Exploring the gap between ethnicity and violence by looking at both top-down and bottom-up pressures in Kenyan elections from 1992-2007

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Abstract

As John Lonsdale states, "ethnicity is a world-wide social fact; all human beings make their cultures within communities that define themselves against *others*".[91] However, ethnicity has come to play a more defining role in everyday politics on the African continent, more so than anywhere else in recent times. As a result, this paper will attempt to explore how ethnicity has been a stronger mobilising force than nationalism specifically in the case of post-Independent Kenya. The paper will attempt to explore the gap between ethnicity and violence, where the two are often assumed to go hand in hand, by arguing that mobilisation on ethnic grounds not only comes from elite-led, top-down pressures, but that the less explored, bottom-up factors play just as important a role.

We will explore both the 1992 and 2007 elections in depth as the primary cases. This is due to the significance held by these individual events. 1992 because it was the first election with a return to multi-party politics in the country and 2007, due to the unprecedented violence that followed, leaving the country on the precipice of civil war. However, we will use the 1997 and 2002 elections in between to illustrate how the events of 1992 and 2007 are connected and not isolated events in Kenya's past, with 2007 being the culmination of twenty-five years of political tension building up.

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[91] Lonsdale, J (1994) " Moral Ethnicity and Political Tribalism", in Kaarsholm, P & Huttin, J, *Inventions and Boundaries: Historical and Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Ethnicity and Nationalism.* Roskilde, Denmark: Roskilde University Press. p.131.

Acronym Key

KADU	**Kenya African Democratic Union**
KANU	**Kenya African National Union**
IMF	**International Monetary Fund**
NAK	**The National Alliance**
NARC	**National Rainbow Coalition-Kenya**
PNU	**Party of National Unity**

Introduction

As John Lonsdale states, "ethnicity is a world-wide social fact; all human beings make their cultures within communities that define themselves against *others*".[92] However, ethnicity has come to play a more defining role in everyday politics on the African continent, more so than anywhere else in recent times. As a result, this paper will attempt to explore how ethnicity has been a stronger mobilising force than nationalism specifically in the case of post-Independent Kenya. The paper will attempt to explore the gap between ethnicity and violence, where the two are often assumed to go hand in hand, by arguing that mobilisation on ethnic grounds not only comes from elite-led, top-down pressures, but that the less explored, bottom-up factors play just as important a role.

In order to achieve this, we will focus on a 25-year period in the country's post-independence history, spanning over four key elections: 1992, 1997, 2002 and 2007. This will be done because, while agreeing that ethnicity has been a stronger mobilising force than nationalism, this paper will also attempt to show how ideas of ethnicity are not only constructed by actors, but that they are often moulded and changed instrumentally around election times to have maximum effect, by both those in power at the elite level, and local actors at a grassroots level.

It will not be possible to understand the snapshot in Kenya's history that we have chosen to focus on without analyzing the Kenyan state under colonial rule and in the immediate years that followed independence, as these experiences had a lasting effect on its modern day politics. Thus, following a section on the historical background that will show how a number of the theories talked about in the theoretical framework

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[92] Lonsdale, J (1994) " Moral Ethnicity and Political Tribalism", in Kaarsholm, P & Huttin, J, *Inventions and Boundaries: Historical and Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Ethnicity and Nationalism.* Roskilde, Denmark: Roskilde University Press. p.131.

section of this paper, came about, we will have a further three sections focusing on the elections mentioned above.

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Theoretical Framework

The majority of writing on ethnic mobilisation on the African continent has been written arguing a realist and state centric perspective that explains the mobilisation, or actions of masses as elite led, or influenced from the top-down. Kenya is not an exception to this, with the numerous reports published on the elections in question from sources ranging from the Commonwealth Observers Group to Africa Watch, all publishing reports critical of the political elite as the sole culpable actors. As mentioned above, this paper will look at the idea of ethnicity, defined as referring to group with a common identity that may include, culture, history and background and sometimes language,[93] from both a more instrumental and constructivist point of view.

From a constructivist belief of ethnicity, we will work with John Lonsdale's idea that, although the primordial view of ethnicity being inherited cannot be totally dismissed, it is through human habits of social interaction that a system of moral meaning and ethnic reputation is created along with an imagined community.[94] While from the instrumentalist angle, these meanings "are also reinvented everyday, to meet new needs",[95] and used strategically at key moments for political gain. Both the work of Gabrielle Lynch and Sarah Jenkins will support with these ideas as well as take them further while focusing specifically on post-Independent Kenya as an empirical study introducing the idea of ethnicity and violence stemming from bottom-up mobilization as a result of exclusionary politics and the 'guest/immigrant' metaphor.[96] Both the plasticity and durability of these ideas will support our argument as we see how these narratives change during election periods in the case of Kenya.

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[93] Gherghina, S & Jinglau (2011) "Explaining Ethnic Mobilisation in Post-Communist Countries", *Europe-Asia Studies*, 63(1), p. 51.
[94] Lonsdale (1994) "Moral Ethnicity & Political Tribalism", p. 131.
[95] Ibid. p. 131.
[96] Jenkins, S (2012) "Ethnicity, Violence and the Immigrant-Guest Metaphor in Kenya", *African Affairs*, 111(445), p. 576.

Theories exclusive to Kenyan politics championed by the various actors struggling for control of the states resources must also be examined and analysed with regard to this discussion. From the time of the independence struggle, the two theories that were competing at the time were firstly, the more nationalist leaning *Harambee,* a call to pull together, championed by Kenya's first president Mzee Jomo Kenyatta. Secondly, and arguably the more durable, is *Majimboism*, or regionalisation, which has been at the heart of Kenyan political discussion till this day, embracing Kenya's ethnic diversity and essentially why "the career of nationalism ended at independence".[97] Ethnicity, not just in Kenya, often leads to neopatrimonial styles of governance and Kenya under Kenyatta through to Kibaki was no exception. Thus, exploring this theory will also serve to help explain how in Kenya's case, ethnicity has been a stronger mobilizing force. Finally, it is fundamental to look at these key debates in relation to the duality of interactions between both structures and actors.

Historical Background and Evolving the Theoretical Foundations

This section will look briefly at the historical background of the Kenyan state under British colonial rule and the years following independence in order to give the historical context, as well as show how events in this period greatly affected the future of Kenyan politics and society. It will also explore a bit further how the main theories attributed to Kenyan party politics worked.

Gabrielle Lynch acknowledges that it was the primordial idea of late 19th Century Europeans that Africans all belonged to a tribe as being crucial in justifying the colonial missions that took place.[98] Lonsdale supports this statement when he uses a metaphor of Europeans African tribes being akin to "differently coloured billiard balls",[99] all with their own cultures, languages and so on. This helps us to understand the reasons for the British style of indirect rule, where by it relied on the chiefs of these so-called separate tribes, along with their authority over an area of *ethnic territory* to administer the local people on behalf of the British administration.

This paper supports the idea of both Lynch and Trence Ranger that far from there being just a primordial explanation for the existence of African tribes, ethnicity was fostered in a much more constructive approach. Their idea suggests that it was the colonial structures that were in place at the time that were responsible for the creation of empty boxes labelled, for example, 'Kikuyu' or 'Kalenjin', but that it was then the

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[97] Kagwanja, P (2003) "Facing Mount Kenya or Facing Mecca? The Mungiki, Ethnic Violence and the Politics of the Moi Succession in Kenya, 1987-2002", *African Affairs*, 102, p.49.

[98] Lynch, G (2013) "The Politics of Ethnicity", in Cheeseman, N, Anderson, D & Scheiber, A, *Routledge Handbook of African Politic*, Oxford, UK: Routledge. p. 96.

[99] Lonsdale (1994) "Moral Ethnicity & Political Tribalism", p. 132.

role of African actors to fill these empty boxes with ideas of what it meant to be Kikuyu or Kalenjin.[100]

In the case of Kenya, as we will find thought out this paper, the fertile area known as the White Highlands, or Rift Valley has often been at the centre of controversies along the years. Access and control of resources often determined movement of ethnic groups, and the British settlers who occupied the Highlands did so by moving the native pastoral Kalenjin and Maasai communities off the land. These pastoral communities were not favoured as labourers by Europeans; therefore they brought in workers from the neighbouring areas to work the land. This resettling of people by the colonial experience can be seen as the sowing of the seeds for Jenkins' 'guest and immigrant' metaphor that we will explore later on, where by tensions between locals and those not from a particular area grew.

At the time of Independence, Mzee Jomo Kenyatta's KANU party led the calls for the, soon to be, new nation to rally behind the more nationalist idea of *Harambee*, advocating a strong central government and the pulling together by the citizens to build a new nation. The opposition at the time, KADU, "feared that the economically dominant Kikuyu, and to a lesser extent, Luo communities, would ascend to a position of political predominance, and marginalise others".[101] It was therefore natural that KADU took a stance that protected the interests of the smaller communities under the banner of *Majimboism*, "which would allow semi-autonomous regions, based on ethnicity, to have substantial decision-making power".[102] It was the Kalenjin who led this alliance, and included in their ranks was Daniel arap Moi who would go onto succeed Kenyatta, as will be seen below.

Upon winning the elections, KANU quickly scrapped any talks to include aspects of *Majimboism* into the new Kenya. As well as this, Kenyatta, through various government-sponsored settlement schemes, made European settler farms available for redistribution. However, "the majority of people that took advantage of this programme were Kikuyu".[103] Specifically, Kikuyu that had been brought in to work the land, and were now able to purchase portions for themselves.

This competition for available land grew intensely, while the Kalenjin and Maasai, whose 'ancestral' land it was, were often unable to purchase any. Thus, it can be seen

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[100] Ranger, T (1993) "The Invention of Tradition Revisited: The Case of Colonial Africa", in Ranger, T & Vaughn, O, *Legitimacy and the State in Twentieth Century Africa*, Basingstoke, UK: Macmillain, p. 27.

[101] Lynch, G (2011) *I Say To You: Ethnic Politics and the Kalenjin in Kenya*, Chicago, USA: University of Chicago Press, p. 72.

[102] Africa Watch (1993) *Divide and Rule: State Sponsored Ethnic Violence in Kenya*, USA: Human Rights Watch, p. 6.

[103] Keller, E (2014) *Identity, Citizenship, and Political Conflict in Africa*, Indiana, USA: Indiana University Press, p. 111.

how Jenkins' idea of 'guests and immigrant' began to inseminate itself into everyday discourse, especially concerning the issue of land distribution.

Upon Kenyatta's death in 1978, Moi became Kenya's second President. Following an attempted military coup in 1982, his leadership became extremely authoritarian and relied on patrimony, while also outlawing any other political party, and thus turning Kenya to a one-party state, which continued until the early 1990's.

Return to Multi-Party Politics and the 1992 Election

This section will look at the violence in the build up to, and during, the 1992 elections that saw Kenya return to multi-party politics. It will attempt to show how, contrary to numerous reports; it was not purely a cause of elite-led ethnic mobilisation, but that local, bottom-up factors played a crucial role that would continue to linger in Kenyan society until this day.

It is necessary to understand "two important elements of Kenyan society: first that ethnicity is a typical mode of thought in everyday life and social interaction, and second that ethnicity and land are inextricably linked".[104] As we have seen above the main issue was focused around the Rift Valley region, and it was much the same at the turn of the nineties. The fall of the Soviet Bloc saw the call for numerous African states to work towards democracy, with Kenya not an exception. This pressure came from both within the state, from opposition groups, and from outside voices such as the IMF and World Bank. A number of academics such as Ajulu and Kagwanja interpret the move towards multi-party politics as being a threat to Moi's personal wealth.[105] Due to the neo-patrimonial style of governance that Moi had employed over the years, the 1992 elections essentially represented a zero-sum game for him, KANU and the Kalenjin people that were his clients.

Peter Kagwanja further explains this elite-led, top-down process that led to ethnic mobilisation, where by he argues, that, Moi and his government were responsible for a form of "informal repression or quasi-legitimization of sectarian violence for political gain".[106] His view is a realist one, whereby, the state, in order to continue acting as the main dispenser of patronage, was required to remain in control of state power. As more institutional accountability was required with the change to multi-party politics approaching, Moi chose to politicise ethnicity.[107]

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[104] Jenkins, S (2012) "Ethnicity, Violence and the Immigrant-Guest Metaphor in Kenya", p. 578.
[105] Ajulu, R (2001) "Kenya: One Step Forward, Three Steps Back: The Succession Dilemma", *Review of African Political Economy*, 28(88), p. 199
[106] Kagwanja, P (2003) "Facing Mount Kenya or Facing Mecca? ", p. 25.
[107] Ajulu, R (2001) "Kenya: One Step Forward, Three Steps Back", p. 197

A number of independent reports written on the 1992 election such as the Akiwumi Report, the Report of the Commonwealth Observer Group and the Africa Watch report also offer a realist analysis of events, where top-down processes are the only explanations offered for the violence that occurred. This violence was a sort of ethnic cleansing that occurred in the Rift Valley, where by "young armed men attacking farms inhabited by members (supporters) of opposition ethnicities".[108] These young men were predominately Kalenjin and were referred to as the Kalenjin warriors, while the occupiers of the farms were, more often than not, Kikuyu, Luo or people of other ethnicities that had brought land in the Rift Valley under the settlement schemes. These groups of armed attackers were more often than not organised, funded and coordinated by members of Kalenjin elite, under false call for majimboism, which had almost tuned into a primordial euphemism for claiming back 'ancestral' land from non Kalenjin and Maasai. The state's use of violence served two main purposes; firstly to unite the previously fractious Kalenjin to vote as one, and next, to undermine the political opposition by displacing its support base.[109]

However, as we have stated is our aim, we must not take such explanations as adequate to understanding the ethnic clashes that occurred in 1991-92. Firstly, the independent reports published on the events were always going to be hyper critical of Moi and his regime due to the amount of aid his government received, thus in order to propagate change, he is the natural focal point of their criticism. Both Ajulu and Kagwanja acknowledge that there was more than just elite-led mobilization involved. In Kagwanja's admission that the state exploited ethnic grievances, he inevitably implies that grievances existed prior to the elections themselves, and they are grievances of everyday life.

It is these everyday grievances that manifest themselves to form the bottom-up pressures that Jenkins, Lynch and Lonsdale talk about, and that this paper believes are just as necessary a process when leading to ethnic mobilisation. Lynch argues that these everyday experiences such as ethnic bias, corruption and marginalization drive people towards ethnic solidarity,[110] much the same way Lonsdale interprets Jean-Francois Bayart's argument that, "ethnicity can be a local triumph over national failure".[111] Such marginalisation, of non-Kalenjin or unfair privileges received by the Kalenjin serve as precursors for the creation of ideas of 'us Vs them'. It mobilises communities against each other in order to seek what they interpret as justly theirs.

The 1991-2 violence in Kenya saw just this; long-standing grievances over land issues whereby by constructed ideas that 'others' were benefiting from their ethnic identity led people to support their own ethnic leaders, with the aim of attempting to benefit themselves. Coupled with this was the political elite who managed to see the

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[108] Africa Watch (1993) *Divide and Rule* p. 2.
[109] Kagwanja, P (2003) "Facing Mount Kenya or Facing Mecca? ", p. 26.
[110] Lynch, G (2013) "The Politics of Ethnicity, p. 103.
[111] Lonsdale, J (1994) "Moral Ethnicity & Political Tribalism", p. 133.

instrumental value of these ethnic ideas to mobilise support for themselves, with ultimately the realist goal of securing power in mind.

1997 & 2002, Moi's Era Continues

This section will look at the two elections in the period between this paper's main focus of 1992 and 2007. It will explore how these two elections played a crucial role in the build up to the events 2007 by showing how yet again, it is at times of elections that ethnic ideas get transformed and heightened from both a top-down and bottom-up perspective to have maximum effect in search of political outcomes.

The interim period once the violence of 1992 had settled was relatively calm in Kenya as the KANU government continued to run Kenya with its firm, centralised grip over the countries resources. However, as the 1997 elections approached, Ajulu argues that mass mobilisation occurred around an anti-Kalenjin and anti-Moi sentiment.[112] Feelings that were ever present in 1992, that certain ethnic groups were favoured over others and the continual frustration of marginalisation led people to mobilise around the idea of preventing Moi from a third term in office. As this paper suggests, it was a combination of both top-down and bottom-up factors that resulted in ethnic mobilisation for political gain, even in 1997. As well as in the controversial Rift Valley region, Kenya's coastal corridor provided an example of where these top-down and bottom-up grievances met.

Ajulu agrees on the presence of Jenkin's "guest-immigrant" metaphor, where by, prime land around the coastal region was brought up by people not "native" to the area. This caused bottom-up grievances such as "great political resentment to ordinary people from the province",[113] as feelings of losing out on opportunities available in their *ancestral* land to other ethnic groups. At the same time, it is crucial to note that these feelings are ever present in day to day life, but that in times of political tension, such as elections, the issue of land is easily politicised by the elite, and ethnicity is instrumentalised to mobilise voters in campaigns such as the one at the Coast against the upcountry people, where the slogan *wabara wao* (upcountry people back to their homes) was popularised by political elite. [114]

Post the 1997 election, in which Moi retained power, saw a number of the "same issues recur: economic stagnation, reports of corruption and land grabbing".[115] These local complaints, as we have seen before, manifested in two ways: Firstly, ethnic groups who were non-Kalenjin came together in what was a bottom-up mobilization of ethnic groups with the common aim of preventing KANU's continuation in the 2002 election. While at the same time, opposition politicians, "took to heart the hard

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[112] Ajulu, R (2001) "Kenya: One Step Forward, Three Steps Back", p. 202
[113] Ajulu, R (2001) "Kenya: One Step Forward, Three Steps Back", p. 211
[114] Ibid, p.211
[115] Lynch, G (2011) *I Say To You*, p.176.

lesson of the 1992 and 1997 elections that fragmentation along ethnic lines was the main reason for their failure to dislodge KANU".[116] Thus, an initial inter-ethnic alliance know as NAK responded to the bottom-up feelings of years of neglect under Moi and KANU.

So, the opposition to KANU gathered momentum through the meeting of top-down and bottom-up methods of mobilisation. While, Moi, under intense pressure to step down, was unable to manipulate ethnic identities as he had done previously, this time turned to generational identities. Kagwanja analyses his strategy from a top-down perspective, as most of his pieces do, where by a generational sentiment was whipped up under the endorsement of the youthful Uhuru Kenyatta as the KANU presidential nominee.[117]

Kagwanja uses Cruise O'Brien to support his top-down, elite driven view of mobilisation by suggesting that Africa's population are ineffective at making their opposition count and are easily manipulated by elite.[118] This paper feels that this view is rather limited and takes any credit away from the general populations ability as actors to influence political decisions.

Instead, Lonsdale offers a more complete view that can be applied to the 2002 election case where by, the final coalition know as NARC, led by Mwai Kibaki won with a landslide, ending KANU's 39 year rule. He suggests that political tribalism, flows down from the elite where communities are pitted in direct competition with one another, a skill Moi performed with great success. While moral ethnicity, creates communities from within the structure and is often the only form of accountability that African's have over the state.[119] Thus, as in 2002, the NARC coalition was able to respond to the countries general feeling of frustration and capitalise on this to oust KANU.

2007 and Kenya on the brink of Civil War

This final section of the paper will analyse the how the events of the 2007 elections and the violence that followed, much the same as in previous years, resulted from the ethnic mobilisation of Kenyan's where top-down and bottom-up factors met. It will agree with Sarah Jenkins' analysis of the guest-immigrant metaphor, supported by Lynch, which came about through analysis of these events. Even though their work

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[116] Kagwanja, P (2006) "Power to Uhuru: Youth Identity and Generational Politics in Kenya's 2002 Elections", *African Affairs* 105(418), p.57.

[117] Kagwanja, P (2006) "Youth Identity and Generational Politics in Kenya's 2002 Elections", p.57

[118] Ibid, p.53

[119] Lonsdale, J (1992) "The Moral Economy of Mau Mau: Wealth, Povery & Civic Virtue in Kikuyu Political Thought", in Berman, B & Lonsdale, J *Unhappy Valley: Conflict in Kenya and Africa: Book Two: Violence & Ethnicity*, London: James Currey, pp. 466-67.

was not yet written, we have applied these ideas to the previous elections, as shown above to explain events, as the ideas have fitted with our argument and are transferable. It may be that previous elections had an elite driven centric view of ethnic mobilisation as they were treated as isolated events. However, after the scale of 2007, those that have analysed Kenya's political history since independence have observed that these events are far from isolated, but connected, and that bottom-up narratives play just a crucial a role.

2007 saw an incredibly heated contest, with the current president, Kibaki on a PNU ticket against Raila Odinga of ODM, who, "for the first time since independence, presented the electorate with a clear policy choice: between the current centralised form of government (PNU) and the devolved or federal system (ODM)".[120] Tension mounted as the results were delayed, however, contrary to initial results showing Odinga in the lead, Kibaki was declared the winner amidst claims by the opposition of rigging and being robbed.

Sarah Jenkins has the most thorough analysis of events that can be "understood as a bottom-up performance of narratives of ethnic territorial exclusion operating alongside more direct elite involvement".[121] These narratives centre on ethnic 'others' as being both 'immigrants' and 'guests', and in much like the previous elections we have seen, also revolve around territorial identity.[122] She also supports our argument that such ideas are heightened at times of political transition in Kenya with one of the main reasons being the zero-sum game that neopatrimonial politics results in. Threatened with the prospect of being marginalised, politics becomes a life or death question, much like it was for the Kalenjin community under Moi.

Ideas of ethnic territoriality are imagined or created by local actors on a daily basis and become embedded into society and communities becoming rather durable over time. Jenkins illustrates how the ritual of returning the deceased to their *ancestral* home for burial is an example of how this occurs in Kenya. Another, she argues, and in doing so, goes one step further than Lonsdale's three classifications of how claims to land entitlement occur in Kenya, is by suggesting 'domination', along with the already existing, understanding, controlling and working.[123] The domination factor occurs when ethnic enclaves are formed by migration of people to major cities and town in search for work, where by one ethnic groups becomes the dominant one.

As a result, the more *plastic*, or more easily changing idea that both she and Lynch agree on, of *guests*, *immigrants* or *ethnic others* come to light. This occurs when the

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[120] Harniet-Sievers, A & Peters, R (2008) "Kenya's 2007 General Election and its Aftershocks", *Africa Spectrum*, 43(1), p.136.

[121] Jenkins, S (2012) "Ethnicity, Violence and the Immigrant-Guest Metaphor in Kenya", p. 576.

[122] Ibid. p.576.

[123] Ibid. p.593.

host community *welcomes* members of ethnic communities onto what they perceive as their territory. The crucial factor in this is that these "so-called foreigners do not enjoy the same kind of naturalised claims as *locals*",[124] and are often given second-class citizen treatment. Coupled with this, *guests* are also expected to conform to rules of hospitality, particularly in terms of following with the political wishes of the host community.[125]

Returning to the idea of Kenyan politics being a zero-sum game goes a long way to explain how tensions arise from the complex dynamics at work that we have just described. Hostility arises when *host* communities become suspicious or jealous of *guests* and *immigrants* that may be perceived as profiting unduly from land that is 'not theirs'. 2007 saw this in abundance with tension raised against the Kikuyu who were seen as benefitting much the same way that the Kalenjin had done so under Moi and KANU's rule. All of a sudden, someone who in times of low political tension was seen as a welcomed guest, all of a sudden, with the stakes on the line, becomes an unwelcome intruder. Jenkins stresses the fact, that it is not important whether the *immigration* population is involved in politics, but whether it does so in direct opposition to the *host's* political orientation.[126] That is when tensions arise, and this is how it happened in 2007 across the country. Harniet-Sievers et al, also agree with Jenkins and Lynch that it was these, "long-standing conflicts over land and social injustice (that) fuelled the violence".[127]

However, as we have said, it was the meeting of elite-driven and bottom up pressures that contributed to events of 2007. From a top-down view, "evidence suggests that, as in the past, ethnic entrepreneurs and political brokers played a significant role in instigating the violence".[128] Those that were able to play on the local narratives and instrumentalise ethnic differences further fuelled the violence that left close to 1500 deaths and over half a million people displaced and the country gripping onto the edge of descending into civil war.

Conclusion

This paper has attempted to show how, over the course of Kenya's post-Independence history since returning to multi-party politics; ethnicity has been used as an extremely effective mobilising factor. This has been done, contrary to the majority of studies focusing on elections before 2007, by the meeting of both elite-driven and top-down pressures and bottom-up, local level, everyday issues. The fundamental aspect has

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[124] Lynch, G (2013) "The Politics of Ethnicity, p. 101.

[125] Jenkins, S (2012) "Ethnicity, Violence and the Immigrant-Guest Metaphor in Kenya", p. 577.

[126] Ibid, p. 584.

[127] Harniet-Sievers, A & Peters, R (2008) "Kenya's 2007 General Election and its Aftershocks", p.131.

[128] Keller, E (2014) *Identity, Citizenship, and Political Conflict in Africa*, p. 122.

been to acknowledge the presence of both pressures from opposite directions and the complex forms that they take, and how they differ over time.

The paper has also tried to link these four major points in the countries history, by arguing that they have not been independent of each other but rather inextricably flow from one to the next, with the events of 2007 being the culmination of 25 years of tension building up. Over the years, ethnicity has been interpreted as primordial, where by certain communities have claimed land as being theirs, *ancestrally*. Elite politicians have capitalised on such narratives to instrumentalise these ideas of ethnicity and manipulate communities against each other, in order to gain power, in forms of political tribalism. Yet, it is impossible to ignore the roots of all this laying with the colonial experience, while "more recently, economic underdevelopment and declining resources have sparked off all manner of ethnic rivalries".[129]

Both Mwakikagile and Jenkins agree when they conclude their analysis, by noting that the tribe remains a defining feature of almost every African society, and while old tensions still linger, the potential for implosion is not too far off.[130] It is the fact that the narratives we have looked at hold both durable and synthetic features that pose a problem for the potential for further violence and the prospect of democracy in Kenya.[131]

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[129] Ajulu, R (2001) "Kenya: One Step Forward, Three Steps Back", p. 211
[130] Mwakikagile, J (2007) *Kenya: Identity of a Nation*, South Africa: New Africa Press, p.165.
[131] Jenkins, S (2012) "Ethnicity, Violence and the Immigrant-Guest Metaphor in Kenya", p. 576.

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