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Cote d'Ivoire:
Responsibility to Protect, Electoral Violence and the 2010 Crisis

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Abstract: The Responsibility to Protect (RtoP) is a highly contested doctrine when authorized or not. Yet, the need to safeguard civilian populations from mass atrocity remains urgent with Cote d'Ivoire's post-election violence being instructive. Numerous studies have interrogated the nature of the conflict and subsequent interventions in Cote d'Ivoire, yet only a few seem to focus on the intervention process, outcome and implications for future application of the RtoP. This highlights need for deeper interrogation of the issues emerging from United Nations Security Council's execution of Resolution 1975 in Cote d'Ivoire and the wider implications for the doctrine. While the Ivorian crisis meets the just cause criteria for RtoP authorizing, its execution in the Cote d'Ivoire exposed some challenges for the emerging doctrine. Challenges encompassing conceptual ambiguity, institutional issues and operational lapses leading to mass violation of rights of the civilian population by intervention forces, and the delegitimizing question of regime change. Future application of the RtoP must be context-specific accounting for the peculiarities of the environment where it is authorized; ensure effective monitoring and evaluation of the process and the actors involved; review of the thresholds for armed interventions; must engage local populations in the peace process and; must be backed by political will of both international and regional actors

Keyword: Responsibility to Protect, Humanitarian Intervention, Mass Atrocity, Electoral Violence, Cote d'Ivoire.

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Introduction

By the early 1990's, a majority of Sub-Saharan African countries were caught up in a wave of democratic transitions (Lynch & Crowfard, 2011). The era was marked by the unprecedented shift from authoritarian civilian and military regimes to multi-party democracies (Burchard, 2015). Though these countries adopted the institutional structures of democracy, they clearly failed to imbibe its more fundamental ethos and, as such, continue to display significant deficits in the operation of crucial liberal values years into the wave of transitions. Against popular expectations, elections as critical lynchpins of democratic practice have been no more than formalities to legitimize autocratic regimes rather than to give voice to the electorate. Electoral corruption has been institutionalized and often stirring up electoral violence (Lynch & Crowfard, 2011). To this end, Africa is faced with a transition crisis where election related violence has emerged as the most prominent kind of political violence across the continent. During this period, almost 60% of all African general elections were marred by violence with 20% these cases recording high levels of fatality (Straus, 2012).

Cote d'Ivoire is a prime example of this state of affairs. Once seen as a beacon of political and economic stability in Africa, the country has spiraled into violence in the wake of the 2010 presidential elections. Old grievances with ethnic roots resurfaced as the two main contenders incumbent, Laurent Gbagbo and challenger Alassane Ouattara, each from competing ethnic groups, vied for the top political position in the country. Against official poll results pointing to a victory for Ouattara, Gbagbo declared himself winner even and ordering widespread security clamp down on key members of the opposition and their protesting supporters.

With the two feuding politicians holding inauguration ceremonies and moving to consolidate their competing claims on power, the resultant showdown between their supporters ignited the violence lasting for the first four months of 2011 (Vasco, 2011). To deter Gbagbo from further acts of aggression, a series of bilateral and multilateral actions, including diplomatic isolation, non-recognition of his new cabinet, travel ban and financial embargoes were imposed on him and key members of his cabinet (Cook, 2011).

Prior to the crisis in Cote d'Ivoire, the international community had taken note in the post-Cold War era of the shift from interstate to intrastate conflict which had accompanied the wave of democratic transitions in much of the developing world and Africa, as well as the high numbers of civilian casualities arising from these conflicts (Straus & Taylor, 2012). A major response to these concerns was the adoption of the Responsibility to Protect (RtoP) doctrine as a framework for the protection of the civilian population from mass atrocities, including war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide and ethnic cleansing.

The RtoP emerged out of international efforts spearhead by Canada under the aegis of the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS), formed in 2001 to institutionalize the "*never again"* mantra as universal call to the protection of vulnerable civilian populations. Accordingly, the 2005 World Summit Report, paragraphs 138–140, outlined that states held the primary responsibility for protecting their civilian populations from mass atrocities. It emphasized the responsibility of the international community to assist and encourage states, especially developing ones, in the implementing of this responsibility. Also the international community has a responsibility to deploy diplomatic, humanitarian and other necessary measures in the protection of these populations from these crimes. This may follow when a state demonstrates express inability or unwillingness to protect its citizens. This responsibility placed on the international community was construed as a moral obligation to take collective action to halt these crimes wherever they occur in line with the United Nations (UN) Charter (UN General Assembly, 2005).

The 2010 Cote d'Ivoire's crisis was a poster case for how unresolved issues of ethnic identity and insecurity weaponised by elite politics can rapidly degenerate into violence. Following the failure of diplomatic channels of resolution, the UN and major regional organisations—the African Union (AU) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)—saw the adoption of Resolution 1975 (United Nations, 2011), empowering the international community as a coalition to, in line with its mandate, protect civilians and end the crisis by all means necessary (Cock, 2011).

The crisis and the intervention that followed provides a unique opportunity to interrogate the very character of the RtoP and its mechanism as they operated in Cote d'Ivoire. What gains, impact, challenges and implications for future of RtoP emerged from the 2011 Cote d'Ivoire intervention? A few studies have attended to the intervention process and it outcomes, yet there remains a need to cast a more critical light on the intervention in order to better appreciate its impact on Cote d'Ivoire and long term implications for the application of the RtoP in the future.

This paper presents a number of arguments viz (i) regardless of its positioning as a framework for the timely protection of civilians, the Cote d'Ivoire crisis demonstrates that the definition of cases and crimes that qualify for RtoP intervention remain ambiguous, (ii) great power politics factor heavily into decisions to intervene or not and (iii) the inability of regional organizations, particularly the AU, to take effective control of the Ivorian situation provided France with the excuse to stretch the Resolution 1975 mandate to include a regime change. These factors have coalesced to deepen the institutional, conceptual and operational challenges plaguing the RtoP as well as reinforcing negative views of Western liberal interventionism as agency for advancing narrow national interests by a few states thus shrinking the probability that RtoP will gain support for authorization in potential sites of mass atrocities across the world.

RtoP and the Electoral Violence in Cote d'Ivoire:
Theoretical Insights

Electoral violence are actions, whether spontaneous or calculated, manifested as threats, intimidation, hate speech, disinformation, physical assault, blackmail, destruction of property or assassination at any phase of the election cycle, aimed at influencing an electoral process and its outcome. According to Fischer (2002), violent conflict may exert negative consequences on any nation's electoral process but the degree of victimization may vary from case to case and country. Creevey *et al*. (2005) highlight two crucial features regarding elections in African democracies, (i) the proliferation of political parties and (ii) ethno-regional crisis. They argue that the proliferation of political parties and electoral violence in the wake of dismantled authoritarian regimes that hither to suppressed opposition politics is driven by political leaders cashing in on the third wave of democratization but not necessarily keen on abiding by its overriding foundational tenets including compromise and tolerance.

While elections remain crucial to the democratization process, Bratton (1998) argues that their regular conduct does not automatically translate to mean presence of a democracy. For him, the conduct of elections does not necessarily guarantee a successful transition, except the process of electoral administration is marked by high levels of transparency, accountability and integrity on the part of organizers and contenders. Within the African context, the new norm is the frequent and regular holding of elections which does not however does not necessarily mean the practice is free and fair. On the contrary, malfeasance including inflation of voters carried on voter register, use of violence as campaign strategy, intimidation of voters and opponents, ballot box snatching, ballot box stuffing and vote buying are becoming endemic (Lindberg, 2006). Besides the fact that elections support modern democracies by providing the citizens opportunity to select their leaders, they are also depending on how they are managed, veritable mechanisms to bridging political divides between competing groups and factions, thus acting as a medium for terminating protracted political conflicts.

The present character of conflict in Africa has led not only to the broadening of the scope of Chapter VII of the UN mandate on peacekeeping operations, but also to the initiation of the RtoP doctrine as an emerging framework for the protection of civilian populations, particularly in the face of humanitarian catastrophe with Kenya being the first theatre where it was applied. Kenya's crisis erupted from disputed presidential elections conducted amidst rising insecurity, widespread corruption, massive human rights abuses and state sponsored violence. Against expectations from certain sections, the announcement of incumbent Mwai Kibaki as winner ignited fresh violence leading to the death of about 1,000 civilians with many displaced. Efforts to curtail the spread of the violence led to the setting up of a AU mission led by Kofi Annan to observe the humanitarian situation and to work out a peace deal between Kibaki and his challenger

Raila Odinga (Sharma, 2010). The application of the RtoP here remains unique in the sense that it executed its mandate applying only the non-coercive provision of the doctrine. It's success impressed on the UN General Assembly, the value of proactive non-violent conflict resolution initiatives and facilitated the inclusion of a International Criminal Court Procedure as component of the RtoP, an action which nonetheless remains divisive (Junk, 2015).

In Zimbabwe, after disputed rounds of presidential elections, violence broke out leading to mass raping, torture, mutilations, massive human rights violation, as well as state sponsored violence on members of the Movement for Democratic Change. While assessing the humanitarian situation in Zimbabwe, Ban Ki Moon not only called for an end to hostilities, but reminded the government and key political leaders of their responsibility to protect civilians (UN News, 2009). Following arguments and counterarguments whether the situation met RtoP authorizing thresholds, the international community adopted RtoP as a framework for ending the crisis. Implementing RtoP here also did not include the use of sanctions or military force (Thakur, 2010).

In Cote d'Ivoire, following second rounds of presidential elections, violent conflict erupted among supporters of the two main contenders – Laurent Gbagbo and Alassane Ouattara. Quickly assuming ethnic dimensions, the state deployed overwhelming security forces against Ouattara supporters. In view of the state's military action, France, leading an international effort sought and received authorization from the UN Security Council on 30 March 2011 under UNSC Resolution 1975 to intervene militarily in Cote d'Ivoire. Adjudging Gbagbo's security attacks on civilian population as constituting crimes against humanity, the Resolution called for the use of "all necessary means" to protect civilians, including prevention of "the use of heavy weapons" by the military (Cock, 2011). Security experts agree that the resolution represented a fundamental shift from the era of non-intervention as well as demonstrating the willingness of the UNSC to employ military action against perpetrators of atrocities (Serrano, 2011).

Since the intervention in Cote d'Ivoire, there have been commendations, condemnations and criticisms aimed at the execution of the process and the RtoP in general. Some experts have therefore, justified AU's intervention through Article 4(g) & (h) which empowers it to bypass state sovereignty on account of mass atrocities against civilian populations (AU, 2000), as not only timely but prompt. IRIN (2013), observed that a humanitarian catastrophe was imminent in the country and the AU and the international community's intervention saved lives. Within the general context of escalating conflicts in Africa and Cote d'Ivoire, in particular, the intervention was critical (Abatan & Spies, n.d). What distinguished this intervention was that, besides protecting Ouattara and key members of his cabinet, it created space and time for international diplomacy aimed at persuading Gbagbo to compromise prior to the adoption of Resolution 1975. For Martins (2011), the Resolution was thus timely in responding to Gbago's instigation of attacks

on civilian population loyal to Quattara. Combined experiences from Cote d'Ivoire and other sites of atrocities like Libya, support the choice military intervention as effective policy for responding to such violence fuelled by recalcitrant leaders.

Other experts have also criticized the intervention in Cote d'Ivoire on observations ranging from poor understanding of the nature of the conflict and by extension the type of intervention best suited to addressing it as well as other issues bordering on lack of consensus and political will among African states and leaders. They have also drawn attention to the need for evolving better, more effective means of getting warring factions/parties to commit to peace agreements as well as emphasis on engineering more effective conflict resolution frameworks. Equal value has also been placed on the role of dialogue in achieving conflict resolving compromise (Ramis, 2011). Arguments here draw attention to the fact that as practicalised by the use of non-military force to resolve the post-election conflict in Kenya and Zimbabwe, the use of force in Cote d'Ivoire's case was not justified as the use of the non-coercive elements of the RtoP were not explored to their full extent.

While some commentators have praised the AU's role in the Cote d'Ivoire intervention, Rupiya (2012), contend that their effectiveness in conflict resolution was hampered by many factors including the Arab Spring and political instability that ensued in its wake. Thus, by the time of Cote d'Ivoire crisis, the AU was already experiencing intervention fatigue. They were as such constrained by numerous problems by the time the UN moved for intervention in Cote d'Ivoire. The intervention itself exposed fundamental weaknesses in the AU's own conflict resolution architecture typified by its inability to match words with actions, non-compliance with obligations by member states, non-ratification of critical protocols and clear over-dependence on the international community in terms of finance and logistics.

Stemming from this, a section of experts continue to perceive the AU as being no more effective but just as inept as its defunct predecessor, the Organisation of African Unity. For many, also, the Cote d'Ivoire put clarion calls such as 'African solutions to African Problems' to the test and came out as empty talk lacking substance. This positions are energized by the AU's slow and fractuous road to a final decision on the crisis and the decision deadlock that paved the way for the foreign intervention spearheaded by France which relegated the AU to an assisting role (Apuuli, 2012). Other studies have also interrogated the intervention in Cote d'Ivoire's post-election crisis through lens of the international community's adoption and application of Resolution 1975. Some argue that the RtoP was merely the high point of the build up of the series of the UN's Operation in Côte d'Ivoire since 2004.

Thakur (2011) argues that while whether international military action in Cote d'Ivoire would consolidate or weaken the RtoP norm remains unclear, what is clear is that the(se)

interventions signalled a fundamental rebalancing of interests and values. They add that, regardless of the debates against intervention, the alternative of standing idly by would only have added more weight to evidence of the international community's inability to act in protection of civilian populations against mass atrocities. Albright and Williamson (2013), contends it is erroneous to suggest RtoP applies only in certain high profile cases. They claim the post-election fracas in Cote d'Ivore, leading to the killing of hundreds and displacement of over 450,000 people, was indeed a justifiable cause for international intervention through the RtoP in the country.

On their part, Bellamy and Williams (2011) argue that the international community's response to the crisis stands out for four reasons. First was the ability of the UNSC to label the crisis in terms of humanitarian catastrophe and justifying the need for protection; secondly, the willingness of the UNSC to authorize the use of force; thirdly, the increasing role played by regional organizations as important gatekeepers, actively affecting the framing of issues and the acceptable set of policy options open to the Security Council; fourthly, the impressive commitment of the international community in collaborating with the Security Council to determine responses to the catastrophe. They conclude that lessons from Cote d'Ivoire and other places like Libya, Kenya and Guinea, underly the need for institutional synergy between the UN and regional organizations for effective interventions.

The intervention has also been dogged by criticisms of ambiguous interpretations of the UN mandate. Amidst sustained attacks on UN peacekeepers and civilians by Gbagbo loyalists, the UN displayed reluctance to implement its mandate provided for in UNSC Resolution 1528 which clearly permitted the use of force to protect civilians if government forces found themselves unable to do so. This, in part, emerged from the narrow understanding and interpretation of Resolution 1975 which left the UN undecided as to whether to use force to protect civilians or not. Consequently, not reacting in the face of the growing threat and hatred in Cote d'Ivoire had persisted even though the situation was recognized as having the potentials to go down the path of a Rwanda-like genocide (Zounmenou *et al.*, 2012).

Regardless of the debate generated by the UN intervention in Cote d'Ivoire, the intervention's neutralization of Gbagbo's National Defence and Security Forces (NDSF), protection of civilians and rendering assistance to Ouattara's forces in the capture of Gbagbo represented a critical step in averting a generalised armed conflict situation which would have destabilized the country and the entire sub-region. While the three month crisis left about 3000 killed, large-scale massacre and destruction was forestalled. For all these achievements, the intervention left Côte d'Ivoire more divided and with a weakened central government and state capacity (Zounmenou & Lamin, 2012).

Background to the 2010 Cote d'Ivoire Post-Election Crisis

Elections in Africa have become increasingly a violent affair. Election-related violence are emerging as consequences of the seemingly uphill task of institutionalizing liberal democratic values on the continent. Cases abound across the continent of states who have recorded violence at different stages of the election cycle instigated by electoral malfeasance and contested outcomes. The turn of events in the 2010 Ivorian Presidential Elections and the run-offs are typical studies in the emerging trend of post-electoral violence.

Three decades of stability in Côte d'Ivoire under its first president Felix Houphouet-Boigny was interrupted by a chain of events including bad blood from election-related violence in 2000, a civil war fought between the 2002 and 2010, a controversial political succession debate and an ill-negotiated transition under a military junta that came to power via a relatively peaceful coup in 1999 all of which coalesced in an incendiary situation that was set off by a disputed runoff presidential election held on November 28, 2010 between incumbent president, Laurent Gbagbo, and former Prime Minister turned into the opposition leader, Alassane Ouattara.

Prior to this, both contenders had come out neck to neck in the first rounds of elections where the president polled 38% and his main challenger, 32% of total votes cast in October 31, 2010 presidential elections. With each candidate claiming to have won the runoff, under separate inaugurations took the oath of office then proceeded to form parallel governments with a full compliment of cabinet. Claiming to be the legitimate executive, each began implementing steps to consolidate their position (Cook, 2011).

Citing the Constitutional Council's decision, Gbagbo claimed to be the clear winner and rejected local and international calls to step down. With early projections pointing to a Ouattara win, the Constitutional Council's decision was preceded by coordinated efforts by Gbagbo supporters to discredit selected runoff polls and prevent their announcement by the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) following concerns Gbagbo would not emerge winner at the polls. They orchestrated disruptions aimed at delaying the collation process to extend beyond the three-day deadline required by the IEC for the validation of the election results. Sustained actions to subvert electoral outcome, on December 1, led Damana Adia Pickas, a member of the IEC nominated by Gbagbo to seize and tear up the provisional IEC results on live television preventing Bamba Yacouba, the IEC spokesman, from making the announcement. This disruption caused the IEC to miss the legal deadline for announcing the results. This served as basis for the Constitutional Council's review and rejection of the IEC's conclusion (Cooks & Coulibaly, 2010).

Both sides in the standoff resorted to the use of violence and intimidation and that caused the killing of dozens of people. Under the pretext of public security, Gbagbo imposed a curfew which was defied by Ouattara supporters in Abidjan taking to the

streets in protest. Their protest was met with a heavy security clampdown resulting in the death of five people with many others injured. The Constitutional Council on the claims of pervasive rigging in the North canceled 660,000 Ouattara votes and delivering the elections to Gbagbo. This sparked fresh rounds of violent demonstration on December 16, again met with state sponsored violence that killed at least eleven civilians. Straus and Charlie (2009) identified two main dynamics to the violence: repressive violence directed at urban demonstrators, northern Muslims and West African nationals by Gbagbo's forces and reprisal violence between rural ethnic minority groups in the country's West.

The prevailing violence set the tone for the humanitarian situation in Cote d'Ivoire. By early 2011, the international community was confronted by an increasingly volatile situation. The present threat to civilian populations led UN and French forces already in Cote d'Ivoire to shift focus from peacekeeping to civilian protection. Though Gbagbo's de facto regime continued to receive the support of de jure authorities, it perceived the UN peacekeepers as partisan enemies. The situation was also marked by a stalemate from the start regarding actionable efforts to defuse the crisis and protect civilians. AU leaders under Article 4(h) of the AU Constitutive Act, initiated regional efforts to break the impasses and resolve the crises. ECOWAS on December 24th, through a delegation made up of the Presidents of Benin, Sierra Leone, and Cape Verde asked Gbagbo to cede power or face use of legitimate force against him. On its second mission to Cote d'Ivoire, the delegation on January 4, 2011, announced a breakthrough indicating Gbagbo's willingness to negotiate without any preconditions (Richard, 2012).

Regardless, the atmosphere remained tense on account of Gbagbo's unyielding hold on power and unwillingness to compromise. ECOWAS resolving to adopt stiffer measures in dealing with Gbagbo at an extraordinary session convened in Abuja on December 24, reaffirmed their recognition of Ouattara as legitimate President of Côte d'Ivoire (ECOWAS, 2010, para. 7). They expressed support for the existing sanctions imposed on Gbagbo by regional organisations and the international community. The Organisation resolved to pursue other measures of last resort should Gbagbo continue to fuel the impass including the use of legitimate force (ECOWAS 2010, para. 10). The heads of state and governments mandated the ECOWAS Commission President to convene an urgent meeting of the Organization's committee of Military Chiefs to draft actionable options should Gbagbo continue to disregard their message (ECOWAS, 2010, para. 11).

The Committee sat in Abuja from 29th to 30th December, and in Bamako from 18th to 19th January, 2011 to draft options for the forceful ousting of Gbagbo if diplomatic options failed. ECOWAS commitment to end the conflict quickly buckled as contemplated military action was halted by opposing positions among its leaders over how to implement the intervention. Progress stalled due to lack of political will and dissensus. Ghana, for one, displayed its unwillingness to contribute troops to the ECOWAS regional force

to remove Gbagbo arguing that its military being tied down in peacekeeping operations globally, including Côte d'Ivoire. This politics of delay paved the way for the UN intervention with France playing the leading role.

**The RtoP, Electoral Violence and Regime Change in Cote d'Ivoire:
A Critical Analysis**

The RtoP represents efforts on the part of the international community to circumvent constraints institutionalized by traditional notions of sovereignty in responding to humanitarian crisis within the borders of sovereign states. It aims to re-conceptualize the Westphalian interpretations of sovereignty as a right to be earned as opposed to being the inalienable right of sovereign states. It, as such, outlines conditions allowing the international community to insert itself into the process for the prevention or halting of ongoing mass atrocities against civilian populations in supposedly sovereign nations.

The international community, under the UN Charter and acting through the UNSC is obligated to intervene in a state displaying a clear inability or unwillingness to protect, or actively deploying deadly force against its or sections of its civilian populations. The RtoP encompasses three specific responsibilities to, (i) prevent, (ii) react and, (iii) rebuild. This multiphase conception of the RtoP developed by the ICISS necessarily broadened prior conceptions of international intervention emphasizing that any effective response to mass atrocities need not be merely reactive but go beyond to focus on sustained engagement to 'prevent' new conflicts and to 'rebuild' society after intervention (Stahn, 2007).

Motivated by the AU and ECOWAS' inability to act with common resolve in the face of Gbagbo's unwillingness to handover power to Ouattara and the increasing violence, the international community apprised the Ivorian government of its manifest failure to protect its citizens. Following a series of failed diplomatic interventions, the UNSC, on March 30, unanimously passed Resolution 1975 recognizing Ouattara as President, condemning Gbagbo position and authorizing the United Nations Operation Cote d'Ivoire (UNOCI) to 'use all necessary means' to protect civilians in the country. The Resolution also imposed travel ban and assets freeze on five individuals determined to have obstructed the reconciliation process efforts and perpetrated violations against human rights and international humanitarian law.

French intervention under the auspices of the UNSC Resolution was crucial to the ousting of Gbagbo. France deployed scores of soldiers and 30 armored vehicles to assist in Gbagbo's arrest. On April 11, 2011, the attack launched by the FRCI on Gbagbo's residence led to his arrest and transfer to the North of the country to be held in detention before being handed over to the International Criminal Court along with his wife to face charges of crimes against humanity. Gbagbo's arrest and detention followed by the swearing-in of Ouattara as President marked the end of the post-election crisis in Cote

d'Ivoire with the AU's Chairperson declaring the AU's intent to fully engage its rightful role in the peace consolidation process (AU, 2011).

Since the collapse of Gbagbo's regime, the intervention process and its outcomes has been the focus of emerging discourse involving the RtoP as implemented in Cote d'Ivoire. These issues may be subsumed under three broad areas, institutional, conceptual and operational. Prominent were the questions of conceptual ambiguity, application, as well as the problem of identifying who is a civilian needing protection and, from what? Prior conflicts like Libya's had exposed urgent need for the RtoP doctrine to clarify who is a civilian and who is not. The urgency of the matter especially in the post-Cold War era emerges out of the fact that while civilians have increasingly become targets of violence during periods of armed conflict, they have also been implicated as perpetrators of violence and atrocities. In Cote d'Ivoire's case, civilians suffered casualties from aerial bombardments executed by French warplanes, they also inflicted violence on fellow citizens. The blurred conceptual line between RtoP and traditional peacekeeping have meant that peacekeeping missions are confronted with operational challenges especially in the interpretation and execution of their respective mandates often running concurrently and simultaneous as expressed in the case of Cote'd Ivoire.

More controversial about the Cote d'Ivoire intervention was the perceived overstretching of the UNSC mandate to include regime change. This has strengthened arguments that liberal Western interventionism in the third world is a smokescreen used by 'great powers' to reward or punish perceived allies or enemies. Though the RtoP sets out to punish those culpable of mass atrocities, intervening states focused only on the atrocities perpetrated by Gbagbo's supporters and conveniently, glossed over evidence of similar atrocities by Ouattara's supporters. The seeming unwillingness of the international community to identify and prosecute all the parties in the perpetration of mass atrocities in Cote d'Ivoire suggests the selective application ofRtoPprinciples. Thus, the Cote d'Ivoire experience tends to lend strength to arguments casting the RtoP as an instrument of coercion and control in the hands of powerful western states (Wai, 2014; Mandani, 2009). In particular Mamdani (2009) states that, the RtoP is nothing but the legitimization of the desire of strong states to punish weak states without constraints of being held accountable and an attempt at the recolonization of Africa's failed states.

At the institutional level, internal Security Council politics served to hamper timely response to the Ivorian crisis. Opposing opinions among its members divided the Council on how best to respond to the crisis. While the U.S and other European members early on favoured imposition of additional sanctions, Russia and China questioned the rationale behind and opposed the sanctions. Gbagbo's refusal to negotiate eventually helped to galvanise the Security Council to adopt a united front (Bellamy & Williams, 2011). Similarly, the AU and ECOWAS were handicapped by internal divisions and a lack of coordination and coherence. Though understanding the gravity of the situation,

division immobilized them from acting. Factors fuelling these divisions ranged from concerns with significant financial costs required for the intervention, differences in tactical suggestions of the committee of defence chiefs, fear of spillover, lack of funds and political will on the part of regional leaders.

At the operational level, the capability of the UNOCI to execute inclusive measures for the protection of civilians proved problematic. Originally, the UNOCI was a Chapter VII mandate mission inaugurated in 2004 under Resolution 1528 to monitor the implementation of the Linas-Marcoussis Accord of January 2003. UNOCI absorbed ECOWAS and UN MINUCI forces deployed since the initial outbreak of the conflict in the country since 2004. Regardless, UNOCI troops were seen more as an invading force by the Gbagbo administration, instigating supporters to target them. The implication was violence against UNOCI personnel. Consequently, UNOCI in the execution of their mandate, their perceived alignment with pro-Ouattara forces as well as their response to violence perpetrated against them raised questions about their impartiality and neutrality and the RtoP as a whole, with negative implications for its universal acceptance.

Furthermore, the nature and dynamics of power politics associated with the UNSC threatened the intervention in Cote d'Ivore. For instance, there was obvious disconnect and misunderstanding in the interpretation of the UNSC mandate. The United Kingdom's representative was of the view that the Resolution 1975 did not alter UNOCI's mandate to use all necessary means to protect civilians, but reaffirmed its role in civilian protection. China's position, on the other hand, argued strongly for peacekeeping operations to be guided at all times by the 'principle of neutrality'. As such, UNOCI should act only in assisting capacity in the peaceful settlement of the crisis and avoid becoming a party in the conflict. India maintained that peacekeepers cannot be utilized as agents of regime change. To this end, UNOCI could not become a party to the Ivorian conflict.

Consequences of the 2010 Cote d'Ivoire Post-Election Violence on the RtoP

Noble as the idea of the RtoP, its application in Cote d'Ivoire has exposed issues with critical implications for its future. First, the argument surrounding liberal western interventionism and its failure to effectively address the complex problem permeated the Ivorian crisis. While the intervention may be counted successful for actually halting the perpetration of crimes against humanity, the inability of intervening states to adopt soft power options of the RtoP, as proven was possible in Kenya and Zimbabwe, suggest excessive focus on the military component of the doctrine without due consideration for its more destabilizing impacts. As such, the RtoP beyond interpretation as an honored principle for civilian protection against mass atrocities, in the same breath assumes the posture of a tool in the hands of western nations for advancing narrow national and economic interest. Therefore, applying global standards without adequate accommodation of the complexities of the social dynamics in countries serving as theatres of

intervention is making interventionism a significantly flawed framework of mediation, further jeopardizing universal endorsement of the RtoP doctrine.

Second, the excessive concentration on the military component without exploring to their full extents the potential of other principle of the RtoP such as the 'responsibility to prevent' and the 'responsibility to rebuild' has exposed concerns and the increasingly problematic challenge of reconciling the difference between humanitarian intervention and the use of force. Particularly, the intervention has proven to be counterproductive as Cote d'Ivoire still records pockets of violence and persisting plights of civilians. More so, the operational challenges associated with the intervention, such as the overstretching of the UNSC resolution to include the removal of Gbagbo, the indiscriminate use of force, aerial bombardment of civilians and, the non-recognition of the recommendation of Cote d'Ivoire's Constitutional Council suggests that the doctrine is still mired in controversies. This not only discredits its framers but also hampers the possibility of itS future application in places like Syriaand Myanmar, where the safety of civilians remain precarious.

In summary, while the Ivorian experience has put the RtoP in a bad light and re-emphasized the controversial and damning aspects often associated with liberal western interventionism, it remains likely that the RtoP will see increasing application in future conflicts as its adoption in the first place was largely demand-driven. To strengthen its position, the RtoP, will benefit from adopting strategies custom designed to account for the complexities of specific societies where they are to be executed and backed by adequate political will as well as strict monitoring and evaluation of every stage of the process and the actors involved. Also necessary is the review of thresholds for interventions and other salient issues such as question of 'right authority' and effective monitoring frameworks for carrying out UNSC resolutions. The RtoP must also improve existing local and foreign institutional capabilities to enhannce critical engagement. It must also address the debate on what constitutes intervention. Finally, there is need for the UNSC reform to align its composition with the new realities of an ever changing world.

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East Timor:
When State Repression Makes Secession Easier
(1975–2002)

Jacob FORTIER

Abstract: Why does state violence sometimes fail to crush a secessionist movement and instead facilitate international support for the separatist cause? Based on the literature on the international recognition of secessionist entities and on the impact of state repression against social movements, this paper develops an argument according to which the timing of certain repressive events make them more likely to generate an international backlash and thus facilitate external support for secessionists. To backfire internationally, state violence must occur at the right time—that is, when the secessionists have gained sufficient media attention, put in place an appropriate organizational structure, and have abandoned violent tactics for a nonviolent campaign. Using the secession process of East Timor as a case study, this paper shows how the international moral outrage that followed the Dili massacre (1991),combined with a changing geopolitical context, have boosted the foreign support of the secessionist movement in East Timor and allowed it to obtain important concessions from Jakarta.

Keywords: State repression, Secession, East Timor, Political violence, International Relations.

Large-scale state violence is a common consequence of secessionist conflicts[1]. When confronted to a self-determination movement, governments often choose repression over negotiation to demonstrate strength and intractability (Toft, 2010).

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Because both belligerents claim exclusive control over the same territory, disputes of secession often reach an impasse and turn into violent conflicts (Walter, 2009). In fact, many states adopt the repressive approach in order to deter ulterior demands for secession (Walter, 2006; Griffiths, 2016). Similarly, when secessionist groups are fractionalized, central states face less pressure to make concessions and are thus more prone to violent reactions (Cunningham, 2011). States also use repression when they expect the secessionist movement to gain enough foreign support to pose a security threat in the future (Butt, 2017) or when they treat sovereignty as non-negotiable (Sorens, 2012).

Repressive tactics against a secessionist movement might however impose a reputational cost on the government that implements them. When widely mediatized, these acts of state brutality are likely to generate a 'moral outrage' and reinforce pro-independence sentiments (Wood, 2003). Anger toward the state violent behavior may stimulate popular mobilization (Sutton *et al.,* 2014), while exposure to violence may increase political participation (Gilligan *et al.,* 2014) and affect people's attitudes toward the perpetrator (Dell & Querubin, 2018, cited in Barceló, 2018). Excessive police or military violence directed at peaceful protesters may create strong symbols of collective suffering and thus lead to 'political jiu-jitsu' where repression generates dissension within the government's ranks and potentially encourages uncommitted third party to support the opposition (Sutton *et al.,* 2014). State-directed violence also sometimes backfires in such a way that a more or less marginal cause turns into a widely publicized mass movement (Hess & Martin, 2006). Such boomerang effects where state violence stimulates the opposition it strives to suppress are expected to sometimes occur in self-determination disputes since secessionist movements are built around strong national identities and collective perceptions of government abuses, both of which could be reinforced due to repeated experiences of state violence (Barceló, 2018, p. 2).

The use of repression by central states against self-determination movements is therefore a tricky game. In fact, state brutality against secessionists have heterogeneous effects, depending on the context in which it takes place. In some cases, state repression is counterproductive and ultimately serves the cause of the secessionists by strengthening the legitimacy of their claims in the eyes of the international community and by prompting foreign interventions in the conflict. For example, several observers highlighted how the Serbian exactions in Kosovo somehow triggered an intervention of the West and paved the way for the international recognition of Kosovo's independence (Marek, 2019). Bangladesh has been recognized, in part, due to serious human rights violations by Pakistani forces (Caspersen, 2013). In contrast, previous researches have pointed out how the Russian crackdown on Chechen secessionists did little to help them gain international support (Cornell, 1999; Pavkovic & Radan, 2011). Likewise, while Nigeria's atrocities in Biafra strengthened French support for the separatist cause, they however failed to convince the great powers to grant official recognition to the secessionist state (Brucker, 2019).

Why does state violence against secessionists only sometimes backfire? Under what conditions does state repression of secessionists turn out to be counterproductive and favor international support for secession?

I argue that the timing of certain acts of state repression during a secessionist conflict is often more important than their magnitude. In order to backfire internationally, state repression must occur at the right time. More precisely, for state violence to internationally backfire and thus transform itself into external support for secession, self-determination movements must have previously adopted awell-organized and nonviolent campaign, and achieved some degree of publicity in international media. Under these circumstances, I expect a government's use of repression to be a tipping point in international support for the territorial integrity of the state. From that point on, outside powers are more likely to pressure the central state to make concessions or even initiate international interventions and sanctions against those guilty of human rights violations. By ripple effect, mediatisation and international arbitration often open windows for secessionists to organize a referendum on secession or obtain territorial concessions from the state. This is how mediatized state brutalities could pave the way for an internationally recognized secession.

Several researchers have underlined the crucial influence of state repression on the likelihood that secessionist entities obtain international recognition. However, the mechanisms through which state repression does affect international recognition are still unclear and debated. In fact, not all repressed minorities found strong support in the eyes of external actors and garnered sufficient international recognition to be allowed to separate (Sterio, 2013, p. 139). The varied international support for repressed secessionists therefore raises an interesting research puzzle and has multiple implications, the most notable being our understanding of the effectiveness of violent state repression as a political tool to maintain a state's territorial integrity.

Furthermore, although we know self-determination disputes are often violent, much remains to be discovered about the consequences of violence on the course of such conflicts. In the next section, I therefore discuss the nexus between violence, legitimacy and international recognition of secession before presenting my argument on the conditions of state repression to internationally backfire in secessionist conflicts. I finally dedicate the last two sections to a case study (East Timor) where I apply my argument and then conclude on future avenues for research.

Violence, legitimacy and international recognition

International recognition of a newly independent state is the ultimate goal of all secessionist projects. In order to achieve it, secessionists must secure external support as well as acquire international legitimacy. It is rarely an easy process, as the international system generally tends to favor norms of territorial integrity and non-intervention

over self-determination principles (Krasner, 1999). Moreover, states are usually reluctant to border changes and therefore show little interest in most separatist demands (Heraclides, 1990).

International politics, however, play a crucial role in the willingness of states to accept or promote secession (Brucker, 2019, p. 2). The evolution of international standards regardinggood governance, the protection of human rights and the right of peoples to self-determination constantly affects the positions of states towards secession (Fabry, 2010). The post-Cold War era for example introduced new set of moral norms such as the protection of minorities and democracy (Finnemore, 1996). These norms influenced the practices and strategies for recognition of *de facto states*, and encouraged secessionist entities to adopt democracy and the respect of human rights as fundamental values supposed to guide the subsequent development of their state (Ryngaert & Sobrie, 2011). The way seceding entities are treated is inconstant and largely depends on the evolution of "global normative consensus" (Fabry, 2012, p. 663). In fact, as observed by Griffiths (2018), international recognition should be somehow viewed as "a body of evolving norms, rules, and practices that determines which claimants can become independent states" (p.80). Accordingly, the 'invisible hand of the international system' tends to influence the number of new states that will be granted international recognition (Griffiths, 2014). Specific periods of world politics have thus been more prone to the emergence of new states, such as the era of decolonization during which self-determination was generally seen as legitimate for ex-colonies (Griffiths, 2016).

Since the normative environment and the distribution of power are constantly evolving in the international system, secessionists need to adapt their strategies in order to gain external support and enhance their international legitimacy. The perfect recipe for successful secession is therefore contextual. Self-determination movements strive to take advantage of changing normative contexts and integrate their demands into the moral economy in such a way as to make them legitimate (Seymour, 2017). Secessionists thus use the normative symbols that they deem the most likely to elicit external support or an intervention from the international community in their favor (Heraclides, 1992). These symbols include independence referenda (Crameri, 2016; Cortés Rivera, 2020), the provision of social services to the population (Stewart, 2018) and the use of para-diplomacy that imitates state diplomacy (Danilovich & Abdulrahman, 2017). So as to increase their internal and external legitimacy, secessionists also build solid institutions capable of maintaining good governance practices and demonstrate that the secessionist state is efficient enough to perform its core functions (Ghai & Regan, 2006; Palani *et al.*, 2019).

In their effort to connect their local struggle to international politics, self-determination movements frequently refer to human rights abuses by the central state so as to engage foreign actors in the conflict (Brucker, 2019, p. 13). Repressed rights-based movements

are more likely to generate public outrage than similarly repressed social movements based on collective identity (Wisler & Giugni, 1999).Secessionists will therefore often amalgamatethe norms of self-determination and human rights, insisting that full independence is the only way to ensure the survival of an oppressed population (Sterio, 2013). Additionally, it has been observed that offering protection to civilians against a repressive state could enhance the internal legitimacy of a secessionist movement and reinforce its local support (Terpstra & Frerks, 2017).

There is thus a permanent interaction between the strategies of the central state and those of the secessionists. In reaction to self-determination claims, central states invoke their right for territorial integrity and non-inference in internal affairs (Heraclides, 1992; Butt, 2017). Government accused of violating international norms such as the protection of human rights often use specific rhetoric aimed at their domestic society in an attempt to counter threats to their legitimacy posed by international condemnations of their repressive behavior (Risse, 2000, p. 29). Once a secessionist movement declares its independence, it is still possible for the central state to hinder its recognition. In these cases, the parent state puts in place a strategy of 'counter secession' aiming at preventing the secessionist territory to become accepted on the international stage (Ker-Lindsay, 2012). Secession conflicts, therefore, become internationalized conflicts as the two belligerents seek external support and address the international community in a struggle over perceptions and legitimacy (Pavkovic & Radan, 2011; Seymour, 2017; Brucker, 2019).

In some instances, it is unclear, however, which side triggered the violence and who should be condemned for it. The Law of Coercive Responsiveness predicts that 'governments will respond with repression when challenged' (Pierskalla, 2010, p. 118). Violence may escalate as state repression leads to new levels of instability and prompts opposition groups to reciprocate government violence (Regan & Norton, 2005). In order to draw international attention to their cause and put pressure on their home state, secessionist groups may thus initiate a cycle of violence and use the resulting political instability as a lever for negotiation (Griffiths, 2016; Griffiths & Wasser, 2019). Paquin (2010) explained how the United States, as a stability-seeking power, often preferred secession to maintaining the status quo when the latter option created too much political instability. Secessionist movements would therefore have certain incentives to use force and drag the central state into violent conflict (Griffiths & Wasser, 2019).

The strategic use of violence by secessionists is nonetheless a double edged-sword. Violence is often necessary to secure the territory and draw international attention to the conflict. On the other hand, a secessionist group capable of limiting the victimization of civilians respects international expectations and norms of warfare, thereby increasing the perceived legitimacy of its organization and the goals its pursuing (Fazal, 2013; Lasley & Thyne, 2015, cited in Flynn & Stewart, 2018). If secessionists succeed

in exposing that the central state is using unilateral violence against them, their claims for self-determination could be viewed by foreign countries as intrinsically linked to human rights protection. Conversely, when secessionists use violence against civilians, they diminish their legitimacy and risk retaliation and losing local support (Fazal, 2013). Moreover, some evidence suggest that the use of violence can be counter-productive if it comes at the expense of the use of institutional methods (Griffiths & Wasser, 2019).

In sum, international politics largely shape the development of secessionist conflicts. Self-determination groups must prove to foreign actors that granting them international recognition is in their best interest. To do so, they appeal to norms that resonate in the moral economy, they demonstrate that they will behave as a good state, and they frequently invoke oppressive behaviors of the central state as a justification for secession and foreign intervention. Specifically, self-determination movements often attempt to involve the great powers in their conflict with the central state. As Milena Sterio (2013) puts it, 'because the great powers are essentially more sovereign than other states, they may engage in interventions and cross other states' borders, in the name of preserving some higher ideals [such as the protection of human rights]' (p. 51). An international denunciation following state violence can therefore lead to a reduction in the international support granted to the state grappling with a separatist conflict (Paquin, 2010). In the face of such a reaction, the state under pressure is more likely to make concessions to secessionists. A self-determination movement therefore has a lot to gain if it manages to prove to the international community that the central state is using political repression against it.

Argument

Not all repressive behaviors result in international backlash. Some states historically resorted to violent coercion and succeeded in crushing a secessionist movement. In fact, the international community sometimes ignores serious human rights abuses by governments and chooses not to intervene in secessionist conflicts. In other cases, however, state-led violence against secessionists engenders international condemnations, government-targeted sanctions, and even military interventions. External support to secessionists is frequently linked to repressive acts by the central state and the legitimacy of self-determination claims is often reinforced when there is evidence of state failure to protect basic human rights (Sterio, 2013).

The argument I present here thus aims to clarify the conditions under which state repression of a secessionist movement turns out to be counterproductive as it triggers foreign intervention in the conflict and increases the legitimacy of secession as a solution to end the violence and political instability. My argument focuses on the international backlash unleashed by state repression, and therefore leaves aside the way in which violence backfires at the domestic level. I argue that the timing of certain

acts of repression make them more likely to generate a reaction from the international community. At the initial stage of the conflict, secessionists are normally poorly organized, lacking campaign infrastructure and media coverage. Under these conditions, the political repression is unlikely to generate popular enthusiasm for secession, nor to make the international community react. State violence could have local effects on the mobilization against the government, but without organizational structure and media attention, the movement will probably not gain momentum and fail to spread information on government's abuses. In contrast, if the central state perpetuates acts of brutality against the secessionist movement at a later stage of the conflict in which the media and organizational structure are present, political repression is more likely to attract international attention and thus backfire.

Furthermore, I argue that the best moment for state repression to backfire is after the secessionists have abandoned violent strategies and instead adopted a nonviolent campaign. Following Griffiths & Fazal (2014) argument, I expect secessionists to initially attain international media attention 'for their cause via the use of violence [and then convert it] into international support once violence has been eschewed' (p. 98). Harsh regime repression against a nonviolent secessionist campaign is often effective in increasing international sympathy for separatist demands. On the one hand, it shifts ethno-nationalist claims towards claims of respect for human rights and, on the other hand, it confirms the separatist rhetoric according to which the central state is a threat to the survival of a population (Sterio, 2013). When hard-hitting images of state repression circulate in the international media, they have the potential to arouse moral outrage and pressure foreign governments to respond so as to avoid reputational damage caused by inaction (Binder, 2015). State repression against nonviolent self-determination movements often makes secessionist disputes more violent (Sambanis & Zinn, 2006). Secessionist groups that aspire to gain international support must therefore resist the urge to respond to state violence to be seen as nonviolent and oppressed (Arves *et al.,* 2019), while provoking a violent overreaction from the state that could backfire. In some cases, foreign states will even go so far as to intervene militarily in order to 'stop the killing' (Balch-Lindsay & Enterline, 2000). In addition, external interventions to end human suffering are more likely when the central state has weak capacities and when the violence generates negative spill over effects on neighboring regions such as flows of refuges to the borders (Binder, 2015).

State violence is however sometimes effective to damper protests (Olzak *et al.,* 2003) or discouraging further mobilization against an oppressive regime (Davenport, 2008). Some states choose to target the secessionist population in order to dissuade civilians from supporting independence (Balcells *et al.,* 2020). Attacks on non-combatants are expected to alter the behavior of the targeted group (Wood, 2010). The goal is to make dissent an expensive option and to maintain the government's grip on power as well

as to preserve the territorial integrity of the state (Davenport & Armstrong, 2004). The repressive tactics undertaken by states against secessionists vary according to their intensity. The likelihood that state repression will backfire internationally thus partially depends on its severity as well as the reputation and (un)democratic nature of the perpetrator state. Barceló (2018) found no evidence of boomerang effect on local mobilization following Madrid's non-lethal use of violence against Catalan secessionists. In addition, most states, including several democracies, have chosen not to condemn Madrid for its aggressive stance against the pro-secession protests in the wake of the 2017 referendum. The reactions of the international community would probably have been more severe if Madrid had shot to death the demonstrators. In fact, extreme acts of state repression such as the indiscriminate killing of civilians are expected to be more likely to spark international outrage than softer repression.

To backfire, state violence must also be known by a wide audience. Secessionist groups lacking local support and strong organizational structures will have difficulty to communicate state abuses and ensure the information is widespread. Francisco (2004), for example, showed the crucial role of 'dissident entrepreneurs' which mobilize supporters by transmitting information in the days following repressive events. Moreover, Hess and Martin (2006) have discussed how state violence is reinterpreted or concealed in order to prevent any backlash from the opposition. Secessionists, if they want the international community to sanction the central state, must convince foreign actors that their interpretation of the repressive event is reliable. One effective way to do so is to refer to credible witnesses such as international media (Gilboa, 2005) or human rights organizations (Franklin, 2008; Murdie & Davis, 2012). States guilty of human rights crimes will often suppress information to avoid international condemnation (Martin, 2007) or claim that 'violence was used in self-defence' (Sutton *et al.,* 2014, p. 561). The great powers decision to 'portray the secessionist group as the culprit in a civil war, or conversely, label the mother state as the oppressor' is crucial to the likelihood that state repression backfires internationally (Sterio, 2013, p.57). Whether or not certain major powers decide to support the central state will greatly affect its ability and willingness to fight secessionists. In order to avoid instability in the international system, great powers might adopt a convergent position towards the conflict, or, contrariwise, compete and fight over the legitimacy of secession (Coggins, 2014). Spheres of influence and regime type could potentially shapes recognition decisions, with western democracies often aligning with the US position in the last decades (Siroky *et al.,* 2020). Democratic states are expected to respect a 'democratic peace' *vis-à-vis* their counterparts, and would thus generally refrain from intervening in conflicts of secession taking place among democratic allies (Bélanger *et al.,* 2005).

The conditions for state violence to backfire internationally are therefore numerous and that explain why so many states have violently repressed secessionist movements

without suffering international repercussions. To backfire internationally, state violence must occur at the right time - that is, when the secessionists have gained sufficient media attention, put in place an appropriate organizational structure, and have abandoned violent tactics for a nonviolent campaign. If the repressive state controls information, or is a major power with a veto at the Security Council, there is little chance that international action will be taken against it (Sterio, 2013).

Empirical strategy

My argument emphasizes the timing of specific events of state repression which are more likely to generate negative international reactions and therefore promote support for secessionists. The case of the East Timorese process towards full independence (1975-2002) is well suited for the purpose of this study because we can observe shifts in the belligerent strategies as well as an evolution of foreign interference in the conflict. Drawing on secondary sources, I track how specific repressive events triggered international condemnations and resulted in a decrease of international support for Indonesia, thus easing the path to secession and international recognition of East Timor.

I consider state violence against secessionists to internationally backfire when there are clear indications of a decrease in international support granted to the central state, or conversely, an increased support for secessionists. The empirical evidence I am looking for includes official condemnations by foreign countries, economic sanctions, Security Council resolutions, military aid and the use of international arbitration. Following Huddleston (2020), I consider international recognition as a continuous process that also includes a large set of foreign policy decisions. This research method aims to unearth causal mechanisms at work that would demonstrate that state repression tipped the balance of legitimacy in the side of the secessionists and helped them gain international support. Moreover, this work will pay particular attention to the evolution of the norms invoked by the secessionists in parallel with the state repression by considering how the rebels instrumentalize certain norms in search of legitimacy and take advantage of the evolution of international normative contexts (Seymour, 2017).

Case study

The overthrow of the authoritarian state in Portugal by a military coup paved the way for a diffuse process of decolonization and left three possible options for East Timor: continued association with Portugal, independence or integration with Indonesia (Purnawanty, 2000). The two major political groups in East Timor quickly clashed over the issue. The Timorese Democratic Union (UDT) has drawn closer to Indonesia, while the Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor (Fretilin) has championed the cause of independence. After several months of violent confrontations between different factions, it was finally the pro-independence Fretilin party with communist affiliations

that took power, unilaterally announcing the independence of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste on November 28, 1975 (Purnawanty, 2000).

Fretilin's victory was a major concern for Indonesia's staunchly anti-Communist military regime (Lutz & Lutz, 2013). The American quagmire in Vietnam convinced the Indonesian authorities that a Communist peril was at their doorstep (Simpson, 2005). In addition, a growing number of unrest in the country suggested that other unilateral declarations of independence could follow. The Indonesian government therefore feared that 'an independent East Timor would provide an example for the secessionist groups elsewhere in the country and generate subsequent instability' (Lutz & Lutz, 2013).

On December 7, Indonesia invaded East Timor (Simpson, 2005). Affirming that the political groups in East Timor have requested its intervention, Indonesia further justified its occupation as being crucial to maintain order and stability in the territory. Another justification for the invasion focused on the norms of decolonization, while Jakarta argued that the dispute in East Timor was a direct consequence of colonial oppression (Risse, 2000). It is widely believed that the invasion was launched with the blessing of the West, if not the support, particularly of the United States and Australia (Purnawanty, 2000). Two days before the invasion, US President Gerald Ford and Secretary of State Henry Kissinger were in Jakarta to visit President Suharto (Wheeler & Dunne, 2001). Kissinger reported that Americans said they understood Indonesia's position on East Timor (Jardine, 1975). The United States and its main Western allies have even gone so far as to oppose the UN's position on the non-recognition of Indonesian sovereignty in East Timor (Jardine, 1975). Australia, for its part, signed oil contracts in East Timor and in turn defended Indonesia's position on the international stage (Leaver, 2001). The British, Australian and American governments have reportedly continued to sell arms and train Indonesian troops (Pilger, 1994; Simpson, 2005).

Indonesia's invasion of East Timor resulted in widespread state violence, including indiscriminate attacks against civilian populations (Lutz & Lutz, 2013). A systematic campaign of terror was waged against groups of the population suspected of sympathizing with Fretilin. Indonesian forces carried out executions, mass rapes and various forms of torture (Lutz & Lutz, 2013). The objective of the Indonesian state repression was to terrorize the civilian populations in order to demotivate them from joining the ranks of Fretilin and thus push the secessionist rebels to take refuge in the mountains. Walter (2009) argues that the Indonesian government quickly used violence in East Timor to discourage other minorities from seceding (p.145).

In the first years after the invasion and perpetuation of political violence, the international community remained virtually silent on Indonesian abuses (Wheeler & Dunne, 2001). International condemnations followed the Indonesian invasion and the UN continued to recognize Portugal as the *de jure* administrator of East Timor (Sterio, 2013). However, international action to end Indonesian human rights violations seemed

impossible, partly due to US and UK obstruction at the Security Council (Simpson, 2005). Moreover, it appears that the conflict was initially seen as a confrontation in which violence emanated as much from secessionist troops as from the Indonesian state. Jakarta has constructed a narrative according to which East Timorese society was a violent society in which political clans and factions constantly fight each other (Haseman, 2003). Hess and Martin (2006) report that although the Indonesian forces committed much greater atrocities and that there was an asymmetry of power between the two belligerents, the fact remains that the Fretilin also used violence and in return received little support from the international community (p. 256). In fact, the international community's criticism of the situation in East Timor focused on the illegality of the Indonesian occupation, but generally ignored the violent repression and human rights abuses (Purnawanty, 2000). It has also been highlighted that the secessionist movement initially struggled to gain international attention, as the Indonesian occupiers 'exercised effective control over information, thus preventing communications between Fretilin and the rest of the world' (Hess & Martin, 2006). The separatist organization was furthermore plagued by intern divisions, which prevented it from developing a solid organizational infrastructure (Hill, 2002).

The secessionists' difficulty in gaining outside support and exposing Indonesian violence to the world prompted a shift in Fretilin's strategy (Fukuda, 2000). In the early 1980s, secessionist rebels thus gradually abandoned guerrilla tactics in mountainous terrain, and instead focused on non-violent resistance in urban context, specifically during visits by foreign dignitaries (Hess & Martin, 2006). This new strategy aimed to generate a disavowal of the international community *vis-à-vis* the Indonesian government if the latter committed acts of violence during peaceful protests. This new tactic bore fruit in the Dili massacre on November 12, 1991, when Indonesian troops opened fire on civilians during the burial of a secessionist activist (Kohen, 1999). Some Western journalists were present at the scene and brutalized by the Indonesian army (Hess & Martin, 2006). The event caught the world's attention and 'the global opinion turned against Indonesia and in favor of East Timorese independence' (Sterio, 2013). In response to the moral outrage, the Indonesian government claimed that secessionist rebels had infiltrated the group of civilians and initiated the violence. In addition, Jakarta set up a national inquiry in order to 'give the appearance of justice to the international community' (Hess & Martin, 2006). The National Commission of Inquiry concluded that the actions of the Indonesian soldiers exceeded 'acceptable standards' (Sherlock, 1996, p. 847).

The massacre therefore marked a turning point in the balance of legitimacy in East Timor. First, the massacre was a major setback for the Indonesian government's efforts to convince the international community that most Timorese had accepted integration into Indonesia (Hess & Martin, 2006). Second, the media coverage of the murder of innocent civilians on television screens around the world has transformed the attitudes

of many influential actors in Western civil society. For example, a member of the US Congress decided to support demands to end aid to Indonesia after seeing the famous images of the massacre (Sherlock, 1996). In fact, larger exactions took place before the Dili massacre and obtained little international attention (Dunn, 2003). That day, the presence of international journalists, the publicization of secessionist demands and the movement's nonviolence all played in favor of the secessionists. If the movement had not previously made its cause widely known and had not developed an appropriate organizational structure, it would hardly have been able to carry out subsequent resistance and benefit from state repression as it did. The international reaction therefore convinced the secessionist rebels of Fretilin to engage even further in a strategy of peaceful urban protests as to make Indonesia repression backfire internationally (Sherlock. 1996; Fukuda, 2000).

This specific event of repression has cost Indonesia dearly. Long-time allies of Indonesia, such as Malaysia, have criticized it for its actions (Traub, 2000; Dunn, 2003). The controversy also undermined Jakarta's efforts in the 1980s to secure the headquarters of the Non-Aligned Movement, and international condemnation of Indonesia continued in the following years (Schwarz, 1994). Affected by the international turmoil, the Indonesian government has sought to increase its legitimacy by injecting investments into the government structure of East Timor, particularly in education and health (Sherlock, 1996).

As the Cold War drew to a close, the United States no more needed to support the government in Jakarta to contain communism (Kohen, 1999). American military assistance to Indonesia was progressively cut off, a clear indication of the decline in foreign support given to the regime in Jakarta. In 1996, a Nobel Prize was awarded to a politician and a bishop of East Timor for their efforts towards a just and peaceful solution to the conflict (Traub, 2000). The announcement of the prize tarnished Indonesia's reputation, and the Nobel Committee statement advanced the 'right to self-determination of the people of East Timor' (Kohen, 2000).In addition, the Asian financial crisis of 1997 left Indonesia in need of international financial assistance, which increased the capacity of the international community to put pressure on Jakarta (Sterio, 2013).

In May 1998, after weeks of protests in the streets of Jakarta, Suharto's government lost power. His successor, Habibie, inherited 'a complex situation in which Indonesia was diplomatically suffering the heavy burden' of its abuses in East Timor (Purnawanty, 2000). It is under these conditions that the negotiations between Portugal, Indonesia and the United Nations concerning the future of East Timor were set up. Agreements authorizing the people of East Timor to decide between autonomy within Indonesia and independence were signed by the different parties (Downer, 2000). The main rationale for the independence option was that East Timor cost Indonesia dearly by 'weakening its international prestige' (Purnawanty, 2000). In response to this demand, the United Nations Security Council created the United Nations Mission in East Timor (UNAMET)

on June 11, 1999. UNAMET organized and conducted the referendum on the independence of East Timor (Maley, 2000). The United Nations Secretary General announced that 78.5% of the East Timorese people voted against autonomy within Indonesia. This meant that the people of East Timor expressed their desire to begin a process of transition to independence (Purnawanty, 2000). Following the vote, government-funded armed militias initiated a new wave of violence in order to terrorize and intimidate supporters of independence (Robinson, 2001). These latter actions gave a 'push of legitimacy' to the secessionist movement and became front-page news in every Australian newspaper (Wheeler & Dunne, 2001). On September 15, 1999, the United Nations Security Council, concerned about the deteriorating situation in East Timor, issued United Nations Security Council Resolution 1264 calling for a multinational force to restore peace and security in the country (Traub, 2000). After 'considerable pressure from the international community', the parliament of Indonesia finally recognized the outcome of the referendum (Qvortrup, 2020). Following a period of transition administered by the United Nations and after meeting specific benchmarks, East Timor was internationally recognized as an independent nation on May 20, 2002.

Discussion

East Timor's process towards independence is a good illustration of how distinct acts of political repression by the central state can generate an international reaction and ultimately backfire. The years following the Indonesian invasion gave rise to terrible abuses against the East Timorese population. It was, however, the media coverage of a specific repressive event during which state violence was used against a nonviolent movement that stimulated an international backlash large enough for the central state to compromise and allow a referendum on secession.

The argument I presented above emphasizes on the timing of certain repressive events in a conflict. When state violence is exercised at the initial stage of the conflict in which the secessionists are not sufficiently organized to transmit information about the abuses of the central state, have not yet managed to publicize their claims for independence, and have not adopted a nonviolent strategy, the state repression is unlikely to attract international attention and thus backfire. It takes time and a lot of resources to organize a nonviolent movement (Chenoweth & Stephan, 2011). It is therefore expected that state violence is more likely to backfire internationally in protracted conflicts. Moreover, why some central states successfully manage to repress violently a secessionist movement without suffering international consequences could be explained by the violent and nascent nature of the secessionist movement. If, on the contrary, the secessionist movement survives the initial repressive acts (as in the case of Fretilin) and improves its nonviolent strategy, publicity and organization, it will be more likely to succeed in gaining international support in the aftermath of state repression.

On the other hand, the analysis shows that the effect of state repression on the balance of legitimacy between the secessionists and the central state is influenced by changing international normative contexts. Since the end of the Cold War, the norms of intervention abroad to protect human rights have become increasingly important, therefore influencing the behavior of the international community *vis-à-vis* states that commit violence against their own population (Finnemore, 1996). At the same time, the evolution of international orders and their 'structural characteristics' have important implications for civil conflicts (Kalyvas & Balcells, 2010). In the case of East Timor, this is highlighted by the strategic support of the United States to the invasion of Indonesia in order to contain communism (Kohen, 1999) and the subsequent reduction of that support when the Cold War ended (Wheeler & Dunne, 2001). In fact, the post-Cold War realignment influenced several separatists conflicts (Olusesan & Basiru, 2018). The international recognition of the secession of East Timor is therefore not only the result of increased legitimacy of secessionist demands, but also of a change in the geopolitical interests of powerful states. The fight for independence in East Timor thus illustrates perfectly how the support, or lack thereof, of the great powers influences the outcome of a struggle for self-determination (Coggins, 2011; Sterio, 2013).

Ulterior research could further examine the influence of international backlashes on domestic backfire effects, as external support following repressive events seems to strengthen local mobilization for secession and generate a momentum for the separatist cause (Brucker, 2019). In the case of East Timor, there appears to be a link between the moral outrage of the international community over the Dili massacre and the subsequent protests against the government in Jakarta. Pressed by the international community to recognize human rights abuses, the Indonesian government changed its rhetoric, which in turn reinforced opposition against Suharto's regime and ultimately forced it to resign (Risse, 2000).

Future research could deepen the links between the strategies adopted by secessionists, the international support they receive, and the likelihood the central state will resort to political repression. States have a wide range of possible responses to dissent activities (Carey, 2010), and the response they choose is undoubtedly influenced by the secessionists strategy as well as the external support these latter obtain (Butt, 2017; Griffiths & Muro, 2020).

In the end, central state repression is rarely a sufficient condition for a secessionist movement to obtain international recognition, but it is most of the time a necessary one. This paper has shown how the international community forced Jakarta to make concessions in the wake of a specific repressive event. From this, we can draw important policy lessons regarding the influence of foreign countries to prevent future outbreaks of state terror and human rights abuses.

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Zimbabwe:
The Ethnicisation of Zanu and the Downfall
of Ndabaningi Sithole (1963–2000)

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Abstract: This article is an exposition of the transformation of ZANU from being, primarily, a nationalist movement into an ethnic oriented party. Since its formation in 1963, ZANU was gripped by ethnicity, resulting in factions and contestations developing among party members. These contestations developed into open conflicts along tribal lines. The paper argues that ethnicity was so acute among ZANU party members to an extent that divisions were clearly drawn along the Shona sub-ethnic groups of Manyika (easterners), Karanga (southerners), and Zezuru (northerners). The competition for leadership positions and the fighting among members of these ethnic groups resulted in the death of some members of the party and the expulsion of others from the party. It is argued in the article that the persecution of Ndabaningi Sithole and his fallout as the ZANU president was a result of the ethnicisation of ZANU and the liberation struggle. The removal of Sithole as the party president and his replacement by Robert Mugabe exhibits these contestations among the Zezuru, Karanga and Manyika ethnic groups. We argue that the deposition of Sithole from ZANU in 1975 and his castigation as a "sell-out" and "tribalist" was a ploy by Robert Mugabe and other ZANU leaders to get rid of him and to replace him along ethnic grounds. The ethnic card was deployed to serve selfish political interests. It is these ethnic contestations and fighting which also brewed conflict and enmity between Mugabe in particular and Ndabaningi Sithole, among other factors. This hatred was clearly displayed later in the struggle for supremacy between Sithole's new party, ZANU-Ndonga and Robert Mugabe's ZANU-PF. It is stressed in the article that this enmity also culminated in the denial of a hero status to Sithole when he died in 2000. We also

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argue that the deposition of Sithole from ZANU is one of the reasons why the Ndau people of Chipinge always voted for him and not Robert Mugabe in elections.

Keywords: Zimbabwe, Ethnicisation, Downfall, Contestations, ZANU, Hero status.

Introduction

The period of the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe, the 1960s and 1970s, witnessed the development of ethnicity, which on the one hand, affected the relations of the major political parties, ZANU and ZAPU, while on the other hand it affected the relations of members of these parties. This led to the split between ZAPU and ZANU in 1962 and serious conflicts and fights between members of the two political parties, especially in the urban areas of Salisbury and Bulawayo (Muzondidya & Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2008). In its worst manifestation during Zimbabwe's liberation struggle, ethnicity seriously affected Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU), leading to the death of some members of the party and the expulsion of others. Herbert Chitepo's assassination has been linked to conflicts and contestations for leadership positions in ZANU. Such conflicts had fully evolved along tribal lines among the three major ethnic groups, the *karanga, zezuru* and *manyika*. Some members of ZANU also lost their leadership positions due to the ethnicisation of ZANU. Ndabaningi Sithole became a victim as he lost his presidency to Robert Mugabe in very unclear circumstances. Such prejudiced treatment of Sithole impelled him to form another party, ZANU Ndonga, with a strong support base among his own Ndau tribe. The overwhelming support which Sithole and ZANU Ndonga received from the people of Chipinge resulted in him becoming a major opposition force to ZANU-PF and Robert Mugabe since Zimbabwe's attainment of independence in 1980 until Sithole's death in 2000. The Ndau people's vote was an indignant one since they did not understand why their tribesman lost the ZANU presidency (personal communication, 2018, May 26). Not only did Sithole lose the ZANU presidency, but he also lost the hero status due to the spill over of the ethnic squabbles from ZANU to ZANU-PF.

Ethnicity in Zimbabwe's Liberation War Politics

The history of ethnicity in ZANU cannot be fully explained and understood without going back to the period of Zimbabwe's liberation struggle in the 1960s and 1970s. The ethnicisation of ZANU should be understood in the light of the ethnic dissensions of the 1960s and 1970s in the competing political parties. The in fights in Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) in the 1960s and the formation of Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) in 1963 climaxed into a series of conflicts that took an ethnic disposition (Sibanda, 2005). Parlous divisions and suspicions along tribal lines became deeply engraved in the minds of both ZAPU and ZANU leaders and their supporters

from that period forth. Such ethnic divisions had to follow the political movements like a ghost for the whole period of Zimbabwe's liberation struggle (Shamuyarira, 1989).

However, besides ethnicity, there could be other reasons for the tensions and contestations between the two political movements, for instance, the difference in ideology and later on the granting of special treatment to ZAPU by the Soviet Union in 1969. This treatment of ZAPU by the Soviet Union left ZANU in a delicate situation with the only option being that of seeking support from China (Shamuyarira, 1989). While this development served to polarise the relations between ZAPU and ZANU leaders and that of their followers, it only worsened relations that were already edgy. Ethnicity remains central to the whole drama of the divisions and polarisation which unfolded between the two political parties and their supporters during Zimbabwe's liberation struggle.

In 1963, ethnicity seized ZAPU members resulting in the fragmentation of the party. A core group of the Shona speaking members of the party, who included Ndabaningi Sithole, Robert Mugabe, Herbert Chitepo, among others, revolted against the leadership of the Ndebele—speaking Joshua Nkomo and founded a new political party; Zimbabwe African Natonal Union (ZANU) (Sithole, 1999). The breakaway ZANU members explained the causes of the split between ZAPU and ZANU as a lack of confidence in Joshua Nkomo's leadership. They indicated the differences they said existed between them and Joshua Nkomo. They argued that they differed with Nkomo in their war strategies, for they said they supported a policy of carrying out the struggle from within Southern Rhodesia rather than depending on international support. However the perceived difference in war strategies with Nkomo has been proven untrue, for ZANU's strategies were said to be similar to those of ZAPU. Joshua Nkomo echoed the similar strategies when he pronounced that ZANU "plagiarised its mother party (ZAPU) strategies and goals" (Sibanda, 2005). This he uttered from the fact that both parties had great faith in the fairness of the courts to decide their interests. They both engaged in foreign diplomatic relations to secure international support which ZANU had denied. Like ZAPU members, ZANU members went to foreign lands, for instance, Zambia, when their party was banned by the Smith regime (Sibanda, 2005).

However, the most convincing explanation in the member's rejection of Joshua Nkomo and the subsequent breakaway from ZAPU is the ethnic differences among ZAPU members before the break away. Ehnicity manifested itself through the conflicts that existed between the Ndebele and the Shona. Such ethnic tensions then continued to haunt the two political movements which comprised the two groups, showing its ugly face through the 1980s when Zimbabwe had already attained independence. The Gukurahundi massacres of the early 1980s were indeed a perpetuation of the ethnic conflicts of the 1960s and 1970s between the Shona and the Ndebele. From the 1960s onwards, therefore, ZANU was already an ethnic centred movement (Sibanda. 2005).

The ZAPU-ZANU split of the 1960s also resulted in factions, ethnic fights and violence in the urban areas, a situation which sharply took an ethnic dimension in Zimbabwe's political developments (Muzondidya & Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2008). From this period onwards, the struggle for national independence was dominated by ZAPU on the one hand, which comprised the Ndebele and the Kalanga speaking people and Joshua Nkomo as the president, and ZANU on the other hand, comprising Shona speaking people, with Ndabaningi Sithole as the president—(Muzondidya & Ndlovu-Gathseni, 2008). These political developments are a mirror of the political history of Zimbabwe from that period onwards. Ethnicity continued to dominate both ZAPU and ZANU. This ethnic division resulted in the political leadership accusing and counter accusing each other of tribalism as was the case of Ndabaningi Sithole and his group who accused Joshua Nkomo of tribalism and regionalism, as one of the justifications for breaking way from ZAPU (Sithole, 1998). As a result of these divisions, and as highlighted earlier on, ZAPU came to be known as the Ndebele people's party while ZANU was increasingly viewed as the party of the Shona people since they provided the party's widest support base (Masendeke, 1996). This ethnic factor became a permanent identity through to the time of Zimbabwe's attainment of independence in 1980. Thus, the ethnicisation of ZANU started manifesting itself when a group of Shona members of ZAPU broke away from the party to form ZANU in 1962.

As already indicated, ethnicity started to affect ZANU from the party's embryonic stage. Since its formation in 1963, ZANU was greatly affected by ethnic contestations and conflicts which were mainly among the Shona sub-ethnic groups of Manyika (easterners), Karanga (southerners), and Zezuru (northerners). At first throughout the 1960s and 1970s, ZANU, like ZAPU tried to deal with the issue of ethnicity, especially in party representations. The party tried to strike a balance in its leadership by having leaders drawn from the three dominant Shona groups mentioned earlier on, but this was short lived (Muzondidya & Ndlovu- Gatsheni, 2008). This resulted in the party comprising such members as Ndabaningi Sithole (Manyika), Herbert Chitepo (Manyika), Robert Mugabe (Zezuru), among others. Even the central committee of the party tried to maintain a balance in its representation especially after its 1964 congress. Elected ZANU central Committee had the following tribal and regional composition; Manyika 8 members, Karanga 8 members, Zezuru 4 members and Ndebele 1 member (Sithole, 1999). This was also the case with ZANU's war council (*Dare rechimurenga*) formed in 1965. The council was tribally and regionally composed as follows: Manyika 4 members, Karanga 3 members, Zezuru 1 member (Sithole, 1999). However, despite the efforts to balance its membership, ethnicity continued to follow the party as it did when some party members broke away from the Nkomo led ZAPU, resulting in grave hatred and suspicion as shall be shown later in this chapter. Part of the problem was the failure by party members to develop mechanisms to deal with ethnic differences. The leadership

condemned ethnicity during the day but used it by night as a political weapon which aided them in their power battles (Sithole, 1999).

The ethnicisation of ZANU became a permanent feature of the party even when it transformed into ZANU PF later. In the period after the formation of the ZANU war council, the ZANU leadership in exile saw the need to hold periodic council elections as a way to keep the party revived. While the 1964 council elections tried to maintain a balance of power, subsequent years witnessed a gradual change in this trend. Election results reflected the disappearance of some tribes from representation in the council. The 1973 war council election results, for instance, were as follows; Karanga 5 members, Manyika 3 members, Zezuru 0 members and Ndebele 0 members (Sithole, 1999). This is a true reflection of no other factor, but ethnicity at work. The ethnicisation of ZANU led to the vanishing of the Zezuru and the Ndebele from the war council. By the end of March 1975, the ethnic and regional composition of the war council was as follows; Karanga 5 members, Manyika 0 members, Zezuru 0 members and Ndebele 0 members (Sithole, 1999). This astonishing disappearance of some ethnic groups from the leadership positions in the war council makes one to think that the move to hold periodic council executive elections was a strategy by the dominant tribes to eradicate "weaker" tribes. Although the Zezuru left and joined FROLIZI in 1971, this was another split which obviously could not have occurred without dissatisfaction. This again was a result of ethnic tensions in the party. In ZANU at home, the party executive was dominated by the Shona. There was only one Ndebele, Enos Nkala, which again is another affirmation of how acute ethnicity was in the party (Sibanda, 2005).

In other incidences of an ethnic nature, in January 1975, a Manyika member of the war council, John Mataure was executed for participating in the Nhari rebellion of November-December 1974. In 1975 a Manyika member of the war council, Noel Mukono was expelled from the party for alleged counter revolutionary activities (Sibanda, 2005). It is interesting to note that such killings and expulsions were between the Manyika and Karanga dominant groups in the war council in exile in 1973. Such conflicts could not have been triggered by anything else, but a strong desire for leadership positions, with the Karanga planning to dominate and eradicate the Manyika. Ethnic differences propelled either of the two tribes to clamour for power and to outdo each other. These executions and expulsions are an exhibition of the ethnicisation of ZANU in its worst outlook. The ethnicisation of ZANU is also singled out for the death of the party's first ZANU chairman, Herbert Chitepo on 8 March 1975. There have been accusations and counter accusations as to who assassinated Chitepo, but the factor of ethnicity has not been doubted for influencing that assassination. Front line states presidents Kenneth Kaunda, Julius Nyerere, and Samora Machel held the view that Chitepo was a victim of the in fights in ZANU. In his conversation with Ndabaningi Sithole, Samora Machel stressed that "the revolution eats its own children" (Sibanda, 2005).

Chitepo, who was still Chairman of the party at his death, was a victim of the ethnicisation of ZANU which brought about the fights between the two major groups, the Karanga and Manyika, as already indicated earlier. The pro-Sithole group also shared the above view concerning Chitepo's death when they maintained that ZANU was responsible for the death of Chitepo. Ethnic contestations were also revealed on the death of Chitepo when the pro Mugabe dare group argued, contrary, that it was imperialism and its agents that were responsible for ZANU's problems (Sibanda, 2005). Such differences in the way they perceived the circumstances leading to Chitepo's death clearly shows how deeply engraved ethnicity was in the ZANU leadership. In his lengthy letter to Zimbabweans, Ndabaningi Sithole argued that by 1974 ZANU had been infested by tribalism and regionalism which resulted in kidnappings and killings which affected people such as Chitepo (Sibanda, 2005). All this is a clear indication that ethnicity in ZANU had reached unprecedented levels.

Sithole's Loss of the ZANU Presidency

Squabbles that followed the death of Chitepo in ZANU among the leadership resulted in Sithole siding with other Manyikas in castigating the Chitepo's assassination. Accusations and counter accusations ensued after Chitepo's assassination, leading to complex relations evolving between Sithole's group and members pro to the war council, who were situated in Zambia. As a result of these ethnic tensions some members of the war council openly revolted against Sithole's leadership, preferring instead, that of Robert Mugabe through the Magagao declaration of 1975.The declaration saw the elevation of the *zezuru* ehnic group in which Mugabe belonged. Through the declaration, Sithole was viewed as a hopeless and ineffective leader of the revolution, a stance which greatly contributed to his downfall (The Patriot, January 9, 2014). As a result of these differences Ndabaningi Sithole was therefore labelled a "tribalist" and "regionalist," for all the regionalists were thought to be from eastern Zimbabwe (Manicaland), which is Sithole's home area (Sibanda, 2005).

Sithole's adamancy in defence of Chitepo is seen when he indicated that he would not keep quiet about the assassination since he would be asked many questions from his constituency in Chipinge by Chitepo's family, his own children, and by the generality of the people concerning the killing. Sithole strongly felt that it was better for him to be castigated and labelled for speaking out against Chitepo's death than to remain silent about it (Sibanda, 2005). In other words, Sithole pledged to defend the position of the Manyika people than to support the Karanga. This again shows the high levels of the ethnic tensions between the Manyika and the Karanga.

Ndabaningi Sithole could not stand the ground, especially when allegations after allegations became his daily experience following Chitepo's assassination. Prior to Chitepo's assassination he was also blamed for the unfortunate situation that befell the detainees

when they were locked up at Sikombela detention camp between 1965 and 1968. The detainees mourned their prison situation which they blamed on Sithole, the ZANU president. They argued that he misled them resulting in their long stay in detention (Sithole, 1999). Sithole was also viewed as an incapacitated leader who could not bring much benefit to ZANU considering that he came from a very small tribe-Ndau, and that he came from a very remote area of Chipinge. To the other ZANU leaders these two factors meant that Sithole's following was quite negligible to build enough support base for the party. After a comparison was made with the other ZANU leaders, it was concluded that Sithole could not make the party vibrant with such a small following. He was then compared with such leaders as Leopold Takawira, Robert Mugabe and others who were thought to have the needed leadership potential and a wider support base (Sithole, 1999). Such allegations against Sithole and all the castigations alike served to widen the gap between the two competing tribes. Such ethnic condemnations in particular later served to widen the ethnic differences between the Karanga and the Ndau tribe, where Sithole came from. Ndabaningi Sithole came to be convinced, and he confessed that a leadership crisis had hit ZANU (Sithole, 1999).

Part of Sithole's blame by other ZANU leaders was that he neglected the guerrillas in Zambia and Mozambique at a time when they needed his support. His failure to spend some time with the guerrillas when he rushed to attend to his sick daughter in America in 1975 was not taken lightly by other ZANU leaders. By that action, Sithole was viewed as a failure in leading the party, and as someone who did not have the guerrillas at heart (personal communication, 2018, May 26). As mentioned earlier, he was viewed as a sell out of the struggle, a label that coasted him the ZANU presidency. This plot to oust him has been regarded by many as a coup. The coup was planned while they were in prison with the intention of elevating Robert Mugabe to the position of the ZANU president (Moore, 2014, pp. 302–318). Thus, in a dramatic way not fully comprehended by Sithole and his supporters, Sithole lost the ZANU presidency to Robert Mugabe in 1975. This became one of the worst scenarios of the high levels of the ethnicisation of ZANU. This also reveals the levels of power struggles that existed among ZANU members at that time.

The coup, however, was received differently by various circles concerned about Zimbabwe's liberation struggle. The coup, which coasted Sithole of, not only the ZANU presidency, but central committee membership as well, was received as a blessing by the Smith regime who viewed Sithole as an enemy since he had declared war against them. The Smith regime accepted Robert Mugabe as the new leader of ZANU (Sithole, 1999). However, the front line states, which supported Zimbabwe's struggle for independence, did not support the coup for reasons known to them. Their disapproval of the deposition of Sithole is shown by their insistence that he was supposed to be reinstated as the ZANU president (personal communication, 2018, May 27). Sithole's

supporters, who were mostly, people from Manicaland, and more specifically, the Ndau tribe in Chipinge, did not take Ndabaningi Sithole's deposition lightly.

Sithole's deposition actually marked a turning point in the relations between him together with his Ndau supporters, and Robert Mugabe and his ZANU, and ZAPU PF supporters later. In much clearer terms the new relationship was characterised by enemity, suspicion, and more power contestations between the two leaders (personal communication, 2018, May 26). Sithole himself obviously could not support Robert Mugabe's leadership and neither did he accept it. Signs of things not going on well between Robert Mugabe and Ndabaningi Sithole could be seen in the period following the coup. The strained relations were visible. The two leaders could no longer share the same platform in public spaces as they used to do before Sithole was dropped. Each man was now working for himself (Sithole, 1999). The supporters of the two leaders could also not hide their strained relations. The supporters clashed and fought each other over the Mugabe–Sithole controversy, and sometimes they fought using guns (Sithole, 1999).What this entailed was the defeat of the Manyika and victory of the Zezuru, which again, clearly exhibits how deeply engraved ethnicity was in ZANU. Thus, the enmity which was brewed during this period between Mugabe and Sithole was never cured until Ndabaningi Sithole's grave.

Sithole and the Ndau's defiance

Sithole, out of anger, in great dissatisfaction, and as a way to show his protest, formed another party-ZANU Ndonga. The party did not only become the product of the ethnicisation of ZANU, but the refusal by Sithole to be dropped from the political arena. Thus he ushered in a strong opposition party against Robert Mugabe and ZANU PF in independent Zimbabwe until his death in 2000. The downfall of Sithole as the ZANU president, therefore, gave birth to more ethnic contestations and differences. Sithole himself was not spared by this contagious ethnicisation of ZANU, for his new party, ZANU Ndonga, exhibited ethnic inclinations to the Ndau tribe. Thus, Ndabaningi Sithole seized to be a mere political leader but also became a tribal leader. The people of Chipinge, which is Ndabaningi Sithole's home area, became Sithole's widest support base. The Ndau people began to jealously support their fellow tribes' man in the political battlefield, partly on the grounds that Sithole's oust from the ZANU presidency was an unfair treatment of him. They failed, also, to come to terms with the fact that the oust meant that Sithole was denied the opportunity to rule the country, come independence (personal communication, 2018, May 26). This loss of political power by Sithole was also a betrayal of the Ndau people who had joined the liberation war, partly, to support their fellow tribesman. The denial of political power to Sithole was also a denial of political power to the Ndau people. Ethnicity, therefore, is a resource which, just like other political resources, is used by some politicians because they perceive it appropriate at particular times for particular objectives. The masses who are the lubricants of the political machine also

calculate that they stand to benefit in one way or the other from "our leader", or "our son", or "our homeboy", or our tribesman in power (Sibanda, 2005).

Sithole's downfall from the ZANU presidency had a ripple of effects as reflected by the way the people of Chipinge voted in elections from 1980 until Sithole's death in 2000. As a way of displaying their dissatisfaction in Sithole's downfall, the Ndau people naturally developed a strong passion for Sithole and ZANU Ndonga to an extent that each time they casted their vote in elections, they voted for Ndabaningi Sithole and ZANU Ndonga against Robert Mugabe and ZANU PF. Considering the election results for all the elections held after Sithole's oust, one can conclude that the Ndau people casted a protest vote. It became a chorus during election times for the people of Chipinge to always say "pandongapo", meaning that everyone was supposed to go and vote for ZANU Ndonga and not for ZANU PF (personal communication, 2018, May 26). In the elections conducted in Zimbabwe after Sithole's death in 2000, the people of Chipinge continued to cast an "angry" vote. They never voted for ZANU PF, and instead voted for the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) of Morgan Tsvangirai. The Ndau people viewed the MDC as a better "devil" than ZANU PF, which was their political and electoral rivalry since 1980. It was therefore clear among the Ndau people that an enemy of an enemy automatically becomes a friend as they did with the MDC. Thus, ZANU PF and its leader, Robert Mugabe, were never forgiven for Ndabaningi Sithole's loss of power in the 1970s.

Bad blood between ZANU-PF and ZANU-Ndonga was also reflected in the failure of the introduction of a one party state by ZANU PF and their Leader, Robert Mugabe. The introduction of a one party state was one of the major aims of Robert Mugabe and ZANU PF since 1980. They wanted to make ZANU PF the sole political party to which all Zimbabweans could lend their membership and support (Laakso, 2002). The existence of ZANU—Ndonga and other opposition political parties such as Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM) of Edgar Tekere, therefore, hampered such a political development. The existence of many political parties, in a way, saved the people of Zimbabwe from being forced from being members of a single party, ZANU PF, and from voting for that single party in elections.

The need to establish a one party state by ZANU PF became one of the serious challenges facing ZANU Ndonga and other opposition parties in Zimbabwe's electoral history; especially in the 1990 general elections. This is mainly because the theme of that election was the possibility of introducing the challenged one party state. This made Manicaland, mostly, a hot bed of electoral politics since the ruling ZANU PF party had to contend with the supporters of Rev. Ndabaningi Sithole and those of Edgar Tekere. The lack of enough political space for such small political parties to participate in the run up to the1990 elections resulted in the opposition parties resorting to holding small-scale meetings rather than rallies. Political meetings were often held in private homes

and were rarely announced publicly for fear of persecution (Moyo, 1992). However; this did not deter the Ndau people from voting for ZANU Ndonga against ZANU Pf. So Sithole and other opposition party leaders prevented ZANU PF and its leader, Robert Mugabe from establishing a one party state in Zimbabwe. This shows that the contestations for power between Sithole and Mugabe did not disappear with the attainment of independence in Zimbabwe. In fact their relationship became complex as it was now more of personal than political enmity. The fact that Sithole went into self imposed exile in the mid 1980s can clearly be explained, in Sithole's view that his life was in danger as a result of the political situation (personal communication, 2018, May 26, 2018).

Ethnicity and Sithole's Denial of a Hero Status

Ndabaningi Sithole's downfall was not only an experience of his loss of the ZANU presidency and membership of the ZANU central committee, but also his erasure from the political history of Zimbabwe. When he died in 2000 it came as a shock to many, and more so to members of his Ndau tribe that Ndabaningi Sithole was not accorded a hero status. Robert Mugabe and the ZANU PF government presented a cold shoulder on the matter. Their expression that they did not know Ndabaningi Sithole disturbed many who were following the political history of the country (personal communication, 2018, May 26, 2018). The implication of this denial of hero status to Sithole is that he had not made any significant contribution to the history of Zimbabwe, a situation which many, especially the Ndau people, embraced with grief. Ndabaningi Sithole was thus deliberately omitted from the political history of Zimbabwe and was "forgotten" by the ruling party and government. In fact this is one reason why Sithole has become an immortal figure among his tribesmen to this day. Thus, the denial of a Hero status sealed Sithole's fate in the political arena.

The label which he received from other political leaders in the 1970s, that of being a sell out and counter revolutionary, became a permanent mark affecting even his contribution to national history. Many still do not see any justification for his exclusion from the history of the country. On the contrary he is still perceived by many as having played a positive role in the nationalism drama. He is viewed as having conceived a vision of the Zimbabwe to be formed after the revolution, and this vision cannot simply be slipped under the carpet. Ndabaningi Sithole is reckoned by many, including his tribesmen, not as a sell out, but a veracious hero of the nation. Considering the role he played together with other known heroes, Sithole has therefore become an unsung hero of Zimbabwe's liberation struggle. His deliberate omission from Zimbabwe's national history is an indication of the strong ethnicisation, not only of ZANU, but also of ZANU PF. The other political leaders' view of Ndabaningi Sithole and his small Ndau tribe is that of a people whose contribution to national history is negligible.

The heroism of Ndabaningi Sithole is perceived by his supporters, even today, on the grounds that the formation of ZANU in 1963 was largely his brain child. He is viewed, not

only as the founder of ZANU, but also its pioneer president (personal communication, 2018, May 27). Under his leadership, ZANU attracted great support from the majority of the people in the country during the struggle for independence from British rule. It is this resounding support ZANU received which made many people to join the liberation struggle. Ndabaningi Sithole is regarded as having laid a strong foundation on which the liberation struggle came to be built (personal communication, 2018, May 26, 2018). Sithole is also fully credited for exhibiting high qualities of bravery, not only in leading the party structures, but also in declaring war against Ian Smith and the Rhodesian Front. His full participation in the liberation struggle has left a lot to be desired from his supporters, but mostly his tribesmen (personal communication, 2018, May 27). Such a participation in the liberation struggle for Zimbabwe, as other nationalists did, makes him qualify to be called a hero of Zimbabwe's liberation struggle. During his leadership as the ZANU president Sithole also fully participated in the consultation of spirit mediums (*masvikiro*) whose contribution during Zimbabwe's liberation struggle was of immense magnitude (personal communication, 2018, May 26, 2018). The wooden rod "*ndonga*" in Ndau dialect, which Sithole is said to have possessed, was believed to have been ordained by the spirit mediums and was a guiding instrument in the struggle. It is asserted that whenever Sithole pointed to the Eastern direction (Mozambique) with the rod, people made a stampede crossing the border into Mozambique to participate in the war of liberation (personal communication, 2018, May 27). Even though he was not accorded a hero status, the nostalgia which his supporters have for him is strong since they believe that he left a legacy to be cherished.

Comparatively to the experience of most political leaders and heroes of the liberation war for Zimbabwe, Sithole also experienced a painful life in detention from 1964 to 1975. He is one person who suffered under the Smith regime in a bid to liberate the country from British colonial rule. Such an experience as a detainee and political prisoner has erased any room of doubt among many concerning his hero status. He is, thus, considered by many as a hero of Zimbabwe's liberation struggle. Sithole was not accorded a hero status as a result of the high levels of ethnicity that continued to grip ZANU PF and its leadership who viewed him as a non contributor to the liberation struggle. Also, when he returned to southern Rhodesia in 1977, after having been ousted from power as the ZANU president, Sithole did not give up nationalist politics. Instead, he formed a new organisation, the African National Council (ANC-Sithole) and at times known as ZANU Sithole, later renamed ZANU Ndonga. One of the aims of the new movement was to liberate the country from British colonial rule. Sithole's new internal politics emphasised an imagination of the liberated country. The new country was thought to be a multi racial democracy with a vibrant economy. Sithole demonstrated this through his political campaigns when he dispensed cars and other rewards to his followers. However, Ndabaningi Sithole failed to maintain his political fortunes in the 1970s for he was overshadowed by Abel Muzorewa in terms of majority support. His resilience, however, left a mark to reckon with.

Sithole's commitment to the liberation struggle is seen from his writings which include African nationalism and Roots of the Revolution. These writings reveal a lot about his conception of the nationalist liberation struggle and his perception of an independent Zimbabwe. His contribution is also seen in his writing in defence of the widely condemned internal settlement in his work In Defence of the Rhodesia Constitutional agreement. In this work he stood firm in defence of the settlement which marked a transitional period from colonial rule to majority rule in Zimbabwe. Sithole's greatness is also seen from the liberation struggle when he went to China with some guerrillas to train in guerrilla warfare. It was from such trainings that recruitment for the liberation war began (personal communication, 2018, May 26). He began his recruitment among the people of Chipinge who became one of the first groups to cross into Mozambique under Sitholes leadership and guidance. His recruitment was also characterised by a strong education to the people about the oppressiveness of the colonial system. Sithole is one leader, among others, who is thought to have worked hard to stop such colonial policies as the reduction of the herds of cattle which Africans were allowed to keep in a bid to reduce overgrazing. Sithole enlightened the Ndau among other people of the fact that such a policy by the Europeans was enacted only to oppress them. It became clear therefore among many that the colonial masters did not want competition from Africans (personal communication, 2018, June 9).

Not only did Sithole contribute in the stoppage of the cattle policy, but also contributed in bringing to an end the slavery going on in Mozambique under Portuguese rule where by the people of Chipinge in particular were taken into Mozambique to labour in the cutting down of trees in order to prepare sisal. That was one of the most dreaded and detested colonial policies among the Ndau people as it led to great oppression and displacement of many people. The support and heroism ascribed to Sithole was partly due to the fact that he managed to put to an end such oppressive colonial policies (personal communication, 2018, June 9). The perception therefore that Sithole was a sell out of the Revolution is dismissed by these facts. When he died in 2000, his burial at his Freedom farm at Mount Selinda in Chipinge was a perpetuation of his downfall. The burial was conducted amidst immense grief and high emotions among Sithole's tribesmen, since he was not accorded the most awaited hero status.

However, members of his party, ZANU Ndonga believe that Sithole suffered a lack of recognition as a hero of the liberation struggle because of the nature of the politics of his days. His supporters foresee a time when history shall be revisited and corrections are made Sithole's supporters look up to a time when all heroes of Zimbabwe's liberation struggle shall be accorded their hero statuses without history being polluted by such negative forces as ethnicity and unnecessary power struggles (personal communication, 2018, May 26).

Conclusion

The ethnicisation of ZANU can be traced back to the period of the 1960s and 1970s when Zimbabwe was under siege from the war of liberation. It is during this period that due to ethnic differences, among other factors, some ZAPU members decided to break away from the party to form ZANU. That marked the beginning of the separatism along ethnic lines between the Ndebele and the Shona. Thus, ZAPU and ZANU developed into like poles along ethnic lines with ZAPU being a Ndebele people's party while ZANU became a Shona people's party. The ethnicisation of ZANU, which has been discussed at length in this chapter evolved fully into hatred and suspicion among some members of the party. Friction developed among the *karanga, zezuru, and manyika* tribes as a result of the ethnic differences. These ethnic conflicts and differences resulted, in their worst manifestation, in the assassination of ZANU's first Chairman Herbert Chitepo in 1975, and the expulsion of some members from the party. Ndabaningi Sithole, as discussed above, was a victim of this ethnicisation of ZANU when he lost the ZANU presidency to Robert Mugabe in very unclear circumstances. It is such an unfair treatment of Sithole by other ZANU leaders which led to him forming ZANU Ndonga.

The existence of ZANU Ndonga, as noted earlier, displayed another form of ethnicity, for the Ndau people treated themselves as an entity in their support for Sithole and ZANU Ndonga. During elections, the people of Chipinge always voted for ZANU Ndonga and Ndabaningi Sithole against ZANU PF and Robert Mugabe. This they did for all the elections held before Sithole's death. Even when Sithole died, the Ndau people continued to cast a protest vote against Robert Mugabe and ZANU PF.

This became a major challenge for ZANU PF and Robert Mugabe, especially considering the fact that they failed to establish a one party state due to the opposition from ZANU Ndonga, among other parties. The ethnicisation of ZANU and later ZANU PF is seen from that party's denial of a hero status to Sithole when he died in 2000. This was partly because Sithole was neither a *karanga* nor a *zezuru*, the two politically dominant tribal groups. This was also worsened by the fact that Sithole came from a very small Ndau tribe and from a remote area of Chipinge, which made him not qualify to lead, as perceived by other ZANU leaders. As a result the Ndau people agitated with grief at Sithole's downfall. However, the Ndau people still perceive that their day shall come when history will be corrected. This they anticipate considering the fact that Ndabaningi Sithole was deliberately omitted from the history of Zimbabwe. He has become an unsung liberation war hero of Zimbabwe.

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Nigeria:
Resource Conflicts and Rurality.
Implications on Heritage Assets

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Abstract: Since its independence in 1960, Nigeria has been ravaged by various categories of resource conflicts with consequential effects on rurality. These conflicts have caused untold hardship on rural communities in Nigeria to the extent that some of the communities have been deserted for safety elsewhere. These rural communities have valued heritage assets where they had leveraged on for meaningful socioeconomic recovery. This study was aimed at identifying these resource conflicts and their impacts on heritage assets in rural Nigeria. However, resource conflicts like Boko Haram, militancy, herdsmen, banditry, and communal conflicts were identified. Evidences show that these conflicts obliterate tangible and intangible heritage assets of rural communities in Nigeria, with correspondence effect on heritage transfer through memory loss. Effective international support among others was recommended as a possible option. This study has implications for the understanding of further effects of resource conflicts on rurality in Nigeria.

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Introduction

Resource conflict has to do with all kinds of disputes with causes emanating from natural resources such as land, water, oil, gold, forest, etc. (Omur, 2015; Lababidi & Hiba, 2016). These conflicts have taken so many dimensions in global politics. A further understanding on resource conflict will be hinged on four distinctive categories of

resource conflict. They include: resources that are peculiar to a particular geographical setting where there is a risk of rebellion by some kind of secessionist movements; those resources that are part of national integration agenda; those that are have been metamorphosed to national projects such as mines and hydropower generating dams, oil blocks, conservation areas, etc.; and the last category has to do with the commutative impact of small scale multiple disputes like land dispute, water dispute, farm dispute, etc. (Brown & Keating, 2015; Keating, 2015). Most of the time resource conflict emanates from struggle over resource rights. USIP (2015) defined resource right as the authority to harness and make use of natural resources. Struggle for this resource rights have caused the Nigerian nation billions of naira and loss of human lives since the last four decades.

Nigeria, as a nation, has numerous ethnic groups, with over 250 languages spoken across various cultural groups, and over 250 million populations according to 2017 World bank population statistics for nations. The nation is richly blessed with multiplicity of heritage assets (natural and cultural) that are naturally distributed across various geopolitical zones of the country (Anozie, 2002; Ofomata, 2002; Frey & Rohner, 2007; Nwankwo, 2013). These heritage assets are those natural and cultural endowments of a people that are usually inherited by the virtue of being a member of a particular community where such heritage assets are located. Over the years, more emphasis has been given to the natural resources due to their unprecedented economic values. These natural resources include but not limited to petroleum resources, forest resources, land resources, animal resources, water resources, and mineral resources like gold, zinc, and the likes. The nature of their control and management is dependent on the existing relevant public policies and that of local regulations in some cases (Nwankwo, 2013; Abara, n.d;).

However, there have been incessant struggles over the control of these resources in Nigeria since independence in 1960. These struggles have culminated to different kinds of conflicts with much effect on the rural population (Abomaye, *et al.*, 2018; Goyei, 2018). Therefore, resource conflicts can be seen as struggles and clashes that emanate from the quest for the ownership and use of natural resources. Also, Klare, Levy and Sidel (2011) defined resource conflicts as violent conflicts that are motivated by the strict competition for the ownership and control of valuable natural resources. This is extended to include minerals, land, wildlife, and other natural endowments which are classified as the heritage of man in his environment.

Moreover, it is regrettable to note that quest for the ownership and control for natural resources that are of great value, have been among key determinants of existing resource conflicts in Nigeria. The nation have been ravaged with various kinds of conflicts and violent conflicts arising from the struggle for the ownership and control of natural resources that are of great economic value (Paki & Ebienfa, 2011; Olasupo, 2013; Adelaja,

et al., 2018). Nigeria has not fared better since the inception of these conflicts. There have been incessant killings, destructions, explosions, untold hardship, and unending security issues, among others. Also, apart from the spontaneous displacement of people from their original homes, these conflicts have cost the government of the country tons of investments and other great economic loss.

Heritage assets aid in historical reconstruction and tourism promotion, with huge implications for culture and identity promotion. They include tangible heritage assets (i.e caves, water bodies, rock shelters, forests, wildlife, rock overhangs, sacred groves etc.), intangible heritage assets (i.e., festivals, belief systems, traditional ceremonies etc.) and built heritage assets (seaports, bridges, amusement parks, recreation centers, great edifices, etc.) (Ofomata, 2002; Nwankwo, 2013; Ezenagu, 2018). This study has its major focus on tangible and intangible heritage assets. These great heritage assets are irretrievable when decimated and Nigerians cannot afford to lose these irreparable values of human history to resource conflicts. To this regard, this study was aimed at identifying these resource conflicts and their impacts on heritage assets in rural Nigeria.

Background studies

It will be imperative at this juncture to look at some related studies and reports on the subject matter. For instance, Moustafa (2006) in his study on the destruction of cultural heritages in the Middle East amidst wars notes that destruction of cultural heritages is a current concern in the Middle East. These wars took place 2001 in Afganistan, 2003 in Iraq, 2010 in Yemen, 2011 in Syria, and 2012 in Libya. He concluded that these wars led to the loss of human lives, and destruction of cultural heritages. Also, Buhari and Soetan (2018) informed that the activities of organized terrorist groups have the tendencies of inflicting a far reaching destruction on community structures and lifestyles. They also informed that Boko Haram activities which began in Nigeria in 1995 have caused most of the rural communities in north east Nigeria their indigenous values and other communal benefits. This view was supported by Adelaja, Labo and Penar (2018) who assert that the activities of terrorist groups like Boko Haram has caused untold hardships on those locations where their activities are prevalent in Nigeria and other neighboring countries like Cameroun and Chad.

Moreover, Ristoldo (2017) noted that the activities of ISIL (Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant) in 2015 destroyed so many ancient artifacts in Iraq. This is similar with the destruction of Afghan Bammiyan Buddhas in 2001 by the Talibans, and the popular attacks on the Sufi Mausoleums by Al Qaida affiliates in Mali in 2012. These activities have implications on heritage memory for the concerned socio-cultural groups in the affected communities (in Afghanistan and Mali). Ristoldo (2017) further noted that most of these cases of terrorist attacks on heritage are intentionally targeted to send a particular signal not minding the implications on identity, memory and socio-cultural

lifestyle of the affected region. Hence, the need for a coordinated protection of heritage resources amidst armed conflicts and other attacks. Frey and Rohner (2007) supported the above assertions when they stated that many terrorist attacks in parts of the Middle East have been targeted on cultural monuments and other iconic monuments of great histories. They went further to state that attacks on these cultural relics of human history are carried out to get the attention of the government to respond positively and very fast to the demands of the groups.

Nimenibo *et al.* (2018) infer that militancy in the Niger Delta has affected communities in Bayelsa State more than other oil producing states in Nigeria. It has affected the socio-economic and other developmental strides as well as overall cultural regeneration, promotion and preservation. Abomaye *et al*. (2018) noted also that militancy in Niger Delta has negative impacts which includes loss of lives, unemployment and incessant business closures which has huge economic implications. In the same vein, Dialoke and Edeja (2017) worked on the effect of militancy in Niger Delta between 2006-2016 and noted that among these effects, are incidence of pipeline vandalization, kidnapping, attack on military personnel and facilities, loss of lives and properties, illegal oil bunkering, displacement and unrest among rural communities, etc. Olasupo (2013) is of the view that the militancy in Niger Delta is fueled by the poor economic condition and living standard of the people in the region. This is as a result of oil exploration and public neglect of the people. He went further to note that the crisis has effects not only on the economic lifestyle of the people, but also their socio-cultural lifestyle which has grossly been affected by the incessant state of unrest. This view is in line with the opinion of Moses and Olaniyi (2017) who added that the government should adopt peaceful dialogue with militants to curtail further damage on the socio-cultural and economic aspects of various communities that have been at the mercy of these attacks over the years.

Herdsmen attack is another destructive activity that ravages communal lifestyle in Nigeria. Tersooubwa, James and Bello (2018) noted that herdsmen crisis in Benue state is symmetric with cultural, structural and direct violence; stating causes of the crisis to include land scarcity, poor public policy, and herdsmen insistence on open grazing. They went further to note that the activities of herdsmen has caused great damage on farming system and freedom of expression of socio-cultural lifestyles among members of affected communities in their various communities (i.e., Idoma, Igede and Tiv communities, among others). This was equally supported by Abdulbarkindo, and Alupsen (2017) who concluded that herdsmen crisis has huge negative implications on the socioeconomic development of Benue and their neighboring states where herdsmen crisis has been reported in Nigeria.

From some other parts of the globe, it was reported that in Darfur region of Sudan, disputes between nomadic pastoralist herders and farmers over the migration routes

for livestock and ownership of waterholes have escalated from mere agricultural disputes to cultural, ethnic and religious difference. This resulted to loss of lives, properties and natural resources including cultural heritage assets (Higueras, 2013; Brown & Keating, 2015). Also, a village-level dispute in Afghanistan over land and irrigation water for farming was reported by a rural community survey in 2008 to have resulted in violent conflicts with attendant uprising in insurgency and coalition attacks with no regard for human lives and properties (Brow & Keating, 2015). In addition, there have been incessant unresolved conflicts over land ownership in some localities in Liberia. This was as a result of loss of land record due to the protracted civil war in the country. Unnecessary tensions have been raised in these rural communities with unprecedented effects on agribusiness investments in those rural communities (Brown & Keating, 2015). Finally, Keating (2015) noted that pressure on the available natural resources, has resulted to high resource conflicts in places like Burma, Sudan, Iraq, Libya, Afghanistan and Democratic Republic of Congo. Most of these wars were attributed to the struggle over the ownership of natural resources (Keating, 2015; Brown & Keating, 2015; Smith *et al.*, 2016).

The brief review above has been able to look at some kinds of resource conflicts and their consequential impacts on the nations, regions and communities. It also revealed that resource conflicts can have some negative effects on the heritage assets of a people. It is expected that at the end of this study, some notable resource conflicts and their impacts on the preservation of heritage assets in rural Nigeria, will be discussed.

Resource Conflicts and Heritage Assets in Rural Nigeria

The literature review in the previous section has been able to x-ray the contributory role of social stability in socioeconomic development of regions and the likes. The various variations of resource conflicts have not only been contributed to poor socioeconomic development but also to socio-cultural, religious and other values of various indigenous communities through heritage obliteration of all kinds. However, this aspect of the study investigates the various categories of resource conflict and their impacts on heritage assets in rural Nigeria.

Herdsmen Crisis

As noted earlier, this crisis has been as a result of quest for the outright use of land as natural resources. The Fulanis who are the predominant herders in Nigeria have engaged so many communities from different parts of the country on resource conflicts with scores of deaths recorded. The crisis has ravaged states like Enugu, Benue, Zamfara, Kaduna, Kogi, Adamawa, Delta among others. Many lives were lost, communities deserted for safety of human lives, comfort and peace of mind abused. In 2016, Nimbo community in Enugu state, and Agatu community in Benue state were seriously at-

tacked, many rural dwellers were killed while others fled to surrounding communities. Shrines, sacred groves, community squares, traditional museums, among others were decimated. Indigenous festivals and dances were abandoned resulting to unnecessary fear and fluctuations in the calendar of such festivals. Also, long period of absence from traditional homes affects the sustainability and promotion of indigenous values. More so, in 2018 and 2019, communities like Jema'a, and Adara in Kujuru area of Kaduna State were attacked.

Moreover, Zumoso, Bang, Gon from Lamurde, Demsa and Numan communities in Adamawa state were decimated in 2018 and 2019. Village squares were destroyed; traditional rulers who are custodian of their customs and traditions were killed while some fled to refugee camps. Many traditional rites like naming ceremonies, rituals, indigenous festivals and other traditional celebrations were abused and abandoned. Notable shrines were seriously destroyed including traditional museums that were set up by these communities to preserve their history. In addition, Ajibefun (2017) noted that "...the killings recorded by Fulani herdsmen and farmers clash has rampaged most communities displacing them of their farmlands and loss of their major source of live-lihood" (p. 134). He went further to note that most of the affected communities have lost their traditional communal lifestyles that are imbedded in their cherished culture and tradition. Bello (2013) supported this notion when he asserted that communities affected by herdsmen crisis in Northeastern Nigeria are in the state of socio-cultural and economic depletion, hence, the destruction of traditional and social structures that have been handed over through generations. The popular Durbar festival was among the victims of herdsmen crisis in Northeast Nigeria. Most of these festivals have been abandoned, some witnessed inconsistency in their circle of celebration and value, and some of them have their culture regalia and other materials destroyed, vandalized and looted.

Boko Haram Crisis

This could be said to be the deadliest insurgency movement in Nigeria that have de-stroyed lots of properties and lives, sacked communities from their original homes, rendered many people homeless, and turned many into refugees (Buhari & Soetan, 2018; Eme & Jide, 2012; Adejoh & Aly, 2014; Anumudu, 2015; Asogwa, Eze, and Kelechi, 2015; Amalu 2015; Goyei, 2018). However, it is imperative to inform that Boko Haram (Jama'atu Ahhus Sunnah Lid Da'await wah Jihad) crisis has debased the Nigerian nation since the past two decades. It has decimated natural resources like water bodies, sacred groves, shrines, monuments, flora and fauna in affected communities in Northeastern Nigeria through unexpected explosions, shootings, and vandalization. This has greatly affected the socio-cultural and economic life of members of these rural communities (Eme & Jide, 2012; Buhari & Soetan, 2018).

Many traditional festivals have not felt any good amidst incessant Boko Haram attacks in northeast Nigeria. For instance, in Yobe state, some traditional festivals have been grossly affected. A good example is the Kamti festival which is celebrated by the Ngamo people of the state to mark the end of the annual harvest. The festival is celebrated around September of every year among the clans, starting with Janga, the head of the clan. This festival does not only promote traditional values and communal living among the Nagmo people, it equally promotes agricultural practices, and hard work among the people. Series of Boko Haram attacks has affected the nature of the celebration of this festival. Visitors are now scared of taking part in the festival for fear of emergency attack from the insurgents. The Bade fishing and cultural festival is another festival that has been greatly affected in Yobe State since the emergence of Boko Haram. It is an annual celebration done among riverine communities in the state. Each of these communities have different names they call their own Bade fishing festival. For instance, it is called Idbizan in Damasa community, Fudan in Yin community, Kabbyon in Duwagaru community, among others. These festivals have lost their taste as visitors and participants have been discouraged by the activities of insurgents. The regularity and functionality of these festivals are currently hanging in the balance. Their activities were randomly disrupted by bomb blasts, shootings and kidnappings. Apart from Yobe state, traditional festivals have also been disrupted in Borno state, no thanks to Boko Haram insurgence. The festivals include the Durbar and Minwara festivals among others. Activities of these festivals have been disrupted between 2011 and 2017, even in the presence of security operatives. The festivals are gradually losing their traditional values and touristic features.

Also, some of the states in northeastern Nigeria have game reserves where special species of animals and plants are kept over the years either as totems, reserves or for touristic purposes. A good example is the Yankari game reserve in Bauchi state. Although the game reserve has not recorded any direct attack from the insurgent, but their activities are threats to peaceful coexistence in this reserve. The visitors' statistics have dropped drastically. The same is applicable to Falgore game reserve in Kano State, Kamuku National Park in Kaduna State, Kuyambana Game Reserve and Kwiambana Forest Reserve in Zamfara State, Chad basin National Park in Yobe and Bauchi States, Lame Burra Game Reserve in Gombe State, among others. Incessant sounds of bomb blasts from Boko Haram attacks have scared big games from these reserves, as well as reducing visitors' statistics since the last ten years. As such, the sustainability of the aforementioned sites and activities is under serious threat.

The reported destruction of Sukur World Heritage Site by the insurgents is a big blow on the heritage industry in Nigeria. In addition, many other sites and cultural activities in northeastern part of the country have been shunned by tourists and other visitors for fear of their lives and properties. They include but not limited to the Mambilla plateau,

the palace of Emir of Kano, Uthman Danfodio tomb, Argungun fishing festival, among others. Also, some notable reserves like the Sambisa forest, a unique fauna and flora reserve, have lost its values to resource conflicts from Boko Haram insurgents (Eme & Jide, 2012; Anumudu *et al.*, 2015; Buhari & Soetan, 2018).

Militancy

This is one of the crises that have almost crippled the Nigerian economy since the discovery of crude oil. It is as a result of the struggle for the ownership of crude oil in the Niger Delta region of the country. Crude oil is a rich mineral resource found in large quantity in South-South geopolitical zone of Nigeria otherwise referred to as Niger Delta region (Dialoke & Edeja, 2017; Abomaye *et al.*, 2018). The region houses various oil wells and pipelines alongside sophisticated oil facilities. The indigenous communities where these oil wells and explorations are located feel marginalized and hence, tends to control this mineral resource locally in their communities against the wishes of the government who explores and markets the oil. This struggle has taken its toll on the nation. Lives and properties worth billions of naira have been lost to this crisis as it involves vandalization of pipelines and other oil facilities estimated to cost over five trillion naira since the inception of the crisis in the late 1980's ((Dialoke & Edeja, 2017; Abomaye *et al.*, 2018). The bombardments, shootings, kidnappings and other instruments of war adopted by these militants have greatly obliterated the natural and cultural assets of the affected communities. These include water bodies, historical landscapes, traditional festivals, indigenous technology, fauna and flora among others.

It might interest you to know that even when these militant attacks are not targeted towards the members of the local communities and their properties, the consistency of their activities in the area is a nightmare for visitors who are part of the targets (Tersoubwa el al., 2018). Some of these communities have traditional festivals that have not only attracted tourists, but also promoted their indigenous values and culture identity beyond their boundaries. Some of these festivals includes the Sangbein Fishing Festival by Sagbama community, Okolode Festival by the Ekpetiama clan in Yenagoa, Ogoriba Uge Festival by Odi community in Kokokuma/Opokuma local government, Izogua Annual Festival by the Otuokpoti in Ogbia Local government, Ikpai-kpai Annual Festival by Ekowe community in Southern Ijaw, Igboruma War Canoe by Otuokpoti people in Ogbia, Iduangi Annual Festival by Nembe community in Nembe Local government and many others. These traditional festivals are losing their values as participants/visitors are lacking the needed motivation and for fear of militant-security clashes. Some other traditional festivals, historical landmarks and archaeological landscapes in other parts of the region like Rivers, Akaw-Ibom, Delta, etc., also suffer similar fate (Abara, nd.; Adejoh & Aly, 2014; Buhari & Soetan, 2018).

Regrettably, some great monuments in Niger Delta region have suffered threats from militancy attacks, while some have been physically vandalized, some are either affected

by bomb blasts or abandoned by visitors and tourists. Some of the monuments that have suffered this fate from Akwa-Ibom include; 'Bridge of No Return' which was said to be an existing remnant of the horrors of slavery during the slave trade era in the region (it was used in the movement of slaves across Nigeria); the Ibibio Museum and State Park which is the embodiment of the peoples' culture and tradition has also been ravaged. Other affected monuments in Rivers State include Isaac Boro Park (a public outdoor recreation place built in honour of the pioneer of minority right activist in Nigeria, Isaac Boro); Port Harcourt Zoological Garden in Trans Amadi which was built in 1974 as one of the nation's conservation centres for fauna and flora; Port Harcourt cemetery which was said to contain the burials of some soldiers of the second world war and that of the renowned activist in the region-Ken Saro Wiwa and many others. These monuments and historical landscapes have embedded in them great histories the people cannot afford to lose to any form of resource wars.

Some notable water bodies like lakes, streams, rivers and waterfalls have also been decimated by contamination. Examples of such are the Ebe lake in Delta state, Lake Ukwa in Cross River State, Delta State Lake Park, just to mention a few. These are remarkable lakes in the area which has in them, great historical and tourism values (Ofuoke & Isife, 2009; Olasupo, 2013).

Banditry

This is the most recent among resource conflicts that are currently ravaging the wealth and posterity of the nation. It was said to be as a result of the struggle for the owner-ship of special mineral resources like gold and the likes (Suleiman, 2019). This has affected states like Zamfara, Yobe, Kaduna, among others. It is regrettably to note that land resources and other traditional values of the affected communities in the above mentioned states have been abused by the activities of these armed bandits. For in-stance, Suleiman (2019) informs that some parts of northeast Nigeria have witnessed direct combat from different groups. There have been cases of kidnappings, attacks, abduction, killings, and robbery on the villagers, and travelers along major roads; they equally engage in cattle rustling.

Suleiman (2019) in his work identified the causes of this banditry from three schools of thought. The first attributed the cause to the quest for conquering land and grazing field for cows, the second attributed the cause to socioeconomic imbalance and other political factors. The third school of thought attributed it to the struggle for the control of gold deposits in the affected states for individual or group gold mining without any form of control from the government. No matter the dimension of cause, this crisis has unleashed untold hardship on the various indigenous communities in the affected areas. Heritage assets of these affected communities have equally suffered preservation and promotional setbacks amidst these conflicts. Banditry have ravaged most of the local

communities in parts of Katsina, Zamfara, Kaduna states, among others, living many dead and some others injured. Over 10,000 houses and silos destroyed, rendering children homeless. This notion was equally affirmed by Suleiman (2019) when he informed that the local or indigenous lifestyles and activities have been dislodged owing to the activities of illegal miners in Zamfara State.

Moreover, indigenous festivals in Katsina like Gani of Daura; Kokowa (a traditional wrestling festival), Kalankuwa, Jaci and Sallah have been affected. These indigenous festivals have suffered continuity and faced preservation challenges in Katsina State. It is no more celebrated freely and active participants are gradually losing interest. This has huge implications for the preservation and sustainability of these traditional festivals. Also, the popular Durbi Takusheyi which is an ancient tomb in Katsina where past rulers have been buried since the 13th century and an important archaeological landmark to the state, has been facing serious threats to its preservation and sustainability owing to the activities of armed bandits. These bandits sometimes threaten to destroy this ancient monument just to force the government to allow illegal gold mining in the state. This ancient landmark is monumental in the historical and archaeological reconstruction of ancient culture and tradition of the people of Katsina. There are some other heritage assets in Katsina, Zamfara, and Kaduna States that have been threatened by the activities of illegal gold miners in these states.

Communal Conflicts

Communal conflict in Nigeria has to do with all sorts of conflicts existing between two rural communities, in most cases. Land boundary dispute is the major cause of such conflicts (Osaretin, 2013; Oji *et al.*, 2014). Communal conflict has been identified as one of the challenges facing the socio-political landscape of Africa. It has both pre- and post-independence histories in most African countries. Nigeria as a nation is not exempted from the devastating effect of this category of resource conflict on heritage assets. For instance, since independence, Nigeria has suffered some notable communal conflicts which includes Yelwa-Shedam conflict (2003–2005), Itsekiri-Urhobo warri conflict (1999–2000), Ife- Modakeke crisis (1999–2000), Zango-Kataf conflict in Kaduna State (1999–2000), Ezillo and Ezza-Ezillo conflict (1982-2012), Tiv-Jukun Wukari conflict in Taraba state (1999–2001), etc. (see Oji *et al.*, 2014). Others include Ndiowu/Ufuma crisis of 1998, Ajalli-Akpu crisis of 1990s, Aguleri/Umuleri crisis of 1990s, among others.

Communal conflicts is most of the time caused by disagreements on land boundaries by two or more communities, and sometimes caused by kingship tussles on who controls the traditional stool of a community or conglomeration of communities. Apart from the killings, other targets of this crisis are rich heritage assets of the affected community like shrines, streams, historical edifices, community squares, traditional celebrations, sacred groves, masquerade houses, worship centers, among others. The

Ezza-Ezillo conflict in Ebonyi State saw the destruction of many shrines and historical edifices in the communities. Such was also the case with the Aguleri-Umuleri conflicts in Anambra State that destroyed some community squares, historical landmarks and burnt most traditional ornaments that are used in ritual practices and masquerading. The Akpu-Ajalli communal conflict in Anambra State affected the celebration of the popular Ikeji festival for two consecutive years likewise Ndiowu/Ufuma communal crisis. During these conflicts, masquerade houses were burnt, lives lost, community freedom lost, and a host of other negative implications.

However, during these crises, people from concerned communities were afraid to engage in their normal communal activities out of fear of being killed, injured or even kidnapped by the vandals of the opposing community. Another prominent crisis is the Jos crisis which is usually between indigenes and visitors over the control of the community assets or religious indifference. Osaretin (2013) also noted that these communal crises can also arise between a company/organization and the host community over disagreement on conditions of settlement. Even as crisis of this sort has arisen in time past, it has not been recorded to have resulted in the destruction of communal assets as witnessed in inter and intra communal crisis (Osaretin, 2013). The incessant community crisis in Jos has led to the suspension of celebration of some indigenous festivals and some other traditional ceremonies. All these does not only affect intangible heritage resources, as tangible resources like lakes, community squares, water bodies, ancient landmarks, just to mention a few, were also decimated.

Theorization of Conflicts, Causes and Effects

This study is theorized in Conflict Theory as was proposed by Karl Max in his co-authored book with Fredrick Engels, The Communist Manifesto, published in 1848). The summary of Karl Max's postulation in conflict theory is that the unending conflict in the society is a result of struggle over the control of the limited resources between the proletariat and the bourgeois. The bourgeois control the resources to maintain their ranks. Max further insinuates that these conflicts bring about change and development in the society. Moreover, the conflict theory has four major postulations: Competition (it is constant as a result of limited resources in the society), Revolution (it is the possible outcome of continued conflicts among the social classes), Structural inequality (human relations and social structures are products of inequalities, where some acquire more powers to suppress others), and finally war (it is seen as the ultimate end of conflicts in the society, either by way of unifying the society or cleansing the society).

However, the current study will be attempted to be mirrored within the context of the four major assumptions of conflict theory as postulated by Karl Max in 1848. On the first assumption which is Competition. Can we attribute the cause of resource conflicts in Nigeria to the competition between the proletariat and bourgeois? Militancy and in-

surgency of bandits can be attributed to complaints and feelings of denial of due rights and privileges. In this case, conflict was seen as the way out not minding the extended implications. This may not be the same with conflicts like communal crisis, Boko Haram attack, and herdsmen attack; even when the conflict is focused on the ownership of a particular natural resource, the inequality factor is never an issue. So competition as a cause of conflict may not be completely applied in the Nigerian situation with respect to the sampled conflicts.

Moreover, on revolution as the result of continued conflict, it has limitations in the Nigeria situation. For instance, conflicts from militancy, Boko Haram and herdsmen can result to revolution as a result of ethnic bias. This informs the reasons for the incessant calls to contain these conflicts. Communal crisis and insurgency of bandits may not have such possibilities as a result of their nature, target and approaches. More so, the concept of structural inequality in conflict theory can be applied to the sampled conflicts. They are motivated by the feelings of having more power than others and the feelings of having fewer powers than others. Also the motivation of the assumed government support is also a factor in these conflicts. This can be used to annihilate others to regain natural resources or acquire natural resources. However, the structural inequality postulation in conflict theory by Karl Max helped in the understanding of the nature and motivation of conflicts among the sampled resource conflicts in Nigeria.

Furthermore, the last presumption of conflict theory has to do with 'war'. From the understanding of this postulation in conflict theory, it is obvious that all the sampled conflicts in Nigeria may not have the tendencies of resulting to war as a means of unifying or cleansing the society. Boko Haram, militancy and Herdsmen attack do have ethnicity prejudice and may have the tendencies of metamorphosing into war as last settlement option if not clutched at their current stages in the country. Resource conflicts like insurgency of bandits and communal crisis have minute probability of metamorphosing into war as a last resort due to their nature and targets. These last two conflicts concentrate on a limited land mass involving small traditional communities or rural areas. Finally, conflict theory propounded by Karl Max in 1848 is conceptualized in this study for the understanding of the nature and targets of the sampled resources conflicts in Nigeria. This knowledge is expected to help in finding a lasting solution to contain the sampled conflicts and at the same time, preserving the nation's rich heritage assets that are always at the mercy of these resource conflicts.

Implications on heritage transfer and loss memories among rural population in Nigeria

Heritage assets have been at the receiving end of these resource conflicts even when they may not have been the primary targets (Higueras, 2013; Thomas, 2015; Smith, *et al.*, 2015; Omur, 2015; Lababidi & Hiba, 2016). Uncontrolled resource conflicts have dealt decisively with huge heritage assets in rural Nigeria. Before long, undocumented

cultural and natural heritage resources of places plagued with crisis/conflicts will be forgotten and this will pose a question on the identity of the people (Nwankwo *et al.*, 2017). Just as in the case of the Sukur World Heritage Site in Adamawa State, where natural and cultural assets lost to Boko Haram can never be recovered (Obafemi, 2017). Most of these resource conflicts involve the destruction and vandalization of valuable cultural properties of rural communities. Intangible heritage practices like festivals, ritual practices, traditional ceremonies, indigenous values, among others, are lost, and these has far reaching implications for culture posterity.

Notably, traditional African societies place values on their traditional systems which are often transferred to the younger generation through myths, folklores, and other oral tradition media (Francis *et al.*, 2011; Moustafa, 2016). Intangible heritage resources like festivals, ritual practices, indigenous culinary art, indigenous knowledge systems, traditional crafts and industries, cultural dances and the likes are grossly affected. While some of them are momentarily lost, most of them are perpetually lost to varying degrees of resource conflicts in the affected communities. What becomes of the knowledge of these irreplaceable intangible resources on the generations to come? How can the knowledge be transferred when most of the custodians are victims? Hence, the continuity of these heritage assets is greatly threatened by these conflicts. Various ethnic groups in Nigeria have their peculiar indigenous values and practices whose knowledge are gradually varnishing into thin air, no thanks to resource conflicts and some other factors like civilization, rural-urban migration, and materialistic lifestyles.

Same is applicable to the tangible heritage assets as they hold a lot of information about these traditional communities. They play significant role in historical reconstruction and archaeological landscape of these communities. Destruction of heritage assets leads to loss of sense of belonging with great question on communal identity. This is because the identity and purpose of these traditional communities are embedded in their peculiar heritage assets and the destruction of heritage is same as the destruction of communal identity (Nwankwo *et al.*, 2017). Information on most traditional communities are most of the times elicited from these heritage assets (tangible and intangible) for academic, other related researches, and fact finding missions through participant observations in these communities.

Moreover, Akinnnade (1999) asserts that destruction of archaeological heritage and other historical evidence has huge negative implication on cultural information of extant societies. Likewise, distortion of archaeological and historical information owing to incomplete evidence as a result of resource conflicts creates unrecoverable gaps in historical reconstruction of extinct societies in the understanding of extant societies (Nwankwo & Ukaegbu, 2011). Fragmented archaeological and historical data has huge implications on the cultural history of a people. Hence unchecked resource conflict can lead to the fragmentation of archaeological data.

Furthermore, destruction of archaeological landscapes and historical landmarks of a people has implications for lost memory since they are the tell tales of human history. The decimation and abandonment of cultural activities and materials grossly affect continuities in their culture regeneration process. As such, future generation stands the risk of not having the knowledge of their existence. Sight, participation, myths, folklore, oral tradition and touch, has been identified as among the media of transmission for indigenous cultural practices and value systems of African communities (Williams & Manunggurr, 1989; Stone, 1989; Sparkes, 1989; Ndagala & Zengu, 1989; Mbunwe-Samba, 1989; Bello, 2000). However, the functionality of these media is currently being threatened by resource conflicts in several parts of Nigeria.

Conclusion

Identified resource conflicts include Boko Haram, militancy, herdsmen, banditry, and communal crisis. These conflicts have over the years affected the preservation of heritage assets in rural communities in Nigeria; even when heritage assets may not have been the targets of these resource conflicts, the effect is unimaginable. For instance, resource conflicts affected indigenous cultural practices, festivals, traditional value system, traditional dance, local cuisines, traditional arts and craft, indigenous knowledge and industry, shrines, forest reserves, sacred groves, lakes, rivers, streams, plants, animals among others in rural communities in Nigeria. This loss has great implications for lost memory since their knowledge of practice and existence is threatened. Destruction of these heritage assets creates a vacuum in rural cultural history with implications on culture sustenance and value reorientation. Heritage assets form bulk of the tourism assets in Nigeria with tendencies for economic transformation through tourism development (Nwankwo *et al.*, 2017; Ezenagu, 2017; Tersooubwa *et al.*, 2018). Heritage asset gives Nigeria and some other African nations, a comparative advantage over developed nations in world tourism market (Nwankwo, 2012). This has called for more responsive measures to clutch these conflicts.

However, resource conflicts can be addressed in four ways as noted by USIP (2007) and Brown and Keating (2015). These include using the existing management structures, following due legislative processes, engaging in judicial actions or court processes and lastly, exploring mediation or arbitration strategy. These processes can be followed sequentially for a better result. The international collaboration is the further suggestion from this study, and it needs to be explored after the four stages listed above have been exhausted. Most of the resource conflicts in Nigeria have exhausted the four stages with fewer results actualized. It is imperative to note that for an effective international collaboration, a range of skills are required for resolving resource conflicts. This include an understanding of the history of the conflict, history of the locality, political economy, knowledge of the natural resources, including resource governance, among others (Keating, 2015). However, with this understanding, international collaborations

can be carefully explored to clutch resource conflicts, and with reasonable respect for the sovereignty of the nation involved. This is necessary because it was noted that an attempt to clutch resource conflicts in Nepal between 1996 and 2006 via international collaboration, failed because the international collaborators were not well equipped with the necessary information on the conflict and the people involved. For instance, the Maoist militants and the roles of India and China were neglected, with much regard given to the views of the Anglophones Nepalese elite. This effort by international collaboration failed because it lacked the needed integration of issues of social conflict and exclusion (see Brown & Keating, 2015). A similar incidence took place in Ecuador when National Resources Defense Council (NRDC) intervened in the dispute between the Conoco oil company and the Huaorani people of the remote Oriente of Ecuador in 1991. During this intervention, it was reported that the Huaorani people were exclude from taking part in some private reconciliatory meetings. This raised some suspicions and the Huaorani people sought for outright withdrawal of NRDC from the conflict resolution process (Brown & Keating, 2015).

That notwithstanding, these international organizations and NGO's need to develop a sustainable strategy before delving into resource conflict management in Nigeria to evade the kind of failures they recorded in places like Nepal between 1996 and 2006, and Ecuador in 1991 (Brown & Keating, 2015). More so, the international collaboration can come in two ways; direct approach (that is bringing in the parties involved in a round table for discussion and dialogue) and indirect approach (that is creating an enabling environment for faster resolution of the conflict). The direct approach (which is the final) can be successful in the Nigeria situation if some factors are taken into consideration. For instance, the international collaborators or machineries need to be equipped with requisite knowledge and capacity building; consult, engage and convene relevant stakeholders in the conflict; regard the respective interests and values of these stakeholders; and finally support conflict resolution process to the conclusion (USIP, 2007; Brown & Keating, 2015).

In conclusion, the business of clutching resource conflict should be taken more seriously in Nigeria than before to evade possibility of the last postulation of the conflict theory (War). To this regard, the assistance of international organizations and NGO's need to be requested by the government. The government has engaged in endless fights against these conflicts, with huge resources invested, but little was achieved. The Nigerian government may need to borrow a leaf from what happened in Papua Guinea, Central Asia, Timor-Leste, Liberia, and also helped in peaceful monitoring of the implementation of international peace agreements, among others. The 1954 UNESCO Convention on the Protection of Cultural Property in the event of Armed Conflict (popularly known as the Hague Convention) as reviewed in 1999, has a unique mandate to protect cultural properties during armed conflicts like the numerous resource conflicts in Nigeria. This convention can be explored by public cultural agencies in Nigeria like National Commission

for Museums and Monuments (NCMM), Nigeria Tourism Development Commission (NTDC), Center for Black and African Arts and Civilization (CBAC), National Institute for Cultural Orientation (NICO), and other security agencies, to protect the nation's valued heritage assets in times of conflicts. Also the countries Nollywood industry (the maker of home movies), can also play a role in resource conflict resolution in Nigeria through making of related movies that would not condone the ills of resource conflicts through values reorientation and vital information on the politics of resource conflict in Nigeria. At the same time the role of the local community cannot be jettisoned (Collier, 2003). In addition, Janet (2011) had suggested that using a human right approach can help in cultural heritage protection during conflicts. This view may not apply in the Nigeria situation since the parties involved in these conflicts in Nigeria seems not to have reasonable regard for human right.

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The Philippines:
The Challenges of *Moro* and *Lumad* Power-sharing in the *Bangsamoro*

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Abstract: Two self-ascribed ethnic groups—*Moro* and *Lumad*—are native to Mindanao in the southern Philippines. Both groups share a common history of oppression from Western colonialism, Christian resettlement, and capitalist interests where the former has waged a more organized insurgency against the Philippine government in the late twentieth century. Due to the political superiority of the *Moros*, the *Lumads* are often left marginalized in the various peace processes in Mindanao due to their accommodation to the *Moro*'s call for the creation of anautonomous region under an internal power-sharing agreement. This form of double marginalization against the *Lumad* promotes a sense of internal colonialism where such arrangements are only left between the *Bangsamoro* regional government and the Philippine national government, thereby forcing the latter to accommodate to *Moro* interests. Analyzing the text of the recent peace agreements between the Republic of the Philippines and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (GRP-MILF), the article attempts to understand the conflict dynamics between *Moros* and *Lumads* under power-sharing and power-dividing measures. The article concludes that consociationalismin ethnically divided societies often lead to more ethnic cleavages if done haphazardly to favor certain interests while leaving ethnic minorities at a disadvantage.

Keywords: Moro, Lumad, Mindanao, Bangsamoro, consociationalism, identity politics.

Introduction

In the *longue durée*, the people of Mindanao in the southern Philippines have suffered the most due to armed conflict for the past three decades. According to Lara and Champain (2009), the conflict in Mindanao has resulted in 120,000 casualties and the displacement of almost two million people. At present, there are existing agreements

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between the Government of the Philippines (GRP) and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) in 1996 and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) in 2014 that aimed for power-sharing between the Christian-dominated national government in Manila and the Muslim-dominated *Bangsamoro* regional government. However, both agreements have been failing to sustain the peace due to constant distrust among ethnic groups as a consequence of internal power sharing between the dominant Muslim Moros and the "inferior" indigenous ethnic groups. At present, Mindanao has been the most underdeveloped island group in in the Philippines where absolute poverty is at 45% compared to the national average of 36% (Philippine Human Development Report, 2005). Despite the autonomous status of the newly created Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) in 2019, the future of Mindanao still remains unclear with some violence breaking out between government and *Moro*armed groups.

Historically speaking, Mindanao has followed a different historical trajectory than the rest of the Philippines. Early encounters with Islam were documented between Arab traders and the natives of western and central Mindanao (Majul, 1973). The indigenous people who converted to Islam, known collectively as the *Moros,*were able to create a distinct political, economic, and cultural heritage from the rest of the Philippines with the establishment of Islamic sultanates in Sulu and Maguindanao in the sixteenth century. However, the creation of a Filipino nation-state that aimed to unify the entire archipelago under Spanish and American colonialism have marginalized them in mainstream society. Furthermore,other factors such as the mass migration of Christian settlers in Mindanao, land conflicts, and the politics of exclusion promoted by the Philippine government after independence have triggered interethnic violence between Christian Filipinos and Muslim *Moros* throughout the twentieth century (Abinales & Amoroso, 2005; Coronel-Ferrer, 2013). This has forced the *Moros* to pursue an armed insurgency in liberating all Filipino Muslims and their claimed homeland known as the *Bangsamoro* or 'the land of the *Moros*'*.*

On the other hand, the non-*Moro* indigenous people in Mindanao have also been excluded and marginalized in Philippine mainstream society. They have received less attention from scholars and government officials due to their political inferiority from the *Moros*. These indigenous people, known collectively as the *Lumads,* have largely been invisible in various political negotiations over their homeland in Mindanao. They have also been regarded as 'second-class minorities' in the various peace negotiations between the Philippine government and the *Moro* armed groups due to the fact that the *Lumads* represent a territorially dispersed indigenous minority group with small populations in a disputed territory (Barter, 2015). This form of double marginalization reflects the politics of exclusion due to the dominance of the *Moro*ethnic groups in the *Bangsamoro* struggle (Alamon, 2017; Barter, 2015; Paredes, 2015).

At present, the current political structure of the *Bangsamoro* regional government contains some, if not all, of the following characteristics: (1) autonomous executive and

legislative powers in the regional level; (2) multipledecision-making bodies in the local level where different ethnic identities are represented at various decision-making levels; and (3) the presence of indigenous peoples in the decision-making policies of the regional government (Coronel-Ferrer, 2012). Despite these recent developments, problems such as bureaucratic inefficiency, the dominance of some ethnic groups in regional governance, and weak institutions on tax collection and state-building continue to plague Muslim Mindanao ever since it was created (Abinales & Amoroso, 2005; Buendia, 2005; Coronel-Ferrer, 2012). This creates doubt as to whether the existing power-sharing arrangements are sustainable in keeping the peace among previously hostile ethnic groups.

Research Question

The article argues on the question *Does the clash between various ethnic identities within the Bangsamoro power-sharing regime cause the resurgence of identity-based conflict in Mindanao*? The article initially rests on the assumption that previously hostile ethnic groups are more likely to engage in interethnic violence during peace transitions. This premise is based on the various arguments that the settlement of peace agreements in ethnically diverse societies are more likely to experience more cycles of violence during peace transitions.(Snyder, 2000; Gurr, 2002; Coakley, 2009; Perez, 2020).

This article is divided into several parts. The first part attempts to provide a brief review of the existing literature on ethnicity and nationalism and relate it to the ongoing Mindanao conflict. Next, the article lays down the scope and specific limitations in order to narrow down the discussion by arguing on the fragility of the internal power-sharing in the *Bangsamoro* as an independent variable is the one causing the identity-based conflict between the *Moros and Lumads* which is then considered as the dependent variable.

Afterwards, the article will provide a brief historical background of the *Moro* and *Lumad* struggles as two distinct ethnic groups and how are they intertwined in the larger Mindanao question. Next, we then analyze the exclusionary politics promoted by both groups in the context of the newlycreated BARMM. This exclusionary politics between ethnic groups is often problematized by various scholars when studying peace agreements in deeply divided societies (Ljiphart, 1977; Horowitz, 1985; McGarry & O'Leary, 1993; Reilly, 2001).

The next part shall explain the existing power-sharing and power-dividing measures between the *Moros* and *Lumads* in the BARMM. Due to the lack of genuine representation of indigenous groups in the regional government of Muslim Mindanao, we then argue on the effects of the fragile peace agreement in Mindanao to the various *Moro* and *Lumad* minorities and if there are existing concerns that are still overlooked. Finally, we look at the challenges faced by various minorities in both ethnic groups in the context of the future of the *Bangsamoro* as a self-governing region. A conclusion will then summarize the arguments in the article.

**Ethnicity, nationalism, and power-sharing:
a conceptual framework**

Throughout the study, the primary framework that was used is based on two important concepts in the study of identity politics: *ethnicity* and *nationalism*. Despite several attempts by various scholars to provide a clear-cut definition, there has never been a consensus for a common definition on both concepts. Young (2003) argues that the problem in fully defining the two concepts lie on the fact that both concepts are not identical since the primary distinction between the two lies in the nature of the political claims that an ethnic group promotes. Summarizing his thoughts, he argues that not all nationalist claims are ethnic since only a minority of ethnic groups often elevate their demand for sovereignty. Connor (1994) uses the term '*ethnonationalism*' as an assertion made by various ethnic groups to create a nation-state as highest aspiration of all ethnic groups to assert their identity (Hannum, 2001).

For this study, ethnicity is loosely defined as an identity based on common descent (Walker, 1994 as cited in Wolff, 2006). Horowitz (1985) suggests that ethnicity in ethnic conflicts operate in political terms such as voting patterns and power-sharing arrangements where groups with the same ethnolinguistic groups, such as in the case of Mindanao, vote for their fellow ethnic groups in order to secure power. This can cause grievances on defeated ethnic groups that lead to intergroup violence if left unchecked. At present, the Moros comprise only comprise a minority in the entire Philippine population which is around 5-6% (Coronel-Ferrer, 2012).

On the other hand, nationalism is defined as an ideology that puts the nation-state first, before all other forms of social or political organization (Wolff, 2006). Anderson (2006) explains that nationalism is operated in terms of an *'imagined community'* where people of the same ethnic, linguistic, or religious history espouse a common identity as manifested in the creation of a nation-state. In the case of Mindanao, a *Moro* homeland is often espoused by various *Moro* groups in their insurgency against the Philippine government. It is for this reason that Smith (2004) uses the concept "*ethnie*" where nation-states are actually created based on the pre-existence of a dominant ethnic group, a named human community connected to a homeland, possessing common myths of ancestry, shared memories, one or more elements of shared culture, and a measure of solidarity, at least among the elites.

The application of *ethnie* in contemporary times is best explained by Snyder (2000) who argues that the presence of elite-dominated regimes in ethnically divided states provide a fertile ground for political elites to harness political energies against other ethnic groups that eventually create a security dilemma. A common pattern often observed in heterogeneous societies is that it usually starts when nationalist elites argue that ethnic minorities and other political opponents should be excluded from political

participation, alleging them that they lack the credentials of being a proper citizen or their alliance to foreign powers (Snyder, 2000). Eventually, these elites create made-up grievances for ethnic groups to use arms and violence in addressing the problem of nation-building.

Throughout most cases, most ethnic elites use religion or language as a primary source for their nationalist agenda. Fox (2004) argues that religion has played a major influence in the rise of ethnic conflicts. Using the Minorites at Risk (MAR) and State Failure (SF) datasets from 1945-2001, the study explains that religion played an important role in aggravating conflicts, especially in the 1980s-1990s. Furthermore, Collier and Hoeffler's (2004) results also confirmed that the recent rise of intrastate conflicts could be attributed to grievance-based conflicts between armed ethnic groups where more than a quarter of these conflicts (28%) or 22 out of the 79 conflicts have occurred after the Cold War (1989-1999).

Religion has predominantly shaped the aspirations of *Moro* groups that ultimately aim for secession from the Filipino nation-state. The fall of the Marcos dictatorship has elevated the Moro's plea for regional autonomy through the conduct of a referendum. However, extremist groups within the *Moro* independence movement have challenged the existing leadership by creating an armed movement that wanted independence (Frake, 1998). The ethnic fragmentation within the *Moro* secessionist movements between the Maguindanao, Maranao, and Tausug ethnolinguistic groups have only exacerbated already existing divisions in the Bangsamoro movement despite the signing of peace agreements between the national government and separatist groups (Horowitz, 1985). Additionally, this ethno-religious division between the MNLF-MILF has forced the latter's struggle to continue for almost three decades until the signing of a power-sharing agreement with the Philippine government in 2014.

Another important variable in this study is the fragility of the power-sharing framework in the democratization of heterogeneous societies. Most of the time, these societies are a product of decades of civil war, revolutions, or *coup d'états*. Consociationalism approaches often aim to address conflicting communities as the basic blocks of political engagement by institutionalizing them as separate entities within a power-sharing framework (O'Flynn & Russell, 2005).

Much of the literature in consociationalism and power-sharing is based on the work of Ljiphart (1977) and more recently with McGarry & O'Leary (2004)where it is based on the assumption that the best way to deal with ethnic divisions at least in the first instance is by taking division seriously. Using the case of the Netherlands, Ljiphart (1977) makes his claim that such approach can be successful over time when power brokers accept the differences between various groups in order to build a just and peaceful democracy for all previously disenfranchised groups.

On the other hand, scholars like Horowitz (1985) and more recently Reilly (2001), argue for the opposite. According to them, power-sharing and consociationalism only deepens the divisions between ethnic groups who are now forced to sign a peace agreement that will settle their conflicts once and for all. The institutionalization of these agreements only create the impression that these previously hostile groups are now a monolithic whole, instead of treating them as separate ethnic groups with different heritages and identities.

For this study, the article has applied the latter's arguments (Horowitz, 1985; Reilly, 2001) as its framework in understanding the power-sharing framework between the *Moros* and *Lumads* in Mindanao. The primary reason why the article primarily uses Horowitz's (1985) arguments on power-sharing is based on two reasons: (1) the arguments posited by both scholars capture the current state of both ethnic groups in Mindanao where unequal relations have been promoted by both groups; and finally (2) the current consociationalism framework promoted by most peace negotiators in the recent peace agreements in Mindanao only deepen the divisions between the two self-ascribed ethnic groups, whether it be on ethnic, regional or religious terms. This will be further discussed in the discussion part of this article.

Scope and Limitations

To further understand the power-sharing arrangements in the Bangsamoro, the study focus on the post-conflict status of the BARMM after the various peace agreements between the GRP and the MILF leadership in 2014. The study made preliminary explanations on the factors that exacerbate the fragile peace arrangements between the *Moros* and *Lumads* in Mindanao.

As a primary limitation, the study will limit its discussion tothe challenges between two indigenous ethnic groups in Mindanao - the *Moro and Lumad*, while also considering the fact that both self-ascribed ethnic groups are also composed of different ethnolinguistic groups. Overall, the study attempts to understand our knowledge on why ethnic identities are at the 'heart' of the *Bangsamoro* struggle and the Mindanao conflict in general.

Also, the article does not include discussion on the other peace agreements in Mindanao such as the 1976 Tripoli Agreement between the GRP and the MNLF. Since there are also divisions between ethnic groups within the *Moro* and *Lumad* identities due to its self-ascription, the study only analyzes the conflict dynamics between the two groups in the recent CAB negotiations from 2014 onwards.

Moreover, the study acknowledges that the terms *Moro* and *Lumad* are self-ascribed identities which means that not all Muslim ethnic groups in Mindanao consider themselves as *Moro* and not all non-Moro ethnic groups in Mindanao consider themselves as *Lumad.* Hence, Spivak's (1999) notion of strategic essentialism is also viewed as a

primary limitation where both *Moro* and *Lumad* identities are considered self-ascribed labels composed of different ethnic groups belonging to either group.

Indigenous Moros and Lumads: an intertwined history

The *Lumads* and *Moros* represent two distinct types of ethnic minorities in the Philippines. Despite their indigeneity to Mindanao, the *Moros* have rejected the 'indigenous' label due to its political designation (Paredes, 2015). The term "indigenous peoples" refers to small-scale tribal minorities in the highlands, which the *Moros* reject due to their distinct history of establishing sultanates in Mindanao. Instead, they consider themselves at par with the Philippine government since they have formed an armed insurgency to voice out their grievances against the central government. It is only the *Lumads* who are considered as indigenous to Mindanao since most of them have sought refuge in the highlands when outsiders have established settlements in the Mindanao lowlands (Tebteba Foundation, 2011).

As mentioned earlier, the *Moros* comprise only 20% of the population in Mindanao and roughly 5-12% of the total Philippine population (Coronel-Ferrer, 2012). They have collectively called themselves '*Moro*' as derived from the Spanish derogatory term for the Muslims in Spain in order to rally on their fellow Muslims to join their struggle against to what they perceive as Filipino colonialism and oppression. This self-ascribed identity gained popularity when the Muslim Independence Movement (MIM) in the 1970s when *Moro* elites used the term as a collective identity for all Muslim Filipinos who sought to liberate themselves from Christian oppression and discrimination. At present, the *Moros* are the overwhelming majority in the BARMM's five provinces and Cotabato City where they are divided into 13 ethno-linguistic groups (Coronel-Ferrer, 2012).

From the various *Moro* ethnic groups, there are three dominant ethnic groups that comprise at least 66% of the *Moro* population (Coronel-Ferrer, 2012). These three groups are the Tausugin the Sulu peninsula, Maranao in the Lanao provinces, and the Maguindanao in Maguindanao. Minority *Moro* groups like the Badjao, Iranun, and Yakan also inhabit in the scattered settlements in the BARMM which make up the remaining percent of the *Moro* population.

On the other hand, the *Lumads* also comprise a notable minority in the *Bangsamoro* population. They have collectively called themselves *Lumad* derived from the Cebuano word meaning "native to the earth" in order to distinguish themselves from the *Moros* and the Christian migrants who have settled in Mindanao. This self-ascribed identity was created during the *Lumad* People's Federation Assembly in Kidapawan, North Cotabato in 1986 as a response to unify the various indigenous peoples in Mindanao to defend and reclaim their ancestral rights (Alamon, 2017). A small number of *Lumads* inhabit within the *Bangsamoro* territory with the Teduray from Maguindanao having the largest numbers. Other *Lumad* groups like the Dulangan Manobo, Lambiangan,

and the Higaunon in Lanao del Sur also have significant populations in the ARMM (Coronel-Ferrer, 2012). *Lumad* minorities such as the *Blaan* and *Higaonon* are also recognized within the BARMM (Sec. 8, R.A. 11054).

The arrival of Spanish and American colonizers has altered the histories between the two ethnic minorities. With the primary agenda of converting the natives to Christianity, the Spaniards have held anti-Muslim prejudices against the *Moros* while the *Lumads* were allowed to retain their indigenous practices and traditions (Paredes, 2015; Alamon, 2017). Upon the arrival of the Americans, the *Moros* were granted limited autonomy while the *Lumads* and other indigenous groups in the Philippines were designated as '*wild tribe*s' and later as '*non-Christian tribes*' in order to distinguish them from the Christianized settlers in the lowlands known as the 'Filipinos' (Rodil, 1993).

After Philippine independence was granted in 1946, the national government has carried out the administrative separation of the Moros and the other indigenous peoples in the Philippines. The separation has left the *Lumad* in a vulnerable position in Mindanao politics where they have suffered discrimination from Christian settlers who have stolen their land through ingenious ways. Alamon (2017) explains how the *Lumads* were oppressed by the Christian migrants as documented in their oral histories whereby the latter have promised gifts to the former only to present a long list of items supposedly loaned. Eventually, they had no choice but to give up their communal lands in order to repay these loans. Due to extensive Christian migration in the lowlands and clashes with the *Moros*, the *Lumads* have become minorities in their own ancestral homeland (Rodil, 1993).

The separation of the *Moro* and *Lumad* agendas after the Marcos administration has been evident in the creation of two distinct bureaucratic offices reporting directly to the president. Under the current administrative structure, the National Commission on Muslim Filipinos (NCMF) administers *Moro* affairs while the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples' (NCIP) administers the concerns of indigenous peoples (Paredes, 2015). The NCIP was created under the 1997 Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act (R.A. 8371) that aimed to secure ancestral lands for various indigenous groups. Unfortunately, the *Lumads* are rarely considered as equal with the Moros on peace keeping matters in Mindanao despite their consultative status under the '*tri-people approach*' in the GPH-MILF peace process (Paredes, 2015). In other words, this double marginalization of a second-class minority is perpetuated by the Philippine state to a people who also have a legitimate place in the future of a *Bangsamoro* homeland.

In sum, both ethnic groups have deeply intertwined histories and cultural identities rooted in Mindanao. Such narrative is manifested in the legend of the brothers *Mamalu* and *Tabunaway* who are the ancestors of both ethnic minorities. According to the legend, it is said that when *Tabunaway* converted to Islam in the fifteenth century, Mamalu chose to retain his ancestral beliefs and move away to the highlands in the Pulangi

River. Despite this, both brothers have made a peace pact that their descendants will coexist peacefully and help each other in times of need (Paredes, 2015). Hence, this narrative remains a justification used by various civil society groups in Mindanao in the various peace negotiations on both ethnic groups as descendants of uncolonized peoples in Mindanao.

The politics of ethnic exclusion in the *Bangsamoro*

Both the *Moros* and *Lumads* consider land as the primary source of their identity. For this reason, land grievances are often the root of most violent conflicts in Mindanao. Alamon (2017) has cited the case of the *Manobo Pulangion* in Bukidnon who have been deprived of their ancestral land from the encroachment of capitalist interests that eventually destroyed their ancestral lands.

When the American colonizers arrived, the *Manobo Pulangion* were driven out of their ancestral lands due to their lack of knowledge in the newly enacted land laws that favored the settlers. This trend was carried over when the first Christian settlers from the Visayas have settled in Northern Mindanao after World War II. The settlers have established large plantations in the Bukidnon plateau where the natives had no choice but to exclude themselves from the outside influence in order to escape marginalization and discrimination from the settlers.

On the other hand, the *Moros* also share this kind of narrative when Christian settlers from the Visayas have settled in Mindanao, thereby outnumbering them in their ancestral lands (Majul, 1973; Quimpo, 2001; Coronel-Ferrer, 2013). The arrival of Christian settlers has led to clashes between the Christian migrants and *Moro* natives over the distribution of land where the former have received the support of the national government in order to promote state development and quell the *Moro* rebellions.

This form of conflict can be described as a '*sons of soil*' (SOS) conflict where native populations like the *Moros* eventually take up arms and support the insurgencies against the migrants and the state backing them (Fearon & Laitin, 2003; Fearon, 2004). Such mechanism was observed in the onset and duration of the *Moro* insurgency that had lasted for almost three decades. Throughout this period, the *Moros* have experienced systemic landlessness in favor of the Christian migrants where private lands were acquired under a registration and titling system (Coronel-Ferrer, 2013).

In order to prevent the escalation of the conflict, several agreements were signed in securing relative peace. The various peace agreements eventually led to the creation of a Framework Agreement on the *Bangsamoro* (FAB). Under the said agreement, the Philippine government is mandated to provide the basic structure of an autonomous government in Muslim Mindanao through the passage of an organic law and the conduct of a two-part plebiscite that will establish the territory of the newly created region.

Under the new regime, the national government has delegated specific powers to the *Bangsamoro* regional government whereby an autonomous political entity shall have a ministerial form of government under the new autonomous government (par. 1 & 2, sec. I, FAB, 2014). Executive and legislative powers are now delegated to the *Bangsamoro* government while leaving certain powers to the national government such as foreign policy and defense (par. 2, sec. III, FAB, 2014). In order to address the existing ethnic cleavages, a consociationalism mechanism between the national and *Bangsamoro* government was institutionalized to foster interethnic cooperation as stipulated in Section III of the FAB. However, such mechanism was never realized since Moro representation in the national level was only left in the Philippine House of Representatives where *Moro* leaders are only elected to represent their constituents (Coronel-Ferrer, 2012). As of this writing, there are no allocated seats for *Moro* candidates in the Philippine Senate as well as on various cabinet positions expect for the NCMF.

The annex on power-sharing has proved to be one of the most significant consociationalism mechanisms in Philippine politics. Coronel-Ferrer (2012) suggests that power-sharing mechanisms in resource-sharing are necessary to address the ethnic grievances from various *Moro* groups against the Philippine government. Moreover, this arrangement was institutionalized in order to prevent ethnic cartels from dominating regional politics although these were never successful. The establishment of power-sharing institutions attempted to recognize the role of indigenous people in promoting peace in the *Bangsamoro* on the basis of recognition of identity (par. 5, sec. I, FAB, 2014). However, it is quite notable that under the various annexes of the FAB, there has been no mention of the *Lumad* in the creation of the *Bangsamoro* homeland.

Various scholars have provided criticism on the consociationalism arrangement in the *Bangsamoro*. One is the overemphasis on intergovernmental relations between the national and the regional government thereby leaving other ethnic groups in the picture (Abinales & Amoroso, 2005). Based on the language of the FAB, it is the identity of the *Bangsamoro* people who are recognized in the new autonomous region as stipulated in sec. 5, par. I of the said agreement:

> "The Parties recognize Bangsamoro identity. Those who at the time of conquest and colonization were considered natives or original inhabitants of Mindanao and the Sulu archipelago and its adjacent islands including Palawan, and their descendants whether of mixed or full blood shall have the right to identify themselves as Bangsamoro by ascription or self-ascription…"

This provision only provides the destiny of the *Moro* people. The seeming intention to erase the *Lumad* narrative is evident since the language of the agreement only emphasizes that the FAB is an agreement addressed to resolve the *Moro* question in Mindanao. Hence, the creation of the ARMM was intended to allow nominal self-rule for Muslim Filipinos as well as to improve the material well-being of all *Moros* only (Paredes, 2015).

On the other hand, the *Lumads* as are left invisible to the existing power-sharing arrangements, waiting for the *Moros* to accommodate their claims to their ancestral domain.

Another criticism is the hegemony of clans in *Moro* politics where ethnic minorities are left on the fringes. According to Lara (2014), the dominance of these clans has exacerbated more violence in Muslim Mindanao due to constant conflicts between clans known as *rido*. Most *Moro* leaders are more concerned on their own constituents which leaves the *Lumads* vulnerable to power politics between the dominant Tausug and Maguindanao in the BARMM leadership. Since the former is known to be politically accommodating to the demands of their *Moro* brothers, they are often vulnerable to such forms of clan-based violence between *Moro* groups.

To share or divide power?

In order to address the existing ethnic tensions, Coronel-Ferrer (2012) has suggested on the viability of power-sharing and power-dividing arrangements. The recognition of the rights of indigenous peoples was enshrined in the succeeding paragraph of the same section mentioned earlier (sec. 5, par. I):

> *"Spouses and their descendants are classified Bangsamoro. The freedom of choice of other indigenous peoples shall be respected."*

It is notable that the mention of indigenous peoples in the FAB is emphasized in the context of the role of the *Lumads* in the future of the *Bangsamoro*. However, it only shows an act of tokenism from the *Moros* to politically recognize the indigenous people due to their political weakness to counter them in regional politics (Barter, 2015). Kaufmann (1996) has described this phenomenon in post-conflict societies where minorities in ethnically divided societies are less probable to wage conflict against dominant ethnic groups. Hence, the *Moros* are least concerned to the grievances of the *Lumad* to reclaim their ancestral domains since the nation-building problem itself is left to the *Moros* to resolve on their own.

As the *Bangsamoro* peace negotiations with the MILF came to an end in 2014, there was no clear wording on the ancestral rights of the *Lumad* despite the fact that the consociationalism framework between the national government and the Moro leadership requires it to be enacted. Under the said mechanism, powers to enact certificates of ancestral domain (COAs) are now delegated to the level of the regional government. During the various negotiations in the GRP-MILF peace process, the *Lumads* are forced to participate to support *Moro* leadership in order to garner support in protecting their homelands once the new regional government is established. In sum, Paredes (2015) has cited an interview from an IP leader arguing that the MILF have used their political advantage to garner *Lumad* support on the creation of a *Bangsamoro* sub-state:

> *"They [MILF] said that they could only support Lumad ancestral domain in concept only at that point, because the tribes first needed to support the Bangsamoro*

struggle. After a peace settlement with the government, the MILF would support them".

In order to fully understand the dynamics occurring in both groups under a power-sharing political structure, we must distinguish between power-sharing and power-dividing mechanisms. Most literature on ethnic conflicts suggest that consociationalism is often used by peace negotiators to address political settlements on ethnic conflicts in order to prevent majority ethnic groups in oppressing local minorities and triggering new mobilizations (Wolff, 2003; Rothschild & Roeder, 2005; Mehler, 2009; Adam, 2018). Under these new autonomy regimes, the idea of consociationalism attempts to bridge decades-old ethnic grievances by allocating power between ethnic groups in order to sustain the peace.

Coronel-Ferrer (2012) explains that there are two dominant approaches in preventing the conflicts to recur in autonomous regions, which are power-sharing and power-dividing approaches. The first one emphasizes the sharing of governmental powers between majority and minority ethnic groups through the division of power among ethnic, linguistic, or religious groups. On the other hand, the second approach explains how decision-making is allocated to different decision-making bodies by including previously disenfranchised ethnic groups in the decision-making process to avoid ethnic cleavages. Despite the fact that these observations are commonly used at the national level, they can also be applied to sub-national territories such as autonomous regions.

Power-sharing mechanisms are commonly used by conflict negotiators during peace negotiations in order to secure sustainable peace through democratic institutions. Walter (1997) argues on the viability of power-sharing because there is less international commitment to guarantee it. However, most peace agreements around the world have power-sharing elements in minimizing ethnic cleavages that usually end with identity-based violence. Lara and Champain (2009) emphasize on the politics of exclusion fostered by the Philippine state to the *Moros* is often rooted in the problem where the national government under the internal revenue allotment (IRA) deprives the sharing of wealth to the regional government. In order to correct this grievance, an annex on wealth sharing was included in the FAB where both national and regional government share the revenues of resources found in the Bangsamoro. Hence, these agreements are institutionalized asymmetrically in order to raise the prospect of national unity to the former rebels where political participation and trust are necessary between parties (Coronel-Ferrer, 2012).

On the other hand, power-dividing mechanisms are entrenched in various peace negotiations in order to promote inclusivity to previously disenfranchised groups. However, not all ethnic cleavages are addressed through the institutionalization of multiethnic autonomous regions. Stedman (1997) argues the presence of so-called *spoilers* as an important barrier to the implementation of peace agreements. In the case of the Mindanao conflict,

the *Lumads* bear the brunt of being labelled as such due to their insistence of assert-
ing their homeland within the contested territories. Paredes (2015) cites the instance
when the final draft of the *Bangsamoro* Basic Law (BBL) from in 2014 has been kept
tight under secrecy before it was submitted to Congress in order prevent any critique
or input by any spoiler. On the various consultations, it was evident that the peace ne-
gotiators have dismissed concerns on the future power-sharing arrangements between
Lumads and *Moros*. As documented in one consultation between the national govern-
ment and the various *Lumad* leaders in Cotabato City last 6 February 2014, Professor
Miriam Coronel-Ferrer, who was then chief negotiator of the national government in the
GRP-MILF peace process, did not answer the queries from the *Lumads* and instead
chided them for being ungrateful (Espina & Testa, 2014, as cited in Paredes, 2015).

It is unfortunate that the issues spelled out by Stedman (1997) on peace processes share
the same characteristics with the *Lumad* and *Moro* power-sharing in the *Bangsamoro*.
First, *spoilers* in the peace process are painted out as the '*bad guys*' who are stepping
out of something that is perceived as good, regardless of what harm it does to particular
group interests. Second, spoilers of the peace process may have been supporters of the
previous democratizations. Finally, it is also important to note a rebel movement that
is accommodated by a peace process and is apparently sticking to the provisions of the
peace agreement, may have been the spoiler during earlier reforms.

Using the previous arguments on the place of the *Lumads* in a *Moro*-dominated
Bangsamoro, the *Lumads* are framed by the mainstream media as fragmented '*spoil-
ers*' by some government officials and evenby GPH-MILF peace process committee itself
since they were considered ungrateful and disrespectful to the commitment for long-
lasting peace in Mindanao (Paredes, 2015). Second, as mentioned earlier, the *Lumads*
have sidelined their interests in order to accommodate the struggle of their *Moro* broth-
ers in claiming their homeland in order to finally receive several incentives from the
Bangsamoro regional government such as positions in the BARMM parliament in com-
pliance to their existing traditions in selecting their official representatives. However,
when the *Moros* have already signed peace agreements with the national government,
Lumad grievances are outrightly dismissed since the *Bangsamoro* question has now
evolved as an issue concerning only Muslim Filipinos. Sadly, most *Lumads* now have
no choice but to participate in the peace process without concrete promises on what
their future will be. Finally, it is important to note that the MILF were once rebels from
the MNLF leadership who have entered into a peace agreement with the Philippine
government that led to the creation of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao
(ARMM) in 1998 (Frake, 1998).

Regardless of the recent praise by most observers on the positive prospects of a peace-
ful Mindanao under the BARMM, one thing remains clear: the constant discrimination
against the *Lumads* by both the national government and the Moro leadership can serve

as a trigger for future mobilizations if ethnic cleavages are left unaddressed. Despite the uniqueness of a '*tri-peopleapproach*' in addressing Mindanao concerns, it only remains in theory than practice because *Moros, Lumads,* and the Christian settlers still have to prove they can coexist peacefully and harmoniously in a contested territory.

The future of minorities in the *Bangsamoro*

Under the consociationalism regime in the *Bangsamoro*, most *Lumads* living within the BARMM have already acknowledged the fact that the mention of 'indigenous peoples' in the various peace agreements is already an important development in their struggle for their ancestral domain. The sidelining of the *Lumad* agenda by the *Moro* leadership can be considered as a form of legal and cultural invisibility in the future of the *Bangsamoro* homeland due to the lack of political will from the regional government to include IP concerns in their agenda. Despite the recent provision on reserved seats allocated to the *Lumads* in the *Bangsamoro* parliament (sec. 8, R.A. 11054), it remains problematic since most leaders who are elected in the new parliament usually come from the three dominant *Moro* ethnic groups (Tausug, Maguindanao, and Maranao). As stipulated in the said law:

> **SEC. 8. Election for Reserved Seats for Non-Moro Indigenous Peoples.** Notwithstanding the immediately preceding sections, reserved seats **for non-Moro indigenous peoples, such as Teduray, Lambangian, Dulangan Manobo, B'laan, and Higaonon**, shall adhere to their customary laws and indigenous processes based on the following:
>
> (a) Primacy of customary laws and practices;
> (b) Primacy of consensus building;
> (c) Acceptability to the community;
> (d) Inclusivity and full participation;
> (e) Representation of the collective interests and aspirations of non-Moro indigenous peoples;
> (f) Sustainability and strengthening of indigenous political structures;
> (g) Track record and capability; and
> (h) Gender equality."

It is notable that under the new organic law, both the national and regional governments recognize the existence of the five *Lumad* tribes living within in the *Bangsamoro* which are the Teduray, Lambiangan, Dulangan Manobo, Blaan, and Higaonon. But in reality, they are still underrepresented in the regional government. In the previous *Bangsamoro* Transitional Commission (BTC) last 2013, only two Lumads (Froilyn Mendoza and Melanie Ulama) were appointed against an overwhelming Moro majority who have often managed to dismiss IP concerns on their right to ancestral domain (Paredes, 2015). As of this writing, the *Bangsamoro* parliament has not yet enacted any legislation on

ancestral domain and indigenous peoples' rights since the R.A. 8371's coverage is only at the national level.

Another concern on the future of minorities the *Bangsamoro* is the hegemony of dominant *Moro* ethnic groups against *Moro* minorities in the BARMM. The dominance of former MILF rebels in the new BTC, mostly from the Maguindanao ethnolinguistic group, proves an important gap in the power-sharing mechanism where dominant ethnic groups tend to dominate ethnic minorities in regional politics. Rothschild & Roeder (2005) has warned that cohesive ethnic groups tend to dominate and form an ethnic elite cartel, causing weaker and unorganized ethnic groups to become fearful. Hence, smaller, unorganized Moro groups like the Iranunin Maguindanao and North Cotabato and the Sama-Badjao in Tawi-tawi may only adhere to majority rule in order not to be marginalized by the dominant Maguindanao ethnolinguistic group under the new BARMM regime.

Such pattern can be observed in the recent 2019 plebiscite on the creation of the BARMM. An overwhelming "YES" vote was recorded in the Iranun and Yakan dominated provinces of Basilan and Tawi-tawi, when a majority voted to be included in the BARMM. On the other hand, an interesting trend can be inferred where Sulu voted "NO" to the new BARMM government. This can be attributed to the opposition of the Tausug against the threat of a Maguindanao majority in the BARMM government. Despite their opposition to be included in the BARMM, their vote is aggregated with the previous ARMM government where most have voted "YES" to be included in the new *Bangsamoro* autonomous region.

Table 1. Results of the 2019 *Bangsamoro* autonomy plebiscite

Summary of Results—On the ratification of the BOL (R.A. 11054) and inclusion to the BARMM

Province	For (YES)	Against (NO)
Basilan (excluding Isabela City)	147,598 (95.78%)	6,496 (4.22%)
Lanao del Sur	503,626 (98.08%)	9,816 (1.91%)
Maguindanao	433,273 (96.44%)	15,990 (3.56%)
Sulu	137,630 (45.7%)	163,526 (54.3%)
Tawi-tawi	143,443 (93.84%)	9,419 (6.16%)
TOTAL	**1,540,017 (88.57%)**	**198,750 (11.43%)**

Source: Commission on Elections, 2019

Observing from the table, it can be inferred that unless genuine distribution of power will be allocated to all ethnic groups in Mindanao, the consociationalism project that has sustained the peace in the past few decades may deteriorate if political reforms are left unaddressed. Horowitz (1985) has cited the case of the ethnic divisions within the Moro groups as another point of contention in the *Bangsamoro*. If these issues are dismissed by peace negotiators in negotiating future peace agreements, it only remains

certain that future power-sharing arrangements will lead to possible identity-based conflicts over time.

To further complicate the future of the *Bangsamoro*, the *Lumad*'s lack of representation in the various peace negotiations proves that peace might be elusive under the current BARMM government. Paredes (2015) laments on the current dilemma that the *Lumads* have to face in asserting their distinct cultural identity within an autonomous territory or suffer from formally accommodating to Moro interests and abandon their identity. Thus, this dilemma is best captured by Smith's (1999) earlier claim that conflicting ethnic groups need a special identity that serves the 'need' for communal solidarity and fraternity; for it sharpens boundaries between communities and points up similarities between members and differences with non-members.

Conclusion

Both *Lumads* and *Moros* share a history of oppression and discrimination from Western colonization, Christianization, and capitalist greed. Despite this shared identity, the *Moros* have yearned to assert their right for self-determination with the creation of a *Bangsamoro* homeland as the highest aspiration of all ethnic groups to assert their identity.

On the other hand, the *Lumads* have also waged to defend their identity by asserting their right to their ancestral domain in Mindanao. Due to their indigenous status, they have been sidelined by the national government and the *Moro* leadership in the various peace negotiations on the future of the *Bangsamoro.* Worse, most of them have resorted to political accommodation to *Moro* interests in the hope that their right for ancestral domains will be heard under *Moro* autonomy. Unfortunately, this has never been the case since most dominant *Moro* ethnic groups like the Maguindanao and Tausughave often dominated regional politics in the Bangsamoro regional government.

In order to prevent the occurence of identity-based violence between ethnic groups, the recent peace agreement under the FAB in 2014 has strengthened the power-sharing and power-dividing mechanisms in the newlycreated *Bangsamoro* autonomous government. Under this regime, power-sharing mechanisms such as consociationalism democracy while power-diving mechanisms such as multi-level decision making between ethnic groups are institutionalized. These measures posit that asymmetrical arrangements raise the prospect of national unity along with an inclusive culture that seeks to avoid ethnic cleavages (Coronel-Ferrer, 2012).

On the contrary, the current arrangement in the *Bangsamoro* regional government also has its fair share of weaknesses. One is the lack of significant *Lumad* representation in the regional government due to their political inferiority in regional politics. Second is the tendency of dominant *Moro* ethnic groups to form ethnic cartels that cause political

uncertainty if they do not follow the spirit of the existing power-sharing arrangements in place. Finally, the exclusion of other *Moro* minorities causes an important gap that must be addressed if *Moro* leaders want an inclusive *Bangsamoro* to all Filipino Muslims.

Analyzing the text of the peace agreements between the GRP-MILF, it can be inferred that *Lumad* and *Moro* identities affirm the existing divisions across various ethnic groups in the *Bangsamoro*. If such identities are left mobilized, then this can trigger newer conflicts in the future. Violence on both sides is possible since these arrangements tend to favor certain interests while leaving other ethnic minorities left outside the national-building process. Hence, it is hoped that under the new Moro leadership, the rights of ethnic minorities will be protected in order to sustain the peace for generations to come.

Generally speaking, the contributions of this study are twofold. For one, the viability of power-sharing arrangements has yet to be tested not only in the Philippines but also on various identity-based conflicts in Southeast Asia and Africa. Second, the study also provides theoretical and practical relevance in filling the gap to understand the Mindanao conflict beyond the discourse of conflict and politics. The study attempts to include the *Lumad's* plight as well as the other *Moro* minorities in the Bangsamoro project as a whole.

In conclusion, the study recommends two issues for further study. First, to assess to what extent can power-sharing arrangements genuinely address multi-ethnic societies like Mindanao. Finally, there is a need to unpack the *Moro* and *Lumad* ethnic groups as self-ascribed collective identities in analyzing the dynamics of the Mindanao conflict. Only then can we genuinely understand the role of identities in the Mindanao question itself.

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Palestine:
Reconciliation and Peacebuilding.
Perspectives from the Civil Society Organizations

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Abstract: This research paper aims to shed light on the theoretical perspectives and operational approaches adopted by the Palestinian civil society organization in connection with the peace-building and reconciliation process in the Palestinian context. The research question is *what are the different moves, debates, and initiatives taken by the Palestinian civil society organizations to put an end to the conflict? Why could not they succeed or produce tangible results in fulfilling this goal?* The first part of the paper considers debates, contexts, and developments of civil society organizations, in general, and Palestine, in particular, as well as their roles on political, national, cultural, and developmental levels. Civil society deepens its peaceful intervention in many developed and developing countries to build domestic peace and achieve reconciliation, along with other tasks and duties. Palestine's case is not an exception but a unique case since the independent sovereign state of Palestine does not exist on the ground. The second part aims to deeply analyze the roles of civil society in the reconciliation process and to assess why this process failed to produce fruitful results until now. To use narrative methodologies, the paper collects primary data through structured interviews and the focus group. Interviews were conducted with the cadres and activists in the Palestinian civil society and other professionals and experts in this field. The last part concludes that civil society, especially among the youth, is necessary for reconciliation not only between Israeli and Palestinians but also within the Palestinians as well.

Keywords: Civil Society, Peacebuilding, Israel, Palestine, conflict.

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Introduction

Throughout the last century, Palestine was under the control of several colonial powers and hegemonic forces, including the current Israeli occupation. In 1948, a new phase of suffering began with a catastrophic loss (*An-Nakba*), ending up with the Israeli army occupying part of the land. What followed was another catastrophe (*Al-Naksa*) which occurred in 1967, which ended with the loss of entire Palestinian lands to the Israeli occupation who have been exposing them to several human rights violations. 15th May 1948 it is considered the most tragic date in contemporary Palestinian history as more than 428 villages were destroyed and more than 800,000 Palestina civilians were forced to leave their land and property (Palestine Liberation Organization Negotiation Unit, 2018). After losing the entire land, the Palestinian community took the lead in defending the lands through popular resistance, using both armed and unarmed resistance strategies. In this context, the Palestinian civil society played a key role in developing and implementing the national agenda through a mechanism of coordination among families, village councils, popular committees, charitable societies… etc. All these entities had a role in minimizing the damages that resulted from the "Israeli" occupation and the subsequent wars caused at that time. Thus, the Palestinians were forced to organize themselves to face the new harmful situation and to preserve their national identity that was under attack (Falcitelli & Montanarini, 1999).

 In 1987, the First Intifada erupted with a large scale mass participation (Ogretir & Ozcelik, 2017). It lasted for four years until the Oslo accords were signed in 1993. Despite the terrible circumstances, civil society grew and developed further to keep up with the changes that occurred on the political, economic, and social levels. One of these changes was the rise of the Palestinian Authority as the national body for the first time in Palestinian history. However, the specific role of the civil society organizations at that stage was directed at serving the Palestinian people and filling the gaps within the newly created Palestinian Authority by acting as a watchdog on the Authority itself and by representing the demands and the rights of the marginalized sections in the Palestinian society. As systemic processes, peacebuilding and reconciliation have become an inevitable necessity in Palestine following the political split and the geographical fragmentation that occurred in 2007. Indeed, in the age of liberal globalization, nobody can imagine any real developments or democratization without adequate positive interventions by civil society. Of course, Palestine has gained momentum since it is a conflict zone. It is not only a nation under occupation, but also fragmented and divided people and territories.

Two major parties dominate the Palestinian politics. One of them is Fatah (The Palestinian Liberation Movement) and Hamas (The Islamic Resistance Movement). The former was founded by Yasser Arafat in the 1950s and has been at the head of the Palestinian national movement, whereas the latter was founded in 1987 as a moderate

political Islam movement intended and committed to establishing an Islamic state in Palestine. Hamas in its Charter defines itself as a local Muslim Brotherhood branch in Palestine. The movement has a comprehensive and macro Islamic approach to life, the universe, politics, culture, and economics"[1].

Significantly, in the absence of real political alternatives, Hamas and Fatah have continued to monopolize the political landscape in the West Bank and Gaza, particularly if we realize that the Palestinian leftist groups and factions lost their political influence with the collapse of its Soviet supporter in the last three decades. Hence, the different ideologies of the two dominant parties resulted in different approaches for dealing with the Israeli occupation.

In the summer of 2006, the Palestinians held a parliamentary election in the troubled and uncertain political environment. This election resulted in the victory of Hamas due to several political issues. First, the Palestinian Authority has been unable to govern Gaza effectively after Israel disengaged from its territory in 2005. Secondly, after the death of Arafat in 2004, Fatah was internally struggling and overwhelmed with several allegations of corruption, cronyism, a weak economy, high unemployment rates, and ineffective preventive security forces (Pina, 2006).

Also, Fatah's lack of electoral success was due to the lack of unity within this political faction and due to the inability to speak with one voice after the death of Arafat. Fatah was unable to agree on the composition of its national list and registered multiple lists just before the deadline, December 14, 2005. Whereas Hamas offered one candidate in each electoral constituency, Fatah ran several candidates in the same constituency. Consequently, support for Fatah candidates was divided, while the supporters for Hamas focused on one candidate. It was evident that Fatah underestimated the popularity of Hamas and the significance of its political challenge (Pina, 2006).

Naturally, the consequence was an overwhelming electoral victory for Hamas and its supporters who marched through Ramallah streets, holding Hamas slogans and waving green flags. When they raised their green flag over the Palestinian Legislative Council building, Fatah supporters who provoked by this act, tried to remove the banner. With this incident, the internal struggle began in the streets of the Gaza strip and tension rose in West Bank. Both sides started to throw stones and fight with each other until the Palestinian Authority security forces fired warning shots into the air. For months following the election, the tension between the two groups remained high (Schanzer, 2008).

After winning the election, Hamas had the responsibility of power and international scrutiny for the first time but neither Israel nor the major world powers, including the US and the EU, recognized the new Palestinian government. Fatah refused to hand over

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1   See Hamas Charter in Arabic: https://www.palestine-studies.org/sites/default/files/mdf-).

the wheels of power nor to join a new Hamas-led coalition, while Hamas insisted that its electoral victory had granted it a legitimate control over the Palestinian Authority. This situation created significant tensions between the two parties. Incidents of open violence between them led to dozens of deaths, particularly in the Gaza Strip. Moreover, due to several oppositions against Hamas at that time, the economic situation was deteriorating and the PA failed to pay the salaries of its employees (Schanzer, 2008).

In June 2007, the armed forces of Hamas took over Gaza in what was described as a "liberation". After six days of ongoing fighting, the entire Gaza Strip was under Hamas's control. The Palestinian Authority President and Fatah leader, Mahmoud Abbas, then dismissed the Hamas-led government, and a new emergency cabinet had been founded in the West Bank, led by Prime Minister Salam Fayyad (Schanzer, 2008).

This wave of violence was a milestone in Palestinian history and a massive setback in the struggle against the Israeli occupation. It was the first time that the Palestinians were engaged in open warfare against one another. However, it should be noted that since the beginning of the division, there have been several reconciliation attempts. The first agreement was signed in May 2011, and another one in 2012. However, in March-April 2012, the political crisis was reignited and tensions strongly increased in 2013. Again, in April 2014, Hamas and Fatah raised the hope of the Palestinians by signing a new national reconciliation deal, and finally forming a unity government in June 2014. However, the terms of the agreement were not implemented; therefore, it could not reduce the tension between the two factions. Indeed, Gaza remained under Hamas's control and the West Bank under Fatah's.

This Palestinian internal political split made the situation even more complicated. Hence, the Palestinian civil society has to carry the burden of dealing with both situations created by the occupation and the political split. Therefore, the main reason behind the creation of the civil society organizations (CSOs) was to strengthen the internal abilities of the Palestinian people to manage the occupation and ramifications of the political fragmentation in a much better strategy and visionary approach. Primarily speaking, the task of CSOs is to rescue and support the specific field of their responsibility and under their mandate For example, some organizations have the mandate to work on women's rights; others address children's rights; while other organizations are focused on democratization, human rights, social accountability, and reconciliation (Bari, 1999). These organizations have achieved moderately in the issues of human rights, democratic transformation, and national reconciliation for many internal and external reasons and factors.

Significantly, the political split between Fatah and Hamas constituted a prominent challenge to the civil society and Palestinians in general. In the light of the internal political fragmentation and the deterioration of the surrounding Arab political order in the context of the Arab Spring, the Palestinian Question returns to be examined in

regional blocks and international alliances and hubs. This split had not only weakened the Palestinian political project but also it increased negative implications to people's resilience and stead fastness. The CSO warned of the risks of the political division and its repercussions and therefore endeavored to achieve national reconciliation. They conducted and tailored dialogues with the participation of various Palestinian political forces and adopted a wide range of activities and initiatives in this regard (Sheikh Khalil, 2008).

Civil Society, Peacebuilding and Reconciliation in Theoretical Context

The modern idea of civil society can be traced back to Tocqueville (1805-1859) that emphasized the importance of independent and voluntary associations (De la Democratie en Amerique). He defines these associations as schools of democracy in which democratic attitudes, behavior, and thinking are learned so that citizens can be protected from authoritarian regimes and defend their rights against tyrannical majorities in society. According to Tocqueville, these associations should be created on all levels (local, regional, national) voluntarily (Wilde, 2014). Civil society is a part of social capital and civic virtues such as trust, honesty, acceptance, and tolerance. The essential components of social capital are reciprocity, trust, and networks of civic engagement that is a society characterized by people who are willing to do things for others, not for immediate return, but with the confidence that others would do the same for them. The idea of social capital can be traced back to the concept of the fraternity of the French Revolution (Putnam, 2000). The important dimension of civil society is the relationship with the state in the context of democracy. Since democracy is closely related to accountability and public opinion, civil society is an important tool for mobilizing public opinion and making government accountable.

The democratization in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) has reached its climax during the Arab Spring. The struggle between tradition and modernity together with the high level of unemployment, regional conflicts, semi-autocratic governments, and the pervasion of clientelism and neo-patrimonialism in state structure has led to a weak, fragile, and artificial civil society in the region (Natil, 2019). Civil society is an important part of peacemaking, conflict resolution, and state-building. It is an alternative and a supplement to diplomatic Track I efforts. It provides an externally driven agenda for real social change on the ground in conflict settings (Ogretir, 2017a, 2017b).

The idea of civil society, NGOs, and civil initiatives has been grown in the Palestinian territories. During the 1970s and 1980s, the PLO and its factions have established most civil society organizations. Their main area of activities has concentrated on resisting the Occupation and establishing an independent Palestinian state. The Palestinian NGOs in Gaza Strip and the West Bank began to thrive in the 1990s especially after the Palestinian Authority was established and recognized widely in the world in 1994. The

road to statehood in Palestine has increased NGOs' abilities to obtain funds from all over the world. Although foreign donations have been pouring into the Territories, it has made the NGOs very dependent on external funding. As a result, they have become more vulnerable to any external pressures.

In 2000, there were approximately 1500 civil society organizations and that number has reached 1495 in 2007 in Palestine. Almost 69 percent were located in the West Bank. The rest of it (31%) were in the Gaza Strip. The average number of paid workers in the NGOs was 20 persons per organization. The most important statistic is that 55 percent of paid workers were women. Although the number of NGOs has increased during this period, the number of volunteers was decreased from 64,936 in 2000 to 53,622 in 2007. The research has also given information about funding that 64 percent of the money for NGOs received from external sources, 4 percent from the Palestinian citizens of Israel, and the rest from the organizations' activities and local communities or institutions. The amount of funding is doubled between 1999 and 2006 is from nearly $ 113 million in 1999 to $ 224 million in 2006 (Chaitin, 2011).

The liberal peace theory that combines democracy and civil society has become an important cornerstone in peacebuilding. The roots of liberal peace could be traced back to Kant and his Perpetual Peace that show direct causation between the adoption of democracy and the ending of the war. The democratic peace theory claims that democratization is an important tool for building liberal peace. As a result, peacebuilders have attempted to turn conflict-ridden societies and war-torn states into liberal democracies (Bouris, 2014).

In September 2015, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) approved 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for 2016-2030. The new development agenda is framed in "Five Ps": people, planet, prosperity, peace, and partnership. The SDG number 16: "Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels. UNGA must have linked peacebuilding and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) that ensure a peace goal in the SDGs. Civil society and peacebuilding are both widely debated concepts. Peacebuilding is related to the concept of conflict transformation described as changing conflict into something constructive (Lederach, 1995). Peacebuilding aims at preventing and managing armed conflict and at creating sustainable peace after large-scale organized violence has ended (Paffenholz, 2010). Peacebuilding and civil society are interconnected and complex processes. Civil society in peacebuilding is based on "bottom-up" rather than "top-down" approaches and local ownership of peacebuilding processes. It promotes building national unity and reconciliation through grassroots traditional processes.

Since the early 1990s, there has been a proliferation of global recognition of the civil-society actors' contributions. One of the examples is the 1992 Nobel Peace Prize for

Guatemalan indigenous woman peace-activist Rigoberta Menchu Tum. Menchu received the Nobel Peace Prize, "in recognition of her work for social justice and ethno-cultural reconciliation based on respect for the rights and indigenous people" (NobelPrize.org, 1992). There are some civil society organizations and campaigns that also received the Nobel Peace Prize: The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (2017), Grameen Bank (2006), International Campaign to Ban Landmines (1997), Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs (1995), and International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (1985).

Civil society organizations (CSOs) view peacebuilding as bridging polarized groups and promoting dialogue and reconciliation. CSOs' peacebuilding activities are as follows: Advocacy and training for human rights, production of reconciliatory information, the encouragement of politicians for peace politics, and training programs for disadvantaged groups. Because peacebuilding is a process, CSOs may focus on a set of activities in governance, human rights, reconciliation, and development that aims at prevention, mitigation, and resolution of conflict (Leeuwen, 2009).

There is a close link between civil society peacebuilding and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), intergovernmental organizations, and donors. First, international stakeholders may support local civil society via new approaches for conflict resolution and peace capacity building training. Second, international organizations provide development assistance as well as technical and political civil society support.

In the mid-seventies, Johan Galtung developed *peacebuilding* as a technical term. In his quest to develop a new concept, Galtung considers peacebuilding inapplicable in real conflict situations unless we deal with the causes at the root of violence. Hence, peace-building structures must be constructed in a way to promote suitable peace and to enhance applicable peace management and conflict resolution (Galtung, 1976). Another school of thought looked upon peacebuilding as an actual process aiming at strengthening national capacities and managing conflicts peacefully while matching sustainable peace with justice and development (UN Report on Peacebuilding, 2017). However, it is challenging to shed light on peacebuilding unless we link it to some overarching terminologies such as conflict transformation, restorative justice, healing, dealing with the past, reconciliation, forgiveness, and national unity. This can be considered a bottom-up approach for peacebuilding through encouraging decentralized social, economic, and cultural structures to shift the relationships of coercion to connections of comfort and social harmony (Galtung, 1969).

Peace is considered to be the hardest point to fulfill since it requires intensive work between the conflicting factions, groups, or communities. Following a logical order, peacebuilding develops gradually after the two stages, namely peacemaking and peacekeeping. These two stages are crucial for ending bloody conflicts that can provide convenient platforms for more effective peacebuilding strategies in later stages (Ghali,

1992). The vast literature in the field of peace studies focuses on five consecutive stages to establish peace in much more practical and tangible terms. First, dealing with the root causes of conflicts; second, appropriate dealing with community's expectations; third, establishing an extensive network of national and international organizations; fourth, harmonizing the national and international interests and finally matching the above-mentioned stages with peacebuilding[2].

It is noted that the theoretical components of this concept indicate that peacebuilding is not only a post-conflict resolution or a post-accord construction, but it is a more comprehensive strategic umbrella that encompasses all arrays of processes, approaches, stages, and activities that can contribute to transforming the conflict into a more sustainable peaceful relationship. In other words, this term can be perceived to have transformational nature and a process of changing the negative relationships into more positive, constructive attitudes in the long run (Lederach, 1995). Therefore, Lederach proposed a sort of mechanism to strengthen peacebuilding on the grounds by engaging the grassroots, local NGOs, and other national and international actors to create conditions conducive to the peace process (Lederach, 2005: 203).

The concept of reconciliation is best described by Bloomfield et al. (2008) who observed that reconciliation is both a goal and a process. So, we have to take into consideration a clear answer to the following question: How can we recognize when the goal of reconciliation has been achieved? Of course, it is not easy to answer such a question since reconciliation is not a handy roadmap and there are no bypass roads or easy descriptions for the reunifications. These societies have been divided by long-lasting violence that resulted from conflicts. Thus, there is a need for a wider understanding as well as a conciliatory environment as a base for those conflicted parties. We have the difficult challenge of establishing a new form of positive co-existence. Accordingly, others have defined the term "reconciliation". For example, Galtung states that it means closure plus healing; closure in the sense of not re-opening hostilities, healing in the sense of being rehabilitated (Galtung, 2001).

Working at the political\elite level is crucial to achieving reconciliation, but that arrangement remains incomplete unless we integrate the social\communal reconciliation into the process. Civil society, in this regard, can facilitate integrating communities into a more meaningful process of reconciliation with justice, social harmony, and active citizenship the main driving principles on the ground (Wüstenberg, 2009).

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2 Peace-making – Overview Conflict Management Toolkit. (Johns Hopkins University, School of Advanced International Studies, Conflict Management Program). Accessed on 15 Feb. 2006. Available from http://legacy2.sais-jhu.edu/cmtoolkit/approaches/peacemaking/index.htm

Civil Society in the Palestinian Context

In his theory of hegemony, Antonio Gramsci describes how states use cultural institutions to maintain power in capitalist societies. Gramsci does not understand the 'state' inthe narrow sense of a government. Instead, he perceives two different ways of how the ruling class maintains its dominance in society: first, it use a coercive strategy that employs the political society (army, the police, legal systems, etc.) of a capitalist state to force other classes to accept its role. Second, they apply a hegemonic strategy that uses the civil society's (family's, education systems', trade unions', etc.) ideas and values to persuade the subordinate class of the idea that the rule of the capitalists is legitimate and fruitful (Özçelik, 2005).The civil society organizations are commonly seen as the 'private' or 'non-state' sphere that mediates between the state and the economy in this Gramscian paradigm (Ncube, 2000).

The debate on the position of the Civil Society and the expected role in the efforts of national reconciliation between the two main Palestinian parties (Fatah and Hamas) has become the main argument among the Palestinians at all Micro and Macro levels. This development comes along with the need to frame the potential use of the political position of Palestinian Civil Society through scientific studies to accumulate the efforts to achieve national, political, developmental, and socioeconomic goals.

The combination of both our professional background and accumulated experience has expanded the idea of this research, putting additional motivation on the importance of the Palestinian Civil Society's role in activating the internal political situation. Indeed, this important issue affected the holistic Palestinian public life in different areas: economic, social, political… etc. It is noted that the strong presence of different Palestinian civil society organizations highlights the great importance of their role in peacebuilding actions internally and externally at the local and elite levels. This study came along with the passion for achieving peace, prosperity, and stability within the Palestinian society and with other neighboring communities. The idea of the accumulated knowledge of the Palestinian civil society has fundamentally contributed towards solidifying public life and enhancing the socio-economic formation of the Palestinian context. The Palestinian civil society has a particular structural role in Palestinian public life. Thus, this paper highlights the main areas that determine the future of civil society's contribution to the Palestinian political map.

Since the end of the Cold War, the Middle East or the Israel-Palestine peace process have been the most important peacebuilding project in the world. The Palestinians, Israelis, and peace sponsors have mostly based on the realist-liberal conceptions of conflict resolution between sovereign entities and democratization. Apart from the Israel-Palestine conflict, there has been intense internal conflict within the Palestinian people. As a result, the Palestinian society seems not to have a unified government that combines both the Islamist Hamas and secular Fatah political parties. Hamas may seem

to have transitioned from militarism to governance and become a resistance movement. This transition has created a new area of civil society building in Palestine society.

The real peace process in the Middle East in general and the Israeli-Palestinian conflicts, in particular, requires the integration of bottom-up (civil society, second-track diplomacy, grassroots) peacebuilding activities and top-down (governmental, formal) peace negotiations and binding treaties. Without people-to-people peacebuilding, the binding agreements among elected leaders have not ensured the conflict to come to an end. Since the end of the Cold War, there has been increasing international recognition of the contributions of civil society and grassroots actors make to peace in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that has mostly seen as the intra-state nature and mostly affected civilian population. The distinction among soldiers, rebels, and civilians has largely disappeared. In an intra-state conflict environment, diplomatic (conventional) mechanisms for conflict resolution and peacemaking lost their relevance. Also, the collapse of the Soviet Union has led to a new freedom for international NGOs to operate in conflict zones. It is important to note that civil society cannot be the only tool for the peaceful resolution of conflicts but diverse civil society initiatives such as media, churches, human rights networks, peace groups, development organizations, women's associations, community and religious leaders, educational institutions, trade unions, and professional associations may have indirect influences on political peace processes (Leeuwen, 2009).

Political agreements usually do not lead to a peace that must be made between people. As a result, there is a need to develop positive and negative peace beyond the political arena. Civil society helps to create environments that make collaborations possible and nurture them and allow them to evolve. Thus, civil society is essential for producing the necessary social and cultural understanding for lasting peace. The collaborations between the Palestinian and Israeli people are necessary for the basic motivation of stable peace. The endless accusation of past mistakes and the egoism of victimization produce blame, guilt and comparisons match between conflicting parties.

From the Israeli point of view, Israelis have been suffered since the Exodus and it has reached its climax during the Holocaust. They have seen themselves as the only victim of the conflict. They also dehumanize and delegitimize the opposite conflict parties, namely the Palestinians, called sub-humans, animals, drugged cockroaches, grasshoppers, two-legged beasts, demons, bloodthirsty devils, deviates, parasites, psychopaths, and violence-prone (Moughrabi, 1992). On the other hand, the Palestinians and even almost whole world have perceived the İsrael as a Zionist and occupied state that has produced huge suffering since its establishment in 1948 which called as*Al-Nakba* (Arabic: ‫النكبة‬ the Catastrophe) as a chosen trauma. As a victim, they have traumatized and suffered from insecurity, anxiety, and sadness. During the de-Arabization period, almost 420 villages were destroyed, Arabic names of neighborhoods and streets were

replaced with Jewish names and Hebrew became the main language of the country and Hativka-Israel's national anthem (Chaitin, 2012). The psycho-analytical and psycho-dynamic concepts such as group narcissism, projection, ethnocentrism, stereotype, prejudice, dehumanization, discrimination, and egoism of victimization have played crucial roles in the Israeli-Palestinian conflicts (Ogretir & Ozcelik, 2008).

At present, civil society institutions work primarily to enhance peace by providing people with knowledge and skills. Nobody can deny that civil society plays a role in consolidating and disseminating knowledge related to democracy, human rights, and development. At the same time, they promote skills connected with conflict transformation, negotiations, mediation, and effective communication. The Palestinian grassroots movements aim to raise awareness of the Palestinian cause that views Israel as an occupier in their historical narratives (Özçelik, 2017). The final goal of such a mission is to promote people's resilience by encouraging them to resolve their local differences peacefully and by adopting the strategy of sustainable development, especially in those areas closer to the Wall and the Israeli settlements in West Bank. Such techniques are helpful not only to strengthen peaceful coexistence internally but also to encourage local communities to have a say in resolving national as well as local conflicts including that one between Fatah and Hamas. For instance, Taawon for Conflict Resolution is a local Palestinian civil society organization that has been engaged in such activities in the last ten years. Taawon is working with youth, women, and the weaker sections of the society and it has widely published reports and studies, along with organizing seminars and workshops to promote these values.

There were some initiatives embraced by civil society organizations in Palestine to eliminate the internal hostility. Such role was crystalized on the ground by stimulating middle-class leaders from both factions (Fatah and Hamas) to meet face to face and to exchange views on the future of reconciliation. Mustafa Al Barghouthi from *Al Mobadara* has been optimistic about the future role of civil society in bridging the gaps between Fatah and Hamas, although in some of his interviews he indicated that there are some hindrances on the way to reconciliation. To have more concrete results on the ground, Al Barghouthi would rather suggest an alliance or solid network between civil society groups and the communal mobilization to precipitate change. In much microanalysis, Palestinian society needs intra-personal reconciliation as both communities and individuals need to reconcile with themselves.

According to Walid Salem, an activist and academic as well, civil society institutions are generally expected to fulfill their roles. These roles include monitoring violations of human rights; observing elections; raising public awareness of democracy, human rights, gender issues, providing agricultural and health information, international lobbying, and organizing nonviolent activities to protest against the occupation and social domination (personal communication). In the same context, Athar Zaghal from UN women,

says that the role of civil society, in general, is to work as an advocacy tool, to advocate people's and the society's voice and put pressures on the official authorities. It is also a monitoring tool that the government uses to guarantee a social, administrative and political system that is free from violations and corruption (personal communication, 15.12.2017).

These roles are justified as part of these organizations' missions to move towards building a healthy Palestinian society and mobilizing the foundations of its existence, survival, and development. Human Rights and Democracy Media Center SHAMS, for example, defines its vision as building a civic democratic society based on tolerance, justice, and rule of law. There is a widespread belief that civil society represents the values of tolerance, recognition, assimilation, reconciliation, democracy, and amnesty. Civil society has a history associated with politics, economics, and developing the state and society. It can facilitate the real intellectual and cultural process towards citizenship and democracy with justice, equality, and basic freedoms as the main principles and slogans (Bishara, 2012).

Moreover, they work on creating media pressure on the international community to make a change. That is why they focus on covering incidents of people who live in crucial and critical situations and broadcasting them to the world. As Amal Joumah from the Women Affair Technical Committee stresses, the NGOs have to play an important role in bringing people's attention to the issues happening around them. This can be done through the coverage and reach out, using media, communication and advocacy campaigns more particularly in issues connected with women in Palestinian society and their daily routine problems (personal communication, 1.1.2017).

Due to the absence of the Palestinian Authority, the intervention of external actors was necessary. Considering that the Palestinians' partial loss of hope in the newly constructed arrangements that took place after the Oslo Accords in 1994, the measurements by external institutions have further consolidated Therefore, people can feel that they have something to lean on since the game has taken place and the third wheel has interfered under the umbrella of the CSOs in Palestine. Since then the organizations have interfered as a third party that has supported the Palestinian people and offered aid when other authorities have failed to help. However, violence has never stopped. Considering Gramsci's theory, it is apparent how powerful forces use civil society to spread their control by containing people's pain and suffering at the end of the day.

Different field interviews have been conducted by the researcher to measure the impact of civil society interventions in the domestic reconciliation process. Ayed Abu Eqtaish, the Accountability Program Director of the Defense for Children International, contends that these organizations have tried many times to give a hand in solving the different sensitive situations in Palestine. Yet the political parties, whether in the internal

conflict or the confrontation with "Israel", have always put limits for them, as these parties always underestimate the civil society's role and even suspected it (personal communication, 02.01.2018).

Abu Eqtaish has highlighted several important points. He has pointed out the limits and the stumbling obstacles preventing civil society groups from achieving substantial change. They started to control their fund accounts harmed the effectiveness and quality of their work. They also put many checkpoints and divide the land. As Zaghal stated that the Israeli occupation limits the ability of civil society to access all beneficiaries; hence, for some civil society organizations to work in all the Palestinian cities, they have to operate through multiple offices in Gaza, the West Bank, and sometimes even in Jerusalem. Also, they have to acquire legal registrations from both the Palestinian and Israeli authorities (personal communication, 15.12.2017).

These circumstances certainly pressure the CSOs financially and politically pressures and would reduce the quality of their services due to the number of challenges they face. Second, some of the local NGOs intervened in the situation but the political views on these interventions are not taken as seriously as the involvement of political parties and factions. A reason for this situation might be that in the case of Palestine. The focal point lies in the political orientations and localizing groups of interests within the public concern. However, at this point, Gramsci's theory explains how these civil society organizations were made only to help in improving the situation without making any political steps or affiliations. On the other hand, CSOs were not as powerful as expected or pretended to be in actual life.

Therefore, the involvement of civil societies as an effective tool for social and political change has to be further debated and discussed in a more specific and narrow context. Hadeel Elayan from Sawa Organization states that Sawa organization doesn't have a role in the political field. However, its main role is aiding those in need including women, children, and families of the victims and who have been harmed because of the occupation and the internal division (personal communication, 01.02.2018). Elayan further says, civil society's work is related to services and consultation but they have no realpolitik. Moreover, Abu Eqtish has also stated Defense of Children International in Palestine (DCIP) in 2014 started a campaign to hold accountable the occupation forces in the UN for using children as human shields in wars and armed clashes. However, and for the first time, the Secretary-General has refused the recommendation of his representative for such a request after the declaration of the initiative of the DCIP Organization to protect the children in Palestine by using the political terms and legal mandate the UN put. Hence, civil society has not taken a useful role in resolving the causes of political causes due to the political obstacles and challenges by powerful institutions (personal communication, 02.01.2018).

Debates on Political Division by Palestinian Civil Society:

The leaders and activists of civil society in Palestine unanimously agreed that political fragmentation caused significant damage to the Palestinian system at political, social, and cultural levels. Such damage has weakened the presence of Palestine cause in international forums and organizations. Such bad ramifications are reflected in the culture of people and their concepts of mutual peaceful coexistence (Ogretir, 2008). The division harmed the composition of Palestinian life in connection with social emancipation and economic developments.

Civil society played a limited but constructive in the issue of national reconciliation and the subject of peaceful resistance to the occupation. The civil society provided more than one initiative, but they sometimes lose influence since there is parts of Palestinian society that limit their connections to the political parties.

Since the beginning of the political split in 2007, civil society has openly and actively expressed its dissatisfaction and rejection of the phenomenon of national tragedy. The nonviolent nature of the Palestinian resistance has reached its climax during the 21st century (Ozcelik, 2020). The network of NGOs, including the networks in the West Bank and Gaza Strip as well as parliamentary blocs and the participation of some political parties, formed the Committee on Public Freedoms. It focuses on human rights abuses in both the West Bank and Gaza, including political arrests, the closure of civil institutions, and the assault on certain peaceful activities (personal communication 09.05.2018).

The deep causes of the problem were not analyzed as an entry point for reconciliation and the political division was not treated as a reason to undermine the Palestinian political system. Articles 44, 45, and 46 of the Palestinian Basic Law (temporary Palestinian constitution) emphasize the components of the political regime as a presidential system. However, it became a mixed system after the division in which two heads of power (the president and the prime minister), might complicate the democratic nature of future Palestine state, especially in the absence of the Legislative Council and the containment of the judiciary (personal communication, 13.05.2018).

It seems apparent that PSC has no solid collective plan, which determines who the organizations are, what their objectives, and how they want to achieve them. There is no vision regarding the political system and the state. Although the role of civil society is limited since it is not part of the process and political structure, it has excellent opportunities to achieve a positive impact on national reconciliation. Experience has shown that this moral force of civil society is not negligible if it manages its activities adequately. The leaders of civil society organizations emphasize the significance of establishing internal peace of the community for more than reconciliation efforts. The contribution of civil society institutions to the issue of reconciliation is limited and non-effective in the real sense. As a result, these institutions fall outside the framework

of the political system in broader terms. The inability of the Palestinian Authority to achieve national goals and the delay in peacemaking may provide an opportunity for civil society organizations to make a change (personal communication, 06.05.2018).

The two groups (Fatah and Hamas) make tangible efforts to create a special civil society that suits the regime of security which controls the lives of citizens as well as the economic and social organizations. Some civil society leaders spoke of the absence of the efficient role of the Palestinian civil society in reconciliation efforts. Democracy in public life declined dramatically including in public bodies such as local government municipalities, student councils, and trade unions. The civil society worked in a dual-track strategy to end the political split. The essential elements of this strategy are to encourage the masses to take over the streets in protest and to document the violations of human rights and basic liberties (personal communication, 07.05.2018).

The masses lost confidence in the political parties and institutions of civil society are living in a state of self-confidence to achieve their true values and traditions. At the same time, civil society institutions could not be deepening their ability to mobilize the public quickly through the student councils and social movements. They suppose, I mean PCS, to work to construct a community alliance for the sake of putting pressure on both conflicting groups to come closer towards reconciliation.

The leaders of civil society have moved away from the masses and their social engagements. Civil society did not provide creative solutions on the grassroots level to deal with the political division. The ongoing Fatah and Islamist discourse does not raise to the level required to deal with the conflict in a much more innovative way. Civil Society needs to be more pragmatic and realistic when it comes to putting its strategies of making internal and domestic peace at the political level. Civil society needs to play all the roles that would make changes in the balance of power and rearrange the map of interests strategically and rationally to transform the conflict.

1. **Initiatives of Palestinian Civil Society in the Context of Peace-Building and Reconciliation**

The Palestinian civil society has undertaken numerous efforts and initiatives in the issue of political split and the subsequent reconciliation file but the tangible results on the ground as we already discussed in the previous pages were limited and ineffective.

- Initiatives aiming at **ending the division and breaking the siege on Gaza** Strip as well as organizing and supporting international solidarity campaigns and returns hips aimed at breaking the siege. The failure of the peace process undermined all efforts to develop programs for the people on a much more professional basis (personal communication, 28.04.2018).
- Among the successes achieved by the society is the **initiative of reducing the effects of division in** some areas. Its most valuable success addresses the human

rights violations resulting from the division, including arbitrary detention, torture, dismissal from public office, infringement of freedom of expression, peaceful assemblies, and the right to form associations (personal communication, 29.04.2018).

– Civil society interventions also included **pressures to protect humanitarian interventions** and follow up the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of the **return of health, water, and basic services**. There have been modest initiatives and contributions by the civil society to the reconciliation process, but although these contributions had positive impacts on the situation, they could not gain the requisite strength. However, some of these initiatives were affected by the political framework and by the state of containment and cooptation. However, only a limited number of institutions remained independent (personal communication, 28.04.2018).

– The most important initiative is the **Palestinian National Initiative (Mubadara) 2006–2007** which participated in the Cairo negotiations and was included in the Palestinian Non-Governmental Organizations Network (PNGO). It aimed at solving the problem of the health sector by the PNGO. Certainly, there are initiatives to communicate with institutions, international parties, and organizations which are working on the issue of reconciliation.

– **The youth movement took over the streets** in an attempt to end the division under various names such as "Youth of March 5", "Youth of June" and "Youth Movements". At the same time, joining with some civil institutions to bring about positive changes in the Palestinian society. It hopes to play a pivotal role in ending the split with the minimum level of cost politically and socially (personal communication, 30.06.2018).

– The PNGO Network formed the Public Freedoms Committee, which aims at focusing on human rights violations in both the West Bank and Gaza. These violations include political arrests, closure of civil institutions, and attacks on Youth activists and volunteers. It hoped to end the division and the political split by formulating initiatives of mediation between the conflict groups. Thus, it has organized many networks, marches, and tents sit-in call for unity in 2011. At the time, it was able to influence the popular efforts and informed the President, Mahmoud Abbas, that he should visit Gaza for the sake of reconciling differences with Hamas. They told him that if he does so, he would be welcomed by Hamas and the political division will end and consequently, our national project would be revived.

– Panorama civil group has managed a program funded by the European Union to coordinate the efforts of all the institutions working on peace, health, education, and the environment in one strategic pot. It is crucial to invest in professional initiatives such as the Swiss Reconciliation Initiative, which still exists, and establish professional experience in the field of conflict resolution and peace studies. This professionalism includes theoretical orientations and practical skills that suit the Palestinian political and social context. It is useful to adopt a national program that neutralizes external intervention and start building bridges of trust with profes-

sional negotiators and sharing the voice of academia and the private sector in the negotiation process (personal communication, 30.04.2018).

Challenges and Obstacles

The Palestinian civil society has not found its appropriate place against the backdrop of the Oslo Era. In other words, that requires the redefinition of the Palestinian civil society by the new changes of Oslo and its political, social, and economic milestones. Civil society does not have enough power to generate sufficient pressure on the parties to conflict regarding the division, its role has not much differed from those of political parties that were not part of the division but became partner parties in one degree or another over time. Besides, civil society still tries to play the role of reformer without sufficient force of the ground. When the split got deeper day after day, civil society emerged as one victim of such division. Division caused deterioration in the system itself to the extent that participatory democracy emerged on paper only without real substance.

Historically speaking, the roots of the problem traced back to the establishment t of the National Authority which is an extension of the PLO. The structure of the organization focused on the widespread use of money and political influence to buy elites and prevent criticism including direct repression. Containment and cooptation were used widely to cultivate new leaders and new elites and civil society was not exceptional to that trend. Trade unions and student councils established inside the occupied territories were utilized by some political factions to falsify their representation among the masses.

Cultural elites, intellectuals, and writers were co-opted by the Authority by offering them posts in the government as ministers, deputy ministers, advisors, or ambassadors abroad. They have been privileged with huge salaries and covering other expenses. Additionally, the Authority transformed funding sources into a tool of control and influence over political parties and civil society. Popular unions such as teachers' unions and the syndicate of public servants were established but used also to look for funds and influence as well.

Final Concluding Remarks

The Oslo Agreement signed between the Palestinians and the Israelis in 1993 had impacted the background of civil society in Palestine due to the social, political, and economic changes that occurred in the Palestinian context. Civil society has not had enough power and willingness as well to put pressure on the two conflicting parties to end the status of political division and split. This is despite its role as reformer and peace promoter at least at the domestic level. At the more advanced stage, civil society activists felt victimized by this fragmentation because participatory democracy was unable to function at the system level and grassroots movements as well.

The main reason behind such a problem was the Palestinian Authority's strategy of putting pressure on the international funds that go to the civil society sector, along with another strategy of containing and co-opting the elites of this sector by offering them portfolios and privileges. The Palestinian Authority has used the strategy of cooptation of civil and cultural elites especially writers, intellectuals, and activists by offering them good positions including ministries and public offices and paying them luxurious salaries.

It is almost impossible to achieve perpetual peace just only people-to-people processes or only formal agreements between conflicting parties. Structural violence and inequalities must be addressed as well. The Israeli-Palestinian peacebuilding requires multiple perspectives and solutions with complex thinking as well as cognitive, behavioral, and affective changes in multiple levels from interpersonal to global. Civil society has encountered some problems and hurdles in peacebuilding in the Israel-Palestine context. First, over the last half of the century, many conflict resolution and peace scholars, practitioners, and activists have engaged in conflict resolution and peacebuilding activities. Although there has been no real huge conceptualization and theories on the subject, it has rarely reached ordinary people on psychological, social, cultural, educational, community, and developmental levels. Second, primary, secondary and third party conflict parties have lost their belief and enthusiasm in a concrete peace agreement. In the post-September 11 World, formal peace processes have failed and the conflict situation has worsened. Third, because of the intractable, protracted, and deep-rooted nature of the conflict, the conflict dynamics have escalated into more violence and armed conflict. The enemy images and other psychological processes have made grassroots and civil society peace activities useless and void (Chaitin, 2011).

To conclude civil society organizations can provide neutral information to conflicting groups based on professional and impartial sources. Appropriate and creative tools and channels for communication between both parties must be developed professionally. The urgent search for acceptable mediators, young energetic leaders, and a positive school of thoughts must be intensified. In sum, despite civil society in Palestine has encountered some setbacks and hindrances, there have been some hopeful developments in the third sector and grassroots and funding have risen in a considerable amount. When third sector and grassroots have been used effectively in the Middle East peace processes, it will have a strong impact on people-to-people peacebuilding and they will challenge the political-psychological-social status quo. Grassroots projects have different, creative, and interesting forms from education and counseling to arts and entertainment. Palestinians, Arabs, and Israelis are cooking, camping, sailing, cleaning beaches, climbing mountains, and coming together for conflict resolution and peace, young and old, male and female, students, and scholars.

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