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Under What Conditions do Ethnic Conflicts Occur? The Case of Cote d'Ivoire

by

Kamonon Amy Soro

Under the Direction of Carrie Manning, Dr

A Thesis submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts

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ABSTRACT

The origins of ethnic conflicts have been a prominent part of the literature on civil wars, especially African civil wars. In this paper, I argue that political leaders' instrumentalization of ethnicity is made possible because of colonial administrations' ethnic configurations. Ethnic conflicts occur when political leaders instrumentalize preexisting ethnic configurations to gain or remain in power. I further claim that such strategies are more likely to result in conflicts in multiparty systems because the stakes are higher during elections. Under a multiparty system this instrumentalization occurs through two major mechanisms: (1) the ethnic polarization of political parties and (2) the installation of the fear of victimization. This conclusion has many implications for conflict resolution strategies and post-conflict statebuilding.

INDEX WORDS: Civil wars, Ethnicity, Constructivism, Instrumentalism, Primordialism, Colonial legacy, Ethnic Conflicts, Cote d'Ivoire, Africa

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August 2021

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my family, who are my source of inspiration and my strength. I could not have completed this without your spiritual, moral and emotional support.

To my friends and classmates, who shared their words of advice and words of encouragement to finish this paper.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS		V
LIST OF FIGURES		VII
1 INTRODUCTION		1
2 LITTERATURE REVIEW		3
2.1 Primordialism		3
2.2 Constructivism		5
2.3 Instrumentalism		6
3 ARGUMENT		8
4 METHODOLOGY		14
5 CASE STUDY		16
5.1 Colonial Period		16
5.2 Pre 1993: Political clientelism		17
5.3 1993-2000 : Doctrine de l’Ivoirité or Ivorianness		22
5.4 2001-2010: Emergence of civil wars		24
6 ANALYSIS		29
7 IMPLICATIONS AND LIMITATIONS		36
REFERENCES		38

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 Regional Repartition of ethnic divisions in CIV	21
Figure 2 Regional Repartition of ethnic groups in CIV.....	22
Figure 3 Divided Map of Cote d'Ivoire. The green zone represents the cities controlled by the rebel forces loyal to Alassane Ouattara. The orange zone represents the safety zone under the UN and French Troops' control. The pink zone represents the cities controlled by forces loyal to incumbent President Laurent Gbagbo.....	29
Figure 4 The path from colonial legacy to civil wars in Cote d'Ivoire.....	30

1 INTRODUCTION

Societies organize themselves along many different lines such as religion, class, political ideology, geography, and ethnicity, yet when societies go to war it is usually between groups defined by ethnicity (Blattman & Miguel, 2010). Ethnic conflicts are conflicts where groups define their goals exclusively in ethnic terms and in which the fault-line of confrontation is one of ethnic variation (Cordell and Wolf, 2010). In this paper, an ethnic conflict is understood as "organized large-scale violent conflict among ethnic groups of which at least one has not achieved statehood or is not in possession of the state apparatus" (Angstrom, 2000). According to Sambanis (2001), "not all wars are the same, each war is as different as the society that produce it". Therefore, to understand ethnic conflicts, we need to understand the societies that produce them and identify the pathways that lead to violence among groups. Under what conditions do ethnic conflicts occur? The literature is generally divided into three major schools of thought:

The first one is primordialism. Regarding ethnicity, primordialists argue that "ethnic groups and nationalities exist because there are traditions of belief and action towards primordial objects such as biological factors and especially territorial location" (Gryosby,1994). It relies on the assumptions made by kinship theorists that beings are more likely to favor kin over nonkin (Van den Berghe, 1987). It is an inherent psychological trait, and it is noticeable in the way we treat family. Individuals are more likely to treat individuals with the same characteristics as them better than those who do not. These characteristics are generally ascriptive, meaning they are beyond their control, like race or ethnicity. Primordialist ideas imply that ethnic conflicts are unavoidable within heterogeneous ethnic societies.

The second school, constructivism, argues that cultural identities like ethnicity are socially constructed. They are the product of historical processes like immigration and colonization.

According to Cederman and Wimmer (2009), countries characterized by particular ethnopolitical configurations are more likely to experience violent conflicts. In other words, ethnic conflicts result from historical processes and specific configurations. For example, colonial administrations in many countries shaped identities and their relations with each other for social and political control. They reinforced exclusive identities like ethnicity and encouraged the belief of "us against them."

Instrumentalists argue that elites politicize ethnicity to gain power. Political leaders organize, unify, and mobilize populations along ethnic lines to secure their supporters' loyalty. It creates strongly polarized political parties and leads to a hostile and fragile environment. Such political strategies lead to the social and political exclusion of a particular group (ethnicity) within the population. According to the instrumentalist argument, ethnic conflicts are the results of political games between leaders.

In this paper, I will explain under what conditions ethnic conflicts occur by using the case of Cote D'Ivoire. In my opinion ethnic conflicts result from a complex interaction between the constructivist and instrumentalist theories. I argue that the French colonial practices politicized ethnicity which created ethnically based politics in the post-colonial era. It led to a competition for resources and tensions among ethnic groups. However, it is the structure of the political system that determine if violence will occur or not. Through their colonial policy of divide and rule, the French administration made ethnicity a salient identity for populations. The colonial legacy had a major impact on the post-colonial administration because after independence, political leaders perpetuated these ethnically based politics. Ethnic identity remained salient in politics and became a cleavage for political mobilization. I further claim that political strategies build along ethnic lines are more likely to result in conflicts in multiparty systems because ethnic

groups perceive the state as a prize. Only by entering and exerting influence in the political arena can ethnic groups articulate their social, cultural, and economic interests. In such process of electoral competition, leaders seek to achieve their goals through two major mechanisms: (1) the ethnic polarization of political parties and (2) the installation of the fear of victimization. In Cote d'Ivoire, the findings indicate that ethnic conflicts were the consequences of ethnic politics established since the French colonial era. First, I will examine the existing literature on ethnic conflicts and ethnic politics. Secondly, I will present my argument and describe the pathway through which I suggest societies move toward ethnic conflicts. The third part of the paper is the case study of Cote d'Ivoire from the colonial era to the civil war of 2011 followed by an analysis of the evidence. Finally, I will share the implications of the findings and the limitations of my study.

2 LITTERATURE REVIEW

First, it is essential to examine the existing literature on ethnic conflicts and ethnic politics. I identified three major school of thoughts: Primordialism, Constructivism and Instrumentalism

2.1 Primordialism

An assumption about the origins of ethnic conflicts is that ethnic heterogeneous societies are more prone to civil wars than homogenous societies. Kinship theorists support this idea because individuals from the same group work on maintaining the "uniqueness" and "purity" of their group. As human beings, we tend to favor kin over nonkin, and ethnic groups can be perceived as extended kin groups. The psychological factor that leads individuals to develop a

closer bond to those who share similar characteristics like family also creates mistrust toward others who do not (Vanhanen, 1999). Individuals perceive the world in a "us vs. them" manner. Regarding ethnicity, there is a lot of distrust among groups. They naturally fear each other. Therefore, they fight for power because it means survival. It becomes instinctive to monopolize power and share it with your kin. And above everything, it is crucial to keep power away from the others for protection. Pierre L. van den Berghe (1987) introduced the concept of ethnic nepotism. According to him, "ethnic sentiments are an extension of kinship sentiments," and members of an ethnic group tend to favor their group members over non-members because they are more related to their group members than outsiders. Vanhanen (1999) later added to his study and explained that this tendency to favor kin over nonkin becomes salient in social life and politics when people and groups compete for scarce resources.

One of the main criticisms of primordialism is that it seems to ignore the structural, economic and political processes within which these conflicts erupt and solely focuses on the kin relationships (McKay, 2011). Research has shown the importance of historical processes like migration, colonialism and war in shaping societies (Cassanelli, 2016), therefore the primordialism theory is not comprehensive. The primordialist assumptions imply that conflicts are inherent to heterogeneous ethnic societies and, therefore, unavoidable. Evidence does not support these assumptions because some societies like Botswana, an ethnically heterogeneous country which, compared to many African countries, have peaceful ethnic relations (Holm and Molutsi, 1992). Another hypothesis is that alliances, such as marriages between different groups, should be unusual. Cooperation between different ethnic groups should be rare, see nonexistent. However, evidence reveals that cooperation does not occur only among relatives and kin groups but extends to nonkin groups. Finally, primordialist arguments do not account for the timing of

an outbreak of violence (Jackson, 2004). For instance, why do the conflicts happen when they do and not earlier or later? Why did the Arab –African identities in the 2003 Darfur conflict become such meaningful markers and not during the earlier conflicts in the region? This genetically based idea of ethnicity does not adequately address these sorts of questions.

2.2 Constructivism

The second theory is constructivism. According to the constructivist theory, ethnic identities are socially constructed. They are formed through colonization, immigration, etc. They are the product of historical processes, which in turn affect ethnic groups creating hostility between them. Identities along chiefly lines were fluid and not strictly defined. Influences in history have affected the relations between ethnic groups, causing hostility. Such configuration evolved and created a conducive environment for violence. The maintenance of exclusive identities by the colonial administration and the post-colonial ruling elites created an environment for violence. According to Ranger (1991), in Africa, the combination of missionary delineations, colonial restructuring with the complicity of African elites led to the intensification of ethnic ideologies. This theory suggests that civil wars occur along ethnic lines because historical processes like colonial policies created a struggle for power and therefore tensions among ethnic groups.

Ethnicity and grievances

Scholars like Horowitz (1985) argued that groups are more likely to rebel if they had been actively discriminated against by the state. Such discrimination could be the result of past colonial policies that have become entrenched. Ethnic division of power is the result of colonial practices that favored one ethnic group over another, as was the case in Rwanda, Uganda, and Nigeria (Keefer, 2008; Young, 1994). It may also result from imperial practices, as occurred in

the Soviet Union when ‘titular’ ethnic groups were favored at the expense of larger, more dominant ethnic groups (Gorenburg, 2006). It may arise from simple demographics where the largest ethnic group in a country was able to consolidate power as the state was being constructed (for example, the Castilian people of Spain).

Ethnic groups and bargaining problems

Civil wars divide along ethnic lines because leaders of ethnically based opposition groups face severe divisibility and commitment problems. Some groups may be less willing to divide certain stakes such as territory because it holds great symbolic value to group members (Goddard, 2006; Hassner, 2003; Toft, 2006). Ethnic groups are likely to have deeper ties to territory for historical reasons (Hensel, 2000). This creates a situation where members of an ethnic group may place greater value on retaining a piece of territory, making the group more likely to fight for it and less amenable to side-payments (Holsti, 1991).

However, some limitations make this theory inconclusive. It does not explain why conflicts occur at a particular time and not at others. It seems to miss a step between these ethnopolitical configurations and the onset. What triggers violence at specific points in time and not at others? How can these ethnicities coexist peacefully for years without conflicts? The constructivist theory fails to establish a precise causal mechanism between historical processes and ethnic conflicts.

2.3 Instrumentalism

For other scholars, identities like ethnicity are not the principal cause of ethnic conflicts. The instrumentalist theory argues that it is rational for parties to organize along ethnic lines depending on the benefit it brings to them. Therefore, political leaders use ethnicity as a political

strategy to achieve their goals. They use their cultural, ethnic groups as mobilization sites to gain power (Bačová, 1998). Ethnicity is exploited as a strategic coalition to win constituencies and secure voters' loyalty. Consequently, ethnic conflict arises among rational agents over scarce resources driven by political leaders' aims for political or economic gains or a deliberate manipulation based on a rational decision to incite or encourage ethnic violence (Chandra, 2004).

Ethnic competition theory emphasizes the function of resource competition as the rationale for ethnic group formation, interethnic clashes, and the crystallization of ethnic and political movements (Nagel, 1995). Motivational ethnic paradigms "view ethnicity as a political phenomenon and rationally constructed vehicle designed to further individual interests and exploit the 'structure of opportunity' in the host country" (Yancey, 1976). Organizational paradigm "relies on rational, voluntary choice and the instrumentality of political association" (Gross, 1996). To derive their objectives, therefore, individuals and organizations sometimes develop ideologies and symbols that are used as their rallying cries to whip up support from group members (for example, the Zulus in South Africa)

Political Patronage

Political patronage is a strategy used by leaders to strengthen their control and secure voters. It is defined as the appointment or hiring of a person to a government post based on partisan loyalty. Scholars studying the patronage politics in Africa commonly assert that leaders distribute patronage along ethnic lines (Denny, 2013). Patronage and policy favoritism may follow lines of ethnicity because shared identity provides better methods of coordination and mobilization, or because similarities of language and culture provide denser networks, and norms of reciprocity that allow for easier sanctioning of in-group members (Kitschelt, 2007).

Ethnicity provides an important source of information to voters about what they can expect from their elected officials. Ethnic conflicts (Hoffman, 2013).

Multipartyism

Since the (re)introduction of multiparty elections in the early 1990s, ethnically dominated party systems have been the norm in sub-Saharan Africa. Political parties have been distinguished from each other largely based on who they represent rather than by what they represent. They have been associated with particular ethnic groups and that association is central to what distinguishes one party from another (Lindberg 2006). The liberalization of the political system in the wake of the political and economic pressures brought by international lending organizations led to the formation of political parties along ethnic or regional lines. The political parties were created within the context of resource competition for the control of amenities and scarce resources. In such political confrontations, the nation- state is only relevant to the extent that it is being used to further group interest and advantage (Udogu, 2018). This implies that ethnic conflicts are likely to occur around election times when power is at stake.

3 ARGUMENT

Ethnic conflicts result from a complex interaction between the constructivist and instrumentalist theories. I argue that the French colonial practices politicized ethnicity which created ethnically based politics in the post-colonial era. It led to a competition for resources and tensions among ethnic groups. However, it is the structure of the political system that determine if violence will occur or not. I further claim that the shift to multiparty system make civil conflicts more likely than it would have been otherwise (under a single-party system) because ethnic groups perceive the state as a prize. In Cote d'Ivoire, I argue that the favoritism by the

French colonial administration of one group (Southern ethnic groups) over the others created a system that strongly favored competition for resources, social and political exclusion. Such system was instrumentalized by political leaders under multipartyism with strategies that eventually led to civil wars.

Colonialism was not just responsible for the creation of ethnic identities but also for shaping their spatial distributions, relative sizes, and numbers. Colonial administrations established exclusive identities through their socio-political dynamics. The French and British colonial styles created different systems of ethnic stratification which impacted post-colonial ethnic conflicts. In this paper I am focusing on the French colonial power and its centralized style. Modern colonial powers-maintained control over their empires by using three main strategies. The first one is assimilation, and it involves co-opting the native elite through bribery or by extending certain privileges or rights (Morrock, 1973). The second is association. It is the colonization-settlement of large numbers of Europeans among the subject peoples to create a relationship between the conqueror and the conquered. This strategy was supposed to respect the existing cultural and political African institutions. However, the implementation was superficial. The third strategy is “divide and rule”. A policy that played a crucial part in ensuring the stability and the viability of every major colonial system” (Morrock,1973). According to Morrock, the four basic tactics of "divide and rule" practiced by Western colonialists are: the creation of differences within the conquered population, the augmentation of existing differences, the exploitation of these differences for the benefit of the colonial power and finally, the politicization of these differences so that they carry over into the post-colonial period. In Cote d’Ivoire, I argue that several of these tactics were used simultaneously. The colonial statehood created an internal security dilemma for African rulers after independence. According to

Roessler, due to these historical considerations, African leaders in post-colonial era are facing a dilemma and must make general power-sharing tradeoff to secure their power (Posner, 2005). They can decide to exclude rivals from power and reduce risks of coup from that group, but in turn raise the likelihood of outsider rebellion (Paine, 2019). Throughout this paper, I assume that political leaders are rational actors. To remain in power, keep control over territories and assure their overall political survival, they make the rational choice to divide and rule. Rational Action Theory maintains that people calculate the benefits and costs of their actions and choices before deciding what to do (Scott, 2000). Self-interest is the cornerstone of political behavior (Downs, 1957). People are essentially motivated by their own interests. Rationality is understood not in terms of “rational goals,” but only in terms of rational means to achieve goals, i.e., efficient means (Gandhi, 2005). Colonial-era policies and administrative structure led to the emergence of specific ethnic identities. Those pre-existing cleavages and ethnic delineations are utilized by post-colonial ruling elites to build political coalitions. Colonial divide and rule policies provided them with new spheres of influence, new avenues of control over land and other local resources.

I argue that political leaders instrumentalize the legacy of colonial administrations to remain in power. They successfully mobilize ethnic groups into political parties because of the preexisting layout from colonial times that they keep perpetuating. Such strategies built along ethnic lines are more salient when elections are imminent because political leaders and ruling elites aim to gain power and control. I further claim that these ethnic conflicts are less likely to occur in one-party systems than in multi-party systems because the stakes are higher in the latter. The transition from a one-party system with non-existent political competition to a multiparty system in which parties compete for power creates a tumult. In fact, this transition changes the boundaries of the effective arena of political competition. It expands it from the electoral

constituency to the whole nation and in turn affects the axes of political competition (Posner, 2005). Under a single-party system, the candidates of the party do not have to compete for their constituencies' votes. It is an internal election within party's members, so ethnic cleavage is not considered a political strategy to win. While, under a multi-party system, the arena of competition is extended to the whole nation. In 1972, Zambian Vice President Mainza Chona made a statement to support his case for the adoption of a new one-party system instead of the multi-party system in place, he declared: "We find that there has been peace in areas where there has been one party rule only. For example, there was a lot of violence in the Eastern Province where both UNIP and ANC had substantial support, but this violence completely died down when UNIP remained as the only party. On the line of rail, political violence, riots, and deaths have occurred mostly in Livingstone and Mufulira, where inter-party competition is strong... villagers have suffered a lot by being beaten up by political opponents, having their houses or their food stores burned... and a lot of other criminal acts." (Parliamentary Debates, 6 December 1972, cols. 54-59). According to his argument, multiparty competition generates ethnic conflict.

The decision to include or exclude particular groups from power can be made based on different criteria like political ideology, religious beliefs or culture. Then why do leaders choose ethnicity instead of other identities to mobilize? According to Posner (2005), the identities that individuals will find most advantageous to choose will depend on the nature of the political system's ethnic cleavage structure. Through a process of electoral competition, the most useful identity to mobilize will be the one that puts the person or the party in a winning coalition. People want resources from the state, and they believe that having someone from their ethnic group in a position of power can facilitate their access to those resources. The best way to achieve this goal is to join or build a political coalition to run during elections. Given the

expectation that elected officials will favor members of their ethnic groups in the distribution of development resources and patronage benefits, voters will elect members of their own ethnic groups to positions of political power. In fact, when politicians promise to distribute development resources to the people whose votes they are seeking, voters use ethnicity as a cue to distinguish between promises that are credible and those that are not. Politicians in turn, knowing this will seek to improve their electoral prospects by framing their electoral appeals in ethnic terms. The first tactic utilized by political elites is party polarization and they use the preexisting ethnic cleavages (legacy of colonial administrations) for mobilization. These political parties engage in confrontational, exclusionary strategies that create strong boundaries of us-versus-them distinctions, in order to mobilize constituencies and boost organizational cohesion (LeBas, 2006). These tactics divide the electorate into opposing camps. According to Tilly (2003), where polarization occurs, processes of inclusion (internal solidarity) and exclusion (policing of relations across the boundary, justification of the boundary) are intensified.

Under multipartyism, ethnic groups perceive the state as a prize. Only by entering and exerting influence in the political arena can ethnic groups articulate their social, cultural, and economic interests. The rationalist approach within ethnic conflict literature assumes that individuals in one group make decisions on the basis of their fears about the intentions or the actions of the other group (Lebas, 2006). Many argue that it is fear driven by their survival instinct that motivates people to fight and use violence. This is the second strategy utilized by political elites, fear. Susan Woodward wrote “the appeal to nation is made in terms of arguments about survival in which the fate of the individual depends on the fate of the group, and the role of the group and its leaders is protection ... Fear of becoming a minority is exactly what is motivating the people to fight.” Because just like states ethnic groups fear for their survival.

According to de Figueiredo and Weingast (1999), ethnic conflict is a social dilemma. Weak leaders use ethnic violence to remain in power. They combine fear of victimization among the citizenry and uncertainty about leaders' intention to cause ethnic conflicts and achieve their goals. Indeed, fear of extreme consequences beyond their control drive citizens to support violence to avoid becoming a victim. A research by Mansfield and Snyder supports that the likelihood of war increases due to the interests of elite groups and the effectiveness of their propaganda over diverse constituencies. They argue that hardliners resort the use of nationalism to draw support from coalition of conflicting and diverse political groups. They create a fear of victimization in a way that citizens do not view the choice between peace and violence but rather between fighting or being a victim. To this end, the elite manipulates media and sponsor violence.

4 METHODOLOGY

The French colonial practices politicized ethnicity which created ethnically based politics in the post-colonial era. The competition for resources that ensued created tensions among ethnic groups. However, it is the shift to multiparty system that make civil conflicts more likely. To test my argument, I will conduct a longitudinal case study of Cote d'Ivoire, analyzing two major time periods focusing on the interaction between colonial heritage, party systems and their impact on the occurrence of civil wars. The first one focuses on politics under the single-party system under Felix Houphouet-Boigny, from 1960 to 1989, while the second examines politics under the multi-party system from 1990 till the outbreak of the second Ivorian civil war in 2011. In my opinion, this method allows a lot of details to be collected that would normally be overlooked by a quantitative approach. The purpose of the research is to look beyond the numbers and analyze the interactions between individuals, groups across time and space. In my opinion, the data collected from our case study will be richer and of greater depth. I selected Cote d'Ivoire (CIV) for a few reasons:

- It is an ethnically heterogeneous country with more than sixty ethnic groups.
- The French colonial administration affected the layout of ethnic groups and their connection to each other through the “balkanization” of the country.
- Transitioned from a one-party system to a multiparty system with at least four major political parties.
- Experienced two civil wars with ethnic backgrounds within a ten-year period.

There are important things I expect to observe in Cote d'Ivoire if my theory is correct:

- Highly polarized political parties divided along ethnic lines. We should observe political parties that are highly polarized and define themselves (officially or informally) in terms of ethnic affiliation.
- Civil wars occurred after the transition to multipartism. We expect to see national and ethnic identity at the core of policies under both one-party and multi-party regimes. But such policies are more likely to lead to conflict under a multiparty system because of the heightened political competition.
- Policies and/or laws with an ethnic nature. We expect to observe the implementation through official or informal means of policies whose goals are to advance or to exclude a part of the population based on ethnicity. Ideally, such policies will change, evolve depending on which group holds the power (Presidency).
- Tensions and violence are expected during elections, pre-electoral, and post-electoral periods. Elite and officials engage in discursive practices that reinforce the existing ethnic cleavage.
- Electoral campaigns designed to mobilize and unify individuals from the same ethnic groups while deprecating other groups. We will be looking at electoral slogans and campaigns, declarations and speeches made by political leaders, newspapers, TV news, and other communication outlets with an ethnic undertone. Another important aspect will be the difference between how campaigns are conducted in a candidate's region of origin and how it is in those of his rivals.

Sources

My proposal is essentially drawn from literature on ethnic conflicts, books, articles, and their findings. They represent the primary sources of my argument. In terms of evidence, I am building up my case study using secondary sources like media reports, newspapers, interviews, and speeches.

5 CASE STUDY

5.1 Colonial Period

Michael Watts describes colonialism as “The establishment and maintenance of rule, for an extended period of time by a sovereign power over a subordinate or alien who is separate from the ruling power.” (Watts, 2000) The French colonial empire profoundly reorganized the political environment, mode of economic development and social hierarchies in Cote d’Ivoire (Conroy, 2010). Cote d’Ivoire became a French colony on March 10th, 1893. The French colonial policy was a combination of assimilation and divide and rule, depending on their interests. The assimilation policy tried to integrate the locals into the French nation and its French culture. It entails embracing the French language, obtaining a higher education, abandoning Indigenous practices like animism, and converting to Christianity. The colonial “subjects” that willingly adopted the French culture were entitled to fully achieve the status of French citizens (Tordoff, 2002). One of these “converts” known as évolués is Felix Houphouët-Boigny who attended the medical school at Dakar. The second policy divide and rule or divide and conquer had a stronger impact on the relations between local ethnic groups. Despite, their efforts of “assimilation”, the French colonial administration encountered much resistance from certain local groups. Locals organized violent attacks against the colonists, stopping them from entering their lands. To break up this resistance groups and prevent larger rebellions, the French colonial empire exploited regional conflicts to implement its policy of divide and conquer

(Schaefer, 2004). Elements of this technique involve: (1) aiding and promoting those who are willing to cooperate, (2) creating divisions among the locals to prevent alliances that could challenge the colonial administration, (3) fostering distrust between local rulers. This rule strategy was used to interfere with the traditional leadership. The construction of a hierarchy of ethnic categories among local populations was a process of the French capitalist development, at the core of its imperialism. The colonial system everywhere in Africa favored one ethnic group over the other and this created internal frictions. For example, the colonial administration gave employment preference to specific ethnic groups, aiming to create competition among them and increase insecurity and conflict. Groups from the East coast (Assinie region, near Ghana) where French originally settled and where the first schools were built were more likely to be chosen for employment (Edie, 2003). In Cote d'Ivoire, Southerners and river side groups enjoyed a privileged status under the French colonial rule because many of them embraced Catholicism, the colonizers' religion. French colonies were left with a centralized bureaucratic power structure (direct rule) that impeded ethnic mobilization and suppressed nonviolent ethnic challenges. Such system favored the social and political exclusion of certain groups while advantaging others.

5.2 Pre 1993: Political clientelism

On August 7, 1960, Côte d'Ivoire achieved independence from France with Felix Houphouët-Boigny as its first president. Boigny was also the head of the only political party at that time, Democratic Party of Ivory Coast – African Democratic Rally (PDCI-RDA). Although he symbolized the *politique d'ouverture*, an inclusive political process, he suppressed all types of opposition under the one-party rule through the PDCI. In regard to ethnicity, Boigny was adamant that despite the sixty and more ethnic groups cohabiting within the territory, ethnicity would not be a decisive factor in politics. Boigny developed what he referred to as

"geopolitique," which was subtle political clientelism based on ethnicity (Kone, 2011). Political clientelism refers to "a more or less personalized, affective, and reciprocal relationship between actors, or sets of actors, commanding unequal resources and involving mutually beneficial transactions that have political ramifications beyond the immediate sphere of dyadic relationships" (LeMarchand, 1972). He tried to secure popular legitimacy by redistributing economic and political resources across regions and among particular groups with the intermediate of individuals known as "fils des régions." Boigny offered influential positions to key regional leaders and actors, allowing them to develop their cities, villages in exchange for political support. Some scholars suggest that this clientelism or patronage could be used to pull, keep together a heterogeneous elite and in this way build up institutions over the long term (Scott, 1969, Arriola 2009). The Africanist literature provides evidence for this stabilizing role of patronage, which according to scholars, has been strategically deployed by leaders to consolidate their regimes since independence (Lemarchand, 1972). Leaders provide political stability and hold onto their regime in the process by maintaining elite clientelist linkages that connect them to a cross-section of ethno-regional groups, as well as localities where the state cannot make itself felt (Arriola, 2009). Bayart (1993) argues that this use of political clientelism has facilitated the integration of ethnic representatives, bureaucrats into a more cohesive elite, united by their common interest in accessing the state resources on which their positions depend. Indeed, Boigny through these strategies tried consolidating his power but also pull together these ethnic groups that had been antagonized by the colonial administration. He emphasized national identity as a response to divisionist colonial policies as opposed to leaders in the multiparty era who tried to use them to establish their own competitive 'brand' vis a vis other, rival parties as we demonstrate below. The year 1990 represented the apogee of multipartyism, when opposition

parties became legal. The major political parties are Ivorian Popular Front (FPI) led by Laurent Gbagbo and strongly supported by the group Krou from the West where he is a native. The FPI was founded in 1984 and was the first party of opposition. Its critics of the politics under Houphouet Boigny resulted in the arrests of many of its members, among which Laurent Gbagbo.

The transition to multipartism in Cote d'Ivoire, like in many African countries was a consequence of both internal and external pressure. In 1989, the Ivorian government instituted severe austerity policies to combat a liquidity crisis brought on by deflated commodity prices and reduce the country's unsustainable level of debt. These measures were unpopular amongst urban and rural Ivorians, as government jobs were cut, and farmers saw lower prices for their crops. A large-scale of nonviolent campaign by civil servants and students began to demand a government that more accurately reflected the will of the people. For example, farmers in the north began forming small farmers' unions as a tactic to organize and defend their interests, transporters and taxi drivers went on a simultaneous strike to protest the proliferation of roadblocks by members of the military. Facing pressure from all sides of society, particularly with the military beginning to turn against him, Houphouet-Boigny agreed to make major concessions to appease the public. In May 1990, Houphouet-Boigny responded to student protests by agreeing to legalize opposition parties, ushering in a multiparty system. Following up on this promise, he scheduled elections for the fall of 1990. In the fall elections, Houphouet-Boigny's main opposition was Laurent Gbagbo, a university professor who had been the most vocal opponent of the regime and one-party system, and became the de facto opposition leader with his party, Front Populaire Ivoirien. Discreet external pressure also contributed to Boigny's decision to move toward multipartism. Like in many African countries, pressure from the West (external aid donors and

creditors) after the end of the cold war pushed the government towards political pluralism as a partial solution to its problems.

According to Munck (1997), Transitions like in CIV are known as reforms from below. In these cases, opposition movements open the political system by demanding their inclusion in the political arena, but simultaneously strong incumbent elites are able to impose constraints on elite contestation. The regime that emerges from this mode of transition is a restricted democracy because the dominant ruling party controls the levers of power, including access to the media, and the electoral process in ways that preclude a meaningful challenge to its political hegemony. Boigny's decision to move toward multipartism was a way to appease protesters and financial donors to remain in power. It remained very shallow because the institutions were not changing at the same rhythm as social demands. The elections of 1990 support this assessment with only two parties running, and Boigny winning 81.68% of the vote. This rapid transition however has led politicians to organize people along the most readily available cleavage lines, in this case ethnicity.

The Democratic Party of Côte d' Ivoire (PDCI) formed in 1946, is supported by the group Akan in the East-Center of the Country, where its leader Houphouet Boigny is native. Finally, the Rally of Republicans (RDR) supported by the Northern populations (Mande and Voltaïque groups) and led by a native of the region Alassane Ouattara. The RDR was formed as a liberal offshoot of the ruling party PDCI in 1994. Considering the ethnic cleavage structure in the country, these parties emerged in what appeared to be an ethnic competition for power. In fact, Cote' D'Ivoire has four major ethnic divisions: Akan (east and center, including Lagoon peoples of the southeast), Krou (southwest), Mande (West), Voltaïque (north center and northeast). The Baoulés, in the Akan division comprise the single largest subgroup with 15%-20% of the

population. They are based in the central region around Bouake and Yamoussoukro. The Betes in the Krou division, the Senoufos in the north, and the Malinkes in the northwest are the next largest groups, with 10%-15% each of the national population (Meledje, 2018). Many Ivorians refer to northern ethnic groups as dioulas because of their trading activities and their merchant occupations. However, this is not entirely correct because dioulas are a Mande ethnic group inhabiting several West African countries. And just like other groups, have a significant presence in neighboring countries, including Mali, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, and Burkina Faso. They are characterized as a highly successful merchant caste however, not all Northerners are dioulas.



Figure 1 Regional Repartition of ethnic divisions in CIV



Figure 2 Regional Repartition of ethnic groups in CIV

5.3 1993-2000 : Doctrine de l'Ivoirité or Ivoirianess

The discussion on the doctrine de l'Ivoirité or Ivoirianess represents the essential part of our analysis because it is the first legal strategy that openly introduced national origins in politics.

Henri Konan Bedie, former President of the National Assembly under Houphouët Boigny, assumed the presidency on December 8, 1993. In 1994, he introduced what is known as the "doctrine de l'Ivoirité" or Ivoirianess as a strategy to exclude former prime minister under Boigny, the leader of the Rally of Republicans party (RDR), Alassane Ouattara, from the upcoming electoral contest (Hervieu-Wane, 2004). In his analysis of the socio-cultural implication of the "Ivoirité", Francis Akindes addressed the question of Ivoirianess. According to him, "Ivoirianess is the set of socio-historical, geographical and linguistic data which enables us to say that an individual is a citizen of the Ivory Coast or an Ivoirian. The person, who asserts his Ivoirianess is supposed to be born of Ivoirian parents belonging to one of the ethnic groups native to the Ivory Coast." (Meledje, 2018) Bedie engaged in a propaganda against his opponent

by accusing him of being a foreigner and from neighboring country Burkina Faso, therefore undeserving of leading the country. This doctrine created a communal fracture within the population. First, it created strong xenophobia in Cote d'Ivoire, a fear of foreigners accused of being responsible for the country's poverty and insecurity. The principal targets of these hostile behaviors became foreigners from the Northern neighboring countries, Burkina Faso, and Mali. An amalgam emerged between these populations and those from the Northern part of Côte d'Ivoire because of their cultural proximity. The "Nordistes" (as other groups are often identifiable by their names) were not considered "true" Ivorians. As the political tensions among political parties increased, violent confrontations between ethnic groups emerged across the country. In 1999, a coup d'état allegedly orchestrated by a group of militants favorable to Ouattara overthrew Henri Konan Bedie, who was forced to flee the Country (Rodrigue Kone, 2011). This is perceived by many as the end of the Akan group hegemony. Until 2000, this idea of Ivoirité was perceived as a cultural and political concept that emphasized Ivory Coast identity. However, on July 23 and 24, 2000, a constitution referendum was held requesting that changes be made to the eligibility requirements for presidential candidates. According to Article 35 of the new Constitution which founded the Second Republic, "The President of the Republic must be of Ivorian origin, born of a father and mother who are also Ivorian by birth. He must never have renounced Ivorian nationality. He must never have used another nationality. He must have resided in the Ivory Coast for five continuous years preceding the date of the elections and have a total of ten years of effective residence". This law excluded many potential candidates among them, Alassane Dramane Ouattara, who was accused of being a citizen of neighboring Burkina Faso, therefore making him ineligible to run for the presidency of Côte d'Ivoire (Akindes, 2003). Many justifications were given to support these changes but the ones that appealed to many were

economic. The Commission for Social and Cultural Affairs of the Conseil Economique et Social published a report on immigration where it evaluated the impact of immigration on the country's natural demographic equilibrium, its political and economic life in terms of unemployment of 'native-born' Ivorians, and on social cohesion and security. The report stated: "The fact is, despite their (the immigrants) low level of education in general, they (the Syro-Lebanese, Mauritians, Malians) have a hold on the trade in this country, thus filling most of the jobs in the informal sector. The outcome is that the native Ivorians have a higher rate of unemployment (6.4 percent) than these immigrants (3.6 percent) ... The hold of these immigrants on jobs in certain sectors of national activity (trade, road transport, agro-industrial firms, butchering, etc.) is such that it prevents Ivorians from competing with them ... Immigration is increasingly become one of the structural causes for the increase in poverty of Ivorians." (Akindes, 2003) The Ivoirité further polarized the political parties and ethnic groups and created strong boundaries between them. It is a confrontational strategy that created us-versus-them distinctions, and two camps were formed, the Pro-Ouattara (North) and the Anti-Ouattara (West, South). While, for his opponents, Ouattara is the prototype of the 'false Ivorian' who is claiming something to which he has no right, for the inhabitants of the North he is symbolic of their loss of status as citizens, having been constantly deprived of his civic rights by governments in the hands of 'people from the South', or 'Bushmen'. (Akindes, 2003)

5.4 2001-2010: Emergence of civil wars

In 2000, Laurent Gbagbo, leader of the FPI, became President after an electoral process that excluded most other major political parties (Akindès, 2003). He followed his predecessors' steps by using ethnicity as a strategic coalition to win constituencies, secure voters' loyalty, and

vilify and exclude opponents from power positions. In fact, in the months preceding the October presidential elections, political leaders exploited ethnic divisions to oust rivals, used the state apparatus to repress opponents, and incited hatred and fear among populations which had for decades lived in relative harmony. Their actions led to unprecedented waves of violence which shocked Ivoirians and members of the international community alike. The regime essentially used propaganda to reinforce the cleavage and build a strong hostility toward northerners (Pro-Ouattara). In 2001, a coup attempt against President Gbagbo's government set off a frenzy of attacks against foreigners. The President and his entourage implicated that foreign nationals from Burkina Faso were responsible for the attempt. Considering the existing amalgam between foreign nationals and Northerners cause by the Ivoirite doctrine, it led to various unpunished attacks against these groups. After detaining hundreds of RDR militants, the police and gendarmes routinely used extreme forms of brutality and torture, resulting in the deaths of several young men. At least fifteen young men "disappeared" after detention. Numerous mid-and high-level RDR activists were tortured and imprisoned without due process. Hospital and clinic workers reported treating hundreds of victims for broken bones, lacerations, burns, concussions, and head fractures sustained while in custody (Human Right Watch, 2001). Civilians were detained after being stopped and asked for their identification, dragged out of their homes and workplaces, or seized while participating in demonstrations. Scores of civilians who were uninvolved politically were captured exclusively and explicitly based on ethnicity, religion, or their perceived nationality. In April 2001, eight paramilitary gendarmes were charged with murder in connection with the massacre of the Charnier de Yopougon. The Charnier de Yopougon remains one of the most gruesome attacks of that time. On October 26, 2000, people, essentially young men accused to be pro-Ouattara, or Foreigners were arrested and murdered by

the gendarmes. More than fifty-sept bodies were found in a ditch in Abobo. Ibrahim a survivor affirmed “all my friends are dead, simply because they were dioulas. Because they had the wrong name” (Liberation, 2000). None of the eight officers accused were arrested or taken into custody. On, August 3, 2001, all of them were acquitted. The judge ruled that the prosecutors had failed to produce sufficient evidence directly linking the gendarmes to the killings. The two survivors of the massacre refused to testify in the trial, citing fears for their safety (Human Right Watch, 2001). These actions created fear for survival among northern populations.

In 2002, an armed rebellion, later known as the Forces Nouvelles de Côte d'Ivoire/New Forces led by Guillaume Soro and composed of "Nordistes" attempted to overthrow the government. By midday on September 19, they had control of the North of the country. According to the New forces, this attack was a response to the impunity for the crimes committed against northern ethnic groups and specially the dioulas. They accused President Gbagbo of perpetuating the same methods of incitement and ethnic polarization by violating the rights. They claimed that his policies and decisions aimed to privilege populations from the West, including his ethnic group, while undermining the representation in the government of those from the North (Dembele, 2003). The rebels demanded the banishment of Ivorianness and the end to the impunity of the armed forced involved in the production of the mass grave in Yopougon and in various exactions (attacks and burning of mosques, assassinations). It became the first Ivorian civil war. It led to a geographic fracture between the North controlled by the New forces and the South controlled by the government. The fear of becoming a minority drove both sides to violence. Despite the Pretoria Agreement and the final cessation of all hostilities, and the end of the war throughout the national territory in 2005, ethnicity remained a salient strategy to gain power. Many years of injustice, mistrust, and grievances have created a profound

rupture between the Krou group (supporters of Laurent Gbagbo) and the Voltaique group (Alassane Ouattara supporters). In 2006 Djigue Dramane, a young Ivorian declared to a correspondent of the Christian Science Monitor that he was assaulted by Young Patriots (ardent supporters of President Gbagbo) as the police watched. He claimed that he was on his way to an opposition party press conference when he was attacked because of his northern name (Hartill, 2006). The 2010 elections revealed how effortless it is for the political elites and presidential candidates to manipulate this ethnic cleavage to secure votes. A strategy that led to the second Ivorian Civil war from 2010 to 2011. Many considered these elections as the "duel des champions" between the three major political actors since 1995, Henri Konan Bedie (Akan group), Laurent Gbagbo (Krou group), and Alassane Ouattara (Voltaique group). Although ethnicity is not explicitly used as the directing line of the electoral campaigns, each candidate's disproportionate efforts in their regions showed that they were aware of the cleavage and utilized it. Ouattara and Gbagbo were the final contestants after the first round. Bedie and Ouattara formed an alliance during the second tour of the elections against Gbagbo, and it is finally Ouattara that is proclaimed winner (Kone, 2011). Laurent Gbagbo and his supporters contested the victory. Violence erupted in Abidjan and its surrounding cities with more than 3000 casualties, a post-electoral crisis that ended with the arrest of Laurent Gbagbo. Throughout the post-election period, President Gbagbo and his entourage turned the state-owned Radiodiffusion Télévision Ivoirienne (RTI) into what might be described as a propaganda machine. The term "foreigner" was consistently used by pro-Gbagbo militants to signify West African immigrants and ethnic groups from the North. Often such statements came from official government sources. On January 10, the UN Security Council "strongly condemned and demanded an immediate halt to the use of media, especially ... RTI, to propagate false information to incite hatred and

violence, including against the UN” (Le Figaro, 2010). On January 19, the UN Secretary-General’s Special Advisers on the Prevention of Genocide and the Responsibility to Protect issued a statement of concern about “continuing hate speech that appears to be aimed at inciting violent attacks against particular ethnic and national groups.” On February 25, Charles Blé Goudé, leader of the Young Patriots affiliated with the regime of Laurent Gbagbo, was shown in a meeting televised on RTI telling his followers: “I give you this order, which must be applied in every neighborhood.... When you go back to your neighborhoods... you must operate checkpoints to monitor the comings and goings in your neighborhoods and denounce every foreigner who enters” (Human Right Watch, 2011). In the same broadcast, another member of the Young Patriots said, “If you are Ivorian, you have to denounce [foreigners] anytime, and if you don’t denounce them, you are a rebel, you are the enemy of Côte d’Ivoire, and you must be treated as such!” In the March 9-15 edition of *Le Temps*, a paper formerly directed by people close to the Gbagbo regime, a journalist wrote: “Ouattara’s “Blakoros” have decamped like rats in cassava fields, followed by the Burkinabé mercenaries who have been fireproof against our regular forces.... These rebels ... in full flight before General Mangou’s men, have infested Abobo like city and field rats, coming in fact from the rebellion’s stinking sewers.... Like hyenas, [Ouattara and French President Sarkozy] giggle and drool at the sight of decaying corpses that are on their macabre menu.... In Abobo, mercenaries, rebels, Licorne and UNOCI wear the same clothes. That is to say, in the sewers of Abobo, nothing is needed to distinguish one vermin from another.” (K. Maurice, 2011). Northerners and West African immigrants were repeatedly dehumanized and described as potential “suspect presences” to be “neutralized”, as the “vermin” did not distinguish from each other. Hundreds more killings followed. On the other side, Alassane Ouattara was also mobilizing and encouraging his militants to stand their ground,

although with more tempered messages because of the support he received from the international community.



Figure 3 Divided Map of Cote d'Ivoire. The green zone represents the cities controlled by the rebel forces loyal to Alassane Ouattara. The orange zone represents the safety zone under the UN and French Troops' control. The pink zone represents the cities controlled by forces loyal to incumbent President Laurent Gbagbo.

6 ANALYSIS

So, what caused the civil wars in Cote d'Ivoire? Our argument can be presented in the chart below.

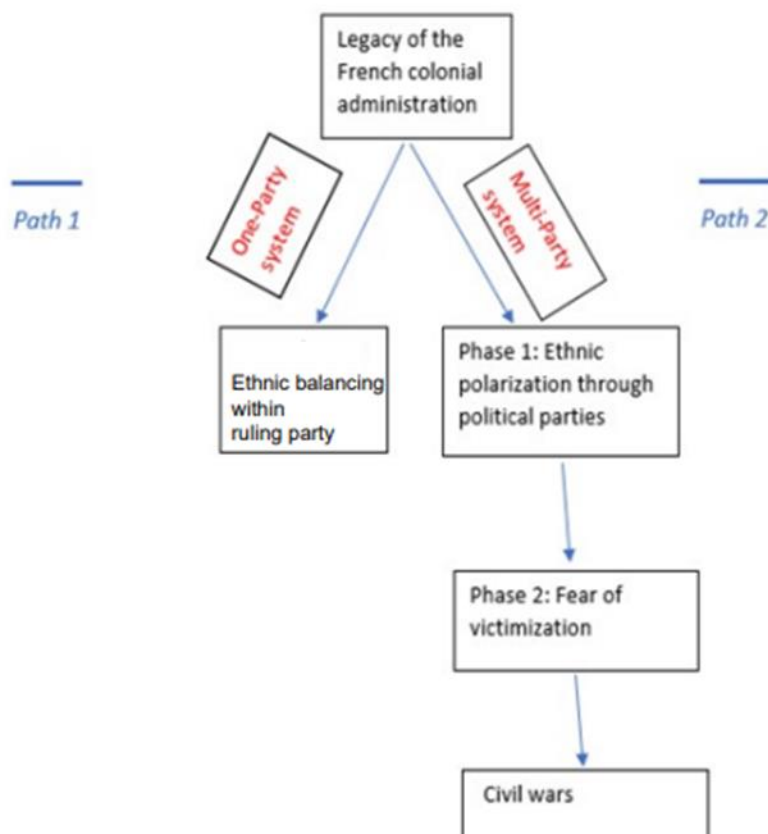


Figure 4 The path from colonial legacy to civil wars in Cote d'Ivoire

What caused the civil wars in Cote d'Ivoire? First, the evidence demonstrates the impact of the French colonial policies on the relationships between ethnic groups. The construction of a hierarchy of ethnic categories among local populations established boundaries between them. The favoritism by colonial administration of one ethnic group over the other created internal frictions and tensions. A system which strongly favored competition for resources, social and political exclusion. The configuration of ethnic groups and the perception they had of other groups was built during the colonial period. For example, Southerners and river side groups

enjoyed a privileged status under the French colonial rule compared to Northern groups. This ruling strategy to control colonial territories, left post-colonial administrations with a challenge to mobilize and unify populations. However as indicated in our chart, this legacy by itself does not cause ethnic conflict. As we can observe in CIV, no civil war occurred in the country for almost forty-two years post-independence. The interaction between colonial legacy and party system impacts the likelihood of ethnic civil wars. So colonial legacy is a necessary component in our argument however not sufficient to cause civil war.

I claimed that in the first path, under a single-party rule, there was no civil war in CIV because it was an internal election within members of the same party, so ethnic cleavage was not considered a political strategy to win. Candidates under a single-party rule must use a different mobilization strategy than those under multiparty rule. Indeed, Boigny utilized political clientelism. offered influential positions to key regional leaders and actors, allowing them to develop their cities, villages in exchange for political support. He did not have any opponents, so his main goal was to mobilize populations around him and prevent potential rebellions. Houphouet-Boigny through these strategies tried to consolidate his power by pulling together all these ethnic groups that had been antagonized by the colonial administration. He emphasized national identity as a response to divisionist colonial policies as opposed to leaders in the multiparty era who tried to use them to establish their own competitive 'brand' vis a vis other, rival parties. The case of CIV supports our hypothesis that ethnic civil wars are less likely under a single party rule. However, it is important to underline that other types of violence can occur among ethnic groups under a single-party rule. Those are usually small-scale local conflicts (less than 25 battle-related deaths) that do not involve the use of conventional warfare and are easily

resolved/contained. Civil wars, understood as armed conflicts that exceed a threshold of 1,000 deaths are less likely to occur under a single-party system.

Under multipartism, I present two major mechanisms through which the French colonial legacy caused the Ivorian civil wars. According to Posner (2005), through a process of electoral competition, the most useful identity to mobilize will be the one that puts the person or the party in a minimum winning coalition. To understand why Ivorian leaders built their political parties along ethnic lines instead of other identities, we have to understand what the cleavage structure looks like (Posner, 2005). First, we should know the number of cleavage dimensions it contains. Secondly, we should identify the number and relative sizes of the groups located on each cleavage. The country is divided among four major groups: Akan (east and center, including Lagoon peoples of the Southeast), Krou (Southwest), Mande (Northwest), Voltaïque (Northeast). The Baoulés, in the Akan division comprise the single largest subgroup with 15%-20% of the population. They are based in the central region around Bouake and Yamoussoukro. The Betes in the Krou division, the Senoufos in the north, and the Malinkes in the northwest are the next largest groups, with 10%-15% (Meledje, 2018). Religion is another important identity in the country with 42.90% of the total population practicing Islam, 33.9% Christianity, and 3.6% of the population follows traditional African religions (Animism, fetishism) and 19.10% have no religion. Therefore, ethnicity represents a minimum winning coalition in CIV because compared to other identities in the country, it is the only one that constitutes a good mobilization site for constituencies with fewest members with whom to share the power. Our case study supports this assessment as the major political parties are Ivorian Popular Front (FPI) led by Laurent Gbagbo and strongly supported by the group Krou from the West where he is a native. The Democratic Party of Côte d'Ivoire (PDCI) is supported by the group Akan in the East-Center of the Country,

where its leader Houphouet Boigny is native. Finally, the Rally of Republicans (RDR) supported by the Northern populations (Mande and Senoufo/Lobi groups) and led by a native of the region Alassane Ouattara.

The first mechanism in the path toward civil war was ethnic polarization through political parties. Political leaders reinforced the boundaries between groups with exclusionary strategies and tactics. In Cote d'Ivoire, it was the doctrine de l'Ivoirité or Ivorianness. In fact, after President Bedie introduced this discriminatory idea in 1994 to exclude his opponent Alassane Ouattara, he created a communal fracture that further pushed ethnic groups apart. It forced them to align with a political party, one that can defend the interests of their ethnic group. This fracture reached its apex after the 2000 referendum and the legalization of Ivoirianness. Groups from the North and immigrants aligned with the RDR of Alassane Ouattara while the 'people from the South' or 'Bushmen' aligned with the FPI of Laurent Gbagbo (Akindes, 2003).

The second mechanism in the path toward civil war was the fear of victimization. This fear was essentially built through discursive practices. Through propagandas, the elites created a us-versus-them by diabolizing the other group using terms like "rats" "vermin" "rebel" "the enemy of Cote d'Ivoire". A member of the Young Patriots proclaimed, "if you are Ivorian, you have to denounce [foreigners] anytime, and if you don't denounce them, you are a rebel, you are the enemy of Côte d'Ivoire, and you must be treated as such!". Political leaders created a fear of victimization within the population in a way that citizens did not view the choice between peace and violence but rather between fighting or being a victim. As Susan Woodward wrote "fear of becoming a minority is exactly what is motivating the people to fight." Each group feared for their survival. The pro-Gbagbo feared that they would become an economic minority in their country, they were conditioned to believe that "foreigners" were trying to steal their resources

(especially their lands), their jobs and their executive branch (during elections). The report by the Commission for Social and Cultural Affairs of the Conseil Economique et Social on immigration was a strong pillar of this rhetoric. And the hate speech led to targeted acts of violence to defeat the “enemy”. On the other hand, the pro-Ouattara also feared for their survival. They were unjustly targeted and labeled as “enemy of Cote d’Ivoire” when many of them are Ivoirians. They faced the choice of using violence to defend themselves and their rights or become victims. The civil wars of 2002 and 2011 appear as a desperate act by populations to avoid victimization. Also, as the evidence in Cote d’Ivoire suggests, these confrontational tactics were more salient around election times. The evidence collected in Cote d’Ivoire support our initial theory that political leaders instrumentalize the legacy of colonial administrations to remain in power and that cause civil wars. Under a multiparty system this instrumentalization take place through two major mechanisms: (1) the ethnic polarization of political parties and (2) the installation of the fear of victimization.

Some people have argued that Ivoirianess is essentially a nationalist policy that aims to promote the interests of the country and instill a sentiment of pride among Ivoirians. Was Ivoirianess the representation of a genuine nationalist concern or was it as many believe a political strategy. In 2010, during his presidential campaign in Ferkessedougou (a city situated in the North), President Bédié made comments about “Ivoirité”. As reported in an article in the front page of the local newspaper Nord-Sud, he allegedly reported to the population that Ivoirité was a misunderstanding. It was obvious that Bédié was attempting to win the votes of northerners at the polls (Zouande, 2011). But this left many wondering about his real intentions at the time, and why he never corrected this “misunderstanding” and is now admitting it after the loss of so many human lives.

Our initial theory that the interaction between French colonial legacy and multipartyism is likely to cause civil wars was verified in Cote d'Ivoire. The French colonial practices politicized ethnicity which created ethnically based politics in the post-colonial and tensions among ethnic groups, yet it is the shift to multiparty system that led to the Ivorian civil wars. Nevertheless, I recognize that such ethnic conflicts come about through other processes. First, the interaction between constructivist and instrumentalist theories can work in different ways than the one demonstrated above. I believe that there are other paths to ethnic conflicts because it is not a one size fits all. Secondly, it is important to mention that violence can occur under a single-party rule. Because the paper focuses on the dependent variable, the occurrence of ethnic civil wars (conflicts that exceed a threshold of 1,000 deaths), I coded the variable as "civil wars" or "no civil wars" in the chart. However, other types of ethnic violence can occur under a single-party rule. There are usually small-scale local that are easily resolved/contained and do not involve the use of conventional warfare.

In the case of Cote D'Ivoire, all the mechanisms in our theory were proved correct. However, there is the issue of generalizability. Some scope conditions are to be considered. So, which one of the independent variables are critical? Which combination of factors is critical to explain civil wars in most cases? In my opinion, colonial legacy is a strong operative factor. Anytime external rulers establish themselves; they implement strategies to solidify their power. The colonial administrations were not different. Both the French and the British colonial administrations utilized the divide and rule strategies to tame resistance and gain power over local populations. In many countries, the results were also similar, rising tensions among groups (ethnic, religious or others) because of favoritism by colonial rulers. The combination of these

strategies is a facilitating factor in creating civil wars in many former colonies. On the other hand, the impact of political systems on civil wars is less strong in other cases than it is in CIV.

7 IMPLICATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

This analysis concludes that ethnic civil wars are likely resulting from the interaction between colonial legacy and multipartyism. However, multipartyism is the essence of Democracy and free, competitive elections are necessary for people to defend their interests. It underlines a key question in the study of African politics, is Democracy fit for African countries? And by Democracy I essentially refers to multipartyism and competitive elections. It appears that in many countries like Mali, RDC and others, its forcefully introduction by Western countries have led to political instability and economic downfall. Many of these countries achieved independence roughly sixty years ago and their institutions are not strong or effective enough yet to sustain the demands of Democracy. France itself became one after about eight hundred years of rule by a King. While I am not advocating in favor of Autocracy, I believe that Western powers are motivated by their own interests rather than the prosperity of the African continent. Democracy is imposed without considerations of History (colonial legacy, artificial boundaries which geographically are not present), the traditional and cultural landscape of these countries, many of which lived peacefully before imperialism. Under Houphouet Boigny, Cote d'Ivoire was politically and economically stable. "Le vieux" as natives called him built a strategy that was fit for the Ivorian ethnic groups, geographic boundaries, and economic challenges at that time.

In my opinion, future research should distance itself from the one size fits all approach and think of political regimes that can work for countries that are more similar in terms of

legacy, ethnic geographic distribution, and such. For example, this case study highlighted some scope conditions that affects the generalizability of my argument. This theory can be applicable to former colonies where the divide and conquer strategy was used to control the populations. As evidence shows that the British colonial empire also utilized this method in their colonies, I predict that similar results might be observed; Sierra Leone is an example. In my opinion, my theory can be applied to all African cases where there has been a colonial strategy of “divide and conquer” based on ethnicity and that then had electoral politics.

Although the evidence suggests that the geographic distribution of ethnic groups across the territories is not the cause of civil wars, it is important to mention its particularity. Indeed, groups are clearly separated from North to South and from West to East. As described above particular cities and regions are associated with specific ethnic groups. This artificial division made exclusionary strategies easier to implement. Different conclusions may be drawn in a country where ethnic groups are heterogeneously spread across the territory.

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