Citizenship Contestation and Reprisal Violence in sub-Saharan Africa

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Abstract

Why do governments choose to challenge the citizenship of ethnic minority groups? Why do some of these cases result in violence, but not others? My research shows that governments choose to challenge the citizenship when the exclusion of the group benefits the government's political project regardless of a democratic transition, and that affected groups will react with violence when there is an intersection of a political opening and a lack of credible exit options. I examined multiple case studies of ethnic minority groups bisected by international borders in sub-Saharan Africa: the Banyarwanda in Congo/Zaire, the Banyarwanda in Uganda, the Dioula in Côte d’Ivoire, the Bamileke in Cameroon, and black Africans in Mauritania. I analyzed key historical points of citizenship contestation and extension to understand the variation of event outcomes within these countries.
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Introduction

“The Gabonese have chased the strangers and they are still alive. The Nigerians have chased the strangers and they are still alive. The Libyans chased the strangers out of their country, and they are still alive. So, if Ivory Coast chases the strangers, what is the problem?”

Borders primarily remain in colonial configurations in Africa. European powers divided up the continent at the Berlin Conference in 1884, choosing pieces of land based on suspected profitability, rather than along divisions determined by people that actually lived there. Today, centuries after the Berlin Conference, the colonies have become countries along these irrational colonial lines. Though with more than 800 ethnic groups sharing the Continent as their home, it is unclear what logical lines would have looked like.

Many ethnic groups who did not consider each other countrymen have become citizens together of one arbitrarily-drawn state. Previously, some indigenous groups had regarded certain other groups living in the area as migrants or strangers, not as permanent residents. But after independence, these indigenous groups had to reconcile that these “strangers” now had access to the same legal and civic rights. In some countries, ethnic groups built alliances and cooperated to create a new government. In others, ethnic groups jockeyed for political control and attempted to exclude their rivals from political power. One strategy of exclusion used by ethnic groups in power was to challenge the citizenship of their rivals by branding them as “other”. The method of “othering” served to call claims to belonging of certain groups into question.

The governments of some countries have capitalized on the xenophobic sentiment of “indigenous” groups against certain minorities by challenging to their citizenship. In several

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1 Ivorian news broadcast, 2003 (Geschiere 2009, 104)
cases, such as in Zaire/Congo, Uganda, Côte d’Ivoire and others that will be discussed in this project, xenophobic belief has resulted in the revocation of citizenship and/or expulsion of minorities from the countries they call home. Only in some of these cases, however, have these groups reacted with violence against the government.

This project seeks to answer two questions. When do governments challenge the citizenship of ethnic minorities? After these challenges have occurred, what cases will trigger violent reactions as opposed to peaceful responses?

While the arguments presented in the literature illuminate several factors that influence citizenship contestation and ethnic violence, there are several crucial elements missing. My research will contribute by responding to these gaps. Building on the dominant theory that governments contest citizenship at times of democratization, I argue that governments will challenge citizenship whenever doing so furthers their interests whether under a democracy or an autocracy. I also argue that cases of contestation will result in violence when there is an intersection of two events: 1) when there is a political opening that increases the salience of citizenship, and 2) when there is no credible exit option for the group facing the challenge. I will use evidence from six case studies to support these hypotheses: the Banyarwanda in Congo/Zaire, the Banyarwanda in Uganda, the Dioula in Côte d’Ivoire, black Africans in Mauritania, the Bamileke in Cameroon, and the Jola in the Gambia.

Before delving into these questions, there are several key concepts that are crucial to understand. First, we need to understand what citizenship is and why it matters. Next, it is important to understand ways that it is commonly contested by authorities and why authorities do so. The first section of this chapter will address the existing literature on citizenship in Africa
and explore the established hypotheses about why and when citizenship is contested by
governments. Next, we need to understand how governments challenge citizenship, from
disenfranchisement and the removal of citizenship documents to repression and violence. The
second section of this chapter will discuss literature on political repression by governments.
Finally, to help us understand why groups attack the government after their citizenship has been
challenged, we will examine theories from the literature on ethnic violence and rebellion.

**Citizenship: Accessible to All?**

Citizenship law poses a puzzle in many sub-Saharan African states because of the fluid
nature of population movements across borders. After countries achieved independence, they
were ushered into the paradigm of nation-states and were expected by the international
community to give citizenship to each person living within their territories (Herbst 2000, 228).
However, borders in Africa were arbitrarily created and thus porous, as groups migrate back and
forth for trade and to visit ethnic kin that were bisected by international boundaries. People were
“assigned” to a state, even if they may have spent more time moving into another state to trade or
visit family. There are at least 50 ethnic groups that have kin groups that live across the border in
a neighboring country (Vogt et al 2014). This data set of transborder ethnic kin (TEK) groups
aggregated smaller, related ethnic groups into one larger group, so there may be even more
subgroups that have ethnic kin across borders. What is the use of citizenship to people when
borders are fluid? This section of the literature review will discuss the philosophical and
historical underpinnings of citizenship law, examine several common theories about the saliency
of citizenship, and discuss when citizenship becomes contested.

To frame this discussion of citizenship rights, we first need to understand the
philosophical ideal of citizenship. Citizenship is an essential part of life within the state today. The nation-state system requires a specific set of relations between people, citizenship, and the state to exist. The current configuration of citizenship rests upon biopolitics, as argued by Michel Foucault. Foucault developed the idea of biopolitics in his later life, defining it as the “inclusion of man’s natural life in the mechanisms and calculations of power” (Agamben 1998, 1). The nation-state paradigm hinges on the politicization of bare life. One is born as a citizen; there is no separation between natural life and political consciousness. This blurring of the private and political sphere results in an inextricable link between one’s humanity and one’s citizenship. As natural life is politicized, the state becomes the ultimate guardian of human rights (Agamben 1998, 77).

While Foucault emphasizes the relationship between citizen and state, citizenship can also be viewed through the functional representation principle. This concept argues that the relationship between people and the state are managed by the group to which individuals belong (Osaghae 2016, 256). In Africa, this frequently occurs through the idea of ethnic citizenship, where citizenship rights are contingent upon membership to an ethnic group. Often these rights may be apply unevenly to different and marginalized groups (Osaghae 2016, 256). State leaders in Africa may attempt to stave off rivals jockeying for political power by “pursu[ing] hegemonic and exclusionary projects that seek to reproduce the state in the image of the dominant ethnic or religious group” (Osaghae 2016, 259). These exclusionary policies can result in the citizenship of ethnic minority groups to be called into question, because it exists outside of the ideology of the dominant group. This idea of how ethnic citizenship can influence citizenship contestation is crucial to foundation of this project. My argument explores how governments raise doubts about
the citizenship of an ethnic group to perpetuate their own agendas, which frequently, but not necessary, align with their own ethnic groups.

How people conceive themselves in relation to the government is frequently different from how citizenship is legally administered. Another facet of the discussion of citizenship that needs to be understood before exploring methods of contestation is how citizenship is legally defined. States approach citizenship through two distinct legal routes: *jus sanguinis* and *jus soli*. *Jus sanguinis*, or “right of blood” in Latin, requires one to have parents that were citizens of a land to become citizens of a country (Keller 2014, 34). In many African states, children can only receive citizenship through their father. The an alterative of *jus sanguinis* is *jus soli*, or “right of soil”. This version of citizenship law affords people citizenship on the basis of whether or not they were born in the country. In his book, in his book, *States and Power in Africa*, Jeffrey Herbst coded the citizenship laws of 40 African states. He found that 14 states use “place of descent” (*jus soli*) while 26 states used “place of ancestry” (*jus sanguinis*) (Herbst 2000, 237). Herbst also found that African states closely mirror the policies of the former colonial power, and those who have altered citizenship policies have shifted from a policy of *jus soli* to that of *jus sanguinis* (2000, 239). While Herbst notes these trends in his analysis, he does not take into account the frequency of expulsion or the contested citizenship of ethnic minorities beyond briefly mentioning the difficulties of the Banyarwanda (Herbst 2000, 237). I will expand upon his research through more comprehensive case studies on the Banyarwanda in Zaire and in Uganda, respectively.

*“There is No Greater Power than that which Grows Out of the Barrel of Gun”: Why and How States Contest Citizenship*

Now that we have discussed the philosophical and legal backgrounds of citizenship,
when and why do governments contest the right to citizenship of people living in their state? The prevailing argument about when citizenship contestation is most likely is to happen is that it occurs at the time of democratic transition. The foremost scholar on citizenship rights in Africa, Bronwen Manby, argues that many of the citizenship issues she writes about--the questioning of citizenship, revocation, and expulsion--are rooted in the transition to democracy. Manby posits that leaders manipulate ethnic divides and politicized indigeneity for more power during the tumultuous time of democratization through calling the citizenship of competing groups into question (Manby 2009, 6). She also argues that governments are most likely to challenge the citizenship of ethnic groups with transborder ethnic kin because they fear that these groups will shift their allegiances away from the government, and so try to preempt this defection by exclusion. The local governments perceive a threat to their grasp on the authority within the territory, which leads the government to question the legitimacy of the group’s citizenship (Manby 2009, 31). Manby argues that challenging citizenship furthers the interests of the government, because then certain populations are not entitled to the protections guaranteed by the state, and so exist outside of courts and international law, which clears the way for government action (Manby 2009, 39).

While the basis of Manby’s theory is sound, her focus on democratization leaves out other key instances of citizenship contestation. Her argument does not account for cases in which a citizenship challenge occurs outside of a democratic transition, such as in Zaire in 1981 and Mauritania in 1989. In these two cases, which will be respectively discussed in Chapter Two and Four, the government revoked the citizenship rights of an ethnic minority under authoritarian rule. My theory builds upon this democratization argument to consider instances of political
opening more broadly. I define a political opening as a moment at which critical societal actors renegotiate terms of political authority and governance, such as during a civil war or the transition to a multi-party state.

Another theory as to why governments contest citizenship rights comes from Claire L. Adida, who writes on immigrant exclusion and expulsion. Although her work primarily focuses on the situation of immigrants in West African countries, her theories are still useful for informing how we think about different levels of citizenship contestation. As to why governments pursue exclusionary policies, Adida argues that these policies are frequently a response to both perceived economic and cultural threats that immigrants pose to host societies (Adida 2014, 12). Among these supposedly threatening immigrants, immigrants with a large cultural overlap with the host communities were considered to be a greater risk by the host communities. With their similar cultural background to the host community, these immigrants were more readily able to access resources and services than immigrants from different cultural backgrounds. The immigrant’s ease of navigating the host society created a perceived decrease in the amount of resources and services for the host community (Adida 2014, 18). Her data found that expulsions usually were not a response to foreign policy goals or used as a tool of nation-building (2014, 144-45). As to when governments choose to expel these challenging groups, Adida’s data additionally demonstrated that immigrant expulsions were most likely after two years of economic downturn.

Another missing piece in this literature, which I explore with my case studies, is how affected groups react to the contestation of their citizenship rights. While Manby and Claire Adida have covered some of the causes of citizenship contestation, no one has written about the
results of what happens afterwards or how affected groups respond. My project addresses this gap by exploring the variation in how groups react to changes in their citizenship rights.

Clearly all forms of citizenship challenges are not equal—contestation can occur on a spectrum, ranging from xenophobic rhetoric to ethnic cleansing and genocide. All methods of citizenship contestation are forms of political repression, and so we can look to the state repression body of literature to understand the relationship between government and tools of repression. We must examine the larger literature of political repression because there is not a sizable body of literature on citizenship contestation itself.

Before discussing the how, the why, and the when of repression, we first must understand what repression is in general. Repression is often defined among scholars in this field as threats or acts of coercion against individuals or groups by the government in hopes of preventing certain acts or beliefs that might pose a challenge to the government authority (Davenport and Inman 2007, 620; Henderson 1991, 121). Repression violates “First Amendment” type rights, such as the freedom of speech, press, assembly, movement, the freedom of association and belief without government surveillance, and the freedom of protest (Davenport 2007, 2). It also infringes more basic human rights, such as the freedom from torture, forced disappearance, and death (2). Repression can take a variety of different forms. Repression restricts political expression through fear, such as surveillance of the population and certain restrictions on free speech and assembly (Davenport and Inman 2007, 620). Repression can be enacted through direct mechanisms of violence, such as physical intimidation, detention, death squads, and mass killings (120). Repression can also be structural, such as marginalization, where groups are kept on the outside of society, and fragmentation, where groups are kept separate from one another
through divisive housing codes or other measures (Galtung 1990, 294).

Repression egregiously harms people’s most basic rights, which raises the question of why governments use repression against their own people. Simply put, repression is a method of control when states do not perceive themselves to have other options to manage dissidents in their population. Hannah Arendt writes that “there is no greater power than that which grows out of the barrel of gun,” arguing that violence can secure state control through coercing populations to be obedient to the authority of the government (1969, 37). Khmelko and Wiegand specifically explore the intersections of government repression and ethnic violence, arguing that government repression is often used as a response to the mobilization, protest, and violence of ethnic groups against the state (Khmelko and Wiegand 2010, 13). Particularly if a government is threatened with violence from its opposition, repression will be used to enforce state control, which is what Davenport and Inman describe as the Law of Coercive Responsiveness (2007, 621). In their empirical evaluation of previous claims about repression, Hill and Jones build upon these two theories, finding that when faced with bloody clashes against opposing factions, governments indeed will utilize repression against their populations, regardless of combatant-status (2014, 677). Governments can control their populations through repressive mechanisms and sanctions such as surveillance and punishment, which have been found to decrease violence (Gurr 1970, 239).

In the case studies that I have compiled, states use a number of strategies to limit the access of certain ethnic groups to citizenship: the confiscation of identity documents, disenfranchisement, restrictions on assembly, marginalization through requiring groups to live in certain areas, expulsion, and physical violence. These methods are only a selection of possible
repression methods, and more may be used by the states to restrict expression of citizenship.

Research on the use of repression by states is a growing field, and thus has several areas for improvement and for further research. I contribute to this body of work by exploring the use of methods of repression for contesting of citizenship. The contestation of citizenship falls under the umbrella of “First Amendment” rights, as everyone has the right to a nationality as guaranteed by the United Nations (UN) Declaration of Human Rights (Article 15). Understanding why states restrict access to citizenship through repression is integral to understanding why reprisal violence erupts.

**When Do Threatened Minorities Resist?**

Thus far in this chapter, I have discussed when citizenship is contested and how governments use discrimination and citizenship contestation as a tool of repression. So when ethnic groups face repression, when do they react with violence? First, I will examine theories that argue that merely experiencing discrimination and marginalization is enough to act as a catalyst for ethnic rebellion. Next I will explore a set of theories that argue violence is influenced by economics, and finally will examine the arguments about the influence of transborder ethnic kin (TEK) groups.

Ethnic hostilities have become one of the largest and deadliest types of violence in the post-1945 period: between 1961 and 1965, ethnic violence accounted for roughly 30% of violent intrastate conflicts (Hewitt 1977, 151). Additionally, the casualties from this type of conflict amounted to more than 10 million in the period between 1945 and 1970 (Hewitt 1977, 151). If ethnic conflict is not due to the inherent friction between two or more ethnic groups, then what is
One argument is that repression itself can be a catalyst for violence, regardless of ethnic hostilities. While violence can support a government’s control of a population through threats and force, opposition forces can also use violence to disrupt this obedience and destroy the government’s power (Arendt 1969, 54). For example, if a government has harsh sanctions and punishments against a rebellious group, it can create a more hostile population which can lead to more sustained political violence later. In fact, using repression can have unintended effects: using force against a group can actually provoke belligerents to use even more force against the government (Gurr 1970, 232). Additionally, if a government and a dissident group hold relatively equal levels of coercion and support from various institutions, then direct violence between the two factions is highly likely, regardless of sanctions and measures of repression (234).

Another theory seeks to specifically explain ethnic violence and argues that when groups are faced with disparate life outcomes, they will choose violence to try to mend these discrepancies. Repressive policies can lead to threats against basic life needs, which groups will try to remedy through rebellion. Ted Gurr calls this situation “relative deprivation”, which he describes as a perceived difference between what a person believes themselves to be entitled to, such as certain living conditions and rights, and what living conditions and rights a person is actually able to attain (1970, 13). Relative deprivation can also be explained through the lens of basic needs. Johan Galtung writes that “avoidable insults to basic human needs, and more generally to life, [that lower] the real level of needs satisfaction between what is potentially possible” is a form of violence in itself (1990, 292). Many government policies and societal
dynamics can be understood as “insults to basic human needs”, such as repressive policies like the discrimination and marginalization of a group, desocialization, and treating a group as a secondary citizen, as well as other policies that blatantly instruct direct physical violence (Galtung 1970, 13).

Gurr argues that relative deprivation is enough to propel a group to violence. If a group is faced with high levels of relative deprivation, then they will be discontent with their circumstances, which will manifest as violence against political actors (Gurr 1970, 13). While the type of violence action may take varied forms, such as riots, coups, or a civil war, this theory argues that all political violence is rooted in the frustration of people at failing to meet their potential for attaining basic goods and living conditions.

Relative deprivation can be broken down into vertical inequalities, which are inequalities between individuals or households, and horizontal inequalities, which are disparities in outcomes between ethnic groups. Using evidence from case studies, Frances Stewart argues that horizontal inequalities act as a catalyst for conflict. Stewart distinguishes between four categories of horizontal inequalities (HIs): economic, social, political, and cultural. All HIs can drive a group to violence, but political HIs, or differences in access to political power and political participation, can especially motivate rebellions such as the violence following the 2008 elections in Kenya (Stewart 2011, 3). Likewise, economic and cultural HIs can act as catalysts for violence as well, as seen in Côte d’Ivoire in 1993. The rebels enumerated their grievances with the state in their manifesto, such as their frustration with their economic position in society and the refusal of the Ivorian government to recognize Islam (3). The contestation of citizenship can be understood as the deprivation of access to social services and political spheres, falling
under the basic life need of identity.

I seek to build upon Gurr’s theory and argue in the following chapters that the frustration of a group with the government’s contestation of their citizenship can be a precondition to realize violence. Citizenship contestation is one political inequality, a type of relative deprivation. While Gurr argues that a threat to a basic need, like an identity need, can be enough for violence in and of itself, I extend his theory by arguing that the contestation of citizenship is necessary but not sufficient for violence. Other preconditions must exist alongside this underlying motivation. A political opening and the lack of credible exit option must be present for violence that combats a threat to citizenship to occur.

However, other scholars argue ethnic violence is more complex that simply frustration with discriminations and disparate outcomes. For example, some scholars argue that violence primarily results from economic reasons, whether it be an economic HI or economic competition between groups. Marxists argue that ethnicity is a tool to distract and separate the working class from uniting in their shared interests (Horowitz 1985, 106). In a study of ethnic minority groups around the world, however, Christopher Hewitt found that economic causes are indeed at the root of several ethnic clashes (Hewitt 1977, 154). When certain ethnic groups have a lower economic status than other groups, such as occupying a lower share of white-collar jobs or having less access to economic reasons, then an ethnic group may be pushed to violence to try to remedy this difference. An example that Hewitt found was the class stratification in Zanzibar before its revolution (Hewitt 1977, 155). However, some doubt has been cast upon this theory because ethnic groups were often historically funneled into different occupations by colonial policies, thus reducing their need for competition (Horowitz 1985, 124). It is also argued that tensions can
arise from economic competition between the business elites of host societies and trading minorities and lead to conflict (Horowitz 1985, 107). This has occasionally been the case, such as in the Philippines with competition between Filipinos and Chinese traders fueling repressive policies, but there is frequently little hostility between ethnic groups and trading minorities (Horowitz 1985, 115).

In sum, the arguments that ethnic violence is primarily linked to economic inequality are unconvincing. While there may be isolated cases where economic competition resulted in violence, it is not a very common trend. It is also worth noting that ethnic groups are willing to lose out economically in return for other gains, such as more autonomy or achieving secession (Horowitz 1985, 131). I seek to further cast doubt on these theories with my research, instead showing that the deprivation of citizenship rights and lack of access to TEK groups provoke violence.

Another group of scholars argue that demographics also play a role in motivating ethnic groups to rebel. For example, Hewitt found that the size of the group and the rate of increase of the population contribute to the likelihood of a conflict. The size of a minority group is often correlated to its strength, and so larger minority groups are more likely to resort to violence when they have a grievance with the state (Hewitt 1977, 157). Additionally, the presence of an ethnic kin group in a neighboring country influences conflict. Ethnic kin groups are members of the same ethnic group, but not necessarily familially related. When ethnic groups have a related group in a country that borders their state, the probability of violence increases under certain conditions as the bordering groups will intervene on behalf of their kin groups (Cederman et al 2013, 407). Through a statistical analysis of ethnonationalist triads, Cederman et al found that
when the transborder ethnic kin (TEK) groups are neither too small nor too large, they will intervene in neighboring states on behalf of their co-ethnics. However, if the TEK group controls the neighboring state, it is less clear if the group will intervene. Majority control by the TEK group acts as a safety valve: the control of a neighboring state functions as a safe haven to which ethnic groups can escape, removing motivation for enacting violence against their home state (Cederman et al 2013, 407). Majority-controlled neighboring states can also be less likely to intervene on behalf of their TEK groups because it is too risky (Cederman et al 2013, 407). But stateless groups, such as the Kurds, are dangerous in the sense that they are disadvantaged in their home states and more willing to intervene for the TEK groups since their situation at home is unlikely to get worse.

These theories regarding demographics and TEK groups are hotly contested. In contrast, James Fearon and David Laitin argue that rather than demographics or ethnic differences, the geography of a country is a more persuasive predictor of violence. In a statistical analysis of civil wars since 1945, Fearon and Laitin find that the level of ethnic diversity in a country is not an indicator of conflict (2003, 82). Instead, they argue that frequency of conflict is better understood by the conditions that are beneficial for insurgency: a weak state with a lack of control over rough terrain, a large population, and instability. If a state has a region of rough terrain where but does not have the central power to adequately maintain control over its large population, then insurgents can easily hide within the population in the areas difficult for authorities to access. Fearon and Laitin differ from Stewart and Hewitt in that they found that these conditions were a more accurate predictor of civil war and ethnic violence than HIs within a country, as they accounted for economic, cultural, and political grievances respectively within their statistical
analysis. The characteristics that favor insurgency influence the organizational and technical capabilities of a government or military to penetrate difficult geographical terrain to combat an insurgency or guerrilla war (88).

The effect of TEK groups is clearly disputed, and thus there is a need for further research. My research seeks to fill this gap. In following chapters, I explore the relationship between the TEK groups and enacting violence against the state, arguing that the lack of a viable exit option to a country with TEK, whether because of a lack of a TEK group or due to the TEK group’s marginalized position within that country, will force a group to respond to citizenship contestation with violence.

**Hypotheses and Research Design**

Clearly many scholars have conducted in-depth work and developed explanatory theories on these questions of citizenship and violence. My research, however, fills several gaps within the body of literature. Starting with my first research question of under which conditions governments choose to challenge the citizenship of ethnic minority groups, the dominant theory is that contestation will occur at times of democratization, such as in the 1960s as countries attained independence and the 1990s when countries opened to democratic, multiparty rule. The democratization theory, however, does not account for cases when contestation has occurred outside of a democratic transition. Notably, challenges to citizenship happened in Zaire in 1981, Uganda in 1969, and in Mauritania in 1989, when each of these countries had not opened to democracy. My first hypothesis seeks to account for this discrepancy:

*Hypothesis 1: Governments contest citizenship of ethnic minorities when it serves their political interests, regardless of whether the country is democratizing.*
This hypothesis provides a reason as to why these challenges occurred outside of
democratization: the challenges furthered the political projects of the ruling elite, by allowing
them to retain their political power through removing outside opponents, by appeasing their
constituency, or for other political projects to be explored.

While scholars have studied ethnic violence and rebellion against governance generally,
they have not studied the particular situation of when an ethnic group faces a citizenship threat.
My research suggests a new theory for this situation:

Hypothesis 2: Violence will result when there is a political opening and when the group perceives a lack of credible exit options.

In other words, when there is uncertainty regarding the ability of a group to access political
rights after a political change and a group cannot flee the country to another due to regional
instability or repression of their neighboring ethnic kin, violence will occur. In this context, I
define a political opening as a moment at which critical societal actors are renegotiating terms of
political authority and/or governance. Examples of a political opening include a new
constitution, an election, the opening to a multiparty system, and democratization. I define
violence as low-level armed resistance against the government, where armed clashes break out
between government-aligned forces and a rebel group.

To support these hypotheses, I present six case studies. I have limited the scope of my
case studies to African ethnic minorities with transborder ethnic kin. Citizenship revocation has
occurred against non-African ethnic minorities, such as the Lebanese in Sierra Leone, the
expulsion of Asians from Uganda, and the citizenship revocation of white Zimbabweans. But for
this project, I was specifically interested in cases of where ethnic minorities can conceivably be
“indigenous” but have had their access to state rights limited, despite it being “their” homeland.
I was curious as to whether having transborder ethnic kin proved to be an indicator of whether an ethnic group would react with violence or flee to their neighboring kin. Future research could explore whether groups with transborder ethnic kin are more predisposed to citizenship threats, but that is not the aim of this project.

The revocation of citizenship is incredibly rare, happening in fewer than 15 cases. Despite the uniqueness of this outcome, I chose to study citizenship revocation because of its implications for access to rights as well as its refusal to recognize a group’s sense of belonging. By choosing an outcome that has happened so rarely but is so dangerous, it is important to understand under what conditions citizenship revocation happens to prevent any future events.

I begin with examining variation between different times of contestation and the extension of citizenship as well as the variations within resulting reactions within one country. Chapter Two uses the case of the Banyarwanda in Congo/Zaire from the 1960s until the 1990s. Citizenship was granted to the Banyarwanda at independence with the 1960 Loi Fundamentale, a transitional constitution, but was revoked in the 1964 Luluabourg Constitution due to fears of Rwandan refugees taking power. In response to this revocation, the Banyarwanda revolted in what came to be known as the Kanyarwanda Rebellion after the political opening of the constitutional convention and a lack of exit options to Burundi or Rwanda. After a prominent Banyarwanda man came to power as the head of Mobutu’s cabinet, Mobutu issued a decree granting citizenship to the group in 1971. Angering the self-styled “indigenous” Congolese, political momentum pressured Mobutu to rescind the law in 1981, which occurred while Zaire was still an autocracy. While previously having responded with violence, the Banyarwanda reacted peacefully as there was no political opening changing the rules of authority and there
were available exit options to Rwanda. Finally, the Conférence Nationale Souveraine, a congress held to organize the transition to multi-party rule, again denied the Banyarwanda access to citizenship. Violence broke out in eastern Congo shortly afterwards in 1993, after the political opening of the CNS and a dearth of exit options in the region. I analyze these events using primary source materials, such as government documents and newspaper articles that I collected during my research trip to Brussels, Belgium, as well as secondary source materials.

Chapter Three studies the case of the Banyarwanda in Uganda from the 1960s until the 1980s. By choosing studying the same ethnolinguistic group within the Great Lakes region but in different countries, I am able to control for the customs and religion of the ethnic group as well as regional politics. Under Milton Obote’s first rule, the Banyarwanda had full citizenship, but Obote enacted discriminatory measures against them in 1969. No violence resulted at the time, as there was not a political opening and there was an available exit option to Zaire. When Gen. Idi Amin took power in 1971, he promoted the Banyarwanda within the civil service, giving top administrative positions to members of the group. Amin was overthrown in 1979, and Obote rose to power again in 1980. Government forces violently expelled the Banyarwanda from their homes in 1982 and 1983. In response to these actions, the Banyarwanda joined the ranks of the National Resistance Army (NRA) that had been fighting a civil war against Obote, as they could not exit to Zaire or to Rwanda and had the political opening of the civil war. I use primary sources, such as government reports and UN documents, as well as secondary sources to explore these cases.

Chapter Four is a selection of four case studies. The first three cases examine a time of citizenship contestation and the resulting reaction. I begin with the Dioula in Côte d’Ivoire, who
launched a civil war after having their identity cards taken by the government. Then I discuss black Africans in Mauritania, who the Mauritanian government expelled under a political project of Arabization. My final case of citizenship contestation focuses on the Bamileke in Cameroon, and the Jola in the Gambia. The final case study of the Gambia examines a situation in which one might have expected the government to contest the citizenship of the Jola, but no challenge occurred. I find that a challenge to the Jola’s citizenship would not have benefited the government’s interests due to the regime’s coalitional structure, as well as the intermarriage and cultural transmission between ethnic groups in the south of the Gambia. Chapter Four relies on primary and secondary sources. Chapter Five will summarize my findings and present opportunities for future research.
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Chapter Two: the Banyarwanda in the Congo

“These people do not have Rwandan citizenship, but only that of Congo. The Constitutional Court has testified: the Rwandan population is Congolese.”

-Banyarwanda representatives

Introduction

The Banyarwanda have long had a precarious position in the Congo, from the time of the Republic of Congo, through Zaire, and up to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). Despite living within the Congo prior to colonial times, the Banyarwanda have frequently been regarded as “outsiders” who do not truly “belong” in the Congo. This suspicion of the Banyarwanda by other ethnic groups has manifested in repeated challenges to their citizenship. While initially granted citizenship in 1960, it was taken away in 1964 with the Luluabourg Constitution. After a member of the Banyarwanda became Mobutu’s right hand man, he extended citizenship again in 1971, only later to rescinded it in 1981. The issue of nationality was revisited at the Conférence Nationale Souveraine (CNS) in 1991-2, but ultimately the Banyarwanda did not attain citizenship. This pattern of extension and revocation of citizenship breaks from the theory that citizenship challenges happen at democratization--while 1960 and 1991 were periods of democratization, democracy had been already established in 1964, and Mobutu was in the midst of his long autocratic rule in 1981. The Banyarwanda’s responses to the loss of their citizenship has varied as well. The eastern Congo saw outbreaks of violence in 1964 and in 1993 in response to the denial of their citizenship, but no violence erupted in 1981.

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2 Letter of Banyarwanda to North Kivu Provincial Council. Original French: “Ce People n’a pas de nationalité rwandaise, mais seulement celle du Congo. La Cour Constitutionnelle peut en témoigner: la population d’expression ruandaise est de nationalité congolaise.”
This chapter will explore both of these variations in the contested position of the Banyarwanda in Zaire and their responses to those challenges. In this chapter, I will use the case of the Banyarwanda to make two arguments. First, I will argue that citizenship contestation occurs when the exclusion of a certain group supports the government’s interests, regardless of time of democratization. Second, I will argue that this contestation will trigger violence when there is an intersection of two events: when there is a political opening that increases the salience of citizenship, and when there is no credible exit option for the group. In this context, a political opening is when political actors are renegotiating the terms of authority within a country, which can be democratization, opening to multi-party rule, or a regime change, to give a few examples.

The Banyarwanda in Zaire prove to be an insightful case. The Banyarwanda, an ethnolinguistic group, are speakers of Kinyarwanda. They have transborder ethnic kin in Rwanda, Burundi, and Zaire. By studying the treatment of this group over a period of time, I am able to control for a single country context--the culture, religion, and societal structure of the group stays the same so I can isolate specific political or regional factors that have changed between each case.

The outline of the chapter is as follows: I will first provide some contextualizing information, such as definitions and background history of the Banyarwanda. Then I will explore the variations in when and how the government contested the citizenship of the Banyarwanda between two cases: the 1960 Constitution vs. the 1964 Luluabourg Constitution, and then 1972 extension of citizenship vs. the 1981 revocation. Third, I will discuss the variations in the response of the Banyarwanda to their loss of citizenship by examining four time periods: the 1964 Kanyarwanda Rebellion in response to the 1964 Luluabourg Constitution, the lack of
violence in 1981, and finally the 1993 violence in Masisi in response to their exclusion from the Conférence Nationale Souveraine.

**Contextualizing citizenship**

Citizenship affords crucial benefits to its holder. It serves to differentiate between those who belong and are entitled to certain state services and those who do not. In Zaire, the benefits of citizenship included the right to vote and hold property. Citizenship also gives an added layer of legitimacy to a person’s claims on the government--if a person pays taxes and carries out their civic duties, then the state should be responsive to their claims.

Weak and failed states do not always have the capacity to uphold their side of the bargain. A puzzle then is how people consider their citizenship in these situations. Herbst writes that despite the inability of weak and failed states to administer certain privileges, people generally continue to value their citizenship for varied reasons (2009, 227). Therefore, even though Zaire did not function as well as stronger states, citizenship was not completely irrelevant to the Banyarwanda, as it allowed them to exist within the society as more than merely “strangers” or refugees.

The access of certain groups to citizenship can become contested at key moments. For example, Bronwen Manby argues that governments are more likely to contest citizenship of minority groups during the process of democratization (2009, 6). While this is partially true, I complicate her theory by arguing that governments instead contest the citizenship of minority groups when it aligns with the government’s political interests. This process often does occur during democratization, because it eliminates potential political rivals from grabbing power in
the transition to democracy. But it can also serve other political interests, such as a way to
delegitimize a group’s claim to power, which will be discussed in the 1981 case of revocation.

While citizenship always matters in some fashion, it does become more salient at political
openings. I define political opening as the transition of a state into another governmental system,
such as to multi-party rule or democratization. During these times, groups have the potential to
realign the political sphere and the ability to vote and organize becomes especially important.
My research finds that when groups lose these privileges and do not have a way to leave the
country, then they will be pushed to use violence to make claims on the state.

**Background information on the Banyarwanda**

The Banyarwanda are people who speak Kinyarwanda. Kinyarwanda is a language
present in the Great Lakes region that is primarily associated with Rwanda. However, the
language is also spoken in other countries in the region, such as the DRC and Uganda (Jackson
2007, 496). These people can be categorized into several sub-groups, such as the Banyamulenge,
Banyarutshuru, and Banyamasisi. Banyarwanda is a term used to identify Rwandophones with
no distinction between ethnic groups. The Banyarwanda have been present in the Congo even
before the arrival of Europeans (Makombo 1997, 51).

How then did they become seen as “other”?

The answer is complicated. In part, the arrival of migrants and refugees from Rwanda
cast doubt upon the ancestral status of other Banyarwanda living in eastern Congo. Many
Congolese contend that the Banyarwanda’s appearance in eastern Congo is a recent phenomenon
and deny that there were Banyarwanda living there before colonialism (Jackson 2007, 483).
However, this is false. The Berlin Conference of 1885 suddenly drew borders around Africa, failing to acknowledge anything that would influence borders other than the interests of the European powers. Movement through the Great Lakes region has always been fluid, despite the imposition of borders by European colonial administrations. Banyarwanda migrants settled into what would become the region of eastern Congo in the 1700s (Makombo 1997, 51). Another group of Tutsi migrants settled into a region between Lakes Kivu and Tanganyika, calling it “Mulenge”, subsequently becoming known in the 1960s and 1970s as the Banyamulenge as an effort to distinguish themselves from other, more recently-arrived Banyarwanda (51). People steadily migrated between areas in order to further their economic prospects and take advantage of opportunities. Some Banyarwanda migrants to eastern Congo were also political refugees who were fleeing the expansion of the Rwandan Kingdom (Jackson 2007, 484).

Colonialism brought more Banyarwanda into the Congo, through both the expansion of the idea of what territorially constituted the Congo as well as forced migration. In a convention in 1910, the Belgian annexed several regions of German East Africa (Pabanel 1991, 33). Belgian Congo absorbed these regions of Bwisha, Karunusi, Gishari and the island of Idjwi, and so the Banyarwanda who had been living in what had previously been East German Africa became Congolese (Pabanel 1991, 33). The Belgian Congo also incorporated the region of Rutshuru from Ruanda-Urundi, which brought more Banyarwanda into what would become North Kivu (Jackson 2007, 484).

The Belgian colonial administration began a system of forced labor migration from Rwanda to eastern Congo in 1937. The “Mission d’Immigration des Banyarwanda” continued until 1955, ultimately moving around 85,000 Rwandophones to North Kivu (Jackson 2007, 484).
The Belgians considered the Rwandophones to be more hardworking and industrious than the local Congolese, whom Belgians considered to be insolent and lazy (Jackson 2007, 484). Population pressures and economic incentives caused the Belgians to implement this program of forced migration, as a famine threatened certain overpopulated regions of Rwanda, and the Belgians needed workers for their plantations and mines (Jackson 2007, 484; Pabanel 1991,34; Prunier 2009, 2). The new population of Banyarwanda intermixed with the local Banyarwanda, who had lived in the eastern Congo before the arrival of the Belgians, which would complicate later discussions surrounding the legitimacy of Banyarwanda in oncoming years (Jackson 98).

The arrival of Rwandan refugees from the 1959 Social Revolution further complicated the status of previously established Banyarwanda. The violence during Rwanda’s transition to independence acted as a catalyst for the third wave of migration of Rwandophones to North Kivu in the late 1950s. Hutus, who are the majority in Rwanda, took control of Rwanda from the minority Tutsis, whose rule had been supported by the Belgians (Staub et al 2005, 299). Approximately 50,000 Tutsis were killed (Staub et al 2005, 299). The Hutu rebellion caused an estimated 80,000 Tutsi refugees to flee, out of which 40-50,000 people settled in North Kivu (Lemarchand 2012, 242). Some estimates, however, put the total number of refugees closer to 120,000 (Jackson 2007, 485). Rwanda became independent of Belgium in 1962, and refugees continued fleeing to eastern Congo until 1964. Lemarchand calls this “a critical turning point in the history of the DRC” as the Tutsi refugees gained political power and radically changed Mobutu’s land and citizenship laws. The incoming refugees from Rwanda were often Tutsi elites, who were well educated and had more administrative and professional skills than any other previous wave of migrants, which facilitated their later economic and political success
The Tutsi refugees settled into existing Banyarwanda communities, and assimilated with no distinction between Hutus and Tutsis (Prunier 2009, 2). The presence of a newly politically savvy ethnic group exacerbated conflicts over land, political representation, citizenship, and belonging with North Kivu and eastern Congo.

**Citizenship contestation**

In this section, I seek to explain the variation in the contestation of citizenship of the Banyarwanda. My first comparison will be between the 1960 Constitution, where the Banyarwanda were granted citizenship, and the 1964 Luluabourg Constitution, where the Banyarwanda lost their citizenship. Then I will examine the case of the 1972 citizenship law that extended citizenship law to all Banyarwanda and the later law of 1981 that revoked their citizenship. Finally I will compare and contrast the two cases, making the argument that the government decided to contest citizenship when the exclusion of the Banyarwanda furthered their political goals.

**Constitutional changes: 1960 vs. 1964**

The Congo attained its independence on June 30, 1960 from Belgium. Reluctant to relinquish control, Belgium formulated a partial transition--the Congo would be independent, but Belgium would retain authority over the army and the civil service (Young 1966, 34). Another element of this controlled transition was the constitution. The new country had a constitution, called the Loi Fundamentale, that had been crafted in Belgium, intended to be temporary until the Congolese Parliament developed their own (Legum 1962, 389). Congolese politicians,
however, could not agree on how to adopt their constitution: should they be a confederation of sovereign states or one nation (390)? The discussions primarily focused on the question of Congolese centralization, and ultimately the council implemented a compromise of a system using both federalist and unitary principles (390). While the army and civil service remained in place, the Republic of Congo would create completely new representative institutions (Young 1966, 34).

With the advent of independence, unity and solidarity were the main objectives of the Congolese politicians. Working the Belgians, they had the incentive to ensure that their constitution was as inclusive as possible, to ensure that the country survived after decolonization. When the question of the Banyarwanda’s citizenship arose at the conference, the representatives could not agree on what to do, so they kept the Banyarwanda as citizens and left the issue, like the rest of the institutions, to be revisited later (Mamdani 1997, 5). Even though this was a period of democratization as the country moved to independence, it was not the government’s interests to isolate the Banyarwanda, as the politicians were foremost concerned with developing strong state institutions.

The attempt to hold the country together through the 1960 constitution proved futile: Congolese unity became tumult soon after independence. The army mutinied on July 5, as Congolese officers were frustrated with their European commanding officers (Young 1966, 34). Six days later, the province of Katanga seceded, further complicating the question of how to set up the Congolese state (Legum 1962, 391). With no help from the UN, the Baluba areas of Kasai seceded on August 9 (Young 1966, 35). These provinces were the wealthiest in the Congo, Kasai with diamonds and Katanga rich with cobalt and copper (Lemarchand 1962, 405). In the midst of
these political crises, President Kasavubu “revoked” the Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba from office without explanation on September 5, which was quickly followed by then-Colonel Joseph-Desiré Mobutu’s military takeover of Léopoldville and installation of a new government (Young 1966, 25-26).

Against this background of interstate crisis, Rwandan refugees began arriving to eastern Congo after the 1959 Social Revolution. While it is true that many Banyarwanda migrated to the Congo for decades before independence, the questions surrounding their nationality were especially heightened by the influx of refugees. Responding to the fears of Rwandan refugees, the crafters of the 1964 Luluabourg Constitution, which replaced the Loi Fundamentale, revoked the citizenship of all Banyarwanda (Jackson 2007, 485).

The contentious election that resulted in the creation of North and South Kivu contributed to the pressure to revoke the Banyarwanda citizenship. Prior to the creation of North and South Kivu existed, the two provinces were joined as one: Central Kivu. Central Kivu provincial government was structured so that during 1963, the Banyarwanda of Rutshuru were overrepresented (Williame 1997, 48). Additionally, Cyrien Rwakabuba, a Munyarwanda3, was one of the executives of the council. However, in 1963, the other ethnic groups pushed through a referendum to return control of the region to “autochthonous” groups4 and create a new province of North Kivu (Williame 1997, 49). Despite the Banyarwanda having a majority that opposed the measure in Masisi, Goma, and Rutshuru, the referendum passed--indicating that the referendum

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3 Singular of Banyarwanda. Literally “Man from Rwanda”.
4 Groups that considered themselves “indigenous” to the region are the Hunde, Nande, and Nyanga. These groups are self-styled “autochtones” (literally sons of the the soil) and label the Banyarwanda “allochthones”, or outsiders. I occasionally will refer to these groups as “autochtones”.
had merely been a farce (Williame 1997, 50). Sporadic violence broke out in the region after the election results were announced, but was minor compared to the later rebellion in 1965.

The fears of Rwandan refugees, as well as the general fear of a region controlled by Banyarwanda, convoluted the political situation. While the previous wave of refugees had been the Tutsi elites, between 1963 and 1965, the Hutu government targeted all Tutsis while creating a new political order (Newbury 2005, 272). These refugees fled to North Kivu, where autochtones grew increasingly wary of their presence.

The letters to the editor section in *La Presse Africaine* provided a place for people in the Kivu regions to debate whether or not Rwandan refugees should be accepted. Notably, Justin Buhenda wrote in issue 414 denouncing the refugees, calling them “sorcerers”, “ungrateful” and “dangerous wolves”. Two men wrote in the next week, reproaching this viewpoint (*La Presse Africaine* 1964, 2). However, Buhenda’s article illustrates the tensions and fear felt by autochtones in the region, who were terrified that the Rwandans wanted to grab power and enact violence. This fear of refugees was often conflated with fear of all Banyarwanda, due to the reticence of autochtones to believe that any Banyarwanda had been living in the region prior to the Belgian forced migration project in the 1930s (Jackson 2007, 486).

Another exchange in the letters to the editor section of *La Presse Africaine* is a debate entitled “Who are the true Congolese?” In this exchange, which predates the final work of the Luluabourg Constitution by a few months, one letter writer argues that if one traces the roots of each Congolese ethnic group far enough back in time, then the only ethnic group with a “true” claim to the Congo would be the Pygmies (Bakwanamaha 1964, 2). Another letter writer responds to Bakwanamaha with agreement, writing “I hope your brothers understand this
problem in the same sense and discontinue minimizing and contested the nationality of their compatriots simply for their own political aims that cause others to suffer” (Nahimana 1964, 2).

There appears to be two forces at work that may have led the crafters of the Luluabourg Constitution to revoke the citizenship of the Banyarwanda: the fear of the incoming Rwandan refugees and, by extension, the Banyarwanda, as well as the fear that the Banyarwanda would retain political power in North Kivu. These two fears, somewhat vindicated by the original results of the vote to keep Central Kivu whole, contributed to the interests of the government to exclude the Banyarwanda from the Constitution. The interests in excluding the Banyarwanda were even apparent at the time, as evidenced by Nahimana’s letter to the editor.

**Shifting grounds: 1972 vs. 1981**

Competition over political positions further alienated the other ethnic groups in the Kivu region from their Banyarwanda neighbors. Mobutu Sese Seko, who controlled Zaire for 32 years, chose his leaders from ethnic groups he did not feel threatened by, “because of the fact of their numerical weakness and the ambiguity of their political and social status” (Jackson 485). Mobutu initially picked the Banyarwanda as his allies, selecting Barthélémyst Bisengimana, a Rwandan immigrant, as his chief of staff (Stearns 2011, 72). Bisengimana took the opportunity as chief of staff to lobby for more rights and benefits for the Banyarwanda. He created several extensive infrastructure projects, pocketing a percentage of the funds, as well as gained prime positions in state enterprises (Jackson 2007, 485).

5 Original French needed!
Bisengimana also influenced Mobutu to pass a citizenship law in 1972 that granted collective citizenship to all migrants from Rwanda and Burundi since 1950 (Williame 1997, 53). Mobutu signed the Decree-Law while the parliament was in recess, bypassing the congressional oversight (Garretón 1997, 25). It behooved Mobutu to ensure that Bisengimana, one of his top administrators, was indeed a citizen, as it prevented his critics from accusing Bisengimana of being a Rwandan citizen (Williame 1997, 53). This citizenship law inflamed tensions among ethnic groups, including groups outside of the autochtones of North Kivu (Jackson 2007, 485). The autochtones, while upset, did not have the political power to formulate any opposition to the decree (Mamdani 1997, 6). This citizenship law inflamed tensions among ethnic groups, including groups outside of the autochtones of North Kivu (Jackson 2007, 485). Other migrant groups argued that Bisengimana was unfairly favoring members of his own ethnic group, as the law did not apply to any other migrant groups that were excluded from Congolese citizenship. Although this law extended de jure citizenship, de facto citizenship still remained elusive. Despite now having formal citizenship, the Banyarwanda had shaky access to national identification cards depending on the region in which they lived (Jackson 2007, 486). However, it was fairly easy for Rwandophones to falsify identity papers, which the flimsy law was unable to prevent (Pabanel 1991, 38). In addition to assisting in the implementation of the citizenship law, Tutsi communities took control of large swaths of land in North Kivu as Mobutu expropriated all foreign businesses during this time period, coming to own 90% of large plantations in the region of Masisi (Stearns 2011, 2).

Bisengimana fell from grace in 1977 after revelations of embezzling from a textile factory came to light (Williame 2007, 55). The status of the Banyarwanda fell down with him.
The Banyarwanda withdrew from politics, although remained active in the agriculture sector. The Banyarwanda became quite economically successful, coming to rule the rural economy, which in turn increased anti-Rwandophone sentiments among other ethnic groups (Jackson 2007, 485; Stearns 2011, 72). The alienation of other ethnic groups from land that occurred through Mobutu’s handling of expropriated land and the leasing of Belgian land from a traditional chief in Masisi to the Banyarwanda continued to divide the Banyarwanda and other ethnic groups (Stearns 2011, 72).

Frustrations of the other ethnic groups with the Banyarwanda’s political participation came to a head in 1980, foreshadowing the 1981 citizenship revocation. Three Rwandophones were nominated for the Central Committee, along with one Hunde (Pabanel 1991, 37). The Banyarwanda population in North Kivu had grown both as a result of the influx of the 1959 refugees and later clandestine migrants, as well as a result of natural population growth (Stearns 2011, 72). In some areas with North Kivu, such as the Masisi, the Banyarwanda made up nearly 77% of the population (Reyntjens 2009, 14). However, despite being in the minority of Masisi, members of other ethnic groups became so agitated with the prospect of being represented by a Munyarwanda in the 1980 elections that political pressure forced the Rwandophones to withdraw from the race. Clearly the tensions surrounding the access of the Banyarwanda to political representation felt in the 1960s had not faded.

The anti-Banyarwanda rhetoric and general dissatisfaction with their political power ultimately led to the 1981 law that revoked the citizenship of the Banyarwanda. By 1977, the autochtones had created enough political momentum to elect a parliament sympathetic to their interests (Mamdani 1997, 6). Bowing to the pressure from the autochtones, Mobutu and the
parliament rescinded the 1972 citizenship law in 1981, and instead declared that Zairian citizenship would only be extended on an individual basis to those who could prove that their family had lived in Congo before 1885 (Stearns 2011, 72-73). The new law of 1981 stripped thousands of Banyarwanda of their citizenship, and with that, their access to land. Only the Banyarwanda who had previously applied for and obtained citizenship could remain citizens of Zaire, while those who had been “citizens by virtue of being descendants of pre-1885 settlements, of the 1910 boundary change, and of the pre-1950 migratory movements were automatically deprived of their Zairian citizenship” (Makombo 1997, 55).

The 1981 revocation demonstrates Mobutu’s willingness to shift allegiance between ethnic groups depending on what most benefited his political interests. The circumstances that had enabled Mobutu to grant citizenship to the Banyarwanda in 1972 had shifted. Mobutu no longer needed to prop up Bisengimana as a citizen to defend himself against critics, as Bisengimana had already lost credibility. The 1981 law is also an extension of some of the tensions felt around the 1964 constitution change in that autochtones continued to feel threatened by the potential of having the Banyarwanda accessing too much political power. Between losing face for having a minister, who was not even “truly” Congolese, steal from the state, and the fears in the general public that the Banyarwanda had too much power anyway, Mobutu and his legislature had enough reason to step in and revoke the citizenship of the Banyarwanda. As this change happened at a time under Mobutu’s autocratic rule, it demonstrates that democratization is not the only indicator of when a challenge to citizenship may occur.
Questions about the nationality of the Banyarwanda quieted down during the rest of the 1980s. However, the political liberalization of Zaire reopened debates over the legitimacy of the Banyarwanda’s nationality. In 1990, Mobutu announced that he would end one-party rule in Zaire (Prunier 1997, 2). To restructure the state after three decades of one-party rule, political leaders held the Conférence Nationale Souveraine (CNS), where party leaders came together to write a new constitution and establish new institutions (Huening 2013, 20). Initially resistant to the idea of a conference at all, Mobutu found a way to vitiate proceedings: a policy of géopolitique, or geopolitics. The CNS required that representatives only could only serve regions to which they were ‘indigenous’ (Jackson 2007, 487). Of course, the requirement of indigeneity effectively removed Rwandophones from any discussion about the formation of a new Zairian state: no Banyarwanda appeared on any party delegate list (487). The conference members created a sub-commission to investigate the issue of nationality. After their investigation, the sub-commission ultimately reaffirmed the 1981 citizenship law (Huening 2013, 20).

In later peace agreements resolving the violence in 1993, the customary authorities disclosed that they had been worried about the implications for their democratic power if Hutus and Tutsis were citizens (GEAD 1993, 12). This worry indicates that the local authorities had an incentive to prevent the Banyarwanda from being a delegate to the CNS, as allowing them access to the conference, and by extension, the subcommission that reconsidered the nationality laws, may have altered the local power dynamics. Again, as in 1964 and in 1981, the authorities prevented the Banyarwanda from accessing citizenship because it ran contrary to their political interests. However, as the case in 1981 shows, the contestation of the Banyarwanda was not
limited to these periods of democratization. Rather than allow the Banyarwanda to attain citizenship—and potentially disrupt the current power balance—the authorities instead chose to deny the Banyarwanda access and maintain the status quo.

**Reprisal violence to contested citizenship**

In this next section, I will analyze the variation in responses to the contestation of the Banyarwanda’s citizenship. I seek to explain why there was violence in 1964 and in 1993 but not in 1981. I will argue that when there was an intersection of a political opening that increased the salience of citizenship as well as a lack of a credible exit option, the Banyarwanda chose to enact violence against the state. I define political opening as a moment when critical societal actors are renegotiating terms of political authority and/or governance. Examples of these openings include constitutional conventions, the move to multipartyism, democratization, a change of regime, and a civil war.

**1964 Kanyarwanda Rebellion**

As discussed previously, the Banyarwanda had faced several encroachments on their citizenship rights before being spurred to violence. The Banyarwanda had greatly anticipated voting on the referendum that split the Kivu provinces, but the election was manipulated against their will. In a report to the central government on the political situation in the Kivu, the situation in Goma is described as “preoccupied with a single problem: the referendum. Each side struggles to ensure success and accuses that the opposition is illogical”⁶ (3). The report goes on to discuss

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people of Rwandan origin, writing that their “eyes jump” when talking about how they are able to participate in the referendum (3). Despite the majority of Banyarwanda opposing the 1963 referendum, it passed to create two provinces of the Kivu which decreased their political access.

The passage of this referendum marked the first event where the Banyarwanda had their political agency limited. The second, more egregious event was of course the 1964 Luluabourg Constitution that completely took away the citizenship of the Banyarwanda. Frustration from being excluded from land and political representation culminated in the Kanyarwanda Rebellion in 1965, when the Banyarwanda fought against Zaire in attempts to secure access to land and political representation (Huening 2013, 18).

The North Kivu Provincial Council conducted an inquest into the violence in October 1965. The investigators present a letter written by a delegation of the Banyarwanda population in Masisi. In this letter, the Banyarwanda leaders wrote that they had always enjoyed the benefits of citizenship and lived in harmony with the Hunde until the creation of North Kivu. After the creation of North Kivu, the Hunde took all political control and began to arbitrarily arrest members of the Banyarwanda (6). The Hunde also confiscated a few of the Banyarwanda’s businesses.

The Banyarwanda, in this letter, also lamented the loss of their voting rights. They wrote that the Hunde declared them all to be refugees, despite their residence in the Congo before 1960. “This idea of the Hundes--is it just?????????????” wrote the leaders with evident emotion (6). By being prevented from voting, the Banyarwanda are unable to secure representation in

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7 My own translation. Original French: “Il saute aux yeux que ce mentions sont portées en vue de permettre à ces nouveaux venus de prendre part au vote du référendum et assurer de la sorte les succès des l’une des parties rivales en présence.”
8 My own translation. Original French: “Cette thèse des Hundes--est-elle juste?????????????”
their region. Additionally, they demanded the constitutional court restore to their nationality:

“The people do not have a Rwandan nationality, but only that of Congo... WE DEMAND OUR POLITICAL RIGHTS AND OUR RIGHT TO JUSTICE”

(6).

However, despite this impassioned plea, the provincial council refused to intervene on the behalf of the Banyarwanda, according to an article in La Presse Africaine. The delegation of the Banyarwanda returned home to more repression and violence by the Hunde government. The Banyarwanda then reacted with more violence against the government (Williame 1997, 50).

This letter to the provincial government clearly shows the frustration of the Banyarwanda with their treatment by the Hundes and their loss of political rights. The balance of power that had been in place prior to 1964 had been disrupted as the Hundes took power and discriminated against the Banyarwanda, and the Banyarwanda evidently believed that through voting in the elections they would be able to return to a more equitable situation.

After the failure of the electoral system and the inability to express their views at the political opening of the Luluabourg Constitution convention, the Banyarwanda had no other method of recourse besides violence against the state repression perpetrated by the Hunde authorities. While the terms of authority were being negotiated by political actors at the constitutional convention, they did not listen to the pleas of the Banyarwanda. The Banyarwanda believed that the system would work, as it was the beginning of the new era of democracy, and reacted with violence in frustration. Other rebellions were also occurring at this time; the Kanyarwanda Rebellion was briefly assumed to be part of the Mulele Rebellion (Provincial

9 My own translation. Original French: “Ce peuple n’a pas de nationalité rwandaise, mais seulement celle du Congo…. REVENDIQUER NOS DROITS POLITIQUES ET DE JUSTICE.”
Council 1965, 7). The frequency of other rebellions demonstrates the belief that violence was the most efficient method of changing the new government of the Congo.

Additionally, there were a dearth of credible exit options: the Banyarwanda were unable to flee to another country that also was home to other members of the group. Rwanda was in the midst of redefining their government along the ethnic lines and sending Tutsi refugees into the Kivus (Lemarchand 2012, 242). The regime of Obote I was in control of Uganda, where other Banyarwanda were facing discrimination (Clay 1984, 17). Burundi was also in the midst of a violent regime change after the assassination of the prime minister, Pierre Ngendandumwe, in 1965 (Nohlen et al 1999, 164). Thus because the Banyarwanda were not able to exit the Kivus or effect change through the political opening of the constitutional convention, they had to resort to expressing their voice through violence.

1981 Revocation of citizenship law

In 1981, after granting citizenship with the 1972 law, Mobutu revoked the Banyarwanda’s citizenship. This action rendered the Banyarwanda stateless, as now they were neither Zairean citizens nor Rwandan citizens. Though some Banyarwanda kept their identity cards that listed them as citizens, they were technically foreigners in the eyes of the state (Prunier 1997, 2). However, there was no violent reaction from the Banyarwanda during this time. As migrating to Rwanda was an option and because consequences of the revocation were minimal due to the constrained power of the state, the Banyarwanda chose not to rebel against the government.
This time period substantially differs from the 1960s and the 1990s in that the revocation, though upsetting, was not as severe as the 1964 Luluabourg Constitution or the exclusion from the CNS. While the revocation of citizenship happened legally, it was ineffective at completing suspending the Banyarwanda’s rights. Revoking the Banyarwanda’s citizenship proved to be a much more difficult administrative task than was possible to achieve. Congolese officials did not have the capacity to collect identity cards or passports (Makombo 1997, 56; Garretón 1997, 28). Additionally, as a concession to the enraged Banyarwanda, the autochtone majority decided to permit the Banyarwanda to vote but not to run for office (Mamdani 1997, 6). The situation on the ground remained essentially the same as before, except the Banyarwanda did not have de jure citizenship (Willame 1997, 59).

This revocation of citizenship was less severe than the threat of the Conférence Nationale Souveraine. Because there was no political opening, no other terms of authority were being renegotiated: the status quo of political authority stayed the same. This continuation of government indicated to the Banyarwanda that there would be few consequences for acting as citizens would, as the government did not have the means to properly enforce the law. In contrast, during the CNS, representatives gave the terms of Congolese governance a complete overhaul as the state moved towards multi-partyism. The Banyarwanda could not predict whether the new government would follow through with a denial of citizenship, and so reacted with violence to use their voice.

In a preemptive response to the revocation of their citizenship, some representatives of the Banyarwanda wrote a letter appealing to the United Nations (UN) a week before the revocation was rumored to be enacted into law. Citing the Universal Declaration of Human
Rights, which guarantees a right to a nationality, the Banyarwanda request the UN to intervene in the Zairean government on their behalf (2). Additionally, the representatives wrote that they had consulted President Habyarimana of Rwanda before calling upon the UN. This indicates that government had ceased to be in turmoil as it had been in 1965, since the president of Rwanda was able to provide counsel to his transborder ethnic kin. Indeed, in a letter to the government on behalf of the Banyarwanda, the bishop of Goma wrote that the Hutus and the Tutsis based in North Kivu did have the option to escape to Burundi or Rwanda, but the majority would rather stay in Zaire (1-2). The process of appealing to authorities is similar to the events preceding the Kanyarwanda Rebellion in that both in 1965 and in 1981, the Banyarwanda took their case to a governmental body before taking any further drastic action. It is possible that the Banyarwanda were reluctant to contact the UN in 1964 because of the UN’s ill-fated operation to contain Katangan secession.

Ultimately, because of the lesser severity of the 1981 revocation, the lack of political opening in which to make their voice heard through violence, and the availability to move to Rwanda and Burundi, no violence resulted. Instead, the Banyarwanda chose to continue using their fraudulent identity cards and contemplate a move to a country where they had ethnic kin.

Conférence Nationale Souveraine and Violence in the Masisi in 1993

Tensions regarding the nationality of the Banyarwanda reached a flashpoint in 1993. As the rhetoric of autochthony was revisited through the CNS, autochtones grew furious with the presence of the Rwandophones, believing that they had taken the autochtones’ land and political power (Stearns 2011, 73). The state grew more repressive, as the regional authorities replaced
the police with exclusively Nandes, Hundes, and Nyangas in Walikale and Masisi, with the intention of removing the Banyarwanda from these regions (Williame 1997, 65). The situation then exploded as autochtones, aided by soldiers from Goma, enacted violence against the local Banyarwanda populations. Groups stole cattle and burned the homes of Banyarwanda in Walikale (Memorandum of Banyarwanda 1993, 7-8). When the violence spread to Masisi, the Banyarwanda had organized a defense (Reyntjens 2009, 15). The violence spiraled into what is known as the Masisi War, between 3,000 and 7,000 people were killed by the end of 1993, and up to 300,000 people on both sides of the conflict were displaced (Stearns 2011, 73; Makombo 1997, 53).

Several factors were at work here that led to the violence. First, the nationality question of the Banyarwanda gained renewed salience due to CNS, which served two purposes: to threaten the political power of the autochthonous minority, as well as to frustrate the Banyarwanda by further excluding them from political power. In the peace agreement negotiated by the Groupe d’Etudes et d’Actions pour un Développement bien défini (GEAD) between the Hunde authorities and the Banyarwanda, both factions admitted to being concerned about the Banyarwanda’s nationality when pressed to list factors that had caused the violence. The customary authorities acknowledged that they had been worried about the implications for their democratic power if Hutus and Tutsis were citizens (GEAD 1994, 12). The Banyarwanda also disclosed that they had been incredibly frustrated with the deprivation of their right to citizenship, including the “customary chiefs’ maneuvers that misled the national opinion on the Hutu and Tutsi identity”10 My own translation. Original French: “Les Manœuvres des Chefs coutumiers trompant l’opinion Nationale sur l’identité des Hutu et Tutsi”. (GEAD 1993, 12). The CNS debate around nationality clearly
exacerbate the existing tensions around access to political representation and power, which ultimately culminated in violence.

Secondly, neither side of the conflict had a credible exit option. The Hundes, Nandes, and Nyangas did not have any transborder ethnic kin to which they could escape (Cederman et al 2013, 407). The Banyarwanda were unable to escape to Rwanda, as the Rwandan Civil War was in full swing by 1993 (Reed 1996, 479). While some young Tutsi men joined the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) and left Zaire, otherwise the situation was too tumultuous (Stearns 2011, 73). During this time, the RPF was based in Uganda and had a complicated relationship with the Ugandan government, which could have discouraged the Hutu contingent of the Banyarwanda from fleeing to Uganda (Reed 1996, 479). Burundi was additionally embroiled in a civil war during this time period (Bundervoet 2009, 357).

Thus, after being faced with violent repression from the Hunde authorities, no method of political recourse, and no viable exit strategy, the Banyarwanda resorted to violence to express their frustrations. This is similar to their reaction in 1964 with the Kanyarwanda Rebellion, although it differs in that the Hunde militias attacked the Banyarwanda communities first and so they acted in self-defense.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, the case of the Banyarwanda in Zaire illustrates my two hypotheses: citizenship contestation occurs when the exclusion of a certain group supports the government’s interests regardless of democratic transition, and this contestation triggers violence when there is a political opening that increases the salience of citizenship and when there is no credible exit
option for the group. By examining the variation between the 1960 Constitution and the 1964 Luluabourg Constitution as well as the variation between the 1972 law and the 1981 revocation, we can see that the political incentives to include the Banyarwanda had changed despite no democratic transition. When looking at the differences in violent response, we can see that there was a violent response in 1964 and in 1993 because there was a political opening that increased the salience of citizenship, whereas in 1981, there was no reason to believe that the law would actually be enacted. There were also no exit options available in 1964 and in 1993, while in 1981 the Banyarwanda were able to leave Zaire for Rwanda.
Works Cited


Chapter Three: the Banyarwanda in Uganda

“A visitor who [votes] is inviting himself to be sent away.”

-President Milton Obote

Introduction

Similar to their ethnic kin in the Congo, the Banyarwanda have held a long-questioned position in Uganda. Again, despite living in the region since before colonial times, the government has frequently discriminated against the group. In 1969, the president Milton Obote enacted a discriminatory hiring policy preventing the Banyarwanda from attaining public employment. That same year, Obote planned to have an ethnic census that would allow him to identify and expel the Banyarwanda. Under his second regime, Obote’s government prevented the Banyarwanda from voting in 1980. Most egregiously, government forces violently expelled the Banyarwanda from their villages in 1982 and 1983. This chapter will discuss my second case study, which explores the contested position of the Banyarwanda in Uganda. In this chapter, I will use the case of the Banyarwanda to make two arguments. First, I will argue that citizenship contestation occurs when the exclusion of a certain group supports the government’s interests, even when the Ugandan regime was an autocracy. Second, I will argue that this contestation will trigger violence when there is an intersection of two events: when there is a political opening that increases the salience of citizenship, and when there is no credible exit option for the group.

The outline of the chapter is as follows: I will first provide some contextualizing information, such as definitions and background history on the Banyarwanda in Uganda. Then I will explore the variations in when and how the different regimes of Ugandan government

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11 Obote’s remarks in response to allegations that “Rwandan refugees” (many of whom were Ugandan citizens) voted in the 1980 elections. (Clay 1984, 33)
contested the citizenship of the Banyarwanda between two cases: the differences in approaches to the Banyarwanda between the Obote I regime and the Amin regime, as well as exploring why the contestation of the Banyarwanda’s citizenship intensified more during the Obote II regime that during the Obote I regime. Then I will discuss the variations in the response of the Banyarwanda to their loss of citizenship by examining the lack of a violent response of the Banyarwanda during the Obote I with the subsequent violent response during the Obote II regime. I will conclude with some closing remarks about my hypotheses and future implications for research.

Using the situation of the Uganda as a case study provides a complementary foil to studying Zaire. By studying members of the same ethnic kin group in the same greater region, the group’s customs, religion, and the regional geopolitics are held constant, which helps to isolate the variation in policies of citizenship and in the group’s responses.

**Overview of the Banyarwanda in Uganda**

This first section will review who the Banyarwanda are and give background information on their history in Uganda, as well as compare this history to their ethnic kin in the DRC. In sum, the Banyarwanda are people who speak Kinyarwanda, a language present in the Great Lakes region that is primarily associated with Rwanda (Jackson 2007, 496). These people can be categorized into several sub-groups, such as the Banyamulenge, Banyarutshuru, and Banyamasisi. Banyarwanda is a term used to identify Rwandophones with no distinction between ethnic groups. The Banyarwanda have lived in Uganda since precolonial times. Most of the Banyarwanda who arrived prior to the colonial period live in the Kisoro district, in the
southwestern part of Uganda and Ntungamo district (Mushemeza 2007, 73).

   How then did they become seen as “other”? 

   The answer is complicated. Similarly to the Banyarwanda in Zaire, the arrival of migrants and refugees from Rwanda cast doubt upon the ancestral status of other Banyarwanda living in Uganda. In 1994, while the new constitution was being drafted, representatives of the Banyarwanda in Kisoro chose to be called the “Bafumbira,” disassociating their group from the name of Banyarwanda (Mushemeza 2007, 73).

   The first wave of migration to Buganda occurred as a result of violence between the Belgians in Ruanda-Urundi and the anti-colonial Nyabingi religious movement in the early 1900s. These Banyarwanda refugees fled to a region once known as Kigezi, where they became integrated among the Bakiga (Mushemeza 2007, 75).

   The second wave of migration occurred during the 1920s, as Banyarwanda migrated northwards from Rwanda as laborers. Colonial administrators began a system of coffee and cotton production in the Buganda region (Rutabajuka 1996, 18). There was a labor shortage in Buganda; migrant laborers were sought from Rwanda. These laborers found employment with higher wages than what was available to them in Ruanda-Urundi (Rutabajuka 1996, 24). The forced labor scheme perpetrated by the Belgian administration in Ruanda-Urundi and the Belgian Congo served as another push factor for Banyarwanda, reaching “exodus level” in 1923 (Rutabajuka 1996, 29). Most of the Banyarwanda fleeing the Belgian forced labor schemes were Hutus, since the Tutsis held a more privileged position under Belgian rule, though some Tutsi pastoralists fled Belgian rule into Buganda as well (Mushemeza 2007, 76). Banyarwanda laborers worked for Baganda peasants, who were small-scale farmers that hire some laborers to
supplement their own labor (Mamdani 1976, 152).

In 1924, nearly 29% of immigrants to Buganda were Banyarwanda, which increased by 28.5% between the years of 1931 and 1948. In 1948, a quarter of the agriculture labor came from Rwanda, and 34% of the African population in Buganda was Banyarwanda (Mamdani 1976, 155). Most of these migrants settled into Ankole and Buganda, though some Banyarwanda moved into the northeastern region where they remained separated from the local communities (Mushemeza 2007, 75). A contingent of Banyarwanda traveled back to Rwanda annually, which prevented the successful unionization of migrant labor in Uganda until 1962 (Mamdani 1976, 153). These settlements of Banyarwanda labor migrants increased quickly: many “Baganda” villages had more Banyarwanda than indigenous people by 1951. The Banyarwanda migrants also had a higher birth rate than the locals (Clay 1984, 15). Many Banyarwanda chose to integrate into the local Baganda communities, adopting their clothing, lifestyle, and spending habits. “As one observed, ‘We have become Ganda’” (Newbury 2005, 269).

In 1959, the Hutu majority overthrew the Tutsi-controlled government in Rwanda as part of the “Social Revolution,” which led to the fourth influx of Banyarwanda to Uganda. These refugees were primarily Tutsis, though some Hutus fled as well (Alex 2008, 11). As previously discussed, Rwanda had several major episodes of violence between 1959 and 1973, which resulted in 80,000 Tutsi refugees fleeing to Uganda. Others fled to Zaire, Burundi, and Tanzania (Clay 1984, 16). These refugees can be categorized into three waves: wave one, from 1958-1963; wave two, from 1963-1965; and the final wave around the founding of the republic in 1973 (Mushemeza 2007, 75). The first wave of refugees generally were Tutsis who had held administrative positions and regarded as upper-class, as the beginning impetus for the struggle
was to overthrow the Tutsi elites (Newbury 2005, 272). The second wave of refugees resulted after the creation of a new political order, which came down more along ethnic lines and targeted all Tutsis, regardless of class (Newbury 2005, 272).

The initial wave of refugees generally stayed with relatives in Uganda, while the subsequent waves moved into refugee camps (Alex 2008, 13). The later groups of refugees settled into Nakivale, which had four settlements; Oruchinga, which had three settlements, and around Fort Portal, which had five settlements (Clay 1984, 17). The refugees had varying levels of success in integrating with local communities and existing Banyarwanda communities. Some refugees drifted into the interior of the country to seek employment, while others moved into existing Banyarwanda communities, while others still stayed in the established camps (Mushemeza 2007, 79).

**Citizenship contestation**

In this section, I seek to explain the variation in the contestation of citizenship of the Banyarwanda. My first comparison will be between the differences in the treatment of the Banyarwanda between the regimes of Obote I and Amin: under Amin, the Banyarwanda were favored, while previously under Obote I, the Banyarwanda faced employment discrimination and were nearly expelled. Then I will examine variation between the first Obote regime during the 1960s, when the government discriminated against the Banyarwanda in public employment and began to plan an “ethnic census”, and second Obote regime, which began in 1980, when the government prevented the Banyarwanda from voting and then violently expelled the group in 1982 and 1983. Finally I will compare and contrast the two cases, making the argument that the
government decided to contest citizenship when the exclusion of the Banyarwanda furthered their political goals, even though the Ugandan regime was an autocracy.

**Contestation and peace: Obote I vs. Amin**

Uganda achieved its independence from Britain in 1962 with Apolo Milton Obote at its helm (Kasozi 1994, 60). Religion and regionalism dominated Uganda politics during this time. The British had privileged the Baganda over other ethnic groups in a system of divide-and-rule (Lindemann 2011, 393). This choice partitioned the country into four regions: north, east, central, and west (393). Most of the economic production occurred in Buganda and Busoga, in the center of the country, while the regions in the north remained economically underdeveloped (Weinstein 2007, 66). The British recruited northerners to join the military in order to retain a check on the power of the Baganda (66). The central region was therefore a politically savvy and economic powerhouse.

The regional divisions became even more politicized at independence. The Ugandan People’s Congress (UPC) formed an alliance with the Kabaka Yekka (KY), or the King's Only Party (KY) (Mudoola 1993, 24). The two parties made curious bedfellows, as the UPC was comprised of northern Protestants originally with an anti-Buganda stance, while KY was a central Protestant group concerned with protecting the Buganda monarchy (Nantulya 2001, 82). This coalition propelled Obote into power in 1962.

The Banyarwanda were primarily Catholic, which meant that they fell in line with the Bahima Catholics in the Democratic Party (DP) (Mushemeza 2007, 68). UPC supporters resented the Banyarwanda for being allied with the DP opposition, as evidenced by one member
of the UPC government said in a research study in 1999:

The Banyarwanda people are not trustworthy. You give them land, food, water and education and yet they support your opponents. Obote was right to find out how many they were in order to find an appropriate solution to them and rid the country of the problem once and for all. (69)

This former government official refers to Obote’s strong actions in 1969 against the Banyarwanda. This quote demonstrates the tensions felt by local communities, who saw themselves as providing resources to the Banyarwanda, who would only later betray them by supporting Obote’s rival.

Obote soon became a repressive leader: by 1965, Obote only allowed the radio outlets to report government and UPC views. By the end of the 1960s, however, strong opposition formed against Obote. Supposedly in response to an attempted coup, Obote arrested several UPC ministers in 1966 and took control of his fragmenting party (Kasozi 1994, 84). He convinced the parliament to suspend the 1962 Constitution and to consolidate power into the role of an executive president (84). Obote directed the army to attack the Buganda king, shattering the alliance between the UPC and the KY Party (86).

Amidst this political instability, support had coalesced around General Idi Amin, one of Obote’s trusted advisors, who then began challenging Obote towards the end of the 1960s (Kasozi 1994, 102). Obote declared Uganda a single-party state in 1969 after a botched assassination attempt (U.S. Committee for Refugees 1985, 6). Obote also began to fight potential political opposition under the guise of economic measures. Supposedly in response to rising unemployment, the regime expelled all Kenyan workers from Uganda (Mamdani 1983, 30). Roughly 30,000 Kenyan workers who had comprised ten percent of Uganda’s industrial workforce left the country under force (Kasozi 1994, 120). This expulsion would set a precedent
for Amin’s later expulsion of Asians in 1972, which will be explored later in this chapter.

Obote needed to retain all the support that he could muster to combat challenges to his regime. Obote ordered a national census on August 18, 1969. On the face, the census was to collect demographic information to “plan future development of schools, medical services, and so on” (*Uganda Argus* 1969, 4). Obote, however, had underlying ominous intentions: to use the census to collect data on the Banyarwanda and then use that to exclude them from Uganda. Two forces had coalesced against the Banyarwanda that encouraged Obote to exclude the group. Anti-foreigner sentiment had seized other indigenous groups that comprised Obote’s base, and so they demanded Obote to limit foreigner’s involvement in the country (Alex 2008, 46). Obote additionally resented the Catholic Banyarwanda’s allegiance to the DP, his political rivals (46). With these political incentives to exclude the Banyarwanda, Obote allegedly intended to use the information gathered from the census to label the group as “non-citizens,” which would have prevented their participation in the process and disenfranchise them (Clay 1984, 28). The designation of “non-citizen” would link the Banyarwanda to groups in Rwanda and Burundi, insinuating that the Banyarwanda did not belong in Uganda (28). Ultimately, Obote appeared to intend to expel the Banyarwanda from Uganda after disenfranchising the group (28).

Tensions around non-citizens in Uganda being included in the census was palpable at the time. In a letter to the editor in the *Uganda Argus* on July 29, 1969, Beatrice K. Bagama expressed worries that non-citizens would be included in the census. At the time, younger students were to collect information for the census, and she was concerned that these students “may not know what a ‘citizen’ is…therefore we might end up with a population bigger than we really have, if say ‘non-citizens’ like refugees are recorded as ‘citizens’ simply because they live
in Uganda” (Bagama 1969). The fear that non-citizens would be included in the census combined with the frustration that Banyarwanda were accessing more resources than to which they were entitled provided Obote fuel to exclude them to please his base.

None of these actions came to pass, however, as Amin deposed Obote before he was able to implement his plans (Alex 2008, 47). Instead, these events foreshadow the expulsions of the Banyarwanda to come under Obote’s second regime in the 1980s, which will be discussed in the following section.

In a similar vein, Obote banned all unskilled foreign workers from public employment in September 1969. This policy targeted the Banyarwanda (Bøås 2004, 295). Despite the fact that many Banyarwanda were Ugandan citizens, the government did not distinguish between refugees and citizens, diminishing their citizenship rights. Obote issued the ban in order to appease his constituency (Alex 2008, 46). Other indigenous groups in Uganda had been agitating the regime to limit foreigners’ involvement in the economy, and claimed that the Banyarwanda had too much authority and political power (Clay 1984, 23). Despite the presence of some Banyarwanda in administrative positions, the amount of Banyarwanda in universities and public employment never reached the disproportionately high level that opponents claimed:

By 1970, of the five largest ethnic groups in the country, only the Banyaruanda had never been represented at the ministerial level—even though ministerial positions were so numerous that about one-half of all UPC members in the National Assembly held one. In the Higher Civil Service, from 1961-1967, the Banyaruanda (5.9% of population) accounted for 4.1% to 4.4% of all employees. (24).

The ban targeting the Banyarwanda was, in actuality, a move made by Obote to drum up support among his base to secure his slipping grip on power (Alex 2008, 46). The exclusion of the Banyarwanda created more ministerial positions for UPC supporters, allowing Obote to privilege
his allies and consolidate his own power.

There appears to be one overarching reason that led Obote to contest the citizenship rights of the Banyarwanda: Obote’s need to appease his supporters who felt threatened, politically and economically, by the Banyarwanda in order to keep his own power secure in the face of increasing political challenges. By using the census data to expel the Banyarwanda, Obote would have struck down two birds with one stone: removing the idea that the Banyarwanda were taking the ministerial jobs of UPC supporters as well as weakening the base of the Democratic Party. These political incentives compelled Obote to limit access of the Banyarwanda to the economic and political spheres. He took the first step by banning Banyarwanda from government positions, but did not achieve his goal of expelling the Banyarwanda until his second regime.

Amin overthrew Obote in a coup in 1971 backed by Britain and Israel (Mamdani 1983, 61). The next nine years that followed were filled with violence, political repression, and fascism. The Banyarwanda initially welcomed the new regime, as it signaled a turn from Obote’s discriminatory polices (Bøås 2004, 295). Amin took the line that any enemy of Obote was his friend, so he encouraged minority groups targeted by Obote to join the ruling party (Mushemeza 2007, 69). Amin aligned himself with the southern ethnic groups, such as the Banyarwanda, Baganda and Bakiga, as well as Catholics and Muslims, as he fought opposition from the north (Clay 1984, 28). These groups may have not fully endorsed Amin, but they were indeed happy to see the end of Obote’s violent rule (28). Seeing the benefit of having trained civil servants in his government, Amin gave administrative jobs to the Banyarwanda. Amin also offered asylum to the exiled king of Rwanda, as well as gave him a new house and car in Kampala (Alex 2008, 47).
The Banyarwanda saw Amin as an opportunity to get revenge against Obote, and they joined the secret service and intelligence agencies as a means of both supporting Amin and being against Obote (Mushemeza 2007, 69).

Amin did not challenge the citizenship of the Banyarwanda during his rule, which appears to be because he relied on their allyship and their presence in his administration to allow his rule to continue. It behooved Amin to position himself in opposition to Obote and rely on the groups that Obote had alienated during his regime--DP supporters, Catholics, Muslims, and ethnic groups like the Banyarwanda. However, as his regime deteriorated, violence aimed at the general public became more common, and the Banyarwanda may not have been protected from those outbreaks (Clay 1984, 28).

**Rise of Obote II: Contestation leading to expulsions**

Amin’s rule did not last. In 1979, facing attacks from Tanzania and the Uganda National Liberation Army (UNLA), Amin fled into exile in Libya (U.S. Committee for Refugees 1985, 8). Exiled groups formed the Uganda National Liberation Front (UNLF), and created a transitional government with Yusufu Lule as head, succeeded by Godfrey Binaisa (Kasozi 1994, 132). The military commission of the UNLF, however, overthrew Binaisa in a coup in 1980. As they supported Obote, the military commission began planning to transfer power back to Obote through a democratic and legal method—one that would be seen as fair instead of tyrannical by the international community (Kasozi 1994, 132). The new government scheduled a parliamentary election in December 1980.

Much to the dismay of the UNLF, the tide of popular opinion had turned against the
UPC. Initial polling demonstrated that the UPC would not win an open election (Kasozi 1994, 132). Determined to cement their control on power with a façade of legality, the military moved forward with the elections using the organizational power of the UPC. While Obote and the UPC won the elections, the result was fraudulent: despite preliminary reports of the DP’s electoral success, some leaders of the UPC worked all night to change votes to Obote’s UPC (U.S. Committee for Refugees 1985, 10).

One of the tools used to rig the election was the disenfranchisement of the Banyarwanda, who were known DP supporters. The government worked to identify members of the Banyarwanda, regardless of refugee or citizenship status (Mushemeza 2007, 92). In an extension of Obote’s proposed policies under his previous rule, the Banyarwanda, once identified, were banned from voting in the 1980 elections (Clay 1984, 29). After the election, the DP reported that UPC candidates won in eight out of eleven districts in Ankole due to the exclusion of the Banyarwanda from the ballot box (Mushemeza 2007, 92). In this case, Obote and his supporters had the political means to implement the intended policy of Obote’s first rule, while in 1969 Obote had been unable to carry out his full plan before being deposed by Amin.

In keeping in step with his previous discriminating hiring practices, Obote implemented a partisan hiring policy after his election, which prevented the Banyarwanda from holding civil service jobs under the premise that they had supported Amin’s rule and worked in his security forces, thus leading to the murder of many Ugandans (Clay 1984, 32). In a speech in 1982, Obote said that “most atrocities during Amin’s era were committed by refugees” (33). This statement served to both connect the Banyarwanda who were Ugandan citizens to the Rwandan refugees, who were distrusted and disliked by indigenous Ugandans, as well as link the
Banyarwanda as a whole to the terrors of the Amin regime. However, while it is true members of the Banyarwanda were in the secret service, a 1986 inquiry commission found that they did not participate in the torture of Amin’s regime (Alex 2008, 47). This move by Obote also affected people who had formerly been civil servants under British rule. Although unemployment negatively affected almost all Ugandans during this time period, the Banyarwanda were most adversely affected due to the added layer of discrimination (Clay 1984, 32).

This policy again was a continuation of Obote’s previous governmental policy. Now, however, the government had the official line that rather than discriminating against the Banyarwanda as a group, they were preventing members of Amin’s security forces to participate in the new government. This rhetoric allowed Obote and his government to address the previous fears of the population as well as the new revulsion for those who had perpetrated the atrocities of Amin’s regime, further securing Obote’s power. The year before, another resistance movement had rose up in opposition to Obote: the National Resistance Army had launched its initial attacks against the government in February 1981, commanded by Yoweri Kaguta Museveni (Kasozzi 1994, 145). It again was a time for Obote to consolidate his power, like in his previous regime, and funnel frustration against his regime to a scapegoat. In the second iteration of his regime, Obote and the UPC government became much more obvious about who the scapegoat was: the Banyarwanda.

Obote and the UPC government proceeded to increase anti-Banyarwanda rhetoric in addition to their exclusionary policies during the first years of the Obote II regime. Once Obote took power again, he soon accused the Banyarwanda of voting illegally (Alex 2008, 50). “Our laws say that non-Ugandans are not allowed to vote,” Obote said to the Ugandan Times in 1982,
showing that the tensions after the elections still continued to build (Alex 2008, 50). This quote also serves as an attempt by Obote to tie the Banyarwanda to Rwandan outsiders, despite the legitimate Ugandan citizenship and multiple generations in Uganda of some members of the Banyarwanda. Later in 1982, Obote gave a speech in which he denounced the Banyarwanda, saying, “Some people had been forced to be refugees in their own country,” implying that the Banyarwanda refugees had greedily taken advantage of the resources of local communities (Clay 1984, 33). He revisited his claim that the Banyarwanda had voted illegally, and that some had joined the armed resistance struggle against his rule. “A visitor who does that is inviting himself to be sent away,” Obote said (33). A few months later, closer to the date of the expulsions, Obote spoke to large political rallies in several regions, accusing Rwandan refugees of wanting to take over the government and asking the Ugandans to rally to protect their country (33). The anti-Banyarwanda rhetoric of Obote and the UPC government continued to add fuel to the fire that would later culminate in their expulsion from Uganda by stirring up prejudices against the Banyarwanda.

Then, in 1982, two members of the UPC youth were shot and killed in Mbarara (Alex 2008, 51). These killings set off a chain of events that tapped into the anti-Banyarwanda sentiment and ultimately spiraled into the expulsions of the group. A meeting took place in September between cabinet ministers Chris Rwakasisi, the Minister of State in the Office of the President and Patrick Robahiyo, the Minister of State for Agriculture, with local officials in Mbarara (Mushemeza 2007, 93). The Weekly Review, a newspaper based in Kenya, reported on the meeting:

[The officials told] the DCs to evict the Rwandans, many of whom had lived in Uganda for generations...The youth wing of the UPC and local chiefs then drove out all people with Rwanda connections forcing them to abandon property and belongings (10.29.82). (Clay
After the meeting, local youth militias aligned with the UPC forced the Banyarwanda out of their homes, looting and burning their houses in the process (Kasozi 1994, 186). The expulsions were lucrative, as participants took the Banyarwanda’s cattle and iron roofs (Alex 2008, 52). Many Banyarwanda were beaten, raped, killed, left to die, or committed suicide during the violence. Roadblocks were established to ensure that the Banyarwanda could not leave with any belongings (Alex 2008, 52). Sources estimate that between 80,000 and 90,000 Banyarwanda were displaced by this violence (US Committee for Refugees 1985, 50). No distinction was made between the Banyarwanda refugees from Rwanda and Ugandan citizens of Banyarwanda descent (Winter 1983, 2). Between 75% and 80% of the displaced people were Ugandan citizens (Clay 1984, 24).

It is abundantly clear from the evidence presented in this section that the expulsions were in accordance with Obote’s existing discriminatory policies. Obote had both planned an expulsion during his first regime as well as actively called for Ugandans to drive out the Banyarwanda to protect their country. Obote would later paint the violence as conflicts within local communities, despite his previous call-to-arms and threats against the Banyarwanda (Winter 1983, 4).

The key factor that changed from the first Obote regime to the second that allowed Obote and the UPC government to evict the Banyarwanda was that they were able to tie the Banyarwanda to the horrors of Idi Amin (4). Similar attacks and expulsions of ethnic groups occurred during this time, such as against the Baganda in the Luwero Triangle (Kasozi 1994, 180). Contrasting with the expulsions the Banyarwanda, Obote’s motivation for these
aggressions was to quell support for the NRA insurgency. The NRA had used peasants as bases to expand their fight against Obote (Kasfir 2005, 274). However, the Banyarwanda’s support was not the motive for Obote’s expulsions. The primary source material, such as within reports prepared for the United Nations and the United States government, makes it clear that the Obote II regime explicitly wanted to both to punish the Banyarwanda for their ties to Amin and to rally local “indigenous” support for the regime through the violence against the Banyarwanda. Providing a channel for the indigenous people’s frustrations to distract from the economic slowdown was essential to the Obote II regime at the time because they were embroiled in a civil war with the NRA. The existing anti-Banyarwanda sentiments among indigenous Ugandans, combined with the connection between the Banyarwanda and Amin, enabled the expulsions to take place.

Reprisal violence (and lack thereof) to contested citizenship

In this next section, I analyze the variation in responses to the contestation of the Banyarwanda’s citizenship rights. I seek to explain why there was violence in the 1980s, when the Banyarwanda joined the NRA to defeat the Obote II regime, but not in the 1960s during the Obote I regime. I argue that three key events aligned for the Banyarwanda to choose to enact violence against the state: the threshold level of citizenship contestation was more severe, and there was an intersection of a political opening that increased the salience of citizenship as well as a lack of a credible exit option.
Lack of response to Obote I regime

As discussed previously in this chapter, the Banyarwanda faced several encroachments on their citizenship rights during the latter half of the 1960s before the Obote I regime fell in 1971: they were barred from civil service jobs and the threats of disenfranchisement and expulsion loomed with the ethnic census. However, there was no violent reaction from the Banyarwanda during this time. This time period differs from the 1980s in three ways. First, the discrimination was not as severe: the Banyarwanda did not lose their right to vote and were not expelled as happened in the 1980s. The potential future of these events hovered over the 1969 census but ultimately did not come to pass as in the 1980s (Clay 1984, 28; Mushemeza 2007, 92). The ban on unskilled foreign workers only applied to public employment, not all occupations, so the Banyarwanda during this time could work in other sectors (Bøås 2004, 295). Thus the Banyarwanda did not have as great as an incentive to rebel against the state as during the 1980s, after being disenfranchised and violently expelled from their communities.

The Banyarwanda had additionally had an exit option to leave Uganda instead of reacting with violence. While Burundi and Rwanda were countries in the midst of violent upheaval, Zaire was in a state of relative peace for Banyarwanda Ugandans to go. Burundi was in the midst of a violent regime change after the assassination of the prime minister, Pierre Ngendandumwe, in 1965 (Nohlen et al 1999, 164). Pressures in Burundi culminated in a genocide perpetrated by the ruling Tutsi minority against the Hutus in 1972 (Lemarchand 2004, 322). Rwanda also had a violent upheaval with the 1959 Social Revolution, in which the Hutu majority took the government (Lemarchand 2012, 242). Between 1959 and 1973, Rwanda had several major episodes of violence, which resulted in 80,000 Tutsi refugees fleeing to Uganda (Clay 1984, 16).
However, during the latter half of the 1960s, Zaire had returned to a measure of stability, and the Banyarwanda had an influential minister in Mobutu Sese Seko’s cabinet to advocate for them. Barthélémy Bisengimana, a Rwandan immigrant took a position in Mobutu’s cabinet in May 1969 (Stearns 2011, 72). Bisengimana used the opportunity as chief of staff to lobby for more rights and benefits for the Banyarwanda, whether living in the country legally or illegally, during this time period (Williame 1997, 53). The Banyarwanda in Uganda had the ability to move to Zaire rather than stay and fight Obote’s repression. There are not any official estimates of population movements within Zaire during this time, but clandestine migration certainly occurred (Williame 1997, 61). The border between Zaire and Uganda was poorly marked, and far from both central governments’ regions of control (Crisp 1986, 167).

Finally, if the Banyarwanda had wanted to combat the repression of the Obote I regime, there was no political opening for them to make their voice, through politics or through violence, heard. Obote turned Uganda into a one-party state in 1969, removing avenues for political opposition (U.S. Committee for Refugees 1985, 6). Obote I was not toppled by a civil war, which allows for more participation of regular citizens. Instead Obote I was deposed in a military coup, which limited the participation of the Banyarwanda (Kasozi 1994, 105). There was no mechanism or opening into which the Banyarwanda could have funneled their frustrations with the government, and so they did not react with violence, choosing rather to exit or to ignore the limited repression of the Obote I regime.

**Banyarwanda and the National Resistance Army in the 1980s**

After Obote retook power in 1980, the Banyarwanda were instrumental in toppling his
regime. The NRA with Museveni at the helm launched initial attacks against the Obote II
government in February 1981 (Kasozi 1994, 145). Alongside Museveni were several
Banyarwanda: Fred Rwigema and Paul Kagame were key players in the NRA (Reyntjens 2005,
588). When Museveni took power in 1986, there were an estimated 4,000 Banyarwanda in the
army, comprising roughly a quarter of the NRA (Mills 2008, 72; Reyntjens 2005, 588).
Museveni gave the Banyarwanda positions in the officer corps as well as in intelligence services
(Reyntjens 2005, 588).

The civil war started by the NRA allowed the Banyarwanda an opening in which to voice
their dissent with the Obote regime. The armed resistance gave them a way to contest the violent
and repressive policies of the regime, as well as to potentially secure their Ugandan citizenship
under a new government (Bøås 2004, 295). While the Obote I regime had hinted that they would
disenfranchise and expel the Banyarwanda, in the 1980s, the government actually followed
through with prevent the Banyarwanda from voting in 1980 and forcibly expelled their
communities in 1982. The NRA provided a mechanism through which the Banyarwanda could
challenge the government, particularly as one of Museveni’s aims was to fight for Ugandan
citizens’ democratic rights (Museveni 1985, 17).

This political opening also aligned with a dearth of exit options. While Uganda refugees
did flee to Zaire, the situation there for the Banyarwanda was less than ideal (Kasozi 1994, 4).
Their TEK group in Zaire had just lost citizenship in 1981 (Prunier 1997, 2). The repressive Hutu
regime was still in power in Rwanda, and the Banyarwanda Rwandan refugees were reluctant to
return (Bøås 2004, 295). While some Banyarwanda were able to enter Rwanda, the border closed
on November 1, 1982 (Winters 1983, 3). The Banyarwanda could have possibly migrated to
Burundi.

Because of the severity of the Obote II regime’s actions, the political opening provided by the NRA, and the lack of credible exit options, the Banyarwanda chose to enact violence against the state through participating in the Ugandan Civil War.

Conclusion

In summation, the cases of the contested citizenship rights of the Banyarwanda in Uganda, and their responses to that contestation, illustrate my two hypotheses: that governments will challenge the citizenship of an ethnic minority group when it serves their interests and secures their power, and that the group will respond with violence when there is the intersection of a political opening and a lack of a credible exit option. The case of the Banyarwanda in Uganda provides a nice compliment to the case of their TEK group in Zaire, as it shows the different shades of government contestation, while the Congolese case shows variation in responses to contestation. In my following chapter, I will extract features of these cases and apply them to cases of citizenship contestation in West Africa.
Works Cited


Chapter Four: Out-of-Sample Cases

Introduction

Now that I have explored the cases of the Banyarwanda in Zaire and Uganda, respectively, I will apply my hypotheses to other cases outside of the region of the Great Lakes. In this chapter, I will test my hypotheses through four different cases of citizenship contestation and their resulting responses in a different geographical region: West Africa. The first case I examine is the first Ivorian Civil War in Côte d’Ivoire, which erupted after an operation to restrict access to national identity cards. Next, I will analyze the case of black Mauritanians in Mauritania, where in 1989 the government seized their identity cards and expelled thousands of members of this group. Third, I will look at the gradations of citizenship in Cameroon, where political rights were determined on locality of birth. Finally, I will examine the case of the Jola in the Gambia, where one might have expected a case of citizenship contestation to occur but none has.

Choosing cases outside of the Great Lakes region is a useful exercise for several reasons. First, it removes the regional dynamics that could be externally influencing the situations in Zaire and Uganda. These cases, secondly, focus on separate ethnolinguistic groups from the Banyarwanda, which allows us to explore whether or not these outcomes are specific to the Banyarwanda or a more universal phenomenon. A limitation of choosing these case studies, however, is that they each occur within the same time period: 1989-2002, the era of political liberalization and democratization across the continent. This means that we cannot necessarily rule out democratization as a cause triggering the contestation of citizenship from the cases of
Côte d’Ivoire and Cameroon. Mauritania, however, remained an autocracy during this time.

Using these three case studies, I will continue to argue that citizenship contestation occurs when the exclusion of a certain group supports the government’s interests, regardless of time of democratization. Second, I will argue that this contestation will trigger violence when there is an intersection of two events: when there is a political opening that increases the salience of citizenship, and when there is no credible exit option for the group. From the evidence presented in these case studies, I have found that there is support for these hypotheses, though the cases themselves are, like anything in real life, in shades of grey rather than black and white.

The outline of the chapter is as follows: I first will discuss the case of the first Ivorian Civil War, providing context to the conflict and then diving into exploring my two hypotheses. Then I will move to exploring the expulsion of black Mauritanians from Mauritania, again providing context to the political situation, the racial dynamics, and Mauritania’s relationship with Senegal before delving into my arguments. For the third case, I will examine the different levels of citizenship in Cameroon, where even if a person has national citizenship is often not allowed to vote or considered a citizen in another Cameroonian city outside of the person’s village of origin. I will describe the historical forces that led to the development of this exclusive, territorially-based citizenship before evaluating my hypotheses. Finally, I will conclude and offer thoughts on possible further research.

Côte d’Ivoire: Introduction and Background

“Give us our identity cards and we will hand over our Kalashnikovs,” a soldier said of the Ivorian Civil War (2002-2008), which erupted in September of 2002 after an attempted coup in
response to the manipulation of the definition of citizenship by then-President Laurent Gbagbo and his government (Manby 2009, 90). Tensions around migration, access to land, and belonging boiled over to the Ivorian Civil War, which is the first case study in this chapter. The question of who was “truly” an Ivorian was not addressed until the early 1990s, thirty years after independence (Marshall-Fratani 2006, 11). This chapter will first explore the history that led to this moment, giving an overview of the migration patterns and the institution of tutorat, how increasing competition for land divided “autochtones” against the “allochthones”, provide an overview of the political history and finally the citizenship laws. Then this chapter will test my first hypothesis, arguing that Gbagbo purposefully excluded the Dioula, an ethnic group from the north, as a strategy to rally his base in the southwest of the country. Gbagbo used questions of autochthony and belonging that had existed prior to democratization to propel his political career throughout multiple transfers of power in the years after democratization. The final section of this chapter will explore my second hypothesis: that violence erupted in the Côte d’Ivoire in response to Gbagbo’s Opération Nationale d’Identification because there was a political opening, here the elections of 2000, and the lack of an exit option due to the instability in West Africa resulting from the Liberian Civil War.

To begin to understand the context for the Ivorian Civil War, one first must understand the tensions between the different ethnic groups in Côte d’Ivoire. Many of these tensions stem from the migration patterns as a result of the plantation-based economy of the country during the colonial era. These historical issues inform the conflict between the Baoulé (“indigenous” to the central region) the Bété and Kru (“indigenous” ethnic groups in the south) with the Dioula, based in the north of the country and often associated with “foreigners” from Burkina Faso and Mali.
Multiple ethnolinguistic groups who share a “vehicular language and frequently the same religion [Islam]” comprise the Dioula, who are in turn a subgroup of the Malinké, who are a subgroup of the Mandé (Marshall-Fratani 2006, 19; Manby 2009, 80).

Côte d’Ivoire produces much of the world’s cocoa, cultivating the crop since the 1920s in the southeast region by the Agbu and Akan (Geschiere 2009, 109). As the decade progressed, cocoa production spread to Bété and other Kru in the southwest. French colonial authorities developed a forced migration scheme to supplement the work of local landholders with that of workers from Haute Volta, which is present-day Burkina Faso (Marshall-Fratani 2006, 15). In 1933, the French changed the border between the two colonies, combining portions of Haute Volta with northern Côte d’Ivoire, creating Haute Côte (Manby 2009, 82). Haute Côte was split back into Haute Volta and Côte d’Ivoire in 1947, a year after the policy of forced migration ended (Manby 2009, 82). Voluntary migration also occurred from the north to the plantations in the south for work and access to fertile land, which continued to independence and beyond (Bøås 2009, 30). Northerners frequently became the majority population in southern towns, while by contrast, migrants only comprise 10% of the population in the north (Marshall-Fratani 2006, 19).

By 1998, out of the 11 million Ivorians, 35% were members of the Dioula (Manby 2009, 82).

Côte d’Ivoire in part incentivized migration through the institution of tutorat, which grants land rights to “good strangers” based on a patronage system (Bøås 2009, 30). Translating to “tutelage” in English, tutorat established a patron-client relationship between a migrant and an autochtone, in which the autochtone would give the migrant a piece of land under the moral belief that everyone deserves land for mere sustenance (30). In return, the migrant would repay the patron with labor on the patron’s farm (Geschiere 2009, 109). Tutorat served two purposes:
for autochtone farmers to receive labor, services, and gifts, and for migrants to be assimilated into a new community (Marshall-Fratani 2006, 15). The French government encouraged the institution of tutorat, as did the government of Félix Houphouët-Boigny, the president from independence in 1961 until his death in 1993 (Geschiere 2009, 110). Houphouët-Boigny encouraged tutorat under the philosophy of pan-Africanism, saying that act of passing land to migrants was a part of “African fraternity” (Marshall-Fratani 2006, 20). Though there was an underlying motive to encouraging integration: Houphouët-Boigny was a member of the Baoulé ethnic group based in the central region, many of whom were some of the wealthiest farmers in Côte d’Ivoire (Geschiere 2009, 111). These “emerging Baoulé cacao farmer bourgeois,” reliant on labor flows from the north, occupied many governmental positions under both Houphouët-Boigny and the later president Henri Konan Bédié, both Baoulé themselves (111). The Baoulé held a precarious position in the schema of autochthony. While the Baoulé considered themselves autochtones, local communities in the southwest viewed them as migrants who had followed the cacao production south (112). The permeability of the Baoulé’s status complicates the dichotomy of autochthony/allochthony as well as the description of the conflict simply between north and south.

While tutorat integrated migrants into the community and provided autochtones with valuable services, competition as a result of land scarcity stressed the relationships between migrants and autochtones. Houphouët-Boigny infuriated autochtones in 1962 when he said “The land belongs to those who work it,” implying that he would not grant special privileges to autochtones over migrants (Manby 2009, 83). Typically, conflict over land was not a problem in rural communities, as the local youth would migrate to the cities to find work rather than stay to
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labor on farms (Geschiere 2009, 110). This rural-urban migration was another reason for which autochtone farmers relied on migrant labor from the north. The unemployment from the 1980s global recession, however, pushed youth back to their villages where land was scarce (Bøås 2009, 32). Conflicts and violence against migrants broke out as the youth acted out their frustration.

Laurent Gbagbo capitalized on the rising anti-immigrant sentiment and rhetoric of autochthony. In the first multi-party elections in 1990, Gbagbo challenged the presidency of Houphouët-Boigny and ran on platform based in autochthony (Manby 2009, 83). He accused Houphouët-Boigny of using immigrants as “electoral cattle,” and after having lost the election, Gbagbo blamed immigrants for voting illegally (Marshall-Fratani 2006, 22). Despite this claim, non-citizens of African origin had been permitted to vote in elections since 1980 (Manby 2009, 83). Ivorian citizenship had been granted to everyone on the basis of jus soli in 1961 in the first constitution, unless the child had two foreign parents (82). People with two foreign parents were able to become citizens through the five-year naturalization process since 1972, a departure from the declaration process that had existed previously. Gbagbo was not the first person to utilize autochthony to agitate for political change, as the sentiment had been in the country for decades prior. For example, in 1970, members of the Guébié group who felt isolated from the land attacked the city hall of Gagnoa to agitate for an independent state free of migrants (Marshall-Fratani 2006, 21).

The resurgence of the autochthonous and xenophobic rhetoric divide the country between the north and south, particularly with the appointment of Alassane Ouattara, a Dioula northerner, to prime minister in 1990. Questions around his true nationality soon arose: Ouattara had Ivorian
citizenship, but had spent most of his childhood in Burkina Faso before going onto work abroad for the International Monetary Fund (IMF) (Manby 2009, 84). Ouattara’s government created “foreign resident” identity cards, which tapped into discourses of autochthony and xenophobia and triggered a fixation on the question of nationality (Marshall Franti 2006, 27). Ouattara also implemented the IMF’s structural adjustment program, which heightened economic frustrations (24).

The next president, Henri Konan Bédié, furthered questioned Ouattara’s nationality, creating the philosophy of ivoirité to justify his political jockeying (Geschiere 2009, 102). Ivoirité defined who truly was Ivorian, who had “the white coat of ivoirité”. The most true Ivorians were the “Ivorians of the trunk,” autochtones who had been in the country and never moved (103). Under the banner of ivoirité, there were two types of Ivorian citizens: those with “pure” heritage (two autochthonous parents) and those with “mixed heritage” (those with one autochthonous parent) (Marshall-franti 2006, 23; Manby 2009, 84). A revised electoral code in 1994 decreed that only those of “pure” heritage could run for office (Marshall-franti 2006, 23). While ivoirité was an extension of the existing autochthonous dialogue, it also served as a barrier to prevent Ouattara from challenging Bédié for the presidency (Manby 2009, 85). Through the 1990s, the Dioula were sporadically denied identity cards and the right to vote by local authorities (84).

Another tension layered on top of ivoirité, regional dynamics, and competition for land was the conflict between Islam and Christianity. Ivorians are much more likely to identify along religious lines than their neighbors in Burkina Faso (McCauley and Posner 2017, 9). The Dioula in the north were predominantly Muslim, while the south was primarily Christian (15). Prejudice
against Muslims was so rampant that Ouattara alleged in 1999 that the government prevented him from running for president on the basis of his faith (15). Indeed, “foreigner” was frequently conflated with “Muslim” in street conversations on ivoirité. Once the civil war broke out, northern rebels listed the refusal of the Ivorian government to recognize Islam as one of their main grievances (Stewart 2011, 3).

A military coup ushered in the new millennium: General Gueï overthrew Bédié in December of 1999, sparking “l’année terrible,” a year of contested elections and battles between Gueï’s soldiers and militia of the Front Populaire Ivoirien (FPI), Gbagbo’s party (Geschiere 2009, 104). After a rigged election to approve a new constitution at the end of July 2000, Gueï organized an “identification campaign”, which labeled many Dioula as foreigners (Manby 2009, 86-87). This campaign proved to be a precursor to the much more effective “Opération Nationale d’Identification” in 2001. Gueï’s campaign was ultimately foiled by the political instability and violence that resulted in his downfall in the elections in October (87). Gbagbo ultimately ascended to the presidency in 2000, amidst attacks on northerners and immigrants by the FPI members after Ouattara’s opposition party, the Rassemblement des Républicains (RDR), protested in the streets (Marshall-Fratani 2006, 24). After the RDR won the majority of local elections in March 2001, Gbagbo argued that the results were rigged because most of the people listed on the electoral roll were not citizens (Manby 2009, 87). Thus regime began the Opération Nationale d'Identification in 2002, which ultimately led to the rebellion in the north.

No More “Good Strangers”: Opération Nationale d'Identification, 2002

This section seeks to explain the moment of the Opération Nationale d'Identification,
which was a targeted strategy by Gbagbo to exclude northern ethnic groups to both eliminate political competition and to mobilize his southern base. Under the Opération Nationale d’Identification, Ivorians were instructed to register for voter registration card with their national identity documents to ensure that only eligible citizens were voting (Manby 2009, 87). When Ivorians tried to obtain a card in their place of residence, they were often told to return to their “village of origin,” separate from their place of residence or their place of birth, where there were witnesses to verify their identity (88). The cities, such as the capital Abidjan which was home to three million people, did not count as places of origin (Geschiere 2009, 98). The program was modified to allow people to attain identity cards in their places of residence as long as they were able to identify witnesses who could vouch that their family had indeed been from their village of origin (99). People were issued a receipt after filing for their card, and a card only after the witnesses had testified on their behalf (99). Many northerners who had been citizens were issued foreign resident identity cards (Manby 2009, 88). Rebellion erupted in the north, which will be discussed in the next section.

Gbagbo's power came from a southwestern base that had been isolated from the land as part of the recession as well as the *tutorat* policy. In order to quell the frustration of his base, he escalated Bédié’s policy of ivoirité to contest and eliminate the citizenship of northerners in order to capitalize on the sentiment of his base as well as to eliminate potential political challenges from Ouattara and the growing strength of the RDR. While this policy did escalate after democratization, it drew from the forces of autochthony and xenophobia already in motion since the 1920s.

The Opération d’Identification Nationale also did not materialize until several of transfers
of power after the opening to a multi-party government. The rhetoric became inflamed around the political liberalization, but the challenges from the RDR and Ouattara did not become serious to Gbagbo and his government until nearly ten years later. This indicates that the Opération d’Identification Nationale served to both eliminate the challenges posed by Ouattara and the RDR as well as mobilize Gbagbo’s base of support who had been frustrated by the economic recession and isolation from land.

“We needed a war because we needed our identity cards”: The Ivorian Civil War, 2002-2007

The Opération Nationale d’Identification was not without consequences: a rebellion soon broke out in the north, escalating into the Ivorian Civil War in 2002. In this section, I will analyze the Ivorian Civil War as a test of my hypothesis: whether the reactionary violence occurred at the time of a political opening and when there were no credible exit options for the Dioula.

“I joined the rebellion because the Malinké have been here since the 12th century, and soon they will be giving us a foreign resident’s card to be able to live here,” a northern rebel fighter said in response to why he decided to take up arms (Geschiere 2009, 100). The Opération d’Identification Nationale was one of the direct causes of the Ivorian Civil War, often cited by fighters as to what pushed them to join the ranks of the Mouvement Patriotique de Côte d’Ivoire (MPCI) (Manby 2009, 90).

The MPCI launched a coup against Gbagbo on September 19, 2002, which ultimately failed. After the failed attempt, the rebels took control of the north of Côte d'Ivoire and fighting
moved steadily south as the MPCI clashed with government troops (90). As soon as the MPCI took over a new town, soldiers sabotaged the national identity records and state registries (Marshall-Fratani 2006, 26). Ethnic violence between autochtones and allochtones broke out as well, particularly in the southwest (Manby 2009, 89). The war lasted until the signing of the Ouagadougou Agreement in March 2007 and displaced over 750,000 people (Bah 2010, 609; Manby 2009, 81).

The MPCI hold a unique position in terms of a political opening: when their attempt to redefine the political authority through the 2001 election was unsuccessful, they tried to create their own political opening through a coup in September 2002. They had multiple opportunities to change the political order but were denied through the corrupt elections and the aborted coup. After failing to utilize those political opportunities, the MPCI turned to violence to try to pressure the Gbagbo regime to allow Dioula and northerners to access citizenship rights and land.

These political openings also aligned with a murky selection of exit options. The Liberian Civil War was concurrent with the Ivorian Civil War, and there was spillover violence from this other conflict into the Côte d’Ivoire. The Gbagbo and the MPCI enlisted rebel fighters from Liberia into the Ivorian Civil War, so the Liberian Civil War played out on western Côte d’Ivoire soil as well (Marshall-Fratani 2006, 31). “If the situation in Côte d’Ivoire is serious, the situation in Liberia is catastrophic,” said a UNHCR official (Kamara 2003, 13). Fleeing to Liberia was ideal, forcing rebels to take up arms. Despite the Liberian Civil War, roughly 100,000 people comprised of Liberians, Ivorians, and other West Africans had left Côte d’Ivoire by April 2003 to cross the border into Liberia (Kamara 2003, 13). Refugee International estimated that 400,000
migrants returned to their home countries such as Mali and Burkina Faso along with 15,000 Ivorians (2007, 1). The number of internally displaced people (IDPs) within Côte d’Ivoire, however, was higher: Refugee International placed the number of IDPs in the south around 500,000 with an unknown number of IDPs in the north (2007, 1).

While there were available exit options for people fleeing the violence in Côte d’Ivoire, considering the Liberian Civil War and the number of IDPs who stayed within the country, it is possible that rebels decided that rather than emigrate it was a better decision to fight against the regime. That being said, several of the MPCI fighters were soldiers who had been exiled under the rule of General Gueï to Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, so there were political asylum options for some of the soldiers (Marshall-Fratani 2006, 25). The lack of credible exit options cannot be ruled out, but we can also not conclusively rule out some alternative explanations, such as regional instability encouraging political violence or the rebellion originating as self-defense against the xenophobic regime.

Mauritania: Introduction and Background

Another example of citizenship revocation can be found in 1989 in Mauritania. Under the guise of an agreement with Senegal to repatriate each other’s citizens, the Mauritanian government forcibly expelled and terminated the citizenship of black Mauritians. This section will first cover the history that culminated in the expulsions, giving an overview of Mauritania’s race relations and political history, as well as Mauritania’s relationship with Senegal. Then this chapter will test my first hypothesis, arguing that the Mauritanian government used the agreement with Senegal to expel its black citizens to further their political project of Arabization.
even though there was no democratic transition during this time. The final section of this chapter will explore my second hypothesis: that violence results when there is an intersection of a political opening and an exit option. In this case, violence did not result in response to the expulsions, which occurred at a time when there were credible exit options and there was not a political opening.

Mauritania and Senegal have a tightly interwoven history. French colonization began in Senegal in the late 1600s, but gained strength after 1817 as colonial authorities decided to organize the colony into a plantation-based economy (Newbury and Kanya-Forstner 1969, 254). French colonial authority radiated northwards to Mauritania, where the nomadic population posed little threat to French military power (Parker 1991, 156). Mauritania became a French protectorate in 1903 (Magistro 1993, 211). Mauritania was viewed as Senegal’s subsidiary: one senator represented both Mauritania and Senegal in the French National Assembly until 1946 when Mauritania was granted its own representation (Parker 1991, 156). The French appointed black Africans as colonial administrators in Mauritania, contributing to the perception held by the Arab White Moors, or Beydan, that black Africans did not exist in the country prior to colonization (156). In fact, several ethnic groups had lived in the southern parts of Mauritanians for generations: the Fulani/Peul, Wolof, Soninké, and Bambara (Manby 2009, 105). Black Mauritians, who primarily worked as sedentary cultivators, were privileged over the Beydan, nomadic herders, under the colonial regime (Human Rights Watch World Report 1990). Once Mauritania achieved independence in 1960, however, this power dynamic flipped: the Beydan took political power and enacted discriminatory laws against the black Mauritians (Manby 2009, 105).
The Mauritanian government began a process of Arabization after independence. Having gained power, the Beydan shift state policies to make the country more Arab than African. Arabic became the national language in 1961, and in 1966 became the mandatory language of instruction for primary and secondary schools in 1966, prompting student and teacher protests across the country (Magistro 1993, 213). The protests were violently quashed by roving bands of Haratines, black slaves of the Beydan who were emancipated in 1980 (Magistro 1993, 213; Parker 1990, 157). The government ended its membership in the Organization commune africaine et malgache in 1965, later joining the Arab League in 1973 (157). Similar to the treatment of the Ugandan Banyarwanda in the previous case study, the Mauritanian government took steps to prevent black Africans’ participation in the civil service: by 1978, the number of black Africans had been reduced to 20% in civil service (157). Violence again erupted in 1979 when the Beydan government issued a decree reaffirming the need for Arabic instruction in schools (Magistro 1993, 213).

Resistance to the Beydan government’s policies had taken root before independence. Two political parties in the 1950s, both based in the Senegal River Valley, opposed any move towards Arabization: the Bloc démocratique du Gorgol in 1956 and the Union des Originaires de la Vallée du Fleuve in 1957 (Magistro 1993, 212). These two groups, along with the more moderate Union progressive mauritanienne, which advocated for a pluralistic society, laid the foundation for the Forces de libération africaines de Mauritanie (FLAM), which was founded in 1983 (Magistro 1993, 212; Kinne 2001, 598). The government exiled FLAM to Senegal in 1984 (598). Members of FLAM were arrested in 1986 after the distribution of the “Oppressed Black African Manifesto,” which argued that Mauritania was under apartheid (Parker 1991, 161).
1987, the group launched a coup, which ultimately failed and resulted in the execution of the participants as well as a purge of blacks from the military and civil service (Parker 1991, 161; Kinne 2001, 598).

Amidst the background of racial discrimination and resistance in Mauritania, a land conflict between Mauritanian herders and Senegalese farmers in the Senegal River Valley brought the relationship between the two countries to the brink. Climate change deeply affected the Sahel. Severe periods of drought in the Sahel pushed the population southwards and into urban areas (Magistro 1993, 215). Desertification in the Sahel pushed Beydan herders further south to the fertile area of the Senegal River Valley, onto the lands traditionally held by black Africans of both Senegalese and Mauritanian citizenship (Parker 199, 155). To prevent the Senegal River Valley from drying up and to provide an economic stimulus in response to slowing economies, Senegal, Mali and Mauritania worked together to build dams (Parker 1991, 158). To aid these reforms and to further the policy of Arabization, the Beydan government passed a decree in 1984 that allowed the government to “allocate resources within the basin”--that is, to expropriate land as needed (158). Land seizures continued in earnest up through 1988, much to the anger of local black authorities (Magistro 1993, 219). Tensions continued to build until 1989, when the region erupted into violence.

**Expulsions of citizens, 1989**

Communal violence between herders and farmers broke out in 1989, in which the Mauritanian National Guard intervened (Kane 2012, 45). The violence culminated in “Black Tuesday” on April 25, when hundreds of black African citizens and Senegalese in Nouakchott
were attacked in response to rumors of violence against Arabs in Senegal (Parker 1991, 160). To prevent the conflict from spiraling into a war between the two countries, Senegal and Mauritania reached an agreement to repatriate each other’s citizens in May (160).

Mauritania, however, used this diplomatic decision to expel its own citizens of black African descent (Magistro 1993, 204). Nearly 65,000 people were expelled to Senegal, while 15,000 fled to Mali (Manby 2009, 106). Black Mauritanians were also denied their identity cards and often had private property seized or destroyed (Human Rights Watch World Report 1990). In contrast to the expulsions in Uganda, the Mauritanian government invited back the deportees in 1994 after relations with Senegal had calmed (106).

The Mauritanian government used the agreement with Senegal to expel black Mauritanians as part of their political project to create an Arabicized country, using the opportunity to eliminate the threat potentially posed by FLAM. This move by the government strategically expelled black government employees and skilled middle class workers in addition to herders and cultivators along the Senegal River Valley border (Manby 2009, 106). Many of those expelled, the government feared, were in opposition to the Arabization policies (106). These expulsions occurred despite a lack of a transition to democracy or multi-party government, complicating the hypothesis that challenges to citizenship primarily occur at times of democratization.

**Response to expulsions**

Despite the violent expulsions, there was no documented reactionary violence. While FLAM initiated some cattle raids into Mauritania to return expropriated cattle to expelled black
Mauritanians in Senegal, no other reprisal violence resulted from the expulsions. Military clashes broke out between Senegal and Mauritania, though these were in response to the tensions over the Senegal River Valley and treatment of nationals in each other’s countries (Parker 1991, 167).

At this time, there was not a political opening: political liberalization did not occur until the early 1990s and there were no other attempts to renegotiate the political terms such as a coup or civil war (Seddon 1996, 207). This indicates that perhaps the expelled black Mauritanians did not choose to participate in retaliatory violence because they did not believe the potential results to be effective or pressing. There were also exit options available to Mauritanian refugees: Senegal and Mali. Senegal set up camps for the refugees, though Mali did not recognize them as such (Human Rights Watch 1990). Although Senegal initiated several military strikes against Mauritania, a full war was never reached and diplomatic relations were fully restored by 1992 (Kinne 2001, 605).

Another reason for the lack of armed struggle could be the lack of organizational capacity of FLAM, the most prominent resistance group. While FLAM had been operating in Dakar and Paris since 1983, they were unable to mount an effective violent resistance to the Mauritanian regime (Pazzanita 1999, 49). The leaders of FLAM were imprisoned during the expulsions, and the task of running the organization fell to high school students in Dakar (Kinne 2001, 602). This new variable of organizational capacity can help explain why some cases result in others while others do not. More research is necessary to determine how it applies to the other cases discussed within this project. This lack of organizational strength contrast strongly with the efforts of northerners of Côte d’Ivoire, who organized into the MPCI and were based within the country. We also see a difference between FLAM and the National Resistance Army (NRA) which had a
many bases across occupied Ugandan territory during the Ugandan Civil War, as discussed in the previous chapter. The combination of a lack of political opening, the available exit options, and the lack of organizational capacity could have been what deterred Mauritanians from launching a sustained armed resistance against the government.

**Cameroon: Introduction and Background**

The final example of citizenship contestation to be discussed in this chapter is the case of Cameroon in the early 1990s. Cameroon is a different test case than previous cases that this thesis has covered, as municipal governments limited the citizenship rights through disenfranchisement of certain groups but did not revoke their citizenship. Citizens were only allowed to vote in their “place of birth,” which disproportionately affected citizens from ethnic groups that migrated internally within the country and who were believed to support the political challenger to the incumbent. This section will first explore history that led to this limitation of citizenship: the internal migration patterns, the regional dynamics with Cameroon, and the political history up to political liberalization in 1990. Next, it will test my hypothesis, arguing that while the limitation occurred during a democratic transition, political incentives to contest the citizenship was the ultimate motivation for the regime. The challenge occurred because of the historical competition over land and access to power, instead of the majority group’s dislike for the minority groups. Second, it will test my second hypothesis: that contestation results in violence at the intersection of a political opening and a lack of credible exit options. In this case, no violence resulted: while there was a political opening, there were also credible exit options for people to take.
As in the cases of Zaire, Uganda, and Côte d’Ivoire, the origins of citizenship contestation in Cameroon can be partially traced back to labor migration and competition for land. Cameroon produces much of the world’s cocoa, and German colonial rule developed plantations in 1890 to profit from this resource (Geschiere 2009, 57). Germans controlled the area that became Cameroon from 1884 until 1916, taking land from the indigenous Bakweri to be used in plantations and exiling the group to “native preserves” (Konings 2001, 171). The growth of plantations in the South West Province created a labor shortage, a problem which migration from the northwest and from other West African states solved (173). Most of the migration came from the Yaounde region and the Grassfield region, which both were populated by the Bamileke (173). The Bakweri soon became the minority within the southwest due to the migration (Geschiere 2009, 42). Competition for land intensified, and while the local groups had initially welcome the migrants, they began to resent the migrants, viewing the migrants’ desire to return home or to be buried in their home village as evidence that the migrants did not truly care for the land (Konings and Nyamnjoh 2003, 15). The migration patterns led to a divide between the north and the south of Cameroon. This regional difference was additionally complicated by a language divide between French and English. After World War I, the League of Nations divided Cameroon into the two protectorates of British Southern Cameroon and French Cameroon, which were reunited in 1961 (LeVine 1964, 423; Awason 2000, 91).

Despite the linguistic and ethnic divides within the country, Ahmadou Ahidjo, the ruler of Cameroon from 1960-1982, insisted on unity. Cameroon existed as a one-party state until 1990 to supposedly encourage solidarity (Geschiere 2009, 40). Talking about someone’s ethnicity during this time, while not prohibited by law, was considered taboo (Geschiere 2009,
Ahidjo also discouraged regional identification; the guise of Cameroonian togetherness had the convenient benefit of preventing any political opposition from gaining strength through connections between urban migrants and their home villages (Nyamnjoh and Rowlands 1998, 220). This taboo faded in the 1980s, after Ahidjo was succeeded by Paul Biya (Geschiere 2009, 40).

Political parties proliferated once Biya lifted the ban on freedom of association in 1990 (Geschiere 2009, 45). Biya helmed the Cameroon People’s Democratic Movement (CPDM), which was supported by the central and southern francophone regions of the country, mostly populated by Beti (45). The main opposition party was the anglophone, northwest-based Social Democratic Front (SDF) (45). Regional associations sprung up as well. For example, the South West Elites Association (SWELA) formed in 1991 to lobby for the interests of anglophone southwesterners, as they were dissatisfied with the representation of SDF, viewing the party as catering to northwest elites (Nyamnjoh and Rowlands 1998, 328). Only members of anglophone “autochthonous” groups, which is those indigenous to the southwest, were permitted to join SWELA (Konings 2001, 185). In response to the exclusionary membership restrictions of SWELA, francophone migrants in the southwest established their own regional association, the Eleventh Province Association (185). The group chose the name “Eleventh Province” to indicate their feelings of isolation and marginalization from citizenship within Cameroon, wistfully thinking of a new eleventh province outside of the existing ten provinces where they were accepted as legitimate citizens (Konings and Nyamnjoh 1997, 82).

Biya recognized the power of SWELA, choosing to create an alliance with the group as a means of cutting into the anglophone voting bloc that had coalesced behind SDF (Geschiere
Regional associations were able to mobilize the educated urban elites to organize their home villages on behalf of their endorsed party (Nyamnjoh and Rowlands 1998, 324). A connection with Biya ensured that the members of SWELA, from relatively small ethnic groups, would exert more influence over politics and resource allocation of the Cameroonian government (Geschiere 2009, 47). Indeed, after Biya appointed southwesterner Peter Mafany Musonge as Prime Minister in 1992, Musonge gave a now-famous speech in which he announced “President Biya has scratched our back, and we shall certainly scratch the Head of State’s back thoroughly when the time comes” (Konings and Nyamnjoh 1997, 214). Musonge clearly implied that the autochtones of SWELA would rally together to benefit Biya in return when Biya requested. In some cases, the autochtones took this to mean that they would force the *allogènes*[^12], or migrants to the southwest, to vote for CPDM (Geschiere 2009, 47). The rise of elite associations and their participation in politics signalled the increasing importance of belonging in Cameroonian sociopolitical life, which became especially salient during the 1996 elections.

**Restricted Voting in 1996**

The year 1996 became a watershed year for the divisions between autochtones and allochtones. After fearing the encroachment of migrants from the Grasslands, the southwesterners lobbied to get protection against the “settlers” (Konings and Nyamnjoh 2003, 117). Shortly before the municipal elections, the government revised the constitution to include protections for “autochtones and minorities” (Konings 2001, 187). Despite the seemingly innocuous wording of this section, the groups protected by the phrasing were the autochtones

[^12]: French variant of allochthon, which was also used to other the Congolese Banyarwanda in Zaire
and minorities who already had political power, such as SWELA (Konings and Nyamnjoh 2003, 137). The constitution also guarantees political representation for autochtones in their region, as stated by Article 57: “The Regional Council shall be headed by an indigene of the Region elected from among its members for the life of the Council” (Cameroonian Constitution 1996, 35).

This article proved key during the municipal elections of 1996. During these elections many Cameroonian migrants were denied the right to vote because they were not autochtones of the region (Geschiere 2009, 47). These Cameroonians were citizens with a right to vote, but because they were not voting in their “village of origin,” authorities prevented them from voting (52). A person’s village of origin was determined to be where the person chose to later be buried (42). As one politician said, “Every Cameroonian is an allogène anywhere else in the country...than where his ancestor lived and...where his mortal remains will be buried” (56). However, when these Cameroonians went back to their village of origin, they were often still denied the right to vote because they were not voting in their “village of residence” (52). In one area of the southwest, Chief Nfon Victor Mukete used vigilante groups to prevent certain migrant citizens from voting (Konings 2001, 187). In contrast with previous policies discussed in this project, local and municipal governments initiated the move to disenfranchise the migrant citizens, rather than the national government such as in Zaire or Côte d’Ivoire.

While citizens were able to retain their national citizenship, a person could not access certain rights of citizenship if they were in a region where they were considered an outsider. In this sense, there were gradations of citizenship: Cameroonians with national citizenship may not have “local” citizenship depending on where they turned in their ballot. While these moves to limit citizenship occurred around the point of political liberalization, it was an extension of
historical competition for power and land within communities with large migrant populations. One of the reasons for the denial of voting rights was because the migrants were perceived to be SDF supporters, which displeased the autochtones in power with the CPDM (Konings 2001, 187). Tensions based in autochthonous rhetoric had existed since the 1950s, but only in the 1990s translated into restrictive voting laws (180). With the opening of Cameroon to a multi-party state, ethnicity and belonging became politicized to help Biya retain power, which ultimately manifested in gradations of citizenship.

“Let All Tribes Vote in Their Place of Origin” and Other Songs: Lack of Reactionary Violence

Despite the restricted voting during the 1996 municipal elections, SDF candidates won five out of six posts in Douala, a city in the southwest (Geschiere 2009, 50). Four out of the five were Bamileke, an “allochthonous” ethnic group that made up 70% of the city’s population (Konings and Nyamnjoh 2003, 118). Protests erupted after the 1996 municipal elections. The streets rang with songs in Douala such as “Let All Tribes Vote in Their Place of Origin”, “This Shall Not Happen in Our Homeland” and “Mayors Should Be Natives” as youths protested, but no violence resulted (Geschiere 2009, 50). The federal government sanctioned the protests, as the opposition party SDF was one of the targets of the demonstrations (Konings 2001, 187).

While there was the political opening of municipal elections at this time, two factors could account for why there was not any reactionary violence. First, there were credible exit options for southwest allochthonous groups to take. It was possible to return to their home villages as there were no violent internal clashes or civil wars within Cameroon, and many did
Moving internally within Cameroon could guarantee the ability to vote in future elections and other citizenship rights. Second, it is also possible that this limited disenfranchisement was not a severe enough event to warrant reprisal violence. The gradations of citizenship were not enforced evenly across Cameroon: local authorities manipulated laws to varying degrees of strictness to prevent certain groups from voting. While some returning Cameroonians were barred from voting in their home villages, other returnees were allowed to vote. A few administrators encouraged violence to prevent allochtones from voting, most did not. This discrimination did not affect all Cameroonians evenly, which could have removed a group incentive to rebel.

**The Gambia**

"In The Gambia for example one can purchase land and establish a 5-star hotel without the authorities questioning your eligibility for citizenship, which is the contrary in Sierra Leone," said Yasser Ayoub, businessman and philanthropist frustrated with Sierra Leone and jealous of perceived access to Gambian citizenship (Kargbo 2011). The Gambia is a country where one might have expected a challenge to citizenship contestation to emerge, but none has. Ethnicity became politicized in the Gambia shortly after its independence in 1965, and the country was long controlled by Dawda Jawara and the People’s Progressive Party (PPP), which both were Mandinka. There are several different ethnic groups, each with transborder ethnic kin located in Senegal and Guinea-Bissau. Particularly, the Jola (known as Dioula in Senegal) are a sizable minority within the Gambia, largely concentrated in the south, near the Senegalese region of Casamance, which has been embroiled in a secessionist movement primarily helmed by radical
Jola. With politicized ethnicity, a secessionist movement next door, and migration from Senegal to the Gambia, why was there not citizenship contestation as in other similar cases? Simply put, it was not in the government’s interests to politicize citizenship in that manner for three reasons: the government relied on multi-ethnic power-sharing coalitions, intermarriage between ethnic groups was fairly common, and there was a lack of competition for land. Therefore, it was a better political strategy for the government to promote inclusive citizenship.

The Gambia is a region constructed by colonial authorities. The ethnic groups that live around the Gambia River—the Mandinka, the Fula, the Wolof, the Jola, and several smaller groups—were separated into French, British, and Portuguese colonies by the Berlin Conference in 1889 (Minorities Rights Group International). The British controlled the Gambia, a strip of land 300 miles long and 15 miles wide bisected by the Gambia River and surrounded by French Senegal (Onishi 2000, 3). Due to the arbitrary nature of the borders, people moved between states to find the most fertile plot of land (Nugent 2007, 237). The migration primarily occurred northwards away from Casamance and into the Gambia, as French colonial rule was considerably more strict than British rule and there was less competition for land in the sparsely populated Gambia (231). This lack of competition for land, which never materialized as an issue, differs from the previous cases in Zaire, Uganda, and Côte d’Ivoire. There was not an allochtone/autochtone binary in the same way as North Kivu, Côte d’Ivoire, or Cameroon, and thus no jilted, self-styled indigenes made claims on the government to get rid of migrants. The policy of welcoming migrants was directly opposed to that philosophy. Perhaps if this binary had arose, citizenship contestation would have occurred.

At independence, the People’s Progressive Party (PPP) took control with Jawara as
president (Thomson 2011, 113). Political parties had initially formed along ethnic lines: the PPP was supported by the Mandinka, the United Party (UP) by the urban Wolof and Fula (Edie, 2000, 163). Realizing that the rural Mandinka vote would not be strong enough to win the election, Jawara created an alliance with the rural Wolof, urban Aku, and the Jola to beat the UP (164). Through this method of power sharing, ethnic and regional divisions did not become a defining factor within national politics (164). This case differs from Zaire, Uganda, Côte d’Ivoire, and Cameroon, all of which politicized regionalism in their national politics. The cooperative power sharing and coalition building of the Jawara government perhaps removed some of the incentive to change to a divide-and-rule policy such as Mobutu’s. It appears as though it was not in the interests of Gambian government to question the citizenship of challenging groups as they may need their support to retain power in the next election.

A coup occurred in 1981, but was put down by the Senegalese government, who returned Jawara to power (Edie 2000, 172). A condition of his re-installation was that the Gambia joined Senegal in the Senegambia Confederation, which existed until its disintegration in 1989 (181). Shortly afterwards, in 1990, a Casamance separatist movement began in earnest, as the Mouvement des forces démocratique casamançais (MFDC) attacked the Senegalese government (de Jong and Glasser 2005, 214). The MFDC was largely considered by the Senegalese government to be an ethnonationalist separatist movement in pursuit of a Jola Republic, but the MFDC refuted this claim (Lambert 1998, 587). Jawara remained prime minister until 1994, when a military coup orchestrated by Yahya Jammeh, a Jola, overthrew him (Thomson 2011, 113). While Jammeh was sympathetic to the MFDC cause, he did not outright support the Casamance separatists because of the Gambia’s amicable relationship with the Senegalese government
Even though the Jawara government relied on the Jola for support, why did the government not contest their citizenship when the Casamance separatist movement began, since it was viewed as an ethnonationalist movement? Another phenomenon had been occurring at the familial level: intermarriage between the Jola and the Mandinka, as well as other ethnic groups. Intermarriage is one feature of a process that has been described as the “Mandingization” of the Jolla by academics, in which the Jola convert to Islam, adopt Mandinka agricultural processes, alter their political systems, change their gender relations, and marry into Mandinka families (Paul Pélissier 1966, Linares 1992, Thomson 2011). Mandingization is a form of ethnic osmosis, where a person, family, and/or community changes their ethnic identification from one ethnic group to another (Thomson 2011, 98). Thomson conducted a survey of married couples in a village in the Gambia to demonstrate how ethnic osmosis manifests in Jola/Mandinka communities. He asked married couples to identify their ethnicity and their spouse’s ethnicity, and frequently people would claim their spouse to be Mandinka despite their spouse claiming another non-Mandinka ethnic identity (110). Through these dependent relationships and combining of family and culture, it shows that the Jola in the south chose to become more closely aligned to the Mandinka. Due to the Madinkanization of the Jola, it is possible that the government did not view their ethnic group as threat, even though there was a violent separatist movement primarily comprised of Jola in neighboring Casamance. Therefore, the government had no incentive or purpose in challenging the citizenship of the Jola, as they both were partners in the PPP coalition and because they were assimilating to Mandinka culture in the south through intermarriage and other cultural practices.
The Jola in the Gambia differ substantially from other ethnic group’s assimilation to their host countries. For example, the Banyarwanda who emigrated to Uganda the earliest adopted some cultural practices of the Buganda (Alex 2008, 44). However, their status was conflated with the later-arriving refugees from Rwanda, who lived in more isolated settlements (Clay 1984, 74). In Côte d’Ivoire, the Dioula primarily lived in the north of the country and were Muslim, in stark contrast to the rest of the country that was Christian (McCauley and Posner 2017, 17). More work is needed to fully understand the effect of ethnic osmosis on ethnic violence in response to citizenship contestation.

In conclusion, despite the Casamance separatist movement helmed by Jolas next door, no threat to Jola citizenship arose at the hands of the Jawara government. This absence of contestation is due the interests of the government to keep the Jola as citizens, because of the reliance on power sharing and coalitions within the PPP ruling structure, the lack of a strangers/indigenes binary, and the intermarriage and Mandinganization of the Jola in the south.
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Chapter Five: Conclusion

In this project, I have shown why governments decide to contest the citizenship of ethnic minority groups through studying the cases of Congo/Zaire, Uganda, Côte d’Ivoire, Mauritania and Cameroon. While the dominant theory is that governments will contest the citizenship of groups at the time of democratization, this theory is incomplete. From the six cases I have examined, evidence shows that the marginalization of the groups will occur whenever it serves the interest of the regime, whether the country is during a time of democratic transition or not. Challenges to citizenship certainly occur at times of democratization, but these challenges are not unique to those periods.

In my first case study of the Banyarwanda in Congo/Zaire, we can find two examples of challenges not during periods of democratization. For example, in 1964, the Banyarwanda were intentionally left out of the Luluabourg Constitution because the government conflated the group with Rwandan refugees, which they feared would take power in the Kivu regions. At the time of independence, when the Republic of Congo was supposedly a democracy, the Banyarwanda had been granted citizenship. Four years later, influx of refugees from the 1959 Social Revolution in Rwanda triggered a citizenship challenge in the 1964 Luluabourg Constitution. The government feared that the refugees would take over the eastern Congo, and so decided to isolate all Kinyarwanda speakers. This challenge occurred after the initial time of independence, once the country was already a democracy. Another challenge occurred in 1981, when the regime revoked the citizenship of the Banyarwanda. This revocation happened in response to anger of the indigenous groups at the favoring of the Banyarwanda under Bisengimana, as well as Mobutu’s general divide-and-rule strategy. This case demonstrates that political incentives heavily
influence citizenship contestation, as even though Zaire was an autocracy during these time periods, the governments had clear payoffs to exclude the Banyarwanda.

I also found examples of citizenship challenges outside of democratic transitions in my second case study of Uganda. The challenge to citizenship was less severe under the Obote I regime in Uganda, where in September 1969 a ban on unskilled foreign workers targeted the Banyarwanda. The challenge did serve Obote, however, by retaining support from key constituencies who felt threatened by the Banyarwanda. This discrimination once Obote decreed that Uganda was a one-party state. An additional case of contestation in Uganda were the expulsions in 1982 and 1983, where forces loyal to the central government violently drove the Banyarwanda, 75% of whom were Ugandan citizens, out of the country as they tried to purge the region of opposition to Obote. Both of these challenges occurred under Obote’s autocratic regimes, while counters the prevailing theory that citizenship challenges occur under times of democratization.

Cases outside of my initial sample further confirmed my hypotheses. An extreme case of contestation occurred in Mauritania, where the Arab regime expelled black Africans after confiscating their identity cards. The expulsion of this group allowed the government to further its political project of Arabization. The government had already began to implement this project through the officialization of Arabic, discriminatory hiring practices, and suppression of black African opposition parties. This policy escalated when the government had an cover under which to expel the black Mauritanians during its conflict with Senegal over the Senegal River Valley border region. The ruling regime of Mauritania would remain an autocracy until 2007. This case
again shows that challenges occur under autocracies as frequently as democracies as long as compelling, political incentives for citizenship contestation exist.

After examining these cases, a question that remains for future research is why some groups are targeted but not others. My case study of the Gambia, where one might have expected to see the citizenship of the Jola pulled into question, illuminated two possible additional variables. The Jola are an ethnic minority within the majority Mandinka country. They also have transborder ethnic kin embroiled in a violent separatist conflict across the border in the Senegalese region of Casamance. No citizenship challenges, however, have emerged.

My research suggests that two variables may be at work: coalitional governance and cultural osmosis. After the Gambia attained its independence, political parties initially formed on the basis of ethnic group, but soon created a coalitional government crosscutting ethnic and regional lines in order to obtain a majority. This power sharing arrangement prevented a divide-and-rule strategy from being politically salient. Thus no need to challenge the citizenship of a competing group arose.

We do not see the variable of a coalitional governance structure at work in either of the cases of Congo/Zaire or Uganda. In Congo/Zaire, Mobutu effectively prevented ethnic groups from forming coalitions that threatened his grasp on power. In Uganda, a brief coalition formed across religious lines when the UPC joined with the KY Party to take power after independence, but Obote shortly afterwards broke the coalition to seize control. This could indicate that cross-ethnic coalitions are needed rather than religious coalitions, but more research is needed.

Additionally, the phenomenon of cultural osmosis occurred in the Gambia. The Jola married into the Mandinka and adopted some of their cultural and religious practices. In a study
conducted by Steven Thomson, members of the Mandinka in an interethnic marriage would frequently identify their spouses as Mandinka, even if their spouses identified as Jola. This rate of cultural assimilation could have provided an incentive not to contest the citizenship of the Jola, because the Mandinka relied on them for both political and familial support.

While some aspects of cultural osmosis occurred between the Ugandan Banyarwanda and Baganda, this process could have been disrupted by the arrival of refugees. The influx of refugees initially stayed with Ugandan relatives, cementing the Banyarwanda identity. Later arrivals of Rwandan refugees built their own settlements, which contributed accusations made by other indigenous Ugandans that the refugees were taking their land. These refugees could have mitigated any pacifying influence from the process of cultural osmosis on citizenship contestation. In the case of the Banyarwanda in Congo/Zaire, there does not appear to be any evidence of cultural osmosis. Future research is needed to fully apply these variables to my test cases to understand if they provided any influence over why the groups were chosen for citizenship contestation.

Another avenue for future research is to investigate would be to compare the challenges to citizenship rights of ethnic groups that do not have transborder ethnic kin to groups that do. The literature does not agree on whether ethnic groups with transborder ethnic kin groups have a greater likelihood of rebelling against the state, and does not answer the question of whether groups with transborder kin are more likely to be targeted.

Through my case work, I have show evidence that violence will result after a citizenship challenge when there is 1) the intersection of a political opening and 2) a lack of credible exit options. I define political opening as a time of renegotiating the terms of political authority such
as a regime transition, a constitutional convention, an election, or opening to multi-party rule, as well as with a lack of credible exit options.

Looking first to Congo/Zaire, we can see that violence occurred when the Banyarwanda were denied citizenship in 1964 after the Luluabourg Constitution and in 1993 after the Conférence Nationale Souveraine. No violence, however, occurred in 1981, when Mobutu revoked their citizenship that had been granted by the 1971 law. Both in 1964 and in 1993, the Banyarwanda could not flee to Rwanda or Burundi due to government repression. They also had a political opening of a constitutional convention to determine the future of the Congo. In 1981, however, the Banyarwanda could flee to Rwanda and Burundi. Mobutu’s regime continued, so there was no opportunity to utilize their voice to attempt to renegotiate the terms of political authority through a political opening.

We see find a similar response pattern in Uganda. After the Banyarwanda lost access to employment in the public sector in 1969, there was no violent response. There were credible exit options, as it was possible to flee to the Congo. There was also no political opening, as Obote’s rule had just tightened to a one-party government. This ban also was possibly not large enough to warrant a response. After the expulsions of 1982 and 1983, however, the Banyarwanda did respond violently through joining the National Resistance Army. The Banyarwanda could not flee to Zaire, because of the discrimination against their kin, and could not flee to Rwanda because the border closed shortly after the first expulsions in response to the volume of refugees. There was a political opening of a civil war.

A similar response occurs in Côte d’Ivoire in 2002, one of my cases out of my initial sample. After the Opération Nationale d’Identification that rescinded the identity cards of
northerners, the majority of whom were Dioula, a civil war broke out. This violence occurred after the political opening of an election that was viewed as corrupt, and when the group had few exit options due to the Liberian Civil War and the conflict in Sierra Leone.

The case of Mauritania illuminated a new variable that could inform future research. A resistance group against the Mauritanian government, based in Senegal, had been previously active but did not launch any successful strikes against the Arab regime after the expulsions. The group, the Forces de libération africaines de Mauritanie (FLAM), was being run by high school students in Dakar (Kinne 2001, 602). This evidence points to a new variable, organizational capacity, that may be influential in informing whether or not a group will react with violence when faced with a citizenship challenge. If the group does not have adequate organizational resources or a body of support, it is possible that they will not respond with violence. Future research could explore the relationship of this variable and responses.

All in all, my work shines light on conditions under which political violence can occur, both violence perpetuated by the state as well as violence perpetuated by affected groups. Although citizenship revocation is not a common occurrence, it has grave consequences for those that it affects. Citizenship revocation is ultimately a violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We have a moral responsibility to prevent violence and to protect people who have become stateless. Thus understanding under what conditions citizenship contestations and reprisal violence occur is imperative.