Redistributive Political Transitions: Minority Rule and Liberation Wars in Colonial Africa

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Do class divisions and fear of redistribution impede political transitions? This article argues that tensions over economic redistribution in European settler colonies caused resisted enfranchisement and liberation wars in colonial Africa. It offers three main contributions. First, it identifies key scope conditions for redistributive transition models: in African settler colonies, the European elite monopolized the best agricultural land and could only secure their economic advantages by repressing majority rule—also incentivizing liberation wars. Second, it exploits a novel research design to assess redistributive theories. Statistical evidence from Africa during the decolonization era demonstrates that larger European settler population shares covary with smaller franchises and with more frequent colonial liberation wars. To account for the endogeneity of European settlement, the article introduces an instrument that measures climatic and other land suitability factors that affected where Europeans could settle. Third, it explains divergent decolonization paths.

Do class divisions and fear of redistribution impede political transitions? Recent political science research offers opposing conclusions. On the one hand, a long tradition in comparative politics analyzes how social classes affect democratization (Collier 1999; Moore 1966; Rueschemeyer, Stephens, and Stephens 1992). More recent influential theories propose precise mechanisms through which redistributive tensions between rich and poor social classes affect franchise expansion and revolution (Acemoglu and Robinson 2006; Boix 2003). In these models, high economic inequality and high asset specificity cause economic elites to fear political rule by the masses—who pose a revolutionary threat—because the masses would redistribute considerable amounts of wealth. Conflicting political preferences lower prospects for negotiated transitions to democracy and raise the likelihood of repression and revolution.

On the other hand, Acemoglu and Robinson's and Boix's redistributive political transition models have generated sustained debate on two fronts. First, many have argued that their scope conditions are too narrow to explain empirical cases, such as nineteenth-century European democratization (Ansell and Samuels 2014; Ziblatt 2006) and postcolonial transitions (Albertus and Menaldo 2014; Slater, Smith, and Nair 2014), especially since 1980 (Haggard and Kaufman 2012). This research challenges various assumptions from the original framework and instead posits, for example, that class tends to be an unimportant political cleavage, economic elites usually do not control authoritarian regimes, revolutionary threats from below rarely exist, and expanded franchises rarely redistribute en masse. Second, most existing evidence for and against redistributive theories faces important limits to drawing causal inferences. Reviewing existing empirical evidence relating economic inequality and regime transitions—including evidence supportive of their original theoretical predictions—Acemoglu et al. (2013, 16) conclude, "it is quite likely that these findings are driven by omitted variables and thus do not represent causal relationships."

This article studies the post–World War II decolonization period in Africa and demonstrates strong empirical support for key redistributive implications about franchise expansion and revolutions—contrary to recent pessimistic empirical assessments of Acemoglu and Robinson's (2006) and Boix's (2003) theories—by examining differences between European settler and nonsettler colonies. Although decolonization episodes have not received much attention from either proponents or opponents of redistributive models, they provide crucial cases for assessing theoretical mechanisms for one of the most widely debated theories in comparative

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politics. Studying Africa during decolonization in the context of redistributive transition theories offers three main contributions. First, this setting closely matches key scope conditions of the models, which enables a more direct empirical assessment of the theory than existing empirical critiques. Second, this setting facilitates a relatively strong research design. Third, in a more historically oriented contribution, the conclusion elaborates on how the analysis explains divergent decolonization paths.

The analysis first presents a modified version of Acemoglu and Robinson's (2006) and Boix's (2003) models accompanied by historical evidence to demonstrate the relevance of redistributive transition theories for understanding colonial Africa. The model shows that tensions over economic redistribution between Europeans and Africans were higher when European settlers composed a sizable minority, which raised the likelihood of a contested political transition to majority rule.[1] In settler-dominated African territories, a minority of Europeans commanded the colonial economy by monopolizing the best agricultural land. European settlers feared economic redistribution of this highly specific asset if the African majority gained control over policy making, which began to occur in many colonies across the continent after World War II. Frequently, settlers successfully blocked franchise expansion reforms that would have undermined their economic privileges, creating incentives for Africans to fight for liberation from European rule. This situation contrasted with nonsettler colonies, which tended to exhibit weaker vested economic interests for maintaining colonial rule. Despite also benefiting from exploiting Africans, Europeans in nonsettler colonies were less willing to pay the associated repression costs needed to maintain colonial rule. The two main hypotheses are that larger European population shares should (1) diminish possibilities for franchise expansion and (2) raise the likelihood of colonial liberation wars.

Initial regression results strongly support these two hypotheses, yielding large-magnitude and statistically significant coefficient estimates. Hypothetically increasing a colony's European population share from Ghana's 0.1% to Rhodesia's 6% increases the predicted probability of a colonial liberation war from 6% to 77% and, between 1955 and 1970, decreases the expected percentage of the population that was legally enfranchised from 78% to 40%. The European settler coefficient estimates remain substantively large and robustly statistically significant when controlling for a wide range of alternative explanations. The results are also similar when presenting robustness checks that use selection on observables to estimate bias from unobservables or that alter the sample of territories or years.

Africa during the decolonization era also provides an advantageous setting for evaluating redistributive political transition models by facilitating a relatively strong research design. Europeans were not randomly assigned to different locations, and their settlement decisions could be correlated with other factors that directly influenced franchise expansion and liberation wars. However, settlers could only replicate European farming techniques in areas of Africa that had either (1) Mediterranean climate or (2) all of high rainfall, high elevation, and low tsetse fly prevalence. Exploiting this historical fact enables constructing a novel instrument for European population share: percentage of a colony's territory suitable for large-scale European settlement, which I calculated by using geographic information systems (GIS) data. Results using this instrument reinforce the initial statistical findings, and formal sensitivity analysis demonstrates these correlations are robust even if the exclusion restriction is violated to a considerable extent.

Finally, additional qualitative and quantitative evidence provides more direct support that land inequality—a key mechanism in the theory—was an important factor for explaining conflictual transitions in settler colonies. Settlers exhibited fear of land redistribution under majority rule, and many African liberation organizations mobilized on the issue of land reform. Two proxies for land inequality are positively correlated with the land suitability instrument and with European population share, and they covary in the expected direction with the two outcome variables.

THEORY: REDISTRIBUTIVE POLITICAL TRANSITIONS AND COLONIAL AFRICA

Acemoglu and Robinson's (2006) and Boix's (2003) theoretical framework explains how redistributive tensions between an economic elite and the masses affect political transitions. This section begins by summarizing key assumptions about actors, objectives, and strategies in redistributive models. It then explains the circumstances under which elites will acquiesce to a peaceful transfer of power, as opposed to conditions under which repression and revolution may occur. Then it provides evidence that Africa during decolonization matches three key scope conditions of the theory: (1) the racial cleavage between Europeans and Africans composed the most important political cleavage, (2) the European economic elite directly controlled or wielded substantial influence over policy making, and (3) Africans posed a revolutionary threat after World War II. The next section describes the key differences

1. Throughout, "majority rule" does not imply that the masses rule via free and fair elections or impose constraints on the executive, which is consistent with the predominant focus of redistributive models on franchise size rather than on other aspects of democracy.

between settler and nonsettler colonies to generate the main hypotheses about divergent decolonization paths. Appendix A (appendix available online) formalizes the model and analyzes equilibrium existence and comparative statics. The current setup provides minor simplifications and alterations to existing redistributive models to focus on attributes most relevant for colonial Africa, and the appendix discusses similarities and differences compared to existing redistributive models.

Key assumptions and implications of redistributive models

The core version of Acemoglu and Robinson's (2006) and Boix's (2003) theoretical models features an interaction between a minority economic elite and the masses. Assuming that the core political cleavage consists of a binary class divide provides the first major assumption (assumption 1). In colonial Africa, these actors are Europeans residing in the colony and the African majority. Each group is assumed to seek to appropriate as much wealth for itself as possible—given available policy choices and given decisions by the other group—net of any costs involved with actions taken to achieve a certain consumption amount. The next consequential assumption is that, starting from a regime in which the masses lack political power, the economic elite is assumed to also compose the political elite that chooses between repression and majority rule, which allows the masses to set policy (assumption 2). The goal of repression is to maintain Europeans' political monopoly by preventing Africans from collectively organizing. However, repression can backfire. Not only does repression destroy a fraction of societal wealth, repression may (probabilistically) fail to prevent African mobilization. This leads to another key assumption: the masses pose a revolutionary threat (assumption 3). Specifically, if repression fails, then Africans can choose whether to initiate a liberation war, which destroys even more societal wealth but also would yield policy control to Africans. Therefore, Europeans' decision to grant majority rule or to repress—possibly sparking a liberation war—determines which actor sets policy.

Consistent with goals of maximizing consumption, the actor who controls the political arena after these initial choices sets a tax on the other player's wealth to redistribute to itself. However, despite this agenda-setting power, there is a constraint on how much redistribution can occur. At a cost, the actor without political power can choose an economic exit option through which it repurposes its economic activity to avoid government taxation. Therefore, the actor choosing policy can only redistribute to the point that the other actor will acquiesce to the government's tax rather than activate its economic exit option. Assuming that this is the only constraint on taxation is another key assumption that the end of the article discusses in the context of land redistribution. This assumption relates to Boix's (2003) concept of asset specificity (also see Acemoglu and Robinson 2006, 287–320), and actors with more specific assets have weaker economic exit options. A key equilibrium implication is that actors with weaker economic exit options face higher appropriation when the other actor determines policy.

In colonial Africa, Europeans' exploitation tools ranged from hut taxes and forced labor to nontax costs such as uncompetitive labor markets and forced resettlement and land expropriation in most settler colonies. Africans' exit options included physical migration from areas of European settlement or intense bureaucratic penetration (Herbst 2000) or withholding information from government bureaucracies, which made them difficult to tax (Gardner 2012). What actors expect to happen under African policy control also influences outcomes in the model. Africans' redistributive tools included taxing production, nationalization, and land appropriation. Europeans had two main types of exit options. The first related to physical exit from the colony, including moving and producing elsewhere for settlers and multinational corporations. How the metropole's economic prospects would change if colonial rule ended also affected this consideration. Second, Europeans involved with technologically sophisticated or capital-intense industries could leverage their comparative advantage to limit redistribution under African rule.

This setup generates two possible decolonization paths: peaceful power transition, or repression with a possible liberation war. The key consideration for Europeans and for Africans is whether they will accept a less preferred redistribution policy in return for avoiding costly coercion, yielding two main questions. First, if Europeans have chosen to repress, will Africans accept minority rule or fight a liberation war? Following the motivation for assumption 3 discussed below—Africans were exploited everywhere across the continent and faced newfound organizational opportunities to challenge colonial rule after World War II—the analysis imposes sufficient assumptions for Africans to initiate a liberation war in response to failed repression.

Second, will Europeans grant majority rule or repress Africans? Either of two factors can cause Europeans to repress: high exploitation under minority rule, or high expected redistribution under majority rule. Because exploitation was high in all colonies, the analysis focuses on the effects of expected redistribution under majority rule, which the next section argues to have composed a key distinction between settler and nonsettler colonies. Elites with more specific assets

are more willing to repress. They realize that repression may fail and could trigger a liberation war that would leave them worse off than had they peacefully acquiesced to majority rule. However, Europeans are more willing to bear the costs of repression and to tolerate the possibility of a liberation war if expected redistribution under majority rule is high.

Overall, the theory generates two distinct decolonization paths. First, Europeans peacefully grant majority rule. Second, Europeans repress to inhibit the legal franchise, and a liberation war may occur. The theory also predicts that which of these two paths a colony follows depends on the extent of redistributive tensions, with Europeans likely to pursue the conflictual path when they control highly specific assets.

Relevance of scope conditions for colonial Africa

Although the literature has challenged the empirical relevance of assumptions 1–3 across a wide range of cases, they provide appropriate scope conditions for studying decolonization in colonial Africa.[2]

Assumption 1. Do divisions between rich and poor provide an important political cleavage? Haggard and Kaufman (2012) argue that class cleavages have been important in few post-1980 democratic transitions. Ansell and Samuels (2014) retain the social class focus but emphasize the importance of splits between a stagnant landed elite and a growing industrial elite. They argue that elite splits have spurred many important cases of franchise expansion, such as nineteenth-century Britain, which a two-actor model cannot capture.

However, in colonial Africa, Africans versus Europeans provided the most important political cleavage. This racial cleavage correlated highly with class—with Europeans composing the economic elite—as many historians have described, especially in the settler colonies. "Class conflicts are overlaid and reinforced by racial differences" (Gann and Duignan 1962, 142). In Kenya, the "wealthy, expatriate, white landowning elite . . . conspicuously dominat[ed] the African societies among whom they dwelled." This "spawned their antithesis: the conscious rural African masses aware of their disadvantaged position in society" (Wasserman 1976, 2). In Algeria, "The lack of articulate class divisions within the European population is explained precisely by its colonial situation; Europeans collectively derived their employment, their riches, their place in the sun, from the rigorous exclusion and exploitation of Algerian Muslims" (Murray and Wengraf 1963, 19), a point that Good (1976, 611–12) generalizes to other major settler colonies.

This assumption does not deny the existence of differences or divisions within either the European or African populations, only that this dichotomous class distinction was politically meaningful in colonial Africa. The relevant question is whether introducing more domestic actors would change the implications of the game (see below for a consideration of international actors), which appears unlikely given incentives for intra-African and for intra-European alliances. Africans differed on dimensions such as whether they lived in urban or rural areas or whether they worked for the colonial government. One group that seemingly might have faced incentives to ally with Europeans was educated African elites. However, although they tended to be relatively pro-Western in the early colonial period, they were soon pushed out of power in favor of decentralized "indirect" rule by local chiefs. Educated Africans reacted by harshly condemning the endemic racism of European colonial rule (Mamdani 1996, 74–76). Furthermore, chiefs favored in the colonial administration—whatever their proclivity toward colonial rule—were outsiders to Africans' independence movements. Many leaders sought to undermine "the traditional authorities [that] were seemingly the anthesis of the modern revolution that they sought to lead" (Herbst 2000, 174). Boone (2003, 159–63) describes how Kwame Nkrumah's nationalist movement overwhelmed the previous political power of Asante planter-chiefs in colonial Gold Coast/Ghana.

Similarly, Europeans faced strong incentives to band together even where sharp intra-European divisions existed. For example, South Africa exhibited a politically relevant split among white settlers between British and Boers, but they consciously chose to create a regime that emphasized racial rather than regional cleavages because they feared losing power to the African masses (Lieberman 2003). Regarding poor whites, white leaders consistently provided "a clear idiom that emphasized strategic and normative obligations to one another and to 'poor whites' within that society" (4). Consequently, there were no cross-racial alliances: "blacks—who were also largely poor—organized and resisted *as* blacks, gaining no solidarity from poor whites—who were, in fact, among their fiercest adversaries" (93).

However, collinearity between class and racial cleavages poses an empirical challenge. How can we know that redistributive pressures played an important role, as opposed to an alternative story about racism and grievances? Below, I show that the economic structure of settler and nonsettler colonies differed in ways that affected Europeans' incentives for decolonization—independent of their racist feelings, which do not explain why they would be willing to suffer massive

2. Lorentzen, Fravel, and Paine (2017) provide a broader discussion of the importance of using case evidence to assess the scope conditions of formal models.

costs of prolonged wars—and evidence that Europeans acutely feared land redistribution following majority rule.

Assumption 2. Do economic elites control minority political regimes? In many postcolonial countries, the state has not—contra Karl Marx's famous aphorism—served as the executive committee of the bourgeoisie. Slater et al. (2014) argue that the military usually does not act as a proxy for the wealthy. Considering the prevalence of military regimes before the end of the Cold War, this may help to explain Haggard and Kaufman's (2012) findings against the redistributive model. However, by definition of colonial rule, Europeans controlled the regime in colonial Africa. This was true even in territories such as South Africa and Southern Rhodesia/Zimbabwe where European settlers were autonomous from the metropole but were still "colonial" from the perspective of the native population. Before 1945, very few citizens or subjects in Africa possessed the legal franchise except for some Europeans in settler colonies (Collier 1982, 34–44).

Relevant for assumptions 1 and 2, a clear source of divergent preferences among Europeans in many cases occurred between the European metropole and European settlers. The next section on different economic structures in settler and nonsettler colonies provides evidence that many large settler communities were politically influential enough to dictate colonial policy, even when it departed from the metropole's preferences. It also discusses alternative modeling setups that yield similar insights as the baseline model.

Assumption 3. Do threats of revolution from below influence political transitions? Frequently, other factors have predominated. During nineteenth-century franchise expansion cases, such as Britain, elite calculations related to club good provision and vote-winning ability under larger franchises were more important than imminent socialist revolution (Collier 1999; Lizzeri and Persico 2004; Llavador and Oxoby 2005; Ziblatt 2017). Labor contributions during World War I sparked womanhood suffrage across Europe and offshoots (Przeworski 2009). In recent decades, international actors such as the United States and European Union have made aid provision conditional on elections, contributing to enhanced electoral competition in many countries despite minimal threat from below (Haggard and Kaufman 2012; Levitsky and Way 2010).

However, in Africa after World War II, the masses posed a credible revolutionary threat. In addition to injustices of foreign political rule, Africans harbored many economic grievances. Hut taxes, forced labor, and uncompetitive labor markets were ubiquitous across colonial Africa (Mamdani 1996, 148–65), which coincided with metropoles' demands that their colonies be self-financing. Young (1994) summarizes the coercion and economic exploitation involved with constructing and maintaining colonial rule in Africa using explorer Henry Morton Stanley's nickname "Bula Mutari" (he who crushes rocks) and discusses the role of coercion in the "revenue imperative" for colonial states (124–33).

Despite these grievances, the continent was nearly free of major conflict in the interwar period. Between 1919 and 1945, only Morocco and Libya experienced major "extrastate" wars between natives and the colonizer, and these two were colonized late and not pacified before World War I.[3] However, prospects for mass rebellion in Africa changed considerably after World War II. Europeans composed a small minority group, even in colonies with—by regional standards—large European populations. Furthermore, spreading nationalist consciousness across the continent and the pan-Africanist "wind of change" created an acute sense of fear of the African majority after World War II, which had increased its mobilization ability, despite never acting as a monolithic bloc.[4] The war also weakened European powers' structural advantages over subject populations and shifted the international environment against continued colonial rule.[5]

ECONOMIC DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SETTLER AND NONSETTLER COLONIES

Structural changes after World War II created a choice for European colonial rulers: decolonization reforms eventually leading to full independence under African control, or rebellion. Although many factors affected the colonial calculus, economic considerations in most colonies did not warrant continued colonial rule as events unfolded in the 1950s and 1960s. European metropoles tended not to derive economic gains from their colonies. For many multinational corporations, rents enjoyed under colonialism did not outweigh looming costs of a liberation war. Therefore, despite benefiting from exploiting Africans, Europeans in nonsettler colonies were less willing to pay the repression costs needed to maintain colonial rule. By contrast, in settler colonies, Europeans usually dominated the best land and derived other rents they could not replicate under African majority rule—stemming from high asset specificity—which created incen-

3. Data are from the Correlates of War database (Sarkees and Wayman 2010), with my coding of war location. Extrastate war is the relevant war category for colonized territories.

4. Spruyt (2005, 139) discusses the phrase "wind of change," used by British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan in a speech in 1960 to describe the changing political climate in Africa.

5. Young (1994, 182–217) provides more extensive background on the decolonization period.

tives to repress. Combining historical evidence with the logic of the redistributive theory yields the two main hypotheses.

Economic incentives for decolonization in nonsettler Africa

Nonsettler colonies tended to face high-valued economic exit options relative to the repression costs needed to maintain colonial rule. Within roughly a decade after World War II concluded, it had become clear to imperial government officials that most colonies did not economically benefit the metropolitan country. Although until the 1950s some argued that the colonies were necessary for economic recovery after the war, these economic benefits were transient. Britain's official historian of colonial development proclaimed with regard to African decolonization in the 1950s: "The economic considerations were fairly evenly matched [because, while Britain might save on some types of expenditure, there might be costs resulting from reduction of special commercial advantages it enjoyed in the colonies]" (quoted in Fieldhouse 1986, 8). Similarly, France granted huge subsidies to its colonies that undermined economic incentives for continued colonial rule. By the 1950s, this economic reality had convinced many French officials that autarkic assumptions about benefits of trading within the empire were flawed (Fieldhouse 1986, 14–17). These trends reflected the changed post–World War II international economic system that made continued colonial rule unprofitable (Spruyt 2005, 65–86), especially considering the alternative of facing anticolonial rebellions.

Nor did nonsettler colonies tend to possess strong business lobby groups with specific assets.[6] Larger firms operating in more modern industries relied less on colonial protection because they were more competitive internationally and, therefore, more readily accepted African majority rule. Many recognized the benefits of establishing a moderate nationalist elite to work with after independence rather than potentially letting a guerrilla group take power following a prolonged struggle. "Big companies were confident that they could cope with changing situations by adapting their methods and activities; it was the small men—the white settlers . . . who had cause for fear that decolonization would destroy their world" (Fieldhouse 1986, 12). Although certain businesses strongly supported the empire, their lobbies were not politically powerful in either Britain or France. Stockwell (2000) examines firms' reactions to decolonization in the Gold Coast, perhaps a most likely case for finding evidence of business influence halting decolonization because of considerable British corporate interests. Instead, she shows that these firms were largely on the defensive with regard to the pace of political change. To the extent that British firms exerted influence, they comprehended the changing tide and supported moderate African leaders.

Even in colonies with considerable mineral production, corporations could leverage their technical expertise against a postcolonial government. For example, Kahler (1981, 392–94) argues that the political future of large European copper-mining corporations in Zambia "seemed secure because of the enormous bargaining power they expected to wield vis-a-vis *any* successor regime" due to Africans' technological and financial dependence on the companies. Butler (2007) details how the chairman of the Northern Rhodesian/Zambian mining company Rhodesian Selection Trust recognized the "significance of African industrial, and subsequently political, mobilisation" (467) and sought to empower moderate African leaders to manage the transition to independence, rather than seek to resist change that he saw as inevitable.

This discussion does not imply that multinational corporations expected to gain the same level of rents in independent Africa. Colonial rule enabled economic exploitation of Africans in a manner that would be impossible under independent rule. Rather, the difference in profits did not justify increasingly high repressive costs for continued colonial rule. In a broad statement, White (2000, 545) argues that after independence, "British economic influence was maintained in the new Commonwealth" as many ex-colonies retained the sterling and relied heavily on foreign investment. "Constitutional advance, it would appear, rarely blighted the prospects for British business overseas" (545–46).

Of course, despite aggregate trends that encouraged decolonization reforms in nonsettler colonies, there were many important sources of heterogeneity, which motivates many of the control variables analyzed below. European metropoles differed in how they assessed continued benefits of colonial rule, with Portugal's authoritarian regime more willing to pay the costs of fighting in order to retain control. Metropolitan political systems also differed in their institutions, which affected the ability of extreme lobbies to influence policy (Spruyt 2005). The Belgian Congo featured considerable concessions to multinational corporations, but Belgium was also a relatively weak European country that had little ability to maintain control in the face of rebellion. Controlling for colonizer fixed effects accounts for these and other important differences across European empires.[7] Nonsettlers colonies also differed in their economic structure and value

6. This paragraph draws from Fieldhouse (1986, 9–12, 17–21), Kahler (1981), and Spruyt (2005, 101–4, 124–27).

7. Paine (2019) evaluates a related consideration about causal heterogeneity. European settlers across empires exhibited similar behavior toward restricting the franchise despite differences in their backgrounds.

with regard to the extent of African labor exploitation and exports of cash crops or minerals, which motivates controls for exports per capita and natural resource income per capita. Colonial policy and the extent to which World War II disrupted colonial control also differed across individual territories, motivating controls for indigenous traditional leaders and Axis occupation during World War II.

Land control and high asset specificity in settler colonies

Economic incentives for decolonization differed considerably between settler and nonsettler colonies. Settlers dominated the best agricultural land, a highly specific asset. Research by area specialists and historians of Africa supports that land inequality between Europeans and Africans was starkly higher in settler colonies. Although colonizers tended to misunderstand "traditional" land practices in Africa, private land ownership was and still is relatively rare. Few territories experienced high levels of disruption of local land tenure arrangements during the colonial era, and almost all that did "saw exceptionally large amounts of land alienated during white rule for the benefit of white settlers" (Herbst 2000, 189). By contrast, "in many African colonies without settlers, the colonial authorities did not attempt to disrupt local tenure practices. Indirect rule was interpreted to call for, in some places, vesting local authorities with control over land" (190; see also Hailey 1957, 685–815; Mamdani 1996; Mosley 1983, 13–29). Table 1 summarizes starkly unequal land distribution patterns in the four main settler colonies—compared to 0% European land alienation in most colonies—and results below analyze the relationship between land inequality and other key theoretical variables using comparative data for a broader sample.

Table 1. European Settler Land Domination—Eve of World War II

	European % of		
Territory	Population	Alienated Land	Cultivable Land
South Africa	20	87	61
Algeria	11	34	27
Southern Rhodesia	6	50	58
Kenya	1	7	25

Note. Land data are from Lutzelschwab (2013), tables 5.1 and 5.2, and land figures for Algeria exclude the Sahara. Many historians consider these the four main European settler colonies in Africa (Good 1976; Lutzelschwab 2013; Mosley 1983, 1).

This key economic difference between settler and nonsettler colonies—considerable European alienation of land—created broad interests against decolonization in settler colonies to prevent redistribution. For farmers, relatively low technological barriers to entry on many Europeans' farms would make it easy to replace Europeans with Africans (Kahler 1981, 391). And farmers' prospects for relocating back to Europe were not promising. Many were uneducated and would face lower economic and social status (Spruyt 2005, 105). Both of these factors correspond with high asset specificity. European land control also created positive spillovers for nonagricultural whites. The major settler colonies were founded on preferential European access to land (Mosley 1983, 13–16; Palmer 1977, 246). Displacing Africans from their land created a cheap, mobile labor supply.[8] This generated and reinforced rents that Europeans accrued by economically marginalizing Africans. Europeans in every economic sector would lose their privileges of having the best jobs and earning the highest wages (Oliver and Atmore 2005, 187, 269) if they lost political control, and most would not be able to replicate their standard of living in the metropole (Spruyt 2005, 105).

Overall, although Europeans participated in a wide range of economic activities in settler colonies (Christopher 1984, 122–92), widespread European control of land fundamentally distinguished them from nonsettler colonies and yielded high asset specificity for the colony as a whole. The section below on the importance of land inequality further grounds this argument by demonstrating that settlers acutely feared land redistribution and that agricultural lobbies tended to be politically powerful.

Political power of European settlers

Settlers' political power enabled them to effectively pursue their economic desires to thwart decolonization. Where large in number, European settlers usually dominated the colonial state and commanded considerable influence in the metropole until and after World War II, which enabled them to block reforms that could have alleviated Africans' incentives to rebel.[9]

In three cases, European settlers directly controlled the state. South African whites governed a sovereign state. They wrote the discriminatory founding constitution in 1909 and

8. Lutzelschwab (2013, 155–61) discusses the four main settler colonies, Duffy (1962, 187) discusses Angola, and Schmokel (1985, 101) discusses South West Africa.

9. A plausible, and reinforcing, linkage between European settlers' political power and willingness to use repression is that larger European communities should be more likely to succeed at repressing, although the model in app. A does not impose this additional assumption.

formally implemented apartheid policies in 1948. Whites in Southern Rhodesia/Zimbabwe had enjoyed self-governance since 1923, and the government pandered solely to European interests (Spiro 1963, 366). After African leaders rejected a proposed constitution in 1961, the white electorate voted into power the extreme right-wing Rhodesian Front party "committed to the maintenance of white rule in the country" (Oliver and Atmore 2005, 272). Rejecting Britain's demands to grant African representation, the settler government took an extreme move to preserve white rule: unilaterally declaring independence in 1965, despite not gaining international recognition. South West Africa/Namibia also had a large European population. South Africa governed the territory after World War I as a League of Nations mandate and extended apartheid rule to its self-proclaimed "fifth province" (Oliver and Atmore 2005, 297).

Elsewhere, the metropolitan country governed the colony, but settlers exerted considerable influence that facilitated implementing their preferences. Relating this consideration to the theory, the model could be easily extended to allow elite agents to differ in their preferences (e.g., differences between the metropole and settlers) and to decide the "representative" elite agent that makes policy choices by a weighted average (determined by political power) of the elite's preferences. Appendix A considers a slightly more complicated extension in which the metropole is a separate actor in the model and shows why the political power of settler lobbies should yield the outcomes predicted in the baseline model even when assuming the metropole prefers more conciliatory decolonization policies. The appendix also analyzes the Rhodesia and Kenya cases with regard to metropolitan relations in more depth.

French settlers in Algeria commanded considerable influence over the colonial government, the Parisian government, and the military. Their influence undermined the Blum-Violette Bill of 1936 that would have granted citizenship to a small fraction of the Arab majority, and the settler-dominated administration rigged the 1948 Algerian Assembly elections to prevent sharing any power with Arabs (Lawrence 2013, 80; Spruyt 2005, 105). Europeans in Kenya also exerted considerable influence before the Mau Mau rebellion. "The British administration did in fact follow a policy which almost invariably allowed the interests of settlers to prevail at all the critical points where they conflicted with those of the African population" (Good 1976, 613). Only after Mau Mau did the British government more directly govern the colony—despite considerable protest by whites—and allow it to become "part of Black Africa" (Gann and Duignan 1962, 136). Although Angola differed because Portugal always maintained tighter metropolitan control, European settlers still exerted substantial influence. They rejected proposed assimilation policies and instead supported segregation to secure their economic and legal status (Duffy 1962, 204; Spruyt 2005, 187) and rejected African proposals for multiracial parties (Bender 1974, 144). A white settler party succinctly stated its desire to make an "intransigent defense of what we built and [what] belongs to us" (152).

Table 2. European Settler Political Domination after World War II

Territory	European % of Population	European % of Settler Legislative Seats
South Africa	20	96*
Algeria	11	86†
Southern Rhodesia	6	100*
Kenya	1	72*

Note. Elections for the Algerian Assembly were divided into two colleges, with 60 seats reserved for French citizens (i.e., settlers) and 60 seats for the rest of the colonial population. Because of widespread rigging, Algerian nationalist parties only won 17 of the 120 seats.

* Source: Mosley (1983, 7). Figures are for 1960.

† Source: Behr (1961, 41). Figure is for 1948.

In addition to important informal channels of power, one formal measure showing the dominance of European settler interests in South Africa, Southern Rhodesia, Algeria, and Kenya is that all had a long history of legislative representation for European settlers—in contrast to the rarity of legislatures across Africa in nonsettler colonies before 1945—coupled with the exclusion of African representation. Table 2 summarizes this pattern.[10]

Combining historical evidence with the logic of the redistributive theory yields the two main hypotheses.

H1. During the decolonization era in Africa, larger European settler population share should covary with smaller franchise size.

10. This observation also suggests the possibility that the existence of a legislature shaped the demands of African nationalists, perhaps yielding stronger calls for representation that ultimately engendered violence. In Southern Rhodesia in the early 1960s, African parties negotiated to be incorporated into the legislature before the far-right Rhodesian Front came to power in 1962 and ended negotiations (Spiro 1963). However, this bargaining process (as opposed to the outcome) did not differ considerably from that in nonsettler colonies, as legislatures had become nearly universal across Africa by 1960. Furthermore, violence occurred even in settler colonies without legislatures, such as Portuguese Angola and Mozambique. Paine (2019) discusses differences in the contestation and participation components of colonial polities in greater depth.

H2. During the decolonization era in Africa, larger European settler population share should covary with higher frequency of colonial liberation wars.

DATA

A key challenge in debates about redistributive transition theories is to convincingly establish associational evidence as causal. Colonial Africa offers a useful setting for testing these theories, not only because the theoretical scope conditions closely match empirical reality but also because it facilitates a relatively clean research design. Although the key proxy for redistributive fear in the current analysis—European population share—was not randomly assigned across colonies, it can be instrumented for using climatic and other geography variables. This section introduces the data, for which appendix B provides additional information and references.

Sample of territories

The core sample consists of every mainland African country (including North Africa) plus Madagascar that gained African majority rule following Western European colonial rule. Appendix B discusses the two exceptions, former Italian colonies Libya and Somalia. Two cases in the sample that fit the scope conditions of redistributive transitions models but deserve special attention are South Africa and Zimbabwe. White leaders of the colonies Cape, Natal, Orange, and Transvaal collectively gained independence as South Africa in 1910. Whites in Southern Rhodesia declared the independent state of Rhodesia in 1965, despite not gaining international recognition. Although these territories' "colonial" status was somewhat ambiguous, the model specifies that rule by a European minority is the key scope condition, as opposed to, necessarily, Europeans whose primary residence is overseas. This also motivates the phrasing "colonial liberation war" (as opposed to "independence war") to denote liberation from European colonial rule, broadly defined. For example, historian John Hargreaves (1996, 5) refers to South Africa's "false decolonization of 1910." Where relevant, South Africa is coded as liberated in 1994, and Zimbabwe in 1980. Furthermore, although South Africa and Zimbabwe fit the theoretical scope conditions, sample sensitivity analyses demonstrate that these two countries do not drive the findings.

Main variables

The main franchise size regressions feature panel data for every year between 1955 and 1970 for all territories, regardless of whether the country was colonized or independent in a particular year. This time corresponds to Africa's main decolonization period. Jointly analyzing colony-years and independent country-years is theoretically appropriate because the timing of independence/liberation—which was closely related to the onset of a full franchise in most colonies—is endogenous to the size of the European settler population. The suffrage variable is the percentage of the population with the legal right to vote in national elections, measured annually by the Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) data set (Coppedge et al. 2016). These regressions include one less territory than the liberation war specifications because V-Dem does not provide data for Equatorial Guinea.

The main regressions for colonial liberation wars use a cross-section of territories. Every observation scores a 1 if a major colonial liberation war occurred and 0 otherwise. A major colonial liberation war is defined as a violent struggle against European colonizers—whether ruled by an overseas European country or by Europeans in the African territory—with some evidence of claims for liberation from colonial rule that involves at least 1,000 battle deaths. Every such war coded here occurred after World War II. No colony in the sample experienced more than one major liberation war, implying that analyzing a cross-section facilitates an appropriate and easily interpreted analysis of this outcome. However, temporal sample robustness checks show that the results for both franchise size and liberation wars are qualitatively unaltered when analyzing a panel from 1945 and 1989 or when analyzing franchise size using a cross-section. Appendix B describes the coding process in more detail, and appendix table B.2 lists the wars.

The main explanatory variable is European population percentage during the decolonization period. As appendix B describes, this variable is computed using data between 1945 and 1960. To prevent a handful of observations with large European population shares (relative to the sample) from heavily influencing the coefficient estimates, the regressions use the natural log of this variable. Appendix table B.1 lists territories' European population share.

Possible confounders

Research on democracy, civil war, and historical legacies in Africa highlights possible confounders for the relationship between European settlers and each of liberation wars and franchise size. This section lists covariate groupings, and appendix B details the rationale and the sources for each variable.

Two variables drawn from precolonial democracy studies are latitude and a country's weighted years as a centralized state as of 1500, which should undermine prospects for democracy. Two precolonial violence covariates are logged slave exports from a territory divided by land area and logged number of years a territory experienced warfare from 1400 to 1700. Both should make violence more likely in the twentieth

century. The geography of rebellion covariates are logged land area and an index of rugged terrain, following the logic that governments face greater difficulties to defeating insurgencies in larger territories with more rugged terrain. Two specifications include colonial attributes. The first models colonizer fixed effects for Britain, France, Portugal, and Belgium. The second colonial specification controls for whether the colony was invaded and occupied by an Axis power during World War II (which could provide an opportunity for insurgent mobilization), logged size of the colonial Protestant missionary population (argued to have promoted democracy), and whether the colony had a ruling monarchy anytime after World War II (an indicator of highly indirect rule). The colonial value covariates are logged exports per capita and logged mineral income per capita, both measured at independence, on the logic that colonizers might have been more resistant to relinquish more valuable colonies. The standard democracy and civil war correlates from the broader literature are ethnic fractionalization, logged population, and logged income per capita. Appendix table B.3 provides summary statistics for all variables.

INITIAL STATISTICAL RESULTS

Graphical evidence and regression results strongly support hypotheses 1 and 2. The regression specifications consider a variety of covariates, and the analysis examines sensitivity to omitted covariates and assesses robustness to altering either the sample of territories or the time period.

Graphical evidence

Between 1945 and 1995, figure 1 compares the seven territories with a colonial European settler population of at least 2.5% to the 35 with a lower percentage. In figure 1*A*, the lines differentiate settler and nonsettler territories by legal enfranchisement rates. Few in Africa could vote in 1945. Limited franchises in European settler-dominated legislatures provided the main exceptions. However, whereas legal enfranchisement rates spiked in nonsettler colonies between 1955 and 1965—by which time most had gained independence—reforms proceeded slowly in settler colonies (and Algeria's independence in 1962 following a liberation war accounts for most of the jump). These differences narrowed throughout the twentieth century after a series of colonial liberation wars, which figure 1*B* expresses. The lines show the percentage of territories in the settler and nonsettler categories with an ongoing major colonial liberation war. French North Africa (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia) experienced conflicts first, followed in the 1960s by Portuguese Africa (including Angola), Zimbabwe, and Namibia. Long-simmering tensions in South Africa reached civil war violence levels in the 1980s. By contrast, few colonies with smaller settler populations experienced colonial liberation wars, and European settlers also contributed to some of these wars (e.g., Kenya).

Regression results

Results from ordinary least squares (OLS) regressions support the main hypotheses by estimating a large magnitude coefficient for European population share. Tables 3 and 4 estimate models of the following form:

$$Y_{i,t} = \beta_0 + \beta_E \ln E_i + \boldsymbol{X}_i'\beta_X + \varepsilon_{i,t}, \quad (1)$$

where $Y_{i,t}$ is the percentage of the population with the legal franchise in table 3 and a (time-invariant) indicator for major colonial liberation war in table 4, E_i is European population share, β_E is the main parameter of interest, $\boldsymbol{X}_i$ is a vector of covariates that differs across the different columns, and $\varepsilon_{i,t}$ is a random error term. Estimating the liberation war specifications with OLS provides a direct comparison for the two-stage least squares (2SLS) results below, although probit re-

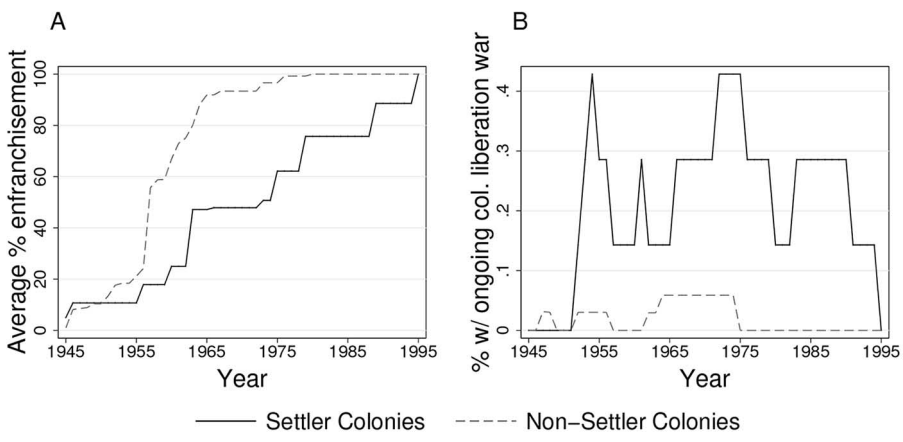

Figure 1. Settler versus nonsettler colonies between 1945 and 1995: *A*, franchise size; *B*, colonial liberation war

Table 3. European Settlers and Franchise Size: Territory-Years

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
ln(European population %)	−10.93***	−9.798***	−11.75***	−9.683***	−7.896***	−11.44***	−7.480**	−18.41***	−11.52***
	(2.819)	(3.227)	(3.544)	(3.098)	(1.709)	(3.073)	(3.571)	(3.103)	(2.140)
R^2	.136	.185	.160	.148	.418	.207	.156	.217	.429
Covariate	None	Precolonial democracy	Precolonial violence	Geography of rebellion	Colonizer fixed effects	Other colonial	Colonial value	Standard	All statistically significant

Note. Ordinary least squares regressions with coefficient estimates for each variable and country-clustered robust standard error estimates in parentheses. Dependent variable is percentage of population legally enfranchised. The sample is territory-years from 1955 to 1970. Territory-years = 650.
* $p < .1$.
** $p < .05$.
*** $p < .01$.

gressions yield similar estimates as table 4 (app. table C.5).[11] The unit of analysis is territory-years in table 3 and territories in table 4. Appendix tables C.1 and C.2 present regressions with identical specifications but show all the coefficient estimates.

In tables 3 and 4, column 1 presents a bivariate regression of the dependent variable on logged European population share. The implied substantive magnitude is large. Hypothetically increasing a colony's European settler percentage from Ghana's 0.1% to Zimbabwe's 6% decreases expected franchise size by 38 percentage points (78% vs. 40%). Even this large difference is an underestimate if one is interested in non-European enfranchisement. For example, the legal enfranchisement rate in South Africa was 20% from 1955 to 1970. This is the value used in the regressions, but 0% of non-Europeans could vote. Also striking, hypothetically increasing a colony's European settler percentage from Ghana's to Zimbabwe's increases the predicted probability of a decolonization war by 71 percentage points (6% vs. 77%). Both correlations are statistically significant at 1%.

Columns 2–8 demonstrate that the coefficient estimate for European population share remains large in magnitude and statistically significant in each table across the seven groupings of covariates described in the previous section. The estimated difference in expected franchise size between Ghana and Zimbabwe ranges from 26% (74% vs. 48% in col. 7) to 63% (86% vs. 23% in col. 8), and the difference in the predicted probability of a liberation war ranges from 61% (70% vs. 9% in col. 6) to 84% (86% vs. 2% in col. 8). These are useful specifications to evaluate because they show that no alternative theory can explain away the finding and also enable assessing which existing explanations find empirical support when accounting for European settlers (see app. C). Column 9 shows that the results are also largely unaltered when letting the models choose the most important covariates, specifically, controlling for every regressor with a p-value less than .10 in the specifications in columns 2–8. Finally, appendix tables C.3 and C.4 show that simultaneously controlling for either every precolonial covariate, every colonial covariate, or all the covariates yields similar findings.

Robustness checks

Three sets of robustness checks affirm the results from tables 3 and 4. First, the magnitudes of the European settler coefficient estimates are relatively stable across the various specifications in the two tables. This observation lends credence to the robustness of the results by suggesting that selection on unobservables would have to be quite strong relative to selection on observables in order for the true effect to be 0. Appendix C uses formal sensitivity metrics and demonstrates that, to explain away the positive European population share coefficient estimate in each specification of tables 3 and 4, the bias from omitting unobservables must either go in the opposite direction as the bias from omitting observables or would have to be large in magnitude. This implies that—although it is impossible to control for every possible confounder—if the control variables included the tables are substantively relevant, then there is less reason to believe that omitted covariates would overturn the results.

11. Additionally, some of the robustness checks used below are better suited to linear models. Techniques for assessing bias from unobservables using observables have been mostly analyzed using linear models (Oster 2017, 5). Additionally, there are problems of separation in some of the probit specifications, which makes summary statistics for the jackknife sample alteration regressions harder to interpret.

Table 4. European Settlers and Colonial Liberation Wars: Territories

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
ln(European population %)	.210***	.196***	.240***	.204***	.207***	.178***	.222***	.245***	.202***
	(.0263)	(.0468)	(.0332)	(.0280)	(.0314)	(.0395)	(.0377)	(.0496)	(.0263)
R^2	.447	.456	.509	.483	.585	.498	.449	.563	.664
Covariate	None	Precolonial democracy	Precolonial violence	Geography of rebellion	Colonizer fixed effects	Other colonial	Colonial value	Standard	All statistically significant

Note. Ordinary least squares regressions with coefficient estimates for each variable and robust standard error estimates in parentheses. The unit of analysis is territories, and the dependent variable equals 1 if at least one major liberation war began between 1945 and 1989, and 0 otherwise. Territories = 42.
* $p < .1$.
** $p < .05$.
*** $p < .01$.

Second, the results are mostly robust to "jackknife" sample modifications that iteratively drop each territory from the sample for every specification in tables 3 and 4. Every drop-one specification is statistically significant at 1% for the liberation war regressions, and all franchise size regressions are statistically significant at 10% (with 97% significant at 5%). The results are also qualitatively similar when simultaneously dropping two influential units, South Africa and Zimbabwe. Every liberation war specification is significant at 1%, and every franchise size regression is significant at 5% except the colonial value specification ($p = .141$), although the estimated gap in suffrage is still 21%.

Third, several temporal sample robustness checks show that the results do not hinge on a potentially arbitrary time period or way to pool the data. Table C.7 reruns the franchise size regressions for all years between 1945 and 1989. The next two appendix tables show the colonial liberation war results are also robust to regressions using a panel of data between 1945 and 1989. Table C.8 analyzes colonial liberation war incidence for all colony-years, and table C.9 analyzes colonial liberation war onset for all colony-years. Table C.10 shows that the franchise size regressions are identical using a cross-section of territories.

INSTRUMENTAL VARIABLES RESULTS

Despite the large magnitude and robust coefficient estimates using standard regression techniques, because European settlers were not randomly assigned to different African territories, it is possible that Europeans tended to migrate to areas that were more likely to experience resisted political transitions for which the different covariates do not account. This section introduces a novel instrument that more directly supports causal implications by addressing the endogeneity of European settlement. Europeans could only develop large-scale settlements in areas of Africa that either had Mediterranean climate or had all of high rainfall, high elevation, and low tsetse fly prevalence. I used GIS data to construct a new variable that measures the percentage of a colony's territory that was suitable for European settlement. Regressions using this variable as an instrument for European settlement generate similarly substantively large coefficient estimates for European population share as in tables 3 and 4. Formal sensitivity analysis presented in appendix D demonstrates that these correlations are robust even if the exclusion restriction is violated to a considerable extent.

Possible European agricultural settlements in Africa

Climatic and related land suitability factors influenced prospects for European settlement. Historians have discussed conditions required for replicating large-scale European agricultural settlements in Africa (Lutzelschwab 2013, 145; Mosley 1983, 5). Temperate (or, Mediterranean) climate, found at the northern and southern tips of the continent, enabled large-scale European-style farming settlements. The remainder of the continent contains tropical climate, which obviates most temperate farming practices. However, Europeans could cultivate similar cereal crops as at home in tropical areas that met three conditions. First, they needed enough rainfall to grow crops. Second, high enough elevation created moderate temperatures. Third, Europeans needed land without the tsetse fly, which causes sleeping sickness in humans.

To construct a variable capturing these conditions, I used GIS data for climate, rainfall, elevation, and tsetse fly prevalence. Appendix D details the data and coding procedure. For each country, I computed percentage of nondesert ter-

ritory with either (1) a Mediterranean climate or (2) all three of at least 20 inches of annual rainfall, 3,000 feet in elevation (see Mosley 1983, 5), and the lowest quartile on Alsan's (2015) tsetse fly suitability index. Figure 2 depicts these conditions, and appendix figures D.1–D.4 depict each factor individually. The regressions log this variable to guard against outliers driving the estimates.

This is a reasonable instrument for studying the effect of European settlement on both franchise size and colonial liberation wars, for three reasons. First, all components of the instrument are exogenous with respect to political factors that could affect these outcomes. The data for the one potentially endogenous component of the instrument, the tsetse fly, come from Alsan's (2015) tsetse fly suitability index—which is derived from historical climate data—rather than from colonial or postcolonial maps of tsetse fly prevalence that may be affected by climate change or by stronger states better able to control the fly (389). It is of course possible that because of finite sample bias there is imbalance on confounders between colonies with a large versus small percentage of territory suitable for European settlement, but (1) there is no a priori reason to believe this bias artificially supports the main hypotheses, and (2) I use the same groups of covariates as above to demonstrate the robustness of the European settlers coefficient estimate across various specifications.

Second, the instrument correlates strongly with European population share. Appendix figure D.5 presents the scatter plot for a bivariate regression of European population share on the instrument, the first stage of the two-stage regressions. Despite the strong correlation, however, a handful of outliers with favorable conditions for European settlement but few European settlers (Burundi, Lesotho, Rwanda) highlight how geography is not destiny and how colonial policies affected European settlement. In these and several other colonies, the colonizer ruled indirectly through an indigenous monarch and eschewed European settlement to maintain a favorable relationship. Hailey (1957) provides examples from colonies such as Lesotho (697) and Uganda (723–26) in which the founding treaty with the monarch agreed that colonists would not appropriate African land. In Ruanda Urundi (contemporary Rwanda and Burundi), Belgium discouraged European settlement and few settlers leased land (754), perhaps because high population density left little land unoccupied. To increase the strength of the first-stage correlations, every specification includes the post-1945 ruling monarchy variable included in column 6 of tables 3 and 4 (see app. B for coding details).[12] The coefficient estimates for European population share are similar when replacing post-1945 ruling monarchy with population density in 1800 (app. tables D.10 and D.11) or when excluding both these variables (app. tables D.12 and D.13), although the first-stage relationship weakens when dropping both covariates.

Figure 2. African territory suitable for large-scale European settlement

Third, various statistical tests show that exclusion restriction violations are unlikely to explain away the findings. Regarding liberation wars, favorable rainfall patterns and high elevation may have directly created favorable conditions for guerrilla tactics, and tsetse fly prevalence may have raised colonizers' costs of repression. These three factors may also have affected precolonial political development, which in turn could have affected demand for majority rule. Two strategies show that these alternative pathways are unlikely to explain away the estimated effect. First, the wide array of control variables across the specifications directly address these specific concerns and show that the estimates remain similar. The controls for terrain and land area account for the most prominent accounts in the literature about geographic causes of rebellion in Africa (see García-Ponce and Wantchékon [2017] and Herbst [2000], respectively), and the various precolonial development controls address the concern about demand for democracy (Hariri 2012).

However, because it is impossible to account for every way in which the exclusion restriction could be violated, it is crucial to formally assess how violations of the exclusion

12. A stronger first-stage correlation decreases the magnitude of bias that results from any violations of the exclusion restriction, which app. D discusses.

restriction would change the results. Appendix D formally demonstrates that the results are robust to relatively large exclusion restriction violations. It uses Conley, Hansen, and Rossi's (2012) formal sensitivity metric designed to perform "inference while relaxing the exclusion restriction" (260), which the appendix explains in more detail.

This instrumental variables (IV) approach resembles but avoids key concerns raised about the identification strategy in Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson (2001), which uses estimated settler mortality rates as an instrument for estimating the effect of economic institutions on development. Specifically, for each country, Acemoglu et al. use the log of "the death rate among 1,000 soldiers where each death is replaced with a new soldier" (1382) among soldiers, laborers, and bishops in the nineteenth century. This variable is strongly correlated with the current instrument. Appendix figure D.6 depicts a scatter plot to demonstrate the systematic negative correlation between the current instrument and Acemoglu et al.'s (2001) settler mortality measure. A bivariate regression (not shown) demonstrates that the coefficient estimate is statistically significant at 5%. However, their variable is missing data for nine of the 42 countries in the current sample. Additionally, Albouy (2012) details concerns about measurement error in their variable because it does not measure death rates of actual European settlers and it extrapolates from data points in a small number of countries. None of these problems apply to the current instrument.

IV results

Results from 2SLS regressions strongly support the main hypotheses. Tables 5 and 6 estimate simultaneous equation models composed of equation (1) and

$$\ln E_i = \beta_{0,Z} + \beta_Z \ln Z_i + \boldsymbol{X}_i'\beta_{X,Z} + \varepsilon_{Z,i}, \qquad (2)$$

where E_i is European population share, $\boldsymbol{X}_i$ is a vector of covariates that differs across the columns of tables 5 and 6, Z_i is the instrument, and $\varepsilon_{Z,i}$ is a random error term. Each column in tables 5 and 6 contains 2SLS estimates of equations (1) and (2) for franchise size and colonial liberation wars, respectively, as well as the partial F-test for the instrument in the first stage. Appendix tables D.2 and D.3 present regression tables with identical specifications but show all the coefficient estimates. Appendix tables D.4–D.7 present the corresponding first-stage and reduced-form estimates.[13]

The combinations of covariates in tables 5 and 6 resemble those in tables 3 and 4. Hypothetically increasing a colony's European settler percentage from Ghana's 0.1% to Zimbabwe's 6% yields a difference in expected legal franchise size that ranges from 36% (77% to 41% in col. 5) to 93% (95% to 2% in col. 3). Using this same comparison to estimate substantive magnitude for the war regressions, the difference ranges from 71% (77% to 6%) in column 9 to 100% (0% to 100%) in several specifications. All the coefficient estimates in the tables are statistically significant at 5%.

Tables 5 and 6 also provide evidence that the land suitability instrument is strongly correlated with European settlers. In every specification, the partial F-test for the instrument exceeds the conventional standard of 10 for a weak instrument. Furthermore, only large violations of the exclusion restriction would overturn these results, as appendix D demonstrates with formal sensitivity analysis. Appendix table D.14 shows that anywhere between 42% and 66% of the effect of the land suitability instrument on enfranchisement would have to occur through channels other than European settlement for any of the specifications in table 5 to lose significance at the 5% level, and between 52% and 72% at the 10% significance level. The corresponding figures for the liberation war specifications in table 6 are between 37% and 61% at the 5% significance level and between 47% and 67% at the 10% significance level. Considering the large-magnitude coefficient estimates and relative insensitivity to exclusion restrictions violations for both dependent variables, it is difficult to explain away the purported causal effect of European settlers.

The findings are similar when considering additional combinations of covariates (app. tables D.8 and D.9), replacing the post-1945 ruling monarchy control with population density in 1800 (app. tables D.10 and D.11), or dropping both monarchy and population density (app. tables D.12 and D.13). The 2SLS liberation war specification with every covariate (app. table D.9, col. 3) is not statistically significant ($p = .104$), but the implied substantive magnitude remains very large: the predicted probability of a liberation war in a colony with Zimbabwe's European population share is 71%, compared to 9% for Ghana's European population share.

DID LAND INEQUALITY MATTER?

Differences between the economic structure of settler and nonsettler colonies in Africa correspond with key assumptions from the redistributive framework that predict divergence in franchise expansion and liberation wars, and the quantitative findings show evidence of a causal relationship between European population share and both franchise size and colonial liberation wars. The final part of the analysis

13. Although colonial liberation war is binary, it is standard to estimate such IV regressions with 2SLS (Angrist 2001). Additionally, linear and nonlinear models tend to produce similar results for nonextreme values of the explanatory variable (Angrist and Pischke 2009, 107), and, as noted, logging the land suitability instrument guards against horizontal outliers.

Table 5. European Settlers and Franchise Size: IV Results

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
ln(European population %)	−19.59***	−20.70***	−26.95***	−19.83***	−10.50***	−22.13***	−22.97***	−25.33***	−13.40***
	(5.004)	(6.487)	(7.264)	(5.008)	(2.342)	(6.261)	(7.839)	(4.561)	(2.665)
R^2	.052	.108		.053	.412	.115		.203	.429
Covariate	Only monarchy	Precolonial democracy	Precolonial violence	Geography of rebellion	Colonizer fixed effects	Other colonial	Colonial value	Standard	All statistically significant
Partial *F*-test for IV in first stage	23.2	12.3	14.9	21.4	44.6	11.1	13.5	51.4	18.5

Note. Two-stage least squares regressions in which log percentage of a colony's area that is suitable for European agriculture instruments for log European population share. Dependent variable is percentage of population legally enfranchised, the unit of analysis is territory-years, and country-clustered robust standard errors are in parentheses. IV = instrumental variables. Territory-years = 650. Every specification controls for post-1945 ruling monarchy. Appendix tables D.4 and D.5 present the corresponding first-stage and reduced-form estimates.
* $p < .1$.
** $p < .05$.
*** $p < .01$.

presents evidence about the importance of the intervening outcome land inequality—specifically, qualitative evidence that an important factor in European settlers' intransigence was fear of losing their land and quantitative evidence that different measures of land inequality correlate as expected with key variables.

This evidence shows the importance of land inequality for explaining divergent decolonization paths in Africa. This explanation is not mutually exclusive from alternative theories that stress the importance of racism or grievances.[14] However, racism and grievances cannot explain important aspects of strategic government behavior for which land inequality provides a more convincing account. First, even if racism were greater in settler colonies—or, perhaps Europeans in these colonies were better positioned to act on their racist inclinations—this factor seems unlikely to explain why European settlers frequently went to extreme means to cling to power even in the face of long and costly wars. By contrast, the nonfungible economic rents they earned from colonialism anticipates this behavior. Second, it is unconvincing to argue that conflict occurred in settler colonies simply because Africans were more aggrieved there. Africans harbored grievances in all colonies (see the discussion of assumption 3) that stemmed from the lack of political representation and from economic exploitation, even if land displacement in settler colonies was particularly egregious. Crucially, in colonies where the Europeans living there did not have strong vested interests that they could translate into policy decisions, Europeans usually decolonized and alleviated Africans' grievances before major conflict ensued—in contrast to intransigence by settler governments. More broadly, ethnic and racial grievances are omnipresent in colonial and postcolonial societies, but they only rarely erupt in conflict because additional triggering factors are required (Fearon and Laitin 1996).

Qualitative evidence of land inequality

Considerable evidence shows that European settlers perceived an acute threat of redistribution under majority rule. Land inequality loomed large, although settlers also enjoyed other rents that they would lose if Africans gained the franchise. This situation departs from many other cases discussed in critiques of redistributive models in which elites may not fear franchise expansion because they do not expect mass redistribution, either because of low state capacity (Slater et al. 2014) or anticipation of either "capturing" or acting as a veto player under democratic institutions (Albertus 2015; Albertus and Menaldo 2014). However, for colonial Africa: "The probable political future of settler agriculture was not promising. Land and land hunger were the driving forces behind nationalist movements from Rhodesia to Kenya to North Africa. The colonial state had carefully prepared the way for European agriculture; any successor regime was likely to threaten its property rights first. Few technological

14. These factors are difficult to measure empirically, which is why they were not addressed in the regression results above. By contrast, the value of colonies—another alternative explanation—is more easily quantified and, therefore, was evaluated statistically.

Table 6. European Settlers and Colonial Liberation Wars: IV Results

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
ln(European population %)	.268***	.320***	.339***	.253***	.272***	.273***	.343***	.248***	.210***
	(.0591)	(.0949)	(.0939)	(.0611)	(.0515)	(.0909)	(.105)	(.0701)	(.0494)
R^2	.418	.364	.452	.463	.555	.434	.363	.563	.664
Covariate	Only monarchy	Precolonial democracy	Precolonial violence	Geography of rebellion	Colonizer fixed effects	Other colonial	Colonial value	Standard	All statistically significant
Partial *F*-test for IV in first stage	22.1	11.1	13.5	19.5	38.4	10.1	12.3	50.5	18.3

Note. Two-stage least squares regressions in which log percentage of a colony's area that is suitable for European agriculture instruments for log European population share. Dependent variable is major colonial liberation war, the unit of analysis is territories, and robust standard errors are in parentheses. IV = instrumental variables. Territories = 42. Every specification controls for post-1945 ruling monarchy. Appendix tables D.6 and D.7 present the corresponding first-stage and reduced-form estimates.

* $p < .1$.

** $p < .05$.

*** $p < .01$.

or other obstacles would prevent a successor government from substituting African or Arab farmers for Europeans" (Kahler 1981, 391).

Providing examples, a Rhodesian historian claimed that "should power fall into African hands in Rhodesia, settlers fear the new rulers would insist on the expropriation of white farms in the name of land reform" (Gann and Duignan 1970, 161). In Kenya, "The fate of the 'White Highlands' was the linchpin determining the future of the European farming community and the colonial political economy. The European farmer holding non-liquid assets in a threatening environment had to adapt in some way to his surroundings—if only by leaving" (Wasserman 1976, 2). Related, Wasserman also refers to the "European farming community" as "perched at the top of the political-economic hierarchy they had largely established" (2). Most of Algeria's French population fled to France as the war ended, in part because of reduced economic prospects in an independent Algeria (Spruyt 2005, 105).

Stated redistributive goals of African rebel organizations likely contributed to Europeans' redistributive fears. In Rhodesia, "one of the strongest motivations for African nationalists taking up arms was to win back the land that had been expropriated by the colonial settlers" (Mlambo 2014, 220–21). Reno (2011, 96) cites anticolonial Rhodesian rebel groups' "consistent commitment to the narrative of majority rule and the promise of access to land." Land reform negotiations composed a crucial part of the Lancaster House Agreement of 1979, which yielded internationally recognized independence and majority rule in Zimbabwe (Mlambo 2014, 191–93). In Algeria, the Soumman Declaration of 1956—the culmination of a foundational meeting for the revolutionary group FLN (National Liberation Front)—stated the need for agrarian reform and land distribution as part of FLN's broader independence goals (Kahler 1981, 391). In Kenya, historians frequently cite Kikuyus' belief that Europeans took their land as the primary trigger of the Mau Mau rebellion (Lutzelschwab 2013, 162; Wasserman 1976, 2). In Angola, early African nationalist publications in the 1950s and a main rebel leader, Holden Roberto, focused on European settlement as a primary grievance (Marcum 1969, 24, 86). In South West Africa, the African liberation group SWAPO (South West African People's Organization) turned to armed resistance after whites proposed the Odendaal Plan in 1964. This plan would have tied South West Africa more closely to South Africa and would have legally reserved 60% of South West Africa's land for whites (Oliver and Atmore 2005, 297–98).

Furthermore, the European settlers who had the most to lose from land reform wielded considerable political power. "The core of resistance to decolonization could be found in the agricultural sector" (Kahler 1981, 390). Farmers were in part able to achieve favorable policies through strong political organization. For example, in South Africa's 1948 elections, rural voters provided the main constituency for the National Party, which won power and launched apartheid policies (Thompson 2001, 186). Similarly, the radical Rhodesian Front gained power in Southern Rhodesia in 1962, largely by rejecting modifications to the Land Apportionment Act—which secured Europeans' dominance over Southern Rhodesia's best land—and had support from white farmers (Palmer 1977, 244). The political power of European farmers in Kenya made the land question "the crucial issue" in the colony's decolonization bargaining (Wasserman 1976, 17).

Quantitative evidence of land inequality

Despite limitations to available data on land control in colonial Africa (van de Walle 2009, 313), comparative data demonstrate quantitative evidence for the land mechanism. Hailey (1957, 687) provides comparative data on the percentage of land alienated by colonial Europeans, perhaps the most direct measure possible of land inequality. Bruce (1998) surveys African countries in the 1990s to assess whether a "significant" amount of land was held privately. Herbst (2000), who also uses this source, argues that only in settler colonies did private property of land become widespread and that these patterns tended to persist after independence because of difficulties for postcolonial rulers to disrupt existing land practices. Therefore, this variable acts as a reasonable proxy for colonial land inequality.

Appendix table E.1 shows that each of these measures exhibit the expected correlations. They are each positively correlated with both the land suitability instrument and European population share. Furthermore, both variables are correlated with the two outcomes: negatively with percentage population enfranchised and positively with major colonial liberation war. These results are somewhat qualified by inherent limitations of the land inequality data. Appendix E details some of the sample restrictions imposed by these variables and concerns about measurement error in the land alienation variable. However, given available data, these seem to be the most appropriate measures for assessing land inequality, and the results—complementing the qualitative evidence—are consistent with theoretical expectations from redistributive political transition models about the consequences of inequality in nonmobile assets.

CONCLUSION

Do class divisions and fear of redistribution impede political transitions? This article argues that tensions over economic redistribution in European settler colonies caused resisted enfranchisement and liberation wars in colonial Africa. It offers three main contributions. First, it identifies key scope conditions for redistributive transition models: in African settler colonies, the European elite monopolized the best agricultural land and could only secure their economic advantages by repressing majority rule—also incentivizing liberation wars. Second, it exploits a novel research design to assess redistributive theories. Statistical evidence from Africa during the decolonization era demonstrates that larger European settler population shares covary with smaller franchises and with more frequent colonial liberation wars. To account for the endogeneity of European settlement, the article introduces an instrument that measures climatic and other land suitability factors that affected where Europeans could settle. Third, it explains divergent decolonization paths.

These findings provide insight into the empirical relevance of redistributive political transition models. Here, the conclusions are mixed overall. On the one hand, colonial Africa corresponds closely with key scope conditions and—whatever evidence to the contrary in other settings—provides one set of cases that demonstrate the empirical relevance of redistributive tensions. On the other hand, the current exercise of matching assumptions from redistributive models with empirical details from colonial Africa perhaps also highlights the limitations of existing redistributive political transition models as a universal theory of regime transitions. Although African settler colonies are historically important cases, they are somewhat specific and extreme with regard to the degree of concentration of a completely immobile asset in the hands of a small economic and political elite, which is why in many other settings the core redistributive assumptions yield less empirical purchase and may need to be modified to better fit the specific empirical context (Ansell and Samuels 2014; Haggard and Kaufman 2012). Overall, this article provides a more balanced empirical assessment of redistributive political transition theories, which should help to inform future theory development and empirical tests.

The current analysis also builds off considerable historical research, cited throughout, arguing that European settlers contributed to liberation wars in colonial Africa. Matching scope conditions of redistributive political transition models with empirical facts from colonial Africa would be impossible without this existing work. However, these historical accounts tend to be less clear about the specific mechanisms posited to cause liberation wars and tend to focus on one or a small number of cases. The current contribution begins with the insights of existing historical work that emphasizes important structural changes that occurred after World War II including economic recovery, ideological competition between superpowers during the Cold War, and shifting norms against foreign rule. These conditions situate the current analysis because the newfound vulnerability of European colonizers and spreading norms of self-rule made the key revolution and reform decisions in the redistributive model empirically applicable, which demonstrates the relevance of general mechanisms for understanding this particular historical phenomenon. Additionally, the statistical analysis comparatively assesses all African colonies using a research design that exploits plausibly exogenous variation in European settlement patterns. This approach exemplifies complementarities among historical research, general theories, and statistical testing/causal inference.

The historical legacy of European settlers did not end with colonial rule. Ex-settler colonies struggled over democratic rule, debated how to redistribute assets and related concerns about economic development, and engaged in prolonged regional wars after independence. Incidentally, the same changes associated with the Cold War that contributed to the post–World War II decolonization wave may have also prolonged the instability of new nations because ex-settler colonies became proxies in the broader global struggle. Whereas governments in countries such as Angola and Mozambique received aid from the Soviet Union and Cuba after independence to consolidate control, European settlers in South Africa and Rhodesia supported rebel groups that supported policies more closely aligned with the West. The current research design may prove useful for studying these additional effects of colonial European settlers, contributing to a broader social science research agenda on this central aspect of colonial rule.

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