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Pro- and Anti-Americanism in Sub-Saharan Africa

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Abstract

Do theories developed to explain widespread anti-Americanism in some regions generalize to countries where pro-Americanism is the norm? Anti-Americanism has intensified in most places, yet sentiments remain relatively positive in sub-Saharan Africa. We compare survey responses from Africa with those from other regions in the developing world to determine why Africans are more pro-American than others. The evidence indicates that personal contacts with individuals in the United States, support for international engagement, and admiration of the American model generate goodwill in Africa. Notably, these individual-level drivers of approval in Africa are similar to those in other regions. We conclude that Africans are relatively favorable toward the United States because more Africans than non-Africans have attitudes, traits, and experiences that encourage pro-American sentiments.

Most scholars of attitudes about America seek to explain disapproval, rather than approval, of the United States. The telling label 'anti-Americanism' is typically used to denote the outcome of interest within this field of study (Friedman, 2012). The search for sources of dissatisfaction has led academics to focus on populations and regions where negative sentiments are especially acute. For example, disproportionate attention has been paid to Muslims, to countries in the Middle East and Europe and, to a lesser extent, Latin America. Such formulations of the object of study, and the resultant selection of cases, may lead to incomplete explanations. Extant theories may be of limited use for ascertaining why many individuals approve of the U.S. much of the time.

We expand on the existing literature by investigating attitudes about the U.S., after first reference in a region with a substantial reserve of pro-Americanism. As we will demonstrate, survey evidence suggests that pro-Americanism is higher in sub-Saharan Africa than in any other region. Africa is also the most neglected region within the study of attitudes about the U.S. This

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article addresses two research questions: (1) What individual-level factors are associated with pro-Americanism in Africa and (2) why are sentiments about the United States higher in Africa than in other developing regions of the world?

To answer these questions, we evaluate whether the theories developed to explain anti-Americanism in other parts of the world also help to explain pro-Americanism in Africa. We use a multilevel model to test the effects of hypothesized individual-level attitudes, traits, and experiences on pro-American sentiments. A comparison of Africa with other regions in the developing world provides additional analytic leverage for explaining the greater pro-American attitudes among Africans. Specifically, we compare the causes of pro-Americanism within Africa versus the causes in other regions. We also ascertain whether, relative to elsewhere in the developing world, Africa has greater endowments of factors that encourage pro-American attitudes.

This article proceeds in five sections. First, we establish that pro-American sentiments in Africa are widespread and multifaceted. Second, we review extant literature on anti-Americanism and propose four sets of hypotheses to explain Africans' relatively high support for America. In the third and fourth sections, we describe our methodological approach and evaluate our hypotheses in light of the evidence. We conclude with a discussion of the implications of our findings for American soft power and foreign policy.

African Attitudes About the United States

Before discussing the relevant literature and developing hypotheses about influences on attitudes about the U.S. in sub-Saharan Africa, it is important to establish that views of the U.S. in Africa are indeed more positive than in other regions of the world, rather than a hallmark of time or survey item. Because much has been made of President Bush's unpopularity (Chiozza, 2009) and the worldwide spike in favorability due to the election of President Obama (Dragojlovic, 2011; English & Ray, 2010; Golan & Yang, 2013), we situate our investigation in 2007 to examine the reservoir of positive support that existed irrespective of Obama's celebrity, African heritage, or other factors. We therefore elected to rely primarily on the 2007 Pew Global Attitudes Project survey.[1] As Figure 1

[1]The 10 Sub-Saharan African countries in this study are Ethiopia, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda. The 24 other developing countries (classification is consistent with 2007 IMF ratings) are Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Egypt, Mexico, Morocco, Peru, Venezuela, Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Turkey, Palestinian territories, Lebanon, Kuwait, Jordan, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Poland, Russia, Slovakia, and the Ukraine. Eight of the African surveys were national in scope and two (Ivory Coast and South Africa) were largely urban. Of the 26 other countries, all were national in scope, except China, India, Bolivia, Brazil, Venezuela, Slovakia, Czech Republic, and Pakistan. Some questions in our analysis were not asked in China, Czech Republic, Morocco, Palestinian territories, Slovakia, and Turkey. These countries are included in analyses of the distribution of pro-Americanism but not in the analyses of the causes of pro-Americanism. Turkey, Egypt, and Morocco are coded as part of the Middle East in this article. For more information on Pew Global Attitudes Project Surveys, see http://pewglobal.org/files/pdf/258.pdf.

shows, with the exception of Tanzania, a majority of respondents in each of 10 African countries expressed favorable opinions about the U.S.[2] Moreover, Africa has the largest proportion of pro-American respondents, the lowest proportion of anti-American sentiment, and the highest proportion of "very favorable" attitudes toward the U.S. of the six regions. Support for the U.S. is also multifaceted; for 7 of the 10 aspects of American society addressed by the survey, more African respondents rated the United States positively than negatively, and on *all* dimensions, they were more approving than any other developing region.[3]

Furthermore, African expressions of approval for the U.S. do not seem to be a product of the period or the Pew survey. Rather, analysis of three other data sets produces consistent results, suggesting that these surveys are a reflection of true attitudes.[4] Additionally, using identical questions about China, Iran, Russia, and Japan in the 2007 Pew Survey we find that more Africans approved of the U.S. than of the four other countries combined. This is noteworthy, as respondents in other developing regions rated the U.S. worse than their combined rating of China, Iran, Russia, and Japan.[5] These findings are further bolstered by evidence in the 2005/6 BBC World Service poll where respondents answered whether they thought seven major powers were each "having a mainly positive or mainly negative influence in the world" (PIPA, 2006). Again, Africa is the only region where attitudes about the U.S. were more positive than attitudes about the seven other countries taken as a group.[6]

[2]Question wordings and descriptive statistics for key variables in the article are provided in Supplementary appendix 1.

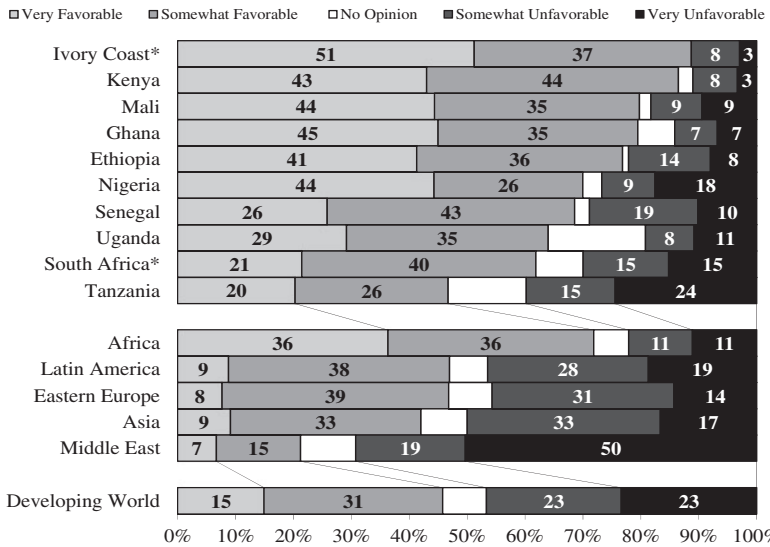
[3]Pluralities of Africans favor U.S. business, technology and science, pop culture, democracy, international policies, anti-terrorism policies, and people. Pluralities are unfavorable about U.S. democracy promotion, actions to address inequality, and the spread of American ideas and customs. See Supplementary Appendix 2 for results by region.

[4]In 2002, Pew GAP conducted a similar survey and found that Africans were more favorable toward the United States than in 2007 (see Supplementary Appendix 3). In addition, a BBC World Service poll conducted between October 2005 and January 2006 showed that the African region had the most positive assessment of the U.S. compared with other regions of the developing world (see Supplementary Appendix 4). Finally, in the 2004 Voice of the People survey by Gallup International Association, Africa was the only region where more citizens responded positively as opposed to negatively to the question "Generally, do you think American foreign policy has a positive effect on your country, a negative effect or does American foreign policy have no effect on your country?" The figures for the Pew surveys and BBC World Service survey are based on author's calculations from the data. The figures for Gallup are based on reports issues by Gallup.

[5]In all, 71.5% of Africans rate the U.S. positively, but only 37.6% of people in other developing countries do. Further, 48% of people in other developing countries rate China, Iran, Russia, and Japan positively (using the average for the four countries), meaning that people in other developing countries are more positively disposed to these nations than to the U.S. In contrast, 56.6% of Africans rate these countries positively, indicating that they are more positively disposed to the U.S. than to these four nations. For the full data, see the Supplementary Appendix 5.

[6]See Supplementary Appendix 4 for full detailed breakdown of these data.

Figure 1
Percentages of Pro-American and Anti-American Attitudes



Note: Survey Question: Please tell me if you have a very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable opinion of the United States. Source: Pew Research Center for People and the Press 2007 Global Attitudes Project. *Disproportionately urban samples

Explanations for Pro-Americanism in Africa

Having demonstrated that U.S. favorability is higher in Africa than in other parts of the developing world, we are left with an empirical puzzle. Why do Africans hold such favorable attitudes compared with their developing-country peers? Following in the theoretical footsteps of Katzenstein and Keohane (2007), Chiozza (2007; 2009) and other scholars, we believe that attitudes toward America are multidimensional, such that multiple attitudes contribute toward overall sentiment toward the U.S. We thus begin by examining factors the literature suggests predict pro-Americanism, testing whether they apply in developing countries generally. Having established our key predictor variables, we must then account for Africans' relative pro-Americanism. We examine two potential explanations: first, that these predictors of attitude toward America are differently related to pro-Americanism in Africa compared with the rest of the world, and second, that Africans are more likely to hold certain attitudes or to hold them more strongly than individuals in the rest of the developing world. For example, in Europe, Isernia (2007) finds that people who have negative attitudes toward capitalism also have less positive attitudes toward the U.S. Thus, in the context of Africa—where pro-Americanism is high—we would ask whether Africans' attitudes toward capitalism are not related to attitudes toward the

U.S. in the same way, whether individuals in Africa have more positive opinions of capitalism, or whether both relations are at work.

This approach is important because most theories about pro- and anti-Americanism have been formulated in regions with low levels of support for the U.S., leaving us to question whether these theories can adequately explain the full range of variation in favorability that we have noted in sub-Saharan Africa. In this section, we review existing theories about the causes of anti-Americanism to derive hypotheses about factors that might be associated with approval of the U.S., and how these may differ in Africa. We also develop hypotheses about the relative levels of explanatory factors in Africa versus elsewhere in the developing world that would be necessary to explain Africans' strong support for the U.S.

Political Sophistication

Literature focused on Europe (Chiozza, 2007; 2009) and the Middle East (Gentzkow & Shapiro, 2004; Golan & Yang, 2013; Nisbet, Nisbet, Scheufele, & Shanahan, 2004) has generally argued that information about the U.S. breeds support, positing that anti-Americanism is a communication problem such that 'they don't like us because they don't know us' (Nisbet & Shanahan, 2008). While some scholars have found mixed or contrary evidence (Blaydes & Linzer, 2012; Nisbet & Myers, 2011), the most prevalent perspective among academics and policy-makers is that political sophistication—or familiarity with and knowledge about the political world—is associated with more favorable attitudes toward the U.S. Thus, we propose the following hypothesis:

> *Hypothesis 1a:* Political sophistication is positively associated with pro-American attitudes in the developing world.

How might sophistication help explain the relative pro-Americanism in Africa? There are two possible pathways. First, if lack of awareness is driving anti-Americanism elsewhere, it is possible that a similar lack of sophistication might have no effect or the opposite effect on attitudes about the U.S. in Africa. In so far as dissatisfaction with American foreign policy seems to be one of the main causes of anti-Americanism globally (Chiozza, 2007; Katzenstein & Keohane, 2007), those who are less politically sophisticated and aware are also less likely to be exposed to information about such policies. For example, while average U.S. favorability in Nigeria in 2002 was quite high, nonetheless individuals also expressed a great deal of antipathy toward the U.S.-led war on terror (Elasmar, 2007). It is possible that in Africa, more exposure to international news and greater political sophistication might in fact *negatively* impact pro-Americanism. This would help explain why Africans are relatively more pro-American than their developing world peers. We test whether:

Hypothesis 1b: Political sophistication is related differently to favorability toward the United States in Africa than in other developing countries.

Second, it may simply be that Africans are more politically sophisticated than others in the developing world, and that this is driving their relative pro-Americanism. We have reason to doubt this, as education and literacy rates are low in Africa. Media penetration is also low, especially with respect to TV and Internet (Gebremichael & Jackson, 2006; Norris, 2004). Africans living in remote areas that are not plugged into the world economy may have little interest in U.S. policies. Given this uncertainty about relative levels of sophistication, we test the following hypothesis about relative levels of the explanatory factor in question:

Hypothesis 1c: Political sophistication is higher in Africa than in other developing countries.

Personal Contact with the United States

A second hypothesis, developed largely in the European (Chiozza, 2007; 2009) and Latin American (Baker & Cupery, 2013) contexts suggests that contact with individuals in the U.S. leads to more favorable attitudes toward the country. In particular, scholars have argued that having friends and relatives living in the U.S. (Chiozza, 2007) or remittances coming from the U.S. (Baker & Cupery, 2013) is related to U.S. favorability. This leads us to the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2a: Personal contact with the United States is positively associated with pro-American attitudes in the developing world.

If *Hypothesis 2a* is true, there are two possible explanations for Africans' relative pro-Americanism. If the American image suffers from lack of personal contact in much of the developing world, it is possible that personal contact with the U.S. does not have the same effect on attitudes toward America in Africa.

Hypothesis 2b: Personal contact with the United States is related differently to favorability toward the United States in Africa than in other developing countries.

Alternatively, contact with the U.S. could explain Africa's relative pro-Americanism if Africans have more personal contact with the U.S. than do others in the developing world. A priori, there are reasons to doubt this explanation. Africans may have fewer opportunities to establish person-to-person contacts with the U.S. than people from other regions with greater linkages (most notably Latin America). Thus, we test the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2c: Direct contact with the United States is higher in Africa than in other developing countries.

Support for Policies of International Engagement

Previous research suggests that appreciation for U.S. foreign policies affects attitudes about the U.S. Evidence from Latin America (Baker & Cupery, 2013) and Asia (Chiozza & Choi, 2012) indicates that attitudes toward U.S. businesses and trade are often related to pro-Americanism. Thus we posit the following:

Hypothesis 3a: Support for policies of international engagement is positively associated with pro-American attitudes in the developing world.

There are two ways in which this factor could explain Africans' pro-Americanism. Africans have been largely been left out of economic globalization, and American businesses are relatively less active in Africa than they are in Latin America and Asia. Thus, attitudes toward international engagement may be less strongly, or even negatively, associated with attitudes toward the U.S. in Africa, in contrast to other developing regions.

Hypothesis 3b: Support for policies of international engagement is related differently to favorability toward the United States in Africa than in other developing countries.

The alternative is that positive attitudes toward international engagement may be more prevalent in Africa. As Africans lack experience with economic globalization, we may expect them to be more likely to support policies that increase international trade and investment—seen as sources of employment and business opportunity—than are individuals in other areas of the developing world. In particular, the relative lack of economic engagement may mean that Africans have not been exposed to the negative environmental and social effects of industrialization at the hands of foreign entities (Van de Walle, 2001) and, thus, may be more favorably disposed to general ideas of globalization and internationalism than individuals elsewhere. Moreover, we posit that many Africans see U.S. involvement as a source of largesse, as the most visible signs of U.S. presence on the continent tend to be things like branded food aid or insignias on development projects.[7] As such, aid and development projects represent a form of "institution-to-person" contact.[8] It remains a matter of academic and policy debate whether foreign aid helps or hinders African economies, governments, and populations in the long run. Nonetheless, the connection between U.S. assistance and its negative consequences is typically obscure while the benefits

[7]We are not aware of hard evidence on the relative visibility of aid and development projects across regions. These claims are based on the high level of donor-funded public good provision relative to domestic provisioning in Africa and on U.S. policies of explicitly branding U.S. assistance (USAID, n.d).

[8]The "institution-to-person" contact discussed here is distinct from the "person-to-person" contact discussed previously. The vast majority of beneficiaries of development aid and projects do not have personal contacts with Americans. Most projects are implemented by Africans, especially with respect to field workers.

are more tangible for those living in Africa. The U.S. is not a particularly generous donor given its enormous wealth and resources—something that may be more evident to those living in regions where U.S. aid is more criticized—but it has consistently been the biggest donor in the region. We thus hypothesize that the following:

Hypothesis 3c: Support for policies of international engagement is higher in Africa than in other developing countries.

Admiration of the Domestic U.S. Model

Finally, our fourth set of hypotheses is based on the extensive soft-power literature. As noted by Isernia (2007) and Chiozza (2007) in Europe and Chiozza and Choi (2012) in Asia, among others (Chicago Council on Global Affairs, 2008), individuals around the world find many aspects of the U.S. domestic model, such as its democratic political system and its wealth-producing capitalist system, attractive. Images of wealth and individual freedom are prominent in U.S. cultural products exported abroad. Individuals may develop images of the U.S. from American television shows, movies, music, and new media content, in addition to any information they receive from news programs.[9] Consistent with this thesis, Elasmar (2007) shows that exposure to U.S. television programming was associated with more positive evaluations of the U.S. in Senegal. If imported news and entertainment media promote a specific model of the U.S. political and economic system, then we would expect that attitudes about this model would affect attitudes about the U.S. Thus, we posit the following:

Hypothesis 4a: Admiration of the domestic U.S. model is positively associated with pro-American attitudes in the developing world.

Given the underdevelopment of many African states relative to the U.S. and other developing countries, it is possible that Africans' admiration for the U.S. may play a different role in their attitudes toward America (Simmons, Dobbin, & Garrett, 2006). It may be that it is a stronger predictor of pro-Americanism, or has a significantly greater effect thereon.

Hypothesis 4b: Admiration of the domestic U.S. model is related differently to favorability toward the U.S. in Africa than in other developing countries.

It is also possible that Africans display greater admiration for the U.S. domestic model than their peers. This is consistent with recent evidence from

[9]Entertainment media may increase favorability toward the U.S. States through other mechanisms, such as if positive emotional reactions to U.S. entertainment products or personalities are transferred onto positive feelings about the U.S., or if U.S. entertainment media convey a societal or cultural image that is appreciated.

the Republic of Korea; Chiozza and Choi (2012) argue that there, democratic values may not help to create positive standing for the U.S. because "they are taken for granted in the rich fabric of Korean society" (2012, p. 278). In Africa, experience with statist, authoritarian, and weak governments may lead to even greater support for the U.S. domestic model. In short, we hypothesize that for Africans, the U.S. model inspires admiration, and thus the following:

Hypothesis 4c: Admiration of the domestic U.S. model is higher in Africa than in other developing countries.

It is important to note that several (or even all) of these hypothesized influences may be at work simultaneously. Katzenstein and Keohane (2007) argue that views of America are multidimensional and often inconsistent because America itself is "polyvalent." America symbolizes many different values and meanings to different people at different times. The various dimensions of the U.S. can elicit both disapproval and approval, and these opinions can coexist within a population, and even within a single individual.

Methodological Overview

We test the four sets of hypotheses outlined above in three stages. First, we test the hypothesized relationships between our independent and dependent variables described in *Hypothesis 1a*, *Hypothesis 2a*, *Hypothesis 3a*, and *Hypothesis 4a* by using a multilevel model combing all developing countries. Second, we determine whether the relationships between our independent variables and our dependent variables differ in Africa compared with other developing countries, testing hypotheses *Hypothesis 1b*, *Hypothesis 2b*, *Hypothesis 3b*, and *Hypothesis 4b* with a multilevel model that distinguishes between Africans and non-Africans. Finally, we determine whether the aggregate levels of our independent variables are higher in Africa than they are in other developing countries, testing *Hypothesis 1c*, *Hypothesis 2c*, *Hypothesis 3c*, and *Hypothesis 4c*. For all three stages, we employ data from the 29 developing countries surveyed in the 2007 Pew GAP Survey (Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, 2007).

Dependent and Independent Variables

Our dependent variable, *Pro-American Attitudes*, is based on the sum of two questions: (1) "Please tell me if you have a very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable or very unfavorable opinion of the United States"; and (2) "please tell me if you have a very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable or very unfavorable opinion of Americans." To provide a more robust measure of pro-American orientation (Nisbet, 2008), we combine the two into a 7-point index ($r = .705$), providing a scale of general orientation

toward the U.S. Respondents who did not offer an opinion to either question were dropped from the analysis.

The individual-level independent variables that we select are similar to those used in previous work exploring anti-Americanism (Chiozza, 2007), but with one important difference: we focus primarily on questions that do not mention the U.S. or Americans.[10] Questions that mention the U.S. or Americans may prime respondents to think about the outcome under investigation when answering the survey questions and, thus, hinder our ability to assess how knowledge and attitudes about the world in general affect attitudes about the U.S. specifically. We allow two exceptions to this rule: for measures of information about and contact with the U.S., we expected that attitude priming was less of an issue and we included questions that mention the U.S. While we favor measures that do not mention the U.S. on theoretical grounds, analyses using Pew's U.S.-specific questions throughout yielded broadly similar results to those obtained using the non-U.S.-specific questions.[11]

The survey did not include questions gauging political sophistication. Therefore, to evaluate the hypotheses about how political sophistication affects opinion of the U.S., we used three proxies: a general measure of the number of years of schooling an individual has had (*education*), an index[12] measuring respondents' ability to answer a battery of questions about world leaders, suggesting international knowledge (*informed*), and an indicator variable for whether individuals are attentive to international affairs (*follow world news*). We test how personal contact with the U.S. affects opinions of the country using two measures: whether individuals have ongoing personal ties to people in the U.S. (*links to United States*), and whether the respondent receives remittances from relatives in the U.S. (*remittances*). To test hypotheses related to how attitudes toward policies of international engagement affect opinion of America, we use questions asking about the influence of trade and foreign companies (*pro-trade* and *pro-foreign companies*), as well as whether individuals believe that wealthier nations are doing enough to help poor nations (*enough aid*) and the degree to which they believe international nongovernmental organizations, key providers of foreign assistance, have a positive influence (*NGOs good*). Finally, hypotheses related to approval of the U.S. model are measured by the degree to which respondents agree that most people are better off in a free market economy

[10]As a result of this choice, we explore all of the dimensions of anti-Americanism explored by Chiozza (2007), with the exception of the U.S.-led war on terror (which was less salient in 2007 than in 2002, when he conducted his analyses) and questions that explicitly focus on U.S. culture and science, which we cannot explore without priming the U.S. We are also unable to evaluate whether exposure to imported cultural products enhances the association between wealth and freedom and pro-American sentiments while still adhering to our measurement strategy to avoid U.S.-specific independent variables.

[11]The relationships between our key predictor variables were similarly significant and all in the same direction as their non-U.S.-specific counterparts; these results are included in Supplementary Appendix 7 as a robustness check.

[12]The Cronbach's alpha for the index is 0.861.

(*pro-market*) and two different measures of support for democracy: whether respondents prefer democracy to a leader with a strong hand (*relative democrat*), and an index[13] of the importance assigned to six components of liberal democracy (*freedom is important*).

In addition to these individual-level predictors, we included various control variables, namely, age, sex, rural residence status, income, and a measure of whether the respondent is a Muslim. We also included a variable to control for positivity bias (*politeness norm*), derived from reported attitudes about China, Iran, Russia, and Japan. Based on recent studies (Baker & Cupery, 2013; Blaydes & Linzer, 2012) indicating that macro-level factors affect anti-Americanism, we included several country-level controls. Specifically, we included measures of bilateral trade with the West (drawn from the Correlates of War, 2007 database), inflows of American aid as per USAID statistics, and Freedom House scores in 2007, hypothesizing that these may affect national variation in attitudes toward the U.S. as they are linked to wealth, global connectedness, and democratic attitudes.

Modeling Strategy

As noted, the first part of our analysis rests on a multilevel model examining the relationships between our predictors and our dependent variable. We began by determining that a multilevel model is indeed the appropriate way to model these data, and by assigning the individual-level variables outlined above as level-1 variables, with our country-level controls as level-2 variables. To facilitate the interpretability of our results, we centered our level-1 variables on their group means; this choice enables us to identify the effect of these variables independent of the effect of our level-2 control variables, and it is further an appropriate choice if cross-level interactions are of interest, as they are for us (Enders & Tofighi, 2007). The level-2 variables were centered on the grand mean. Centering our variables further eases interpretation of our results; they can be understood as the effect for the average individual and country. The data for both African and non-African developing countries were included in this first model; the data are grouped at the country level. As Table 1 shows, there is variation at both the country and individual level that is not explained by the variables that we have included; however, our model explains a significant amount of the variance.[14] Table 1 also includes a column indicating whether the relevant hypotheses were supported.

[13] The Cronbach's alpha for the index is 0.670.

[14] We compared our model with an empty model, that is, a model containing no predictors other than the grouping variable, and found that our model significantly reduced the unexplained variance at both the individual and country levels. We also tested the significance of each of our predictor variables' effect on the unexplained variation at the individual and country level, and found them all to be significant.

Table 1
Regression Analyses of Pro-American Attitudes in Developing World

Variables	All developing countries		Hypotheses summary
	Coefficient	*SE*	
Political sophistication			
Education	0.007	0.010	*Hypothesis 1a* not supported
Informed	−0.027	0.009***	
Follow world news	−0.029	0.004***	
Personal contact			
Links to United States	0.035	0.005***	*Hypothesis 2a* supported
Remittances	0.035	0.009***	
Policies of international engagement			
Pro-trade	0.072	0.008***	*Hypothesis 3a* supported
Pro-foreign companies	0.094	0.008**	
Enough aid	0.069	0.005***	
NGOs good	0.068	0.009***	
Domestic U.S. model			
Pro-market	0.079	0.006***	*Hypothesis 4a* partially supported
Relative democrat	0.006	0.004	
Freedom important	0.020	0.014	
Controls			
Age	−0.108	0.015***	
Male	−0.014	0.004***	
Rural residence	0.004	0.005	
Wealth	0.020	0.008**	
Muslim	−0.198	0.007***	
Politeness norm	0.131	0.009***	
Country level			
Total trade	0.000	0.000	
Total aid	0.000	0.000	
Freedom house	−0.008	0.009	
Constant	0.526	0.031***	
Other			
Number of observations	18,102		
Countries	30		
Individual-level variance	0.069	0.001	
Country-level variance	0.018	0.005	

**$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$

Our second model, summarized in Table 2, includes the same data as the first.[15] However, in addition, we created a dummy variable with a value of 1 for African countries, and 0 for non-African countries, and then created cross-level interactions between this dummy and each of our level-1 predictors and

[15]As was the case with the previous model, this model was found to perform better than an empty model, and each of the included variables was found to significantly reduce the unexplained variance at both levels.

Table 2
Regression Analyses of Pro-American Attitudes in Developing World by Region

Variables	Africa		Other developing countries		Significance of difference in effects between Africa and other	Hypotheses summary
	Coefficient	*SE*	Coefficient	*SE*		
Political sophistication						
Education	0.025	0.018	−0.003	0.012		*Hypothesis 1b* not supported
Informed	−0.026	0.015	−0.028	0.010**		
Follow world news	−0.027	0.007***	−0.030	0.005***		
Personal contact						
Links to United States	0.019	0.009*	0.044	0.007***	*	*Hypothesis 2b* not supported
Remittances	0.047	0.014***	0.033	0.011**		
Policies of international engagement						
Pro-trade	0.081	0.015***	0.065	0.010***		*Hypothesis 3b* not supported
Pro-foreign companies	0.058	0.014***	0.114	0.010***	***	
Enough aid	0.064	0.007***	0.073	0.006***		
NGOs good	0.048	0.017**	0.077	0.010***		
Domestic U.S. model						
Pro-market	0.041	0.011***	0.100	0.008***	***	*Hypothesis 4b* not supported
Relative democrat	0.009	0.008	0.004	0.005		
Freedom important	0.074	0.026**	−0.004	0.017	*	
Controls						
Age	−0.152	0.029***	−0.085	0.018***	*	
Male	−0.026	0.007***	−0.007	0.005	*	
Rural residence	−0.006	0.008	0.010	0.006		
Wealth	−0.007	0.014	0.032	0.009***	*	

(continued)

Table 2
Continued

Variables	Africa		Other developing countries		Significance of difference in effects between Africa and other	Hypotheses summary
	Coefficient	*SE*	Coefficient	*SE*		
Muslim	−0.203	0.01***	−0.188	0.010***		
Politeness norm	0.077	0.014***	0.173	0.012***	***	
Country level						
African/non-African	0.214	0.037***				
Total trade	0.000	0.000				
Total aid	0.000	0.000				
Freedom house	−0.007	0.007				
Constant	0.468	0.024***				
Other						
Number of observations	18,102					
Countries	30					
Individual-level variance	0.068	0.001				
Country-level variance	0.008	0.002				

*$p < .05$, **$p < .01$, ***$p < .001$.

controls. This model thus captures whether there are any significant differences between how our predictors affect attitudes in African versus non-African countries, as well as providing estimates of the coefficients for each level-1 variable for both African and non-African countries. To ease reader interpretation of the results of this model, we calculated the estimated level-1 effects for African countries based on the combination of the coefficients for the main effects and interaction effects. We display the results of these calculations, in Column 1 of Table 2; we include these calculations instead of displaying the estimated coefficients for the interaction terms. Column 2 presents the coefficients for non-African countries, and Column 3 indicates whether the coefficient for the interaction was significant (in other words, whether there was a significant difference between the effect of each level-1 variable on African and non-African countries). The coefficient for the level-2 dummy for Africa is included with our other country-level variables. In both multilevel models, the predictor variables were entered as fixed effects. This facilitates the interpretation of our results and is appropriate, as our primary interest is not in the country-to-country variance in pro-Americanism, but rather in how individual-level variables affect attitudes toward the U.S. and how these interact with region.

Finally, we compared the mean levels of our explanatory variables between countries located in Africa and developing countries located in other regions. Table 3 displays the weight-adjusted (uncentered) means for the observations included in the analysis, rescaled from 0 to 1 to facilitate comparisons. Column 1 provides the means for African respondents. Column 2 displays the combined means for respondents in other developing countries. Column 3 represents the difference between Africa and other regions. All the differences are statistically significant at the $p < .001$ level. A positive number indicates that the mean level for Africa exceeds the mean for other regions.

Insights on Hypotheses

Predictors of Pro-Americanism in Developing Countries

The first set of hypotheses, *Hypothesis 1a*, *Hypothesis 2a*, *Hypothesis 3a*, and *Hypothesis 4a*, posited particular relationships between our predictor variables and attitudes toward the U.S. in the developing world. Support for these hypotheses was mixed. While we hypothesized that political sophistication would be positively associated with pro-American attitudes (*Hypothesis 1a*), as you can see in Table 1, this hypothesis was not supported. *Education* was not significantly associated with pro-Americanism, while both *informed* and *follow world news* were significantly and negatively associated with pro-Americanism—the more politically sophisticated the individual, the less likely he or she is to be pro-America. This is unexpected given the

Table 3
Comparison of Mean Values in Developing World

Variables	Africa Mean	Other Mean	Difference in Means	*Hypotheses* Summary
Political sophistication				
Education	0.501	0.575	−0.074	*Hypothesis 1c* supported
Informed	0.854	0.845	0.009	
Follow world news	0.614	0.536	0.078	
Personal contact				
Links to United States	0.258	0.184	0.074	*Hypothesis 2c* supported
Remittances	0.153	0.084	0.069	
Policies of international engagement				
Pro-trade	0.782	0.705	0.077	*Hypothesis 3c* supported
Pro-foreign companies	0.693	0.594	0.099	
Enough aid	0.366	0.207	0.159	
NGOs good	0.820	0.683	0.137	
Domestic U.S. model				
Pro-market	0.666	0.592	0.074	*Hypothesis 4c* supported
Relative democrat	0.685	0.616	0.069	
Freedom important	0.840	0.806	0.034	
Controls				
Age	0.345	0.374	−0.029	
Male	0.528	0.527	0.001	
Rural residence	0.513	0.281	0.232	
Wealth	0.433	0.582	−0.149	
Muslim	0.332	0.410	−0.078	
Politeness norm	0.135	0.100	0.035	
Country level				
Total trade (m)	6,469	36,731	−30,262	
Total aid (m)	373	260	113	
Freedom house	7	6.77	0.23	
Constant				
Other				
Number of observations	6,303		12,238	
Countries	10		20	

conventional view among academics and policy-makers, though it is consistent with results for similar measures of sophistication in recent studies (Blaydes & Linzer, 2012; Nisbet & Myers, 2011).

Hypothesis 2a and *Hypothesis 3a* were supported; personal contact with the U.S. and an appreciation of policies of international engagement were both positively and significantly associated with pro-Americanism. Finally, *Hypothesis 4a* received some, though not uniformly, strong support. While *pro–market* was significantly and positively related to pro-Americanism, neither measure of democratic attitudes was statistically significant, although the relationships were in the expected direction.

African Versus Non-African Countries

Table 2 displays the results of our second multilevel model, testing hypotheses *Hypothesis 1b*, *Hypothesis 2b*, *Hypothesis 3b*, and *Hypothesis 4b* as described above. The estimated effects for African and non-African respondents are remarkably similar. The signs of all the significant estimated effects are the same across the two, indicating that to the extent that factors matter, they matter in similar ways in Africa and elsewhere. Furthermore, all of the same factors were predictive with only two exceptions: *Informed* was negatively and significantly related to pro-Americanism in other regions but not in Africa, and *freedom important* was positively and significantly related to pro-Americanism in Africa but not elsewhere. Finally, the magnitude of the effects differs significantly for only 4 of the 12 independent variables of interest; these variables are dispersed across the four hypothesized factors, and the size of these differences are not large. Thus, we conclude that by and large, the same factors have the same effects with similar intensity in the two regions.

Aggregate Levels

These results, combined with the fact that Africans are distinctly more pro-American than their developing world peers, suggest that to explain Africans' relative pro-Americanism, we need to look to relative levels of these factors (*Hypothesis 1c*, *Hypothesis 2c*, *Hypothesis 3c*, and *Hypothesis 4c*) rather than their differential effects.

Table 3 shows that there were significant differences in the mean levels of our key characteristics and attitudes for all of the variables under consideration. On average, Africans scored higher on all the elements that have a positive and significant impact on attitudes about America. They had greater personal contacts with the U.S.,[16] were more favorable toward international policies around aid, free markets, trade, and foreign companies, and held more pro-market and pro-democracy attitudes than their peers in the rest of the developing world. This suggests that Africans' pro-Americanism can be explained, in part, by the fact that Africans score higher than their peers on traits and attitudes that predict pro-Americanism. Even for those four variables that have a slightly smaller substantive impact on pro-Americanism among Africans than among individuals in other developing nations, the fact that Africans have considerably higher endowments of these attributes helps explain their pro-American outlook. There is one exception to the general rule that relative levels of characteristics and attitudes predispose Africans to be

[16]This may be because the non-African developing countries are from Asia, Latin America, the Middle-East, and Eastern Europe. It is likely that Latin Americans have greater levels of personal contact with the United States than Africans, but it is also likely that those in the other regions have more contact with Europe, Australia, and Japan.

more pro-Americanism. Africans are more informed and attentive to international news, two traits that increase anti-Americanism. It would seem that Africans are pro-American *despite* their relative political sophistication.

Control Variables

Our control variables displayed some interesting patterns. Africans are generally younger than their peers in other emerging markets, and youth is associated with more positive attitudes toward the U.S. In addition, the effect of age is greater in magnitude in Africa than elsewhere in the developing world, suggesting that Africa's relative youthfulness is another factor driving pro-Americanism in the region. Sex is a significant driver of attitude toward the U.S. in Africa, but not elsewhere, with African males displaying more negative attitudes toward the U.S. than females. Further, wealth is not a significant predictor of attitude toward America in Africa as it is elsewhere, and wealthy Africans appear to display more negative attitudes toward the U.S. than their less wealthy counterparts, while wealth is positively and significantly associated with attitudes toward the U.S. elsewhere in the developing world. Blaydes and Linzer (2012) argue that in the Islamic world, anti-Americanism is an elite-led phenomenon, with elites manipulating non-elites' anti-Americanism for domestic political ends. This accords with the pattern in our data showing that less-wealthy individuals tend to be more anti-American than wealthy individuals in many developing nations, but does not hold true for Africa. Finally, these results indicate that pro-Americanism is significantly less likely to be the result of a politeness norm in Africa.

Robustness Checks

The key results are robust to several different specifications of the model and estimation strategies (see Supplementary Appendices 6 and 7). First, we conducted the same analysis without the country-level variables and without centering our predictors, using ordinary least squares with fixed effects and standard errors clustered at the country level. Second, we estimated the model excluding countries in the Middle East to verify that that one region was not responsible for the findings from the non-African cases. Third, we estimated the model using variables that specifically mention the U.S. in connection with policy and the U.S. model. In each of these specifications, our main findings are confirmed.[17]

Finally, it is possible that the effects we are finding are spurious, that the predictors we have hypothesized affect pro-Americanism are in fact simply expressions of internationalism, or globalism, which are also associated with positive

[17] *Informed* is the only factor with inconsistent results across specifications.

attitudes about all foreign countries. To verify that this is not the case, we reran our first multilevel model using attitudes toward China, France, the United Kingdom, the European Union, and India (full results are included in Supplementary Appendix 8). We retained the variables related to personal contact because, while these are U.S. specific, they also are an indicator of cosmopolitanism (there are no measures in the survey for contact with other countries). The results of these analyses suggest that the cluster of variables we have examined are not capturing a general pro-global orientation, nor are they capturing a pro-Western orientation (as the results for the EU, France, and the UK suggest), but rather are distinct predictors of pro-Americanism.

Conclusion

What does the available public opinion data tell us about the causes of pro-Americanism within Africa? Personal contacts with individuals in the United States, positive attitudes toward policies of international engagement, and admiration for the American model all generate goodwill. In contrast, greater attention to world affairs drains support for the U.S. Our analysis therefore suggests that pro-Americanism in Africa stems from widespread approval of America's image as a capitalist democracy that engages with international issues, but that exposure to foreign produced news about America's actions may tend to tarnish this image and thus pro-American attitudes.

Why are sentiments about the U.S. higher in Africa than in other developing regions of the world? Pro-Americanism in Africa is *not* the result of unique processes. The individual-level drivers of approval in Africa are similar to those in other parts of the developing world. Existing theories generalize well to Africa when it comes to explaining why some individuals within a given country are more positively disposed toward America than others. Africa is not an outlier with respect to the causes of pro-Americanism, even though overall levels of pro-Americanism are atypically high in Africa.

Instead, the evidence suggests that Africans are more favorable toward the United States because more Africans possess those characteristics and attitudes that encourage pro-American sentiments. As compared with individuals in other regions of the developing world, Africans have more contact with individuals in the U.S., they are more supportive of policies of international engagement, and they are more admiring of the free-market economy and political liberties symbolized by the American model. In short, Africa is better endowed with attributes that are common causes of pro-Americanism than other regions. Only with respect to political sophistication are Africans predisposed to anti-Americanism relative to other regions, and the effect is modest.

So far, research on attitudes about the U.S. has focused primarily on determining which causal variables predict anti-Americanism. Our findings confirm the broad applicability and validity of this research, with the exceptions noted. However, our results also highlight the importance of studying relative endowments of causal variables. Examination of levels and origins of factors that drive satisfaction is an important next step. Another key area for future research is to develop additional predictors of pro-Americanism in Africa. The coefficient for the Africa dummy in our second model was 0.214 ($p < .001$), suggesting that there is something about being African that inclines individuals to like America beyond the variables included in our model. Future theory should attempt to identify these.

One possible explanation for these regional differences may be elite behavior. Where aggregate levels of pro-American predictors are high, as in Africa, citizens will not be receptive to anti-American agitation, but rather predisposed to rally around pro-American messages. Domestic elites may tend to emphasize their support for, and personal connections to, the U.S. to mobilize support. Local media (whether run by the government, politicians, or businesspeople) may also deliver pro-American messages to curry favor with and to attract audiences. As a result, elites in Africa may amplify the positive effect of the individual-level factors that encourage pro-Americanism, just as they amplify negative sentiments where citizens are predisposed to dislike the U.S. (Blaydes & Linzer, 2012). While most citizens are exposed to positive cues in the domestic sphere, such as in the U.S. television programming mentioned by Elasmar (2007), the politically sophisticated are alone are exposed to hard international news that is more critical of the U.S.

So what are the potential effects of the abundance of popular support for the U.S. within Africa? Our contention is that pro-Americanism among the mass public enhances U.S. soft power in the region (Lindberg & Nossel, 2005; Nye, 2004). Public opinion may not have a direct effect on government policies (Katzenstein and Keohane 2007), especially in Africa where leaders have little leverage vis-à-vis the U.S., as the governments are often heavily dependent on foreign assistance and face potentially devastating costs for acting against U.S. interests. However, soft power may have economic ramifications, including perceptions of product quality and willingness to buy a product (Amine, Chao, & Arnold, 2005; Insch, 2003; Klein, Ettenson, & Morris, 1998). Public sentiments toward the U.S. would also seem to affect support for U.S. proposals in the United Nations General Assembly (Goldsmith and Horiuchi, 2012; Datta, 2009), as well as the reception U.S. investors receive in Africa and the terms they are able to negotiate. Finally, mass attitudes may also determine the success of U.S. programs aimed at mobilizing African publics for state-building, democratization, development, and anti-terrorism. Increasingly, U.S. agencies are bypassing national governments to work with

nonstate actors and local-level leaders. It is precisely in these arenas that popular opinions matter most.

Notably, pro-Americanism in Africa cannot be taken for granted. Since 2007, Chinese involvement in Africa increased dramatically, and China's influence is now at an all-time high (Brautigam, 2009). Our analysis suggests that the image of the U.S. benefits from trade, foreign companies, and development assistance, and we note that China recently surpassed the U.S. as the continent's largest trade partner. China is also active in creating public works projects (such as the new African Union headquarters) and has publicly pledged >US$20 billion in financing to Africa (Sun, 2013). Chinese projects are often heavily branded and promoted as gifts from the Chinese government, suggesting that China sees the potential for such projects to promote positive attitudes toward China (Brautigam, 2009; Sun, 2013). While the purpose of this article is not to explore opinions of China, we mention these changes as a note of caution. America's good standing in Africa may be challenged if China supplants the U.S. as the most visible source of foreign investment, trade, and aid.

The U.S. does have one important advantage over China with respect to soft power in Africa: its image as a beacon of freedom. Believing that freedom is important contributes to Africans' positive feelings about America. Africans' liberal political values may help the U.S. retain its influence in Africa, even while its market share and prominence declines. Notably, our evidence suggests that the U.S. is valued because it symbolizes liberty for Africans, whereas this is not the case for most individuals elsewhere in the developing world.

Africa, with its favorable opinions on freedom, free markets, aid, and trade, offers a "fertile ground" for American influence. Our results suggest that by emphasizing active policies in Africa with respect to increasing trade, promoting free markets and foreign investment, undertaking visible aid efforts, and fostering personal contacts, the United States can sustain and enhance the positive attitudes Africans have toward America.

Supplementary Data

Supplementary Data are available at *IJPOR* online.

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