Learning to Share: Alternatives to Winner Takes All, Loser Keeps Nothing, in the African Post-Conflict Context

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ABSTRACT:

In Africa's many civil wars the rebels often persist in fighting (a) because they are profiting from the war economy and (b) because, if they give up, they are left with nothing. Indeed, if a group with evil intentions were to collaborate to design the political system least suited to the promotion of peace in situations of ethnic, religious and economic conflict, they might well chose winner-takes-all democratic elections. Whilst much of Africa is undoubtedly beset by corruption, the systems which determine the rules of the political game are as important as the near universal neo-patrimonial culture in determining the consequences of political pacts drawn up in brave attempts to secure sustainably peaceful outcomes. Because generalisations across African countries mean little, this study examines a number of specific examples of both the formal constitutional provisions and their meaning to participants in the war to peace transitions through the political processes. The conclusion is that, despite its promise and widespread usage in association with peace processes, power-sharing rarely creates an enduring and peaceful solution because the political participants on all sides would rather reach for the whole than accept a part.

INTRODUCTION

Intra-state wars have become almost the new normal across much of Africa. Some 20 to 33% of countries which have ended one intra-state war and achieved some form of peace return to war within five years (Call & Cousens 2008: 5). Burundi is an excellent example of this constant see-sawing between peace and war. So the question is whether a different institutional system embodied in a different constitution could help to change this dire pattern of regular re-return to civil war.

The US Government's Strategic Studies Institute argues that the international community can "reduce the prospects for a resumption of armed conflict by (1) introducing peacekeeping forces, (2) investing in economic development and reconstruction, and (3) establishing democratic political institutions tailored to the configuration of ethnic and religious cleavages in the society" (Mason 2008: Foreword). The problem is that whilst we know something about peacekeeping and economic development, very little is actually known about how to "tailor

democratic political institutions" especially in Africa and/or contexts where political corruption and power seeking for material rewards are the norm.

Working for themselves: "Democracies have two basic choices for managing ethnic, national, and religious diversity. They may seek to construct a single all-embracing public identity through "integration" or try to accommodate dual or multiple public identities through "consociation" (McGarry and O'Leary 2007:670).

Power sharing is supposed to deliver three possible benefits: (1) the shortest route to ending conflict; (2) giving legitimacy to the government in the eyes of the maximum possible number of politicians and their supporters; and (3) opening up the possibility for broad acceptance of the reforms necessary to address the underlying causes of the conflict (Mehler 2009). Politicians who are sufficiently idealistic to wish to reform the system are unlikely to be willing to share power with those only interested in the material rewards of power (except, possibly, in Zimbabwe and in the Nigerian case discussed below). Thus, as will be discussed further, whilst the first and second goals are sometimes achieved, the third remains an ideal unlikely to be attained since the elites involved have minimal genuine interest in reform. For most African politicians, reform is code for more power and rewards to my faction. An article in the Nigerian *Vanguard* in October 2015 (Aribisala 2015) entitled "The defeat of President Buhari's idealism" perfectly sets out this dilemma. It begins by explaining how Buhari had lost several previous elections because his chosen running mates were too pure, too much men of integrity. Then in 2015 he won after "he agreed to dine with known political devils. He formed an alliance with the very political elite he had long despised. These are men who know the crooked ropes of the Nigerian political system. They know how to finance a nationwide campaign with funds obtained magically; no questions asked. They know how to buy and manipulate the press. They know how to conjure votes with the sleight of hand. With their help, Buhari finally became president against all the odds. The million naira question then became how he would rule alongside these strange bedfellows. How is he going to be their anointed president without becoming one of them ?" Buhari took four months to announce his list of ministerial appointments, and the names announced are largely recycled corrupt politicians from amongst his former opponents now opportunist allies. In the eyes of the public, Buhari has now moved from near saint to yet another deal-with-anyone-however-corrupt politician. Such are the perils of power sharing even where there has been no nation wide fighting.

THE DANGERS OF PREDICTING PEACE

In 2012 Dirk Vandewalle, an Associate Professor of Government at Dartmouth College, wrote an article "After Qaddafi: The surprising success of the New Libya" which was published in the prestigious journal Foreign Affairs. It is the misfortune of writers on peacebuilding that their predictions can be disproved so rapidly. In reality, Vandewalle's text did not present an unmitigated picture of optimism. He recognised that "Libyans had little sense of national identity and no experience of democracy" and were led by "a transitional government that did not have a monopoly on the use of force" - still the first elections had been held

in peace. In 2012 a national commission was drawing up a new constitution and, he argued, Libya unlike Tunisia or Egypt had benefited from having to start from scratch without an entrenched military and powerful bureaucracy. "Libya's leaders have been offered a chance that few successful revolutionaries get: to start anew, with ample financial resources and the freedom to build a state as they see fit". Sadly the "scores of powerful militias-some consisting of genuine revolutionary fighters, other simply of armed thugs" were not bought off and the "recent attacks by Islamist groups on Sufi shrines" did presage "how profound religious differences in Libya will continue to hamper the creation of a harmonious political community". Regrettably, the unified modern state which Vanderwalle saw emerging was still-born and Libya has not proved "to be an important exception to the so-called resource curse: the seemingly immutable rule that oil-exporting countries are bound for authoritarianism and stagnation". In this context, now that Ghana, a country often congratulated on being peaceful and intermittently democratic has found significant oil reserves it will be revealing to see how far the government can peacefully ensure the non-corrupt sharing of the oil wealth.

Way back in the 1850s, philosopher John Stuart Mill predicted that a new democratic tide would destroy the huge multi-ethnic empires and queried whether political systems designed to establish majorities and minorities would prove to be workable in multi-ethnic societies.

CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTIONS

"The adoption of a new constitution marks a special moment in a state's history when political discussion must go beyond everyday concerns and (to) grapple with the very nature and future of the polity. Questions of consent, legitimacy, key institutions, methods of apportioning and controlling power, and respect for rights come to the fore as basic options are weighed, and then chosen or rejected. Should the state be federal, unitary, or confederational ? Should it be parliamentary, presidential , or some hybrid of the two ? What will be the duties and powers of its law courts ? How should all those with a stake in the country be represented both in the process of forming the constitution (the 'ground rules of the game', so to speak) and in the regular 'game' of politics itself ? Are popular elections necessary at every step of the way ? If so, how can they be made feasible in countries struggling to be free from oppressive majority dictates ? How can the government be made strong enough to govern effectively and yet not so strong that it threatens to smother human rights?" (Benomar 2004).

This quotation comes from an academic paper by Benomar, who was a senior advisor to UNDP in 2004, and reflects some of the advice which was given to the Iraqis at that time. He goes on to discuss, inter alia, the constitutional drafting experiences of South Africa, Namibia, Ethiopia and Nigeria. How many people know that two million people made submissions to the South African constituent assembly ? Benomar is now (January 2016) the United Nations envoy trying to secure peace in Burundi.

POWER SHARING

One obvious alternative to 'winner takes all' are the various forms of political power sharing, usually defined as some mechanism to include political opponents in a joint executive coalition government. Helga Binningsbo (2013) carried out a highly practical literature review looking for any clear relationships between power sharing, peace and democracy which includes his Table 1 which summarises sixteen studies in the area. Frustratingly, researchers varied vastly in their conceptualization of the topic, the domain covered, their understanding of the causal mechanisms involved and how they measured success. African examples included Kenya post the 2007 elections, and Zimbabwe from 2009-13 and peace settlements for Burundi, Rwanda and Sierra Leone. In broad studies, Hartzell and Hoddie (2007) studied 49 negotiated settlements 1945-1999; Jarsted and Nilsson (2008) 83 peace agreements 1989-2004; Mattes and Savun (2009) 46 peace agreements 1945-2005; Mehler 19 African peace agreements 1999-2007; Mukherjee (2006) 111 civil wars 1946-1999; Walter (2002) 72 civil wars 1944-1992; Roeder (2005) 658 ethno-political dyads 1955-1999. The majority of these studies found that political power sharing prolongs the duration of peace after violent conflict. Mehler's (2009) African study found that the elite focus of power sharing deals works to obstruct the general inclusion of civil society and therefore has a negative impact upon widespread democracy, which this author would argue may well be an acceptable short-term price to pay for peace.

Questions of just when it is essential to let short term needs overrule long term goals, and how far to let the acceptable be the enemy of the good, commonly arise in debating the value of power sharing. Lemarchand (2007) found that power sharing failed to establish democracy in Rwanda, partially failed in the DRC but, at the time of writing in 2007, had been more successful in Burundi. As has already been noted, recording success is a very dangerous gamble for researchers in this area, since subsequent developments so often prove their assessments to have been highly over-optimistic. On the contrary, African cases where apparent failure turns into success are, sadly, virtually unknown. Using a much more extensive definition, which went so far as to include a free press as a form of power sharing , Norris (2008) studied the range of broad based and inclusive political institutions in 191 countries 1970-2004 to find that such power sharing does strengthen democracy.

Taken together, academic studies of the impact of power sharing show that the results depend on the definition and timing of power sharing and the indicator of success which can range from the duration of peace in months to the implementation of democratic governance. As a illustrative example, Bumba Mukherjee (2006) examined "Why political power-sharing agreements lead to enduring peaceful resolution of some civil wars, but not others ?" He developed a complex bargaining model, which predicted that if a civil war ends in a stalemate renewed war is likely, but that if either government or insurgents win decisively and offer a power sharing deal prolonged peace is probable. One advantage of this study is that it lists all the 111 civil wars 1944 to 1999 in his sample, which

helpfully allows the reader to query the accuracy of his individual classifications (and Africa experts will find much to query). As he points out, the much quoted study of "Power Sharing and Post Civil War Conflict Management" by Hartzell and Hoddie (2003) actually excluded cases where civil wars ended in military victories. He also clarifies that his own definition of political power sharing includes the use of proportional representation in elections and/or allowing members of insurgent groups to organize and form political parties to participate in elections (Mukherjee 2006: 495) - thus he counts Nigeria-Biafra 1970 as a successful case of power sharing. He found that in the 17 of the 61 cases where political power sharing agreements were offered after governments defeated the insurgents on the battlefield, peace was successfully maintained for an average of 117 months (almost ten years); if the insurgents had won before the power sharing agreement (as in 11 cases) then the average peace duration was 88 months; but if the power sharing agreement followed a stalemate, as in 33 cases, peace only lasted for an average of 19 months (Mukherje 2006: 497) presumably because both sides felt that after a recuperative period they could probably win by going back to the battle field.

Table 1
List of African Civil Wars, Outcomes and Political Power Sharing Agreements 1944-1999

Country	Political Power Sharing Agreement	Government Victory	Insurgent Victory	Military Stalemate	Peace Failure or Success
Algeria 1992-7	0	0	1	0	F
Angola 1992-4	0	0	0	1	F
Angola 1975-89	0	0	0	1	F
Angola 1989-91	Yes	0	0	1	F
Burundi 1972-3	0	0	0	1	F
Burundi 1988	Yes	1	0	0	F
Burundi 1993-4	Yes	0	0	1	F
Chad 1965-79	Yes	0	0	1	F
Chad 1980-94	Yes	0	1	1	Success
Congo-Zaire 1964-97	0	0	0	1	Success
Congo-Kisangani 1967	Yes	1	0	0	Success

Congo-Brazzaville 1998-	0	0	0	1	F
Djibouti 1991-5	Yes	0	0	1	F
Eritrea 1974-91	0	0	1	0	F
Ethiopia-Ogaden 1975-85	0	1	0	0	Success
Ethiopia 1977-78	0	1	0	0	Success
Ethiopia-Tigray 1976-89	0	0	1	0	Success
Guinea-Bissau 1998	1	0	0	1	Success
Liberia 1989-93	Yes	0	0	1	F
Liberia 1994-7	Yes	0	0	1	F
Mali 1990-95	Yes	0	0	1	Success
Morocco 1975-89	Yes	0	0	1	F
Mozambique 1979-92	Yes	0	1	0	Success
Nigeria-Biafra 1967-70	Yes	1	0	0	Success
Nigeria-Muslim 1980-84	0	1	0	0	Success
Rwanda 1963-4	0	0	0	1	F
Rwanda 1990-1	Yes	0	0	1	F
Rwanda 1994	Yes	0	1	0	F
Sierra Leone 1991-6	Yes	0	0	1	F
Somalia 1988-91	Yes	0	0	1	F
Somalia 1991-3	Yes	0	0	1	F
South Africa 1976-94	Yes	0	0	1	Success
Sudan	Yes	0	0	1	Success

1963-72					
Sudan 1983	0	0	0	1	F
Zimbabwe 1972-80	Yes	0	0	1	Success

Source: Extracted from Mukherjee 2006 Table 1.

It is of vital importance just what form of power sharing is to be adopted and in what permutations : political, military, economic, and/or geographical. But it is also crucial what timing is imposed on the process of power sharing. In this question of timing, outside third parties, if they are guaranteeing the peace, will often have a vital role to play in decision making. It might well be ideal to hold a national convention of some kind to discuss constitution making but this requires a degree of patience the third parties may well not have, and in any case may also be impracticable in an immediate post-war context.

Others would argue that it is important to local elections first and give local authorities authority and resources. Dobbins from RAND argues that holding local elections first before national elections "provides an opportunity for new local leaders to emerge and gain experience and for political parties to build a support base " (Dobbins et al:154). However, all too often, the reality is that the old elites who were the ones who benefited from the war, are also the leaders benefiting under the new regime. Also, for poor countries local elections may be regarded as a luxury. Liberia has claimed to have decided not to hold Mayoral elections because this would be too expensive. In return, cynics noted that this gave the President the opportunity to appoint Mayors who supported her.

BURUNDI

Burundi figures extensively in discussions of power sharing because of its long succession of violent conflicts and massacres and its particular history and demography. In Burundi 85% of the population is Hutu, 14% is Tutsi and 1% Twa or other. This imbalance makes it very difficult to establish a form of democratic government where the minority Tutsi, who long held power through military might, feel that their interests will be adequately represented. For a quarter of a century Burundi has experimented with various forms of power sharing as "an instrument of political liberalisation, democratisation and conflict resolution" (Vandeginste 2009: 63). As early as 1988, under pressure to democratise, Tutsi President Buyoya set up a non-democratic government of national unity with equal numbers of Hutu and Tutsi and a Hutu Prime Minister.

Then, for just five months in 1993, Burundi was presented as the very model of a political transition after the June multi-party elections were won by the predominantly Hutu Frodebu Party and President Buyoya peacefully handed over power to the new Hutu President Ndadaye. However in October 1993 during an attempted coup, President Ndadaye and other leaders were assassinated, this led to the civil war which began in July 1994. The question then was whether the 1992 consociationalist inspired Constitution suffered from too much or too little power-sharing ? This Constitution specified that

political parties were not allowed to identify with ethnic groups nor religions, nor regions nor a gender and thus had to be mixed. However, whilst political offices were shared, there were no provisions relating to power sharing in the judiciary, the military, the provincial administration, diplomatic posts or state owned companies. As a consequence, the perception was that Tutsi hegemony had been replaced by Hutu rule under "Frodebisation". So to avoid " Frodebisation" and take over of the army came the attempted coup. There followed years of negotiations for peace first lead by President Nyere of Tanzania and then by President Mandela of South Africa. The South African involvement was significant because South Africa had successful, if short-term, experience of a power-sharing government which had reassured the minority white ethnic groups during the post-Apartheid transition to majority rule. Belgium, the former colonial power, which still had significant influence, has a longstanding form of consociationalism also promoted by its diplomats in Burundi. Between the failed coup of October 1993 and the successful coup of July 1996 Burundi experimented with power sharing which was mediated from outside but never fully accepted internally.

Many of Burundi's political elite still think of power sharing as a betrayal of the people's will expressed in a democratic vote which would inevitably favour the Hutu. Back in 1995 the Conseil National pour la Defense de la Democratie (CNDD) published its political manifesto in which it attacked the "Anti-democratic thesis called consensus and power-sharing between winners and losers of the elections" as no less than a violation of international law (CNDD 1995). When Buyoya seized power once more in 1996 he said that power sharing had demonstrably failed and that the country was at risk of foreign invasion.

Peace negotiations in Burundi began yet once more in 1998 and dragged on until 2005 and the final acceptance of a new consociational constitution. Between 2001 and 2004 there was a power sharing transitional government. The Constitution adopted in 2005, following a national referendum where 92% of the population voted in favour, is a highly complex attempt to assure that the Tutsi cannot be overruled yet that the Hutu have a reasonable share of power. Thus there is a President assisted by two Vice Presidents who have to come from different ethnic groups and different political parties. Parties are not allowed to be based on ethnicity and out of each three successive candidates of a party on its blocked list one must come from a different ethnic group. A maximum of 60% of Ministers can be Hutu and a maximum of 40% can be Tutsi, at least 30% must be female. The Minister of National Defence and the Minister for National Police must come from different ethnic groups. Any party with 5% of votes gets at least one ministerial post. The army and police are supposed to achieve ethnic parity over time. Remarkably, most of those who voted no in the constitutional referendum were Tutsis who were not even satisfied by a 50/50 split in the Senate (plus 3 Twa senators).

Burundi's experience thus covers the use of power sharing (1) to initiate political liberalisation after one party rule; (2) to maintain institutional stability after elections (3) to address the grievances of the under-represented Hutu and (4) to negotiate peace with rebels (Vandeginste 2009). In order to answer any

questions as to the success of power sharing it is thus necessary to ask first which form of power sharing is intended and designed to achieve precisely which goals ?

Burundi has suffered from a 'lethal military veto' (Sullivan 2005: 88, 93). The issue remains that the Tutsi expect to be over-represented in the military especially in the upper ranks so as to give them an unofficial veto over all political decisions, which will secure their power in the last resort. Thus back in 1993 the Tutsi had a 'use it or lose' attitude to their military veto which led to the attempted coup and the failure of power sharing. One question for Burundi remains why it is that so few members of the elite perceive themselves as being the winners from the maintenance of peace under a power sharing formula. Whatever the feelings of the elite, the Afrobarometer representative survey of over a thousand Burundians in 2014 showed that 86% thought that democracy is the best form of government because it protects civil liberties and personal freedom (70%) and provide peace, unity and power sharing (47%).

A comparative study of consociationalism and power sharing in Rwanda, Burundi and DRC, published in 2006, found that whilst Rwanda ("a textbook example of failed power-sharing") and DRC were manifest failures, Burundi, although it had failed in 1994, might succeed in 2005 due to a change in zeitgeist and a better formula (Lemarchand 2006). Interestingly DRC, which is eighty times the size of Burundi or Rwanda, was seen as being simply too big to succeed. Lemarchand waivers between arguing that mass human rights abusers should be barred from power sharing and a pragmatic recognition that this is not possible since such abuses are nearly universal amongst African rebels and governments alike.

Burundi is arguably "a unique case on which to judge what power-sharing mechanisms can and cannot achieve in what Arend Lijphart termed as 'deeply divided' societies" (Sterck 2015). Unquestionably, after the civil war Burundi implemented a highly complex scheme of consociational power-sharing designed to ensure that both Hutu and Tutsi had significant representation at all levels of government. It appears that this has indeed worked to reduce the saliency and significance of ethnicity in Burundian politics. The sad irony is that, having slain the dragon of ethnic conflict, Burundi has been left to combat that other curse of African politics: the President who refuses to leave office and who distorts the whole system to keep himself in power.

Burundi is a very poor country, which has proved much less economically successful than its neighbour/twin Rwanda. It is highly dependent on aid, which accounts for 20% of GDP and 49% of the state budget (World Bank 2015). Yet Burundi's President is also in a position to black-mail the international community. This is because Burundi supplies some 5,500 troops to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) which is fighting against Al Shabaab. Within the region, beyond the constant factor that unrest in Burundi puts peace in the whole Great Lakes Region at stake (100,000 refugees have already fled) President Nkuruniziza also has the support of other Presidents who wish to stay in power for as long as possible (Museveni has been President of Uganda since 1986 and will soon breach the 75 year constitutional age limit) as well as those

who hope to make Bujumbura a resource hub. This discussion of power sharing in Burundi as an on and off again phenomenon associated with both peace and conflict should re-enforce the point that cross-national studies which allocate numerical scores to individual countries usually have little meaning, especially when the countries included range from Africa to Northern Ireland.

Critics of power-sharing and other post-conflict political fixes often complain that such band-aid solutions do not address the root causes of war. This is often an unhelpful, and possibly unreasonable, complaint. If it were possible to address the root causes in the post-conflict rebuilding people would be rushing to do so. The problem is usually that the root causes are closely related to poverty and a lack of resources which cannot be addressed in the short term in a post-conflict society unless donors are willing to provide vast amounts of aid. Today little is written about Taiwan or South Korea in this context, but these are excellent examples of countries which have succeed in establishing peace as they have become richer, but over many years of time and with very significant inputs of external aid in the early years.

Conflicts over land are a major root cause of conflict in Burundi (as elsewhere across Africa) since agriculture employs some 90% of the population. Burundi cannot create more land, and there is little scope for agricultural intensification or land redistribution. On a per capita basis there are .096 hectares of arable land per person (i.e. one tenth of a rugby field) and just 170 tractors across the whole country. Imagine four families trying to grow all their food on one rugby pitch and that is before land is taken out to grow coffee as a cash crop.   Yet, some half a million refugees came home after the civil war to find that their land had been taken over by those who stayed behind. The National Land Commission (CNTB) created a further division in Burundi when it essentially awarded the land to the original owners without any compensation or any where to go to for the subsequent settlers. This created so many fights that the CNTB has been suspended and its leader sacked. However, this does not solve the land issue, which is further complicated by the elite growing coffee and drawing rents from improved seeds and fertilizers.

SIEERA LEONE

Sierra Leone suffered an eleven year long civil war which ended in 2002 leaving some 50,000 dead and perhaps a third of the population displaced. The war was exceptionally brutal with atrocities on both sides but with the RUF rebels responsible for most of the torture, mutilations and rapes. Sierra Leone's experiment with a power sharing government as set out as part of the Lome Peace Agreement signed in July 1999 remains highly controversial. Should the government of Sierra Leone ever have agreed to an amnesty for the leaders of the RUF ? (The UN signatory to the Peace Agreement excluded internationally recognised war crimes from the amnesty provisions). Should the RUF war criminals have been given plum posts in the power-sharing government? Did President Kabbah have any choice ?

Rosalind Raddatz (2016) has devoted her doctoral research to an intensive comparative study of the peace negotiations for Sierra Leone which led to the

Lome Agreement of 1999 and those for Liberia which resulted in the Accra Agreement of 2003. Over three visits to the region, she interviewed most of the significant figures involved and came to the conclusion that President Kabbah was duped by Foday Sankoh, the leader of the RUF, who was not negotiating in good faith. She also believes that Rev Jessie Jackson's surprising support for Sankoh was the result of too little knowledge of the country or the conflict, and of a desire to be the hero 'bringing peace to Sierra Leone'. For Liberia where, as she stresses, President Charles Taylor had already signed and broken no fewer than seventeen peace agreements, she argues that none of the parties was actually negotiating in good faith (despite all the efforts of the religious leaders who were mediating with great passion and honesty). The question remains as to what can or should be done where it is clear that the parties to peace negotiations are not acting in good faith, especially since it would appear that African war lords, whether as rebels or when they have achieved government, are men who cannot realistically be expected to keep to their agreements when this is no longer to their advantage.

Accounts of peace processes often suggest that peace most frequently comes about when both sides recognise that they have reached a hurting stalemate and they cannot win. To the contrary, Raddatz's interviews suggest that West African warlords are born optimists, generally believing that an advance if not outright victory is just around the corner. The one exception was the genuine democrat, Kabbah who underestimated his own side's successes and therefore negotiated away significantly more than he needed to.

Both the Sierra Leonian and the Liberian negotiations suggest that, even given a lack of honesty on almost all sides, negotiations can achieve advances towards peace and give a chance for external events to change the balance of power in such a way that longer term peace is ultimately achieved. In the case of Sierra Leone, in May 2000 the RUF kidnapped 500 Zambian UNAMSIL peacekeepers. This led to 20,000 civil society marchers demonstrating outside Sankoh's house where 21 were shot dead by RUF guards. Sankoh then fled, but was captured and imprisoned as were the other RUF representatives in government (Binningsbo & Dupuy 2009). [As a historical footnote, Sakoh had a very poor opinion of UN peacekeepers having served with them in the Congo in the 1960s]. It can be argued that the power sharing arrangements agreed in Lome, by physically placing Sankoh and his lieutenants in the capital, where they could be arrested by the government, made a significant contribution to longer term peace. On this point, one of his fellow ministers argued that Sankoh's willingness to live in government controlled Freetown was evidence of his commitment to peace, whilst many RUF followers wanted him to live in Kailahun out of reach until all the conditions of the peace agreement were met (Binningsbo & Dupuy 2009: 99-100). That, nearly a decade later, even fellow members of the RUF still disagreed about the genuineness of 65 year old Sankoh's commitment to peace shows just how difficult it can be to judge of war lords' motives. The cynical might suggest that, after years in the bush and in prison, Sankoh was simply opting for the basic comforts of Freetown. One argument against offers of power sharing is that they encourage spoilers and new claims to participate in the peace process and the government (Tull & Mehler 2005). In the Sierra Leone case such new claims

rather served to split the rebel opposition and made it easier for the government to establish its legitimacy and good standing.

SUDAN, ANGOLA

Sriram and Zahar (2009) have discussed "The perils of power-sharing" in Africa and beyond. The majority of the African examples they discuss appear to involve cases where there was no commitment, even at the outset, to power sharing. This is particularly likely to be the case where the rebels are aiming at succession rather than having a realistic hope or even desire to take over the central government as in Sudan, where Sriram had been directly involved, which certainly coloured his thinking. A different case was Angola where Jonas Savimbi was totally consistent in insisting that unless he were made President there would be no peace settlement. There is probably an overall sense in which politicians are very rarely genuinely committed to power sharing, in as much as they would almost always prefer their party, ethnic, religious or ideological group to be in sole control of the government. Sriram and Zahar (2009: 13) maintained that there are three key factors determining the success or failure of post-conflict power sharing arrangements: the extent of the state's centralisation and/or repressive power; the capacities and interests of the armed groups involved in or excluded from the deal and the robustness of external actors in upholding or undermining the agreement. They also treat power sharing as having four dimensions: sharing control over or access to security, territory, politics and economic resources. In contrast, this paper argues that political power-sharing is central; that shared control of the security apparatus is also essential (to neglect this was one crucial mistake made by the MDC in Zimbabwe) as is the shared control of the economy (think of diamonds in Sierra Leone) but that sharing out territory, whilst sometimes the only wise choice, represents a failure of the state. A written agreement that revenue from natural resources will be shared geographically according to a set formula does not constitute power sharing (despite Mitti, Abatan and Minou 2013). Sriram and Zahar also make some highly debatable assumptions, which only apply in a narrow range of countries. One is that rebels will not rebel unless the central government loses control of its armed forces. Another is that many rebel groups do not have the capacity to play an active role if allowed into government (they cite Sierra Leone as an example).

Another question that emerges is how far power sharing is intended just as a stop-gap measure for the short term until 'real' elections can be organised. This was, for example, one of the provisions of the 1999 Sierra Leone peace agreement. Here the RUF made a major miscalculation, believing that they could win an open election when they had minimal electoral support. When polled, the majority of Burundians said that they believed that power sharing should only be astop gap to be replaced by democratic elections (Afrobarometer 2014).

PURITY IS DANGER: AN ARGUMENT FOR DIVISIBLE IDENTITIES

It has been argued that societies where people have multiple cross cutting identities are more likely to be able to maintain the peace despite different ethnic affiliations (Simons 2000). In the post Cold War period in Africa there is a great lack of political parties based upon differences in ideology (but see Rivero's 2004 study of Algeria, Uganda, Zimbabwe and South Africa). Nationally parties may be divided on a Northerners versus Southerners basis but very rarely is there any left/right division.   For much of Africa the problem is, indeed, that ethnic or religious identities (often found in combination) significantly outweigh all other identities. For example, it is of great importance how far common membership of mixed political parties or the bureaucracy or the national military forces or police overrules common ethnic origin or religious beliefs. When a judge has to make a decision she needs to be influenced by legal tradition, human rights awareness and the collective views of her legal colleagues not by religion or ethnicity.

West Africa has the misfortune to have a series of countries which share having Christian tropical South lands divided from Muslim arid Northern zones and thus religion coinciding, in no way by chance, with ethnic and linguistic divisions. "The slide is short and slippery between group identities mattering and members of 'other' groups not mattering at all…. When people consider those outside their group to be competitors and rivals. Then, their very existence demands removal" (Simons 2000: 175). If Africans really believed this there would be no peace at all. Instead there are accepted spaces where people co-exist. In this context, there have been remarkably few studies of ethnic intermarriage although many African politicians benefit from ethnically mixed parentage which extends their electoral appeal.

BENIN

Benin presents some of the most interesting African examples of power sharing. In the 1960s and until the 1972 coup Benin experimented with a rotating Presidency where representatives of each of the three major ethnic groupings (Fon, Northern, and Yoruba plus) would hold power in succession (Comoros also has a rotating presidency, changing from island to island). From 1974 to democratisation in 1990, national legislators were chosen on the basis of their work including farmers, artisans and the military. Additional interesting features of the system in Benin are a two term limit on Presidents which is actually observed and a 70 year age limit on presidential candidates. Benin is due to elect its next President in early 2016 after the national court ruled that the current president cannot have a third term.

The maps of the geographic divisions in voting in the 1991 and 1996 Benin presidential elections show striking regional differences (Battle and Seely 2010). In 1991 in all communes to the north of the dividing line a majority voted for Kerekou and in all communes to the south the majority voted for Soglo. Because they had access to data on individual voting intentions from the Benin Afrobarometer survey, these authors were able to demonstrate that ethnic voting patterns depend upon concentrations of voters from the same ethnic

group living together, and that scattered voters are much less likely to vote along ethnic lines. In 1996 some southern communes voted for the incumbent president but still no northern communes opted for Songlo. The current president Yayi has the advantage of a father who is a Southern Yoruba and a mother descended from two ethnic groups from the North. Also he was raised as a Muslim but converted to Catholicism in his youth and his final advantage is that he is an international financier who worked for the Central Bank of West African States. It is a remarkable measure of the general tolerance of West African Muslims that this 'apostate' secured 74% of the vote right across a country which is 24% Muslim.

DEMOCRACY AID

Western donor governments are keen to see democracy flourish in countries previously afflicted by violent conflict. This is especially important because, as Snyder (2000) has argued, in the early stages of democratization the risk of violent conflict rises sharply as political elites exploit rising ethnic consciousness to accentuate divisions in society, and because the central government is often too weak to overcome these elites' polarizing tactics. The timing of elections can be crucial. Some claim that the evidence suggests that waiting for two years before holding elections in countries unfamiliar with democracy, and for one year in more established democracies may be the optimal amount of time to allow for institution building. However, elections also appear to be associated with delayed economic recovery so there appears to be no win-win solution (Flores & Nooruddin 2012). Diamond (2006: 100) claims that where the state has collapsed or there is no democratic pre-history elections should wait for at least five to seven years. Yet he acknowledges that in the case of Iraq this would have been impossible because of local pressures for early elections and the common problem of the legitimacy of the authority (local or international) in charge of the government in the interim, pre-election period. He cites Angola in 1992 and Liberia in 1997 as examples of rushed elections, which set back the prospects for democracy and led to the return of civil war.

The electoral time table may depend upon contextual factors such as the duration of the conflict. Mozambique's 1994 elections followed seventeen years of civil war and two years of UN intervention. Sometimes, as in Liberia in 1997, when Charles Taylor was elected on a platform of 'elect me or I go back to war', many voters unwillingly supported the candidate who was most likely to take the country back to war if defeated (Lyons 1999). This is a long way from democratic theories which rely on voters choosing candidates on the basis of a package of coherent policies supporting peace and economic reconstruction (Coyne 2008).

Alongside a number of more general studies of the effectiveness of democracy aid (which is in itself a troubled concept) in promoting democracy, a couple of studies have examined the effectiveness of democracy aid in reducing politically inspired violence, Savun and Tirone (2011: 233) found that "democracy aid reduces the risk of conflict by reducing commitment problems and uncertainty". Donors serve as a guarantee that combatants will lay down their arms. As noted above, this is an area where claims of success are dangerously prone to being

over taken by the return of violence. Notably, their 2011 successes included Burkina Faso, Tanzania, Malawi and Kenya.

Ghana in 1996 is cited as an example of successful democracy aid. In that year the United State, Canada, the European Union and the Netherlands provided some $12 million to the National Electoral Commission as well as supporting extensive voter education programmes on registration, elections and voters' rights and responsibilities. The result was recognised as a free and fair election which nevertheless returned Jerry Rawlings - the leader who had led not one but two military coups against earlier regimes- back to power, this time as the elected president (Gyimah-Boadi 1999). One might well query whether this was really a victory for democracy.

KENYA AND ZIMBABWE

Kenya and Zimbabwe provide two well-known African examples of power sharing governments following violent political disturbances rather than full scale civil war. One, highly simplified, view is that power sharing was more successful in Kenya because Kenyan political differences did not have any significant ideological basis, being restricted to which groups were going to control access to the government's money pots whilst in Zimbabwe, besides issues of control, there were real differences as to what policies any government in power should follow and therefore as to what should be done. One commentator even saw the Zimbabwe case as an ideological mixture between 'fire and water' (Ranger 2008). Another version distinguishes between the politics of collusion in Kenya and the politics of continuity in Zimbabwe with the lesser significance of veto players (particularly the military) in Kenya resulting in a more cohesive outcome (Cheeseman & Tendi 2010). In neither country was the unity government capable of creating significant reform (with many participants having no desire for reform to reduce their access to the rewards of corruption), and thus they both might be seen as postponing conflict rather than resolving it, which would be classified by some as an unrealistic expectation and by others as a failure. United Kingdom Foreign Secretary David Milliband urged leaders: "To agree to a power-sharing Cabinet that will serve Kenyans effectively in order that the country can move forward and start to deal with the underlying issues that fuelled so much of the violence in the post-election period" (DFID 2008). For Zimbabwe, the British and Americans were both equally opposed to any solution which continued a powerful role for Mugabe, but did not offer a realistic alternative.

FORMS OF POWER-SHARING OR POWER-DIVIDING

There are those who advocate power-dividing (Roeder 2005). They make very little reference to the possibilities for Africa. (Thus Roeder's examples are largely drawn from the USA, occasionally the former Soviet states). Power dividing involves different levels of government and different agencies of government having independent power and the broad observance of individual human rights – requirements which are rarely met in Africa, especial in post-conflict situations and Presidentialist systems. Semi-presidentialism refers to systems where

there is both a president and a prime minister (not necessarily of the same political party) and both leaders have executive power. In Africa such systems are often a recipe for disaster yet they are also prescribed in peace settlements as a way of maximizing the number of participant parties in government and thus supporters for the settlement

Complex power-sharing goes beyond both consociational and integrative theories; covers a very broad range of issues (from economic management to civil-military relations); operates at many different levels of government and usually involves international technical advice (Cambridge Carnegie Project 2002). The one African example of complex power sharing is South Sudan (Wolff 2007: 376) which is hardly a good augury.

Whilst most attention is understandably paid to political power-sharing, other significant forms of power-sharing include military appointments; public service position allocation and geographic/ territorial sharing. A study of the implementation of the seven African peace settlements including the sharing or division of military power which were reached between 1980 and 1996 showed that only two: Mozambique 1992 and South Africa 1991 had been fully implemented and followed by peace. Angola 1991 and 94 had been partially implemented and saw a return to war. Chad 1996 was partially implemented and followed by peace. Both Rwanda 1993 and Sierra Leone 1996 failed in their implementation and heralded a return to dreadful warfare (Hoddie & Hartzell 2003: Table 1).

CONCLUSION

Power-sharing in post-conflict situations has the appearance of being a good idea. Yet in practice, especially in Africa, it rarely succeeds in maintaining the peace or surviving long term. One demonstrable truth about maintaining the peace after internecine conflict is that this is easier if one side has a clear military victory. This is because the losers then understand that, at least in the short to medium time frame, they have no chance of achieving victory if they restart the conflict. The problem with power sharing is that it is only likely to be tried where there are two or more relatively evenly balanced parties each or all of which are convinced that they could achieve victory if left to fight it out. After the end of the Cold War, there would appear to be very few African political leaders who even claim to be motivated by ideology. If their sole motivation is to control how the national cake is shared around then continuing violent conflict is almost inevitable The tragedy remains that so few demonstrate any interest in how to grow the overall size of the national cake. Colonialism may well be held to blame for this view but it is now time to look forward and develop genuinely African solutions to African problems.

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