

RETHINKING SPATIAL INEQUALITY IN DEVELOPMENT: THE PRIMACY OF POWER RELATIONS

ABDUL-GAFARU ABDULAI*

Department of Public Administration, University of Ghana Business School, Accra, Ghana

Abstract: Why do spatial inequalities emerge and persist? After showing that existing explanations of spatial inequality are at best partial, this article argues that persistent spatial development disparities are the product of the terms on which underdeveloped regions are incorporated into ruling coalitions. In most cases, political elites from lagging regions are incorporated on marginal terms, undermining their capacity to direct public resources to their constituents. Consequently, governments direct more resources to relatively better-off and politically dominant regions, reinforcing spatial inequalities. Our analyses highlight the importance of going beyond a dichotomous assessment of whether disadvantaged regions are included or excluded from ruling coalitions to an examination of the terms of their inclusion. Copyright © 2016 John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

Keywords: spatial inequality; clientelist politics; power relations; inclusive political settlements

1 INTRODUCTION

Amidst growing international concerns about rising inequalities, spatial inequality has been of particular concern mainly because of the tensions and conflicts that they often engender (Kanbur, 2010). Østby (2007:2) utilised survey data from 55 countries to calculate welfare inequalities between ethnic, religious and regional groups during 1986–2003, finding that ‘[a]ll the inequality measures, but particularly regional inequality, are positively associated with higher risks of conflict outbreak’. As used here, spatial inequality refers to ‘inequality in economic and social indicators of wellbeing across geographical units within a country’ (Kanbur & Venables, 2005:11). Inspired mainly by the literature on (new) economic geography, current influential accounts of spatial inequality emphasise variations in geography and the effectiveness of market forces

*Correspondence to: Abdul-Gafaru Abdulai, Department of Public Administration, University of Ghana Business School, Legon, Accra, Ghana.

E-mail: ghaaff2000@yahoo.co.uk or agabdulai@ug.edu.gh

as the main explanatory factors (Kanbur & Venables, 2007; World Bank, 2009a). Although a new set of literature has now increasingly gone beyond these technoeconomic accounts of spatial inequality, much of this emerging literature has focused almost exclusively on the impact of the quality of governance and institutions (van de Walle, 2003; Ezcurra & Rodríguez-Pose, 2014; Tomaney, 2013; Rodríguez-Pose, 2013), ignoring the question of why similar institutions have often produced very divergent development outcomes in different settings.

In response to a growing level of disillusion regarding the capacity of new institutionalist approaches to offer clear insights into why some countries are more developed than others, some leading proponents (e.g. North *et al.*, 2009; Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012) have recently revised their approaches to take greater account of the central role that politics and power relations play in shaping long-run processes of development. A key feature of this new move has been to push development thinking beyond an institutionalist approach by focusing on the underlying power arrangements that underpin the emergence, stability and performance of institutions. From this perspective, similar institutions produce divergent outcomes because the underlying power dynamics between political elites are different. This line of thinking is most strongly exemplified in Mushtaq Khan's (2010) concept of political settlements, which highlights the primacy of power relations over institutions for understanding processes of development and underdevelopment. In identifying the mechanisms through which politics shapes spatial development disparities, a political settlements approach focuses particularly on how elites struggle to gain 'holding power' within ruling coalitions and the ways in which these struggles shape the distribution of public resources (Abdulai, 2016).

This article adopts a political settlements approach to offer a deeper political explanation to the problem of spatial inequality in developing countries, paying particular attention to the impact of inter-elite power relations on the spatial distribution of public resources. It argues that persistent spatial inequalities are the product of the terms on which underdeveloped regions are incorporated into ruling coalitions. In most cases, political elites from lagging regions are incorporated into ruling coalitions on relatively marginal terms, undermining their capacity to direct substantial public resources to their constituents. Consequently, governments direct more resources to relatively better-off and politically dominant regions, reinforcing spatial inequalities. In this context, spatial inequalities are underpinned not by the exclusion of lagging regions from political decision-making structures, but from the inclusion of elites from such regions into ruling coalitions on unfavourable terms. In this respect, it is important to go beyond a dichotomous assessment of whether lagging regions are included or excluded from ruling political coalitions to an examination of the terms of their inclusion because factions *within* all ruling coalitions often have differing levels of power, and thus differing capacities to influence institutional functioning and resource allocation in line with their interests.

The paper proceeds as follows. The next section reviews current influential literature on the underlying drivers of spatial inequalities, and highlights their shortcomings. Third, the paper proposes a new theoretical framework for investigating the politics of spatial inequality, before turning to discuss some important methodological issues in relation to this framework in Section 4. Section 5 utilises the political settlements framework to explain the evolution and persistence of regional inequality, drawing examples from a number of countries in sub-Saharan Africa. Section 6 concludes and highlights policy implications.

2 EXPLAINING PERSISTENT SPATIAL INEQUALITIES: A REVIEW OF SELECTED LITERATURE

This section reviews selected influential literature on spatial inequalities, focusing on arguments concerning state interventions versus free markets, variations in geography and the new economic geography approach. The literature on spatial inequality was initially dominated by economic explanations. Lipshitz (1992) has categorised these explanations under three broad themes: the convergence, divergence and radical paradigms. The convergence perspective, advanced by neoclassical economists, considers spatial inequality as a natural, but short-lived phenomenon that arises from temporal market failures. It is argued that in the long-run, and provided there are no barriers to factor mobility, '...the market mechanism will be equilibrating and any disparities in regional wages will tend to disappear over time' (McCombie, 1988:267).

The underlying thinking is that in a free market economy, labour and capital move in opposite directions: while labour moves in search of higher wage locations, capital tends to move in the opposite direction in search of lower cost locations. It is assumed that this process will continue until such a time when the income per worker in both flourishing and lagging regions is roughly equal, leading to convergence in regional incomes. A similar logic underlies the well-known inverted U-shaped hypothesis which holds that regional inequalities often increase in the early stages of a country's development but typically decline as markets become more effective and capitalist development progresses (Williamson, 1965). Yet, the empirical evidence is clear that far from being a temporal phenomenon, regional inequalities have remained a global reality, and have even widened in many countries in recent years (World Bank, 2009a). This is in spite of, or perhaps even because of, the vigorous pursuit of the free-market ideology since the early 1980s.

The *divergence perspective* argues that left on their own, markets would lead to the cumulative concentration of the factors of production in certain regions at the expense of others. Myrdal (1957) invoked the concept of 'circular and cumulative causation' to argue that once a region takes a lead in socio-economic development ahead of others, all new major economic activities tend to be concentrated in the relatively developed areas. From this perspective, the intervention of the state is crucial to overcoming spatial inequalities.

However, the *radical perspective* perceives state elites as part of the problem of deepening spatial inequality within countries. Rooted largely in neo-Marxist theories, these analysts perceive regional inequalities as an inevitable outcome of capitalism (Harvey, 1975). It is argued that the dynamics of capital accumulation inherently creates a centre-periphery structure in production in which the role of the periphery (marginalised regions) is essentially to serve as: a labour reserve that can feed the expansion of production; and a market place for absorbing the increasing quantities of commodities produced. In such relations, lagging regions are merely 'dependent colonies' (Clark, 1980: 227), providing reserves of labour and markets for exploitation by the core economy. Regional 'catch-up' becomes virtually impossible under such conditions.

These debates resonate with the more recent discussions concerning the impact of economic globalisation on inequality. Contrary to claims that globalisation 'has actually promoted economic equality' (Dollar & Kraay, 2002: 120), a large volume of empirical studies show that the recent global trends towards widening spatial inequalities have partly been 'a consequence of the uneven impact of trade openness and globalization' (Kanbur &

Venables, 2005:1). It is argued that global integration leads to a sharper expression of comparative advantage, and that regions whose geographical locations are better suited for export-oriented production tend to derive the most benefit and grow faster than interior regions (Kanbur, 2010). Yet this argument raises an important question: is the relationship between geography and development outcomes deterministic?

Most scholars concur that geography is not destiny (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012) and substantial evidence suggests that appropriate spatially sensitive interventions can serve as a powerful stimulus in overcoming geographical constraints in lagging areas. Based on an analysis of the experience of some 58 developing and transition economies, Kanbur and Venables (2005: 9) conclude that 'a key determinant of household well-being in a region, over and above household specific characteristics, is the quantity and quality of infrastructure in that region'. Unsurprisingly, in previously backward areas such as the Cerrado and Northeast regions of Brazil and Thailand respectively, publicly targeted infrastructural investments have recently enabled both regions to conquer important world markets, defying previous claims that their 'challenging agroecological characteristics, remote locations, and high levels of poverty would prove impossible to overcome' (World Bank, 2009b: 23). These observations imply that the relationship between physical geography and developmental outcomes is mediated by the distribution of public goods. To this extent, the relative neglect of politics and power relations in much of current accounts of spatial inequality is problematic because public investment patterns ultimately reflect the decisions of some powerful elites in society.

The generally apolitical approach in extant literature on spatial inequality is most evident in the World Development Report 2009 which argues that because some regions are naturally more endowed than others, economic growth will inevitably remain unbalanced, and that efforts aimed at spreading economic production will only undermine national economic growth and prosperity. Therefore, rather than trying to spread productive investments to those currently excluded, developing country governments are advised to adopt spatially blind institutions that allow market forces to concentrate productive activities in economically prosperous regions while taking steps to move the poor from marginalised regions to the areas where economic activities are booming: 'Spatially blind institutions that ensure well-functioning land markets, enforce property rights, and deliver basic social services such as schooling and health care can be the mainstay of an economic integration strategy to reduce the economic distance between lagging and leading areas' (World Bank, 2009a: 29).

Yet these generally apolitical accounts of spatial inequality are problematic. Across the developing world, empirical evidence suggests that those often at the 'margins' of development are marginal not because they are far from centres of agglomeration, but mainly because they are distant from centres of political power (Rigg *et al.*, 2009). The WDR 2006 on *Equity and Development* made this important point, and explained persistent spatial inequalities as the product of 'long-standing, unequal relations of power between advantaged and lagging regions...' (World Bank, 2005: 20). Moreover, by emphasising the potentially progressive role of formal (spatially blind) institutions in redressing spatial inequalities, this approach tends to ignore the crucial role of informal institutions in shaping the adoption and implementation of policy decisions in developing country context. As Khan (2010: 5) reminds us, the implementation of formal state institutions in *all* low-income countries is shaped 'by the significant exercise of power based on informal organizations, typically patron-client organizations of different types' (Khan, 2010: 5).

3 POLITICAL SETTLEMENTS AND SPATIAL INEQUALITY: A MORE PROMISING APPROACH?

The concept of 'political settlement' has been defined as 'the balance or distribution of power between contending social groups and classes, on which any state is based' (Di John & Putzel, 2009: 4). At the heart of this concept is the argument that developmental outcomes are shaped not so much by the design of 'good' institutions, but by the power relationships within which institutions are embedded. Here, the role of inter-elite power relations is emphasised over institutions because 'if powerful groups are not getting an acceptable distribution of benefits from an institutional structure, they will strive to change it' (Khan, 2010: 4). The concept of power in this context refers to Khan (2010: 6) calls 'holding power' which refers to 'the capability of an individual or group to engage and survive in conflicts' against other elite actors over the distribution of valuable resources. From this perspective, poorer regions are marginalised not so much because of their own internalised characteristics (e.g. bad geography), but 'precisely because they do not have the power to adjust institutions and policy in their favour' (Parks & Cole, 2010: 7).

This approach draws attention to the ways in which inequalities in the distribution of political power at the level of elites can underpin socio-economic inequalities at the mass level by undermining public investments in regions with limited influence over decision-making structures and processes. This is especially the case in developing country contexts where informal institutions (principally patron–client relations) remain prevalent in part because the limited size of the formal productive economy in the developing world implies that political entrepreneurs lack the tax-base required to allocate resources to powerful groups other than through off-budgetary processes (Khan, 2010).

Importantly, country case studies frequently show that as far as the distribution of government resources is concerned, political institutions in most developing countries are often characterised by 'pork-barrel politics', as regional elites try to acquire as much public resources for their constituencies in exchange for political support (Abdulai, 2014; Brockerhoff & Hewitt, 2000). In this context, a region's capacity to effectively lobby and attract government expenditures is shaped directly by the level of its 'bargaining chips' within ruling coalitions rather than by rational bureaucratic criteria (e.g. needs-based allocation criteria). From this perspective, persistent spatial inequalities are mainly the product of relationships of unequal power, with emphasis here on 'power as political representation' (Mosse, 2010: 1157).

A political settlements approach thus holds a good deal of promise for enhancing our understanding of the politics of spatial inequality, especially through its emphasis on the distribution of power between 'different groups and organizations contesting the distribution of resources' (Khan, 2010: 1). By focusing attention on the nature of ruling coalitions and the actual *distribution of power* within them, a political settlement approach makes it clear that spatial inequality can be underpinned not only by the political *exclusion* of marginalised regions, but also through the inclusion of elites from such regions into decision-making structures on terms that do not enhance (and potentially undermine) their influence over resource allocation decisions. From a political settlement perspective, then, an analysis of whether ruling political coalitions are inclusive or exclusive should go beyond the quantitative inclusion of various ethno-regional groups to consider also the terms of inclusion.

This suggestion can significantly advance our understandings of the current debates on inclusive political settlements. Although scholars have increasingly highlighted the

importance of inclusive political settlements for sustained peace and inclusive development, there is often little reflection on the ‘how’ of inclusion and with what effects for redistributive policies. Indeed, much of the current political settlements literature suffers from an overly-simplistic included/excluded dichotomy, whereby the inclusiveness of ruling political coalitions is often explained in terms of the inclusion of key elites that have the potential to threaten the stability of ruling coalitions (Khan, 2010; Parks & Cole, 2010; Rocha Menocal, 2015; Bell, 2015).

Similar observations are evident in recent related literature, as with North *et al.* (2009) distinction between ‘limited access orders’ and ‘open access orders’ and Acemoglu and Robinson’s (2012) distinction between inclusive and exclusive political institutions. Although without explicitly using the label ‘political settlement’, North *et al.* (2009: 56) argue that developing countries are generally ‘ruled by a dominant coalition’, and that ‘people *outside* the coalition have only limited access to organizations, privileges and valuable resources and activities’. I argue that factions *inside* ruling coalitions often have differing levels of power, and thus differing capacities to influence institutional functioning and resource allocation in line with their interests. To this extent, the ultimate test of inclusiveness needs to be anchored in the *terms of inclusion*, given the critical role of this in mediating between inclusivity and the distribution of resources.

Thus, it is important to distinguish between ‘symbolic’ and ‘substantial’ forms of inclusion when seeking to understand the distribution of holding power within ruling coalitions and how this shapes spatial development disparities. It needs to be emphasised that the absolute distribution of positions of state power (e.g. ministerial positions) can understate actual inequalities in political power because the power of patronage varies significantly across different government portfolios. As Frances Stewart has noted, ethno-regional inequalities in the distribution of more prominent positions within ruling coalitions often ‘reflect not only a power imbalance but also lopsided possibilities of patronage and shares in rents’ (Stewart, 2010: 142).

Despite its potential in deepening understanding of the politics of spatial inequality, the political settlements framework is not without shortcomings. First, although this framework places emphasis on the distribution of power, there is some evidence to suggest that devolving substantial political power to marginalised regions is not a magic bullet to redressing the development challenges of lagging areas. Much also depends on other factors, including the characteristics of lagging regions, the extent of institutional capacity in such areas for policy implementation, and the commitment and ideas of regional-level elites towards the development of their regions. In India, for example, regional inequalities in industrial development during 1960–1991 has been explained in terms of ‘[t]he janus-faced character of regional elites’ and the nature of central-local dynamics more broadly (Sinha, 2005:13). Here, whereas political and bureaucratic elites in some regional states (notably Gujarat) attracted substantial industrial investments through strategies such as the lobbying of central ministries, other regional elites (notably in West Bengal) resorted to partisan confrontational strategies that eschewed bargaining with central state elites in ways that undermined resource flows to these regions.

Second, and more broadly, the language of ‘settlement’ can be confusing, as it seems to connote a single, clearly articulated agreement at specific moments in time. While Khan, (2010: 4) himself notes that ‘no political settlement is static’ and that ‘all settlements are continuously evolving’, his definition of a political settlement as ‘an interdependent combination of a structure of power and institutions ... that is mutually ‘compatible’ and also ‘sustainable’ in terms of economic and political viability’ (p.20) seems to point to a

sort of an equilibrium arrangement. Here, however, I follow those who have emphasised the dynamic nature of political settlements that are constantly subject to renegotiation and contestation (Parks & Cole, 2010; Laws, 2012). As Laws and Leftwich (2014: 1) explain, although the process of establishing political settlements may involve specific one-off events like elite pacts, such events 'are not in themselves political settlements, because political settlements are continuous, dynamic and change over time'.

4 INVESTIGATING THE POLITICS OF SPATIAL INEQUALITY: SOME METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The political settlement framework suggests that an investigation of the politics of spatial inequality requires an examination of the spatial/regional distribution of holding power; the distribution of public resources, and the extent to which resource allocation patterns are driven by inter-elite power relations in society. In other words, this framework suggests that the clientelist character of political settlements in all developing countries (Khan, 2010), the dominance of particular regions in influential positions in government leads to policy outcomes that advance the interest of such regions at the expense of others and thereby reinforcing historical inequalities; and that (2) one way of testing these relationships is to examine patterns of development expenditures across different ethno-regional groups, given that resource allocation decisions are generally taken by senior public officials. To this extent, the spatial distribution of cabinet ministers and permanent secretary positions represents one of the most significant sources of 'holding power' in society; whether regional elites are able to hold out in conflict with other elites with regards to the spatial allocation of development projects depend on their 'bargaining chips' within ruling coalitions which is in tend shaped by the *extent* and *terms* of their inclusion.

In most developing countries where formal rules-based norms have yet to displace personalised elite bargaining as the main form of political exchange, resource allocation patterns often tend to be driven more by the formal and informal distribution of power rather than according to a rational bureaucratic-logic (e.g. need-based allocation criteria). Particularly in countries characterised by serious resource scarcity, as in Africa, political actors frequently bargain over the allocation of resources in order to secure their consumption under conditions of economic scarcity. Therefore, the questions of who is represented within ruling coalitions and under what terms has important implications on variations in the regional patterns of public resource distribution, and hence the spatial patterns of development.

This analysis also suggests that it is important to go beyond the *quantitative* distribution of positions of state power to an analysis of the *quality* of inclusion. This can be done by paying particular attention to the distribution of the more consequential positions in government—what Langer (2005) calls the 'inner core' of political power. The concept of 'inner core of power' is important because it helps us to see whether the inclusion of marginalised regions also extends to the positions of real power and influence. Here, I propose a three-way strategy for identifying the 'inner core' positions of power within ruling coalitions. First, following Lindemann (2011a, 2011b), one way is to conduct as many key informant interviews as possible with those who were in government at any given moment in time. Second, indicators such as the share of the national budget commanded by different ministries, and the extent of rents associated with different government institutions (e.g. ministries responsible for extractive industries) can be used

as proxies in determining the most crucial government ministries in different countries. A third useful strategy is to focus on obviously powerful positions such as the President/Prime Minister, Vice President, key positions within the state bureaucracy (e.g. permanent secretaries) and highly recognised ministerial positions. While such ministries will vary across countries, they would most likely include Ministers responsible for Finance, Defence/Security, Foreign Affairs, Agriculture, Roads and Transport, Energy, Education and Health. These ministerial positions generally fall within the category of what have been considered as the 'inner core' of power in countries such as Cote d'Ivoire (Langer, 2005), Nigeria (Mustapha, 2006, 2009), Zambia (Lindemann, 2011a), Uganda (Lindemann, 2011b), Kenya (Stewart, 2010) and Ghana (Abdulai, 2014).

This said, it is important to add that the question of who actually comprises the 'inner core of power' in any political regime, and how such actors can be identified presents significant challenges in part because the influence wielded by individuals in government can be shaped by factors other than the formal authority attached to their positions of power, in as much as certain party financiers who may not necessarily be part of the ruling elite can be very influential behind the scenes in shaping resource allocation decisions. One useful contribution in this regard relates Carl LeVan's (2015) recent efforts to operationalise the concept of 'veto players', defined as 'political actors operating in both formal and informal political settings with the leverage to block policy change and extract concessions' (p.3). The idea of a veto player has some similarities with Khan's notion of holding power because if holding power is the power to 'hold out' in a conflict, then groups with a lot of holding power are veto players. LeVan moves beyond a conceptualisation of power as arising from institutional arrangements to incorporate informal social power. He operationalises veto players as having '(1) a motive for challenging policy (2) a mechanism for coordinating common interests and reducing information costs if they are collective, and (3) they prevailed on at least one major policy issue [sic]' (p.55). Applying this definition, he identifies institutional, partisan, factional and regional veto players, with the set of veto players shifting over time.

Another methodological challenge relates to the issue of establishing causality between the regional distribution of 'holding power' on the one hand and the regional allocation of resources on the other. One way of doing this is to interrogate various alternative (and feasible) explanations beyond interpreting the observed expenditure patterns on the basis of politics and power relations. This is one key strategy in making causal inferences in qualitative research, whereby a researcher tries to identify a wide range of alternative explanations that would threaten the proposed explanation and then search for 'clues' as to whether these processes were actually operating in a given case (Maxwell, 2004). The ability of the researcher to rule out other feasible explanations means that 'the confidence in the suggested explanation will be increased' (Bennett & Elman, 2006: 460). Maxwell (2004: 257) notes that 'the main challenge in using this strategy in qualitative research is coming up with the most important alternative explanations' and then specifying in enough detail that such 'rival hypotheses' cannot be taken as the causal mechanisms of the observed social phenomenon. Arguably however, for research seeking to establish a causal linkage between the spatial patterns of political representation and resource sharing, there can be no better alternative explanation than the ones offered by those who have been directly involved in the formulation and implementation of the policies and programmes concerned. This suggests the need researchers to explore not only the alternative explanations they deem feasible, but also those offered by the policymakers involved in the formulation and implementation of programmes under investigation through informant interviews.

Second, in cases where it is feasible to obtain disaggregated expenditure data on both budgetary allocations and actual spending for any given year(s), another approach to establishing causality (or at least a strong correlation) could be a comparison of the two. This is to understand the patterns of deviations between expected and actual expenditures by location, which can then be compared to the spatial distribution of power among elites. This is arguably an important way of establishing the influence of political representation and other forms of politics on public spending, not least as budgetary allocations and actual expenditures in developing countries are widely acknowledged to be shaped by formal rules and informal practices respectively (DFID, 2007). Thus, the budgetary processes of Malawi and Ghana have been respectively characterised as a ‘theatre’ (Rakner *et al.*, 2004) and ‘a ritualised façade’ (Killick, 2005: 2), not least as powerful government ‘ministers and high officials are able to set aside what the budget says and dispose of public monies according to quite other decision processes’ (Ibid.: 3). Similarly in Tanzania, although politicians and public bureaucrats typically include all districts in allocating annual budgetary resources, it is the political and bureaucratic elites that make the *de facto* decisions about actual allocations (Therkildsen, 2008). Thus, an inter-regional comparison of budgetary allocations and actual spending can give us a sense of the impact of the spatial distribution of political power on the spatial patterns of actual resource allocation. If the observed deviations arise from other factors such as funding shortfalls, for example, we would expect the pattern of shortfalls to be fairly uniform across regions. However, if those with limited access to the power structures of the state are also those that frequently experience high levels of shortfalls in their actual allocated sums *vis-à-vis* their budgetary shares, then we could reasonably attribute this to power relations and the vested interests of more influential political and bureaucratic elites.

Third, process tracing can be employed to explore the politics of the observed patterns of public spending. Process tracing is a method of causal analysis that ‘attempts to identify the intervening causal process—the causal chain and causal mechanism—between an independent variable (cause) and the outcome of the dependent variable’ (George & Bennet, 2005: 206). In this approach, causation is ‘thought of as a process involving the mechanisms and capacities that lead from a cause to an effect’ (Bennett & Elman, 2006: 457; Collier, 2011).

5 THE POLITICS OF REGIONAL INEQUALITY IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

This section discusses how a complex politics of exclusion and inclusion has shaped spatial development disparities in sub-Saharan Africa. There is broad consensus that colonialism laid the foundation to regional inequalities in many African countries (Osaghae, 2006). As part of a deliberate divide and rule strategy which sustained colonial rule, colonial powers systematically privileged certain ethnic groups over others (Chabal, 1992:131), especially with regards to the provision of infrastructure and educational opportunities. For example, the Germans clearly favoured the Ewe in Togo, the English the Baganda in Uganda, while Belgian colonial administrators favoured the Tutsi in Rwanda and Burundi, and the Lulua in Congo (Alwy & Schech, 2004). Importantly, because ethnic groups often correlate well with administrative regions in Africa (Groth & Wade, 1984:14), the patterns of inequalities created by these policies assumed ethno-regional dimensions. Historical accounts of the roots of the contemporary north–south inequalities in countries such as Plange (1984), Uganda (Mamdani, 1983)

and Nigeria (Kohli, 2004) highlight how the British colonial administration discouraged the production of cash crops in the north—a decision aimed at designating these areas and their inhabitants as a source of cheap labour.

The most consequential of all colonial policies that impacted on the construction of postcolonial African states and subsequent patterns of spatial inequalities was in the area of education (Graham, 1966). As part of the divide-and-rule strategies, colonial administrators selectively privileged certain ethno-regional groups in the provision of education. In Nigeria, this implied that as late as 1940, the northern part, which was largely excluded from colonial educational opportunities, typically remained ‘without an English-speaking middle class’ (Kohli, 2004:313). These discriminatory educational policies had significant implications on the question of who was to dominate the state in the immediate postcolonial period (van de Walle, 2003). As Osaghae (2006: 9) aptly put it, by selectively privileging certain groups in the provision of education, ‘the various colonial authorities ensured that the transfer of power at independence preserved the captive ruling classes that had been nurtured under colonialism’ (Osaghae, 2006: 9).

These discriminatory policies also meant that the colonial enterprise bequeathed a legacy of high social fragmentations in Africa which, as Chabal (1992: 131) notes, was to prove ‘politically consequential for the post-colonial order’. The newly independent states were in most cases dominated by a few ethno-regional groups and therefore necessitated counter-mobilisation by members of the ‘excluded’ groups. Rothchild and Olorunsola (1983) classifies such counter mobilisation efforts into low-intensity demands for distributional benefits to high-intensity demands for separate statehood which threatened the very existence of the state itself. Thus, the newly independent African ‘state came to be seen as an arena of struggle between different groups vying for control over its resources’ (Azarya, 1988:4). How then did the new ruling elites respond to such demands, and why has the attainment of political independence in sub-Saharan Africa failed to alter the patterns of regional disparities created by colonial rule?

One important feature of post-colonial African politics has been the incorporation of elites from different ethno-regional groups into ruling coalitions (Chazan, 1988:129). Rothchild and Foley (1988) draw attention to how ruling elites across Africa ‘responded rather similarly to the overriding need to include ethnoregional intermediaries in the ruling coalition’ (p.241), often by combining the use of formal rules and informal practices aimed at ensuring the ethno-regional representativeness of their cabinets. But what has been the impact of the politics of inclusive coalitions on spatial inequality in postcolonial Africa? There is broad agreement that the overriding need for the formations of broad-based ethno-regional coalitions was essentially a means by dominant elites in co-opting potential rivals so as to foster inter-elite cooperation and sustain their fragile hold on state power (Jackson & Rosberg, 1982:19; van de Walle, 2003). This is what has been variously termed in the Africanist literature as the ‘reciprocal assimilation of elites’ (Bayart, 1993:252), the ‘fusion of elites’ (Sklar, 1979:537; Lonsdale, 1981:153) or the ‘hegemonial exchange’ among elites, whereby ‘the dominant political elite... exchanges participation and distributable resources for local support and compliance with its regulations’ (Rothchild, 1985:73). In such arrangements, ‘[p]atronage politics provided a material basis of consensus *and control* within ruling coalitions, oiling and structuring the processes by which regimes coalesced into economically dominant social strata’ (Boone, 1994:127).

Several Africanists have attributed this form of politics to the ‘soft’ nature of the postcolonial state in Africa, implying that because the new ruling elites lacked the power to impose their decisions on the various ethno-regional factions that challenged their

authority, they resorted to incorporating potential ethno-regional challengers into ruling coalitions so as to ‘maintain the political system by means of co-optation’ (Rothchild, 1985:79). Such observations strongly echo North et al.’s (2009) recent arguments that the establishment of stable political settlements in developing societies requires the formation of a ‘dominant coalition’ among elites, which limits access to economic rents to members and thereby creates incentives for elites to co-operate among themselves rather than fight.

However, there are reasons to suggest that the underlying incentive for the ‘fusion of elites’ in postcolonial Africa has not been as conducive for enhancing balanced regional development as it might have been for the maintenance of ‘political coalitions/settlements’. In particular, the underlying motives for elite inclusivity implied that elites from marginalised regions were often included on inequitable terms in ways that undermined their capacity to influence resource allocation decisions and policy agenda more broadly. This took the forms of under-representing such regions *vis-à-vis* their population shares, and the tendency of dominant elites to ‘skew high level appointments’ towards their ethno-regional groups in ways that made ‘the cabinet and bureaucracy more reflective of certain ethnic and class interests than of others’ (Rothchild & Foley, 1988:233).

These differential patterns of political inclusion are critical for understanding the persistence of the ethno-regional disparities created by colonial policies. As Rothchild and Foley (1988: 252) have noted, ‘For a group leader to be left out of the inner circle of decisionmakers is to be ineffective in championing the claims of his her constituents’. Elsewhere, Rothchild (1984) examined the resource allocation practices of a wide range of African countries in order to see if the distribution of state investments favoured relatively disadvantaged regions. His findings drew attention to how various dominant elites took ‘advantage of their positions of power ... to skew distributive patterns in favour of a relatively advantaged subregion’ (p.167), reinforcing historical inequalities. In his study on ‘The Institutional Origins of Inequality in Sub-Saharan Africa’, van de Walle (2003) similarly highlights the ways in which dominant elites, who were often from the ethno-regional groups favoured by colonial policies, used political power to reinforce their initial socio-economic advantages after independence, concluding that ‘Insofar as political power has been used to gain economic advantages during the postcolonial era, inequality has little changed in the past 40 years’.

In sum, it would seem that dominant ruling elites often co-opted enough ethno-regional spokespersons into ruling coalitions order to maintain regime stability, whilst monopolising real political power in ways that undermined resource flows towards historically marginalised areas. Thus, while the symbolic inclusion of elites from various ethno-regional groups helped legitimised ruling coalitions, the differential terms of inclusion ensured that public resources were distributed in ways that made it difficult for the relatively disadvantaged sub-regions to catch up. In this respect, the differential terms of inclusion for marginalised regions not only limited their influence over resource distribution, but also contributed in hurting their interests through a legitimisation of the very structures that underpinned their marginalisation.

One country whose experiences illustrate the above observations is Uganda, where Museveni has been purportedly implementing an all-inclusive coalition government for three decades now. Here, Lindemann (2011a) has analysed the distribution of government positions among different ethno-regional groups for the period 1986–2008, with appointments broken down into three different categories: Cabinet, Deputy Ministers and the ‘inner core’ of political power. His findings show that the distribution of political,

economic and military power have historically been heavily biased in favour of ethnic groups from the south-western parts of Uganda, especially in the more consequential positions in the ‘inner core’ of power. In contrast, elites from the historically underdeveloped Northern region were often assigned the most marginal positions in ways that undermined the development prospects of the region. It is in light of this that some analysts explain Uganda’s persistent north–south inequalities in terms of the north’s ‘adverse incorporation’ into the politics of state formation and capitalist development in Uganda over a prolonged period of time’ (Golooba-Mutebi & Hickey, 2010: 1223).

Such observations closely resonate with the experience of Côte d’Ivoire, a country also characterised by a serious socio-economic north-south divide. Although Côte d’Ivoire’s relative political stability during her first two decades of independence has frequently been attributed to President Houphouët-Boigny’s system of ‘ethnic quotas’ which ensured a ‘fairly inclusive’ government (Stewart, 2010:149), detailed analyses reveal a more nuanced picture. Langer (2005) has analysed data on the level of representation of various ethno-regional groups in government *vis-à-vis* their demographic sizes for the period 1980–2003. His analysis paid particular attention to the Baoulé—the largest sub-group of the Akan and the ethnic group of both President Houphouët-Boigny and his successor, Konan Bédié. Although his findings point to what one could refer to as an all-inclusive government, as no major ethnic group was fully excluded, his data also nevertheless pointed to a ‘significant over-representation of the Akans’.

Moreover, in order to assess whether the inclusion of the various ethnic groups could be said to have translated into a more equal voice or decision-making powers, he presented data on the ethno-regional distribution of a set of key political positions—what he also termed ‘the inner circle of political power’. The results of this exercise showed that the over-representation of the Akan and Baoulé was even ‘more pronounced’ in these key political positions, leading to the conclusion that ‘Houphouët-Boigny assigned the government positions of lesser importance to other ethnic groups’ (Langer, 2005:9)—a clear form of political adverse incorporation. Moreover, Langer’s analysis points to a close association between this skewed distribution of *real* political power and the ethno-regional patterns of well-being. Analysing DHS data for the 1990s, he showed that both the Akan as a whole and Baoulé in particular improved their relative socio-economic position considerably during 1994–1998, such that the ‘Akan’s relative socio-economic prosperity was 40 per cent higher than Côte d’Ivoire’s average’ (Langer, 2005:7). Brockerhoff and Hewitt’s (2000) survey data pointed to a similar trend.

Ghana has also been long confronted with a north–south developmental divide, with the north (comprising the Northern, Upper East and Upper West regions) lagging far behind since colonial times. Indeed, there is a sense that the over 20 years of rapid economic development in Ghana ‘has done nothing to reduce the historical North–South divide in standards of living’ (World Bank, 2011: 28), and so ‘the development gap has increased between the south and north’ (Al-Hassan & Diao, 2007). Scholars have frequently explained this problem in terms of certain innate characteristics of the north, including the region’s fewer production potentials associated with its ‘bad geography’ and northerners’ proclivity for violence (see Harsch, 2008; Lall *et al.*, 2009). However, a series of more recent studies have shown that a key factor that explains the persistent north–south developmental disparities in contemporary Ghana has been the continuous exclusion of the historically poorer northern regions from a fair share of public spending; and that the socio-economic marginalisation of these regions has been underpinned principally by a weaker influence of northern elites on resource allocation decisions within a political

environment that is driven by patron-client relations (Abdulai & Hickey, 2016; Abdulai & Hulme, 2015; Abdulai, 2014). This problem reflects a longer-term trajectory over the post-colonial period, whereby '[w]henver the North was represented in the national government, it was always as a decidedly junior partner' (Ladouceur, 1979: 268) in ways that undermined resource flows to the region.

Abdulai and Hulme (2015) illustrate this argument through a case study of Ghana's *HIPC Fund* which was established as part of the PRSP process. Despite a high level of government rhetoric of utilising HIPC debt relief to reduce regional inequalities through the provision of extra per capita expenditure for the three northern poorer regions, they showed that the actual distribution of HIPC resources short-changed the north. Their analyses clearly revealed that it was the relatively prosperous Southern regions that actually enjoyed the highest per capita HIPC spending during 2002–2005, average per capita HIPC expenditures in the north was US\$ 0.8 compared to US\$ 3.4 in the south. Southern-based dominant political elites agreed to policies of reducing regional inequality in order to have access to aid funding but, once approved, these funds were allocated on quite different criteria in ways that marginalised the poorest north. With the weaker representation of northern politicians in the governing coalition and their corresponding lack of 'agenda-setting powers', their vehement protests against the distributional pattern went unheeded. Poorer citizens in the north therefore tend to suffer from socio-economic exclusion because their political representatives were not part of the 'inner circle of political decision makers'. A similar process is reflected in the distribution of resources provided under the \$547 million Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) on agricultural modernisation which fully excluded the two historically poorest regions in the north of Ghana (Abdulai, 2016).

Similar observations have been made in Kenya where 'access to political power by the president's home determines the fortunes of that province and the resultant exclusion of other provinces' (Muhula, 2009:93). Here, 'the region that controls political power ... also controls the direction and magnitude of economic and political resources of the state' (Muhula, 2009:86). Analysis of the ethno-regional composition of governmental coalitions in postcolonial Kenya confirm that both the Kenyatta (1963–1978) and Moi (1978–2002) regimes disproportionately favoured their respective ethno-regional groups (i.e. Central and Rift Valley Provinces, respectively). This was especially so with regards to the distribution of the upper echelons of government positions in the Cabinet, the Military, Diplomacy and Public Service (Nellis, 1974:14–15; Rothchild, 1969:699–701), a trend that continues to this date (see Stewart, 2010). What is of particular interest has been the strong correlation between the spatial distribution of government resources and patterns of access to political power in postcolonial Kenya. Under Kenyatta's rule in 1979, whereas the Central Province had only 766 people per hospital bed, 'politically excluded areas like Nyanza, Western and North Eastern Provinces had an average of over 1000 peoples per bed' (Muhula, 2009:95). Unsurprisingly, by the 1980s, child mortality levels among President Kenyatta's ethnic group were on par with those of many industrialised countries (Brockerhoff & Hewitt, 2000:34). Data for 1969 and 1970 point to similar patterns with regards to access to educational facilities and government expenditures on housing (Rothchild, 1984; Alwy & Schech, 2004).

The Moi era brought similar advantages to the Rift Valley Province, whose share of development expenditures for road construction remained disproportionately high during each year between 1979 and 1988 (Barkan & Chege, 1989:449), with similar advantages conferred on this Province in the area of Health (Ibid). It is not surprising, therefore, that

by the end of the Moi administration in 2002, Rift Valley had about 6000 people per health facility, the least of any Province in Kenya (Muhula, 2009:95). Variations in child survival followed a similar trend, whereby children of the ethnic group of President Moi, the Kalenjin, were 50 per cent less likely to die before age five than others (Brockhoff & Hewitt, 2000:22). In sum, the historical evidence is clear that 'the distribution of public goods such as education facilities, health, water and physical infrastructure in Kenya have tended to follow patterns of access to political power' (World Bank, 2009b: 9).

6 CONCLUSION AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Why do spatial inequalities arise and persist, and how might this problem be redressed in developing countries? Answers to these questions have typically focused on techno-economic factors such as geography and institutions, while the role of politics and power relations remains neglected. Consequently, much of current policy recommendations aimed at redressing spatial development disparities often tend focus on 'what' policies and institutions are required to overcome spatial inequalities (see Kanbur & Venables, 2005; World Bank, 2009a), but with little understanding of the specific conditions under which such policies and institutions are likely to be adopted and implemented on a sustained basis.

This article has argued that the possibilities of overcoming spatial/regional inequalities depend substantially on the way political power is distributed among regional elites and how this influences the distribution of public resources. Given the problem of resource scarcity in developing societies, various ethno-regional groups seek access to influential positions in government primarily as a means of presenting group interests in the decision-making process. Thus, developing countries are typically under the control of a coalition of elite factions, which compete amongst themselves for access to resources and political power. In such contexts, comprehensive policies that skew benefits towards marginalised regions are more likely to be implemented on a sustained basis when elites who directly represent the interest of those segments of the population have substantial influence over resource allocation decisions. Strategies that aim to bridge interregional development gaps should therefore also consider ways of shifting interregional power relations in ways that ensure more advantageous inclusion of lagging regions within ruling coalitions. Nevertheless, the devolution of substantial authority to disadvantaged regions is only a necessary but not a sufficient condition for overcoming spatial development disparities. As the evidence here suggest, much also depends on a wide range of other factors, including the characteristics of lagging regions, the extent of institutional capacity in such areas for policy implementation, and the commitment and ideas of regional-level elites towards the development of their regions.

This argument reinforces recent research that highlights the 'inherently political' nature of spatial inequality and the difficulty of achieving spatially inclusive development without the inclusion of elites from poorer regions within ruling coalitions (e.g. United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD), 2010: 82). However, the analysis here goes further to emphasise that whereas the political inclusion of lagging regions matters, it is the terms of their inclusion that are especially critical in shaping their access to vital state resources and enhancing prospects for overcoming spatial development disparities.

REFERENCES

- Abdulai A-G. 2014. The Politics of Resource Sharing and Regional Inequality in Ghana: Lessons for the Post-2015 Development Agenda. *Development* 57(3–4): 488–496.
- Abdulai A-G. 2016. The Political Economy of Regional Inequality in Ghana: Do Political Settlements Matter? *European Journal of Development Research* advance online publication, May 5, 2016 DOI:10.1057/ejdr.2016.11
- Abdulai A-G, Hickey S. 2016. The Politics of Development under Competitive Clientelism: Insights from Ghana's Education Sector. *African Affairs* 115(458): 44–72.
- Abdulai A-G, Hulme D. 2015. The Politics of Regional Inequality in Ghana: State Elites, Donors and PRSPs. *Development Policy Review* 33(5): 529–553.
- Acemoglu D, Robinson J. 2012. *Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity and Poverty*. Random House: New York.
- Al-Hassan RM, Diao X. 2007. Regional Disparities in Ghana: Policy Options and Public Investment Implications. Ghana Strategy Support Program Background Paper No. 2, International Food Policy Research Institute, Washington DC.
- Alwy A, Schech S. 2004. Ethnic Inequalities in Education in Kenya. *International Education Journal* 5(2): 266–274.
- Azarya V. 1988. Reordering state-society relations: incorporation and disengagement. In *The Precarious Balance: State and Society in Africa*, Rothchild D, Chazan N (eds). Westview Press: Boulder and London; 1–21.
- Barkan JD, Chege M. 1989. Decentralising the state: district focus and the politics of reallocation in Kenya. *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 27(3): 431–453.
- Bayart J-F. 1993. *The State in Africa: The Politics of the Belly*. Longman: London.
- Bell C. 2015. What we Talk About When we Talk About Political Settlements: Towards Inclusive and Open Political Settlements in an Era of Disillusionment. Working Paper 1. Political Settlement Research Programme, University of Edinburgh.
- Bennett A, Elman C. 2006. Qualitative research: recent developments in case study methods. *Annual Review of Political Science* 9: 455–476.
- Boone C. 1994. States and Ruling Classes in Postcolonial Africa: The Enduring Contradictions of Power. In *State Power and Social Forces*, Migdal JS, Kohli A, Shue V (eds). Cambridge University Press: Cambridge.
- Brockerhoff M, Hewitt P. 2000. Inequality of child mortality among ethnic groups in sub-Saharan Africa. *Bulletin of the World Health Organization* 78(1): 30–41.
- Chabal P. 1992. *Power in Africa: An Essay in Political Interpretation*. St Martin's Press: Macmillan and New York.
- Chazan N. 1988. Patterns of State-Society Incorporation and Disengagement in Africa. In *The Precarious Balance: State and Society in Africa*, Rothchild D, Chazan N (eds). Westview Press: Boulder and London; 121–147.
- Clark GL. 1980. Capitalism and Regional Inequality. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 70(2): 226–237.
- Collier D. 2011. Understanding Process Tracing. *Political Science and Politics* 44(4): 823–830.
- DFID. 2007. *Understanding the Politics of the Budget: What Drives Change in the Budget Process?* Department for International Development: London.
- Di John J, Putzel J. 2009. *Political Settlements: Issues Paper: Governance and Social Development Resource Centre*. University of Birmingham: UK.
- Dollar D, Kraay A. 2002. Spreading the Wealth. *Foreign Affairs* 81(1): 120–133.

- Ezcurra R, Rodríguez-Pose A. 2014. Government quality and spatial inequality: a cross-country analysis. *Environment and Planning A* **46**(7): 1732–1753.
- George AL, Bennet A. 2005. *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*. MIT Press: Cambridge, M.A.
- Golooba-Mutebi F, Hickey S. 2010. Governing chronic poverty under inclusive liberalism: the case of the Northern Uganda Social Action Fund. *Journal of Development Studies* **46**(7): 1216–1239.
- Graham S. 1966. *Government and Mission Education in Northern Nigeria: 1900–1919*. Ibadan University Press: Ibadan.
- Groth AJ, Wade LL. 1984. Volume Editors' Introduction. In *Comparative Resource Allocation: Politics, Performance and Policy Priorities*, Groth AJ, Wade LL (eds). Sage Publications: Beverly Hills, London and Delhi; 151–180.
- Harsch E. 2008. Closing Ghana's national poverty gap: North-south disparities challenge attainment of Millennium Development Goals. *Africa Renewal* **23**(3): October 2008.
- Harvey D. 1975. The Geography of Capitalist Accumulation: A Reconstruction of the Marxian Theory. *Antipode* **7**(2): 9–21.
- Jackson R, Rosberg C. 1982. *Personal Rule in Black Africa*. University of California Press: Berkeley.
- Kanbur R. 2010. Regional Disparities and Indian Development. Contributed to VOX India, June.
- Kanbur R, Venables AJ (Eds). 2005. *Spatial Inequality and Development*. Oxford University Press: Oxford.
- Kanbur R, Venables T. 2007. Spatial Disparities and Economic Development. In *Global Inequality: Patterns and Explanations*, Held D, Kaya A (eds). Polity Press: Cambridge.
- Khan M. 2010. *Political Settlements and the Governance of Growth-Enhancing Institutions*. School of Oriental and African Studies: London.
- Killick T. 2005. The Politics of Ghana's Budgetary System. CDD/ODI Policy Brief No. 2, Accra and London.
- Kohli A. 2004. *State-Directed Development: Political Power and Industrialization in the Global Periphery*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge.
- Ladouceur PA. 1979. *Chiefs and Politicians: The Politics of Regionalism in Northern Ghana*. Longman Group Ltd.: London and New York.
- Lall SV, Sandefur J, Wang HG. 2009. *Does Improving Market Access Help De-Industrialize Lagging Regions?* The World Bank: Washington DC.
- Langer A. 2005. Horizontal inequalities and Violent Conflict: Côte d'Ivoire Country paper. Human Development Report office Occasional paper No. 32, UNDP.
- Laws E. 2012. Political Settlements, Elite Pacts, and Governments of National Unity—A Conceptual Study. In *Background Paper; Developmental Leadership Program*. University of Birmingham: Birmingham.
- Laws E, Leftwich A. 2014. Political Settlements. Concept Brief 1. Developmental Leadership Program. University of Birmingham.
- LeVan AC. 2015. *Dictators and Democracy in African Development: The Political Economy of Good Governance in Nigeria*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge and New York.
- Lindemann S. 2011a. Inclusive Elite Bargains and the Dilemma of Unproductive Pease: A Zambian Case Study. *Third World Quarterly* **32**(10): 1843–1869.
- Lindemann S. 2011b. Just Another Change of Guard? Broad-Based Politics and Civil War in Museveni's Uganda. *African Affairs* **110**(440): 387–416.
- Lipshitz G. 1992. Divergence versus Convergence in Regional Development. *Journal of Planning Literature* **7**(2): 123–138.
- Lonsdale J. 1981. States and Social Processes in Africa: A historiographical Survey. *African Studies Review* **24**(2-3): 139–225.

- Mamdani M. 1983. *Imperialism and Fascism in Uganda*. Heinemann Education Books Ltd.: London.
- Maxwell JA. 2004. Using Qualitative Methods for Causal Explanation. *Field Methods* **16**(3): 243–264.
- McCombie JSL. 1988. A Synoptic View of Regional Growth and Unemployment: I—The Neoclassical Theory. *Urban Studies* **25**: 267–281.
- Mosse D. 2010. A Relational Approach to Durable Poverty, Inequality and Power. *Journal of Development Studies* **46**(7): 1156–1178.
- Muhula R. 2009. Horizontal Inequalities and Ethno-Regional Politics in Kenya. *Kenya Studies Review* **1**(1): 85–105.
- Mustapha AR. 2006. Ethnic Structure, Inequality and Governance of the Public Sector in Nigeria. Democracy, Governance and Human Rights Programme Paper Number 24. United Nations Research Institute for Social Development: Geneva.
- Mustapha AR. 2009. Institutionalising Ethnic Representation: How Effective is Affirmative Action in Nigeria? *Journal of International Development* **21**: 561–576.
- Myrdal G. 1957. *Economic Theory and Under-Developed Regions*. Gerald Duckworth & Co: Ltd, London.
- Nellis J. 1974. The Ethnic Composition of Leading Kenyan Government Positions. Research Report No. 24 9. The Scandinavian Institute for African Studies, Uppsala.
- North DC, Wallis JJ, Weingast BR. 2009. *Violence and Social Order: A Conceptual Framework for Interpreting Recorded Human History*. Cambridge University Press: New York.
- Osaghae EE. 2006. Ethnicity and the State in Africa. Working paper No.7. Afrasian Centre for Peace and Development Studies, Ryukoku University, Japan.
- Østby G. 2007. Horizontal Inequalities, Political Environment, and Civil Conflict Evidence from 55 Developing Countries, 1986–2003. Post-Conflict Transitions Working Paper Series, No. 7 The World Bank, Washington DC.
- Parks T, Cole W. 2010. Political Settlements: Implications for International Development Policy and Practice. Occasional Paper No. 2, The Asia Foundation.
- Plange Nii-K. 1984. The Colonial State in Northern Ghana: The Colonial Economy of Pacification. *Review of African Political Economy* No. 31, Capital vs. Labour in West Africa (December), pp. 29–43.
- Rakner L, Luke M, Naomi N, Kimberly S, Aaron S. 2004. *The Budget as Theatre: The Formal and Informal Institutional Makings of the Budget process in Malawi*. DfID: London.
- Rigg R, Bebbington A, Gough KV, Bryceson DF, Agergaard J, Fold N, Tacoli C. 2009. The World Development Report 2009 ‘Reshapes Economic Geography’: Geographical Reflections. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* NS **34**: 128–136.
- Rocha Menocal A. 2015. Inclusive Political Settlements: Evidence, Gaps, and Challenges of Institutional Transformation. International Development Department, University of Birmingham.
- Rodríguez-Pose A. 2013. Do Institutions Matter for Regional Development? *Regional Studies* **47**(7): 1034–1047.
- Rothchild D. 1969. Ethnic Inequalities in Kenya. *The Journal of Modern African Studies* **7**(4): 689–711.
- Rothchild D. 1984. Middle Africa: Hegemonial Exchange and Resource Allocation. In *Comparative Resource Allocation: Politics, Performance and Policy Priorities*, Groth AJ, Wade LL (eds). Sage Publications: Beverly Hills, London and Delhi; 11–17.
- Rothchild D. 1985. State-Ethnic Relations in Middle Africa. In *African Independence: The First Twenty-Five Years*, Carter GM, O’Meara P (eds). Indiana University Press: Bloomington; 71–96.

- Rothchild D, Foley MW. 1988. African States and the Politics of Inclusive Coalitions. In *The Precarious Balance: State and Society in Africa*, Rothchild D, Chazan N (eds). Westview Press: Boulder and London; 233–264.
- Rothchild D, Olorunsola VA (eds). 1983. Managing competing state and ethnic claims. In *State versus Ethnic Claims: African Policy Dilemmas*. Westview Press: Boulder; 1–24.
- Sinha A. 2005. *The Regional Roots of Developmental Politics in India: A Divided Leviathan*. Indiana University Press: Bloomington.
- Sklar R. 1979. The Nature of Class Domination in Africa. *Journal of Modern African Studies* **17**(4): 531–552.
- Stewart F. 2010. Horizontal Inequalities in Kenya and the Political Disturbances of 2008: Some Implications for Aid Policy. *Conflict, Security & Development* **10**(1): 133–159.
- Therkildsen O. 2008. Inequality, Elites and Distributional Coalitions in Tanzania. Danish Institute for International Studies, Copenhagen.
- Tomaney J. 2013. Region and Place I: Institutions. *Progress in Human Geography*, pp. 1–10.
- United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD). 2010. *Combating Poverty and Inequality: Structural Change, Social Policy and Politics*. UNRISD: Geneva.
- van de Walle N. 2003. Presidentialism and clientelism in Africa's emerging party systems. *Journal of Modern African Studies* **41**(2): 297–321.
- van de Walle N. 2009. The Institutional Origins of Inequality in Sub-Saharan Africa. *Annual Review of Political Science* **12**: 307–327.
- Williamson JG. 1965. Regional Inequality and the Process of National Development: A Description of the Patterns. *Economic Growth and Cultural Change* **13**: 1–84.
- World Bank. 2005. *World Development Report 2006: Equity and Development*. The World Bank: Washington, D.C.
- World Bank. 2009a. *World Development Report 2009: Reshaping Economic Geography*. The World Bank: Washington, D.C.
- World Bank. 2009b. Kenya: Poverty and Inequality Assessment. World Bank Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Unit, Africa Region.
- World Bank. 2011. Tackling Poverty in Northern Ghana. Report No. 53991-GH. World Bank Africa Region, Washington D.C.