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Full Length Research Paper

Challenges and prospects of lake Tana island monasteries as a tourist site since 1950's: The case of Kebran Gabriel

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Nowadays, tourism plays pivotal role for economic and social development of many nations. It is considered as the world's first investment movement of the 21st century. Thus, developing countries are giving due attention to service delivery industries like tourism that contributes a lot to their economy. Ethiopia has its own long centuries of history and rich culture. For instance, Amhara national regional state has been endowed with rare and endemic cultural and natural heritages. In this regard, the island monasteries of Lake Tana which are the green flower baskets of the lake have potentials for the development of tourism in the area but yet it is fully unexploited. Currently, tourism sector is facing multifaceted challenges, and it is attracting the intellectual gaze of many scholars from various disciplines. This article is a step in that direction. The grand objective of this article is to examine the historical vicissitude of tourism developments in the island monastery of Kebran Gabriel. Towards this end, archival sources are consulted and interview is made with informants. So, it is needless to say that this article attests the challenges and prospects of the island monastery of Kebran Gabriel as a tourist site since 1950's.

Key words: Kebran Gabriel, treasury, attraction, preservation, museum.

INTRODUCTION

Although tourism is a recent phenomenon, its roots are as old as civilization itself. The imputes for people to travel in prehistoric period was in search of food and favorable climate, which changed for in the course of time for war, trade, economic gain, religious conviction and study. Tourism as an idea of spending some time for entertainment outside one's residence is a recent phenomena. In the period before Industrial Revolution, the travel for entertainment was dominated by the upper class. Industrial revolution was a land mark for the developments of tourism because it brought advancement in transportation and communication that enabled the people to have access to tourist sites and it marked tourism not to be the issue of upper class by creating

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new middle class (Ayalew 2009; Purafkarj 2007).[1]

World tourism organization was set up in 1985 by United Nation to foster the activities of founding member states like Ethiopia in the preservation and conservation of heritages. Nowadays, tourism plays pivotal role for economic and social development of many nations. It is considered as the World's first investment movement of the 21st century. Besides, in a more pronounced manner it is referred as "the industry of 21st century." Thus, developing countries are giving due attention to service delivery industries like tourism that contributes a lot to their economy. But, this does not to mean that "tourism is a panacea for the economic crises of the developing world (Chaudhary 2009; Currin 2002)."[2]

Ethiopia is found in what is known as Eastern Ear of Africa, has its own long centuries of history and rich culture; nowhere in Africa can one find such rich historical records, buildings and precious objects from medieval and later periods. Among the regional states in Ethiopia, Amhara national regional state has been endowed with very rare and endemic cultural and natural heritages. Since the region has a remarkable number of tourist attraction sites, it is referred as the heart land of Ethiopian world wonder. As a cultural and political seat of Ethiopia since the late 13th century, Amhara national regional state has many but yet fully unexploited very old virgin tourist attractions. However, the growth of new and safe pattern of communication and transportation made the inaccessible and hidden historical and cultural sites and treasures of the region possible.

It has been believed that Lake Tana was created by volcanic eruption during Cenozoic era around 2.5 million years ago and has been possessed 37 islands, 20 of them have monasteries endowed with fascinating historical and religious heritages. These island monasteries of Lake Tana are referred as the green flower baskets that have potentials for the development of tourism in the area (Cheesman 1968).[3] Although the lake and all of its unique island monasteries have to be the area of study, this paper confined only to explore the challenges and prospects of Kebran Gabriel as a tourist site. This is because despite monastery is hub of rich

heritage collection of medieval period and near Bahir Dar town, it is the most unvisited and the heritages are at a very precarious condition. For the sake of convince, it is better to have comprehensive information about the historical vicissitudes of Kebran Gabriel before discussing its tourist attraction resources, challenges and prospects.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study is done based on both primary and secondary sources. For this study, a purposeful sampling method was used to select informants who have remarkable knowledge about the issue so that their in-depth information gave optimal insight on the issue about which no or very little is known. The sample size has depended on the quality of information obtained from informants. In this study, ten key informants were selected and interviewed on the basis of their knowledge on the research issue. The researcher has used both unstructured interview and focused group discussion to acquire data from informants. Apart from this, archives and manuscripts are also consulted. The collected information is not an end by itself but a means to an end. Thus, the collected data was critically and skeptically analyzed through narrative and document analysis approach.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

It is clear that Christianity was introduced to Ethiopia in the 4th century (Abbink 2003). Following this, in the subsequent periods numerous churches and monasteries were built in different parts of Ethiopia. It was during the reign of Amde Seyon (r. 1314 to 1344) that the Christian kingdom had established firm social, political and religious influence into the area of Lake Tana. Since the 14th century the island monasteries of Lake Tana have been centers of monastic life known for their historical and religions heritages. Kebran Gabriel is the remarkable one in this regard (Abbink 2003; Mara 1972; Moore 1936; Taddesse 1972a,b).[4] Kebran Gabriel is located about 11 kilometers to the North West of Bahir Dar not at a far distance, which takes nearly about 45 minutes traveling by boat. It is an island lying of the hilltop which is covered by forest and has captivating landscape, surrounded by the lake and bordered with Entons to the south east and

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[1]Bahreh Purafkarj, "A Comparative Study on Cultural Tourism Development in Iran and Turkey," (Master's Thesis, Lulea University of Technology, 2007), 19; Ayalew Sisay, *Historical Development of Travel and Tourism in Ethiopia* (Addis Ababa: Red Jackal P.L.C, 2009), 1-3.

[2]Hayward Currin, "Transformation of Paradise: Geographical Perspectives on Tourism Development of a Small Caribbean Island Cutila, Honduras," (Master's Thesis, Louisiana State University, 2002), 6; Prabhat Chaudhary, *Tourism Concepts and Principles* (India: Adeline Books, 2009), 10.

[3]Amhara National Regional State Culture, Tourism and Information Bureau, "Discover the Age-old virgin Attractions of the Amhara Region," Pamphlet (Bahir Dar, 2005), 1-4; Lake Tana Transport Enterprise, box title and number D, file number 01, the year the file was generated in 2002 E.C. Thus, it can be abbreviated as LTTE/D/01/2002. Hereafter, the sources of the archives, specific series number of the file and the year the file was generated are not written. So, the first series of letters and/or letters refers to the box and file number. All dates of the archival materials are written as they are, that is, in Ethiopian calendar.

[4]Taddesse Tamrat, *Church and State in Ethiopia, 1270-1527* (London: Oxford University press, 1972), 195; Yolande Mara, *The Church of Ethiopia: The National Church in the Making* (Asmara: Il Poligrafico, 1972), 12-13; J. Abbink (2003), A *Bibliography on Christianity in Ethiopia* (Leiden: African Studies Centre), 1; Dale H. Moore, "Christianity in Ethiopia," *Church History*, Vol. 5, No. 3 (1936), 273-274; Abbas Haji Gnamo, "Islam, the Orthodox Church and Oromo Nationalism (Ethiopia) (L'islam, l'Église orthodoxe et

lenationalisme oromo en Éthiopie, " *Cahiers d'Études Africaines*, Vol. 42, Cahier 165 (2002), 102 ; Informants: Gebre Giyorgis and Fikre Mariam Wolde Samuel, interview with the author, 17 June 2013, Kebran Gabriel.

Ura Kidane Mehret to the north. Kebran Gabriel was founded during the reign of Amda Seyon by Abuna Zayohannes in 1321. Abuna Zayohannes who was originally from the Shewaprovince called Mareha Beté arrived first in south Gondar especially in a place called Robit, where he found a couple (Za-Gabriel and his wife Kebra). After some days Abuna Zayhonnes was moved to the island of Kebran where a python was worshipped by giving many sacrifices like goat, sheep, blood and milk. He killed the python in the island and made great endeavor to preach Christianity to mainland areas. Due to this, he encountered fierce opposition from the mainland Agaw ruler Jan-Cuhay, also called Zankimir. Jan-Cuhay arrested Abuna Zayohannes at a place called Amadamit. Later on, the abune was released with the involvement of the forces of Amda Seyon. After this, Amda Seyon was granted *gult* to the monastery of Kebran Gabriel from the land of Ajama to the limits of Geyon up to Tumha and up to Agaw. The Christian king Amda Seyon helped Abuna Zayohannes in building the monastery and the monastery is named Kebran Gabriel by planting Ark of Gabriel in memory of the two couples aforementioned above.[5]

The Gabriel Church of Kebran was rebuilt first by Dawit II, popularly known as Libne Dingel (r.1508 to1540) and later by Iyasu I (r.1682 to1706). The latter built the church using well carved red stones brought from Gondar, lime from Yilmana-Densa and wood from Agaw Medir using *tankwa* (traditional boat made from papyrus) as means of transportation and the construction was completed within six years. The outside roof of the church is supported by 12 pillars made from carved stones, symbolizing the twelve apostles. In a room built connected to the wall east of the *kidist kidisan* (holy of holies) of the church, there is the grave of the founder of the monastery, Abuna Zayohannes. It was after a very long period of existence that only the thatched root of the church was replaced by corrugated iron sheets in 1963-1964 during the reign of Emperor Haile Sellassie. (Aalund 1985)[6] The Gabriel church of Kebran is endowed with historical and religious heritages that enable it to be the principal tourist site among islands monasteries of Lake Tana.

Ethical monastic practices

The monks living in the monastery are now governed by the head of the monks. The head monk receives his

spiritual administrative responsibilities by seating on the chair in which Abuna Zayohannes used to sit. The monastery is governed by different monks classified and empowered under the administration of the head monk. All the monks who live in the monastery have been practicing the monastic life as the old original ancient monastic life style tradition of Kebran Gabriel. No one lives in the monastery except monks who isolated themselves from the world dedicating their lives to God by limiting themselves and by standing all the difficult temptations they face and by practicing the spiritual monastic life as it is only allowed by the monastery. Women are not allowed to enter into the monastery because of religious reasons.[7]

Tourist attraction resources

During the medieval period, Kebran Gabriel was the political and spiritual hub of the Christian empire. Its historical significance is even more quite evident particularly between the 14th and 16th century in maintaining the Christian faith against Muslim pressures. Since there was no strong invasion over the Lake Tana monasteries, the Ethiopia kings safely hide their treasures in the monasteries like Kebran.[8] From its topography all the way to its old aged basic buildings and wondrous treasures which are beautiful work of art have potentials of attracting tourist.

In the courtyard of Kebran Gabriel, there are several historical and religious heritages kept in a treasury said to be built by emperor Fasiladas in 1664, which is currently serve as a museum. The heritages kept in this treasury are the icon of virgin Mary said to be painted by the apostle st. Luke, iron cloth that belonged to the founder of the monastery Abuna Zayohannes, emperor Iyasu I's bed and sword, *Negus* Tekle Haymanot's bunk bed, old wooden candle sticks, crown of some medieval kings starting from 14th to 17th centuries, Amda Seyon (r.1314 to1344), Eskindir (r.1478 to1495), Na'od (r.1495 to1508) and his wife, and I yasu I (r.1682 to1706), 17 cross made from gold, silver and bronze having embossed designs of Bét Giorgies of Lalibela, Aksum Tseyon church and Gondar castle, colorful cloaks of kings, ladder made during the construction of the treasury in 1664 and other old aged and valuable religious materials used in religious ceremonies.

The treasury of Kebran Gabriel is a stack for more than 174 holy manuscript books written from parchment in Ge'ez around 600 years ago. Among those holy manuscripts books written from parchment, መጽሐፍ ሐዊ, Book of *Hewi* which was written in 1560's during the reign of Serse Dingle (r.1563 to1597) from 200 goat's skin is the most eye catching manuscript. The book is named

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[5]*Gadil-* a medieval manuscript written by Zayohannes who was the founder of Kebran Gabriel Monastery. It is a very valuable parchment manuscript about all aspects of the monastery. So, it can be cited as *Gadila* Zayohannes, MS (monastery). Kebran Gabriel, ff. 38-41; Taddesse Tamrat, "A Short Note on the History of Pagan Resistance to the Ethiopian Church (14th and 15th centuries)," *Journal of Ethiopian Studies* 10.1(1972):145.

[6]RE Cheesman, *Lake Tana and the Bulu Nile: An Ethiopian Quest* (London: Frank Cass and Co Ltd, 1968), 154; Flemming Aalund, *Ethiopia Operational Action for the Safe Guarding of the Immovable cultural Heritage and Its Reintegration in to Modern Life: Master Plan for the Preservation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage* (Paris: UNESCO, 1985), 63.

[7]Informants: Gebre Giyorgis and Fikre Mariam Wolde Samuel, interview with the author, 17 June 2013, Kebran Gabriel.
[8]Cheesman, 155.

Book of Hewi after the name of the writer Hewi, it weighted about 17 kilogram and deals with any aspects of the Ethiopian orthodox Christianity. (Abbas 2002; (Ephraim 1983)[9]

It has been believed that some of these heritages are brought from mainland churches there for safe keeping during Moslem invasion and have never been returned. There are two bells in the monastery, one cast metal bell weighting about a hundred kilogram and bold inscriptions in Ge'ez language embossed round it and dedication, which roads "ዝንቱ ደወል፡ ዘተውኅበ ለታቦተ ክብራን ገብርኤል፡ እምነበ፡ ፍሲለደስ፡ ንጉሡ ነገሥት ዘኢትዮጵያ ወስመ፡ መንግሥቱ፣ ዓለም ሰገድ", free translation this bell is given to the Ark [church] of Kebran Gabriel by Fasiladas whose throne name is Alamsagad [the world bows to him]. The other is two stone bells made of narrow slabs of rock having round stone as striker and when one is struck it gives a sound of two notes as each stone is truck in turn. This bells serves for belling during the church ceremony are also the tourism resources of the church. The church building is old aged and have many paintings adorned on its walls that tantalize the tourists to have visit to monastery. Moreover, its geographical location on the hill top being surrounded by Lake Tana, covered by dense forests (native free species of different kind) and sings of the different types of birds adds some kind of beauty to the monastery which in turn makes the visit of the tourist interesting. Generally, it is probably fair to conclude that this monastery is the historical and spiritual library of Ethiopia.

Challenges affecting tourism development

As a tourist site Kebran Gabriel has been visited by foreign and domestic visitors. In the earlier period the monastery was visited by James Bruce and R.E. Chessman. Since the earlier period on wards people from different parts of Ethiopia visited the monastery. Up until the first half of the 20th century travel to the monastery was only possible through *tankwa,* made from papyrus by the Woyto community who live in the southern shores of Lake Tana. In the post liberation period, the imperial regime made great endeavors to make Bahir Dar as a tourist center of north western Ethiopia, due to its geographic proximity to Lake Tana and its island monasteries, Gondar and Lalibela. To realize this, the government built infrastructures to make access to the area possible through air and land transportation to visitors. (Seltene 1988).[10]

The Italians during their occupation of Ethiopia (1935 to1941) introduced boat transportation on Lake Tana to supply provisions and firearms from their camp at Goregora to their soldiers to control areas of Gojjam. It was this episode that laid a good foundation or milestone to the establishment of Navigatana Company in 1950 for transportation on the lake basin, which makes the visit to the island monasteries somehow safe from the earlier periods. Moreover, the navigation company opened today's Giyon Hotel by repairing the Italian building to provide accommodation to visitors. So, this effort of the government had its own remarkable role to the increment of tourist flow to Bahir Dar in general and Kebran in particular. However, in the morrow of Ethiopian liberation, the local communities had paranoia attitude to foreigners, *ferenje* that perpetuated for some decades and concealed heritages even from the eyes of foreign nationals.[11]

Ethiopia's participation in the establishment of world tourism organization as a founding member state was an impetus for its efforts to develop the tourism industry. Following this, in 1993 Amhara national regional state cultural and tourism information bureau was setup in Bahir Dar to foster the development of tourism industry in the region through promotion, preservation and restoration of the tourist sites. It was those changes that took place in last quarter of the 20th century both in the international realm and national level could have in turn resulted increment of tourist flow to this monastery.[12] The Figure 1 and Table 1 below show the increasing trends of tourists flow to Bahir Dar, the lake monasteries and Tiss Abay. (012: 69 to76) But, this does not mean that suffice work is done to increase the flow of tourists to this site. As discussed in the foregoing discussion though Kebran Gabriel possess precious heritages, it does not fully exploit its potentials and the business generated from the tourism is insignificant. There are challenges that sapped the development of tourism and tourist flow to the monastery of Kebran Gabriel. These are:

Lack of infrastructure

Infrastructure is the principal element for the development of the tourism sector. The quality of transportation system is the determinate factor for the accessibility of tourist attracting areas. To this fact, because of lack of modern transportation service, tourist sites of Ethiopia in general and Kebran in particular had remained to be unknown to many visitors. Though from 1950 onwards a considerable effort have been made to foster the growing touring industry from its initial stage, the transportation services

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[9]Ephraim Isaac, "New Light up on the Book of Enoch from Newly Found Ethiopic Mss." *Journal of American Orientation Society* 103.2 (1983): 400; Informants: Wolde Tselot and Yaqob Getahun, interview with the author, 18 June 2013, Kebran Gabriel and Bahir Dar, respectively.

[10]Seltene Seyoum, "A History of Bahir Dar Town: 1936-1974," (Master's Thesis, Addis Ababa University, 1988), 116; Informants: Mulate Tarekegn and Yohannes Mesgan, interview with the author, 19 June 2013, Bahir Dar.

[11] 05D/04.05/1998; 03D/2002: Five Years Summary Report, 1998-2002; Informants: Mulugeta Shiferaw and Takele Mengistu, interview with the author, 20 June 2013, Bahir Dar.

[12]Informants: Mulate Tarekegn and Yohannes Mesgan, interview with the author, 19 June 2013, Bahir Dar.

Table 1. Tourists flow from 1996 to 2012.

Tourists	Years					
	1996	1999	2003	2007	2011	2012 (9 months
Domestic	8, 290	15, 903	15, 205	23, 561	30, 885	38, 523
Foreign	5, 940	6, 181	8, 182	10, 083	17, 901	23, 042
Total	14, 230	22, 084	23, 387	33, 644	48, 786	61, 565

Source. (Amhara National Regional State Culture, Tourism and Parks Development Bureau, 2012: 69-76).
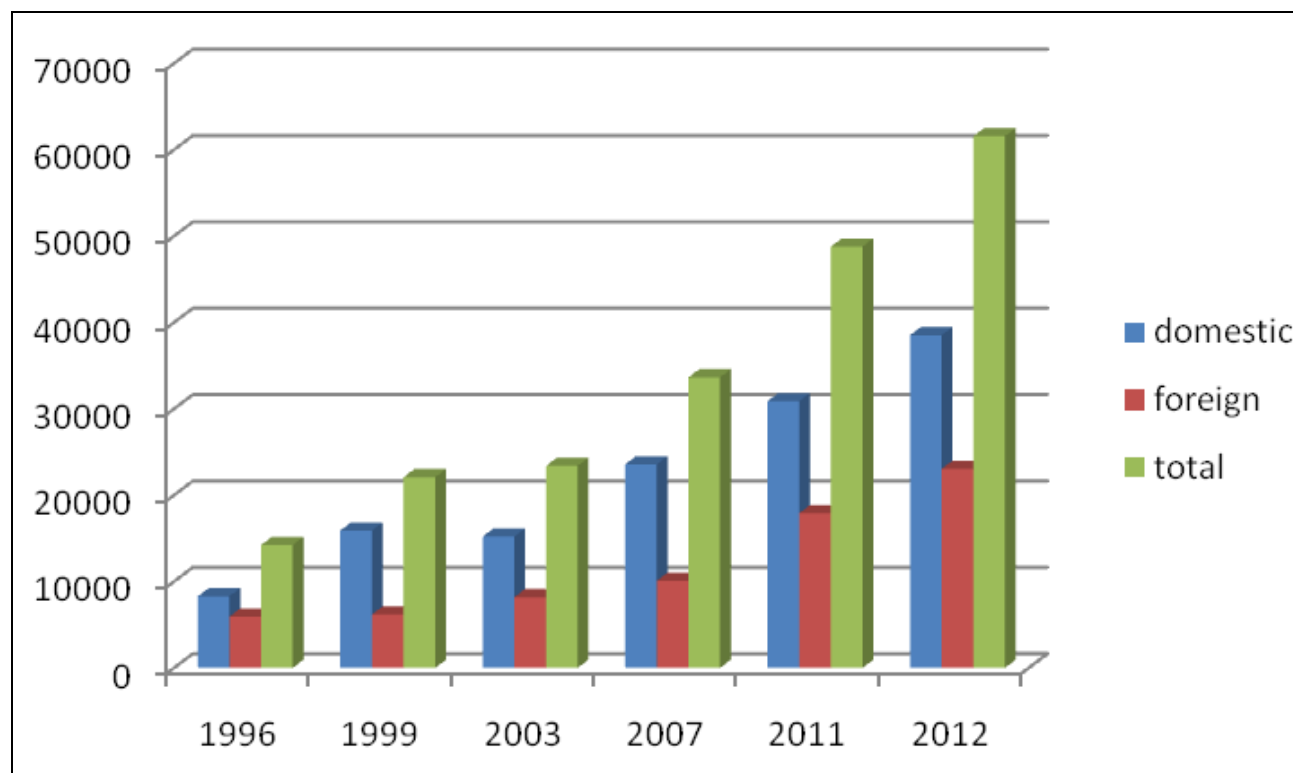

Figure 1. Tourists flow from 1996-2012.

delivered to the tourists in this site lacks standard, insurance and are unable to provide safe service as it is expected from the tourists point of view. Pertaining to Kebran Gabriel, the port is old and short which makes it difficult to get off from boats following the decline of the water of the lake. In addition, most of the boats are obsolete and persistently mutilated, imbalance between number of boats and visitors and decline of water of the lake deter the travel to this site.[13] These circumstances adversity affected the tourist flow to the monastery.

Problem of security

From the medieval period on wards the monastery used

nature as its umbrella to defender itself from different wars held in the country and passed down to these days generation. The monastery has no guard equipped with gun to keep security. The government doesn't allow the monastery to have weapons to protect it from robbers and other dangers. The measures that has been taken by the government on the robbers who theft heritages is very lax. The destruction of Mehal Zeghie Giyorgis monastery by fire on 15 March, 2010 within a very short period of time attests the less protection given to the monasteries.[14]

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[13]*Ibid*; Informants: Amelework Mamo and Birhanu Abebe, interview with the author, 21June 2013, Bahir Dar.

[14]Informants: Mulate Tarekegn and Yohannes Mesgan, interview with the author, 19 June 2013, Bahir Dar.

Females are not allowed to have entry to the monastery

Kebran Gabriel is open only to male visitors and females are obliged to stay in the port. This is because of the reason which could be read and understood from the written manuscript story of Abuna Zayohannes as "…ኣሜሃ ዕለት አው ገዘ ከመ፡ እቲባእ ብእሲት ውስተ፡ ደሴት ወኮነ በከመቃሉ አሰከ ይኣዜ", during that day females are condemned not to have entry to the monastery and it still works. This is to avoid temptation and to make the lives of monks appropriate. Abuna Zayohannes had built nearby island of Entons one year after the foundation of Kebran Gabriel for nuns. Mostly, men are less interested to visit the monastery since their partners (females) are unsecured in their stay at the port lonely. It has been affected the flow of tourist to the monastery.[15]

Lack of museum

The monastery is the hub of historical and religious heritages. The heritages are kept in the treasury that was built during the reign of Fasilades which serve as a museum. The treasury is old aged, very narrow to display all heritages and unable to entertain more than five tourists, has no windows, the door is inadequate and shutter of which do not necessarily prevent the entry of pigeons, rats and dust.[16]

Lake of proper promotion of the existing tourism resources: Currently, Even though the tourists flow to Kebran Gabriel and the business generated from it shows slow increment, it is insignificant as compared to its potentials. This is due to lack of proper promotion of its resources to both local and international community.[17]

Problems related to ethics of tour guides

Tour guides provide misinformation for tourists such as confusing the location of the monastery as if it is only having building with hill top road with fill of hindrance, provide wrong information about the existing heritages resources of the monastery and they asked the monastery to pay commission to them. There are illegal tour operators who badly treated the tourists. The tour guides lacks language skills and know about every aspects of the monastery.[18]

Lack of protection and preservation of heritages

Though the monastery possesses precious heritages, due

attention is not given to the protection and preservation of those heritages. Since the treasury is very narrow to display and preserve all the heritages, some heritages are stored in another building where resources are unsafely preserved from natural and human threats. The mural paintings adorned on the wall of the church aged back to the 17th century which witnessed the artistic potentials of the past generation are scratched off from the wall, because of the aftertaste of bad temperature in the earlier periods. The preservation and protection is so bad that one feels a sense of responsibility to cast one's voice for improvement.[19]

The church is not open to visitors

The tourists have no chance to visit the inner part of the church and to see mural paintings adorned on its wall. For tourists the only chance they have is to visit the monastery compound, the museum and building of the church. It is for religious reason that the church is not open to visitors. However, tourists have been disappointed by the prohibition to see the mural paintings adorned on the wall of the church. Thus, tourist made a visit to other island monasteries where they can see the inner part of the church.[20]

Lack of service and facilities

Since females are not allowed to get in to the monastery, they are forced to stay around the port and in their stay most of them are frustrated, because no quest house and others facilities are made available to them. Moreover, the water of Lake Tana around the monastery could not be used freely due to some aquatic problems. Many visitors are restricted from swimming in the water. The only possible way for male tourists is to visit the monastery and for females to stay in the port.[21]

Financial constraint

For the development of service delivery industries like tourism, finance is the basic essence. The monastery lacks finance to built museum to preserve and display all of its heritages and to provide other facilities which address the interest of tourists.[22]

Decline of the water of the Lake Tana

Sometimes the water volume of Lake Tana has been

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[15]*Gadila* Zayohannes. MS. Kebran Gabriel, ff. 36; Informants: Gebre Giyorgis and Fikre Mariam Wolde Samuel, interview with the author, 17 June 2013, Kebran Gabriel.
[16]*Ibid*
[17]*Ibid*
[18]*Ibid*

[19]Informants: Mulugeta Shiferaw and Takele Mengistu, interview with the author, 20 June 2013, Bahir Dar.
[20]*Ibid*
[21]Informants: Gebre Giyorgis and Fikre Mariam Wolde Samuel, interview with the author, 17 June 2013, Kebran Gabriel.
[22]Informants: Amelework Mamo and Birhanu Abebe, interview with the author, 21 June 2013, Bahir Dar.

diminished possibly due to the dry season and the utilization of the lake for different purpose like hydroelectric power, which in turn adversity affected the tourist flow and even disabled the monastery not to have relation with the main land areas.[23]

Prospects

The aforementioned factors adversely affected the monastery to exploit its potential for the development of tourism. Overcoming those challenges requires the joint collaboration and cooperation of many stake holders. The monks of the monastery have planned to build museum to display all heritages to the tourists. They also planned to build guest house at the port, to display the heritages kept in the museum for females who are denied to have entry through electronic devices and to provide other services that enable the tourists to stay for some time there. Bahir Dar city administration culture, tourism, labor and social affair office has made efforts to develop the tourism sector through giving training for two individual from each tourist site for about two days in every year, visit the sites to check the manner how the heritages are preserved, and promote heritages of each site through pamphlets and others. Amhara national regional State culture and tourism bureau in its own part is doing network plan of Lake Tana monasteries through which each monastery has a chance to be visited by tourists.

Moreover, it tries to make Bahir Dar as "a conference city for tourism"; to have a visit of sites like Gondar, Lalibela, Tiss Abay and others tourist have to first destined in Bahir Dar which in turn increase the flow of tourists to the island monasteries like Kebran Gabriel. So as to solve the problem of transportation, Lake Tana transport enterprise has been started to build standardized boats at its workshop at Goregora backed by mechanical engineering department of Bahir Dar University from theoretical design up to the practical work.[24]

Literatures mainly Amharic fiction written by Yismake Worku entitled "Dértogada", played pivotal role in the promotion of Kebran Gabriel. In addition, nowadays, standardized hotels are being built in Bahir Dar that provides services to meet the interests of tourists, which enabled the tourists to stay for some days in Bahir Dar. However, tourists need to be aware that young people who did not get the necessary authorization to give a guide service may contact visitors to offer some assistance. Yet since such people have no ethical qualities and the necessary skills, it is not advisable to deal with them.

Therefore, the tourists need to make sure that the guide they contact is issued with badge that is stamped with the seal of Amhara national regional state tourism commission. Due to the above efforts of different bodies, there is a glimmer of hopes and bright prospect for the development of tourism and torrent flow of tourists to Kebran Gabriel. However, the restoration of wall paintings of the monastery needs dexterous response and it is necessary to cry alarm for improvement.

CONCLUSION

Though Christianity was introduced to Ethiopia in the 4th century, evangelization in Gojjam and Lake Tana area delayed until the 14th century. This was due to the fact that evangelization followed closely the expansion of the Christian state. In this regard, Kebran Gabriel is a good case in point. Its historical and religious heritages have survived down to the present day as a uniqe inheritance from the medieval period.
Despite the fact that different efforts have been made since the 1950's to develop tourism, the tourist flow to Kebran Gabriel and the business generate from tourism is insignificant as compared to its potentials. This is because of the challenges that can be associated with human and natural threats. If different stake holders work jointly, it has a bright prospect for the development of tourism. As it is discussed above the monastery is the historical and spiritual library of Ethiopia. However, much attention and concern is not given for the protection and preservation of the monastery, the ancient wall paintings made from naturally squeezed flowers and leafs from the 17th century are being scratched off from the wall and the paintings are in every dangerous position resulted from the earlier leakage of water and bad temperature. Therefore, the preservation of this important part of the cultural legacy of the medieval period is a very heavy responsibility.

Conflict of Interests

The author(s) have not declared any conflict of interests

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Full Length Research Paper

Aspects of Ughievwen Culture of Western Delta of Nigeria and the Influence of Westernism

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The culture and tradition of a people represent their source of identity, pride and dignity. The Ughievwen people of Western Delta of Nigeria are no exception to this generalisation. However, the introduction of colonial rule to that part of Nigeria in the nineteenth century commenced a phase in the history of the Ughievwen, in which the people began to experience culture conflict. This eroding force gradually undermined the cultural values and practices of the people especially in areas of marriages and healing practices. These aspects of the people's cultural values and practices thus began an irreversible journey into the abyss of adulteration and extermination. This paper examines aspects of Ughievwen culture and points out areas of conflict with western culture and calls for the restoration of Ughievwen cultural pride. The papers also provide data for further academic research and suggests way forward.

Key words: Culture, Nigeria, Ughievwen, Western Delta and Westernism.

INTRODUCTION

In every society, culture shows the way of life in that particular society. The culture of a society is the bedrock and pivot on which all relations stand (Ojo, 2011: 161). Societies of the world today, whether ancient or modern, had cultural variables that determined what they were and what they did (Ajetunmobi, 2005: 8). Thus, no society in the world can survive without culture.

The issue of culture transcend mode of dressing, dancing, music, morals, festivals and language because it involves the generality of human actions. The importance of culture lies not only in its intellectual spectrum, but also in the fact that it marks the missing link bet-

ween man and the lesser animals. It is the totality of human actions which is socially as opposed to genetically transmitted values from one generation to the other (Akinjogbin, 2002: 1 to 2). However, western Europeans in the continent (Adebayo, 2009: 98). This perception is derogatory. History shows that African societies developed like other groups in the world and that the emergent civilization was later spread and modif-yed by other nations and groups (Ademiluyi, 2011). Africa is one of the most exploited as well as exploitable continent because of her rich cultures and resources that has been overwhelmed by foreign cultures (Idowu and Adegoke,

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2011).

In the light of the above, this paper discusses cultural aspects of Ughievwen people of Western Delta of Nigeria especially areas of marriage and healing practices in the pre-colonial times to show the extent to which the introduction of colonialism appears to have adulterated and exterminated them. It is therefore imperative that African and indeed, Nigerian culture needs to be preserved because it is the only link between the past, present and the future.

The entire Ughievwen area is said to have been occupied by four main families that sprang from the four children of Ughievwen, the eponymous founder. They are Orhowe, Owahwa, Ukpedi and Uvburie. Even though there are dearths of written works on the early history of the Ughievwen people, recent research shows that the area now occupied by the people may have been occupied by the same people as far back as at the beginning of the 18th century (Oghi, 2013). Upon settlement in the area, the people had their culture and related amongst themselves harmoniously before the advent of colonialism in the 19th century. Aspects of the people's culture that marked and will continue to easily distinguish them from their peers are marriages and healing practices. This appears to have changed with the advent of colonialism and even the post colonial period.

METHODOLOGY

This study was based on oral interviews and archival materials got from intelligent report compiled by S.E. Johnson on the Ughievwen people in 1932. Where these sources did not provide answer to the issues discussed, resort was made to secondary sources. The analysis of these sources showed that marriage and healing aspect of Ughievwen culture had challenges with the introduction of colonial rule. Attention is therefore drawn in the conclusion that there is need to preserve these aspects of Ughievwen culture.

Marriages in pre-colonial Ughievwen Land

In Ughievwen land, like other African societies, marriage evolved out of the people's traditional beliefs and was therefore regulated by custom. As a result of this, marriages contracted which fell short of the traditionally accepted standard was customarily frowned at, and socially stigmatized by the people (Okphohie, 2008). For instance, couples who were not lawfully married under the traditional system were denied certain traditional and social privileges. First, the male was not regarded as son-in-law to the parents of the wife. Second, the male was not allowed to perform traditional burial rites if either parents of the wife died; third, the woman or wife was regarded as Osen (a concubine) or treated as prostitute (Opharien).

Traditional marriage in pre-colonial Ughievwen land was conducted in six stages. The first stage was courtship. This starts right from the time the man saw lady whom he liked and signified interest in her before the parents. At this stage, the man made occasional visits in the evenings to the parents of the would-be wife. The parents of the lady also used such opportunity to investigate the man's background. Once there was confirmation, the man was asked to pay a specified amount of money to the mother of the girl. This payment was called Igho-Esheren. The suitor was also expected to buy a wrapper and blouse for the girl called Amwa-Esheren (Pippah, 1999). These requirements were expected to be fulfilled by the suitor before he was traditionally allowed to sleep with the lady. The amount of money paid was not fixed as it depended on the prevailing economic situation. However, as asserted by my informant, such amount was within the neighborhood of £1 or more (Okpohie, 2008).

The second stage was introduction and acceptance. At this stage, the man was asked to come with his relations for formal introduction to the in-laws. Kolanuts and native gin (called Ogogoro) were presented by the man to the family of the would-be bride and their purpose was made known to the bride's family via the oratory skill of a spokesman (Otota) brought for that purpose. Where the family of the bride accepted the proposal, the suitor and his family presented acceptance drinks referred to as Udi-merhovwenren. The quantity of this however, varied among villages, but in Owahwa village, it included a bottle of native gin, a plate of kolanuts with alligator pepper and the sum of twelve and half pounds (Okpohie, 2008).

The stage of introduction and acceptance was followed by Oko (bride wealth). A list of items to be presented by the suitor was made known by the family of the would-be bride to the suitor. In Owahwa community of Ughievwen area, these items included: two wrappers (Ileleji), two headgears, one umbrella, a pair of shoes, a golden necklace, wrist coral beads, a suitcase, one lamp, tubers of yam, two Otovwe fish and cosmetics (Okpohie, 2008). These items were compulsorily expected to be provided before the next stage called Udi-Eghiekuotor. It should be noted that while most of the items were meant for the bride, the consumables were shared by the parents of the bride among their relations.

The stage of Udi-Eghiekuotor preceded the payment of dowry (Emuebro). The basic things required at this stage were not significantly different from that of Udi-Eghiekuotor except that before the day of the payment of dowry, the son-in-law was expected to provide a hat, walking stick and a wrapper for the father-in-law, while the mother-in-law was expected to be given money for taking care of the bride, called Igho-Gberharen (Koyor, 2009). Other payments expected to be made by the suitor was Igho-Oyanvwen (money for circumcision), which was a token and the amount was not static and three bags of salt, one for the mother-in-law which she shared among her relations, the remaining two bags were

given to the Ewheya (married women of the extended family).

The last stage of marriage activities in Ughievwen area was called Aje-Esuo (escortion). This took place only on certain days of the traditional week (Koyor, 2009). These days were known as Omamede and Edebi, which according to tradition, was to avoid other fresh and protracted arrangement. On the date of escortion, the family of the bride (*Opha,* plural: *Epha*) delegates two or more responsible married ladies, joined by two or more ladies sent by the bridegroom, both of whom teamed up to bring the bride (*Opha*) home in a colourful ceremony.

Healing practices in Pre-colonial Ughievwen

Pre-colonial Ughievwen had their herbal practices before the introduction of colonialism in the 19th century to the area. It was believed in the community as in most African pre-colonial societies that illness could be natural, non-supernatural, psychiatric and social or preternatural and supernatural (Okpohie, 2008). Like the Yorubas of western Nigeria, the belief was that preternatural agents could cause or worsen natural or physical ailment (Dopamu, 1991: 12). Social or preternatural diseases were associated with the activities of witches, sorcerers and evil eyes of enemies. Thus, in Ughievwen land, while a witch (*Orienda*) was one who resolved to do evil and whose activities were mainly executed during nocturnal operations, a wizard was believed to be one who used his/her power in healing and generally for the good of the society, known as *Adjele* (celebrated witch who had confessed his/her sins and resolved to do good) and in most cases, *adjele* were herbal practitioners (Esiri, 1988: 14). The therapeutic methods adopted in traditional healing in Ughievwen land varied. Mume states too, that Nigeria had the highest variety of therapies that placed Nigeria traditional medicine in a superior position to other countries (Mume, Nd: 49).

The therapeutic methods of healing in Ughievwen land were: the use of herbs, massaging, hydrotherapy, fasting, cupping or blood-letting, heat therapy, surgery, faith healing and divination. Herbalism, as a concept, constituted the oldest form of therapy. Its origin is associated with the evolution of mankind. It was used by the ancient Egyptians, Greeks, Chinese and Romans. Ughievwen therapy displayed some mystical forces. For example, there were some that had occultic strength, some were *Ifue* (antidote) which counteracted diseases supernaturally caused, *Umu-Use* which could be directed telepathically to summon a mission person, while *Ekpofia* was used to divert bullets from the target person or spot. There was also massaging which was a method peculiar to the Ijos of the Niger Delta. It seems that the Ughievwen people, perhaps due to their historical ties with the Ijos could have learnt this art from them. This practice was called *Oma-Eghworo* (Okpohie, 2008). Massaging or *Oma-Eghworo* was used for ailment of the

nervous, muscular and osseous system. It was specially used for treating gynecological problems. By this method, there was physical manipulation of the muscles, joints and veins on the nude skin in a technical manner (Okpohie, 2008). In some cases, massage treatment could be applied to relax the muscles and veins, and to allow circulation of blood. This treatment was believed to aid stimulation of muscles and allowed circulation of blood. Other groups that also practiced this therapeutic method were the Isoko and Itsekiri peoples of the Niger Delta region of Nigeria.

Hydrotherapy, called *Ame vwo nyoma* was also practiced as a healing method by the Ughievwen people. It involved the application of water of different forms and temperature for the treatment of ailment. Hydrotherapy equalized the circulation of blood in the body system and helped in increasing muscular tone and nerve force. It was also believed to improve nutrition and digestion thus facilitating activities of the respiratory glands (Okpohie, 2008). The hydrotherapeutic method made use of cold, hot, compressed and steam vapour baths. Cold and hot baths were used for the treatment of different diseases after adding some herbs. When fused in this way, the cold and hot bath were used as cure for fever, headache, rheumatism and general pains. The hot bath not only made the skin capillaries to relax but increased the activities of the sweat glands (Okpohie, 2008). The compressed bath on the other hand, comprised a piece of cloth wrung out of cold or hot water to produce the desired temperature. This method was specially used in treating ailments like pains, soreness, inflammation, rheumatic pains, and swellings by traditional midwives for women.

Fasting and cupping or blood-letting was also used by the Ughievwen people. Fasting, referred to as *Ohwevwechiro* by the people was mostly used for the treatment of constipation (*evurokere*), obesity (*ekpevu*) as well as spiritual diseases. Traditional Ughievwen medical practitioners prescribed fasting before patients were given some concoction (Igun, 2011). This treatment continued for days until the ailment was completely cured. Cupping or blood-letting on the other hand, called *Ubo emuo* or *Egho* involved abstraction of impure blood with the use of horns or cups. The method was also commonly used in the Northern part of Nigeria and could probably have been learnt from the Hausas, who S.E. Johnson in 1932, reported, were commonly found in the area. This was a method of healing widely used by the Indians and was common with Victorian medicine. Its efficacy as a measure of reducing placenta congestion and inflammation was long recognised during the Victorian age (Youngson,1979:6).

Apart from the aforementioned healing practices, there was also the use of heat therapy. Known as *Oma evuvwo* in Ughievwen land, the therapy was effected by preparing fire with logs and when the smoke had reduced and charcoal burnt brightly, the patient was asked to expose the affected part of the body to the direct rays of the fire.

In some cases, clothing materials were removed from the body and the patient lay or slept beside the fire (Igun, 2011). This assisted in calming the nerves and regulates muscular contractions and adequate circulation thereby inducing sound sleep.

There was also native surgery practice called *Omaebere*. It was an operation used to extract bullets and poisonous noxious tissues from the body. Ughievwen traditional medical practitioners were adepts in the operation of intricate tissues that caused disturbance to patients. According to an informant, the area of the body that was operated on, was stitched together by technical application of pieces of calabash on the operated part and *Uhuvwun edri* (herbal concoction) was applied until the sore gradually healed. Before the *Uhuvwun edri* was applied to the operated part, the herbal concoctions were reduced to paste and this served as anaesthetic drug (Igun, 2011).

However, there were certain illnesses that required divination. Such illnesses included spiritual attacks which were associated with witches and wizards. Before treating such illnesses, their causes were divined and the necessary prophylactic diagnosed. From my interview with notable elders of Ughievwen communities, there seemed to be common practices on divination between the Ughievwen people and their neighbours of Edo State. The methods of divination were similar; namely, the use of seeded string of cowries and bones, bones and pebbles and the use of pieces of kolanut and mirror (Erhagbe and Ehiabhi, 2011: 121). Just like what is obtained in Ishan, the commonest and most popular was the use of seeded strings of cowries in Ughievwen land. This method was traditionally known as *epha* and was called *Oguega* in Ishan (Erhagbe and Ehiabhi, 2011: 125). Among the Ughievwen people, by this method, the person seeking divination touched his mouth with the cowries and returned it to the diviner, who thereafter threw the seeded strings of cowries on the piece of mat specially prepared for the purpose and interprets the message revealed. Findings at this stage determined whether the healing required was curative or preventive or both.

Curative healing required the use of herbs while preventive type took the form of preparation of magical charms or performance of rituals depending on the findings of the diviner. Where it was a curative medicine, the patient was told to bring some materials to prepare a herbal concoction and as soon as they were provided, prescription was given on how it was to be administered (Okpohie, 2008). However, where rituals were required to be performed, the items required were named and later used to appease the ancestors or the gods. Failure to do this, it was traditionally believed, elicited the wrath of the ancestors or gods (Okpohie, 2008).

Preventive healing on the other hand, was done to avoid attacks or afflictions. In Ughievwen land, this was used to thwart the activities of witches (*erienda*) which

was believed to be directed at family members. It was against this background that sayings like *Oruvuvwemi ruohwo ahwo ro rie ohwo oye rue ohwo* (it is the person who knows man that bewitches him), *Uwevbida rhovwe k' ohwo ko yere omamo akpo* (if one's family/house agrees for one to live good life then one can become prosperous) abounded. Thus, for most African societies as observed by Dopamu, "witches are held responsible for illness, death, sterility, ill-luck, unsuccessful harvest… In fact, all misfortunes which occur in the family and the whole villages are attributed to witches" (Dopamu, 1979: 39).

Persons accused of witchcraft in Ughievwen land, had the onus of proving their innocence by subjecting themselves to test. Such persons were taken to Kwale land (Okpohie, 2008). On arrival, if the accused or suspect survived the ordeal without any observed abnormality in behavior, he/she was believed not to be a witch, otherwise he/she was guilty. This method, corresponded with what obtained in Ishan land in the neighbouring present day, Edo State, where the sasswood (*Ohanki*) ordeal was common (Okojie, 1994: 101 to102).

From the foregoing it could be seen that precolonial Ughievwen had closely knit cultural practices that served as source of identity, pride and dignity for the people before colonialism in the nineteenth century. However, the coming of colonial rule seemed to have adulterated, if not exterminated, these practices. No matter the degree of civilization a society attains, part of that civilization ought to be the preservation of the things that hitherto, held the society together and not otherwise. It is the preservation of such culture that defines the Africanness and not "hook-line and sinker" adoption of western practices.

Marriages and healing practices in colonial and post colonial Ughievwen

An essential feature of colonial administration in Nigeria was the establishment of native courts. These native courts applied principles that only native customs and institutions that were not repugnant to British ideas of justice and morality had to be preserved. The chaos that followed this perception was a general phenomenon in the Southern Nigeria province. Many British officers attested to the changes which the native courts introduced to Nigerian societies. For instance, Mr. Palmer, a strong advocate of the Emirate system of native administration expressed the view that "the attempt to preserve native customs resulted in steadily destroying it… the government is steadily grinding the powder all that is native and transforming the people into Black English men" (Ojiefoh, 2002: 169 to170).

In the area of marriage, precolonial Ughievwen marriage system no matter the shortcomings it had, laid

emphasis on betrothal and wives being inherited. The idea behind inheritance of wives was to keep the family intact and ensure continuity of the lineage. Where a woman committed adultery, the ancestors and the gods had the responsibility of ensuring that the culprits were punished. This was basically a traditional way of ensuring justice and nothing more. However, British political officers, drawing from their own culture, would prefer divorce. This western orientation, in itself, increased the cases of divorce in the Ughievwen area. The resident in Warri which had control over Ughievwen area had also stated that divorce became very common in the Warri area and other provinces and that subject to the refund of dowry, very little difficulty was placed in the way of petitioners (Wilkes, 1949).

One major factor that dislocated the tradition customs of the Ughievwen people concerning marriage was the introduction of Christianity. Hitherto, a man could marry as many as his income dictated (Okpohie, 2008). With the introduction of Christianity, monogamy was encouraged, shrine sacrifices and ancestral worships were condemned and this gradually repositioned the people's cosmology and social outlook. Records show that by 1931, the Christian missions in the western Delta to which Ughievwen belonged, had established over 289 churches with about 32,842 members and by 1953 church membership had risen to 123,989 (Erivwo, 2011: 459).

The introduction of colonial rule to Ughievwen land also challenged the healing practices of the people. The Christian missions condemned divination and other medical practices of the people like female circumcision, traditional immunization against poisons and evil forces, invocations and incantations. Even traditional healers who became Christian converts were required to destroy all visible symbols of their profession and make public declaration of their new faith (Mimiyerayen, 2011). This was the emphasis in the whole of Warri Province to which Ughievwen belonged before the area came under the control of Ughelli District. Witchcraft and its associated detection practice was condemned. All these innovations, did not however, completely obliterate some of these practices. The Ughievwen people, like other communities in southern Nigerian, still had confidence in their traditional medical practice. This implicit faith, generally among peoples of southern Nigeria, was observed by R.P. Heslop, the district officer of Aboh Division, when he said:

Belief in witchcraft is implicit and universal even among the well educated and native Dibia (which sometimes effect quite remarkable cures) is preferred to the medical officer by the bulk even of the government and native administration staff" (Agubosi, 2002: 129).

The salient question now is: should the Ughievwen people allow this seemingly gradual extinction of their cultural values continue? Certainly not. It is against this background that, though the domain of history is not prescriptive, the following suggestions are made and conclusion drawn.

SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

Every state in the world has its culture which is a practical reflection and demonstration of the people's history borne out of their experiences. Culture has continuous growth and therefore, ever changing via the acquisition of more traits through diffusion, acculturation or borrowing, but not extermination. Through culture, certain items that are no longer useful at a particular period can be discarded in favour of new ones (Akinjogbin, 1992: 13). This however, does not imply that the new one is superior. In precolonial Ughievwen society, the idea of justice, was influenced by culture. There were punishments for circumventing traditions and to avoid the wrath of the gods and ancestors and as such, traditions were strictly adhered to.

However, as soon as Africa was colonized, most practices were either Europeanised or discarded. Marriages in the colonial and post-colonial period began to experience strains because of the erosion of the traditional values on which they were instituted. Circumcision, which was a common practice among the Ughievwen people seems almost discarded in present times. Widow inheritance appears now replaced with marriages contracted through the internet. Diseases of imaginable proportion are now rampant through unhealthy relationship between persons of the same sex, all in the name of westernism. Much as it is accepted that some of the pre-colonial practices such as healing, may not be scientifically easy to prove, it does not totally obliterate their usefulness. Therefore, there is the need to rekindle and modify these practices to fit into present realities and challenges. Above all, since no other persons other than Africans can develop Africa, there is need to preserve African culture and Nigerian culture in particular, even though it may be argued that our history could have taken a different course had there not been any colonial interlude, the history of the people will continue to be influenced by colonial impact.

Conflict of Interests

The author(s) have not declared any conflict of interests

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Interviews

Interview with Madam Usen Okpohie, traditional healer, 110 years, Okpako Ewheya, Owahwa Village, 14/6/2008.

Interview with Solomon Koyor, 58 years old, the Ogbirhue of Ughievwen Kingdom, Eyara Village, 14/11/2009.

Interview with Pa Igun, 74 years, Eyara Village, 16/3/2011.

Interview with Pa Moses Mimiyeranyen, Clergyman, 71 years, Eyara Village, 26/1/2011.

Full Length Research Paper

Ethnic politics and post-election violence of 2007/8 in Kenya

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Based on primordial and essentialist theories of ethnicity, the paper critically interrogates the trajectory of politics since 1963 in Kenya. The objective was to explain the causes of ethnic politics in Kenya which led to the political assassination of the 1960s under Jomo Kenyatta, the ethnic clashes of Moi era and culminated into the 2007/8 post election violence of Kibaki presidency. Under Kenyatta (1963-1978), Kenya experienced relative political and economic prosperity and stability but with an entrenched authoritarianism and ethnic favouritism. The Moi regime (1978-2002) and Kibaki Government (2003-2013) fared no better. This paper seeks to analyze the ethnic praxis to find out the nature, extent and impact of negative ethnicity in the country. It is argued by most post-2007 literature that the causes of violence included poverty, underdevelopment, political marginalization, ethnic exclusion, manipulated electoral process, lack of institutions to mediate in case of election malfeasance and the long held historical injustices over how land distribution was managed in the Kenyatta regime after the end of colonialism. Pursuing a historical methodology, we argue that to prevent political violence in future, the principle of constitutionalism must be upheld. The 2010 Constitution suggested devolution, truth and justice commission, gender and ethnic parity in state appointments and a trustworthy electoral system as means of preventing future conflicts and violence.

Key words: Ethnic politics, post-election, violence Jomo Kenyatta, and Kenya.

INTRODUCTION

In 1962 Julius Nyerere said the following:

When the nation does not have the ethic which will enable the government to say: "we cannot do this, [because] it is un-Tanganyikan (un-Kenyan)' or the people to say "That we cannot tolerate it [as] it is un-Tanganyikan." If the citizens do not have that kind of ethic, it does not matter what kind of constitution you frame. They can always be victims of tyranny. What we

must continue to do all the time is to build an ethic of this nation, which makes the head of state who ever he is to say, "I have power to do this under the constitution but I cannot do it [as] it is un-Tanganyikan" (Nyerere, 1970*).*

In his opinion, the late President Nyerere, suggested that national leaders should be guided by high moral, ethical standards and values as they offer leadership to the citizenry. Guided by high moral values, leaders would

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avoid nepotism, corruption and negative ethnicity. Branch stated that people across Kenya joyfully celebrated independence from British colonial rule, anticipating a bright future of prosperity and social justice. As the nation approaches the fiftieth anniversary of its independence, the people's dream remains elusive. During its first five decades Kenya has experienced assassinations, riots, coup attempts, ethnic violence, and political corruption. The ranks of the disaffected, the unemployed, and the poor have multiplied (Branch, 2011). Examining Kenya's challenges since independence, Kaimenyi and Ndungu, (2005) have categorically stated that ethnic groups are permanent interest groups that compete in the market for wealth transfer and they employ violence to take control of the government to redistribute benefits to their members. Similarly, Okoth (2008) has argued that the concept of ethnicity is useful in the study of the development of new political cultures in situations of social change in the third World because in such societies petty divisionism abound though the term is also used in western societies. He adds that there was a shift in Anglophone scholarships in Anthropological discourse from using the term 'tribe' to the term 'ethnic group'. The use of the latter term suggests contact and interrelationships [between people]. The terminological switch from 'tribe' to 'ethnic group' may transcend the narrow Eurocentric bias which the anthropologists were accused of using. When we talk of 'tribe' we impartially introduce a qualitative distinction between ourselves and the other people comparing the modern and traditional (primitive) societies. Ethnicity is an aspect of social relationship between agents who consider themselves as being culturally distinctive from members of other groups with whom they have a minimum of regular interaction. Oyugi has argued that ethnicity is a 'perceived identity' based on ascriptive criteria like common origin, language or culture and class (Oyugi: 1994). Thus the articulation of economic interests and sentiments of group solidarity is based on these criteria. The concept of ethnicity is hinged on a social formation that rests upon culturally specific practice and unique set of symbols and cosmology (Oyugi, 1998). It is a belief in common historical evolution and provides commonality on inheritance of symbols, heroes, football teams, values, identity, which leads to a situation of 'us' versus the 'other'. But ethnicity is also a tool for political survival used by politicians in Africa. Individuals are called upon to adopt ethnic identity as an explanation of who they are, their achievements and perception of the world. Through ethnic congregation, sections of citizens claim neglect and marginalisation from the realm of economic development. In Kenya the Luo, the Coast and Northern Kenya and other sections of the country have complained of economic neglect in last fifty years of independence.

Immediately after independence, President Kenyatta sought to frustrate his political opponents such as Bildad Kaggia, Masinde Muliro and Oginga Odinga, who was forced to resign as Vice President in 1966. In 1964, in order to exclude Odinga from any automatic succession, a new formula of succession was introduced and it stated that 'should the president (Kenyatta, 1938) die in office, the parliament would elect a successor to finish his term (Ogot, 1995). In addition to that between July 1967 and June 1968, there was acrimonious change in the constitution debate, frustrating Tom Mboya, a powerful minister and secretary general of the ruling Party, from taking over, if the president died. In effect both Odinga and Mboya were victims of ethnic politics that sought to exclude the Luo from getting the presidency, a feeling repeated in 2013 General Elections when former Prime Minister, Raila Odinga lost the presidency controversially, once again to Uhuru Kenyatta, the son of the late Jomo Kenyatta.

It is crucial to note that ethnic violence in 1992, 1997 and 2007 was the result of bad governance and lack of strong institutions, or failure to respect those institutions leading to autocratic state. But what is an autocratic state? According to Odhiambo-Mbai (2003), 'autocratic state is characterised by personal rule', where the individual ruler is a semi-god, similar to ancient absolute rulers in Europe. Kenya suffered ethnic politics and subsequent political conflicts because.I It was under autocratic governance. An autocratic state, according to Mbai, is characterised by lack of popular participation by citizens in governance, prevalence of ineffective political party politics, lack of well articulated ideology, use of force or coercion in order to enforce political obedience and little institutionalisation of governance hence personal rule (Odhiambo-Mbai, 2003).

Another characteristic of ethnic based governance is the existence of a patron-client relationship in the state machinery. In Kenya the president is always the chief patron of all the farmers in the country, commander of all armed forces, and up to 2004, chancellor of all public universities. All ministers, ambassadors, military chiefs and parastatal heads are appointed directly by the president making him a single most important person in the land, more powerful than parliament, of which he is a member, because he is in charge of its calendar. In theory, the patron-client relations that existed in the country involved the establishment of a chain of patron-client ties extending usually from the centre of a personalised regime.

That is to say that there is a link running from the top leadership to his lieutenants and other followers and through them to their followers up to the local level (grassroots). This system of linkage is characteristic of poor governance in Africa and existed in Kenya where the president was the chief patron, assisted by the military officials, ministers and other local administrators. The rationale for the establishment of this type of political linkage is to ensure access to rewards by the patrons upon the fulfilment of certain political obligations by the client.

THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL ORIENTATION

This work is based on library research and the review of newspapers, new books on Kenya and other secondary sources, which have been critically assessed and corroborated with other sources to attain authenticity. Weber defines ethnic groups as 'those human groups that entertain a subjective belief in their common descent because of similarities of physical types or of customs or both' (Malesevic, 2004). In other words, ethnicity is rooted in the belief of common descent and presumed identity. But he hastens to add that ethnicity only comes to play and relevant during political mobilisation. Writing on ethnicity, Barth (1969) stated 'we give primary emphasis to the fact that ethnic groups are categories of ascription and identification by actors themselves.' He continued to state that 'ethnic identity entails criteria for determining membership and ways of signalling membership and exclusion' (Eriksen, 2002). By implication, ethnic groups set their own categories of identifying each others, distinctively from the other. Ethnicity has been studied under the concept of 'primordialism' and 'instrumentalism' in this paper. By primordial theory is meant the "given" by nature or God or the assumed given of social existence, immediate contiguity and kin connection mainly, but beyond that the givenness that stems from being born into a particular religion, community, speaking a particular language or even a dialect of a language, and following [given] social practices. Primordialism is underpinned by the congruities of blood, speech, customs and so on which are seen to have an ineffable, and at times overpowering coerciveness in and of them. Under the neo-primordialist theory, one is bound to his/her kinsmen, her neighbour, other family members and one's fellow believer (Eriksen 2002). Indeed, 'ethnicity is a categorical ascription and classifies a person in terms of his basic, most general identity, determined by his origin and background. American sociologist, David Riesman, first used the term in 1953 but the word "ethnic" is older having been used in the Bible to refer to Jews. Ethnicity therefore, refers to minority issues versus the majority or race relations. It also means aspects of relationships between groups, which consider themselves and are regarded by others, as being culturally distinctive. The term ethnicity is also perceived as relationship between groups whose members consider themselves distinctive and these groups may be ranked hierarchically within society.

Essentialist approach enunciates that, 'it is through ethnic identification that competition for influence in the state and in the allocation of resources takes place' (Rawlinson, 2003). As a result ethnicity underlines the competition for political and subsequently economic power. Class is thus relegated. Instead of contesting for resources in terms of the rich and poor classes as it happens in Western societies, in Africa, this is done via ethnicity, leading to ethnic violence and political problems. Ethnic tension usually results from the perception of inequitable access to resources among groups and the fear of marginalisation from power as demonstrated in Uganda by the mutual distrust between the Baganda and other ethnic groups in Uganda and in the case of the Igbo in Nigerian ethnic conflict over economic supremacy. This promotes client-ethnic relationship between the leading elites of respective ethnic groups keen on maintaining the status quo. This system forms a dense trickle-down network of patronage sustained by channelling the state's revenues to one's own groups and followers through rent seeking and corruption (Rawlinson, 2003). Through essentialism, sectarian political leaders use numerical or strategic advantages to create more districts, universities and infrastructure in their ethnic domains to the chagrin of other deserving regions of the country. This leads to skewed development and political dissatisfaction as we have witnessed in Kenya, Uganda and Rwanda, among others.

As a corollary politicians in Africa are at times forced to by circumstances of survival to practice ethnic politics, for example, once one political party opts for home or ethnic support, like in 2007 and even the 2013 elections in Kenya, it becomes rational for any rival party to define and consolidate its own ethnic base leading to ethnic ideology guiding political agenda instead of issues. As a culture of politics or as apolitical resource, ethnicity is a phenomenon of the post-colony that dates back to the bargaining for independence in 1960. It involves the cultivation and then politicisation of old and newly invented primordial sentiments and stereotypes. In this respect it is an aspect of neo-traditionalism in that tends to glorify past cultural differences. For instance, culturally the Kikuyu circumcised their adolescents while the Luo never followed this culture.

This issue of whether to circumcise or not has been used to discriminate against the Luo in the past political contests. Sometimes, we wonder whether to consider ethnicity as a political ideology, but one shudders at the likely violent consequences. Parties and whole ethnic groups are faced with a prisoner's dilemma, in which, whilst the outcome may be catastrophic for all concerned, no party can abstain from using ethnically based strategies for fear of losing out to the other ethnic mobilisation of an opponent hence campaign issues become couched in ethnic terms (Rawlinson, 2003). The instrumentalist use of ethnicities according to John Lonsdale (1971) is successful because it goes on well with strong cultural identification with the ethnic groups on the part of the followers. Citizens in such a situation have a deep seated allegiance to traditional and cultural leaders and tribal chiefs who are often seen as political and economic elites. The political mobilisation of ethnicity replaces class mobilisation leading to false consciousness of the population along ethnic lines. The instrumental use of ethnicity has under-mined the

emergence of cohesive national identities in Kenya as this paper argues.

The praxis of ethnic politics

On the question of ethnicity in Kenya's political past, President Obama, in 2009, while addressing Parliament in Ghana pointed out that:

In my father's life, it was partly tribalism and patronage in an independent Kenya that for a long stretch derailed his career and we know that this kind of corruption is a daily fact of life for far too many. A future that so many in my father's generation expected was never found due to poor governance; [thus] governments that respect the will of their own people are more prosperous, more stable and more successful than governments that do not (President Barrack Obama's speech in Ghana on 10/7/2009)

The above quote implies that in Kenya negative ethnicity got a renewed impetus after independence. The Jomo Kenyatta regime began well but after consolidating power in 1964 through constitutional amendments, embarked on Kenyanisation of the economy, which turned out to be ethnicisation. Since 1966, when Kenya African National Union (KANU) became the most important political party in Kenya, to 1978, when Kenyatta died, ethnicity in Kenya was manifested in a myriad ways. This was visible in public appointments and political party formations. In Kenya your name suggested you ethnicity and region. Ethnicity was also seen in resource allocation. The president's region had the best schools, roads and industries. There were ethnic based associations such as New Akamba, Luo Union and Gema, which offered a sense of economic security amidst ethnic competitions. Senior government positions were appropriated on ethnic affiliations rather than merit leading to discontent and ethnic tensions across the country.

KENYATTA ERA AND THE BIRTH OF ETHNIC POLITICS

Kenyatta perfected the art of sidelining his colleagues, political assassination and manipulating electoral process in favour of the incumbency. As a corollary, When Kenya became a one-party state in 1969 Kenyatta ruled the country with a clique around him mainly from his ethnic Kikuyu, who eventually alienated other groups in Kenya from the political and economic order for his entire reign(1963-1978). Although Kenyatta did not instigate ethnic clashes, he targeted eminent persons from ethnic groups that he felt were a threat to his leadership. Many people were assassinated including Pio Gama Pinto (Kenyan Indian), JM Kariuki (Kikuyu) Tom Mboya, D.O

Makasembo, Arwgings Kodhek (all Luo) Ronald Ngala (Mijikenda of Coast), Seroney (Kalenjin) among others. This was a strategy that Moi also adopted at the height of his reign when prominent persons were assassinated or died in mysterious circumstances. They include Robert Ouko, Owiti Ongili, Otieno Ambala, Hezekiah Oyugi (all Luo) Bishop Kipsang Muge, (Kalenjin), Adungosi and Muliro (all Luhya,). Many students, journalists, lecturers, and politicians like Raila Odinga, Charles Rubia, Keneth Matiba, Martin Shikuku, among others were also detained and tortured (Ong'ayo, 2008).

According to the *Sunday Nation* (30. 11. 2008), 'Kenyatta's first cabinet in 1964 had 16 members including himself. Of these, seven were from the Kikuyu community; four were Luo, one Kisii, one Luyia, one Kalenjin and one European. Similar cabinet inequalities in favour of the Kikuyu were replicated in 1969 and 1974.' The report adds that the civil service and the provincial administration, an important support of Kenyatta's administration was not spared. In 1970, the Kikuyu alone occupied nine out of 22 permanent secretary positions (chief executive in the ministries) (Nation, Nov 30, 2008).

So at his death, in 1978, six out of the eight Provincial commissioners were Kikuyu and majority of the District Commissioners, District Officers and heads of Departments and parastatals were from the Gikuyu, Embu, Meru (Gema) communities (Kirimi and Ochieng, 1980). The impact of this flawed government appointments was that economic development was mostly experienced from those regions that produced senior government officers. In effect, opportunities for other Kenyan ethnicities were narrowed; there was lopsided development trajectory for the nation with other regions such as Eastern and North eastern regions being disadvantaged.

The president's region, which was also favoured had been home to the white highlands, where most settlers were, continued to have a head start in economic resource allocation. Consequently, the Luyia, Kamba, Mijikenda, Turkana, Taita, Somali, Maasai, Samburu, Kisii, Kuria Pokot, Ogiek, and other communities are felt out in this new power dispensation. The sad reality is that if you are not from the big communities in Kenya, you stood little chance of making it in government and the private sector. Through consolidation of political power and ethnic engineering, Kenyatta managed to make the republic of Kenya, *a de facto* one party with a dominant president. Members of KADU, formerly an opposition party were persuaded after 1964 to cross the floor in parliament and join KANU, the ruling party, which now became dominant (Mwaura, 1997). Kenyatta centralized political power in his office. He was then empowered with the authority to appoint and sack ministers including the vice-president and all civil servants. The appointment of senior administrative officers helped cultivate a patronage system in which all parts of the country enjoyed some form of patron-client relationship. Kenyatta then initiated

moves to reduce competition for political dominance by initiating internal purge in KANU and also being in control of Electoral Commission of Kenya, a fact inherited by President Moi in 1978 and later Mwai Kibaki in 2002. Indeed the roots of ethnic conflict in Kenya were reinforced by these political manoeuvres in the newly independent Kenya. Through the 1966 Limuru Conference the myth of ethnic unity between the Luo and the kikuyu was badly shattered when Odinga, the Vice-President was politically marginalized as ideological differences emerged on land and control of state power.

Odinga, frustrated by the political maneuvers, subsequently formed Kenya Peoples' Union (KPU) in 1966 where he together with political colleagues such as Bildad Kaggia and Achieng Oneko sought political refuge. In response, the government came up with constitutional amendments that led to the 1966 'little elections' in which the government contained and frustrated Odinga's ambitions of ever leading Kenya. In October, the president's motorcade was stoned in Kisumu because the Luo felt that Odinga, their leader had been marginalized. The security apparatus responded by shooting into the crowd killing a few Kenyans. This event traumatized the Luo and Kenyatta never visited Kisumu until he passed on in 1978. Ethnic animosity was inflamed again in July the same year when another popular national leader and Secretary General of KANU, Tom Mboya was assassinnated further poisoning the Luo-Kikuyu political conflict. Following riots in Kisumu and Nairobi over Mboya's death, KPU was banned and its leaders arrested and detained (Mwaura, 1997).

In the 1974 General Elections, Kenyatta had turned KANU, his vehicle for political control and subjugation, a tool of carrot and stick to politicians in the country. All candidates now had to be members of the ruling party, as all other parties had been either absorbed or banned. Former KPU members were technically disqualified from participating in elections, hence the birth of poor governance and abuse of power that led to impunity in the country.

MOI AND KANU: CONSOLIDATION OF ETHNIC POLITICS

From 1990, Kenya underwent a series of profound political changes, culminating in multiparty politics, which resulted in a political struggle between different political leaders. This period was marked by power brokers exploiting their ethnic backgrounds to drum up support to their own political advantage. The re-introduction of political pluralism, ethnic suspicions, hostility and witch hunting have culminated in 1992, 1997 and 2007 massacres in Kenya, destruction of property, socio-economic uncertainty and insecurity. The new democratic space from the 1990s generated a vicious struggle for political power, capital accumulation and unforeseen cutthroat rivalry for domination and control of strategic resources across the nation (Kagwanja, 2010). In Kenya, the government's reluctance to expand the democratic space caused the ethnic conflicts in the country (Osamba, 2001). On October 10th 1978, President Moi took over the reigns of power, a few days after being elected unanimously as the chairman of KANU and he soon embarked on the journey of consolidating his position with the support of former lieutenant of Kenyatta: G G Kariuki, Kibaki and Attorney General Charles Njonjo. He declared that he would follow the path (*nyayo*) of his predecessor. In the 1979 elections, KANU became important as the only political party. Life membership to the party remained an important part of his grand plan of enhancing patron-client relationship from the president to the grassroots. Once again, Odinga and his associates could not be cleared to contest in the election allegedly because they had failed 'loyalty test' as promulgated by the Secretary General, Nathan Munoko. Together with Odinga, those denied clearance included Achieng Oneko, a former detainee with Kenyatta during Mau Mau, Okello Odongo, Luke Obok and Ocholla Mak'Anyengo, most of them Luo (Weekly Review, 21/11/1979).

On assuming power, Moi, a Kalenjin from the Rift Valley province also embarked on taming the Kikuyu. His first cabinet reflected national representation while reducing the numerical strength of the Kikuyu in the cabinet and the provincial administration. He attempted to woo back the Luo from the political wilderness by luring Odinga with a job as a parastatal chief. Moi reinforced the politics of patronage, which engendered an unprecedented corruption in our political system. The Kikuyu elite still dreaming of power saw him as a mere 'passing cloud'. Soon Kibaki lost his position as Finance Minister to Arthur Magugu while Njonjo, who had retired as Attorney-General in 1980 and was given a powerful position as the Minister for Constitutional Affairs faced an inquiry in 1983 and was forgiven by the President in 1986 as a humbled man having lost his cabinet role his political power drastically reduced. By reducing the power of Kibaki and Njonjo, the Kikuyu influence was finally capped. In consolidating his position further, Moi introduced free primary education, free school milk and increased by 10 per cent, employment in the public sector (Mwaura, 1997). He then banned all ethnic based welfare organizations belonging to the Luo, Kamba, Kikuyu, Embu, Meru, Kalenjin, Luyia etc. But this action did not mean that Moi was fighting ethnicity, rather he was positioning his Kalenjin community to take over in the main sectors of the economy.

It was probably Odinga who suffered the most from ethnic based politics because from 1969, when he formed an opposition party, he never saw the Parliament again. Using the existing one party, the state blackmailed him and frustrated his efforts at political comeback. For instance in 1980 Odinga was barred from returning to full political life (Guy, 1980). A by-election called in April that

year in Bondo Constituency after its MP, Ezekiel Ougo had resigned in order to allow him run would undoubtedly have returned Odinga. KANU, under Moi disallowed him to contest after he had referred to Kenyatta as a land grabber. Yet this was his third abortive attempt to return to parliament since 1969. This was one grand betrayal against Odinga and his Luo community's ambitions.

In May, 1982, Odinga and a number of radical University lecturers, mostly Luo and Kikuyu, were accused of engaging in divisive politics and spreading Marxism. No alternative political space was left for Kenyans and in June, Odinga and George Anyona were nipped in the bud when they attempted to form Kenya African Socialist Alliance as an alternative political voice. Once again, through parliamentary amendment section 2A was introduced in the constitution which made Kenya a *de-jure* one party state (Atieno-Odhiambo, 1998). Subsequently Odinga was put under house arrest further worsening political tension in the public sector and even within the military. Leaders such as Anyona and George Khaminwa were locked up followed by several others like Mukaru Nganga and Maina Kinyatti. These detentions coupled with dissatisfaction with the prevailing economic problems led to tension within the military. On August 2 1982, the Kenya Air Force staged an abortive military coup d'etat against the Moi regime, an action that threatened his grip on power.

As a result, several military officers were court mar-tialled and imprisoned as some were to death sentences. Apparently many of them were Luo. Moi was incensed and as a result, Raila Odinga, the current Prime Minister and Professor Vincent Otieno were detained. Between 1986 and 1990 several politicians such as Kibaki, Josphat Karanja and Njonjo had their long political relations with Moi sharply derailed as they were dropped from their former political positions. They were replaced by up-coming Kalenjin politicians and businessmen, Ezekiel Bargetuny, Nicholas Biwott, Henry Kosgey, Philomen Chelagat and Jonathan Ngeno. In March 1988 General elections, the secret ballot was replaced by *mlolongo* or queue-voting system in which any candidate who garnered 70 per cent in nomination process was con-sidered to have been elected un opposed (Mwaura, 1997) The objective was to rid parliament of opposition elements and consolidate Moi's power in the land. Criticism against the government increased.

In 1990 a popular Foreign Affairs Minister, Robert Ouko was assassinated for trying to disclose corruption report to the press. The country, especially Nairobi and Kisumu, which has a huge Luo population experienced riots and the situation became chaotic, with donors withholding aid. With Moi cornered, he reacted by throwing current Prime Minister, Raila Odinga, Kenneth Matiba and Charles Rubia into detention without trial, an act which heightened ethnic conflict in the country. For the first time since the 1960s, there was now an apparent Luo-Kikuyu unity in opposition against Moi regime,

though a short-lived one. As a result the Kalenjin ethnic group instituted a lethal ethnic attack against Luo, Luyia and Kikuyu who lived in the Rift valley province in 1992 (Ogot, 1995). The resultant pressure in the 1990s from civic bodies, political activists and foreign nations led to the repeal of section 2A in 1991. This allowed multiparty system back and by 1992, a massive political pressure group, the Forum for the Restoration of Democracy (FORD), which later became a political party, before splitting, was formed by the late Masinde Muliro. However, after allowing parties back into the political field, Moi, a reluctant reformer, continued insisting that he was forced to re-introduce the political parties by Western nations and poor economic conditions at home.

Having spearheaded the fight for a return to a multiparty system in 1990s, Jaramogi Odinga and Luyia leaders such as Masinde Muliro, Wamalwa Kijana and martin Shikuku had led other Kenyans in forming the Forum for the Restoration of Democracy (FORD,) a formidable political opposition to KANU. But due to tribalism, Kenneth Matiba, who was ailing in London was called to challenge Odinga, leading to the split of the party into FORD-Kenya led by Odinga and FORD-Asili under Matiba (Kikuyu). Yet Odinga was at this time expected to be the compromise candidate in removing Moi from power but ethnicity and Kikuyu-Luo rivalry fru-strated these efforts of possible unity. The 1992 General Elections witnessed one of the worst ethnic conflict and clashes in the rift Valley, probably the greatest threat to stability that we had enjoyed since independence. The opposition led by Kikuyu (Matiba), and Mwai Kibaki of the Democratic Party of Kenya and Luo, Odinga, accused the Moi regime of ethnic cleansing of *madoa doa* (aliens) from the Rift Valley province but the government in turn accused the opposition of being behind it.

Following the 1997, in January 1998, the world was shocked by the massacre of Kenyan men, women and children over a few days in the valley of death, officially known as the Rift Valley. Kenyan conscience was shaken by systematic reports of rape and 'ethnic cleansing.' While such horrors are not new in the annals of human cruelty, they are systematically hidden and trivialized by the autocratic state authorities (Maupeu et al., 2005). The most dramatic Luo-Kikuyu unity occurred in the 2002 Presidential elections. In order to remove Moi from power Raila Odinga and Mwai Kibaki, two leading politicians, put aside their ethnic differences in 2002. For the first time since Multi-party politics began, Kenyan politicians united against KANU successfully sending it packing as Kibaki who led National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) into victory took over as the new President in 2003. In these elections, KANU represented the so-called marginalized ethic groups known as Kalenjin, Maasai, Turkana and Samburu (KAMATUSA). This Raila-Kibaki unity was fundamental because in 1992 and 1997 ethnic rivalries between Kikuyu and Luo had given Moi an easy victory. It was clear that ethnic unity could change the political

situation in this country.

On ascending to power, however, president Kibaki, unfortunately, dishonoured the Memorandum of Understanding between him and Raila leading to more acrimonious relations between the Luo and the Kikuyu (Oloo, 2005). He decided to follow the *nyayo* of both Jomo Kenyatta and Moi in appointment of senior government officials and monopolizing of power to the chagrin of their coalition partner, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) led by Raila. The differences between coalition parties, LDP and National Alliance Party (NAK) led to entrenched political conflict that culminated in the government losing the 2005 Referendum on the new constitution (Holmqiust and Githinji, 2009).

The year 2007 was of relative calm. After a phase of tension and recurring ethnic tension between 2003 and 2005, things changed gradually following government's loss in the Referendum. As elections approached, in mid year the political climate changed and bitter political exchanges combined by major political fallout between Raila led mass opposition party, Orange Democratic Party (ODM) and the Kibaki led government. Thus after the 27, December 2007 General Elections, ethnic tension turned bitter as the opposition alleged that elections had been rigged by President Kibaki's Party of National Unity (PNU). By the end of the Post Election Violence (PEV) more than 1300 Kenyans were dead and more that 300,000 lived as internally displaced Peoples (IDP) yet the roots of this ethnic and political conflict can laid squarely on negative ethnicity, historical injustices and the 1992 and 1997 ethnic wars in the country. The Kibaki regime, like its predecessors, had failed to bring a sense of nationalism and patriotism across the ethnic groups. Okoth (2008) pointed out that 2007 violence had been caused by underdevelopment, economic competition and historical injustices (Okoth, 2008). The violence was the product of many years of 'manipulated electoral processes, ethnicisation of politics and the betrayal by Kenyatta regime on land that he allocated to his cronies in the Rift Valley and the flawed elections' (Ong'ayo, 2008).

Characteristics of politics of ethnicity in Kenya

According to Wanyande et al. (2007), political regimes in Kenya and Africa as a whole, suffered specific challenges after independence, which included the above mentioned problems as well as 'poor government representation and accountability, lack of respect for ethics and rules, unjust distribution of national resources for prosperity. In post-colonial Kenya, the process of political representation was watered down through deliberate changes on the constitution. One notable change was the shift from a multiparty to a single party electoral system. As a result of manipulate electoral system; there were illegitimate representatives who were not able to articulate the

people's interests. As a corollary, the independence of the courts of law from extraneous influence was undermined by the substantive lack of security of tenure for the judges in the face of the president's discretionary powers to appoint judges.

In the 2007 post election, which was underpinned by negative ethnicity, children were orphaned, women were widowed, women were raped and many became internally displaced people (IDP) especially in the Rift Valley leading to poverty. The worst effect was that security agents brutalized citizens in Kenya. As neighbours turned against each other, there was systematic destruction of social cohesion. Many years after the episodes of ethnic killings, the local economies were destroyed and people still live in poverty and in fear of neighbours. Yet the solution lies in long term policies that will guarantee national healing and cohesion through good governance and equitable distribution on national resources.

Another challenge to post-colonial state in Kenya was the skewed distribution of development resources due to ethnic and political patronage (Kaimenyi and Ndungu, 2005). One reason is that as population became bigger, resources became fewer than the needs of the society. The subsequent imbalance between resources and demands led to the introduction of a criteria of distribution based on ethnicity and nepotism with the President's tribe getting more than the others, that is , between 1963 and 1978, the Kikuyu.

The crisis of development and resource distribution in Kenya became acute in the mid-1980s following the introduction of the World Bank led structural adjustment Programmes. There were also the class-based disparities irrespective of ethnicity, which exacerbated the configurations. The class-based discrepancy that existed in the colonial era persisted into the post-colonial state, 'precisely because the class structure of society retained' (Wanyande et al. 2007). Indeed the post-colonial sate did not reform the 'bifurcated state' that was inherited from the past era. Instead in Kenyatta and Moi's Kenya, class power and ethnicity became increasingly intertwined. The concept of the 'tribe' became more fundamental as the Kikuyu (later Kalenjin) elites turned to their ethnic groups for support in their competition for scarce resources. The absence of an opposition political party in Kenya (after 1969) allowed Kenyatta and later, Moi respectively to a mass economic and political power for the control and regulation of their respective countries.

What is the solution? Guy argues that 'everyone else condemns negative ethnicity yet too often they do nothing else' (Guy, 1980). Pheroze Nowrojee, a prominent lawyer in Kenya has proposed that we should avoid politics of ethnic exclusivity (*siasa mbaya, maisha mbaya* of former President Moi), (National Star, 29/7/2009). As a panacea Kenya could also needs to implement the devolution of government at the grassroots. There is also need to address the historical injustices especially in the Roift Valley and the Coastal region as proposed by the Kofi

Annan committee in 2007/8 post-violence truce. Further, politics should be about the national interest rather than narrow ethnic nationalism. The country needs to come to terms with the 2008 negotiated Agenda Four on historical injustices in Kenya. Other measures need to ensure a reduction of economic disparity between the richest and poorest counties, which has been achieved in the 2010 constitution.. The politicians, who inflame ethnic passions during political contests, should contain political use of ethnic animosity and the glorification of false ethnic nationalism. In Kenya there have been Kiliku Commission, Kriegler Commission, Waki Commission and Alston Report whose findings have not been implemented. Granted there is now the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission (IEBC), a national integration commission and Kenya National Human Rights Commission yet as a nation we have failed to agree on how to deal with the suspects of the 1992, 1998 and 2007 ethnic violence; hence the intervention of the International Criminal Court (ICC) process. Kenya is more determined to break with the past but which way to go is the problem. The country needs a dedicated political will to deal with the past ethnic and land problems.

Other solutions and options include the creation of Truth Justice and Reconciliation (TJRC) led by Ambassador Bethwel Kiplagat (Kagwanja and Southall, 2010). However, poverty and underdevelopment continue to light the embers of ethnic animosity and we believe that negative ethnicity will be reduced with increased investments and economic prosperity, as pursued by Kenya under vision 2030.

Ali Mazrui states that, 'for a while class and ethnic antagonism will simply reinforce each other, but as the economy becomes more complex and its productive capacity becomes enlarged, kinship competition should begin to subside significantly' (Mazrui, 1979). Kagwanja has proposed voting based on electoral college in addition to the popular vote as a solution to big tribes ganging up to dominate the country (Kagwanja, 2010) This view is predicated on the fact that current system of voting is not representative enough. However, Mutiga has reminded us that Kenyans as a whole are not inexorably tribal. They do not bear deep seated, static hatreds like those of Muslim Shiites and Sunnis of Iraq and Iran.

There are no fixed and permanent hostilities among the Kenyan ethnic groups. Negative ethnicity is a game among the elite with constantly shifting boundaries (Mutiga, 2013)

Conclusion

The paper attempted to discuss the meaning of ethnicity and the causes of ethnic conflicts in Kenya since independence. Ethnicity is perceived as a perceived identity based on similar language, origin, culture and social and political orientation. With decolonization,

pioneer leaders in Kenya consolidated their power with ethnic based support, which led to exclusivist policies against sections of their citizens. The 2007/8 violence was the result of historical injustice, land allocations by Kenyatta regime, flawed elections, lack of institutional mechanism for conflict resolution and the general poverty and underdevelopment.. The theory of ethnicity is based on primordial and essentialist approaches, among others. Kenya witnessed ethnicity and political conflicts in 1992, 1997/8, 2007/8, all of which came after the coming of multi-party politics, which ecercabated ethnic competition for power and resources.

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