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No more blood must run: An analysis of ethnic violence in the Second Congo Conflict

Cindil Redick
Eastern Michigan University

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No more blood must run: An analysis of ethnic violence in the Second Congo Conflict

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NO MORE BLOOD MUST RUN:
AN ANALYSIS OF ETHNIC VIOLENCE IN THE SECOND CONGO CONFLICT

By

Cindil Redick

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Supervising Instructor (Print Name and have signed)

Honors Advisor (Print Name and have signed)

Department Head (Print Name and have signed)

Honors Director (Print Name and have signed)

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Introduction:

Since gaining independence in 1960, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has been in a state of turbulence. There have been three different dictatorships and the DR Congo is still in the midst of an extremely bloody conflict in the Eastern provinces. Life in the DRC is dramatically unstable. Since the beginning of the Second Congo Conflict in August 1998 more than 5.4 million people have died, with a monthly death count at 45,000¹. Additionally, the Congolese are constantly faced with starvation and malnutrition, disease, sexual violence, lack of sanitation and numerous other social problems. The conflict has reached epic heights and has been dubbed the worst humanitarian crisis of our times. But how come this history of violence has been sustained? Why has the DR Congo been unable to maintain political stability? And, most importantly, why hasn't the international community made a better and more proactive response to the political and humanitarian situation in the DRC?

Researchers, humanitarians and the Congolese people have been asking these questions for the past 11 years. However, the answer itself is not simple. There are many factors that are considered influential to the sustained war and violence in the DR Congo, and why political stability has been nearly impossible to achieve. The purpose of this paper is to explore a theory about the causes and consequences of continuous conflict and examine them in relation to the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The ethnic and political dimensions of the conflict will be inspected, as well as the political implications of ethnic violence in the constant fighting in the Eastern Provinces in the DRC.

¹ "Conflict History: DR Congo." International Crisis Group: Working to Prevent Conflict Worldwide. July 2008. Web. 20 Oct. 2008.
<http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?action=conflict_search&l=1&t=1&c_country=37>

Overview of the Situation in the DR Congo:

July 1998 marked a fateful event: this is the month that President Laurent Kabila demanded a mass exodus of all foreign troops from the Democratic Republic of the Congo.² This decree led to the August 1998 invasion of the DRC by Rwandan and Ugandan troops, which was the catalyst to the current wave of violence in DR Congo. Since the 1998 invasion, the people of the DRC have been plagued by constant infighting, a lack of access to basic resources such as water and healthcare, and an unending path of political instability. To pinpoint the forced exiting of foreign troops from the DR Congo as the sole reason for the current conflict is inaccurate however. In order to have a better understanding of the conflict, it is important to understand the conflict history of the DRC.

Ever since colonization in 1908, the DRC has been shaken with conflict. King Leopold ruled as a money hungry sovereign, who used the guise of a humanitarian mission in the Congo Free State (CFS) to exploit the people and land for resources. He used a system called “indirect rule” to govern the CFS; this is a system where parts of the traditional political structure are incorporated into the colonial framework, and this was done so that King Leopold II did not have to be physically present to rule the Congo, he had people on the ground to do it for him. This was very fruitful for his money plundering schemes, and also allowed Leopold to kill hundreds of thousands of natives without having to see the effects. This brutal regime was immediately followed by the instatement of Belgian colonial rule. The Belgians continued to operate with a system of indirect rule, but they drastically improved the living and social conditions in the CFS.

² "Congo Civil War." Global Security. 17 Dec. 2006. Web. 04 Dec. 2008.
<<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/congo.htm>>.

However, the political and social repression was as horrible as it had been under Leopold and this fueled many small conflicts that eventually built up to form a collective struggle for independence.

When DR Congo was declared independent by Belgium in 1960 there was already political tension in the air. Once the people of the DRC were finally able to have political control of their country, they elected Joseph Kasavubu as President and Patrice Lumumba as their prime minister on January 17th, 1961.³ Between 1961 and 1965, DRC was consumed by intense political fighting caused by ethnoregional tensions between the different political and ethnic groups. This constant political combat between different factions in Congolese society and the military led to the overthrow of the Kasavubu government by Colonel Joseph Desire Mobutu.⁴ Mobutu (who later changed his name to Mobutu Sese Seko) was aided in his coup d'etat by the United States and Europe. The United States strongly disliked Lumumba due to the fact that he did not hold a clear anti-communist position; so they worked to replace him with Mobutu, someone who they thought would actually work to fight off communism and Soviet influence in Africa.⁵

Mobutu's 32 year reign of power was defined by corruption and political repression. Mobutu gained power in 1965 and was viewed as a genuine political figure, but all of that drastically deteriorated when his preference for a unitary state became a reality in 1967 with the establishment of the political party MPR (Popular Movement of

³ Akerman, David. "Who Killed Lumumba?" Online Article. British Broadcasting Company News. BBC News, 21 Oct. 2000. Web. 7 June 2009.
<<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/correspondent/974745.stm>>.

⁴ McCalphin, Jermaine O. "Historicity of a Crisis." *The African Stakes of the Congo War*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002. 33-50. P.39

⁵ Shah, Anup. "The Democratic Republic of the Congo." *Global Issues*. 27 Mar. 2008. Web. 10 Nov. 2008.
<<http://www.globalissues.org/article/87/the-democratic-republic-of-congo>>

the Revolution).⁶ Under this single political party Mobutu brought all grassroots and social society organizations (including churches) under party control and also banned the creation/action of any other political party. Under the umbrella of creating a singular Congolese state Mobutu also changed the name of the Congo from the Congo Free State to Zaire.

Mobutu's actions were welcomed at first, but once the nature of Mobutu's rule deteriorated into a kleptocracy the people of Zaire grew restless. Michael Schatzberg summarizes the nature of Mobutu's rule quite well: "as his regime's legitimacy evaporated, Mobutu ruled increasingly through coercion and fear." Mobutu's list of offenses against the Congolese is quite extensive, but it includes mineral exploitation, co-opting rivals and enriching himself (and his allies) through extensive patronage and institutionalized corruption.⁷ Mobutu enacted a number of political and economic policies that were extremely harmful to the Congo. The largest failure was the "Zairianization", or nationalization, of the economy in 1973. This core of this policy was the local take-over of business owned by foreign nationals.⁸ These radical economic policies plunged the Zairian economy into debt and forced Mobutu to go to the U.S., Belgium and other Western allies for aid. This had serious implications for Zaire's neighbors and regional partners. Zaire was a member of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the member countries own economic interests were seriously at risk due to Mobutu's policies.⁹

⁶ Schatzberg, Mark. "Beyond Mobutu: Kabila and the Congo." *Journal of Democracy* 8.4 (1997): 70-85. Academic OneFile. Web. 25 July 2009. <<http://find.galegroup.com>>. p.74

⁷ "Conflict History: DR Congo"

⁸ Nzongola-Ntalaja, Georges. *The Congo: From Leopold to Kabila - A People's History*. London: Zed Books, 2002. p.149

⁹ Laremont, Ricardo. "Civil War, Peacekeeping and the Great Lakes Region." *Causes of War and Consequences of Peacekeeping in Africa*. New York: Heinemann, 2001. p.93

In addition to all of this, after the 1994 Rwandan Genocide Mobutu also began a campaign of ethnic cleansing to rid the DRC of the Tutsi minority.¹⁰ It is speculated that after the genocide thousands of Hutu rebels and Tutsis fled into the DRC. This influx of people exacerbated ethnic tensions in the region, and Mobutu saw genocide as his final opportunity to gain some legitimacy. So, Mobutu armed different ethnic groups in the eastern provinces of the DRC (primarily Hunde and Nyanga peoples) and allowed them to feed their emotions by encouraging the extermination of the Banyaruanda (an ethnic group made up of Hutus, Tutsis and Twa.)

This campaign was the beginning of the end for Mobutu. Mobutu was finally ousted in May 1997 in a rebellion led by General Laurent Kabila. Kabila was able to engage in such a rebellion due to the fact that he had much support from the Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Congo-Zaire (ADFL - a political group of Congolese who wanted Mobutu overthrown), and lots of state sponsored support from Angola, Burundi, Eritrea, Rwanda and Uganda. Kabila received so much state support due to the fact that the leaders of these countries wanted to see Mobutu removed from power. Some of these alliances would prove to be problematic to Kabila during his time as head of state in 1997-1998.

Very early into his time ruling the Democratic Republic of the Congo (what Kabila renamed Zaire), Kabila was accused by some rebel groups (comprised of Congolese soldiers, people of the Banyamulenge tribe, and Rwandan, Ugandan and Burundian soldiers) of government mismanagement and corruption.¹¹ This division of the party and the military eventually led Kabila to his July 1998 decree. This decision was, in

¹⁰ Nzongola-Ntalaja, Georges. "Violation of Democratic Rights in Zaire." Issue: A Journal of Opinion 22.2 (1994): 9-11. JSTOR. Web. 28 July 2009. <http://www.jstor.org> p.10

¹¹ Shah, p.5

Kabila's eyes, a desperate attempt to rid the DRC of perceived economic and politically destabilizing forces. The Rwandan, Ugandan and Burundian soldiers who so forcefully backed Kabila had become involved with the lucrative business of resource exploitation in DR Congo. Their interests had shifted from sustaining Kabila's regime to being able to support themselves; and it is no surprise since Kabila had alienated them by deciding not to integrate the external forces into the Congolese military.¹² Another important issue, that was a legitimate concern to Kabila, was the fact that Rwandan and Ugandan soldiers and rebels had fled into the Democratic Republic of the Congo at the end of the 1994 Rwandan Genocide in an attempt to escape international prosecution for the crimes committed. These rebel forces were involved in stirring up ethnic tensions in the Eastern Region of the DRC.

These factors helped influence the August 1998 invasion of the Democratic Republic of the Congo by Rwandan and Ugandan troops. Rwanda and Uganda had actively supported Kabila throughout his rebellion against Mobutu. However, once Kabila was in office he failed to pay proper homage to his external supporters. He refused to integrate the Rwandan and Ugandan soldiers into the Congolese military and he failed to take a firm stance on the issue of Banyamulenge (Congolese Tutsis) nationality. So it became immediately apparent that Kabila was turning out to be another Mobutu.¹³ All of these factors influenced Kabila's decision to force all Rwandans and Ugandans out of government positions in the DRC. This act sparked the rebellion against President Laurent Kabila.

¹² Afoaku, Osita. "Congo's Rebels: Their Origins, Motivations, and Strategies." *The African Stakes of the Congo War*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002. p.116

¹³ Afoaku, p.109

The rebel movement against Kabila was made up of a number of different groups. The primary instigators of the rebellion were the Rwandan and Ugandan governments. But in addition to these state actors, there was also a strong grassroots movement against Kabila as well. Included in this movement were groups of Congolese Tutsi rebels and Congolese soldiers, all of whom were receiving funding and support from Rwanda.¹⁴ The outburst of violent conflict led Kabila to the decision to call upon Angola, Zimbabwe and Namibia for assistance; and they continued to support the Congolese government until the assassination of Kabila in January of 2001.¹⁵ The rebel movement against Kabila and the Congolese army physically had divided the Congo into three territories, and all of them had reached military deadlock in early 1999.

This deadlock provided an opportunity for the peace process to begin since the involved parties have severely limited options in regards to actions they could take. Therefore, a ceasefire was proposed and eventually signed in July 1999 in Lusaka, Zambia. The Lusaka Peace Accord was signed by six of the parties involved: The Democratic Republic of the Congo, Zimbabwe, Angola, Namibia, Uganda, and Rwanda. The agreement called for “a cease-fire, the deployment of a UN peacekeeping operation (MONUC), the withdrawal of foreign troops, and the launching of an "Inter-Congolese Dialogue" to form a transitional government leading to elections.”¹⁶

Unfortunately, the DRC and other signatories failed to uphold the terms of the peace accord because none of the signatories were able to implement its provisions.¹⁷ This led to the further deterioration of the political situation in the DR Congo, which

¹⁴ “Conflict History: DR congo”

¹⁵ Shah, p. 4

¹⁶ “Congo War”

¹⁷ “Congo War”

came to an apex on January 16, 2001 when Rashidi Kasereka, one of Kabila's bodyguards, assassinated President Laurent Kabila. After Laurent Kabila's assassination, his son Joseph Kabila was instated as President. This action fueled further tension amongst the parties involved.

Another attempt at peace talks was made in early 2002, but it resulted in a widespread decision that the Lusaka Agreement was dead because none of the parties involved could seem to uphold its principles.¹⁸ Another peace agreement to end the conflict was drafted in June 2002 in Pretoria, South Africa. "Congolese belligerents and political groups" signed this agreement, and they all agreed to work on creating a new transitional government in which the presidential powers were shared between the president and four vice-presidents.¹⁹ A new constitution was instated in December of 2005 and the first round of elections was held on July 30th, 2006. This election proved to be politically problematic due to the fact that neither Joseph Kabila nor the MLC (Movement for the Liberation of Congo) party leader Jean-Pierre Bemba took a majority of the votes.²⁰ After a second round of votes, Kabila won the Presidency with 58% of the vote.

The new Kabila regime faced numerous challenges: lack of infrastructure and public services, poorly organized military, political corruption, etc. Shortly after this spurt of election violence, the security situation escalated to new heights and things have since remained destabilized, which has had a negative effect on the Congolese political system. Another attempt at peace was made in late 2007/early 2008 with the signing of the Nairobi Agreement and the Goma "Actes d'Engagement". Unfortunately, none of the

¹⁸ "Democratic Republic of the Congo"

¹⁹ "Conflict History: DR Congo"

²⁰ "Conflict History: DR Congo"

rebel groups involved have been willing to disengage for long enough for the agreements to take effect. External rebel groups primarily control the Eastern provinces of the DRC, and this has resulted in the mass displacement of Congolese peoples. There are still multiple state actors involved, but a majority of the violence occurring now in the DRC is fueled by Rwanda-Congo tensions.

The current situation in the DRC has not improved dramatically since the beginning of the Second Congo War in 1998. In fact, many would argue that the situation has gotten worse. As recently as February 2009 there has been another attempt at a ceasefire agreement between the Congo and the National Congress for the Defense of the People (CNDP – the main rebel party instigating fighting in Eastern DRC currently). The CNDP agreed to end its insurgency, become a political party and integrate its soldiers into the national military and police force.²¹ Negotiations have officially ended, but the integration process has been mucky at best. The violence in Eastern DRC continues as political figures and the international community attempt to implement a solution that will have the best outcome for everyone.

Literature Review:

There are many dimensions to the Second Congo Conflict. Resource exploitation, corrupt elites and colonization all play a part in the current condition in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. But is the situation in the DR Congo completely reducible to these three explanations? It is obvious that there is another underlying factor that has played a pivotal role in the violent conflict: ethnic tensions. Much of the literature on the conflict in the DRC overlooks this important aspect of Congolese history. This small gap

²¹ "Conflict in Congo." International Crisis Group, 16 June 2009. Web. 8 Oct. 2008. <<http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=2829>>

leads one to wonder about the influence and importance of ethnic rivalries in the Second Congo Crisis.

Scholars have offered multiple explanations for the ongoing conflict in the Congo. The literature presented will shed light on the extremely complex relationships that underlie the animosities that have catalyzed the current war. Following a brief analysis of the war there will be an overview of theoretical literature on ethnic conflict and internal conflict. The paper will consider general theories that offer additional explanations. Specifically, it will examine Stuart Kaufman's theory of symbolic politics of ethnic war and how it applies to the Second Congo Conflict.

One of the most popular arguments about conflict in Africa is that corrupt elites cause it. Ricardo Laremont's analysis of the Second Congo Conflict focuses on the influence of political elites, but it goes a bit further to examine the increased militarization in the DRC and the character of the influence of regional actors. Laremont states that while there are numerous factors that contributed to the outbreak of the conflict, there are three major events that directly led to it: the disintegration of the Mobutu regime, the Genocide in Rwanda and Kabila's rise to power. The most recent (and arguably detrimental) was Kabila's rise to power in the mid-nineties. His acquisition of the presidency led to the mass exodus of all foreign troops out of DRC and the instigation of a massive regional conflict.²²

In addition to these three events, there are also three primary actors that Laremont argues have caused the most devastation: Kabila's former Tutsi associates in the ADFL, former Mobutu allies seeking to regain state power and non-Tutsi intellectuals, and former ADFL officers who felt that Kabila had become the next

²² Laremont, p.92

Mobutu. While Laremont claims that these three are the most “important” actors, it is important to acknowledge that part of the uniqueness about the conflict in the DRC is that there are numerous actors, most of which are not native to the DRC. Most of the parties involved in the Second Congo War are either state actors or rebel groups. The primary state actors involved are the United States, France, Rwanda, Uganda, Angola, Chad, Burundi, Namibia and Zimbabwe.²³ The number of rebel groups involved is extensive, but most are former political parties or factions of the DRC and Rwandan militaries.²⁴ All of these states have conflicting interests within the region and have exacerbated already tense relations.

McCalphin explains the conflict as largely the result of colonialism and secondarily as an outcome of the Cold War, struggle for independence and the character of Mobutu’s regime. In regards to the first event, the colonization of the DRC by King Leopold had a severe impact on the Congolese people. There was already tension amidst the Congolese population over resources and King Leopold exploited these tense relationships in order to increase his profits from selling resources.²⁵ Due to the increased violence over resource distribution, Belgium divided the Congo into six provinces, some of which were given more autonomy than others. This allocation of land and independence further exacerbated tensions within the CFS and these tensions flowed over into the era of independence.²⁶

DRC’s independence was fairly problematic and poorly executed. Belgium had originally decided to give the CFS independence in 1985, but due to mass protest by the

²³ Laremont, p.94

²⁴ Laremont, p. 97

²⁵ McCalphin, p.35

²⁶ McCalphin, p.36

Congolese, it was declared independent in 1960.²⁷ McCalphin states that Congo was supposed to be governed using the methodology of the European political institutions. Under this guise, the Belgian government encouraged the formation of several political parties: The National Congolese Movement (MNC – led by Patrice Lumumba), The Alliance of Bakongo (ABAKO - led by Joseph Kasavubu) and the National Progressive Party (PNP- led by Paul Boyla). All of these parties represented different regions and peoples in the Congo (the only thing they had in common was achieving liberation from the colonizers.) However, despite the similar goal of decolonization, the Congo was quickly torn apart upon independence.

Within the first week of Congo's independence, the country was held hostage by the army because they had discovered that military structure and operations would remain as they had under colonial rule. Following the military mutiny, all Belgians were evicted from the Congo and a political struggle began between the country's newly elected President Kasavubu and the Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba.²⁸ From 1960 to about 1964 Congo was under intense political combat. This was a result of a clashing of Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba's and President Joseph Kasavubu's political ideologies. Political animosities heightened when Prime Minister Lumumba went to the Soviet Union for aid when the United Nations refused to give any.²⁹ This action resulted in the dismissal of Patrice Lumumba and created a major faction in Congolese political parties. This battle led to the 1965 coup where Mobutu overthrew the government that was instated during independence.

²⁷ McCalphin, p.36

²⁸ McCalphin, p.39

²⁹ McCalphin, p.39

The November coup marked the beginning of the third stage in Congo's history: Mobutu's regime. Mobutu faced many issues early in his regime, the main one being a deficit of legitimacy, which was mostly due to the abundance of political instability in the DRC.³⁰ Mobutu did not do very much to portray a legitimate government, and this was worsened by the tensions of the Cold War and the rising ethnic tensions within Zaire (what Mobutu had renamed the CFS) between the Banyarwanda ("Congolese Tutsis") and the Hutus.³¹ All of these factors gave way to the eventual collapse of Mobutu's regime and the current state of the Congo.

Osita Afoaku goes beyond the ideas presented in the pieces by Laremont and McCalphin and examines the motivations and problems within the rebel movement throughout the conflict. While the motivations of the actors involved are somewhat hard to discern, the identity of those involved is very clear. There was much opposition to Kabila's regime, due to the fact that he failed to integrate Rwandan and Ugandan soldiers into the Congolese military; and his dismissal of all Rwandans from government service served as the catalyst for invasion of the DRC by both Rwandan and Ugandan troops. The attack was far from a surprise; however, Rwanda and Uganda had a large advantage over Kabila's troops for a number of reasons. According to Afoaku the DRC's military had a large number of members that were opposed to Kabila's decree and his rule in general. Because of the level of dissent in the military Kabila lost a number of members to local rebel groups that supported the Rwandan and Ugandan militaries.³² By having support of local rebel armies, Uganda and Rwanda appeared to have a serious

³⁰ McCalphin, p. 41

³¹ McCalphin, p.45

³² Afoaku, p.114

advantage over DRC. However, Kabila found much support from Angola, Zimbabwe, Chad and Namibia.³³

Despite having regional allies, Kabila still faced a daunting opposition. The rebel groups that joined the war in the DRC (predominantly from within the DRC, but some were also from Rwanda and Uganda) had organized themselves in order to dismantle Kabila's regime.³⁴ The rebel groups had several objectives for state and regional stability; these included (but were not limited to) building a united democratic state, facilitating reconciliation, grassroots organization, regional and sub-regional integration, and increased solidarity.³⁵ Afoaku points out that while the rebels had extremely ambitious goals, unfortunately infighting and internal division plagued them. This made a successful movement extremely difficult. One of the major dividing factors that has driven the rebel groups apart is the issue of how to finance the war. Afoaku states that one of the major methods of financing the war is local resources exploitation by the rebel leaders. The vibrant abuse of resources led to the development of a second war (completely internal to the rebel system). The constant fighting over resources led to the deterioration of the rebel movement and has exacerbated the social and political conditions in the DRC.

Thus, current explanations for the Second Congo Conflict emphasize either the actions of political elites, the long-term consequences of colonialism, or regional militarization and the character of rebel movements." While the authors raise many good points, their work should serve as nothing more than a starting point for examining the roots and reasons behind the conflict. All of the explanations presented above address

³³ Afoaku, p.111

³⁴ Afoaku, p. 114

³⁵ Afoaku, p. 117

that there are other factors that are influential to the conflict, but they tend to favor one specific explanation for violence over all of the others. With a conflict as dense as the Second Congo Conflict, it is important to acknowledge the ethnic component to the conflict. Additionally, one must go further than just looking at the ethnic factor and examine the nature of the ethnic violence taking place and how it has influenced the situation in the DRC. A more extensive theory on the nature of ethnic conflict is necessary for understanding the current situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Stuart Kaufman offers such a theoretical framework in his book *Modern Hatreds: The Symbolic Politics of Ethnic War*. He argues that ethnic conflict is a modern phenomenon that is caused by the use of myths about ethnicity and ethnic hatreds. Kaufman states that there are three main explanations for the causes of ethnic conflict: ancient hatreds, manipulative leaders and economic rivalry. There are two main elements to Kaufman's argument: first, that the necessary preconditions for ethnic war are ethnic myths and fears and the opportunity to act on them politically; second, that ethnic war only occurs when the politics of ethnic symbolism goes to the extreme.

In order to explain the process by which ethnic conflict comes to fruition, Kaufman uses what he calls the "symbolic theory of ethnic politics". He defines the symbolic theory of politics as a theory in which political choice is viewed as individual emotional expression and the main focus of politics is about manipulating people's emotions with the use of symbols (an "emotionally charged" shorthand reference to a myth). He argues that this is best way to analyze ethnic conflict because it utilizes some of the most important factors of psychological theories of ethnicity. Kaufman believes

that by combining these two theories he can comprehensively explain the phenomenon of ethnic war and address all of the issues that the rationalist and psychological theories fail to explain on their own.

Kaufman argues that there are three necessary preconditions for ethnic war: myths justifying ethnic hostility, ethnic fears, and the opportunity to mobilize and fight. All of these factors are absolutely necessary for the formation and accession of mass hostility, chauvinistic mobilization, and a security dilemma (which do not have to occur in any particular order), which inevitably result in ethnic war.³⁶ According to Kaufman, mass hostility is the normalization of relating to other groups in society as if they are your enemy. In this context, Kaufman is referring to the relations of different ethnic groups. Chauvinistic mobilization refers to organizing people around the notion that they are superior than other groups in society; and a security dilemma is a situation that arises out of “strong evidence of the other side’s hostility, usually matched by open hostility on one’s own side.”³⁷ Security dilemmas can arise out of politically motivated acts such as chauvinistic policies.

It is argued that the creation of an ethnic conflict requires all of these factors and situations to work in conjunction with each other in an atmosphere of positive feedback; where all of the causes positively reinforce each other in an “escalating spiral of violence.”³⁸ This is created in one of two types of situations: mass-led violence or elite-led violence. Kaufman argues that ethnic conflict can be boiled down to these two types of circumstances. Kaufman’s theory is an excellent lens through which we can examine

³⁶ Kaufman, p. 34

³⁷ Kaufman, p.47

³⁸ Kaufman, p.34

the conflict in the DRC because it combines all of the individual factors that are discussed above into a comprehensive explanation.

A comprehensive analysis of the conflict is definitely in order, but has yet to be produced. The explanations above act as parts of an analysis, but there needs to be an examination through a larger theoretical context. In this paper, I will be exploring one main idea: that the prolonged conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is a result of the manipulation of certain ethnic groups' myth-symbol complex by political elites. By using Kaufman's theory of symbolic politics of ethnic war, it will be shown that the ethnic manipulation of certain peoples in the DRC has aided in the creation of the Second Congo Conflict. Because there is a large ethnic component to this conflict, it will also be argued that there needs to be an alternative policy for peace used in the DR Congo.

Analysis of the Conflict:

As stated earlier, the purpose of this paper is to explore Kaufman's theory of symbolic politics of ethnic war and apply it to the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It is hypothesized that if there were prolonged manipulation of ethnic group's myth-symbol complexes, then ethnic conflict would result. Furthermore, if there is an ethnically fueled conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, then there should be a conflict resolution policy that addresses the ethnic dimensions of the conflict. In order to accomplish this the ethnic and political dimensions of the conflict will be inspected, as well as the political implications of the current peacemaking process that is occurring in the Eastern Provinces in the DRC.

Methods of testing Kaufman's Theory of Symbolic Politics –

In order to adequately measure manipulation of certain ethnic groups by political elites I plan on researching the ethnic manipulation that occurred during Belgian colonialism in the Congo and also the motives and actions of specific political leaders during the three conflicts that have occurred in post-independence DRC. In order to fulfill the first research goal I plan on examining the Belgian colonization of Congo and the methods of ethnic manipulation that the Belgians used in order to gain control and govern the Congo. Furthermore, I will explore and the ethnic and historical myths they may have created or taken advantage of in order to subordinate the Congolese. To address the second portion of the first hypothesis, I will look at primary sources such as interviews by the leaders of different factions of ethnic movements, and secondary sources such as newspaper articles, journal articles and other journalistic events that may help me examine and determine the motivations of the political elites.

Conceptual Definitions -

In order to perform a detailed investigation of the conflict in the DRC it is important to establish the concepts that will be used. In regards to the first hypothesis, I will seek to define “ethnic conflict”, “ethnic group”, “myth”, “symbol” and “myth-symbol complex”. According to Kaufman, an “ethnic conflict” is a war where the key issues at stake are ethnic markers (language, religion, ethnic status) and is characterized by armed combat between at least two belligerent sides in which at least 1,000 people are killed. If we accept this definition of “ethnic conflict” then the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo can be considered an ethnic conflict because the conflict was

catalyzed by the tensions between the native Congolese and the Rwandans and Ugandans who had fled to the DRC to avoid being apprehended for the Rwandan Genocide.³⁹

In regards to the second term, “ethnic group” I will again be using Kaufman’s notion of this concept. Kaufman defines “ethnic group” as “A group sharing 5 key traits: group name, believed common descent, common historical memories, elements of a shared culture and attachment to a specific territory; all of these traits are tied together by a ‘myth-symbol complex’.”⁴⁰ By accepting this definition, I acknowledge that all of the major ethnic actors involved have these traits in common. While the evidence is not necessarily obvious, it is apparent that the ethnic actors involved (Congolese, Rwandans and Ugandans) have these shared elements because of how they are attached to the territory, have shared cultural experiences, a common group name and a believed common descent.⁴¹

I will also be using Kaufman’s definition of “myth”, “symbol” and “myth-symbol complex”. Kaufman uses Murray Edelman’s definition of myth, which he defines as “a belief held in common by a large group of people that gives events and actions a particular meaning.”⁴² This definition is fairly ambiguous, but the point is to understand what a specific belief (such as ethnoregionalism – the idea that a specific ethnic group owns or belongs on a certain section of land) or event means to a group of people. Kaufman defines a symbol as “an emotionally charged shorthand reference to a myth.”⁴³ What Kaufman means by a “shorthand reference” is that the myths that surround a

³⁹ “Conflict History: DR Congo”

⁴⁰ Kaufman, p.17

⁴¹ For further evidence and explanation on this claim see Mamdi (“African States, Citizenship and War: A Case Study”), Herskovits (“Peoples and Cultures of Sub-Saharan Africa”), and Edgerton (*The Troubled Heart of Africa*)

⁴² Kaufman, p.16

⁴³ Kaufman, p.16

specific event are imbedded in references to a certain event, such as a war. So the war becomes a “shorthand reference” to the myths that are held by the ethnic group in question.

Lastly, Kaufman defines his idea of a myth-symbol complex as “the web of myths and related symbols that collectively define what it means to be a certain ethnicity.”⁴⁴

The myth-symbol complex is crucial to the application of Kaufman’s theory because the myth-symbol complex is used to justify hostilities against another group of people. One important thing to note about Kaufman’s conception of the myth-symbol complex is that not every ethnic group has to have a well-defined myth-symbol complex. In order for there to be ethnic violence there only needs to be one group with a moderately well defined myth-symbol complex.

The Establishment of Ethnic Myths

Examining how contemporary ethnic hostilities surfaced and were reinforced in Congolese society is crucial to the application of Kaufman’s theory of symbolic politics to the Second Congo Conflict. Historically, the DR Congo was made up of a number of different Bantu speaking kingdoms. The Congo was made up of over 250 different ethnic groups; all of which were culturally and linguistically related.⁴⁵ One other important fact to note about the 250 ethnic groups that comprise the Congo territory is that many of these ethnic groups straddle “state” boundaries. The Kongo can also be found in Angola; the Hutu, Tutsi and Twa can be found in Rwanda and Burundi; the Bemba can also be found in Zambia; and the Lunda tribe can be found in Zambia and Angola.⁴⁶ These

⁴⁴ Kaufman, p.30

⁴⁵ Nzongola-Ntalaja, Georges. *The Congo: From Leopold to Kabila - A People's History*. London: Zed Books, 2002. p. 14

⁴⁶ Nzongola-Ntalaja, p. 14

interstate relationships are vital to understanding the motivations of some of the rebel groups in the conflict. The historical roots of the Hutus and Tutsi in the DRC, Rwanda and Burundi can be viewed as influential to the struggle over resources and the infighting in the Eastern provinces of the DR Congo.

Although there are numerous ethnic groups in the Congo, there were only a few kingdoms that made up the Congo territory. The largest empire in pre-colonial Congo was the Kingdom of Kongo. In addition to this, there was the Luba Kingdom, the Lunda Kingdom of Mwata, the Kuba Kingdom of the Shonga people, and the Lunda Kingdom of Nwata Kazembe.⁴⁷ Most of these kingdoms had good relations and were fairly wealthy. Inter-kingdom relations began to change when Portuguese and Arab slave traders came over to Africa. The Portuguese slave traders were primarily trading in Western Congo, and the Arab slave traders were located in Eastern Congo where they found an abundance of ivory.

Once King Leopold became the sovereign over the “Congo Free State” he immediately showed preference to any indigenous group who was receptive to his rule (this included the Bangala and Baluba peoples.) Additionally, King Leopold and his Belgian cohorts who were working on the ground had developed a preference for the peoples of Northern Congo. The various tribal preferences that Leopold and other Belgians held at the time are vital to understanding how Leopold set up the Congo Free State for further ethnic exploitation. It is important to note that there is no direct evidence of Leopold manipulating or pitting other ethnic groups against each other. He was so concerned about putting money in his own pocket that he exploited everyone he could.

⁴⁷ ““Race and Ethnicity in Precolonial African Belgian Colonies”.” Encyclopedia Britannica. 11th ed. Jrank.org. Web. 01 Aug. 2009. <<http://encyclopedia.jrank.org/articles/pages/5918/Africa-Belgian-Colonies.html>>

Ethnic tensions were not really infused or fueled until the Belgian government took the Congo Free State away from Leopold II and instated it as a Belgian Colony in 1910.

The Belgian Colonizers immediately installed an apartheid type of system upon gaining control of the Congo. There were two systems of classification; one was based upon ethnicity (whites and natives) the other (which applied only to the Africans) was based upon nationality (native and non-native).⁴⁸ It is the former of these two classifications that has proved to be the most problematic in Congolese society. The Native/Non-Native distinction helped the Belgians to initiate a system of divided rule, where they favored certain ethnic groups over others. There are several different ethnic groups that the Belgians manipulated under this form of rule, but the most important to the case of the Second Congo Crisis is the manipulation of the Banyamulenge (native Tutsis who came over to the Congo right before King Leopold II colonized it.)⁴⁹ The Banyamulenge had been living in what is now South Kivu in the eastern part of the DRC as pastoralist.⁵⁰ They were labeled as “non-natives” by the Belgian government so they had no native authority and were exempt from ethnic citizenship (and the rights that ensued.) This created serious tensions in the region between the Banyamulenge and the other local tribes because the Banyamulenge had been stripped of their rights and robbed of their land.

⁴⁸ “Race and Ethnicity in Precolonial African Belgian Colonies”

⁴⁹ Sarkin, Jeremy. *Politics of Identity and Exclusion in Africa: From Violent Confrontation to Peaceful Cooperation*. “Towards Finding a Solution for the Problems Created by the Politics of Identity in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC): Designing a Constitutional Framework for Peaceful Cooperation.” Seton Hall, 26 July 2001 p.67

⁵⁰ “The Banyamulenge Tutsi Survivors of the Gatumba Refugee Camp Massacre.” *COR Center Refugee Backgrounder 1* (Feb. 2007): 1-6. *Cal.org*. Cultural Orientation Resource Center, Feb. 2007.

The policy of divided rule was reinforced by the fact that the Belgians absolutely refused to let ethnic groups mix to form political parties.⁵¹ The Belgians did this out of the fear of an organized uprising. This fixed order established hard lines between the different ethnic identities and helped to create a system of ethnic politics. Ethnic groups were not allowed to mix to form political parties until right before the Belgian government actively decided to free the Congo in 1960.⁵² Unfortunately, at this point it was too late in the game – parties at independence were primarily created along ethnic lines. The manipulation of different ethnic groups by the Belgian government worked to create the ethnic myths that Kaufman believes fuels ethnic conflict. The establishment of a system of superiority in which “native” Congolese are better than “non-native” Congolese enabled the creation of the idea that the Banyamulenge are an inferior people who do not deserve the rights to own Congolese soil, despite the fact that the Banyamulenge and other indigenous groups native to the eastern region held control of most of the land and resources in the area. This myth led to further tensions in the Kivu region during the independence movement in 1960.

Another important occurrence that helped to fuel tensions was the Belgian’s decision to import labor from Rwanda. The Belgians primarily imported the Luba people into Ituri (a city located in the province of Orientale), but they were also ushered into other provinces along the eastern border.⁵³ They even imported the Rwandans as far as the Capital, Kinshasa (located in Bas-Congo). A major implication of this importation of labor was the Belgian government would displace the local people (such as the Twa, who

⁵¹ Schatzberg, p.71

⁵² Schatzberg, p. 71

⁵³ *DRC: Special report on Ituri District, northeastern DRC*. Rep. United Nations; Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA); Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN), 18 Dec. 2002

were closely related to the Banyamulenge) in order to make settlements for the Rwandan workers.⁵⁴ The mass displacement of peoples ignited a serious enmity in the region against Rwandans which led to President Mobutu's attempt to ethnically annihilate all Rwandans in the Congo.

The independence struggle and the First Congo Crisis only helped to exacerbate and reinforce the pre-established ethnic tensions. There were many projections of ethnic hostility during the independence period: there was a Belgian supported secessionist movement in Katanga (where the whites settlers were attempting to displace the native Africans), South Kasai also attempted to secede from the Congo, and lastly, all of the major political parties that were campaigning for independence were created along ethnic lines. All of these factors worked to exacerbate issues of identity and supported the idea of politics as ethnoregional.⁵⁵ The notion of ethnoregionalism (ethnic identities categorized by regional associations) can be seen as the primary reason underlying most ethnic tensions in the DRC. According to Kaufman, the idea that a groups identity is strongly tied to the land that it held is one of the major myths that aids in the propagation of ethnic based violence. This appears to be especially true in the DR Congo.

The ethnoregional myth was widely used during the First Congo Crisis to justify the small conflicts that comprised the crisis. This myth is specifically important to the history of the Banyamulenge, who were constantly the target of ethnically motivated violence in the Congo. In the First Congo Crisis the Banyamulenge were attacked during the Simba Rebellion in 1964.⁵⁶ The Simbas were a rebel group comprised of leftist tribesmen from Kivu and Orientale. They had organized themselves to fight against

⁵⁴ See appendix A for map of the DRC

⁵⁵ McCalphin, p.42

⁵⁶ "The Banyamulenge Tutsi: Survivors of the Gatumba Refugee Camp Massacre."

government corruption and the ousting of Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba by President Joseph Kasavubu. During this rebellion, the Simbas overtook Banyamulenge land and displaced them from Southern Kivu.⁵⁷ The Banyamulenge remained displaced until the late 1960s.

Not too long after the Banyamulenge returned to their homes, General Mobutu gained power of the Congo through a brutal coup d'état. Once Mobutu took power, the ethnic tensions only worsened. Mobutu was forced by the West to transition the political framework of Zaire (now the DRC) to a multi-party democracy in the early 1990s. The transition was anything but smooth. However, Mobutu did "give in" to the request of the major opposition party (the Union for Democracy and Social Progress – UDPS) to hold a national conference on democratic transition in Zaire⁵⁸; but this definitely came at a price. Mobutu knew that Etienne Tshisekedi wa Mulumba (leader of the UDPS) was a Luba from eastern Kasai. With this knowledge in hand, Mobutu decided that he had to do two things: divide the Luba people by using other Luba politicians as his allies, and create anti-Luba/Kasai sentiments among the Congolese people.⁵⁹ It is crucial to note that the Luba were one of the groups of people brought to the Congo by the Belgians for labor.

Mobutu accomplished both of these goals. When the Sovereign National Conference convened in 1992 Mobutu used Luba politicians to open up and govern the conference. Mobutu also used vast amounts of government money to create fake political parties made up of his Luba supporters in order to increase his popularity at the

⁵⁷ "The Banyamulenge Tutsi: Survivors of the Gatumba Refugee Camp Massacre."

⁵⁸Nzongola-Ntalaja, Georges. "Violation of Democratic Rights in Zaire." *Issue: A Journal of Opinion* 22.2 (1994): 9-11. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org p.10

⁵⁹Nzongola-Ntalaja Violation p.10

Conference.⁶⁰ In addition to this, he began a campaign of ethnic cleansing fueled by the hatreds against Rwandans in the DRC throughout the region in order to further derail the conference. The most severe instance of ethnic cleansing during this time occurred in 1992-93 in North Kivu between the Banyaruanda (a native group comprised of Hutus, Tutsis and Twa from Rwanda; closely related to the Banyamulenge), the Banyamulenge and the Mai-Mai (a grassroots military group comprised of Hunde, Nande, and Nyanga militias.)⁶¹

Tensions were especially high in this region due to issues regarding land and resource distribution between the two groups. So, Mobutu armed the Mai-Mai and pitted them against the Banyaruanda and the Banyamulenge in a successful attempt to exploit emotional tensions and gain some political adoration.⁶² This conflict led to the mass slaughtering of Congolese Tutsis (about 5,000 were killed), the displacement of over 300,000 Congolese Tutsis, and further increased tensions between the natives and the non-natives. Due to such high tensions in the Kivu regions, and the apparent alliance of the Mobutu regime and the Hutu government in Rwanda, the Congolese Tutsis allied themselves with the Rwandan Tutsis in an attempt to find solidarity and protect themselves from extermination.

Issues related to ethnoregional sentiments continued throughout the duration of Mobutu's rule from 1992-1997 when he was overthrown. In addition to Mobutu's ethnic cleansing in the eastern regions of the DRC another major event occurred during his regime: The 1994 Rwandan Genocide. During the Rwandan genocide, the Hutus killed thousands of Tutsis and Tutsi supporters in an attempt to end years of political repression

⁶⁰ Nzongola-Ntalaja Violation p.10

⁶¹ Sarkin, p.68

⁶² Nzongola-Ntalaja Violation p.10

by the Tutsis. During this conflict about a million Rwandans fled into the DRC – refugees and rebels alike.⁶³ This sudden influx of people had a severe effect on the DR Congo. People were displaced, ethnic tensions got hotter between the Congolese and Rwandans and also between the Congolese Tutsis and Hutu rebels.

At this point in time President Mobutu supported the Hutu rebels, which made things extremely difficult for Congolese Tutsis. The rebel spill over from the conflict instigated attacks on the Congolese Tutsis (Banyamulenge and Banyaruanda); and since the Congolese government supported the Rwandan Hutus no action was taken to stop these occurrences. In addition to this, Mobutu exacerbated relations with Rwanda at this time because he refused to attempt to separate the refugees from the insurgents.⁶⁴ These attacks on refugee Tutsis peaked in 1996 when about 2,000 Tutsi refugees and Banyamulenge were exterminated by the Interhamwe (Rwandan Hutu rebel group) and Zairian rebel groups. According to the Cultural Orientation Resource Center there have been regular massacres against Tutsis in the DR Congo since.

President Mobutu's deliberate attempt to divide the Congolese people worked quite well, it just did not wind up working in his favor. During the last couple of years of his regime, Mobutu worked to manipulate the ethnic differences between the Congolese Tutsis and the Hutus. The pinnacle of this campaign was Mobutu's policy of expulsion against all people of Banyamulenge heritage.⁶⁵ Fed up with the government oppression and corruption, and the constant fighting, the Congolese Tutsis aligned themselves and

⁶³ Matthee, H. "State collapse or new politics? The conflict in Zaire 1996-1997." *Strategic Review for Southern Africa* 21.1 (1999): 88-105. *Academic OneFile* <http://find.galegroup.com> p.88

⁶⁴ Matthee, p.89

⁶⁵ McCalphin, p.46

began an active rebellion against Mobutu. This rebellion was led by Laurent Kabila, the soon to be leader of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Although Kabila was the leader of the rebellion, he did not topple the Mobutu regime by himself. Kabila received a lot of local support from the Banyamulenge in eastern Zaire. Initially, Kabila's rebel movement (the ADFL) joined the Banyamulenge in their uprising; however, he quickly became the leader of the movement.⁶⁶ The ADFL was also receiving military assistance from Uganda, Rwanda and Cuba (Che Guevara himself was in the DRC to aid the fighting rebels.) While Cuba's motivations for assisting the conflict were rooted in trying to topple a dictator, Rwanda and Uganda had more vindictive motives behind their aid.

Mobutu had angered Rwanda (and Uganda by affiliation) by allowing the Hutu rebels, primarily the Interhamwe, to set up camp in Zaire.⁶⁷ As if housing Hutu rebels wasn't enough, Mobutu made relations between Rwanda and Uganda even worse by refusing to separate the refugee and rebel camps, and by being unwilling to drive the Hutu rebels out of Zaire. So while Rwanda and Uganda worked to remove Zaire under the pretenses of creating regional stability and economic prosperity, they were really working to drive the Hutu rebels out of Zaire and into Rwanda so that they could be prosecuted for the 1994 Genocide and also to squash a potential insurgency.⁶⁸ Since there was so much on the line for Rwanda, they had the most obvious presence in the rebellion. This would soon come to be extremely problematic for the Congolese people.

⁶⁶McCalphin, p.47

⁶⁷ Dearaujo, E. "Chaotic Congo." *Harvard International Review* 23.3 (2001): 10. *Academic OneFile* <http://find.galegroup.com> p.10

⁶⁸ Dearaujo, p.10

Kabila also received substantial amounts of aid from Angola, Zimbabwe and Zambia.⁶⁹ It is important to note that Kabila's external support was crucial to the execution of the rebellion due to its massive scale. While Kabila's physical presence in the rebellion was sparse (many speculate that he was hiding out in North Africa) the whole initiative went quite smoothly. According to most accounts, the ADFL offensive started out as a rebel movement, but as the conflict progressed, the front received very little opposition and gained increased support.⁷⁰ Kabila successfully took office on May 29, 1997 and by this point, the only Zairians who supported Mobutu were those who feared a Tutsi invasion.

While the invasion went relatively quickly and smoothly, trends of ethnic violence were already apparent. The most notable case of this was the excessive extermination of Hutus that occurred along the ADFL's way to take over the capitol city, Kinshasa. While it is difficult to find an exact count of how many Hutus died, it is estimated by the United Nations thousands refugees were killed.⁷¹ In addition to thousands being murdered, it has also been documented that Kabila and his troops were denying the Hutu refugees access to foreign aid workers.

The best documented attack on Hutu refugee communities occurred in March-May 1997 (right before Kabila took office.) Over forty different Hutu refugee settlements were attacked. The apex of this stint was a large massacre that occurred in the town of

⁶⁹ Dearaujo, p.10

⁷⁰ Rosenblum, Peter. "Kabila's Congo." *Current History* 97.619 (1998). *GoogleScholar* p.3

⁷¹ French, H. W. "Refugees Recall Horrors of Congo Killings / U.N. says government stalled probe into Hutu massacres." *San Francisco Chronicle* 23 Sept. 1997, sec. A: 11. *InfoTrac Custom Newspapers*.

Mbandaka right after Kabila took office. It was here that the largest massacre occurred and over 2,000 Hutus were killed.⁷²

When confronted by the international community about these massacres Kabila denied any involvement. He claimed that any refugees that had been killed by his troops occurred because they had been fighting a proxy battle for Rwanda.⁷³ This led Kabila to later blame the entire situation on the Rwandans. In August of 1997, the United Nations sent investigators into the DR Congo and found evidence of mass attacks against the Hutu refugees. These findings by the UN brought Kabila's legitimacy into question and forced him to go public about the massacres that occurred. Despite this, Kabila still refused to take responsibility for the slaughter of thousands of Hutus.

In regards to the grand massacre in Mbandaka, Kabila explained it as a defensive military procedure against the Interhamwe. He stated that the Hutus attacked were suspected to be instrumental in the 1994 Rwandan genocide.⁷⁴ Despite this small acknowledgement to the massive killing of Hutus, Kabila found other ways to defer responsibility for the events. In an interview with Ray Suarez on the "McNeil/Leher NewsHour" Kabila stated, "They're asking me if we did kill people. We said no. But I said, 'You don't know. There are Rwandese soldiers killing the Hutus.'" This statement was one of many that insinuated that it was the Rwandans who were responsible for the mass killing of Hutus. This proved to be beneficial to Kabila later when the DRC was invaded by Rwandan and Ugandan troops.

In addition to deferring responsibility for the actions taken against the Hutus in the DR Congo, Kabila also used the situation to further manipulate and aggravate the

⁷² French, "Refugees Recall Horrors of Congo Killings"

⁷³ Rosenblum, p.6

⁷⁴ French, "Refugees Recall Horrors of Congo Killings"

ethnic tensions in Congolese society. It is reported that after Kabila was instated as President of the DRC he declared that any Congolese who did not surrender surviving Hutus would face serious reprisals.⁷⁵ The people of the DRC were extremely xenophobic about Rwandans in the DRC already, and this decree helped to allow the Congolese to exercise their xenophobic ideas. This fear would prove to be very fruitful to Kabila later in 1998 when Rwanda and Uganda would invade the Democratic Republic of the Congo and cause the Second Congo Conflict.

The downfall of Kabila took place very shortly after he became president of the DRC. Kabila had changed his overall strategy from being a Tutsi- supporting government to being a Hutu-supporting government. While Kabila's motivations are somewhat unclear, in late 1997 he turned on his Tutsi-supporters and attacked the Congolese Tutsi population in the DRC with the help of Rwandan Hutus and the DRC Army.⁷⁶ It is argued by some that the reason Kabila disassociated himself with the Rwandan Tutsis is because he wanted to free himself from their overbearing presence in his government.⁷⁷ In order to do this Kabila began replacing high-ranking Tutsi government officials with Hutus and low level Congolese. Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja argues that it was this action that sparked a rebel movement amongst the Congolese and Rwandan Tutsis.

The ethnic tensions in the government continued to escalate throughout late 1997/early 1998. This intensification of Hutu-Tutsi relations led Kabila to launch a large scale hate campaign against all Tutsis in the DR Congo.⁷⁸ This hate campaign was similar to the one launched by Mobutu against the Congolese Tutsis. Kabila declared that the

⁷⁵ French, Refugees

⁷⁶ Dearaujo, p.10

⁷⁷ Nzongola-Ntalaja, Congo p. 229

⁷⁸ Nzongola-Ntalaja, Congo p.250

Congolese Tutsi population was extremely dangerous and wanted to take over the DRC as they did in Rwanda; this resulted in the indiscriminate violence against the Tutsis by state sponsored security forces and citizens.⁷⁹ Kabila's hate campaign struck a tense cord amongst the Congolese Tutsi population and the Rwandan military. As Kabila worked to systematically remove all Hutus from government positions, he found himself facing serious opposition from within the military. In an attempt to alleviate his own stress, Kabila used the existing anti-Tutsi sentiments within the Congo and Kinshasa and decided to rid the Congolese Army of all foreigners.⁸⁰ Therefore, on July 27, 1998 Kabila declared that all foreigners in the DRC Army leave the country. After Kabila did this, he was forced to look to insurgency groups, such as the Interhamwe, to act in place of his dwindling military. These actions could be seen as the last straw for Rwanda and Uganda.

The enragement of the Congolese Tutsis worked to Rwanda's advantage because they were actively working to dismantle Kabila's regime and replace him with someone who would be more receptive to Hutu/Rwandese influence. Kabila only made things worse when he tried to suppress a Congolese Tutsi uprising in the east on August 2nd 1998, which resulted in the mass killing, torture and imprisonment of hundreds of Banyamulenge.⁸¹ This massacre in August was the catalyst for Rwanda and Uganda to bring their troops across the border, attack Kinshasa, and take down Kabila (which also occurred on August 2.)

After the initial invasion occurred Kabila's support was waning. During this time, Kabila used his hate campaign to play up the hatreds that already existed against the Congolese Tutsis to increase the moral of the Congolese military. This mentality worked

⁷⁹ Nzongola-Ntalaja, Congo p.250

⁸⁰ Afoaku, p.114

⁸¹ "The Banyamulenge Tutsi: Survivors of the Gatumba Refugee Camp Massacre"

for a while, but Kabila found even more support from the xenophobic portions of the Congolese population. According to an article in the *New York Times*, Kabila “turned out thousands of volunteers in recent days for what he says will be a ‘long and popular war’ against a Rwandan-backed rebellion.”⁸² After all, of the instigated violence and ethnic manipulation it is hard to imagine that Kabila had any support at all.

However, Kabila’s supporters were extremely fearful of loosing their land and freedom to the Rwandans. Pierre Kunga, a member of one of the volunteer militias that organized to protect Kinshasa after the invasion, said “We want to fight to save our nation from the Rwandans [...] this is no time to debate the flaws of our leaders. Our country is about to be swallowed up.”⁸³ This statement is highly reflective of the mentality that Rwandans are going to take away Congolese land (more specifically, that the Tutsis are going to take away their land.) This rationality was especially vivacious in the eastern provinces of the DRC where there have been land disputes between the Congolese Tutsis and other tribes since independence.

While it is not entirely accurate to say that Rwanda and Uganda were guided by ethnic myths in their invasion, it is accurate to say that the Congolese Tutsi uprising in Eastern DRC was guided by ethnic fears and tensions. This uprising is at the heart of the conflict and has since had a devastating effect on ethnic relations in the East. Since the beginning of the rebellion in August of 1998, there has been an increase in ethnic violence in Eastern DR Congo. Multiple splinter conflicts have surfaced and have created extensive ethnic violence in several places in the East, the worst cases being in Katanga and Ituri (where ethnic tensions fueled large-scale massacres.) Kabila’s attempts to

⁸² French, H. W. "Top Fear in Congo Conflict: Wider Regional Violence." *New York Times* 19 Aug. 1998. *InfoTrac Custom Newspapers*

⁸³ French, [Top](#)

further divide the Congolese people against themselves and the Rwandans were quite effective.

Ethnic Fears Lead to a Security Dilemma

In Kaufman's theory of symbolic politics of ethnic war, ethnic myths are necessary but not sufficient for the creation of a conflict. Kaufman states that in addition to having myths that justify ethnic hostilities, there must also be ethnic fears and an opportunity for people to mobilize and fight. Looking back at the development of ethnic myths in the Democratic Republic of the Congo it can be deduced that ethnic fears definitely existed within the Banyamulenge population. During Laurent Kabila's presidency, he systematically worked to victimize and endanger the Congolese Tutsi population. As stated earlier, in August of 1998 Kabila waged a large-scale massacre against the Congolese Tutsi in the Eastern DRC. This action fed the Banyamulenge's fear that their ethnic group's existence was at stake.

This fear of extinction worked to justify the hostile attitudes and actions against the Congolese government. These actions lead to Kaufman's third necessary condition for ethnic war: the opportunity for people to mobilize and fight. Kabila's hate campaign against all Congolese and Rwandan Tutsis powered their fears and gave the Banyamulenge a reason to organize and rebel against Kabila's regime. An important point to note about this rebellious uprising is that while the hate campaign fueled the fears of the Banyamulenge, the key factor is that the Congolese Tutsis were able to mobilize. Ethnic groups must have enough freedom within their state to organize themselves, and the Banyamulenge had this freedom.⁸⁴

⁸⁴ Kaufman, p.32

It is crucial to establish these two other necessary conditions in order to apply Kaufman's theory. Kaufman states that if the three pre-conditions are present, then ethnic war will result if they lead to increases in mass hostility, chauvinistic mobilization and a security dilemma. Looking back to the detailed analysis of the development of ethnic myths in the DR Congo it can be argued that both Kabila and Mobutu achieved mass hostility through the manipulation and perversion of ethnic myths. The constant portrayal of the Congolese Tutsis as non-citizens and land thieves established the fear that Tutsis are a threat against the Congolese. This fear led to the fueling of mass hostility against the Congolese Tutsis in the DR Congo. Contrarily, the idea that the Congolese Tutsis are non-citizens was detrimental to the Banyamulenge and the Banyarunanda because they felt like as though they had been robbed of their rights to land and Congolese citizenship.⁸⁵ These myths and fears helped fuel the hatred and hostility against the Kabila regime.

In regards to the last two situations that lead to ethnic war (chauvinistic mobilization and a security dilemma), both of these conditions were created in the situation in the DRC. Chauvinistic mobilization has occurred numerous times in post-independence Congo, most notably amongst the Congolese Tutsis against Mobutu's oppressive regime. The argument can be made that the uprising of the Banyamulenge Tutsi in Eastern DR Congo was also an act of chauvinistic mobilization because it was done in response to the actions of Kabila. Furthermore, this mobilization was fueled by the hostilities and fears that the Banyamulenge felt from years of persecution.

The mass hostility and chauvinistic mobilization of the Congolese Tutsis worked in a process of positive feedback to help produce a spiral of violence that results in a

⁸⁵ Nzongola-Ntalaja, Violence p.9

security dilemma.⁸⁶ Before discussing the development of the security dilemma that helped lead to the Second Congo Conflict it is important to understand how Kaufman conceptualizes the idea of a “security dilemma”. Kaufman views an ethnic security dilemma as a situation where two openly hostile groups who are willing to fight use extremely threatening methods to “pursue its own security-defined-as-dominance” which results in a downward spiral of rivalries, which leads to war. What is important to note about Kaufman’s definition is that the way each group defines their own security is inspired by their mythologies and this results in two incompatible notions of security.⁸⁷

In regards to the Second Congo Conflict, the security dilemma arose out of the Banyamulenge’s fear of extermination. It can be argued that they felt that the only way they could keep themselves safe and secure as a people is by increasing the security in Eastern DRC. Once Kabila launched his hate campaign outbursts of violence against the Congolese Tutsis became more frequent, and this sparked the creation and reactivation of different rebel and guerrilla groups for the protection of the Banyamulenge people.⁸⁸ The event that can be viewed as the security breach of the Banyamulenge people is when Kabila’s troops invaded the Eastern DRC and massacred hundreds of Congolese Tutsis. This event was the tipping point, which led to the uprising in August 1998.

Additionally, it is worthwhile to note that there was another security dilemma occurring in the region that contributed to the increased tensions between the Congolese Tutsis and Kabila’s regime. As stated previously, early in his reign Kabila made it clear that he had no intention of continuing alliances with the Rwandan Tutsis (who vehemently supported him during the rebellion.) This decision contributed to the

⁸⁶ Kaufman, p.34

⁸⁷ Kaufman, p.36

⁸⁸ Hayes, S. (Nov 2, 1998). Clash in the Congo. *Scholastic Update*. , 131, n5. p.17

Rwandans' fear that they were losing their strong hold in the DR Congo. Tensions between the opposing groups surmounted when Kabila began replacing Hutu officials in his government.⁸⁹ This decision and the decision to expel all Rwandans from the military convinced Rwanda that its interests in the DRC were in serious trouble. These factors greatly influenced the decision for Rwanda to invade the DRC and also to support the Banyamulenge people in their rebellion against Kabila. This security dilemma was extremely influential to the Banyamulenge-Kabila security dilemma.

It can be seen that all of the factors that Kaufman claims are necessary for the creation of an ethnic war were present in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Furthermore, it is apparent that there is a strong ethnic element underlying the animosities in the Congo. But what does this mean for the execution of the peace process in the DR Congo? It was hypothesized earlier that if there was an ethnically fueled conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, then there should be a conflict resolution policy that addresses the ethnic dimensions of the conflict. It has been argued that the conflict in the DRC was definitely influenced by ethnic tensions.

Accepting this, we must look at how this ethnic component has affected the peace process. The peace agreements made in the DR Congo have been highly ineffective. While a transition government has been created, little resolution has actually occurred, mainly due to the inability of those involved to lay down their weapons. But why has no reconciliation occurred? The answer to this question can be found at the heart of the peace process in the DRC.

Policy Implications of Addressing Ethnic Dimensions of the Second Congo Conflict

⁸⁹ Nzongola-Ntalaja, Congo p.228

According to Kaufman, in order to have a comprehensive conflict resolution approach the parties involved should strive to prevent all three causes (mass hostility, chauvinistic mobilization and a security dilemma) before or after violence breaks out. Unfortunately, the foresight rarely exists to be proactive in preventing these three conditions. Because of this, Kaufman proposes a few different policy alternatives, all of which are dependent upon the type of situation that a state faces. If the problems can be reduced to primarily an issue of chauvinistic mobilization and mass hostility than the best course of action would most likely be peacemaking. Peacemaking can be defined as “pursuit of intergroup negotiations and cooperation, whether through mediated talks, building consociational institutions, or some other device.”⁹⁰ Kaufman argues that in order for peacemaking to be an effective tool of conflict resolution the leaders involved must want an agreement and can agree on a formula for said agreement, can actually deliver said promises of the agreement and have a mutually acceptable process for negotiation.

If the core of the problem is a security dilemma, then peacebuilding is necessary for conflict resolution.⁹¹ Kaufman defines “peacebuilding” as “efforts to bring the groups (not just their leaders) together to change their hostile attitudes so they can revise their understanding of their security needs, thereby making peacemaking possible and peacekeeping less necessary.” Peacebuilders are supposed to bring the warring groups together and replace the myths that they hold about each other. This option seems extremely proactive and practical for the resolution of ethnic based conflicts, but it is a

⁹⁰ Kaufman, p.40

⁹¹ Kaufman, p.40

practice that is rarely used, especially on a large scale. Kaufman believes that peacebuilding is often overlooked, and rightly so.

The other main conflict resolution tool that can be used to prevent a breakout of violence is Reassurance. Kaufman argues that when two parties have similar goals but a mutual mistrust then they can work to reduce this mistrust through reassurance. Reassurance (or “reassuring moves”) is “confidence-building measures such as military reduction or withdrawals; agreement on norms regulating competition; or implementation of strategies such as graduated reciprocation in tension-reduction.”⁹² The most effective way for reassurance to work is if there is a leader in one of the parties who is willing to make a symbolic gesture that recognizes the legitimacy of the other group. Peacekeeping can also be extremely effective in the reassurance process because it can help to quell small-scale conflicts.

While all of these methods offer various options for different conflict resolution methods, Kaufman stresses that these should be attempted before violent conflict breaks out. In the instance, that violent conflict has already begun (which in most cases it has); there are two main “crisis management” options: inducements and co-optation. Inducement is the offering of concessions (political or economic) that could possibly help the leaders maintain some power without having to use hostile ethnic symbolism.⁹³ Kaufman believes that this is most effective in instances of elite-led violence. Co-optation is when opposition leaders are given limited power in exchange for dependability. Obviously there are other options, including sanctions, peacekeeping and

⁹² Kaufman, p.41

⁹³ Kaufman, p.44

reassurance, but problems arise with this type of conflict management due to the fact that once fighting ensues it is rare that either side will be willing to give up.

With these options in mind, we must turn our attention to the conflict resolution process that has taken place in the DR Congo. Since the fighting broke out in August 1998, there have been a few different attempts at peace and conflict resolution. The first of these came in July 1999. The Lusaka peace accord was a cease-fire agreement drawn up and signed in Lusaka, Zambia. The Lusaka Agreement was created out of the fact that the DRC was in a military deadlock. According to the U.S. Department of State, there were three factions that were pitted against each other: a rebel group led by Kabila, a rebel group led by Rwanda and a rebel group led by Uganda. In February of 1999 Ugandan and Rwandan troops split and Uganda formed the MLC and proceeded to engage in conflict with both Congolese and Rwandan forces. These three warring parties had systematically divided the Congo up into three chunks, which resulted in the military deadlock that sparked the Lusaka Agreement.

The Lusaka Agreement has two main components, military and political. The military component of the agreement calls for a cease-fire, the creation of a United Nations (UN) peacekeeping mission, the neutralization of forces and the removal of foreign militaries.⁹⁴ The political component of the agreement calls for the creation of an inter-Congolese dialog, which was supposed to serve as a forum for agreeing on the terms of a transition government, and the re-establishment of the authority of the state.⁹⁵ In addition to all of these aims, the Agreement stated that all of this must be completed

⁹⁴Reyntjens, Filip. "Briefing: The Democratic Republic of Congo, From Kabila to Kabila." *African Affairs* 100 (2001): 311-17. *GoogleScholar*" p.313

⁹⁵ *usaka Ceasefire Agreement*. Rep. 10 July 1999. Web. 18 Aug. 2009.
<<http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWB.NSF/db900SID/MHII-65HB37?OpenDocument>>

within a one-year time frame. While this timetable seems unrealistic, there was the timely competition of some of the items, mainly the establishment of a UN Mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC).

MONUC was brought to fruition in UN Security Council Resolution 1291 on February 24, 2000. MONUC's mandate included: monitoring of the ceasefire, development of an action plan to implement the ceasefire, work to free all prisoners of war, monitor disengagement of forces, facilitate and monitor humanitarian assistance, cooperate closely with the Facilitator of the National Dialogue and, lastly, to work on the mine situation in the DRC.⁹⁶ It is important to note that MONUC was charged with all of these tasks without the ability to use force. This inability to use force would prove to be extremely detrimental to the mission because MONUC did not have any way to enforce the Lusaka Agreement. Because there was very little enforcement of the agreement, there were numerous violations of it. The cease-fire was frequently violated, foreign troops refused to disengage and all of the groups refused to disarm.⁹⁷ In addition to this, Kabila did everything he could to foil the inter-Congolese dialog. It is speculated that his reasons for this was that he was unwilling to relinquish or share power.⁹⁸

Political instability ensued until it peaked in 2001 with the assassination of Laurent Kabila. The conflict had taken a serious toll on the DRC economically and politically, and Kabila took the heat for most of it. The only thing keeping him in office at this time was the fact that most people had united under the bond of nationality and

⁹⁶ *Security Council Resolution 1291*. Rep. United Nations, Feb. 2000. Web. 18 Aug. 2009.
<<http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/missions/monuc/mandate.html>>

⁹⁷ Reyntjens, p.313

⁹⁸ Reyntjens, p.313

they feared the threat of foreign occupation and rule.⁹⁹ Unfortunately, the unity of nationality was lost on the members of the rebel movement. There was an attempted coup in late 2000 by one of Kabila's former ADFL party members, Commander Masasu Nindaga, but he was arrested before anything could occur.

At this point in time, the MLC controlled almost 500,000 sq km of land in the DRC and were systematically cutting off trade routes and regularly attacking the Congolese military.¹⁰⁰ This had a devastating effect on what little of the economy was left in the DRC. What made things worse is that in 2000 Kabila created a new currency (the *franc congolais*) and this shot inflation over 500 percent.¹⁰¹ Instances like this stressed the fault lines in the political framework of the DRC. Frustrated and looking for answers, many Congolese were highly suspicious of Kabila as a leader. All of this ended on January 16, 2001 when Kabila was assassinated by one of his bodyguards, Rachidi Kasereka (a former child soldier of the ADFL.)

Kabila's assassination marked a shift in Congolese politics. He was succeeded by his son Joseph Kabila, who worked hard to fight off the doubt that surrounded his ascension to the presidency. Within his first few months in office Joseph Kabila reversed many of the negative policies that his father had instated, including healing alliances with the West and liberalizing the economy.¹⁰² In addition to all of this, he worked to reinstate the peace process that had been dramatically halted when none of the opposing sides could uphold their ends of the Lusaka Agreement. The inter-Congolese dialogues were

⁹⁹ Reyntjens, p.313

¹⁰⁰ Misser, Francois. "Democratic Republic of the Congo: While Kabila Flounders, Rebels Thrive." *African Business* 258 (2000): 34-35. *WilsonSelectPlus*

¹⁰¹ Reyntjens, p.314

¹⁰² "Kabila II: Unravelling the Enigma." *African Business* Mar. 2001: 9-12. *WilsonSelectPlus*

resumed in 2001 in Addis Ababa and were monitored by Ketumile Masire, the former president of Botswana.

In the Lusaka Agreement, the inter-Congolese dialogue was meant to serve as a forum for moderation between the anti-Kabila rebels and Kabila. It was hoped that this dialogue would foster the creation of a new transitional government for the DRC. Unfortunately, little came out of this dialogue due to the fact that Joseph Kabila stalled the proceedings claiming that too many delegates were absent and no substantial change would be achieved because of this.¹⁰³ Because of this failure, another inter-Congolese dialogue was scheduled to occur in February 2002 in Sun City, South Africa.

The Sun City talks had a marginally better outcome. The meeting lasted a total of seven weeks, and resulted in a partial agreement brokered between the MLC and the Congolese government. According to the International Crisis Group, the accord is was first step in the “political realignment” of the DRC. It called for the isolation of the Congolese Rally for Democracy (RCD) and its primary supporter, Rwanda; the installation of a new transition government; an official “end” to the anti-Kabila regime; and lastly, the beginning of a regional discussion on the security and economic issues that instigated the conflict in the DRC.¹⁰⁴ This appeared to be a major accomplishment for the parties involved. The accord was agreed upon by most of the delegates present in Sun City; and it was approved by Angola, Uganda and Zimbabwe. However, there was one major actor left out of this decision, Rwanda, and this would prove to be detrimental to the peace process.

¹⁰³ *HE INTER-CONGOLESE DIALOGUE POLITICAL NEGOTIATION OR GAME OF BLUFF?* Rep. International Crisis Groups, 16 Nov. 2001

¹⁰⁴ *Storm Clouds Over Sun City: The Urgent Need to Recast the Congolese Peace Process.* Rep. International Crisis Group, 14 May 2002 p.3

Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo failed to come to an agreement over the disarmament of the Hutu rebel's party, the Rwandan Army for Liberation (ALiR).¹⁰⁵ Despite this, most of the international community came to the consensus that the Sun City talks were a definite success. The prospects for peace were high, and the accord was finalized in Pretoria, South Africa on December 17, 2002 and was ratified by all parties on April 2, 2003. Immediately after the Pretoria Agreement was ratified, a transitional constitution was adopted and the democratic process was officially under way.

Since the signing of the Pretoria Agreement, a transitional government has been established and Joseph Kabila now rules with the aid of four prime ministers (each on representing a specific political party). The transition government held the country's first ever free and fair multi-party election on July 30, 2006. According to the U.S. State Department, over 25 million Congolese came out to vote; voter turnout was over 70%. There were 33 presidential candidates and over 9,500 candidates for the National Assembly (which only has 500 seats.) President Joseph Kabila had 44.81% of the vote, and his closest opponent Jean-Pierre Bemba (one of the four vice presidents from the transitional government) took 20.3% of the vote. This stirred up tensions within the region and resulted in a second round of voting in October, where Kabila won the presidency with 58% of the vote.¹⁰⁶ Kabila began his five-year term as president on December 6, 2006.

Despite these grand strides towards democracy, the DR Congo is still incredibly unstable. The new administration has faced serious opposition in the Eastern DRC.

¹⁰⁵ "Storm Clouds Over Sun City: The Urgent Need to Recast the Congolese Peace Process" p.3

¹⁰⁶ Background Note: Democratic Republic of the Congo." *U.S. Department of State: Diplomacy in Action*. U.S. Government, Mar. 2009. Web. 22 Oct. 2008. <<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2823.htm>>

Numerous militias (Congolese and Rwandan) are still operating in the East. The two most dangerous groups at this current time are the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR – a group led by Hutu rebels who were instrumental in perpetrating the 1994 Rwandan Genocide), and the CNDP (a Congolese Tutsi rebel group spearheaded by former Congolese Army General Laurent Nkunda.) Both of these groups have been continually instigating ethnic violence in the Eastern regions of the DRC up to this day. The two most notable occurrences of this violence were in Ituri and Katanga.

Another peace accord was signed in Goma (a city in North Kivu), in January of 2008. Over 20 different armed Congolese groups were present, including the CNDP. In Goma all of the parties agreed to a disengagement of troops, a cease-fire, and the creation of a UN buffer zone.¹⁰⁷ Despite the appearance of peace, not much has actually changed since the signing of the Goma Accords. The conditions are constantly being violated, primarily in the form of a failure to uphold the cease-fire.¹⁰⁸ Additionally, in late 2008 fighting in the Eastern provinces increased exponentially between the CNDP and the FARDC (the Congolese Army). The outbursts of violence by the CNDP forced the United Nations to send additional peacekeeping forces so that now there are 17,000 MONUC troops present in the DRC.

Substantial efforts towards peace have definitely been made in the DRC, but the fact of the matter is that despite these attempts there are still massive outbursts of violence. The agreements that the warring parties signed appeared to be along the lines of reconciliation and peacekeeping that Kaufman claims are important to the conflict resolution process. So why has the peace process failed? There are many explanations

¹⁰⁷ “Background notes: Democratic Republic of the Congo”

¹⁰⁸ “Background notes: Democratic Republic of the Congo”

about what has gone wrong in the DRC, but what seems to be a crucial factor is the unwillingness for all of the parties involved to come to a consensus. Kaufman argues that this is the problem of trying to implement conflict resolution tactics after a conflict has already begun. The unwillingness of some of the parties to quit fighting is a major obstacle to peace. This fact casts a certain shadow of doubt over the question as to whether or not peace will ever be attainable in the DRC.

Discussion of Findings:

There is definitely an ethnic component to the violence in the DRC. Furthermore, it can be concluded that the Second Congo Conflict can in fact be categorized as an ethnic war. If one examines the manipulation of ethnicities by the Belgians and the post-independence political regimes it can be seen that within Congolese society there is one main ethnic myth that is based upon ethnoregionalism. Many of the different ethnic groups in the DR Congo have strong territorial ties and tend to believe that they are entitled to a certain area of land within the DRC. They equate their identity with the land that they originally lived on, and therefore are possessive of it. This dominating sense of ethnoregionalism was developed and manipulated by the Belgians in an attempt to divide and conquer the Congolese. The division that the Belgians made in Congolese society between “natives” and “non-natives” primarily fuels the myth surrounding ethnic territoriality.

Despite the fact that the Congo was a state drawn up and created by the Belgians, they managed to rally and convince the people who lived *in* the Congo Free State that they were Congolese. Those ethnic groups whose kingdoms and land straddled the borders of the Congo and other colonial states were labeled as “non-natives”. This

created an immediate division amongst the people of the Congo Basin. This division was manipulated over decades and created two different myth-symbol complexes. Those who were considered to be natives believed that the non-native Congolese were going to steal their land and were a threat to their freedom. On the other hand, the non-native Congolese, which were primarily Tutsis, believed that they had been robbed of their land and citizenship, and this fueled their hostilities towards the other Congolese.

As shown earlier, these myths about the two divisions in Congolese society were fueled and manipulated by political elites in the post-independence period. Mobutu played up the hatreds for the Congolese Tutsis by revoking their citizenship and launching a massive hate campaign against them. While his hate campaign was purely a political strategy in order to boost his own legitimacy, it also legitimized the hostilities that most Congolese in the East felt against the Congolese Tutsis. Laurent Kabila further fueled these hatreds when he launched a similar hate campaign against the Congolese Tutsis, claiming that they were going to allow Rwandan foreign rule to take over the country.¹⁰⁹

The constant persecution of the Congolese Tutsis charged their hostility and increased their paranoia. All of the ethnic manipulation that took place resulted in exaggerated ethnic fears that helped to lead to the creation of a security dilemma between the Congolese Tutsis and the Congolese Military. While the presence of ethnic fears is definitely apparent in the situation, the presence of an actual security dilemma is a bit muddled. While I have argued that the increased persecution and execution of the Congolese Tutsis under Kabila definitely raised security concerns within the Congolese

¹⁰⁹ French, Refugees

Tutsi community, I do not think that it can be argued that it was the primary motivator of the eruption of the Second Congo Conflict.

As stated earlier, there was another security dilemma that was involved, one between the Rwandan and Ugandan troops and the Congolese Military. It has been argued by some scholars that Rwanda and Uganda were responsible for the beginning of the rebellion, not the Congolese Tutsis.¹¹⁰ While it is true that the Rwandans were responding to the rejection of a Rwandan Tutsi-led government, it is definitely worth acknowledging that there were two distinct disputes being fought at first. However, both the Congolese Tutsis and the Rwandan and Ugandan troops united under one front shortly after the initial rebellion. The presence of two different security dilemmas does not weaken Kaufman's theory; however, it does stand out as somewhat of an anomaly.

Another important note on the application of Kaufman's theory to the Second Congo Conflict is looking at how the violence should be classified. Kaufman argues that within ethnic war there are two types of violence (one of which usually dominates the conflict): mass-led and elite-led. Kaufman states that mass-led violence occurs in situations where myths, fears and hostility are already strong among the population. The mass-led violence is sparked by a "galvanizing" event and is reinforced by political support of the chauvinistic fears.¹¹¹ On the other hand, an occurrence of elite-led violence is characterized by the manipulation of ethnic myths and fears by a small handful of powerful elites in order to provoke fear, hostility and a security dilemma.

From the above analysis of mass-led v. elite-led violence, it is evident that the Second Congo Crisis can be characterized as an example of elite-led violence. Laurent

¹¹⁰ N-N, p.240?

¹¹¹ Kaufman, p.34

Kabila manipulated the different ethnic factions in the DRC by reinforcing the myth that the Congolese Tutsis were going to take their land and install foreign rule. This fear was reinforced by the hate campaign that Kabila launched, and fostered further hostility in the DRC. There are a couple of particularities to note about these circumstances, however.

Firstly, that Kaufman's definition of elite-led violence makes it seem as though the political elite are deliberately manipulating the different ethnic factions in order to create a security dilemma. If we further examine Kabila's manipulation of the "native" Congolese, we see that Kabila was manipulating these groups in order to establish legitimacy for himself amongst the Congolese people. Furthermore, he was also provoking ethnic tensions as somewhat of a slight against the Rwandan troops who initially supported his presidency. Secondly, ethnicity and ethnic hostilities were not the only motivating factor for Kabila's actions. He was desperately trying to save his presidency and was also fighting his own internal political battle with the Rwandans. The ethnic manipulation served as a tool for him to justify his own ends, he himself did not appear to be convinced of the myths he was reinforcing.

While it can be argued that there were other factors motivating Kabila's actions besides strictly ethnic hostilities, such as resource exploitation and economic gains¹¹², I think that this conflict can still be considered an ethnic war. All of the major indicators that Kaufman argues are necessary for an ethnic war (security dilemma, ethnic hostility and chauvinistic mobilization) were present and positively reinforced each other to assist the development and outbreak of the Second Congo Crisis. Furthermore, it is necessary to note that theory is hardly ever an exact reflection of real life. It serves to offer a general guidance for understanding and explaining occurrences in the world. So even though the

¹¹² Misser, "Democratic Republic of the Congo: While Kabila Flounders, Rebels Thrive."

Second Congo Conflict does not meet all of Kaufman's criteria one hundred percent of the time, it definitely falls in line with the general trends that he talks about. Considering this, I reason that the Second Congo Conflict should be considered an ethnic war, even though there are other motivating factors at work here as well. Having established that this is a conflict with a heavy ethnic component, what does this mean for the peacekeeping efforts in the DR Congo?

As I stated earlier, much of the efforts that have been attempted by the Congolese people do actually follow some of the recommendations that Kaufman makes. So why is it so difficult for lasting peace to be achieved in the Democratic Republic of the Congo? Well, Kaufman states that in order for any of this to work, the parties involved must be willing to make concessions and must want peace. As it can be seen, there is some evidence of this, but not enough of the parties involved appear to want peace (primarily the CNDP.)

Many scholars have written on the subject of instilling peace in the DRC. But if we look back to Kaufman's analysis of the implications of the symbolic theory on conflict resolution, he argues that one of the most important steps in the conflict resolution process is ethnic reconciliation and mediation. Neither one of these methods has been implemented in DR Congo. There have been attempts at mediation with the inter-Congolese dialogue, but that was specifically focused on political mediation in order to aid democratization. What Kaufman is referring to is something much more holistic. He claims that there needs to be an understanding reached between both the parties in regards to their ethnic myths and hostilities. Only through this process can the peace process truly be.

In its most basic way, this formulation actually makes a lot of sense. If we think about how we are taught to resolve conflicts with our siblings when we are children, it is a very similar method. You sit down, air your grievances and attempt to understand each other. This method is foreign to most conflict resolution, but it is definitely not absent. In fact, this sort of reconciliation was performed in Rwanda after the genocide during the Gacaca trials.

The Gacaca trials were a series of trials that decided who was responsible for the genocide, and they were administered by community run courts.¹¹³ These court sessions served as a method of reconciliation because the accused was put before the entire community and (in most cases) told their story. In this process, the perpetrator was able to talk about their side of the story and the community was able to offer their perspective and talk about their stories. These trials also offered further healing for the community members because they were able to get many of their questions answered.

It is evident that intensive reconciliation and mediation processes are needed in the DRC. Political mediation is definitely important and should continue to be attempted, but since there is a heavy ethnic component to this conflict there needs to be some recognition of that. If the Congolese and the rest of the international community openly address the ethnic element of the conflict, then I believe that the peace process will truly begin. Furthermore, if the ethnic tensions in the DRC are viewed as contributing factors to the conflict then further understanding of the situation will be achieved.

Conclusion:

¹¹³ Walker, Robert. "Rwanda still searching for justice." Online Article. *British Broadcasting Company*. BBC World News, 30 Mar. 2004. Web. 18 Aug. 2009. <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/3557753.stm>>

The Democratic Republic of the Congo is one of the most troubled and afflicted regions in Africa. The Second Congo Crisis exacerbated the social, political and economic situation in the DRC. Because of this, and the international and regional inability to produce a comprehensive peace agreement, the DR Congo has remained in a fixed state of violence. However, what is important to recognize here is the fact that the DR Congo is not the only state in Africa with such an affliction. Many of the countries in Africa have been engaged in extreme conflicts since the mass independence movement in the 1960s-1980s. Similar to the DRC, most of these conflicts are a result of failed transitions to independence, resource exploitation, and the damaging effects of colonization. Ethnic identity is more than who you are in Africa; it is what you are.

There have been multiple ethnic conflicts in Africa. Most obviously are the Rwandan Genocide and the situation in Sudan, but there were also ethnic wars in Somalia, Ethiopia, Nigeria, South Africa and many others. In all of these situations, the international community has responded either too late, or not at all. This seems to be a trend in the world, and it is costing the lives of millions of people. The character of the international community has been one of self-preservation, and the time has come for things to change.

If the world were to act in a timely manner then many conflicts in Africa could be avoided. When looking at ethnic conflict specifically, the international community needs to adopt an active policy of conflict prevention. This policy should be comprised of Kaufman's methods of reconciliation and peacemaking, and a new conceptualization of peacekeeping; in addition to the already established methods that the United Nations and other international organizations use. Such a policy could be initially be pursued in states

where hostilities are high and the potential for conflict is apparent. It would work to peacefully reconcile differences and bring understanding in an effort to defer conflict. Conflict prevention would be the most proactive and holistic resolution policy. If we worked collective to stop the spreading of hatred and violent ideologies then atrocities such as those that are occurring in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, then maybe world peace could actually be an attainable goal.

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Appendix B: Abbreviations and Acronyms

ABAKO: Alliance of Bakongo

ADFL: Alliance of Democratic Forces for the Liberation of the Congo

ALiR: Rwandan Army for Liberation

CFS: Congo Free State

CNDP: National Congress for the Defense of the People

DRC: Democratic Republic of the Congo

FARDC: Congolese Army

FDLR: Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda

MLC: Movement for the Liberation of the Congo

MNC: National Congolese Movement

MONUC: Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies en RD Congo (UN Mission to the
DRC)

MPR: Popular Movement for the Revolution

PNP: National Progressive Party

RCD: Congolese Rally for Democracy

UDPS: Union for Democracy and Social Progress