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Contents

Mano River Basin:
An Evaluation
of Negotiation and Mediation Techniques

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Abstract. *This paper interrogates the negotiation and mediation techniques that was following aggression, violence and social disruptions in Mano River basin, particularly against the recent return to democracy in the region. While peace has largely been restored, the scattered but continuing incidence of aggression, violence and social disruptions in the Basin has raised questions about the viability of negotiation and mediation techniques. The success or failure of these techniques has effect on the sustainability of State, individual and social structures in the region. Therefore, the paper argues that enough attention has not been paid to the ethical, moral and historical dimensions of the problem of negotiation and mediation, especially the role of traditional institutions and civil society agencies as critical components in conflict resolution. Given this, the paper draws attention to some of the gaps and challenges embedded in 'imported' negotiation and mediation techniques that leverage the certification of conflicts in Africa as being "ethnic and racial". Using secondary data and drawing on personal experiences in the Mano River Basin (MRB) countries in West Africa, the paper also raises critical questions about the relationship between negotiation and mediation techniques and conflict resolution and the lessons learned so far. It also suggests ways of addressing those aspects of negotiation and mediation techniques deficits as a basis for suggesting options that will likely reduce recourse to conflicts, encourage dialogue and inclusive participation, as well as increase the chances for peace in the region and Africa.*

Keywords: *Negotiation, Mediation, Mano River, West Africa.*

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Introduction

The Mano River Basic (MRB) Region, which is made of four West African countries - Sierra Leone, Guinea, Liberia and Cote d'Ivoire - is renowned for its porous borders which allows the flow of weapons, the movement of former combatants and the transnational exploitation of resources (Afolabi, 2017). The violence arising from the inflow of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALWs) into the region has led to violence, conflicts and social disruptions for more than two decades. At a point, UNDP (2006) noted that the proliferation of (SALWs) in the Mano River Region made it one of the most unstable areas on the planet. Therefore, the high incidence of violence and conflicts in the Mano River of West Africa raised a lot of concern and questions about the viability of life, peace, social structure and the state in the four countries. It has also raised issues and questions about the effectiveness of negotiation and mediation. However, it should be noted that, while through negotiation and mediation these conflicts and violent incidences have reduced drastically, the continued possession and proliferation of (SALWs) and the continued intermittent pockets of conflicts in the region are security threats (Garuba, 2013; Isiche, 2002).

In a related manner, the introduction of electoral democracy with its fierce competition for power, following the decades of armed conflict and political strife, including civil wars in Sierra Leone and Liberia, have provided the context to resort to violence to settle electoral disputes, calling into question the viability of negotiation and mediation as a lasting tool for conflict prevention and peacebuilding mechanism. Furthermore, the non-resolution of the issues of porous borders, former fighters and refugees among the four countries are problems that can put a lie to negotiation and mediation efforts. On the other hand, other issues that are potential security threats in the Mano River Region that can result in conflicts and violence include narcotics trafficking, illegal mining, human trafficking, intra and inter communal feuds, local wars, rebel activities and terrorism (National Security Strategy of the Republic of Liberia [NSSL], 2008). As earlier noted, while negotiation and mediation mechanisms have reduced the occurrence of conflicts in the Mano River Region, especially in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Cote d'Ivoire, the intermittent occurrence of these conflicts have raised ethical, moral and historical dimensions of the problem of negotiation and mediation in Africa. This is against the often-neglected role of traditional institutions and civil society agencies as critical components in negotiation, mediation and conflict resolution in Africa. Thus, given the above explanations, there is need for research to examine the theory and practice of negotiation and mediation within the context of violence and conflicts as a way of addressing those aspects of negotiation and mediation technique deficits as a basis for suggesting options that will likely reduce recourse to conflicts, encourage dialogue and inclusive participation, as well as increase the chances for peace in the region and Africa.

To tackle the identified lacuna, the study is structured as follows: the first section is the introduction which explains the issues and problematic of negotiation and mediation, the focus of why the research is undertaken, while the second section unpacks the concepts of negotiation and mediation. Section three examines the histography of Mano River Basin so as to give the political geography and history of the region. This dovetails into the section four which specifically situate peace, negotiation and mediation within the Mano River region. The section focussed on diverse actors' negotiation and mediation techniques to achieve peace. Section five analysed the problems of negotiation and mediation, including the limitations and lessons learned. This is central to understanding the limits of the effectiveness of negotiation and mediation. Following from this, section six looked at re-designing negotiation and mediation, going forward by exploring possibilities that can be adopted and used in intractable and intermittent incidences of violence and conflicts like has been witnessed in MRB region. The paper, in section seven, thereafter concluded with an interrogation of the extent of the chances for peace in MRB using orthodox negotiation and mediation techniques.

Conceptualising Negotiation and Mediation

The concept of negotiation has received attention from different scholars. Negotiation connotes a peaceful method/technique through which conflicting parties or disputants resolve their differences. For Kissinger (1969), negotiation has to do with the process of bringing conflicting parties together to take a common position unanimously. Elsewhere, Fells (2012) defines negotiation as "a process where two parties with differences which they need to resolve are trying to reach agreement through exploring for options and exchanging offers-and an agreement" (p. 3). For him, negotiation is a process (involving sequence of activities). It involves two or more parties, with clear differences to be addressed for a negotiation to take place. Negotiation aims to make the conflicting parties arrive at a compromise, usually with a win-win situation for all parties involved. Negotiation agreements are usually reached in a "non-judicial or non-arbitral setting" (Jack, 2014: 42). Given these varied notions of negotiation, Alfredson and Cungu (2008) are of the opinion that scholars, however, agree on one basic tenet of negotiation. This tenet is the assumption that parties who negotiate agree in at least one fundamental respect; that is, "they share a belief that their respective purpose will be better served by entering into negotiation with the other party" (Alfredson & Cungu, 2008: 6).

However, mediation differs from negotiation because it often involves a third party believed to be neutral. It is the process of coming to terms or compromise by conflicting parties and this is achieved by the help of a third neutral party- the mediator. In a mediation, the mediator creates the appropriate environment which makes it possible for the conflicting parties to enter into dialogue (Sandu, 2013b). The mediator, sometimes called the third party, is usually required in mediatory efforts because of the mistrust between/

among conflicting parties (Chereji & Pop, 2014; Govender & Ngandu, 2010). Mediation has, thus, been referred to as "a process of dialogue and negotiation in which a third party assists two or more disputant parties, with their consent, to prevent, manage or resolve a conflict without resort to force" (Nathan, 2009: 2). For Herrberg, Gunduz and Davis (2009), mediation describes the involvement of both inter- and intra-state actors, such as the United Nations (UN), African Union (AU), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), in conflict resolution among disputant parties. Furthermore, they assert that what differentiates mediation from other forms of third-party interventions in the peace process is that mediation does not involve the use of force and disputant parties have a say in the outcome of the peace-making process (Herrberg, *et al.,* 2009). Mediation is, therefore, a relevant tool in conflict prevention, stultifying violence eruption, management of ongoing conflict, conflict resolution and peace building efforts in post-conflict environment.

The quality of mediation in a conflict goes a long way in determining the success or otherwise of any mediation (Sandu, 2013a). This may have informed the submission of Govender and Ngandu (2010) that "*ceteris peribus,* depending on their proficiency, experience and team, mediators can either heighten or reduce the likelihood of achieving a positive outcome" (p. 14). Also, Marsh (as cited in Smith, 1998: 3) identified five elements of a successful mediation that include: an impartial third party; the protection of the integrity of proceedings; good faith from disputant parties; attendance of proceedings by those with full authority to make decisions; and an appropriate neutral location.

According to Nathan (2009: 25-26), mediation involves the following activities:

- Analysing the conflict, diagnosing its causes and identifying the parties' positions and interests.
- Pursuing shuttle diplomacy when the adversaries refuse to talk directly to each other.
- Employing methods to build the parties' confidence in negotiations.
- Designing and convening mediation processes and preparing agendas in consultation with the parties.
- Facilitating dialogue, negotiations and cooperative problem solving by the parties.
- Identifying common ground between the parties and generating options for overcoming deadlocks.
- Helping the parties to forge agreements.
- Creating opportunities for civil society to contribute to peace talks.
- Co-ordinating external actors' that have an interest in the conflict but are not participants in the negotiations (e.g. International bodies, donors and neighbouring states).
- Providing information about the peace process to relevant actors, the public at large and communities in conflict in the country.

Historiography of Mano River Basin

The Mano River Region, as earlier mentioned, is made of four West-African countries-Sierra Leone, Guinea, Liberia, and Cote d'Ivoire. It is renowned for its decades of violence and conflicts facilitated by porous borders, flow of weapons, cross-border movement of former combatants, and the transnational exploitation of resources (Afolabi, 2017). The shared open borders, the struggle for power, electoral democracy and unresolved long standing inter- and intra-state disputes have made the region highly volatile and unstable. The large inflow of Small Arms and Light Weapons in this region, coupled with several democratic setbacks, has made the Mano River Basin one of the most unstable areas on the planet (Small Arms Survey, 2004; UNDP, 2006). The high and continuing incidence of violence and conflicts, though now on a smaller scale and occurring in-termittently, has raised a lot of concern and questions about the viability of life, peace, social structure and the state in these countries. Furthermore, and critically for these study, it raised questions on the viability of negotiation and mediation as peace-building technique to achieve lasting peace in the region and in countries where decades of fighting, violence and conflicts has become endemic and perennial with global security threat implications (Garuba, 2013).

Mano River Basin have witnessed a long period of armed conflict and political strife, including civil wars in Sierra Leone and Liberia, several unrests in Cote d'Ivoire and have caused huge damage to human security. The high level of migration, internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refuges in the MRB are pointers to the interplay of nego-tiation and mediation techniques failure (Afolabi, 2017). Lack of effective supervision and management of internally displaced persons and refugees has had a multiplier effect on violence and conflicts in the region which is further exacerbated by zero-sum game, winner takes all nature of electoral politics in the region and Africa. The level of violence and conflicts in Mano River Basin, while it has dropped significantly, has remained intermittent and posed questions about the effectiveness and viability of negotiation and mediation techniques in a region where might is right and violence is the perceived acceptable medium of dispute resolution with country and regional implications (Afolabi, 2017).

Peace, Negotiation and Mediation Techniques in Mano River Basin

The cessation of hostilities in the Mano River Basin was achieved through many agen-cies, particularly using varieties of negotiation and mediation techniques to achieve peace in the region. To achieve this peace, various actors, ranging from governments, regional, international, religious and traditional, to civil society, adopted varying peace negotiations and mediation techniques. In order to understand how peace was achieved in the Mano River region, there is the need to discuss in this section, the actors involved in the negotiation and mediation as well as the techniques used.

1. Techniques Adopted by Governments/Governmental Actors

Various governments of the Mano River countries adopted many techniques for negotiation towards peacebuilding in their respective countries towards ensuring peaceful co-existence in the region. For instance, to strengthen peace and security in Sierra Leone, the government embarked on security sector reform aimed at strengthening civil decision-making bodies. This technique, according to Bearne, Oliker, O'Brien and Rathmell (2005), helped to constrain the power of armed forces and assisted peace talks and peacebuilding in Sierra Leone. In Liberia, the government had embarked on the 'Poverty Reduction Strategy' (PRS), as a technique for effective negotiation and peacebuilding. This was to ensure a more inclusive society and to appease those who had felt marginalized in the country (Petra, 2014). Inclusive of this technique, Kurz (2010) posits, was the preposition by the Liberian government to create a 'Reparations Trust Fund' in order to compensate victims of civil wars in the country. By doing so, negotiation and mediation talks were made easier and largely receptive. Also adopted and implemented by the Liberian government was the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Liberia. This Commission investigated cases of human rights abuses during the civil wars and set the tone for reconciliation. To achieve this, the TRC adopted the collection of testimonies/narratives of past abuses from private individuals. Petra (2014) avers that the TRC since inception in 2010 had collected an estimate of 16,800 testimonies/statements in Liberia, which had helped in peace negotiations and mediation in the country.

The technique adopted by the Guinean government in negotiation and mediation has been mostly via the use of basic guiding principles in mediation and conflict resolution. Such principles include: "impartiality of the mediator, profound knowledge of the conflict context, capacity to listen, and capacity to find compromise" (Petra, 2014: 33). For Cote d'Ivoire, the Commission on Dialogue, Truth and Reconciliation (CDVR) was created to enhance negotiation and mediation, promote reconciliation and prevent future crisis in the country. The techniques often adopted by the CDVR included the analysis of the social problems and challenges confronting the people as well as the conduct of public survey to analyse the triggers of wars and its impacts on the people (CDVR, 2013). This helped to bring both victims and perpetrators to talk to each other, thus, sowing the seed of forgiveness among the citizens. The CDVR also adopted the reparation technique which consists of material, moral and psychological support to victims of war and reintegrate perpetrators into the society (Petra, 2014; CDVR, 2013).

2. Techniques Adopted by Regional Actors

Regional bodies, such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), African Union (AU) and the Mano River Union (MRU), among others, have also adopted various techniques in peace negotiations and mediation in the Mano River Basin.

For ECOWAS, peacebuilding among member states within the Mano River was mostly achieved via three different techniques, *viz:* Political Declarations; the Protocol Relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security; and the use of 'hard security' (ECOWAS, 2015; Petra, 2014; Jack, 2014). ECOWAS political declarations consists of the protocol of non-aggression adopted in 1978 and the protocol on democracy and good governance which lays out conditions and the need for a free, fair and transparent elections as a means of preventing and resolving conflicts. Also, the protocol on the mechanism for conflict prevention, management and resolution, peacekeeping and security adopts guidelines for peace consolidation, security and stability among its members in the Mano River region (Jack, 2014).

ECOWAS also adopts economic and trade techniques towards peace negotiation and mediation among members in the Mano Basin (ECOWAS, 2015; Jack, 2014). The ECOWAS 'hard security' technique adopts military and civilian interventions in contributing to peacebuilding among Mano River member states. This usually involves the use of the ECOWAS Standby Force (ESF) (Agbambu, 2010). The ESF consists the Main Force and the Task Force. While the Main Force comprises 2,772 personnel, the Task Force comprises about 1,000 troops and both could be deployed to achieving peace through negotiation and mediation (Agbambu, 2010). Conteh, Taflinski and Hislaire (2014) aver that the ECOWAS has deployed these various techniques over crises in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Cote d'Ivoire and Guinea over the years.

The Mano River Union (MRU) has also adopted techniques and initiatives to establish and enhance the structures and tools for conflict resolution, including enhancing border security. Furthermore, the AU has adopted series of techniques for conflict negotiation, prevention, resolution and management in Africa, generally, and in the Mano River region, specifically. Petra (2014) posits that the AU's primary techniques and means for mediation and conflict resolution in the River Basin is the African Standby Force (ASF), the Panel of the Wise (POW) and the AU Peace Fund. While the ASF provides civilian and military components, the Peace Fund provides financial assistance and the Panel of the Wise is made up of five 'highly respected individuals' who assist towards peace negotiation and mediation within the Mano River Basin and the continent at large. West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) also uses workshops as a technique for peace, negotiation and mediation. The body organizes conflicts resolution and peacebuilding workshops throughout the West African region, of which the MRB is part (Sues & Mathias, 2013; Conteh, *et al.,* 2014).

3. Techniques Adopted by International Actors

International actors, such as the United Nations (UN) and the European Union (EU), have also adopted varieties of peace negotiation and mediation techniques. For instance, arguably, the most prominent technique adopted by the UN are the UN Peacekeeping

Missions which aims at monitoring ceasefire agreements and negotiations (Petra, 2014). Such peace negotiation and mediation efforts include the UN Mission in Liberia from 2003 to 2018 (Amanda & Liezelle, 2018) and UN Mission in Sierra Leone (Obi, 2009; Conteh, *et al.,* 2014). The UN Mediation Support Unit (MSU) of the Department for Political Affairs (DPA) is also a tool with which the UN provides advice, finance and logistics to peace processes. The UN Mediation Support Structure also consist of UN Standby Team of Mediation experts, which helps to promote capacity building in terms of mediation of regional and sub-regional organizations (Petra, 2014). The Peace and Development Advisors (PDA) also work with the MSU in conflict mediation and negotiations. The UN also uses the envoys of the United Nations Secretary General (UNSG) to provide support and advice in peace negotiation and mediation, and also to monitor peacebuilding activities. The UN Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone to Consolidated Peace (UNIPSIL) was also part of UN's peace negotiation and mediation technique employed in solving the Sierra Leonean crisis (Amanda & Liezelle, 2018).

4. Techniques Adopted by Religious and Traditional Actors

Religious and traditional actors have also adopted various peace negotiation and mediation techniques towards peacebuilding in the Mano River Basin. The positive influence of religious and traditional actors on negotiation and mediation is based on the fact that "one of the assets that religious leaders can use in conflict resolution is their established regional and global networks, from which they can attain support" (Petra, 2014, p. 38). This support can be expressed in places of worship like the churches, mosques, temples, community centres and educational institutions. This makes it possible for such actors to reach a large number of people through the networks of their religious and educational centres who otherwise might be unreachable, while capitalizing on their status as leaders (Bercovitch & Kadayifci-Orellana, 2009). The techniques that have been adopted over time by traditional actors towards peacebuilding and mediation in the Mano River are basically the 'Palaver hut', the 'kinship of pleasantry', town-hall initiatives and cultural fraternity (Sites of Liberia, 2009). These are traditional community methods for conflict resolution and for *palaver hut*, it functions through the gathering of citizens under a 'palaver' tree or in a palaver hut to discuss community issues and resolve conflicts (Petra, 2014; Sites of Liberia, 2009).

In Liberia, for instance, Kurz (2010) posits that the 'palaver hut' and the 'kinship of pleasantry' served as a forum where the perpetrators, victims and survivors could meet and confess. While perpetrators confess their war crimes, the survivors forgave such perpetrators or made them go through community punishment (Kurz, 2010). The 'kinship of pleasantry', Naine (2005) explains, is a form of friendship established across cultural ties on the basis of humour and mockery. This, he posits, contributes to the dissolution of negative tensions and prevent conflict.

Religious actors, on the other hand, have also adopted several techniques towards peace negotiation and mediation in the Mano River Basin. They achieved this by mobilizing religious narratives and doctrines to motivate disputant parties to shelve their swords (Bercovitch & Kadayifci-Orellana, 2009). This is usually achieved via the doctrines of forgiveness, love and compassion which have been used over time for the purpose of reconciliation. During the Civil War in Sierra Leone, for instance, the Inter Religious Council undertook dialogue with all disputant parties and contributed significantly to the reconciliation efforts. Also, in Liberia, the Inter Religious Council played a significant role in peace negotiations and drafted the Liberian Peace Accord which was signed by all parties and was instrumental to peacebuilding in Liberia. Furthermore, between 2002-2003, the World Conference on Religion and Peace (WCRP) implemented a programme it tagged 'Peacebuilding, Reconstruction and Reconciliation in the Mano River Basin', which assisted in peace-making and mediation activities (Sues & Mathias, 2003; Conteh, *et al.,* 2014).

5. Techniques Adopted by Civil Society Actors

Civil Society actors have also adopted various peace negotiation and mediation techniques in the Mano River Basin. Petra (2014) observed that Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) often employs multi-track mediation when carrying out peacebuilding negotiations and mediation. The multi-track mediation involves shuttle diplomacy and advocacy between the parties through constant outreach to disputants. For instance, shuttle diplomacy was applied by women's groups in the Liberian and Sierra Leonean Civil Wars to reach actors in the conflict. Such CSOs include the Mano River Women's Peace Network (Sues & Mathias, 2003); the Liberian Women's Initiative; Sierra Leone Women's Movement for Peace and the Campaign for Good Governance (Petra, 2014). In the Sierra Leonean Civil Wars, women's groups were the first to engage in the dialogue process with the RUF in place.

In Liberia, during the first phase of the Civil War, a lot of CSOs sprang up to engage in negotiation and mediation. Such CSOs were the Liberia Women Initiative (LWI) and the Centre for Law and Human Rights Education (CLHRE). Also, in Sierra Leone, in 1995, several CSOs came together to mount pressure on both the government and the RUF to come to the negotiation tables. In Guinea, neutral CSOs engaged in shuttle diplomacy, often neglected by the government. They had also engaged in human capital development and strived to improve accountability on the part of government. Petra (2014) and Conteh *et al.* (2014) observed that the mediation activities of CSOs in Guinea contributed to peace negotiations and prevented the outbreak of conflicts. Furthermore, in Cote d'Ivoire, CSOs often played important role in mediating in community-based conflicts in situations and circumstances where other approaches to peacebuilding negotiation and mediation had failed. As well, the Mano River Union Civil Society Movement

(MRUCSM) also put in place various conferences in Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia (Sues & Mathias, 2003; Conteh *et al.,* 2014) as a mediatory tool. We now examine the problems and challenges of negotiation and mediation.

Problems of Negotiation and Mediation:
Examining Limitations and Lessons Learned

There is no gainsaying the fact that the various peace negotiation and mediation techniques that have been put in place by various actors have been, undeniably, useful in the quest for finding sustained peace in the Mano River Basin. Nevertheless, these negotiations and mediation have been associated with problems/challenges and they have their limitations too. Therefore, for this section of the paper, we examined these problems and challenges, *vis-à-vis* the lessons that could be learned going-forward.

One major problem with negotiation and mediation in the Mano River Basin was the mistrust that existed both among warring factions and the international and regional actors (Conteh *et al.,* 2014). The ECOWAS and indeed other regional and international actors who got involved in negotiation and mediation, failed to put strategies in place to build confidence among warring factions. Rather, they were mostly interested in getting the warring factions to sign 'peace' agreements, mostly signed in deception. Describing the Liberian situation in this respect, Captan (as cited in Conteh et al., 2014) posits that people "who didn't trust each other were making commitment to each other to work together, knowing very well that confidence doesn't exist between them" (p. 55). Captan also added that the mistrust among ECOWAS members and other actors interested in peacebuilding resulted in communication gaps among warring factions. This was to the extent that when there is an agreement for ceasefire, implementation deficit always results because of information not reaching those at the lower level of leadership within the warring factions. Closely related to this is the challenge of the ECOWAS technique of 'hard security', in which the successful implementation of the technique depends on the willingness of members to implement diplomatic protocols/trade measures and contribute personnel for military and civilian forces (Agbambu, 2010). This challenge has always been a recurring limitation factor in peace negotiation and mediation. Added to this is the fact that warring factions sometimes set unreasonable preconditions for negotiation. This is also a major challenge (Armon & Carl, 1996).

Closely linked with the issues of trust and confidence as negotiation and mediation limitation is the problem of lack of coordination and coherence especially among local civil societies. As argued by Manson (2013), negotiation/mediation process is more likely to succeed where there are no divisions among local civil societies. Noticeably, there seem to be an influx of several local civil societies in the Mano River region, most of which are not in coherence with each other. Ettang, Maina and Razia (2011) posit that the emergence of several CSOs in the region, with lack of coordination and

coherence, has resulted in varieties and duplicity of peacebuilding and negotiation efforts in the MRB. According to them, even though the creation of bodies such as West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) and Mano River Women's Peace Network (MARWOPNET) were geared towards bringing local civil societies together, the situation has largely not changed. Furthermore, CSOs are often accused of compromise, usually by aligning with political parties and disputants. They also suffer from lack of funding which prevents them from being effective (Petra, 2014). For instance, in the 1990s, CSOs in Cote d'Ivoire were considered to have aligned with political parties, hence, did not enjoy the trust of the people. Given this, during the Civil War, activities of CSOs in Cote d'Ivoire were often met with violence. Similar situation played out in Liberia where President Charles Taylor sowed discord among civil society groups, which rendered the groups factionalised; a situation which impeded peace negotiation and mediation during the period.

Finance, or better put, lack of fund, is also a major limitation to negotiation and mediation efforts. The lack of independent finance by actors involved in negotiation and mediation often force them to seek financial partners, who use the 'carrot and stick' approach to drive their agenda (Conteh et al., 2014). Therefore, rather than put genuine efforts into negotiations and mediation, actors become tools in the hands of financial partners to achieve selfish interests, at the detriment of genuine peace negotiation. Furthermore, a lack of formal and established clear-cut structure for negotiation and mediation is also a major challenge in the Mano River Basin. As noticed from the various negotiations and mediation efforts/techniques adopted in the region, there is no gainsaying the fact that most of the peace negotiation and mediation moves were hurriedly 'packaged'. Therefore, the hurried and ad-hoc nature of negotiation and mediation ensures that there are no structures to guide negotiations and mediation, resulting in haphazard approach.

Furthermore, the disregard for traditional agencies/actors in the negotiations and mediation processes in the MRB is also a key limitation (Ettang et al., 2011). When negotiations are entered with total disregard or little regard for indigenous structures, institutions and agencies, with preference for 'imported' structures and institutions, such peacebuilding negotiation and mediation suffers setbacks particularly in terms of receptivity. Hence, mediators who embark on peacebuilding process with disregard for local actors, agencies and institutions, do that at their own peril. To remove this limitation, peacebuilding efforts/negotiations should be done in collaboration with local actors and agencies that are domiciled within local communities of warring factions.

Beaming the light on Liberia, Willie (as cited in Conteh et al., 2014) identified differing interpretations given to conflicts by warring factions as yet another problem with negotiation and mediation. While a warring faction might see conflict as a fight for rights, other parties to the conflict might see it as ethnic or territorial expansion. Therefore,

different and peculiar interpretations given to conflicts by warring factions has made it quite difficult for factions to come to agreement during negotiations and mediation efforts. This also explains the difficulty experienced with warring factions' adherence and commitment to signed peace agreements in all the conflicts that have taken place in MRB countries (Conteh et al., 2014). This for example, was responsible for splinter groups and multiple factions in Liberia.

Furthermore, the selfish and greedy interests of leaders and mediators who had difficulty in remaining neutral in negotiations and mediation processes is a major problem/limitation in peace negotiations and mediation efforts in the MRB. Hence, Svensson (2007) argues that a large portion of mediation efforts are done through biased mediators. Jack (2014) gives the example of the Kenyan Prime Minister, Raila Odinga, who was appointed as a mediator to negotiate an end to the conflict which ensued in Cote d'Ivoire as a result of the 2011 electoral disputes between Laurent Gbagbo and Alassane Quattara. Raila Odinga, as a mediator in that conflict, compromised his neutrality and favoured an armed intervention which truncated the totality of the negotiation and mediation efforts. Also, for example, with respect to Liberia, representatives and interim leaders during the Liberian Civil Wars compromised and sought selfish interests during negotiations (Captan, as cited in Conteh et al., 2014). These leaders compromised and refused to be neutral, owing to personal interests. This impeded negotiation and mediation for a long time during the Liberian crisis.

Most importantly, negotiating and mediating for peace without efforts to address the triggers of the conflict, is often an exercise in futility. We consider this most important, that before, during and post-negotiations, genuine efforts must be put in place to address the root cause (s) of conflicts. This way, negotiations are not only successful and conflicts are resolved (albeit, not certainly), it also guarantees that future conflicts are averted. As Amanda & Liezelle (2018) have argued, the failure to address root causes of conflicts in Liberia and Sierra Leone dealt a blow to peace negotiation efforts. The same could be argued for the other Mano River countries of Guinea and Cote d'Ivoire. Thus, Amanda and Liezelle (2018) enumerate those areas which must be addressed for a successful peacebuilding negotiation and mediation: access to justice; security sector reform; reconciliation; inclusive economic diversification, reduction of donor dependency; governance; and cross-cutting issues (such as human rights, youth employment and education, etc.).

Designing Negotiation and Mediation: Exploring Possibilities

Having appraised the challenges, problems and limitations with negotiations and mediation in the Mano River Basin, it is pertinent to provide a template and possibilities of achieving successful negotiations and mediation in future. It is important to mention that the role of the mediator is very critical to peace negotiation and mediation process.

As such, impartial, neutral and uncompromising mediators (Govender & Ngandu, 2010), whether international, regional, local or CSOs, must be employed in negotiation and mediation process. A successful mediation must be unbiased and protect the interest of all parties in order to bridge the gap in relationships among warring factions. Along with this is the need for a wide range of experience in mediation because "an experienced mediator is much more likely to be successful than an inexperienced mediator; and a confidence-building approach to mediation is more likely to yield a positive outcome than coercive diplomacy" (Nathan, 2009, p. 1). Therefore, in order to improve mediation process in the MRB, the need for experienced, unbiased and uncompromising mediators (local, regional, international, religious, CSOs, etc.) cannot be overemphasized.

To engage in effective negotiation and mediation, it is also pertinent to get the timing correctly. Getting the appropriate time or period when warring factions will be responsible and receptive of the negotiation and mediation process, is germane to achieving peace. This is what Zartman (1989), Smith & Smock (2008) and Zartman & Berman (1982) referred to as the 'ripeness of the conflict resolution'. This is the stage in the conflict where warring factions become obviously tired and find themselves in a stalemate/deadlock. For Zartman (1989), this is the right time to negotiate. Accordingly, Zartman (2001) posits that "when the parties find themselves locked in a conflict from which they cannot escalate to victory and this deadlock is painful to both of them (although not necessarily in equal degree or for the same reasons), they seek an alternative policy" (p. 8). At this point, warring factions are most likely to embrace peace negotiation and mediation efforts. Alvaro (as cited in Isaoho & Tuuli, 2013) describes the essence of 'ripeness' in mediation process that, at that point, "the opposing parties perceive that the cost of coming to an agreement has become less than the cost of pursuing the conflict" (p. 24) When conflict has not reach its ripeness, Isaoho & Tuuli (2013) argue that mediation process-though not certainly, runs the risk of breaking down. The Sierra Leonean civil war and the failed Abidjan Peace Accord provides vivid examples. However, when the conflict became ripe for resolution, the Lomé Peace Accord of 1999 eventually put an end to the conflict (Isaoho & Tuuli, 2013). These scenarios explain the need to get the 'right time' when negotiation and mediation attempts is likely to be successful.

Confidence building among/between warring factions and the mediation process is vital to an effective peace negotiation and mediation. As such, a mediator must, as a matter of necessity, try to build parties' confidence/trust on him/her and the mediation process. When warring factions lack confidence and trust for the mediator and the mediation process, they are unlikely to participate in such negotiations/mediation. Even when they participate, they only pay lip-service to the negotiation and mediation efforts. However, mediators can build confidence/trust in warring factions through: being honest and open about their mandate and agenda when mediating between warring

factions; creating clear framework for the mediation process and shuttling between the to-be negotiating parties (Isoaho & Tuuli, 2013).

Furthermore, for a successful peace negotiation and mediation process, issues that triggered conflicts such as poor/bad governance, denial of access to justice, high level of human and material insecurity, human rights abuses, youth unemployment and low educational opportunities must be addressed (Amanda & Liezelle, 2018). When these issues are addressed or there are genuine commitments towards addressing them, then peace negotiation and mediation have higher potentials of succeeding. Furthermore, there is the need to recognize and revert to indigenous techniques of peace negotiation and mediation, both in the Mano River Basin and across African societies. The often neglect and disregard for traditional actors, agencies and institutions in peace negotiation and mediation in favour of 'imported' institutions and techniques has proven to be largely ineffective. This shows the need for reversion to indigenous mediation institutions.

Generally, however, to explore possibilities in negotiations and mediation, we recommend the adoption and adherence to the AU's (2014) guidelines for mediation, as a guiding framework which include:

a. The parties must own the agreement;
b. Mediation and negotiations should be inclusive of all significant political actors;
c. Civil society must be involved in the mediation and negotiations;
d. The mediator(s) must help the parties develop a relationship of trust and cooperation;
e. Mediation must be a non-threatening venture for the parties;
f. Mediators must be impartial;
g. There is no quick-fix solution in deep-rooted conflict;
h. Mediation must help the parties address the root cause(s) of the conflict;
i. Mediators must be flexible, creative, responsive and adaptive;
j. The drafting and implementation of peace agreements should be properly linked (see for instance, Nathan, 2009);
k. The process must address the regional dimensions of national conflicts; and
l. There is a need for systematic and rigorous approaches to mediation processes (see for instance, Govender & Ngandu, 2010).

The use of the above framework is to serve as the least benchmark for any actor, individual or agency that wants to engage in peace negotiation and mediation in any society, especially those that have witnessed decades of violence and conflict like the Mano River Basin countries in West Africa.

Are Chances for Peace Increasing in MRB? Concluding Remarks

The sociology of violence and conflicts in Africa often necessitates the need for a thorough analysis of existing mechanisms that are used to achieve and engender peace, especially that of negotiation and mediation mechanism. This approach has two-way benefits viz, providing an understanding of the negotiation and mediation techniques to achieve peace and the challenges/limitations of these techniques in order to increase their effectiveness and usefulness. The Mano River Basin countries debacle of decades of violence and conflict presented such opportunity to engage in the analysis. Therefore, the study traced the issue of violence and conflicts in Mano region, noting the varied and intertwined nature of the conflicts. The study also examined the various negotiation and mediation techniques used, while pointing out that these techniques, while it has drastically reduced conflicts, have not been able to fully solve the incidence of violence and conflicts in the region. However, the study noted that even though there are limitations, the negotiation and mediation techniques could be improved upon if certain criteria are adopted and used as operational framework for conflict resolution and peacebuilding, not only in the Mano River Basin region but across states and societies in Africa where there are violence and conflicts. A particular focus on traditional structures of peace negotiation and mediation like town-hall initiatives, cultural fraternity (Sandi/Poro) and clan by clan outreaches can help improve peace negotiation and mediation techniques given its explained limitations and challenges. The adoption of these suggested traditional methods and improvement to in-use negotiation and mediation techniques, it is believed, would lessen greatly the incidences of violence and recourse to conflicts, while increasing the chances for peace.

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USA:
The Role of New Media
in the Charlottesville 'Unite the Right' Conflict

Georgiana BIGEA

Abstract. *The impact of new media on polarization and of social media on populist messaging is as poorly understood as it is widely debated every time that a violent incident occurs. The 2017 Unite the Right rally from Charlottesville has turned into violent conflict through everyday individuals transforming into fighters. Our goal was to find out why, by doing a conflict analysis of the events. The literature review as well as the events leading up to the rally have shown that new media has a polarization-intensification effect on the conflict parties, independent from partisan politics or media bias. To study this phenomenon deeper and to find out how it led to violence, we employed Randall Collins' escalation model. Then in the second part, we focused the research on social media and its role in the events, with the help of Bernard Mayer's triangle of conflict and root cause model. Our findings were that new media-exacerbated polarization and social media were the primary tools for instigation and escalation, which transformed the conflict from potential to actualized. While the first fostered the element of group solidarity, the second provided resource for mobilization. We consider this research valuable in the field of conflict studies insofar as this type of conflict analysis is an important tool to detangle the invisible inter-connected strings that characterize modern conflicts. Interdisciplinary exploration is recommended in the future, with the benefit of gaining a holistic perspective that is more faithful to the dynamic nature of reality.*

Keywords: *social media, Charlottesville, polarization, populism, conflict.*

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Introduction

On August 11 and 12 in 2017 in Charlottesville, Virginia, the Alt-right[1] organized a rally to protest the city's resolution to take down the statue of Confederate General Robert E. Lee. The Alt-right was met by counter-protester groups formed out of students, town inhabitants, and even a local militia. The third party that was involved was the local police force that ended up instating a state of emergency and canceling the rally before it even began, due to violent outbreaks between the factions on the day before and the morning of the rally date. As the groups were scattering, one of the protesters got in his car and drove into the crowd, killing a 32-year old Charlottesville woman. On the same day, one of the helicopters survey   ing the area crashed and the both crew members lost their lives. In the aftermath, inhabitants of another town took down their local Confederate statue, a protest started in Atlanta, President Donald Trump's statements spiked conflict and controversy throughout the nation, and some rally goers were denounced on Twitter, were publicly chastened, and lost their jobs.

This paper will explore through conflict analysis the part that new media played in this violent conflict, taking into account the polarization intensification effect that it can have. The role of new media and particularly of social media has been explored before in the context of sociology, conflict studies, and of media studies. We chose to address it because in the Charlottesville case as in many others, the media was the only medium of communication through which the parties talked at each other. Therefore, understanding this role is essential for conflict prevention, mitigation, and peacekeeping. Communication is a pillar of cooperation and conversely, of conflict. The existent societal polarization becomes exacerbated when the parties are unable to relate to the other one's point of view or are even unaware of it, creating a conflict escalation loop.

Research Questions

Our study plans to answer the following research questions:

(1) What were the implications of new media-amplified polarization for the Charlottesville conflict?
(2) What was the role played by social media in the Charlottesville events?

Methodology and Literature Review

In our conflict analysis, we will rely on Randall Collins' escalation and de-escalation models and Bernard Mayer's Triangle of Conflict and Conflict Root-Cause Analysis Model.

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1   "Alt-right" is a term referring to white supremacist, neo-Confederates, neo-Nazis, neo-fascists, and other far right groups. They are usually characterized by one or more of the following: isolationist, protectionist, antisemitic, identitarianist, nativist, Islamophobic, right-wing populist, homophobic, and antifeminist.

We chose these from the plethora of existing conflict analysis models because they give due space to the two issues that we aim to explore: social media and polarization amplification, in other words the role of communication and the consequences of its flaws.

To contextualize our first research question, polarization is known in the field of conflict studies as an escalator (Ramsbotham, Miall, & Woodhouse, 2011; Randall, 2012), as a determinant of the magnitude of wars and arms races (Dougherty & Phaltzgraff, 2001) and a feature of intractable conflicts. Moreover, recent empirical work provides evidence suggesting that polarization outperforms fractionalization as a predictor of civil conflict (Montalvo & Reynal-Querol, 2005; Reynal-Querol, 2002).

New media plays a part in proliferating or countering polarization while in the context of social media, the "filter bubble" phenomenon creates a high level of group homogeneity.

That leads us to the second question. We deem it observable that the social media has changed conflict. The connection between the two has been approached in the literature from a variety of angles. From changing conflict reporting (Aslam, 2016), to offering a new platform to those previously oppressed (Diamond, 2010; Zeitzoff, 2017), to allowing groups of people to organize in protest, to enabling remote radicalization. It has been weaponized: allowing war actors to control the narrative (Zeitzoff, 2017), enabling direct communication from incumbents, insurgents, (Mesquita & Dickson, 2007; Rosendorff & Sandler, 2004 cited in Zeitzoff, 2017) and candidates for election (Tufekci & Wilson, 2012), to micro-targeting of messages, foreign meddling in elections, gaining support for conflicts (Mutz, 2006), and giving whistle blowers a platform (Panama Papers), encouraging citizen journalism, coordination for finding safety in times of conflict (Castells, 2007), and an ability to elicit an international response and expose wrongdoers as well as complicity in genocides Rwanda (Deane, 2013), legitimization of negative messaging through its publishing or tacit legitimization (Mutz, 2006; Mikkonen, 2017).

However, due to the rapid development of technologies, the field of conflict studies is still in need of research to explore the causes, correlations, and effects of what has been happening. Although many of these topics have been discussed over and over in the western media, which makes them seem "obvious," a search in the available scholarly literature will reveal gaps that are yet to be filled.

This is important because the problems and developments that we are witnessing are likely to exacerbate (Zeitzoff, 2017), with the predicted increase in the number of internet and social media users and the advent of technology embedment in all aspects of life. Due to the inherent globalization and rapidity of information flow, conflict can be provoked at every step. The demand for transparency and the ability of any one actor to reveal sensitive data, generates a certain volatility (Deane, 2013), that conflict practitioners and peace workers ought to be concerned with.

Due to the interconnectedness and multi-faceted effects of social media consumption – into behavioral psychology, philosophy, communication, sociology, IT, marketing, neurology, cognition, conflict, political science, and so on, we believe that studying the phenomenon ought to be multi-disciplinary as well.

In our research, we also give a particular attention to populist[2] messaging on socializing networks as a contributor to increased polarization, due to the significant echo that the populist President Donald Trump's statements have had in the aftermath of the Charlottesville violent events.

The effect of populist rhetoric proliferation is predicted by conflict studies literature to be social cleavages and conflict characterized by intractability (Mikkonen, 2017; Esteban & Schneider, 2008) because increasing group salience leads to self-categorization, identification with the group over the individual identity, and intergroup animus (Hogg & Reid, 2006; Oakes, 2002; Turner, Oakes, Haslam, & McGarty, 1994).

In the case of the US, polarizing discourse falls on the fertile ground set by the 10% increase in partisan animosity that the country has seen from 1994 to 2015 (Gramlich, 2018). But by fostering intergroup conflict, group prototypes are made even more distinctive from each other, i.e. group members are encouraged to conceptualize a disputed issue by actively contrasting where their group and the opposing group stand (Abrams, Wetherell, Cochrane, Hogg, & Turner, 1990; Hogg, Turner, & Davidson, 1990; Mackie & Cooper, 1984; Mackie, 1986).

Although the scope of this study is the US and US-originating resources, materials, and points of reference, we believe that its implications are global. The US media is globally consumed, as are the social media platforms it is distributed by. Second, the US is a major culture and view-point influencer in the western world. It has been a model of liberalism for centuries, and has been the archetype for democracy. Its positioning – transmitted through the news outlets or the President's tweets – enhance and legitimize certain behaviors, and even announce an example of what will soon be adopted in others parts of the world.

Structure

The first section will briefly introduce Collins' Theory of Social Conflict as well as Meyer's Root Cause Model. Then, we will approach our *de facto* case: The Unite the Right Rally

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2 Populism is inherently characterized by an overly-simplistic divisive description of the world, a conflictual view of the "people" against the "elites" that operates within the "good" versus "evil" dichotomy, historically appealing the most in times of distress, economic recession, etc. We will show how this combines with the media's predilection for framing most of its stories in a conflictual paradigm which intensifies polarization. (Galtung &Ruge, 1965; Harcup & O'Neil, 2001 cited in Han, 2016).

in Charlottesville, 2017. Using information and resources available online, we will start by presenting the historical events. In doing so, we will also follow Collins' framework of analysis to map out the conflict evolution: from escalation to de-escalation and the subsequent conflict that emerged. This step will be particularly revealing of the impact of media-intensified polarization in various stages of conflict. After that, we will apply Mayer's Triangle and Root-Cause framework to understand what occurred and why the conflict erupted. Lastly, we will give extended attention to Communication, one of Mayer's root causes and the subject of our second research question. Here, we will illustrate the role that social media played in the conflict from its inception to the aftermath. We end our research with our concluding remarks and recommendations for further exploration.

Randall Collins' Theory of Social Conflict was published under the title *Conflict Sociology* in 1975 in which he drew together all that sociology had learned about conflict and tried to formally state theories. He reduced the hundreds of theoretical statements that found into the following four main points:

1. The unequal distribution of each scarce resource produced potential conflict between those who control it and those who don't. The basic scarce resources can be found in Weber's work: economic (material), power (social positions within networks), status, and cultural resources (Collins understands them as control over the rituals that produce solidarity and group symbols).

2. Potential conflicts become actual conflicts to the degree that opposing groups become mobilized. The two main areas of mobilization are: emotional (moral) and symbolic. Here, the prime component is collective rituals. According to Collins, groups don't simply need material goods to wage war, but there have to be emotional and symbolic goods as well. "The more a group is able to gather physically, create boundaries for ritual practice, share a common focus of attention, and a common emotional mood, the more they will:

a. Have a strong sense of group identity.
b. Have a worldview that polarizes the world into two camps (in- and out- group).
c. Be able to perceive their beliefs as morally right.
d. Be charged with the necessary emotional energy to make sacrifices for the group and cause".

The second main area of mobilization concerns the material resources, i.e. communication and transportation technologies, materials, monetary supplies, and people. A conflict outcome is also dependent on who can replenish their supplies. A higher level of ritual solidarity, however, can also lead to victory. Civil rights movements are often the case here.

3. Conflict engenders subsequent conflict. In order to *activate* a potential conflict, according to Collins, parties must have a sense of moral rightness. There has to be more than a utilitarian perspective, namely a sense of moral superiority. In addition to affirming social solidarity, ritualized acts of violence are used to garner support.

4. Conflicts diminish as resources for mobilization are used up. The two fronts of demobilization are: emotional resources (important in the short run) and material resources (for the long-run). In intense conflicts, emotional resources are very important, while milder forms of conflict tend to continue longer than the intense ones. This can be seen in guerilla warfare and terrorism, as well as peaceful political movements. Relatively mild forms of conflict also tend to deescalate due to bureaucratization, which can co-opt them. For instance, inequality is something that is studied nowadays, and for that reason it has been co-opted, integrated.

The other front where conflicts can be lost is de-escalation of ritual solidarity. The group has to periodically gather to renew the emotional energy. The intensity of conflicts will also vary by focus of attention, i.e. conflict that is multi-focused will tend to not be able to generate such high levels of emotional energy (Collins, 1975).

Randall Collins' Models of C-Escalation and D-Escalation assumes that conflict escalates through a series of feedback loops. It starts off with stating Simmel's theory elaborated in 1956 by Coser: external conflict increases group solidarity. Solidarity, in turn, causes conflict as it is a key weapon. More solidarity means more capability to mobilize and fight and more sensitivity to threats.

There are three outcomes of successful interaction ritual. The first, group solidarity, makes one willing to sacrifice oneself for the group (Collins, 2011). It also creates idealized symbols of membership, including identifying as good or evil depending on the relation to the group boundary. Emotional energy in conflict takes the form of courage, belief in a win, etc.

The first one of the feedback loops for Collins, after conflict and solidarity cause each other to rise, is the atrocities/polarization loop. He defines atrocities as *opponents' actions that we perceive as especially hurtful and evil, a combination of physical and moral offense that we find outrageous.* Even from the level of conflict talk, atrocities can begin, in the way *trash-talking [...] precedes fights.* (Collins, 2009). Genocides for example, start with the buildup of emotional polarization. Additionally, both sides perceive themselves as strong and the enemy as week, therefore they expect to win.

The second loop is when the group seeks allies by appealing to ideals, virtues, atrocity stories, emotional appeals by describing how evil the other side is. A typical move, says Collins, is to magnify the enemy threat to include everyone.

Lastly, the third loop is mobilizing material resources. The availability of material resources and of replenishing capacity are indicative of the strength and duration of the conflict.

In terms of de-escalation, Collins says that winning or losing is a matter of how one side successfully attacks key components of the enemy's ability to escalate. Another path to de-escalation is through emotional burnout. Although conflict produces it is unclear how long this solidarity lasts.

Another reason for de-escalation is that material resources are no longer available. This is a reason for which riots tend to be short, because the participants need to go back home, eat, return to work, etc. Additionally, some of the alliances that earlier supported the conflict may fall through. Solidarity is also a source of idealism, so when it dissipates, individuals automatically become less willing to sacrifice themselves for the group. At this point, all the elements required for escalation reverse and lead to de-escalation implicitly.

Bernard Mayer's Triangle is a prominent triangular-type conflict analysis framework. He developed it in 2000, tracing conflict as occurring along cognitive (perception), emotional (feeling), and behavioral (action) dimensions (Mayer, 2000). The framework developed by Mayer to identify conflict sources is called the wheel of conflict, derived from Christopher Moore's Circle of Conflict. According to Mayer, there are five basic forces: the way that people communicate, their emotions, their values, the structures within which these interactions take place, and history.

The Chronological Events

Loop #1 Solidarity breeds polarization, conflict, and atrocities

In August of 2017, white nationalists and supremacists were going to the US town of Charlottesville, Virginia for a Saturday Unite the Right rally. Their plan was to march in a torchlight procession on August, 12, to protest against the removal of a statue of Gen. Robert E Lee. The torches were meant to evoke similar marches of Hitler Youth and other such manifestations. One of the leaders, Richard Spencer, texted a reporter a little after 8 PM: "I'd be near campus tonight, if I were you" he wrote, "After 9 p.m. Nameless field".

The parties involved in the conflict at this point were: a coordinated and armed company of white nationalists, a determined group of counter protesters intent on stopping the Saturday rally, and state and local authorities who were caught off guard by the events.

By 8:45 PM on Friday, a group of about 250 mostly young white males, the majority of which were dressed in khaki pants and white polo shirts, started crossing the Nameless Field, an open field behind the Memorial Gymnasium at the University of Virginia. Their torches were still dark and they had organizers carrying bullhorns. At a signal, their torches were lit and they took off at a brisk pace, yelling "Blood and soil!" "You will not replace us!" "Jews will not replace us!".

Shortly after, next to the Jefferson statue, they met a group of about 30 university students, both white and of color, who had locked arms around the statue to face down the hundreds of torchbearers. The marchers surrounded the statue. Then they chanted "White lives matter!".

Within moments, chaos began: chemical irritants were sprayed, shoves, punches were thrown, many marchers threw their torches toward the statue and the student. There was only one university police officer on site and several minutes went by before reinforcements appeared.

The basis of this conflict is racial segregation and a fight for supremacy within the American society. In this case, the scarce resources that the parties are fighting over are power and status. While the equal rights movements are trying to establish a political correctness that would ensure equality and spare the feelings of previously humiliated groups, the white supremacists and other such factions fight to maintain their ancestral dominance.

But what made this conflict erupt then and there? We believe the answer lies in Collins' second principle: **through mobilization potential conflicts become actual conflicts.** Through physical mobilization, i.e. gathering for the rally and against the rally as well as emotional, by perceiving themselves as safeguarding an ancestral right, the two groups had the necessary elements for eruption. A noteworthy addition presented in Collins' model as well is the "ritual practice" which in this case was wearing the traditional wealthy white man golf club "uniform," the Nazi reminding torch ritual, and scanting mantras. That simultaneously achieved all the four points in Collins' conflict theory: created a strong sense of group identity for the rally-goers due to the uniform and of the high degree of racial homogeneity, created a clear discrepancy between them and "the others," i.e. those not wearing the same items and not carrying torches, chanted "White lives matter" which was a mantra that is morally sound and charged each other with sufficient emotional energy to be willing to jump in the confrontation for each other.

At the opposite end, the students were unified by a common goal and furthermore by the discrepancy between them and the others. External conflict was what increased their group solidarity. They were holding hands, which was their own ritual signaling solidarity. Soon thereafter, the atrocity[3] occurred: the white supremacists threw their torches at the group. This seemed particularly "atrocious" due to the opposition being formed by students and the battleground being a university campus. Their young age and the fact that this was happening on university ground, were additional aggravators. Breaking the "peacefulness" of the event was like crossing the Rubicon.

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3 Defined as "Opponents' actions that we perceive as especially hurtful and evil, a combination of physical and moral offense that we find outrageous" (Collins, 2012).

Loop #2 Seeking out allies

The next day, the rally was supposed to begin at 5 PM, but at 8 in the morning the park was filling up. The rallygoers waved nationalist banners and chanted slogans, many carrying shields, clubs, pistols, or long guns.

The counter protesters were there as well, with members of anti-fascist groups yelling at the marchers. Many were armed with sticks and shields. They were joined by locals, civil rights leaders, onlookers, and members of church groups. Most stores and restaurants were closed for the day in Charlottesville.

At 9:30 AM, some clergy members clasped arms and began singing "This Little Light of Mine" while the nationalists yelled "Our blood, our soil!".

The third force arrived. Over 35 members of a self-styled camouflage wearing militia walked in, armed with semiautomatic rifles and pistols. The self-designated commander of the unit, Christian Yingling, said they were there to maintain peace. On the site, there were law enforcement officials as well.

Tensions were beginning to rise. Later, the Charlottesville Police Chief said that the rallygoers went back on the initial plan meant to keep them separate from counter-protesters by coming in through all entrances instead of the designated one.

At this second stage, Collins' model is reflected faithfully again. At least two out of the three conflicting parties returned with allies the next day, although some of them were less keen to participate in violence (e.g. the town people, the church group members) while some others came uninvited (e.g. the militia was not invited by the Police department per se). However, they showed up with reinforcements and that was the second step in the escalation. Additionally, by not intervening, the police forces became enablers of the conflict.

The increase in the scope of the conflict aggravates the potential outcome. Due to the presence of armed militia, police forces, and more people than before, the battle territory extended and there were more volatile elements involved. By just changing the entrance that they came in through, the white supremacists helped escalate the conflict altogether.

Loop #3 Mobilizing material resources

At almost 11 AM, a group of white nationalists carrying large shields and wooden clubs approached the park on Market Street, facing about twenty counter-protesters who formed a line across the street to block their path. The marchers charged through the line with a roar and the counter-protesters fought back punching and spraying chemicals. At this time, the police did not move to break up the fights. Later, the Police Chief motivated that the policemen had to hurry to get their armors. At 11:22 the Police declared an unlawful assembly. At 11:28 AM, a local state of emergency was declared.

The 3rd loop of escalation was unraveling when the parties showed up at the scene of the protest armed with weapons and bats, sprays, and other combat utensils. Because there was more weaponry on site, the number of variables increased and the outcome was more difficult to control. Also, acquiring weapons instigates the opposite party to acquire weapons as well, quickly inflaming the situation. The police observed this and moved to cancel the gathering. That was the first step towards de-escalation.

De-escalation begins: loss of solidarity and loss of allies

Within minutes of the dispersal order, the nationalist groups began leaving the park, still exchanging insults with counter-protesters as they were making their way. As Washington Post Writes, "Go home" and "Go back to Africa" were being yelled from everywhere.

At this point, several people were injured and some arrested, but nothing serious seemed to have happened. Despite some sporadic fighting around town, it all appeared to calm down. The rally had been stopped before it could even begin, both sides were claiming victory, and both thought the police should have intervened earlier to keep the peace. Rally-goers were informed that a state of emergency had been declared and the rally would not go forward.

The loss of the Police as an "ally"

While as before they were relatively uninvolved, they intervened and scattered the people, thus bringing the main de-escalation factor - the loss of solidarity. By being banished from the park and scattered around, neither the protesters nor the counter-demonstrators could preserve their unity and thus became less willing to engage. However, the emotional build-up did not get discharged, so there was sufficient "fuel" for the atrocities to continue. Far from emotional burnout, there was still plenty of tension for the participants to draw from.

In Collins' theory, the victory can be claimed by the party that is in a better position to limit the opponent's ability to escalate. In this case, the structural authority of the Police and the fact that the conflict participants had to replenish resources, i.e. they wanted to eventually return home, they were not committed to becoming outlaws, weighed the balance in favor of the authorities and put a halt to the gathering. The sporadic violent outbreaks were broken up and the nucleus of the conflict put out. This mirrors Collins' 4th principle, that conflicts diminish as resources for mobilization are exhausted.

Loss of material resources and another atrocity

At 1:42 PM, the Charlottesville city Twitter account tweeted: "CPD and VSP respond to 3-vehicle crash at Water and 4th Streets. Several pedestrians struck". It was not immediately clear from this statement, but witnesses seemed to have no doubt that it was "absolutely intentional" (Heim, 2017). Ralleygoer James Alex Fields Jr. had roared his

Dodge Challenger at a crowd of pedestrians. Heather Heyer was killed and 19 others were injured. Later in the day, another report arrived that a helicopter monitoring the rally had crashed in Albemarle County, just a few miles from Charlottesville.

Collins' third principle is *conflict engenders subsequent conflict*. He also mentions that conflict parties use ritualized acts of violence in order to garner support. Though this incident was not particularly ritualized, it was surely a way to "score a win" for the perpetrator's side. Before this, the protest had not been very noteworthy. But because on the side of the supremacists, one of the protesters decided to supplement his material resource by getting behind the wheel of his car and attacking people with it, this enlarged the scope considerably. This step ended the Charlottesville Rally conflict – due to the strong release of energy, but it was the atrocity that generated the next conflict that carried on in the media. Already, this was the 1st loop from a conflict involving the US President, the media, and the left/right supporters from all over the US.

Polarization and Conflict

Polarization is quintessential for conflict because solidarity is a "key weapon" in conflict (Collins, 2012) and polarization is a variation of solidarity, combined with intergroup animus between the few sides. Each step of the conflict, from the initial rituals, to the atrocities, breeds more in-group solidarity and anger and fear toward the enemy.

In this case, the students, the rally-goers, and the town inhabitants might have all gotten along in other circumstances of their lives. Neither one of them had particularly violent intentions to begin with and certainly not towards the woman that died in the aftermath. The parties seemed to develop "moral blindness" to their own atrocities, and this usually proves that the enemy is "morally subhuman". Their polarization was an intense perception that whomever is inside the group is good, and whomever is outside of it is evil. As Collins says, polarization leads to atrocities "because we feel completely virtuous, everything we do is good [and] the enemy is completely evil, they deserve what is done to them". Thus, each part perceives the enemy as weaker and deserving of what they are getting.

On the day of the Charlottesville incident, the events happened too quickly for there to be social media polarization, but in its preparation as well as aftermath, social media was the war room.

Mayer's Conflict Triangle and Root-Causes Model

As presented in the first part, Mayer's Conflict Triangle illustrates three sides: cognitive, emotional and behavioral.

Mayer's Triangle of Conflict revealed the following:

	ALT-RIGHT	ANTI-PROTESTERS	CITY AUTHORITIES
COGNITIVE (GOALS)	Maintaining the statue of Robert E. Lee	Removing the statue	Maintaining the city order.
	Reclaiming/maintaining white supremacy and privilege	Condemning white supremacy (equality)	Protecting the rule of law.
EMOTIONAL	Feeling left out and concerned what their place would be if they "let" ethnic minorities be equal or even advantaged. Attachment to history as a part of their identity.	Feeling that basic human rights were under attack. Fear that history might reoccur.	Fear of escalation. Fear for their own lives.
BEHAVIORAL	Organized a march.	Rallied to protest against the alt-right.	Mobilized to secure order. They were idle at the beginning and then declared an unlawful assembly and state of emergency.

In order to understand the contribution of social media to this conflict, we delved into Mayer's Root-Cause model as well:

	ALT-RIGHT	ANTI-PROTESTERS	AUTHORITIES
EMOTIONS	Attachment to history, race identity.	Feeling afraid/anxious that the alt-right might dominate again. Desire to confirm that the past is shameful.	Concern at the sight of an increase in scope, weaponry, and rising tensions.
VALUES	Security and chances for themselves and their children. Belief that maintaining the past and social status was essential to that.	Claiming their equality. Fighting against white supremacy. Denouncing the errors of the past as a sign of good faith.	Protecting the law. Maintaining public order.
STRUCTURES	The whites used to have supremacy over the Blacks for centuries and discrimination is still a reality in the United States. Black people are more likely to be jailed, to fall sick, be treated differently, be unable to get jobs, they are likely to live in ghettos, get into selling drugs, etc.		They voted for removing the statue. They allowed the rally and then declared it "unlawful" together with a "state of emergency."

History

Fragmentation of the American Society

In his 1993 Presidential Address, Randall Collins was saying that "there is more overt conflict in [the US] than perhaps ever before, at the same time, this conflict is extremely fragmented" because of the multitude of mobilized conflict groups. Some of the conflicts of the 21st century (over gender, sexual preference) were quite inconceivable in the previous centuries. It was also in the 19th century that nationalism and ethnicity became prominent. These conflicts flourished due to the widespread availability of resources for organizational mobilization.

What's more, as per the Marxian theory, capitalist competition that pushes for innovation and for increased production capacity reduces the demand for labor, which is indeed reflective of the American crisis. But then there was no Marxian class mobi-

lization. Marx's "key factor [was] technology displacing labor" but the high level of fragmentation along with institutionalization of conflicts (e.g. studying inequality) kept the tensions under control.

The difference is that in 2016, Donald Trump – through his populist and divisive rhetoric – has given the American society a point of reference around which to become polarized. Additionally, new media rendered itself as an optimal vehicle to transmit that message, therefore intensifying its effect. The POTUS has unified seemingly different factions under a binary system: pro-Trump and anti-Trump, thus meeting the 3 most important characteristics of polarization: "high degree of homogeneity within each group; high degree of heterogeneity across groups; small number of significantly sized groups" (Esteban & Ray, 1994, p. 824).

Thus, even when the subject of discussion is not political per se, the Donald Trump persona offers a position. That is, even if someone did not vote for Donald Trump, by being anti-immigrant or pro-deportation, they become stereotyped (or they even self-stereotype to fit that image).

The conflictual media-framing stimulates self-categorization and increases intergroup animus. If the group identity becomes more salient (and there are a very small number of overarching opposite identities) it leads to exaggeration of stereotypes, assimilation to the group prototype (solidarity) and afterwards, as Collins showed, into conflict.

As we discussed earlier, self-definition makes people behave more consistent with group prototypes and the presence of inter-group conflict helps make prototypes even more distinctive from each other. For example, in the US the political polarization has risen to the level that party sympathizers see the other party as a threat to the nation.

Anti-liberalism

The white supremacists used the historical trope of the torches to remind people of young Nazis. Some journalists speculated that by reviving those symbols, they were reintegrating them into the mainstream, in a populist attempt to gain support. Additionally, Donald Trump's rhetoric and his consequent election has given momentum to Alt-right and white supremacist groups, due to the fact that among his bold stances there's a strong anti-immigrant and even pro-whites position. The press noted that Donald Trump (and the Brexit vote in Europe) were protest-votes, coming from a desire to bring about *change* and something *different.*

Many Americans would seem to agree to what philosopher S. Zizek pointed about the rise of populism (Zizek, n.d.): that it is an indication of the inability of the liberal moderates to provide adequate answers to today's problems. Liberalism became so widely adopted because at the end of the eighteen-century it imposed itself by bringing a new solution to the problem of how to govern the countries of Europe. It came as an alter-

native to the previous choices: having a republic that was "torn by factions" (Manent, 2014) or an oppressive monarchy. This manner of governing was the synthesis of two great options that emerged in European political history: the republic of the antics, and the monarchy.

A distinction must be made, as to how political liberalism and economic liberalism are different. While the first is marked by a continuous endeavor towards achieving *better* representative governing, the latter is focused on economic prosperity. And while the word has a strong positive connotation, prosperity can obviously have negative consequences. Yet in spite of this difference, the two are indispensable to each other.

Today the conditions under which early liberal theorists formulated the principles of free exchange have been drastically modified by the spread of competition. In theory, allowing foreign competitors on a country's market would incentivize the national productions to increase their quality and limit their chance of profiting from a "captive market" (Manent, 2014). Yet the provisions made by its original author, Adam Smith, had a much more homogenous group of countries in plan. Nowadays, countries from different continents can be in direct competition with one another, a major unforeseen change by the theorists. Free exchange does not boost the quality of a nation's production anymore, because that respective industry might have been agonizing or even disappearing for the past couple of decades.

In this context, it is understandable that anti-liberals want to reinstate protectionism, bringing back the nation's businesses and its people from abroad. However, the economic activity seems to have become "emancipated" from the framework of the national policy. As (Bartels, 2009) and (Ferguson, 2011) have shown, politicians are more adjusted to the needs of the wealthy than to the demands of the "99 percent". It's been found that in the United States, "when a majority of citizens disagrees with economic elites...they generally lose" (Gilens & Page, 2014) These facts are usually used to argue that democratic principles have become degraded, but if prioritizing those with a greater share or intake is undemocratic, than perhaps the same could be said of the US electoral college system.

In this climate of doubt towards the US Government, about the electoral system, disappointment of the electorate, and the ever-present racial tensions, fueled by non-stop television and internet exposure with a conflictual stance, spikes of violence such as the Charlottesville incident become increasingly likely. People's nerves are tense due to losing a (however illusive) feeling of life and job security, of American supremacy in the world, and a trust in the country's leaders.

This is a situation that President Trump could exploit during his campaign, playing into the need that people had for something "different" and someone that would "do the right thing," "not be afraid," and have sufficient power to accomplish what they wanted.

Since Donald Trump had been a start of the highly-watched reality show The Apprentice and America was familiar with him, it was relatively easy for him to become popular, in spite of much of the news coverage being negative. The sheer fact that he was always on the front page throughout the entire campaign and after his victory ensured that he had visibility and won people's votes, even if that vote might have been anti-Hilary in some cases. But a side-effect of his populist rhetoric is a deepening of the social cleavages that the country is having.

Populists searching for the antidote to capitalism

Historically, the proliferation of extreme ideologies has been tied to some disaster, such as a great economic depression or a war. While the past few decades did not appear to bring anything that dramatic - except perhaps the 2008 economic crisis - a number of changes have proven equally disruptive: globalization and the automation of the world. They both gravely altered the economy that the American working-class was used to, leaving some of the former industrial workers unequipped to survive in today's economy. The political class promoted free trade and globalization as being the key to prosperity and equity. But the reality shows that while some of the more professional classes have greatly benefited from this trend, there is a great number of disenfranchised people who are now exerting their resentment.

The outcome of the Brexit and the election of Donald Trump affected westerners and spread uncertainty to the other continents as well. Worry and suspicion have been eroding people's trust (Pew Research Center, 2016) in the European Union, and the worsening relations with Turkey made the threat of a new wave of refugees more real.

In France, the year of 2015 saw Marine Le Pen's distinguishing between "globalists and patriots", suggesting that the pro-EU parties were essentially anti-French. Because the European establishment did not appear to cope well with the refugee inflow, those who have been long questioning the European project and its liberal values had a reason to reopen the matter. With the terrorist attacks (Freedom House, 2016) taking place in France, Europeans began to be even more suspicious. At the time, the Czech president Milos Zeman named the Middle Eastern migrants an "organized invasion" and the Hungarian PM asserted that "all the terrorists" in the Paris attacks "are basically migrants" (Freedom House, 2016). In Germany, neo-Nazis assaulted refugees and other countries took physical measures (such as building fences) to deter the refugees from crossing their borders.

The facts point to this protectionism trend being the mere beginning. Authoritarian right-wing populism has been gaining popularity in the western world, from the Scottish independence movement, to the Spanish "Poedemos", from the Greek Syriza to Mr. Orban's promised "illiberal democracy".

Moreover, since the Brexit vote and the US 2016 Presidential Election, the media and the mainstream rhetoric have been filled with posturing introspections (Gould-Wartofsky, 2015) about the failure of democracy. The space that was dedicated to all-inclusive non-discriminatory politically correct content is now reserved for the outrage that these surprising results have provoked. Having gotten so far in their progressive journey, the contemporary libertarians have completely forgotten about the worries of every-day citizens.

Puzzled by this unexpected turn of events, some Americans and people around the world are shocked and scared by what is increasingly being perceived as the fall of the libertarian-bastion. The one nation that was believed to be authoritarianism-proof, the nation perceived to be fighting wars for people to be *free, equal and represented* has now seemed to fall prey to *ignorance* (Somin, 2016) *and spite* (Gerson, 2016).

The outcome is now being pinned on various factors, and the liberals seem to believe that this has been just a momentary lapse of judgment, not at all representative for the nation. And while that may very well be the case, there's an alternative possibility: this may be precisely the proof that democracy works. A conviction of moral superiority allows liberals to dismiss what the voters showed to be their concerns. In recent years, American and mainstream liberalism has been striving towards a moral high ground of "identity politics", with minorities unified against the common-enemy: The White Christian America (Ross, 2017).

The results favoring populism should by no means be dismissed or pinned on some *foreign intervention*, or regarded as isolated incidents, nor exaggerated and interpreted as the rise of dictatorship on the ashes of democracy. The grid of rules is not inherently dysfunctional, but when times have changed so rapidly and dramatically, it is mandatory that it is reviewed. Not just at the detail level, but also at its core guidelines.

Because these changes are yet to be made, the past is invoked at every step. As stated in the beginning, representative libertarian democracies came as a novel alternative to authoritarian rules. Lack of a better solution leaves the Western society with the same two extreme alternatives in mind: freedom for all or freedom for none. Populist campaigns follow their predecessors' leads and disenfranchised voters are compelled to do the same. Historians and scholars, being well versed in the mistakes of the past, give warnings on the pitfalls of such decisions. And the media sells copies by propagating these realities. But until honest awareness and innovation in the field of governance will emerge, the metaphorical river will always fall back into its old course.

The Confederates

The pretext that gave this conflict the opportunity to emerge was the debate over the statue of the Confederate Robert E. Lee, the South's leading general who owned a plantation in Virginia before the Civil War. Even though the South lost the US Civil War, the

efforts of the United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Sons of Confederate Veterans to portray Confederate soldiers as heroes and during the first half century after the war led to the rising of numerous statues for the Confederates.

In 2015, a white supremacist by the name of Dylann Roof, who shot and killed nine people at a mostly black church in Charleston, South Carolina, was posing with the Confederate flag in pictures that were revealed after the shooting, stirring a debate within the state on whether it should take down a Confederate flag hung at the state capitol for years. In the end, the flag was removed.

Since then, the debate has continued: one side claims that because the Confederacy fought to maintain slavery and white supremacy in the US, these symbols ought to be denounced. The other replies that those are symbols of Southern pride, not of pro-slavery rebellion and that taking them down would erase American history (Lopez, 2017).

In April 2017, the Charlottesville City Council voted to sell Lee's statue but in May an injunction had been issued to halt the removal, after a lawsuit was filed against the city (Spencer & Stevens, 2017).

Lastly, the election of US President Donald Trump has contributed to mounting tensions in the United States. Since the 2016 Presidential Election, there have been post-election protests (DuPree, 2017), conflictual ethnic manifestations (e.g. Unite Right Rally, August 2017; White Lives Matter, October 2017) as well as (supremacist, nationalist American) terrorist incidents (Williams, 2017), while having secession movements (Bernstein, 2017) and further social unrest is a possibility. As AlJazeera writes, "between the November 8 election of Trump and April, the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) watchdog documented 1,863 bias incidents, at least 330 of which took place on university campuses. In the 10 days following Trump's election alone, the monitor recorded an average of 87 hate incidents a day. This is five times the daily average of hate crimes recorded by the FBI in 2015. The SPLC noted that the initial increase in the number of bias incidents has since subsided, but it warned of the growing severity of recent incidents" (Strickland & Gottbrath, 2017).

As stated above, his divisive stance on key-issues and sensitive subjects for the American people may have even helped bring him the victory, but has given the nation a point of reference to orient against, thus turning the stability-creating fragmentation, into the conflict-enabling polarization.

The KKK March in July

In May 2017, demonstrators gathered in Charlottesville against removing Confederate Robert E. Lee's statue. A month before the Unite the Right march, in July, there had been a Ku Klux Klan march in Charlottesville in a protest against the same decision.

At the time, around fifty members of KKK[4] shouted "white power" next to over 1,000 counter-protestors who were hurling insults and "black lives matter[5]" at them. As they were leaving, a group of counter protesters started harassing them; the police declared an unlawful assembly, and officers intervened. Police ordered people to disperse and when they did not, they released three canisters of tear gas, emptying the square. The counter-protesters said that they were motivated by the fact ignoring Alt-right viewpoints might allow them to proliferate (Spencer & Stevens, 2017).

Communication: The Role of Social Media

Mayer' framework begins with "communication" showcasing its paramount importance. The proliferation of social media creates a situation where every piece of information is quickly transmitted globally, which can bring freedom and salvation as well as scandal and fear.

In the case of Charlottesville, the social media's contribution was as follows:

1. **Conflict Resource:** The rally was organized via a Facebook event which was removed only a day before and offered the medium for opponents to attract allies and rattle each other. The protests that occurred the next day in Atlanta and the toppling of a statue in North Carolina are additional proofs of that.
2. **Official communication medium:** The Charlottesville Police made their announcements via Twitter. President Donald Trump also made his statements through it.
3. **Citizen Journalism Tool:** In the aftermath of the events, the Twitter account @ YesYoureRacist (almost 400,000 followers) began curating images posted by people from the rally and invited submissions, with the purpose of identifying the people who protested there). (Newcomb, 2017) That led to some of them being fired (Hines, 2017) (Helm, 2017).
   – ***Citizen Fundraising:*** *A GoFundMe campaign in Ms Heyer's memory managed to raise $225,000 over the first weekend alone.*
4. **A Virtual, Political Battleground** In the aftermath of the events, President Donald Trump promptly reacted via his Twitter account, spiking a debate and further inflating the issue. On August, 12 he condemned the clashes in a Twitter post and only two days later, after public outcry, he specifically condemned white supremacy. Afterwards on Tuesday, he insisted that there was "blame on both sides" including by anti-fascist protesters. Ku Klux Klan leader David Duke tweeted gratefully: "Thank you President Trump for your honesty and courage to tell the truth". NY Times criticized Mr. Trump for defending the protesters and equaling the pulling

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4   The Ku Klux Klan refers to three distinct movements in the history of the US advocating for "purification" of American society with views of white supremacy and white nationalism.
5   Black Lives Matter is an international activist movement originated in the African American community that campaigns against racism towards black people.

down the Confederate statues with desecrating the memorials of G Washington and Thomas Jefferson, emphasizing that POTUS had given "White Supremacists an Unequivocal Boost" for which the former Ku Klux Klan leader publicly thanked President Trump on Twitter (Stevens, 2017).

The Medium is the Message

At the micro-level, on site, the three parties did not communicate much outside of chanting slogans. The ancestral urge to join voices with fellow "tribe members" is ever-present: at football matches and in church choirs alike. Ancient tribes used sounds to intimidate the adversary, identify group members, and give themselves courage. In Charlottesville, the church group began singing a religious song – probably in part to calm others, but mostly to calm themselves. By yelling "white lives matter" the supremacists were stating both their goals at once: manifesting their importance and mocking the African American movement Black Lives Matter. That simultaneously reinforced their identity and attacked the opposing group. But through ritualist sound-making, the members of a crowd can melt each of their own resources and willpower into a collective (stronger) willpower, in an almost religious experience. That gives super-human courage sometimes and a sentiment of presence. That also increases solidarity and helps escalate events, the same way that two gangs would insult each other before fighting.

At the macro-level, the rallygoers and anti-protesters gathered with the help of social networks and communicated in the aftermath of the events via computer-mediated media. Taking a look at the communication medium will bring important details to light. As communication philosopher Marshall McLuhan famously said, "the medium is the message".

Two thirds of white Americans get "some" news from social media and 74% of non-whites report getting [all] their news from social media. That should mean that a high percentage of people are looking at the same thing, shouldn't it? Well in fact, due to algorithm-powered agenda-setting people are surrounded by things that they want to see, in order to spend more time online. Furthermore, with over half of Americans reporting that they see made-up and inaccurate news online, it is increasingly hard to distinguish between the truth and the relative perception. But as we'll show below, this problem has another layer still.

The American media landscape is highly polarized. The two camps, liberal and conservative, mirror the two main political parties. Although there is no definite proof that partisan media increases partisanship amongst Americans and no consensus on whether the public is currently more polarized than it used to be, what is confirmed is that the media legitimizes discourse by covering it without filter or even covering it at all. In this way, the media defines the limits of accepted controversy, which the general public is unaware of, by covering some types of content regularly.

Because the country's president is a constant source of controversy and the American media has been found to frame news in conflict centric ways, it follows that the media allocates extensive coverage to the scandalous and divisive content emitted by Mr. Trump. Indeed, even if that were not the case, people would still receive his messages from Twitter, but because the media adds exposure and attention, it desensitizes the public and ultimately legitimizes it as acceptable when journalists engage him.

As a matter of fact, when we performed a Twitter search for the hashtag #Charlottesville on August 11, 2017, the day before the rally was supposed to happen, we found that an overwhelming majority of the tweets were about white supremacy, the confederates, and calling for counter-protesters with a notable tendency to pit parties against each other and show "outrageous" content. On August 12-13, 2017 however, after the incident, almost half of all tweets on #Charlottesville had a reference to the US President and many of them only talked about him and his reaction. Each one of the parties was interpreting his words to their advantage: the liberals and his political rivals accused him of not condemning the supremacists, while white supremacy and KKK sympathizers rejoiced and used his words to feel encouraged.

This is only one example where his statements take over the spotlight, dividing the American people into pro- and anti-. The high-volume news coverage of his statements deepens partisan conflict and polarization, because such news increase group self-categorization and self-stereotyping, as shown above. In other words, by being audacious, he increases group salience, i.e. people either agree with him or not and by exaggerating in-group prototypes he stimulates assimilation. People begin to regard themselves as members of "his" or "the opposition" group, instead of individuals. Those overwhelmingly salient identities are inherently conflictual.

The Charlottesville conflict demonstrated that self-determination made people act in a way consistent with their group prototypes, as in the case of one rallygoer exposed on Twitter who later said *he was not the angry racist* (Taylor, 2017). This kind of ulterior disassociation is indicative of his temporary assimilation into the group dynamic that did not persist while he was by himself. By conceptualizing disputed issues and contrasting viewpoints continuously the way the media frames stories or as it occurs on social media between individuals, prototypes become more distinctive.

Moreover, new media and particularly social media's features lend themselves especially well to the promulgation of conflictual messages and characters. It is also important to note here the role of emotions and partisanship in susceptibility to political misinformation which has been studied by (Weeks, 2015). The findings were that even if people experience anger or anxiety (which are the most powerful click-drivers) independently, that encourages them to consider some doubtful information as true. Due to a politically motivated need for consistency, the theory of motivated reasoning mentioned in (Weeks, 2015), show individuals evaluating information at times in a biased manner to

remain consistent with their prior attitudes. That could mean that someone who was a moderate liberal before this conflict but was made afraid/angry by the events, could shift their political views and afterwards, selectively internalize information that confirms what they had begun believing after the heated events. It's true that sometimes anxiety was shown to increase political information seeking, learning, and deliberation, whereas anger depresses each and promotes close-mindedness' as stated in (Weeks, 2015) but if the information-seeking leads to materials made in bad-faith, that creates confirmation of suspicions and deepens the gap.

Even in cases where other media outlets issue clarifications and reports showing that the previous resource was ill-interpreted or wrong, that is only marginally effective as shown by Chan, Jones, Jamieson and Albarracín (2017) study on the psychological efficacy of messages countering misinformation which found that even if the viewer encounters the correction (which they often do not), it will only be effective provided they are not keen to bring arguments in favor of the first version (due to a variety of reasons, among which group cohesion, party allegiance, or emotions such as anger or anxiety). So, if the person is emotionally invested in a particular storyline, the individual will overlook the debunking articles, the logical discrepancies, and even the ridiculous nature of fake/ill-interpreted news, as their preference will be to keep the confirming views that were internalized due to anger, fear, or some other stressful feeling.

In the case of Charlottesville, before the events the rivaling parties' supporters kept distributing atrocious imagery and information about the "other" in order to attract more people to the event. That creates polarization by portraying the other side as "evil". Then, once the events occurred, social media was used to communicate on the scene (the Police), to organize a fundraiser, a campaign to expose participants[6], and to discuss Donald Trump's reactions. That politicized and gave the events a high-profile connotation, incentivizing all media outlets to cover this divide. As shown above, American people are inclined to adopt stereotypical behaviors consistent with what their party is doing/having. That increases self-stereotypization and further disassociation with the self as an individual. Back to Collins' model, that was also shown to breed solidarity and conflict.

Thus, by bringing the President into the spotlight, the cleavage is deepening and the underlying causes remain unresolved. The "sensationalization" of the events is evident in how the media also emphasized that three people lost their lives in the Unite the Right Rally, in spite of the fact that there was one victim there and the other two died in an accident later that day. But increasing the number of casualties, they gave a bigger proportion to the events, in order to raise interest and make people engage more.

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6 This type of approach *feeds* the bloodthirst and gamifies the experience of tracking down people who showed up in the images, prolonging and adding satisfaction to interacting about the event, while taking away from their "realness" due to the virtual setting of the interaction.

Lastly, when the President's words are distributed by a former KKK leader thanking him for his support, even if many might see through that and not give it much credit, this is definitely a strategy to mobilize supporters and shape the narrative about his group. This strategy can be paralleled with that of Middle Eastern terrorist organizations' which mediated their killings and used communication channels aggressively to manifest their power and attract followers. Although it might seem that someone taking the US President's words as a praise would not make much of a difference, in reality it can be interpreted as such by anyone who either *wants to believe it* or who simply agrees based on a few previous such *misunderstandings.*

Results and Conclusions

We hope that this paper has uncovered some new connections between apparently independent issues and has mapped out the known connections in a logical order that allows one to see a clear picture of the conflict as a whole.

Our first research question was: *What were the implications of new media-amplified polarization[7] for the Charlottesville conflict?* First, we analyzed the conflict itself using Collins' conflict theory.

The conflict parties: The Alt-Right, the Anti-Protesters (students), and the Police authorities, plus the *allies* (who joined on the 12th): town inhabitants, church groups, a local militia group had the following conflict:

The unequal distribution of each scarce resource produced potential conflict between those who control it and those who don't.	The scarce resource that the parties were fighting over – the context for which is discussed in greater detail using Mayer's model – are privilege and status.
Potential conflicts become actual conflicts to the degree that opposing groups become mobilized.	Mobilization is what converts latent into active conflicts. This is where ICT/social media is the key: it allowed rally-goers to gather and counter-protesters to call upon each other to attend. Both sides exaggerated each other's wickedness or the threat, in order to attract more attendees, which constitutes as *emotional mobilization* (usually anger and fear).
Conflict engenders subsequent conflict.	The events in Charlottesville were preceded by a KKK march the month before, and by a protest in May, 2017. They were also followed by a media conflict involving the US President, protests in Atlanta on the next day (Sharpe, 2017) about the events, and Durham, North Carolina (Horton, 2017) town's inhabitants toppling their local Confederate statue.
Conflicts diminish as resources for mobilization are used up.	The decline in resources for mobilization ended the conflict: When the police removed the authorization by declaring it an unlawful assembly, they lost solidarity of the group. Once there was a person killed, the thirst for blood/justice was replaced by shock and the crowd's emotional charge was depleted.

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7   The definition of polarization required: high homogeneity within each group, high heterogeneity across groups, and a small number of significant groups.

Once we saw the general traits of the conflict, we moved into the chronology which we **found that was an exact match for Collins' (de-) escalation model.**

Loop #1 **Solidarity breeds polarization, conflict, atrocities**	The alt-right group was homogenous, wearing matching clothing and carrying torches, inspiring solidarity with their predecessors: Nazi groups and plantation owners. Their chanting also helped solidify their identity and what created sufficient distance between them and their "opposition" for atrocities to start occurring. **This is the effect of polarization.** The students were holding hands surrounding the statue and later the churchgoers were singing together. These are also practices meant to increase group salience and give courage to individuals to sacrifice themselves for the greater good. The atrocity was that the students were attacked and thus the Rubicon was crossed.
Loop #2 **Attracting allies**	Judging by the augmentation of the crowd the next day, group salience was increasing. People with otherwise diverging interests were joined together by a common goal. This is also where more resource was mobilized.
Loop #3 **Mobilizing material resources**	The presence of militia with semi-automated riffles, the increase in scope, the illusion of power and that the enemy is weaker, paired with an *arms race*, quickly escalated the events.
De-escalation begins: loss of solidarity and loss of allies	The quick inflammation of the conflict and the start of violent outbreaks made the police – which was largely not interfering until then – declare it an unlawful assembly and scatter the crowd. This removed all three of the previous escalation elements: solidarity, allies, and even material resources. People wanted to avoid getting arrested and needed to return to work on Monday, so they started to leave (instead of confront the police, for example).
Conflict engenders subsequent conflict.	Although physical solidarity had been taken away, the emotional mobilization and polarization had not been dissolved. That enabled one rally-goer to drive his car into the crowd, resulting in a woman's death. This is also where the need for superiority becomes apparent once again: because he might not have been able to affect enough change by himself and he was away from his alt-right group, he mobilized his material resources to forcefully appropriate the scarce resource of superior status.

To conclude, high group salience (solidarity) made people feel stronger and willing to engage violently. We have also remarked that emphasizing differences (polarization) brings about more salience, and that fractioned communities become polarized when they have a binary issue to rally around (such as removing a statue, or not).

To answer the second research question, regarding the role that social media played in the events, we used Mayer's Conflict Model. It revealed that the students were united by a common enemy, while as the "white nationalists" were united by a common faceless threat. Their chanting of "While Lives Matter" (a spin on "Black Lives Matter," a movement meant to bring awareness to African Americans being killed by police in the US) was an attempt to "reclaim" something that they felt that they lost: the attention that they deserved. This emotional dimension of the conflict is presumably what led one of the rally-goers to run his car into the crown and kill a town inhabitant in spite of his better interest (maintaining his freedom).

In terms of the behavioral dimension, two of the three parties seemed to have been implicated at least in part against their will into a violent conflict. The students and town inhabitants did not seem to have violent intentions to begin with, nor did the Police forces.

The emotion is built-into the subject matter, with many people in the US having a strong feeling about racial, gender, religious, and other types of segregation, due to their national history, ideals of equality and freedom, and perception of their country as bound to safeguard human rights. Because it is emotions that fuel conflicts of this sort, this one ended quickly once the emotional discharge around her death occurred.

In terms of values, the three parties diverged significantly. On one hand, all three of them wanted to ensure their own security, well-being, chance, a good life for their children, the values that they believe America was founded on, but they disagreed about what those American values were: one of the sides seemed to think that America was founded upon the white-man-supremacy or at the very least, guaranteed place in society, while the other chose to emphasize equality of rights.

The structural causes are particularly prolific in this instance. At the micro level, the protest had to be approved by the authorities and was also stopped by the Police authorities that declared a state of emergency. This structure enabled the events. The macro level is revealed through history.

History

- The American Society has been fragmented and going through a Marxian crisis: capitalism drives competition; competition driving innovation and lowering cost of production; thus, technology is being pushed to displaced labor.
- The US has had an increasing number of conflicts over the past decades due to the widespread availability of resources for mobilization, most notably communication technologies.
- In recent years, global events have increased the collective fear of terrorism and an impeding war and it culminated in 2016, when the populist Republican Presidency candidate Donald Trump took over the spotlight and gave people a distinct figure around which to polarize. The media has been keeping him in the headlines ever since he announced his candidacy and has given people material for self-stereotypization and for demonizing the opposition.
- Anti-liberalism has been a global trend, with nations seeing the current regimes as unable to deal with the present-day issues, such as terrorism, refugees, and economic instability. That led to a rise in protectionism and separatist movements, which thanks to the global social media is being transmitted throughout the whole world.
- These protectionist and separatist movements are generally centered around populist leaders who prophesize a depart from the main liberal values, oversimplifying

the issues in a characteristic manner, and splitting the world into the "elites" and the "people" as well as "us" and the "others." This is a particularly inflammatory rhetoric in the US which is first, a highly diverse country to begin with and second, a country whose inhabitants are used to seeing it as the main superpower in the world. A perceived threat to that (from immigrant/Middle Easterners, for example) brings about a high level of anxiety.

• The Confederates were the ones who fought to maintain slavery in the US civil war. The city voted to remove the Confederate Gen. Lee's statue in April, 2017.

• The city of Charlottesville was sued. Then, in May, 2017 there was a small march against removing the statue. In July, 2017, there was a 50-people KKK march in Charlottesville met by 1,000 counter-protesters that ended with tear gas and some violence. The rally in August, 2017 was the largest alt-right rally in the recent history of the US.

Communications

The main source of news for over 60% of Americans and over 70% of non-white Americans is social media. Most people use it daily and there has been a recent increase in adoption from adults and seniors over the past couple of year. News outlets broadcast their news on social media and even official announcements are made there. In the conflict of Charlottesville, social media played the following roles:

1. Enabled the parties to gather, to attract allies, and to rattle each other. It also allowed both parties to attract sympathy/followers in the aftermath of the events.
2. Official communication medium on behalf of the Charlottesville Police and the President.
3. Citizen journalism tool – a Twitter account exposed the identities of people who showed up in the pictures from the rally.
4. A virtual political battleground – after the POTUS expressed his (conflicting) views, most of the coverage of the event began to revolve around him and became politicized. That, in turn, shifted the focus from the root causes of the conflict (as enlisted above) to a partisan angle which is a key-polarization factor in the US.

Important findings about new and social media:

• Unlike a television broadcast which shows the same thing to everyone who is watching, social media sets the content using algorithms that feed content with which the user engaged or liked. The main factors driving engagement are the emotions of fear and anxiety. That means that each user has their own customized information source that feeds into what they like and/or what they are angry/afraid of. That generates polarization, a tendency to believe fake news or exaggerated inferences, an inability to see logical inconsistencies, and a feeling that that is how "the world is" or "what everyone thinks."

- Secondly, by covering certain issues, the media legitimizes them and delineates the acceptable specter of controversy. In the case of Donald Trump, his words were immediately mediated and used by parties to their own interest: some were taking them as a confirmation that he should not have been voted, others rejoiced and felt encouraged that he accused both sides equally, political opponents were taking the chance to establish their views, and the media heavily broadcasted this controversy. Unavoidably, the conflict fell on the second place and certain assumptions (e.g. that the President was racist) were trivialized. That is a problem because it desensitizes people to the meanings of words and renders them unable to react later when they are posed with danger.
- The Donald Trump persona gives Americans a point to orient around, increasing group salience in both anti- and pro- Trump camps and the division between opposing sides. Contrasting the viewpoints repetitively increases group solidarity.

In the end, we have illustrated the important roles of new media-intensified polarization and of social media in the Charlottesville events, going as far as saying that the two of them were the principal drivers that allowed the conflict to transform from potential to actualized. Our exploration of how new media and social media reacted to the events has also shown that the next conflict is a mere mobilization opportunity away. We encourage further inter-disciplinary exploration of these phenomena, with the purpose of delivering viable solutions and empirically supported warnings to the civil society, which is the fundamental function of research and exploration.

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Congo:
Nonviolent Struggle in the DRC.
Making Sense of the Consent Theory of Power

Jean-Marie Kasonga MBOMBO

Abstract. *The history of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is awash with resistance against systemic exploitation of the country's huge mineral resources by foreign powers, coupled with repression of local population by subsequent regimes. This paper seeks to address the question as to why public withdrawal of consent does not necessarily cause the change of political power in line with the aspirations of the vast majority of citizens. The case study adopts an argumentative approach based on secondary data. The study reveals that the consent of the suffering masses is meaningless as far as regime change is concerned. In other words the survival of repressive regimes is contingent upon the submission of a co-opted few around the seat of power, the cooperation of hired agents of violence and the support of powerful multinationals that have vested interests in the status quo. In the light of Agency theory, it is argued that the success of nonviolent struggle against unpopular regimes depends on the astuteness of unarmed demonstrators to reach out to the agents of legitimate violence with an olive branch so as to not only bridge the distance between them but also turn them into partners for change. As a way forward, the study recommended a broad understanding of the concept of Civil-Military Relations that goes beyond elite framing.*

Keywords: *Power, Consent, Repression, DRC, Agents of violence, Shirk, Regime change.*

Introduction

Since the end of the Cold War, a few countries in sub-Saharan Africa have made progress in terms of political alternation by peaceful means. Others continue to experience political stagnation through rigged elections, co-option of key figures of the opposition and even indefinite postponement of electoral processes. As a result, political rallies and street protests have become daily occurrence but each time they are met with clinched fists of heavily-armed security

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men. Having lost confidence in their leaders, the majority of citizens stand by and wait for Divine intervention while a great deal of young people find enough reasons to brave the harshness of the Sahara desert and the turbulence of the open Sea in an attempt to escape the limitations imposed on them by their respective political leaders. Still, many more other youngsters turn to churches and mosques for spiritual breakthrough but end up as brainwashed radicals. This paper is concerned with the change of political power through nonviolent struggle in the Democratic Republic of Congo. It adopts a case study approach based on secondary data and seeks to address the question as to why the withdrawal of consent through peaceful means does not necessarily translate into regime change. The study submits that power shift in authoritarian regimes is contingent upon the ability of nonviolent activists to offer an olive branch to the agents of violence that are closer to them and seek their conversion (defection) rather than trying to reach out to the dictator who lives in a fortified castle.

Consent theory of power

Power has been associated with force, authority and influence (Evans & Newnham, 1998). It can be monolithic and pluralistic. Every state government retains the monopoly of violence and compels the citizenry to obey the laws of the land willy-nilly. Monolithic power is therefore reserved exclusively to the ruler and it comes from the barrel of a gun as long as armies and police forces are stationed around the seat of power to protect incumbents. On the other hand, a pluralistic power is a kind of support given to the ruler through the acquiescence and cooperation of various actors within a particular system. As Atack (2012) contends, such power springs "from the diverse social groups that make up the base of any social and political hierarchy, through this relationship of consent and compliance" (p. 12). The power of consent is central to nonviolent struggle construed as "a technique used to control, combat and destroy the opponent's power by nonviolent means of wielding power" (Sharp, 1973, p. 4). This study relies on Gene Sharp's definition of pluralistic power as "the total authority, influence, pressure and coercion which may be applied to achieve or prevent the implementation of the wishes of the power-holder" (Sharp, 1973, p. 8; 2012b, p. 229).

Many activists and scholars have written extensively about the relevance of nonviolent action towards regime change (Chenoweth & Cunningham, 2013; Nepstad, 2013) but as Brian (1989) observes, it was Gene Sharp who developed the consent theory of power: citizens of any nation provide political power to the ruler through voluntary obedience and cooperation and they can as well overcome repression by withdrawing their support to the regime. The power-through-consent actually gives power to the ruler and it is more apparent in democratic societies. As a bargaining chip, it takes the form of negotiation between the people and the government so much so that it is difficult to know who is actually in charge. Whereas the elected elite believe that the people's vote implies a transfer of power from bottom up, the electorate clings to their

voting rights and presses for the rule of law, transparency and accountability. Even though it makes sense to link democracy and consent as opposed to dictatorship and cadaveric obedience, it is important to bear in mind that the survival of regimes in both democratic and non-democratic systems depends on several sources of power (Sharp, 1973). The scholar identifies six sources of power stemming from the cooperation of the citizenry as follows:

1. Shared belief among the people that the regime is legitimate and worthy of obedience;
2. Assistance to the ruler by the commitment of individuals and groups (human resources);
3. Supply of skills and knowledge through the cooperation of the peoples;
4. Psychological and ideological factors which may induce the masses to obey and assist the rulers;
5. Ruler's access to and control over material resources such as mineral wealth, financial resources, means of communication and transportation;
6. Sanctions, punishments, threatened or applied, to ensure the submission and cooperation that are needed for the regime to carry out its policies and to exist (Sharp, 2012a; 2012b).

Schock (2013) associates the power of consent in civil resistance with a lever through which oppressed people can defeat repressive opponents through collective actions intended to drain the legitimacy to rule by withdrawing every support as opposed to a hammer that engages direct force upon them through armed movements. However, the elite in power constantly try to defuse the power of the citizenry, sometimes using the hammer, so that saying nothing equates with consenting. This begs the question as to how different sources of power avail themselves simultaneously in order to either support the ruler or withdraw their cooperation in an attempt to bring down the system altogether. Atack (2012) devises the pluralistic power as a combination of three types, reflecting a hierarchical structure of every society: the power over, available to the ruling elite that occupies the top level (the ruler and closest collaborators), followed by the power with, that rests with governing institutions (army, police and civil servants) and stemming from the cooperation of these institutions towards agreed goals. At the bottom of the pyramid is found the power of consent, compliance and obedience in the hands of the vast majority of the population. The merit of this model is twofold: the withdrawal of consent does not imply the change of the regime on top and the power of the ruler depends on the cooperation of the governing institutions in the middle of the pyramid. Put simply, the grassroots' initiative (withdrawal of consent) must target key institutions upon which the power of the ruler is based before any change of can occur.

By acting without the consent of the people, the elites in power actually usurp and lose their legitimacy to govern. However, when citizens forfeit their freedom as a result of

state repression, they lose their political leverage. Cadaveric obedience becomes the only currency available to those who want to trade with the powerful, except for the few who are not ready to sell their birthright. Therefore, in order to undermine the system that has been run without their consent (explicit or latent), activists may engage in acts of civil disobedience by refusing to do what they have been forced to do or forbidden to do (Sharp, 2005). Protest begins at the bottom of the pyramid by the same people who were at the polling station yesterday. They are calling on the attention of their representatives over particular issues of mutual interests. They do not constitute a political party whose ambition is about taking over power. They rather identify their opponent and seek the conversion of the latter (Sharp, 2005). Contrary to transnational terrorist movements that launch indiscriminate attacks in secret and cause untold damage to innocent life, nonviolent protesters have a clear agenda in mind, which is not hidden from the general public. They belong to the civil society and operate in the open, with the intention of reaching out to a wider audience: "Openness will facilitate (but not ensure) the opponents' understanding of the nonviolent struggle group's motives, aims, intentions and plans" (Sharp, 2005, p. 370). Such actions involve organizing, training and disciplining large masses of people (Nojeim, 2004).

The training revolves around the use of selected techniques, which Gene Sharp has brought down to three categories, namely protest and persuasion, noncooperation and nonviolent intervention (Sharp, 2012b). It is unwise to stop cooperation without having publicly expressed one's dissatisfaction. According to Zunes, Kurtz and Asher (1999), the technique of protest and persuasion means that "we name what we think is wrong, point out fingers at it and try to help others understand" (p. 21). This is absolutely the right of every citizen in a democratic society. No wonder that techniques such as petitioning, picketing, demonstrating, and lobbying are daily occurrence in places where people enjoy freedom of expression. Usually, peaceful demonstrations in democratic societies have the advantage of attracting Media's coverage as well as the service of the Police to ensure the safety of protesters. This brings home the message that policy-makers are in the know. The next thing to do for the protesters is to wait and see what will happen next. At this first stage, they expect the other party (government) to have a change of heart (conversion). The aim of the protest is to call on the goodwill of the ruling elite to live up to expectations. If nothing is forthcoming, protesters resume the struggle with different techniques under the category of noncooperation: boycotts, strikes, tax resistance and the like.

Noncooperation means that "we deliberately fold our hands and turn our backs, refusing to participate in the wrong we have named" (Zunes *et al.*, 1999, p. 21). Noncooperation affects both the government and the people at different levels. At least, it shows that both camps depend on each other for survival. They must reach some compromise (accommodation) before the trouble goes out of hand. So far, the people's action has been indirect and somehow ineffective. The struggle intensifies only when the parties

involved fail to negotiate. It is then that nonviolent intervention becomes direct action with techniques designed to interfere, to block the smooth running of the system such as physical obstruction, civil disobedience, sit-ins, parallel institutions and the like. It is worth mentioning that these techniques are sequential steps in nonviolent struggle in the sense that one causes the other. Should the government heed the message of the marchers in the first place and change its policy accordingly, nonviolent action would stop at the level of protest and persuasion. The next section of the study makes reference to some classic examples of nonviolent struggle to highlight the power of consent in practice.

Nonviolent struggle in practice: Gandhi, King and the People's Power

Mahatma Gandhi had his life transformed in the face of massive injustices in South Africa over the issues of segregation, Indian Franchise Bill, exorbitant taxation. The brutality he and the people of colours suffered under both the apartheid regime in South Africa and the colonial rule in his native land (India) convinced him that the British authorities were not living up to their professed ideals (Schell, 2004). He also discovered that constitutional pressures, petitions, and rational persuasion would make little or no impact on 'prejudiced' minds. So, he challenged his fellows to first liberate themselves from fear in order to rediscover the immense force within. As Parekh (1997) puts it, "he urged them to 'rebel' against themselves, and warned them that those who behave like worms should not blame others for trampling upon them" (p. 9). Against what he describes as 'passive resistance', Gandhi adopted a strategy known as *satyagraha,* an experiment with the truth, a search for truth both within and in the other (Schell, 2004).

This strategy aimed at one goal: shaming rather than destroying the opponent, with the possibility of reaching a dialogue. It was meant to expose the power base of the ruler in every context: "I believe and everybody must grant that no Government can exist for a single moment without the cooperation of the people, willing or forced, and if people withdraw their cooperation in every detail, the Government will come to a standstill" (Schell, 2004, p. 129). It is worth noting that the pluralistic sources that supplied the British with the power to rule were within India. That is why Gandhi targeted colonial institutions. In other words, he urged his countrymen to boycott British goods as demonstrated in the famous Salt March in 1930, resign from government employment and forsake British titles and honours for the purpose of crippling the colonial government economically, politically and administratively. For him, the final arbiter was not military might but the consent, and the cooperation that flowed from it (Parekh, 1997). Once the colonized people were able to muster all their strength and withdraw their cooperation, the British power to lord it over India crumbled.

Reverend Martin Luther King Jnr developed his philosophy of nonviolent struggle after he had been chosen to lead the Montgomery bus boycott (1955) in Alabama. He used it

as a tactic to win the Civil Rights for the Black Community. The Civil Rights Movement under the leadership of King was based on the love of one's enemy preached by Jesus, studied by Tolstoy and practiced by Gandhi. As Nojeim (2004) points out, "He [King] liked to say that Christ furnished the spirit and Gandhi provided the technique for his nonviolent approach to racial injustice" (p. 184). He captured the issue of racial discrimination as a political arrangement in which everybody was caught up in the quagmire of dehumanization: both the repressive government and the marginalized Black people needed to reclaim their lost humanity. He specifically challenged the Black folk to replace the use of violence with non-cooperation. According to Powers, Vogele, Kruegler and McCarthy (1997), "King posited that through nonviolence, African Americans could end racial oppression, free themselves and their white oppressors from the sin of racial discrimination and then build a beloved community based on equality and Christian love" (p. 90).

Likewise his mentor Gandhi, Rev. King had a clear idea of who the opponent were and how to face them. He knew that it was counterproductive to use violent means against a government that held superior power to crush its opponents (Sharp, 2012a). Accordingly, he led nonviolent civil disobedience with the purpose of stirring up tension which would in the end compel the US government to open the doors to negotiations:

> We shall match your capacity to inflict suffering by our capacity to endure suffering… One day we shall win freedom, but not only for ourselves. We shall so appeal to your heart and conscience that we shall win you in the process and our victory will be a double victory" (Powers *et al.*, 1997, p. 291).

It is important to observe however that the Civil Rights Movement which was sparked by Rosa Parks' bus boycott on December 1, 1955 targeted the transport sector of the US economy. Activists also lobbied and worked with Congress as a key institution in the US to overturn discriminatory legislation instead of calling on the resignation of the President. Thanks to the media coverage, the Birmingham demonstration (1963) exposed to the whole world the paradox of American society that disenfranchised a portion of her population while standing for the equality of all people as stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948). Through King-led civil disobedience, the consent power was apparent in the withdrawal of cooperation by the Black community and a great deal of White sympathizers against the systemic racial discrimination. At the end of a long walk for equality, the Johnson-led administration adopted the landmark Civil Rights Act of 1964 which ended *de jure* segregation in the United States.

The Filipino saga is perhaps the best illustration of the consent power whose withdrawal resulted in the disintegration of the Marcos' rule (Sharp, 2012b; Zunes *et al.*, 1999). What triggered the People's Power in the Philippines in 1986 is arguably the ballot power. The concept of 'People's power' literally means *democracy* in which the people exercise their power through elected representatives. It all began when President

Marcos decided to perform the ballot ritual in order to legitimize his autocratic rule. Convinced that the elections had been rigged, the opposition party led by Cory Aquino called for mass protests. Without delay, a coalition of three sections of the population responded with different motives: politicians, mutineers, and civilians. The most striking point in this struggle was that the people held the keys to the success of the crisis. Although the conflict had been masterminded by the opposition party in connivance with the rebel leaders, the unarmed civilians interposed themselves between loyalists and rebel troops in order to preempt a violent outcome. They facilitated the resolution of the conflict by extending their love and friendship towards both camps. However, far from being a spontaneous mass uprising, the success of nonviolent struggle in Manila was a culmination of years of preparation and training in nonviolent techniques (Zunes *et al.*, 1999). It came at the right time when external players had decided to withdraw their logistic supports to the regime. Not only did the nonviolent activists melt the hearts of armed men, they also facilitated the coalition of loyalists and mutineers against the regime and within 77 hours, the incumbent lost the legitimacy to rule (Nepstad, 2013).

Everything considered, nonviolent struggle was for Gandhi and King a way of life geared toward reconciliation with one's opponent (Atack, 2012). These two figures enjoyed vested authority as charismatic leaders. However, the People's Power stands out as a demonstration of the power of consent in which different sources of power conflated and produced a regime change. By way of drawing a parallelism, the next section considers a case study that deals with the question as to why the withdrawal of consent at the bottom of the pyramid is far from causing the downfall of the Kabila regime.

Case study: Democratic Republic of Congo

Located in Central Africa, the DRC spans a surface area of 2.3 million square kilometers of which arable land covers 80 million of hectares. It is sometimes described as a geological scandal given its abundant natural resources (over 1,100 minerals and precious metals) that have the potential to make it into one of the richest countries in the world (World Bank, 2015). However, the country remains one of the poorest on the planet, occupying the 176th position out of 187 (UNDP, 2015). It is also placed in the category of "Not free" states, with worst scores for freedom, civil liberties and political rights (Freedom House, 2013). How have the people of Congo resisted wholesale repression with its attendant pauperism over the years? In an attempt to justify the proneness of violent conflicts in mineral-rich countries, particularly in post-colonial Africa, resource-curse theorists establish a link between natural wealth and civil wars, laying emphasis on the greed of local warlords (Collier and Hoeffler, 2004; Collier and Sambanis, 2005; Moss, 2007). They, nevertheless, stop short of unveiling another important link between local entrepreneurs of conflict and multinational conglomerates according to the basic law of supply and demand. In other words, it is not enough to focus our attention on the greed/grievance of the supplier of blood minerals and fail to expose the growing

appetite of the hungry demander that sustains the war economy. A synoptic account of a long history of oppression can be divided into five regimes which have in common the dominant interests of powerful actors against the emergence of a strong, stable and legitimate leadership in the DRC.

To begin with, King Leopold II of Belgium set up a NGO (the first of its kind) called the International Association of the Congo from the luxury of his palace at Laeken in Brussels in 1876. Though absent at the West Africa Conference in Berlin (1884-1885), he was assigned the control of what became known as 'Congo Free State' (CFS) with a specific mission of establishing a free trade zone in which different companies would come and exploit available resources hitch-free (Pakenham, 1991, p. 249). Under the command of British explorer Henry M. Stanley, the King's private army, *La Force Publique* (FP), became notorious in the art of flogging, severing of hands and rationing food supply as modes of punishment against resisters (Cordell, Wiese, Payanzo and Marchand, 2018). FP was also famous in burning down entire villages and slaughtering those who attempted to rebel against the system. These agents of terror would kidnap wives and children of fugitives and forced the latter to surrender and meet unrealistic work quotas before securing the release of their loved ones (Nzongala-Ntalaja, 2015). In short, the King's project of making blood money out of rubber and ivory was a renewed form of slavery on the African soil that caused a rapid depopulation of indigenes estimated around 10 million deaths (Quinn, 2005; Snow, 2007). More important, it left behind a terrorized population with a high degree of 'colonizability' (compliance).

Inhuman treatment inflicted upon the natives by Leopold's agents attracted international condemnation and as a result, the Belgian government decided to whitewash the King's crime against humanity by taking over the CFS in 1908. But the speed of repression meted out to traumatized populations entered a higher gear as a result of high demand of raw materials in the aftermath of World War I and II. Colonial policies of hard labor were designed to prevent the emergence of local leadership because 'no elite implies no trouble'. Accordingly, the education system was kept in check, below the secondary level so as to keep the natives infantile and submissive throughout the colonial era. As Cordell et al. (2018) contend, Belgian paternalism was an irreducible tendency to treat Africans as children with a firm commitment to political control and compulsion, which ruled out initiatives designed to foster political experience and responsibility. However, voluntary compliance with state regulations was not the case, particularly in the rural areas where peasant resistance to colonial rule took on both violent and nonviolent forms (Nzongala-Ntalaja, 2015, p. 25).

After five days of Independence (June 30, 1960), the Congo descended into chaos after departing officers instigated a mutiny within the national army. The ensuing riot gave Brussels the pretext to deploy its troops in her former colony for the protection of foreign nationals. The newly elected head of government Patrice E. Lumumba,

who was constantly arrested by the colonial authority for civil disobedience, was dismissed from premiership in a bloodless coup by the Army chief of Staff, Joseph Mobutu on 14 September 1960 and murdered four months later under the watch of the UN Peacekeeping troops. Following in the footsteps of King Leopold II, Mr. Mobutu's rule relied strongly on the support of Western powers. As Nzongala-Ntalaja (2015) contends, external players looked for "a ruler who had no social base or constituency to which he could be accountable nationally, so he could be expected to fully implement the policies dictated to him from abroad" (p. 27). At home, the client regime that lasted 32 years was famous in the art of rewarding loyalists with political portfolios (cooption) while repressing dissenters. Foreign troops and mercenaries were readily available to shore it up by fighting insurrection and crushing down peaceful demonstrations. Needless to say that the withdrawal of Western support at the end of the Cold War culminated in the downfall of the Mobutu rule without the involvement of local actors in May 1997.

Heading the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation (AFDL), the self-proclaimed President Laurent Desire Kabila had his regime shortened when he failed to meet the expectations of his foreign allies. The latter only needed another Stanley-like figure on the ground to facilitate the exploitation of the Congo's natural resources and a nationalist figure was not the right choice (Snow, 2007). Once again, it was not the consent power of the masses that pulled the plug for a regime change to occur despite civil resistance against occupying forces but the fall of Laurent Desire Kabila on 16 January 2001 in the course of fighting the war of aggression by unknown assassins. The 'African World War' involving many African countries testified to the influence of foreign powers in the DRC between 1996 and 2003 (Prunier, 2009). The then UN Secretary General Boutros-Ghali describes the Congo tragedy as "a new Anglo-American conflict which France, and the Anglo-American block won through Uganda and Rwanda" (Philpot, 2005, p. 101). By the time various troops were forced to pull out, they left behind proxy armed groups to securitize the mines on behalf of global players and terrorize local populations to date, especially in eastern Congo.

Unknown to the public and aged 29, Joseph Kabila succeeded his slain father as if Congo was a monarchy. It is worth noting briefly that UN Peacekeeping troops were deployed to stabilize the war-torn country. They actually paved the way for international financial institutions (the World Bank, International Monetary Fund) and other UN sister agencies to resume their activities in the capital Kinshasa. The Global and All-Inclusive Accord for the transition – *Accord Global Inclusif (*AGI) was signed in Pretoria under the watch of the government of South Africa and it recognized the incumbent as Transition President who would share political power with four vice-presidents on April 7, 2003. An international committee to oversee the transition at the level of ambassadors accredited in DRC, known by its French acronym - CIAT (*Comite International d'Accompagnement de la Transition)* was also launched and it facilitated the drafting of a new Constitution

which was finally promulgated in 2006 after a *Yes* vote in a referendum a few months earlier. As if that was not enough, the European Force (EUFOR) was called upon to securitize the ballots in Kinshasa while the Blue Helmets policed the countryside before the incumbent could emerge winner of the presidential elections in December 2006. Arguably, the election of Joseph Kabila was a victory in a pre-emptive war stemming from the cooperation of the UN and the EUFOR against the interests of the Congolese electorate (Mbombo, 2008). Since then, members of the opposition have been atomized, that is turned into masses of isolated individuals that are incapable of working together to achieve regime change.

The hope for a peaceful change of regime was dashed when the incumbent modified the Electoral Law in 2011 and thereafter won for the second time the elections in a simple majority vote against ten other contestants. Toward the end of his second and last term in office, the taciturn president decided to remain in power by hook or crook. He invited the opposition parties to a roundtable dialogue which was endorsed by the international community with the intention of co-opting some key members of the opposition and gerrymandering others. The inconclusive dialogue was then followed by another series of talks, facilitated by the prelates that eventually produced on 30 December 2016 the Saint Sylvester Accord in which parties agreed to the organization of presidential elections within a year, to be followed by a peaceful change of regime (Mbombo, 2017). However, the nature of the repressive rule was once again displayed by the brutality of security forces in their attempt to prevent a peaceful march of Christians, calling for the implementation of the 2016 Accord on the New Year Eve. As Sharp (2012a) argues, "Dictators are not in the business of allowing elections that could remove them from their thrones" (p. 9). Given that obedience as an internal source of power has been publicly withdrawn on 31 December 2017, it becomes obvious that the Kabila regime that has lost its constitutional legitimacy to rule now relies heavily on the caprice of external forces. As Schock (2013) contends, "governments depend on the cooperation of their own citizens, but also on other states and, increasingly, non-state transnational entities" (p. 284). The next section of the study discusses the challenges of power shift against the interests of external supporters.

Back to basics: why reliance on citizen's consent is not enough

Critiques of Sharp's pluralistic power argue that the model is associated with the voluntaristic behavior of individuals in the society and it does not pay much attention to many factors such as patriarchy, capitalism, or the impact of a given educational system (Brian, 1989, 1999; Burrowes 1996). Similarly, the consent theory is unsatisfactory because it fails to analyze the structural roots of power in society: "People's obedience to rulers is not so much an element of free personal choice that can be reversed at will, but a characteristic of the way society is organized" (Danjani, 1994 as cited in Zunes, Merriman and Stephan, 2010). In the absence of free choice, there seems to be no room

for consent especially when power relation remains unbalanced. More important, the pluralistic model of power focuses on internal sources of power and overlooks the impact of external actors. Sobek and Clare (2013) argue that this reliance on internal sources of power misses an important power resource available to a state, namely its external relations. As they put it: "it is reasonable to expect that when a state estimates the power of a potential opponent it looks not only at the internal resources but also at the power of states that would likely join the conflict" (p. 477). Therefore, internal and external sources of power must be considered if we want to explain the failure of nonviolent action towards regime change (Nepstad, 2013).

The flattened world that followed the end of the Cold War (Friedman, 2006) has caused most state governments in the southern hemisphere to share their powers with a plethora of actors both local and foreign under the mantra of global governance (Duffield, 2001). As a result, the consent power in the hands of the citizenry has been diluted by foreign influence. International financial institutions, multinational corporations and mercenaries constitute a reliable power base for the survival of longstanding dictators. External influence targets two sides of the aisle discriminately, namely the people and the ruler. On the one hand, active citizens count on the help of virtual activists across international borders in their struggle for change through social media. The growing in number of demonstrators that thronged central districts in Tunisia, Cairo or Ouagadougou testifies to the overt support given to street protests in defiance of the government of the day. Together they publicly withdraw their cooperation (consent) and engage in civil disobedience until some degree of change is recorded. On the other hand, the backing of the ruling party by its numerous beneficiaries takes place behind closed doors. The main players are multinational corporations which dominate the mining, forestry and oil sectors (Batware, 2011). These global citizens are more powerful than many poor nations (Korten, 2001). They prefer the status quo to change because a known evil is better than unknown angel. In short, the presence of multinationals in a conflict-torn country sends a strong message of support to the ruling elite. Elworthy and Hayman (2005) expose the role played by Western multinational corporations to undermine local efforts towards change in strong terms:

> They give bribes, inducements or incentives to local politicians…do deals on natural resources, such as the European Union's purchase of fishing rights from Guinea Bissau, which take resources out of the hands of local people and channel them to the government.

In the DRC, external support to activists has produced a coalition of 14 international and close to 200 Congolese Rights Organisations, based in the troubled Kivu region. Popularly known as the Citizen's Movement, *Filimbi,* the coalition encourages Congolese youth to peacefully and responsibly perform their civil duties (Yarwood, 2015). Filimbi members and activists organise protests for the release of their members while calling

on President Kabila to step down. The struggle for change, *Lutte pour le Changement* (LUCHA) is also gaining prominence in Goma and its environs*.* Created in June 2012 after the re-election of President Joseph Kabila, LUCHA, which is neither a NGO nor a political party but a coalition of young people, demands among other things social services such as access to portable water, justice against the killing of unarmed civilians in the territory of Beni, reform of the Congolese army, political solutions to the Rwandese refugees in the Congo. In the last two years, it has organised sits-ins, marches, rallies to demand social justice nationwide and respect of the Constitution (Bantariza, Hirschel-Burns and Schuster, 2017). Even a very young girl, aged 15 joined the protest but she was detained just for holding a card that called for an end to Kabila's rule (Sawyer, 2017).

As far as the ruling party is concerned, a lot of support comes from multinational corporations operating in the mining and forestry industries. The UN High-Level Panel of Experts report (2001) exposed the scramble for Congo's wealth by Multinational Corporations based in Europe, the US, Canada and South Africa (Carroll, 2002). As a result, leaders of resources-rich countries including President Kabila easily become gatekeepers: they collect most of their revenues from taxes on imports and exports, control entry and exit visas, issue licenses that determine who could engage in business activities and many more (Cooper, 2002; Somerville, 2016). The figure below illustrates the vicious circle created by the rent-based power in vogue in most mineral-rich countries: gatekeepers use the proceeds at the gate (rent) to buy the obedience of party officials and key figures within the army, police and other support groups (co-option) while silencing dissident voices (repression) in a sustained effort to remain in power (loss of legitimacy) by force and as long as heaven permits (dictatorship).
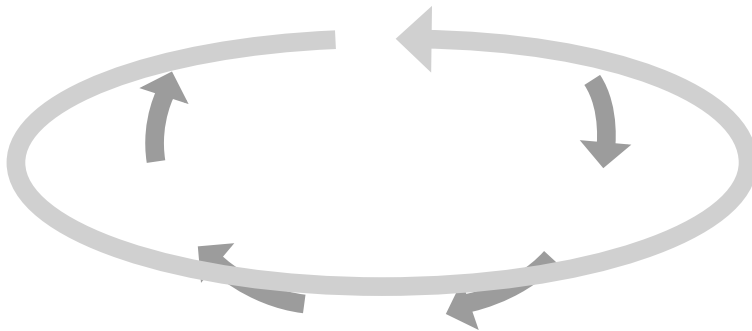

Fig. 1: Rent and Dictatorship nexus
Source: Author

When it comes to the DRC, President Joseph Kabila is not just a gatekeeper who depends on the rent of mining concessions. He is also in charge of companies and guarantor of a primitive capitalist system of exploitation centred on the ownership of private property.

According to the report by the Congo Research Group at New York University, the Kabila's holdings include over 70,000 hectares of farmland, a lucrative stake in Congo's largest mobile phone network and over 100 mining permits for diamonds and gold (Ross, 2017). The Financial Post presents billionaire mining investor and founder of Ivanhoe Mines Ltd, Robert Friedland as business partner to one of Kabila's brother and Member of Parliament, Zoe Kabila (Wilson, 2017). Some critics argue that "if you want Kabila to pay attention, you have to target the financiers" (Kavanagh, Wilson, & Franz, 2016).

It is not an overstatement to claim that multinational corporations operating with government-issued mining permits use their economic leverage to not only determine who should lead the DRC but also provide necessary means to shore up the incumbent against all odds. Both the state and foreign companies depend on the cooperation of security agents to protect their assets against disgruntled youths (Brian, 1999). In its recent report, Human Rights Watch made a revelation that the Kabila government hired former Congo's enemies known as M23 rebels stationed in Uganda and Rwanda with special instruction to suppress any threat to the regime (Hancock & Tilianaki, 2017). In the end, the withdrawal of people's consent by unarmed groups of peoples does not necessarily imply the end of the regime as long as the security agents (military and police force) remain loyal to the ruler. How then can nonviolent activists contribute to the conversion (defection) of the agents of violence? The remainder of the study makes sense of the Civil-Military Relations (CMR) in the light of the Agency theory.

Seeking the conversion of security agents

The use of legitimate violence is dependent on the government's ability to control the behaviour of the military and the police forces towards unarmed civilian populations. In a repressive system, the distinction between the police and the military is blurred because both seem to have specialised in violence against the citizenry. In the following discussion, we refer to them as security agents. The question as to why the security agents must submit to the whims of the ruler is amply discussed in the literature with regards to the concept of professionalism construed as a voluntary submission of the military to the civilian rule. However, focussing on the classic works of Samuel Huntington's *The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations* (1957) and Morris Janowitz's *The Professional Soldier* (1960), it is gathered that a professional soldier in the American context is one that not only submits to the civilian authority but benefits from the autonomy of the military institutions (training, budget, deployment, sacrifice...).

On the one hand however, Huntington lays emphasis on the negative impact of the society's liberal values (democracy, human rights, rule of law) on the soldier and advocates professionalism based on the ideals of conservatism (Nielsen, 2005; Baker, 2007). On the other hand, Janowitz (1960) makes a case for military effectiveness when a soldier

is able to absorb the liberal values of tolerance, freedom and justice upon which the US democracy is based and knows why he or she must voluntarily submit to the civilian authority in the defence of state. He contends therefore that it is not impossible for the military establishment to resemble a pressure group and as a result, meaningful integration with civilian values (civilianisation) will enhance the civilian control of the military. Others measures that improve the control of the military by the civilians include legislative oversight, extension of control into lower levels of military organizations, and civilian involvement in officer's professional education (Janowitz, 1960 as cited in Nielsen, 2005, p. 67).

Feaver (2003) studies the CMR in the light of the Principal-Agent theory which is widely used in economic analysis and coins the Agency Theory to describe the strategic inter-actions between the civilian authority (Principal) and the military as servants of the state (Agents). Though both parties are driven by self-interest, namely civilian control and punishment on the one hand and submission and incentives on the other hand, it is possible for a professional soldier to shirk by doing his job of serving the nation without necessarily following the interests of the Principal. Shirking occurs either by omission (failure to carry on instructions from above) or commission (action aimed at undercutting the civilian authority). Simply put, disobedience (shirking) goes against the interests of the principal when the latter loses political control over the security agents and through them, coercive control over the entire population.

Reviewing the above works, Baker (2007), however, points out that the CMR reflects the Cold War thinking which is applicable to the Western democracies that have a long tradition of military professionalism. Given that a military coup is the ultimate form of shirking in which the old agent becomes the new principal, the scholar contends that the Agency theory propounded by Feaver is also relevant to fragile states that are prone to military coups, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa (Baker, 2007). Shirking becomes an option available to a professional soldier or policeman if they come to realise that a popular demand for regime change echoes their own individual aspirations as stake-holders and important members of the society, with family ties, social identities and responsibilities. This seems to be the missing piece of the puzzle in the consent theory of power that puts everybody in one basket as the power base of the ruler.

Accounts of loyalty shifts among security forces as a result of nonviolent campaigns which emphasize the importance of winning over or neutralizing state security forces, along with maintaining nonviolent discipline are well documented (Zunes et al., 2010; Nepstad, 2013). The civilian populations to whom the power to choose their leaders is constitutionally guaranteed have the power to influence the behaviour of security agents that are paid to protect not one single individual but all. In keeping with the focus of this study, the conversion of security agents (defection) requires a new understanding of CMR as opposed to the traditional view in which civilian control is exercised by the

office of the head of state (commander-in-chief). Galtung (1989, as cited in Zunes et al., 2010) stresses the 'social distance' factor that justifies unsuccessful outcomes of some nonviolent movements: the shorter the distance between contending forces (young pro-testers and Serbian security forces, Israeli activists and Israeli soldiers, pro-civil rights activists and White police in US), the easier for the resisters to influence their opponents' behavior. The greater the social distance between Black South Africans and Afrikaaner security forces, Palestinians and Israeli troops, local populations and invading foreign troops) the more difficult the struggle. Equally important is the physical distance: the longer the distance between the seat of power (capital) and the peripheries, the less successful the movement which usually begins in remote areas. Therefore the success of the nonviolent struggle depends on the ability of peaceful demonstrators to bridge the gap (distance) and reach out to the security agents with a friendly attitude so as to win them to their laudable cause.

Conclusion

Nonviolent action works well in developed countries because elected leaders are afraid of being voted out at the next turn of electoral process. This is not the case in most African countries where nonviolent movements often end in chaos as a result of general apathy coupled with tacit endorsement of the regime by external powers. Sharp (2012a: 11) believes strongly in the capacity of the oppressed to liberate themselves and claims that no saviour would come from a foreign land. Using the DRC as case study, the study has argued that the success of nonviolent movements in façade democracies depends on the ability of activists to establish strong ties with security agents. However, one thing is that foreign intervention may support local initiatives for change and another thing is that foreign powers identify with the status quo. In many ways, workers withdraw their human capital and embark on frequent strikes but important allies (security agents, donor countries, multinational corporations and many more) provide the needed support to incumbents in a sustained effort to undermine the consent power of the masses. Findings suggest that submission may work well at the top but it is problematic at the bottom of the pyramid where military men are poorly paid and ill-motivated. They can easily be converted by the message of nonviolent activists. Success in this regard requires that activists of nonviolence endeavour to win the hearts of the security agencies and turn them into partners for change. The possibility of defection or neutrality is already open to the men in uniform as they are allowed to take up courses in peace education, conflict studies and nonviolence in reputable departments of universities around the world. Given that the same consent defines relationships between the ruler and the masses, the principal and the agents, the study recommends that Civil-Military Relations move beyond the elite control of the military and include taxpayers (citizens) in an effort to promote good governance. By bringing the agents of legitimate violence close to the people, the concept of professionalism will take on board the aspirations

of the masses so that each time the latter decide to descend in the streets and demand political change, they expect the cooperation of their fellow countrymen in uniforms.

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Nigeria:
Nomadic Migrancy and Rural Violence

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Abstract. *Nomadism has been an age-long mode of pastoralism. Over the centuries, the practice has thrived amidst certain socio-ecological dialectics which has influenced its essence, including conflict and insecurity, climate change, urbanization, as well as changing patterns of land-use systems. Embedded in the practice of nomadism is the phenomenon of transhumant migration whereby pastoralists undertake a seasonally amenable geo-spatial sojourn in search of pasturable fields, resulting to both trans-local and trans-national migration. This pattern of migration has become a veritable source of security and livelihood threats in some parts of Africa in the contemporary times. This study explores the nexus between nomadic migrancy and rural violence in northern Nigeria against the backdrop of the degenerating complexion of nomadism in that context over the recent years. By means of a descriptive analysis, predicated on secondary sources and anchored on the 'ungoverned spaces' thesis, the study sets forth to establish how nomadic migrancy has accentuated and/or complicated the incidence of rural violence in the focal area. The study posits that non-regulation of nomadic migration and pastoralism by the Nigerian government has provided an opportunity for the perpetuation of violent crimes, such as rural banditry and herdsmen militancy in the focal area. The study makes a case for a pragmatic securitization of Nigeria's border and immigration governance systems as the way forward.*

Keywords: *Migration, migrancy, nomadic migrancy, Northern Nigeria, rural violence, ungoverned spaces.*

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1. Introduction

Nigeria is a country with huge governance deficits. It is a dysfunctional state, precariously slacking about holding effective sway over its territory and civil population. Governance deficits mean the inability of the government to effectively superintend its territories and frontiers in a manner that makes for sustainable national security. It presupposes the failure of the state in that context to perform the basic functions of governance, providing security, civil policing, education, healthcare, livelihood opportunities and law and order.

Nigeria's governance deficits also manifest in terms of the incapability of the Nigeria state to optimally harness and exploit its enormous human and natural endowments towards the goal of national development. Most fundamentally, governance deficits in Nigeria are saliently demonstrated by the country's frailty in upholding its territoriality and sovereignty in the face of internal or external existential threats. Important critical empirical indicators of governance deficits in Nigeria include endemic poverty, mass unemployment, prevalence of violence and criminality, terrorism, and the like. Challenges such as the aforementioned are not peculiar to Nigeria. Nonetheless, the apparent lethargy with which governmental authorities in the country have attended to the challenges smacks of functional irresponsibility.

The nonchalant posture of the Nigerian government towards governance has been most pronounced in the area of civil security. In this regard, the inability of the government to assume and exercise legitimate control or dominion over its territorial domain creates an avalanche of "ungoverned havens" that conduce for criminal impunity and intractability. This has been the case with the contemporary challenge of nomadic migrancy, which has been associated with high incidence of rural violence in northern Nigeria. In this context, the salient analytical posers of the study include understanding the nature of contemporary nomadic migration in northern Nigeria, how nomadic migrancy correlate with the rising incidence of rural violence in northern Nigeria, and the implications nomadic migrancy has for national security in Nigeria.

Situating its arguments within the analytical prism of the 'ungoverned spaces' thesis, the study posits that the non-regulation of nomadic migration and pastoralism by the Nigerian government has complicated the incidence of rural violence in northern Nigeria by accentuating the prevalence of rural banditry, herdsmen militancy and arms proliferations in that context. Arising from the analytical premise of a threat-import analysis, the study submits that nomadic migrancy holds critical implications for national security in Nigeria. This article is systematically structured into seven sections to properly engage the discourse. The first section introduces the discourse by situating hypothetically the nexus between nomadic migrancy and rural violence, associating the pathology with the prevalence of governance deficits in Nigeria. The second section clarifies and contextualizes nomadic migrancy, rural violence and nomadism as the

conceptual thrusts of the study. The third section presents the ungoverned spaces thesis as an analytical framework of the study. The fourth section provides some reflective perspectives on pastoral migration in an attempt to explore the extant literature on the subject matter. The fifth section concentrates on the complex interplay of nomadic migrancy, ungoverned spaces, and rural violence in northern Nigeria. The sixth section examines the implications of the nomadic migrancy challenge for national security in Nigeria. The last section concludes by making salient submissions with policy implications and recommendations.

2. Conceptualizing and Contextualizing Basic Variables

Three key variables constitute the conceptual thrust of the present discourse, namely rural violence, nomadism and nomadic migrancy. The sub-sections that follow present the operational meanings of the variables alongside a number of contextual nuances designed to properly situate their understanding.

2.1 Nomadic migracy: This refers to a pattern of migration and settlement associated with pastoral nomadism. It presupposes the movement and/or sojourn of nomadic herdsmen from one location to another in pursuit of ecological survival, economic substance and sustainable livelihood. The movement can be translocal or transnational, depending on its origination-to-destination equation vis-à-vis national boundaries. Nomadic migrancy in Nigeria is characterized by sporadic influx of herdsmen into the country, especially from the Niger-Chad corridor of the country's northern borderlines. Over the years, this phenomenon has exploited the faultiness border porosity in the country towards constituting a national security threat.

2.2 Rural violence: By violence it meant "the intentional use of force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community that either results in or has the likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development or deprivation" (Krung, Dahlberg, Mercy, Zwi & Locano, 2002, p. 6). Rural violence, therefore, refers to a situation whereby a person, group or community in the hinterlands (countryside) is deliberately inflicted with death, injury, or any form of psycho-social harm. Rural violence thrives in the context of socio-political and agrarian contestations (Kay, 2001). It is also associated with armed criminality (Ceccato & Ceccato, 2017), especially in the context of fragile state.

Drivers of rural violence in Nigeria include communal disputations pertaining to identity politics, power sharing, resource control, chieftaincy tussles, etcetera. This is in addition to various dimensions of armed criminality, such as banditry, cattle rustling, kidnapping, cultism and youth-related brigandage (Okoli & Okpaleke, 2014). There has been a rising trend of rural violence in Nigeria over the years. This development has been exacerbated by the incidences of arms proliferations and organized militancy

in the countryside, amidst the "government's fecklessness in dealing with the threat" (Federal Research Division-Library of Congress, 2008, p. 137).

2.3 Nomadism: Our understanding of nomadism in this context presupposes pastoral nomadism. It refers to a subsistence practice or strategy that is based on itinerant subsistence whereby a pastoral group or community moves from place to place in prospect of a "pastorable" livelihood. Pastoral nomadism is basically a pattern food producing economy as distinguished from other forms of food extracting economy such as hunting and gathering, fishing (Khazanov, 1994). More precisely, pastoral nomadism has been conceptualized "... as distinct form of food-producing economy in which extensive mobile pastoralism is the predominant activity, and in which the majority of the population is drawn into periodic pastoral migrations" (Khazanov, 1994, p. 17).

Pastoral nomadism is a 'socio-ecological mode' of culture that has coexisted as an alternative to agricultural sedentism and urban living (Scholz, 1995). Beyond being an agrarian practice, nomadism typifies a cultural system with salient socio-ecological essences and dynamics. These include temporally and spatially ubiquitous settlement, mobile pastoralism and transhumance political economy (Egwu, 2016). Nomadism in West Africa is associated traditionally with the Fulani. In Nigeria, the practice has been inhibited by the adversities of climate change, civil conflicts, urbanization, population explosion, and insecurity. Over the recent years, the practice has become rather estranged and precarious, apparently degenerating into the morass of rural banditry and armed militancy.

3. Theoretical Framework: The Ungoverned Spaces Thesis

In interrogating nomadic migrancy and rural violence in northern Nigeria, the ungoverned spaces thesis has been adopted. The choice of ungoverned spaces thesis is motivated by the fact that previous studies on the complex nature, dynamics and consequences of nomadic migrancy were predicated on eco-violence (Homer-Dixton, 1994, 1999; Okoli & Atelhe, 2014; Odoh & Chigozie, 2012; Awogbade, Olaniyan, & Faleye, 2016), competitive control of resources (Fisher & Mercado, 2014), competing governance (Forest, 2010), intractable conflicts (Northrup, 1989; Coleman, 2000; Putnam & Wondolleck, 2003; Gray, Coleman, & Putnam, 2007; Smith, 2014), modernization triggered by cultural change and democracy (Newman, 1991; Inglehart & Welzel, 2005) and the Marxist political economy (Marx and Engel, 1968; Ensminger & Rutten, 1991) approaches.

As plausible as these analytical frameworks are in explaining phenomenon of the type investigated, they tended to have given less consideration to the role of the state and the place of governance in the crisis associated with the nomadic migrancy responsible for rural violence. From this context, the ungoverned spaces thesis is found to have the capacity of explaining the salient dialectics of criminal and subversive activities within

Nigeria's ungoverned spaces, which have posed serious threats to the existence of the nation.

The ungoverned spaces thesis fertilized in the post-9/11 era featured remarkably in a report developed by the American think-tanks with the RAND Corporation (Rabasa, Boraz, Chalk, Cragin, Karasik, Moroney, O'Brien, & Peters, 2007). The concept of ungoverned spaces was popularized by Hillary Clinton, the former Secretary of State in the United States of America, when she addressed the Afghanistan-Pakistan border as ungoverned spaces (Marsden, 2017). Since then, publicists, scholars, researchers and policy-makers have used ungoverned spaces thesis to investigate and engage discourses involving different strands of domestic and global security concerns.

Contemporary security concerns, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, have tended to lend credence to the ungoverned spaces thesis, to the effect that sovereign void exemplified in governance deficit exist in Africa. As Keister (2014) puts it, ungoverned spaces reflect a general condition of weak or non-existence of state authority in a defined geographic area. In other words, ungoverned spaces relate to areas where there are governance deficits or absence of control over areas of specific or general concerns. Without effective state's control, or under the atmosphere of ungoverned spaces, also referred as "anarchic zones", state's security becomes precarious (Fall, 2015; Taylor, 2016; Coleman, 2000).

The ungoverned spaces thesis presents definitively exploitable and contested spaces that often come under the illegitimate control of gangs, local armed groups, militants and/or warlords as a result of under-governance, misgovernance or the total absence of governance within a definable space (Raleigh & Dowd, 2013; Whelan, 2005, 2006; Lamb, 2008; Clunan & Trinkunas, 2010). In this context, a shadow state or authority emerges to contest the authority of the state (Taylor, 2016; Mallet, 2010; Whelan, 2006), through local networks within and across the state.

The problems of ungoverned spaces are contingent on certain conditions, including the size of the state, population growth, density and spatial distribution, as well as the pattern of wealth distribution. Other conditions may include urbanization, globalization and increase wealth of non-state actors and lack of capacity to exercise effective control of territorial boundaries, as well as the government complacency toward the security threats (Menkhaus, 2007; Keister, 2014; Julum & Evans, 2015).

It is the sole responsibility of state to provide and guarantee national stability through security governance. The purpose of security governance is to mitigate conditions that have the tendencies of leading to the problems such as that of ungoverned spaces. Security governance in this context implies the exercise of effective governance through social provision of human security as well as national security. The essence of security governance is to guarantee the safety of lives, property, livelihoods, and territoriality in state through the monopoly of legal violence (Lenshie, 2018; Coleman, 2000).

The ungoverned spaces thesis has been criticized for excessively being Western in analyzing security issues, in that the thesis is framed against non-Western states viewed as constituting security threats to the Western countries as a result of their weaknesses (Menkhaus, 2010; Feldman, 2009; Andrew, 1975). Some of the reasons explicated for such analysis stem from the fragility of states in developing countries, particularly in the Middle-East and Africa. Poor governance, porous state's boundaries and weak security institutions are some of the conditions attributed for the prevalence of ungoverned spaces in these continents (Raleigh, 2013; Martin, 2003).

Western scholars and publicist believe that chaos in these parts of the world have deleterious effects on the Western world (Diggins, 2011; Andrew, 1975; Feldman, 2009). The scenario implies that ungoverned spaces are generally manifest in dysfunctional states. Nonetheless, even the strong states also suffer the consequences of ungoverned spaces that are internal to them (Lenshie, 2018; Marsden, 2017).

Despite the criticism of the ungoverned spaces thesis, it has been found to be plausible in analyzing the intersection between nomadic migrancy and rural violence in Nigeria. The thesis implicates the government of Nigeria for permitting the emergence of contested, ungoverned, misgoverned and exploitable spaces controlled by networks of criminalities under different identities. One of such spaces is the unregulated practice of nomadic migrancy, which has yielded violence in many parts of rural northern Nigeria. In the recent time, Nigeria has witnessed unprecedented nomadic migration from other countries. These nomads are undocumented and unregulated. The porous nature of the Nigeria's boundaries makes it possible for the influx of nomadic migrants in the country.

The consequences of uncoordinated governance are incidences of rural banditry, herdsmen militancy and arms proliferations, which instantiate rural violence in most parts of the northern Nigeria. The failure of the government of Nigeria to exercise effective sovereignty or control of the ungoverned spaces within its territorial confines and frontiers, explains the criminal dynamics in the ungoverned spheres (Olaniyan & Akinyele, 2017; Ali, 2017).

4. Perspectives on Pastoral Nomadism/Nomadic Migration

Pastoral nomadism is a cultural cum occupational practice whereby herds are maintained all year round based on a system of free–range, extensive grazing (Goodall, 2007). It is essentially a mobile form of food-producing economy, entailing the periodic movement of a substantial percent of the population of a pastoral community in accordance with the dialectics of pastoral economy (Khazanov, 1994). According to Khazanov (1994) the most salient characteristics of pastoral nomadism are:

(1) Pastoralism is a predominant form of economic activity (2) Its extensive character connected with the maintenance of herds all year round on a system

of free-range grazing without stables (3) Periodic mobility in accordance with the demands of pastoral economy within the boundaries of specific grazing territories, or between these territories (as opposed to migrations) (4) The participation in pastoral mobility of all or the majority of the population (as opposed, for example, to the management of herds on distant pastures by specialist herdsmen, into which only a minority is involved in pastoral migrations (5) The orientation of production towards the requirement of subsistence (as opposed to the capitalist ranch or dairy farming of today (p. 160).

From the foregoing, whether it is the majority or minority of the population that is involved, pastoral nomadism entails necessarily a level of communal migration. This movement involves the herders alongside their herds, often in company of members of the herding clan. Therefore, nomadic migration is, above all, motivated by economic rationalism. As Kurekova (2011) stated, it is "stimulated primarily by rational economic consideration of relative benefits and costs" (p. 4).

Depending on the seasonal variability as well as other salient socio-structural interveners within a pastoral ecology, nomadic migration usually tends from areas of high pastoral costs towards areas of high pastoral benefits. 'Pastoral costs' refer to the prevalence of occurrences that undermine effective and rewarding pastoralism, such as drought, desertification, civil strife, disease, insurgency, and so on. 'Pastoral benefits', on the other hand, have to with the availability pasture and fresh water, as well as assurance of peace and security (Egwu, 2016).

Nomadic migration is a veritable livelihood strategy open to all nomadic communities (McDowell & Haan, 1997). It enables the herders navigate through social and ecological hazards that often confront their occupation in an effort to ensure survival and sustainability of livelihood. In addition to the imperative of survival, migration also helps nomadic communities to access new rangelands, locate new markets for their produce, and establish new transhumant linkages and ties (Mulianga, 2009).

Adriansen (2005) observes that nomadic migration "is highly appropriate in a variable and unpredictable environment" (p. 208). According to him:

> Pastoral mobility implies that pastoralists can move to areas with pasture for their livestock. Moreover, pastoral mobility means that the effect of unforeseen events, e.g. outbreak of disease, bush fire, locust attack, can be mitigated. Finally, migration between different agro-ecological zones means that more animals can be kept than in each of the zones (p. 208).

In other words, nomadic migration guarantees a high pastoral productivity, resilience and sustainability. With that, the subsistence of the pastoral community is guaranteed on a sustainable basis.

Broadly, two patterns of nomadic migration are identifiable, namely routine seasonal migration and 'emergency' migration (Janzen, 2005). The former is dictated by the exigencies of seasonal variability while the latter is often informed by the need to escape climatic, civil, or health-related adversities such as drought, pestilence, conflict, etc. Whatever be the reason, nomadic migration has its essence in a "spatio-temporal movement" in search of a favourable rangeland (Mulianga, 2009, p. 1).

Nomadic migration can be translocal or transnational (Lee, 2009). Translocal migration occurs within the territories of a country while transnational migration occurs across the borders of countries. The crossing of international boundaries by herdsmen in Africa typifies the reality of irregular migration (International Organization for Migration [IOM], 2011). According to the IOM (2011), irregular migration is "movement that takes place outside the regulatory norms of the sending, transit and receiving countries" (p. 54).

Nomadic migration to and fro the borderlines of Nigeria are largely unregulated. This has created an illicit economy around the nomadic business giving rise to organized crimes such as smuggling, trafficking in humans and drugs, and cattle rustling (IOM, 2011). It has also provided avenues for terrorism and/or insurgency financing (Okoli, 2017). The abusive instrumentalization of nomadic migration by organized criminals and insurgents/ terrorists has raised a pertinent national security concern in Nigeria. The sections that follow will engage this important concern.

5. Nomadic Migrancy, Ungoverned Spaces, and Rural Violence in Northern Nigeria

Nigeria is a territorially challenged and fragile state. It is characterized by what we may term "virtual territorial ungovernability". This existential syndrome is evident in the near absence of governmental presence and control within critical domains of the country's wider territorial sphere. Nigeria's territorial ungovernability is thus instantiated by the huge governance deficits in the country's physical and maritime boundaries, cyberspace, forest areas, as well as mainland, airways and waterways.

Nigeria's ungoverned spaces syndrome is most saliently and vividly demonstrated by the vast and porous borderlines of the country. The *Nigeria World Today* (2017) is of the view that "Nigeria borders are vast with hundreds of footpath, overlapping to the adjoining countries of Chad, Cameroon and Niger, with links to Sudan, Mali and Libya" (para. 5). The source adds that:

> ... there are more than 250 walkways from Maiduguri, Damaturu axis to Niger, Chad or Cameroon. Most of these paths are unknown to the security agencies and are neither manned nor guarded and they are being used frequently by criminals to sneak in (sic) instrument of death into the country (para. 5).

In addition to its woefully porous boundaries and borderlands, Nigeria's countryside is equally characterized by acute ungovernability. There are vast expanses of rangelands and forests that are physically and functionally separated from the sphere of effective state control. These ungoverned spaces have often been occupied and utilized by criminals, insurgents and terrorists as operational strangleholds (Okoli & Ochim, 2016).

How does the foregoing apply to the phenomenon of nomadic migrancy? First, nomadic migrancy is a phenomenon that festers within the typically ungoverned spaces of the Nigerian territory, namely the porous boundaries and borderlands, the scarcely governed rangelands and forestlands, and the poorly policed hinterlands in the countryside. Secondly, nomadic migrancy itself is an activity that is hardly regulated by the law. Obtaining largely outside the formal regulatory regime of the state, the practice is bound to be abused. This is evident in the bastardization of the practice by criminals, insurgents and terrorists who capitalize on the governance deficits in the sector to perpetrate felonious acts. The sub-sections hereunder attempt to put the foregoing argument into empirical perspective, drawing from selected evidences from northern Nigeria.

Suffice it to state that the ungoverned nature of nomadic migration in Nigeria has created an enabling environment for criminal impunity in the sector. This has led to critical outcomes that complicate and accentuate the incidence of rural violence in northern Nigeria, with dire implications for nation security of the country.

5.1 Nomadic migrancy and arms proliferations: Nomadic herdsmen have been involved in arms proliferations in two important ways. First, they bear arms, ranging from rudimentary to modern weaponry. Nowadays, it is common to see Fulani cowboys brazenly armed with sophisticated weapons, such as AK-47, in the course of their routine grazing. The weapons are ostensibly borne for self-defense, and possibly, to ward off traditional threats of cattle rustling and banditry (Egwu, 2016). Unfortunately, it is the same weapons that the herdsmen use in raiding settled communities at every instance of a major confrontation (Bonga, 2017).

Besides the issue of arms bearing, the herdsmen have also been implicated in arms smuggling and running (trafficking). According to *Nigeria World Today* (2017):

> It is unfortunate that the Fulani Herdsmen have devised mean (sic) of smuggling arms into Nigeria through the footways. The methods they employ include the use of their cattle. The fact that the weapons are light and collapsible makes it easy to be hidden and transported with cattle. The ammunition are (sic) attached to the bellies of the cows with specially crafted skin bags majoring meant for illegal mission undetected (para. 6).

Reinforcing the claims of the above citation, Omitola (2014, slide 14) opines' that "Fulani herdsmen have been reported to be involved in transporting (of) small arms to Nigeria through their cattle". The smuggling and trafficking of arms, as well as the

blatant use of same, by the herdsmen has complicated the challenge of arms prolifera-
tions in northern Nigeria.

5.2 Nomadic migrancy and rural banditry: Nomadic migration has contributed to the
escalation of rural banditry in northern Nigeria. This is evident in the spate of armed
robbery, cattle rustling and kidnapping wherein herdsmen have been implicated. Crops
of herdsmen displaced by conflict and climatic adversities in the Sahel have migrated
to parts of northern Nigeria where they have taken to guerilla criminality. In places like
Borno, Yobe, Bauchi, Adamawa, Gombe and Jigawa States, they have often operated as
high-way robbers (locally referred to as *Kwanta-Kwanta*), molesting passers-by on the
inter-state roads (Okoli & Okpaleke, 2014).

In Zamfara-Kebbi axis of North West Nigeria, rural banditry has assumed a sophisticated
dimension with the emergence of forest-based nomadic bandits who specialize in cattle
rustling, kidnapping as well as market and village raids (see table 1 below). In Zamfara
State, the criminals have effectively occupied the major neighbouring forests from where
they launch incessant attacks on hapless communities in the hinterlands of the State.

Table 1: Estimated Number of Livestock Rustled in the Zamfara State in 2016

S/No	Area	Number of Livestock
1	Badarawa	Over 200
2	Bagega	Over 4,500
3	Dorayi	Over 2,500
4	Filinga	Over 5,000
5	Gidan Kaso	1,455
6	Guru	270
7	Jangeme	Over 600
8	Kizara	Over 4,000
9	Lilo	90
10	Lingyado	Over 2,100
11	Madaba	106
12	Nasarawa Godal	Over 1,000
13	Nasarawa Mai Layi	Over 500
14	Rukudawa	250
15	Shigama and Kwokeya	1,020
16	Tsabre	Over 3,500
17	Tungar Baushe	1,110
18	Unguwar Galadima	850
19	'Yar gada	230

Source: MACBAN (2016) as cited in Rufai (2016, p.6).

In North Central Nigeria, rural banditry orchestrated by the migrant herdsmen and
their local cohorts has led to a convolution of rural criminality and violence. While
some have engaged in cattle rustling, others have taken to kidnapping and robbery. A
recent arrest by the Nigerian police of a gang of kidnappers who doubled as herdsmen

in Niger State is instructive. Regarding this incident, Uwujire (2017) reports:

> In addition to kidnapping, they engaged in robbery, dispossessing the hapless victims of both cash and valuables. After the operations, they would simply disappear into the bush and resume tending to their cattle, an activity that provided perfect cover for the criminal acts (para. 4).

Elsewhere, in North Central Nigeria, incidents of rural banditry involving the herdsmen have been pervasive. States, such as Benue, Nasarawa Plateau, have become critical hotbeds of cattle rusting (see table 2 below). Cattle rustling are a specialized criminality that requires some nomadic prowess. Driving a herd of rustled cattle along the hazardous bush paths for days and nights certainly requires an expertise that only an experienced nomadic cowboy can offer. In effect, it takes the involvement of an experienced herdsman to effectuate cattle rustling in any case (Okoli, 2016). This highlights the culpability of the migrant herdsman to the act.

Table 2: Estimated Incidence of Cattle Rustling in Central Nigeria (2013 to early 2015)

State	No. of Cattle Rustled	No. of Human Casualty
Plateau	28,000	264
Nasarawa	25,000	70
Benue	8,680	2,500
Kwara	1,640	150
FCT	1,500	7
Total	64,820	2,991

Source: Weekly Trust (2015, May 16), as cited in Okoli (2016, p. 418).

Fulani herdsmen have also been involved in nightly and highway robberies in Central Nigeria. In Nasarawa State, for instance, they have been responsible for most of the market-day road-robberies in the hinterlands. They have equally been involved in nightly robbery attacks in the urban centers and suburbs of the State (Okoli, 2016). The scenario is more or less the same in parts of the neighboring States of Kaduna and Taraba, where the contours of rural banditry have been life-threatening.

5.3 Nomadic migrancy and herdsmen militancy: The dominant herding community in Nigeria is the Fulani. The Fulani are traditionally a nomadic tribe with immense sense of group solidarity. The cult-like solidarity manifests powerfully in their relationship with out-groups. When faced with a threat emanating from the out groups, the Fulani are inclined to mobilize supports from their national and transnational tribal networks, even in terms of military logistics and resourcing. This tendency has played out in the context of the perennial farmer-herder conflicts in Nigeria, whereby fighters are recruited by the herdsmen from their clans in the Diaspora to fight for them. Most of the perpetrators of herdsmen militancy arrested in various places in North Central Nigeria have incidentally been found to be foreign Fulani.

The organized militias fighting on the side of the Fulani in most instances of farmer-herder crises in Northern Nigeria have been found to consist largely of Fulani from the Sahel and Magrib (*Nigeria World Today*, 2017, para. 8). The involvement of these elements in the crises has not only complicated matters, it has resulted in huge humanitarian crises that negate sustainable human security in Northern Nigeria and beyond.
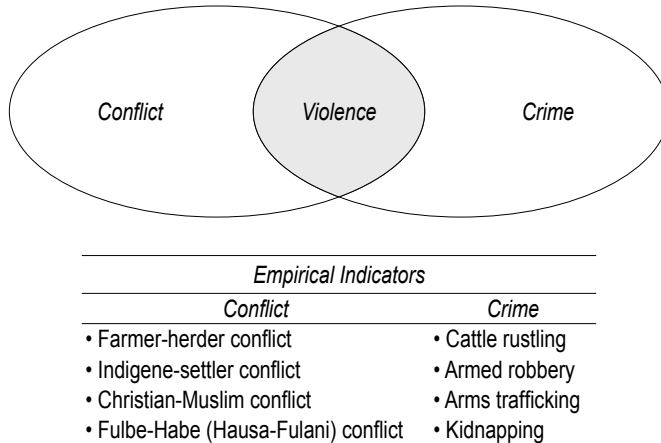

Empirical Indicators	
Conflict	*Crime*
• Farmer-herder conflict	• Cattle rustling
• Indigene-settler conflict	• Armed robbery
• Christian-Muslim conflict	• Arms trafficking
• Fulbe-Habe (Hausa-Fulani) conflict	• Kidnapping

Figure 2: The Conflict-Crime Nexus of Nomadic Migrancy

*Source***:** Authors' concept, 2018.

Nomadic migrancy has been associated with the vicious outcomes of conflict and crime whose indicators are highlighted in figure 2. The critical outcomes intersect on violence, with requisite crisis and instability manifested in the forms of farmer-herder conflict, indigene-settler conflict, Christian-Muslim conflict and Fulbe-Habe conflict, as well as cattle rustling, armed robbery, arms trafficking and kidnapping in northern Nigeria. The implications involving the various dynamics of conflicts and criminalities are great and deleterious for national security in Nigeria.

6. Nomadic Migrancy: Implications for National Security

Nomadic migrancy constitutes a threat to national security in Nigeria. It has provided an avenue for irregular and undocumented influx of migrant herdsmen into the country. Locally, it has resulted in unrestrained and often provocative movement of herdsmen from one part of the country to another. The unregulated nature of these movements means that it could be capitalized upon by criminal or terrorist elements towards undermining the security of the nation. This has, indeed, been the situation.

As we have established in the course of our analysis in this study, the ungoverned terrain of nomadic migrancy in Nigeria has provided ample opportunities for the perpetration of organized crime by local and transnational syndicates operating as or in the guise of

herdsmen. The proven complicity of migrant herdsmen involving in arms trafficking, cattle rustling and kidnapping in northern Nigeria, point to the ominous fact that an underworld economy of violence cum criminality is festering alongside unregulated nomadic migration.

More ominous is the fact that migrant herdsmen have been implicated in the on-going insurgency and militancy in the North-Eastern and North–Central Regions respectively (McGregor, 2014; Olayoku, 2014). Apart from rustling cows and trafficking arms for Boko Haram insurgents, migrant herdsmen have orchestrated lethal violence in parts of North Central Nigeria. The orgy of violence in North Central Nigeria has been very pervasive and prevalent over the recent years. The trajectory of the violence points to the arrival of another genre of insurgency in the country in addition to the Boko Haram menace.

Equally disturbing is the involvement of migrant herdsmen in communal conflicts in northern Nigeria. This trend is evident is the ethno-communal/religious conflagrations in States such as Kaduna, Taraba, Zamfara, and the bulk of the north-central States. In these contexts, mercenary fighters recruited from the rank and file of Sahelian herdsmen militia have often been involved in localized communal conflict, fighting for their pay-masters. Sometimes, the militant herdsmen would simply volunteer to come to the aid of a preferred conflicting party on the basis of ethno-religious affinity. A semblance of this played out in the Eggon (Ombatse)-Fulani crisis in Nasarawa State (2014-2015).

The involvement of migrant herdsmen in criminality and violence in northern Nigeria has complicated the security situation in the area, resulting in volatile inter-group relations, arms proliferations, human casualties and injury, force displacement of population, livelihood crises, and allied humanitarian disasters. It has accentuated the material suffering of the vulnerable rural population which has been sentenced to the margins of human security as a consequence.

The most strategic import of the foregoing is that Nigeria's national security is under a dire threat. The ease and impunity with which the marauding herdsmen infiltrate and terrorize Nigerian communities in the hinterlands adumbrate an acute failure of national security in a fast failing state of Nigeria.

7. Conclusion and Recommendations

Nomadic migrancy is one of the most dominant patterns of contemporary group migration in Africa. It has been driven by a combination of socio-ecological and economic factors that bear on the survival, subsistence, and sustainability of the nomadic tribe. In sub-Saharan Africa, nomadic migrancy is traditionally associated with the Fulani who constitute the bulk of the nomadic population in that context. The Fulani are mostly found in West Africa where their nomadic extraction engage in translocal and transnational transhumance.

Nigeria constitutes a critical hotbed within the West African transhumance corridor. As such, it occupies a crucial place in the political economy of nomadic migration in the region, serving variously as a veritable point of origin, transits, and destination of nomadic migrancy. Nigeria witnesses influx of nomadic herdsmen from Mali, Niger and Chad on yearly basis. These migrants enter through the multifarious irregular routes that dot the northern axes of Nigeria's porous borderlines. Over the years, this pattern of migration has been associated with untoward tendencies that threaten national security in Nigeria.

This study explored the nexus between nomadic migrancy and rural violence in Northern Nigeria. It argued that unregulated migration has aggravated the incidence of rural violence in Northern Nigeria. It identified rural banditry, herdsmen militancy and arms proliferations as the complications of the nomadic migrancy menace, noting that the trend holds grave implications for national security in Nigeria. To arrest and reverse this trend, there is a need for the Nigerian government to institute a securitized border governance system capable of de-criminalizing nomadic migration and pastoralism.

In this regard, a transhumance regulation regime whereby the entry and movement of migrant herdsmen are documented and monitored should be instituted. This should be backed up by a digitally mastered system of range-surveillance by which the activities of the herdsmen are tracked in real time in the hinterlands in order to forestall their criminal and subversive tendencies. Lastly, there is a need for Nigerian government to institute a specialized rangeland guard system of community policing in an effort to fill the lacuna of conventional policing in Nigeria's vast and vulnerable countryside.

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