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Horizontal Inequalities and Violent Conflict. Côte d'Ivoire Country Paper

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HORIZONTAL INEQUALITIES AND VIOLENT CONFLICT

Côte d'Ivoire Country Paper¹

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1. INTRODUCTION

The question why some countries are able to maintain stable and inclusive multi-ethnic societies while others, including countries which have been relatively stable for decades such as Côte d'Ivoire, experience wide-scale violence along ethnic lines remains, undoubtedly, among the most important questions to be researched at the beginning of the twenty-first century. In order to explain the emergence of ethnic violence and disintegration of multi-ethnic states, scholars from different disciplines have focused on different factors and proposed different conflict narratives or models. One of the most influential narratives used to explain and analyze the emergence of violent group mobilization and violent conflict is the 'theory of relative deprivation.'

Ted Gurr has developed this theory most fully in his well-known book *Why Men Rebel* (Gurr, 1970). The theory's main claim is that grievance-induced discontent is the main determinant for (violent) political mobilization. In recent years, Frances Stewart has re-developed this argument (see Stewart, 2000 and 2002). More particularly, she asserts that where there are social, economic and political inequalities, 'coinciding with cultural differences, culture could become a powerful mobilising agent that can lead to a range of political disturbances,' including violent conflict and civil war (Stewart, 2002: 3). She refers to the inequalities between culturally defined groups as *horizontal inequalities*, and differentiates this *kind* of inequality from the 'normal' definition of inequality (Ibid.). She labels the latter type of inequality as *vertical inequality* because it 'lines individuals or households up vertically and measures inequality over the range of individuals' (Ibid).

It is important to emphasise that the presence of severe horizontal inequalities does not produce wide-scale violence *as such*, but it rather makes multi-ethnic countries more *vulnerable* to the emergence of violent conflicts along ethnic lines. Whether horizontal grievances actually result into violent conflict depends to a large extent on whether or not (ethnic) leaders and elites are willing and able to instigate and/or organise the process of grievance formation and violent group mobilization. In this respect, it is often argued that the existence of mutually beneficial inter-ethnic elite alliances is an important factor for explaining the *non-appearance* of ethnic group mobilization in countries with severe horizontal inequalities. Following from this, I argue that the absence of political horizontal inequalities at the *elite* level significantly reduces the risk of violent group mobilization, even if there are severe socio-economic horizontal at the *mass* level, because in these situations political elites and

¹ This paper is based on my previous research and forthcoming papers on the relationship between horizontal inequalities and violent group mobilization in Côte d'Ivoire (See Langer, 2005 and 2005).

leaders lack the incentives to mobilize their constituents for violent conflict. The converse hypothesis also seems to hold: ethnic mobilisation and violent conflicts appear to become more likely if there is a high degree of political horizontal inequality and exclusion.

In addition to the interaction between the political horizontal inequalities at the elite level and socio-economic horizontal inequalities at the mass level, it is also important to analyze the changes in a country's institutional and economic environment. For instance, instead of making countries more peaceful as was traditionally argued, the process of democratisation is an important institutional change that frequently fosters political instability and violent group mobilisation. The state and progress of a country's economy is another factor that can catalyse the processes whereby latent ethnic grievances become a source of violent group mobilization.

The structure of the paper is as follows. The first section gives a brief historical overview of the emergence of violent conflict in Côte d'Ivoire. The second section provides some data on the evolution of the socio-economic horizontal inequalities at the mass level in the 1990s. The third section will discuss the evolution of the political horizontal inequalities in the period 1980-2003. The last section will draw some conclusions regarding the linkages between horizontal inequalities and violent group mobilization in Côte d'Ivoire. This section will also include a policy 'box,' suggesting some measures that might have prevented the emergence of violent conflict.

2. FROM IVORIAN MIRACLE TO VIOLENT CONFLICT²

Côte d'Ivoire is a multi-ethnic country with approximately 60 different ethnic groups which can be grouped into five larger socio-cultural or ethno-linguistic groups: Akan (42.1%), Voltaic or Gur (17.6%), Krou (11%), Northern Mandé (16.5%) and Southern Mandé (10%). Although the northern ethnic groups, Northern Mandé and Voltaic, originate from Côte d'Ivoire's northern regions, many people belonging to these ethnic groups now live in the southern parts of Côte d'Ivoire. Another important dividing line, partly reinforcing the ethno-regional differences, is religion. The largest religious group are the Moslems with approximately 38% of the population. The Moslems are predominantly found among the northern ethnic group, Northern Mandé and Voltaic, while the majority of the ethnic groups that originate from the southern and western regions, the Akan and Krou, are Christian (RGPH, 1998).

Resulting from extensive international migration flows, a large proportion of the people in Côte d'Ivoire is of foreign origin. From the early 1940s, the French colonial administration organised the transfer of forced labour from the *Upper Volta*, today's Burkina Faso, to the cocoa and coffee plantations in the southern parts of Côte d'Ivoire. Although forced labour was abolished by the French Assembly in 1946, Côte d'Ivoire continued to attract large numbers of migrants from neighbouring countries. Côte d'Ivoire's first president, Felix Houphouët-Boigny, promoted the influx of foreign workers by introducing liberal landownership laws, under the slogan 'the land belongs to those that develop it' (Gonin, 1998: 174). By giving foreign migrants the right to vote in national elections, they became an important political asset, in addition to being a productive economic workforce. In 1998, foreigners

² See appendix I for a chronology of the main political events in Côte d'Ivoire's post-colonial history.

accounted for roughly 25% of the population; although about 50% of these 'foreigners' were born in Côte d'Ivoire (Ibid.).

When Côte d'Ivoire became independent in 1960, an one party regime was installed and the *Parti Démocratique de la Côte d'Ivoire* (PDCI-Ivorian Democratic Party) took control of the state institutions. The PDCI was founded by the Baoulé tribal chief Felix Houphouët-Boigny who would also become Côte d'Ivoire's first president. Houphouët would be successively re-elected until his death in December 1993. During the first twenty years of his presidency, Côte d'Ivoire not only achieved a remarkable economic record with an average real GDP growth rate of more than 7% (World Development Indicators), but also benefited from a relatively stable political environment. An important factor that contributed to maintaining stability in Côte d'Ivoire was Houphouët-Boigny's 'system of ethnic quotas' which was aimed at establishing a balance between different regions and ethnic groups within the state institutions (Bakery, 1984). In the light of these economic and political achievements, international observers referred to Côte d'Ivoire as the 'African Miracle.'

However, from 1980s, the Ivorian model slowly started to disintegrate. Côte d'Ivoire's heavy reliance on export revenues of coffee and cocoa exposed the Ivorian economy to price variability on the international commodity markets. When the prices of these commodities sharply declined at the end of 1970s, Côte d'Ivoire's vulnerability was clearly exposed and led to serious economic problems (Berg *et. al*, 2000).³ The negative economic environment exacerbated existing tensions between locals and foreign as well as internal migrants in the southern regions. These communal tensions were increasingly perceived as a conflict between north and south (Dembele, 2003). As Dembele (Ibid: 36; my translation) argues: 'The communal conflict between north and south was mainly related to land issues and the presence of too many migrants from the centre and north in the rural economy in the south-western regions and the urban economy in the south.'

In April 1990, the social crisis resulted in major student protests and demonstrations by the officially illegal political opposition. In an attempt to restore social and political stability by appeasing the political opposition, Houphouët-Boigny decided to abandon one party rule and legalise opposition parties in May 1990. The first competitive presidential elections took place in October 1990. Houphouët-Boigny won the elections with a considerable margin against the main opposition party candidate, Laurent Gbagbo. The most significant aspect regarding these elections, however, was the introduction of ethno-nationalism and xenophobia into the political arena. During the 1990 elections, Côte d'Ivoire's main opposition party, *Front Populaire Ivoirien* (FPI-Ivorian Popular Front), initiated a political campaign around the message that 'the PDCI was a partial regime which had systematically favoured the interests of particular Ivorian ethnic groups –Baoulé and groups from the north-and of foreigners' (Crook, 1997: 222).

An important change regarding the November 1990 government was the appointment of Alassane Ouattara – a Malinké belonging to the Northern Mandé ethnic group- to the newly created position of prime minister. As a former director at the International

³ The international coffee (All coffee New York) and cocoa (Ghana - London) prices declined, respectively, 35% and 40% between 1977 and 1980 (International Monetary Fund (IMF), International Financial Statistics).

Monetary Fund (IMF), Ouattara was mainly chosen for his economic management skills and international reputation. However, by appointing Ouattara as prime minister, 'the conflicts between the forest people from the south and the northerners in the land and economic sphere shifted to the political sphere' (Dembele, 2003: 36; my translation). A growing northern consciousness was another important change that contributed to the escalation of ethnic tensions at the beginning of the 1990s. The distribution of an anonymous document called 'le Charte du Grand Nord' (Charter of the North) in 1992 illustrated the changed attitudes of the northerners regarding the socio-political system in general and the Baoulé group in particular. The Charter 'called for fuller recognition of the Muslim religion ... , more efforts to reduce regional inequalities, greater political recognition of the north's political loyalty during the upheavals of the 1980s and ... an end to Baoulé nepotism in recruitment to public jobs' (Crook, 1997: 226). Following the emergence of a new opposition party, *Rassemblement des républicains* (RDR- Republican Rally), in 1994, the heightened northern consciousness led to a split among Côte d'Ivoire's political elite. The party aimed to draw support among the northern ethnic groups, Voltaic and Northern Mandé. Alassane Ouattara would soon become their political leader.

When Houphouët-Boigny died on 7 December 1993, Henri Konan Bédié would succeed him. The emergence of the RDR confronted Bédié with a serious challenge because this new political party was likely to reduce PDCI's electoral support in the northern regions (Ibid: 227). As Crook states in this respect: 'Bédié's initial strategy was familiar to any student of electoral politics: he stole the opposition's clothes, and adopted a policy of Ivorian nationalism, under the slogan of the promotion of *l'Ivoirité*' (Ivorian-ness) (Ibid). Although he claimed that the concept was solely aimed at creating a sense of cultural unity among all the people living in the territory of the Côte d'Ivoire, it is widely recognised that it was introduced for specific political reasons: preventing Ouattara from participating in the presidential elections in 1995. 'L'Ivoirité' changed the electoral code, requiring both parents of a presidential candidate to be Ivorian. Another important change was the fact that foreigners were no longer allowed to vote in Ivorian elections. Due to this new electoral code, Ouattara and many 'foreign' migrants as well as 'northerners' lacking the appropriate documents were excluded from participating in the 1995 elections.

Due to the exclusion and boycott of his main rivals, the RDR leader Alassane Ouattara and the FPI leader Laurent Gbagbo, respectively, Bédié won the October 1995 elections with a landslide, receiving 96.5% of the votes (Ibid). Until the coup d'état in December 1999, these two opposition parties would together form the '*Front républicain*' (Republican Front). The Republican Front attacked Bédié for giving too much political influence and economic privileges to his own ethnic group, the Baoulé. In sharp contrast to Houphouët-Boigny, Bédié almost completely stopped the balancing process among the different ethno-regional interests and parties, and started a process of '*baoulisation*' of state institutions (Dozon, 2000). In addition to the baoulisation of the political-administrative sector, Bédié also aimed to establish a more favourable ethnic composition among the military forces. Contamin and Losch (2000) argue that Bédié progressively destroyed the internal balances in the military by predominantly appointing Baoulé people to the higher command positions.

The combination of ethnic grievances stemming from Baoulé favouritism and the general decline in status of the armed forces eventually triggered a coup d'état in

December 1999. The coup was initiated by a group of young officers who claimed they were owed financial compensation for their participation in an international peace keeping mission in Central Africa (Kieffer, 2000). However, the protest movement would quickly developed into a large-scale mutiny, at which stage more senior officers got involved. Ultimately Bédié was removed from power and general Robert Gueï was asked by coup leaders to become the interim head of state. Although the coup d'état initially appears to have originated from individual grievances, these grievances and fears of exclusion cannot be separated from what went on in the rest of the society. As Kieffer (2000) argues, the opposition parties' discourse of exclusion and Baoulé domination of the Ivorian state is likely to have had an important impact on the views and attitudes of the young officers involved in the coup d'état.

Following Bédié's removal from power, the military forces established the '*Comité national de salut public*' (CNSP-National commission of public safety). The CNSP was headed by general Gueï who was a Yacouba, one of the ethnic groups belonging to the Southern Mandé ethnic group. After negotiations between the various political parties and the military junta, a transitional government was installed on 4 January 2000. Initially, Gueï strongly rejected the ideology of 'L'Ivoirité' and also proclaimed that he would not participate in the following presidential elections in order to guarantee free and fair elections. However, after several months in office, Gueï changed his mind and decided to participate in the next presidential elections after all. Further, although without explicitly using the term, he also started to use the ideology of 'Ivoirité' in order to gain political support and exclude political opponents, in particular Alassane Ouattara and his RDR party (Akindes, 2003).

The presidential elections of October 2000 were marked by chaos and violence. When minister of interior Mouassi proclaimed that Gueï had won the elections with 51.35% of the vote, this sparked off massive street demonstrations by Gbagbo's FPI supporters as well as members of the military and security forces (Le Pape, 2002). The military forces supporting these demonstrations and who would eventually forced Gueï to leave the country, mainly had northern origins (Banegas and Losch, 2002). Following the exclusion of their presidential candidate, Alassane Ouattara, for 'nationalité douteuse' (nationality in doubt), the RDR refused to recognise the legality of the election results and demanded new elections. To support their demands, the RDR supporters started to organise large-scale street protests in Abidjan, Bouaké and Korhogo which led to violent confrontations with both the FPI supporters and security forces (Ibid: 49). On 29 October, the 'massacre of Yopougon' was uncovered. In this neighbourhood of Abidjan, around sixty RDR-supporters with a northern background had been slaughtered by the security forces (Leymarie, 2001).

On 26 October, the Supreme Court formally declared Laurent Gbagbo the winner of the presidential elections. Gbagbo originates from the western town of Gagnoa and is a Bété, one of the ethnic groups belonging to the Krou family. Gbagbo allocated most government positions in the January 2001 government to his own party, the FPI. This obviously aggravated the already existing feelings of political exclusion and inequality among the RDR supporters. Similar to his two predecessors, Bédié and Gueï, he also wanted to establish a more favourable ethnic composition among the military forces. In order to achieve this, Gbagbo planned to demobilise two contingents –called 'zinzins' and 'bahéfouê'- that predominantly consisted of soldiers who had been recruited during the brief reign of general Gueï (Banegas and Losch,

2002). In response to their planned demobilisation, however, these soldiers started a mutiny which quickly turned into a more organised rebellion. It seems, therefore, most likely that the military mutiny of 19 September was part of a larger plan to overthrow Gbagbo's regime.

By the end of September, the rebels had secured control over the northern part of the country and were referring to themselves as the *Mouvement Patriotique pour la Côte d'Ivoire* (MPCI-Patriotic Movement of Côte d'Ivoire). The MPCI had the following key demands: 'the resignation of President Gbagbo, the holding of inclusive national elections, a review of the Constitution and an end to the domination by the Southerners' (MINUCI, 2004). Although the majority of its forces have a northern/Muslim background, the MPCI claims to have no specific regional or ethnic affiliation. The two most prominent figures of the political wing are, respectively, Secretary-General Guillaume Soro Kigbafori and the head of foreign relations Louis Dacoury-Tabley. The conflict was further complicated by the emergence of two additional rebel movements in the western region of Côte d'Ivoire: *Mouvement pour la Justice et la Paix* (MJP) and *Mouvement Populaire Ivoirien du Grand Ouest* (MPIGO). These other two rebel groups are however much smaller. After the rebel forces joined forces, they are collectively referred to as the 'Forces nouvelles' (New forces).

With strong encouragement from France and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the conflicting parties were brought together in Linas-Marcoussis for a roundtable meeting. These negotiations resulted in the signing of the Marcoussis Agreement on 23 January 2003 in Paris. The main provision of the agreement was the creation of a government of national unity, which would be comprised of ministers from all different political parties and rebel organisations. However, the transitional government was never able to implement the more controversial aspects of the Marcoussis agreement. Moreover, until the time of writing, the conflicting parties remain deadlocked over several crucial issues such as the disarmament of the rebel forces, the eligibility criteria of the presidential candidates, and the nationality laws.

3. SOCIO-ECONOMIC INEQUALITIES AT THE MASS LEVEL

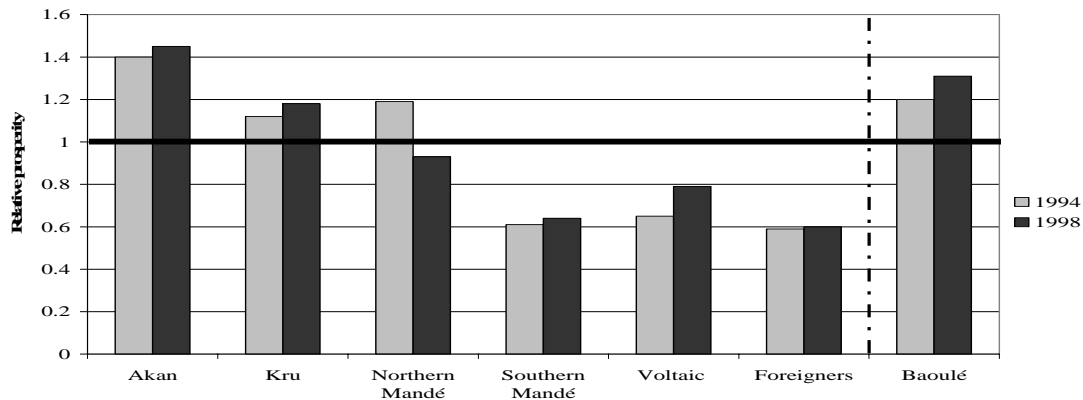
This section will discuss the evolution of the socio-economic inequalities at the mass level during the 1990s. In order to illustrate the evolution of the socio-economic ethno-regional disparities in Côte d'Ivoire, I will use data from the Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS). The DHS surveys have been conducted in about seventy developing countries around the world and are usually repeated every five years. The standard DHS survey consists of a household questionnaire and a women's questionnaire for which a nationally representative sample of women age 15–49 is interviewed. In addition to asking an elaborate range of questions regarding issues such as family planning, maternal health, reproductive behaviour and intentions, contraception, breastfeeding and nutrition, the surveys also ask questions regarding a respondent's ethnic background, place of birth and socio-economic situation.

In order to compare the inter-ethnic socio-economic disparities more systematically, I have compiled a socio-economic index on the basis of the DHS data. The Socio-

Economic Prosperity Index is made up of the following five indicators: 1) refrigerator (% yes), 2) car (% yes), 3) source of drinking water - water piped into house (% yes), 4) main floor material - ceramic tiles in place of residence (% yes), and 5) type of toilet facility - access to flush toilet (% yes). For every indicator included in the index, an ethnic group's score is standardized by dividing it by the national average. The index is subsequently computed by averaging the standardized indicators. The index refers to an ethnic group's *relative* position with respect to Côte d'Ivoire's average. It is therefore important to note that a declining index does not necessarily mean that an ethnic group's *absolute* socio-economic situation has also worsened.

In figure 1 the Socio-Economic Prosperity Indices for 1994 and 1998 are presented graphically. In addition to showing the Socio-Economic Prosperity Indices for the major ethnic groups, the figures also show the relative position of President Houphouët-Boigny and Bédié's own ethnic group, the Baoulé, which is the largest *sub-group* of the Akan. Figure 1 shows that the Akan enjoyed the highest socio-economic prosperity both in 1994 and 1998: Akan's relative socio-economic prosperity was about 40 percent higher than Côte d'Ivoire's average. From 1994-1998, both the Akan as a whole and Baoulé in particular improved their relative socio-economic position considerably.

Figure 1: Socio-Economic Prosperity Index, 1994 and 1998

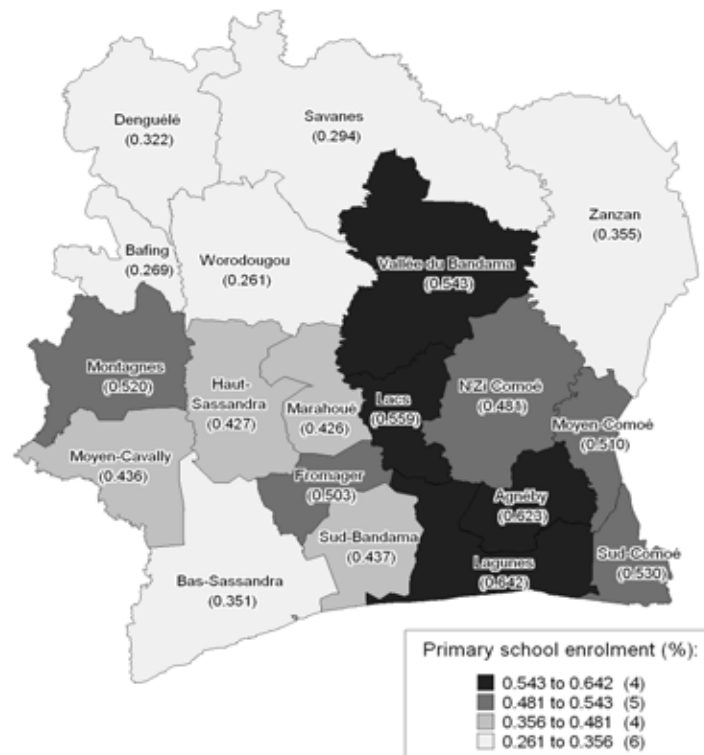


From the perspective of violent group mobilization in Côte d'Ivoire, the relative socio-economic position of the northern ethnic groups, Northern Mandé and Voltaic, is particularly important. In 1998, it is notable that these ethnic groups had relative socio-economic positions that were considerably lower than Côte d'Ivoire's average. Although the Northern Mandé and Voltaic slightly improved their socio-economic position in absolute terms between 1994-1998, the relative socio-economic position of the Northern Mandé in particular worsened significantly: from 1.19 times the national average in 1994 to 0.93 times the national average in 1998.

In order to complement the analysis of the socio-economic horizontal inequalities on the basis of DHS data, figure 2 below shows the *regional* disparities regarding primary school enrolment based on Côte d'Ivoire's 1998 census data. Figure 2 clearly demonstrates that the northern regions perform significantly worse on this important socio-economic indicator. More particularly, five of the six regions that score lowest on this socio-economic indicator are located in the northern part of Côte d'Ivoire. In short, it is interesting to note that the 1998 census and 1994/1998 DHS data not only

complement each other in significant ways, but they also corroborate the same pattern of socio-economic horizontal inequalities, more particularly: northern regions and northern ethnic groups are significantly less prosperous than the southern and western ethnic groups Akan and Krou.

Figure 2: Primary school enrolment across regions in Côte d’Ivoire in 1998



Source: 1998 Census (RGPH. 1998)

4. POLITICAL HORIZONTAL INEQUALITIES AT THE *ELITE* LEVEL

This section will discuss the evolution of the political horizontal inequalities in Côte d’Ivoire’s government. In order to assess the evolution of the political inequalities and exclusion, table 1 on the next page gives an overview of the ethnic representation of government for the period 1980-2003. To compile this table, the ethnic background of government ministers was inferred on the basis of name recognition. Each ethnic group’s *relative representation* (RR) is calculated by dividing an ethnic group’s relative proportion in government by its relative size in the entire population. Consequently, unity means proportional representation; figures higher than one point to over-representation and less than one to under-representation.

Table 1 shows the continued existence of Houphouët-Boigny’s system of ethnic quotas during the 1980s. Although the Akan remained the dominant ethnic force in government, other ethnic groups were not excluded. However, in contrast to the

1980s, the November 1991 government shows a much more significant over-representation of the Akan: the Akan over-representation increased from 1.12 to 1.46 times its relative demographic size. When further taking into account that the Akan are by far the largest ethnic group with approximately 42 per cent of the population, it is clear that Ivorian politics remained the 'Akan's business' (Bakery, 1984: 35). Moreover, it appears that Houphouët-Boigny has counter-balanced the appointment of a non-Akan, Alassane Ouattara, to the newly created and influential position of prime minister by increasing the overall representation of the Akan in the November-1991 government significantly.

A more ethnically equal distribution of government positions is likely to improve ethnic groups' perceptions and attitudes towards a political regime. However, whether the inclusion of different ethnic groups in government actually results in a more equal and participatory decision-making process is not always certain. It could be argued that even if the overall picture points towards ethnic balancing, the most important political positions and, therefore, the real decision-making power, might still be monopolised by one particular ethnic group. In order to assess this, table 1 also provides data on the ethnic distribution of a set of key political positions in Côte d'Ivoire, which I call here the *inner circle of political power*. The political positions included are: president of the republic, prime minister, president of national assembly, president of economic and social council, minister of security, minister of economy and finance, minister of defence, minister of mines and energy, minister of agriculture, minister of interior, minister of justice and minister of foreign affairs.

The figures demonstrate that the over-representation of the Akan and Baoulé, in particular, regarding the key political positions was more pronounced than in the case of the government as a whole. This suggests that Houphouët-Boigny assigned the government positions of lesser importance to other ethnic groups. The figures further show that the Akan over-representation regarding the key political positions slightly increased to around 1.70 in November 1991. The Baoulé over-representation, on the other hand, was significantly reduced from 3.33 in November 1980 to 2.18 in November 1991.

Table 1: Ethnic representation in government, 1980-2003

Ethnic Groups	GOVERNMENT ¹																							
	Nov-80		Jul-86		Oct-89		Nov-91		Dec-93		Jan-96		Aug-98		Jan-00		May-00		Jan-01		Aug-02		Sep-03	
	%	RR	%	RR	%	RR	%	RR	%	RR	%	RR	%	RR	%	RR	%	RR	%	RR	%	RR	%	RR
Akan	0.49	1.16	0.41	0.99	0.47	1.12	0.61	1.46	0.52	1.24	0.52	1.23	0.59	1.41	0.50	1.19	0.30	0.72	0.46	1.10	0.52	1.23	0.40	0.94
Baoulé	0.22	1.29	0.24	1.46	0.20	1.20	0.17	1.04	0.24	1.43	0.28	1.64	0.31	1.86	0.13	0.74	0.04	0.26	0.11	0.64	0.13	0.77	0.09	0.55
Krou	0.19	1.30	0.20	1.34	0.20	1.37	0.17	1.19	0.24	1.89	0.21	1.63	0.16	1.23	0.13	0.98	0.22	1.71	0.29	2.25	0.19	1.52	0.23	1.83
S. Mandé	0.05	0.51	0.10	0.91	0.13	1.25	0.04	0.41	0.04	0.40	0.10	1.03	0.06	0.63	0.08	0.83	0.17	1.73	0.18	1.79	0.16	1.61	0.07	0.70
N. Mandé	0.08	0.51	0.17	1.07	0.13	0.84	0.09	0.55	0.08	0.48	0.07	0.42	0.03	0.19	0.17	1.01	0.17	1.05	0.07	0.43	0.13	0.78	0.19	1.13
Voltaic	0.14	0.83	0.10	0.60	0.03	0.20	0.09	0.53	0.12	0.68	0.10	0.59	0.13	0.71	0.13	0.71	0.08	0.47	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.12	0.66
No.	N=37		N=41		N=30		N=23		N=25		N=29		N=32		N=24		N=23		N=28		N=31		N=43	
Ethnic Groups	INNER CIRCLE OF POLITICAL POWER ²																							
	Nov-80		Jul-86		Oct-89		Nov-91		Dec-93		Jan-96		Aug-98		Jan-00		May-00		Jan-01		Aug-02		Sep-03	
	%	RR	%	RR	%	RR	%	RR	%	RR	%	RR	%	RR	%	RR	%	RR	%	RR	%	RR	%	RR
Akan	0.67	1.59	0.70	1.67	0.80	1.91	0.73	1.74	0.67	1.58	0.67	1.58	0.75	1.78	0.38	0.89	0.11	0.26	0.18	0.43	0.18	0.43	0.33	0.79
Baoulé	0.56	3.33	0.40	2.40	0.50	2.99	0.36	2.18	0.42	2.48	0.42	2.48	0.42	2.48	0.13	0.74	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.08	0.50
Krou	0.11	0.76	0.10	0.68	0.10	0.68	0.09	0.62	0.17	1.31	0.17	1.31	0.08	0.66	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.45	3.58	0.55	4.29	0.17	1.31
S. Mandé	0.11	1.04	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.13	1.25	0.22	2.22	0.09	0.91	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
N. Mandé	0.11	0.70	0.10	0.63	0.00	0.00	0.09	0.57	0.08	0.51	0.08	0.51	0.08	0.51	0.13	0.76	0.44	2.69	0.18	1.10	0.18	1.10	0.33	2.02
Voltaic	0.00	0.00	0.10	0.61	0.10	0.61	0.09	0.56	0.08	0.47	0.08	0.47	0.08	0.47	0.25	1.42	0.11	0.63	0.09	0.52	0.09	0.52	0.17	0.95
No.	N=9		N=10		N=10		N=11		N=12		N=12		N=12		N=8		N=9		N=11		N=11		N=12	

1. Government: president of the republic, ministers of state and regular ministers. Note: deputy-ministers were not included in the calculations.
2. Inner circle of political power: president of the republic, prime minister, president of national assembly, president of economic and social council, minister of security, minister of economy and finance, minister of defence, minister of mines and energy, minister of agriculture, minister of interior, minister of justice and minister of foreign affairs.

Source: Langer (2005).

In December 1993, Bédié succeeded Houphouët-Boigny as president of Côte d'Ivoire. The figures in table 1 regarding the ethnic composition of Bédié's governments (1993-1999), largely corroborate the claims that he started a process of baoulisation. More particularly, under Bédié, the Baoulé overrepresentation in the government as a whole increased from 1.43 in the December 1993 government to 1.86 times its relative demographic size in the August 1998 government. Bédié initiated a similar process of baoulisation regarding the key positions of political power. Throughout his presidency, Bédié allocated more than 40% of the key political positions to the Baoulé. From a violent group mobilization point of view, it is interesting to note that Alassane Ouattara's ethnic group, the Northern Mandé, was the main victim of Bédié's political exclusion. In the August 1998 government only 3% of the government ministers had a Northern Mandé background.

When Gueï replaced Bédié as president, he made sure that the ethnic distribution of the January 2000 government was relatively equal. However, the figures in table 1 also confirm the important shift in Gueï's political behaviour between the first and second transitional government of January and May 2000. First, Gueï more than doubled the relative representation of his own ethnic family, the Southern Mandé, in the second transitional government of May 2000. A similar evolution is observable regarding the inner circle of political power. Second, the relative representation of the Krou in the May 2000 government also sharply increased. The reason why Gueï allowed this sharp increase in the representation of the Krou has to do with the de facto coalition between Gbagbo, the leader of the FPI, and Gueï against their mutual 'enemy,' the RDR leader Alassane Ouattara. Third, by excluding the RDR from the second transitional government, he effectively reduced the relative representation of the largest northern ethnic family, the Voltaic. The relative representation of the Voltaic in the May 2000 government and inner circle of political power decreased sharply to 0.47 and 0.63 respectively.

After the violent presidential elections of October 2000, the FPI presidential candidate Laurent Gbagbo became president. As mentioned previously, Gbagbo is a Bété, one of the ethnic groups of the Krou family. An important observation, therefore, deals with the increased political power in the hands of the Krou. By allocating twenty of the twenty-eight ministers in the January 2001 government to his own party, the FPI, Gbagbo was able to increase the relative representation of the Krou significantly. By excluding the RDR from the January 2001 government, Gbagbo effectively guaranteed that the northern ethnic elites were deprived of any executive political power. This obviously aggravated the already existing feelings of political exclusion and inequality among the northern elites. Although the Krou were a relatively small ethnic group –only thirteen percent of the population in 1998- under president Gbagbo they became the most important political force in Côte d'Ivoire, controlling more than 55 percent of the key political positions.

5. SOME CONCLUSIONS

The first conclusion relates Côte d'Ivoire's relatively stable political environment in the period 1960-1980. Although there were severe socio-economic horizontal inequalities between the northern and southern parts of Côte d'Ivoire, violent group mobilization did not occur for at least two reasons. First, the positive economic environment mitigated the general discontent and the prevailing socio-economic

inequalities. Second, due to Houphouët-Boigny's 'system of ethnic quotas,' political horizontal inequalities were relatively moderate which in turn meant that the political elites lack strong incentives to mobilize their constituents along ethnic lines. When the economy started to deteriorate in the 1980s, the socio-economic inequalities and grievances became more important in the national political sphere and resulted in social unrest and increased ethnic tensions between locals and economic migrants. However, due to the continued integration of the national political elites within the PDCI institutions, large-scale ethnic group mobilization was prevented.

Following from the emergence of violent group mobilization in Côte d'Ivoire at the end of the 1990s, it is clear that the simultaneous presence of severe political *and* socio-economic horizontal inequalities forms an extremely explosive socio-political situation because in these situations the excluded political elites not only have strong incentives to mobilise support along ethnic lines, they are also likely to gain support among their ethnic constituencies quite easily.

Box 1: Conflict prevention through managing horizontal inequalities

Sustainable conflict prevention requires the reduction of severe socio-economic *and* political horizontal inequalities. However, the reduction of socio-economic horizontal inequalities is a long-term, complicated and possibly stability-threatening process. A critical pre-condition for any non-violent and effective reduction of socio-economic horizontal inequalities appears to be a situation of economic progress and growth. In a situation where the national cake is shrinking is often impossible to find sufficient resources and political will to start or maintain such processes. In cases of economic progress, a country's added value could be disproportionately distributed to less prosperous regions and ethnic groups, thereby reducing these regions or groups' *relative* backwardness, without reducing the more prosperous regions or ethnic groups' *absolute* level of prosperity (e.g. NEP policies in Malaysia). Some inequality reducing measures or policies might have a limited objective impact on the overall socio-economic inequality situation, but their *symbolic* impact on reducing the political salience of the prevailing socio-economic inequalities can nevertheless be very important (e.g. Ghana's policies of providing free primary education to children in the northern regions).

From a conflict prevention point of view, the management of political horizontal inequalities appears to be a more effective means for preventing the emergence of violent conflict in the short-term. The inclusion of various regional and ethnic interests and claims can be engineered through formal constitutional and electoral processes that aim to foster moderate ethno-regional coalitions and policies. However, the processes of 'electoral engineering' are extremely complicated and, as the case of Sri Lanka shows, might not lead to the desired ethno-political moderation and integration. An electoral provision that has produced positive results in the Ghanaian case is the outright ban of ethnic and regional parties. In Ghana, political parties need to demonstrate a 'national character' and have branches in all ten regions before they can register for the elections. The Ghanaian political system points to another measure that might reduce objective and perceptive political inequality. More particularly, the presence of national ministers that are responsible for specific regions gives the regions direct political access to the national decision making centre.

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Appendix I: A chronology of key events

- 7 August 1960: Côte d'Ivoire becomes independent from France.
- November 1960: Felix Houphouët-Boigny wins the first presidential elections and installs an one party system. The *Parti Démocratique de la Côte d'Ivoire* (PDCI-Ivorian Democratic Party) subsequently takes control of the state institutions.
- 1960-1980: Côte d'Ivoire experiences a period of high economic growth.
- 1982-1984: Following the rapid decline of the prices of cocoa and coffee at the end of the 1970s, Côte d'Ivoire experiences its first major economic recession.
- July 1987: Following the sharp decline of the international cocoa prices, President Houphouët-Boigny decides to stop exporting cocoa.
- May 1990: The ban on political parties is lifted and in the period May-September 25 political parties are established.
- 28 October 1990: Houphouët-Boigny wins the first multi-candidate presidential elections and starts his 7th consecutive term in office.
- 7 December 1993: Houphouët-Boigny dies and in accordance with the constitution, the president of the National Assembly, Henri Konan Bédié succeeds him as president of the republic.
- 12 January 1994: The CFA Franc is devalued 50%; contributing to a significant improvement in Côte d'Ivoire's trade position.
- 22 October 1995: President Henri Konan Bédié wins the presidential elections with 95% of the votes. The leaders of the two major opposition parties, Alassane Ouattara and Laurent Gbagbo, did however not participate in the elections.
- 30 April 1999: The government and the main opposition party *Rassemblement des républicains* (RDR- Republican Rally) fail to reach an agreement regarding the organisation of the general elections in 2000.
- 28 September 1999: Judge Zoro Bi Ballo issues a certificate of Ivorian nationality to Alassane Ouattara. The government continues however to dispute Ouattara's Ivorian nationality and, on 27 October 1999, Ouattara's certificate of Ivorian nationality is revoked.
- 23/24 December 1999: Military mutiny erupts in Abidjan. General Robert Gueï announces that President Henri Bédié has been removed from power and that the National Assembly, government, Constitutional Court and Supreme Court have been suspended. The military forces establish the '*Comité national de salut public*' (CNSP- National commission of public safety), which is headed by general Gueï, to run the country until new presidential and parliamentary elections have been organised.

- 24 July 2000: A new constitution is adopted by referendum. Following a last minute change, article 35 of this new constitution with respect to the eligibility criteria of presidential candidates now requires that both parents –instead of just the father *or* mother- of a prospective candidate are Ivorian.
- 6 October 2000: The Supreme Court, headed by Judge Tia Koné, decides to invalidate the presidential candidacies of Henri Konan Bédié, Alassane Ouattara, Lamine Fadiga, and Emile Constant Bombet.
- 22-25 October 2000: The presidential elections of 22 October 2000 are marked by chaos and violence. When minister of interior Grena Mouassi proclaimed that Gueï had won the elections with 51.35% of the vote, this sparked off massive street demonstrations by FPI supporters as well as members of the military and security forces. General Gueï is forced to flee the country. The official results proclaimed by the national electoral commission stated that Laurent Gbagbo had won the elections with 59.36% of the votes. On 26 October: Laurent Gbagbo is officially installed by the Supreme Court as president of Côte d'Ivoire.
- 27 October 2000: The 'Charnier d'Yopougon' (Massacre of Yopougon) is uncovered. In this neighbourhood of Abidjan, around sixty RDR-supporters with a northern background have been slaughtered by the security forces.
- 7/8 January 2001: An attempted coup d'état to overthrow Gbagbo's regime fails and the military forces involved are forced to flee into exile, mostly ending up Côte d'Ivoire's neighbouring countries.
- 19 September 2002: A military mutiny starts with simultaneous attacks against the military installations of Abidjan, Bouaké and Korhogo. The rebellion is led by officers that had gone into exile either because of the military purges during the Gueï regime or because of their involvement in the failed coup d'état in January 2001
- 23 January 2003: Under encouragement of France and ECOWAS, the conflict parties sign the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement in Paris. The agreement includes a power-sharing government.
- September 2003: Rebel forces accuse President Gbagbo of stalling the peace process and pull out of the power-sharing government.
- March 2004: The former ruling party *Parti Démocratique de la Côte d'Ivoire* (PDCI-Ivorian Democratic Party) accuses President Gbagbo of "destabilising the peace process" and withdraws its ministers from the government of national unity.
- November 2004: Re-emergence of violence. After air strikes by the Ivorian air force kill nine French peace-keeping soldiers, France retaliates and destroys almost completely the Ivorian air force. In response violent anti-French protests ensue. The United Nation Security Council imposes an arms embargo on Côte d'Ivoire.

Sources: Abidjan.net, BBC online Country Profiles and Le Pape (2002).