

a continentwide aeronautical blockade of Soviet aircraft. In doing so, Muehlenbeck presents the reader with a lively discussion of African and global anxieties over the meaning of nonalignment in a moment of Cold War crisis. More than in any other chapter, it is in this final chapter that the reader begins to feel the real stakes of Kennedy's charm campaign for both the United States and Africa's postcolonial leaders.

In all, *Betting on the Africans* offers an insightful collection of case studies outlining Kennedy's tactical inserting of American Cold War ambitions into the language, and in some cases possibly even the goals, of African decolonization. The author's ability to maintain a cohesive and persuasive narrative throughout the book despite its vast scope is particularly admirable. Yet the author's treatment of Kennedy himself is at times problematic—and the discussion of Eisenhower is perhaps even more so. Throughout this book Muehlenbeck describes Eisenhower's African policy as racist or even nonexistent. For instance, nearly every chapter in the book's first part refers to an initial slight by Eisenhower or his officials that helped turn Africa's radical nationalists against the United States. The book suggests, therefore, that Kennedy was burdened throughout his presidency with the task of restoring the image of the United States in Africa. Such a narrative reads very powerfully, but it is also problematic analytically. Specifically, it obscures the differing sets of local and global realities, possibilities, and constraints faced by Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Africa's postcolonial leaders during the two U.S. administrations, turning these realities into static representations of each president's personal views of Africa and Africans. The larger question is that of the changing nature of the postwar international community over the course of the 1950s and early 1960s and possibly the two presidents' roles in it, something only hinted at in what is nevertheless a novel and accessible exploration of American and African foreign policy.

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## **POLITICS, INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, AND GLOBALIZATION**

**Leonardo R. Arriola. *Multiethnic Coalitions in Africa: Business Financing of Opposition Election Campaigns*.** New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012. xxiii + 301 pp. List of Figures. List of Tables. List of Abbreviations. Appendixes. References. \$30.99. Paper.

In this book Leonardo Arriola examines the question of why opposition parties are able to form multiethnic coalitions in some African countries but not in others. He argues that opposition parties in Africa have historically

been unable to establish cross-cleavage coalitions because of the indivisible nature of the presidential office and the uncertainty surrounding whether winning candidates will uphold commitments to disperse rewards—such as ministerial positions—once in office. The book offers a theory of “pecuniary coalition formation” to explain how opposition candidates overcome these challenges. The theory asserts that multiethnic coalitions are most likely to emerge where incumbents have lost influence over the political allegiance of business elites because of liberalizing financial sector reforms. Such reforms enable entrepreneurs to support opposition candidates without fear of reprisals from the regime in power. When this is the case, opposition parties obtain monetary support from business leaders, which in turn allows opposition leaders to provide money, favors, and goods in exchange for the endorsements of politicians from other ethnic backgrounds.

Arriola maintains that this causal explanation holds in the context of African societies where, he argues, the principal cleavage between groups in political competition is distinguished along ethnic lines. However, the book fails to explain how ethnic groups are conceptualized from country to country. It assumes that ethnic groups can be treated equally across all countries throughout Africa regardless of their political relevance. The author’s “Multiethnic Opposition Coalitions” dataset, which consists of election and coalition data for thirty-six sub-Saharan African countries from 1990 to 2005, supplies no measure for assessing the political significance of one group as compared to another. This omission is conspicuous, since the relative importance of multiethnic coalitions is bound to the political relevance of the cleavages being bridged. Conversely, the book assumes that ethnic identity is the foremost political cleavage in any given African society. In order to establish the general validity or implications of the argument, the book would have needed to address these conceptual issues in more depth.

Another problematic aspect of the book is that it does not explore the ability of opposition leaders to deliver the votes of their coethnic constituents after they join a multiethnic coalition. In the absence of provided evidence, the assumption that opposition leaders are capable of generating the bargained-for votes is tenuous. If voters cast their ballots based on ethnicity, what ensures that they will vote for the non-coethnic leader of the coalition over an alternative coethnic representative, another coalition altogether, or the incumbent candidate? Thus the book submits two contradictory and untested assumptions: first, that political cleavages exist primarily along ethnic lines and are equally relevant between countries; and second, that voters will cast their ballots for whomever their co-ethnic candidate supports regardless of ethnic identity. Further evidence is necessary to establish the causal connection between voters and their coethnic candidates.

Despite these issues, many aspects of Arriola’s work are compelling. The use and development of innovative measures of political control over the banking sector stand out as a testament to Arriola’s ability and creativity

as a scholar. The parsimonious style of explanation and logical consistency of the argument throughout the book make it engaging. Methodologically, the author's employment of quantitative and qualitative methods to test his propositions is impressive. In each chapter Arriola seamlessly integrates and compares data from fieldwork in two case studies, Kenya and Cameroon. The foundation of his argument concerning the relationship of the business class to the state and later to incumbent regimes is corroborated through both the quantitative analysis and qualitative cases. Through a careful examination of the state-led financial sector, banking sector, and liberalization of capital, the book demonstrates that African states that implemented liberalizing financial reforms ultimately generated a business class free from state regulation and more supportive of opposition candidates. These contributions of the book ensure that it will have a lasting impact on the broader field of African politics and political economy.

Nevertheless, the conceptualization of ethnic groups as the same across many countries implies that ethnic groups face identical challenges to forming political coalitions regardless of their context. Rather than relying on ethnicity to capture differences among groups across the continent, it may be useful for students of African politics to think about why—perhaps even if—ethnicity is important in particular cases. This requires scholars to investigate particular cases closely in order to determine which groups, ethnic or otherwise, are politicized and why. Arriola presents evidence from the two case studies in this fashion and the resulting analysis is decidedly persuasive. What is lacking is a convincing discussion of the relevant cleavages in the remaining cases that are analyzed by quantitative methods. *Multiethnic Coalitions in Africa* contributes to the literature on democratizing states in Africa and will undoubtedly be read in future seminars on African politics both at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

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## **ECONOMICS AND DEVELOPMENT**

**Morten Jerven. *Poor Numbers: How We Are Misled by African Development Statistics and What to Do about It.*** Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press. Cornell Studies in Political Economy, 2013. xx + 187 pp. Bibliography. Illustrations. Tables. Charts. \$65.00. Cloth. \$22.95. Paper.

The title of Morten Jerven's engaging and valuable new book, "Poor Numbers: How We Are Misled by African Development Statistics and What to Do about It," is unfortunate. Even Jerven seems aware that such a title could raise hackles. After dedicating his book to African civil servants