

Abstract:

Socialism and National Identity in Modern Africa.

The determinants of national identity are a major topic of scholarly research, particularly in ethnically diverse post-colonial African states. There is now a large and growing literature on the determinants of African national identification, but this literature has failed to examine the effects of state ideology on national identity. Here I argue that socialist regimes have been more successful in generating strong national attachments in modern Africa than non-socialist regimes, using two different types of evidence.

First, I use individual-level data from the Afrobarometer project to show that citizens in states with socialist ideologies have greater attachment to the nation over their ethnic group.

Second, I show that post-colonial African socialist regimes have been more proactive than non-socialist regimes in promoting nation-building through both concrete and symbolic policies. The paper thus helps make sense of why certain countries such as Ghana, Guinea, Mauritius, Tanzania and Zambia, among others, have had historic high levels of national identity and social cohesion in comparison to their neighbours, and also has implications more broadly for the study of state ideologies and national identification across the world.

Bio

Elliott Green is Professor in Development Studies in the Department of International Development at the LSE. He has three main research areas: 1) ethnic politics and national identity in Africa, 2) patronage, clientelism and African development, and 3) the political demography of modern Africa. He has conducted fieldwork in Uganda, Tanzania and Botswana, and for several years taught a course entitled 'Poverty and Development' at the annual LSE-University of Cape Town Summer School.

His research has been published in a variety of academic journals, including the *British Journal of Political Science*, *Comparative Politics*, *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, *International Studies Quarterly*, *Journal of Modern African Studies*, *Studies in Comparative International Development* and *World Development*, among others.

He currently sits on the editorial boards of the *Journal of Development Studies*, *Nations and Nationalism* and *Regional and Federal Studies*, and is a series editor for the book series 'Politics and Development in Contemporary Africa' published by the International Africa Institute. Outside academia he has briefed the British High Commissioner to Uganda twice (in 2008 and 2010) and regularly writes blog entries for a variety of websites.