

Does democracy help Africa?

An inquiry into multiparty democracy, political settlement, and economic development in Africa

Martin Koper

African Studies Centre
Leiden

Universiteit
Leiden

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African Studies Centre Leiden
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African Studies Centre Leiden
P.O. Box 9555
2300 RB Leiden
The Netherlands
asc@ascleiden.nl
www.ascleiden.nl

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Prologue

Working from 1989 to 1993 as a Third Secretary at the Embassy of the Netherlands in Nairobi, I thought I knew the answers. Kenya, under the leadership of the *professor of politics* Daniel arap Moi, was completely stuck. The economy was in bad shape, corruption was rampant, and the political climate could perhaps best be described as intimidating. There was an obvious solution, so it appeared to me. The state should withdraw from the economy in order to let market forces reign, but, most of all, put the necessary political checks and balances in place by replacing the one-party state, as was the case in Kenya at that time, by a Western style parliamentary democracy as soon as possible. In the following years, I slowly discovered that the solution was not that straightforward, not in Kenya, nor elsewhere in Africa for that matter.

Holding different positions at the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, be it at headquarters, be it at an embassy in Africa, I was confronted time and time again with the complexity of the "good governance" problem in sub-Saharan Africa. From 1989 to 1993, as indicated, I worked for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at the Netherlands Embassy in Nairobi, subsequently at the department for International Organizations at the ministry, and from 1996 to 2001 at our embassy in Kampala, Uganda. Between 2001 and 2013, I held several positions at headquarters in The Hague again: first at the department for Human Rights and Peacebuilding and afterwards at the Africa department of the ministry. During that period I closely followed the developments in the countries that have been the subject of my research. From 2013 on, I have been working as Deputy Head of Mission in Ethiopia.

I also got involved in a number of research projects that were focusing on the same topic, such as the *International Cooperation Academy* project focusing on the characteristics of the African state (a collaboration between the African Studies Centre and the Africa department of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs), *Tracking Development* (implemented on behalf of the ministry by the Royal Netherlands Instititute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies, and the African Studies Centre of Leiden University), and the *Africa Power and Politics Program* and the *Developmental Regimes in Africa* project (both implemented by the Overseas Development Institute in London). Over and over again, I came across the discrepancy between our assumptions about the relevance of our "good governance" agenda and the African reality.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to a number of experts and colleagues in the Netherlands and abroad, who have contributed greatly with their opinions, remarks, and criticism in forming my judgment on this subject: David Booth, Research Fellow at the Overseas Development Institute and project leader of the *Africa Power and Politics Program*; Fred Golooba Mutebi, political scientist, journalist and Rwanda expert; Leo de Haan, former rector of the Institute of Social Studies and former rector of the African Studies Centre; David Henley, professor of Contemporary Indonesia studies at Leiden University and former project leader of *Tracking Development*; George Kalibbala, former colleague at the Netherlands embassy in Kampala; Roel van der Veen, colleague and scientific adviser at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Wil Hout, professor of Governance and Political Economy at the Institute of Social Studies, and of course my wife Elizabeth, who as a Kenyan could offer me insights into Kenyan society, which usually are not granted to outsiders.

The following anecdote might serve as an illustrative example of the above. During a visit in 1990 to a Kenyan electoral district, I was told the story about the member of parliament of this constituency who was voted out at the latest elections. Interesting enough he was as poor at the end as at the start of his term. I remarked that at least he was an honest politician, a rather unique combination in Kenya. My Kenyan companion explained to me that that was exactly the problem: If he could not take care of himself, how could he then take care of his supporters? This book, based on my dissertation on the same topic (2016), deals with the implications of that remark.[1]

Martin Koper
Addis Ababa, 2017

1 I defended my PhD thesis "Helpt democratie Africa?" successfully in September 2016 at the University of Amsterdam.

Contents

Figures, Illustrations, Maps and Tables 9

1 What is this book about? 11

1.1 The main question 15
1.2 How to go about it? 17
1.3 Layout 22

2 Kenya 23

2.1 What preceded 23
2.2 The elections 27
2.3 Short overview of economic developments 38
2.4 The response of the political elite 40
2.5 The role of the international community 50
2.6 Conclusions 51

3 Uganda 53

3.1 What preceded 53
3.2 The elections 60
3.3 Short overview of economic developments 63
3.4 The response of the political elite 65
3.5 The role of the international community 77
3.6 Conclusions 78

4 The Congo 81

4.1 What preceded 81
4.2 The elections 88
4.3 Short overview of economic developments 92
4.4 The response of the political elite 93
4.5 The role of the international community 105
4.6 Conclusions 106

5 Rwanda 109

5.1 What preceded 109
5.2 The elections 113
5.3 Short overview of economic developments 115
5.4 The response of the political elite 118
5.5 The role of the international community 129
5.6 Conclusions 130

6 Ethiopia 133

6.1 What preceded 133
6.2 The elections 138
6.3 Short overview of economic developments 144
6.4 The response of the political elite 147
6.5 The role of the international community 163
6.6 Conclusions 164
6.7 Post Script 166

7 Common lines and patterns 172

7.1 The specific nature of the political process 172
7.2 Corruption for political purposes 175
7.3 Ethnicity 176
7.4 Instrumentalization of violence 179
7.5 Elections and political parties 181
7.6 Cohesion of the political elite 185
7.7 Economic transformation and political settlement 189

8 Conclusions 193

8.1 No positive contribution of multiparty democracy 193
8.2 Intrinsic value 197
8.3 What to do? 199
8.4 The ten commandments for crafting a sensible "good governance" policy 203

Summary "Does democracy help Africa?" 209

Abbreviations 212

Literature 214

Figures, Illustrations, Maps and Tables

Figures

Figure 1.1	Patron-Client Factions & the Structure of the Ruling Coalition	18
Figure 2.1	Ethnic groups Kenya	42
Figure 3.1	Ethnic groups Uganda	68
Figure 4.1	Ethnic groups The Congo	96
Figure 5.1	Ethnic groups Rwanda	122
Figure 6.1	EPRDF coalition	137
Figure 7.4	Ethnic groups Ethiopia	157

Illustrations

Illustration 2.1	Jomo Kenyatta	24
Illustration 2.2	Daniel arap Moi	28
Illustration 2.3	Election violence in Kisumu 2007/2008	34
Illustration 2.4	2013 elections in Kenya	36
Illustration 2.5	Uhuru Kenyatta	37
Illustration 2.6	Raila Odinga	41
Illustration 2.7	Ethnic violence in the Rift Valley	49
Illustration 3.1	Milton Obote	56
Illustration 3.2	NRA leader Yoweri Museveni on his way to Kampala 1986	57
Illustration 3.3	Presidential candidate Kizza Besigye (2001, 2006, 2011)	60
Illustration 3.4	2011 elections in Uganda	63
Illustration 3.5	Transport in Kampala	64
Illustration 3.6	Yoweri Museveni	66
Illustration 3.7	UPDF at the Congolese border	71
Illustration 3.8	Kabaka Ronald Muwenda Mutebi II	75
Illustration 4.1	Henry Morton Stanley, Serpa Pinto, Africa, circa 1877	82
Illustration 4.2	Mobutu Sese Seko with prince Bernhard	84
Illustration 4.3	Laurent Kabila	87
Illustration 4.4	Joseph Kabila	88
Illustration 4.5	Presidential Guard (2011 elections)	91
Illustration 4.6	Internally displaced near Goma (2004)	99
Illustration 4.7	14th brigade of the FARDC in North-Kivu (2006)	102
Illustration 5.1	Juvenal Habyarimana	111

Illustration 5.2 2010 elections in Rwanda 115
Illustration 5.3 "ICT bus" in Rwanda 118
Illustration 5.4 Paul Kagame 121
Illustration 5.5 Genocide monument near Kigali 123
Illustration 5.6 Countryside in Rwanda 124
Illustration 5.7 Kayumba Nyamwasa & Paul Kagame 126
Illustration 5.8 Return of the RPF from eastern Congo 128
Illustration 6.1 Demonstration by political opposition in 2005 140
Illustration 6.2 2010 elections in Ethiopia 143
Illustration 6.3 Growth and Transformation Plan 145
Illustration 6.4 Meles Zenawi 151
Illustration 6.5 Ethnic diversity in Ethiopia 159

Maps

Kenya 23
Uganda 53
The Congo 81
Rwanda 109
Ethiopia 133

Tables

Table 2.1 Results 1992 presidential elections in Kenya 29
Table 2.2 Results 1997 presidential elections in Kenya 30
Table 2.3 Results 2002 presidential elections in Kenya 32
Table 2.4 Results 2007 presidential elections in Kenya 35
Table 2.5 Results 2013 presidential elections in Kenya 38
Table 3.1 Results 1996 presidential elections in Uganda 58
Table 3.2 Results 2001 presidential elections in Uganda 59
Table 3.3 Results 2006 presidential elections in Uganda 61
Table 3.4 Results 2011 presidential elections in Uganda 62
Table 4.1 Results 2006 presidential elections in the Congo 90
Table 4.2 Results 2011 presidential elections in the Congo 92
Table 5.1 Results 2003 presidential elections in Rwanda 114
Table 5.2 Results 2010 presidential elections in Rwanda 115
Table 6.1 Results 1995 national elections in Ethiopia 139
Table 6.2 Results 2000 national elections in Ethiopia 139
Table 6.3 Results 2005 national elections in Ethiopia 141
Table 6.4 Results 2010 national elections in Ethiopia 142

1 What is this book about?

Most African colonies gained independence in the early 1960s. Independence went hand-in-hand with the introduction of a multiparty political system. However, the institutions and organizations that were created in great haste within this context usually did not last long. The new African elite did not possess their own sources of income but depended on state resources. Political power was a precondition for accessing these resources. Elections determined who would gain access. Given the winner takes all nature of the political competition, the opposition would be completely sidetracked and confronted with two choices: to join the ruling party or be "neutralized." Most African countries, including the countries that are the subject of my research, became one-party states. In the second half of the 1980s, however, most African countries were financially, economically, but also politically bankrupt. The call for social and political change by the population of these countries became stronger. The international community as well, in contrast to the period of the Cold War, called for not only economic but also political reforms.

The British political scientist and Africa expert Clapham summarized this new trend as follows: "In short, 'political conditionalities' (as they soon came to be called, mirroring the economic conditionalities imposed under structural adjustment) could be regarded as the program of an alliance, comprising international financial institutions, seeking to bring about capitalist transformation of African economies; Western governments, flexing their diplomatic muscles in the aftermath of the Cold War; Western public opinions, outraged at the brutality and corruption of at least a significant number of African regimes; and finally, at least vicariously, the African publics who were vociferously demonstrating their own discontent with the existing order, and on whose behalf the Western aid donors could claim (often misleadingly) to speak."[2]

A consensus developed within the Western donor community that international aid would only be effective if the government of the receiving country could guarantee a minimum level of "good governance." The term "good gov-

2 C. Clapham, *Africa and the international system* (Cambridge, 1996), 195.

ernance" started to appear frequently on the agendas of the multilateral and bilateral aid agencies. It came at the right time. The international donor community was in need of something new. The prescriptions concerning market reforms, liberalization, privatization, and deregulation, as initiated by the *Washington Consensus*, did not produce the anticipated results. Slowly more attention was given to the importance of governance in boosting economic growth and reducing poverty. This paradigm shift was not only understandable given the disappointing outcomes of the *Structural Adjustment Programs* but also because of its objectives. These are very recognizable and attractive. Who can be against the pursuit of such commendable goals like democracy, human rights, and separation of powers? Moreover, these are concepts that have proven their worth in our own societies and still do.

Among the members of the donor community, it became widely accepted that "good governance" was a precondition for structural economic growth and poverty reduction. Donor agencies feel very strongly about "good governance." It influences to a large extent the considerations on the basis of which Western donor countries decide whether to provide aid or not. In view of the asymmetric relationship between the provider and the receiver, this agenda has been particularly visible in Africa. In addition, there is also the notion that the pursuit of "good governance" and democracy could well be a goal in itself, given its intrinsic value.

Initially the emphasis was on the more technical aspects of governance such as improved economic policies and administrative efficiency, but gradually the notion of governance took on a more political interpretation ("good governance"). More technically oriented institutions like the OECD and World Bank, albeit somewhat more cautiously, moved into this direction as well.

There is no generally accepted definition of "good governance." Almost every self-respecting donor has a unique interpretation of what it contains. These definitions differ in terms of specificity. "Governance," "good governance," and "democratic governance" are sometimes used interchangeably. In addition, the same organization sometimes uses different definitions. Some "good governance" definitions limit themselves to specific policies or outcomes, others to specific institutions and political processes. However, a general distinction can be made between the more economically and management oriented approaches by the international financing institutions and the emphasis on political aspects by bilateral Western donors. Moreover, given the wide scope of some of these definitions, it is not always clear how these "good governance" definitions distinguish themselves from the development process in general.

In spite of the differences, these definitions often also have a number of common features. Most definitions of "good governance" emphasize the normative and legitimacy aspects of governance. These are: democracy and representation, human rights, rule of law, transparency and accountability, and a number of specific goals like elections, freedom of expression, property rights, etc. Especially bilateral donors, such as the EU countries and some UN organizations, stress the importance of the rule of law, democracy, and representation.

In short, one common characteristic in these definitions is that "good governance" is primarily defined in a normative and prescriptive manner. Governance in a specific country is supposed to comply with the formulated standards. In particular, the legitimacy aspects of the "good governance" agenda stand out. An important component of this line of reasoning is the assumption that development is only possible if citizens are empowered to hold their leaders accountable for their actions. Therefore, the advancement of a pluralistic political system, and especially free-and-fair elections are an integral part of the "good governance" agenda of Western donor countries. Supporting these is considered a crucial means of achieving their goal of legitimate and accountable government.

Donor countries believe that multiparty democracy, and free-and-fair elections will not only bring about more legitimate governments in the recipient countries but also, as a consequence, development and poverty reduction. As explained in a number of publications on "good governance" and development by OECD countries and – sometimes more indirectly – by international financial institutions like the World Bank, the support for multiparty politics is a prominent part of their "good governance" repertoire. And so it has happened. The reintroduction of multiparty politics in the (early) 1990s has been perhaps the most important political change on the continent since the struggle for independence.

The conventional donor approach assumes, implicitly or explicitly, that the ideal picture in this respect resembles to a large extent the manner in which OECD countries have organized their own societies. The task at hand is to fix as soon as possible the discrepancy between the actual situation in a specific developing country and the desired state of affairs. Some development organizations have realized, however, that the improvement of the governance situation in a developing country involves more than simply copying institutions, which have proven their worth in Western societies. There is a growing interest among donors to use political economy analysis tools to be

able to identify and manage risks related to interventions in this area and to formulate more realistic implementation strategies.

Because of ongoing aid dependency, developing countries particularly in sub-Saharan Africa are confronted with the "good governance" wishes, preferences, and conditions of Western donors. The way these turn out in practice also depends, of course, on the specific context of the country in question, other (strategic) considerations, and the political layout in the donor country itself. In the chapters on specific countries, the manner in which the "good governance" agenda has been applied in practice will be considered a bit more in detail.

Generally speaking, there appears to be a noticeable gap between the findings of at least a portion of the academic research into the relevancy of the Western "good governance" agenda and the opinions of the Western donor countries. Quite a lot of research in the last fifteen years emphasizes the continuity and resilience of the authoritarian and neo-patrimonial dimensions of politics in developing countries, all while donor countries during the same period were insisting consistently on a rapid implementation of "good governance" reforms Western style. Furthermore, there seems to sometimes be a discrepancy between the actual demeanour of donor countries and what they preach in public.

So far, these discrepancies have not resulted in a (partial) readjustment of the "good governance" agenda of the Western donor community. Apart from country-specific considerations (see country chapters), the necessity for political representatives of a donor country to take into account the domestic political reality in their political assessment and decision-making with regard to the "good governance" situation in aid-receiving countries might explain these dilemmas (not to follow academic advice, and the discrepancy between policy and practice). As it happens, there appears to be a consensus in parliaments, media, and civil society organizations of most donor countries as to the universality of the "good governance" agenda.

Finally, and worth mentioning in this context, is the increasing number of relatively new international players active on the continent, who do not share these preoccupations about "good governance." China, for instance, does not attach any "good governance" or human rights conditions to its financial support, as this is considered interference in internal affairs. In general, China is of the opinion that "good governance" issues are the responsibility of Africans themselves, which cannot be imposed by foreigners.

1.1 The main question

"Good governance" as a necessary precondition for development. Sounds logical, but is this statement actually correct? No one would like to dispute that bad governance is bad for development, but that does not necessarily mean that development is only possible if the "good governance" wishes or even demands of the speech-making donor community are accommodated. In countries like China or Vietnam, or earlier Indonesia, which witnessed spectacular economic growth and substantial poverty reduction, bad governance, as defined by Western countries, has been rampant. It cannot therefore be much of a surprise that the supposed causal relationship between, on the one hand, economic growth and poverty reduction, and, on the other, "good governance" is increasingly called into question. The emergence of "new" players on the African continent, who do not care much about this agenda, has undoubtedly contributed to this. In short, the question of how important the "good governance" of the West is for the development of Africa has become pertinent.

In academic quarters there appears to be no consensus about the nature of the relationship between "good governance" and economic development. Different studies establish different causal links. Although economic growth has undeniably occurred in sub-Saharan Africa, the structural nature of this growth is also called into question. Research that focuses on the developmental history of a specific country, or a comparison among a limited number of countries, usually provides a more nuanced picture than large scale, ahistorical, statistical comparisons between countries.

According to a number of authors the reintroduction of multiparty democracy and elections, being essential elements of the "good governance" agenda, did not in itself contribute positively to economic development and poverty reduction. The nature of African politics did not really change. Political settlements in Africa were still characterized by elite politics, patronage, and ethnicity.

Political reality in Africa has a different face than in Western countries. While the political process in the West is relatively autonomous and as such a recognizable part of society, this is much less the case in sub-Saharan Africa. Politics and power in African countries are primarily informal and personal. Patronage still has a strong impact on societal relations. Within this context, an individual or group, and a (potential) *patron* seek a personal relationship, in which the supporters provide certain services, among which is political loyalty, to the *patron*, and the *patron* in return favors and protects his supporters. It is against

this background that the lack of efficient public institutions and the general disregard for formal rules and procedures can be explained. Although in a different manner than in Western countries, in this environment political actors also act rationally, albeit in terms of their own political logic.

The above does not imply that formal, modern democratic institutions are not important, but it does mean that they are to a large extent influenced by these informal links and corresponding factions and therefore operate in a different manner than, for example, in Western countries. Political systems in most African countries are in reality a mixture of patrimonial practices and modern, Western institutions. That is why too much emphasis on formal institutions may obscure our view of the often more relevant informal distribution of power, which influences very strongly the functioning of these formal institutions. The reality behind the official façade of African states (and its paraphernalia such as parliaments and the judiciary) should be part and parcel of any meaningful analysis. Generally, African societies (but they are not the only ones) can be characterized by the continued existence of premodern societal relationships within a seemingly modern, Western, bureaucratic context, and the interaction between them both. In addition, important historical differences among countries remain, which determine the way in which these politics are conducted in the (informal) political arena as well. The central question in this book is whether, given this context, the introduction or reintroduction of a multiparty system, and corresponding elections in a number of African countries in the 1990s, contributed to political settlements that were conducive to economic development and transformation. In short, the answer is that it has not been particular helpful, in some cases irrelevant, and sometimes even counterproductive.

Although multiparty politics and elections are not identical with "good governance" or democracy, they are an essential part of this agenda. Elections are considered –particularly by Western countries – as the "high mass" of democracy. They are an indispensable part of the democratization process. In his *The Third Wave: Democratization in the late twentieth century*, Samuel Huntington states this opinion in the following concise manner*:* "Elections, open, free and fair, are the essence of democracy, the inescapable sine qua non."[3] It can hardly be a surprise that promoting and supporting free-and-fair elections is an integral part of the "good governance" repertoire of the traditional donor community.

3 S. Huntington, *The third wave: Democratization in the late twentieth century* (London, 1991).

In order to answer the above question, I will focus on the reaction of the political elites in a number of African countries to the challenges they faced as a consequence of the reintroduction of multiparty politics. In this study, an effort will be made "to open the black box of elite decision-making and examine what is inside."[4]

1.2 How to go about it?

There are quite a number of different circumstances that have an impact on economic development or the lack thereof, such as geographic location, demographic developments, social factors, the structure of the economy, the nature of the economic policies, etc. In this study, the emphasis is on the response of the political elites to the challenges of a pluralistic political system and its effects on economic development. It is not assumed that political elites necessarily consider the development of their countries as the main priority of their policies or that development can only take place if these elites are held more accountable by the population. Given the "vertical" nature of African politics and, as a consequence, the competition for resources in order to be able to fulfill patronage-related obligations, the emphasis will be on political elites. In other words, the position and stance of the political elites in a specific country do not constitute the only explanation for the level of economic progress but are nevertheless very important and crucial elements. Within such a context, the fight for and the distribution of political power in order to gain access to available resources, take center stage. The systematic concentration of political power in the hands of the president constitutes a trend in Africa, which could not be altered by the reintroduction of a multiparty system either. For that reason, especially the reaction of political elites to presidential elections will be reviewed.

Political settlements

In an effort to provide insight into the question of how different forms of cooperation (or the lack thereof) by the political elites have influenced the relationship between multiparty democracy and a political constellation conducive to economic development, I have made use of a typology developed by the economist Mushtaq Khan of the School of Oriental and African Studies of the University of London concerning political settlements in developing

4 D. Booth, "Development as a collective action problem," *Africa Power and Politics Program*. Policy brief no. 9 (London, 2012).

countries. This typology appears to me as the most appropriate for analyzing the settlements in the countries under scrutiny.

		Horizontal distribution of power: excluded fractions	
		WEAK (interest of ruling coalition strongly aligned with growth) →	(interest of ruling coalition weakly aligned with growth) **STRONG**
Vertical distribution of power: lower level fractios	**WEAK** (ruling coalition has strong implementation capabilities) ↓ (ruling coalition has weak implementation capabilities) **STRONG**	**Potential developmental coalition** Low opposition from excluded factions giving ruling coalition stability and long time horizon. Limited power of lower level factional supporters ensures high enforcement capability.	**(Vulnerable) authoritarian coalition** Initial enforcement capabilities likely to be strong but excluded factions mean force or legal restrictions have to be used making coalition vulnerable to violent overthrow.
		(Weak) dominant party Enforcement capabilities become weaker as lower-level factions get stronger or more fragmented. Exluded factions also become stronger and dissatisfied supporters start leaving.	**Competitive clientelism** Characterized by competition between strong factions. Stability can be achieved only with credible mechanisms for cycling factions in power. Low enforcement capabilities in most cases and short time horizons.

Figure 1.1
Patron-Client Factions & the Structure of the Ruling Coalition
Source: M. Khan, "Political settlements and the governance of growth- enhancing institutions." 2010 Research paper series on growth enhancing governance (London, 2010), p. 65.

According to Khan, the manner in which the ruling coalition is organized is of crucial importance. He identifies two dimensions: the position of power of the ruling coalition relative to the excluded political elites and the internal distribution of power within the ruling coalition. The first dimension (horizontal distribution of power) spells out the balance of power between the excluded factions and those in power. If the excluded factions are weak, the ruling coalition will feel relatively secure and might therefore apply a more farsighted agenda, which could be advantageous to policies promoting economic growth and development. The second dimension (vertical distribution of power) describes the balance of power between the higher echelons within the ruling coalition and the lower levels. The more powerful the higher echelons, the stronger the capability to actually implement and enforce policies that benefit

economic development. From a development perspective, the *potential developmental coalition* is the most conducive constellation. As Khan points out: "Here the ruling coalition has a long-term horizon and therefore its interests are aligned with development and it has effective implementation capabilities."[5] Within this context the outcome of elections remain important. Winning elections does not just mean access to state coffers, crucial to staying in power, but it also provides an indication of the balance of power between the competing elite factions. In the country chapters, the set-up of the political settlements and changes will be reviewed on the basis of this typology.

Historical

The approach is first and foremost historical. I am particularly interested in the questions of what has happened and why. The point of departure is the reality as I have encountered it in my research. The developments under review are put in their historical context. Such a method of working is, in my opinion, the best way to do justice to the complexities of the issue. A historical perspective allows one to go beyond establishing rather superficial correlations and to get a real insight into the question of why things happened as they happened. A historical analysis of experiences in individual countries will provide us with a better understanding of what has happened as well as why a certain development took place, because it takes into account the specific context and the correlation with other events and processes in the course of time. The focus will not only be on specific developments relevant to the subject matter but also on more long-term historical developments that have influenced the course of events. In this way, the relationship between cause and effect, specific factors that were at play, and their interaction can be identified.

Comparative

In addition to a description of the diversity of historical experiences in a number of African countries, these experiences will also be compared to each other. A historical as well as a comparative perspective will produce the best insights relevant to the type of questions raised in this study. A comparative method will help to better understand certain events and developments in a specific country, to identify alternative explanations, and to formulate (new) generalizations. It is evident that there are also limitations connected to this approach. There will always be a certain tension between, on the one hand, the effort to do justice to the interpretation of a specific case and, on the other, to try to draw more general conclusions.

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5 M. Khan, "Political settlements and the governance of growth-enhancing institutions," 2010 Research paper series on growth-enhancing governance (London, 2010), 65.

Another point of particular interest concerns the choice of the country cases. Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, the Congo, and Ethiopia have been selected on the basis of the following considerations. First, they are sufficiently similar as well as different to make a comparison meaningful. A common feature of the political settlements in these countries is that they are based on patron-client relationships, but at the same time they vary in the way these relationships have been given shape and substance. Furthermore, I have selected these countries on more practical grounds. I have either lived and worked, or followed closely the social and political developments in these countries on account of my positions at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Non-prescriptive

Regardless of the level of development or context, the "good governance" agenda of the Western donor community consists of a number of reforms aimed at macroeconomic stability, accountability, transparent public finance management, clearly defined property rights, rule of law, human rights, and a pluralistic political system. The implicit message is that what works in Western democracies will also work in Africa. Given the evidently normative character of the notion of "good governance," it might be useful to emphasize here that this study unequivocally aims to find out what has really happened, and not the image that is being presented or should be presented. The point of departure is reality, not appearance. The layout of our the Western society is, after all, also the outcome of a specific historical process, as convincingly explained in the standard work *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* of Barrington Moore (1966).

The relevance of his conclusions for this study justifies the length of the following quotation: "The freedoms created through this process [the democratic route to modern society] display a clear relationship to each other. Worked out with the rise of modern capitalism, they display the traits of a specific historical epoch. Key elements in the liberal and bourgeois order of society are the right to vote, representation in a legislature that makes the laws and hence is more than a rubber stamp for the executive, an objective system of law that at least in theory confers no special privileges on account of birth or inherited status, security for the rights of property and the elimination of barriers inherited from the past on its use, religious tolerance, freedom of speech, and the right to peaceful assembly. Even if practice falls short of profession, these are widely recognized marks of modern liberal society."[6]

6 B. Moore Jr., *Social origins of dictatorship and democracy. Lord and peasant in the making of the modern world* (Boston, 1966), 429.

This does not mean that governance is not important for development. Of course it is. The question is, however, whether the abovementioned governance reforms fitted the (historical) phase these countries were in and the concrete challenges they faced. This book deals with the implications of multiparty democracy for development.

Qualitative

The above implies a mainly qualitative approach. A quantative method of working inevitably limits itself to those matters that can be counted and disregards qualitative changes in the way people and groups of people relate to each other. Moreover, measuring results (quantitatively) in Africa is often problematic. In the majority of African countries, reliable, quantative information is only available to a limited extent. But more important, many "transactions" happen in an informal context. A one-sided quantative approach carries the danger of making us blind to the African reality. To quote Albert Einstein: "Everything that can be counted does not necessarily count; everything that counts can not necessarily be counted." This does not preclude that some statistical data can be helpful to gain a basic insight into, for example, information relevant for this study concerning economic growth and the level of economic transformation over a specific period of time.

Economic development

The nature of economic development in sub-Saharan Africa requires some clarification as well. It is beyond dispute that from the mid-1990s many African countries witnessed substantial economic growth, partly thanks to economic reforms, adequate macroeconomic policies, a growing demand for natural resources, and financial support from donor countries. Yet, according to a number of authors structural transformation is the essence of the process of economic development. In that respect Africa is still lagging behind if one takes a number of other crucial elements of economic transformation into consideration as well.

By structural economic development is meant here the growth of the economy as well as the extent of its transformation. This book focuses on the question of whether the introduction/reintroduction of a multiparty system and corresponding elections in a number of African countries in the 1990s contributed to political settlements that are conducive to structurally inclusive economic development and not just economic growth as such. Within this context, three types of data will be used: Gross National Product per capita, the extent of economic transformation as defined by the African Center for

Economic Transformation (ACET), and the poverty figures in the selected countries.

1.3 Layout

The layout of this book is as follows. As indicated, the subject matter will be dealt with from a comparative historical perspective. The proof of the pudding is in the eating. Therefore a major part of this book is dedicated to a number of case studies of countries in sub-Saharan Africa: Kenya, Uganda, the Congo, Rwanda, and Ethiopia.

These country chapters, which include developments up to 2015, also have a common layout.[7] First, developments preceding the introduction/reintroduction of a multiparty democracy will be reviewed in as far they are relevant to the main question of this study. Then there will be a short and concise description of the most important events in relation to the (presidential) elections, followed by a limited overview of relevant economic development during the period in question. Subsequently, the reactions by the political elites to the challenges with which they were confronted as a consequence of the introduction/reintroduction of multiparty politics will be reviewed. In particular, I will look into the following factors that influenced the nature of the political settlements in the selected countries: the political cohesion of the political elites (or the lack thereof), the ethnic/regional dimensions, the extent of political instrumentalization of violence, and political corruption. In addition, I will also briefly pay attention to the attitude of the international donor community. Some country specific conclusions will round off these chapters. On the basis of these conclusions and of relevant literature in this context, I will try to identify a number of common lines and patterns. These then will form the "building blocks" for the formulation of a number of general conclusions and observations with regard to the agenda propagated by the OECD members in Africa about multiparty democracy as a necessary precondition for development and the implications of this agenda. Finally, since this study also has the pretense to have some policy relevance, a number of general policy recommendations regarding "good governance" will be formulated.

7 In 2016 the political landscape in Ethiopia changed considerably. Therefore, I added a *post scriptum* to the chapter on Ethiopia.

2 Kenya



2.1 What preceded

To appreciate what happened in Kenya during the reintroduction of multiparty politics in 1992 and why, it might be useful to review a number of developments within Kenyan society that were set in motion long before that. After independence, the political system in Kenya under the leadership of President Kenyatta became rapidly dominated by the presidency, as in so many African countries. Political stability characterized the first years after independence. This stability rested on the policy by the president to create

a strong bond with a large part of the political elites, to secure "the fruits of independence," and of course on the personality and reputation of Kenyatta himself as father of the nation. He exploited the patronage-based ethnic networks within and outside his own ethnic group along with his command of the civil service and in particular the provincial administration. The pursuit of inclusivity was facilitated after the *Kenya African Democratic Union (*KADU), the party that represented the interests of the smaller ethnic groups, joined the *Kenya Africa National Union* (KANU), the biggest and nationalist party under the leadership of Kenyatta.

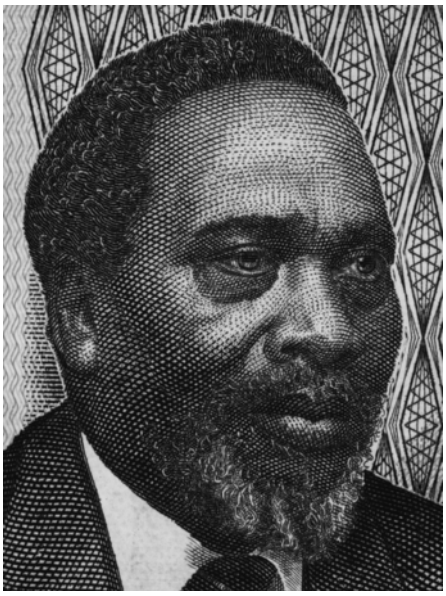


Illustration 2.1
Jomo Kenyatta

That did not mean that every ethnic group, and more particularly the local *Big Men*, could share in equal measure in the spoils (political) power provided. First of all, Kenyatta saw to it that he consolidated the support of his own ethnic group, the Kikuyu, which in fact was not a homogeneous group either. Although his kitchen cabinet mainly consisted of people from his native area, the *Kiambu mafia*, he ensured the support from other Kikuyu factions as well. An instructive example of this was the establishment of the *Gikuyu Embu Meru Association* (GEMA) in 1973, a collaboration of Kikuyu and related ethnic groups, the Embu and Meru, in an effort to strengthen the ethnic base of his regime. He accepted that by doing so the dominant position of his ethnic supporters in the political and government structures became

rather obvious. Still, in order to maintain as much as possible the bond with other ethnic groups and strengthen the legitimacy of his government, he saw to it that these groups were also part and parcel of this patronage system. He supported local political leaders who owed him personal loyalty. At the same time he systematically isolated his opponents and their protégés. They were not only deprived of any patronage but their freedom of action was restricted as well. The treatment suffered by the opposition party, the *Kenya People's Union* (KPU), under the leadership of Oginga Odinga (the father of the former prime minister, Raila Odinga, who championed more leftist policies), might serve as an example.

During the second half of the 1970s, Kenyatta, who was in his eighties, lost the ability to steer the Kenyan ship of state as he had done in the past. Competing factions tried to fill this power vacuum. A number of Kikuyu politicians made an effort to prevent, after the demise of Kenyatta, Vice-president Daniel arap Moi would take over the presidency for a period of ninety days, as stipulated in the constitution. However, this initiative to change the constitution failed with the help of other Kikuyu leaders, such as the then minister of Finance Mwai Kibaki and the powerful Attorney General Charles Njonjo and probably Kenyatta himself. Partly thanks to the increased value of important export commodities like coffee and tea, and the tourist industry, the economy was doing well during this period in spite of the political uncertainty.

As a result of the disagreement among the several Kikuyu factions about who should be the next president and the underestimation of his political capabilities by his rivals, Daniel arap Moi managed to succeed Kenyatta after his death in 1978. Initially Moi consolidated his position, on the one hand, by forming an alliance with Kibaki and Njonjo (who did not belong to the Kenyatta coterie, which originated primarily from Kiambu) and, on the other, by strengthening his homebase, the Kalenjin in the Rift Valley. Moi exploited the tensions between the several Kikuyu factions. Slowly but surely, he started to dismantle their power, for example, by banning tribal organizations, with the main objective being to eliminate the powerful Kikuyu organization GEMA. Gradually, Kikuyu working in the civil service, parastatals, army, and police were replaced by representatives of other ethnic groups. Contrary to Kenyatta, who only intervened in case of economic and political necessity, political and economic power became more centralized. Whereas Kenyatta, firmly in the saddle, could afford to operate as a "benevolent dictator" and be in charge from a distance, the new president was less sure of himself.

After the economic prosperity in the time of Kenyatta, the Moi regime had to cope with a number of economic setbacks: increasing oil prices, lower prices for export products like coffee and tea, decline in tourism, and, most importantly, scarcity of farmland as a result of increasing demographic pressures as well as land grabbing by political elites. Against this background, the reorganization of the "political economy" had its price. The Kikuyu were the most productive and best-educated section of the Kenyan population. The stable patronage networks established under Kenyatta were dismantled. The coffee areas, primarily situated in Kikuyu territory, were neglected, and the parastatals active in this sector eroded, as they were considered an economic powerbase and therefore politically dangerous. After all, the Kikuyu were the most important opponents of the regime. In spite of all the opposition, they still constituted a key economic factor, albeit now often with a "layer of varnish" of Kalenjin (and Asian) business people. The regime could count less and less on the support of the most important economic regions: Central Province (the homebase of the Kikuyu) and Nairobi.

Moreover, Moi lacked the charisma Kenyatta had at his disposal. Against the background of political uncertainty as a consequence of the failed military coup in 1982 and the abovementioned declining availability of resources for patronage purposes, Moi had no option but to resort to a divide-and-rule policy: Different groups were played against each other. But in order to hand out, he first had to take away. Apart from a number of "regular friends" of the president, rotation among political elites became the benchmark of the political system the president had in mind, the general trend being the replacement of Kikuyu in important government and semi-government positions by fellow, often underqualified Kalenjin. The same happened in the economic domain. During the time of Kenyatta, Kenya was already a *de facto* one-party state. This was formalized by Moi in 1982: KANU became the only legal political party. Repression and corruption increased. The disappearance of consensus among the elites reinforced the call for political liberalization and the removal of the one-party state.

In addition to these long-term developments, a number of specific events triggered more overt political protests: the mass demonstrations in Eastern Europe against communist dictatorship, the irregularities during the 1988 elections, and the suspension of international aid. Initially efforts were made to suppress these protests by force. The author of this study had the doubtful pleasure of closely witnessing the mass protests (in Kenya known as *Saba Saba*) after the arrest of the main opposition leaders at that time, Matiba

and Rubia. In 1991, Moi yielded to the internal and external pressure and announced the reintroduction of a multiparty system.

2.2 The elections

1992

Within the context of a multiparty system, winning the presidential elections is the most important prize. Part of the KANU tactics to decide these in its favor was based on a readjustment of the relevant procedures by the Kenyan parliament (consisting only of KANU MPs): a ban on a coalition government and, apart from a majority of the overall vote, a minimum of at least 25 percent of the votes in at least five of the eight provinces. The reasons behind these provisions were rather obvious: taking into account the discord among the political oppsition, KANU felt confident that it would win the presidential elections but was not so sure about the outcome of the elections for the legislative. The first provision allowed Moi to form a minority government. Since the support of the opposition was concentrated in a limited number of provinces, and KANU possessed a well-organized countrywide network (which the political opposition did not have) and was in command of the provincial administration, the second provision was clearly meant to give KANU the advantage.

Put in a simplistic way, Moi was capable of remaining in charge for 24 years thanks to a combination of repression and the consolidated support of a number, often smaller ethnic groups, held together by a strong anti-Kikuyu sentiment. Towards the end of the 1980s, the representatives of those ethnic groups, which once constituted KADU, called the shots within the KANU hierarchy and government. These groups became known under the name of KAMATUSA, an alliance of ethnic factions, primarily from the Rift Valley, that supported the regime: the Kalenjin, the Maasai, the Turkana, and the Samburu.

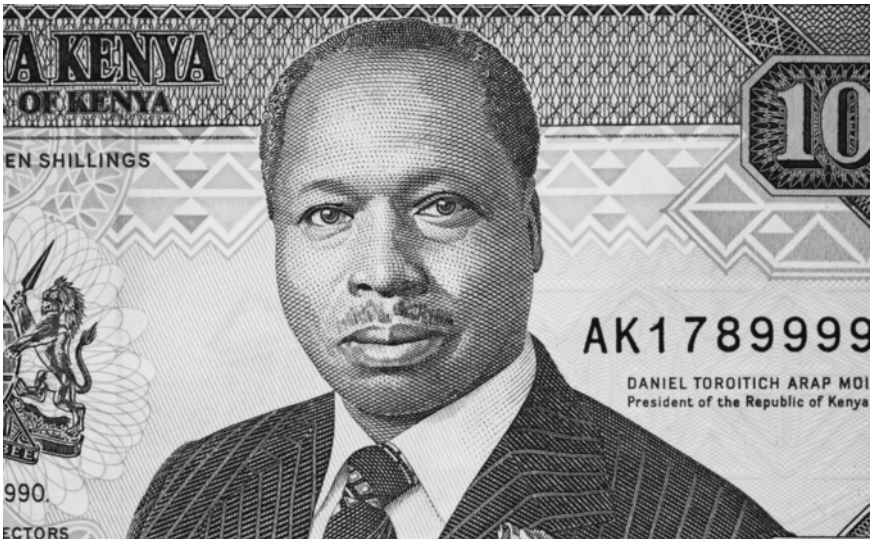


Illustration 2.2
Daniel arap Moi

One of the preparations by KANU for the 1992 elections concerned the organization of KANU youth as the "security organ" of the party. *Youth for Kanu* and *Operation Moi Win* became important instruments in the election campaign. Supported by the provincial administration (one of the mainstays of the regime), KANU used these organizations to win votes for KANU and to intimidate the opposition. The leader of *Youth for KANU,* Cyrus Jirongo, had considerable financial resources at his disposal to "convince" constituents to vote for KANU. The Ksh. 500 notes, introduced at the time of the election campaign, were nicknamed "jirongos" after him. In addition, these youth militias were used to intimidating the political opposition physically (once the elections were over and the job was done, these organizations were quickly disbanded). Furthermore, life was made difficult for the opposition by withholding licences for meetings, prohibiting gatherings at the very last minute, and by arbitrary detention of opposition leaders.

Simultaneously, a violent campaign began, aimed at ethnically cleansing the Rift Valley – a crucial province from an election perspective and the homebase of the Kalenjin ethnic group – of Kikuyu (opposition supporters) and to a lesser extent of other ethnic groups in order to turn this region into an exclusive KANU zone. Although many Kikuyu had been living in this province for 30 or 40 years, they were still considered as "outsiders" who had no place in this region. The author of this study was able to personally witness the results: More than 1500 people were killed and more than 300,000 dis-

placed, the majority of whom were Kikuyu. Within this context there was the notorious statement of the Maasai leader and close ally of Moi, Ntimama, who advised Kikuyu "to lie low like envelopes." The result was that the opposition found it impossible to campaign in at least a third of the country. The divisions among the opposition did the rest.

The result of the presidential elections confirmed the important role patronage and ethnicity played in Kenyan politics. Opposition parties became ethnic vehicles. Already before the elections, the main opposition party, the *Forum for the Restoration of Democracy* (FORD), a collaboration between a number of ethnic groups, had split into two competing parties, each with their own specific ethnic constituency. The future president Mwai Kibaki also established his own party: the *Democratic Party* (DP). In addition, quite a number of other small parties came into existence, sometimes facilitated by the government. The most striking feature of the result of the presidential elections was perhaps the fact that the incumbent and his party failed to get a clear majority of the votes in spite of all the intimidation, ethnic violence, corruption, and divisions among the opposition. Precisely because of the election tactics of KANU and indirectly the president, events were triggered that Moi had warned against: The introduction of political pluralism resulted in intensified competition, ethnicity-based political parties, and a near bankruptcy of the economy. At the same time, the Kenyan population participated in the elections with great enthusiasm. For the first time in a long while, Kenyans had something of a real choice.[8]

Table 2.1
Results 1992 presidential elections in Kenya

Candidate (Party)	Number of Votes	% of Votes
Daniel arap Moi (KANU)	1,962,866	36.35%
Kenneth Matiba (FORD-A)	1,404,266	26.00%
Mwai Kibaki (DP)	1,050,617	19.45%
Oginga Odinga (FORD-K)	944,197	17.48%
George Anyona (KSC)	14,273	0.26%
Chibule wa Tsuma (KNC)	10,221	0.19%
Harun Mwau (PICK)	8,118	0.15%
Mukaru Ng'ang'a (KENDA)	5,766	0.11%

Source: africanelections.tripod.com

8 My own experience as an election observer in the district of Kajiado in 1992.

1997

After the elections of 1992, the opposition remained very much divided along ethnic lines. Furthermore, they were unable to reach a consensus on the strategy and tactics to be followed against Moi and others. KANU managed to win a number of by-elections and to weaken the opposition further. In a sense, the elections in 1997 were a repetition, albeit on a smaller scale, of the events in 1992, and they led to the same result. Once again ethnicity took center stage. In the run up to the elections of 1997, the same tactics by KANU as before were applied: intimidation and physical violence against political opponents and their supporters. This time KANU selected a youth militia, other than the one in 1992, to do the dirty work, *Jeshi la Mzee,* which presented themselves as the informal presidential militia. While assisted by the police and financed by wealthy KANU politicians, the group focused on disrupting election meetings of the opposition. In response, the opposition created its own militias, albeit less well organized and financed. Ethnic cleansing was also part of the 1997 elections, although less extensive than in 1992. Once again the objective was to chase out opposition supporters, not only in the Rift Valley and in the adjoining areas of Nyanza and Western province but also this time on the coast. The Luo, Kikuyu, and Kamba living in these areas were considered potential supporters of the opposition and an important swing factor. The result of the elections was hardly a surprise.

Table 2.2
Results 1997 presidential elections in Kenya

Candidate (Party)	Number of Votes	% of Votes
Daniel arap Moi (KANU)	2,445,801	40.12%
Mwai Kibaki (DP)	1,895,527	31.09%
Raila Odinga (NDP)	665,725	10.92%
Michael Wamalwa (FORD-K)	505,542	8.29%
Charity Ngilu (SDP)	469,807	7.71%
Martin Shikuku (FORD-A)	36,302	0.60%
Katama Mkangi (KNC)	23,484	0.39%
George Anyona (KSC)	16,294	0.27%
Kimani wa Nyoike (FORD-P)	8,564	0.14%
Koigi wa Wamwere (KENDA)	7,463	0.12%
Munyua Waiyaki (UPPK)	6,103	0.10%
Godfrey M' Mwereria (GAP)	4,555	0.07%
Wangari Maathai (LPK)	4,133	0.07%
Stephen Oludhe (EIP)	3,653	0.06%
David Waweru Ng'ethe (UMMA)	3,526	0.06%

Source: africanelections.tripod.com

2002

In the run-up to the elections of 2002, Moi tried to create a broad-based ethnic coalition of KANU supporters. KANU and the party of Raila Odinga (NDP), who could count, as always, on the full support of the Luo, merged. However, the internal power struggle about who should succeed Moi, retiring after 24 years, was the final nail in the coffin of KANU. To the dismay of many KANU heavy weights, Moi personally appointed as his successor Uhuru Kenyatta, son of the first president. Next, he travelled with Uhuru around the country to introduce him to KANU party officials ("project Uhuru"), all this very much against the will of other KANU contenders, among whom Odinga, who of course considered himself as the best candidate. A bitter power struggle ensued between "project Uhuru" (Moi and Kenyatta) and the *Rainbow Alliance* (a number of KANU big shots and Odinga). Slowly KANU imploded. Eventually Moi managed to push through the appointment of Kenyatta as the official presidential candidate of KANU. As a consequence, a number of prominent party leaders (among whom Odinga) left KANU and joined the *National Rainbow Coalition* (NARC) under the leadership of Kibaki. During the 1992 and 1997 elections, KANU had been very effective in mobilizing their supporters, undermining the opposition, and manipulating the vote in crucial constituencies. In 2002, that was not longer the case. Furthermore, contrary to the previous elections, the opposition was, at least initially, capable of maintaining a sense of unity.

The elections in 2002 were much less prone to violence than those in 1992 and 1997. Although some violent incidents did occur, in which youth militias were often involved, Kenya was able to avoid ethnic cleansing this time around. This might be explained by the similar ethnic background of the two most important presidential candidates: both were Kikuyu. Therefore, anti-Kikuyu sentiments could not be exploited to incite (political) violence. Second, contrary to the previous elections, the opposition formed a strong power bloc, while KANU was divided and weakened. The efforts of civil society to avoid election violence must have contributed as well. Kibaki and NARC defeated Uhuru Kenyatta, the KANU presidential candidate, by a wide margin. Initially there was great optimism among the Kenyan population. The Moi era of repression and economic stagnation had been overcome. The economy was picking up. The paraphernalia of a democratic political system were reinstated. The reality behind this façade was somewhat different, however.

Table 2.3
Results 2002 presidential elections in Kenya

Candidate (Party) [Coalition]	Number of Votes	% of Votes
Mwai Kibaki (DP) [NARC]	3,646,277	62.20%
Uhuru Kenyatta (KANU)	1,835,890	31.32%
Simeon Nyachae (FORD-P)	345,152	5.89%
James Orengo (SDP)	24,524	0.42%
David Waweru Ng'ethe (CCU)	10,061	0.17%

Source: africanelections.tripod.com

2007

In accordance with the recycling nature of African politics, a substantial number of the elected NARC parliamentarians were ex-KANU members. The NARC anti-KANU coalition was, however, short-lived and disintegrated rapidly. After the initial unity and optimism as a result of the convincing election victory, the elite consensus came swiftly to an end. The long absence of Kibaki due to a traffic accident (during the campaign), combined with his style of leadership (based on delegation of powers to his ministers) made it possible for a small circle of confidants of the president to in fact partly take over power. This group of people became known as the *Mount Kenya Mafia*; many came from the area around Mount Kenya, also the home region of the president.

The failure to honor an agreement between Kibaki and Odinga made prior to the elections about the distribution of the cabinet and other important positions – in particular the position of prime minister (for Odinga) – as well as the opposition by the Kibaki camp to the constitutional reform process constituted important reasons for the collapse of the coalition. The basis for the inter-ethnic coalition, that is, decision-making by consensus, had ceased to exist. The referendum on the constitution in 2005 resulted in further fragmentation among the political elite. Under the leadership of Odinga, a massive campaign was conducted against the draft constitution proposed by the government. The "no-camp" consisted of a very mixed bunch of people: Fanatical *majimboists* (see below) from the Rift Valley were campaigning side by side with civil society activists, who hoped for a curtailment of the executive powers of the president and the enhancement of local government. The constitutional proposals by the government were rejected. Undoubtedly, a number of substantive issues like the constitutional powers of the president and the wish for devolution played an important role. However, the main

reason appeared to be that the draft constitution was seen as a recipe for continued Kikuyu domination.

As a follow-up to the referendum, a new political party was established in the build-up to the elections of 2007: the *Orange Democratic Movement* (ODM). At the heart of this new party was a coalition between Raila Odinga and William Ruto, a well-known Kalenjin politician from the Rift Valley. The ODM built on the anti-Kikuyu rhetoric, which had proved so successful while campaigning against the new constitution. Quite a number of politicians from the Rift Valley, who joined ODM, were known as militant supporters of the efforts, during the Moi presidency, to rid the province of Kikuyu. Many residents of the Rift Valley interpreted the collaboration between Odinga and these local politicians from the Rift Valley as an encouragement to expel "foreigners."

In the field, the campaign partly degenerated into a fight between *forty-one tribes against one*, in which the perceived over-representation of the Kikuyu in trade, the banking sector, and civil service was emphasized. It was pointed out that the predominance of Kikuyu was the main cause of the marginalization of other ethnic groups in the national political arena. Of course, attention was also paid to other issues such a fairer distribution of wealth, the fight against corruption, and the need to improve infrastructure. Still, the ethnic dimension, implicitly or explicitly, loomed large. The other side also kept up its end, when it came to stereotyping opponents. Appeals were made to the ethnic prejudices among Kikuyu themselves. In August 2007, Kenyatta announced that KANU would support Kibaki. Moi also spoke out in favor of the incumbent, something for which he was not exactly thanked by the majority of his own Kalenjin. Many interpreted this support as an effort to secure his own personal interests and that of his family. The response of the Kalenjin was grounded in perceptions of marginalization in the past as well as in the present. The British historian Gabriela Lynch, who studied the sentiments among the Kalenjin that led to such an attitude, concludes: "This strongly ethnicized discourse of current 'prosecutions' and 'bias' was strongly interwoven with those of past and potential 'injustices' and how these expanded discursive threads encouraged a popular rejection of PNU [Kibaki's party] and strong support for ODM's manifesto pledges of redistribution, devolution and correction of historical injustices."[9]

9 G. Lynch, "Courting the Kalenjin: the failure of dynasticism and the strength of the ODM wave in Kenya's Rift Valley province," *African Affairs*, 107 (2008), 429, 544.

The 2007 elections were primarily a contest between the incumbent Kibaki and his *Party of National Unity* (PNU) and Raila Odinga of the *Orange Democratic Movement*. By Kenyan standards, the ODM campaign was well organized and lively, while the performance of the party of Kibaki was rather lacklustre. However, the government could point to positive economic results, an important fact after so many lean years. While the ODM clearly won the parliamentary elections, the outcome of the presidential elections, the main prize, turned out to be a neck-and-neck race. It was far from clear who had won the presidential elections. Nevertheless Kibaki declared himself to be the winner and was hastily sworn in as president under strong protests by the opposition



Illustration 2.3
Election violence in Kisumu 2007/8

Although the elections themselves went peacefully enough, riots subsequently broke out on a massive scale in Kisumu (the homebase of Odinga) and in the ethnically mixed slums of Nairobi. Violence spread across other, ethnically diverse parts of the country. On New Year's Day 2008, 39 people, mainly women, children, and handicapped, who sought refuge in a church near Eldoret (in the Rift Valley), died after ODM supporters set the church on fire. This tragedy evoked memories in Kenya of the events during the genocide in Rwanda in 1994. It nevertheless gave the go-ahead to Kalenjin youth militias to attack their Kikuyu neigbours in big numbers, to chase them away or, worse, kill them and burn their properties.

Once again, the largest number of casualties was to be found in the Rift Valley. The trigger this time was the suspicion that the representatives of the Kikuyu had stolen the elections. The General Service Unit (GSU) put down demonstrations in support of the opposition in a brutal manner in a number of cities. In response to violence against their fellow tribesmen, Kikuyu militias and Mungiki vigilantes carried out reprisals in Nairobi and other cities like Naivasha and Nakuru in the Rift Valley. All this violence resulted in hundreds of casualties and more than 100,000 displaced. Finally, with the assistance of mediator Kofi Annan, a government of national unity was formed, which put an end to the violence. Following further international pressure, the warring parties came to an agreement in 2008 about the distribution of power among the parties.

The scale, intensity, and nature of the violence came as a surprise to many Kenyans as well as foreigners. More than was the case in other African countries, it appeared that in Kenya conditions had gradually been put in place for a peaceful democratic process. By African standards, Kenya had a relative large middle class, which is considered to be the mainstay of a successful democratic process. Furthermore, there was the presence of a sizeable, active, and politically aware civil society, a serious, free, and independent press, and a continuous lively political debate. However, all this did not compensate for the ethnic divide-and-rule politics by a segment of the Kenyan political elite. There was initially a deafening silence on the part of Kenyan civil society, eloquent and active as they might be. Traditionally the church had been an important and socially engaged factor in Kenyan society. Yet, ethnically inspired violence prevailed over religion, usually a strong unifying force for most Kenyans.

Table 2.4
Results 2007 presidential elections in Kenya

Candidate (Party) [Coalition]	Number of Votes	% of Votes
Mwai Kibaki (DP) [PNU]	4,584,721	46.42%
Raila Odinga (ODM)	4,352,993	44.07%
Kalonzo Musyoka (ODM-K)	879,903	8.91%
Joseph Karani (KPTP)	21,171	0.21%
Pius Muiru (KPP)	9,667	0.10%
Nazlin Omar (WCP)	8,624	0.09%
Kenneth Matiba (SSA)	8,046	0.08%
David Waweru Ng'ethe (CCU)	5,976	0.06%
Nixon Kukubo (RPK)	5,927	0.06%

Source: africanelections.tripod.com

2013

The elections of 2013 passed remarkably peacefully for the following reasons. On account of their perceived roles during the violent aftermath of the 2007 elections, Uhuru Kenyatta and William Ruto, the political leaders of the Kikuyu and Kalenjin, respectively, were indicted for crimes against humanity by the International Criminal Court (ICC). These indictments were followed by a striking political realignment. Kenyatta and Ruto, fierce political opponents during the previous elections, decided to work together. It would be far more difficult for the ICC to pursue these indictments, were the suspects to hold political power.

The ICC indictments dominated the election campaign. They offered the Kenyatta/Ruto campaign the opportunity to manipulate nationalist sentiments to their advantage and mobilize their supporters. They were able to pose as victims of a neo-colonialist, Western conspiracy, whose objective was to undermine the sovereignty of the country. The ICC indictments saw to it that both ethnic groups, Kikuyu and Kalenjin, closed ranks. An important cause of ethnic tensions was removed. It made possible a temporary reconciliation between Kalenjin and Kikuyu, in particular in the Rift Valley, the epicenter of so much election violence in the past.



Illustration 2.4
2013 elections in Kenya

In response to the dramatic events after previous elections, political activities that could lead to political instability were considered off limits. With election violence still fresh in their memory, peace and stability were of greater priority to many Kenyans than unrestricted political competition. Opposition leader Odinga was depicted as a troublemaker who refused to accept the results of the 2007 elections. In addition, political reforms provided new legitimacy to the electoral and political system. Devolution, introduced under the new Constitution, made it possible for the losers in the presidential elections to still gain a substantial number of seats in the local elections.



Illustration 2.5
Uhuru Kenyatta

The "coalition of the accused" changed the dynamics of the elections completely. Only some locally based violence occurred, and it happened prior to and not after the elections, as was the case in 2007/8. The *Jubilee Alliance* clearly won the presidential as well the parliamentary elections in the first round. Although it was questionable whether the election victory was big enough, so that a second round was not needed, Kenyatta was declared the winner of the presidential elections.

Table 2.5
Results 2013 presidential elections in Kenya

Candidate	Party	Votes	% Votes
Uhuru Kenyatta	The National Alliance (TNA)	6,173,433	50.51%
Raila Odinga	Orange Democratic Movement (ODM)	5,340,546	43.70%
Musalia Mudavadi	United Democratic Forum Party (UDFP)	483,981	3.96%
Peter Kenneth	Kenya National Congress (KNC)	72,786	0.60%
Mohamed Abduba Dida	Alliance For Real Change (ARK)	52,848	0.43%
Martha Wangari Karua	Narc - Kenya (NARC-K)	43,881	0.36%
James Legilisho Kiyiapi	Restore And Build Kenya (RBK)	40,998	0.34%
Paul Kibugi Muite	Safina (SAFINA)	12,580	0.10%

Source: http://eisa.org.za

2.3 Short overview of economic developments

In comparison to other African countries, Kenya witnessed rather successful economic growth and development in the 1960s and 1970s. The following decades were characterized by stagnation. These periods coincide roughly with the governments of Kenyatta and Moi. This difference reflects partly the choices each made and the elites they represented. The interests of the Kikuyu elite and their allies, as became apparent during the Kenyatta era, partly involved the export of cash crops and were best served by a market economy. In terms of education and expertise, the members of this elite were ahead of the others, and this enabled them to use state resources to accumulate private capital. In short, economic policies were market-oriented and conducive to economic growth, a negative side effect being increased regional disparity.

On the other hand, Moi represented the interests of those elites who benefitted less from the economic prosperity during the time of Kenyatta. These groups tried to catch up by a redistribution of available resources, extracting funds from productive economic sectors, and outright plunder. The economic circumstances deteriorated further as a consequence of a number of "exogenous" shocks, for example, the failed military coup in 1982, drought in 1983/4, the rise in oil prices due to the First Gulf War, reduction of international aid in the early 1990s, again drought in 1991/2, and the ethnic cleansing in 1992 and 1997. In a collection of articles on economic growth in Africa by the African Economic Research Consortium economists, Mwega and Ndung'u came to the following conclusion in their contribution on the Kenyan

economy: "The introduction of competitive politics in early 1990s, however, provoked ethnic tensions revolving around land ownership and control of the state. This tended to create uncertainty and to add to poor growth performance. Kenya suffered from a regime shift towards political expediency, destroying the policy environment and the incentive structure for economic agents and leading to the poor growth performance and rising poverty in the 1980's and 1990's."[10]

Although there are, of course, numerous factors that have an impact on the development of the economy, the factual observation can be made that the reintroduction of a more pluralist political system in Kenya, at the very least, did *not* contribute to improved economic growth and poverty reduction. The Kenyan economy suffered in particular around the election years. Election years and their immediate aftermath produced the lowest growth figures. Growth in non-election years amounted, on average, to 3.9 percent, in post-election years 2.7 percent, and during election years 2.4 percent. 2007 constituted an exception, as Kenya benefitted from the macroeconomc policies initiated in the years before. Of the last six elections (2013 not included), three were followed by periods of relatively low growth, especially in 2008, when post-election violence abruptly ended a period of steady growth.

The first term of President Kibaki (2003-2007) showed a clear recovery of the economy. Economic growth increased from 3.7 percent in 2003 to 7 percent in 2007. GDP per capita was growing again. The government maintained macroeconomic stability, reduced the budget deficit, raised tax returns, and improved the investment climate. New foreign investments and increased aid flows followed. This trend continued during the second term of Kibaki.[11] However, the Kenyan government was far less successful in reducing poverty.

Kenya is ranked sixth (of 21 African countries) on the *African transformation index* of the African Center for Economic Transformation (ACET). The relatively strong aspects of the Kenyan economy were the diversification of the economy, competitiveness, and technological innovation. However, industry and agriculture stalled. ACET identifies the following obstacles that delayed the transformation of the Kenyan economy: institutional weaknesses, poor

10 F. Mwega and N. Ndung'u, "Explaining African economic growth performance: the case of Kenya," in J. W. Gunning, B. Ndulu, S. O'Connell, and J. Azam (eds.), *The political economy of economic growth in Africa, 1960-2000* (New York, 2008), 326.

11 Not only Kenya but also many African countries witnessed economic growth during this period due to better prices for their exports on the world market.

infrastructure, lack of finance, and low productivity in the public as well as the private sector.

2.4 The response of the political elite

Political cohesion

Right to this day, Kenyan politicians employ tactics based on ethnic calculations and clientelism in their struggle for power. Principles and programmatic choices are less relevant. The leader as an individual, along with ethnicity, constitute the main points of reference. Politics are interpreted as a winner takes all, zero sum ethnic game: "The national cake is the prize. Various ethnic groups argue openly it is their turn to eat."[12] Political parties are primarily personal vehicles for ambitious politicians. In a number of cases parties only consist of a name. During election time Kenyan politicians use these parties to be able to participate in the elections. Political parties come and go. Politicians switch parties with great ease and sometimes form the most surprising alliances.

The political career of former Prime Minister Raila Odinga might be a case in point. He was put under house arrest in 1982 for a period of seven months under suspicion of complicity in the failed coup against President Moi. During the following years, he was arrested several times and detained. In 1992, he joined the opposition movement FORD led by his father Oginga Odinga. He followed his father and joined FORD-Kenya, when FORD split into two parties. After the death of his father, he lost the fight for the political leadership of FORD-Kenya. Subsequently he joined another party, *National Democratic Party* (NDP), and took over the leadership. After the elections in 1997, Odinga had his party merge with KANU, and he became minister in the government of Daniel arap Moi, the man who had detained him so many times. When in the run-up to the elections of 2002 Uhuru Kenyatta and not Odinga emerged as the successor of Moi, he left KANU again and joined another party, the *Liberal Democratic Party* (LDP). This party in turn became a part of the *National Rainbow Coalition* under the leadership of Mwai Kibaki, beating KANU convincingly in the 2002 elections.

This collaboration was also short-lived. Soon major disagreements arose within the coalition about the distribution of governmental and other im-

12 S. Mueller, "The political economy of Kenya's crisis," *Journal of Eastern African Studies*, 2:2 (2008), 200.

portant positions. Together with other parties, Odinga inflicted a heavy defeat on the President during the referendum in 2005 on a new constitution. For obvious reasons, the LDP was expelled from the government. In 2006, Odinga established the *Orange Democratic Movement*, which participated in the 2007 elections and eventually became a member of the government of national unity after the political crisis of 2007/8. After the elections in 2013, he became the opposition leader again.



Illustration 2.6
Raila Odinga

The lack of unity among the opposition was one of the main features of the 1992 and 1997 elections. During the elections of 2002, the opposition was for once united (afterwards that changed rapidly), while the ruling coalition was very much divided. In the 2007 elections, two clearly defined ethnic power blocks competed for political power. The negative consequences of a political system characterized by *competitive clientelism* kicked in this time after the elections. Because of the special circumstances, under which the 2013 elections were held, violence could be largely avoided.

The *Afrobarometer* reports are an important source for gaining an insight into the opinions of ordinary Kenyans (and not the elites) about their political system.[13] Its first Kenya report took a closer look at the political mood just after the overwhelming victory by the opposition in 2002. People felt euphoric, which was clearly reflected in the positive assessment by a majority

13 See: www.afrobarometer.org

of Kenyans of the situation in their country, the economy, the government, and the political system. Eighty percent of those who were interviewed were of the opinion that democracy was the only acceptable political system, 89 percent considered elections as the best way to elect a government, and 74 percent were in favor of a multiparty system. According to the *Afrobarometer*, the Kenyan population took a more positive view than in most other African countries. Undoubtedly the aforesaid euphoria had something to do with this. Similar research was carried out two and a half years later, which showed a more mixed picture. While support for a multiparty democracy as such remained high (80 percent), the quality was assessed more critically. In 2005, only 53 percent considered Kenya to be a real democracy, while in 2003 this view was still held by 79 percent of the population. The benefits that Kenyans expect from a democratic system are very recognizable: a more equal distribution of chances and resources, honest and competent leaders, less corruption, a stronger economy, and better security. Noteworthy is the existing discrepancy between the importance that people attach to a pluralist political system and the considerations on which they base the way they cast their vote: ethnicity and tangible reciprocity.

Ethnic and regional dimensions

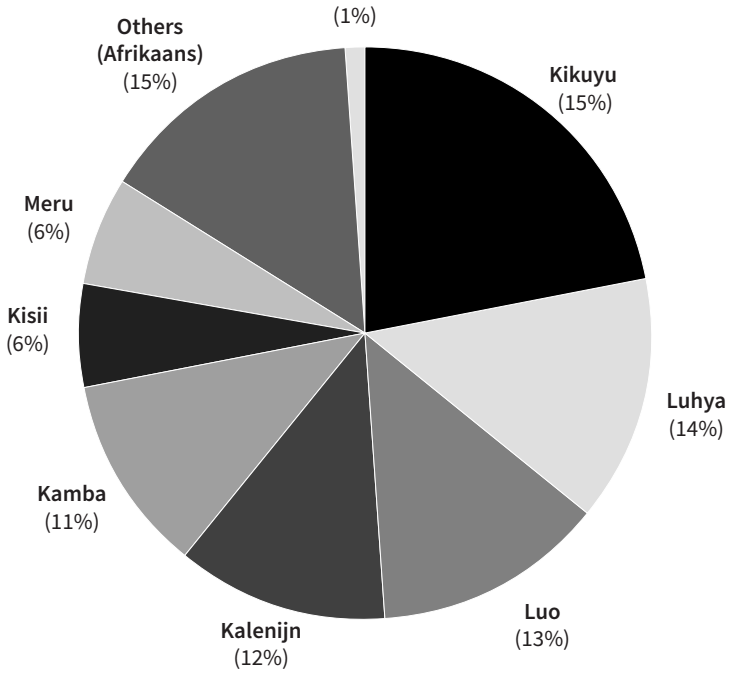


Figure 2.1
Ethnic groups Kenya

In all the elections cited, ethnicity was a key factor. Ethnic identity took definite shape during the colonial period. The policies of the colonial authorities vis-à-vis the different ethnic groups in Kenya saw to it that they became more clearly defined than before. After the reintroduction of a multiparty system, the KANU leadership made the choice of using ethnically motivated violence to mobilize their supporters and intimidate political opponents in order to remain in power. The ethnic conflicts that *preceded* the elections in 1992 and 1997 gave new momentum to the use of ethnic violence for political purposes. This development contributed greatly to the violence that *followed* the elections of 2007, which brought Kenya to the brink of civil war. In a country of ethnic minorities, winning multiparty elections revolves around ethnic coalitions. On the one hand, efforts were undertaken to forge collaboration between ethnically related tribes (for example, Kikuyu, Meru, and Embu) or sub-groups (the term Kalenjin refers to a collection of a number of smaller, ethnically related groups). On the other, multi-ethnic coalitions were created around one or more of the major ethnic groups (Kikuyu, Luo, and Luhya). Kenyatta, Moi, and Kibaki all came to power on the basis of such a coalition.

In day-to-day-reality, ethnicity constitutes a frame of reference that offers possibilities as well as imposes limitations, and influences to a large extent the social and political perceptions of Kenyans (like elsewhere in Africa): "Kenyans talk or think about tribalism as a regular experience of their everyday life, in its many enabling capacities, its incapacitating impediments on the hopes of individuals and its blocking of opportunities. They use tribalism as a practical vocabulary of politics and social movements. Thus tribalism is a term of everyday acknowledgement, of contextual practices and political fact. In the context of a sharply conflicted and volatile political arena it has often and recurrently become a dependable focus for the articulation of legitimate interests."[14]

As the events in Kenya showed, ethnic distinctions became a major problem when leaders misused these in order to secure their economic and political interests. Elections were often the trigger. An election victory meant access to (political) power and resources. Why did the Kenyan voter lend himself so easily for this type of politics? It appears that at least three interrelated considerations played an import part. First, the expectation that the political leader in question would transfer a part of the resources, which would

14 E. Atieno Odhiambo, "Hegemonic Enterprises & instrumentalities of survival: ethnicity and democracy in Kenya," in B. Berman, D. Eyoh, and W. Kymlika (eds.), *Ethnicity & democracy in Africa*, 172.

become available in case of an election victory, to his native area and in partular to his own ethnic group: in other words, political support along ethnic lines as a rational decision by the voter. Second, ethnic politics appealed to historical perceptions about which ethnic groups benefitted more than others from political patronage and the hope that, by supporting their own ethnic candidate, this would be corrected. The Kalenjin *versus* the Kikuyu are a case in point. A third consideration was the uncertainty about the intentions of other ethnic groups. Support for his or her own ethnic candidate offered protection: in other words, *identity voting* as a strategy to prevent other ethnic groups from seizing power at their expense. Kenyans did not consider themselves ethnically biased but feared that others were, and would organize themselves along ethnic lines. As a counterbalance and defensive measure, they voted along ethnic lines as well.

During election time, ethnicity might have been the most important but of course not the only point of reference. In the elections of 2007, for example, other considerations like socioeconomic hardship, corruption, etc., also played a part in making up one's mind about who to vote for. Yet, when after the elections the situation got completely out of hand, the ethnic ranks closed. When insecure and threatened, other points of reference like religion or station in life were pushed aside. In 2013, the ICC indictments resulted in a political realignment but still along ethnic lines.

Political instrumentalisation of violence

Violence along ethnic lines for political purposes characterized the multiparty elections in 1992, 1997, and 2007. In particular, the 1992 elections were a classic example of political *instrumentalization of disorder*. Violence was used on a large scale to influence the outcome of the elections. Different tactics were applied: physical intimidation of the political opposition but more seriously, the violent mass expulsion of people from especially the Rift Valley, suspected of siding with the opposition in order to turn the province into a KANU zone. Something similar happened on a smaller scale in 1997. The same problem surfaced after the elections in 2007 but in a much more chaotic manner. The political violence in 1992 and 1997 was primarily of a "preventive" nature: to prevent the opposition from winning the elections. In 2007, violence was used to "correct" the alleged manipulated and falsified election results, followed by the use of force to stop this.

The use of violence during an election period often lasted a limited period of time and was carried out to a certain extent in a "controlled" way, in case of a one-sided balance of power between the political opposition and the ruling

coalition, in favor of the latter. The purpose of violence and intimidation was to secure the election victory. When the ruling coalition and the excluded political factions were more or less equal in strength, as was the case during the 2007 elections, the situation could get easily out of hand with dire consequences for the population and the stability of the country.

Apart from weakened government institutions and the ethnic and clientelist character of most political parties, the loss of the monopoly on the use of force by the state constituted an important reason for the violent events after the controversial result of the 2007 elections. Within this context the following sources of "private" violence, originating from the Moi regime, can be distinguished: politically connected vigilantes, youth militias involved in ethnic cleansing, youth gangs in the slums of Nairobi and other cities (the Mungiki being the most notorious), and the enormous increase in "regular" crime.[15] Given the unique character of the ethnic political coalition between Kikuyu and Kalenjin the 2013 elections were largely peaceful.

Political corruption

Corruption to enrich oneself or to achieve certain political objectives was and is not unusual in Kenya. Prior to the reintroduction of a multiparty system the level of large-scale corruption increased dramatically. Quite a number of prominent Moi supporters shifted into the highest gear – before it might be too late – to become (even more) rich as fast as possible. The Kenya Commercial Bank (KCB) became known as the *Kalenjin Cash Box* for a reason. Land grabbing was no longer an exception but common practice. Parastatals were a favorite target. In addition, in order to meet the challenges of multiparty politics, new sources of revenue had to be mobilized. Campaigning does not come cheap in Kenya. Given the clientelist nature of Kenyan politics winning elections requires most of the time considerable financial resources. The introduction of a multiparty system resulted in an intensified competition for votes. The demand for funds for this purpose increased accordingly. It led to mega-corruption scandals like the *Goldenberg* case in the early 1990s and the *Anglo Leasing* scandal ten years later. Both cases provide a rather sobering insight in how election campaigns were financed.

Essentially the *Goldenberg* case came down to generating export subsidies for fictitious gold and diamond transactions. The alleged export of these pre-

15 In the period prior to the 2002 elections, the Mungiki became initially known as a group of Kikuyu thugs, who were used to disrupting meetings of KANU members who opposed the candidature of Uhuru Kenyatta.

cious metals by Goldenberg International, the directors being former jeweller Kamlesh Pattni and former director of the Directorate of Security Intelligence James Kanyotu, yielded a profit of hundreds of millions of dollars, paid by the Central Bank of Kenya by way of compensation for the export of non-existing gold and diamonds to fictitious companies in Dubai and Switzerland. All compensation payments were transferred to Goldenberg, the only company allowed to carry out these transactions. So-called political banks connected to important KANU politicians were responsible for "processing" this money. A large part of these funds was used to finance the 1992 KANU election campaign. Moreover, it led to a massive expansion of the money supply and serious macroeconomic instability. Witnesses heard by a commission of inquiry established by President Kibaki, in 2003, stated that the Central Bank made compensation payments to an amount of around 850 million US dollars. In spite of a number of court cases, no one was convicted. Although being the largest corruption scandal in Kenyan history, no one went to jail.

Political corruption was not the privilege of just the Moi regime. Something similar (albeit on a smaller scale) took place prior to the elections in 2007: the *Anglo Leasing* scandal. This time, it concerned awarding government contracts to a ghost company that was supposed to make large purchases on behalf of a number of security-related projects like equipment for forensic laboratories, the manufacture of passports, the renovation of naval vessels, and information and surveillance systems for the Kenyan police. A fictitious company, Anglo Leasing & Financing, was used to receive the allocated funds and to channel the money to a third party. In short, it amounted to payments by the government, without any services rendered in return, while the security aspects of these transactions could be used as an excuse for not putting it out to tender. The funds generated in this manner were supposed to fund the election campaign of President Kibaki. John Githongo, Permanent Secretary in the Office of the President at the time and known as the "anti-corruption tsar" of the Kibaki government, uncovered the scandal. He was then afraid for his life and had to temporarily flee abroad. Those directly involved were forced to resign. But that was all.

The use of financial incentives during election time is widespread in Kenya. An *Afrobarometer* report, published in 2009, gives an idea why voters are susceptible to these practices. Voters approached in this manner went out to vote in bigger numbers than those who were not, by 15 percent, and voted predominantly for the politician on whose behalf they were approached. For obvious reasons lower-educated voters gave in to the temptation more easily.

The report provides two types of explanations: on the one hand, the belief in the capacity of the politician or party to monitor and punish if the voter in question voted for someone else, while, on the other, the increased credibility of the politician involved in this practice. Voters, who were encouraged in this manner, gave more credence to the election promises made than those who were not. In other words, the readiness to "buy" votes indicated the willingness of politicians to be generous to supporters at a later stage. A clearer illustration of the clientelist nature of Kenyan politics is hardly possible.

Majimbo

In a situation as described above, mainstream political concepts could take on a different and specific meaning. *Majimbo* (regionalism or federalism) might serve as a good example of this. The use and misuse of this concept by especially Kalenjin politicians constituted an inextricable part of the political jousting and ethnic violence during the 1992, 1997, and 2007 election campaigns, especially in the Rift Valley. *Majimbo* was introduced for the first time during the negotiations about independence as the basis for a decentralized federal political system, which would protect the autonomy of the smaller ethnic groups. KADU (of which Moi was one of the leaders), comprised of a number of smaller ethnic groups, and loyal to and supported by the colonial authorities, strongly advocated *majimbo*. On the other hand, KANU, primarily a collaboration between Kikuyu and Luo, committed itself to a nationalist and anti-colonialist agenda.

KANU won the 1963 elections (the run-up to independence) by a big majority. Deprived of political power and resources, KADU made the best out of a bad situation by joining KANU after independence. *Majimbo* was no longer on the table. However, the notion returned in full force in the early 1990s, this time as a defensive response by KANU to the increasing pressure on the government to reestablish political freedoms. A small group of Kalenjin MPs and ministers, all of them allies of the president, took the lead. The violence during the 1992 and 1997 election campaigns was closely linked to the call for *majimbo*. Admittedly, President Moi never publicly supported the *majimbo* campaign but did not take any action either to stop the violent actions in the name of *majimbo* initiated by members of his government and even by his own President's Office.

Majimbo played an important role during the 2007 election campaign and featured prominently on the agenda of the main opposition party ODM. Although its leader, Raila Odinga never advocated ethnic cleansing, during the campaign he remained vague about what, according to ODM, the term ex-

actly implied. The same went for his political allies in the Rift Valley and their leader William Ruto. Their cooperation in the past, with staunch and militant *majimboists*, easily led to the assumption that ODM also supported a rather radical interpretation of the *majimbo* agenda. That is what happened. Many considered the support of Odinga for *majimbo* as an endorsement to expel "foreigners" from the Rift Valley.

The content of *majimbo* had changed. Initially, during the run-up to independence, it meant the pursuit of a federal political system, since the 1990s *majimbo* implied more control over land in the Rift Valley by and more political power for the Kalenjin at the expense primarily of the Kikuyu. *Majimbo* defined in this way held out the prospect of concrete advantages to Moi's Kalenjin supporters, and meant a real threat to the economic interests and physical safety of the Kikuyu living in the Rift Valley, who were considered opponents to the Moi regime. Two types of grievances were at the bottom of these sentiments, cultivated and manipulated by local politicians: a general feeling among Kalenjin that, in spite of a tenure of twenty years by their "own" president, they had benefitted less from the spoils of power than the Kikuyu.

More important, however, was the notion among the Kalenjin that they were victims of a historical injustice: The Kalenjin, the original inhabitants of the Rift valley, were supposed to have suffered in particular during colonial times. This notion was confirmed in the Akiwumi report, named after the chairman of the commission that was tasked by the government in 2002 to investigate the ethnic clashes in the 1990s. According to the report, *majimbo* was interpreted in the Rift Valley not so much as federalism or devolution but as an arrangement whereby each ethnic community would have to return to the region of their "ancestors" voluntarily or, if need be, by force.

Rift Valley

Apart from ethnic preoccupations and *majimbo* considerations, the discontent among Kalenjin over the allocation of land in the past constituted a third factor that lent itself to inciting violence for political purposes. Every once in a while these three factors became a deadly combination in the Rift Valley. This province was hit hardest by political violence and was the center of election violence in 1992, 1997, and 2007/8. The Rift Valley was of particular concern to national politics as it was a multi-ethnic region, the most populous province, and had the biggest number of constituencies. Moreover, the White Highlands were part of the province. The manner in which, before and after independence, this fertile land was dealt with played an import role in the election violence.



Illustration 2.7
Ethnic violence in the Rift Valley

Partly in response to the Mau Mau rebellion (primarily a Kikuyu affair), the colonial authorities formulated a policy partly geared towards a partial re-Africanization of these highlands. Containment of the discontent among Kikuyu peasants and the threat this posed to the European immigrants was one of the main reasons for this policy. On a modest scale, settlement schemes were identified to satisfy to some extent the need for land among the Kikuyu. This approach was continued on a larger scale after independence. The government introduced new settlement and land-purchasing schemes. Kikuyu, more than other ethnic groups, profited. At the same time, the Kalenjin believed they were entitled to this land, which they considered theirs having settled there long before colonial times. Initially this created hardly any problems. Inclusion of KADU into the government limited the danger of violent ethnic competition for land. Different elite factions benefitted from the land purchase programs. Rich Kikuyu as well as Kalenjin acquired large parcels of land. In addition, the availability of these highlands offered the opportunity to political *Big Men* to satisfy the need for land by their own ethnic supporters and consolidate their clientelist relationship.

After the reintroduction of a multiparty system in 1992 a number of local Kalenjin politicians allied to the president used the perceived unfair distribution of land in the Rift Valley in favor of the Kikuyu as an excuse to chase the political opposition out of the province. As a matter of fact, quite a number

of politically well-connected Kalenjin politicians had themselves acquired huge stretches of farmland after independence. Yet, they mobilized their poor landless supporters against the Kikuyu living in the Rift Valley, claiming that during the Kenyatta regime the Kikuyu were given preferential treatment when it came to the distribution of land at the expense of the Kalenjin. That land had to be taken away again from the Kikuyu, who were considered outsiders in a region that belonged to the Kalenjin. As was to be expected, Kikuyu small holders especially fell victim to the ethnic cleansing during the election campaigns of 1992, 1997, and 2007.

2.5 The role of the international community

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the Paris Club, which most of the major donors belonged to, stepped up the pressure on the Moi regime by withholding budget support and making resumption contingent on the implementation of political reforms. Earlier, donors had already reduced their support to the country because of the high levels of corruption, insufficient financial transparency, and the lack of "good governance" in general. The Netherlands, for example, decided to stop the payment of substantial sums of budget support, which had been provided to Kenya for a number of years, and to use these funds to provide assistance to the victims of the ethnic clashes prior to the elections in 1992, as well as food aid to drought stricken areas in Kenya.[16] In fact, the introduction of multiparty democracy became a prerequisite for the resumption of financial aid to the government.

At same time, the donor countries wanted to keep Kenya from slipping into political and economic instability. The consequence was a rather ambivalent attitude towards the election process in 1992. Initially in the run-up to the elections, they increased the pressure on the Moi government to take the necessary measures to guarantee free-and-fair elections, and a level playing field for the opposition. Although that was hardly the case during the election campaign in 1992, the international donor community still accepted the outcome of the elections and resumed their financial support. Something similar happened in 1997.

In 2007/8, the international donor community was confronted once more by the tension between its call for free-and-fair elections, and the need for

16 During that period it was an important part of my responsiblities while working at the Netherlands Embassy in Nairobi.

peace and stability. By promoting a power-sharing agreement between the warring parties, priority was given to the second consideration. The build-up to the 2013 elections was dominated by the ICC indictments against presidential candidate Kenyatta and his running mate Ruto. On the one hand, Western donor countries expressed their support for the ICC and appealed to the Kenyan authorities to cooperate wholeheartedly with the ICC. On the other, this stance was used as evidence by the *Jubilee Alliance* that the West was intervening in the internal affairs of a sovereign country. The position of the Western donor countries became an important subject for debate during the election campaign. As a consequence, the international donor community exercised restraint and confined itself to avoiding "non-essential" contacts, especially in the case of Kenyatta and Ruto. No doubt, the strategic role Kenya played in military operations in Somalia and the fight against terrorism contributed to this reticence.

2.6 Conclusions

Whereas the government in Kenya during the heyday of Kenyatta could be considered as *a potential developmental coalition*, this was no longer the case during his final days in power and in particular during the Moi regime. Initially the Moi regime could be characterized as a *vulnerable authoritarian coalition*. However, after the reintroduction of political pluralism, competition among the political elites for power intensified with all this entailed.[17] The centrifugal forces in Kenyan politics added greatly to a further weakening of the Kenyan state. As a consequence of the gradual exclusion of parts of the elite, the powerbase of the government narrowed to such an extent that President Moi was forced to accept a multiparty system. More fragmentation among the political elite followed. After the reintroduction of pluralist politics, the political balance of power definitely fell into the category of *competitive clientelism.* Step by step, the decline of KANU as the dominant political force in Kenya became apparent. Initially KANU managed to remain in power in 1992 and 1997 thanks to the use of force, intimidation, and the divisions within the political opposition.

In the 1990s, the international donor community put the Moi government under pressure to introduce multiparty politics, and allow for free-and-fair elections. Although the elections were far from free and fair, the outcome was accepted and financial aid was resumed for fear of political and economic instability. The economic slowdown of the country, which had already started

17 See also typology of Khan in the introductory chapter.

before the reintroduction of political pluralism, continued. The intensified struggle for political power and increasing ethnic tensions resulted in rather uneven economic development. Periods of economic growth alternated with those overshadowed by political unrest, inadequate economic policies, and economic stagnation. Obviously such a context was not very conducive to a structural transformation of the Kenyan economy. In particular, election years were bad for (economic) business.

After the change in political system, the political settlement also remained under the strong influence of a combination of patronage practices, ethnic considerations, and the use of violence for political purposes. Political parties scarcely mattered. They were conduits, often temporary, for the ambitions of ethnic and regional power brokers. In the face of the ICC indictments, a rearrangement of ethnic coalitions followed and softened the ethnic tensions in trouble spots during previous elections, like the Rift Valley. Ethnicity remained an important organizing principle in Kenyan politics. Moreover, the introduction of multiparty politics resulted in an intensified competition for votes. The need for funds increased accordingly.

Within this context political liberalization posed a serious risk. The convergence of elite fragmentation, the loss of the monopoly on the use of force by the state along with political liberalization created a highly inflammable mixture. The elections in 1992, 1997, and 2007 sparked off this mixture. The electoral process in 2002 and 2013 proceeded peacefully, partly due to the implosion of KANU, and the unity among the political opposition in 2002 and the unique ethnic coalition in 2013. Ironically the ICC indictments against the alleged main instigators of the political violence in 2008 saw to it that these political opponents were forced to cooperate and, in doing so, laid the foundation for a generally peaceful election process in 2013.

3 Uganda



3.1 What preceded

After gaining independence in 1962, Uganda went through a very turbulent and violent period. Successive governments were unable or unwilling to bridge the existing ethnic, regional, and religious divisions in Ugandan society. As a matter of fact, they intensified in the first twenty years after independence. A number of these divisions originated in colonial times. The manner in which the British colonial authorities exercised their authority influenced to a large extent inter-ethnic relations, ethnic perceptions, and the nature of the political process after independence. First, there was the divi-

sive issue of the relationship between the Buganda kingdom and other parts of the country. British colonial power was first established in Buganda and gradually extended to the whole country. The Baganda constituted the biggest group in Uganda (17 percent of the population). In the eyes of the British authorities, the Baganda were superior to other ethnic groups and therefore were given preferential treatment.

As Christianity and corresponding missionary activities were first introduced in Buganda, the Baganda were more educated than other groups. The colonial authorities deployed Baganda to administer other regions in a manner that was customary in Buganda. Luganda, the Buganda language, became the official language in terms of administration, education, and religion. Buganda not only enjoyed greater autonomy than other kingdoms and regions but was also, as the center of colonial power, more prosperous. This inequality created a sense of discrimination, distrust and resentment among other ethnic groups towards the Buganda kingdom and the Baganda in general.

The colonial administration also decided to divide the countries into four regions: central, north, east, and south, whereby each region was assigned a specific "task." For example, army recruitment was supposed to take place in particular in the north with unforeseen consequences after independence. To this day, the Ugandan population uses this regional division as a frame of reference. A third distinction highlighted by colonial interventions concerned the relations between religious groups. There were just as many Protestants as Catholics in Uganda. However, predominantly Protestant leaders had privileged access to political power: Before independence, they were closely linked to the colonial establishment and afterwards to the *Uganda People's Congress* (UPC) of Uganda's first Prime Minister Milton Obote.

Uganda gained independence in 1962 against a background of growing internal divisions. The first government after independence was a "coalition of convenience" between the UPC, the party of the protestant elite, and the *Kabaka Yekka*, the party that represented the interests of the Buganda kingdom. The leader of the UPC, Milton Obote, became the first prime minister of independent Uganda, with the king of Buganda, Mutesa, the first president (basically a ceremonial position). An important objective of this coalition was to exclude the *Catholic Democratic Party* (DP) from power. The position of Buganda within the overall governmental structure of Uganda developed rapidly, however, into a major cause of friction. The first constitution of the country guaranteed the Buganda kingdom autonomy, with more rights and privileges than other parts of the country. The *kabaka* (king) and

the political leaders of Buganda defended as much as possible the special status of the kingdom, while Obote and the leaders of other ethnic groups, especially from the north, endeavoured to undo the privileged position of Buganda. Obote's aggressive approach towards Buganda was an effort to break the dominance of Buganda in Ugandan society. The referendum on the *Lost Counties* heightened the tensions further between the kingdom and the national government. The *Lost Counties* were an area that was originally part of another kingdom, Bunyoro. The colonial authorities had transferred the area to the Buganda kingdom. The result of the referendum was a clear majority in favor of rejoining Bunyoro. However, the Buganda authorities refused to accept this outcome and requested the national government to withdraw from Buganda. In response, Obote ordered the army to occupy the royal palace. The first intervention of the army in national politics was a fact. Obote went on to abolish the Buganda kingdom and other monarchies, appointed himself as president with far-reaching powers, and instructed parliament, under the supervision of the army, to ratify a new constitution, which confirmed his actions. Uganda became a one-party state. But the wish for autonomy by an important part of the Buganda political elite remained a constant in Ugandan politics.

After the exclusion of the Baganda from political power, Obote consolidated his own power by putting representatives of his own ethnic group, the Langi, and of other related ethnic groups like the Acholi, in important political positions. The army, which had become a powerful player, was consulted about every important political decision. Although most key positions within the armed forces were already held by northerners, Obote further strengthened the dominance of his own specific ethnic group at the expense of other groups from the north. This process of building up ethnic factions within the army, on the one hand, and the exclusion from power of a substantial part of the political elite outside and inside the UPC, on the other, created the conditions for the military coup in 1971 by Idi Amin, a protégé of the president. Under his military responsibility, the army invaded Buganda in 1966.



Illustration 3.1
Milton Obote

Uganda became one of the most brutal dictatorships in Africa. Obote jailed his opponents without trial; during the rule of Amin (1971-1978), they were murdered. Political elites became even more fragmented. New divisions arose, this time between ethnic groups from the north. Obote's allies in the army were eliminated without mercy and replaced by members of Amin's own tribe, the Kakwa (from the West Nile region) and other related ethnic groups. The Baganda were in for even harsher treatment than during Obote's government. The economy collapsed as a consequence of administrative ignorance, unrelenting corruption, and the forced departure of the Asian community.

After he had invaded Tanzanian territory, Amin was ousted with the assistance of Tanzanian troops in 1978 and had to flee the country. The post-Amin coalition did not last long. The divisions and polarization among the Ugandan political elites were as big as in the past. After the hardly free-and-fair 1980 elections, Obote became president of Uganda for the second time. The fragmentation of the political elites among ethnic and regional lines continued. Once again population groups from the north dominated the government and the army. The Baganda were still excluded from power. The result was a new civil war. A number of rebel groups took up arms against the Obote regime, of which the *National Resistance Army* (NRA) under the leadership of Yoweri Museveni rapidly posed the biggest threat to the Obote regime. Responding to the strong anti-Obote sentiments and indignation about the

behavior of the army, Museveni decided to make the Buganda countryside the base for his guerilla. The inability of the Obote regime to deal with the rebellion increased the pressure on the army and resulted in a further fragmentation of the army leadership along ethnic lines. Acholi officers complained that Obote's own ethnic group, the Langi, was given privileged treatment and benefitted more than other groups from all kind of privileges and promotions, while the fighting against the guerillas of Museveni was left to them.

The new ethnic infighting culminated in 1985 in a new military coup by frustrated Acholi officers led by Tito and Bazilio Okello. In the following year the NRA of Museveni defeated the military junta. Until 1986 the battle for political power between competing groups of an already highly fragmented elite was primarily pursued by force of arms. The Ugandan political scientist Sabiti Makara summarizes as follows: "Since 1966 when former President Obote used the gun to overthrow Mutesa II (the then king of Buganda and the first president of Uganda) the gun has become a permanent feature in changing political leadership in the country. In 1971 Amin used the gun in a coup to overthrow Obote and declare himself President; and he was also chased by a combined military force of Ugandan exiles and Tanzanian Peoples Defence Forces in 1979. Between 1981 and 1986, the National Resistance Movement/Army guerillas used violent means to dislodge Obote II and Okello regimes and subsequently came to power in January 1986."[18]



Illustration 3.2
NRA leader Yoweri Museveni on his way to Kampala 1986

18 S. Makara, G. Tuhakebwa, and F. Byarugaba (eds.), *Voting for democracy in Uganda: issues in recent elections* (Kampala, 2003), 1.

When Museveni's NRA marched into Kampala, much to the surprise of the population, the soldiers did not loot as happened in the years before. The NRA was a disciplined army. Museveni promised a fundamental break with the past. A general amnesty was promulgated and former rebels were integrated into the national army. To boost its legitimacy and support among the population across the country, the *National Resistance Movement* (the political arm of the NRA) formed a government of national unity, which included former political and military opponents. The new government restricted the activities of political parties and introduced a *no-party* or *Movement* system, which according to the NRM would do justice to the ethnic diversity of the country and in which the different political strands of political opinion would be represented. A system of decentralized and layered local government had been introduced during the guerilla war against Obote and was now extended to the whole country. Mindful of the *Movement* ideology, elections were held on the basis of individual merit.

The NRM restored peace and order in large parts of the country, maintained sound macroeconomic policies and free market forces were unleashed on the economy. It reduced the army in size, implemented civil service reforms, enhanced women's rights, and removed the taboos that surrounded HIV/AIDS. The possessions confiscated during Amin's rule were returned to the former Asian owners. In comparison to the previous regimes, the human rights situation improved considerably. The international donor community held Uganda up as a model to other African developing countries. Museveni was highly popular inside as well as outside the country. American President Clinton praised Museveni as one of the "new" leaders in Africa. He won the 1996 elections by a landslide. In 2001 it was not that easy. Former military companion and prominent NRM member Besigye presented himself as a rival candidate for the presidency and criticized heavily not only the NRM but also Museveni personally. He got nearly 30 percent of the votes.

Table 3.1
Results 1996 presidential elections in Uganda

Candidate	Number of Votes	% of Votes
Yoweri Kaguta Museveni	4,458,195	74.33%
Paul Kawanga Ssemogerere	1,416,140	23.61%
Muhammad Kibirige Mayanja	123,291	2.06%

Source: africanelections.tripod.com

Table 3.2
Results 2001 presidential elections in Uganda

Candidate (Party)	Number of Votes	% of Votes
Yoweri Kaguta Museveni	5,123,360	69.33%
Kizza Besigye	2,055,795	27.82%
Aggrey Awori	103,915	1.41%
Muhammad Kibirige Mayanja	73,790	1.00%
Francis Bwengye	22,751	0.31%
Karuhanga Chapaa	10,080	0.14%

Source: africanelections.tripod.com

Until 2003, the NRM promoted the *Movement* system, which did not prohibit political parties but imposed so many restrictions on them that they could barely function. The recent past of Uganda served as a justification. The NRM blamed political parties for the prevailng "sectarism" (meaning exclusion on the basis of religion, ethnicity, or region) and the subsequent chaos and violence during the previous regimes. Multiparty democracy was deemed inappropriate for Africa in general and Uganda in particular. This type of democracy was considered the cause and not a solution to the abovementioned problems. Open competition between political parties might be an important and useful part of the political process in the developed countries but not in Uganda. The *Movement* system was based on the assumption that an underdeveloped country like Uganda was not yet ready for such a political system, since the population would still vote along ethnic or religious lines, and not because of socioeconomic considerations or differences in political approach. For that reason the NRM opted for a "non-party" democracy.

The main purpose of this alternative to a Western liberal democracy was to foster inclusive politics and consensus instead of competition and confrontation. Elections therefore should be held on the basis of personal merit and not on membership of "divisive" political parties. The NRM did not develop the *Movement* concept much further. Because of the negative experience with political parties after independence, most Ugandans were willing to give this political system the benefit of the doubt.



Illustration 3.3
Presidential candidate Kizza Besigye (2001, 2006, 2011)

3.2 Elections

In 2001, the government organized a referendum on the reintroduction of a multiparty system in Uganda. During the campaign prior to the referendum three political positions could be distinguished. First of all, as could be expected, President Museveni and the NRM campaigned actively in favor of maintaining the *Movement* system. The traditional political parties like the UPC and DP boycotted the referendum on the grounds that the freedom of political parties is a fundamental political right and therefore should not be subject to a referendum. Third, a loose coalition of new and older, smaller parties did participate and campaigned for the restoration of a multiparty system.

Many voters interpreted the referendum as a vote against or for Museveni. He was highly respected by large parts of the rural population. It was not just Museveni who associated political pluralism and political parties with the instability and violence of the past. Especially in densely populated central Uganda, these memories were still fresh. There was a genuine fear that multiparty politics would revive this past. The *Luwero triangle,* the area that was the epicenter of the political violence during the Obote II government, was part of this region. Although there was some occasional political intimida-

tion and a relative low turnout, a clear majority voted in favor of continuation of the *Movement* system. Most "no" voters were to be found in the north of the country and in the urban areas.

Gradually a clear divide in Ugandan society manifested itself again. The president and the NRM could count on the support of the population living in the west, center, and east of the country. Those who lived in the northern part of the country, however, felt excluded and marginalized. They overwhelmingly identified with the political opposition. The country was (once again) politically divided between the north and the rest of the country, and in particular the west, which was the homebase of the president.

Uganda was more successful in keeping out the reintroduction of a multiparty system than neighboring countries. But after 2001, a chain of events was set in motion that eventually resulted in the introduction of a multiparty democracy. To the surprise of many, Museveni decided in 2003 to convene the National Executive Committee and the National Conference of the *Movement* to debate the return to a more pluralist political system. And that is what happened. In a new referendum, a clear majority voted this time for the introduction of a multiparty system. In addition, parliament agreed to a change in the constitution that removed the restriction of a maximum of two presidential terms and allowed Museveni to stand again as a candidate in the elections. The main candidates in the first elections after the abolition of the *Movement* system in 2006 were once more Museveni and former colonel Besigye on behalf of the *Forum for Democratic Change*. And once again Museveni prevailed, albeit less convincing than in the past: 59 percent voted for the president and 37 percent for Besigye. As could be expected, the west voted overwhelmingly for Museveni and the north in favor of the opposition. In other parts of the country, Museveni got a majority of the votes as well but by smaller margins than before.

Table 3.3
Results 2006 presidential elections in Uganda

Candidate (Party)	Number of Votes	% of Votes
Yoweri Kaguta Museveni (NRM)	4,109,449	59.26%
Kizza Besigye (FDC)	2,592,954	37.39%
John Ssebaana Kizito (DP)	109,583	1.58%
Abed Bwanika	65,874	0.95%
Miria Obote (UPC)	57,071	0.82%

Source: africanelections.tripod.com

The opposition thought they were in a good position to embarass Museveni in the 2011 elections. During each of the previous three presidential elections, Museveni received fewer votes. The friction between the president and the Buganda political elite had intensified. Moreover, the opposition believed to have very popular candidates at its disposal this time. Actually, the opposite was the case.

Museveni won the elections by a big majority, 68 percent, while his main political rival Besigye got 26 percent of the votes. He even succeeded in getting a majority of the votes in the north, a region that in the past had always voted for the opposition. For the first time Museveni managed to win in all four regions. According to the *Afrobarometer*, this remarkable victory can be attributed to the following factors: sustained economic growth, continued support for Museveni among the rural population in Buganda, satisfaction among the population in the north with the end to the violence by the *Lord's Resistance Army*, and the (organizational) weakness of the opposition candidates and parties.

Table 3.4
Results 2011 presidential elections in Uganda

Candidate (Party) [Coalition]	Number of Votes	% of Votes
Yoweri Kaguta Museveni (NRM)	5,428,369	68.38%
Kizza Besigye (FDC) [IPC]	2,064,963	26.01%
Norbert Mao (DP)	147,917	1.86%
Olara Otunnu (UPC)	125,059	1.58%
Beti Kamya (UFA)	52,782	0.66%
Abed Bwanika (PDP)	51,708	0.65%
Jaberi Bidandi Ssali (PPP)	34,688	0.44%
Samuel Lubega	32,726	0.41%

Source: africanelections.tripod.com



Illustration 3.4
2011 elections in Uganda

3.3 Short overview of economic developments

When Museveni and the NRM came to power in 1986, the Ugandan economy was in ruins as a result of twenty years of political mismanagement and civil war. Against this background, Uganda became a success story. The NRM government adopted a policy focused on macroeconomic stability and implemented a number of structural economic reforms. Uganda witnessed a period of unprecedented economic growth. Poverty was reduced considerably under Museveni. In the 1990s, economic growth amounted to 7 percent, on average, and, between 2001 and 2008, it even surpassed 8 percent.

From 2009 onwards, economic growth slowed down somewhat. Initially, post-conflict recovery and reconstruction drove economic growth. In the opinion of the World Bank, a modest transformation of the economy took place due to the service sector and the export of cash crops. This transformation did not continue. In particular, the agricultural sector lagged behind. As more than two-thirds of the Ugandan population was still engaged in agriculture, the development of the economy as a whole remained closely linked to the transformation of agriculture. Low productivity, underdeveloped markets, and limited private and public investment still characterized this sector.

Merely 50 percent of the agricultural production in the country was marketed in 2010.



Illustration 3.5
Transport in Kampala

Partition of the country into more and more districts, and the establishment, as a by-product of the privatization effort, of a great number of semi-autonomous authorities resulted intentionally or not in institutional fragmentation that hampered effective government policies. Apart from the changing character of the ruling coalition, the related patronage costs and institutional proliferation might have been the reason that the NRM was capable admittedly of maintaining macroeconomic stability and boosting economic growth but unable to bring about structural transformation.

Uganda is ranked fifth on the ACET *African transformation index*, thanks to sustained economic growth, technological innovations, and relative high productivity in the industrial sector (which is questioned by ACET). In spite of impressive economic growth, low productivity was still an important feature of the economy. In as far there was a change in economic structure, this involved a relative decline in agriculture, a sector characterized by low productivity, in favor of the service sector, still dominated, however, by small companies and low productivity as well.

3.4 Response of the political elite

Political cohesion

Since the arrival in power of the NRM in 1986, its efforts to consolidate power can be divided roughly into two phases. During the first ten years, the NRM opted for a relatively inclusive and conciliatory approach. The NRM tried as much as possible to accommodate the representatives of the various political forces, provide space for different political opinions, and allow for public debate on important political issues. Such a policy was consistent with the *Movement* philosophy. It offered the NRM the opportunity, in tandem with the extension of the NRM version of local government to the whole country, to commit other parts of Uganda than the west and Buganda to the government and achieve political legitimacy in the whole country. Part of this "inclusive" approach was the restoration of several monarchies, in particular the Buganda kingdom, on the condition that the "monarchs" agreed to be cultural and not political leaders.

In the build-up to the referendum on the reintroduction of a multiparty system and the elections in 2001, the policy changed. Inclusivity was considered less important than in the past. The tolerance of dissident opinions within the NRM clearly waned. The most contentious issue concerned the continuation of the *Movement* system. Gradually advocates of a multiparty system were removed from government and other key positions.

Once the decision was taken to abandon the *Movement* system after all in favor of a multiparty system, the NRM strategy focused on minimizing the risk of losing power in a number of ways. The NRM saw to it that the restriction of a maximum of two presidential terms was removed from the constitution in order to allow Museveni, as the most popular NRM politician, to run again for president. The president and his allies feared that the NRM would run the risk of losing the 2006 elections if Museveni were no longer able to be its presidential candidate.



Illustration 3.6
Yoweri Museveni

Since the *Movement* system remained in force until the elections in 2006, the NRM benefitted from continued financial support by the government. The NRM registered as a political party before other political parties were allowed to do the same and gratefully exploited the presence of the existing *Movement* structure in the country. In the run-up to the elections, the NRM made full use of its government status, changed the election rules and regulations to its advantage, and then, during the actual campaign, used its dominant position to prevent a level playing field. Criticism of the degeneration of the *Movement* into an one-party state, the corruption, the military strategy against the LRA in the north, and the lack of democracy within the NRM itself first led to the departure of Besigye and his supporters. The tacit *quid pro quo,* by which a part of the NRM seemed to link a restoration of political pluralism to a removal of the limitation of the maximum number of presidential terms, resulted in the exodus and marginalization of a number of other important NRM leaders in the government, army, and intelligence services.

The announcement by Museveni after the 2001 elections that the reintroduction of a multiparty system would be up for discussion again came as a surprise to the outside world. The National Executive Committee of the NRM gave four reasons why this time the introduction of a more pluralist political system should be considered positively. First of all, the transformation of the *Movement* into a political party would make it possible to get rid of those supposedly disloyal to the NRM. Second, the supporters of a multiparty system would no longer be able to argue that the NRM was undemocratic.

Moreover, it would improve the relationship with donor countries. Finally, Uganda could no longer afford to go against the global trend, which clearly pointed in the direction of political pluralism.

The reason for this fundamental policy change was not so much dictated by demands from Ugandan society for more political freedom or from external pressure. Donor countries were impressed by the achievements of the NRM government and of Museveni as president: political stability, economic reforms, improvement of human rights, etc.[19] It appears that this remarkable policy change had more to do with an effort to secure the dominant position of the NRM and of Museveni in Ugandan politics in the long run. The assessment was made that a multiparty system in the long term would give the NRM a stronger position to remain in power than continuation of the *Movement* system. The relatively strong performance by former NRM bigshot Besigye and the internal conflicts prior and after the 2001 elections prompted serious reflection among the NRM leadership on the approach to follow. The fact that many of Museveni's most important opponents came from the army must have unsettled the NRM leadership. The increasing disagreements within the NRM as to which political direction to take tipped the balance towards a multiparty system. It would provide an opportunity for the *Movement* to change into a party completely loyal to Museveni. Being a regular political party, the NRM would no longer have to accommmodate dissidents, as was the case under the *Movement* system. The NRM would be able to boost its internal cohesion and effectiveness.

The *Movement* recipe appeared to be past its sell-by-date. Within the NRM the following groups could be distinguished: the army, the *Historicals*, and the younger generation of NRM politicians. Strong ties existed between the Ugandan army (to a large extent a continuation of the *National Resistance Army*) and the NRM, and Museveni personally. Many important political questions were first discussed within a small tight-knit group consisting of Museveni and the military leadership, popularly known as the *Movement Political High Command.* The announcement in 2001 that retired colonel Besigye, a former companion of Museveni, would run for president, demonstrated that there was political disagreement within the army. The *Historicals*, a clearly defined group of NRM founder members, constituted another important group within the NRM. Several members were increasingly critical of the dominant position of Museveni and the small circle around him, and

19 This was my experience while working at the Netherlands Embassy in Kampala from 1996 to 2001.

demanded more political diversity. Third, there were the so-called Young Parliamentarians: A group of relatively young NRM Members of Parliament, which was distinct from the NRM veterans but also opposed the growing power of the Executive.

The NRM regime suffered from internal divisions as to the future political direction and the concentration of power within the NRM, and not so much from political threats coming from the outside. The NRM consolidated, at a price, its power by getting rid of the opposition within the organization itself.

Ethnic and regional dimensions

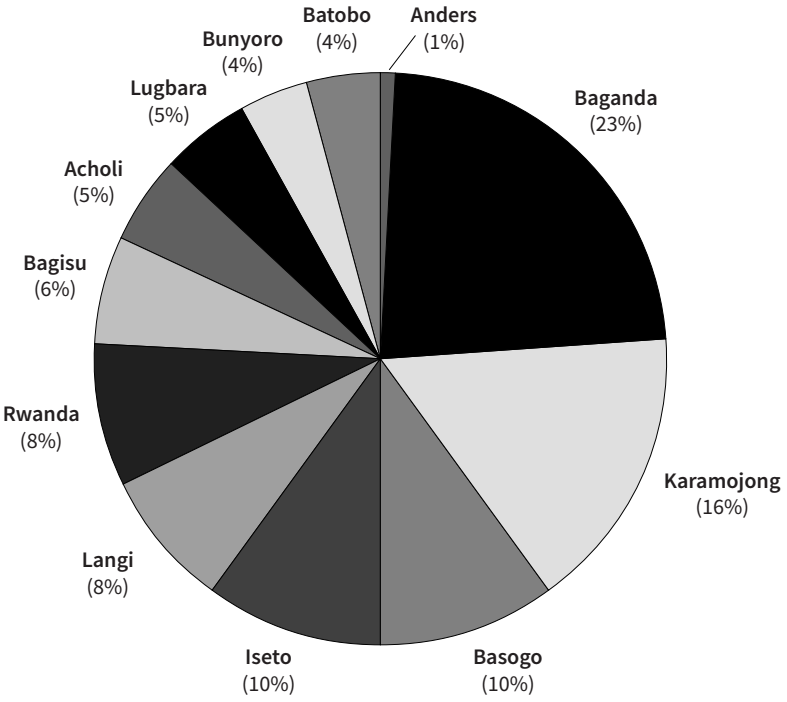


Figure 3.1
Ethnic groups Uganda

In Uganda, ethnic or regional background also plays an important role in politics, voting behavior, and in everyday life for that matter. Ethnicity shapes the thoughts and acts of the different communities in Uganda. Opinions differ on the extent of ethnic in- or exclusivity of the NRM in the first years after coming to power.

The population in west and south/central Uganda initially constituted the ethnic powerbase of Museveni. Representatives of these regions held many of the most important positions in the government and the army. That was quite understandable: The NRM guerilla in 1981-1986 relied mainly on an alliance between Museveni's own ethnic group, the Ankole living in the west of the country, and the Baganda, living in the southern and central parts of Uganda. It was not without good reason that the NRM was considered the first "non-northern" government of Uganda. The so-called westerners were the main beneficiaries. The Buganda ethnic group gradually lost influence. The really important postions ended up in the hands of westerners and in particular Ankole. The Buganda ministers, who still held powerful positions, were at loggerheads with the Kabaka. In other words, the interests of a substantial part of the elite, who sympathized with the Buganda kingdom and were still very influential, were barely represented in the ruling coalition anymore. Representatives of the population living in the west and to a less extent in the east held the main positions in the successive NRM governments.

The changing power relationships became apparent in the army and in particular at the top level. After independence, 80 percent of the officers originated from the north and partly the east of the country. Given the history of Uganda it was not surprising that the NRM considered the loyalty of the army crucial to the consolidation of its power. After 1986, the majority of the senior commanders came from the west of the country. The intelligence services were firmly under the control of "westerners," among whom a certain Paul Kagame.

At the same time these ethnic preoccupations need to be qualified. Political power in Uganda is also considered and analyzed primarily from an ethnic perspective. The "ethnic equation" therefore has a big impact on the political decision-making process. Nevertheless, other considerations could also play a significant role in the voting decisions of different groups. During the 2006 elections, presidential candidate Besigye, from the west of the country and main rival of Museveni, collected many votes in the north in spite of the fact that a candidate from the north was available, the daughter of Obote. In the same elections, Museveni won the majority of the votes not only in the west of the country (not a surprise) but also in Buganda (with the exception of Kampala), while a Buganda candidate was participating as well. The *Afrobarometer* explained the huge victory of Museveni in the 2011 elections, including the north, by the sustained economic growth and the "peace dividend" in the north. After having lost the north to the opposition in 2001 and 2006, Museveni got the majority of the votes in the north in the 2011 elections.

Still, the nature of the regime can be best explained in terms of ethnicity. The ruling elites originated primarily from the southwest of the country, the native region of Museveni. This applied to the army to an even greater extent. Initially, a large part of the Buganda political elite (the biggest and richest ethnic group) was a part of the ruling coalition, but its relevance eroded gradually. The main political threats did not come from outside the ruling coalition but from within. The political opposition was incapable of posing a serious threat to Museveni and the NRM, partly because of the internal divisions and the inability to mobilize support in the rural areas. Although representatives of its natural homebase occupied most of the important military and political positions, it was not the northerners or Buganda that posed the main threat to the NRM leadership but westerners themselves and in particular from the higher echelons of the army.

Political instrumentalization of violence

In spite of the reconciliation efforts by the NRM, the change of government in 1986 triggered a new exodus of political exiles and newly armed rebels. Several armed groups, often with a regional, ethnic, and/or religious background, tried, in turn, to oust the NRM regime by force of arms. To cope with these rebellions, the NRM, in contrast with previous regimes, applied a two-track policy: on the one hand, a military approach through its army and local militias and, on the other, negotiations and co-optation of local leaders from insurgent areas. In a number of cases this approach was successful: Rebel leaders were given political positions in the government and their troops were integrated into the national army. Another reason for Museveni's success in consolidating peace in the country (apart from areas in the north) was the establishment of a disciplined army, which partly reversed the tradition of ethnic recruitment (especially in the lower ranks) and the assurance of a regular, albeit low, income.

Although the NRM regime brought peace and stability to most of Uganda, it still had to get rid of no less than eleven armed rebel groups that refused to negotiate an agreement. The most important hailed from the north of the country and in particular from the Acholi region: the *Uganda People's Democratic Army (*UPDA) in 1986-1988, the *Holy Spirit Movement* in 1986-1987, and the *Lord's Resistance Army* (LRA) in 1987-2006*.* The LRA especially spread death and destruction in the northern part of Uganda over a period of twenty years with devastating consequences for the population. During that period, the north of the country was unable to benefit from the economic growth and poverty reduction, as was the case in the rest of the country. After *Operation Lightning Thunder* in 2008, carried out together with South-Sudanese troops

and with the support of the USA, the LRA was expelled from the north for good and peace finally returned.



Illustration 3.7
UPDF at the Congolese border

The military adventures of Uganda in the Congo gave rise to another type of instrumentalization of violence. Senior Ugandan military officers became involved in smuggling diamonds, gold, coffee, and timber out of the Congo. During the military operations against the LRA military officers already gained experience in utilizing war situations for personal gain. In reports by the Group of Experts of the United Nations, a number of them were accused in 2002 of plundering the Congo's natural resources, among whom Salim Saleh, the brother of the president, and James Kazini, head of military operations in east Congo.[20] The activities of these military "entrepreneurs" and the networks they controlled not only served as a means of self-enrichment but also formed an integral part of the consolidation of Uganda's political elite system and as such were closely linked to the regime.

During the first Ugandan military intervention in the Congo in 1996, these activities were still a relative side issue and used for supporting the military

20 Final report of the Panel of Experts on the illegal exploitation of natural resources and other forms of wealth of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, s2002/1146 (New York, 2002).

operation financially. At the time of the second intervention in 1998, the economic dimension developed into a crucial part of the dynamic of the conflict. The sad climax came with the heavy fighting between Uganda and Rwanda in and around Kisangani over who would be allowed to appropriate the natural resources in that area. A number of key figures within the Ugandan regime played an important role in the economic exploitation of the Congo's natural resources. The "careers" of the earlier mentioned James Kazini and Salim Saleh were symbolic of the rise of a very influential group of "*entrepreneurs of insecurity*." The key to success of these militarized economic activities was the already existing cross-border economic (and social) networks, gratefully exploited by new coalitions consisting of army commanders, rebel leaders, traders, and local authorities. Although these economic adventures of the Ugandan army caused friction among *Historicals*, on the one hand, and between the *Historicals* and younger officers, on the other, it is hard to imagine that these networks could have been exploited without the knowledge and involvement of the political center of the Ugandan regime. After they returned, most of the commanders involved took their place again in the state machinery. Apart from a few arrests and discharges, these leaders, in spite of their involvement in the economic shadow networks, as mentioned, remained part of the ruling political elite. James Kazini was the main exception. He was discharged as army commander, sentenced, and jailed. There is the suspicion that this treatment had to do more with his alleged political ambitions than his role in the Congo.

Political corruption

Museveni had succeeded in committing a substantial part of the national and local elite to himself personally. Gradually the regime became more and more personalistic. As in so many developing countries, this also went hand-in-hand in Uganda with the expansion of patronage networks, making full use of the opportunities the restructuring of the economy offered. Liberalization of the economy through privatization of state enterprises was an essential part of this restructuring. Most of these enterprises were running at a loss, were managed inefficiently, and were a permanent drain on the treasury. Privatization would reduce the number of state enterprises and limit the possibilities for using them for patronage purposes. As part of the *Washington consensus* this prescription was applied in the 1990s to the whole of sub-Saharan Africa. As to be expected, many African leaders were rather hesitant in implementing these reforms that curtailed their opportunities to use public means to consolidate their power.

However, the pressure of the international financing institutions and Western donor countries gave them no other choice. They made a virtue of necessity. These and similar reforms were manipulated in such a manner that they still could serve their political purposes. The privatized companies could no longer be used for patronage, but one could see to it that these enterprises would end up at a low price in the hands of political allies. As the sale of a number of national "crown jewels" to foreign investors appeared to be a politically sensitive matter, this offered the opportunity to hand over these companies to "politically correct" indigeneous entrepreneurs. This also happened in Uganda. In the 1990s, almost a hundred privatizations were finalized. The NRM regime used the privatizations of these state enterprises to its advantage as well as the establishment of semi-autonomous agencies that were to supervise the liberalized economic sectors such as the Uganda Revenue Authority, the Uganda Investment Authority and the Privatization Unit, including the lucrative positions that came with it. As expected, the political elite close to Museveni especially benefitted.

Gradually the delegation of powers to local government, very much supported by Western donor countries, became also part of the NRM "patronage machine." Initially the local administration bodies established in the country after 1986, first *Resistance Councils* and later *Local Councils,* were at least in part an expression of the intention to give the population the opportunity to have a say in local administration and hold local leaders to account. Slowly another aspect started to prevail. Increasingly the NRM used decentralization as a means to achieve other political objectives. The *Local Council* structure became an important instrument for the NRM to exert political influence at a local level. The number of districts proliferated. In 1986, Uganda counted 22 districts, in 2012, 112 districts. Such a high number of administrative units relative to the size of the population was rather exceptional.

The government justified this spectacular expansion of districts on the grounds that it would improve local participation in the political descision-making process, accountability, and, as a result, service delivery. However, it appears that, above all else, political considerations underlied this process. The NRM hoped that in this way it could mobilize political support all over the country. The potential benefits were twofold. A new district would provide the opportunity for the local elite to gain access to government resources, political power, and government jobs in the district. In addition, in a country, where the majority of the people still lived in the countryside, the promise of a separate district and all the benefits that went with it was politically very attractive. During several election campaigns, Museveni gratefully

exploited this opportunity. New districts were created just before elections or were promised, provided that the local population concerned would vote for the president. This tactic proved to be rather successful. New districts delivered votes. They were considered presidential handouts. Moreover, local patronage networks were used to muster votes by influencing district appointments, the selective use of government resources, and manipulation in awarding government contracts. The World Bank also noticed this. The Bank concluded that after abolishing the graduate tax in 2005, until then collected by the districts themselves, the districts became financially almost completely dependent on the central government. By establishing ever more districts, the amount of money spent on salaries and administration increased significantly at the expense of the resources meant for basic service delivery.[21]

Museveni and the NRM had a lot more funds at their disposal to "convince" voters than the opposition. According to some, that is why Museveni won the elections. Government resources funded a number of NRM election activities, for example, an extensive publicity campaign, and the use of public funds to obtain the support of local power brokers and individual voters. *Afrobarometer* looked into this matter within the context of the 2011 elections. In its opinion, the available data do not suggest that the large amounts of money spent by the NRM on the campaign trail had a big impact on the outcome of the presidential elections. Possibly the establishment of new districts might have resulted in a limited number of additional votes: "Money might have flowed freely, but it certainly did not play the decisive role in the outcome critics suggest, and in fact might have had relatively little effect on the final outcome, at least at the presidential level."[22]

Buganda

The division between the established Buganda elite and aspiring elites with a different ethnic/regional background repeatedly stood in the way of a unified political elite after independence. The Buganda monarchy relied on strong, well-established institutions deeply rooted in society, which exerted a strong attraction over many rich as well poor Baganda, and served as an alternative source of legitimacy to national government institutions. The NRM was the first government that succeeded in reaching a (albeit temporary) settlement by reinstating the monarchy and accommodating Buganda as well as other parts of the country within the existing political framework. Museveni's alliance with the Buganda and the representatives of the kingdom was forged

21 "Uganda Country Assistance Strategy 2011-2015," *World Bank* (Washington, 2010), 7.

22 Afrobarometer, "Museveni and the 2011 Uganda election: did money matter," 13.

during the struggle against the Obote II regime, but his efforts to secure a more lasting cooperation between the central government and Buganda were in the end less successful. First, the NRM alliance with the Baganda came under pressure because of the refusal by the central government to return the land taken away from the kingdom by Obote in 1966. Therefore, the *Kabaka* was less able to generate the funds needed to accommodate the expectations of his supporters. The coronation of *Kabaka* as king (without implementing powers) offered a temporary but not a permanent solution. Buganda monarchists not only strove for a complete restoration of the monarchy but also for a federal structure of the Ugandan state (*federo)*, of which the kingdom would be a part but would have far-reaching powers regarding, for instance, taxation, and land policy.



Illustration 3.8
Kabaka Ronald Muwenda Mutebi II

Museveni, however, was strongly in favor of a state structure consisting of a large number of districts (which remained financially dependent on the central government). He could count on the support of Ugandans living outside Buganda, who were not prepared to accept a privileged position for Buganda within the Ugandan state. In 2001, the *Kabaka* started to develop a certain interest in working with the opposition. In response, Museveni and the NRM tried to weaken the position of the king in a number of ways but without much success. For instance, an effort was made to reduce the area over which the *Kabaka* could exercise his "cultural authority" by supporting other cul-

tural leaders within the kingdom and introducing legislation to thwart the involvement of traditional leaders in party politics.

In addition, the NRM government attempted to limit the political influence of rich Buganda landowners (an important mainstay of the Kabaka) by strengthening the land rights of small farmers in Buganda. Although sensible in itself, this rapidly became a part of the political battle between Buganda and the government. The government claimed that it wanted to put an end to the widespread practice of depriving farmers of their land, while representatives of the kingdom accused the government of wanting to lay its hands on land that belonged to the kingdom and to deny the *Kabaka* the right to have a say in the distribution of land in the kingdom. Simultaneously, the government proposed the establishment of a new regional administration consisting of elected members in order to undermine the wish for *federo* by representatives of the kingdom. This resulted in serious riots in 2009. The efforts of Museveni to reduce the influence of the *Kabaka* among the Baganda failed. Museveni had to backtrack. It has to be noted that the protests were primarily taking place in the urban areas of Buganda and much less so in the countryside. Here the alliance remained in tact, especially in those areas where the NRM started its guerilla movement. In the 2011 elections, the majority of Buganda voted again for Museveni (even by a slightly bigger margin than in 2006).

Museveni appeared to be more capable than his predecessors in "managing" the Buganda question, but his options for solving the fundamental issue of the (privileged) position of the kingdom within Uganda were limited. Although in the course of time the NRM lost the support of an important part of the political elite of Buganda, it could continue to count on the support of the rural population of Buganda.

The army

The army and the security services formed an important basis of the power of Museveni. He made his position on this matter quite clear. Repeatedly he reminded Uganda that the UPDF was *his* army and that it would never accept a candidate of the political opposition as president or as its commander-in-chief, responding to the still existing fear among many Ugandans of a return to the pre-NRM period of chaos and violence. Probably, the High Command of the NRA constituted the real center of power in the country. Initially the *Historicals*, the twenty-six men who, together with Museveni, started the guerilla against Obote in 1981, occupied the key positions in the army. At a later stage the leadership of the Uganda People's Defense Forces

(the new name for the army) gradually ended up in the hands of a well-educated, professional military. After a number of (former) officers, predominantly from the west of the country including some *Historicals*, joined opposition candidate Besigye, Museveni, and others, made sure that the loyalty of the higher military echelons to the NRM was beyond suspicion. A number of important military positions were held by close family members of Museveni. His son was appointed head of the Special Elite Forces, his brother held a number of high military positions, after which he became a presidential adviser, and a cousin became the commander of the Presidential Guard, of which the members were primarily recruited from the same ethnic group as the president. Museveni dealt personally with important military appointments and promotions. In short, Museveni could count on the support of the army. In turn the army benefitted from his patronage and was offered the opportunity to make personal profits from military operations such as in eastern Congo.

The military leadership and their business relations also took their cut from lucrative military tenders. During the second half of the 1990s the government started to purchase larger quantities of military material than before, often through intermediaries. It resulted in a number of corruption scandals such as the purchase of MI-24 helicopters, MIG fighter planes, anti-aircraft guns and T55 tanks, but also the acquisition of food and uniforms. As revealed by the press, bribes, kickbacks, and inflated prices were usually part of these transactions, of which the main beneficiaries were military officers, government officials and shadowy intermediaries. The revelations in the media led to much indignation among the public, as was the case with Kiiza Besigye. As head of logistics within the UPDF Besigye was well informed about what was going on and became more and more disillusioned by the behavior of a number of his NRM colleagues. After initially having kept his criticism indoors, he sent in 1999 an article to the press in which he accused the NRM leadership of corruption, dishonesty, opportunism and undemocratic behavior.

3.5 The role of the international community

Because of primarily internal political considerations Museveni and the NRM decided to part with the *Movement* system and reintroduce multiparty politics in Uganda. Western donor countries, which supported the NRM

government financially, scarcely exerted any pressure in this matter,[23] as opposed neighboring country Kenya, where they made the introduction of a multiparty system a condition for the continuation of aid. Why? The following factors may explain the difference in approach. Uganda was still recovering from a long period of civil war. The NRM government introduced a wide range of political reforms that meant a substantial improvement in comparison to the past. Moreover, the international donor community including the World Bank was in need of an African success story. Uganda was a suitable candidate. Uganda implemented a more or less successful economic liberalization program, as recommended by multilateral and bilateral donors, and the economy was growing at a fast pace. Moreover, Museveni was a reliable partner of the West in the region. Uganda stood out as an island of stability surrounded by countries hit by civil war and anarchy. Although the economy kept growing, Uganda afterwards became increasingly the subject of criticism by Western donor countries because of endemic corruption, the increasing authoritarian and personalistic nature of the regime, and intolerance towards sexual minorities.

3.6 Conclusions

The stability of the regime was not so much endangered by political threats from the outside as it was from the inside. The NRM developed slowly but surely into a *weak dominant party*. By introducing a multiparty system, the NRM managed to restore its internal cohesion. The NRM leadership had come to the conclusion that a more pluralist political system would make it easier to remain in power, as there would be no need anymore to accommodate dissidents within the framework of the *Movement*. This turned out to be a successful strategy. Outside the NRM, the opposition did not stand much of a chance. In short: multiparty democracy and elections as a means of addressing the problem of internal cohesion.

Although the political system in a formal sense offered more political space for dissident opinions, the Executive actually became more powerful. Paradoxically the *Movement system*, introduced by the NRM, allowed more political space and influence in practice than the introduction of a multiparty system. The stability in the country became increasingly linked to the current president. Although Museveni showed greater capacity than his predecessors

23 This was my experience while working at the Netherlands embassy Embassy in Kampala from 1996 to 2001.

for managing the tensions between Buganda and the central government, he was not able to come up with a long-term and workable solution. The factions outside the regime did not represent a serious threat to the regime.

For the past twenty years, Uganda has witnessed continuous growth. However, low productivity still characterizes the economy. The changing nature of the ruling coalition, the related patronage costs, and institutional political and economic proliferation might provide an explanation why the NRM was admittedly able to maintain macroeconomic stability and boost economic growth, but not to bring about economic transformation.

Initially political inclusivity was a main feature of a political settlement, housing different political interests and population groups. Later this settlement developed slowly and surely into a regime that was less broadly based than in the past. Representatives from the region of the president held the most important positions in the government and even more so in the army. At the same time, Museveni and the NRM managed, with the help of well-tried patronage practices, to commit a substantial part of the national political elite, local elites, and the higher echelons of the army to the regime. This had its price.

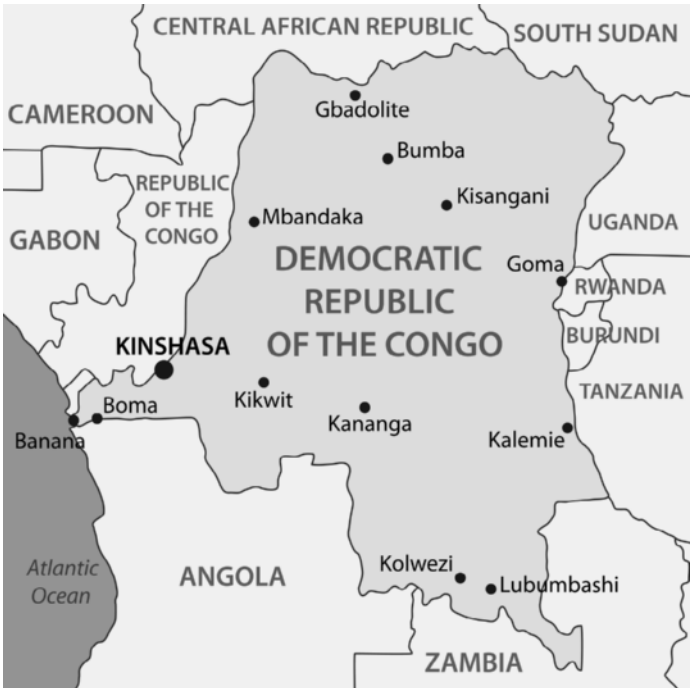
In comparison to the other countries under scrutiny, the NRM scarcely had to use much violence to remain in power. Restoration of peace and stability after so many years of civil war in large parts of Uganda was an important asset of the NRM regime. In the words of Ugandan journalist and researcher Fred Golooba-Mutebi: "Indeed, a major reason for Museveni's continuing popular support, especially in rural areas, is because he 'brought peace', which allows people to sleep peacefully in their beds, something that under previous regimes and their undisciplined armies, could not be guaranteed."[24] The striking 2011 election victory of Museveni in the north of the country might serve as an example.

In spite of the absence of a multiparty democracy, the NRM could initially count on support by the donor community on account of the economic and political reforms implemented by the NRM and the restoration of peace and stability.

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24 F. Golooba-Mutebi, 'Collapse, war and reconstruction in Uganda. An analytical narrative on state-making'. Working paper no. 27 (series no.2) Crisis States Research Centre (London, 2008), 21.

4 The Congo



4.1 What preceded

The many name changes that the Congo experienced are perhaps indicative of the turbulent history of the country. In 1895 the famous explorer Henry Morton Stanley claimed the area on behalf of the Belgian king Leopold II as his private property, which was given the name of Congo Free State. Subsequently, it became formally part of the Belgian colonial empire. After independence, it was given the name of the Republic of the Congo, Mobutu changed it to Zaire and the country is known nowadays as the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Among the Congolese, the colonial state was also known as *Bula Matari*: he who crushes stones. Originally this *epitheton or-*

nans was the nickname of Stanley, who at the request of the king vigorously forced himself from the east to the west of the country, and frequently used dynamite to crush rocks while constructing the first roads in the country. *Bula Matari* became a symbol for colonial power, which crushed all opposition. Colonial authority was absolute and primarily used to make money: first ivory and rubber, later minerals. Gradually an uniform colonial bureaucratic structure was imposed on the whole country. To quote the American Congo expert Crawford Young: "None... could escape the overarching uniformities imposed by the nature of the state, its vocation of total control of the subject population, and its productionist orientation."[25]



Illustration 4.1
Henry Morton Stanley (seated, center), Serpa Pinto, (right of center), Africa, circa 1877

The colonial authorities established a highly centralized government structure in combination with a system of indirect rule at the lower levels on the basis of clearly defined ethnic identities. The main focus of the colonial authorities was on maintaining power, taxation, and mobilizing labor to be employed on plantations and in mines, and on the construction of infrastructure. The provision of basic services like education and health was left to the

25 C. Young and T. Turner, *The rise of and decline of the Zairian state* (Madison, 1985), 36.

Catholic mission. Congolese were only allowed to organize themselves along ethnic lines, which determined to a large extent the political landscape after independence in 1960. The large number of political parties, which emerged around that time, were primarily ethnic and/or region based.

During the first years after independence, the omnipotent state disintegrated fast. The country fell apart as the former instruments of colonial rule, government bureaucracy and army, imploded after a hasty, improvised decolonization. Within a week after the declaration of independence the army began a mutiny demanding higher pay and the appointment of Congolese officers. Then a number of "rich" provinces (Katanga, Kasai, and Kivu) seceded. The anarchy and the ethnic character of the political strife were not only the antithesis of the colonial state but also saw to it that political pluralism and federalism were discredited in the eyes of the population. The first five years after the independence were characterized by chaos: a combination of mutinies, secessions, rebellions, and failed UN interventions. Mobutu put an end to this chaos. He could count on support from the population as well as donor countries when he, in his capacity of army commander, without much resistance, seized power in 1965.

Mobutu set up the model of a highly centralized state and corresponding authority versus the chaos during the first years of the republic. Gradually Kinshasa gained control again over the whole country. He consolidated his power by initially co-opting a large part of the existing political elites, granting himself extensive powers and restricting activities by political parties. In addition to co-optation, intimidation and worse were, of course, also important attributes of the new regime. In order to serve as an example, a number of political opponents were arrested, convicted, and hanged. Politics became the monopoly of a new political party established by the regime: the *Mouvement Populaire de la Revolution* (MPR). Towards the end of 1967, the new regime had co-opted, marginalized, or jailed most of the political heavy weights of the first years after independence. In the following years, an extreme personalization of the power of the state took place. Political leaders, who had an autonomous powerbase, were replaced by those entirely dependent on the president.

His power assured, Mobutu could afford to give free reign to his ambitions. He used the state to provide the Congo and its leader (or the other way around) of the necessary *grandeur*. Abroad, African leadership was actively pursued. In the Congo itself, large-scale projects were launched, facilitated by generous loans provided by Western countries. A "moral reorientation"

was furthered by vigorously promoting the ideology of *authenticité*. The sphere of influence of the government party MPR was extended to church and army. As part of the proclaimed *Zairianization*, major foreign companies were nationalized. However, the new Congolese management was unable to run these companies adequately. Copper mines, the main source of income for the Congo, went downhill rapidly.

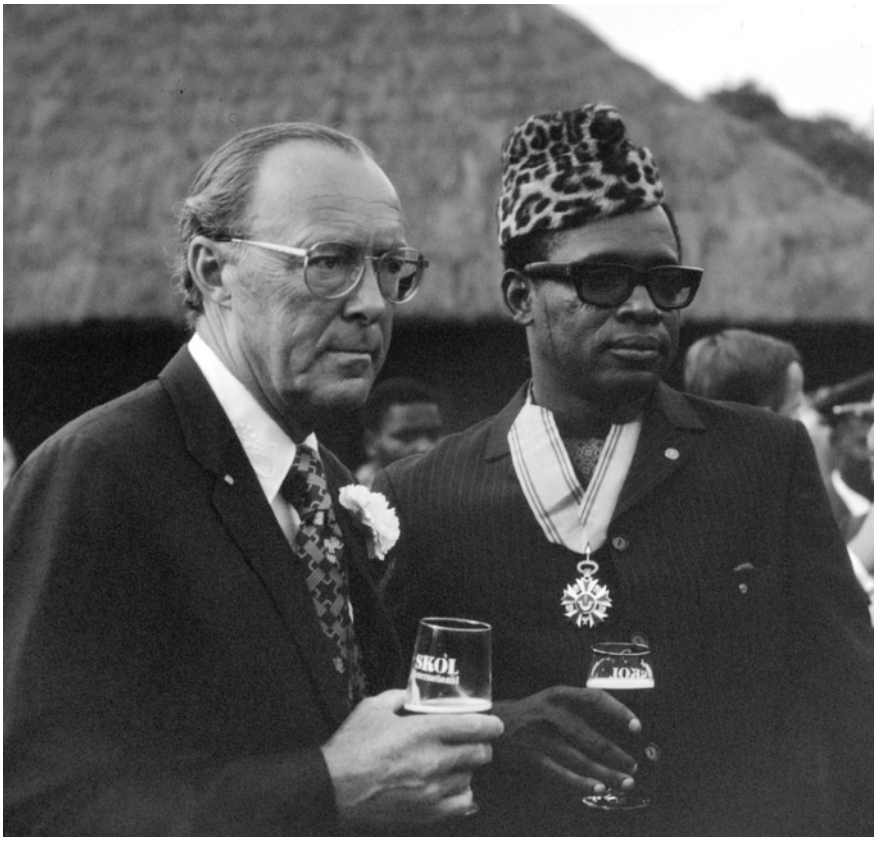


Illustration 4.2
Mobutu Sese Seko with Prince Bernhard

Mobutu was more interested in immediate access to funds to support his patronage networks and to secure his position than in the development of the Congolese economy. Nationalization boiled down to a transfer of property from colonial to post-colonial elites and in particular to allies of Mobutu. Yet, *Zairianization* and the promotion of *authenticité* contributed positively to the development of a common national identity after the chaotic years following independence. Personalized power culminated in the adoption in

1974 of a new official state ideology: Mobutuism. That was asking for trouble. At the same time, the economic problems of the regime grew. The price of copper, the main source of income for the Congo, dropped on the world market, while oil prices increased. The negative consequences, in combination with *Zairianization* of the economy, started to kick in.

In April 1990, President Mobutu announced the end of the one-party system and a transition to multiparty democracy. During the transition period, he made good use of the opportunity offered by promoting further divisions among the political opposition in order to secure his own position. Manipulation of ethnic sentiments once again became an important instrument in the political arena. Mobutu managed to block the *Sovereign National Conference* (composed of political opposition parties and civil society) by creating a competing government and co-opting a number of moderate representatives of the opposition. Thanks to the internal divisions among the opposition, Mobutu succeeded in staying in power. Although he remained president, this period meant another nail in his coffin. The transition itself was doomed to failure. Hundreds of political parties were established, most of them personal vehicles for the ambitions of members of the political elites. The *Sovereign National Conference*, which had announced a new constitution and elections, disintegrated slowly but surely.

The presidential as well as the opposition camps were hopelessly divided, continuously changed composition, and held a stranglehold on each other, resulting in a paralysis of state and government. Behind the façade of the never ending political skirmishes between Mobutu and the political opposition under the leadership of Étienne Tshisekedi, a more fundamental change took place. The elite no longer focused exclusively on securing access to government resources but increasingly looked for opportunities to accumulate wealth, and to legitimize its position at the regional and local level. Mobutu was no longer the spider in the center of the web. The creation of autonomous patronage networks undermined the position of Mobutu even further. Still, he managed to stay in power for the time being, mainly because of his control over the diamond industry, the central bank and support by segments of the security sector.

The genocide in 1994 in Rwanda had enormous consequences for the Congo. After the victory of the *Rwandan Patriotic Front* (RPF), more than a million Hutu sought refuge across the border and contributed to the chaos and misery in the Kivus. Incursions into Rwanda by remnants of the former Rwandan army and *Interahamwe* militias went hand-in-hand with massacres among

the Tutsi population in North-Kivu, with the help of Mobutu who provided substantive military assistance to the Hutu leaders. The destruction of the refugee camps by the RPF, which Hutu extremists used as a base for their military operations against the new government in Kigali, was followed by the "first" Congolese war. In 1996, Rwanda and Uganda decided to support the military offensive in eastern Congo through the *Alliance des Forces Democratiques pour la Libération du Congo-Zaire* (ADLF), led by Laurent Désiré Kabila, all the way to Kinshasa. The Mobutu regime collapsed like a house of cards.

Cold War logic had helped Mobutu to remain in the saddle for 32 years. The end of his rule in the aftermath of the rebellion by Rwanda- and Uganda-supported rebels turned the "Mobutu or chaos" rhetoric into a self-fulfilling prophecy. The final collapse of the regime was the result of a combination of a number of factors: the underperformance by the political elites during the transition period, intensified political mobilization along ethnic lines, the suspension of international aid to the regime, the conflict in eastern Congo as a consequence of the political and economic exclusion of Congolese of Rwandan descent, and a coalition of convenience between Rwanda, Uganda, Angola, and Zimbabwe against Mobutu. Taking into account his background and personal history, the succession of Mobutu by Kabila was rather remarkable and perhaps typical of the erratic recent history of the Congo.

The Kabila regime was basically a combination of all kinds of informal, shadowy networks. He continued, with a great deal of verve, the "revolving door system" of Mobutu: potential rivals were frequently dismissed from one job and reappointed in another. Many of the key positions in the government, army, and parastatals, however, were awarded to Katangese and, in particular, to the Lubakat group from North Katanga, the area from which Kabila originated. The regime combined an authoritarian approach with a high level of (policy) incoherence and a belief in a strong interventionist state (which scarcely existed anymore). Moreover, Kabila was faced with a dilemma. On the one hand, he had come to power thanks to the support of Rwanda (and Uganda), while, on the other, he had to distance himself from these countries in order to achieve legitimacy and gain support among the Congolese population. After a number of incidents, he decided that the second consideration was more important than the first. He had to get rid of Rwandan and Ugandan tutelage, and ordered all Rwandese (and other foreign) military to leave the country immediately. This triggered the "second" Congolese war.

The circumstances in 1998 were very different from the "first" Congolese war. First, the foreign coalition against Mobutu disintegrated into two competing camps. While Rwanda and Uganda opposed Kabila, Angola and Zimbabwe chose to align themselves with the "legitimate" regime in Kinshasa. Moreover, contrary to 1996, the rebel groups that joined Rwanda and Uganda were internally very much divided. In the Congo, the "first war" was at least in the beginning regarded as a war of liberation; this time the majority of the Congolese saw this as a war of aggression against the country. By appealing openly to racist anti-Tutsi sentiments in Congolese society, Kabila managed to increase his popularity among the Congolese population. Returning the favor, Kinshasa supported Rwandese and Ugandan rebels operating from eastern Congo. As a result the continuing conflict between the several ethnic communities living in the Kivu provinces intensified even further.



Illustration 4.3
Laurent Kabila

In 2001 Laurent Kabila was murdered by one of his bodyguards and was succeeded as president by his son Joseph. On the ground, the territory of the Congolese state was divided up into three areas controlled by the government in Kinshasa, by the *Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie* (RCD) supported by Rwanda and by the *Mouvement de Liberation du Congo* (MLC) supported by Uganda, respectively. The 1999 ceasefire agreement of Lusaka (which was never implemented) confirmed the informal partition

of the Congo. Following the *Accord global et inclusif* of Sun City in 2001, the main parties in the conflict eventually formed a transition government, which was given the task of reunifying the country, reestablishing a national army, and holding national elections. The political settlement was based on a "1 + 4 formula." Power was distributed among the four main parties, being Joseph Kabila's government, the MLC led by Bemba, the RCD of Ruberwa, and the political opposition, with Kabila junior as the president of the country.



Illustration 4.4
Joseph Kabila

4.2 Elections

Extreme political fragmentation characterized the first years after independence. Mobutu could count on a lot of support when he excluded political parties from the political process. Politics became the prerogative of the *Mouvement Populaire de la Révolution* (MPR), established by the government for this purpose. The Congo became a one-party state, allowing the regime to keep a close eye on all political activities. Gradually the separation between party and state disappeared. Although there was not much choice, paradoxically the MPR (originally established to substitute political competition) was mainly used to win elections and to legitimize the regime in a formal sense. Mobutu won the elections in 1970, 1977, and 1984, receiving more than 99 percent of the votes.

In response to external and internal pressure to introduce a more pluralist political system, Mobutu put the "Third Republic" in place in 1990, which was supposed to pave the way for political competition on the basis of a multiparty system. Within a year, more than 200 political parties were established. Similar to the period after independence, these parties were predominantly organized along ethnic or regional lines, and served as instruments for the personal interests of ambitious politicians.

The elections, as provided for by the Sun City peace agreement, finally took place in 2006 after being postponed a number of times due to political, logistic, and procedural problems. On the whole these elections were considered free and fair, but they confirmed the deep division between the east and the west of the country. In the first round, Kabila and Bemba got 45 and 20 percent of the vote, respectively, which necessitated a second round. The Congolese voted predominantly *against* those who, during the war, called the shots in the areas where they lived. The population living in the area controlled by the government in Kinshasa voted against Kabila, whose Congolese origin was called into question. The population living in the regions controlled by rebel groups voted *against* Bemba and Ruberwa, since they were held responsible for the continuing state of war and interference by Rwanda.

In preparation for the second round, both presidential candidates formed alliance with parties of other candidates. Joseph Kabila established the *Alliance de la Majorité Présidentielle* (AMP), consisting of 31 parties, and Bemba the *Regroupement des Nationalistes Congolais* (RENACO), consisting of 23 parties. The result of the second round of the presidential elections was as follows: Jean-Pierre Bemba (a native of Équateur) got the majority of the votes in the west (all in all 42 percent of the votes); Kabila got most of the votes in the east of the country. He mustered more than 90 percent of the votes in the east. His election victories in Kivu, Ituri, Katanga, and Maniema provinces made it possible for Kabila to win the overall elections (58 percent of the votes). Kabila probably owed his initial popularity in the east of the country to the return of peace, the reunification of the country, and the withdrawal of Rwanda and Uganda from the Congo, for which he received the credit.

Violence between (armed) supporters of Kabila and Bemba accompanied both rounds of the presidential elections. After the refusal by Bemba's militia after the elections to join the Congolese army, heavy fighting erupted between Bemba's "bodyguard" and the official Congolese army. Bemba was indicted on a charge of high treason and fled the country. At the request of the International Court of Justice, he was afterwards arrested in Belgium on

charges of war crimes (in Congo-Brazzaville) and extradited to the ICC in The Hague. Exit Bemba. The expected outbreak of violence in Kinshasa failed to happen. Partly thanks to the military presence of the United Nations, of the European Union, and repressive behavior by Kabila's Presidential Guard, the population in Kinshasa and the western provinces had to comply. However, the popularity of Kabila dropped dramatically in the east of the country in the years following the elections. He was unable to deliver peace to the east of the country. An agreement with Rwanda that allowed the country, together with the Congolese army, to engage in military operations in the Congo against the Rwandan rebel group FDLR caused a breach of trust between the president and the non-Tutsi population in the Kivu provinces. Internal divisions within the political opposition benefitted Kabila once again. Initially, the MLC dominated the opposition camp but was weakened considerably after the departure of its leader Bemba. The main opposition leader Tshisekedi and his UPDS decided to boycott the 2006 elections. The other rebel group, which turned itself into a political party, the RCD of Azaria Ruberwa, was wiped out in the 2006 elections due to its close ties with Rwanda.

Table 4.1
Results 2006 presidential elections in the Congo

Candidate (Party) [Coalition]	First Round		Second Round	
	Number of Votes	% of Votes	Number of Votes	% of Votes
Joseph Kabila Kabange	7,590,485	44.81%	9,436,779	58.05%
Jean-Pierre Bemba Gombo (MLC)	3,392,592	20.03%	6,819,822	41.95%
Antoine Gizenga (PALU)	2,211,280	13.06%	–	–
François Joseph Mobutu Nzanga Ngangawe (UDEMO)	808,397	4.77%	–	–
Oscar Kashala Lukumuenda (UREC)	585,410	3.46%	–	–
Azarias Ruberwa Manywa (RCD)	285,641	1.69%	–	–

Source: africanelections.tripod.com

In the build-up to the 2011 elections, the political opposition offered a well-known picture of a large number of different parties. These elections were a lot less free and fair than in 2006. It appeared that the incumbent regime manipulated the electoral process to such an extent that Kabila could not lose the elections. Capitalizing on the divisions among the opposition, the presidential electoral process consisting, if required, of two rounds was changed. Now the candidate who got most votes (in the first round), would win the

elections. The lack of transparency during the registration, the partisanship of the electoral commission, and the gross irregularities during the count did the rest. For example, Katanga, the homebase of the president, showed an improbably high turnout, while in Kinshasa, a stronghold of the opposition, the results of approximately 2000 polling stations were lost. International observers were refused access to the center where all the votes cast in Kinshasa were collected. In the opinion of the Carter Center, the elections lacked credibility.



Illustration 4.5
Presidential guard (2011 elections)

Table 4.2
Results 2011 presidential elections in the Congo

Candidate (Party)	Number of Votes	% of Votes
Joseph Kabila Kabange	8,880,944	48.95%
Étienne Tshisekedi wa Mulumba (UDPS-Tshisekedi)	5,864,775	32.33%
Vital Kamerhe Lwa-Kanyiginyi (UNC)	1,403,372	7.74%
Léon Kengo wa Dondo (UFC)	898,362	4.95%
Antipas Mbusa Nyamwisi	311,787	1.72%
François Joseph Mobutu Nzanga Ngangawe (UDEMO)	285,273	1.57%
Jean Andeka Djamba (ANCC)	128,820	0.71%
Adam Bombolé Intole	126,623	0.70%
François Nicéphore Kakese Malela (URDC)	92,737	0.51%
Josué Alex Mukendi Kamama	78,151	0.43%
Oscar Kashala Lukumuenda (UREC)	72,260	0.40%

Source: africanelections.tripod.com

4.3 Short overview of economic developments

In the last years of Mobutu's regime, economic policy by the government was basically absent. It was everyone for himself. The device was: *Débrouillez vous* (the imaginary "article 15" of the constitution): Manage on your own! This trend continued during the war. During this period the Congolese state was almost completely dismantled. To quote the Belgian Great Lakes expert Filip Reyntjes*:* "Almost 100 procent of its performance became informal. Economic actors often of a mafia-like nature, pursue short-term interests in what often amounts to plundering rather than entrepreneurship."[26] The war situation resulted in a further change of the economy, which was already in a nosedive, for the worse. During the war (1996-2001) economic policy focused on getting hold of sufficient foreign currency to be able to finance the war. For this purpose, heavy taxes were imposed on the few still operating private companies. Regarding the extraction of natural resources, in particular diamonds, monopolies and concessions including tax exemptions were

26 F. Reyntjes, "Briefing: The second Congo war: more than a remake," *African Affairs*, 98:391 (1999), 248.

granted to companies that were willing to pay up front. In addition, a system of different exchange rates and price controls was introduced leading to a major shortfall of imported goods that were crucial to keep the economy going. The (formal) economy collapsed. The budget deficit was financed by printing money and negotiating additional loans. The national income in 2000 amounted to 80 percent of that in 1995 (which was already a pretty bad year).

After succeeding his father in 2001, Joseph Kabila changed course: a program of economic reforms was implemented, which put an end to the vicious circle of monetization of the budget deficit, hyperinflation, and devaluation. It resulted for the first time in thirteen years in some economic growth. In 2005, the regime temporarily abandoned these policies aimed at macroeconomic stability. This coincided with the preparation for the elections to be held the following year. In 2008, the economy suffered badly because of a slump in the price of copper on the world market. From 2009 on, the economic and fiscal situation improved again. The Congo benefitted from substantial debt relief within the framework of the international debt relief initiative HIPC; a structural reform program was under implementation and inflation reduced to 15%. Although reliable data are lacking, it appears rather obvious that a big majority of the Congolese population continued to live in absolute poverty. Given the turbulent history of the Congo, hardly any information is available that can provide some insight into the level of structural transformation of the Congolese economy. However, it almost goes without saying that, taking into account the circumstances, this could hardly have been the case.

4.4 Response of the political elite

Political cohesion

In the history of the Congo since independence, the fragmentation among the political elites runs as a common thread. Within this context, a number of phases can be distinguished. The first elections after independence in 1960 immediately resulted in a civil war and a disintegration of the national elite: nationalists against federalists, radicals against moderates, separatist movements (the most important being in Katanga), and UN military interventions. Moreover, this fragmentation went hand-in-hand with frequent ethnic violence between and in different regions.

After his takeover in 1964, Mobutu succeeded in temporarily committing major parts of the Congolese elites to the regime, to him personally and to

the idea of a nation-state. Secession was no longer an option. Elite factions from the relatively poor north of the country became more influential and realized that their interests were better taken care of in a united Congo. Representatives from the mineral rich south of the country gave up their threats to secede. The United States made very clear their support for Mobutu and their preference for a united Congo as an ally in the Cold War. Mobutu offered stability to the Congolese elites as a whole but at the same time kept the individual members of these elites in a state of suspense. He tried to deprive them of the opportunity to establish an independent powerbase by frequently changing their positions and sometimes by dismissing them altogether or even putting them in jail. In the history of independent Congo the first ten years of Mobutu's regime was the only period until now in which a deliberate and reasonably effort was made to forge a level of unity among the political elites: "...Mobutu was implementing a strategy designed to construct a centralized system of patronage, which would allow the state to capture funds and discipline wealth holders, subjecting them to a national project."[27]

As long the president was able to count on foreign financial and political support (due to the export of minerals to the West and the strategic position of the Congo during the Cold War), his position within the country was secure. The suspension of financial aid in the 1980s, the drop in the price of minerals on the world market, the mismanagement of the economy and the related scarcity of means for patronage, forced Mobutu to change course. The earlier relative consensus among the political elites could not be sustained under these pressures. The president had to change tactics to survive politically. Against the background of the reduced opportunities for patronage the central government could offer, Mobutu as well as members of the political elites felt compelled to tap into alternative sources. However, the networks based on regional and ethnic affiliations to which they turned, were much more difficult to control by the political center in Kinshasa. Mobutu's *debureaucratisized patrimonialism* encountered more problems as the "sanctioned" private accumulation made it easier for local *Big Men* to create their own local powerbase and to avoid control by Kinshasa. During the 1980s a shift took place towards decentralized networks as a basis for political power. Still, for the time being Mobutu remained the main *patron* of the Congolese elite, which in the meantime fragmented further.

27 J. Putzel, S. Lindemann, and C. Schouten, "Drivers of change in the Democratic Republic of Congo: the rise and decline of the state and challenges for reconstruction," *Crisis States Research Center – Working paper* 26:2 Crisis Research Centre (London, 2008).

The political (and economic) liberalization initiated by external and internal pressure led to a further weakening of the central government and more autonomy for the regional elites. Government institutions increasingly had to compete with alternative centers of power. Mobutu used the reintroduction of multiparty politics, announced in 1990, to give preferential treatment to different ethnic power brokers. As opposition against his rule increased, he resorted more and more to playing off regional *Big Men* against each other, whose powers were based on ethnic patronage networks. As part of this strategy, in 1991 he ordered that all regional civil servants, including governors, had to originate from the region in which they worked. This constituted a fundamental policy change: previously, civil servants had to come from a different region than the one where they held office so as to avoid the establishment of an independent local powerbase. Most of the new parties, which were formed around this time, were therefore predominantly ethnic and/or region based.

The political void created by the meltdown of the Mobutu regime played an important role in the rapid fragmentation of the political arena. In the eastern part of the country, competing centers of power were in control of the local natural resources thanks to their informal networks and armed groups, undermining even further the already corroded monopoly on the use of force by the state. Mobutu had become just one of many players in the political and economic power play in the Congo. The establishment of new patronage networks in the east of the country, linked to Rwanda and Uganda since the start of the war, further complicated the situation.

During the regime of Laurent Kabila nothing much changed. Furthermore, his government could only exercise authority in a part of the Congo. Kabila's domestic powerbase initially only consisted of Banyarwanda from the Kivu region. After he was done with them, he sought support from the elites from Katanga (his home region), Kasai, and the capital Kinshasa. The advancing fragmentation of the political elites along ethnic/regional lines intensified during the civil war. Rebel groups also mobilized their support on the basis of ethnic allegiance.

After the establishment of a transition government consisting of the main warring parties, the Congo sailed into calmer waters. The layout of this government (2001-2006), cumbersome as it might have been, was rather inclusive as far as its composition was concerned. This period was characterized by a political agreement to which all participating parties actually adhered. The key to its success appeared to be a combination of active involvement by

the international community in sustaining the government and the access by all the important players (being members of the government) to state resources. In the aftermath of the 2006 elections and the departure of the main rival Bemba, the government was still cohesive enough and had the necesary determination to carefully begin some repairs of the Congolese state. This did not apply to the east of the country. Kabila junior was unable to commit major parts of the political elite in the east to the regime, with all kind of repercussions for the stability of the Congolese state as a whole.

Ethnic and regional dimensions

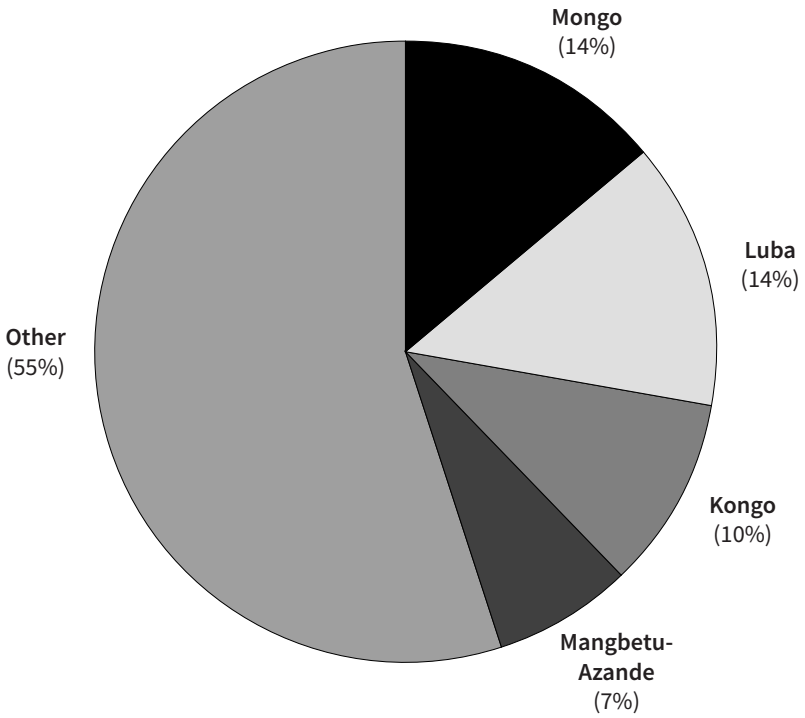


Figure 4.1
Ethnic groups The Congo

As in so many African countries, the colonial authorities in the Congo sharpened the dividing lines between ethnic groups. Some ethnic groups, like the Kongo and the Kasai Luba, benefitted in the eyes of many Congolese more than other ethnic groups from the proximity of transport routes and economic centers offering employment, access to education, and, last but not least, from ethnic prejudices of the colonial rulers. Electoral competition

turned these ethnic perceptions into political issues. Partly as a consequence of the concentration of power in the hands of the president and the aversion among the population towards the ethnic excesses during the first years after independence, Mobutu initially managed to put an end to the excessive use of ethnicity for political purposes, the ethnic patronage practices within government institutions, and ethnic propaganda.

Of course, the politically canny Mobutu saw to it that most ethnic groups felt represented in the different government institutions. However, the position of their political leaders was not so much based on their ethnic connections as on the benevolence of the president. The first requirement for qualification for an important government position was *fidélité au Guide.* But even Mobutu could not escape the ethnic reality on which his power was based. Representatives of Équateur province, the home area of Mobutu, occupied the most crucial positions. In the course of time their dominance, particularly in the security sector, became more and more visible. As mentioned, the return to multiparty politics, announced by Mobutu in the early 1990s, resulted in heightened ethnic tensions in a number of regions. Once again, the combination of political competition and ethnic mobilization appeared to be fatal.

Against this background, generally speaking, a number of criteria can be distinguished, which Congolese apply in identifying friend or foe depending on the circumstances. Whether these "identities" actually corresponded to the reality on the ground is, within this context, less relevant. First, there was an ethnic distinction on the basis of local circumstances, whose contours were established in particular during the colonial era. As ethnicity often had an impact on the access to local political power and land, this turned out to be an explosive issue in some areas. Second, one could differentiate between provinces, known in the Congo as *géopolitique*. Mobutu made use of this distinction in response to challenges of political pluralism in the 1990s. Resentment against the Rwandaphone population in the Congo became a popular distinction as well, initially in the east but, as a consequence of events during the Congolese wars, also in other parts of the country. In line with this resentment, the intractable myth of the perceived antithesis between Bantus, the "original" inhabitants, and the Nilotes, the "invaders" from the north became once again popular. As part of this construct Bantus were portrayed as hard-working farmers, naive but honest by nature and with specific physical features, while Nilotic nomads were characterized as calculating, dominant, cunning, and having other physical features. For the sake of simplicity Hutu were equated with the first group and Tutsi with the second.

The developments in the Kivus and Katanga might serve as an illustration of the correlation between increased political competition and the use of ethnicity for political purposes.

The Kivus

It appears that in the case of the Kivus all the in/out qualifiers were applied depending on the circumstances. The Congolese state never succeeded in adequately defining the political and social status of the population originating from Rwanda. The equation of the system of land allocation in this region, with the instrumentalization of ethnicity for political purposes, resulted in sharp divisions and exclusion among the local population. Exclusion was a continuous threat to the originally non-indigenous inhabitants, since access to land and the corresponding land rights were defined on the basis of ethnicity. In the last two centuries, different Rwandaphone groups settled down in eastern Congo. In the nineteenth century, Banyamulenge emigrated from Rwanda. During the 1930s, the Belgian colonial authorities encouraged the inflow, in particular, of Hutu from Rwanda to be able to provide the Belgian plantations with labor and ease demographic pressure in Rwanda itself. In some areas this group even constituted the majority of the population.

After the Hutu "revolution" in Rwanda in the 1960s, a new Rwandaphone group, this time of Tutsi, took refuge in eastern Congo. Among them were also members of the Tutsi elite, who were richer and better educated than the earlier influx of Rwandese and certainly than the local population. After the genocide in Rwanda in 1994, a huge number of Hutu refugees marched into the area. Against this background, the claim of Rwandaphone Congolese to Congolese citizenship was strongly opposed by the local population. Initially the Mobutu regime had given a segment of the Rwandaphone population preferential treatment.[28] However, as the Congolese state slowly disintegrated, the regime, as well as local *Big Men*, had to come up with new approaches to protect their positions.

The reintroduction of multiparty politics intensified political competition in the country. Ethnic manipulation was a favorite political tool. The Rwandaphone population was the main victim. A 1981 law that stipulated that Congolese nationality would be reserved for those who could prove to have Con-

28 In 1972, all Rwandaphone citizens, who had entered the country before 1960, received Congolese citizenship, thanks to a number of influential Banyarwanda and, in particular, the director of the *Bureau de la Présidence*, Barthelemy Bisengimana, appointed by Mobutu in 1969. Rich Banyarwanda also made use of the opportunity to acquire large tracts of land.

golese ancestors going back to 1885 was used by the local authorities to deny this group any political rights. The democratic counterpart of the Mobutu regime, the *Conférence Nationale et Souveraine,* chipped in by reconfirming the nationality law of 1981. The delegation from North-Kivu used the conference as a platform to continuously agitate against the Rwandaphone population by bringing up the alleged economic and political exploitation of the region by Rwandese "foreigners." It was hardly surprising that tensions further increased in the aftermath of the first but especially after the second Congolese war.



Illustration 4.6
Internally displaced near Goma (2004)

Katanga

The dividing line between the "indigenous" Katangese (although also Luba) and "foreign" Luba-Kasai played an important role in the recent history of Katanga. The tense relationship between the two ethnic groups originated in the colonial period. Initially the local population resisted Belgian rule and refused to become part of the colonial system. The mine industry especially was forced to recruit laborers from other regions. Neighboring Kasai started to provide the bulk of the labor force in the mines. This group benefitted from all kind of services and provisions like education, access to formal employment, and even the colonial civil service, from which the local Katangese

population was excluded. In the colonial set up, the Luba-Kasai were hierarchically superior to the Katangese. This would not go without repercussions.

In the run-up to independence, the establishment of political parties in Katanga along strictly ethnic lines confirmed the antagonism between the two groups. Ethnic violence surfaced whenever a political power struggle occurred, for example, at the time of the secession of Katanga or towards the end of the Mobutu era when a return to a multiparty system was planned. In the early 1990s, Mobutu tried to neutralize his political opponents by encouraging ethnic discord. Mobutu actively supported the emergence of Katangese chauvinism, which strongly opposed the perceived privileged status of the Luba-Kasai. In this manner, he was able to undermine the position of his main political rival at the time, Étienne Tshisekedi, originating from Kasai, and divide the opposition. As could be expected, this went hand-in-hand with a lot of violence against the Luba-Kasai.

Congolité

An important weapon in the hands of Bemba during his political battle with Kabila in the 2006 presidential elections was doubts about the Congolese origin of Kabila. In the Bemba propaganda, Kabila was continuously accused of being a "foreigner," an *oiseau migratoire*, who hardly spoke any French or Lingala. His mother was supposed to be Rwandese and Laurent-Désiré Kabila (the murdered previous president) was not his real father. Although Bemba lost the elections, he gained a lot of support with these accusations among the Congolese population in large parts of the country. This campaign rhetoric not only appealed to xenophobic sentiments among the population (targeted mainly at Rwanda) but was, indirectly, also an indication of the broad popular support for the state as a national unity. This is quite remarkable given the nature of the breakdown of the Congolese state, the diversity among the Congolese population, the intense polarization along ethnic and regional lines, the several separatist movements in the past, and the existence of a number of rebel movements during the second Congolese war (1998-2000), which occupied large parts of the country. And yet, the Congo endured. In spite of everything, political elites and population alike supported the idea of national unity wholeheartedly.

Why? Sovereignty of the Congolese state offered to the elites more economic and political opportunities than a division of the country. It provided international legitimacy and allowed for the provision of international aid and investments. Realizing the advantages of international recognition of the Congolese state, political elites in the end pursued their agendas within the

context of the national state. The numerous armed rebellions concerned not so much different views on the question of unity of the Congolese state as the conditions under which the rebels were prepared to take part in this state. The purpose of these armed rebellions and/or the wish to secede were all efforts to rearrange the balance of power within the Congolese state as a whole. Tshombe, the leader of the Katangese secession in the 1960s, became prime minister of the Congo in 1965; Kalonji, leader of the South-Kasai separatist movement, became a minister under Tshombe. Bemba and Ruberwa, leaders of the rebel movements during the second Congolese war, joined the transitional government. Many Congolese consider federalism as a means to express their identity but want to do so within the existing national context. Once in power the same politicians suppressed the quest for a more decentralized government system in order to prevent infringement on their authority and the establishment of alternative institutional power centers: *"Quand on va manger a Kinshasa, c'est fini."*

In spite of all its deficiencies the Congolese state provided many Congolese with a sense of predictability as opposed to armed insurgencies, military rebel leaders, and humanitarian emergencies. Moreover, it was precisely the weakness of the state that provided Congolese political elites as well as ordinary Congolese with the opportunity to make money. In an article about the nature of the Congolese state, Pierre Englebert gives the example of the many potholes in the streets of Kinshasa. From a longer-term perspective, it would have been of course more efficient to repair the road once and for all. However, these potholes were also a source of income for young, unemployed *Kinois*. By carrying out temporary *ad hoc* repairs, they were in a position to ask for contributions by motorists.[29]

Political instrumentalization of violence

As explained, the outcome of the elections in the run-up to independence in 1965 and the return to a more pluralist political system in the early 1990s triggered a lot of violence. One of the more structural factors underlying the violent nature of Congolese history, before and after independence, has to do with the Congolese armed forces. The power of the state is, in the final analysis, based on its monopoly on the use of force. If, however, the main instrument to exercise this monopoly, the army, is considered weak, unreliable, and turns occasionally against it own population, it undermines the credibility of

29 P. Englebert, "Why Congo persists: sovereignity, globalization and the violent reproduction of a weak state," QEH working paper series 95 (2003), 8. A more generic explanation is offered in P. Chabal and J. Daloz, *Afrika works. Disorder as political instrument* (Oxford, 1999).

the state and can even jeopardize the existence of the state itself. That is what happened in the Congo. Within a week after independence the army rose in mutiny. Since then nothing much changed. The Congolese army turned out to be the main perpetrator of violence against its own population, of plunder, and violation of human rights. However, in terms of fighting, the track record of the Congolese army is rather poor. The performance of the Congolese army against rebels after independence; against Katangese insurgents in 1966, 1967, 1977, and 1978; the military support to the FNLA in Angola; and their failures during both Congolese wars is a case in point.



Illustration 4.7
14th brigade of the FARDC in North-Kivu (2006)

The army potentially constituted the greatest threat to the power of the president. Mobutu maintained an extensive system of patronage and internal competition within the army in order to neutralize this threat. His successors applied the same divide-and-rule tactics. At the same time, the leadership of the army and security services remained an important mainstay of the regime. This patrimonial context might partly explain the absence of political will to implement real security sector reforms (a precondition for the reinstatement of the monopoly on the use of force by the state). A reformed, professional army with a clear command and control structure could, after all,

endanger the powerbase and important sources of income of the elite linked to President Kabila.[30]

The gradual loss of the monopoly on the use of force by the state of course created an environment conducive for the establishment of private armed groups. As part of the intensified political competition in the 1990s, a number of armed groups rose up, initially to protect the interests of local politicians. As political and ethnic issues got more intertwined, these groups developed into armed militias with a specific ethnic agenda. As the fragmentation of the state progressed, government institutions felt more and more obliged to negotiate and compete with non-governmental parties, including on the use of force.

This was especially the case in the border areas in the east of the country. The two Congolese wars changed the nature of the patronage networks in these areas. They acquired a strong military dimension and established strong links with neighboring countries (Rwanda and Uganda). A number of rebel groups, ethnic militias, and military "entrepreneurs" demanded access to available funds and minerals. The manner in which they tried to achieve this led, in a number of cases, to even more violence. An instructive example in this context was the *modus operandi* of the RCD Goma. In 1998, this rebel group (supported by Rwanda and Uganda) began a military campaign against Kabila senior from the east of the country. Once the RCD had occupied the strategic centers in the east, they never reverted to seriously establishing an alternative administration in this region but limited themselves to collecting taxes and the exploitation of minerals. However, the rebels too were dependent on the willingness of other groups and individuals to work together with them (the rebels) in exchange for protection of their economic interests.

The militarization of patronage networks encouraged local RCD commanders to start their own businesses and conclude lucrative business deals with local traders. They created their own parallel structures that led to an entanglement of rebel groups and local businessmen: "As economic stakes in this unfolding war economy were high, the need for (private) protection engendered new patterns of interaction between rebel leaderships and local entre-

30 In the period 2005-2013, I was working at the Africa department of the Netherlands ministry of Foreign Affairs and closely involved in the effort – unsuccessful – by the international community to initiate a meaningful process of army reform.

preneurs."[31] The east of the country especially could not escape this vicious circle. The search for alternative means of protection, in the absence of the state, contributed to a proliferation of ethnically based local networks and a further fragmentation of the monopoly on the use of force.

Against this background it was quite surprising that the 2006 and 2011 elections passed by relatively peacefully. Still violence did occur. When necessary, violence was used to make clear who was in charge. Following the violent skirmishes after the first round of presidential elections, violent clashes broke out again in March 2007 between troops of Kabila and Bemba. For two days there was heavy fighting in the center of Kinshasa. Kabila was determined to disarm his opponent, who still had under his command a number of soldiers for his "personal protection." Bemba fled the country and the opposition was further weakened.

Political corruption

Political corruption in the Congo is endemic. Successive regimes used public resources to maintain and expand their political patronage networks. Mobutu set the trend. During his 35 years in power Mobutu employed state resources and international financial aid, which flowed into the country until the end of the Cold War, to consolidate support for his regime among the Congolese elites and the army. Politics of this nature did not disappear after Mobutu finally had to leave the political stage. Wealth depended to a large extent on access to the state coffers, political office, or favors by the president. Kabila senior and junior as well distributed important positions in the government and parastatals on a massive scale to political supporters, who were then able to accumulate private wealth. The manner in which this happened changed depending on the political situation, but this organizing principle of doing politics remained the same: granting access to government institutions to parts of the political elites in change for support.

The state itself became a source of income to the political elites and their supporters. It was the very weakness of these state institutions, which made this possible and contributed to a large extent to the survival of the regime. This type of corruption among the elite was not unusual, but the scale on which this happened in the Congo was. Not only did the political elites benefit; all over the country the weakness of government institutions was exploited to generate private income. Elites, employees, and citizens alike used the

31 K. Vlassenroot and T. Raymakers, "New political order in the DR Congo? The transformation of regulation," *Africa Focus*, 21:2 (2008), 46.

non-functioning of ministries, government institutions, provincial instititutions, and other administrative units to their own advantage.

The presidential elections also took place within this context. Apart from the means and instruments that the incumbent had at his disposal to influence the outcome of these elections, no reliable information (at least to me) is available about large-scale political corruption (like, for example, the *Goldenberg* scandal in Kenya), which can be directly linked to the election process in either 2006 or 2011. An explanation might be the fluid and unstable nature of the patronage networks, which will normally have to be used for this purpose in a country as big as the Congo and with such a large electorate. It is obvious, however, that, during elections on a smaller scale, money changed hands. In the 2007 elections for governor by the provincial parliaments, the coalition of the president managed to win in eight provinces, while the main opposition party MLC only got the governorship of Équateur (the homebase of Bemba). The Congo expert Filip Reyntjes provides the following explanation: "Widespread corruption explains why Kabila's camp was victorious even in provinces where it scored poorly during the presidential elections. This was made possible because the provincial assemblies have only a few dozen members who can individually be approached and bought."[32]

4.5 The role of the international community

During the Cold War, Mobutu could count on the support of the West. The Congo was considered an important anti-communist ally in this part of the world. The Western countries provided financial as well as military support to suppress periodic regional rebellions. No conditions with regard to "good governance" were imposed, for example. Access to this support facilitated the consolidation of Mobutu's regime. The end of the Cold War changed this. Mobutu was no longer needed. Western donors started to demand political and economic reforms. The way Mobutu implemented the "democratic transition" did not convince Western donor countries. He was put under pressure to resign. Aid flows were suspended. The politics of his successor, who came to power in 1997, were not very different from Mobutu. During this period, the efforts of the international donor community were mainly focused on ending the war that held the Congo in its grip.

32 F. Reyntjes, "Briefing: Democratic Republic of The Congo: political transition and beyond," *African Affairs*, 106:423 (2007), 312.

The establishment of a transitional government, in which the main warring parties took part, triggered the resumption of international aid. The World Bank and IMF started to provide substantial loans to the Congo. In 2003, the Congo became eligible for substantial additional funds within the framework of the HIPC initiative. Donor countries also contributed generously to the 2006 and 2011 elections, both won by Kabila. There appeared to be an informal consensus among Western donor countries that the Congo, above anything else, needed stability and that Kabila, of all the candidates, was the least bad choice.[33]

The nature of politics did not change after the elections of 2006 and 2011. Although more discrete than during his father's regime Joseph Kabila and his entourage basically applied the same political methods as his predecessors. The Congolese state confronted the international community with a dilemma. Donor countries continued to provide financial support to the Congo to prevent the Congo from collapsing again, but by doing so limited the possibilities for the necessary political reforms in the country. At the same time, a collapse of the state (as we have seen before) would run the risk of a new regional armed conflict.

4.6 Conclusions

The Congo is a perfect example of *competitive clientelism* that got completely out of hand. With the exception of the first years of the Mobutu regime, the most salient feature of Congo politics was elite fragmentation. Congolese political elites perceived a strong government more as a threat to their interests than a means to achieve national economic and social development. Political survival of the regime systematically prevailed over development. Multiparty elections confirmed the fragmented nature of Congo politics. The large number of parties participating in these elections was almost without exception ethnic- or region-based, and personal vehicles for ambitious politicians. The weakness of the Congolese state institutions offered subsequent regimes the opportunity to use state resources to win over parts of the political elites. As a consequence, the legitimacy and strength of these institutions eroded even further. The regime as well as the elites linked to the regime benefitted from a continuation of this state of affairs. Although reliable data are lacking,

33 This was the general feeling during the frequent donnor meetings I attended during that period.

it seems rather obvious that scarcely any transformation of the Congolese economy took place in the period under review.

The use of ethnicity, violence, and corruption for political purposes also determined the nature of the political settlement in the Congo. The return to political pluralism in the 1990s and the political manipulation of ethnicity were strongly interconnected in the Congo, with dire consequences for the population. Local *Big Men* managed to build their own ethnic, political, and economic powerbase, without having to be accountable to the central government. These local networks also became explicitly military in nature during the 1990s as a consequence of the establishment of armed groups, in particular in the east of the country. The economic entanglement, especially with military *patrons* from Rwanda and Uganda, added to the fragmentation among the elites. Politics and corruption are closely linked in the Congo. Subsequent regimes used public resources on a massive scale to maintain political patronage networks.

The "democratic transition" in the early 1990s, the increasing tensions in eastern Congo partly as a consequence of the Rwandan crisis, and the extreme divide-and-rule politics by Mobutu resulted in a further fragmentation of the Congolese elites and a meltdown of an already very fragile political settlement. After the armed rebellion in the east, the Mobutu regime collapsed like a house of cards. The problematic nature of the Congolese armed forces constituted another *Leitmotiv* in the recent history of the Congo. The Congolese army posed not only a threat to its own population but was also incapable of enforcing the monopoly of the state on the use of force.

The international donor community faced a difficult dilemma. Especially pitted against the background of the recent past of the country, political stability is a precondition for economic recovery and development. At the same time, given the manner in which this stability has been achieved in the Congo until now, structural development seems highly unlikely in the forseeable future. The reintroduction of a multiparty system brought about no improvement.

5 Rwanda



5.1 What preceded

As has happened in the other countries, the existing distinctions between ethnic groups in Rwanda were further emphasized during the colonial period. The initially complex web of economic, social, and political relationships between Hutu and Tutsi was defined and exploited unambiguously by the Belgian colonial regime. The Tutsi elite was supposed to administer Rwanda. The colonial authorities considered Hutu less suitable for this responsibility. Tutsi replaced Hutu even in areas that were traditionally administered by Hutu. The Belgian colonial rulers applied a rather rigid ethnic classification and intentionally strengthened the position and status of the Tutsi elite by granting preferential access to administrative positions, sources of income,

and education. Most school pupils were Tutsi. The Catholic Church, which monopolized education in Rwanda, played a crucial role in this effort. Another necessary condition in order to be part of the native elite was to convert to Catholicism. In his study on the history of the Rwandan genocide, Prunier explains: "…And since the Tutsi were the natural born chiefs they had to be given priority in education so that the church could enhance its control over the future elite of the country."[34] The myth of the so-called Hamitic origin of the Tutsi, with corresponding connotations about their superiority over the Hutu, commanded widespread support in colonial circles. This quasi-scientific theory not only influenced the colonial authorities but also the ethnic groups themselves. This "heavy bombardment with highly value-laden stereotypes" over a period of sixty years resulted in an inflated self-image among the Tutsi population, and an inferiority complex and resentment among the Hutu.[35]

Against the background of resistance by a segment of the Tutsi elite against the colonial order and a change of mind within Belgian clerical circles, the Catholic Church started to purposefully cultivate a Hutu counter-elite after the Second World War. Similarly the Belgian colonial administration implemented a fundamental policy change in the period prior to independence: A Hutu elite was being quickly prepared to take over after independence. The influence and dominant position of the Tutsi elite in the Rwandan society was reduced as much as possible.

In 1959, the colonial authorities endorsed the establishment of political parties, which were organized along ethnic lines. The main parties were the *Union National Rwandais* (UNAR), consisting of Tutsi traditionalists and monarchists, and the *Parti du Mouvement et de l'Émancipation Hutu* (PARMEHUTU), whose main objective was indeed Hutu emancipation. The Hutu-Tutsi animosity now became part of the public domain and served as an important vehicle for political mobilization. It was a struggle between two competing elites: the new Hutu counter-elite, cultivated by the church and colonial authorities, and the older, "neo-traditionalist" Tutsi elite, initially supported by the colonial regime. In 1960, the colonial regime began replacing Tutsi chiefs with Hutu. Immediately the persecution of the Tutsi began on the hills controlled by the Hutu.

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34 G. Prunier, *The Rwanda crisis. History of a genocide 1959-1994* (Kampala, 1999), 33.

35 See also the chapter on the Congo.

The Hutu party *PARMEHUTU* won the 1961 elections convincingly, and the Tutsi monarchy was abolished. The "Hutu revolution" became a reality and implied a transfer of power along ethnic lines. The exclusive right of a demographic majority was put on an equal footing with democracy. The changes in the political situation and the corresponding ethnic violence forced many thousands of Tutsi to flee, in particular to Burundi and Uganda but also to the Congo and Tanzania. In 1963, Tutsi rebels from the first two countries carried out armed raids into Rwanda. In response, anti-Tutsi razzias intensified and more Tutsi had to flee the country. The number of Tutsi who sought refuge in neighboring countries rose as high as 130,000. Efforts to return to Rwanda by force of arms failed and were abandoned (temporarily). Moreover, the Kayibanda regime in Rwanda outlawed all Tutsi political parties. Anti-Tutsi intimidation intensified. Still, the regime faced growing unpopularity, increasing internal divisions, and regional infighting among the Hutu elites. The ethnic cleansing and killing of Tutsi appeared to be an effort to complete the process of political, economic, and social Hutu dominance and, at the same time, to put an end to the discord among the Hutu themselves.

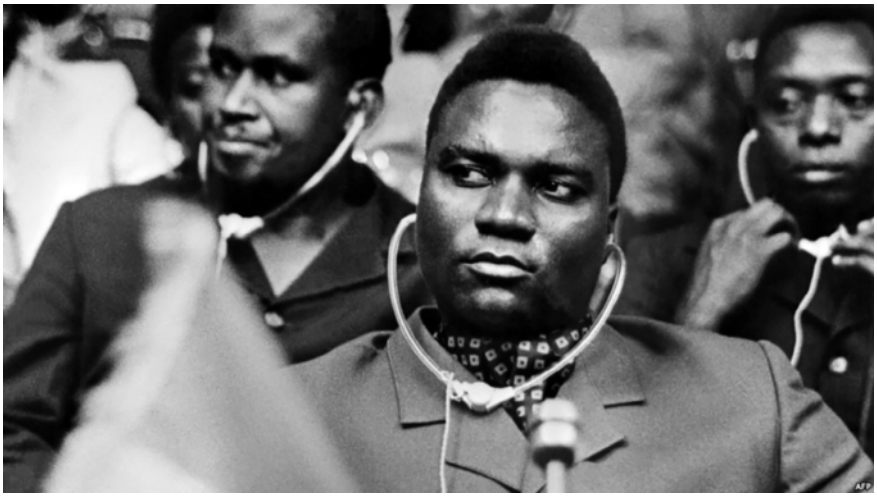


Illustration 5.1
Juvenal Habyarimana

In 1973, the army led by Juvenal Habyarimana seized power. The Hutu elite from the north of the country and especially Gisenyi (Habiyarimana's homebase) and Ruhengiri took over. Until the 1980s, Rwanda experienced a period of relative stability under the leadership of Habyarimana. The economy grew at a steady rate, and the regime did not instigate *pogroms* against the Tutsi, as was the case during the previous government. Otherwise, it was business

as usual. As far as access to political offices, education, and government positions was concerned, strict quotas were applied, based on ethnic and regional considerations. Ethnic identification in official personal documents, maintained after independence, facilitated this process. As long as the Tutsi did not try to tamper with these policies, they were left in peace. Under Habyarimana Rwanda became formally a one-party state. Every Rwandese was supposed to be a member of the presidential party, *Mouvement Républicain National pour la Démocratie et le Développement* (MRND). Power was concentrated in the hands of the president, his wife Agathe Kazinga, and her closest family. The MRND became in practice an important instrument for exercising complete control over the population, and for protecting the power and interests of the ruling elite.

While the *Rwandan Patriotic Front* (RPF) was establishing itself in Uganda and preparing to invade Rwanda, internal tensions in the country were on the rise. The Hutu opposition was increasingly frustrated about the lack of opportunities to participate in the political process. The economic crisis in Rwanda during the late 1980s, and as result increasing hardships for the Rwandese population, coincided with domestic dissatisfaction about the monopolistic character of the regime, the corruption, and "regionalism." Habyarimana's clout within the MRND declined, while the extreme anti-Tutsi wing of the party gained more influence. Moreover, the MRND, dominated by the Hutu elite from the north of the country, was confronted with strong competition by the "southern" *Coalition pour la Défense de la République* (CDR), which was under the influence of Hutu extremists. The invasion by the RPF in 1990 further complicated the situation.

A threat to some often implies a chance for others. The transition towards a more pluralist political system posed an internal political threat to the ruling elites and a chance to those who were until then excluded from the political process. The invasion by the RPF constituted an external threat to the Hutu regime and provided the opportunity for the Front, mainly consisting of Tutsi, to seize power. One could roughly distinguish three groups fighting for political power: the regime tried to survive, the domestic political opposition attempted to gain political recognition, and the Tutsi exiles, who made an effort to return to the Rwandan political stage. MRND extremists seized the opportunity to portray the moderate Hutu opposition as accomplices of the Tutsi military invasion by the RPF. A number of new parties were established. The most important were the *Mouvement Démocratique Républicain* (MDR), partly a continuation of Parmehutu, strongly associated with the anti-Tutsi *pogroms* in the past, and with Gitarama as a homebase, and the

Parti Social Démocrate, representing moderate Hutu concentrated around Butare. In 1992, Habyarimana was obliged to form a coalition government with the opposition and start negotiations with the RPF. Eventually, under pressure of the international community, a peace agreement in Arusha was signed, which provided for a power-sharing arrangement between Habyarimana's MRND, the domestic political opposition, and the RPF. However, things turned out differently. The civil war and the peace agreement of Arusha led to an increased radicalization of anti-Tutsi sentiments in Rwandan society and a consolidation of *Hutu power* ideology. The killing of Habyarimana in April 1994 was the detonator that caused Rwanda to explode. It created a power vacuum that Hutu extremists used to their full advantage.[36] Genocide followed.

After seizing power in 1994 the RPF formed a transition government in line with the Arusha agreement, in which all the major actors were represented, with the exception of the MRND and CDR, which were considered instigators of the genocide. The transition period, foreseen for a period of 22 months, lasted nine years. After the events of 1994, the first years were dominated by recovery, return to stability, security, and reconstruction of the state. After the replacement of Bizumungu by Kagame as president in 2000, the development of the country was pursued vigorously with impressive results.

5.2 Elections

The Arusha agreements of 1993, on which Rwanda's interim constitution was based, provided for a multiparty system and a government in which the main parties would be represented. In a sense Kagame took a risk when in 2002 he announced multiparty elections to be held the following year. In Burundi, Pierre Buyoya, a Tutsi who came to power through a military coup d'état, had also called elections hoping he could win over the Hutu majority. The opposite happened. But the RPF won the 2003 national elections by an overwhelming majority. Kagame and RPF did not leave anything up to chance. The regime saw to it that the political space for opposition groups was indeed very limited.

36 The actual events and the role of the international donor community are not part of this study. See also the paragraph on ethnic and regional dimensions.

Table 5.1
Results 2003 presidential elections in Rwanda

Candidate (Party)	Number of Votes	% of Votes
Paul Kagame (FPR)	3,544,777	95.05%
Faustin Twagiramungu	134,865	3.62%
Jean-Népomuscène Nayinzira	49,634	1.33%

Source: africanelections.tripod.com

The government excluded a number of influential political parties from the pre-genocide period from the elections due to their complicity in the genocide or their perceived ethnical nature. According to some, these elections were to a large extent a cosmetic exercise meant for international consumption. In spite of all kinds of shortcomings in the electoral process, other authors are of the opinion that Kagame enjoyed widespread approval: "There can be little doubt that by August 2003 the vast majority of the Rwandan electorate associated their president closely with the recent years of security and stability that their country has known since the end of the insurgency in the north and the west of the country."[37] As in so many developing countries, control over state organs and resources turned out to be an important factor in defeating the political opposition. Kagame, and others, not only relied on their track record. In order to silence the opposition, they also accused, rightly or wrongly, the opposition of manipulating ethnic sentiments. Laws that were introduced to advance national unity and reconciliation, such as a ban on *divisionism*, were also used to limit the political space of the political opposition.

For example, the *Movement Democratique Republicain* (MDR), one of the few existing parties which tried to maintain a certain political autonomy vis-à-vis the RPF, was banned in 2003. The regime made life difficult for other emerging opposition parties like the *Parti Démocratique pour le Renouveau* and the *Parti pour la Solidarité et Progrès*. Sometimes they were simply banned. During the run-up to the 2010 presidential elections, something similar happened to the *FDU-Ikingi* and the *Democratic Green Party*, new opposition parties that were critical of the RPF. Kagame was reelected as president receiving 93 percent of the votes.

37 C. Waugh, *Paul Kagame and Rwanda: power, genocide and the Rwandan Patriotic Front* (Jefferson NC, 2004), 194



Illustration 5.2
2010 elections in Rwanda

Table 5.2
Results 2010 presidential elections in Rwanda

Candidate (Party)	Number of Votes	% of Votes
Paul Kagame (FPR)	4,638,560	93.08%
Jean Damascene Ntawukuriryayo (PSD)	256,488	5.15%
Prosper Higiro (PL)	68,235	1.37%
Alvera Mukabaramba (PPC)	20,107	0.40%

Source: africanelections.tripod.com

5.3 Short overview of economic developments

During the first ten years of his regime, Habyarimana pursued relatively sound economic and development policies. In the late 1980s, Rwanda faced serious economic problems partly as a consequence of a sharp decline in coffee prices (Rwanda's main export product). The sustained political crisis was neither very conducive to robust socioeconomic policies. The genocide and subsequent events resulted in a total collapse of the economy. After seizing power, the RPF initiated policies initially geared towards recovery and, afterwards, reconstruction. In spite of the total breakdown of society, impressive

results were achieved in a relative short period. The Rwandan government embarked on an ambitious strategy to boost modernization and diversification of the economy and achieve (lower) middle-income status in 2020. It also pursued regional economic integration by joining the *Common Market for East and Southern Africa* and the *East African Community*. Efforts were undertaken to increase agricultural productivity by encouraging farmers to grow more suitable crops, based on the conditions in the regions they lived in. Part of this strategy was relocation and "regrouping" farmers in villages, some new, in order to use scarce farmland more efficiently and provide higher quality basis services to the rural population.

In recent years, the Rwandan economy has grown faster than the African average and the other countries of the *East African Community.* Between 2001 and 2011, the Rwandan economy grew by on average 8 percent and was one of the fastest growing economies in the world. Services and the industrial sector (mining and construction) were mainly responsible for this growth. However, agriculture remained the most important sector of the economy. Rwanda appeared to be more on track in achieving the *Millennium Development Goals* than most other African countries. Between 2005/2006 and 2010/2011, poverty was reduced by almost 11 percent (in the period 2000-2005/2006 it amounted to one percent). The number of school pupils increased considerably; the access to health services, clean drinking water, and sanitation improved as well. The high economic growth also contributed to a modest reduction in income inequality.

The RPF embarked on reforming the Rwandese economy. Several sectors were privatized such as telecommunication, banking, and power. Measures were taken to diversify the economy and reduce the country's dependence on agriculture. The government took a number of initiatives to improve the investment climate. In 2010, Rwanda rose the fastest in the *Doing Business Index* (from place 143 to 67) of the World Bank. Corruption remained very low by African standards.

Social and economic progress started in earnest after Kagame took over from Bizumungu as president. It should be noted, however, that it is not too surprising that the results achieved under Kagame were so much more impressive than during the Bizumungu years. The first years after the genocide were dominated by efforts to start everyday life up again, the restoration of law and order, the refugee crisis, and the fight against armed rebel groups. These challenges made it nearly impossible for the Bizumungu government to concentrate on the actual development of the country as well. When Kagame

succeeded Bizumungu in 2000, security and stability had more or less returned to the country. Moreover, it was obvious that the RPF was also pulling the strings during the presidency of Bizumungu. That does not alter the fact that the determination of the Kagame regime to bring economic development to the country appeared to be rather exceptional.

A study carried out within the framework of the *African Power and Politics Program* provides an interesting and original explanation for the economic success of the RPF government.[38] The study focuses on the centralized manner in which resources were mobilized for a long-term development agenda. During the Kagame regime, rent seeking was organized quite differently in comparison to the previous regimes. The new ruling elite used the initial main sources of income, such as contributions by RPF supporters in the diaspora, profits from the trade in minerals during the two Congolese wars, and profits made by parastatals, only to a limited extent for its personal enrichment. The regime mobilized a substantial part of these resources, with the assistance of enterprises under the control of the RPF like *Tri-star Investments* and *Horizon Group*, to support the economic and social agenda of the government (while of course the army was not forgotten either). The RPF made use of these companies to encourage and attract private investment in sectors such as telecommunication and to contribute to the diversification of the economy. Policies and politics were not so much determined by the necessity to create funds for purposes of political patronage as by the realization that rapid economic and social development seemed to be the only viable route to leave behind the ethnic divisions of the past.

Against this background, the policy adjustments implemented in 2007/8 have to be mentioned. In its efforts to turn Rwanda into a middle-income country as fast as possible, the government initially did not regard smallholder agriculture as paramount. It considered the development of a modern, technology-based economy (for example, ICT) as the fastest option for achieving this goal. The 2007 food shortages changed the view of the Rwandan authorities. These shortages, the continuing poverty in the rural areas, along with their possible implications for the political stability of the country led to a reappraisal. The agricultural sector and in particular smallholder agriculture was given an important role in the developmental ambitions of the country. Investment in agriculture increased considerably. While the national budget

38 D. Booth and F. Golooba-Mutebi, "Developmental patrimonialism? The case of Rwanda," *Africa Power and Politics Program*. Working paper 16 (2011).

expenditure on agriculture amounted in 2008 to 4.2 percent, in 2010/11 this percentage had gone up to 10.2.



Illustration 5.3
"ICT bus" in Rwanda

According to the *African Center for Economic Transformation*, Rwanda is a fine example of successful post-conflict reconstruction. Thanks to the determined policies of the government and its ability to provide leadership to the national development effort, Rwanda made impressive progress in improving its business climate. Rwanda has been ranked eighteenth on the ACET transformation index. Although in itself a modest placing, it might be considered quite an achievement, given the recent history of the country (the disastrous consequences of the genocide, a devastating civil war, and the total collapse of the Rwandan state in 1994).

5.4 Response of the political elite

Political cohesion

The long-term cultivation by the colonial authorities of an elite consisting exclusively of Tutsi came to an abrupt end in the years prior to independence with all its political, socioeconomic, and political implications. Encouraged by the Catholic Church, efforts were made, in a short period of time, to cre-

ate a Hutu counter-elite, which were supposed to take over power after independence. The policy to first offer preferential treatment to a specific ethnic part of the elite and then to reverse this policy radically in order to establish a new elite consisting of representatives of another much bigger ethnic group was not particularly helpful in promoting a cohesive elite, which was to rule the country after independence. And so it turned out.

Not only the evident inter-ethnic but also at a later stage intra-ethnic tensions and rivalry determined the relationship between the several elite groups. During the years leading to and after independence, the often violent competition between the "new" Hutu and "old" Tutsi elites took center stage, but after this was decided to the disadvantage of the Tutsi elite, the rivalry within the Hutu elite itself became the main feature of political competition. The Kayibanda regime was dominated by that part of the Hutu elite that, just like the president, came from the south and in particular from Gitarama. The increasing political and economic exclusion on the basis of regional origin intensified the tensions within the Hutu elite. Under pressure the regime resorted in the early 1970s to imposing more and more discriminatory measures against the Tutsi population in order to divert attention from its own failings and internal divisions. Power became even more concentrated in the hands of the representatives from the south. After the military coup in 1973, the Hutu elite coming from the north of the country took over. Close family and marriage ties were a main feature of this elite.

A group consisting primarily of family members of the wife of Habyarimana constituted an important center of power and enjoyed accompanying privileges. They controlled state enterprises, and influenced domestic and foreign policy of Rwanda. The group was known as A*kazu* (little house) or the *Clan de Madame.* The coup of 1973 signified the victory of the Hutu elite from the north over the south. Subsequently internal divisions within this group came to the fore. President Habyarimana and his wife favored that section of the Hutu elite that, just like themselves, originated from Gisenyi over those from Ruhengeri, another region in the north of Rwanda. The economic crisis, the dissatisfaction among the population, and the reintroduction of a multiparty system led to further divisions and fragmentation of the political arena.

The nature of the political settlement under the RPF regime was strongly influenced by the following factors: the genocide and its effects on the population, the military victory of the RPF, the initial threat of Hutu extremists from eastern Congo, and the association of political competition with political violence and killings in post-colonial Rwanda. That is why the RPF opted explic-

itly for (at least initially) an inclusive political approach and a fundamental change compared to the past. The principle of power sharing, as formulated in the Arusha agreement, was to a large extent respected. Moderate Hutu leaders were co-opted in the RPF and the government.

Although it is clear who in Rwanda was pulling the strings from 1994 on, an effort was made to avoid a winner takes all scenario, as was the case under Kayibanda and Habyarimana. The constitution of 2003 stipulates that ministerial posts should be distributed among political parties in line with their number of seats in parliament and that the party occupying the majority of the seats (in reality the RPF) will get no more than half of those. Moreover, in practice it was seen to it that the prime minister and the chairmen of parliament, senate, and supreme court did not belong to the party of the president. All governments in Rwanda became coalition governments.

It was the first time in the post-colonial history of Rwanda that power, at least formally, was no longer distributed on a purely ethnic basis. Opinions differ on the question of to what extent this was also the case in reality. The secrecy around the policy decision-making process within the RPF, the lack (as a consequence) of reliable information, and the polarized debate (outside of Rwanda) or the lack of it (inside Rwanda) about the achievements of the Kagame regime undoubtedly contributed to this. The more extreme position is that there is a remarkable continuity between the pre- and post-genocide regimes in Rwanda.

According to this opinion, those in power during the Habyarimana as well as Kagame regimes accumulated wealth and privileges. Both cliques manipulated ethnicity, the first by turning the Tutsi population group into scapegoats and eventually exterminating them, the other by discriminating Hutu in the name of ethnic "amnesia." Both presidents eliminated political opponents without having to account for it. Continuity is also apparent in not only the exercise of power but also in the nature of the state with its strong authoritarian characteristics. A completely different view emphasizes that the political settlement of 1994 has been more solid, consistent, and inclusive than many suspected. This settlement is supposed to still be based on the following principles: 1) the RPF giving up voluntarily the winner takes all principle in 1994, enshrined as such in the constitution of 2003; 2) combatting "sectarism" by pursuing rapid socioeconomic development; and 3) acceptance by an important section of the Hutu elite that, at least for the time being, given the circumstances, the present political constellation is the only realistic option.



Illustration 5.4
Paul Kagame

At same time, it appears that support for the elite in power has been gradually eroding. Initially the RPF was capable of winning moderate Hutu to its side. In conformity with the Arusha accords, the main democratic Hutu parties participated in the government. However, this multi-ethnic façade could not be maintained for long. Rather quickly a number of non-RPF politicians as well as prominent RPF leaders resigned from the government or were forced to do so. The resignations over the years of prominent Hutu leaders and Tutsi survivors of the genocide undermined the inclusivity of the government. A number of them went into exile after being accused of corruption or *divisionism*. Prominent examples: prime minister Faustin Twigarumungu (Hutu, MDR) who resigned in 1995, minister of Internal Affairs Seth Sendashonga (Hutu, RPF), premier Celestin Rwigema (Hutu, MDR) who resigned in 2002, Joseph Sebarenzi (Tutsi, president of the transitional parliament) in 2000, and, last but not least, the resignation of President Pasteur Bizumungu (Hutu, RPF), also in 2000. In the opinion of an author rather sympathetic towards the Kagame regime, the departure of Bizumungu signified the end of the Rwandan "multi ethnic experiment."[39] Probably more dangerous to the internal cohesion and the RPPF leadership was the opposition from within the RPF, in particular from a number of companions of Kagame who belonged to the inner circle of the RPF. In September 2010, four former high-ranking officials, who initially operated at the highest political levels and subsequently

39 C. Waugh, *Paul Kagame and Rwanda: power, genocide and the Rwandan Patriotic Front* (Jefferson NC, 2004), 152.

went into exile, issued a statement in which they condemned Kagame and his regime in very strong terms.[40]

Ethnic and regional dimensions

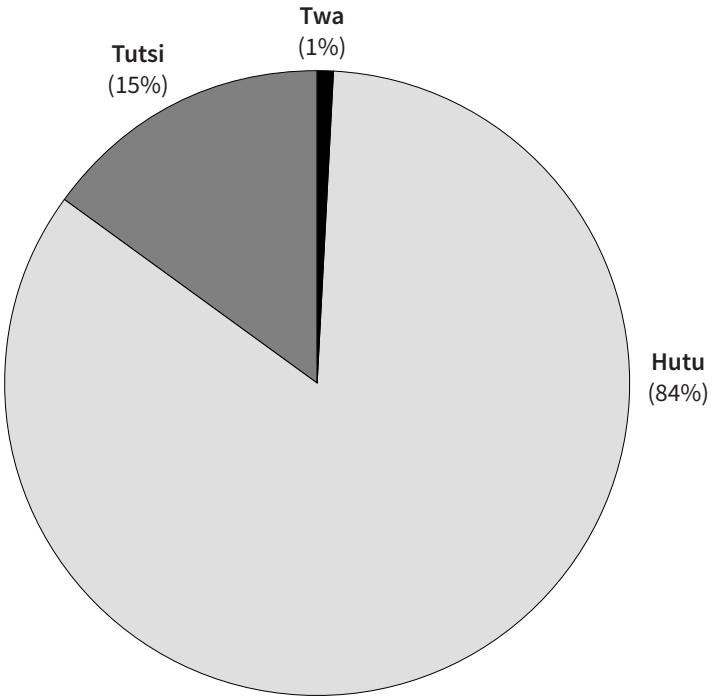


Figure 5.1
Ethnic groups Rwanda

It is obvious that against the background of the genocide in 1994, ethnicity was and is a highly charged topic, which has rightly received a lot of attention. In this section, I would like to limit myself to those aspects that are relevant to an adequate understanding of the present political settlement. First, reference has to be made to the legacy of Belgian colonial rule. As described above, the cultivation for many years of a Tutsi elite as "natural rulers," who were supposed to keep the majority of the population in check, saw to it that the relationship between the majority (Hutu) and minority (Tutsi) was

40 Theodore Rudasingwa, former secretary generl of the RPF; Gerald Gahima, former public prosecutor of Rwanda; Patrick Karegaya, former head of Rwanda's intelligence service; but particularly Kayumba Nyamwasa, former chief of staff of the Rwanda army and once a close confidant of Kagame.

seen from a strictly ethnic perspective. The Hutu population considered the Tutsi chiefs not so much as representatives of the colonial state but of the Tutsi community as such. In the years preceding independence, the colonial authorities made a complete U-turn. In a new round of social engineering, efforts were undertaken to create a Hutu elite as fast as possible, which would take over power from the Belgian colonial authorities after independence at the expense of the old Tutsi elite. Once in power, a number of Hutu politicians used the resentments and feelings of vengeance towards the former Tutsi "rulers" to secure their own position of power.



Illustration 5.5
Genocide monument near Kigali

The logic of the *génocidaires* built on this, based on the following lines of reasoning. The civil war legitimatized the killings because of security considerations. In addition, the tradition of obedience to the state made it possible to associate the genocide with the authority of the state. The most important argument, however, concerned the specific interpretation of ethnicity. This was based on the notion that all Tutsi are basically similar. Tutsi equaled enemy of Rwanda, and the enemy needed to be eliminated.

The focus of the official policy of Kagame, and others, was to never allow a return of ethnically based politics in Rwanda. The policy was explicitly geared towards national unity, based on "ethnic amnesia." References to ethnicity

were off limits. Ethnicity and ethnic divisions, as happened in the past, were never to be used again for political purposes. A strict ban was introduced on using ethnic identification as a political frame of reference ("divisionism").

As indicated earlier, this ban was interpreted rather liberally and often used as a pretext to clamp down on opposition. It was not always clear where the effort to stop ethnic politics ended and frustrating political opposition against the regime began. In spite of the return of stability, law and order in the country, and the socioeconomic achievements, the regime still appeared to be uncertain as to what extent Rwandan society would be able to resist ethnic politics. In the opinion of Reyntjes, the official policy of the RPF to eliminate ethnic discrimination was only cosmetic. After having seized power in 1994, the RPF, according to this author, rapidly monopolized power and the access to resources for the benefit of a small group of Tutsi with strong mutual ties, originating from specific refugee camps in Uganda.[41] The truth might be a bit more nuanced. Although it is clear that the RPF leadership was and is mainly a Tutsi affair, at the same time, there appears to be a certain overlap between ethnic and political alliances. Still, quite a number of prominent Hutu are active RPF members and part of the government. Moreover, political opponents can also be found in the Tutsi community and the RPF inner circle itself, whether or not originating from Uganda.



Illustration 5.6
Countryside in Rwanda

41 F. Reyntjes, "Rwanda ten years on: from genocide to dictatorship," *African Affairs* 103:411 (2004), 177–210.

The poorest and the majority of the Rwandan population live in in the countryside and consist mainly of Hutu smallholders. One of the aims of Rwandan socioeconomic policy is to reduce poverty among this group as fast as possible (see the overview of economic development) in order to boost the legitimacy of a regime that, in the eyes of many Hutu, is dominated by Tutsi. This realization has also shaped the decentralization policy implemented by the RPF. The regime considered decentralization to be an important instrument in speeding up socioeconomic development in the rural areas. Therefore, it emphasized the achievement of rapid and concrete development results. Although this policy went hand-in-hand with the delegation of a number of powers and resources to local governments, the regime saw to it that control by the center over local administration was maintained and the possibilities for creating an autonomous powerbase among the rural Hutu population would be limited. The regime was not prepared to take any chances.

Political instrumentalization of violence

Political violence permeates the recent history of Rwanda. The establishment of ethnically based political parties during the run-up to independence in 1959 resulted immediately in inter-ethnic violence. The factors that contributed to the violent nature of the post-colonial culture in Rwanda can be summarized as follows: the sharpened ethnic distinctions during the colonial period; the political violence between ethnic population groups in the build-up to and after independence, and the subsequent exodus of many thousands of Tutsi; the policy of the Rwandan governments not to allow them to return to their country; the continuing discrimination of the Tutsi who remained behind; the frustrating experiences of a number of Tutsi groups in exile; intra-Huta competition; and demographic pressures on land and the economy in general as well as the political liberalization in the early 1990s. The genocide in 1994 constituted the sad apotheosis.

This came to an end after the RPF seized power in 1994. This did not mean that the RPF regime shunned violence if it was considered necessary. A clear example of this were the military operations by the Rwandan army in the Congo to counter the threat of armed Hutu rebels and the forced clearance of Hutu refugee camps, during which many thousands of civilians perished. In addition, there are strong suspicions that the regime was involved in the liquidation, or efforts of that nature, of a number of political opponents in and outside Rwanda.[42] Topics that are off-limits in Rwanda.

42 For example the death of former minister of Foreign Affairs Zaken Sendashonga, who died in Nairobi in 1995 under suspicious circumstances; the mysterious murder of the vice-president



Illustration 5.7
Kayumba Nyamwasa & Paul Kagame

Political corruption

Elections are not free and fair in Rwanda. Given the total control by the RPF over the political process the use of patronage, and its accompanying costs, to influence the outcome of elections was scarcely an issue in the Rwandan context, unlike some of the other countries under review. Remarkable in the Rwandan case is that the available funds were not used on a large scale either for self-enrichment or to secure political support from specific groups in society. The only exception has been probably the army, which was able to get ahold of sufficient resources at all times. A substantial part of the available resources were used for economic initiatives the regime considered of strategic importance. This is rather exceptional in the region.

An instructive example of this rather unique approach was the difference in the use of the profits resulting from the military presence in the Congo, on the one hand, of Rwanda and of Uganda, on the other. The Ugandan "elite network" that monopolized the trade in minerals, the border trade, and tax collection distributed the profits among themselves and was a loose, unstructured group of UPDF officers, businessmen, rebel leaders, and local administrators. The UPDF and the rebel groups linked to Uganda constituted *de facto* the armed extension of this network. The Rwandan "network" was, however,

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of the Green Party Andre Rwisereka in 2010; and the assassination attempt on Kayumba Nyamwasa, former chief of staff of the Rwandese army, in South Africa in 2010.

directed centrally by the *Congo Desk* of the Rwandan army, which coordinated the Rwandan military and commercial activities in eastern Congo. The profits were partly used to finance the military presence of Rwanda in the Congo and, as such, to keep it outside the official Rwandan budget. One of the reasons for the departure of a number of former allies of Kagame, among whom Bizumungu, appeared to be, according to a number of authors sympathetic to the regime, the lack of access to these funds limiting the possibilities of using public funds to acquire political support. The limited access by the new elite to the "legitimate" spoils of war in Rwanda or the Congo might have been also one of the reasons for the departure of prominent RPF members such as general Kyumba Nyamwasa, initially one of the closest companions of Kagame.

The manner in which the resources generated by political and other interventions were used signified a fundamental break with the past. Prior to the seizure of power by the RPF, the political culture of Rwanda was dominated, just like in the surrounding countries, by considerations based on patronage. Entrepreneurs, for example, needed godfathers within the government or the military to be able to do business. To get this support, money had to change hands. These funds were then partly used to finance political activities. As indicated earlier A*kazu*, a powerful network closely linked to the family of President Habyarimana, was the apex of this system.

Rwanda Patriotic Front

Apart from the personality of Kagame himself, the discipline, the tight organization, and the clear strategy of the RPF during the war as well as in the political arena formed part of the success of the Kagame regime. The ideology and way of operating were initially clearly derived from the experiences and lessons of the *National Resistance Army* in Uganda, in which Kagame and other RPF leaders held important positions. The struggle against Obote was an important frame of reference for Kagame and his companions. To quote Prunier: "The equation present in every 'Ugandan' RPF fighter's mind was MRND = UPC, Habyarimana = Obote and RPF = NRA (and later in the war Kagame = Museveni)."[43] That the RPF was primarily a Tutsi organization (15 percent of the population), while the NRA could count on the support of almost half of the population was conveniently forgotten. The *no-party system* in Uganda also had its attractions for post-genocide Rwanda. In view of the demographics of the country, the experiences with multiparty politics in the final years of the Habyarimana regime and the impact of the genocide on

43 G. Prunier, *The Rwanda crisis. History of a genocide 1959-1994* (New York, 1995), 155.

society, a rapid return to pluralistic politics did not appear a realistic option to the RPF. In line with the NRM philosophy, the RPF emphasized cohesion and collaboration in the aftermath of the genocide.



Illustration 5.8
Return of the RPF from eastern Congo

Given their decisive role in seizing power (as in Uganda), the military commanders played an important and influential role in the RPF. Similar to the NRM in Uganda, close ties existed between the political and military leadership within the RPF. Although military officers were initially very much part and parcel of the political scenery in Rwanda, gradually they became less visible. Still, former military RPF leaders remained part of the Rwanda political elite. Although Hutu constituted the majority of the Rwanda Defence Force (particularly in the lower ranks), the overall leadership of the army remained in the hands of former RPF commanders of Tutsi origin. As was the case with the NRM in Uganda, the army was an important support base for the RPF.

Differing from the NRM, the RPF developed into a relatively tightly organized party having the internal discipline necessary to be able to mobilize public and other resources generated by the RPF for prior-agreed-upon development objectives (and not so much for self-enrichment of the ruling elite). The RPF seemed to have the authority, power, and the willingness to discipline those who did not play by the rules and to reward (moderately) those who did. Whether this will remain the case will depend, among other things, on the question of whether the RPF will also be capable in the future to commit potentially competing elite factions to its agenda. In addition, it is still an open question whether the succession of the present RPF leadership can be

taken care of in an orderly manner. The fact that still only a few high RPF officials do not originate from Uganda, in spite of all recruitment efforts, seems to be an important "weaving fault."

5.5 The role of the international community

After the genocide, the international community showed a lot of sympathy for Rwanda. The RPF faced the task of rebuilding a devastated country, defending itself against the *Interhamwe* and other Hutu rebels operating from the Congo, and prosecuting *génocidaires*, along with implementing political and institutional reforms. Because of the energetic manner Kagame, and others, addressed these problems, Western donor countries offered large scale support to Rwanda. The feeling of not having done enough to preempt the genocide no doubt contributed to this generosity.

In spite of the criticism by Western donor countries about the flawed democratic process in Rwanda, irregularities during elections, limited freedom of expression, and intimidation of the political opposition, Rwanda continued to receive substantial donor support. In addition to the "genocide dividend," the socioeconomic achievements of the country played an important role. Rwanda witnessed sustained economic growth and made spectacular results in achieving a number of *Millennium Development Goals*. The low levels of corruption, political stability, and the effectiveness and active involvement of the government in the implementation of development programs were highly appreciated by the international donor community. Donor countries got value for money in Rwanda. In practice, these achievements appeared to be more important than the "good governance" deficit.

The relationship between Rwanda and the international donor community came under pressure in particular from the alleged support of Rwanda to rebel groups in eastern Congo. Even after the warring parties in the Congo reached a peace agreement (in eastern Congo), Rwanda continued to be suspected of providing military support to Tutsi rebel groups. Initially, this involved the *Congrès National pour la Défense du Peuple* (CNDP). A 2012 United Nations report accused Rwanda of actively supporting another rebel group, partly the successor of the CNDP, the M23. These accusations resulted in a decision by a number of important Rwanda donor countries to temporarily suspend a part of their aid to the country. Preoccupations about the negative implications of the Rwandan interventions for the fragile stability

of the Congo were the main reason to use the aid instrument this time as a conditionality.[44]

5.6 Conclusions

The assumption of power by the RPF in 1994 signified a departure from the post-colonial political economy of Rwanda. The political settlement under the guidance of the RPF proved to be successful in terms of consolidating the political stability of the country, and boosting economic growth and development. The term *potential development coalition* seems to apply to Rwanda. The excluded factions played only a marginal role in Rwandan politics, and the control of the RPF over its supporters was beyond question. Given the lack of transparency about the political decision-making process, it is hard to assess to what extent this settlement is sustainable. The cohesion of the RPF as a political organization and the existing culture of respect for government authority were main assets.

Apart from the break, there was also continuity. The RPF utilized to the full extent the deeply rooted tradition of Rwandan political culture of unconditional obedience to government authority. According to this tradition government is (supposed to be) all powerful, strongly hierarchical in nature, and have effective control over the population. Elections in this context served as a legitimization of existing power arrangements. The regime took care that this façade of electoral legitimacy would not be undermined.

The regime pursued the transformation of the Rwandan economy vigorously. This policy seems to be partly the result of the realization that economic and social developments are the only viable option to bridge the ethnic divisions of the past. Whether this approach, aimed at creating a common interest among the population in a successful socioeconomic development of the country, will, in the future, also be able to neutralize the dangers related to the ethnic divisions from the past and a potentially hostile ethnic majority in the country of course remains to be seen.

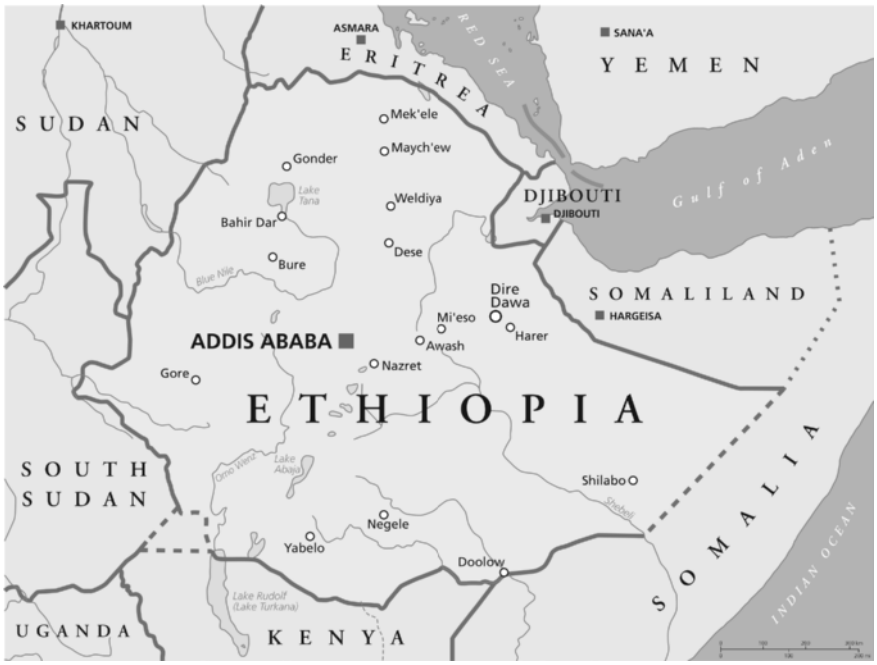
Taking into account the key role of the political elites in instrumentalizing ethnic sentiments in the past, the nature and the extent of the settlement between the RPF leader and parts of the Hutu elite will be of crucial importance in the longer term. Given the relative predominance of the RPF in the Rwan-

44 I was closely involved in the donor meetings about this topic.

dan political arena, the internal cohesion of the RPF itself appears, for the time being, to determine the nature of this arrangement. Within this context, a complicating factor might be the policy of the RPF to utilize the available resources for developmental objectives to a large extent, and not so much for self-enrichment and acquiring political support of important groups in society. This could undermine the support among certain sections of the elite for the regime.

After seizing power in 1994, the political violence that Rwanda had so often been a victim of came to an end. Still, the regime did not hesitate to use force if it was of the opinion that vital interests were at stake. The involvement of Rwanda in the Congo created serious tensions with the international donor community. However, Rwanda might serve as an example of a country that confronted Western donor countries with the dilemma of a "good governance" situation at odds with the expectations and demands by these same donor countries, while at the same time the country in question engaged in very successful and effective development policies.

6 Ethiopia



6.1 What preceded

The history of Ethiopia distinguishes itself from the other countries under review in one important aspect. Ethiopa is the only country in Africa that was able to maintain its independence during the colonial period, for the most part, and therefore went through its own process of state formation. Against this background, the tension between the center and the periphery runs as a common thread throughout the history of Ethiopia. Other historical dividing lines, such as between high- and lowlands, Christianity versus Islam, and the division between ethnic groups, can be linked to this historical dividing line. The Orthodox Christian highlands of Amhara and Tigray constitute the historical nucleus of Ethiopia. Its past goes back to the empire of Axum (first

to the seventh century), which at one time included the northern highlands as well the coast along the Red Sea. Partly as a consequence of the rise of Islam, the empire gradually shrunk again and was reduced to the northern highlands.

The Ethiopian state took on its present shape in the nineteenth century. After the Ethiopian (at the time Abyssinian) victory over Italy in the battle at Adwa in 1896, the empire not only managed to maintain its independence but also to substantially expand its territory. Under the Amhara emperor Menelik II (who ruled from 1889 to 1913) in particular, the empire increased its military power and engaged in a number of wars to bring neighboring regions under its control. Territories outside the historical center of the empire were brought under its rule by force. It was not a foreign colonial power as elsewhere in Africa but the Orthodox Christian elite from the northern highlands that enforced the unification of the modern Ethiopian state and, as a result, gained privileged access to its institutions of power. In a word, the Ethiopian empire was enlarged with territories that, until then, were never associated with the Ethiopian state. Ethiopia was not a victim of the *scramble for Africa*, but an enthusiastic and active participant.

The rulers from the northern highlands succeeded more or less in integrating the highlands of the southern periphery (a part of nowadays Oromia and the southern region of the country) into the Ethiopian state. These conquered territories were administered by representatives of the political elites from Amhara and assimilated local elites, which also took possession of the most fertile lands. These territories, as was customary in the north, were administered on the basis of a feudal structure. In the slipstream of these events, huge numbers of Amhara immigrants established themselves in these areas with the dissemination of Amhara culture as a consequence. The integration of the lowlands in the west and the east, mainly occupied by nomads, went beyond the (financial) reach of the empire. They primarily served as conquered lands and were left to their own devices. The Amhara elite especially looked down on the population of the western periphery. The Muslims living in the eastern lowlands were feared and despised at the same time by many Christian highlanders. The center monopolized power and took possession of the structures of the state, while the periphery was mainly excluded, and given only a marginal political and economic role.

This process went hand-in-hand with the dissemination of the political culture as featured in the northern highlands. This political culture was vertically organized and layered. Society was organized along strong hierarchical

lines, in which the socioeconomic and political status of every individual was clearly defined and as such understood. In this context, authority was absolute. In Ethiopian political tradition, no distinction was made between government and state.

The concept of (political) opposition traditionally held a negative connotation. The display of authority and its continuity constituted an important aspect of the enforcement of power in Ethiopia. Large segments of the population obeyed governments and state officials, simply because they were supposed to be in power. From a historical perspective, control over the Ethiopian state was strongly associated with this tradition, which also clearly left its traces in the present political culture. According to political scientist and Ethiopia expert Christopher Clapham, the main cause of the conflicts that have structurally influenced the formation of the Ethiopian state has been the incompatibility between the hierarchical and authoritarian concept of the state in line with the political culture in the northern highlands and the different ethnic, cultural, social, and economic interests, which could not be accommodated within this concept.[45]

The Orthodox Christian Church played an important role in the process of state formation. Since the fourth century state formation, Christianity and the institution of the Orthodox Church were closely intertwined. The Church provided ideological legitimacy to the ruler, who in turn rewarded the Church with land and accompanying privileges. The alleged threat of Islam, from the eighth century on, in the region consolidated the unity between church and state, which supported an increased centralization of power in the hands of the monarchy.

Moreover, during the long rule of emperor Haile Selassie (1917-1974) Ethiopian statebuilding was closely linked to Amhara culture. The Orthodox Christian faith was actively propagated in other parts of Ethiopia. An Amhara ethnicity-defined political class, in which other elites were moderately assimilated, continued to be in charge. The state became further centralized and bureaucratized. Rebel groups in Tigray, Eritrea, and Ogaden were violently suppressed. The regime made an effort to modernize Ethiopia as well as maintain the feudal, absolutist character of the state – in vain, as became clear in 1974. Against this background, it is rather evident that the process of the formation of the Ethiopian state has been interpreted in different ways:

45 C. Clapham, "Post-war Ethiopia: The trajectories of crisis," in *Review of African Political Economy* 36:120 (2009), 181–192.

For Ethiopian nationalists and in particular Christian highlanders, it has been a cause for pride, while those who have been integrated into the Ethiopian state by force, consider this process as a form of domestic colonialism.

Derg

The student protests that intensified in the second half of the 1960s weakened the empire. The fight against the feudal regime of Haile Selassie went hand-in-hand with a proliferation of political opposition movements, often Marxist-Leninist oriented. Rebellious military officers, however, dealt the final blow to the crumbling regime. After a bloody internal political struggle, power ended up in the hands of the *Derg* under the leadership of colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam. What had started as broad-based resistance against autocratic rule turned eventually into a military dictatorship. The military regime adopted the Marxist-Leninist jargon of the leftist student movement, but simultaneously, and with a lot of violence, eliminated one by one the several competing student movements ("red terror"). The revolution of 1974 also destroyed the material and ideological basis of the empire of Haile Selassie. The close ties between church and state were abruptly terminated. The *Derg* abolished all feudal obligations, nationalized land, financial institutions, and private enterprises, and put agricultural production and markets under control of the state.

Not only the "socialist" transformation of the society but also the numerous military campaigns against insurgent regions were the main features of the *Derg*. Supported by the Eastern Bloc, the Somali army, which had invaded the contested Ogaden region, was beaten. In addition, large-scale military operations were carried out against several regional rebel movements. This uncompromising approach, the miserable circumstances under which the rural population had to live, in combination with the political terror led, in a number of regions, to the establishment of ethnically based rebel movements. Moreover, towards the end of the 1980s, the regime could no longer count on the support of the Soviet Union and its allies. In spite of massive military operations, the *Derg* failed to neutralize the rebel movements, in particular in the north of the country.

The EPRDF in power

In 1991, the revolts in Eritrea and Tigray eventually overthrew the Mengistu regime. The *Tigray People's Liberation Front* (TPLF) had already prepared itself for the fall of the *Derg* regime by establishing the *Ethiopia People's Revolutionary Democratic Front* (EPRDF) in 1989, a collaboration between a number of regional rebel movements. This coalition, which is still in power, con-

sists, in addition to the TPLF, of the *Amhara National Democratic Movement* (ANDM), the *Oromo People's Democratic Organization* (OPDO), and what later would become the *Southern Ethiopia People's Democratic Movement* (SEPDM). The ANDM emerged from that part of the revolutionary student movement that decided in the 1980s to collaborate with the TPLF. Although initially modest in size the organization gained importance after many Amhara prisoners of war joined the ANDM. In view of the active involvement of the TPLF in creating the organization, the ANDM initially found it difficult to be considered as an independent representative of Amhara. The same applied *a fortiori* to the OPDO. The OPDO was established in 1990 partly on the initiative of the TPLF and ANDM, and became a member of the EPRDF as well. Former ANDM members of Oromo origin constituted the first members of the OPDO. Given the background of the establishment of the OPDO and the presence of a rival, the *Oromo Liberation Front,* the OPDO encountered problems as well while trying to build its own support base among the Oromo population. Finally, several *Popular Democratic Organizations* in the south of the country (supported by the EPRDF) were transformed into the SEPDM in 1994. It was quite clear from the beginning that the TPLF was the dominant party in this coalition.



Figure 6.1
EPRDF coalition

After 30 years of civil war, the victor, the EPRDF, found a highly centralized and militarized country and a ravaged economy. In 1991, a transitional government was established under the leadership of the EPRDF. During that year, a "peace and democracy" conference adopted a transitional charter, which served as a temporary constitution. On the initiative of the EPRDF an interim Legislative was established in which many political organizations participated. The opposition that opposed the ethnically based regionalization of the country or was considered a potential political rival was, however, not invited by the EPRDF. Parties that initially participated in the transitional government, but were in disagreement with the political positions of the

EPRDF or were not prepared to accept its leadership, were soon excluded from power as well. Almost immediately tensions arose between the *Oromo Liberation Front* and the EPRDF. Towards the end of 1993, the transitional government only consisted of the EPRD and a number of ethnic parties closely linked to the EPRDF.

The EPRDF-led transitional government pushed for three major reforms: the introduction of a parliamentary democracy, liberalizing the economy, and federalization of Ethiopia along ethnic lines. These reforms featured prominently in the constitution, which came into effect in 1995. The explicit recognition of ethnicity as an organizing political principle was especially quite remarkable. While in other African countries leaders distanced themselves, in any case officially, from ethnic politics, the new regime under the leadership of Meles Zenawi explicitly took into account the ethnic diversity of Ethiopia. The ethnicity-based federal system introduced by the government signified a fundamental break with the past. The regions created along ethnic lines received wide-ranging powers including the right of secession. Earlier in 1993, Eritrea made use of this provision and became an independent state. From now on Ethiopia consisted of nine ethnicity-based, regional states and two federally administered cities (Addis Ababa, Dire Dawa).

6.2 Elections[46]

In the 1990s, the EPRDF faced opposition on two fronts: on the one hand, a number of regional parties and former rebel movements that were of the opinion that the type of federalism introduced by the EPRDF was just a divide-and-rule tactic to be able to remain in power and, on the other, a pan-Ethiopian nationalist tendency, which as a matter of principle opposed ethnic federalism and the secession of Eritrea. Initially the opposition boycotted the political process, as was the case during the referendum of 1994 and the parliamentary elections in 1995. In 2000, the opposition decided to participate again in the election but was unable to threaten the position of the EPRDF.

46 Ethiopia does not have a presidential system like the other countries under review. The prime minister, appointed by parliament has the main executive powers. The presidency is basically of a ceremonial nature.

Table 6.1
Results 1995 national elections in Ethiopia

Party/[Coalition]	Number of Seats (548)*
Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front [EPRDF]	483
Independents	08
Others	46
Unconfirmed	11

Source: africanelections.tripod.com

Table 6.2
Results 2000 national elections in Ethiopia

Party/[Coalition]	Number of Seats (547)
Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front [EPRDF] ▪ Oromo People's Democratic Organization (OPDO) ▪ Amhara National Democratic Movement (ANDM) ▪ Southern Ethiopia People's Democratic Movement (SEPDM) ▪ Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF)	481 183 146 112 40
EPRDF-Affiliated Parties	37
Others	16
Independents	13

Source: africanelections.tripod.com

Thanks to the national reputation and dominance of the EPRDF and the limited geographic appeal of a number of only regionally organized opposition parties, the EPRDF initially did not face serious competition. This changed during the 2005 elections. The two most important opposition coalitions proved to be a real political threat to the EPRDF. The *Coalition for Unity and Democracy* (CUD) could count on the support of large parts of the urban population, the higher educated, and the Amhara rural population. The *United Ethiopian Democratic Forces* (UEDF) was considered the voice of opponents of the regime from Oromia and the south of the country, in particular. The popularity of the opposition appeared to be more the result of a protest against the ruling party than because of its political program. Parts of the population were concerned about the "loss" of Eritrea, ethnic federalism, and the authoritarian manner in which the EPRDF governed the country. The

ANDM, especially, seemed to be unable to counter these grievances in Amhara, as put forward by the CUD. Moreover, the war against Eritrea stirred up nationalist sentiments in society. Together with the weakening of the authority of the regime as a result of the split within the TPLF about the conflict with Eritrea, the opposition was granted new political legitimacy.



Illustration 6.1
Demonstration by political opposition in 2005

On the basis of the disputed (by the opposition) outcome, the EPRDF and allied parties won 371 seats in parliament (68 percent), the CUD 109 seats, and the UEDF 52. The CUD constituted the biggest political threat, especially in Addis Ababa, where the coalition gained an absolute majority. However, the opposition refused to take over the administration of the city and withdrew from the political process in order to protest against alleged vote rigging, intimidation by the EPRDF, and the use of force against its political leaders.

Table 6.3
Results 2005 national elections in Ethiopia

Party/[Coalition]	Number of Seats (547)
Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front [EPRDF]	327
Coalition for Unity and Democracy [CUD]	109
United Ethiopian Democratic Forces [UEDF]	52
Oromo Federalist Democratic Movement (OFDM)	11
Benishangul-Gumuz People's Democratic Unity Front (BGPDUF)	08
Afar National Democratic Party (ANDP)	08
Gambela People's Democratic Movement (GPDM)	03
Sheko and Mezenger People's Democratic Unity Organization (SMPDUO)	01
Harari National League (HNL)	01
Somali People's Democratic Party (SPDP)	23
Argoba National Democratic Organization (ANDO)	01
Independent	01
Vacant	02

Source: africanelections.tripod.com

The 2005 elections turned out to be a "historical watershed." The EPRDF saw the unexpected popularity of the opposition as an existential threat to its position. It had anticipated electoral losses in the cities but not in the countryside, in particular in Amhara. The EPRDF chose to consider all political protests as law-and-order problems and suppressed these with a great deal of force. The opposition was being neutralized in a number of ways. Parliament adopted new laws to make life difficult for the opposition. In addition, the EPRDF reorganized itself and embarked on an expansion of the coalition nationwide. EPRDF membership increased from 700,000 in 2005 to 6.5 million in 2013, with the majority being farmers.

The various opposition parties faced serious internal divisions. As a consequence of the pressure by the EPRDF and these internal differences of opinion, the opposition fell apart after 2005. It took part in the 2010 elections, however, without having addressed these disagreements. Divided, intimidated, and badly organized, the opposition was unable to pose an electoral threat to the EPRDF in 2010. The coalition was well prepared and left nothing to chance, especially in the rural areas.

Table 6.4
Results 2010 national elections in Ethiopia

Party/[Coalition]	Number of Seats (547)
Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front [EPRDF]	499
Somali People's Democratic Party (SPDP)	24
Benishangul-Gumuz People's Democratic Party (BGP-DP)	9
Afar National Democratic Party (ANDP)	8
Gambela People's Democratic Movement (GPDM)	3
Argoba People's Democratic Organization (APDO)	1
Harari National League (HNL)	1
Ethiopian Federal Democratic Unity Forum [MEDREK]	1
Independent	1

Source: africanelections.tripod.com

In spite of the legalization of political opposition in 1991, the same coalition of political parties has dominated the political landscape since then. The EPRDF won the elections in 1995, 2000, 2005, and 2010 and has been in charge of the federal government during this period. The four regional EPRDF parties have been administering the four most important regions of the country; the five other regions were governed by parties allied to the EPRDF. Exclusion and polarized politics were the main features of the political debate. Government and opposition operated on the basis of very rigid and inflexible positions, from which they opposed each other, instead of having a genuine political dialogue.

With the exception of 2005, the political opposition was unable to threaten the political dominance of the EPRDF. Since 1991, hundreds of political parties have been established in Ethiopia. Most of them were small, found it hard to cooperate among themselves, and disappeared again very quickly. The landscape of political parties consisted, first of all, of officially registered parties, with the majority refusing to participate in the electoral process until 2000. Furthermore, political organizations agitating against the regime from abroad among which groups advocating the use of force to remove the government; these groups enjoyed support among parts of the diaspora. The nature of the opposition against the regime also differed. Some parties had a specific ethnic background; others had a multi-ethnic base. From an ideological point of view the latter group often presented itself as advocates of

political liberalism and individual citizen's rights. Most of the parties based on ethnicity emphasized collective rights along ethnic lines.

As far as the opposition is concerned, one can distinguish two phases since 1991. Until 2000, the majority preferred not to participate in elections, not only as a protest against the absence of a level playing field but even more so as part of an effort to deny legitimacy to the political process as a whole. The opposition was unwilling to accept the new constitution and EPRDF rule. From 2000, however, opposition parties did participate in national and regional elections. This change in tactics seemed to have been influenced by the fear that the electoral board would no longer recognize these parties.

Most of the time, coalitions of opposition parties proved short-lived. Relevant factors in this context involved the intimidating political climate and obstruction by the EPRDF, a collaboration, based more on a collective dislike of the regime than on a common agenda, the radical political positions of parts of the diaspora, and lack of internal party democracy and of genuine efforts to reach consensus.



Illustration 6.2
2010 elections in Ethiopia

6.3 Short overview of economic developments

The war between Ethiopia and Eritrea (1998-2000) meant a serious setback for the economic recovery of the country, which had begun to kick off after many years of civil war and signified the start of a period in which Ethiopia embarked on new economic policies. It was after the split within the TPLF that the EPRDF explicitly decided that the Ethiopian version of the *developmental state* was the most suitable model for the development of a country like Ethiopia. In this model, the state was to play an important role in pushing the economy forward. The results were impressive. In the period 2004-2011 Ethiopia witnessed an average growth of more than 10 percent. Poverty was reduced in rural as well as urban areas. However, in its Country Partnership Strategy, the World Bank identified the following main challenges in this context: maintaining macro-economic stability, the still very high poverty levels, dependence on food aid, the low quality of basic social services, and the limited capacity of the public sector.[47]

The Ethiopian developmental model relied heavily on large government investments (as in Asia), but was faced with a very low savings ratio and limited availability of local resources to finance these investments (unlike Asia). To sustain the high economic growth, the government, in the opinion of the World Bank, should have opened up more space in the economy for the national and international private sector. Given its size, agriculture remained the backbone of the economy and the main source of economic growth, since the majority of the Ethiopian population lived in the countryside. Although Ethiopia experienced high economic growth and achieved impressive results in the area of poverty reduction, the economic transformation, held so dear by the EPRDF, lagged behind. As in other African countries, the services sector was the main source of economic growth.

The basis for the developmental agenda of the EPRDF was the *Growth and Transformation Plan 2011-2015* (GTP I). The main objective of GTP I was to see to it that Ethiopia reached the status of a (lower) middle-income country by 2025. Within this context, the following ambitious goals were formulated: an average GDP growth of 11 percent per year within a stable macroeconomic framework; achieving the *Millennium Development Goals* in the social sectors, in particular, education and health; and the realization of a stable and democratic state. The GTP put great emphasis on economic growth

47 "Country partnership strategy for the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia," *World Bank* (Washington, 2012)

and creating jobs, in particular, in modern agriculture and industry. During a transition period, special attention was given to supporting areas of the country with chronic food shortages.



Illustration 6.3
Growth and Transformation Plan

The rationale behind the Ethiopian model of development

The EPRDF explicitly rejected the notion that the free market was the ideal mechanism to increase production and to allocate resources for the benefit of economic transformation. Such "neoliberal" economic policies would only serve the interests of the non-productive sectors of the economy. Because of the numerous market distortions in development countries, the market in the opinion of the EPRDF would not be able to produce accelerated economic growth. This was certainly the case in Ethiopia, which, in comparison with other countries, scarcely had any comparative advantage, and where patronage and the unwillingness to create added value dominated the private sector. Under these circumstances, market forces alone did not offer an appropriate solution. What was needed was a strong activist state that could operate independently from the private sector and centralize the necessary resources for economic development. Therefore, the government took on a leading initiating and supervisory role in facilitating and stimulating economic growth.

Of crucial importance in the eyes of the EPRDF was a government that had the will and the power to discipline the market and the private sector in such a manner that economic transformation could be enforced. For that, a pri-

vate sector was needed that focused on creating added value in industries and services instead of rent seeking. This term has, in the Ethiopian context, a clearly negative connotation. Such an interpretation had far-reaching implications for the private sector. This sector needed to be explicitly coached and encouraged in order to contribute actively to economic development. Only in this manner could the private sector make a constructive contribution, complementary to that of the government. The dominant position of the government in the economy would continue until the private sector had developed sufficiently to be able to take the lead. It goes without saying that this long-term vision on the part of the Ethiopian political leadership concerning the development of the country also had political ramifications.

The so-called "endowment" companies played an important role in this undertaking. Following the example of Tigray, where the *Endowment Fund for the Rehabilitation of Tigray* (EFFORT) was active, similar outfits were established in other regions. They financed or facilitated investment in areas where there was insufficient interest on the part of the private sector. Originally the starting capital consisted of funds made available by the EPRDF coalition parties after having seized power. Although formally no ties existed between the EPRDF and these companies, a number of EPRDF politicians were intimately involved in these enterprises, which focused in particular on politically sanctioned commercial activities. In addition, the government had a number of state enterprises at its disposal to push the economy in the required direction. At the same time, some important economic sectors were excluded from privatization, such as the financial sector, telecommunication, power, and the airlines. The regime maintained close ties with the MIDROC business conglomerate of Mohamed Al Amoudi (a businessman and billionaire of Saudi-Ethiopian origin), which had interests in various sectors of the Ethiopian economy.

In spite of all the efforts of the EPRDF regime to bring about structural transformation of the Ethiopian economy, in addition to economic growth and poverty reduction, the reality is that Ethiopia is still very much at the beginning of this process. Ethiopia occupies the seventeenth place in the economic transformation index list of 21 African countries. The negative effects of an inherited centralized economic system, the *de facto* discouragement of private sector development and of the long civil war during the *Derg* regime, are still very much felt in Ethiopian society.

6.4 Response of the political elite

Political cohesion

After coming to power in 1991, the main priorities of the EPRDF were to democratize the country, to solve the "national question." and to fight poverty and underdevelopment. The Ethiopian state was thoroughly reorganized. A formal multiparty system was introduced, elections were held, a new ethnicity-based administrative system was introduced, the bureaucracy was decentralized, and several sectors of the economy were privatized. The manner in which these reforms were implemented had important consequences for the composition and cooperation among the political elites. A number of interacting factors were at play: the interpretation by the regime of the concept of revolutionary democracy, the role of and relationship between party and state as regards the development of the country, the implications of the implementation of ethnic federalism, the role of the TPLF in the political arena, the personality of (the late) Prime Minister Meles Zenawi, and a certain convergence of existing political traditions in Ethiopia and the political ideology of the EPRDF.

Revolutionary democracy

Before coming to power, The TPLF/EPRDF already put forward the notion of revolutionary democracy. The notion of revolutionary democracy was derived from Lenin's concept of proletarian democracy, meant as a revolutionary equivalent of "parliamentary bourgeois democracy." The application of this concept to developing countries where non-capitalist governments and movements were in power (but where no socialist revolution had taken place yet) became known as revolutionary democracy.

Despite the fact that the political system introduced by the EPRDF after 1991 had the appearance of a liberal parliamentary democracy, the revolutionary democracy philosophy was not abandoned. After the electoral upheaval of 2005, the concept was revitalized as part of a renewed emphasis by the party on ideology. Although it was not always very clear what was meant by revolutionary democracy, the concept was once again an important reference for the EPRDF. The version adapted to the Ethiopian context emphasized the collective interests and rights of the poor masses, in the past oppressed and primarily living in the countryside, and of the various ethnic minorities. It focused on the crucial importance of inclusive economic development. In the opinion of the EPRDF granting rights on the basis of ethnicity and political power to ethnic parties in the new regions constituted an important component of this concept.

According to this view, a liberal democracy as such would jeopardize the interests of the majority of the population, since it would lead to a rapid accumulation of wealth by competing rent seeking elites at the expense of the (poor) population. In the eyes of the EPRDF, there are two fundamental differences between liberal and revolutionary democracy: the first emphasizes individual rights and representation, while the second promotes collective rights and direct political participation (by means of mass organizations), in short, an interpretation which is rather diferent from the Western view and which cannot be easily aligned to the existing parliamentary system in Ethiopia.

In the opinion of the EPRDF, the relevance of this concept is limited by time. Economic growth and development will eventually result in the formation of clearly defined groups in society with different socioeconomic interests and will provide the basis for a functioning liberal "Western" democracy.[48] In the ideological rhetoric of the EPRDF, the necessity of a productive, well-educated middle class is emphasized, not only because of its importance for the development of the economy but also to underpin the eventual transition towards a competitive, liberal democracy.

But that has not been the case as yet. Such a middle class does not exist in Ethiopia. In the opinion of the EPRDF, economic growth and transformation in the present phase of development of the country can only be sustained and be in the interest of the majority of the population, if the principles of revolutionary democracy are applied as well. An unregulated introduction of a competitive political system would only be misused by rich elites and lead to exploitation of the poor. According to the EPRDF, revolutionary democracy under the leadership of a vanguard party, in combination with the developmental state, is the only democratic option under the present circumstances. The EPRDF considers itself to be the party or political coalition best equipped to implement this agenda. Following the example of the TPLF, the parties that are members of the EPRDF are organized on the basis of the classic Leninist principle of a vanguard party and are established along democratic-centralist lines.

The result was a rather hybrid political system. Although the EPRDF opted in the early 1990s for a pluralist political system and a parliamentary democracy, the article of faith with regard to revolutionary democracy and the

48 These arguments show similarities with the rationale behind the Ugandan *Movement* system, which is not surprising taking into account – to a certain extent – the common ideological background of NRM and TPLF when they were still operating as resistance movements.

need of a vanguard party, which should be in charge of the political process, simultaneously remained equally valid. Apart from the ideological dimension, the unexpected outcome of the 2005 elections had also something to do with this. Against this background, elections in the eyes of the EPRDF might be a necessary but certainly not an adequate condition for the success of the democratization process in Ethiopia.

Party and state

Roughly three phases can be distinguished in the relationship between state and party. The period 1991-2001 showed two separate power structures: state and party. The relationship between the two came under pressure during the war with Eritrea. A number of leading member of the TPLF (the most important party within the EPRDF coalition) opposed the course vis-à-vis Eritrea as set out by prime minister Meles Zenawi (also TPLF). The outcome of this internal TPLF party struggle brought about a shift of power from the party to state institutions. The emphasis from now on was on building the capacity of state institutions. The possibility for the party to make autonomous decisions became more restricted. Priority was given to strengthening of the capacity of politically active party members within the government bureaucracy. After the electoral upset in 2005, the emphasis shifted back again to the further development of the party as separate entity and as the driving force behind the Ethiopian development model: "The ruling party's self-conceptualisation is that it 'deals' with the software of developmental change, whilst the government deals with the 'hardware.'"[49]

The blending of party and state came with a price. It is clear that the EPRDF exercised strong influence on the Executive. Not only did the party determine to a large extent the policies of the government but it also had an important say in the appointment of high-ranking officials. The absence of any separation between party and state meant that Ethiopian bureaucrats became highly politicized. Party membership and loyalty to the EPRDF became important conditions for making a career for oneself. This created a problem. In view of the decisive role given to the government and its institutions in the Ethiopian development model, a competent and, to a certain extent, independent state bureaucracy is necessary to make the model work. The scale and the frequency of political appointments in all sectors of the state, in tandem with the traditional hierarchical political culture, did not particularly contribute to a well-equipped bureaucracy.

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49 S. Vaughan, M. Gebremichael, 'Ethiopia: Country Level study'. Report for the European Union. 2014. xii.

Ethnic federalism

According to the constitution, Ethiopia is a federal state with far-reaching powers for the regions. The constitution recognizes fully the identity of each ethnic group, including language and culture. The federal administrative organization of the state, based on ethnicity, allowed for the rise of new regional elites. For the first time in the history of Ethiopia, political and bureaucratic appointments went to representatives of local ethnic population groups on a large scale. In practice, these rights and powers were curtailed. Local political elites were, at the same time, an integral part of the existing political system, in which all regions were governed by parties that were also members of the EPRDF coalition or closely linked to it. Moreover, the EPRDF itself was structured in a very centralist manner. Last but not least, the careers of many leaders of the regional parties in power were based and depended on personal relationships with their EPRDF mentors in the capital. The federal government was therefore still capable of greatly influencing the policies of the regions and imposing uniform policies, procedures, and rules. In reality, all the important decisions of a political nature were taken at the central, federal level, and subsequently via the different parties imposed on the regions. In such a context, in which the same parties were in charge at a central as well as a regional level, there was hardly any space for political pluralism at the local level.

Other factors were also at play that saw to it that devolution of power was rather limited. The constitution stipulates that the policies of the regional states should be in line with federal norms and principles. In addition, the capacity at the regional level to be able to make autonomous decisions was still underdeveloped. That was especially the case in regions in the periphery of Ethiopia like Somali, Afar, Gambella, and Benishangul Gumuz. The center exercised control over most of the financial resources of the regions as well (federal subsidies). Behind the façade of a formally highly decentralized administrative structure was hidden a less visible but very effective oversight by the central authorities. In spite of the nominal decentralization of power to the regional and local authorities, the federal state remained powerful and very much in charge.

The role of the TPLF and of Meles Zenawi

No doubt the TPLF was the most important party within the EPRDF coalition. The TPLF (and its slipstream the EPRDF) had beaten the *Derg* and decided the civil war in its favor. The TPLF was the driving force behind the establishment of similar parties in other regions of Ethiopia. The founder of the Ethiopan state in its present shape and prime minister (until his death in

2012) was Meles Zenawi, who was the political leader of the TPLF as well. Opinions differ whether or not the TPLF is still the completely dominating party within the coalition as was the case during the first years of the regime. The fact that political discussions and decision-making within the EPRDF takes place exclusively behind closed doors makes it difficult to answer this question. It is clear, however, that the political decisions taken within the TPLF were still, to a great extent, influencing internal political events in Ethiopia as a whole.

From a historical point of view, the rift within the TPLF central committee in 2001 was of crucial importance for the political and economic direction of Ethiopia. Initially the disagreements concerned Ethiopia's position towards Eritrea. A number of senior TPLF leaders blamed Prime Minister and TPLF chairman Meles Zenawi for having been insufficiently assertive prior to and during the war with Eritrea. In addition and perhaps more importantly, opinions differed on the proper development strategy for Ethiopia. Eventually, Meles Zenawi and his supporters gained the upper hand. An internal party cleansing and a shift in power in favor of Prime Minister Meles Zenawi and the political institutions in Addis Ababa followed, at the expense of the TPLF political headquarters in Mekelle (capital of Tigray). A number of TPLF veterans had to step down. Meles Zenawi emerged from this political crisis as the undisputed leader of the TPLF.



Illustration 6.4
Meles Zenawi

This outcome made possible the implementation of a development strategy, which is still valid today. The doctrine of government-led development towards *developmental capitalism* was linked to the vanguard role of the EPRDF. The political leadership, albeit not always visible, also changed somewhat in character. Together with the dominant position of Prime Minister and TPLF leader Meles Zenawi, a more collective-oriented leadership was established with a more important role for the other EPRDF partners in the decision-making process than before. This possibly facilitated the political continuity after the death of Meles Zenawi. Paradoxically, the replacement of a number of disproportionately powerful TPLF veterans by a more balanced EPRDF leadership came about due to the evergrowing power of the TPLF chairman.

Not only as a politician but also from a policy perspective, Meles Zenawi left his mark on Ethiopia. The Prime Minister never finished his dissertation "African development: Dead ends and new beginnings," but a draft has been preserved.[50] It constitutes the justification of and a blueprint for the *democratic developmental state*, as has been put in place in Ethiopia. According to Zenawi, the political process determines the extent of economic transformation in developing countries. The political forces that are capable and willing to implement this transformation need to be assured of a longer period in power than can usually be offered by the limited time scale of an election cycle. At the same time, the state, in the opinion of Meles Zenawi, has to be "democratic." In view of the attractiveness of democracy to the population, the international context, and especially the existing ethnic divisions, there is, according to Zenawi, no future for African countries without a certain democratic legitimacy.

The most likely scenario for a state that aims to be developmental as well as democratic is a political settlement with a dominant political party or coalition. Initially the private sector cannot be a part of such a coalition, as it has to be sufficiently independent to be able to punish the "non-productive" behavior of the private sector and reward the creation of added value. The basis of such a coalition must be initially rural in nature. The majority of the population lives in the countryside and has, according to Zenawi, nothing much to gain from patronage and rent seeking. That is how the necessary continuity can be guaranteed. The political implications are clear: For the successful economic development of Ethiopia, representatives of the political

50 http://cgt.columbia.edu/files/conferences/Zenawi_Dead_Ends_and_New_Beginnings.pdf (2012).

class, who have the will and the capacity to implement this agenda, should stay in power for a substantial period of time. The dominant position of the EPRDF in Ethiopian politics had been legitimized.

Continuity and change

The seizure of power by the EPRDF in 1991 signified a radical break with the past. At the same time there was a certain historical continuity as well in the manner in which (political) power was exercised. Traditionally in the political culture of the Ethiopian highlands, great importance was attached to a government that could guarantee stability, efficient administration, and united, hierarchical leadership. The *modus operandi* of the EPRDF fitted well within this tradition. In addition to the political culture in Ethiopia, the Leninist ideological legacy emphasizing the leading role of a vanguard party played an important role. Against this background, the concept of the Ethiopian development model was familiar territory: The importance placed, particularly in the highlands, on order and stability, based on hierarchy and authority, sat well with an omnipresent and directive government (an essential component of the promoted model of development), which was rather unique compared with other African countries (perhaps with the partial exception of Rwanda). Subsequently this "holistic" understanding of authority led to a blurring of the institutional distinction between state, government, and party.

One could also recognize a certain continuity in comparison to the *Derg* regime: top-down ideology-driven policymaking, a marginal role for independent media, civil society organizations, human rights groups, and trade unions, and the overlap between party and government institutions. Reflecting on the 2005 elections, the Dutch Ethiopia specialist Jan Abbink noted: "The 2005 elections and their aftermath thus revealed major constraints in Ethiopia's political system, underlining that after the regimes of Emperor Haile Selassie (1930-74) and the military leader Mengistu (1974-91), centralist authoritarianism is not gone but perhaps is being reinvented in a new form."[51] The question whether this type of exercise of power constitutes an impediment in the present Ethiopian development context will be addressed later in this book.

The political development, as explained above, of course also created losers. The regime, in power since 1991, has a long-term agenda regarding the development of the country. The EPRDF considers itself as the only party capa-

51 J. Abbink, "Discomfiture of democracy? The 2005 election crisis in Ethiopia and its aftermath," *African Affairs* 105:419 (2006), 174.

ble of actually implementing this agenda. After the electoral shock in 2005, the regime consolidated its power to such an extent that a repetition of the uncertainty about election outcomes seemed unlikely. That part of the Ethiopian elite that was represented by the opposition remained excluded from political power during the electoral cycles in the period under review.

The development model introduced by the EPRDF imposed restrictions anyway on groups within Ethiopian society having political aspirations. In its 2012 Country Partnership Strategy for Ethiopia, the World Bank summarizes the situation as follows: "EPRDF's dominance has allowed it to establish a strongly interventionist 'developmental state' system, which is often perceived as limiting the space and role of non-government social, political and economic actors in economic growth, promotion of liberal democracy and pluralism. These include non-governmental organizations and civil society organizations, whose role is limited largely to service delivery under recent legislation; private media outlets, whose activities are also regulated by strict legislation and a tough judicial approach to editorial freedom; and private sector investors, who often also feel their interests are neglected by a government determined to curb what it sees as anti-development 'rent-seeking.'"[52]

The issue of integration (or the lack thereof) of the Muslim population in the political system is burdened with history. Until the fall of the empire in 1974, the Orthodox Christian faith was the official religion of the state. Islam entered the country in the seventh century, its expansion started in the tenth century. Generally speaking, the Orthodox Christian elite prevailed over the Muslim elite within a context of pragmatic co-existence. Initially the majority of Muslims were not part of the Ethiopian state but lived in the semi-autonomous regions in the east of what became later Ethiopia. The separation between church and state, as stipulated in the 1995 constitution, was to the advantage of the Muslim (and Protestant) population. The strategy by the EPRDF to grant religious freedom to all denominations was prompted by its experiences of the deeply religious population in the rural areas during the rebellion against the *Derg*. On the other hand, recognition of religious diversity in Ethiopia fitted in with the EPRDF concept of ethno-regional federalism. The dominant position of the Orthodox Church in Ethiopian society was brought to an end. The position of Muslims, from a political as well as an economic perspective, improved considerably. A growing number of Mus-

52 World Bank, "Country partnership strategy for the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia" (Washington, 2012), 2.

lims held government and public functions, and Muslims were represented at all party and state levels.

Simultaneously the EPRDF pursued a consistent policy to stop religion or religious organizations from becoming a vehicle for mobilizing anti-EPRDF sentiments. In the second half of the 1990s, the government became increasingly preoccupied with the trend among certain groups of Ethiopian Muslims towards religious activism, which was interpreted as politicizing Islam in Ethiopia. The 9/11 attacks, the increasing geopolitical tensions in the region, and the rise of radical Islamic groups in neighboring Somalia contributed to the worries. In the opinion of the government, the political radicalization among certain groups took root to such an extent that it felt obliged to take action. A number of Islamic organizations were abolished. The government imposed restrictions on others. The *Ethiopian Islamic Affairs Supreme Council* (EIASC), strongly under the influence of the government, became the sole representative of all Muslims in Ethiopia. The perceived preference given by the government to Christians, the intervention in Somalia, the interference by the government in internal Muslim affairs, in particular with regard to the EIASC, resulted in a more critical stance of parts of the Muslim population towards the EPRDF than previously had been the case. As a consequence, new tensions entered the present political system, which might have implications in the long-term for the tenability of the existing settlement.

The tenability of the present coalition

To what extent has the EPRDF coalition, in power since 1991, succeeded in establishing a sufficiently broad political base to implement its long-term development agenda? According to Christopher Clapham in an article in 2009, this coalition, with its roots in the local revolt in Tigray against the *Derg*, has failed in this respect.[53] He put forward the following arguments: disagreements within the regime itself, the opposition in the big cities as well as among Ethiopian nationalists, the wish of several "nationalities" for greater autonomy, and the problems related to the many conflicts in the Horn of Africa. Other authors point to the lack of "ethnic" legitimacy or of an electoral mandate.

However, the following observations should be added. In spite of the crisis within the dominant party (TPLF) of the coalition in 2001 and the unexpected strong performance during the 2005 elections, the political base of EPRDF

53 C. Clapham, "Post-war Ethiopia: The trajectories of crisis," *Review of African Political Economy*, 36:120 (2009), 181–192.

coalition was solid enough not only to remain in power since 1991 but also to implement an ambitious development program and mobilize the necessary resources.

The death of the undisputed leader of the country, Meles Zenawi, in 2012 did not alter that either. The chaos after his death, expected by many, failed to happen. Apart from the strong economic growth and the spectacular reduction of poverty in Ethiopia, the successful institutionalization of the party organization might be part of the explanation. After the 2010 elections, which confirmed the dominance of the EPRDF, the party oversaw a process of gradual resignation of a number of political veterans and the entry of a new generation of leaders taking office, who constituted a more ethnically balanced representation. It appeared that the EPRDF leadership were fully aware of the deteriorating health situation of the prime minister and prepared a smooth transition. The successor of Meles Zenawi as prime minister, Hailemariam Desalegn, originated from the south, while the three deputy prime ministers represented each a member of the EPRDF coalition and therefore a region. Many considered Hailemariam to be a compromise candidate (a Protestant from the south) who did not pose a threat to the other factions within the EPRDF.

The political culture in Ethiopia, which attaches great importance to a strong government, the inclusion of regional elites, the control over government institutions, and the internal divisions among the excluded part of the political elite, all contributed to the consolidation of the existing political settlement. The ruling coalition did not seem to base its legitimacy primarily on its electoral mandate. The way in which the election victories were normally achieved must have been noted by every Ethiopian citizen. Preferably, for purposes of legitimacy, reference was made to the socioeconomic progress in recent years. As indicated earlier, the ideological justification for legitimizing the regime in this manner was based on the conviction that, according the principles of revolutionary democracy, the EPRDF as vanguard party is best equipped to lead and shape the development of Ethiopia.[54]

54 See also the *Post Scriptum* at the end of this chapter.

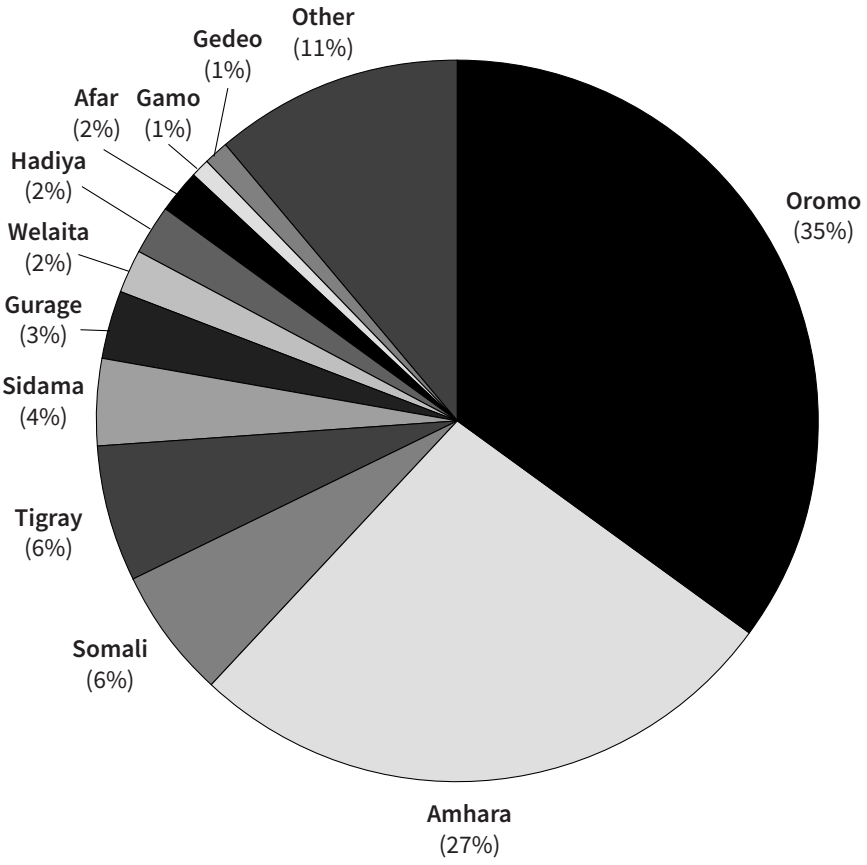


Figure 6.2
Ethnic groups Ethiopia

Ethiopia has a population of more than 90 million people and more than 70 ethnic groups. Approximately 62 percent of the population consists only of two ethnic groups: Oromo (33 million) and Amhara (26 million). Somali (6 million) and Tigray (6 million) together constitute 12 percent of the population. The rest of the population is responsible for the big ethnic diversity of the country.

The EPRDF opted for a completely different approach than its predecessors (and elsewhere in Africa) for addressing the question of ethnic diversity. Ethiopia was transformed into a federation of different, ethnicity-based regions, each with its own government and the right to self-determination, including

the right to succession. Ethnic diversity was accepted as a political fact and applied to the administrative organization of the country and to government policies. Unique in Africa, ethnicity became the explicit organizing principle of the state. In accordance with the constitution adopted in 1995, Ethiopia consists of nine, ethnicity-based regional states: Tigray, Amhara, Oromia, Southern Nations, Somali, Benishangul-Gumuz, Gambella, Harar, and Afar. These states are very heterogeneous. For instance, the federation consists of relatively densely populated regions such as Oromia and Amhara as well as sparsely populated and underdeveloped areas like Gambella and Somali.

This remarkable policy appeared to be based on three main considerations. The military victory and the very existence of the TPLF were partly due to the mobilization of ethnic sentiments. Second, during the final years of the regime of Haile Selassie and afterwards the *Derg*, the "national question" had been identified by the student movement in particular as one of the main causes for Ethiopia's problems. Finally, in order to beat the *Derg*, the TPLF deemed it necessary to work together with other regional rebel movements and to formulate a common political agenda. Instead of a strong centralized state, as was the case in the past, Ethiopia became a federation based on ethnicity. The multi-ethnic state replaced the Ethiopian unitary state, allegedly dominated by Amhara highlanders. It was an effort to put an end once and for all to the domination by one specific population group and to the many regional conflicts affecting Ethiopia during the regimes of Haile Selassie and the *Derg*. This approach also allowed for the secession of Eritrea.

Furthermore, from a political point of view, this approach was understandable: How could the victor in the civil war (TPLF), representing only a relatively small ethnic minority, rule a huge and diverse country and establish a new political order without forming an alliance with other ethnic groups? Moreover, such an approach would offer the new rulers the opportunity to attract to their side other, until then oppressed minorities. In short, the use of ethnic mobilization had an ideological as well as a political background.



Illustration 6.5
Ethnic diversity in Ethiopia

The reality of ethnic federalism in Ethiopia was a bit more ambiguous. A number of phases can be identified in the development of this federal experiment. The main feature of the period 1991-2000 was the establishment of stability after thirty years of civil war. During this period the transition towards a federally organized state was initiated. The war with Eritrea and the internal TPLF power struggle resulted in 2002-2003 in a change in policy direction within the TPLF and at a national level. Subsequently in 2003-2005, the EPRDF expanded its support base by integrating new regions into its network. From 2005 on, the concept of the developmental state became the main policy for the country emphasizing national development and projects, with accompanying powers for the federal government.

Opponents of the EPRDF regime regarded ethnic federalism as an effort to protect the interests of the TPLF *clique* from Tigray. Behind the scenes, the TPLF was still pulling the strings and dominated the other regional EPRDF parties. The promised autonomy just did not materialize. Depending on their political background, parts of the opposition blamed the EPRDF for destroying the unity of the Ethiopian nation or refusing to allow for meaningful political competition by other parties that claimed to be more authentic representatives of the population groups in question.

The alleged political dominance of the TPLF and therefore Tigray within the EPRDF was an ongoing topic of discussion within (although not too openly) and outside Ethiopia, especially among the diaspora. In addition, in more academically oriented circles, it has been pointed out that the EPRDF regime has admittedly achieved impressive results in term of development, but this

has not translated into genuine legitimacy among a substantial part of the population due to the ethnic bias of the regime. Since all important political discussions and decision-making within the EPRDF take place behind closed doors, it almost impossible to appropriately assess the extent to which the TPLF continue to run the show within the EPRDF. What is clear is that, during the period under review, TPLF members were very well represented at the highest federal levels, in particular in the armed forces, the intelligence services, and the (semi-) public economic sector.

The manner in which the EPRDF conceptualized the notion of ethnicity and converted it into policy was strongly influenced by the Marxist-Leninist tradition in this area, especially Stalin's interpretation of the "national question." Two principles, at odds with each other, figured prominently in this approach. On the one hand, the conviction that communities could be mobilized and involved in their own political development more effectively if the members of those communities were provided the opportunity to do so in their own language and on the basis of their own cultural traditions. On the other, the EPRDF, following the example of Stalin, was of the opinion that criteria for "nations, nationalities and peoples" could be identified independently and externally. Such an interpretation resulted in the notion that a vanguard party could decide which ethnic groups qualified for the right of self-determination, the specific ethnic criteria for these groups, and the borders of the areas where these groups were living.

This approach was only partly successful. The "territorial" approach did not always match the reality on the ground. The ethnic composition in a number of cities but also of rural areas was mixed, resulting in all kind of problems. Moreover, in the final analysis regional autonomy was subordinate to the political interests of the EPRDF and to the federal agenda as determined by the EPRDF. The EPRDF was not prepared to recognize the legitimacy of any regional or ethnic movement, which was not under the control of the party.

Political instrumentalization of violence

As do so many countries, Ethiopia has a violent past. The Ethiopian state was established by the use of force. The regions in the periphery were incorporated in the empire by military means. Revolts by regional rebel groups and protests by the opposition were brutally dealt with. A sad climax was the "red terror" instigated by the *Derg* and the military actions particularly against the rebel movements in Eritrea and Tigray. In addition, Ethiopia and Somalia went to war in 1978 after Somalia invaded the Ogaden

After the seizure of power by the EPRDF in 1991, Ethiopia has known greater stability than in the past. Concerning its relations with its neighbors, the major exception was of course the war with Eritrea. Efforts by Eritrea to occupy a disputed area on the border between the two countries led to an all out, bloody war. Otherwise Ethiopia was a relative beacon of stability in a very volatile region.

That did not mean that Ethiopia did not have its own, internal problems concerning peace and security. Some opposition movements tried to realize their political agenda by force. A number of them committed themselves to and received support from the regime in Eritrea, which tried to make life as difficult as possible for big brother Ethiopia. As such these groups did not constitute a military threat to the government in Addis Ababa, but were able to stir up local conflicts and to destabilize a number of border areas. The *Oromo Liberation Front* (OLF) and *Ogaden National Liberation Front* were the most important armed opposition movements. In view of the position and the size of the Oromo population group, the OLF was mainly a political threat to the EPRDF. The EPRDF and the OLF already clashed in 1991 regarding the question of whose forces should temporarily administer the areas inhabited by Oromo and when the local regional elections, planned for 1992, should be held. Moreover, the OPDO (the Oromo party which is a member of the EPRDF coalition) came forward as a rival to the OLF. The EPRDF managed to rapidly neutralize the OLF militarily and politically. Afterwards, the OLF faced disintegration and internal divisions among its leadership. Still, in spite of its military and organizational weaknesses, the organization could always count on some support among Oromo nationalists.

Taken into account the context of this study, it is important to take a brief look at the use of force to influence the outcome of elections. Primarily, this concerns the attitude of the EPRDF and subsequently the authorities towards the political opposition. As indicated earlier, opposition groups were harassed and intimidated especially during the run-up to an election. Usually this approach sufficed to condemn the opposition to a political existence on the margins. This was, however, not the case in 2005. After the surprising election results, the EPRDF did not hesitate to eliminate the opposition by all possible means, including the use of force. During the protests, a number of people were killed, tens of thousands detained, and non-governmental organizations silenced.

Political corruption

While corruption for political purposes was an important feature of the political process in countries like Kenya, Uganda, and the Congo, this was less the case in Ethiopia. Given the political dominance of the EPRDF there was less need for it. Besides, the government, as in Rwanda, appeared to be serious about centralizing funds in order to use them for the development agenda as defined by the EPRDF. In practice, the political will to implement a zero-tolerance policy lagged behind the other developmental state in Africa, Rwanda. The far-reaching powers of the government and the size of its investments of course created in itself plenty of opportunities for rent seeking and corruption. In particular the alleged preferential treatment by the EPRDF of the endowment companies linked to the party was sharply criticized.

The regime succeeded in limiting the patronage pay-offs needed to consolidate its position. Regarding the sectors in which the government played an important role, research of the World Bank shows that corruption in sectors that provide basic services, like education, health, water, and the legal sector, was relatively limited and less than in other low-income countries.[55] In sectors with traditionally high capital investment, such as construction and mining, the corruption risks were higher but still lower than in many developing countries. The risk of corruption in capital-intensive, relatively new sectors, like telecommunication, was comparable with other, corrupt developing countries. There was a shared perception among the public that members of the political parties in power enjoyed unfair advantages when it came, for instance, to the allocation of jobs, selection of students or members of the judiciary, or awarding construction tenders. The World Bank report also noted that Ethiopians, because of the specific cultural-historical context, assessed the level of corruption in their country higher than non-Ethiopians.

There was also the perception among the public that prosecution in corruption cases was selectively applied and was often politically motivated. The prosecution on account of corruption against a number of opponents of Meles Zenawi during the political purges in the aftermath of the 2001/2003 discord within the TPLF could serve as an example. Politicians, who were politically correct, scarcely ran any risk of being prosecuted and publicly sentenced.

55 J. Plummer (ed.), "Diagnosing corruption in Ethiopia. Perceptions, realities and the way forward for key sectors," World Bank (Washington, 2012).

6.5 The role of the international community

Under the leadership of the EPRDF, Ethiopia became a recipient of large sums of international aid. Three factors contributed to the popularity of Ethiopia as a recipient of foreign aid. Donor countries were pleasantly surprised by the initial ideological flexibility of the EPRDF, as became apparent in the liberal constitution, in renouncing the socialist model of development and in applying economic reforms. Ethiopian policies coincided with the emphasis on poverty reduction by international donors. Ethiopia had one of the most pro-poor budgets in Africa. Third, shared geo-political interests were at play. The *global war on terror* identified the Horn of Africa as a region of strategic importance. Ethiopia positioned itself as a frontrunner in the fight against terrorism. Because of its proximity to Somalia and the Middle East, Ethiopia became an important foothold for the West.

The still existing ideological differences between the Western international donor community and the EPRDF carried less weight. The EPRDF advocated a developmental model that gave a leading role to the government in an otherwise capitalist developmental process. Western donor countries acknowledged that the government could play an important role in starting up economic development but should limit itself to those sectors in which it had a comparative advantage. In particular, they criticized the dominant role in the economy of companies linked to the EPRDF.

Another bone of contention was the limited political space for the opposition. The handling of the 2005 elections resulted in sharp criticism by the European Union, among others. According to the EU observer mission, the elections were far from democratic. The donor community decided to suspend its budget support. Aid did not stop but was now mainly provided as project support. Albeit in less harsh terms, the 2010 elections were criticized as well, due to the absence of a transparent election process and of a level playing field for the opposition.

In addition, Western donors, on a regular basis, requested less restrictive legislation concerning civil society organizations. According to the EPRDF many NGOs were patronage networks, whose members received high salaries without showing any tangible results. It is obvious that such an approach was diametrically opposed to the role the international donor community grants to civil society organizations in the political as well the developmental process.

In recent years, non-traditional donors have become increasingly active in Ethiopia. A new important donor country, as elsewhere in Africa, is China. It is clear that this country does not share the "good governance" preoccupations of the Western donor countries. From a commercial perspective, Ethiopia is not a priority for China: It does not possess large quantities of natural resources nor is it an important trading partner. The reasons for China's interest in Ethiopia are of a different nature: a government of a big country sympathetic to China and the perceived diplomatic influence of Ethiopia in Africa.

6.6 Conclusions

The political coalition, in power since 1991, has been able to maintain a long-term agenda. The regime most of the time was in a strong position as regards the political elite that was not a part of the coalition as well as the potential opponents within the coalition. There appeared to be a *potential development coalition*. The integration of a part of the regional elites within the political settlement, the delegation of powers to the regions, the internal divisions among the excluded opposition, and the economic success of the Ethiopian model of development undoubtedly contributed to the weakness of the excluded elite. The tight internal organization of the EPRDF, partly based on the revolutionary democracy concept, contributed, in turn, to the strong internal discipline of the EPRDF coalition.

Once in power, the EPRDF implemented a number of fundamental reforms. What did not change was the authoritarian and hierarchical way the country was governed, such that there was scarcely any space for dissident opinions. The government continued to play a central role in society. It is often noted that, unlike much of the rest of Africa, Ethiopia suffers from too much government, not too little. At least in the central agricultural highlands (much less so in the pastoralist periphery), the state is well entrenched, down to the highly deconcentrated local level of the *kebele* (local administration).[56]

Elections in this context served, just as in Rwanda, to legitimize the existing political balance of power. After the electoral upset in 2005 the EPRDF did not leave anything to chance to prevent that the façade of electoral legitimacy would be jeopardized again. The trend, especially after 2005, towards a more

56 See also: S. Vaughan, M. Gebremichael, "Rethinking business and politics in Ethiopia. The role of EFFORT" The Endownment Fund for the Rehabilitation of Tigray, *Africa Power and Politics Program*. Research report 2 (2011), 24.

authoritarian political environment can be interpreted as an integral part of the developmental strategy of the EPRDF. The political settlement and the developmental strategy of the EPRDF enabled Ethiopia to witness an impressive economic growth and a substantial reduction in poverty. The aspired transformation of the Ethiopian economy is still at the beginning.

The choice for a political settlement based on ethnicity was partly dictated by political necessity: The real victor of the civil war against the Derg, the TPLF, only represented a small minority (Tigray) of the Ethiopian population. Moreover, it was the conviction of the EPRDF that the oppression of the ethnic aspirations of the different population groups was the main cause of the political problems in the past. The EPRDF believed that this could be solved only by making ethnicity the organizing principle of the political system.

Of course, there were also tensions in the political system. In the perception of many, the TPLF, which only represents a small minority of the population, was still the dominating force in the EPRDF. The perceived domination by politicians from Tigray undermined the multi-ethnic legitimacy of the regime. Furthermore, the actual political autonomy of the regions can be called into question. In spite of the federal structure of Ethiopia and, on paper, the far-reaching powers of the regions, the EPRDF and its allies were in charge all over the country. Taking into account the way the EPRDF is organized, policies were still primarily decided in the capital. By embracing the *developmental state* model this trend continued. A further complication was the worsening relationship in recent years between the government and the Muslim community.

Partly due to the stability of the political settlement, the regime could resist, for the most part, the temptation to make use of government resources to win over potential political supporters. Thanks to the concentration of political and economic power in its hands, the EPRDF, in charge at the federal as well regional level, succeeded in using these resources in part for the economic development of the country. The question remains to what extent the EPRDF will be able in the future to limit rent seeking behavior and corruption in its own ranks. René Lefort, Ethiopia specialist and critic of the EPRDF government, describes this danger as follows: "Then today one of the most promising tracks to becoming a rent seeker is to join the party and climb the ladder within it."[57]

57 R. Lefort, "The theory and practice of Meles Zenawi: a response to Alex de Waal," *African Affairs* 112:448 (2013), 460– 470.

The EPRDF could count on large-scale financial support by the international donor community for the following reasons: the implemented reforms, the emphasis on poverty reduction, and shared geopolitical interests. The ideological differences between the EPRDF and the Western donors, and their criticism of how the regime eliminated the opposition by whatever means including the use of force, if considered a serious threat, carried less weight.

6.7 Post Script

Something happened

In 2016, the political landscape in Ethiopia changed considerably. There was an outbreak of wide-scale protest in the country, especially in Oromia and Amhara regional states. Sparked by the planned expansion of the Ethiopia capital Addis Ababa, the focus of the protests shifted to include wider political issues, such as the perceived marginalization of specific ethnic groups and demands for more regional autonomy. Long simmering tensions erupted in often violent protests. These protests had in common that, to a large extent, they were spontaneous and grass roots based. Opposition political parties were only remotely and indirectly connected to these protests (in contrast to 2005). Hundreds of protesters were killed; many thousands detained. Government offices, factories, warehouses, trucks, buses, and large foreign- and Ethiopian-owned farms were attacked and burned. In October 2016, a state of emergency was temporarily proclaimed.

Why

A combination of factors triggered these protests and the political turmoil in the country:

- The (perceived) political and economic domination of one specific ethnic group. There was and is a widespread perception that the Tigrayan elite monopolizes political as well as economic power at the federal as well as the regional level.
- Lack of economic prospects. Young people have been the main driving force behind the protests and destruction. Lack of economic progress for many young people who received an education but whose expectations in terms of employment and prosperity could not be met.
- Local grievances, most of which revolved around land issues. A number of farmers were displaced without adequate compensation to make way for private investments. In addition, Ethiopia faces growing landlessness. Groups of landless, often young people seized the moment to express their grievances. Land in Ethiopia, as elsewhere in Africa, is not only an

important (economic) asset but is also linked to family history and culture. It can serve therefore as an easy conflict mobilizer.

- Tensions between the center and the regions. The (ethnic) federalist structure of Ethiopia does not sit well with the requirements of a *de facto* over-centralized political system or, for that matter, of the development state as a national project. The protests constituted an expression of frustration about the unmet expectations of ethnic federalism.
- Security response. The security response also played a role in the escalation of the protests. Initially the federal government delegated security to the regional security forces, which in a number of cases refused to intervene. This created a security vacuum and provided a window of opportunity for protesters to go on the rampage. Paradoxically, the restrained reaction by the government led to rumors in Amhara and Oromia that the government was seriously weakened and had even collapsed.
- Top-down political culture. The absence of a political tradition of dialogue and compromise, in tandem with a culture of distrust created a situation in which government officials were not only caught off-guard by the extent and the seriousness of the grievances but also were unable or unwilling to address some of these grievances.
- Manipulation. Finally, in some cases there was a strong suspicion that some local elites mobilized communities, especially the youth, into violent behavior to serve as a smokescreen for lucrative, often illegal, land deals they were involved in.

Implications

The intense and large-scale protests shook the political establishment in Ethiopia to its core and led to increased divisions within the ruling coalition. The question of what the policy implications should be continued to be the main topic of discussion within the EPRDF: between the coalition partners of the EPRDF at a federal level, within the parties themselves, and between these parties and political center in Addis Ababa. The outcome of this debate will determine to a large extent the nature of the political settlement in this country for years to come. It has become clear that the balance of power is changing in Ethiopia as a result of the events in 2016.

The (perceived) Tigrayan domination in politics, the economy, and in the security sector has become a major political issue. Ethiopia's troubled transition from a historically entrenched unitary state to an ethnic federation could be considered as a major form of political settlement among contending elites, and a peace-building intervention to the extent that it has redressed the historical grievances of minority groups. In the eyes of many, however,

the TPLF, which only represents a small minority of the population, is still the dominating force in the EPRDF. This widespread sentiment among many non-Tigrayan Ethiopians undermines the multi-ethnic legitimacy of the regime and has become a strong mobilizing force in Ethiopian politics.

The protests in 2016 have resulted in a more assertive leadership in Oromia as well as Amhara, and an increasingly divided political center. At the same time the ruling parties in Amhara (ANDM) and Oromia (OPDO) are members of the coalition that governs Ethiopia as a whole. In the wake of the unrest, they have extended their powerbase within the coalition at the expense of the traditionally dominant position of Tigray (TPLF). As a consequence, there are new divisions in the EPRDF coalition itself, as the power balance is shifting.

Until the events in 2016, Oromo nationalism was an important but partly dormant factor in Ethiopian politics, partly enabled by ethnic federalism and the identity politics connected to it. It has fueled Oromo grievances, including the rising consciousness that they are the country's biggest ethnic group, with the largest contribution to the national economy. Yet, they believe themselves to be "dominated" by an ethnic minority (the Tigrayans). The Oromo sense of marginalization is also accentuated by the strong feeling that they are not adequately politically represented at the federal level.

The perceived Tigrayan dominance has long undermined the legitimacy of the OPDO among the Oromo population. However, under the leadership of regional president Lemma Megerssa, who came to power in the aftermath of the 2016 troubles, the OPDO has found a new assertiveness. A more (Oromo) nationalist rhetoric and vocal opposition to the federal government, when regional interests are at stake, have increased its support base, both at home as well as in the diaspora. A similar new sense of independence can be observed among members of the ANDM. Like its counterpart the OPDO, the ANDM, although to a lesser extent, had a popular legitimacy deficit, given its dependence on the TPLF. Amhara followed and deployed similar tactics as Oromia with similar results. This recent mutual solidarity between Oromia and Amhara is remarkable. Historically the two are not natural allies, yet currently they are united in trying to increase their political power.

As the political leaders of Oromia and Amhara have been positioning themselves as staunch defenders of regional interests, Oromo nationalism and its Amhara equivalent have become a crucial driving force in regional and national politics. The main political players in Oromia and Amhara seem to aim

at a change in the national balance of power within the context of the prevailing political set-up, not to abolish it. The regional presidents are themselves products of the existing political system.

The inbuilt tensions between the concept of (ethnic) federalism and the requirements of the developmental state have come visible. Ethiopia's federal project principally responds to the challenges of ethnic diversity. EPRDF's developmental state ideology and "vanguard capitalism" on the other hand are a national project, which does not leave much room for regional economic and political diversity.

Moreover, the identity politics of the OPDO and ANDM and the efforts by the TPLF to remain in charge suggest that the EPRDF is in danger of loosing its ideological rigor, which is a precondition for a successful application of the developmental state model and its ambitious transformational agenda. As a consequence, the EPRDF seems to find it increasingly difficult to speak with one voice and have its policies enforced.

In short, ethnicity is very much back on the agenda. Ethnicity as an important political point of reference has become increasingly relevant in Ethiopian politics. The recent political unrest has intensified tensions and divisions between different regional partners of the federal government coalition along ethnic lines. As indicated, ethnic nationalism has particularly come to the fore in the two most densely populated regions of the country: Oromia and Amhara. Sentiments about alleged historical injustices or entitlements, with ethnicity as a reference, have become a dominant factor in Ethiopian politics. The perceived inequality between regions is being increasingly framed in ethnic terms.

Conclusion

What keeps a political settlement together is the convergence of interests within the dominant coalition, and the relationship between these interests and those of other groups in society: the power balance, on which this settlement is based, is fluid and dynamic. As a result the political settlement has to adjust itself regularly and is subject to renegotiation and disagreements.

As the protests in 2016 and the subsequent political divisions show, the political settlement did not turn to be as solid as it appeared. Since the opposition outside the ruling coalition is fragmented, badly organized and divided on how to approach the EPRDF, the existing political constellation is not threatened so much by excluded factions as by the lack of its control over a part of

their own rank-and-file, the subsequent divisions within the ruling coalition, and its diminished capacity to implement and enforce policies.

The abovementioned tensions form an integral part of the (recent) history of Ethipa and cannot be resolved overnight. The main task of the powers-that-be is not so much to find a definitive solution to these rather fundamental problems but to seek a negotiated compromise. The EPRDF has to accommodate and realign the changed ethnic balance of power within the ruling coalition as a consequence of the political crisis of last year. Moreover, the ruling coalition is faced with the task of honoring, in one way or another, the demands for greater regional autonomy. At the same time, the centrifugal forces in the Ethiopian society along ethnic lines have to be kept under control and, in spite of everything, its relatively successful developmental state model sustained. This touches upon the core of the political settlement and implies winners and losers. As this is, in the end a zero-sum game, this process will have to be carefully managed. Still, there is no realistic alternative for the present EPRDF coalition. An open-ended political transition could lead to the *de facto* disintegration of Ethiopia along ethnic lines with dire consequences for the stability of the country and the region as a whole.

Addis Ababa, December 2017

7 Common lines and patterns

The introduction of a multiparty system, the subsequent political settlements, and the nature of the economic development in each country can only be properly assessed if the specific historical context of the countries under review is taken into account. It is self-evident that this context was different for each country. The outcome depended to a great extent on the circumstances, limitations, and opportunities that were often specific in nature. First, there are a number of circumstances of a permanent or semi-permanent character typical for each country like geographic location, ethnic composition, demographic pressure, etc. Second, the way in which the different colonial regimes exercised and organized their power has left its mark to this day. The lack of proper preparations for the independence of the Congo, the land policy in the Rift Valley in Kenya, the position of the Buganda kingdom in Uganda, cultivating a specific ethnic group to be the political elite of Rwanda might serve as clear examples. Neither can the recent history of the Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda, and Ethiopia be separated from the personalites of their leaders. Mobutu, Kenyatta, Zenawi, Kagame, and Museveni influenced very much the developments in their countries, of which they were president and, in the case of Uganda and Rwanda, still are.

That does not mean that behind this diversity there are no commonalities, which also underlie developments in these countries. With the country cases as a starting point, common lines and patterns can be identified that were related to and influenced the way in which political settlements were shaped after the introduction or reintroduction of multiparty democracy. Academic findings about political and societal developments, in general, and in Africa, in particular, will also be used to the extent that they help to explain what happened and why. The following topics will be addressed: the specific nature of the political process in these countries, corruption for political purposes, ethnicity, instrumentalization of violence, the role of elections and political parties, the cohesion of the political elite, and the relationship between economic transformation and political settlements.

7.1 The specific nature of the political process

Since the reintroduction of a multiparty system, much has changed. Politicians had to try harder to stay in power. Those in power in Kenya, Uganda, and the Congo had to be more careful than before. Governments and their leaders were more exposed to criticism from the public, media, and parliament, and had to explain themselves more than in the past. The 2002 transition of power in Kenya took place peacefully after free and fair elections. Corruption scandals involving political elites were extensively covered in the media, whether it was the *Goldenberg* case or the *Anglo Leasing* scandal in Kenya, the purchase of military equipment or the privatization of public enterprises in Uganda, or the illegal trade in minerals in the Congo. During the 2005 elections in Ethiopia, the governing coalition was unexpectedly given a pounding.

At the same time, much remained the same. As explained, for example, by Bratton and Van de Walle, the neo-patrimonial nature of African regimes and extreme "presidentialism" did not go away.[58] After the reintroduction of a multiparty democracy, the political arena in all five countries was still very much dominated by the president (in the case of Ethiopia the prime minister). Mobutu and later Joseph Kabila in the Congo, Daniel arap Moi and to a lesser extent Mwai Kibaki in Kenya, Yoweri Museveni in Uganda, Paul Kagame in Rwanda, and (prime minister) Meles Zenawi in Ethiopia systematically strengthened the power of their office. They did not shrink from using government resources for this purpose. The corruption scandals in Kenya, the proliferation of local administrative offices in Uganda, and turning a blind eye to the illegal practices by the Congolese army are just some examples. In Rwanda and Ethiopia this was less the case.

Political accountability Western style, as promoted by the international donor community, could not cope with neo-patrimonial logic, which still held the political system captive. Democracy and more in particular elections adapted to the obstinate reality of a political patronage system and not the other way around. Moreover, after the reintroduction of a pluralist political system, politics and political power relationships remained above all informal and personalized in nature. Political reciprocity was based on the personal ties between political *Big Men* and their support base. Still, the modalities were different for each country. Repression, but even more importantly

58 M. Bratton and N. van de Walle, *Democratic experiments in Africa. Regime transitions in comparative perspective* (Cambridge, 1997).

his alliance with the leaders (and their supporters) of a number often smaller ethnic groups, held together by a strong anti-Kikuyu sentiment, kept Moi in power in Kenya for ten more years after the introduction of multiparty politics. In Uganda, Museveni managed to remain in power, partly by using tested patronage methods. The three presidents who ruled the Congo after independence (Mobutu, Kabila senior, and Kabila junior), are classic examples of personalized power. As the political center lost influence, local *Big Men* replicated this way of exercising political power at a local level.

Rwanda and Ethiopia appeared to break at least in part with this practice. The political agenda of the elites in power in these countries was less shaped by the necessity to create and use resources for political patronage purposes than by the notion that rapid economic development constituted the best and most practical option to leave the ethnic divisions of the past behind and subsequently protect the position of the ruling elite.

Political and state institutions could not escape the powerful influence of the omnipresent patron-client relationships either. According to the conceptual framework developed by North, Wallis, and Weingast in their *Violence and social orders*, the main cause for this is that a number of important institutions, such as the Legislative, Executive, and the Judiciary, are not tailored to the reality of the *Limited Access Order (*see also the paragraph in this chapter on instrumentalization of violence).[59] Although the point of departure of Chabal and Daloz is different, they reach the same conclusion: "We are thus led to conclude that in most African countries, the state is no more than a decor, a pseudo-Western façade masking the realities of deeply personalized relations."[60]

The reality in the countries under review was of course more nuanced at the same time. The return to macroeconomic stability in the five countries could not have been realized without the presence of expertise within and some level of autonomy of the respective ministries of Finance. While in the Congo most bureaucratic institutions still remained an empty shell, in the other four countries a certain degree of "institutionalization" of state structures did take place, which made it possible at least in theory to operate independently from the ruling elite to a certain degree. For the Rwandan government to implement its developmental agenda, efficient institutions in a number of

59 D. North, J. Wallis, S. Webb, and B. Weingast, *Violence and social orders. A conceptual framework for interpreting human history* (Cambridge, 2008).
60 P. Chabal and J. Daloz, *Africa works*, 16.

areas are indispensable. The same goes for Ethiopia. Due to the economic developments in Kenya, the professionalization of the government turned out to be unavoidable as well. Certainly during the first years of the NRM government in Uganda, important steps in this direction were taken. The practices and needs of the ruling elite clearly imposed restrictions on this trend. Government and related institutions were still used for patronage purposes on a wide scale.

As regards the "institutionalization" of the separation of powers, one can be brief. Although the Executive could permit itself fewer liberties than prior to the introduction of pluralist politics, the concentration of power in the hands of the president defined much more the political reality in all the five countries than the separation of powers according to the Western template. Against the background of the personalized and informal nature of politics, parliaments in Kenya, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Uganda, and the Congo remained closely linked to the Executive. The Judiciary suffered the same fate.

To consolidate their power leaders also applied the principle of *extraversion*, the thrust being that African elites appropriate the (political) profits that are generated by the dependency on the outside world.[61] The way those in power tried to use the reintroduction of multiparty politics to their own advantage may serve as an example. Manipulation was the order of the day. In the Congo, President Mobutu took advantage of the introduction of a multiparty system in the early 1990s by promoting the establishment of as many political parties as possible in order to stay in power himself. In Uganda, the NRM used the introduction of pluralist politics to restore the cohesion within its own ranks, as dissidents did not have to be accommodated within the NRM any longer. In Ethiopia and Rwanda, multiparty elections went hand-in-hand with so many restrictions, as regards the political space for the opposition, that they hardly influenced the political landscape. The build up towards the 1992 elections in Kenya gave the government the opportunity to deliberately incite population groups against each other in order to remain in power.

In short, after the reintroduction of a multiparty system and regardless of the type of electoral system, the term neo-patrimonialism still remained, in different shapes and forms, applicable to the political reality of these countries. It was based on political relationships, for the most part personal, informal, and ethnic in nature. The attributes of Western democracy provided the for-

61 J. Bayart, "Africa in the world: a history of extraversion," *African Affairs*, 99 (2000), 217–267.

mal framework in which this took place, and imposed certain restrictions on this logic.

7.2 Corruption for political purposes

Corruption for political purposes is inextricably linked to the logic of African politics described above. Whenever the outcome of elections was uncertain, as in Kenya or to lesser extent in Uganda, considerable funds were needed to win the elections because of the patronage nature of politics. In Kenya, the reintroduction of multiparty politics resulted in increased competition to gain enough votes to win elections. The need for financial resources increased accordingly. It led to mega corruption scandals: the *Goldenberg* case in the early 1990s and the *Anglo Leasing* scandal 10 years later. Part of the electorate was susceptible to these practices. A patron-client relationship implies reciprocity. Voters, who were prepared to "sell" their vote, gave more credence to the election promises by candidates involved in those practices than of those who were not. The readiness to "buy" votes was supposed to indicate the willingness of politicians to be generous to supporters at a later stage as well.

In Uganda, Museveni applied well-tried patronage practices to commit a substantial part of the national and local political elites to his regime. It appears that the introduction of multiparty politics strengthened this trend. Nothing was left to chance. For instance, the creation of new districts was used as presidential handouts during election time. Museveni would get most of the votes in these districts. Although it was and is clear that patronage is an integral part of Congolese society, little is known about how this was put into practice during the 2006 and 2011 national elections. Possibly this had to do with the fluid and unsettled nature of the patronage networks in a country that big and with such a huge electorate. In any case, money did change hands during elections at the regional level.

In view of the total control by the EPRDF of the political process in Ethiopia and of the RPF in Rwanda, the use of patronage in order to influence the outcome of elections was less relevant. In Rwanda and to a certain extent in Ethiopia, resources did not have to be mobilized to assure an election victory or to buy the support of certain groups in society because of political considerations.

All in all, the abuse of public resources for political purposes did not diminish as a result of the reintroduction of a multiparty system in Kenya, the Congo, and Uganda, perhaps even the opposite: The picture that emerges is one of increasing abuse of public means in Kenya as well as Uganda. In Rwanda and Ethiopia, this was less the case. Ironically these were the countries where elections actually did not matter given the *de facto* absolute power of the RPF and the EPRDF. In the other countries, the competition between rival political factions increased in order to stay in power as a consequence of multiparty politics. As indicated, a well-tried method to win over groups was to dole out favors or to make promises along these lines.

7.3 Ethnicity

Ethnicity can be defined in a number of ways. It is clear, however, that in the five countries ethnicity constituted a very important frame of reference. It might not come as a surprise that this concept is also multifaceted and context specific in time as well as space. The manner in which colonial powers, prior to independence, applied ethnicity in organizing the administration in the country, in some cases favored one population group over the other, determined to a large extent by how this worked out.[62]

Against this background, the British historian and East Africa expert John Lonsdale distinguishes two dimensions of modern ethnicity: *moral ethnicity* and *political tribalism.*[63] The first dimension refers to the debate within a specific ethnic group about cultural identity, communality, leadership, and rights and obligations in a changing society. The other dimension concerns the relationship between the ethnic group and others. In a multi-ethnic concept this dimension often results in the instrumentalization of ethnic identity for the purpose of political competition with other (ethnic) groups. It might be obvious that this study focuses on the latter.

The Belgian colonial authorities in Rwanda selected representatives of the Tutsi indigenous elite to rule the country under Belgian leadership. The preferential treatment came at the expense of the other population group (Hutu),

62 B. Berman, "Ethnicity, patronage and the African state: The politics of uncivil nationalism," *African Affairs*, 97:388 (1998), 305–341.

63 J. Lonsdale, "Moral ethnicity and political tribalism," in P. Kaarsholm and J. Hulin (eds.), *Inventions and boundaries: historical and anthropological approaches to the study of ethnicity and nationalism* (Roskilde, 1994), 131–150.

which was explicitly allocated to an inferior position in society. In the final years before independence, the Belgian authorities made a radical U-turn: At a forced rate, a Hutu counter-elite was created. The effects on the relationship and mutual perception between the two population groups were not hard to fanthom. In the Congo as well, Belgian colonial policy as regards different ethnic groups left its mark. The mobilization of labor from Kasai to mine the mineral resources in Katanga, and as a consequence greater prosperity and development prospects for this population group, gave rise to a deep and long-lasting antagonism.

Something similar happened in the east of the Congo. The employment of big numbers of Rwandan laborers (mainly Hutu) on the plantations in eastern Congo and the large scale influx of Tutsi refugees in a later period as a consequence of the anti-Tutsi *pogroms* instigated by a Belgian-supported regime in Kigali were partly the cause of the continuous conflicts in that part of the country. In Uganda, British colonial power gave preferential treatment to the Baganda at the expense of other ethnic groups. It also appointed representatives of this population group to administer other parts of the country on its behalf. This approach, in tandem with the policy to recruit the local armed forces predominantly from a specific region (the north), determined the nature of the conflicts that came to a head after independence.

In Kenya, a part of the Kikuyu population group was expelled from their homes in favor of British settlers. The preferential treatment given to this group in the land distribution schemes, especially in the Rift valley after independence, stirred up bad blood among other population groups living in the region (in particular the Kalenjin). This perceived injustice (originating in the colonial period) contributed highly to the tense relationship between these two ethnic groups, resulting in periodic violence. In Ethiopia, it was not a foreign colonial power, as elsewhere in Africa, but the Amhara elite from the northern highlands, which enforced Ethiopian unification. The ethnic groups that were subjected to the rule of the Ethiopian empire, by the use of force, experienced this process as internal, Amhara colonialism, having implications for the administrative structure of Ethiopia after 1991.

Multiparty elections frequently contributed to a further emphasis on the ethnic distinctions created during the colonial period.[64] Some politicians used these for their own ends for electoral purposes. Unfortunately, there is no

64 Regarding the question of why political competition is organized along specific different ethnic lines, see D. Posner, *Institutions and ethnic politics in Africa* (Cambridge, 2005).

shortage of examples. During the Kenyan elections in 1992, 1997, and 2007, politicians emphatically used ethnicity to influence the outcome to their advantage. A popular theme when mobilizing the supporters of the non-Kikuyu political elites was the perceived domination of this ethnic group in society, the preferential treatment of Kikuyu under Kenyatta as regards the distribution of land, and an anti-Kikuyu interpretation of the *majimbo* concept. Ethnicity was also the main feature of the multiparty system established in the early 1990s in the Congo and during the 2006 elections.

After Rwanda reverted to multiparty politics in the early 1990s, ethnic (anti-Tutsi) sentiments were once again mobilized and turned out to be the prelude to the genocide of 1994. After the RPF came to power in 1994, the elections were directed in such a manner that there was no longer room for openly expressing feelings of ethnic vengeance. Since the NRM took power in Uganda in 1986, ethnicity played a less pronounced role in politics than before. The *Movement* system and the initial policy, focused on political inclusivity, no doubt contributed to this. Nevertheless, in this country as well, *ethnic arithmetic* played an important role in the background. The first multiparty elections in the history of Ethiopia took place after the EPRDF gained power in 1991. Given the multi-ethnic composition and the political dominance of the EPRDF, using ethnicity as an explicit mobilization tool did not have much chance of success.

Still an important observation needs to be made here. The mobilization of ethnicity for political gains was not reserved for multiparty politics alone. The manipulation of anti-Kikuyu sentiments was *common currency* in Kenya before (during the tenure of Moi) as well as after the introduction of multiparty elections. The same applies to the anti-Buganda rhetoric in Ugandan politics (albeit less explicit after the NRM came to power). It is rather obvious that the heavily charged relationship between Hutu and Tutsi continued to leave its mark on Rwandan politics. With the exception of the early years under Mobutu, political fragmentation along ethnic lines has been the main feature in the Congo since independence.

The colonial period has partly determined how ethnicity was used and abused after independence in the political debate in the countries under scrutiny. Although African leaders in theory distanced themselves from ethnically based politics, many political *patrons* mobilized ethnicity to decide multiparty elections in their favor. The interpretation of what ethnicity meant depended on the specific historical context. Sometimes it concerned the clan, sometimes the tribe, sometimes a collection of related ethnic groups, and sometimes the

whole nation (for example, *Congolité*). It has to be noted that emphasizing ethnic distinctions and differences, defined in whatever way, never resulted in secession but was deployed by political *Big Men* within the existing state structures to get hold of power and of as many resources possible for themselves as well as their supporters, most of the time organized along ethnic lines.

In Ethiopia, the new regime led by Meles Zenawi did explicitly take account of the ethnic diversity in the country. This was accepted as the fundament for the administrative structure of Ethiopia. This approach also allowed for the secession of Eritrea.

7.4 Instrumentalization of violence

After their independence, the Congo, Rwanda, and Uganda faced different periods of political instability, civil war, and widespread violence. After the fall of the regime of Haile Selassie, Ethiopia also witnessed a long period of civil war and violence. Initially Kenya was a relative beacon of stability until the 2007 presidential elections got totally out of hand. All the five countries under review here fit within the concept of the *Limited Access Order* (LAO) developed by North and colleagues.[65] The main features of this concept are the problem of containing violence in a society and the political and economic behavior of the elite in its efforts to get access to resources.

The way in which these are generated and their distribution among the elite determine whether this takes place in a peaceful manner or not. A change in composition of the dominating elite and, as a consequence, in the distribution of the available resources could result in serious instability and increase in violence in a society. As part of the continuum regarding a LAO, one can distinguish three types: "fragile," "basic,"and "mature." Seen from this perspective, possibly the chief virtue of Zenawi, Museveni, and Kagame has been that they have contributed substantially to move Ethiopia, Uganda, and Rwanda, respectively, from a "fragile" LAO towards a "basic" LAO. The Congo, however, was never able to break free from fragility. In spite of the incidental outbursts of violence related to the election process, Kenya could hold its ground as a more or less stable, "basic" LAO.

65 D. North, J. Wallis, S Webb, and B. Weingast, "Limited Access orders in the developing world: a new approach to the problems of development," *World Bank*, Policy research working paper no. 4359 (Washington, 2007).

In view of the importance of elections in order to get access to the available government resources, it is not too surprising that multiparty elections in Africa often went hand-in-hand with violence. In itself, this is not so unique, but the frequency with which this occurred on the continent might well be. Often intimidation and violence were part and parcel of the tactics applied by important political actors. This could take many different forms: an expression of dissatisfaction (for example, because of disputed elections), violent intimidation by the ruling party, the use of informal militias to enforce an election victory, and as a means to acquire resources for patronage purposes by "political" entrepreneurs. Examples of this can be found in all five countries. It is worth noting, however, that the recent histories of four of the five countries (the exception is Kenya) have been marked by civil war and its consequences for the political process.

Depending on the political settlement, violence in all five countries took different forms during the reintroduction of a multiparty system. Political liberalization in Kenya appeared to be risky business. Multiparty elections involved political violence, until then unknown in post-colonial Kenya. The convergence of elite fragmentation, the loss of the monopoly of force by the state, and political liberalization resulted in a highly inflammable mixture. In 1992 and 1997, the ruling party KANU used violence and intimidation on a large scale to secure electoral victory. In 2007, allegations of electoral fraud triggered large-scale outbursts of violence.

After Mobutu was forced to allow political liberalization in the early 1990s, armed groups were established as a result of intensified political competition, initially in order to protect the interests of local politicians. The subsequent loss of the monopoly on the use of force by the state and two Congolese wars created the conditions for increased fragmentation and multiplication of informal militias, which protected their interests by the use of force. Against this background, the relatively peaceful running of the 2006 and 2011 elections was rather remarkable.

The violent nature of Rwanda's political history is self-evident. The establishment of ethnically based parties in the run-up to the 1959 elections immediately led to inter-ethnic violence. The background of the genocide in 1994 is a case in point. After the RPF came to power, this came to an end, since the grip on power by the RPF was so absolute that any large-scale violence in Rwanda could be ruled out. Given the political dominance of the EPRDF in Ethiopia, the opposition was marginalized. That changed during the 2005 elections. After the unexpected election results, the EPRDF did not shy away

from eliminating the opposition by all possible means, including violence. In Uganda, the fraudulent 1980 elections marked the starting signal for another bloody civil war, which eventually resulted in the armed seizure of power by Museveni in 1986. Since then, the electoral process (initially under the *Movement* system) for the most part took place peacefully.

On the basis of the above country cases, one could argue that the chance of instrumentalizing (political) violence within the context of the reintroduction of multiparty politics and multiparty elections increased when the ruling party was not sure about the outcome. In the absence of such doubts because of the dominance of the ruling party, the risk of election violence also became smaller.

7.5 Elections and political parties

In most cases, the main reference for establishing political parties in Africa was ethnic and/or regional origin, and not programmatic and ideological preferences. This did not imply that political parties became automatically ethnic parties, but it did mean that political mobilization took place primarily along ethnic lines. How this mobilization translated itself into the formation of political parties depended on a number of factors like the size of the ethnic group, the ethnic concentration in a specific region, the intensity of political moblilization of ethnicity, and, last but not least, on specific historical circumstances.

Ethnic fragmentation did not necessarily lead to a fragmented political system. In many African countries, the main feature of the political system was a dominant, ruling party, which, in a number of cases, was also in power in the period prior to the reintroduction of a multiparty system. This might be partly explained not only by the authoritarian nature of most multiparty systems but also by the ethnic diversity itself in African societies. Political leaders of specific ethnic groups were obliged to form coalitions. An important consideration of course was that a coalition should offer the best chance to get access to political power and the available resources. Still, quite a number of a small, unstable opposition parties also continued to exist, which, in the run-up to the elections, were not part of such a coalition. The dominating position of the president and the patronage character of African politics constituted the main stumbling block for opposition parties to consolidate themselves. It encouraged individual *Big Men* to usually have small parties at their disposal to be able to join the winning party. Having one's own party served

as a tool to get access to public means, which were necessary to maintain and expand a political patronage network.

The political parties participating in elections after independence were, in different varieties, based on the footing as described. In Kenya, initially the main political dividing line was between KANU, which was strongly in favor of a unitary state and, in particular, represented the biggest ethnic groups, and KADU, which as representative of the smaller ethnic group advocated a federal structure. In Rwanda, the main divide was between parties with a Hutu support-base and those representing Tutsi interests. In Uganda, region and religion marked the political divisions, while in the Congo parties were organized along strict ethnic lines. In Ethiopia, no political parties were allowed until 1991

After independence, in four of the five countries a one-party system rapidly replaced multiparty politics: KANU in Kenya, UPC in Uganda, the MRND in Rwanda, and MPR in the Congo. Ethnic and regional considerations to a large extent still dominated the political debate but less openly and, in general, less intensely. After the reintroduction of a multiparty system the same patterns as before could be identified as regards party formation. Depending on the strength of the ruling party, ethnic sentiments were mobilized to stir up divisions among the opposition and to secure an election victory, clear examples being KANU under Daniel arap Moi in 1992 and 1997, and the MPR of Mobutu in the 1990s.

Most parties established after the reintroduction of a multiparty system had some of the following characteristics: scarcely indistinguishable programs; a weak bureaucratic organization; informal, personal, and patronage based; a high degree of factionalism; lack of internal democracy; a weak membership structure; a narrow financial base; weak links with civil society; and, most importantly, support based along ethnic and regional lines.[66] Still, ethnic arithmetic frequently forced parties to form coalitions.

Opposition parties faced additional difficulties in Africa. Apart from the abovementioned characteristics, the dominance of the president and the resources available to him and his party saw to it that opposition parties were most of the time small in size, internally divided, and rather powerless in the face of the ruling party. Only when the ruling party itself was strongly divid-

66 G. Erdmann, "Party research: Western European bias and the African labyrinth," *Votes, money and violence. Political parties in Sub-Saharan Africa*, 34–64,

ed and the opposition united, did the opposition stand a chance, examples being the opposition united (for a limited time) in the *Sovereign National Conference* in the Congo in the early 1990s and the electoral defeat of KANU in 2002 in Kenya.

Exceptions to this were the *Rwanda Patriotic Front* in Rwanda, the Ethiopia People's *Revolutionary Democratic Front* in Ethiopia, and, initially, the *National Resistance Movement* in Uganda. These political organizations succeeded, at least temporarily, in uniting important parts of the political elite, in disciplining those who did not comply with the rules, rewarding those who did, and maintaining some checks and balances in order to avoid too much power in the hands of one individual.[67] Moreover, the EPRDF distinguished itself from all the other ruling parties, on the one hand, by the explicitly ethnic/regional character of the parties belonging to the EPRDF coalition and, on the other, by its expressly ideological stance, which was absent or much less present in the other countries.

The reintroduction of multiparty politics in the 1990s was the result of an interaction of domestic and foreign pressure, and the reaction to this pressure by those who were in power. In Uganda, Rwanda, the Congo, and Ethiopia this process took place against the background of a civil war (Rwanda, Ethiopia), the disintegration of the country (the Congo), or a foreign invasion (Uganda). The subsequent developments, as described in the previous chapters, led to considerable delays before multiparty elections could be actually held: in Ethiopia in 1995, in Rwanda in 2003, and in Uganda and the Congo in 2006. Only in the case of Kenya did multiparty elections in 1992 follow rapidly after the liberalization of the political system.

The reintroduction of a multiparty system and elections, including their intended and unintended implications, did not turn out to be an unqualified success. It was clear that those in power as well as those who wanted to come to power considered elections, in particular for the presidency, as the most crucial part of the political process. They determined who would get access to government resources, which were necessary to maintain and possibly expand the political support base.

The still strong presence of patronage arrangements in these societies saw to it that the manner in which the election campaigns were conducted followed

67 J. Putzel and J. Di John, *Meeting the challenges of crisis states*, Crisis States Research Report (London, 2012).

the corresponding logic. It appears that the reintroduction of a multiparty democracy strengthened this logic rather than weakened it. During election time, accountability was often interpreted literally. Generosity by a candidate yielded more votes than asking for support on the basis of political programs. Hyden summarizes: "In a multiparty political setting, the temptation for quick and easy gains grows and the inclination to side step official policy objectives consequently becomes even greater."[68]

It appears that many young "democracies" face this challenge. Politicians in starting democracies are less capable of making credible promises to large groups of voters than in older democracies. Therefore, they turn to giving preferential treatment to specific groups of voters and acquiring resources for the purpose of patronage at the expense of the provision of public services benefitting everyone. In a situation in which a voter thinks he or she can benefit most by associating with a political *patron*, politicians are understandably tempted to focus on patron-client relationships with potential voters to address the problem of credibility. Politicians in older democracies have more opportunities than their counterparts in young democracies to establish a credible political reputation among large groups of the electorate.[69]

Political considerations of a "vertical" (patron-client) nature determined political preferences much more often than "horizontal" (for example, shared socioeconomic) interests. In practice, these preferences were based on ethnic and/or regional affinity, and the political coalitions along these lines. A clear example was the elections in Kenya after the reintroduction of multiparty politics. Over and over again, politicians were prepared to mobilize ethnically based "vertical" relationships for political purposes. After the withdrawal of the *Movement* system, the NRM in Uganda was capable by using well-tested patronage practices to win over a substantial part of the political elite at the national and local levels.

The instrumentalization of ethnic and regional affiliations, together with widespread patronage practices to win the loyalty of a part of the political elite, was an integral part of Congolese politics. As indicated earlier, in Rwanda, the position of RPF in the political arena was so overwhelming that elections were scarcely relevant. In Ethiopia, elections most of the time were a formality as well, with the exception of 2005. In these elections a united op-

68 G. Hyden, *African politics in comparative perspective* (Cambridge, 2012), 137.
69 P. Keefer, "Democratization and clientelism: why are young democracies badly governed?" *World Bank* PS3594 (Washington, 2005).

position, which was allowed more political space than before, posed a serious electoral threat to the EPRDF. Subsequently, the opposition was neutralized.

Still, this time the above picture also needs to be qualified. The ideals of democracy, "good governance," or at least less corruption are very attractive to the population in Africa just as all over the world. The Kenyan example might suffice here. What Kenyans expect as the output of a multiparty system and elections are very familiar: a fair distribution of opportunities and resources, righteous leaders, and less corruption. Yearning for a *moral economy* is still very much alive. In spite of all the intimidation, violence, and disappointment about the results, Kenyans still continue to attach great value to political pluralism as a means of electing their leaders. Remarkable but at the same time understandable was the discrepancy between the importance given to a democratic political system and, on the other hand, the considerations on the basis of which people voted: ethnicity and direct reciprocity, which at least in part appeared to be contradictory.

At the same time considerations other than ethnicity or regional background and the corresponding reciprocity influenced how people voted. Although a candidate from the north was available, an important part of the electorate in the north of Uganda voted in 2006 for a candidate from the west, who was deemed to stand a better chance against Yoweri Museveni. In 2012, the majority of same electorate voted this time for the incumbent, primarily because he had brought peace to the northern part of the country. Kabila Jr., whose family originates from Katanga, won the 2006 elections mainly because of his popularity in the east of the country. Voters in the east held him responsible for the (short-lived) return of peace, and the withdrawal of Rwandan and Ugandan troops from the east of the Congo.

Exceptions confirm the rule. The reintroduction of a multiparty system and the corresponding elections adjusted the rules of the political game but as such did not change the neo-patrimonial logic, which was at the heart of African politics; at best it imposed certain restrictions.

7.6 Cohesion of the political elite

The common lines and patterns formulated above had serious implications for the degree of political cohesion of the ruling coalition in the five countries. It must be emphasized, however, that elite fragmentation is not just the preserve of a multiparty democracy. In the period after independence, there

were also already sharp divisions among the political elites in the Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, and Uganda.

An extreme example of this is the Congo. Immediately after independence, fragmentation of the political elite was the order of the day. With the exception of the first ten years of the Mobutu regime, during which he managed a certain level of cohesion among the political class, elite fragmentation was a main characteristic of the political settlement in the Congo. The opening up of the political system in the early 1990s and the subsequent manipulation of the political constellation by Mobutu resulted in a further fragmentation of Congolese politics. This fragmentation reached its climax during the two Congolese wars leading to autonomous regional elites. During the transition government established in 2001, the outlines of an elite agreement began to take shape again. The period after the elections showed that this type of settlement did not last.

Initially Uganda did not fare any better. Until the NRM came to power in 1986, political and military representatives from the north of the country (for example, during Obote and Amin) dominated the ruling coalitions. The main features of these coalitions were not only the exclusion of important elite factions from other parts of the country but also the internal divisions of these coalitions. Following the terminology of Khan: The vertical and the horizontal bases of the ruling coalition were rather small, with dire consequences. The rule of Museveni and the NRM signified an import break with the past. The regime, bearing in mind the NRM "philosophy," was able, with some success, to also win over elites other than those from the west and Buganda. The NRM, as a political organization, managed to discipline those who did not conform and reward those who did. In short, the horizontal as well as the vertical bases of the regime were consolidated to such an extent that Uganda for the first time since independence witnessed a long period of stability. When the NRM became less successful in maintaining internal cohesion, it changed its strategy. The NRM used the reintroduction of a pluralist political system to restore internal consensus and regain political strength. Being a political party within the framework of a multiparty system, there was no longer a need for the NRM to accommodate political dissidents within the "Movement." In other words, the NRM instrumentalized the introduction of multiparty politics to consolidate its grip on power. It was accepted that this came at the expense of political inclusiveness.

Between independence and the 2003 elections, one can distinguish roughly three periods in Rwanda as regards the manner in which the political settle-

ments between the several elite factions was organized. Confrontation between between the "old" Tutsi and "new" Hutu elites characterized the first period. During the Habyarimana regime, the increasing intra-ethnic competition between the Hutu elite from the north and south of the country was the main feature of the political settlement. The narrowing powerbase of the ruling coalition contributed to events leading to the genocide, when not only a large part of the Tutsi population group was massacred but also a number of Hutu opposition leaders murdered. Unlike in the past, the RPF opted expressly for inclusivity. It was the first time in the post-colonial history of Rwanda that political power was not purely organized along ethnic lines. As indicated earlier, opinions differ as to whether this political settlement indeed formed a solid horizontal and vertical powerbase for the regime or that it just constituted a façade. In any case, its capacity for action was well taken care of.

Although much less destructive than in the Congo, Rwanda, and Uganda, *competitive clientelism* determined politics in Kenya to a large extent as well. The period after independence, during which Kenyatta senior left his mark on the nature and the composition of the regime, constituted an important exception. This changed in the final stages of his regime and even more so during the Moi era. Certain factions were given expressly preferential treatment over others. Moi and his allies increasingly used divide-and-rule tactics to consolidate their power. *Ethnic arithmetic* was the guiding principle. The consolidation of political power depended on the alliance of a number of – often smaller – ethnic groups, with anti-Kikuyu sentiments as a common denominator. A certain level of inclusivity under Kenyatta was replaced by exclusion. The gradual exclusion of (economically) important parts of the various elites narrowed the powerbase of the regime considerably.

The reintroduction of multiparty politics, and in particular presidential elections, very much influenced the way ruling coalitions operated. In their effort to consolidate or expand their power, members of the political elite had to adjust to the changed rules of the game. How this happened was different in each country. These adjustments to the new political reality had a number of implications for the vertical and horizontal base of the ruling coalitions in the five countries and the degree of cohesion among the political elites.

The 2006 elections in the Congo were relatively successful. They had a stabilizing impact because they formalized, in a visible and recognized way, the balance of power between the different elite groups and reduced the risk that these groups would try to realize an adjustment by the use of force. In the

period following these elections, fragmentation among the political elites in the Congo gradually occurred again along familiar lines. The position of the ruling elites in Uganda hardly faced any threat by the elites excluded from power. More relevant were the challenges coming from within this coalition. As indicated, a part of the NRM leadership made a deliberate choice to use the introduction of multiparty politics to get rid of a number of important dissidents within the NRM. By doing so the cohesion of the organization and the loyalty of the lower echelons to the party leadership could be restored.

Kenya might serve as a classic example of *competitive clientelism*. Fragmentation of the elite had already started before the introduction of a multiparty system, but it subsequently intensified. The position of the ruling coalition was repeatedly threatened by excluded factions as well as internal divisions, albeit not always simultaneously. In spite of its narrow powerbase, the ruling elite managed to stay in power during the 1992 and 1997 elections, partly thanks to the divisions among the excluded factions. The situation in the run up the 2002 elections was different: The regime was seriously weakened with regard to its horizontal and vertical powerbase. For once the opposition was united, and, within the ruling party, serious disagreements came to the fore about the question of who should succeed Daniel arap Moi as leader. In 2007, there was a consensus among the factions of the ruling coalition, but its powerbase was rather limited. The outcome was an outburst of violence in the aftermath of the elections. The ICC indictments resulted in a rearrangement of political forces, but still along ethnic lines.

After the introduction of political pluralism, political elites remained divided along ethnic and regional lines. In a number of cases, the introduction of a multiparty system formalized and intensified the competition between the different factions. There is no lack of examples: the 1992 and 1997 elections in Kenya, the opening up of the political system in the Congo and Rwanda, or the 1980 elections in Uganda. In brief, the reintroduction of multiparty democracy did not contribute to a greater cohesion among the political elite but rather the opposite. At the same time it has to be recognized that fragmentation of the political elite was already an issue during times when there was no multiparty system in place. The increased competition among the elite in Uganda in the final days of Obote II or in the Congo after Mobutu disappeared from the political stage had little to do with political pluralism or elections. The same applies to the disintegration of Ethiopia under the regime of Mengistu.

In Rwanda multiparty elections did not have any impact on the political settlement and powerbase of the regime. In as far as there appeared to be a declining powerbase, it had little to do with the elections in 2006 and 2011. In Ethiopia something similar happened. After coming to power in 1991, the EPRDF was in a strong position vis-à-vis the political elites outside the coalition as well as potential opponents within the coalition. The integration of a part of local elites into the regime, the internal divisions of the opposition, and the repressive policies exercised by the regime no doubt added to the weakness of the excluded elites. The tight organization of the EPRDF imposed a strong discipline among its members. Within this context, elections served as legitimizing exercises for the existing political set-up. After the electoral scare in 2005, measures were taken to avoid this façade of electoral legitimacy from being jeopardized again.

7.7 Economic transformation and political settlement

Africa has witnessed substantial economic growth in the last ten to fifteen years. That was also the case in the five countries under review. However, it has also been pointed out that this economic growth was primarily based on rising world market prices for natural resources and more effective processing and export of primary goods.

Without economic transformation this economic growth cannot be sustained.[70] In the five countries limited progress was made in changing the economic structure and enhancing the technological level of the economy. Opinions differ about the question of where the policy focus should be during the initial stages of this transformation.[71] But is clear that an economic take-off, in the sense of structural changes in the economy, has not taken place as of yet. A comparison with countries outside of Africa, which under-

70 See, for example, the conclusions of the African Center for Economic Transformation in "Growing rapidly-transforming slowly"; the Economic Commission for Africa, "Making the most of Africa's commodities: industrializing for growth, jobs and economic transformation," in A. Noman, K. Botchwey, H.Stein, and J. Stiglitz (eds.), *Good growth and governance in Africa. Rethinking development strategies*; D. Rodrik, *The future of economic convergence*.

71 The research project *Tracking Development* draws the conclusion that a combination of macroeconomic stability, economic freedom, in particular, for small farmers and enterpreneurs, and substantial financial government support to the countryside was a precondition for the economic take-off of a number of Southeast-Asian countries (D. Henley, *Asia-Africa development divergence: a question of intent* [Leiden, 2010]).

went a process of transformation at an earlier stage, shows that Africa is still at the beginning of this process.

Of the five countries, political conditions have possibly been created in Ethiopia and Rwanda that can pave the way towards a structural change of their economies. However, the economic transformation index of the *African Center for Economic Transformation*, which compares African countries to each other, shows that also these countries are still lagging behind. It has to be noted that, although a political settlement conducive to economic transformation seems to be present in these two countries, the recent history of the countries still has a big impact on the start and tempo of such a development. In particular, the disruptive effects of the violent conflict these countries went through are still very much present.

Experiences in Asia, among other regions, show that an active role of government in bringing about structural changes in the economy is of crucial importance. It requires a government that is prepared to make the substantial investments needed for economic transformation and also capable of maintaining these policies for a considerable period of time. A necessary but not sufficient precondition is a ruling coalition that has enough support from the political elites and perseverance to be able to implement these policies.

The introduction of multiparty democracy, according to a Western template, did not contribute in the five countries to any such political settlement. It appears that the opposite might have happened. The stagnation of the Kenyan economy already started before the reintroduction of political pluralism. But multiparty politics did not bring about a positive change. Moreover, election years turned out to be bad for the economy. Noteworthy, though, is that, after the 2002, elections the economy continued to grow in spite of an intensification of *competitive clientelism* after the disintegration of the NARC coalition. Since the NRM came to power in 1986, Uganda has experienced political stability, continuous growth (although slowing down in recent years), and a reduction in poverty. After the introduction of a multiparty system, the NRM still managed to maintain the support of a major part of the national and local elites, using patronage as an important tool. The related costs did not sit well (from a developmental perspective) with an efficient allocation of the still scarce resources. After the relatively successful elections in 2006, the Congo entered a period of macroeconomic stability, some economic recovery, and, initially, also political stability. A partial departure from the policies geared towards macroeconomic stability in 2005 coincided with the preparations for the elections in 2006.

The lack of political pluralism in Ethiopia and Rwanda could well have contributed to a political climate that made substantial investments to boost the modernization of the economy possible. The mixture of the determination of an autocratic regime and a policy focused consistently on socioeconomic development might have not resulted in democratic legitimacy but has created a certain level of support by the population, based on the provision of peace and security, improved public services, and economic progress.[72] It seems that, in these countries, at least the political foundation was laid for economic transformation.

72 See also P. Collier, *War, guns and votes: democracy in dangerous places* (New York, 2010).

8 Conclusions

8.1 No positive contribution of multiparty democracy

The central question in this study is whether the introduction or reintroduction of a multiparty system and corresponding elections in a number of African countries in the 1990s contributed to political settlements that are conducive to economic development and transformation.

Most members of the Western donor community emphasize the normative and legitimacy aspects of "good governance." The advancement of a multiparty system is an important dimension of their governance agenda. Although multiparty politics and elections are not identical with "good governance" or democracy, they constitute central and crucial elements, and therefore an inseparable part of this agenda.

A number of studies establish a relationship between "good governance" and economic development in general. The authors of *Why nations fail?* point out the importance of inclusive political institutions for (economic) development. The economic growth of a number of African *cheetahs* in recent years is partly attributed to the introduction of more open and democratic political systems.[73] In addition, statistical studies in particular show an important correlation between economic growth and political "good governance."

However, (seen from the perspective of the typology of Khan) the conclusion here can be drawn that the introduction/reintroduction of a multiparty system and corresponding elections did not particularly help the establishment of political coalitions that were prepared to initiate a long-term developmental agenda and were capable of enforcing the implementation of such policies. In Rwanda and Ethiopia, there appeared to be a *potential developmental coalition*, although those in power kept the political system under tight

73 D. Acemoglu and J. Robinson, *Why nations fail: the origins of power, prosperity and poverty* (New York, 2012); S. Radelet, *Emerging Africa: how 17 countries are leading the way* (Washington, 2010).

control. The weakness of the factions excluded from power and the strong hierarchical organization of the ruling coalition in both countries enabled them to implement such an agenda. *Competitive clientelism*, albeit in varying degrees, was the main feature of the political settlements in Kenya and the Congo. The relative strength of the excluded factions, as well as the limited authority over its own supporters, resulted most of the time in opportunistic, short-term policies by the ruling coalition and a limited implementation capacity. It is obvious that the negative consequences of this were much bigger in the Congo than in Kenya. The structure of the ruling coalition in Uganda evolved into a *weak dominant party*, whereby forces within and not so much outside the ruling party constituted the most important threat to political stability.

On the basis of the five country cases and the identified common lines and patterns, as described in the previous chapter, the following trends related to the introduction/reintroduction of multiparty politics in Africa can be identified that contributed to the above state of affairs.

Trend 1
Continuation of the neo-patrimonial nature of the political process

A lot changed as a consequence of the introduction of a multiparty system in the five countries. Political leaders had to try harder to stay in or come to power. At the same time, much remained the same. Multiparty democracy offered a new framework, but the nature of the political process in itself did not change fundamentally. Choices by political actors within this context were not so much influenced by motives, based on programmatic or ideological convictions, as they were by (equally politically rational) considerations that were focused on direct reciprocity with their supporters. Given the increased competition among the political elite to win votes, the introduction of a multiparty system resulted in an intensification of these practices in contrast to what was intended. In other words, it was much more the relationship between *patrons* and their (potential) "clients," which determined to a large extent the functioning of the new political system than between politically conscious citizens. Elections turned out to be exercises, whereby political *Big Men* tried to get access to the available government and other resources for themselves and their supporters. In a number of cases the coalition in charge manipulated the reintroduction of multiparty politics in such a way that continuation of their power could be secured. At election time, accountability was taken literally. Generosity by a candidate yielded more votes than asking support for political programs formulated in general terms. This

did not mean, as was shown in the country cases, that there were no other considerations in play, which could lead in part to other outcomes.

Political parties operated roughly along the same lines. They were often personal in nature, based on an informal and patronage-based relationship between leaders and supporters. In most cases, ethnic and regional origin in practice constituted a more important point of reference than ideological or programmatic differences. Exceptions to a certain extent were the ruling parties in Rwanda and Ethiopia.

Trend 2

Intensified divisions among the political elites

After the introduction of multiparty democracy, political elites remained divided along ethnic and regional lines. The new political system formalized and intensified the competition between ethnic groups. Electoral politics resulted in a stronger emphasis on existing differences between political elites (and the population). As political freedoms improved and elections became more free and fair, the divisions between the political elites and the focus on short-term political success increased. To be fair, during the period when multiparty politics were absent, the political elites were also often divided as well. In Rwanda and Ethiopia this was much less the case. Multiparty elections in these countries scarcely had any impact on the political cohesion of the ruling elite. In as far there were divisions among the ruling elite, these were not related to elections.

Trend 3

Political manipulation of ethnicity remains a serious problem

African societies are pervaded by ethnicity. It constitutes an import reference frame for most Africans. *Ethnic arithmetic* is a skill, which every African politician possesses. The legacy of colonialism determined partly how, after independence, ethnicity was used and abused for purposes of political competition. Moreover, after the reintroduction of a multiparty system, ethnic identity, in whatever shape or form, remained an essential mobilization tool for politicians. Many political leaders made use of ethnicity to decide multiparty elections to their advantage and secure their political position. Quite often they turned ethnic distinctions into antagonistic contradictions. Violence around elections usually had a strong ethnic connotation. In short, multiparty elections often contributed to an increased emphasis on ethnic differences in order to gain political advantage. *Moral ethnicity* was defeated by *political tribalism*.

Trend 4

The use of violence for political purposes continued

Election results determined who would get access to government resources. Taking into account the nature of politics in these countries, this access was of crucial importance for political leaders in order to maintain or expand their power. Therefore, it came as no surprise that the introduction of multiparty politics would often go hand-in-hand with violence. Political violence especially occurred when the ruling party or coalition was unsure about the outcome of elections. When the political dominance of the ruling party was evident, the chance of election violence diminished. Political violence was of course not the prerogative of a multiparty democracy. Civil war and its implications for the political process are an integral part of the recent history of four of the five countries (the exception is Kenya). However, the introduction/reintroduction of a multiparty system and corresponding elections certainly did not put a stop to political violence.

Trend 5

Political corruption depended on the nature of specific elections

The misuse of public means for political purposes did not decrease after the introduction of multiparty democracy in Kenya, Uganda, and the Congo. The rivalry between competing factions intensified in order to come to power, but even more so to remain in power. To win the support of voters, favors had to be distributed on a large scale or promises to that effect had to be made. For this a lot of money was needed. This was hardly the case in Rwanda and Ethiopia, where the outcome of elections was a forgone conclusion, given the dominant position of the ruling coalition.

The trends outlined here of course cannot exclusively be traced back to the reintroduction of a multiparty system in the 1990s. Still the conclusion can be drawn that the introduction of a pluralist political system did not put an end to these trends or change them in a positive direction. In some cases negative trends intensified. Sometimes they were defused by turning multiparty politics *de facto* into irrelevant exercises. In any case, a pluralist political system and elections did not result in inclusive political institutions, which, according to Acemoglu and Robinson in their *Why nations fail?*, are a precondition for economic development.[74]

74 D. Acemoglu and J. Robinson, *Why nations fail: the origins of power, prosperity and poverty* (New York, 2012).

This complex and obstinate reality did not escape the international donor community either and resulted sometimes in a more pragmatic approach. At the same time, Western donors continued to consider multiparty democracy and elections as an important priority in their "good governance" agenda. The discrepancy between theory and practice is particlarly striking in countries in which the situation in terms of democratization on the ground does not correspond at all with the demands of the Western donor community, but which do have successful and efficient developmental policies. In other words, the political representative of a donor country faces two politically conflicting realities: the political situation at home, where often the need of a democracy according to a Western template is emphasized, and in the recipient country, where visible and real developmental progress is made, but where the level of democracy is not in line at all with Western expectations. This has been the case in Rwanda and Ethiopia.

But first things first. Apart from personal and other (e.g. economic or security) considerations, the political representative in question, if only out of self-interest, will prioritize the political reality at home over the complex reality of the recipient country. Sometimes an effort is made to accommodate both: The recipient country will be lectured publicly about the democracy deficit, but at the same time the support will continue in spite of all the rhetoric. As head of the division of the ministry of Foreign Affairs dealing with, among others, the bilateral relations between the Netherlands and Rwanda, I had the privilege to witness this process up-close.[75]

8.2 Intrinsic value?

Although the introduction of a political system according to the Western template did not contribute demonstrably to political conditions conducive for economic development, one could still argue that democracy in itself has an intrinsic value and therefore worthwhile pursuing.[76] Advancement of "good governance," and in particular democracy, could also be an objective in itself and for that reason should be supported. This is, however, more com-

75 From 2009 to 2013, I headed the Middle and Southern Africa division of the ministry of Foreign Affairs. The critical comments and questions from parliament and civil society with regard to Rwanda focused primarily on the authoritarian nature of the Rwandan regime, in addition to its involvement in the Congo conflict.

76 See, for example, A. Sen, *Development as freedom* (New York, 2000); T. Carothers, "Democracy assistance: political vs. developmental?" *Journal of Democracy* 20:1 (2009), 5–19; T. Carothers, "The elusive synthesis," *Journal of Democracy* 21:4 (2010), 12–26.

plicated than it seems. The tension between the requirements for sustained economic growth and modernization of the economy in developing countries, on the one hand, and "good governance" ideals, on the other, is not easy to reconcile.

From the perspective of economic development, the trends, as described above, were bad news. The "good governance" agenda as pursued in Africa appeared to have become part of the problem. A fragmented political elite saw no other option than to implement a political agenda, which did not reach further than the next elections. To secure a positive election outcome and, as a result, political power, available means were used to commit (potential) supporters and neutralize opponents: tangible favors, ethnic prejudices, and violence. Against the background of the divisions among the political elites as a consequence of the societal and political context in most African countries, political actors seemed to be more interested in the accumulation of resources for the purpose of patronage than for development. Multiparty democracy reinforced this type of politics instead of reducing it and contributed to a political settlement that was not very helpful in creating the political preconditions for an economic take-off. The short-term political requirements prevailed over a structural development agenda, if present at all. The subsequent elections in Kenya after the reintroduction of a multiparty democracy are a case in point. In practice these two, by themselves laudable objectives, were at odds with each other.

In a number of cases, the introduction of a multiparty system did more harm than good. The preconditions present in more developed countries were simply not in place in many developing countries. What happened was not so much democratization but an increase in elections. The transfer of political institutions from Western developed countries to developing countries did not lead to the desired political, democratic changes and the supposed effects, such as accountability and legitimacy. Quite the opposite: If these institutions as a consequence of international or domestic pressure are imposed on developing countries without taking into account the nature of the political settlement between the relevant elite factions, they will perform even worse than the ones they have replaced. The emphasis by the West on multiparty democracy Western style might have led to a situation in a number of developing countries where they lacked not only the capacity of an autocratic state to act in a resolute manner but also the accountability of a well functioning democracy.

8.3 What to do?

There are of course factors that are of major importance for successful economic policies in developing countries but which can hardly be influenced (such as geographical factors, worldmarket prices, etc.). The conclusion that can be drawn on the basis of the previous chapters is that the insistence by the international donor community on a Western-type political settlement in the countries under review, as a precondition for or at least a contribution to sustained economic development, was not particularly successful. Therefore, the question should be raised as to which political constellation would be more conducive for sustainable (economic) development in these countries? The answer might be a type of political elite arrangement that is fundamentally different from the one prescribed by the West.

The distribution of political power among the national elites is of crucial importance for a structural take-off of the economy. Given the nature of the politics in the countries studied, the manner in which the political settlement is organized determines to a large extent the political costs of a policy focused on structural economic development and the effectiveness of its implementation. The more firmly a ruling coalition is in the saddle vis-à-vis political opponents outside and within the coalition, the bigger the chance that a long-term horizon will be used in determining policies and the bigger the chance of being able to enforce these policies. Those in power do not have to worry about the result of the next elections and therefore do not have to use a substantial part of the available resources to secure the outcome of these elections.

Such a political settlement offers the possibility to the powers-that-be to keep a check on the existing, often patronage-based political tensions and free resources for investments, which will only pay off at a later date. In other words, the ruling coalition must have the power to be able to mobilize resources in a structural manner in support of economic growth and transformation, instead of having to use them for short-term political gains.

A political settlement along these lines was an important component of the economic take-off in a number of Asian countries. Examples of this, albeit only for a relatively brief period, can also be found in Africa. Ivory Coast, Kenya, and Malawi initially achieved substantial socioeconomic progress on the basis of this type of settlement. However, this period of accelerated economic growth could not be maintained and came to an end with the death or diminishing power of their political leaders.

Although most African countries, including the country cases in this study, witnessed a period of economic growth, the process of a tangible economic transformation leading to (economic) convergence with developed countries has not started yet. Of the five countries, possibly the political preconditions in Rwanda and Ethiopia have been created, which will allow them at a certain point in time to take this path. Only the future will show whether this is indeed the case. It is too early to express a definite opinion. At present, the economic development in both countries is still at the initial stage. In the *Economic Transformation Index*, both countries lag behind other African countries.

As, for example, the outcome of the research project *Tracking Development*, which carried out a historical comparison of the developmental path of four Southeast Asia countries and four African countries, shows, it was not the presence or absence in these countries of "good governance," nor the acceptance of Western-type political institutions or meeting generally accepted liberal-democratic standards, that determined the economic success of these Asian countries.[77] Neither in the five African countries under review has the introduction of multiparty democracy, as an essential part of the "good governance" agenda of the international donor community, been a very positive contribution.

But that is not the whole story. A ruling coalition that is firmly in-charge will create stability and is therefore a necessary but not a sufficient precondition for a successful take-off. Such a political settlement will not automatically result in an agenda focused on long-term economic development. Although the NRM in Uganda, certainly after the 2011 elections, has been firmly pulling the strings, it still considers it necessary to use a substantial part of government resources to consolidate its powerbase instead of making relevant economic investments. Under similar circumstances, the same applies to the Congo after the election victory in 2006. In short, there is more to it. In addition to the type of political settlement, much more emphasis should be put on the difference in policy choices and the way in which those policies are implemented.

In answer to the question *why* those in power in Southeast Asia opted for policies focusing on long-term development, poverty reduction, and investment in rural areas, the relevant literature most of the time refers to the specific historical circumstances as they existed in those days in that part of the

77 See for publications, www.institutions-africa.org.

world. Reference is made to the common interests of the ruling political elite, which had to react to the threat of communist-led revolutionary movements especially in the countryside. This "systematic" threat forced the political elites to support a regime that was capable and willing to defend its interests. This also included addressing the needs of the poor rural population as an integral part of the developmental agenda. There are no indications that in the countries studied within the framework of this research, electoral democracy was able to generate a similar political pressure.

In the opinion of former research leader of the project *Tracking Development,* David Henley, other factors of a more personal nature played an important role as well. He emphasizes the importance of the personal convictions of the leaders in a number of Southeast Asian countries. Partly on the basis of personal experiences (during the anti-colonial struggle) and nationalist considerations, they appeared to be determined to contribute to the economic prosperity of the whole nation, the majority of which lived in the countryside. He comes to the conclusion: "…The great divergence between African and South-East Asian development performance since 1960 does not result from differences in geographical or institutional endowments, but simply in the absence in most parts of Africa, and the presence of most parts in South-East Asia, of a serious developmental intent on the part of national political leaders."[78]

In Kenya, Uganda, and the Congo this "systematic threat" from the rural areas did not exist, but it could be, to a certain extent, the case in Rwanda and Ethiopia. The policies of the Rwanda authorities seem to be partly based on the belief that rapid economic and social development is the only way to neutralize the potential threat to the present regime by the majority of poor Hutu peasants. This might also be the case in Ethiopia, where the majority of the rural population belongs to ethnic groups than the dominating party in the coalition, which was in charge in Addis Ababa. At the same time, as emphasized by Henley, the importance of personal convictions and choices of the political leadership in these countries (Kagame, Zenawi!) should not be underestimated.

Apart from all kinds of considerations based on power politics, Ethiopia stands out because of the explicit ideological dimension of the regime, which was absent or much less present in the other countries. In Rwanda it took more than ten years for the RPF regime to opt for a development strategy,

78 D. Henley, *Asia-Africa development divergence: a question of intent* (Leiden, 2010), XIII.

where an increase in agricultural productivity and income for small (Hutu) farmers would become an important component.

Still, political leaders, even if they are cast in the right mould, cannot surpass themselves. In the history of a country, there are also many deeply rooted social and economic factors, which also have an impact on the political system and the economic development of that country. These can be positive as well as negative, but usually they cannot be changed easily or rapidly.

In the country chapters, examples of this can be found, not only specific political characteristics, perceptions among the population about political power, or ethnic fragmentation but also, for instance (which is outside the scope of this study), the value placed on entrepreneurship in a society.[79] The outcome of the interdependence between *agency* and *path dependency* cannot be summarized in general formulations; it is the result of country specific circumstances, as described in the country cases.

From an economic development perspective, the reintroduction of multiparty democracy in the 1990s in Africa has been anything but successful, but it has become gradually part and parcel of the political system of African countries. In addition, under specific historical circumstances, the introduction of a multiparty system and corresponding elections did contribute to political stability, one of the preconditions for economic development. The 2002 elections in Kenya guaranteed an orderly transfer of power by a bankrupt regime, which had lost the support of the majority of the people. After years of civil war, the 2006 elections in the Congo provided clarity about the actual balance of power in the country. The 2011 elections in Uganda confirmed Museveni's position of power as being recognized by the majority of the people.

Moreover, although frequently disappointed about the impact, many Africans continue to have confidence in multiparty democracy as the best political system for securing a better future. The ideal of democracy, "good governance," or at least less corruption exert, just like in other parts of the world, a real attraction for the population in Africa. At the same time, it is not to be expected that the Western donor community will soon stop pressing for a political system in line with their own experiences. Partly because of the

79 Kenya might be an interesting case. The political settlement is characterized by a number of negative trends in terms of economic development. Still, there are indications that point in the direction of partial economic transformation. It is too early to tell whether this is indeed the case.

still substantial aid dependency, countries especially in sub-Saharan Africa will continue to be confronted with the wishes, preferences, and demands of Western donor countries in this area. Therefore, the question becomes relevant as to how a "good governance" agenda, which takes into account the context as described in this study, should look.

8.4 The Ten Commandments for crafting a sensible "good governance" policy

The country cases show that it is rather doubtful whether the reintroduction of a multiparty democracy and corresponding elections created the right political conditions or provided the necessary incentives to African political elites to enable structural economic development. Even if it is true that regular elections lead to more civil and political liberties, the question still remains as to what the significance of this is.

As stated several times, multiparty politics are not identical to "good governance." Still they form an integral part of this concept. Promoting multiparty democracy, and free-and-fair elections are one of the most crucial components of the "good governance" agenda of the traditional donor community. On the basis of the findings of this study, an effort will be made in this chapter to formulate a number of more general, realistic policy recommendations as regards "good governance."

Africa distinguishes itself from modern Western societies in two important respects: a relative low level of development not comparable with that of the West and Africa is "different," that is, African and not Western. This has important consequences for the content and the application of "good governance" policies and, in particular, for the sequence of economic and political reforms. The level of development of a society has implications for the societal context in which the business of politics is done.[80]

For a "good governance" agenda to be relevant for African countries and for it to contribute to sustained economic development, it needs to take into account the specific developmental phase of these countries. The term *good enough governance*, coined by the American political scientist Merilee Grin-

80 See, for instance, R. Inglehart and C. Welzl, *The human development sequence. Modernization, cultural change and democracy* (Cambridge, 2005).

dle, is highly relevant in this context.[81] What is meant here is that it is not necessary or possible to tackle all the problems in the area of "good governance" at the same time as the institutions and capacity in question are the result of specific historical developments as well. Often, in and of itself, laudable efforts to promote "good governance" result in lists of governance issues that need to be resolved, without paying much attention to what should be done first in order to have a better chance to achieve other governance objectives later. In determining the sequence, timing, and type of intervention, one should first explicitly take into account the specific circumstances in a country (for example, limited financial resources, and the available knowledge, expertise, and organizational capacity) and the specific target to be achieved. According to Grindle, *good enough governance* should focus primarily on the minimal conditions needed for political and economic development. What those conditions are depends on the specific characteristics and available capacity in a country.

But that is not all. On the basis of the study of the country cases, and the lines and patterns identified, the conclusion has to be drawn that a "good governance" agenda that wants to be relevant should not focus on the advancement of democracy or the fight against authoritarian regimes. Much more important is the presence of and the support for a regime that has the determination and the capacity to implement a long-term economic development agenda and free up the resources necessary for that purpose. Apart from the right policy choices and implementation, political leadership that has a solid powerbase and a genuine developmental ambition constitutes an essential condition.

It is time for the international donor community to stop pressing for a "good governance" agenda, which scarcely had the desired effect in developing countries and, in a number of cases, even resulted in the opposite of what was trying to be achieved. The debate about the relevance of "good governance" for the development of Africa should be framed along different lines, resulting in an approach in tune with the African reality. It will have to be an approach that does not highlight the legitimacy aspects of governance on the basis of a Western template and its supposedly salutary effects but that contributes to the establishment of political conditions necessary for economic development: No *good governance* but a *developmental governance* agenda. It is of course not possible here to come up with a ready-made answer to the

81 M. Grindle, "Good enough governance revisited," *Development Policy Review* 29:1 (2011), 199–222.

question of what this new approach should entail. However, based on the country cases and the relevant literature, a number of suggestions can be formulated as to which "commandments" should figure in such an agenda.

Thou shalt review thy policy assumptions

What can the international donor community do? To be frank, not much. Outsiders should be modest. The domestic political process might well be a decisive factor in determining the future of a developing country, but donor countries are not in a position to act as drivers of change with regard to governance issues and should not have the ambition to do so. Developing countries, just as Western countries in the past, will have to find their own way. The (political) reorganization of patronage networks, so they can no longer block development, is obviously not a task for outsiders.

What the international donor community can do is to critically confront once again a number of its own policy assumptions with regard to "good governance," in general, and the presumed necessity of a pluralist political system, in particular, in terms of the African reality. The effectiveness of a Western-type democracy depends on economic and social conditions, which in any case were not (yet) present in the five countries studied. To actively promote such a political system and to make the provision of aid conditional on fulfilling this demand, for example, is based on a misunderstanding of and runs contrary to the political and social reality of those countries: wrong diagnosis, wrong prescription.

Thou shalt take account of the special character of African states

Another type of analysis is required. The prevailing model of the state on the African continent is a patrimonial one. This system permeates all levels of society, up to the highest political echelons. Many important decisions taken by government are influenced by it. A clearer understanding of these pervasive client-patron relationships and their impact on the functioning of multiparty systems is crucial for formulating a sensible strategy. An analysis will become more relevant to the extent to which this reality behind the façade is taken into account. It means that it is not the *pays légal*, the formal political structure on which the Western donor community mainly focuses, that should be taken as a point of departure but the *pays réel*, where real political power is exercised. A proper understanding of the situation on the ground should matter more than the exigencies of the political climate in Western donor countries. In many cases, this approach requires us to adjust our expectations and associated ambitions.

Thou shalt value effectiveness over moral indignation

Lack of "good governance" does not necessarily have to be an obstacle to structural economic development and poverty reduction. In and of themselves, commendable demands (as formulated by the international donor community) are not preconditions for developing countries to move ahead. It is often simply impossible for developing countries to meet these demands. Moreover, they draw attention away from governance reforms that are feasible and can make a difference. Many African countries are ill equipped to carry out many of the government tasks considered essential from a Western point of view. What is needed is a healthy dose of opportunism. Build on what is already working or could work. Whatever you do, don't try to reinvent the wheel.

Thou shalt engage in a different political dialogue

The implication is that a relevant political dialogue with African leaders will primarily have to deal with the manner in which they *manage* the political process in their countries so that it does not undercut measures that need to be taken in support of economic development. Relevant questions in this context: Are stimulation of economic growth, in particular of agriculture, free entrepreneurship, and raising (national) productivity part and parcel of the rules of the game of the policies of the government? Are serious efforts made to manage political tensions and maintain a minimum of political stability? To press for political reforms with the objective of dismantling the prevailing patronage system might even be counter-productive. In a number of cases, this type of reform will result in limiting the capacity of the state to counteract excesses, all while this political practice still continues.

Neo-patrimonialism in itself does not have to be an obstacle to development. The nature of the settlement between political elites is much more important in this respect. It is therefore advisable not to judge the quality of the political decision-making process, based on the appearances of Western democracy or the lack thereof, but on the achieved (economic) results. What is important In terms of (economic) development is less the manner in which a government is established than what it achieves: It does not matter whether a cat is black or white, as long as it catches mice.

Thou shalt emphasize economic reforms

"Good governance" follows economic development and not the other way around. Taking into account the low level of economic transformation of most of the African economies, economic reforms are more important than political ones. It will be impossible to sustain "good governance" reforms, if these are not accompanied by economic growth. Too much emphasis on po-

litical pluralism will drive these countries into a situation where they lack not only the capacity of an autocratic state to to act in a resolute manner but also the accountability of a well-functioning democracy.

The removal of specific impediments to economic development should have priority over the implementation of general governance reforms. Discussions, for example, about the need for substantial government investments in agriculture and rural areas should take precedence over lecturing on the importance of "good governance" and democracy. Given the perception among African leaders that policy advice by the international donor community often has a neo-colonial connotation, such advice should be part of more general support for building the capacity of policy-developing institutions.

Thou shalt prioritize inclusivity over elections

Taking into consideration the widespread support among the population for a pluralist political system, multiparty elections are and will remain a reality in Africa. *Sequencing* (first economic followed by political reforms) might perhaps have the best chance of success in terms of structural economic development, but this is not a realistic option (any longer). In as far as outsiders can influence events, their efforts should focus as much as possible on mitigating the negative consequences of elections.

More important than the outcome of elections is the need to hold together what are often deeply divided societies. The various segments of the population must feel that they are represented and not excluded by the state. Political inclusivity among the elites often constitutes a more important condition for political stability and therefore economic development than a Western-type democracy and all its trappings. The politics of accommodation in the Netherlands operated partly along similar lines. Whether they are conducted fairly or not, elections that can be used to legitimize a winner takes all approach are, in Africa, all too often a recipe for misery and therefore do not deserve our support.

Thou shalt not mix and match agendas

Although the magnitude of a country's (often interrelated) needs and problems is often enormous, policymakers will have to limit themselves to the most urgent reforms on account of the rudimentary capacity and the exceptionally weak institutional environment in African states. The donor community (including the Netherlands) must not overburden African countries with a laundry list of requests and demands. A broad governance agenda rarely deserves priority as part of a growth strategy. Some reforms are more

necessary than others, and some countries can shoulder a greater burden than others. Consequently, rigorous prioritizing is essential. Biting of more than these countries can chew can be counterproductive, because it diverts resources from the implementation of measures that *are* possible.

Thou shalt not make matters worse

Should there be a regime that achieves tangible results regarding poverty reduction and creates the right conditions for economic development, it is advisable to refrain from external pressure to bring the political settlement in line with the requirements of the fashionable "good governance" agenda. Rwanda and Ethiopia fit in this category. External pressure to change their admittedly authoritarian style of governing might well undermine the domestic political stability based on this type of political settlement, and involuntarily contribute to the undermining of the economic progress made and even result in the outbreak of violence between different population groups. In countries governed by competent regimes focused on economic development and transformation, demands to increase political participation rapidly could easily lead to a drastic redistribution for the purpose of short-term patronage with detrimental effects on long-term economic development.

Thou shalt appreciate ethnicity for what it is

African societies are pervaded by ethnicity. It constitutes an import frame of reference for most Africans. *Ethnic arithmetic* is a skill that every African politician possesses. Many political leaders make use of ethnicity to decide multiparty elections to their advantage and secure their political position. Western donor countries would be well advised to take this into account and accept this as a political fact. What needs to be done is to help mitigate the increased ethnic animosities as a consequence of the introduction of multiparty democracy. Considering the implications of the intrumentalization of ethnicity for the political stability of a country and the well-being of its population, the Western "good governance" agenda should be of secondary importance. Within this context, reconciliation prevails over justice.

Thou shalt have different expectations

The international community (including Western civil society) could do with a healthy dose of realism and should adjust their expectations: smaller steps, a longer time scale, and a better understanding of the historical, political, and the sociocultural context. The developmental process of African countries will be an African process and will not take place *per se* on the basis of our Western templates. We are dealing here with long-term socioeconomic developments that cannot be cut off just for institutional Western-style reforms.

Summary "Does democracy help Africa?"

Western donor countries consider a proper functioning multiparty democracy as one of the most import conditions for achieving more legitimate governance, and subsequently economic development and reduction of poverty in their partner countries. Support for free-and-fair elections is an integral part of the "good governance" agenda of the traditional donor community. The central question in this study is whether the introduction/reintroduction of a multiparty system and corresponding elections in a number of African countries in the 1990s contributed to political settlements that are conducive to economic development and transformation. A comparative historical approach has been applied to shed light on the research question. Within this context, the reaction of the political elites, in particular, to the challenges of a multiparty democracy has been investigated. Since the proof of the pudding is in the eating, a major part of the study focuses on five country cases in sub-Sahara Africa, that is, Kenya, Uganda, the Congo, Rwanda, and Ethiopia. Based on these country studies and studying the relevant literature, a number of common trends and conclusions have been formulated.

Although the abovementioned countries, like elsewhere in Africa, have witnessed substantial economic growth, it is clear that a transformation of their economies has not taken place yet. They are just at the beginning of this process. Without a structural change, this level of economic growth will not be sustainable. In an effort to try to understand how multiparty democracy influenced the different types of cooperation among the political elites, and its implications for economic transformation, the typology on political arrangements in developing countries, formulated by Mushtaq Khan, has been applied.

Seen from the perspective of this typology and based on the findings of the country-specific research, the conclusion can be drawn that the introduction/reintroduction of a multiparty system and elections, as such, did not result in ruling coalitions that were capable of applying a long-term agenda conducive to economic development and transformation, or of implementing these policies for that matter. Political settlements in Kenya and the Congo, albeit at different levels, fell in the period under review in the category of *competitive clientelism*. The relative power of the excluded factions and the limited authority over lower-level supporters created a situation in which the

emphasis was on short-term politics, along with a limited capability as far as enforcing policies is concerned. It is evident that the consequences were far more serious in the Congo than in Kenya. The structure of the ruling coalition in Uganda developed over time into the reality of a *weak dominant party*. The stability of this political settlement was not so much threatened by excluded factions as it was by political forces within the party itself. In Ethiopia and Rwanda, countries in which the political process was firmly under control of the ruling coalitions, the political settlement does seem to have the characteristics of a *potential developmental coalition*. The weakness of the excluded factions as well as the strong hierarchical nature of the ruling coalition in both countries has created a political environment conducive to implementing a long-term development agenda.

The following trends related to the introduction/reintroduction of multiparty democracy and elections in the abovementioned countries, could be identified:

- **Continuation of the neo-patrimonial nature of the political process**
  Multiparty democracy offered a new framework, but the nature of the political process in itself did not fundamentally change. Choices by political actors within this context were not so much influenced by motives based on programmatic or ideological convictions as they were by (in itself politically rational) considerations that were focused on direct reciprocity with their supporters. Exceptions to a certain extent were the ruling parties in Rwanda and Ethiopia.

- **Intensified divisions among the political elites**
  Electoral politics after the introduction/reintroduction of multiparty democracy resulted in a stronger emphasis on existing differences between political elites (and the population). As political freedoms improved and elections became more free and fair, the divisions between the political elites and the focus on short-term political success intensified. In Rwanda and Ethiopia, this was not the case. Multiparty elections in these countries scarcely had any impact on the political cohesion of the ruling elite.

- **Political manipulation of ethnicity remains a serious problem**
  African societies are pervaded by ethnicity. Many political leaders have made use of ethnicity to decide multiparty elections to their advantage and secure their political position. Violence around elections usually had a strong ethnic connotation. In short, multiparty elections often contributed to an increased emphasis on ethnic distinctions in order to gain political advantage. *Moral ethnicity* was defeated by *political tribalism*.

- **The use of violence for political purposes continued**
  Political violence occurred in particular when the ruling party or coalition was unsure about the outcome of elections. When the political dominance of the ruling party was evident, the chance of election violence diminished. Political violence was of course not the prerogative of a multiparty democracy. However, the introduction/reintroduction of a multiparty system and corresponding elections certainly did not put a stop to political violence.

- **Political corruption depended on the nature of specific elections**
  The misuse of public means for political purposes did not decrease after the introduction/reintroduction of multiparty democracy in Kenya, Uganda, and the Congo. In order to win the support of voters, favors had to be distributed on a large scale or promises to that effect had to be made. For this, a lot of money was needed. This was not really the case in Rwanda and Ethiopia, where the outcome of elections was a forgone conclusion given the dominant position of the ruling coalition.

This complex reality did not escape the international donor community either and has resulted in a more pragmatic approach in a number of cases. At the same time, Western donors have continued to consider multiparty democracy and elections as an important priority in their "good governance" agenda. Partly because of the still existant and substantial aid relationship, developing countries, in particular in sub-Sahara Africa, were confronted with the "good governance" demands and conditions of Western donors.

On the basis of the findings of this study, it appears, however, that it is not so much the acceptance of Western-type political institutions or compliance with generally endorsed liberal-democratic standards that determine the possibilities for developing countries to achieve economic transformation and substantial poverty reduction, as it is the nature of the political settlement among the political elites. This conclusion should have consequences for the policy of Western donors with regard to "good governance." A "good governance" agenda that is relevant for developing countries should not focus on the advancement of democracy or challenging authoritarian regimes. Much more important is encouraging the presence of a ruling coalition that is willing and capable of giving shape and substance to a long-term agenda necessary for economic transformation and of mobilizing the necessary resources. It is for this reason that African countries with a political leadership that have a solid powerbase and a genuine developmental ambition deserve generous and long-term support from the international donor community.

Abbreviations

ACET	African Center for Economic Transformation
ADLF	Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo
AMP	Alliance de la Majorité Présidentielle
ANDM	Amhara National Democratic Movement
CDR	Coalition pour la Défense de la République
CNDP	Congrès National pour la Défense du Peuple
CUD	Coalition for Unity and Democracy
DP	Democratic Party
EFFORT	Endowment Fund for the Rehabilitation of Tigray
EIASC	Ethiopian Islamic Affairs Supreme Council
EPRDF	Ethiopia People's Revolutionary Democratic Front
FARDC	Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo
FDC	Forum for Democratic Change
FDLR	Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda
FORD	Forum for the Restoration of Democracy
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEMA	Gikuyu Embu Meru Association
GTP	Growth and Transformation Plan
ICC	International Criminal Court
HIPC	Heavily Indebted Poor Countries
KADU	Kenya African Democratic Union
KAMATUSA	Kalenjin, Maasai, Turkana, Samburu
KANU	Kenya Africa National Union
KPU	Kenya People's Union
LAO	Limited Access Order
LDP	Liberal Democratic Party
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
M23	Mouvement du 23-Mars
MDR	Mouvement Démocratique Républicain
MLC	Mouvement de Libération du Congo
MPR	Mouvement Populaire de la Révolution
MRND	Mouvement Républicain National pour la Démocratie et le Developpement
NARC	National Rainbow Coalition

NDP	National Democratic Party
NRA	National Resistance Army
NRM	National Resistance Movement
ODM	Orange Democratic Movement
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OLF	Oromo Liberation Front
ONLF	Ogaden National Liberation Front
OPDO	Oromo People's Democratic Organisation
PARMEHUTU	Parti du Mouvement et de l'Émancipation Hutu
PNU	Party of National Unity
PSD	Parti Social Démocrate
RCD	Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie
RENACO	Regroupement des Nationalistes Congolais
RPA	Rwandan Patriotic Army
RPF	Rwandan Patriotic Front
SEPDM	Southern Ethiopia People's Democratic Front
TPLF	Tigray People's Liberation Front
UEDF	United Ethiopian Democratic Forces
UNAR	Union National Rwandais
UPC	Uganda People's Congress
UPDF	Uganda People's Defense Forces

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Western donor countries consider a proper functioning multiparty democracy as one of the most import conditions for achieving more legitimate governance and subsequently economic development and reduction of poverty in their partner countries. Support to free and fair elections is an integral part of the 'good governance' agenda of the traditional donor community.
On the basis of the findings of this study, it appears however that it is not so much the acceptance of Western type political institutions or compliance with generally endorsed liberal-democratic standards that determine the possibilities for developing countries to achieve economic transformation and substantial poverty reduction, but rather the nature of the political settlement among the political elites.

Martin Koper is historian. He has been working at the Netherlands ministry of Foreign Affairs for almost three decades. His postings abroad include Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia and Rwanda.

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