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Comparative Ethnic Politics and National Identities: A Systematic Review

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Abstract: Ethnic politics and national identities remained contentious debate in political science and particularly, in comparative politics. While this study has systematically reviewed ethnic politics and national identities in selected African countries of DR Congo, Burundi, Kenya and Rwanda as well as discussing sectarian politics and violence in the Middle East countries, the study is timely given the political transformation of the world today. The study argues that ethnic politics and national identities are shaped by elites in given countries. Political elites will mobilize their constituents and subjects for violence conflicts and hateful national identities crusades while corrupting the country resources. If this is not handled well on time, it can spiral to genocide and ethnic cleansing destroying the states. A great example is the Rwanda genocide. The study deploys case studies, process tracing and comparative method to scholarly argue ethnic politics and national identities, their taxonomies, political salience of divisions, political competition & ethnic mobilization, the economy of ethnicity, corruption & political market place, ethnic politics & cleavages of Middle East countries, DR Congo, Burundi & Kenya and Rwanda genocide. To remedy extreme ethnic politics and violence national identities, accommodation of deep ethnic differences and national identities must be done expeditiously. This accommodation should embrace accountability and rule of law to those elites who triggered violence ethnic politics and sectarianism. The accommodation should include establishing regional autonomies through federalism and above all allowing co-identities along side national identities. The study concludes that the states should forge national consensus for peace, development and prosperity for their people to eschew violence ethnic politics, sectarianism and hateful national identities.

Keywords: ethnicity, politics, identities, conflicts, corruption, cleavages, ethnic mobilization, accommodation, accountability, co-identities.

INTRODUCTION

Ethnic politics and national identity have remained quite critical to the political scientists and particularly, comparative political scientists. While at the global scene, ethnic politics and national identity continued to be debated, they have continued to be contentious. At regional level, ethnic politics and national identity divide the populace as such, no consensus has been reached (Riak, 2023). At the national levels, ethnic politics and national identities have led to conflicts, tensions and ethnic violence. Countries such as Sudan, South Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Burundi and Kenya to mention but a few have been torn by ethnic politics and national identities innuendos. Although some countries have laid foundations of national identities and have been built their states to prosperity, some countries have continued to lag behind (Chol, 2014). South Africa built its national identity on rainbow, referring itself as a country of many colors and as such, a diverse progressive country. Kenya built its national identity on "harambee" a Swahili word for "donation" and gift giving for socio-economic development. Harambee led for the progress being seen today in Kenya. In Tanzania, the national identity was built on ujamaa or vilagilization, referring to the national unity, cohesion and ethnic peace for all the Tanzanians. Besides, Uganda built her own national identity on "for God and my country" referring to the sanctity of all Ugandans in translating the word of God to action. This helps in cementing national unity as well as increasing production for goods and services. For Zambia, it built its national identity on "one Zambia, one Nation" which empathizes the need for genuine unity in a country of over 72 ethnic groups.

With all the above national identities, established, ethnic politics and national identities continued to affect the success of any country and are therefore important to be studied and systematically reviewed. So, what is ethnicity? What is ethnic politics? What is national identity? What is political salience of sectarian divisions? What is the economy of ethnicity, corruption and political market place? What are ethnic cleavages and conflict in DR Congo and Burundi? What is ethnic politics as a conflict by other means, the case of Kenya? What is Rwanda genocide and its consequences? How can we accommodate deep ethnic differences and national identities? These questions shall be attempted in this study. The study is structured as follows: section one discusses the concept of ethnicity. Section two discusses the concept of ethnic politics. Section three analyzes the concept of national identity and the taxonomies. Section four appraises political salience of sectarian divisions, political competition and ethnic mobilization. Section five discusses the economy of ethnicity, corruption and political market place. Section six discusses ethnic

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cleavages and conflict in Democratic Republic of (DR) Congo and Burundi. Section seven analyzes ethnic politics as a conflict by other means, the case of Kenya. Section eight discusses Rwanda genocide and its consequences. Section nine appraises accommodation of deep ethnic differences and national identities. Section ten concludes and section eleven gives recommendations for further research.

1. The Concept of Ethnicity

Ethnicity as a term designates a sense of collective belonging, which could be based on common descent, language, history, culture, race or religion (or some combination of these (Horowitz, 1985). Some would like to separate religion from this list, letting ethnicity incorporate the other attributes. Ethnicity is a complex concept to be defined. Many scholars continued to contest the definition of ethnicity. For example, a neoliberal scholar, Philips Mair who is a social scientist views an ethnicity as a group of people sharing the same historical experience, having the same culture, speaking the same language and sharing the belief about the future together (Mair, 1992). Other neoliberal theorists such as Zolberg (1998) and Young (1999) view ethnicity as an inevitable consequence of modernization, economic development and political development, especially in Africa. The neoliberal theorists believe that an ethnic group has as its members, people who share a conviction that they have common interests and fate, and they tend to propound a cultural symbolism expressing their cohesiveness. Ethnic groups differ from other groups in their composition because they include persons from every stage of life and social class. It is viewed that the insignia of ethnicity is inescapable. Nelson Kasfir (1976) suggests four ways of recognizing ethnic groups. These are (i) culture; (ii) language; (iii) traditional political organization; and (iv) territoriality. Succinctly, members of an ethnic group must share a common culture, language and custom and occupy the same territory (Kasfir, 1976).

According to Okwudiba Nnoli (2007), ethnicity is a very complex phenomenon. It is always closely associated with political, economic, social, religious and other social views and interactions (Nnoli, 2007). Hence, ethnicity finds expression in political domination, economic exploitation, psychological oppression and class manipulation. Perhaps the commonest explanation of what an ethnic group means is that which says that it comprises of people with a common ancestry. In other words, this refers to people who can trace their pedigrees to one ancestor. Apparently, most definitions and explanations of the term, by social and political scientists, seem to draw from this perspective. Max Weber (1968) for instance, described the ethnic group as "those human groups that entertain a subjective belief in their common descent" (Kasfir, 1976). The main elements of ethnicity according to Nnoli (2007) include "exclusiveness manifested in inter-group competition, conflict in relation to stiff competition, and the consciousness of being one in relation to others" (Nnoli, 2007).

In addition to these, Mair (1992) identifies three main characteristics of ethnicity:
"One, it is a culturally specific practice and unique set of symbols and beliefs, especially the way in which an ascribed identity is given contemporary construction through socialization and mobilization in cultural and political movements. Two, it is a belief in common origin involving sometimes, the existence or imagination of a common past. Third and finally, it involves a sense of belonging to a group defined in opposition to others" (Mair, 1992).

A critical examination of these three elements on which ethnic identity rests shows an attempt to bridge the gap in literature between those who take ethnicity as a primordial inheritance and those who see it as something that is historically or socially constructed. Indeed, there is an increasing tendency to discard the earliest approaches to the conceptualization of ethnicity. These include approaches which had emphasized ethnicity as primordial (Geertz, 1963) and those that present ethnicity as a handover of the past which modernization, access to the media, western education and urbanization are expected to whittle down in the course of time.

2. The Concept of Ethnic Politics

It is quite perturbing getting to review scholarly definitions of ethnic politics as it has been highly contested by political scientists and political practitioners. However, career politicians seemed to have preferred definitions. Thus, ethnic politics is defined as "politics that's based solely on a tribe and ethnicity and that's doomed to tear a country apart, it's a failure, a failure of imagination" (Obama, 2008). Our theory of ethnic politics and conflict is based on two pillars. First, I rely on institutionalist theories that show how established structures of political legitimacy provide incentives for actors to pursue certain types of

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political strategies. Second, my model follows a configurationally logic. Depending on the configuration of political power, similar political institutions can produce different consequences, while similar consequences can result from different constellations of power. The institutionalist part of the argument specifies the conditions under which political loyalties will align along ethnic cleavages; the configurationally part explains when we expect such ethnic politics to lead to armed violence and how it should return to genuine peace.

2.1. Institutional Incentives for Ethnic Politics

I derive the institutionalist part of the argument from Andreas Wimmer's (2013), theory of nation-state formation and ethnic politics. It states that ethnicity matters for politics, not because of a universal, naturally-given tendency to favour (ethnic) kin over non-kin (as socio-biologists argue), nor because of a primordial attachment of individuals to their identities, nor because it provides lower costs for political organizations (as the political economy tradition maintains) (Wimmer, 2013). Rather, ethnicity matters because the nation-state itself relies on ethno-national principles of political legitimacy: the state is ruled in the name of an ethnically defined people and rulers should therefore care for "their own people" (Wimmer, 2013). As a result, ethnicity and nationhood have much greater political significance in nation-states than they do in other types of polities such as empires or city-states. Given this institutional environment, political office holders have incentives to gain legitimacy by favoring co-ethnics or co-nationals over others when distributing public goods and government jobs; judiciary bodies have incentives to apply the principle of equality before the law more for co-ethnics or co-nationals than for others; the police have incentives to provide protection for co-ethnics or co-nationals, but less for others; and so forth. The expectation of ethnic preference and discrimination works the other way too. Voters prefer parties led by co-ethnics or co-nationals, delinquents hope for co-ethnic or co-national judges, and citizens prefer to be policed by co-ethnics or co-nationals. Not all modern nation-states are characterized by such ethnic and national favouritism.

As it is common referenced, this favouritism is more likely in poor states that lack the resources for universal inclusion, as well as in states with weak civil society institutions where other, nonethnic channels for aggregating political interests and rewarding political loyalty are scarce (Wimmer, 2013). In such states, political leaders and followers orient their strategies toward avoiding dominance by ethnic or national. Others strive for the self-determination and self-rule that are at the core of nationalist ideology. This motive is at the same time material, political, and symbolic: "adequate" or "just" representation in a central government offers material advantages, such as access to government jobs and services; legal advantages such as the benefits of full citizenship rights, a fair trial, and protection from arbitrary violence; and symbolic advantages such as the prestige of belonging to a "state-owning" ethnic or national group. The aggregate consequence of these strategic orientations is a struggle over control of the state between ethnically defined actors or ethnic politics for short (Rothschild, 1981). Such ethnic politics may lead to a process of political mobilization, counter-mobilization, and escalation. Political leaders appeal to the ideal of self-rule and fair representation enshrined in the nation-state model to mobilize their followers against the threat of ethnic dominance by others. These demands may stir the fear of ethnic dominance among other political elites and their ethnic constituencies and result in a process of counter-mobilization. The conflicting demands may finally spiral into armed confrontation. The argument of institutional incentives does not explicitly address the logic of this escalation process but seeks to specify the ethno-political configurations that make it more likely.

3. The Concept of National Identity and the Taxonomies

The ambiguity and controversy surrounding the discourse of the concepts of identity in social sciences is indeed baffling (Brubaker, 2002, Brubaker & Cooper, 2000; Voros, 2006). The scholarship on identity is therefore highly divided. Broadly, three schools of thought or models are discerned. These are primordialism (scholars associated with this school are Edward Shilts, Clifford Geertz, Piere Van De Berghe), Constructivism (Ernest, Gellner, Benedict Anderson, Eric Hobsbawm, John Breuilly, Paul R. Brass) and Ethno-symbolism (Smith, 2009).

Further as derivatives, two main conceptual and theoretical models dealing with national identity are also duly identified. These are the civic and the ethnic. The schools/theories are further identified as modernist/constructivist/instrumentalist, on the one hand and primordialist/essentialist/intrinsic, on

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the other (Brubaker, 2006). The modernist/ constructivist/instrumentalist cluster has for several decades now, particularly in sociology, political science and political anthropology, assumed the dominant model of identity analysis and theorizing (Voros, 2006).

Firstly, according to the ethnicist or primordialist model (henceforth primordialist), the set of the dichotomy, identity is perceived as a repository of collective memory, a manifestation of imagination that could assume various contours. The collective memory, in turn, is presumably spawned by constitutive variables such as descent, blood ties, linguistic affiliation, homestead, kinship, etc. The primordialist model distinguishes itself through reposting identity at the ethnic social store whose contours invariably may be real or imaginary common descent, shared speech, common cultural traits, defining specific or unique commonality (Connor, 1994).

Identity has increasingly come to be conflated (Bereketeab, 2012). While driven by the politics of identity, identity itself is heading toward fragmentation, seeking to lift up the constituent units as separate and independent, the result of which is a proliferation of identities. Will Kymlicka (1995), argues that the most liberal theorists have recognized identity as an expression of one's membership in a political community (Kymlicka, 1995). In this conceptualization of membership, an individual could be a member of (a) political community (national), and (b) of a cultural community (sub-national). Although membership in one of these social categories is by choice, the individual has rights and duties that are inherent characters of identity.

Secondly, the civic or modernist model, on the other hand, locates identity at the civic repository premises whose contours are invariably identified as territoriality, residence under common secular law, loyalty to and identifying with common national symbols (flag, national holidays, buildings, etc), national institutions such as parliament, judiciary, loyalty to an overarching state (Anderson, 1991). The civic/modernist model, broadly understood as characterizing modern identity, is therefore related to the modern state, that is, allegiance to the state.

The third school of thought or model, ethno-symbolism, rejects the premises of both primordialism and constructivism and concludes that there is a continuation between the two. It argues that primordial identity is transformed into the modern one. Unlike the primordialist that claims that identity is perennial, or the modernist who claims it is a modern construction, the ethno-symbolist traces continuity and change (Armstrong, 2017; Hutchinson, 2000).

Recently another school/model that rejects constructivism, or rather deconstructs it, has emerged, notably the post-modernist. While constructivism in its analysis of identity pursues methodological nationalism, deconstructivism pursues methodological cosmopolitanism. In the case of the former, the unit of analysis is the collective (nation), whereas in the case of the latter, the unit of analysis is the individual (Bereketeab, 2012). For the post-modernist, identity is cosmopolitan, transnational, cross-cultural, trans-territorial, global etc (Clark, 2009).

Whereas identity for the primordialist is given, natural, constant and incontestable, for the modernist, it is malleable, constructed, conditional, contestable, narrative-based and susceptible to cultural and environmental impacts (Lustick, *et al*., 2004). For the post-modernist school, identity is deconstructed, de-narrated, formless and shapeless, situational and inter-subjective; indeed, it only exists in the interlocutory space of individuals.

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Table 1: cconcepts and theories of identity

Variable	Primordial Communalism	Ethno-Symbolism	Modernism Constructivism	Post-Modernism Deconstructivism
Identity	Ethnic Community Sub-nationalism	Ethnie	Civic Collective Nation	Civic Individual Post-Nation State
Methodology	Methodological Communalism		Methodological Nationalism National	Methodological Cosmopolitanism Regional
Ethnic Politics				
Co-identities				

Source: Author

4. Political Salience of Sectarian Divisions, Political Competition and Ethnic Mobilization

Sectarianism is a rule by religious fanatics, pitting one religion against another (Sham, 2016). In many countries, particularly, in a state where religion is a very sharp cleavage, sectarian divisions are quite strong. The majority of Middle East countries, particularly, Muslim-dominated are sectarian states. They include Iraq, Iran, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Kuwait, Bahrian, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Syria etc. In Sub-Saharan Africa, we have Nigeria, Central Africa Republic (CAR), Sudan, and Somalia etc. However, in this study, the focus shall be mostly on Middle East countries due to the salience of sectarian politics and divisions.

4.1. Political Competition and Ethnic Mobilization

There are at least three schools of thought in the social sciences that explain ethno-nationalist mobilization and these are explained as follows: primordialism, instrumentalism and constructivism. They are useful in explaining the rise of religious sectarianism and political mobilization in Muslim societies given that most mainstream forms of politicized Islam are religious forms of nationalism whose actors have accepted the borders of the post-colonial state and are fundamentally concerned with the internal national politics of their home countries. Moreover, Muslim sectarian discourses of power and their underlying paradigm of politics are "ethnic" in the sense they are concerned with the politics of group identity where the group in question self-identifies with religion as a key marker of its identity. Furthermore, as Harvard scholar, David Little (2017) argued "there are several other ways in which ethnicity and religion are connected" (Little, 2017). In his survey and analysis of nationalist conflicts, he observes that there "is a widespread tendency of ethnic groups in all cultural contexts to authenticate themselves religiously that lends plausibility to the term, 'ethnoreligious" (Little, 2017). He goes on to note that in particular cases "it is artificial to try to distinguish too sharply between religious and non-religious ethnic attributes" (Ibid). In those instances where religious identity becomes ethnically salient, language, customs, even genealogy, take on strongly religious overtones" (Ibid). This suggests that functionally speaking, ethnicity and religion are deeply intertwined and often overlap and mutually reinforce each other. Aspects of the Sunni-Shi'a divide, particularly between Iranian Shi'a and Arab Sunnis, support this view thus giving credence to the utilization of the social scientific literature on nationalism and ethnic politics in assessing religious sectarianism and conflict in Muslim societies today. Apart from Muslims in Middle East, the rise of ethnoreligious tensions has also occurred in other religious societies. This has been seen with a rise of religious divisions and tensions in Jonglei state fitting Bishop Moses Anur Ayom and Ruben Akurdit Ngong of Bor Diocese over the contest of Jonglei Internal Province.

Returning to the three schools of thought on what we can now call "ethno-religious," the first school, primordialism views ethnicity as a shared sense of group identity that is natural and deeply embedded in social relations and human psychology. For primordialists, ethnicity is based on a set of intangible elements rooted in biology, history and tradition that tie an individual to a larger collective. Ethnic mobilization is tied to emotional and often irrational notions of group solidarity and support (Smith, 2009). In societies, where other forms of social solidarity around gender, labour or class are weak, ethnoreligious mobilization is often an integral part of political life. One of the major criticisms leveled at primordialism is that it does not explicate the link between identity and

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conflict. While primordialism has utility in identifying where ethnic ties are prevalent, it does not tell us how it can be a factor in mobilizing identity during times of conflict. The existence of multiple identities among social actors suggests that they are often manipulated as part of a mobilization process into cause-and-effect scenarios (Tiemessen, 2005). Instrumentalism, by contrast, suggests that ethnicity is malleable and is defined as part of a political process. The idea of manipulation is thus an inherent part of this school of thought. By emphasizing in-group similarities and out-group differences as well as invoking the fear of assimilation, domination or annihilation, ethno-religious leaders can stimulate identity mobilization (Fearon & Laitin, 1996). For instrumentalists, ethnic mobilization is a byproduct of the personal political projects of leaders and elites who are interested in advancing their political and economic interests via social conflict. Placed within a larger context of conflict escalation, instrumentalism allows us to make cross-comparisons between societies with similar social cleavages.

Constructivism adopts a middle ground between primordialism and instrumentalism. Its proponents argue that ethnicity is not fixed but rather a political construct based on a dense web of social relationships (Anderson, 1993). Like primordialists, constructivists recognize the importance of seemingly immutable features of ethnic/religious identity but they disagree that this inevitably leads to conflict. On the other hand, constructivists share with instrumentalists the view that elites and leadership play a critical role in the mobilization process; disagreement emerges, however, on the degree to which these identities can be manipulated. In brief, constructivists do not believe that ethnicity/religion is inherently conflictual but rather conflict flows from "pathological social systems" and "political opportunity structures" that breed conflict from many social cleavages and which are beyond the control of the individual (Rothschild, 1981).

4.2. Middle East Context and Genesis of Sectarian Divisions

While most Muslim-majority, societies are Sunni, constituting about 90 percent of the total global Muslim population, Iran, Iraq, Azerbaijan and Bahrain are Shi'a-majority societies. Significant Shi'a populations also live in Lebanon, Afghanistan, Kuwait, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and Syria. Critically, what these societies share in common is that most of their political systems are decidedly non-democratic and various forms of authoritarianism dominate the political landscape. It is this overarching fact that determines the ebb and flow of political life and influences the relationship between sects, the rise of sectarianism and the behaviour of political and religious leaders. Authoritarian states in the Muslim world have several distinguishing features which influence sectarian relations. They suffer from a crisis of legitimacy and as a result they closely monitor and attempt to control civil society by limiting access to information and the freedom of association of their citizens. Joel Migdal (1988)'s concept of a "weak state" best describes these regimes (Migdal, 1988). In his formulation, based on an innovative model of state-society relations, "weak states" suffer from limited power and capacity to exert social control. They often cannot and do not control sections of the country both within urban and rural areas, over which they claim sovereignty. Moreover, they confront highly complex societies made up of a "mélange of social organizations" such as ethnic and religious groups, villages, landlords, clans, and various economic interest groups which limit the state's reach into society and compromise its autonomy. Dispersed domination, the state (any other social force) managed to achieve its full autonomy (Ibid). While the state is too weak to dominate society, it is often strong enough to manipulate and effectively respond to crises that threaten national security and regime survival (Nasr, 2000).

In weak states, politics revolves around strategies of survival. state leaders and political elites are fundamentally concerned with both their staying on power and staying in power. Thwarting rivals who might threaten them both from within society and among various state organizations is a key political obsession that drives and informs political decisions. A common tactic to preserve and perpetuate political rule in a weak state is to manipulate social and political cleavages via a divide-and rule-strategy. This gives ruling elites greater room to manoeuvre in the short term but often at the cost of social cohesion in the long term. This dominant feature of the politics of weak states also suggests why "state actors are principal agents in identity mobilization and conflict in culturally plural societies, the manner in which politics of identity unfolds in a weak state is a product of the dialectic of state-society relations" (Nasr, 2000). Weak states, therefore, are more prone to sectarianism given that manipulating cleavages of identity is a dominant feature of their

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politics or as David Little has observed in his analysis of religion, nationalism and intolerance, "authoritarian states appear to draw life from ethnic or religious intolerance as a way of justifying the degree of violence required to maintain (and perpetuate) power" (Little, 2017).

During the 1960s and 1970s, in several Muslim countries, political opposition to the ruling regimes was in the form of various socialist, communist and left-wing political formations. In an attempt to pacify these oppositional currents, Islamic political groups were allowed greater freedom of movement and association in the hope that they would challenge the popularity of these secular oppositional groups thus immunizing the state from criticism and scrutiny. The most dramatic case of this was in Egypt when Anwar Sadat released scores of Muslim Brotherhood members from jail and allowed exile leaders to return home. This was a watershed period in the history of Egypt. Similarly, in an attempt to enhance the capacity of the Pakistani state and solidify political control, General Muhammad Zia Ul-Haqq launched an islamization program in the late 1970s, which despite its pretensions to Islamic universalism was in essence an attempt at the sunnification of political and social life of Pakistan. This was therefore viewed as a threat by religious minorities in Pakistan, the Shi'a community in particular, who considered these policies detrimental to their socio-political interests. The severe rupture in sectarian relations in Pakistan that soon followed was significantly shaped by this development but as Vali Nasr has demonstrated it was also deeply influenced by regional and international variables as well (Nasr, 2000).

4.3. Ethnicity, Social Class and Contentious Politics

Social class is defined through both structural and processual approaches, whereby the former interprets class as a matrix of fixed categories in which individuals move up or down a continuum while the latter interprets class as group identities shaped by common, shared experiences (Wright & Shin, 1988). Structural approaches to class analysis typically measure social class through indicators of socioeconomic status such as income, occupation, and education. Marx Weber (1947) categorized classes as working class, lower middle class, intelligentsia, and upper class (Weber, 1947). Similar to Weber, the stratification of classes demonstrated through Warner's class model (1949) divides classes into upper, middle, and lower, with subdivisions in each (upper-upper class, lower upper class, upper-middle class, lower-middle class, upper-lower class, lower-lower class) (Warner, 1949). Newer variations of Warner's model have since been produced by sociologists such as Gilbert (2002) and Thompson and Hickey (2005), and although the variations use different labels, the six hierarchical levels usually remain intact (Ibid). In comparison, processual approaches to class analysis explore how individuals develop, interpret, and display class identities.

While processual approaches have tremendous value in class analysis, structural approaches are more appropriate to examine mobility. Mobility is broadly defined as the opportunity for one generation to increase relative earnings above the previous generation (Thompson and Hickey, 2005). The degree of mobility is often influenced by the opportunities available from one generation to the next. Advances in opportunity can be achieved through structural mobility, circulation mobility and ethnic favors. Nathan Bok (1996) defines structural mobility as the product of economic growth, which involves an increase in the total supply of opportunities (Bok, 1996). In comparison, circulation mobility is defined as a matter of how fairly society distributes the opportunities that already exist (Ibid).

Ethnicity plays a critical role in social class formations and mobility. Leaders in power would tend to favour members of their ethnic groups in resources and power allocations. This is out of fear that members of their ethnicity would help them to stay in power forever. Leaning toward ethnic extraction is a common belief of leaders in Sub-Saharan Africa (Chol, 2021). This always affects social class mobility given it is not totally based on meritocracy. Efforts to eschew ethnicity in social formation and class mobility have not achieved much in Sub-Saharan Africa. It is Rwanda that has constitutionally endeavored to shun away ethnicity consideration and favors in social, economic and political power and resources allocation in the government. Rwanda has indeed promoted meritocracy in the government. Ethnicity favouritism is a taboo and it is discouraged by Rwandan constitution.

On the other hand, contentious politics is the use of disruptive techniques to make a political point, or to change government policy. Examples of such techniques are actions that disturb the normal activities of societies such as riots, general strike

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actions, demonstrations, terrorisms, civil disobedience, and even revolution or social movement which often engage in contentious politics. Historical sociologist Charles Tilly (2008) defines contentious politics as "interactions in which actors make claims bearing on someone else's interest, in which governments appear either as targets, initiators of claims, or third parties" (Tilly, 2008).

Contentious politics centers on consequential collective claims: calls for action on the part of some object that would, if realized, affect that object's interests. Claims range from decorous collective expressions of support to devastating attacks. The inclusion of claims in the definition rules out inadvertent, indirect, and incremental interactions, however, politically consequential. It rules out, for example, the gradual encroachment of one peasant community on the land of an adjacent peasant community. If, on the other hand, one community makes public, collective demands for some portion of its neighbor's land, the two communities move definitively into the zone of contentious politics (McAdam, *et al*., 2007). Governments figure in all contentious politics, although frequently as third parties rather than initiators or objects of claims. But contention in adjacent arenas regularly affects them as well, for example, when street disorders disrupt the delivery of governmental services. In political contention, most forms of contentions are either conventional or confrontational, more rarely, violent. Conventional and confrontational forms of action are most typical of what Charles Tilly call "the social movement repertoire". Large-scale violence always remains a possibility, however faint. Indeed, contentious politics depending on the claim is always affected by ethnicity and deepest ethnic affiliations. Not all citizens in a country would wish to demonstrate against the government for correction of economic, security or elections malpractices. Members of the ethnic group who's the country's leader comes from may not wish to demonstrate or cause riots against their "son or daughter" government. This is due to primordial feeling that "we cannot disrupt our own government" (Tilly, 2008).

4.4. Ethnic Parties and Democratic Stability

Ethnic parties are defined as political parties formed on exclusive particular ethnic outfit (Chol, 2021). They are not mostly based on national ideology but on ethnic card. They exist to champion the interest of their ethnic categories and exclude others and that make such representation central to its strategy of mobilizing voters. Ethnic divisions, according to empirical democratic theory, and common-sense understandings of politics, threaten the survival of democratic institutions (Chandra, 2007). One of the principal mechanisms linking the politicization of ethnic divisions with the destabilization of democracy is the so-called *outbidding effect* (Ibid). According to theories of ethnic outbidding, the politicization of ethnic divisions inevitably gives rise to one or more ethnic parties. The emergence of even a single ethnic party, in turn, "infects" the political system leading to a spiral of extreme bids that destroys competitive politics altogether (Ibid).

5. The Economy of Ethnicity, Corruption and Political Market Place

5.1. Concept of the Economy of Ethnicity

Scholars of ethnic stratification increasingly research the causes and consequences of employment in ethnic economies. Although debate continues on an ethnic economy's definitive characteristics. In its least restrictive sense, the term refers to economic power and wealth owned by members of an ethnic group (Model, 2009). Until quite recently, efforts to identify the conditions that promote the formation of ethnic economies have dominated the scholarly agenda (Bonacich, 1973). Now, however, researchers are turning to the outcomes associated with jobs in the ethnic economy, a highly controversial undertaking, especially with respect to the experiences of its working class.

Edna Bonacich's influential paper published in 1973 on middleman minorities was the first to examine the definitive characteristics of the ethnic economy in advanced capitalist nations. She stresses the ways ethnic owners mobilize co-ethnic resources to enhance the profitability of small and liquidable enterprises. One of the most important of these resources is the formation of horizontal and/or vertical links with other co-ethnic firms. By limiting competition or by lowering the costs of inputs, these linkages create business advantages in a manner of reminiscent of monopolies. "The result is a tremendous degree of concentration in, and domination of, certain lines of endeavour" as argues by Edna Bonacich (Bonacich, 1973). A second, equally important way that ethnic owners exploit ethnic resources is by hiring co-ethnics and paid very low wages in exchange for paternalistic benefits, such as on job training or assistance in eventual self-employment.

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A third tier of the economy of ethnicity is ethnic business dominance and control via offering of contracts, jobs and government subsidies to members of an ethnic group. This has been quite prevalent in Africa. It has been done as means of extension of economic and political rule.

5.2. Ethnic Corruption

There are various definitions of corruption. Corruption is defined as a form of dishonesty or unethical conduct by a person entrusted with a position of authority, often to acquire personal benefit (Mitchel, 2018). Corruption may include many activities including bribery and embezzlement, though it may also involve practices that are legal in many countries. Government or political corruption occurs when an office-holder or other governmental employee acts in an official capacity for personal gain. However, the most appropriate definition is the one advanced by Vito Tanzi (1998) who defines corruption as the intentional non-compliance with the arm's-length principle aimed at deriving some advantage for oneself or for related individuals from this behaviour (Tanzi, 1998).

Economic theory has developed two basic views of corruption, one that considers corruption to be exogenous and the other endogenous to the political process. Applying either theoretical view, three basic types of corruption can be identified: corruption for the acceleration of processes, administrative corruption, and state capture which is akin to deep state. While in most cases, corruption can be attributed to rent appropriation, self-interested individuals seeking to maximize their own personal welfare as well as complicated, ambiguous, and unenforceable laws are also to blame for raising of corruption activities.

Ethnic corruption is well-captured and summarized in Michela Wrong's masterpiece "*It is Our Turn to Eat*" published in June 2009. A majority of African ethnicities view political power as associated with their communities/ethnicities thus a reigning leader would favour his/her community. By doing so, then corruption ensues, beginning from the leader to the ethnic group. This state of affairs is what Jean-Francois Bayart captured vividly in his ground-breaking work as *"The State of Africa: The Politics of Belly"* published in 2009. In her seminal work *"South Sudan: Civil War, Predation and The Making of Military Aristocracy"*, Clemence Pinaud summarized SPLM/SPLA corruptions through taxes of the refugees' ratios in Itang-Ethiopia; to the distribution of wives to lieutenants; to putting monies in personal accounts of Dr. John Garang's trusted confidantes and to the building of kinship networks (Pinaud, 2014).

Drawing on Marcel Mauss's analysis of 'gifts', the gifts of bride wealth and wives illustrate how corruption binds the system of political and class domination. Mauss stresses that making return gifts is an absolute obligation in order to retain authority and wealth (Mauss, 2011). In the same vein, the 'gift' made by the commanders to their soldiers constituted ways to retain their authority. Thus, ethnic corruption in South Sudan has been deepened by the grand corruption in the office of the president. Out of the sixteen individuals accused, ten were from Dinka ethnic group, making total of 63 percent. Out the then individuals acquitted by the Supreme Court, all were from Dinka ethnic group. Drawing from her extensive research, in her book "*The Thieves of State"* Sarah Chayes argues that corruption is a threat to ethnic group, national and global security (Chayes, 2016). Indeed, corruption has no colour or border.

5.3. Political Market Place

Corruption has been associated with a daily struggle for primitive accumulation of wealth and power in the political market place (Chol, 2021). Drawing from his much celebrated work *"When Kleptocracy becomes Insolvent: Brute Causes of The Civil War in South Sudan"*, Alex De Waal, argues that members of the South Sudanese political elite, in their desire to acquire wealth as fast as possible, and determination to prevent the northern government from renting the allegiance of southern militia and thereby jeopardizing the SPLM's secessionist project, created a governing system even less regulated and no less brutal than its northern counterpart (De Waal, 2014). Untrammeled greed, combined with the reckless decision to shut down national oil production in 2012, meant that by 2013 the South Sudanese government simply could not afford the loyalty payments to keep the system running, and it fell apart. A commander or a provincial leader can lay claim to a stake of state resources (rents) through a mutiny or rebellion. The government then attacks the leader and his constituency to press him to accept a lower price. After a number of people have been killed, raped, and displaced, and their property looted or destroyed, as an exercise in ascertaining the relative bargaining strengths of the two parties, a deal will be reached. In South Sudan, these cycles have become known as rent-

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seeking rebellions. Such conflicts follow a material logic but have ethnic manifestations.

Inverting its original intent, the SPLM became a magnet for rent-seekers. However, corruption had initially permeated the armed struggle from the earliest days and SPLM and SPLA was turned into a marketplace. Peter Adwok Nyaba cited a shocking case of how food rations for conscripts in Ethiopia – which may in fact have been an aid initially destined for refugees were sold and given as *masadaat* (assistance), contributing to deaths by disease and starvation of many hundreds of SPLA young recruits (Nyaba, 1997). Over the years, SPLA officers became oriented toward an apparently unending supply of international humanitarian aid, which could be stolen with impunity (De Waal, 2014). Looting of food aid was elevated to military strategy in the 1990s, when the contending factions of the SPLA staged hunger camps to attract humanitarian relief, which was then stolen. SPLA officers also sold natural resources including gold and timber to finance the war effort and themselves, leading some to speak of "blood teak". During the years of the war, SPLA commanders became "military aristocrat", using a raft of coercive, corrupt, and patrimonial measures (Pinaud, 2014). Pinaud's analysis showed how in South Sudan corruption evolved into a political and military marketplace.

6. Ethnic Cleavages and Armed Conflicts in DR Congo and Burundi

Ethnic cleavages are defined as differences within ethnic groups that could either enhance peace or trigger armed conflicts across the world. In the case of the Democratic Republic of Congo and Burundi, Ethnic cleavages have promoted violence. The study will look at each case, analyse the ethnic cleavage (s) and determine the impact of the conflict and violent.

6.1. Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) Conflict

The cause of conflict and violence in DRC is summarized by Jason K. Stearns in his work "*Dancing in the Glory of Monsters: The Collapsed of Congo and Great War of Africa*" published in 2012. Stearns argued that the civil war was fought by various ethnic groups, particularly, Tutsis and Hutus and it was a war of power pursuit (Stearns, 2012). In Congo, "power is eaten whole", goes the saying. The First Congo War began in 1996 as Rwanda grew increasingly concerned that members of Rasemblement Democratique Pour la Rwanda Hutu militias, who were carrying out cross-border raids from Zaire, were planning an invasion of Rwanda. The militias, mostly Hutu, had entrenched themselves in refugee camps in eastern Zaire, where many had fled to escape the Tutsi-dominated Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF) in the aftermath of the Rwanda Genocide of 1994.

The new Tutsi-dominated RPF government of Rwanda (in power from July 1994) protested this violation of Rwandan territorial integrity and began to give arms to the ethnically Tutsi Banyamulenge of eastern Zaire. The Mobuto government of Zaire vigorously denounced this intervention but possessed neither the military capability to halt it nor the political capital to attract international assistance. With active support from Uganda, Rwanda, and Angola, the Tutsi forces of Laurent Desire-Kabila moved methodically down the Congo River, encountering only light resistance from the poorly trained, ill-disciplined forces of Mobutu's crumbling regime. The bulk of Kabila's fighters were Tutsis, and many were veterans of various conflicts in the Great Lakes region of Africa. Kabila himself had credibility as a long-time political opponent of Mobutu, and had been a follower of Patrice Lumumba (the first Prime Minister of the Independent Congo), who was executed by a combination of internal and external forces in January 1961, to be replaced by Mobutu in 1965. The ethnic violence between Hutu and Tutsi aligned forces has been a driving impetus for much of the conflict, with people on both sides fearing their annihilation. The Kinshasa and Hutu aligned forces enjoyed close relations as their interests in expelling the armies and proxy forces of Uganda and Rwanda dovetail.

While the Uganda and Rwanda aligned forces worked closely together to gain territory at the expense of Kinshasa, competition over access to resources created a fissure in their relationship. There were reports that Uganda permitted Kinshasa to send arms to the Hutu FDLR via territory held by Uganda backed rebels as Uganda, Kinshasa and the Hutus are all seeking, in varying degrees, to check the influence of Rwanda and its affiliates. However, the ethnic cleavages of Hutus and Tutsis led to deep division, caused the war and sustained it. At the time of writing this piece, M23 with a back up of Rwanda has captured North Kivu and provincial capital, Goma, South Kivu and provincial capital, Bukavu. While it is proceeding to Kinshasa, time will tell if Kinshasa will fall or not.

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6.2. Burundi Conflict and Violent

The genesis of Burundian conflict and violence is succinctly captured by Rene Lemarchand in his seminal work *"Burundi: Ethnic Conflict and Genocide*" published by Woodrow Centre Press in 1996 as an ethnic tweak conflict (Lemarchand, 1996).

The Burundian civil war lasted from 1993 to 2005, and an estimated 300,000 people were killed (Ibid). The conflict ended with a peace process that brought in the 2005 constitution providing guaranteed representation for both Hutu and Tutsi, and parliamentary elections that led to Pierre Nkurunziza, from the Hutu Forces for Defense of Democracy (FDD), becoming President. In Burundi, ethnic differences between Hutu and Tutsi, much as in the case of neighboring Rwanda, existed prior to colonial rule but were solidified by colonial and post-colonial politics. The fight for control of the Burundian state has long been a place where conflict becomes ethnic (Jones, 2015). Approximately 84 percent of Burundians are Hutu, 15 percent are Tutsi, and 1 percent are Twa. Among Burundians, ethnicity is not a taboo subject!

Burundi's history of ethnic violence precedes its civil war (1993-2005), which began after elements of the Tutsi-dominated army assassinated the Hutu President, kicking off ethnic massacres by both groups. One haunting example is the 1972 genocide committed against Hutu elites, schoolboys, army personnel and politicians. Since the outbreak of protests against Pierre Nkurunziza's third term, both the government and opposition have used ethnicized rehtoric. For example, the government and pro-government forces claim that the protests are a purely 'urban' phenomenon, with 'urban' used as an implicit cue indicating Tutsi ethnicity. Increases in ethnically charged speech prompted in November, 2015. US former Secretary of State, John F. Kerry and others called for an immediate cessation of inflammatory dialogue.

More concerning than the rhetoric, however, was the ethnic patterns of violence that emerged to be emerging. There were reports, for example, that security forces targeted protesters in Tutsi minority-heavy districts of Bujumbura in December 2015 (Jones, 2015). These individuals were arrested, tortured and subjected to other forms of violence. Weekend violence resulted in at least 87 deaths, and witness statements and information on victims' ethnicity strongly suggest that many of the victims were disproportionately Tutsi. After the violent suppression of protests in 2015 against unconstitutional third term in the office by President Pierre Nkurunziza, Burundi was isolated internationally for a long time, with the opposition and civil society under pressure. Current President Evariste Ndayishimiye has abandoned repeated promises to ensure justice and promote political tolerance unfulfilled since taking power in 2020.

7. Ethnic Politics as Conflict by Other Means, the Case of Kenya

Kenya is a multi-ethnic society and has more than 40 ethnic communities that have lived side by side for a long time. The most dominant ethnic communities in this linguistic and ethnic landscape are the Gikuyu, the Luyha, the Luo, the Kalenjin, the Kamba, and the Kisii. There are however many other smaller ethnic communities in Kenya. Since the onset of colonialism, power in Kenya has been associated with a particular ethnic group. Kenya was initially a protectorate and later a colony of the United Kingdom. From self-rule in 1963 until the death of the first President Mzee Jomo Kenyatta in 1978, political and economic power was increasingly vested in his trusted circle of fellow Kikuyus (Decalo, 1998). During the second presidential regime, political power became concentrated in the hands of Kalenjin élites. In all the different regimes then and after, the ruling group sought to use the resources of the state for the special benefit of its own ethnic community and its allies. It is often suggested that land scarcity and its distribution, which was aggravated by other factors such as a high rate of population growth and environmental degradation, has contributed to the violent ethnic clashes in Kenya.

Since the 1920s, political and economic factors have encouraged the movement of populations within Kenya's national borders, often to zones where they constitute ethnic minorities. The British divided the Kenyan territory along ethnic lines into eight regions. During promulgation of new Kenyan Constitution in 2010, forty-seven counties/regions were created to devolve power to the grassroots. Based on county governments system, each region was subdivided into county, often according to ethnic groups and subgroups. For example, the Luo are based mainly in Nyanza (though it is also the home to the Kisii, who have their own county); the Luhya, in western region; the Kikuyu, in central region; the Somali, in north-eastern region; and the Mijikenda, in the coastal

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region. The Rift Valley is dominated by the Kalenjin, but also contains the Maasai, Turkana, Samburu and a number of Kikuyus. The Kamba share eastern region with Embu and Meru, among others. Nairobi is the most cosmopolitan region, with the Kikuyu forming a plurality. Nonetheless, these population movements into ethnically distinct areas did not cause any large-scale violent attacks prior to 1991. Historically, members of Kenya's 40 plus ethnic groups have co-existed, traded and intermarried, often in a symbiotic relationship between pastoralist and agricultural communities (Lonsdale, 1992). Moreover, ethnicity was prior to the mid-twentieth century, a more fluid concept than commonly supposed (Ogot, 1996).

7.1. Historical Causes of Ethnic Politics

One of the long-term causes of the clashes in Kenya is attributed to the colonial legacy, which is essentially historical but with ramifications in the post-independence era. It is a historical fact that the indirect rule administered by the British colonialists later turned out to be the `divide and rule' strategy, which polarized the various ethnic groups in Kenya. This in turn contributed to the subsequent incompatibility of these ethnic groups as actors on in one nation-state called Kenya. It was unfortunate that the early political parties in Kenya that championed the nationalist struggle against colonial establishments were basically distinct ethnic unions. The Kikuyu for instance, formed the Kikuyu Central Association (KCA), the Akamba formed the Ukambani Members Association (UMA), the Luhya formed the Luhya Union (LU), the Luo formed the Young Kavirondo Association (YKA), the Kalenjin formed the Kalenjin Political Alliance (KPA), the coastal tribes formed the Mwambao Union Front (MUF), Taita formed the Taita Hills Association (THA) in that order of ethnic conglomerations (Diamond, 1966). As a result of the foregoing ethnic trends, a situation prevailed in Kenya in which a common political voice was not possible. At the dawn of independence, African leaders ascended to governmental structures which had been intended to preserve the colonial administrative legacy. Indeed, leadership, for example, ruling elites in post-colonial Kenya have often relied heavily on ethnicity to remain in leadership positions or settle a dispute with their perceived enemies.

The land is yet another source of ethnic conflicts in Kenya, both in the long term and in the short term. For a long time in the history of this country, land has remained a thorny economic and political issue. Various scholars like Christopher Leo and Mwangi wa Githumo, have attempted to provide some explanations as to why land has been a major source of ethnic/political conflicts (Wrong, 2009). The land issue has its origin in the colonial history of Kenya, where the colonialists dreamed of making this part of Africa a white man's country. The colonialists established the Kenya protectorate and later on the Kenya colony with the finance that was to be generated from the white settler plantations which covered the high potential areas of the country. History has it that large tracts of agriculturally potential land, for instance, white highlands were alienated by the British colonial administration. As a result of the massive land alienation activities in the early period of colonialism, many of the hitherto cultivating populations were pushed into the `infertile' native reserves that were not conducive for arable farming. The displaced populations lived as farm laborers, casual workers, tenants as well as squatters. The process of land alienation was also extended to pastoral ethnic groups like the Maasai, Samburu, Nandi, Pokot and other Kalenjin speaking communities.

Like their agricultural counterparts, the pastoralists were pushed to the less conducive reserves. During the period of nationalism and decolonization, land grievances were central to all ethnic groups that actively participated in the struggle for independence. In fact, the land question is one of the main factors for the Mau Mau rebellion of 1952 to 1956 in Kenya and the subsequent declaration of a state of emergency by the British. The defense of Kenyan land led to the killing of Dedan Kimathi in 1957 by British colonial administration. After this historic resistance to land alienation by the Africans, the British became very conscious in dealing with the issue of transferring power to the Kenyans at independence. Indeed, the colonialists were afraid that if the land issue was not handled properly, it could degenerate into civil strife as numerous ethnic groups engaged in the scramble to recover their alienated pieces of land.

It is on record that the largest beneficiaries of this land distribution programme were the Kikuyu and their allies, thus the Embu and Meru. By projecting some mythological kinship and taking advantage of neighbourliness, the Kikuyu managed to win the Embu and Meru into some `land alliance' within the framework of Gikuyu Embu Meru Association (GEMA), which was a bargaining organ for these communities on the sharing of the `national cake'. The Kikuyu with

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their allies quickly formed land-buying companies and cooperatives with the blessing of Mzee Jomo Kenyatta. The critics of GEMA have often stated that the membership of these land-buying companies and cooperatives was strictly ethnical-contrary to constitutional and company law provisions against this form of discrimination**.** Where did they get the money from? The critics further argue that the Kikuyu ethnic group which constituted the membership of these organizations was just as poor as other Kenyan ethnic groups. And yet they managed to buy some of the largest and most expensive tracts of land from white settlers. One possibility is that they raised money from their meagre incomes. But this alone would not certainly have sufficed. The main source was banks and non-bank financial institutions into which President Kenyatta had appointed mostly Kikuyu managers. For instance, the top management of the Kenya Commercial Bank, the National Bank of Kenya and the Industrial and Commercial Development Corporation (ICDC) were registered of managers from one ethnic group. Given this ethnic and political marginalization, other communities from Rift Valley formed a political union for survival, hence the Kalenjin Maasai Turkana Samburu Association (KAMATUSA).

By 1978 when President Kenyatta died, the Kikuyu had far more than all other ethnic groups put together, bought the bulk of the so-called "white highlands". Besides, they were the main beneficiaries of the government's settlement plan for the landless at no cost or at minimal rates. They thus expanded their land ownership and settlement beyond their traditional home-Central Province into the Rift Valley Province, and a bit into the Coast Province, apart from their widespread networks in urban centres within Kenya. The distribution of land formerly occupied by the white settlers to Kikuyu people mainly, was perceived by other ethnic groups as unfair and there were parliamentary debates that called for equal distribution. Unfortunately, these debates did not address the issue of ethnic imbalance (Eshiwani, 1991), and the subsequent animosity that later on degenerated into the ethnic conflicts between the Kikuyu and the Kalenjins in the Rift Valley.

The issue of unequal distribution of resources is yet another source of potential instability in Kenya. Apart from their easy access to land, the economic success of the Kikuyu region in the first ten years of Kenya's independence was not enviable by other ethnic groups. The Kikuyu also enjoyed good modern roads, abundant school and education facilities, expanded health services, piped water, electricity and other forms of infrastructure (Arthur, 1979). More than that GEMA helped its members to acquire land and businesses. They visibly outdistanced other ethnic groups at a pace that posed immediate political risks to their newly acquired positions in the government structures.

In sharp contrast, Nyanza region, the home of the Luo ethnic group suffered severe repression and neglect, more than any other region in Kenya for trying to challenge and question the unjust enrichment of one region on what was a `national cake'. It is important to give a few illustrations with regard to the ethnic suppressions during the Kenyatta regime. On 14th April, 1966, Oginga Odinga, the undoubted Luo leader, who had hitherto been the Vice President of the country, and the ruling party, Kenya African National Union (KANU) tendered his resignation to President Jomo Kenyatta, citing his marginalization as number two. He lost both posts at the famous Limuru Party Conference. The message was clear but milder at this point in time. Odinga responded by forming his political party-the Kenya Peoples Union (KPU). The accusations and counter accusations between Odinga and Kenyatta over KPU were largely emotive and they succeeded in heightening Luo-Kikuyu ethnic tensions and animosities that sometimes degenerated into open confrontations.

The assassinations of Joseph Tom Mboya (an ethnic Luo) for motives never fully ascertained on July 9, 1969, a few months after the mysterious death of Argwings Kodhek, another prominent Luo politician intensified the ethnic animosity between the Luo and the Kikuyu. The banning of KPU in October 1969 and the detention of Oginga Odinga and other leaders without trial sent the wrong signals to the Luo ethnic group who could not hide their emotions and anger during the visit of Kenyatta to Kisumu on 25th October 1969. During this visit, a large crowd of Luo reportedly menaced Kenyatta's security and was fired on by the security guards in what later came to be known as the "Kisumu Massacre". In an explanatory statement, the government accused KPU of being subversive, intentionally stirring up inter-ethnic strife, and accepting foreign money to promote anti-national activities. The prescription in effect returned Kenya to the single party state (Nyukuri, 1997). Following these incidents, Nyanza region, like other non-Kikuyu areas, was virtually written

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off from national development plans. For instance, the government terminated the construction of the Kenya-Uganda highway (part of a trans-Africa highway system) in 1969 because the road had reached Luo land. The plans to construct the Yala Falls hydro-electric plant were also brought to a halt for spurious reasons.

Other tribes suffered their punishments in the same or varying ways. The same trends of unequal distribution of land, infrastructure and other national resources have been witnessed in the Moi regime, where the Kalenjin ethnic group was "perceived" to have benefited more than others. However, just like for the Kikuyu, not all Kalenjins have benefited. It is only a clique that surrounds the mantle of power (executive) who seem to have enjoyed in the Moi era (Barasa, 1993).

The mysterious death of Robert Ouko in 1990 strained the relationship between the Luo and Kalenjin ruling elites. This could be considered as one of the long-term causes of the conflicts between the Luo and the Kalenjin in the build up to the 1992 general multiparty elections. The study asserts that as long as there exist ethnic prejudice and animosity among the diverse Kenyan communities, the search for peace and nation-building will remain elusive.

Another long-term factor of ethnic prejudice and subsequent conflict is attributed to the Africanization of the civil service. Just as there was an immediate need to `Africanise' the land, the government moved equally fast to give jobs in the civil service and para-government sector to the Africans. Independence had after all been fought for on the popular slogan *"Uhuru na Kazi"* translated as independence will bring jobs. During the colonial period, the African population had worked essentially as plantation laborers or domestic hands for white landowners. It was therefore natural that independence should give them mobility into the higher echelons of the labour market as a realization of self-governance. Understandably, the government came up with a policy, first described as 'Africanization', then `Kenyanization', and eventually by some unofficial baptism `Kikuyunization' and `Kalenjinization'. This terminological mutation succinctly explains how a policy, otherwise well-conceived, deteriorated into the ethnicization of employment in the civil service in Kenya.

7.2. Impacts of Ethnic Politics in Kenya

I. Ethnic Violence

Large scale inter-ethnic violence is a new phenomenon in Kenya. The proximate causes of violence are intrinsically related to democratization and the electoral cycle; its roots are to be found in recent times and are politically instigated, and not primordial. As the move to multipartyism became increasingly probable, senior politicians in many political rallies issued inflammatory statements and utterances, asking for people to go back to their ancestral lands or they be forced out. The advent of the violent ethnic clashes closely followed these rallies (Nyukuri, 1997). As new political parties emerged, a clear enduring pattern of ethno-regional interests appeared. The violence in Kenya appeared to be an ethnicized expression of political conflict. Ethnicity in this case, was the medium of political violence, not its cause. However, the system once in place, became self-perpetuating: it increased the likelihood of future conflict by sharpening ethnic identity and chauvinism, as well as promoting the doctrine that specific regions of the country "belonged" to the groups that "originally" occupied them. This has led to the emergence of terms such as "outsiders," "foreigners," "strangers" or "aliens," and this is regardless of the legal ownership of land and the constitutional right of all Kenyans to live anywhere of their choosing within their country (Ndegwa, 1997).

II. Burden of Electoral Democracy

As explained above, election has been a burden, a curse and a regrettable idea for Kenyans. Every year Kenyans carried out elections, particularly, from 1992 to 2022, elections have continued to cause tensions and violence amongst ethnic groups, pitting Kikuyu and Luo or Kikuyu and Kalenjin and others. Kenyan academic and jurist, PLO Lumumba has christened Kenyan electoral democracy as an "ethnic census exercise" meaning they are not based on ideology and issues but on ethnic headcounts. Thus, electoral democracy has turned out to be electoral ethnic extractions. The multiparty kind of democracy that Kenyans received with joy in 1992 so far unfortunately seems to have worked along ethnic lines, although all elections since 1963 have revealed ethnic dimensions. The general elections of 2007 seemed to be a replay of the general elections of 1992, in terms of the ethnic violence that was experienced before and after. This kind of violence in the latest electoral round was large scale and this magnitude had never been witnessed before in all the previous

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elections. Prior to these elections, the political elites had conducted a lot of campaigns but a closer look at these campaigns revealed that most of them were based on ethnicity and the different ethnic identities that exist in the country. It turned out that the political elites had actually exploited the fact of Kenyan different ethnic identities to forward their political agenda. While the 2022 national elections were ethnically balanced on campaigns and voting, ethnic tensions are still worrying trends in Kenya today. While William Ruto won the presidential race through votes and via a Supreme Court ruling, the opposition leader Raila Oding continued to mobilize Kenyans, particularly, his ethnic Luo that William Ruto did not win the August 2022 elections. This led to the birth of Gen-Z protests in July 2024 against the Financial Bill, 2024 combined with exclusion, poverty, inequalities and unemployment in Kenya. Realizing that these protests could make Kenya politically unstable and send him out of power, President Ruto signed unity power sharing deal with Raila to share power between his Kenya Kwanza party and Orange Democratic Movement (ODM). Time will tell whether the unity power deal will stop protests and eliminate burden of electoral democracy in Kenya or not.

III. Kenya, A deeply Divided Society

With the 2007 post-election violence until at the time of writing this article, Kenya has remained a deeply divided country. The 2007 elections led to ethnic violence amongst Kikuyu, Luo and Kalenjin resulting in the deaths of 1,500 persons. The electoral powere contest between Mwai Kibaki, a Kikuyu and Raila Amolo Odinga, a Luo appeared to have been rigged in favour of President Kibaki. A shaky collation government was set up to accommodate Raila and his ODM party. The 2013 elections were also alleged to have been rigged in favour of Uhuru Kenyatta though the Supreme Court ruled in favour of Uhuru. Moreover, the 2017 elections were rigged as the Supreme Court nullified the presidential results, calling for rerun elections within sixty days as per the Constitution provisions. Raila Odinga withdrew from rerun on the 26th October 2017 elections citing that the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC) needed reforms to conduct credible, free and transparent elections. Moreover, Raila Odinga disputed August 2022 elections leading to demonstrations on Mondays and Thursdays in March 2023. Though President Ruto and Raila have been dialoguing on issues affecting Kenya, these dialogues are yet to yield postive results. It is important to note that Uhuru Muigai Kenyatta, the son of founding father and first President of Kenya, Mzee Jomo Kenyatta and Raila Amolo Odinga, the son of former first Vice President of Kenya, Odinga Oginga have pursued their fathers' bad chemistry which continued to cause tensions and deeply divided Kikuyu and Luo and above all, Kenya today. However, a golden hands-cheque between Raila Odinga and Uhuru Kenyatta normalized the ethnic tensions leading to one empty campaign on Building Bridges Initiative (BBI). It was envisaged that President William Ruto and Raila Odinga may end up in another golden hands-cheque in 2023 to stop Azimio La Umoja violent demonstrations against Kenya Kwanza Government in Kenya. Indeed, in late 2024 and early 2025, Raila Odinga and President William Ruto signed a Unity Government in which Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) got shared in the cabinet. Moreover, Odinga was nominated by President Ruto to contest for the Chairperson for African Union Commission. The outcome of this contest was an ugly humiliation to Kenya in which Mahmoud Ali Youssouf of tiny Djibouti won the docket. Keeping together, Ruto appointed Odinga as a Special Envoy for peace to South Sudan. This docket has already allowed Odinga to engage with President Salva Kiir Mayardit and parties' signatories to the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS) in order to de-escalate security tensions in South Sudan.

IV. "Nusu Mkate" (Half Loaf of Bread/Coalition) Government

Given all electoral malfeasances, ethnic tensions and conflicts, Kenya went through a mood of "*Nusu Mkate"* (half loaf of bread) governments. We saw this in 2008 after post-election skirmishes where the position of Prime Minister was created to accommodate Raila Odinga and his supporters' given allegations of massive rigging of the polls. However, it appeared that in the August 2022 elections, Raila Odinga was not accommodated in the cabinet and this gave Raila Odinga sleepless nights. However, in March 2025, President William Ruto and Raila Odinga inked a Unity Government deal in which Raila's party ODM got some slots in the cabinet. This mentality of *"Nusu Mkate"* government will continue to haunt Kenya's peace and democracy in the foreseeable future.

8. Rwanda Genocide and its Consequences

8.1. Origins, Factors and Roots of Genocide

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In 1994, Rwanda erupted into one of the most appalling cases of mass murder the world has witnessed since the Second World War. Many of the Hutu majority (about 85 percent of the population) turned on the Tutsi (about 12 percent of the population) and moderate Hutu, killing an estimated total of eight hundred thousand people in three months (Uvin, 1998). Since genocide is the most aberrant of human behaviors, it cries out for explanation. To understand this, a short journey through Rwanda's history is necessary. From 1894 until the end of the First World War, Rwanda, along with Burundi and present-day Tanzania, was part of German East Africa. Belgium claimed it thereafter, becoming the administering authority from 1924 to 1962. During their colonial tenure, the Germans and Belgians ruled Rwanda indirectly through Tutsi monarchs and their chiefs (Melvern, 2009). The colonialists developed the so-called Hamitic hypothesis or myth, which held that the Tutsi and everything humanly superior in Central Africa came from ancient Egypt or Abyssinia. The Europeans regarded Hutu and Twa (about 88 percent of the population) as inferior to Tutsi. Sixty years of such prejudicial fabrications inflated Tutsi egos inordinately and crushed Hutu feelings, which coalesced into an aggressively resentful inferiority complex.

During 1933-34, the Belgians conducted a census and introduced an identity card system that indicated the Tutsi, Hutu, or Twa "ethnicity" of each person. In the identity card "ethnicity" of future generations was determined patrilineally; all persons were designated as having the "ethnicity" of their fathers, regardless of the "ethnicity" of their mothers (Mamdani, 2001). This practice, which was carried on until its abolition by the 1994 post-genocide government, had the unfortunate consequence of firmly attaching a sub-national identity to all Rwandans and thereby rigidly dividing them into categories, which, for many people, carried a negative history of dominance-subordination, superiority inferiority, and exploitation-suffering (Berry, 1999). In their *"Hutu Manifesto" of 1957*, Hutu leaders referred to the identity card categories as "races," thereby evincing how inflexible these labels had become in their minds. In fact, Hutu and Tutsi spoke the same language and practiced similar religions. They also intermarried.

In November 1959, the pro-Hutu PARMEHUTU party led a revolt that resulted in bloody ethnic clashes and the toppling of Kigeli Rwabugiri (Uvin, 1998). By 1963, these and other Hutu attacks had resulted in thousands of Tutsi deaths and the flight of about 130,000 Tutsi to the neighbouring countries of Burundi, Zaire by then (now the Democratic Republic of the Congo) and Uganda (Mamdani, 2001). The land and cattle that the fleeing pastoral Tutsi left behind were quickly claimed by land-hungry, horticultural Hutu. As a result of the referendum held in 1961, the Monarch was abolished and national election was held under UN supervision in 1961, Gregoire Kayibanda (author of the *"Hutu Manifesto"*) became Rwanda's President-designate. Rwanda was declared independent on 1st July 1962. Supported by the Tutsi-dominated government in Burundi, Rwandan Tutsi refugees there began launching unsuccessful attacks into Rwanda. These invasions were usually followed by brutal Hutu reprisals against local Tutsi. The Hutu government used a failed 1963 invasion as the pretext to launch a massive wave of repression between December 1963 and January 1964, in which an estimated 10,000 Tutsi were slaughtered (Melvern, 2009). All surviving Tutsi politicians still living in Rwanda were executed (Dalliare, 2003). In July 1973, Major Juvénal Habyarimana, a northern Hutu, overthrew Kayibanda, a southerner, and declared himself President of the Second Republic (Melvern, 2009). In those years, his security forces eliminated former President Kayibanda and many of his high-ranking supporters as part of a plan to eradicate serious Hutu opposition. Habyarimana's kin and regional supporters filled high level positions in the government and security forces. Close relatives of the President and his wife dominated the army, Gendarmerie and especially, the Presidential Guard. Under Habyarimana, Rwanda became a single-party dictatorship. He relegated the Tutsi to the private sector. Regulations prohibited army members from marrying Tutsi. Habyarimana also maintained the "ethnic" identity card and "ethnic" quota systems of the previous regime. By the mid-1980s, the number of Rwandan refugees in neighbouring countries had surpassed one-half million. Thousands more were living in Europe and North America (Berry, 1999). Habyarimana adamantly refused to allow their return, insisting that Rwanda was already too crowded and had too little land, jobs, and food for them. However, the surrounding countries were also poor and had insufficient resources to accommodate both their own citizens and large refugee populations. Rwandan Tutsi refugees in Uganda, together with some Rwandan Hutu refugees, formed the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) and committed themselves to return to

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Rwanda. During 1990-93, RPF troops conducted a number of assaults into Rwanda from Uganda in unsuccessful attempts to seize power. The fighting caused the displacement of hundreds of thousands of people. Habyarimana retaliated by heightening internal repression against the Tutsi. From 1990 to 1992, Hutu ultra-nationalists killed an estimated two thousand Tutsi (Melvern, 2009).

Owing to European pressure, especially from France, the Rwandan government allowed political parties and press freedom in the early 1990s. The result was more pro-Hutu, anti-Tutsi extremism. The December 1990 issue of a *"Hutu Power"* Newspaper vilified the Tutsi as the common enemy (Dallaire, 2009). Despite strong opposition from the growing Hutu power movement, Habyarimana's government signed a series of agreements (the Arusha Accords) with the RPF that called for a power-sharing government with the Tutsi, return of Tutsi refugees to Rwanda, and the integration of Tutsi into the armed forces. The RPF was to constitute 40 percent of the integrated military forces and 50 percent of its officer corps. For Habyarimana, the Accords amounted to a suicide note. Hutu Power leaders cried treason. If the Accords were implemented, many Hutu elitists in the government and the military would lose their privileged positions (Melvern, 2009). A significant number of northern Hutu related to or allied with the powerful lineage of Habyarimana's wife were among those who would be adversely affected. Within days of the signing, Radio Rwanda, RTLM (One Thousand Hills Free Radio), and Radio Milles Collines, a new, private station, began broadcasting anti-Accord and anti-Tutsi diatribes from Kigali. RTLM called for lynching and killing actions against Tutsi whom broadcasters called "cockroaches' and 'snakes".

8.2. The Trigger of Genocide

On April 6, 1994, President Juvenal Habyarimana decided to fly back from Dar es Salaam to Gregoire Kayibanda International Airport, now Kigali International Airport in the evening. His jet, a Mystere Falcon 50, was a gift from President Francois Mitterrand which was four years old and spotless (Melvern, 2009). Its maintenance was paid for by France, as were the three crew members, who were former French military officers, a pilot, a chief mechanic and a navigator (Dallaire, 2009). Apparently, President Cyprien Ntaryamira of Burundi asked Habyarimana for a lift home (Melvern, 2009). Ntaryamira was tired and his own propeller-driven plane was slower and less comfortable and above all, his wife was in Kigali. The jet was full and boarded by the two Presidents and the accompanied persons. 'At exactly 8:26 pm, I could see the red lights of the plane as it approached', the air traffic controller recalled. He continued: 'As it passed over Masaka Hill, I saw three missiles, the first went over the aircraft and the third under but the second hit the aircraft and it burst into flames' (Melvern, 2009). The presidential jet was struck by a missile and plunged to earth, killing the president and all aboard. Although the identity of Habyarimana's assassins is not publicly known, it is believed that Habyarimana was killed by Hutu extremists in his own military base (Dallaire, 2009). Within the hour following the crash, and prior to its official announcement over the radio, members of the Interahamwe (Hutu militiamen) had begun to set up roadblocks in Kigali. On April 6th and 9th, the young men checked the identity cards of passers-by, searching for Tutsi, members of opposition parties, and human rights activists. Anyone belonging to these groups was set upon with machetes and iron bars. Radio Milles Collines station, RTLM and Kangura newspapers blamed the RPF and a contingent of UN soldiers for Habyarimana's death and urged revenge against the Tutsi (Mamdani, 2001). The Presidential Guard began killing Tutsi civilians in Ramera, a section of Kigali near the airport. Extremists in the President's entourage had made up lists of Hutu political opponents, mostly democrats, for the first wave of murders.

The extremists exhorted the Interahamwe and ordinary Hutu to kill Tutsi and *"eat their cows*" (Uvin, 1998). This phrase had both symbolic and practical significance. Symbolic, because historically Tutsi supremacy had been built on cattle ownership. Practical, because it also meant looting Tutsi homes, farms, offices, businesses, churches, and so on. The theft was one of the main rationales used to bribe people into betraying and killing their neighbours. RPF troops from the north began fighting their way south in early April in an attempt to stop the slaughter. By July 18, the RPF had reached the Zaire (DRC) border. Having defeated the Hutu militias that opposed them, the RPF unilaterally declared a cease-fire. Within a period of only three months (100 days) over seven hundred and fifty thousand Tutsi and between ten thousand and forty thousand Hutu, amounting to around eight hundred thousand or 11 percent of the total population, had been killed (Melvern, 2009). About two million people were displaved within Rwanda, while similar number of Hutu fled from

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Rwanda into Tanzania, Burundi, and Zaire (Uvin, 1998). The RPF and moderate Hutu political parties formed a new government on July 18, 1994, but the country was in chaos. The government pledged to implement the Arusha Accords. The government publicly committed itself to building a multiparty democracy and to discontinuing the ethnic classification system utilized by the previous regime.

8.3. The Role of Colonialist/Western Powers in Genocide

Mahamood Mamdani in his ground-breaking work "*When Victims Become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism, and the Genocide in Rwanda."* argued that the Rwandan genocide needs to be thought of within the logic of colonialism (Mamdani, 2001). The horror of colonialism led to two types of genocidal impulses. The first was the genocide of the native by the settler; the second was the native impulse to eliminate the settler. Following Franz Fanon, Mamdani says the second seemed more like the affirmation of the native's humanity than the brutal extinction of life. The Tutsi, a group with a privileged relationship to power before colonialism, was constructed as a privileged alien settler presence, first by the Hutu revolution of 1959, and then by Hutu Power propaganda after 1990. During the colonial period and thereafter, "Hutu" was made into a native identity and "Tutsi" a settler one. In its motivation and construction, Mamdani further argued, the Rwandan genocide needs to be understood as a natives' genocide. It was a genocide by those who saw themselves as sons and daughters of the soil, and their mission was one of clearing the soil of a threatening alien presence. It was not an ethnic, but a "racial" cleansing. For the Hutu who killed, the Tutsi were colonial settlers, not a neighbour. Most scholars on the subject traced Hutu-Tutsi distinction to the Belgians' use of the ten-cow rule for the 1933-34 census and the identity cards. Supposedly, any male who owned 10 cows was classified as a Tutsi; those with fewer than 10 cows were classified as Hutu. No explanation for Twa is usually given. Relying on a doctoral dissertation by Tharcisse Gatwa, (2000), Mamdani writes that the Belgians actually used three major sources of information for their census classification: "oral information provided by the church, physical measurements, and ownership of large herds of cows" (Gatwa, 2000). The fact is," writes Mamdani, "that the Belgian power did not arbitrarily cook up the Hutu/Tutsi distinction." What it did was to take an existing socio-political distinction and radicalized it (Ibid). The origin of the violence in Rwanda is connected to how Hutu and Tutsi were constructed as political identities by the colonial state, Hutu as indigenous and Tutsi as alien.

Indeed, as the genocide unfolded, France supported Hutus while Belgium supported Tutsi. The USA and UK did not help but ended up lobbying the UNSC in the withdrawal of 25,000 UNAMIR after ten Belgians soldiers were killed. The UN did not heed the advice of Canadian Commander of UNAMIR, Lieutenant General Romeo Alain Dallaire who called for the UN action before widespread genocide. The UN indeed was deeply silent. He asked for more troops to stop violence but UN refused. In his seminal book "*Shaking Hands with the Devil: The Failure of Humanity in Rwanda, (2003)"* Lt. Gen. Romeo attributed genocide to the failure of Western powers to act as told. The UN then admitted its failure and UNSC accepted its responsibility for not preventing genocide. In her thought-provoking book *"A People Betrayed: The Role of The West in Rwanda's Genocide"*, Linda Melvern examined the failure of UN member governments to comply with the 1948 Genocide Convention and the shock waves Rwanda caused around the world. Instead, in November 1994, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) passed a resolution that created the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) (Brehm, *et al*., 2014). The mandate of this Ad-hoc tribunal was to try the Rwandans deemed most responsible for the genocide. The ICTR held its first trial in Arusha, Tanzania, in 1997 and handed down the world's first conviction by an international court for the crime of genocide 1 year later. As of 2021, the tribunal has completed 90 cases. On 31st December 2015, the ICTR issued its final judgments and it was dissolved.

8.4. Consequences of the Genocide

In the aftermath of the genocide in Rwanda, the RPF overthrew Hutu government in July 1994. Half a million women and girls were tortured, raped and abused acquiring sexual transmitted diseases, especially HIV/AIDS (Berry, 1999). Over two hundred and fifty thousand children have been orphaned by these diseases (Melvern, 2009). Many people got into trauma and have mental problems (Uvin, 1998). Property, homes, schools, roads and churches were destroyed. Poverty expanded (Mamdani, 2001). Many criminals were jailed and Gacaca court system was introduced in 2001. Gacaca in Kinyarwanda refers to "*grass"*. Thus, Gacaca court refers to *'justice on the grass"*.

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In more than nine thousand clans throughout Rwanda, panels of elected lay judges known as Inyangamugayo *("those who detest dishonesty" in Kinyarwanda)* presided over genocide trials in the same cities, towns, and villages where the crimes were committed (Rettig, 2008). More than 250,000 male and female judges were elected, and in April 2002, the elected judges underwent training. Finally, on June 18, 2002, the first pilot phase of the Gacaca began.

What is more, the Government of Rwanda and international organizations played a great role in the post-reconstruction and reconciliation of the country. In March 2003, Paul Kagame won the first national election. President Kagame reshaped the identity of Rwandans, he abolished through the Constitution, the ethnic identities of Hutu and Tutsi. The population was to be referred to as Rwandans and Kinyarwanda became the national language. Thus, all three ethnic groups, Hutu, Tutsi and Twa proudly called themselves Rwandans. Moreover, Kagame introduced a community service day called '*Umuganda"* referring to "*our pride"* in Kinyarwanda. This occurs on the last Saturday of every month when all Rwandans including the President volunteer to clean the environment. It is a day meant to cement national unity and identity. Besides, as part of deepening reconciliation, national unity and development, the Government of Rwanda introduced in November 2003, an annual national dialogue referred to as "*Umushyikirano"* in Kinyarwanda. The President visits each province annually and engages directly with the common citizens in town halls, meeting grounds or stadiums. Overall, the Government of Rwanda empowered, its national army, Rwanda Patriotic Army (RPA) and pronounced its as the foundation of nationality unity of Rwandans.

9. ACCOMMODATION OF DEEP ETHNIC DIFFERENCES AND NATIONAL IDENTITIES

Ethnic identity is salient cleavage that is highly mobilized in political conflicts in the developing world. From Asia to Caribbean to the Middle East and to Africa, ethnic cards are played in achieving political goals (Chol, 2014). Accommodating deep ethnic differences and national identities goes back to Arend Lijphart's "theory of consociationalism" exhaustively discussed in his masterpiece- *"The Politics of Accommodation".* Yet, Lipjhart's *Theory of Consociationalism* which would have served as the treatment of the deeply divided society was misunderstood and wrongly applied by many Republics (Lijphart, 2009). Lijphart's thinking was not a political accommodation of the individuals but the representation of all cross-cutting cleavages of the societies such as ethnic groups, political parties, elites and minorities' autonomies in the governance etc. Lijphart institutional design model offers accommodation with legal redress and social justice and thus the new Republics such as South Sudan, DRC and Burundi concentrated on the mere political and military accommodation of individuals without addressing crimes committed by the accommodated individuals in the first place. This led to impunity; rebellions and re-rebellions of the individuals tweaked on rewards and amnesties. Thus, this compromised social justice.

Accommodating deep identity differences begin with what unites the people in that country and what values do communities in that polity cherish. From Nigeria, Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Burundi, DRC, Iraq, Spain, Lebanon, Yemen etc, identity conflict has ensued in a variety of ways. Some have graduated from localized conflicts to insurgencies and then to outright civil wars, some have stuck in permanent rebellions. Although Lijphart's consociational theory is a treatment to the deeply divided identities, *co-identities theory* (author's term) is a solution to sensitive national identities.

Moreover, many experts uncritically promote federalism in its various forms as a panacea for multicultural societies with deep community cleavages, notably those coming out of ethnic wars (Watts & Chattopadhyay, 2008). According to some recent scholars' federal arrangements offer the best option for governance designed to reflect diversity and consociation, in terms of political recognition and representation. However, in multi-ethnic/multi-cultural societies, the quality of governance and accommodating diversity depends heavily on the type of democracy within which they function. For instance, either majoritarian or consensual (Fleiner, 2008). It is interesting to note that globally, the power-sharing constitutions combining proportional representation and federalism are relatively few (twenty six out of two hundred and six states (Watts and Chattopadhyay, 2025). Indeed, empirical evidence suggests that proportional representation-based electoral systems, and not federalism or other types of power-sharing arrangements, are not adequate for democratic inclusion and participation. The implications for policymakers

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are clear: investing in basic human development is probably a more reliable route to achieve stable democratic governance than mere constitutional design (Norris, 2005). “We the people” should be translated into reality and practice as stipulated in many countries’ constitutions.

10. CONCLUSIONS

Ethnic politics and national identities continued to increase violence in the world. While ethnic politics should have promoted ethnic peace as the case of Tanzania, many states in Africa such as DR Congo, Sudan, South Sudan, Kenya and Burundi to mention but a few continued to express ethnic violence and conflicts. The result of ethnic violence is either genocide as surveyed in the case of Rwanda or state failure for case of South Sudan and DR Congo. Above all, the catastrophic of ethnic politics, ethnic mobilization and sectarian violence is the state collapse for the case of Sudan and Yemen. As demonstrated in the empirical literature, the solution for violence ethnic politics, violence sectarian and weaponized national identities is the accommodation of difference deep ethnic differences and hateful national identities. Moreover, regional autonomies policies on systems of governance such as federalism should be allowed to ensure freedom of the people to construct their regions and promote co-identities. This way, the fruits of political accommodation can be realized. Indeed, political accommodation can be achieved through genuine accountability, rule of law, building of national consensus for peace, development and prosperity in the world.

11. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Noting comparative ethnic politics and national identity as a wide area in the sub-field of comparative politics, further studies are hereby recommended to comparative politics scholars to investigate the positive impacts of ethnic politics and national identity in non-African and Middle East regions, particularly, the Asia region. The Asia region will offer lessons to be learned (if any) by African and Middle East regions to deepen positive ethnic politics, shun away violence sectarianism and build consented national identities.

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