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Peace - What Is It Good For?

Analyzing the 2017 Kenyan elections using the theory of peaceocracy

Mikael Bjuremalm

Abstract

The use of peace narratives in order to delegitimize political opposition has been observed in electoral autocracies. One such case was in Kenya in 2013, which gave rise to the theory of peaceocracy. Peaceocracy is conceptualized as being made up of six components, namely a fragile peace, incumbents cast as peacekeepers, peace as a responsibility of the citizenry, delegitimization of certain issues, curbing of oppositional participation in elections, and international support. By applying these criteria, this study has applied the concept of peaceocracy to the 2017 Kenyan elections through a narrative analysis, while also situating the theory in the larger field of peace research. The findings indicated that while there were attempts to establish conditions of a peaceocracy, the opposition effectively used counter-narratives to contest issues that the government tried to remove from the political agenda, leading to only a partial occurrence of peaceocracy in 2017. Furthermore, the study suggests potential improvements for the theory, tying it to existing concepts in peace research such as everyday peace.

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1. Introduction

Kenya is often seen as "an island of peace in a region known for conflict" (Odote, 2020:96). While peaceful by East African standards, violence has been common throughout the history of the country. A notable example of this includes the Wagalla Massacre, where hundreds of men belonging to the Somali minority were rounded up and murdered by the Kenyan Army in 1984 (Katumanga, 2020:417). In addition to this, ethnic clashes in the Rift Valley area have also been commonplace, in particular during election periods, especially surrounding the first Kenyan multi-party elections in 1992 (Brosché et al., 2019:117). Political cleavages in Kenya are heavily split along ethnic lines, with ethnicity influencing voting patterns "both in contemporary politics and during single-party rule" (Fjelde & Höglund, 2018:33).

The image of Kenya as peaceful took its worst hit yet following the 2007 elections, where the incumbent president Mwai Kibaki was declared duly elected by the Electoral Commission of Kenya (ECK) despite massive irregularities in the voting process. Supporters of the opposition candidate Raila Odinga protested the outcome but were met by an oppressive response from the authorities. Hundreds of demonstrators were killed by police in opposition strongholds, mainly in Nyanza Province and in Nairobi, with an even larger amount of injuries. While these protests were mostly spontaneous, violence occurred in the Rift Valley and was mainly premeditated, being carried out by ethnic-based militia groups targeting civilians (Murunga, 2011).

The next set of elections came in 2013, with the country still nursing its wounds from the prior vote and subsequent crisis. The Uhuru Kenyatta-William Ruto ticket (who had been on different sides in 2007, with both of them indicted by the International Criminal Court (ICC) for financing and organizing ethnic militias) defeated Raila Odinga, and Kenyatta was sworn in as president. While the outcome of the presidential election was challenged by the opposition in court, the petition was thrown out. The world watched while Kenyans went to the polls, eager to see if the country could avoid a repeat of 2007, and the elections passed without any major incidents of violence (Odote, 2020).

Kenya was almost universally applauded for holding the elections in a peaceful manner. The narrative of keeping peace was heavily promoted by both the sitting government, civil society organizations, and the media. However, questions were soon raised regarding this strong peace narrative. Was it sincere in nature, or did it serve a secondary purpose of silencing dissent and delegitimizing certain political issues? The heavy focus on peace led to the term *peaceocracy* becoming a part of the Kenyan political vocabulary, referring to the situation in 2013, where legitimate political grievances were silenced in the name of "keeping the peace" (Cheeseman et al., 2014).

The 2017 presidential election would serve as a rematch between Kenyatta and Odinga. Kenyatta was yet again declared the winner following a dubious tallying process. Like in 2013, the results were contested in court by the opposition. In the immediate aftermath of the elections, the integrity of the electoral process was praised by the international community and various international election observers, with the emphasis yet again being on the comparatively peaceful handling of the elections.

However, much to the surprise of the outside world, the result of the presidential election was declared null and void by the Kenyan Supreme Court due to irregularities in the voting process. The international observers who had signed off on the conduct of the elections, praising them as free and fair despite obvious flaws, were left with egg on their faces.

1.1. Aim and research question

The aim of this study is to analyze the 2017 elections in Kenya using the theory of peaceocracy. The 2013 elections have been studied at length, with much of the focus directed towards the heavy peace narrative (Cheeseman et al., 2019), and the theory of peaceocracy originated as an empirical account of the 2013 election. However, the 2017 elections have not been studied using the same theoretical framework. The 2017 election was in many ways broadly similar to the 2013 election, as the two main candidates were the same, and the result (prior to the annulment) was also similar. Furthermore, both elections saw a focus on peace from the international community. However, there are also clear differences between the two, with the first and foremost being that the result of the 2017 presidential election was overturned. Secondly, the conduct of civil society

organizations and the opposition was also markedly different in 2017, with their focus shifting from peace to justice. With this in mind, it is relevant to use the theory of peaceocracy in order to analyze the events of the 2017 election.

The fact that the 2017 elections have not been researched using the peaceocracy framework stemming from the 2013 elections creates a research gap, which this project aims to examine. Furthermore, since the theory of peaceocracy is a recent addition to the field of peace research, it can be elaborated on and developed further. One of the aims of this study is therefore to delve further into peaceocracy as a concept, and to situate it in a larger context. Using a framework of peaceocracy to analyze the 2017 election could strengthen the theory and help develop it further. Seeing as peaceocracy has recently been used to analyze elections in other countries, anchoring the theory to existing peace research in a stronger way can help it become a more rigorously defined theoretical concept. As the peaceocracy theory is heavily based on narratives, a narrative analysis will be applied in this thesis in order to study the 2017 election.

1.1.1. Research question

With all this in mind, the research question of this study has been formulated as following:

How can we apply the concept of peaceocracy to the 2017 Kenyan elections, and what does the theory of peaceocracy teach us about electoral violence?

1.2. Disposition

This thesis is structured in a fairly orthodox order. Firstly, a section outlining previous research will contain a literature review, focusing on peace and electoral violence. In the subsequent part, the theoretical framework of peaceocracy will be introduced. Following this, the methodology of this study is discussed, describing both the research design of a case study and the methodology of a narrative analysis. This will lead to a section providing historical context, followed by a section containing the main analysis, organized into different sections based on the key theoretical components of peaceocracy. After this section, there will be a discussion of the results, with everything finally summarized in the conclusion.

2. Literature review

In order to further study the 2017 elections in Kenya using the theory of peaceocracy, we need to understand how the theory has developed. There is no better way of doing this than examining the history of peace research, highlighting some key themes within it, and identifying contemporary currents within the field, in order to situate the theory of peaceocracy in a wider context. The context and underlying causes behind peaceocracy in Kenya will be introduced and discussed at a later stage, in section 5.1.

2.1. Peace research

In order to discuss peaceocracy, we must first start off by discussing the concept of peace. When Galtung set out to define peace research in the 1960s, he described some of its key tenets. This would end up laying the foundation for a contemporary understanding of the concept of peace. According to him, analyses of peace are commonly divided into two different positions, namely negative peace and positive peace. This dichotomy is still seen as the "most prominent conceptual distinction in peace research" (Söderberg Kovacs et al., 2021). The former definition - conceptualizing peace as merely being "the absence of violence" (Galtung, 1964) - is dominant, especially in non-academic contexts, and can be traced back to Hobbes. Galtung later specified his theory, stating that negative peace is equivalent to "the absence of personal violence" (Galtung, 1969).

Positive peace, on the other hand, rejects the notion that peace is just merely the absence of violence. This perspective is historically associated with Spinoza, who famously posited that peace is more than just the absence of war, instead being "a virtue, a state of mind, a disposition for benevolence, confidence, justice" (Spinoza, 2009). While negative peace might be dominant in common parlance, "it is generally acknowledged that peace is more than the absence of war" in academia (Söderberg Kovacs et al., 2021).

Positive peace was originally defined by Galtung as "the integration of human society" (Galtung, 1964), but after being criticized for the vagueness of this definition, he elaborated, claiming that positive peace is defined by "the absence of structural violence" (Galtung, 1969:183). This marked a shift in peace research, as the concept of positive peace could now be used in a more forceful way. As per Galtung, structural violence is broadly synonymous with social injustice (ibid:171), meaning that radical issues of redistribution were now on the agenda when implementing positive peace.

Despite the aforementioned academic consensus stating that negative peace does not provide a sufficient explanation of the conditions of peace, it is paradoxically enough more commonly used within peace research. Allegedly, this is due to the complexity and vagueness of the definition of positive peace (and by extension structural violence), which makes it harder to conceptualize and use as a unit of measurement (Söderberg Kovacs et al., 2021).

Measuring peace is one thing, but actually achieving it is another. Oliver Richmond, a leading scholar within contemporary peace research, dismisses the idea of building a society based on negative peace. In his words, "negative peace will always be fragile because it is based on ever-shifting configurations of power in the international system or within the state. Hidden, so-called 'structural violence' embedded in social, economic, and political systems remains unaddressed" (Richmond, 2014:7).

The idea of peace and violence not being antithetical is often brought up in peace research. One such notable study was conducted by Branch, showing that a society moving from a status of war to a status of peace often brings with it a continued domination of civilians by the victorious forces (Branch, 2014). This can be related to the idea of victor's peace, identified as the "oldest understanding of the concept of peace" (Richmond, 2014:52), where the winners of a conflict are able to dictate the terms of peace unilaterally.

Not everyone prescribes to the division of positive and negative peace, however. According to some thinkers, in particular within poststructuralism, we need to rethink the relation between war and peace. One such researcher is Polat, who attempts to "reimagine peace against the backdrop of a Foucauldian understanding of politics" (Polat, 2010:317). Polat attempts to merge Hobbesian and Spinozist thought in order to provide a new understanding of the phenomenon of peace. Furthermore, Wallensteen, famous for his account of quality peace, states that "'Quality peace' is a concept for breaking out of the dichotomy of

negative versus positive peace that long has been taken for granted" (Wallensteen, 2015:3).

Wallensteen's concept of quality peace is defined as "the creation of postwar conditions that make the inhabitants of a society [...] secure in life and dignity now and for the foreseeable future." (Wallensteen, 2015:6). Despite seeking to move away from the positive/negative dichotomy, quality peace clearly goes above and beyond negative peace, having more in common with the positive peace approach.

When discussing peace research, it is important to also investigate the dominant approach in actual peacebuilding, which is that of liberal democratic peace. Despite enjoying a status of "near hegemony" (Mac Ginty, 2006:33), it is clear that the liberal democratic model of peace has major flaws, given that it often produces negative rather than positive peace (ibid:176). One of these flaws is that "in some cases, the operationalisation of the liberal democratic peace has entailed the suppression of democracy and the denial of rights" (ibid:37).

The failure of liberal democratic peace has given rise to critical peacebuilding perspectives. One of these is the "local turn", heavily influenced by poststructuralist thought. It is marked by a departure from universalist approaches, and "one implication of the local turn is a retreat from the certainties and binaries that underpin Western modes of thinking" (Mac Ginty & Richmond, 2013:780). Yet another theory springing from a critical perspective is that of everyday peace.

Everyday peace stems from a bottom-up approach to peacebuilding, in comparison to the top-down, one-size-fits-all model of liberal democratic peace. In the words of Mac Ginty, "everyday peace refers to the practices and norms deployed by individuals and groups in deeply divided societies to avoid and minimize conflict and awkward situations at both inter- and intragroup levels" (Mac Ginty, 2014:553). Such an approach to peace prioritizes a hypersensitivity to local context rather than a universalist model.

Despite the rise of critical perspectives like the ones described above, liberal democratic peace is still considered the dominant model. As per Mac Ginty, the democratic peace thesis has held tremendous weight in international peacebuilding, despite not necessarily being true (Mac Ginty, 2006:44). Since elections are seen as perhaps the most important feature of a democracy, it makes sense that hegemonic approaches to peacebuilding have emphasized the importance of holding elections despite there not being sufficient institutional strength to do so fairly (ibid:49). Naturally, this can lead to violence.

2.2. Electoral violence

In many places in the world, especially in countries plagued by violent conflict, elections are often a trigger for heightened violence. Despite this, electoral violence did not receive much attention as a concept of its own until recently. Höglund pioneered the idea of viewing electoral violence as distinctively different from political violence, stating that it is "separated from other forms of political violence by a combination of timing and motive" (Höglund, 2009:417). According to her, the timing refers to the violence being confined to the electoral period, while the motive is that of influencing the voting process and possibly also the result of the election.

While it may occur in otherwise peaceful countries, electoral violence is mostly prevalent in "conflict-ridden societies" (Höglund, 2009). These are characterized by patrimonialism, a shared experience of insecurity, and high levels of impunity. Furthermore, how an electoral system is designed might also impact the potential outcome, with first-past-the-post-type electoral systems singled out as being more prone to violence. It is also claimed by Höglund that the competitive nature in itself might help encourage violence in post-conflict societies, which is ironic given that the holding of elections has become a major piece in contemporary peace-building approaches (ibid).

As previously mentioned, electoral violence occurs in many contexts, but some of the most publicized are on the African continent. Söderberg Kovacs, building on Höglund's research, has studied the subject with a focus on Africa in particular, noting that while there has been an increase in democratic elections being held on the continent, there has also been an increase in electoral violence. This is explained by a lack of decentralization and a neopatrimonial nature of politics referred to as "Big Man Politics" (Söderberg Kovacs & Bjarnesen, 2018:11). It is also argued that large socio-economic inequalities further increase the risk of violence, and land conflicts in particular are identified as "a central theme [...] in fueling electoral violence" (ibid:18), with historical narratives revolving around the right to the land being used as a mobilization tool.

The initial conceptualization of electoral violence by Höglund identified timing as one of the key components, stating that electoral violence occurs during an election period (which is long in nature, including both the pre- and post-election periods, as well as the election in itself). Söderberg Kovacs, however, argues that it is difficult to define what actually constitutes the electoral period,

especially in emerging democracies where the line between election period and non-election period becomes blurred (Söderberg Kovacs & Bjarnesen, 2018:6). She introduces the concept of "everyday politics of electoral violence" (ibid:2), based on the bottom-up concept of everyday peace introduced by Mac Ginty and described in the previous section, in order to describe how individuals on the ground are affected by (and themselves affect) electoral violence.

2.3. Summary of previous research

Previous research in the field shows that Galtung's theories of positive and negative peace still hold enormous influence in the field. The general consensus in peace research is that positive peace holds more weight as a concept, but due to the difficulty of conceptualizing it precisely, the majority of research is actually performed using ideas of negative peace.

As for the key trends in peacebuilding, liberal democratic peace still enjoys a dominant position in the field, notwithstanding the criticism from more bottom-up theories. This is due to it being the favored view of the international community. Liberal democratic peace favors the building of what are seen as democratic norms and values, with elections being seen as a mark of peace. However, due to the inflexibility of the theory, this often leads to the holding of elections that are not free and fair. Elections also serve as a convenient exit strategy for the international community in post-conflict environments. Unfair elections in such contexts can serve as a trigger for violence.

Finally, electoral violence has been studied, showing that it primarily occurs in post-conflict societies that are distinguished by a high level of patrimonialism and perceived insecurity. What sets apart electoral violence from political violence is that its aim is disrupting the electoral process, but research has shown that it may also occur outside of the orthodox definition of the electoral period. In an African context, electoral violence is more likely to occur in societies with large socio-economic inequalities.

3. Theory

Seeing as this study focuses on elections in Kenya and peace research, the theoretical framework will be that of peaceocracy. Peaceocracy is, as described above, a newcomer to the theoretical field, and is therefore both a theory which has not been applied to more than a select few cases (which allows us to fill a research gap by applying it to a previously unstudied case), and a concept that is ripe for further theoretical development (while the authors do situate the theory in contemporary peace research, this can be elaborated on further). This allows us to answer both parts of our research question, namely that of applying the theory to the 2017 election, while at the same time developing the theory for future academic use.

3.1. Peaceocracy

The concept of peaceocracy first appeared in Kenyan political discourse in 2013 (Shah, 2015). It later became a catch-all term for describing the uniquely strong peace narrative surrounding the 2013 elections. Originally more of a descriptive term, it has evolved over time into a broader theoretical concept.[1]

Seeing as the term began as an explanation for a phenomenon in Kenyan politics rather than a theoretical framework, it is worth discussing whether the term is of use as a theory in political science, or if it merely serves as a description of a past state of events in Kenyan politics. Peaceocracy might be a newcomer in the vocabulary of peace studies, but using peace concerns to quash dissent is a familiar concept in Kenyan politics (Cheeseman et al. 2014, Willis 2015, Lynch 2019).

While a niche theory in academia, the concept has however recently been used to study political situations in other countries, such as Ghana (Cheeseman et al., 2019), Uganda (ibid), Rwanda (Lynch, 2019), Tanzania (Cross, 2021), and Somaliland (Elder, 2021). Furthermore, Lynch states that the theory can be

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[1] For an overview of how peaceocracy has developed as a theoretical concept, see Cheeseman et al. (2014), Cheeseman et al. (2019) & Lynch (2019).

applied in a broader context, since other examples exist of "hybrid regimes [...] that have used the idea of a 'fragile peace' to legitimize authoritarian tendencies and to delegitimize opposition activities in countries as different as South Africa [...] and Peru" (Lynch, 2019:3). Based on this, peaceocracy can be understood as having branched out from a description of an empirical phenomenon into a theory in its own right, and therefore, it is suitable to use it to study the 2017 Kenyan elections.

There is no singular definition of a peaceocracy, but as per Cheeseman, Lynch, and Willis, "peaceocracy can be defined as 'a situation in which an emphasis on peace is used to prioritise stability and order to the detriment of democracy'" (Cheeseman et al., 2019:603). The theory has not been heavily conceptualized yet, but some key components have been identified in previous research. While the term peaceocracy at first was more generally used as a shorthand for the presence of a heavy peace narrative, it has become a phenomenon with clear and identifiable characteristics in recent research, which will be discussed below.

3.1.1. Etymology of peaceocracy

The word "peace" is not very clearly defined, as has been outlined in a section above. While it is usually described as "the absence of war" in layman's terms, the whole field of peace research is seemingly at times dedicated to disproving this notion. The definition of "peace" commonly used in describing peaceocracy will be discussed in the upcoming section. What needs to be discussed first, though, is the second part of the term in itself. It is easy to assume that "peaceocracy" is a portmanteau of "peace" and "democracy". However, the theory does not reference democracy - it is rather the suffix "-cracy", originally stemming from the Greek term *kratos*, meaning power or rule (Denk & Anckar, 2018:18), that is the starting point. It is the rule of (a supposed) peace that is discussed - a rule that does not necessarily have to be democratic in nature.

3.2. Situating peaceocracy

Existing accounts of peaceocracy do not go to great lengths in order to situate it in the larger field of peace research, but when they do, Galtung's work is heavily

cited (Cheeseman et al. 2014:12, Lynch 2019:3, Cheeseman et al. 2019:607). Primarily, his concepts of positive and negative peace are referenced. Peaceocracy forms a version of negative peace, where democratic rights are sacrificed at the altar of order and stability.

However, two other concepts within peace studies are also referenced at times. Firstly, "the violence of peace" (Branch, 2014) is referred to at multiple points, alleging that the idea of peace can be used as a way of wielding power through political violence while delegitimizing political opposition. This shows that even a situation with a widely accepted hegemonic peace narrative might still be fraught with violence.

Secondly, the idea of peace as "the presence of unity and cohesion" (Lynch, 2019:4) is often brought up as well. This conceptualization stems from empirical research in a number of African countries, showing that citizens tend to define peace as such as commonly as the "traditional" definition of negative peace is used[2].

Along with the theories mentioned above, it needs to be noted that peaceocracy situates itself strongly in a local historical context, drawing heavily on a tradition of emphasizing order in Kenyan politics (Atieno-Odhiambo, 1987). When applied to other countries, peaceocracy also takes the history of those countries into consideration, showing that it is not a theory with universalist ambitions.

3.3. Criticism of the theory of peaceocracy

As peaceocracy is a novel theory, there has not been much criticism directed towards it in academia. One issue with peaceocracy is that it is not strongly situated in peace research. This is not a problem when peaceocracy is used in specific cases where a local historical context helps elaborate the theory, but as peaceocracy becomes more mainstream within academia, it may become an issue in the future. Furthermore, caveats apply when a theory originally stemming from a single case is used in other contexts.

Despite being firmly based on Galtung's theory of positive peace, the authors do not delve further into what structural violence may be, only stating that

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[2] For further reading regarding this definition, see Bratton (2011) and Lynch (2018).

a positive peace "requires dealing with the underlying hostilities, inequalities, and injustices that can promote conflict" (Cheeseman et al., 2019). The theory thereby risks falling into the common trap of not actually utilizing positive peace in research, as it is notably difficult to conceptualize.

Finally, the issue of actorhood is missing from the theory in regard to forming narratives. The theory takes into account how hegemonic narratives affect political discourse, but does not examine at length who is actually the "narrator", constructing the narrative, the motivations behind it, and the intended aims. As such, the perspective of an analysis of power thereby only becomes secondary.

3.4. Conceptualizing peaceocracy

Lynch (2019), along with Cheeseman et al. (2019), were the first to conceptualize the main features of peaceocracy. Both studies use the 2013 Kenyan election as a starting point, and base their definitions of peaceocracy on that election in particular. However, they make it clear that peaceocracy is not merely a descriptive account of the 2013 election cycle in Kenya, but something that can be extrapolated to a larger context. Lynch has laid out a blueprint for what peaceocracy looks like in practice.

"Key characteristics of peaceocracy include: the presentation of an existing peace as under constant threat; a state discourse of incumbents as the unrivaled guardians of order and stability; and a normative notion of citizenship that casts the "good citizen" as someone who actively takes care to uphold and protect a fragile peace and the "bad citizen" as someone who does anything to potentially threaten the same."

(Lynch, 2019:1).

She further elaborates:

"It is this combination of factors—namely, of peace as the absence of violence and/or presence of unity; of peace as a generally desired state at both the domestic and international level; of peace as an idea that can help to (de)legitimize certain actions; of the state as enjoying a monopoly over the

legitimate use of violence; and of associated debates about how citizens should behave to help promote peace—that lies at the root of peaceocracy."

<div align="right">(Lynch, 2019:7).</div>

The above quotes provide us with the most elaborate description of the conditions of a peaceocracy. It is a multifaceted concept, and thereby needs to be sorted into a number of different areas in order to accurately grasp its components. While not strictly limited to these criteria, a general assessment of the theory shows that at a minimum, peaceocracy has a number of main features that need to be operationalized for this study. Based on previous research, those features have been operationalized to include the following six:

3.4.1. A fragile peace

The fragility of an existing peace is often a necessity in order to maintain a peaceocracy. With "the presentation of an existing peace as under constant threat" (Lynch, 2019:3), the political climate becomes securitized in nature, and measures that might be seen as off-limits in peacetime suddenly become legitimate. Without a credible threat of violence, peace messaging rings hollow. In some cases, however, the perceived fragility of peace might not be equivalent to the actual risk of conflict, as the securitization of discourse can be manipulated for political gains.

As Lynch explains, an underlying threat of violence means that demands for a negative peace move further up the political agenda (Lynch, 2019). Yet again, the underlying threat does not necessarily have to be entirely credible. As per Cheeseman et al., in order for such messaging to be effective, there needs to be "a deep fear that elections will descend into disorder and violence" among the general public (Cheeseman et al., 2019:613). A negative state of peace is then seen as preferable in comparison to direct violence, but it also may entail the government upholding the peace via violent means. According to Branch, "Violence and peace are not antithetical: the violence of peace is [...] productive political violence, pushing towards specific possible futures, while cutting off others" (Branch, 2014:609). Upholding a fragile state of peace may well serve to further the political goals of the ruling elite. This could be through extrajudicial means such as police violence, which is nonetheless framed as peacekeeping.

3.4.2. Incumbents cast as peacekeepers

Who is capable of maintaining this peace, then? One of the defining features of a peaceocracy is a "state discourse of incumbents as the unrivaled guardians of order and stability" (Lynch, 2019:3) in a country on the brink of violence. Any political opposition could be cast as agents of chaos that need to be kept away from power at all cost. A handover of power is framed as potentially leading to a disruption of the fragile peace, which could give rise to civil conflict, if not outright war. Supporting the status quo, although oppressive, is presented as the lesser of two evils, while supporting the opposition becomes synonymous to calling for violence and chaos. Furthermore, as per Barma, incumbents are able to "consolidate power by altering social discourse and by using targeted policies to reshape social preferences" (Barma, 2018:64), showing the advantage of incumbency in creating certain narratives.

When the incumbent government proclaims itself as the true guardians of peace, there are changes in how elections are viewed. Values such as transparency and credibility are deprioritized on behalf of maintaining order and (a negative) peace (Cheeseman et al., 2019:611). This allows for more blatant attempts to meddle with the electoral process. Oppositional candidates raising questions regarding electoral integrity might be cast as instigators of violence, while police forces might be deployed to oppositional strongholds as a show of intimidation. Finally, it could also lead to the incumbent government pressuring electoral and judicial bodies in order to not allow an oppositional victory.

3.4.3. Peace as a responsibility of the citizenry

While incumbents might frame themselves as peacekeepers, the responsibility of maintaining the peace rests squarely on the shoulders of the citizenry. In the words of Lynch, a peaceocracy is shaped by a "normative notion of citizenship that casts the 'good citizen' as someone who actively takes care to uphold and protect a fragile peace and the 'bad citizen' as someone who does anything to potentially threaten the same" (Lynch, 2019:3). As structural issues are seen as too complex to be solved when short-term peace is framed as necessary, there is instead a heavy "emphasis on citizens' personal responsibility to guard against chaos and disorder" (Cheeseman et al., 2019:617). When structural issues are viewed as

unimportant, they might eventually be removed from the list of issues that are seen as within the limits of social acceptability in discourse.

Furthermore, as per Dorman, those in power attempt to "discipline and shape unruly subjects into 'good citizens' in order to consolidate their rule and ensure the reproduction of hegemonic projects" (Dorman, 2019:466). While educating citizens in the name of peace might seem a good idea on the surface, it is likely to lead to the shrinking of social spaces in reality. When dissenting perspectives become taboo in daily conversations, and the government is asking its citizenry to be the first line of defense against viewpoints that could threaten the peace, this leads to a situation where counter-narratives are seen as incitement. If the government tasks citizens with peacekeeping, such a situation can lead to pro-government vigilantism when other characteristics of peaceocracy are present.

3.4.4. Delegitimization of certain issues

The delegitimization of certain issues is not only the responsibility of the citizenry, however. In a peaceocracy, the government seeks to remove certain issues from the political discourse, as they are seen as a threat to national cohesion if discussed. Contentious issues are shut down completely and taken off the agenda. "Discussion of critical reform issues that historically contributed to violent elections" (Cheeseman et al., 2014:11) are seen as tantamount to endorsing violence, as they might disturb the existing negative peace in attempts to create a positive peace. The fear of violence is then used as a "justification to censor and repress individuals and groups that might cause disorder" (Cheeseman et al., 2019:622).

This is furthered by what Lynch calls "the idea of peace as the presence of unity and cohesion" (Lynch, 2019:4). While not receiving much attention in academia, previous research has shown that in an East African context, peace is often described by the general populace as being related to maintaining cohesion and unity (ibid). At first sight, this might be seen as a plus, as such a description is more closely tied to Galtung's earliest conceptualizations of positive peace. However, it may also serve as a way of alienating oppositional voices, as Lynch points out, since "peace as the presence of unity might arguably require action to be taken against those who promote division and disunity" (ibid:6). A critical perspective might claim that addressing underlying structural problems is the only way of achieving unity and cohesion. On the other hand, a more hegemonic

perspective claims that raising such issues sows discord, which in turn leads to less national cohesion. Any counter-narratives may therefore be seen as dividing the nation.

3.4.5. Curbing of oppositional participation in elections

Another criteria which is one of the hallmarks of a peaceocracy is the lack of opportunity for the opposition to "meaningfully participate in the electoral process" (Cheeseman et al., 2019:608). While this does not mean that the opposition is outright banned from running, there are still obstacles that create an uneven playing field. Examples of this can be government-controlled courts, a lack of independence of the electoral commission, and unfair coverage in state-owned media. The partisanship of institutions ensures that while a country may be a democracy on paper, the chance of a non-incumbent actually winning an election is slim-to-none. This relates to the observation that peaceocracies most often occur in hybrid regimes - i.e. "regimes that are neither fully democratic nor classically authoritarian" (Lynch, 2019:3). As elections in Africa often have served the purpose historically of upholding political order (Cheeseman et al., 2019:610), it is easy to see how incumbents can portray their victory as necessary for upholding the order, while the opposition is limited in how fiercely they can criticize the electoral process, as it forms part of a charade of maintaining the order, for both domestic and international eyes.

Grievances that arise from elections that are free but not fair may cause severe violence further down the line. Elections can lead to "anti-democratic outcomes" (Barma, 2018:207) especially when not held freely and fairly. According to Höglund, electoral violence can be sponsored by state actors, ranging from petty vandalism and police intimidation, to the violent suppression of protest, all the way to ethnic cleansing (Höglund, 2009). However, this violence is often carried out in the name of peace. Therefore, it is difficult for anyone to call for reforms, as that might be seen as an attempt of upending the current order, therefore amounting to disturbing the peace. While it is rare for oppositional candidates to not be able to participate whatsoever, they are often pressured into accepting unfair electoral conditions, where they are able to run but not able to win.

3.4.6. International support

While strong narratives of peace often develop domestically, they are often helped by support from the international community, which has a penchant for sponsoring projects that further these narratives. With the backing of international donors, a government can impose a strong peace narrative, and by financing programs for peace, the government may use those programs to help frame itself as peacekeepers. This leads to the creation of a "peace industry" even in countries with little history of electoral violence (Cheeseman et al., 2019:621). Highlighted by Mac Ginty, the so-called "international community" often prioritizes keeping peace and order over addressing legitimate grievances when push comes to shove (Mac Ginty, 2006:53). Meanwhile, Paris argues that the dominant peacebuilding strategies have "paradoxically [...] increased the likelihood of renewed violence" (Paris, 2004:6)

Moreover, incumbents can use a self-proclaimed status as peacekeepers in order to receive further support from the international community, creating an endless cycle. Government-sponsored programs looking to school its citizenry into being peaceful may actually be a means of indoctrination, while still nonetheless being supported by donors. As the international community has a "tendency to prioritize stability and order over human rights and democracy" (Cheeseman et al., 2019:621), the political opposition might face difficulties in calling for electoral and judicial reform when those issues have been framed as contentious by the government. This creates a situation where the international community might endorse faulty elections, as holding elections is seen as a value in itself, no matter how free and fair they are. Voices calling for reform can then be framed as instigators, as they challenge the established (but admittedly unjust) order.

4. Research design and methodology

4.1. Research design

This thesis examines the 2017 Kenyan elections using the theory of peaceocracy. Six key components of peaceocracy have been identified, namely a fragile peace, incumbents cast as peacekeepers, peace as a responsibility of the citizenry, delegitimization of certain issues, curbing of oppositional participation in elections, and international support. The empirical material will be studied using these six components as the basis of analysis.

As the research question of this thesis focuses on the 2017 elections in Kenya, the most apt research design for answering it is by using a case study. While there are comparisons to the 2013 election, it is not a comparative case study *per se*, but rather a single case study. No new research will be conducted related to the 2013 election, which will instead be used as a reference for peaceocracy, since the theory was formulated in response to those elections.

4.1.1. Single case study

A case study is one of the most common research designs in the social sciences. Case studies fall under the umbrella of qualitative research, as they tend to be focused on a few units, rather than drawing conclusions from a large *n* value (George & Bennett, 2005). One definition of a case is that it is "an instance of a class of events" (ibid:27), with the class of events referring to "a phenomenon of scientific interests" (ibid). Qualitative research tends to focus on words and meaning, rather than numerical values, and is broadly associated with an interpretivist epistemology, where the understanding of a context is derived from how the people in said context explain their realities (Bryman, 2008). Moreover, qualitative research is associated with an inductive research approach, where a theory is formed based on the given results of a research process (ibid). This can be seen in the case of peaceocracy, which is a highly inductive theory founded on the empirical results of research regarding the 2013 Kenyan elections.

One of the advantages of a case study is that it allows for an in-depth understanding of a single case, which might not be possible when using a large *n* value. As such a study only seeks to investigate one case, it provides an unparalleled opportunity to explore all of the nuances of the chosen case, as opposed to just going over many different cases very briefly. Flyvbjerg agrees with this assessment, stating that "Concrete, context-dependent knowledge is more valuable than the vain search for predictive theories and universals" (Flyvbjerg, 2006:224).

A disadvantage of a case study is the lack of ability to generalize the results. When working with an *n* value of one in a single case study, it cannot be credibly claimed that the results are universal to all cases (Bryman, 2008). However, Flyvbjerg claims that "formal generalization is overvalued as a source of scientific development" (Flyvbjerg, 2006:228). This means that even if the findings are not generalizable, this study still holds academic value.

Is my case actually a single case study? Kenyan elections are in the form of general elections, electing not only a president but also senators, members of parliament, governors, and local councilors. In addition, the focus is not only on what happened on Election Day, but also on the run-up to the elections, the primaries, and the rerun of the annulled presidential election. Despite this, it is nonetheless motivated to combine these occurrences into a single case, as previous research in the field of electoral violence has combined pre- and post-election periods with the electoral process, in order to form one unit.

4.1.2. Delimitations

In this thesis, I will be studying the 2017 election period through the lens of peaceocracy. When appropriate, some comparisons will be made with the 2013 elections, but this is not a comparative study, since the focus is on the 2017 elections. As discussed previously, the theory of peaceocracy started out as an empirical account of the 2013 elections, before moving to a theory applied to other countries. Due to this, it is inevitable that some comparisons will be made to Kenya in 2013.

When talking about the 2017 Kenyan elections, it is necessary to define what they actually constitute. The general elections were held on 8 August 2017, which, as mentioned above, include not only presidential elections but also elections to other posts. Primary elections were held in the months prior to the

general election, while a repeat presidential election was held on 26 October 2017 following the annulment of the first vote. Most of the attention of this study is directed at the two presidential elections, but all elections during the electoral period are taken into account.

What is the electoral period, then? As per Söderberg Kovacs (Söderberg Kovacs & Bjarnesen, 2018:6), defining it is not as clear-cut as it may seem. It could be argued that the pre-election period ahead of 2017 started immediately after the 2013 elections. While not choosing a specific starting date, the study will take into account events from approximately one year ahead of the elections up until occurrences roughly six months after the repeat presidential election held in October.

4.1.3. Collection of data

For this thesis, most of the source material that is used can be considered to be secondary sources, and in some cases even tertiary sources. No new empirical material will be gathered in the process of conducting this study. The reason for this is that since this thesis will primarily study narratives, it is unfeasible given the time constraints to conduct enough interviews to accurately represent any narratives. Therefore, different documents from the electoral period will be studied instead.

In order to analyze any existing narratives, I have constructed an archive of texts from the 2017 electoral period, which is made up of a wide range of different sources, in order to fully grasp what narratives were present during the elections. The archive contains everything from reports from NGOs, government agencies, and election observation groups, to news clips, to manifestos from political parties. Court documents will also be included. However, the primary source will be newspaper articles, primarily from Kenyan sources.

These different sources are used as they can help us capture different components of a narrative. Government sources are helpful in order to understand state-sponsored narratives, while international news articles serve as an indicator of external narratives from the international community. Finally, transcripts of interviews of local voters and reports from local NGOs helps us understand the everyday realities of Kenyan citizens, and may also help uncover any counter-narratives. By using an archival method of research, and especially by gathering information from non-traditional sources, political scientists can "ask more

nuanced questions about the roles of various actors in politics and political implications of their everyday practices" (Subotić, 2021:345).

The reason for the wide range of sources is that it is necessary to take multiple streams of information into account, in order to fully understand the complex narratives and stories that were at play during the electoral period. By only limiting the study to, say, newspaper articles, it would be difficult to grasp the sentiments present in Kenya during this timeframe. Only by using a multifaceted method of data collection, such as this one, could the study feasibly be completed.

4.1.4. Source criticism

It is always important to be wary of false sources when conducting research, and this is particularly the case when no first-hand material is gathered by the researcher. In order to maintain a standard of proper source criticism, only comparatively well-reputed news outlets will be used as sources. Furthermore, it is common for fake statements from political candidates in Kenya to circulate on social media, especially during election periods. Therefore, all sorts of communication from political actors will be thoroughly scrutinized before being used in this thesis.

4.2. Methodology

Peaceocracy relies heavily on the importance of peace narratives. The main theoretical components identified as key parts of a peaceocracy are all tied to the formation of narratives in one way or another. With this in mind, it is only natural to use narrative analysis in order to determine the extent of possible features of peaceocracy in the 2017 elections. By using this method, we can maximize the use of the theory of peaceocracy, by analyzing and deconstructing the peace narratives provided as a foundation for the conditions of peaceocracy, while also studying counter-narratives.

Narrative analysis has been chosen as the method since it helps us understand shared descriptions of Kenya's past and present. When it comes to the question of fragile peace, for example, it would not be relevant to this study to operationalize what constitutes fragile peace and then do quantitative research, as

peaceocracy is a theory stemming from a qualitative research tradition. Instead, articles and reports where different groups in Kenya are able to communicate using their own words help us find a more precise meaning. In order to fully understand peace, we need to develop an understanding of what actually constitutes peace in the eyes of the citizenry. Peace, as conceptualized within peaceocracy, relies heavily on how individuals and groups experience it, and this sort of influence from standpoint epistemology is related to poststructuralism. However, it is difficult to place the theory of peaceocracy squarely within one single theoretical school of thought.

4.3. Narrative analysis

A "narrative turn" has been observed in many different fields of research, primarily in literary studies and history. This phenomenon has also appeared in the social sciences, albeit in a much slower manner. According to Hyvärinen, the narrative turn in the social sciences slowly developed during the 1980s, but the real boom occurred in the 90s, when narratives "were now, for the first time, seen as material, theory and as a perspective for reading" (Hyvärinen, 2010:74). While still not a mainstream method in political science, it has come to be more and more accepted over the years, and is a well-suited method for studying conditions of peaceocracy.

4.3.1. What is a narrative?

Just like when it comes to peace, there is not one singular definition of what a narrative is (Andrews et al., 2013). Hinchman & Hinchman offer a customized definition of narratives for use in the social sciences. According to them, "narratives (stories) in the human sciences should be defined provisionally as discourses with a clear sequential order that connect events in a meaningful way for a definite audience and thus offer insights about the world and/or people's experiences of it" (Hinchman & Hinchman, 2001:xvi). According to Bruner, narratives "impose a structure, a compelling reality on what we experience" (Bruner, 2002:89).

Furthermore, as per Patterson & Monroe:

"A narrative is essentially a story, a term more often associated with fiction than with political science. Yet narrative also refers to the ways in which we construct disparate facts in our own worlds and weave them together cognitively in order to make sense of our reality. Since these narratives help us understand ourselves as political beings, narrative becomes an invaluable tool in navigating the myriad of sensations that bombard us daily."

(Patterson & Monroe, 1998:315).

Somers & Gibson (1994) identify four separate kinds of narratives, namely ontological, public, conceptual, and meta-narratives. Furthermore, according to Riessman (2005), there are four main schools of narrative research, namely thematic analysis, structural analysis, interactive analysis, and performative analysis. Thematic analysis is mainly useful for "finding common thematic elements across research participants and the events they report" (ibid:3), while structural narratives may require more work in interpreting them, but are "very useful for detailed case studies" (ibid:4). This study will combine these two approaches, in order to both capture a wide variety of events, but also to analyze certain occurrences in depth.

Postmodernist thinkers like Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida and Jean-François Lyotard have criticized narratives as a concept, with the latter defining postmodernism as "the end of grand narratives" (Lyotard, 2010). Nevertheless, narratives are strongly associated with postmodernism, despite this criticism being leveled against certain aspects of narrative analysis (Patterson & Monroe, 1998:318).

4.3.2. Hegemonic narratives

When using peaceocracy as a theory, it is critical to study hegemonic narratives, as they play a large part in developing a peaceocracy. Since multiple conditions of peaceocracy require an elite-led narrative in order to occur, it is important to examine the ways in which such narratives are used by ruling elites in order to influence political discourse. In order to study this, we first need to define what a hegemonic narrative is, however.

As per Ewick & Silbey, "narratives are likely to bear the marks of existing social inequities, disparities of power, and ideological effects" (Ewick & Silbey, 1995:222). Since narratives do not appear in a vacuum, it is important to take into account any underlying power structures that might affect how they are formed. Seeing as how all human interactions are in some ways influenced by power structures (Foucault, 1976), this is a relevant consideration for our study, particularly as one of the defining features of a peaceocracy is its neglect of structural issues.

How can this manifest itself in a case study focusing on one country? One of the most obvious relationships to examine is that between state and citizen, as well as between state and society, since those can serve as avenues for the state to attempt to impose a certain narrative on its subjects. Traditionally, "the state has an unmatched capacity to shape narratives of the past by employing the various tools and resources at its disposal" (Wertsch, 2008:128). Following this, it is easy to understand that hegemonic narratives often originate from the state. However, despite enjoying a status of hegemony, such narratives are not the only ones to exist.

4.3.3. Counter-narratives

While hegemonic narratives may be dominant, other narratives will always form simultaneously, although they might not reach the same level of prevalence. These narratives often stem from marginalized areas of society. In the words of Ewick & Silbey, "the conditions that may generate the counterhegemonic narrative [...] may be the social marginality of the narrator" (Ewick & Silbey, 1995:220). Where there are strong hegemonic narratives, there is also a chance of counter-narratives appearing as a manner of resistance.

Using counter-narratives when studying peaceocracy is a relevant way of investigating which political issues are removed from the domain of acceptable political discourse. One of the main goals of a peaceocracy is to counteract the spread of such narratives. As per Lynch, peaceocracy is "a strategy, rather than a discreet regime type, which incumbents can use in hybrid regimes as part of their 'menu of manipulation,' and which can be said to be 'successful' when counter-narratives are in fact marginalized" (Lynch, 2019:1).

The above quote shows that the prevalence of counter-narratives is one of the simplest ways of identifying the success of a peaceocracy. Moreover, identifying cleavages in society that hegemonic narratives want to censor is key in order to understand the structural issues that form the foundations of a political system. Thus, it is of the essence to use hegemonic narratives and counter-narratives in order to fully grasp the context of our case.

4.3.4. Why not discourse analysis?

Discourse analysis is one of the most commonly used research methods in social science. There are some obvious similarities between discourse analysis and narrative analysis. Discourse analysis uses the researcher as the "measurement instrument" (Neuendorf, 2004:34), just like this study. One oft-cited difference is that narrative analysis is not as concerned with power relation, but in a study like this one, though, where hegemonic narratives and counter-narratives are used, the distinction becomes even more blurred, seeing as it is the one branch of narrative analysis to come closest to discourse analysis. However, while discourse analysis is primarily concerned with finding patterns (Taylor, 2001), narrative analysis focuses on stories. Furthermore, a key difference is that a narrative may contain multiple discourses at once, allowing for a more thorough understanding of a case, which is useful in this study.

4.4. Interpretation and reflection

Narrative analysis is a method which is heavily "dependent on interpretation" (Patterson & Monroe, 1998:320). This makes it all the more important to analyze my own positionality in relation to the results, and I will be mindful so as to not stray too far from the outlined definitions of peaceocracy. When studying narratives, it is important to be mindful of existing power structures. As I have not conducted any interviews by myself, I do not need to worry about me potentially affecting any interviews or reports.

4.5. Thematic and structural narrative analysis

However, as the researcher, I will be responsible for interpreting the narratives and placing them in a larger context. According to Gluck & Patai, "interpretations can be shown to inhere in the 'original' narrative, but our aims in pointing out certain features, or in making connections between the narrative and larger cultural formations, may at times differ from the original narrator's intentions" (Gluck & Patai, 1991). This means that the onus of contextualizing the narratives falls upon the researcher in this study.

In order to analyze my empirical material, the six main defining features of a peaceocracy identified above will serve as the areas of analysis. They include the following: a fragile peace, incumbents cast as peacekeepers, peace as a responsibility of the citizenry, delegitimization of certain issues, curbing of oppositional participation in elections, and international support. The empirical material will be analyzed to see what conditions of peaceocracy were met during the 2017 election. After this, a final discussion will follow in order where the results are summarized.

The reason why the method described above has been chosen is that it provides a helpful template for identifying certain conditions of peaceocracy, as a structural narrative approach "can facilitate understanding of people's experiences" (Ahmed, 2013:241). This is helpful when studying how hegemonic narratives and counter-narratives are perceived.

4.6. Potential problems

One glaring issue with this study is the lack of first-hand source material. Since no creation of empirical material by the researcher is used, primary sources, defined as "eyewitness accounts of a given process - for example, documents produced by participants at the time an event occurred" (Beach & Pedersen, 2013:132), will not be used in this study.

Moreover, it is established that Kenyan politicians often use different rhetoric when speaking in English compared to local languages. Speeches in English are characterized by their formality, while those in Swahili and even more so in local vernacular languages, use everyday jargon, with insults and slurs not being uncommon (Nyabola, 2017). As the author only has a very limited understanding of Swahili, and none whatsoever of other local languages, this

creates a situation where the study has to rely on second-hand translations. When no translation is available, the material is rendered unusable for this study.

When talking in terms of collective shared narratives, it is easy to essentialize all members of an ethnic group as sharing the same worldview. Even in a country with as high levels of ethnic voting as Kenya, this is obviously not the case. Different individuals of an ethnic group will have different perspectives, and might not share what are perceived to be collective narratives. Furthermore, many of the ethnic groups that are described as monolithic in nature actually consist of multiple sub-groups that might share conflicting narratives. Nonetheless, such narratives will be included in the analysis when deemed appropriate.

5. Peaceocracy in Kenya 2017: Analysis & findings

In this section, the underlying causes of peaceocracy will be brought up first, followed by a discussion regarding the dynamics of the 2017 elections. Following this, the empirical material will be analyzed using a narrative analysis based on the six previously identified categories of peaceocracy.

5.1. Context and underlying causes of peaceocracy in Kenya

In order to understand any existing narratives in 2017, we must first discuss Kenya using a historical perspective. Only by looking to the past can we fully grasp the present.

5.1.1. From colonialism to independence to a one-party state

Kenya has seen electoral violence occur throughout its history. Formerly a British colony, the country gained independence in 1963. KANU (Kenya African National Union), the leading political organization in the independence movement, immediately became the dominant political party, with the formerly imprisoned Jomo Kenyatta sworn in as president. Ahead of the first post-independence general election in 1969, the major opposition party KPU (Kenya People's Union) - a left-wing faction led by Jaramogi Oginga Odinga, which had broken away from KANU - was banned, leading to the introduction of a *de facto* one-party state under the rule of Kenyatta (Brosché et al., 2019).

Peace and order were seen as synonymous during KANU rule, and in single-party Kenya, primary elections served as a way for the state to exert power while still maintaining an illusion of choice for the citizenry (Willis, 2015:99). This key characteristic of the post-independence political ideology of the KANU government was described as an "ideology of order" (Atieno-Odhiambo, 1987). This ideology was furthered by the media, with the Daily Nation, one of the leading Kenyan newspapers, stating the following in an editorial: "Peace and order are in the interest of every citizen, be he a policeman, a Government official

or an ordinary citizen. […] The part which each person plays in this respect will be a major contribution to the nation's image both here and abroad" (Daily Nation, 1974).

One of the contentious issues of the post-independence state was that of decentralization. Representatives from the smaller ethnic communities pushed for a high degree of federalism, but the Kenyatta government quickly made it clear that the new Kenyan state would be centralized in nature (Ajulu, 2002). Kenyatta, himself a Kikuyu (the most populous ethnic group in the country), helped farmers from his own ethnic group purchase land throughout the country, primarily in the Rift Valley but also in Coast Province[3] (Dyzenhaus, 2020:648).

Kenyatta died in 1978 and was succeeded by his deputy, Daniel arap Moi. In 1982, the constitution was amended, making Kenya a *de jure* one-party state. While Kenyatta had by no means been lenient in the treatment of his critics, Moi furthered the repression of political opposition (Throup, 2020:66). Parliamentary elections during Moi's time in power were often fraught with violence, as the government cracked down on supporters of candidates perceived to be disloyal to the Moi regime. Amidst increasing domestic and international pressure, the constitutional amendment declaring one-party rule was repealed in 1991, and Kenya held its first post-independence multi-party elections a year later.[4]

5.1.2. Multi-party elections

The 1992 elections were highly anticipated. However, the electoral process was marred by ethnic violence in the Rift Valley, with the Moi government fanning the flames of hatred (Oyugi, 1997). Some government officials actively aided in the training of Kalenjin ethnic militias, while security forces looked the other way when the militia groups ran rampant, targeting those perceived as "foreign" to the region (Brosché et al., 2019). This served the purpose of scaring away perceived opposition supporters - i.e. certain ethnic groups - from diverse areas where government-friendly parliamentary candidates were at risk of losing (Mutahi & Ruteere, 2019). The intimidation strategy was largely successful, and on the presidential side, Moi was re-elected with only 36% of the vote against a

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[3] For a thorough overview of the land question in the Rift Valley region, see Boone (2012).

[4] For a more detailed overview of Kenyan political history, see Mutua (2008), Hornsby (2011), Branch (2011), and Murunga et al. (2014).

splintered opposition, a result made possible by the first-past-the-post electoral system.

Daniel arap Moi won yet another election in 1997, which saw sporadic incidents but nowhere near the degree of violence seen five years earlier (Muhula, 2020). As a result of the two-term limit introduced along with multi-party democracy, Moi was ineligible to run in 2002. He endorsed Jomo Kenyatta's son Uhuru, but Kenyatta and KANU were defeated in a landslide by Mwai Kibaki and his NARC (National Rainbow Coalition). NARC managed to unite almost all of the opposition, which had previously been divided among multiple candidates, and Kibaki, who finished third in 1992 and second in 1997, finally succeeded in his third stab at the presidency, with Kenyatta acknowledging that he had been defeated. The 2002 elections were notable for the peaceful transition of power, and the undisputed nature of the results, being the only presidential election during the multi-party era where results were accepted by all parties (Muhula, 2020).

The transfer of power and swearing in of Kibaki was positively received by the international community, which proclaimed Kenya as a role model for democratization in Africa. While Kibaki's presidency was initially also greeted with optimism domestically, he was unable (or perhaps unwilling) to keep his promise to deliver a new constitution within 100 days of his term. A watered-down proposal was eventually rejected by the Kenyan public in a referendum in 2005, after a number of Kibaki's coalition partners had quit the NARC government in protest against the proposed constitution. The major defector was Raila Odinga, son of Jomo Kenyatta's rival Jaramogi. Odinga formed the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM), named after the symbol for a "no" vote in the referendum. Ahead of the 2007 elections, it became clear that the race for the presidency would be a close Kibaki-Odinga duel.

5.1.3. 2007 elections and subsequent crisis

The hotly contested elections in 2007 were marred by irregularities, with incidents of violence occurring during the party primaries. The vote was, as per usual in Kenyan politics, heavily split down ethnic lines, with the two main candidates racking up tallies of above 95% in their home regions. Odinga quickly took a seemingly unassailable lead in the vote tally, but following a drawn-out counting process, Kibaki caught up and passed him. Despite obvious errors in the tallying,

such as turnout in excess of 100% in certain constituencies, Kibaki was proclaimed as the winner by the electoral commission, and hastily sworn in as president later the same night.

An investigation led by South African judge Johann Kriegler concluded that it was "impossible to determine who had won" the election (Soy, 2022), something that was later backed up by Samuel Kivuitu, chairman of the Electoral Commission of Kenya, who had been the one to declare Kibaki president (Al Jazeera, 2013). An exit poll conducted by the International Republican Institute (IRI) indicated an Odinga win well beyond the margin of error of the poll. The poll result was kept secret for months, however, with the reason for this allegedly being interference from the United States, who enjoyed a good relationship with the pro-American Kibaki government (Gettleman & McIntire, 2009).

Following the declaration of results, protests immediately erupted throughout most of the country. In areas of Nairobi seen as opposition strongholds, as well as in Odinga's home province of Nyanza, police officers moved in brutally to quash dissent. Several hundred people were killed by police (Murunga, 2011). Videos of officers shooting protesters were aired on television, and the Kenyan police publicly admitted using a "shoot to kill" policy (France24, 2008)**.**

With the police homing in on Odinga's home region, little attention was paid to the rest of the country. According to Murunga, the government expected small-scale protests but largely a "resigned acceptance" of the election results outside of Nyanza Province (Murunga, 2011:28). However, the violence in the Rift Valley took on a new dimension, going way beyond the expectations of the government. Ethnic militias (predominantly Kalenjin) targeted Kikuyu civilians, followed by a counter-mobilization of Kikuyu militias conducting revenge attacks. One particularly severe act of violence, in which a church containing Kikuyu civilians seeking shelter was burnt down, was heavily condemned worldwide. The international community attempted to mediate between Kibaki and Odinga, and after two months, they signed a power-sharing deal, which gave Odinga the newly-established post of Prime Minister. All in all, at least 1,113 people lost their lives while several hundred thousand were internally displaced (Dercon & Gutiérrez-Romero 2012).

The issue of land ownership was seen as particularly contentious, with inequalities stemming from the colonial era remaining in place. These inequalities, combined with stark ethnic divides, led to a situation where

grievances spilled over into violence, especially in ethnically heterogeneous areas. In 2007, some politicians managed to exploit these tensions by mobilizing militias, conducting campaigns of localized ethnic cleansing. However, the underlying grievances are often based on legitimate political concerns. Kenyan voters have often been dismissed as non-ideological due to the ethnic-based nature of voting, but this is not a wholly accurate description (Kagwanja 2008, Kanyinga 2009, Murunga 2011).

The post-election violence came as a shock to the outside world, with Kenya previously being seen as a stable and somewhat democratic country. A prolonged debate followed about how the country should move on, both regarding how to heal from the scars of the violence, as well as who should bear legal responsibility for atrocities committed during the crisis. The Kenyan Parliament rejected a bill that would have established a local tribunal, referring the matter of judicial responsibility for the crisis to the ICC.

Kenya passed a new constitution through a referendum in 2010, in an attempt to mitigate the risks of a repeat of the 2007-08 crisis. Broadly backed by the political elite, the only major voices to come out against the new constitution were former president Daniel arap Moi and William Ruto, a firebrand Kalenjin politician who had been one of Raila Odinga's key allies in 2007. Odinga and Ruto had fallen out over the former's support of the eviction of Kalenjin squatters from the Mau Forest.

Meanwhile, six chief suspects were named and indicted by the ICC. Among them were Uhuru Kenyatta and Ruto, who were seen as responsible for mobilizing ethnic militias on either side of the conflict. The two former foes found themselves sharing the same dilemma, and formed the Jubilee Alliance ahead of the 2013 elections, using "an explicitly nationalist rhetoric which focused on the ICC" (Cheeseman et al., 2014:8), framing themselves as the victims of a neocolonial conspiracy.

5.1.4. 2013 elections and aftermath

Kenya went into the 2013 election period with memories from 2007 still fresh. The elections pitted Uhuru Kenyatta (and his running mate William Ruto) against Raila Odinga. Ahead of the elections, a message of peace was relentlessly promoted by the government, so as to not repeat the errors of 2007. In the media, this manifested itself in the rise of "peace journalism" (Maweu et al., 2019).

Furthermore, as the ICC question was paramount during the 2013 campaign, the graphic nature of the evidence presented in Kenyan media helped further the peace narrative. Meanwhile, Police Inspector General David Kimaiyo warned candidates ahead of the 2013 election to not discuss land questions (Cheeseman et al., 2014:11), as such a conversation was seen as inflammatory, notwithstanding the fact that many Kenyans were well within their rights to complain about unequal land distribution.

While the heavy peace narrative might have seemed like a noble message, in hindsight it is clear that it was an effective way of silencing contentious issues that could have "disturbed the peace", for example issues of inequality and land redistribution. Such a situation, where upholding a peace narrative becomes paramount at the expense of democratic rights, came to be referred to as a *peaceocracy* in Kenyan political parlance (Cheeseman et al., 2019).

The 2013 elections went by without any major outbreaks of violence, and Kenya was applauded by the international community for holding elections in such an orderly and peaceful fashion. Certain aspects of the elections were questioned by the opposition, who contested the results, but the petition was rejected by the Supreme Court. Uhuru Kenyatta was sworn in as Kenya's fourth president, but despite the highest court in the land signing off on the validity of the vote, the results were yet again controversial, with reports that the full results at polling-station level had not been made public almost a year after the vote (Cheeseman et al., 2014:3).

The anti-ICC alliance between Kenyatta and Ruto was alleged to have brought peace to the Rift Valley by uniting Kikuyus and Kalenjins in one political bloc. However, the primary explanation for the lack of electoral violence was the strong peace narrative that was prevalent ahead of, during, and immediately after the elections. This narrative was uniquely overwhelming even in a global context, with Cheeseman et al. proclaiming that "few countries have witnessed such a heavy and intense focus on peace as Kenya in the run up to the country's 2013 general election" (Cheeseman et al., 2019:604).

Following the elections, questions were raised regarding the motives behind the peace narrative. While it helped keep the country calm during the electoral period, it also served as a way of neutralizing dissent, silencing calls for justice, and delegitimizing certain political issues (Cheeseman et al. 2014, Shah 2015). As per Maweu et al., "in the wake of the elections, and their dubious conduct, more critical commentators and civil society groups began to ask whether the peace

narrative was manipulated by the government in order to marginalize opposition voices" (Maweu et al., 2019:101).

Ahead of the 2017 elections, the opposition organized protests and demonstrations in order to push for reforms within the IEBC (Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission). The government resisted implementing these reforms, however. Heading into the 2017 election, a re-match of 2013 was on the cards, with Odinga yet again running against the incumbent Kenyatta.

5.2. Electoral dynamics surrounding the 2017 elections

The 2017 elections pitted Uhuru Kenyatta against Raila Odinga for the second time in a row. Kenyatta and Ruto had seen the charges against them dropped by the ICC, partly due to the intimidation - and, in some cases, disappearances - of witnesses. Despite this, the duo had to contend with corruption scandals and a domestic security crisis following a number of attacks carried out by Al-Shabaab. Odinga, meanwhile, called for the reforms of the IEBC, questioning their ability to organize free and fair elections. The Kenyatta/Ruto-led Jubilee Alliance had merged into a singular party called Jubilee Party, while Odinga's ODM had built a wide-reaching coalition with a number of regional parties that came to be known as the National Super Alliance (NASA).

In the build-up to the election, the IEBC commissioners were replaced, due to heavy pressure mounting on the government as a result of street protests organized by the opposition. Nevertheless, there were still concerns regarding the voting technology. These fears were only heightened when Chris Msando, the information and communications technology director of the IEBC, was murdered in suspicious circumstances only a few days before the election. Suspicions quickly arose that his login credentials had been stolen and would be used to hack into the database (Pommerolle, 2020:113).

While the voting process was conducted fairly seamlessly, things started to go south quickly during the tallying process. In accordance with a High Court ruling prior to the election, results announced at constituency level were to be seen as final, while the tabulation of the results at a centralized level by the IEBC was only to be used as confirmation. Instead, votes were reported in the central portal without corresponding results at constituency level. More than a quarter of results lacked the forms that were to form the basis of the official tally.

Naturally, the opposition protested against the reported results. Despite this, Uhuru Kenyatta was once again declared president. The expectation was that Odinga's camp would not contest the results in court, as this had proved fruitless four years earlier. While this seemed correct at first, the suspension of two NGOs protesting the results by the government made the opposition change its tune. A thoroughly prepared petition was submitted to the Supreme Court, and the court very surprisingly ruled in favor of the opposition. The results of the August 2017 presidential election were therefore declared null and void.

A re-run of the presidential election was scheduled for October, but following disputes over reforms in the IEBC, Odinga declared that he would be withdrawing, stating that "all indications are that [the re-run election] will be worse than the previous one" (Guardian, 2017). Several key members of the IEBC expressed similar sentiments, and doubted the commission's ability to organize free and fair elections. Despite this, the vote went ahead with Odinga still having his name on the ballot. Uhuru Kenyatta was re-elected with 98.3% of the vote in a low-turnout election, where opposition supporters heeded the call to boycott. Kenyatta was sworn in with the opposition refusing to recognize his mandate to govern the country.

The evening before the repeat election, Odinga declared that NASA had been transformed from a political coalition to a "resistance movement" (Otieno, 2017). However, he emphasized its non-violent nature, calling for civil disobedience and economic boycotts rather than any form of violent resistance. The campaign culminated in a January 2018 ceremony in Nairobi when Odinga swore himself in as "The People's President" in front of a large crowd of opposition supporters.

The Kenyan political landscape seemed all but certain to be locked in a tense state of standoff between the Kenyatta government and an Odinga-led opposition which refused to recognize it. Surprisingly, though, the two men shook hands in early March, pledging to resolve their differences via dialogue. The move came as a shock to most. While the international community greeted it warmly, many opposition supporters were left with a bitter taste in their mouths, as there was a feeling of meaningless sacrifice following the months of street protests that had led to many injuries at the hands of police officers (BBC News, 2018).

Much of the research interest surrounding the 2017 elections has focused on the unexpected decision to annul the result, and what that means for the

independence of the Kenyan judiciary. There has not been any interest in analyzing the elections using theories of peaceocracy. Nevertheless, research has explained the lack of inter-ethnic violence surrounding the elections firstly by existing structures of elite accommodation, allowing for bargaining and deal-making between government and opposition politicians, and secondly by highlighting the way in which the Kenyatta-Ruto alliance created an uneasy peace in the Rift Valley. The latter factor was also identified as important in keeping the 2013 elections peaceful (Mutahi & Ruteere 2019, Kanyinga et al. 2019).

5.3. Analyzing the 2017 elections

In order to understand what happened in the 2017 elections based on the theory of peaceocracy, the analysis has been broken down into six main areas, based on the conceptualization of peaceocracy outlined in the theory chapter. The narrative analysis builds on these six conditions, which are presented one by one below:

5.3.1. A fragile peace

The fragility of peace is seen as a defining characteristic of peaceocracy, as fear-mongering about potential outbreaks of violence (and even civil war) ring hollow in a context where the vast majority of the population do not believe that any existing peace is threatened. In the Kenyan context, one historical example of this is how Kikuyu elites have used the rhetoric of "forty-one against one" in order to mobilize voters on the basis of fear, claiming that redistributive campaigns will upend the current order of Kenya and leave Kikuyus as an oppressed people (Murunga, 2011).

Concerns that Kenya would slide back into violence were brought up during the campaign. Uhuru Kenyatta was not slow to attempt to frame Raila Odinga as disturbing the fragile peace. "He has started it all over again…it is 40 against 2 this time. What kind of politics is this?" (Capital FM, 2017), Kenyatta said at a campaign rally, referring to the Kikuyu-Kalenjin alliance he had formed with William Ruto, and the historical narrative described in the paragraph above.

Odinga's campaign did not do much to quash concerns of violence, using street protests to attempt to force through electoral reforms despite a violent response from police. There were also several thinly veiled threats of violence

from the opposition, with ODM MP Rashid Bedzimba claiming at a rally that "Kenya would burn and will never be the same" (Nyassy, 2017) in case the incumbent government attempted to rig the elections. It is clear that many ordinary citizens were scared of electoral violence in the run-up to the election, with an opinion poll showing that 70% of surveyed Kenyans were fearful of post-election violence occurring (Mwangi, 2016).

Attention was not as universally focused on the peace question internationally as it had been in 2013. After the much-publicized 2007-08 crisis, the world focused on Kenya in the run-up to the 2013 election. Since those elections passed peacefully, however, there was not as much media interest in covering the 2017 polls. International Crisis Group (ICG) were quoted as saying that "the chance is small that August 2017 elections (will) ignite a major conflict" (ICG, 2017). However, other international groups did not concur, with ACAPS stating that "it can be assumed that some violence will occur following the 2017 elections" (ACAPS, 2017).

The fear of violence did not decrease following the annulment of the results, as many feared a return to the chaos that had followed the 2007 elections. The Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK) issued a statement calling for dialogue, stating that "our Nation is on the brink of disaster" (ACK, 2017). Clearly, the church lacked faith in the stability of peace in Kenya.

As the 2013 elections proceeded in a largely peaceful manner, there might not have been the same immediate threat of violence ahead of the 2017 vote, since the memories of 2007 were more distant. However, the fragility of peace was still a recurring theme in political discourse. In fact, it could be argued that ironically, peace was actually more fragile in 2017, due to the decreased prevalence of an overbearing peace narrative. While the lead-up to the 2013 elections was characterized by the preaching of peace from all angles of society, the opposition and civil society organizations placed a stronger emphasis on justice in 2017. The street protests by the opposition were an elaborate strategy in order to push for electoral reforms, despite knowing that the protests would be met with a violent response.

The above findings indicate that there was less respect for the sanctity of the peace-at-all-cost narrative in 2017. Indeed, while there was "considerable public, scholarly and policy concern that ethnic violence would recur in the 2017 elections" (Mutahi & Ruteere, 2019:257), this did not prevent the opposition from

using confrontative rhetoric during the campaign (and in particular after the elections), while the government responded in kind.

5.3.2. Incumbents cast as peacekeepers

When a peace narrative has taken hold, and the peace is framed as fragile, there is an opportunity for savvy politicians to frame themselves as the only ones who can be tasked with keeping the peace. This is usually done through either claiming responsibility for achieving and upholding said peace in a post-conflict context, framing the opposition as a threat to stability, or both.

The incumbent campaign in 2017 was a conservative one, focusing on maintaining the order that had shaped Kenya as a nation. When examining the Jubilee Party manifesto, it is clear that it promoted a message of stability, as they sought to "build on the tremendous gains we have made towards achieving and maintaining a peaceful, stable and secure nation" (Jubilee, 2017). The NASA manifesto, on the other hand, called for addressing the "causes of conflict and violence, including structural ones, that affect Kenya" (NASA, 2017).

Ahead of the 2017 election, the Kenyatta re-election campaign attempted to cast itself as the singular alternative for peace and stability in Kenya. Of course, in order to frame themselves as peacekeepers, a threat to the current state of peace needed to be presented, that could be used as a bogeyman. Naturally, this role came to be filled by Raila Odinga. In the 2017 Kenyan election, the efforts to cast him as a threat to peace mainly happened through negative campaigning.

While there were some cases of Kenyatta highlighting his own role as a peacekeeper, a more common approach was the attempt of framing Odinga as a threat to stability. In one campaign meeting, Kenyatta said that "the opposition is led by a tribalist who doesn't like peace" (Daily Nation, 2017), and went on to say that anyone planning chaos ahead of the election would be arrested. Furthermore, at another campaign meeting, he was quoted as saying that "Raila was at the centre of the 2007 chaos [...] He is the one who ignited the flames" (Gekara, 2017).

The Jubilee campaign did not only limit itself to just condemning Raila Odinga in speeches, though. Simultaneously, a more covert form of campaigning was underway, using online ads framing Odinga as a dangerous candidate. Chief among these was a campaign which went by the name of "The Real Raila", which put out multiple videos to discredit his candidature. Paid ads on YouTube and

Facebook made sure that Kenyan voters looking for information about the candidates online ended up viewing the material. One of these videos in particular gained traction, showing a hypothetical Odinga-led dystopian Kenya in 2020, with the country plagued by an economic crisis, ethnic cleansing of certain communities, and Al-Shabaab controlling much of Northern Kenya (The Real Raila, 2017).

The architects behind the smear campaign remained anonymous, claiming to be "concerned Kenyans for peace". However, it was revealed after the elections that the US media company Harris Media, with ties to the Republican Party and a history of producing campaign work for European far-right parties, had produced the ads on behalf of the Kenyatta campaign (Privacy International, 2017). Furthermore, Cambridge Analytica, notable for their controversial involvement in the Trump presidential campaign and the Vote Leave campaign in the Brexit referendum, were also employed by Jubilee. One of the managing directors of Cambridge Analytica was caught on tape as saying that they controlled "just about every element of [Kenyatta's] campaign" (Channel 4, 2018).

However, despite the Kenyatta campaign framing themselves as peacekeepers, it is clear that almost all of the violence that occurred during the electoral period was committed by the state apparatus. While there had been widespread fears that the country would descend into ethnic violence following the election, the violence that did occur was overwhelmingly the result of police brutality. Ahead of the 2017 election, local Jubilee politicians called for police to "decisively deal with" anyone who attempted to disturb the peace (Citizen, 2017).

The Kenya National Commission for Human Rights (KNCHR) described how "except for two cases caused by civilians, the rest [of those who died in post-electoral violence] were allegedly because of excessive use of force by police" (KNCHR, 2017:164), findings that were bolstered by a collaborative report from Human Rights Watch (HRW) and Amnesty International (Amnesty International & HRW, 2017). Furthermore, another report from HRW found multiple cases where women described being raped by officers (HRW, 2017) Despite this, Joseph Boinett, the Inspector General of Police, said that any police response had "always been proportionate and measured" (NTV, 2017b), while dismissing the reports as based on lies.

5.3.3. Peace as a responsibility of the citizenry

Another hallmark of peaceocracy is how peacekeeping moves from a structural problem to an individual one. The responsibility of keeping peace is claimed to rest with individual citizens, rather than society as a whole.

Following the 2017 elections, various statements were put out by multiple different organizations, ranging from international observers to religious groups. After the voting had closed, the Commonwealth Observer Group (COG) commended the "peace messages that were conveyed ahead of the elections by several groups including civil society groups, citizen observers and the youth" (COG, 2017). The National Council of Churches of Kenya (NCCK), meanwhile, commended "Kenyans for remaining calm and peaceful before and after the ruling on the Presidential election Petition by the Supreme Court of Kenya" (NCCK, 2017), stating that the "restraint displayed by supporters of leading political formations" (ibid) was formidable, and a welcome surprise in a political climate where elections frequently turn violent.

Furthermore, the Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA) ran a video ahead of the election where victims of the post-election violence arose from coffins, preaching to citizens that "you must shun the bloodshed", finishing the video with the hashtag #TogetherForPeace (KEPSA, 2017). The video was accused of shifting the blame for the 2007-08 violence from those who organized it to "ordinary Kenyans who accepted to be organized to commit violence" (Njoya, 2017), echoing a narrative seen in 2013.

An interview with a social worker in Nairobi revealed that Pentecostal churches in the area were used to spread the "false message of peace" on behalf of government politicians (Kahura, 2017). The social worker said that the spreading of a peace narrative began to sow doubts in peoples' minds, stating that "the peace narrative in the slums is a euphemism for veiled threats and subtle intimidation" (ibid). This creates a situation where instead of making people think about peace, the implicit message instead becomes that "a demand for justice is tantamount to a demand for violence" (ibid).

Indeed, one of the main features of the message of certain evangelical churches was that while the responsibility of peacekeeping rested with the individual, the matter of electing a leader was in other hands. Kahura noted the tendency of the peace narrative being particularly strong among evangelicals, and

that claims that the president would be hand-picked by God were commonplace (Kahura, 2017).

In such a scenario, a good citizen is one who reacts to the divinely ordained president through acceptance. This was shown in a statement by Hope FM, a radio station tied to the Pentecostal Christ Is The Answer Ministry (CITAM), which proclaimed the following on the eve of the election:

"On Election Day, go and vote for the persons of your choice. Once the results are out, celebrate the successful candidates – as chosen by God – whether they are the ones you voted for or not. King Solomon in his wisdom said: The lot is cast, but its every decision is from the Lord. There is therefore no reason to fight over elections"

(Hope FM, 2017).

This shows a prevailing narrative where the role of the citizen is not one of a voter, but rather one that tacitly accepts whatever leaders are bestowed upon the general populace. While not all Kenyans are Christian, and not all Christian Kenyans are evangelical, the ways in which these churches act can definitely be seen as schooling the citizenry into a predetermined role.

It was not only churches that called for citizens to keep peace, though. Uhuru Kenyatta, on the eve of the election, said that citizens should "go home after they vote, shake their neighbor's hand, have something to eat and wait for the election results together" (Craig, 2017). This statement is seemingly innocuous, and even praiseworthy at first glance, but by comparing it to how the police were instructed to deal with protesters, it is easy to see the dichotomy between "good citizen" (one who watches the results and accepts them) and "bad citizen" (one who protests following the election).

5.3.4. Delegitimization of certain issues

Another significant attribute of a peaceocracy is the delegitimization of certain issues which are seen as controversial and divisive. Bringing these up is seen as tantamount to inciting violence. In Kenya, two issues that have traditionally been seen as divisive are land redistribution and electoral reform. In 2013, electoral integrity was not as highly politicized as it had been traditionally, as a result of strong peace narratives and a broad support for the institutional changes brought

forth by the new constitution. However, in 2017, the narrative was markedly different.

In the aftermath of the 2013 elections, the opposition announced an initiative to force a referendum on reforming the electoral commission. The demands for a referendum were however rejected, as the IEBC announced that the required threshold of one million signatures had not been met (Otieno, 2016). As a consequence, the opposition instead took to the streets, holding weekly protests that were met by a violent police response. When Odinga threatened to boycott the elections, Jubilee Secretary General Raphael Tuju labeled his calls as "incitement" and urged him to preach peace instead (Obara, 2017). Another Kenyatta ally, Martha Karua, said that such statements meant that the country could "degenerate into anarchy and make Kenya ungovernable" (Munene, 2017). Nevertheless, the opposition did not waver, continuing to call for electoral reforms. The existence of a strong counter-narrative thereby made sure that the issue of electoral legitimacy was high on the agenda both before, during, and after the elections.

As a result of this dispute, the government had to use alternative (and more heavy-handed) methods instead, in order to delegitimize calls for electoral integrity. Following the August 2017 elections, a number of local NGOs involved in various ways in the election petition, namely AfriCOG, Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC), We the People, and Kura Yangu Sauti Yangu (KYSY), were deregistered by the NGO Coordination Board, a government agency. Its chairman Fazul Mahamed claimed that the organizations had received illegal funding from the George Soros Foundation, which had been used "for purposes of funding political and flagitious operations in the country" (Vidija, 2017). This action was against the rule of law and was eventually overturned, but nonetheless served as a stark reminder to civil society to tread very lightly on the topic of electoral integrity.

Despite a heavy focus on electoral integrity, the issue of land nevertheless made its way onto the agenda. Odinga made remarks in Kajiado County where he claimed that "outsiders" should not buy land there, as many in the majority Maasai population had seen their land dispossessed. This remark did not go over well with the government, with the pro-Jubilee Kajiado Governor stating that "Kajiado is one of the most peaceful counties in Kenya. [...] We do not need the kind of politics Raila is trying to introduce in Kajiado" (Ngunjiri, 2017). Vice President Ruto also agreed, saying that the "comments are likely to spark

violence" (Wanambisi, 2017), while Raphael Tuju reported him for hate speech. A pro-government NGO even wanted to take Odinga to the ICC for inciting crimes against humanity (Ngirachu, 2017).

Furthermore, Odinga went on to call out the large white-owned ranches in Laikipia County, claiming that "there's a need for a rationalization to ensure that there's more productive use of that land" (Laing, 2017). In a region with a history of land conflict between pastoralists and ranchers, with several recent high-profile violent attacks, this was met with condemnation from the Laikipia Farmers' Association (Mbatiah, 2017). Odinga later clarified that he did not support the expropriation of the ranchers. Despite the controversy of raising issues of land redistribution in Laikipia, the county is characterized by extreme inequalities, with over 40% of the total land area of Laikipia county owned by 48 large-scale ranches (Letai, 2021).

Finally, already ahead of the 2017 election, questions had started to be raised regarding the legitimacy of the Kenyan project of nationhood. In a much-publicized piece one year before the election, economist and columnist David Ndii proclaimed that "Kenya is a cruel marriage. It's time we talk divorce" (Ndii, 2016). After the annulment of the election, several opposition leaders drummed up support for separatism. Two of Odinga's key allies, Mombasa Governor Hassan Joho and Kisumu Governor Anyang' Nyong'o, called for secession, with Nyong'o saying that "People have a right to refuse to cooperate with a government that has gone against their sovereignty [...] If they cannot reason with us, let us divide this country in two [...] You cannot remain in a republic where your only fate is to be killed when you are expressing a political right" (Allison, 2017).

Furthemore, ODM MP Peter Kaluma drafted a bill to be tabled in parliament calling for the country to split into two (Vidija, 2017b). These calls were well-received by opposition supporters (Torchia, 2017). While Odinga himself toned down these sentiments, it is clear that the ferocity of the counter-narratives meant that even the continued existence of the Kenyan nation was up for debate.

5.3.5. Curbing of oppositional participation in elections

When it comes to the 2017 elections, it is obvious that the ability for the opposition to participate properly was curbed. Firstly, the presidential election held in August was found to not have been conducted in accordance with the

constitution, and the irregularities and illegalities of the electoral process served to help the government. Furthermore, ahead of the repeat presidential election held in October, Raila Odinga withdrew from the electoral process entirely, claiming that it lacked any sort of integrity (Al Jazeera, 2017). Recently resigned IEBC commissioner Roselyn Akombe agreed with Odinga's assessment, proclaiming that there was no chance of a free and fair election, before fleeing to the United States (BBC News, 2017). Even IEBC Chairman Wafula Chebukati doubted the integrity of the elections he was tasked with overseeing. A narrative had therefore taken root, even among the electoral commissioners, where the integrity of the election was in doubt.

Despite calls for dialogue from multiple parts of Kenyan society, the incumbent government was not interested in reforming the electoral process whatsoever, passing a draconian election law ahead of the repeat presidential election (Dahir, 2017). The law "explicitly intended to prevent the annulment of another election on procedural grounds" (Kanyinga et al., 2019:220), nullifying Odinga's plan of forcing another election by boycotting the re-run.

The October 2017 election was more of an electoral-type event rather than a free and fair election. Uhuru Kenyatta garnered 98.3% of the vote on a low turnout, while no election was held at all in several Luo-dominated counties seen as Odinga's main strongholds. The decision not to organize elections in said counties came as a result of protests, with Odinga's call for a boycott heeded by almost all oppositional supporters (he received less than one percent of the vote, remaining on the ballot against his will). Very few oppositional supporters wanted to participate in the election, and when Odinga said "there is no election today" (Otieno, 2017), demonstrators in Siaya County, Homa Bay County, nearly all of Kisumu County, and most of Migori County ensured that no elections were held there (IEBC, 2017).

The above events resulted in a strange situation where oppositional supporters, considering themselves to have been *de facto* disenfranchised, officially disenfranchised themselves by stopping the election from taking place. Nonetheless, demonstrating youths clashed with police, who attempted to force the electoral process to go ahead. The election was postponed and later wholly canceled in those counties, and voters made clear that they would not participate in a process which, according to them, lacked legitimacy (KTN, 2017). Clearly, a narrative had taken hold among oppositional supporters that any elections held without major reforms were illegitimate.

5.3.6. International support

There was a sizable contingent of international election observers present in 2017, among whom one name in particular stood out. John Kerry, the former US Secretary of State, was chosen to co-lead the Carter Center election observation mission. Naturally, such a high-profile name drew media attention, and Kerry wasted no time in involving himself in the political discourse. Following the murder of Chris Msando, IEBC's ICT Director, he warned the opposition to not politicize the murder and called on them to abstain from criticizing the IEBC (Kelley, 2017). When NASA raised concerns about dead voters being present on the voter rolls, he brushed it off by stating that "The people who voted were alive. I didn't see any dead people walking around!" (Epstein, 2017), while simultaneously commending the tallying process.

When doubts began to rise regarding the authenticity of the results, and tension started brewing, the international media needed to look no further than Kerry when searching for a savior. Two days after the election, with no final results announced yet, Newsweek reported on the worrying possibility that Raila Odinga might not accept the outcome. The article was titled "Can John Kerry Help Stop Kenya From Slipping Into Post-Election Violence Again?", showing a not-so-subtle narrative of Western exceptionalism. Kerry was quoted in a press conference as saying "I know what it's like to lose an election. I lost by one state the presidency of the United States, and I had a lot of reasons to complain about what happened [...] But you gotta get over it and move on" (Gaffey, 2017), almost verbatim echoing the mantra of "accept and move on" which had come to be seen as the defining slogan of peaceocracy in Kenya in 2013 (Shah, 2017).

While the Carter Center's full report was more nuanced, pointing out multiple errors and flaws in the electoral process (Carter Center, 2017), its co-head wasted no time endorsing the process, repeatedly praising the conduct of the election. In one interview, Kerry proclaimed that the elections had "great legitimacy" (CNN, 2017), and at the national tallying center, he applauded the IEBC for their "extraordinary job to ensure that Kenya has a free, fair and credible poll" (Lang'at, 2017). This helped create a narrative of American meddling in Kenyan affairs, with ODM MP Ken Okoth calling Kerry's lecturing colonialist and imperialist (NTV, 2017).

6. Discussion and concluding remarks

The two-pronged nature of the research question used in this thesis requires a thorough discussion to be answered. Firstly, the empirical findings will be summarized and analyzed, showing how peaceocracy can be applied to the 2017 Kenyan elections. Secondly, there will be a segment discussing what the findings mean in a larger theoretical context, showing how the theory of peaceocracy can be strengthened and used in future research.

6.1. Discussion of the analysis of the 2017 Kenyan elections

When analyzing the 2017 election using a framework of peaceocracy, some takeaways stand out, while some are less clear. The results of the study will be discussed in the section below.

The fragility of peace in Kenya was a prevalent narrative yet again, with multiple different organizations framing the country as on the brink of chaos. Nevertheless, there are clear indications that the overbearing narrative of peace that so heavily characterized the 2013 election was not as respected this time around. The opposition embarked on a campaign which prioritized justice over peace, leading to a charged pre-election period which included skirmishes with police. However, there were only a few rare instances of communal violence following the elections, contrary to predictions. Instead, the violence that did occur was perpetrated by the police against oppositional supporters.

While police violence obviously is inexcusable, it did not come as a surprise, given that the Kenya Police Force was rated as the third worst among 127 countries surveyed by the International Police Science Association (Kisia, 2017). Furthermore, on a theoretical plane, it does not contradict some of the characteristics of peaceocracy. As discussed previously, upholding a fragile peace might include using extrajudicial and violent means. Such a process is often framed as peacekeeping, and the strength with which such a narrative can be combated is dependent on the actions of the opposition, for instance. During the 2017 Kenyan elections, the opposition contested this narrative ferociously, with

Odinga condemning an "unconstitutional and reckless deployment of troops to annihilate NASA supporters" (Macharia, 2017)

On the campaign trail, the incumbents attempted to cast Odinga as an agent of chaos. Implicitly, they cast themselves as peacekeepers as a result of Kenyatta's statements during the campaign, in the sense that they identified themselves as the candidates of law and order. Following the theories of Atieno-Odhiambo (1987), it can be said that Kenya as a state is built upon an ideology of order, in which the government uses order to assert dominance and to achieve hegemonic control. In present times, peace has become a weapon of choice in reinforcing this order, making use of hegemonic narratives to discredit any challenges to it.

It is ironic that Kenyatta accused Odinga of being the cause of the 2007 violence, given that both men on the incumbent ticket were charged with crimes against humanity, while the opposition leader was not. However, in some areas of the country, Kenyatta's credentials as a peacekeeper were seen as legitimate, as he was seen as a bulwark against the radicalism represented by a possible Odinga presidency. This indicates that the creation of a state-sponsored narrative may gain ground among the population, despite evidence indicating that said narrative may be false.

However, the view of the incumbent Kenyatta-Ruto government as peacekeepers is not something that all Kenyans prescribe to. In other areas, promises to uphold the national order only served as a way of continuing an oppressive project of nationhood that only served to enrich a select few on the backs of the rest of the country. Both the BBC (2017c), and Jubilee Secretary General Raphael Tuju acknowledged the popularity of Odinga in much of the country, while Tuju claimed that many Jubilee voters were motivated by "Railaphobia" (Tuko, 2017). This shows that while a hegemonic narrative of Odinga as violent may have taken root in certain regions, a counter-narrative hailing him a champion of democracy was equally strong in other areas.

Kenyan politics are often reduced by outside observers to a mere ethnic head count, but it is clear that there were major ideological differences among the two campaigns, with the incumbent campaign focusing on law and order, maintaining a conservative approach to issues of redistribution, while the opposition was more radical in its rhetoric. The Jubilee campaign called for maintaining the status quo, while the NASA campaign was oriented towards addressing structural issues (NASA, 2017). The difference in narratives was too stark to simply explain using a framework of incumbent versus opposition.

The emphasis of peace as a responsibility of the citizenry was moderate, but not as heavy as it had been in 2013. This messaging came from various sources, including a private sector umbrella organization, observer groups, and the President himself. However, the strongest messaging in this category came from evangelical churches, where worshippers were instructed not to question the outcome of electoral results. Previous research has suggested that proclaiming peacekeeping (and other structural issues) to be the responsibility of individuals rather than of society is a main signifier of Kenyan evangelical thought (Deacon, 2015).

Moving on to delegitimization, there were attempts by the incumbents to frame the issue of electoral integrity as illegitimate. However, unlike in 2017, there was a very strong counter-narrative provided by the opposition, making sure that it was a contentious issue throughout the campaign period, with much of the pre-election attention directed towards the issue of electoral reform. As for the issue of land redistribution, it was not as prevalent as electoral integrity, but when it surfaced on the agenda, it was quickly framed by government politicians as an issue that may disturb the peace. Land has traditionally been an inflammatory issue, and much of the political violence throughout Kenyan history has been related to disputes over land ownership, with government-issued title deeds often clashing with perceived historical narratives of ownership (Boone, 2012). It bears mentioning that the Kenyatta family is one of Kenya's largest land-owners, and therefore have a dual interest in delegitimizing the issue of land redistribution.

There were definitely signs of the curbing of oppositional participation in the 2017 elections. As Sjögren has indicated, multi-party elections in Kenya have tended to be free, but not fair (Sjögren, 2018). The opposition competed with candidates of their choice in all races, but as the Supreme Court annulled the presidential elections, it is clear that they were not conducted in a fair way. Furthermore, while not officially barred from the repeat election, it is evident that the opposition viewed the system as too stacked against them to give the process any semblance of fairness, as a result of the lack of reforms.

While the 2013 elections took place in a post-conflict scenario where rebuilding the nation was important, the 2017 elections were held in a context where fissures in the national project were brought out in the open. Many different counter-narratives have emerged historically, attempting to rewrite what is viewed as a false hegemonic account of Kenyan history. For example, in 2006, Kenyan historian Bethwel Ogot declared "Project Kenya" to be dead (Ndii, 2016), and

there has been a long tradition of calls for the Coast to secede from the rest of Kenya (Willis & Gona, 2012). Given that Kenyan politics are heavily divided by ethnicity, these counter-narratives often come in the form of collective ethnic group narratives.

Although the government attempted to delegitimize certain issues like they successfully had in 2013, the opposition heightened its rhetoric to such a degree that in 2017, the legitimacy of the state was eventually questioned. The very existence of the Kenyan project of nationhood was up for debate, and in fact, while "Project Kenya" has been a shaky endeavor since independence, there have been few instances where the legitimacy and feasibility of Kenya as a coherent nation have been as questioned as during the 2017 elections. The secession narrative had previously been an "idea that was extremely marginal", which now entered mainstream political discourse (Torchia, 2017). As it proved popular with opposition supporters, it is clear that the use of this counter-narrative was highly successful.

In the coastal case, the narrative of separatism has deep historical roots, being brought up on the agenda by Hassan Joho following the elections. Ahead of independence, its Arab population pushed for secession, while the African population wished to be included in a federal Kenya. As the nature of the Kenyan state came to be strongly centralized, calls for secession post-Kenyan independence were presented based on unity between the coastal communities. ODMs electoral success in the region in 2017 was attributed to "the depth of Coastal grievances and the fact that ODM had taken ownership of them" (Sjögren & Angerbrandt, 2019:355), showing that successfully appropriating one of the many Kenyan counter-narratives brought with it electoral success for the opposition.

Furthermore, the issue of no repeat elections being held in Nyanza has to be viewed in a larger perspective of another collective ethnic group counter-narrative. Traditionally, there has been a strong narrative among the Luo, who make up the large majority of inhabitants in the region, that they have been collectively oppressed by the Kenyan state. This has given rise to a counter-narrative, which is "shaped by a long history of how the state and successive governments have interacted with the residents of the Nyanza region, which has been perceived as an opposition stronghold since the 1960s." (Mutahi & Ruteere, 2019:259). As communities in Kenya that are seen as pro-opposition are often policed using a hostile approach, this creates an agonistic relationship, especially

seeing as the Luo community is framed as "posing a particular threat to existing political order" (ibid).

This narrative is furthered by a sense of a political "community trauma" (Asingo, 2020:619) as a result of members of the Luo political leadership being sidestepped, imprisoned and even killed during early post-independence Kenya. Furthermore, "Most of those killed and wounded in the 2017 elections were Luo [...] Given the strong ethnic patterns of support in Kenya, this fostered claims by the opposition of ethnic bias and profiling of protesters and communities for killing as well as repressive violence." (Mutahi & Ruteere, 2019:259). Yet again, this shows a shared counter-narrative that is deeply rooted in a community, shaping relations between state and citizen, as well as between state and ethnic group.

The attempt to hold elections at all costs in oppositional areas, and striking down on large-scale protests using police force, needs to be seen through a lens of elections as a political charade. As per Lynch, "most countries feel the need to hold regular multiparty elections to help legitimize themselves to domestic and international audiences" (Lynch, 2019:8), and elections may serve as creating the "state as a distinct entity and sphere of order, even as it creates the voter as the subject of that order" (Cheeseman et al., 2019:610). During one-party rule in Kenya, elections served to provide the general public with an illusion of choice. Therefore, when this process is disrupted, the illusion of democracy, which the ideology of order rests upon, is shattered. Order thereby needs to be restored through other means.

When it comes to the international community, it is obvious that their heavy focus on peace had harmful effects. Given the fierce politicization of electoral integrity during the campaign period, the actions of the international community (and John Kerry in particular) served as a tacit endorsement of the government position. Although the Kenyan domestic political climate had moved away from the strong peace narratives of 2013 - as described in the previous sections - the international community was still stuck in the past. Despite electoral integrity being one of the main issues of the campaign, international observers were quick to endorse the conduct of the election, which had the effect of silencing legitimate concerns about the electoral process.

Kenyans were understandably amused by the conundrum that the observers found themselves in after endorsing the legitimacy of an annulled election. However, they did not just merely play the role of comic relief for a worldly-wise

and weary Kenyan electorate. More damningly, the seal of approval given by the international observers was used as an argument by the IEBC's legal counsel in the Supreme Court hearing, but was disregarded by the judges. The final decision concluded the following:

"The role of observers and their interim reports were heavily relied upon by [The IEBC and Kenyatta] *as evidence that the electoral process was free and fair, the evidence before us points to the fact that hardly any of the observers interrogated the process beyond counting and tallying at the polling stations. The interim reports cannot therefore be used to authenticate the transmission and eventual declaration of results."*

(Supreme Court of Kenya, 2017).

The election observers thereby both directly, by officially approving the conduct of the election, and indirectly, by condemning attempts by NASA to politicize electoral integrity, managed to legitimize the position of the government. This occurred to such a degree that their reports were brought up as legal evidence, although subsequently thrown out. While the observer groups did not submit the reports to the Supreme Court themselves, it added further weight to the narrative that the international community prioritized stability and order over truth and justice.

To sum up the above sections, during the 2017 electoral period in Kenya, counter-narratives were heavily present throughout political discourse. While components of what had led to the establishment of conditions of peaceocracy four years prior remained, it is quite clear that the peace narrative was not quite as overbearing in 2017. The opposition was notably much less fearful of being seen as inciters of violence compared to 2013, with street protests being commonplace ahead of the elections.

The lack of inter-ethnic violence in one way serves to falsify the narrative of Odinga as a threat to peace, as the vast majority of violence was committed by government forces. However, when using Lynch's dual definition of peace, where peace is as often seen as the presence of unity and cohesion, the government could frame Odinga as an agent of chaos following the election due to a narrative of him preaching disunity by not recognizing the legitimacy of the state, despite a markedly non-violent resistance campaign. This shows that the perception of peace is as important, if not more, than "real" peace in a peaceocracy.

In light of the overturned election and subsequent lack of reforms, there were multiple incidents of oppositional politicians using separatist rhetoric. The government, meanwhile, used a heavy-handed approach to deal with any dissenting views, attempting to ban NGOs, while charging oppositional figures with treason for taking part in the swearing-in ceremony of Odinga as "People's President" (Walter, 2018), and a violent repression of protests.

While the government attempted to repeat the conditions of peaceocracy from four years prior, much had changed in the Kenyan political landscape. Kenyatta and Ruto attempted to cast themselves as peacekeepers, and they had some success in doing so, although this was not the case in all areas of the country. Furthermore, the incumbents attempted to delegitimize oppositional calls for electoral integrity, and were abetted in doing so by an international community that endorsed an electoral process found to be marred by "irregularities and illegalities" (BBC News, 2017b). Nevertheless, while the IEBC showed signs of partisanship, the judiciary proved resistant to government pressure. However, the government refused to allow electoral reforms ahead of the repeat presidential election, curbing the opposition's ability to participate.

Peacekeeping was still framed as being the responsibility of the individual citizen, especially coming from evangelical churches. However, the findings in this category were somewhat inconclusive. Furthermore, the widespread popularity among opposition supporters of radical actions, such as threats of secession, meant that "peace", in the sense of unity and cohesion built upon subjugation to the hegemonic narrative, was viewed as undesirable by large swathes of the Kenyan citizenry. As the opposition was strong enough to provide potent counter-narratives, the government had to use more repressive methods to keep a stranglehold on power.

6.2. Theoretical outlook

This thesis has conceptualized and situated the concept of peaceocracy in a more rigorous way than previously has been done, providing us with a number of theoretical takeaways that can be used to advance the theory of peaceocracy.

When asking what the theory of peaceocracy teaches us about electoral violence, we need to remember that the question is also about what electoral violence can teach us about peaceocracy. One way of answering this is by

concluding that peaceocracy is a "soft" approach, which tries to subvert democracy via soft power, i.e. by establishing narratives.

In 2017, the government attempted to use these tools, but was met by a much more combative opposition, meaning that it had to resort to a "harder" approach. This could then be used to claim that when a country moves away from quashing dissent using peace narratives, to quashing dissent using teargas and bullets, said country moves away from a peaceocracy and into a more openly authoritarian state. However, it would be premature to proclaim this as a certainty, since the preservation of peace can occur through violent means (Branch, 2014). Peaceocracy shows that despite the presence of a strong peace narrative keeping violence levels low among the general public, state-led violence can still occur in the name of maintaining peace and order. This does not contradict the narrative of peace whatsoever. Instead, it reinforces the view that peace can be violent in itself (ibid).

Since incumbency is a key factor of peaceocracy, the phenomenon is more likely to occur in a country like Kenya. Historically, the combination of first-past-the-post elections (according to Höglund (2009) notable for their heightened risk of violence) and a strongly centralized state, along with neopatrimonial politics (both, according to Söderberg Kovacs & Bjarnesen (2018), also notable for their heightened risk of violence), has led to a "winner-takes-all" approach to politics where incumbents attempt to cling to power at all costs. Despite the new constitution lessening this somewhat, the 2017 election arguably showed that constitutional reforms alone are not sufficient when attempting to overcome these sentiments (Kanyinga et al., 2019). This can help us in conceptualizing what positive peace could look like in the Kenyan context, by showing that the structural problems are too large to be overcome by mere constitutional reform.

Peaceocracy refers to how "everyday understandings of peace often combine (or even replace) peace as the absence of violence - be it direct or structural violence - with the idea of peace as the presence of unity and cohesion" (Lynch, 2019:3-4). While never mentioning the concept of everyday peace as presented by Mac Ginty, it is clear that this understanding of peace can be seen as an offshoot of his theory, as it is a definition of peace that can be seen as a coping mechanism in a post-conflict scenario, built upon a bottom-up, context-specific approach. Thereby, the theory of peaceocracy can be developed by more closely tying this form of peace to Mac Ginty's concept. By situating it in

the field of peace research in this manner, a stronger theoretical foundation is provided when using peaceocracy to study other future cases.

Given the findings, it is clear that in the case of Kenya, peaceocracy was in some ways defeated through contesting hegemonic narratives, while using collective counter-narratives in political rhetoric. However, this does not mean that we can deduce that such an approach is universally viable. Firstly, the oppositional fightback against peace narratives instead led to a more directly repressive approach from the government. Secondly, the unique conditions of Kenya, a fragmented country with several different collective counter-narratives and a strong opposition willing to use these in political discourse, might not be replicable in any other context. After all, what had worked in Kenya in 2013 was not as successful in 2017. Nevertheless, despite a lack of generalizable results, this study has further developed the theory of peaceocracy.

6.3. Concluding remarks

This study set out to answer a research question, formulated as "*How can we apply the concept of peaceocracy to the 2017 Kenyan elections, and what does the theory of peaceocracy teach us about electoral violence?*". The findings have been presented in the above sections, and are briefly summarized below.

In conclusion, while the incumbents attempted to use peace narratives in order to defeat the opposition, the success in establishing counter-narratives and combativeness of the opposition meant that despite some elements of peaceocracy being present, the government did not fully succeed in establishing one. As per Lynch, a peaceocracy "is deemed to be effective when counter-narratives are in fact marginalized and the political space is substantively closed" (Lynch, 2019:12). While the political space undoubtedly closed off following government repression, counter-narratives were certainly not marginalized in Kenyan political discourse in 2017, meaning the conditions of a peaceocracy can only be said to have been partially met, at most.

Following the study, it can be concluded that many elements of peaceocracy were present during the 2017 elections, but that the strength of oppositional counter-narratives greatly reduced the effectiveness of a hegemonic peace narrative.

Therefore, the conditions for a peaceocracy were not met in their entirety. Furthermore, this thesis has allowed us to situate peaceocracy in a more thorough manner, and while the results are not particularly generalizable, the study has still presented a thorough explanation of Kenya in 2017. By looking at our case, it can be deduced that a peaceocracy may be defeated through establishing counter-narratives, but that this could lead to more repressive methods being used instead. Along with a contextualization and development of the theory of peaceocracy, it can be concluded that this study has successfully contributed to the field of research.

6.4. Future research

At the time of writing, Kenya is in the middle of another electoral campaign, with the 2022 elections less than three months away. As of now, the term-limited Uhuru Kenyatta has endorsed his former rival-turned-handshake partner Raila Odinga in a bid to outmaneuver William Ruto. While it is too early to analyze the result of the 2022 elections yet, it may be relevant for future research to study them through a lens of peaceocracy, in order to see if and how peace messaging will be utilized during the 2022 campaigns.

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