

THE ROLE OF ETHNICITY IN KENYA'S TRANSITION FROM SINGLE PARTY  
RULE TO POLITICAL PLURALISM (1992-2007)

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## **ABSTRACT**

The thesis attempts to explain the salience of ethnicity in political party formation and the cyclic ethnic violence during elections in Kenya's multiparty democracy. It accords special focus on how ethnicity was deployed in the management and even disorganisation of politics in Kenya's multiparty era. The thesis examines two significant questions. Why and how ethnicity was salient in Kenya's transition from one-party rule to political pluralism? What was the relationship between ethnic conflict and political liberalization in Kenya? The thesis contributes to our understanding of Kenya's attempt at transition from authoritarianism to more democratic forms of politics and its impact on multiparty politics in Kenya's multiethnic society. It also illuminates the trajectories that Kenya's politics has taken since the advent of multiparty politics in the early 1990s. The thesis considers the significance of the concept of democratic transition in the context of Kenya, a country emerging from single party rule characterised by authoritarianism and patron-client politics. It locates the protracted transition process in the immediate post-independence exclusionary politics along ethnic lines and the resultant fall out among the political elite. The thesis presents ethnicity as a lived experience that had politicised Kenya's multiethnic society. The centrality of ethnicity in Kenyans' lives is testified to by the views by respondents from a mosaic of ethnic, social economic and political strata.

## DECLARATION

I declare that this research report is my own unaided work. I submit it for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination in any other university.

\_\_\_\_\_ (Signature of Candidate)

\_\_\_\_\_ Day of, \_\_\_\_\_ 2012

## **DEDICATION**

To my mother, Sophia Ayuma.

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

AU	African Union
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CCC	Coalition for Commonsense Constitution
CDF	Constituency Development Fund
CIC	Constitution Implementation Committee
CIPEV	Commission of Inquiry into Post-Election Violence
CKRC	Constitution of Kenya Review Commission
CNC	Coalition for National Convention
CoE	Committee of Experts
COTU	Central Organisation of Trade Unions
CPDSG	Central Province Development Support Group
DP	Democratic Party of Kenya
ECK	Electoral Commission of Kenya
EISA	Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa
EU EOM	European Union Election Observer Mission
FORD	Forum for the Restoration of Democracy
FORD-A	Forum for the Restoration of Democracy -Asili
FORD-K	Forum for the Restoration of Democracy- Kenya
FORD-P	Forum for the Restoration of Democracy - People
FPTP	first-past-the-post
GEMA	Gikuyu, Meru and Embu
GNU	Government of National Unity
HRW	Human Rights Watch
ICC	International Criminal Court
ICG	International Crisis Group
IEBC	Independent Electoral Boundaries Commission
IIBRC	Interim Independent Boundaries Review Commission
IIEC	Interim Independent Electoral Commission
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPPG	Inter-Parties Parliamentary Group
IREC	Independent Review Commission
JKIA	Jomo Kenyatta International Airport
JSC	Judicial Service Commission

KADU	Kenya African Democratic Union
KAMATUSA	Kalenjin, Maasai, Turkana and Samburu
KANU	Kenya African National Union
KBC	Kenya Broadcasting Corporation
KENDA	Kenya National Democratic Alliance
KHRC	Kenya Human Rights Commission
KICC	Kenyatta International Conference Centre
KLA	Kenya Land Alliance
KNCHR	Kenya National Commission on Human Rights
KPLC	Kenya Power & Lighting Company
KPU	Kenya People's Union
Legco	Legislative Council
LDP	Liberal Democratic Party
NAC	National Alliance for Change
NCA	National Convention Assembly
NCC	National Constitutional Conference
NCEC	National Convention Executive Council
NCIC	National Cohesion and Integration Commission
NAK	National Alliance Party of Kenya
NARC	National Rainbow Coalition
NDP	National Development Party of Kenya
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MP	Member of Parliament
ODM-K	Orange Democratic Movement- Kenya
ODM	Orange Democratic Movement
OMCT	World Organisation against Torture
PCK	People's Commission of Kenya
PNU	Party of National Unity
PSC	Public Service Commission
RPP	Release Political Prisoners
SID	Society for International Development
SDP	Social Democratic Party
SMD	single-member districts
TJRC	Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission

US	United States
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
YK '92	Youth for KANU '92

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract .....	ii
Declaration.....	iii
Dedication.....	iv
Acknowledgements.....	v
Abbreviations.....	vi
Table of Contents.....	ix
List of Tables .....	xiii
<b>Chapter One: Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1. Ethnicity in Politics in Kenya .....	2
1.2. Political Party Formation: The Background .....	7
1.3. Political Parties in the 2007 Elections .....	11
1.4. Big Man Politics and Political Parties .....	14
1.5. Explaining the Salience of Ethnicity in Kenya’s Multiparty Politics .....	18
1.6. Why the absence of Class-based Politics? .....	21
1.7. Thesis Aims and Objectives .....	22
1.8. Rationale .....	23
1.9. Methodology .....	24
1.10. Data Collection .....	24
1.10.1 Primary Sources .....	24
1.10.1.1 Presidential Speeches.....	25
1.10.1.2 The Constitution .....	25
1.10.1.3 Interviews .....	25
1.10.1.3.1 Politicians/Hansard .....	26
1.10.1.3.2 Teachers .....	27
1.10.1.3.3 Youth .....	27
1.10.1.3.4 Religious Leaders .....	27
1.11. Sample size .....	27
1.12. Secondary Sources .....	28
1.12.1. Internet Sources .....	28
1.12.2. Reports .....	28
1.12.3. Newspapers, <i>The Weekly Review</i> and Video .....	29
1.13. Ethical Questions .....	30
1.14 Chapter Synopses.....	31
1.14.1 Chapters One: Introduction.....	31
1.14.2 Chapter Two: Literature review, Ethnicity, Tribalism and Electoral Politics .....	31
1.14.3 Chapter Three: <i>Nyayoism</i> : The Epitome of Big Man Politics .....	32
1.14.4 Chapter Four: Kenya’s Transition without Transformation .....	32
1.12.5 Chapter Five: The <i>Jogoo-Tinga</i> Duel and Moi Succession.....	33
1.14.6 Chapter Six: ‘Everything is Possible without Moi’ .....	33
1.14.7 Chapter Seven: The 2007 Elections: A Moment of Democratic Reversal .....	34
1.14.8 Chapter Eight: Reform and Kenya’s Post 2007 Political Stability .....	35
1.14.9 Chapter Nine: Conclusion.....	35
<b>Chapter Two: Literature Review, Ethnicity, Tribalism &amp; Electoral Politics .....</b>	<b>36</b>
2.1 Introduction.....	36
2.2 Definition of Concepts.....	37
2.2.1 Ethnic Group.....	37
2.2.2 Tribalism.....	38

2.2.3 Ethnicity.....	39
2.3 Electoral Politics: The Electoral System .....	46
2.4 Influence of Ethnicity, Tribe & Party Politics .....	50
2.5 The Politics of Patronage .....	58
2.6 Conclusion .....	60
<b>Chapter Three: Nyayoism: The Epitome of Big Man Politics .....</b>	<b>62</b>
3.1 Introduction.....	62
3.2 Manifestation of Ethnicity .....	63
3.3 Personal Rule .....	64
3.4 The <i>Nyayo</i> Era .....	67
3.5 Deft Manipulation of Ethnicity.....	73
3.6 Personality Cult .....	74
3.7 Moi and the Education System.....	77
3.8 Land Politics in the Rift Valley .....	79
3.9 The Making of the Big Man .....	82
3.10 The Abortive 1982 Coup .....	84
3.11 The <i>De Jure</i> one Party State .....	86
3.12 A Travesty of Democracy.....	88
3.13 Fractious Opposition Politics.....	91
3.14 <i>Nyayoism</i> & Multiparty Politics .....	92
3.15 Repeal of Section 2A of the Constitution .....	93
3.16 A Conclusion.....	94
<b>Chapter Four: Kenya's Transition without Transformation .....</b>	<b>96</b>
4.1 Introduction.....	96
4.2 The Forum for the Restoration of Democracy (FORD) .....	98
4.3 The Logic of Tribal politics .....	104
4.4 Analysis of the 1992 Results .....	106
4.5 State Sponsored Tribal Violence .....	109
4.6 Odds stacked against the opposition parties .....	113
4.7 Politics of Cooperation for Development .....	117
4.8 Moi-Oginga Odinga entente .....	118
4.9 GEMA/KAMATUSA alliance .....	121
4.10 The National Development Party of Kenya (NDP).....	123
4.11 The FORD-Asili Woes .....	126
4.12 Beyond Tribal politics?.....	127
4.13 No Reforms, No Elections .....	129
4.14 The Opposition as 'Replicas of KANU' .....	130
4.15 Conclusion .....	131
<b>Chapter Five: The <i>Jogoo-Tinga</i> Duel and Moi Succession .....</b>	<b>133</b>
5.1. Introduction.....	133
5.2. Overview of the 1997 Elections .....	134
5.3 The Norfolk Hotel and (Dis) unity in Defeat.....	136
5.4 Who betrayed whom? .....	138
5.5 Raila Odinga's New Found Bipartisanship .....	139
5.6 KANU-NDP Co-operation .....	140
5.7 The Merger .....	146
5.8 Succession Manoeuvres .....	148

5.9 KANU's Waterloo .....	149
5.10 A Rainbow of Tribes .....	152
5.11 Elusive Opposition Unity: Third Time Lucky .....	153
5.12 Raila Odinga, the King-maker .....	155
5.13 Conclusion .....	156
<b>Chapter Six: 'Everything is Possible without Moi' .....</b>	<b>158</b>
6.1 Introduction.....	158
6.2 Mt Kenya Mafia.....	159
6.3 NARC: Was it a Replica of KANU? .....	161
6.4 Kenya: The Bastion of Stability?.....	168
6.5 Yet another False Start.....	170
6.6 NARC's Internal Contradictions .....	172
6.7 Demagogic Pledges & Recrudescence of Corruption .....	176
6.8 Tribal Big Men & NARC Win.....	178
6.9 The 2005 Constitutional Referendum.....	180
6.10 NARC Fallout & the 2007 Elections .....	183
6.11 Conclusion .....	184
<b>Chapter Seven: The 2007 Elections: A Moment of Democratic Reversal.....</b>	<b>186</b>
7.1 Introduction .....	186
7.2 The Big Two Political Parties .....	187
7.3 The Fusion between Politics and the Economy .....	191
7.4 The Media & the 2007 Elections .....	192
7.5 Watershed Elections .....	194
7.6 The Narrative of the 2007 Elections .....	196
7.7 The Controversial Declaration.....	198
7.8 The Eruption of Violence .....	199
7.9 Shoot-to-Kill Order .....	200
7.10 Weak Institutions, Polarisation & AU Intervention .....	202
7.11 (Mis) Trust and Coalition Politics in Kenya .....	205
7.12 Views from the ground – Ethnicity, Poverty, Corruption, Big Men, Gender, Land, Origins, Witchcraft and Impunity .....	206
7.12.1 Instrumentalisation of Ethnicity .....	206
7.12.2 Poverty and the Tribal link .....	207
7.12.3 Corruption and Political Instability .....	211
7.12.4 Living Large .....	214
7.12.5 Land and Tribal Violence .....	217
7.12.6 Where do you originally come from? The Significance of belonging .....	219
7.12.7 'The Kikuyu Problem' .....	221
7.12.8 Witchcraft, Livestock & Clashes in Sondu.....	225
7.12.9 Impunity and the 2007 Elections .....	228
7.12.10 Resources and Politics of Eating in Kenya .....	233
7.12.11 The Constitution and Political Renewal .....	237
7.12.12 Cynicism about the Coalition Government .....	239
7.12.13 Dynastic Leadership Successions .....	240
7.12.14 Opportunism in Kenya's Politics .....	245
7.12.15 Women as Honorary Men .....	246
7.13 Conclusion .....	247

<b>Chapter Eight: Reform and Kenya’s Political Stability .....</b>	<b>249</b>
8.1 Introduction.....	249
8.2 Background to the Constitutional Review Process.....	250
8.3 Civil Society and the Model Constitution .....	255
8.4. Inter-Parties Parliamentary Group (IPPG) Minimum Reforms .....	257
8.5 Tribalism and Self Interest beneath the Idiom of Reforms.....	258
8.6 The Constitution of Kenya Review Commission (CKRC).....	260
8.7 The National Constitutional Conference (NCC) .....	261
8.8 NARC and the Constitution Review: A Sense of Déjà vu .....	262
8.9 The National Accord.....	264
8.10 The Constitutional Interpretation of the National Accord .....	266
8.11 The New Constitutional Dispensation .....	270
8.12 Institutional, Legal and Constitutional Reforms .....	272
8.13 Challenges to the Coalition Government .....	279
8.14 Conclusion .....	286
<b>Chapter Nine: Conclusion.....</b>	<b>288</b>
Appendix One .....	302
Appendix Two .....	303
<b>Bibliography .....</b>	<b>304</b>
Books & Book Chapters .....	304
Journals .....	311
Reports.....	318
Newspapers .....	322
Presidential Speeches.....	333
Videos .....	334
Interviews .....	335

## List of Tables

1. Kikuyu Constituency Elections in 1992 .....	105
2. The 1992 Parliamentary Election Results.....	106
3. Presidential Results in 1992 General Elections by Province .....	108
4. Summary of the Parliamentary and Presidential Voting in 1992 .....	109
5. Results of Kenya's General Elections, 1997 .....	116
6. Presidential Vote Distribution in Kenya's 1992 and 1997 Elections .....	117
7. 2002 Presidential Votes by Province .....	179