangements that primarily served a narrow elite. We are beneficiaries of progress, mainly because our predecessors made that progress work for more people: most people around the globe today are better off than our ancestors because citizens and workers in early industrial societies organized and challenged elite-dominated choices about technology and work conditions, and forced ways of sharing the gains from technical improvements more equitably. However, progress is never automatic. Today's "progress" is again enriching a small group of entrepreneurs and investors, whereas most people are disempowered and benefit little. A new, more inclusive vision of technology can emerge only if the basis of social power changes. This requires the rise of counterarguments and organizations that can stand up to the conventional wisdom. Confronting the prevailing vision and wrestling the direction of technology away from the control of a narrow elite may even be more difficult today than during the glorious days of the Industrial Revolution (Acemoglu, D., Johnson, S., 2023).

Optimism regarding shared benefits from technological progress is founded on the idea of the "*productivity bandwagon*", meaning that new machines and production methods that increase productivity will also produce higher wages. As technology progresses, the bandwagon will pull along everybody, not just entrepreneurs and owners of capital. On the other hand, just how productivity benefits are shared depends on how exactly technology changes and on the rules, norms, expectations that govern how management treat workers. Productivity growth increases the demand for workers as businesses attempt to boost profits by expanding output and hiring more people, then the demand for more workers increases the wages that need to be offered to attract and retain employees. Unfortunately, neither step is assured, because what really matters to companies is *marginal productivity*, i.e. the additional contribution that one more worker brings by increasing production or serving more customers. Automation often raises average productivity but does not increase, in fact may reduce worker marginal productivity. So, productivity growth does not necessarily deliver broad-based prosperity. It will do so only when technologies increase worker marginal productivity and the resulting gains are shared between firms and workers, but these outcomes depend on economic, social and political choices. They can generate shared prosperity or relentless inequality, depending on how they are used and where new innovative effort is directed. In principle, these are decisions a society should make collectively. In practice, they are made by entrepreneurs, managers, visionaries, and sometimes political leaders, with defining effects on who wins and who loses from technological advances (*idem*).

THE CASE OF MADAGASCAR

The rivalry for colonies in Africa between the French and British peaked in the second half of the 19th century. However, before the construction of the Suez canal, France and the United Kingdom signed in 1862 an agreement concerning the future division of East Africa. According to this, the British recognized the priority of French interests in Madagascar, while the French ceded Zanzibar and the eastern coast of Africa to the British Empire. The French territorial claims in and around the Big Island resulted in the first Franco-Hova War in 1883 and the forced cession of the Malagasy territories situated North of the 16th parallel (Randriamamonjy, F., 2008).

The Berlin Conference of 1884/1885 sealed the fate of Madagascar (the French protectorate of Madagascar was already recognized by the British in 1890), resulting in the final conquest of the island by a French army in 1894-1895. A year later the Malagasy monarchy was abolished and Madagascar became a French colony. The colonial regime abolished slavery in Madagascar in 1896, but also introduced in 1901 the discriminative legal system of the *indigénat*, in order to control the individual and social life of the natives by severe administrative and punitive measures (Blanc, G., 2022).

Anticolonial resistance never ceased on the island. As a result, on June 26th, 1960, Madagascar proclaimed its independence. The first Malagasy Republic remained strongly attached to France by bilateral cooperation agreements, while its economy was substantially aided by the former colonial power. The dependance from France, perceived as neocolonial exploitation, eventually led to the fall of president Tsiranana in 1972, replaced by an army general, Gabriel Ramanantsoa, former prime minister, until 1975, when Didier Ratsiraka was declared president and chief of the government. Ratsiraka proclaimed the Democratic Republic of Madagascar (the second Malagasy Republic), of Marxist inspiration, establishing a political system on the Cuban model, with the unique party AREMA (Avantgarde of the Malagasy Revolution) and relying mainly on the Eastern Bloc for the functioning of the economy. The socialist experiment proved to be a total failure and in 1990 the government was forced to admit the access of private investors, not least in order to cease the famine affecting ever larger parts of the country. After new riots and political instability, a new Constitution was adopted in 1993 (the third Malagasy Republic), followed by the election of Albert Zafy as president. However, the economic and political liberalization did not produce the expected growth, so a new crisis and a deep conflict between the president and the parliament resulted in the destitution of Zafy and the election of Norbert Ratsirahonana as interim president.

In 1997 former president Didier Ratsiraka was reelected, this time sustained by the French government. A short period of economic stability (until 2001) followed, during which Madagascar's average annual growth rate was 4.3%. After a long political turmoil that put the country on the verge of civil war, the former mayor of Antananarivo Marc Ravalomanana was elected president in 2002, then reelected in 2006. In 2007 the Constitution was amended by referendum, allowing the president to rule by decree in case of emergency or catastrophe. On January 26th 2009 a new Malagasy political crisis began, started by the manifestations of the opposition in the capital city, under the leadership of mayor Andry Rajoelina, which resulted in violence and casualties (dead and wounded), caused by the intervention of the police and of the presidential guards. The final intervention of the army led to the resignation and escape from the country of president Marc Ravalomanana, the declaration of Rajoelina as interim president on March 18th and the suspension of both chambers of the parliament on March 19th. The second round of the postponed presidential elections was held in December 2013 with Hery Rajaonarimampianina as winner. In December 2018 former president Andry Rajoelina won the second round of the election, then in November 2023 he was re-elected to another term in the first round. In September 2025 (two weeks after similar events in Nepal), new manifestations against corruption erupted among the young people in the capital, resulting in more than 20 deaths. The president sacked prime minister Christian Ntsay and his government, then in October 2025 the army associated to the manifestants. President Rajoelina fled the country on a French military plane. On October 14th, colonel Michael Randrianirina declared having taken the power after the National Assembly voted the destitution of the president.

Just like in many other countries of Africa, rival factions of the elites in Madagascar, supported by foreign powers, are permanently fighting for power and periodically shifting each other at the top functions of the country. The Malagasy elite, associated by definition with the ruling class, has though remained the same on the whole in Madagascar since independence. It is made up largely of the *Andriana* and *Hova* bourgeoisie, which has inherited symbolic power (before colonisation for the *Andriana*, and before and during colonisation for the *Hova* who were responsible for managing public affairs). Members of the *côtier* high families have joined this group based on the place they had secured on the national scene as representatives of their region, among others, since the colonial period. This role of ethnic groups and castes in Malagasy society (despite their late 19th century abolition) is a persistently nagging question in the country's history. Access to elite status may stem more or less directly from parental lineage. In the case of Madagascar, there is clear evidence of a family-based elite social reproduction mechanism. Nearly half (46%) of the elites have

at least one parent who is (or was) a member of the elites. This phenomenon is more marked among the younger generations. With their investment in school and capacity for a level of education largely above the Malagasy average (including studying abroad), it is relatively easy for the children of elites to attain privileged positions in the different spheres of power. So it is not surprising to find the same family names since independence in the ruling class. There is no shortage of descendants of dignitaries of the First Republic in the political class. Granted, new names appear, but by and large an oligarchy made up of a bourgeois elite, including *côtier*, already in position following independence still holds an important place today. The elites who have a role in the political sphere differ in terms of their much higher rate of involvement in associations in general (87% vs. 81% on average), in hometown associations (67% as opposed to 46% on average) and in Freemasonry (14% compared with 11% on average). There is a specific link between associative participation and access to political power (Razafindrakotto et al., 2018).

The elites – especially political elites – consequently appear to be in a position to benefit from support and forms of legitimization by means of their membership in these circles. The elites in Madagascar form an extremely airtight world largely disconnected from the vast majority of the population. They use all the resources at their disposal to ensure their reproduction as a dominant group at the apex of the social hierarchy. If the system breathes at all, it is essentially internally (between the different spheres of power) as individuals juggle with a certain amount of give between one field and another. However, the elite world's borders are well guarded by strategies designed to limit and control newcomers' access to power. This *modus operandi* of preserving privilege is in itself already at odds with the principles of meritocracy and equal opportunities on which modern democratic societies are supposed to be founded. At the same time, this dominant class displays rather mixed attitudes to democratic principles. Although they join the population in criticising the poor successive leaderships, they look as if they are trying to extricate themselves somewhat from their share of responsibility, generally claiming other underlying reasons for Malagasy society's underdevelopment and deadlock: exogenous factors – colonial heritage and donor diktats – and the population's culture and reactionary mentality. Yet the main point of disagreement between elites and the rest of the population concerns the order of priorities on the political agenda. Although maintaining order counts most for the elites, the rest of the population prioritises improved living conditions for the poor. This discrepancy between the elite class's position and the wishes of the vast majority of the people is indicative of the divisions between these two groups. The situation is to the people's disadvantage in that the elites have the privilege of power and more easily influence which political

options are taken up. So by maintaining the social order's status quo, the elites have basically protected their status since the colonial period, if not the kingdoms, irrespective of the interests of the vast majority of the population (Razafindrakotto et al., 2018).

There is a remarkable contrast between the living standards of rural and urban areas of Madagascar, most of the former being characterized by extreme poverty, while in the cities, not very rich either, there is a visible class of nouveau riches who can afford almost European consuming patterns. These contrasts cause deep frustrations which, associated to the endemic corruption and indifference of the political leadership, is a permanent hotbed for political turmoil, erupting explosively in periodic uprisings, coups d'état and revolutions, while the economic and social situation of the masses does not change at all or sometimes even worsens. A relative calm was characteristic for the capital and its surroundings in November 2008 (while I was travelling there), but as it came out later, it was just the silence before the storm. Violent demonstrations, illegitimate power structures, disease (bubonic plague in 2014 and 2017, measles in 2019, Covid in 2020, botulism in 2025), catastrophic floods caused by tropical storms or extended drought in other regions, even locust invasions and famine were frequent if not chronic symptoms of Madagascar's crisis in the last decade. In 2021, Madagascar's worst drought in 40 years left more than a million people in southern Madagascar food insecure. This forced thousands of people to leave their homes to search for food.

The situation is aggravated by a demographic explosion which seems to be uncontrolled (the total population raised from 18.6 million in 2000 to 32 million in 2024) and has an increasing impact on the environment. All these facts sustain the positioning of Madagascar on the Narrow Corridor diagram below the corridor but somewhere close to the bottom left corner, as a typical case of Paper Leviathan, with a weak state controlled by corrupt elites and a weak society, dominated by divisions and superstitions, with a powerful cage of norms.

MOROCCO

Morocco was the only country in North Africa that was not conquered by the Ottomans in the 16th century. Several Arab-Berber dynasties ruled the kingdom, whose boundaries changed significantly during the ages. Nevertheless, the Atlas Mountains were always at the heart of this land finally fallen under French protectorate in 1912, except its northern province of If and the southern territories known today as Western Sahara, both overseas territories of Spain.

On March 2nd 1956 Morocco proclaimed its independence and one year later the last sultan from the Alaouite dynasty, Mohammed V, became the first king of Morocco, followed after his death in 1961 by his son Hassan II. The social unrest that started in 1965 with riots in Casablanca lead to the declaration of the state of exception until 1970. In the next years, after two failed coup attempts, the Constitution was modified, meaning the reinforcement of the monarchy and an even stronger influence of the royal family. In 1975, after the death of General Franco, the Spanish authorities abandoned their last colony of Rio de Oro (Western Sahara), which soon resulted in the occupation of the province by Morocco within the project called Green March.

Political reforms in the 1990s resulted in the establishment of a bicameral legislature with Morocco's first opposition-led government coming to power. King Hassan II died in 1999 and was succeeded by his son, Mohammed VI, a cautious moderniser who has introduced some economic and social liberalisation. During the 2011–2012 Moroccan protests, thousands of people rallied in Rabat and other cities calling for political reform and a new constitution curbing the powers of the king. In July 2011, the King won a landslide victory in a referendum on a reformed constitution he had proposed to placate the Arab Spring protests. Despite the reforms made by Mohammed VI, demonstrators continued to call for deeper reforms.

The changes of 2011 brought the separation of powers formally without affecting the power of the King, let alone the possibility of change at the top of power. Thus, the power structure remains intact: all powers and decisions start from the top and are delegated and granted. Indeed, the alternation was in the government and not an alternation in power, because in Morocco the power and its legitimacy reside in the person of the King, for that reason one cannot talk about the alternation of power. Despite the new constitution of 2011, the Moroccan monarchy has deployed a strategy of withering away and marginalizing political parties, while perpetuating a multi-party system that serves to maintain and consolidate its leadership. The multiple elections that have punctuated the political history of Morocco have provided a framework for the expression and renewal of the partisan field, carefully controlled by the Monarchy and devoid of any truly competitive dimension when it comes to the issues of appropriation of power. Political formations in Morocco have a more front-facing role in the service of the monarchy more than other functions, that is to say, to channel and regulate the political system on behalf of the monarchy. These political parties have agreed to continue to play the game of integration or co-option at the risk of weakening their social foundations and increasing their popular discredit; for the monarchy, to secure the support of partisan structures through a certain electoral legitimacy, to guarantee if not its hegemony at least its stability and survival (El Aalaoui, M., 2021).

The Moroccan power uses a carrot and stick approach to control the institutions of civil society and subordinate them to the state. The regime appoints loyalists as heads and directors of civic institutions, or other figures capable of managing civilian organizations, in a way that serves the interests of the political regime. The modernized traditional elites are represented by the sons as their fathers, they evolve at the crossroads of economics and politics. They assume proximity to the central power, that is to say to the palace. This elite is diverse by its origins, Makhzenian families, families of provincial notability, large religious families, families of the Istiqlal party, and by its type of linking to the Makhzen. Nevertheless, few members of these modernized traditional elites play an important role in the naturalization of Moroccan neoliberalism. They openly assume their link to the palace, they are explicitly part of this double relationship to power made up of legality and allegiance, even claiming the primacy of the latter. The members of these modernized traditional elites feel liberal and see themselves as Makhzenian. Most of them claim to be apolitical by the desire to distance themselves from political parties.

It is very likely, that the elites who prospered under the autocracy will resist normalizing the distribution of wealth and the democratization of political life, while democracy will remain incomplete. The Moroccan constitution reflects the will of the constituent to preserve the achievements of the traditional monarchy, by establishing the legitimacy of independent Morocco around the triptych God, the Nation and the King. Elections have failed to induce genuine political change in Morocco; however, they have been used as an instrument to reconstitute the existing political system. And besides, we are witnessing a stagnation in the production of the Moroccan political elite, in another way, the elections in Morocco only strengthen the elite, which stabilizes the Moroccan political regime in terms of change. Thus the constitutional changes in Morocco are only made to gain more support from Western powers and donors. We still live the recycling of traditional political elite system with colours of modernity and liberalism (*idem*)

These facts are determining the positioning of Morocco on the Narrow Corridor diagram above the corridor, as a case of a rather despotic regime, with a strong state controlled by the royal family but a quite weak society, even if formally a multiparty system with regular political elections, and still with a powerful cage of norms.

SENEGAL

After independence Senegal was largely relying on French trade and industry, while the president kept a French praetorian guard to ensure national security. Senghor refused to countenance a more rapid rate of Africanisation by allowing unqualified Africans to take over jobs from qualified Frenchmen. In Dakar the French population actually grew after independence. Despite French assistance, Senegal's economy remained largely stagnant, as demographic growth effectively canceled out the increase of the economy. At the same time Senegal became increasingly encumbered by external debt. Senghor steered through these difficulties with a mixture of compromise, coercion and pork-barrel politics. He kept the support of the Muslim Brotherhoods by providing marabouts with special favours, such as large loans and strategically placed development projects. He bought off political opponents by offering them government posts and material benefits. He reacted to student protests with strong arm tactics - tear gas and arrests. At the age of 74, Senghor announced his decision to resign in favor of his protégé, Abdou Diouf. Senghor thus became the first African leader since independence to give up power voluntarily. The tradition of multi-party politics he established in Senegal survived. In 1981 Diouf passed legislation allowing for the legalization of all political parties. He went on to win several elections until accepting defeat in 2000 (Meredith, M., 2011).

The presidential elections of March 19th 2000, won in the second round by the long time leader of the opposition, Abdoulaye Wade, brought the fall of president Abdou Diouf. Wade abolished the Senate and the Economic Council in 2000, then in 2001 succeeded in amending the constitution, reducing the presidential mandate from 7 to 5 years, dissolving the National Assembly and naming Mme Madior Bouaye as first female prime minister of Senegal in March 2001. Abdoulaye Wade, after being reelected as president in 2007, reestablished the Senate and a seven years presidential mandate in 2008. His liberal economic policy brought significant foreign investments into Senegal and spectacular investments in the infrastructures, but also resulted in the decay of the agriculture, the crash of several industrial sectors (like the chemicals' industry), a high unemployment rate, an increasing number of emigrants seeking refuge especially in the Canary Islands and a dependance on the Senegalese diaspora in covering the needs for foreign currency.

The opposition denounced on several occasions a drift into authoritarianism during the mandates of A. Wade, who presented himself for a third mandate in 2012, but was finally defeated by his former Prime Minister Macky Sall. The new president launched a series of institutional reforms in order to reduce government

spending and the corruption, creating a national antifraud and anti-corruption agency in 2012. The massive government investments resulted in a 6,8% economic increase in 2018, while the country became increasingly dependent on Chinese, Indian, and Middle Eastern capital. At the same time, the drift into authoritarianism did not cease: during his first mandate, the Constitution was amended ten times and the electoral law eighteen times. As a result, Macky Sall was reelected for a second term in 2019, then the Parliament abolished the office of Prime Minister between 2019 and 2022, installing a presidential form of government.

In March 2023, based on the opinion of the Constitutional Council of 2019, Macky Sall declared himself eligible for a third presidential mandate. His main opponent, Ousmane Sonko, mayor of Ziguinchor, was charged in 2021 with rape and murder threatening, and condemned in March 2023 to two years of prison. His conviction started a series of violent riots in the capital with several deaths and injuries, and resulted in his elimination from the list of eligible presidential candidates. In June 2023, president Macky Sall declared that he would not candidate in 2024 for a third term, sustaining as presidential candidate for the Benno Bokk Yakaar coalition Prime Minister Amadou Ba. In March 2024, opposition candidate Bassirou Diomaye Faye won Senegal's presidential election over the ruling coalition's candidate, becoming the youngest president in Senegal's history.

The present situation of Senegal allows the positioning of the country within the Narrow Corridor on the previously mentioned diagram, but close to the bottom left corner, as a state at the beginning of democracy, with a multiparty system that resisted until now to the authoritarian tendencies of its leaders and managed to change the president with democratic elections, where the state is strong but so is society, in spite of some weaknesses connected to corruption and subsisting traditional structures, characteristic for most of the African countries.

BOTSWANA

Bechuanaland, the territory situated north of the Cape Colony, became a British protectorate in 1885. By the 19th century there were eight Tswana states which had developed a core set of political institutions. These involved an unusual degree of political centralization and collective decision-making procedures that can even be viewed as a nascent, primitive form of pluralism. The political institutions of the Tswana, in particular the *kgotla*, encouraged political participation and constrained chiefs. The Tswana chieftaincy was not

strictly hereditary but open to any man demonstrating significant talent and ability. Though in appearance the Tswana had clear rules stipulating how the chieftaincy was to be inherited, in practice these rules were interpreted to remove bad rulers and allow talented candidates to become chief. So, winning the chieftaincy was rather a matter of achievement, but was then rationalized so that the successful competitor appeared to be the rightful heir. The Tswana chiefs continued in their attempts to maintain their independence from Britain and to preserve their indigenous institutions even under the protectorate. They would avoid both intense indirect rule and the far worse faith that would have befallen them had Cecil Rhodes succeeded in annexing their lands. This was the result of the interplay between the existing institutions, shaped by the institutional drift of the Tswana people and the critical juncture brought about by colonialism. The three chiefs who traveled to London in order to ask the protection of the British Empire had made their luck by taking the initiative and they were able to do this because they had an unusual degree of authority, compared to other tribal leaders of sub-Saharan Africa, owing to the political centralization the Tswana tribes had achieved, and perhaps they also had an unusual degree of legitimacy, because of the modicum of pluralism embedded in their tribal institutions (Acemoglu, D., Robinson, J., 2013).

Though at independence, in 1966, Botswana was one of the poorest countries in the world, today it has the highest per capita income in sub-Saharan Africa, and is at the same level as successful Eastern European countries like Estonia and Hungary, and the most successful Latin American nations, such as Costa Rica. Botswana was able to achieve this by quickly developing inclusive economic and political institutions after independence. Since then, it has been democratic, holds regular and competitive elections, and has never experienced civil war or military intervention. The government set up economic institutions enforcing property rights, ensuring macroeconomic stability, and encouraging the development of an inclusive market economy. This was possible because Botswana already had some amount of state centralization and relatively pluralistic tribal institutions that survived colonialism. Even though land was owned communally, cattle was private property in the Tswana states and elites were similarly in favor of well-enforced property rights. Things could have turned out very differently if it had not been so fortunate as to have leaders who decided to contest power in elections rather than subvert the electoral system, as many post-independence leaders in sub-Saharan Africa did. The management of natural resources in Botswana also differed markedly from that in other African nations when diamonds were discovered. Before the discovery was announced, president Khama instigated a change in the law so that all subsoil mineral rights were vested in the nation, not the tribe. This ensured that diamond

wealth would not create great inequities in Botswana. It also gave further impetus to the process of state centralization as diamond revenues could now be used for building a state bureaucracy and infrastructure and for investing in education (*idem*).

All these features allow the positioning of Botswana clearly in the Narrow Corridor, with a strong state controlled by a strong society, a typical case of shackled Leviathan, unique in Africa and also a remarkable example for the whole developing world.

CONCLUSIONS

Most of the sources mention the heritage of colonial system as one of the main causes of underdevelopment. However, their appearance and spread was based on the cooperation of the local elites, whether it started with the slave trade or simply by any kind of trade. The local potentates had usually no scruples when selling into slavery or mercilessly exploiting their subjects. On the contrary, they saw advantages for themselves and later the colonial regimes were primarily based on the cooperation of these elites. Most of these elites have survived until today and represent the link between the new nation states and their former colonizing countries. They are still dominating the countries' political systems and their main goal is to maintain their privileges, even if this means exploiting the people, being involved in corruption and electoral fraud or imposing dictatorships by force.

Fortunately the extractive model did not become a general pattern for all the developing countries, not even in the so-called third world, with a longer or shorter colonial history. Though the best examples of stable democracies with developed or fast developing economies (such as South Korea, Malaysia, Costa Rica, Chile, Uruguay etc.) are usually found outside Africa, the positive examples of Botswana, Namibia, Senegal, and recently Angola are giving hope for other countries too, Africa included. The recent spectacular economic growth and social progress of the emerging states (like India, Indonesia, Vietnam, Brazil or Mexico) are hopeful signs for a better future world, though the power of society in these states is often weak. We should not forget that things can always change for the worse, no matter if they are about political or social questions (like in Russia, Iran, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, the D.R. of Congo, Nigeria, the Sahel states, Ecuador, Venezuela, and even Argentine) or just stay essentially unchanged for decades, even if periodically revolutions, civil wars or coups are shaking the whole system (like in Egypt, Algeria, Ethiopia, Peru, Bolivia, Afghanistan or Nepal).

Most of the former socialist countries of Eastern Europe are nowadays privileged EU members or candidates for membership, but this is by no means a guarantee for stable democracy with a strong state and a strong society. The example of Hungary is the most relevant in this sense. Once a leader in the demolishing of communist regimes and of the pro-democracy movement in Europe, Hungary is more and more drifting out of the Narrow Corridor, becoming a black sheep within the European Union. The populist Orbán government, installed for 15 years, is very successful in brainwashing the electorate, liquidating most of the checks and balances of power and weakening the rule of law. Furthermore, it is overtly speaking against European values with anti-Brussels slogans, shamelessly linking itself to authoritarian and anti-democratic regimes such as Russia or China.

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