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By

Adrienne Lynett, B.A.

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Adrienne K. Lynett, B.A.

Thesis Advisor: Deborah Schiffrin, PhD

Abstract

This paper presents the findings from an analysis of the language of U.S. and British newspaper reporting on the Kenyan post-election crisis of 2007-2008. Previous studies (Wall 2007, Ibelema 1992) have shown a tendency for African crisis reporting to characterize such events as largely tribal or ethnic. The data used was a corpus of news articles produced between December 2007 and March 2008 from four news organizations: The New York Times, the Associated Press, the Los Angeles Times, and Reuters, a U.K. news service. The study applied qualitative methods including narrative and critical discourse analysis, and quantitative methods such as keyword and concordance analysis. Sources of quoted material were also counted and analyzed, as was the structure of the quoted material itself. The analysis found that although some themes of coverage prevalent in prior reporting remained, the tendency to attribute the violence to mere tribalism appears to have lessened. Reporters characterized the crisis more often as stemming from a complex sociopolitical circumstance that was further agitated by allegations of fraud in the presidential election. This shift in African crisis coverage may signal progress toward a less prejudicial and more sympathetic tradition of reporting on the region.
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INTRODUCTION

The mass media plays a major role in framing the American public’s view of much of the world. Africa is no exception. Most of the West turns to the press for an unbiased, informed account of events on the African continent. Because of the media’s power to shape public perception about Africa, it is imperative that the language of media reports on Africa is examined with a critical eye.

For various reasons, much of the regional coverage reaching a U.S. audience has tended to focus on crises, disasters and conflicts. As my literature review will show, this coverage has oversimplified events in Africa, attributing complex political circumstances to tribal clashes, famine or disease, when often these events, if they do occur, are the symptoms — not than the causes — of deeper, more complicated afflictions.

For example, studies on African reporting have shown that it continued to reveal a prejudicial bias as recently as the Rwandan genocide in 1994. Coverage of the post-election crisis in Kenya — from a highly disputed presidential poll in late December 2007 to a power-sharing agreement brokered by the two rival parties in late February 2008 — provides an opportunity to assess whether the language of Africa reporting has changed since then.

The election, decried by many observers and both parties as fraudulent, gave way to violence that shook the country for months, much of which was attributed to tribal allegiances. To be sure, these allegiances may have played a role in fomenting the fighting. The incumbent president, Mwai Kibaki of the Party for National Unity, identifies as a member of the Kikuyu tribe, the most populous ethnic group in Kenya. The opposition candidate, Raila Odinga, of the Orange Democratic Union, was from the Luo community. Many of the atrocities that were reported were committed against members of the Kikuyu community, allegedly in retribution for Kibaki’s perceived electoral manipulation. However, violence
was also perpetrated against supporters of Odinga, mainly Luo and Kalenjin people. Much of the violence was reported as occurring along tribal lines.

A remarkable feature of this corpus of media coverage of the Kenyan election was the emergence of material that sought to bring to the reader’s attention the failings of a view of the conflict as mainly tribal or ethnic. In one article (from the wire service Reuters), Oxford University Professor Richard Anderson, says: “Describing it as ethnic violence is not quite right. This is political violence of the most classic kind.” This characterization follows a pattern I found throughout my analysis: Although the “tribal” characterization was certainly still evident in the reporting on Kenya, characterizations of the unrest as political or civil appear nearly as frequently.

Through an analysis of keywords, a look at the narrative structure of a sample of articles, and an investigation into the content and sources of the quoted material within the corpus, I will argue that the characterization of Africans and the post-election violence in particular shifted away from earlier depictions as primarily tribe-based, with all the bias inherent in such a characterization. In addition, I will discuss the effect of the narrative genre of many of the articles within the corpus, and the contribution of quoted material to the articles.
LITERATURE REVIEW

The Effect of Framing on Interpretation of Media

It’s a commonly accepted belief that the way events are portrayed in the media affects readers’ (or viewers’ or listeners’) understanding of that event. But rarely is a critical eye trained on the media’s presentation of important global events — or, if it is, the discussion is generally relegated to insider journalism publications, such as Poynter or Fact.org.

A discussion of the influence of the media on popular opinion would be incomplete without a discussion of the contributions of frame analysis. The concept of frame analysis, generally attributed to Erving Goffman’s seminal work (1974), has had an important influence on the study of the mass media, whether by communication scholars, linguists, or practitioners. Indeed, an oft-cited example of the power of framing was put forth by the psychologists Kahneman and Tversky (1981), in which the framing of a potential disease outbreak — in terms of possible deaths or possible lives saved — affects the way respondents would respond to the outbreak, despite the two programs resulting in an identical number of deaths. Specifically, The authors used the experiment to demonstrate risk aversion:

Respondents were much more likely to favor the program that framed its outcome in terms of certain survival rates than the prospect of an equal number of lives saved. In the experiment, participants were asked to choose between two programs. Participants were told, in a group of 600 people, that 200 people would be saved if Program A were implemented, and that if Program B were implemented, there was a one-third probability that 600 people would be saved and a two-thirds probability that no people will be saved. 72 percent of participants chose Program A. In the next prompt, participants were told that under Program C, 400 people (of 600) would die, but that in Program D, there was a one-thid possibility that that no one would die, and a two-thirds probability that 600 people would die. In the second frame, 78 percent of people preferred Program D. Programs A and C were identical, as were programs B and D.
The difference in the way the program was framed created a preference reversal. The terms in which a problem was presented dramatically changed how it was viewed, even though the scenarios were identical.

An important appropriation of frame analysis to mass communication studies was done by Robert Entman (1993), who gives the useful example of the Cold War frame that dominated public discourse in the United States for decades. As this paper will explain, the Cold War frame tended to dominate African crisis reporting as well. As a result of this dominant frame, much of the public discourse on global events was discussed in terms of the “global balance” between two superpowers and their “spheres of influence” (Hertog and McLeod 2003).

Researchers across disciplines, then, agree that the way an event is presented, or framed, affects perceptions of and approaches to said event. As Entman (51) says, “Frames call attention to some aspects of reality while obscuring other elements, which might lead audiences to have different reactions.” One could extrapolate, then, that the way the crisis in Kenya was represented in the media similarly lead the audience to interpret the event differently.

**Contributions from Mass Media Research**

Critical evaluation of global U.S. press coverage appears to have increased after the Vietnam War, reflecting the view that the media can have a significant role in shaping the outcome of an international conflict and the proliferation of mass media outlets in the 1950s and ’60s.

One of the earliest critical assessments of U.S. press coverage of Africa is an oft-cited 1970 article by William Artis, Jr., then a reporter for The New York Post. “The Tribal Fixation,” which appeared in the Columbia Journalism Review, blasted stories about the Nigerian Civil War as mere speculation at best, and, at worst, as ammunition for longstanding racist stereotypes. Artis’ article sheds light on Western reporters’ tendency to reduce African conflicts to tribal wars, and Africans, for that matter, to
savage but simple warriors. The stories coming out of New York, he said, were consistent with a Western “fantasy” view of Africa: “The reporting frequently reflected a view of the Nigerian loyalists as being almost congenitally brutal, helpless, and savage children” (Artis 1970: 2). He went on to point out that the “tribal” element is unique to stories about Africa; conflict or crisis reporting rarely reduces the complex sociopolitical situations in other parts of the world — he mentions contemporary hotspots Albania and Northern Ireland — to mere tribal divisions.

Minabere Ibelema (1992) expands on the “tribal fixation” theme of Africa coverage in his article, “Tribes and Prejudice: Coverage of the Nigerian Civil War.” He identifies two additional common themes of Western media coverage of Africa: one, the view of African crises through the Cold War-inspired East-West lens, and, two, a tendency to pass European-American cultural judgment. The Cold War frame was especially relevant at the time of publication of Ibelema’s essay, although Ibelema admits that coverage of the Nigerian Civil War of 1967 to 1970 hardly touches on this particular frame. He attributes the absence of a Cold War ideological framing with respect to that particular conflict to his assertion that the struggle was not ideological in nature. He does accuse Time magazine of promoting racial stereotypes in its coverage of the Nigeria conflict, and even says the press’ coverage of the event may have exacerbated the conflict, or at least stalled any progress toward peace, with its obsession with the “genocide” angle.

Nearly an entire continent and many years away, one can encounter the same themes. In her essay, “Inkatha: Notions of the ‘Primitive’ and ‘Tribal’ in Reporting on South Africa,” Lisa Brock identifies the most frequent characterizations of conflict in South Africa in the early 1990s as “black-on-black violence,” “tribal violence” and “factional fighting” (Brock 1992: 150). While notions of tribe may be unique to Africa, the phrase “black-on-black” is an even more distinctive descriptor; as Brock notes, never does one hear conflicts in Europe, for example, described as “white-on-white.”
Brock elaborates briefly on the meaning of “tribe,” which until about WWI was used interchangeably with “nation.” Now, however, the very notion of a “tribe” has come to represent a group of people whose political boundaries, usually the result of colonial occupation, do not coincide with their societal or community boundaries. In other words, if the Kikuyu “tribe” were in fact, by its own internationally recognized political boundaries citizens of the state of Kikuyuland, the discourse would be very different. We would simply refer to them as Kikuyu, and “tribal divisions” would become “border skirmishes” or simply “war,” were it to come to that. That “tribe” is constructed in terms of colonial history shows its inherent disdain for the people to whom the term is applied.

Colonial history is, of course, no less relevant in Kenya. An important example of colonialism’s effect on media discourse of Africa coverage is the Mau Mau rebellion of 1952. Western international press coverage of the 1952 uprising was characterized by the very propaganda used for years by colonial powers to subjugate the working class, says Wunyabari Maloba in “The Media and Mau Mau: Kenyan Nationalism and Colonial Propaganda.” Not only did media coverage of the uprising propagate negative views of the rebels while reinforcing the authority of Western colonial control, but it also “set the tone and structure of Western media coverage of African nationalist struggles” (Maloba 1992: 51). Specifically, he says, the Mau Mau were portrayed, with not a little push from British official propaganda, as criminal on one hand and as superstitious on the other. Little, if any, mention was made of the fact that the movement was directly caused by years of economic disenfranchisement caused by land-grabbing, enslavement and other self-serving policies on the part of Western colonists. To acknowledge the true origins of the insurrection would be to admit the West’s role in it. In the Western press, then, the uprising was portrayed colorfully and stereotypically, with gory photographs and blood-curdling anecdotes dominating coverage. Such sensationalist storytelling certainly makes for good reading — and selling — but doesn’t begin to do justice to the complexities of the situation.
Maloba makes the point that continued portrayal of Africans as irrational, tribe-obsessed savages serves to reinforce the traditional mythology about Africa that has been used to justify the slave trade, colonial occupation, and other policies of discrimination and abuse that have haunted the African continent for so many years. The predictable coverage of events in Africa, limited mostly to brief spells of interest surrounding some kind of crisis — famine, warfare, natural disaster — adds another dimension to the portrayal: Not only are Africans savages, but they are also helpless and doomed without Western assistance. This kind of coverage in the popular press, Maloba says, hinders the possibility of any understanding in the West about the complexities of class struggle, politics and ideology Africans face.

The horrors of the Rwanda genocide hurtled Africa media coverage into the spotlight once again — this time in a far more critical light. The Rwandan news media and, to a lesser degree, the international press were held responsible for their role in the atrocities committed during that bloody April 1994. Rwandan newspapers and radio stations aligned with Hutu extremists explicitly encouraged the killings of Tutsis and identified specific targets to attack, and the international media misrepresented the violence, calling it tribal warfare as opposed to genocide. Amid all the sorrow of the genocide’s aftermath, perhaps a bright spot was the new realization of the media’s very real power to shape ideas and events. Those deemed involved in the propagation of hate speech through the media in Rwanda were brought to trial in 2000. Three men — two radio journalists and one newspaper editor — were sentenced to prison for their role in the genocide, having been found guilty of genocide. This sentencing highlighted the murderous possibility of mere words (Des Forges 42).

The international media, though not brought to trial, did not escape unscathed. Western reports were criticized for turning a blind eye to the crisis until it was too late, and even then misidentifying the genocide as a humanitarian event rather than a systematic extermination campaign. While many have
attempted to explore how the international media missed an event like Rwanda, Melissa Wall’s “Analysis of News Magazine Coverage of the Rwanda Crisis in the United States” looks at what was reported; specifically, whether Western media held to their historical representation of African conflict as irrational tribalism in the case of Rwanda. That the butchery in Rwanda had an ethnic component is not under debate. However, Wall argues, the Western media chose to portray the crisis in a decidedly ethnic light, largely evading explanation of the political and economic causes of the crisis. Because the media relied on a “tribalism” explanation for the violence without detailing the real causes, “readers were left to believe that this tribal violence just exploded” (Wall 2007: 271). Her analysis found that the “tribal fixation” was alive and well. She also found that coverage tended to dismiss or demean regional players, implying that not only Rwanda but all of Africa cannot govern itself without spiraling into inevitable bloodshed. It follows, then, that only the West is capable of rescuing Africans from their self-inflicted suffering. She also found instances of Rwandans portrayed as either wild animals or passive victims — both characterizations having the effect of distancing the subject from the Western reader. Reinforcing that distance were Biblical allusions and references to supernatural belief that implied the violence was beyond any earthly comprehension.

Wall also analyzed quoted material in the articles she examined, finding that non-Africans tended to be quoted more than Africans, suggesting that not quoting Africans — especially Rwandans — serves to deprive them of any agency to solve their problems.

Wall notes the organizational demands facing news outlets that often lead to the kind of shallow, sensationalist reporting lamented by her and her predecessors in media criticism. Sadly, Africa news does not tend to be a moneymaker for media companies and is therefore sidelined in favor of more profitable stories. When it does make money is when the stories are gruesome or heart-wrenching — people are much more interested in reading about a famine or fighting than about political proceedings.
or economic development. Because of this lack of enthusiasm for Africa coverage in the popular press, correspondents in the region tend to be few, and don’t often stay long. Despite what may be their best efforts, these reporters often enter a conflict zone or refugee camp with little or no knowledge of the history, politics or language. It’s no wonder, given this system, that Africa news is low on the contextual details.

**The Contribution of Linguistics**

Linguistic analysis of news media coverage was relatively scant, certainly until the 1970s, before which structural linguistics was primarily concerned with sentence-level grammatical analysis (Van Dijk 1985). Whole-text-level analysis tended to be left to related disciplines such as rhetorics or semiotics, or, at the more macro level, to the mass communications field, which tended to approach mass media studies from an institutional perspective. Therefore, little attention was paid to the language of mass media at the textual level — somewhere between microanalysis and macroanalysis.

The increasing interest among linguists in media discourse is addressed by Colleen Cotter (2001). As Cotter explains in an overview of linguistics in media analysis, an approach that gained traction in the 1990s is that of critical discourse analysis (CDA), a framework that investigates discourse in relation to ideology and social practice, giving special attention to racial discrimination.

Fairclough (1995) identifies six approaches to media discourse: linguistic and sociolinguistic analysis, conversation analysis, semiotic analysis, critical linguistics and social semiotics, the “social-cognitive” model developed by van Dijk, and cultural-generic analysis. My analysis will in part follow the critical linguistics method, which Fairclough describes as follows:

“The view of text as multifunctional, always simultaneously representing the world (ideational function) and enacting social relations and identities (interpersonal function); seeing texts as built out of choices from within available systems of options in vocabulary, grammar, and so forth.”
The “systems of options” implies that the author (or speaker), makes linguistic choices that can be assumed to be related to ideology.

The branch of sociolinguistics known as narrative analysis also has a useful role to play in journalism analysis, especially with the rise of narrative journalism.

The use of this technique represents a significant difference from Africa reporting in previous years, perhaps having emerged from an awareness that Africa reporting sometimes reinforced prejudices. An analysis of a sample of stories in the corpus shows that the narrative journalism style employed by many of the reporters in Kenya at the time appeals to the reader’s sense of outrage at the violence.

Despite the fact that in the industry, articles are referred to as “stories,” the narrative features a reader might expect in a work of fiction or creative non-fiction now appear more commonly in news articles than ever before. The Nieman Foundation at Harvard, which administers a mid-career program for investigative journalists and publishes numerous articles about the craft, has dedicated an entire staff to a program it calls “Narrative Journalism,” highlighting contributions to the genre each month. According to the Nieman Foundation, narrative journalism “requires deep and sophisticated reporting, an appreciation for storytelling, a departure from the structural conventions of daily news, an imaginative use of language, and a strong presence of the writer through voice and point of view.”

Reports on wars, conflicts and crises, especially in other parts of the world, can be ideal venues for a narrative storytelling approach. Although these events are often described in a more traditional journalistic style, some reporters choose to bring a more narrative style to their articles, capitalizing on narrative’s ability to capture the interest and sympathy of the reader. Journalists speak of bringing a “human element” into the article — and the narrative form can serve to do just that.

Just as in oral storytelling or spontaneous narratives, narrative journalism seeks to capture the attention of its audience with drama, excitement, emotion, or other engrossing qualities. Narrative
journalism inserts an evaluative element into the story, allowing the writer to stray from the traditional, he-said-she-said style of reporting that has come under criticism for being outdated and boring (Scanlan 2003).

Possible arguments for narrative journalism over the traditional approach closely mirror Labov’s (1972) discussion of reportability in narrative, or the “So what?” argument. Just as in conversation, newspaper readers must care about the story enough to not ask to themselves: “So what?” In journalism this means the story must not only have a point; it also must be relevant to the reader. This connection for which narrative journalists strive is often termed the “human element” of the story.

As Sandy Tolan, a National Public Radio producer, told a conference on narrative journalism in 2009, “We need to try to figure out a way to bring remote stories home to answer editors’ query: ‘Why should I care?’ ” (Kirtz 2009)

Journalists dread the question “Why should I care?” in the same way storytellers seek to avoid the “So what?” question discussed by Labov. In the quest to avoid these sentiments, both everyday storytellers and narrative journalists weave a combination of fact and evaluation to capture their audience’s attention.

An important difference between narrative journalism and the narratives of everyday life is the question of credibility. Journalists have a responsibility above and beyond the layperson to get the story right. The price of inaccuracy is much higher for a journalist than it is for a neighbor telling the story of his morning at the post office. Arguably, the main purpose of these stories is different; whereas it is the journalist’s primary goal to deliver the facts accurately, the neighbor simply wants to entertain and relate.

Narrative journalism, then, straddles the line that divides these often competing storytelling priorities. Labov (1997) terms these priorities reportability (that which prevents the audience from that
dreaded “So what?” question) and credibility. Further, these concepts have an inverse relationship; in other words, the more believable a story is, the less interesting it is likely to be. For example, someone could tell a story about taking the train to work, but without elaboration that would likely be a rather lackluster story. It lacks reportability. If, however, the narrator told a story about how he saw a famous moviestar on the train during his morning commute, that would make for a much more interesting story. The story is reportable because of the celebrity sighting, but it remains credible because it is a plausible event. If, however, the story was that on the narrator’s way to work his train sprouted wings and flew over the city to its next stop, he would lose his listeners for his lack of credibility.

As I will show, narrative journalists take some liberties with credibility that would not be possible in traditional reporting, in order to advance a story’s reportability. They must not go too far, however, or they risk a violation of journalistic ethics and even, possibly, their jobs.

By using a combination of three approaches — keyword analysis, an investigation into quoted material and the sources of quotes, and narrative analysis — I investigated whether the patronizing tone and shallow character of Africa coverage have prevailed. Specifically, I want to assess whether the “tribal fixation,” so entrenched in Western coverage of Africa, had showed any signs of abating by the 2007-2008 postelection crisis in Kenya.
METHODS

Because of the previous inquiry into the pervasiveness of “tribalism” as a feature of Africa coverage, I chose to focus on characterizations of the post-election violence that shook Kenya and riveted the world for several weeks following the disputed presidential election.

The crisis unfolded after a widely disputed presidential election on December 27, 2007. Western reporting leading up to the election was generally optimistic that Kenya — a relatively stable ally of the United States in a troubled region — would conduct an orderly, fair and free election. When supporters of opposition candidate Raila Odinga accused incumbent president Mwai Kibaki of electoral manipulation, violence erupted. Much of the brutality was directed at supporters of Kibaki, and because Kibaki identified with the Kikuyu ethnic group, some Kikuyu people who did not happen to support Kibaki were also targeted. As the violence spiralled, however, atrocities were committed against plenty of Kenyans who had little or no tribal or political allegiances. Meanwhile, the presidential campaigns and other Kenyan authorities continued to argue over outcome of the election, until a power-sharing agreement was signed by Odinga and Kibaki, after the urging of United Nations and African Union officials, on February 28, 2008. Under the terms of the agreement, the two leaders would form a coalition government, with Kibaki as president and Odinga as prime minister.

News of the crisis in the popular press was one of the most visible ways for Americans to access information about the event. Because of this, I sought to determine how the crisis was represented in the U.S. mass media.

I analyzed news articles published from December 2007 to March 2008 by The New York Times, The Los Angeles Times, The Associated Press and Reuters. I chose these sources for their relative authority and influence, as well as for the amount of coverage they provided. These news organizations had at least one correspondent based in Nairobi during the time period examined, and therefore
produced several stories per week. Although Reuters is a U.K.-based service, its articles do get picked up by U.S. newspapers. Initially, I began examining all the news articles having to do with the Kenyan crisis published by these four organizations between Dec. 1, 2007, and March 1, 2008. I pared the corpus down to 571 articles, having combed through for duplicates and less relevant stories. (Stories classified as less relevant were stories that focused on the U.S. government response — for example, stories filed from Washington, D.C. — or that made some mention of the crisis but were primarily focused on a separate event.)

The dimensions I chose to analyze were chosen based on the idea that certain elements or features in a narrative can have a great influence on how it is interpreted and, on a larger scale, how the subject of the narrative is viewed thereafter. Though much of my analysis will most closely follow Fairclough’s critical linguistics method, I also used methods from narrative analysis and corpus linguistics. Specifically, I examined whether the violence characterized as “tribal,” or as political or electoral? To answer this question, I examined keywords and word clusters relating to violence within the corpus, keeping in mind critical linguistics’ emphasis on vocabulary as a kind of ideological choice.

As part of my qualitative analysis, I investigated the narrative styles of three news articles from three different sources. I then looked at the sources of quoted material in the articles, and finally, conducted a qualitative assessment of the portrayals of those involved in the crisis to compare such portrayals to earlier characterizations of Africans mentioned in the previous section.

My three approaches to the investigation — narrative analysis, looking at quoted material, and a quantitative investigation of keyword frequency — relate to the general theme of the portrayal of the crisis, more specifically whether the crisis was depicted with the same themes that have characterized previous coverage of African crises, especially the theme of senseless tribalism.
RESULTS

Frequency of Terms

A list of the most frequently used words in the article corpus yielded no unexpected findings. Table 1 shows the top 10 most frequent lexical items in the corpus (omitting function or grammatical words such as “on “ and “for”).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Total Occurrences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Kenya</td>
<td>2,599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Kibaki</td>
<td>2,559</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Odinga</td>
<td>1,885</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>people</td>
<td>1,496</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>election</td>
<td>1,423</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>violence</td>
<td>1,258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>opposition</td>
<td>1,171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>police</td>
<td>941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>government</td>
<td>910</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Nairobi</td>
<td>767</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What is perhaps noteworthy and which offered a justification of the continuation of my research is the frequent appearance of the word “violence.” Although the events that took place in Kenya over those months is certainly referred to as a “crisis” with some regularity, I was a little surprised to find the word “violence” appearing far in advance of the more neutral “crisis.” In fact, “crisis” has a rather poor showing at only 379 occurrences, coming in all the way at No. 100. The frequency of the word “violence,” which is arguably the most loaded term on the list of top 10 words, warrants investigation into its context and characterization. Also significant is the word’s position in the articles. The vast majority — nearly 95 percent — of the occurrences of the word “violence” are found within the first half of the articles. Position is important because often, readers will not read to the end of an article. By
the same token, many editors of regional newspapers or magazines will cut from the end of an article to fit the article into the space allotted (one of the reasons for the inverted pyramid form, with the most important information coming first). Moreover, the word “violence” not only appears with a high degree of frequency in the corpus overall, but is also distributed quite evenly throughout. “Violence” appeared at least once in 426 of the 571 articles in the corpus, or about 75 percent. The context in which the keyword appears is also illuminating: The majority of the occurrences are the author’s own words, and not found in quoted material.

Because I was concerned specifically with how the violence was portrayed, I chose to examine the keyword “violence” in a variety of contexts. A search for two-word clusters containing the keyword “violence” yielded the findings in Table 2.

Table 2: Top Two-Word Clusters Containing the Keyword “Violence”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word Cluster</th>
<th>Total Occurrences</th>
<th>Percentage of Total References to “Violence”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>election violence</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ethnic violence</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tribal violence</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>political violence</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 shows the top four two-word clusters with the word “violence,” excluding function-word clusters, such as “the violence” or “violence in.” (The cluster “election violence” includes all instances of that two-word cluster, plus all instances of the cluster “postelection violence,” which on its own had 31 occurrences.) The word “election” (or “postelection”) was the most commonly used adjective to describe the violence, followed closely by “ethnic,” “tribal” and “political.” Still, frequency alone cannot tell us the whole story. Examined as a percentage of the total amount, violence was represented
as “ethnic violence” about 8% of the time throughout the entire corpus, as “election violence” 5.9% of the time, as “tribal violence” 4.1% of the time and as “political violence” about 2% of the time.

It is possible to further collapse these references into two categories, one containing violence characterized as stemming from tribal or ethnic divisions, and the other containing reference to violence caused by the election. In doing so, we find 129 in the category of ethnic or tribal violence, and 118 in the second category denoting political or election-based violence. This method yields slightly more references to violence caused by tribal or ethnic tensions than by the outcome of the election, though the difference is small. I have compiled these numbers in Table 2.1 below.

Table 2.1: Top Two-Word Clusters Containing the Keyword “Violence”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word Cluster</th>
<th>Total Occurrences</th>
<th>Percentage of Total References to “Violence”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>election or political violence</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ethnic or tribal violence</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is also interesting to look at these references separated by news source. In Table 2.2, I have expanded the original table to include the frequencies of the above clusters in the various news sources.

Table 2.2: Top Two-Word Clusters Containing the Keyword “Violence,” by News Source

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word Cluster</th>
<th>Occurrences in NYT</th>
<th>Occurrences in LAT</th>
<th>Occurrences in AP</th>
<th>Occurrences in Reuters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>election violence</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ethnic violence</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tribal violence</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>political violence</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Comparison across the sources reveals that although “election violence” is the top two-word cluster overall, it is only the top cluster in one course category: the Associated Press. The other three sources had references to “ethnic” or “tribal” violence as their top two-word clusters containing the word
“violence.” A hypothesis I will test further later in this paper, which is supported by the data above, is that different news sources characterize the violence in varying ways.

Still, there are many other references to violence besides the two-word clusters listed above. Another look at the clusters can give us an idea of how else the violence was characterized. The fourth most frequent cluster when including functional words (after “the violence,” “violence in” and “of violence”) is “violence that,” a construction that allows for a description to follow.

Many occurrences of the cluster “violence that” are followed by a count of people killed or displaced, or a reference to a location. However, some occurrences are followed by a reference to the election, including the following quote from an EU election monitor in a Dec. 21, 2007, AP story: "We have noted with concern the level of violence that has taken place during the electoral process particularly in Kuresoi and Mount Elgon," Alexander Graf Lambsdorff, chief EU election monitor, said on a trip to hotspots around the nation.

Just as many references are followed by a reference to tribalism, however. And a significant proportion of the occurrences are preceded by the words “ethnic” or “election,” which means they were already analyzed in the table above.

Another popular two-word cluster containing “violence,” with 16 occurrences, was “violence since.” A look at some of these references reveals more election-focused characterizations of the violence. A frequent formula within these findings is “violence since” followed by some form of reference to the election. For example, in a Jan. 28, 2008, story, Los Angeles Times writer Edmund Sanders stated “Violence since last month’s presidential election has killed nearly 700 people and displaced an additional 250,000.”
These clusters are more difficult to quantify and require a more qualitative examination of the sentence structure and context, which is beyond the scope of this investigation. However, it is important to keep such descriptions in mind when analyzing characterizations of the violence during the crisis.

The evidence in Table 2 does not support my hypothesis that Western coverage tends to refer to the violence as tribal or ethnic more often than it refers to the violence as political or election-based. Even when collapsing keyword clusters into two categories, the difference is extremely slight.

For my statistical analysis, I broke the corpus into files containing the individual articles I was going to test, labeling each one with variables indicating its source (i.e. New York Times, Los Angeles Times, Associated Press or Reuters), and the keyword occurrences. Because I had articles of varying sizes, I chose to examine the frequency of the keyword in question divided by the number of words in that particular article. So, for example, in one Associated Press article of 512 words, the percentage of the keyword “violence” occurring nine times was 1.76%.

Because I was interested in finding out whether the crisis was characterized as a tribal one or a political one, I began by looking the frequencies of the keywords “violence” and “election.” Of the total data set (i.e. all the articles I examined), “violence” occurred 1,289 times, while “election” occurred 1,779 times. These findings are not particularly surprising, and don’t tell much in themselves. It is to be expected that there would be more references to the election, as the violence was a result thereof, not the other way around. Plus, earlier articles would have little reason to mention violence because it hadn’t begun until the days surrounding the election. This is also true for the later articles.

To take the analysis further, I found the number of occurrences of the keywords mentioned in Table 2 in each article. I then collapsed these keywords into two categories, as I had done earlier: “ethnic” or “tribal” violence versus “political” or “election” (including “postelection”) violence. I then found a percentage of occurrences of each type of keyword by the number of words in the article. So, for
example, one Los Angeles Times article had two instances of election-focused keywords containing “violence”; based on that particular article’s word count, the percentage of election-focused violence keywords was roughly 0.31%.

Because there were so many very small percentages, I recoded both variables once they had been entered into SPSS, giving each article a “score” of 0 through 10. Percentages of 0.00% to 0.09% received a score of 0; percentages of 0.10% to 0.19% received a score of 1; and so on. With this score, it became easier to see whether individual articles had a greater or smaller number of references to election violence versus tribal violence, based on the article’s total word count.

I analyzed the frequency of three variables: 1) score for ethnic/tribal violence, 2) score for political/election violence, and 3) publication. There were a great deal of articles with a score of 0 for both types of violence, meaning most of the articles had zero or very few occurrences of the phrase “ethnic” or “tribal violence” as a percentage of total word count, and zero or very few occurrences of the phrase “political” or “election violence” as a percentage of total word count. However, a look at the frequency tables to indicate that articles were more likely to have a greater number of occurrences of the political phrasing versus the tribal phrasing.

To put this observation to a more rigorous test, I ran a t-test to compare the means of the two variables, ethnic/tribal score and political/election score. A t-test of the two variables supported the hypothesis above that political phrasing occurred with greater frequency than tribal phrasing. The mean for the political phrasing was 0.44, while the mean for the tribal phrasing was 0.34. Although the difference is small, it was statistically significant at the 0.001 level. So in fact, according to this analysis, “violence” tended to be characterized as political or election-based rather than tribal or ethnic.
Narrative analysis

For my narrative analysis, I chose three news articles written about the same event: the burning of a church in western Kenya in January 2008. The church burning, which resulted in the deaths of about 30 people and many more injuries, was one of many tragedies that unfolded in Kenya during the months following the 2007 presidential election.

The articles come from the Associated Press, a U.S.-based wire service whose articles are published in newspapers throughout the world, Reuters, a U.K.-based wire service, and The Los Angeles Times. These news organizations were chosen because each had at least one correspondent in Kenya at the time, and because all three agencies produced an article in the narrative style for their reporting on the church fire. All three of these services reported on the post-election violence with varying regularity — the AP and Reuters, as is typical for a wire service, produced at least one article each day from December 2007 to March 2008. The Los Angeles Times ran articles on the crisis less frequently, but the stories tended to be longer and more detailed. (That is not to say, however, that the wire services did not produce some lengthier stories. My analysis was largely at the level of the paragraph, which is a traditional unit of analysis in journalism.)

News articles that employ a narrative framework often assume that the reader knows something about the event that took place. It is common practice at newspapers, for example, to publish a brief, bare-bones article — with the critical factual information — along with a longer, more detailed narrative-style story. A publication may also choose to first publish a facts-focused version of the story, then, in the next few days, publish its narrative-style counterpart. This practice may reflect the industry tenet that it is important to first relay the facts — then, if possible, delve into the more nuanced and complex elements. Of course, publication decisions are also dictated in large part by space and timing.
constraints. Often, there simply may not be space for a longer, narrative-style version of a story, and a more traditional, bare-bones version will appear instead.

A classic characteristic of the journalistic article is the so-called inverted pyramid (Scanlan 2003), referring to the traditional form with whatever is deemed the most important information first. The inverted pyramid, which is the most commonly used form in journalistic writing, is valued because a reader can stop at any point in the article without missing any crucial information. This quality is important particularly in print journalism — especially newspapers — because readers often read only the portion of an article that appears before the “jump,” or the point at which the reader must turn to another page within the paper for the continuation of the story.

Though useful, the inverted pyramid form has been criticized as overly formulaic and dry. Perhaps more readers would follow a story to its end, some journalists argue, if the form itself were more compelling.

The three articles examined in this paper are notable for their narrative styles. They are an Associated Press story from January 2, 2008, originally filed with the headline “Mob Torches Kenyan Church Where Hundreds Sought Refuge; 50 Reported Killed,” written by Elizabeth A. Kennedy; a Los Angeles Times story from January 3, 2008, filed with the headline “Kenyans Recall the Screams of the Dying in Burning Church,” written by Robyn Dixon; and a Reuters story from January 2, 2008, filed with the headline “Blood in Church as Kenya Falls Into Tribal Violence.” The Reuters story did not list an author. For comparison, I also examined a New York Times story written by Jeffrey Gettleman about the same event on January 2, 2008, but which was written in a more traditional style. The headline of the New York Times story was “Fire Set by Mob at Kenya Church, Killing Dozens.”

The same correspondents who wrote these articles filed a great number of stories from Kenya as the post-election crisis unfolded, but most of the articles were written in the traditional, inverted-pyramid
form. In fact, when the event first happened, the church burning was reported in the classic style by all three of these correspondents. The stories analyzed here were filed several hours or even days after the event, allowing the reporters more time to seek more colorful quotes, to assess the scene for interesting details, and, of course, to craft a compelling story.

That these articles are examples of narrative journalism is evident in the first paragraph, called the lead" by journalists. Each article begins with an anecdote or detail intended to capture not only the reader’s attention but also his sympathy and even outrage. All three articles open with a detail about the gruesomeness of the scene at the church. The Associated Press article’s first paragraph, for example, details the terror felt by the people trapped inside the church as it was attacked:

The mob struck in broad daylight Tuesday, setting fire to the church where hundreds of terrified people had taken refuge. Screams filled the air. Even children were burned alive.

The final sentence is particularly noteworthy, not only for the unsettling scene it describes, but also for the evaluation it offers. The word “even” implies that it was unexpectedly brutal for children to have been targeted by the attackers. Readers accept this evaluation because nearly everyone can agree with the sentiment; still, this kind of evaluation is more acceptable in narrative journalism than in the more traditional forms. I will discuss evaluation in greater detail later in this analysis.

The lead of the Los Angeles Times article focuses on the victims themselves and the weapons used:

First, the attackers pelted the church with rocks to pin down the women, children and elderly people seeking shelter inside.

The Times reporter’s emphasis on the “women, children and elderly” serves to strike a particular outrage in the mind of the reader, as those three groups are generally thought to be innocent victims in conflict situations.

Finally, the lead of the Reuters article spotlights the sensory experience of the event:

Even as Kenya Red Cross staff cleared the last of the bodies from the church's smouldering remains, traces of the massacre still haunted it.
The word “smouldering” inspires not only images of fire, but smells and sounds as well. The reference to “bodies” reminds the reader of the bloodshed, while the final clause, with the words “traces” and “haunted,” has an eerie, sinister effect. The reporter’s appeals to the reader’s senses continue in the next paragraph, with details such as “pungent smoke” and “blackened rubble.”

It should be noted that the writers of these articles are making use of a practice particular to narrative journalism — and one that is not altogether uncontroversial within the field: They are “reporting” events that they could not possibly have actually seen. It is highly unlikely any of these reporters were on the scene when this tragedy unfolded on January 1, 2008. And even if they had been there, the reporters have taken liberties with their appraisal of the victims’ mental state. The reader accepts that the victims were “terrified,” as reported in the AP story, for example, but the reporter could not possibly have known that for sure.

What is also notable is what these leads do not have: namely, the who, what, when, where and why that is so central to traditional lead paragraphs.

Interestingly, in all three of these leads, the writers make use of the definite article “the” to describe an entity not previously introduced. For example, the AP story begins by describing “the mob” and “the church”:

The mob struck in broad daylight Tuesday, setting fire to the church where hundreds of terrified people had taken refuge.

Both the mob and church are being introduced for the first time in this first paragraph, but the reporter chooses to use the definite article, usually reserved for an element with which the reader is already acquainted.

When viewed in terms of Chafe’s (1994) observations on narrative units and active versus inactive consciousness, this device suggests the reader should know a character or entity in the story when he
doesn’t. The mob and church are being *activated* for the first time in the reader’s consciousness at this first reference.

This unexpected use of the definite article catches the reader off guard. By disrupting the reader’s schema, this device may serve to lure the reader in to the story — perhaps to find out what this “mob” is that they should already have known about.

A similar use of the unknown antecedent is found in the Times story, in the 13th paragraph:

Charred machetes, cooking pots and handbags were scattered on the ground beside children's shoes: these small pink sandals fit a toddler; those running shoes, a child of 7 or 8.

This paragraph has a very lyrical quality to it: The description of the items at the scene is highly detailed and appeals the reader’s senses and emotions — the references to children are particularly chilling. Furthermore, this paragraph uses pronouns with no referent, a strategy that makes this paragraph particularly well suited to the narrative form. “These small pink sandals” and “those running shoes” are phrases that assume the listener has an idea of the shoes in her consciousness. This, of course, is impossible, because the shoes were just introduced. This use of these pronouns paired with the vivid description is a clever way to give the reader a feeling of connectedness to the scene.

The use of pronouns without antecedents and definite articles in the place of indefinite ones may be deemed possible in journalistic narrative only when the event has been reported before. Although a reader may be learning of the event for the first time when reading the narrative version of the story, perhaps the fact that it has been reported before allows the reporter to refer to the event with the definite article.

Of course, the reporters go on to provide the who, what, when, where and why of the story in later paragraphs, so a reader stumbling upon this story for the first time in its narrative form would not want for the “important” factual details.
The strategies for telling these key details were different among the stories, however. In both the AP and Reuters stories, the third paragraph provides the essential details of the burning, departing from the narrative form briefly to return to the traditional journalistic form. This paragraph might be called the “nut graph,” the paragraph of a story that contains the important information. This paragraph takes the reader from the scene of the church attack to the present time and place, and could appear as a lead paragraph in a more traditional, inverted-pyramid-style story.

The transition to this third paragraph in both the AP story and the Reuters story is somewhat jarring; the reader is required to shift the focus from very personal, individual details of the burning’s aftermath to the broader effects of the attack — including the number of people who died — and the even larger circumstances that triggered it. Interestingly, in both the AP and Reuters stories, the authors expand the scope first to the community affected by the church burning, then to the country of Kenya, then to the entire African continent, with a reference to Kenya’s historical place as “one of Africa’s most stable democracies.”

The Times story, by contrast, stays truer to the narrative form throughout the article. The reader is kept in the scene longer, drawing out the encounter with the scene of the church fire’s aftermath. The reporter stays with the narrative style by evoking the imagery and emotion through metaphor, vivid description and first-person reports. For example, the reporter uses the disturbing metaphor of “an oven” to describe the church in the fifth paragraph. These first few paragraphs also vividly describe how the attackers barricaded the church and then lit the building on fire.

Again, this reporter is taking some liberties to pursue a narrative format. Describing the church as “an oven” is acceptable to the reader because we assume it must have felt that way inside. However, this reporter was most likely not there at the time, and she certainly was not inside the church. The reporter’s description of the event surely relies heavily on the accounts of witnesses who were interviewed later.
Though this story is told in a highly narrative style, the traditionally important details are not neglected; they are simply woven into the narrative itself as the story progresses, rather than announced in a particular paragraph. For example, the third paragraph mentions the location of the burning for the first time: “Inside the small Kenya Assemblies of God Church in Kiambaa, just outside the town of Eldoret in western Kenya.” Another detail, the date, emerges in the sixth paragraph.

Thorough background information about the election, the event that triggered the violence, also emerges later in the story — in the eighth paragraph. Here, the reporter finally begins to reveal what looks like a traditional “nut” paragraph. Again, a telling characteristic is the shift in scope. Whereas previous paragraphs had focused on the scene at the church on the day it was attacked, this eighth paragraph expands the analysis to all of Kenya, and to a wider time frame. It does this by mentioning violence that has raged “from Western Kenya to the coast,” and by making use of the past perfect tense: “Mobs of opposition supporters have attacked Kibaki's fellow Kikuyus …”

This paragraph’s position later in the article distinguishes it from the placement of similar paragraphs in the other two articles. This later placement allows the reader to remain in the scene for a longer period of time and therefore draws out the narrative of that moment.

Another key characteristic that separates narrative journalism from more traditional forms is its use of evaluative devices. An important tenet of modern journalism — in the United States, especially — is to appear as objective as possible. A reporter is taught to relay both sides of a story, for example, to refute any potential accusations of bias. In narrative, however, reporters have greater leeway in inserting their own judgments. These reporters supply these judgments not overtly, but through various evaluative devices.

The AP article, as mentioned earlier, introduces evaluation immediately, in the first paragraph. The very first line, “The mob struck in broad daylight,” is evaluative. The phrase “broad daylight” is usually
used when describing events that would not have been expected to occur during the day, particularly crime. Therefore, the reporter is suggesting that this was an unusual time of day for such an attack to occur. It also hints at the chaotic atmosphere of the time: Under normal circumstances, such an attack would not have been possible during the day — neighbors, police and community members could have stopped it. However, because of the violence that had saturated Kenya by this time, such an attack became feasible. The phrase “even children” is also evaluative, as discussed earlier; it implies that children, a population deemed innocent in the conflict, should have been spared such a horrible fate.

In a similar strategy, the Times story refers to the “women, children and elderly people sheltering inside” the church when it was attacked. Unlike the AP reporter, this writer does not use the adverb “even” for emphasis. Still, the outrageousness of the event is conveyed through the grouping of “women, children and elderly people.” These groups are expected to be spared in fighting; that they were in fact the targets of an attack makes the event all the more shocking.

Of course, evaluation also exists in the way a reporter inserts or omits elements of the story. Each time a reporter includes a scandalous quote or an off-hand comment about a person’s upbringing, for example, the reporter is suggesting that this information is important. The reporter is effectively *judging* the information at her disposal by choosing which pieces are more relevant, interesting or useful, and discarding the rest. This practice of selective inclusion also exists in traditional oral narratives, of course, but the consequences for the wrong choice is usually graver for a journalist than for a layperson.

These reporters are demonstrating their ability to strike the difficult balance between reportability and credibility in narrative journalism. They include enough evaluation to increase reportability, but not so much to undermine credibility. They achieve this balance by ensuring that much of their evaluations are *implied* rather than overtly stated; they insert the details, quotes and adverbs that properly convey a sentiment without ever having to explicitly say it. These reporters stop short of writing something like
“It was horrifying” to describe the scene. The sentiment is certainly suggested, however. For example, the Times reporter describes in the sixth paragraph the way the villagers “told their stories, reliving the horror.” With this sentence, the reporter is effectively judging the scene to be horrifying, but because the sentiment seems to come from the villagers and not from the reporter, it is permissible.

These three articles vary in their level of adherence to the narrative form. The two wire service articles, from the Associated Press and Reuters, waver between the traditional journalistic form and the narrative style or reporting. The Los Angeles Times article is more clearly an example of narrative journalism. Still, all three employ techniques of narrative journalism, including evaluative devices that would not be permitted in non-narrative reporting, the use of referent-less pronouns and definite articles, and vivid descriptions of seemingly small details. The purpose of these devices is to appeal to the senses and emotions of the reader; to allow the reader to connect to the story and to achieve that “human element” that journalists crave.

Several important elements of narrative reporting were discussed here: the difference in form, the use of evaluative devices, and the use of inventive details to offer a vivid description of the event. These articles, then, fit the Nieman Foundation’s description of narrative journalism well: They flout “the structural conventions of daily news,” they use language indefinitely with evocative details, and they offer a sense of the reporter’s point of view through evaluation.

That this sample of articles on the Kenyan crisis employed the use of narrative journalism suggest that the reporters may have been attempting to humanize the crisis for its readers, as this is often the intent behind its use.

**Quoted Material**

It is important also to determine what perspectives other than the reporter’s are represented in an article, as a way of showing how the reporter chooses to represent the people about whom the article is
written. As a way of determining what voices other than the reporters’ were being represented, I analyzed the quoted material found in the corpus. In a sense, the quoted material reveals the author’s intention nearly as much as his or her own words — sometimes more — because the reporter chooses a select few quotes from a likely massive quantity of material. The quotes he or she chooses to include most likely advance the author’s point, whether intentional or not. Quoted material, then, provides additional insight into the ideology of this selection of articles.

I first looked at who was quoted, and with what frequency. I identified 18 groups, based on how often they were quoted and how clearly I could establish categories. The “other” category includes quotes from sources that less clearly fit into any of the other categories.

By far the most quoted group was a group I classified as “regular Kenyans,” people not involved in the political machinations of the crisis but affected nonetheless. These people were often identified by their occupation and age. Many of this group were unemployed, had been injured in the fighting or had lost a loved one — qualities that often served to show the individual’s frustration with events that were unfolding. Chart 1 shows the percentages of sources for quoted material throughout the corpus.
Table 1: Sources of Quoted Material

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source category</th>
<th>Number of times quoted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Regular Kenyans”</td>
<td>495</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PNU</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ODM</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raila Odinga, opposition candidate</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experts</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. State Department</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenyan NGOs</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African heads of state or organization</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Nations</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mwai Kibaki, incumbent</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenyan news outlets</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Election observers</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Embassy</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenyan election commission</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International NGOs</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British government</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>1366</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. PNU represents members or representatives of the incumbent president’s party, Party for National Unity. ODM stands for Orange Democratic Movement, the party of the opposition.

That the overwhelming majority of quoted sources are “regular Kenyans” is inconsistent with Wall’s findings on Rwanda coverage that foreign aid workers tend to be most frequently quoted. In fact, foreigners represent a rather small portion of sources. The greater frequency of quotes from Africans suggests that the coverage has shifted to grant them greater agency and make them seem better equipped to help in solving crises. Also, just as in narrative journalism, quoting Africans may serve to lend a more human element to the story.

Also interesting is the relative scarcity of quotes from incumbent president and PNU leader Mwai Kibaki, given that his name was featured so high in the list of most frequently found keywords. It appears that although Kibaki is often mentioned by name — more so than his rival, Raila Odinga — he is much less often the source of directly quoted material. This may be attributed to a couple of factors:
Odinga, as the opposition challenger to the incumbent party, may have called more press conferences and been more willing to speak to reporters. Kibaki, whose party was widely accused of rigging the vote, may have been less eager to speak out amid such charges. It could also be, however, that reporters tended to prefer interviewing and quoting Odinga.

Another point Wall makes is that non-Rwandans (especially Westerners) made up a greater percentage of all sources than Rwandans in her sources. She laments that the non-Rwandan category was, with one exception, made up entirely of Westerners. So, she says, not only were Rwandans disproportionately represented, but Africans as a whole were largely ignored. Collapsing the source material into two categories, African versus non-African, for the Kenya corpus yields the results in Chart 2.

Chart 2: Sources of Quoted Material, Sorted by African vs. Non-African

Clearly, African sources made up the majority of the sources for quoted material in the selected reports on the Kenya election crisis. This evidence suggests that reporters have sought to interview and feature more local and regional sources than they did more than a decade ago in covering Rwanda.

A remarkable feature of coverage — found most of all in Reuters stories — was material that sought to bring to the reader’s attention the failings of a view of the conflict as mainly tribal or ethnic. Oxford University Professor Richard Anderson, quoted by Reuters, cautions against a “tribal”
interpretation: “Describing it as ethnic violence is not quite right,” he says in an article from Feb. 6, 2008. “This is political violence of the most classic kind.”

Some of the “regular Kenyans” quoted also stressed the greater influence of politics and the economy as opposed to tribe, although just as many if not more expressed the sentiment that tribe trumps all.

Although the coverage did give some attention to the error of attributing the violence too much to tribalism, there was still a lack of detailed analysis of the real causes of the crisis, which were largely socioeconomic and had been building for many years. A report from IRIN News, a UN information source, stresses the importance of recognizing the real cause of the unrest, which was the Kenyan economic system. Although specific ethnic groups were certainly targeted, the report notes, the atmosphere that led to the possibility of such violence was caused by an economic structure that had left man Kenyans landless, jobless and otherwise marginalized for so many years.

Most of the warnings against interpreting the unrest as tribal rather than political came from experts and analysts, both African and non-African. However, as Chart 1 shows, experts/analysts represent a relatively small percentage of the total sources in the corpus: 5 percent. This number is the same as what Wall found in her analysis of Rwanda coverage. The fact that these experts tend to be the ones cautioning against too simplistic a reading of the crisis suggests that perhaps it would be valuable to include more expert sources in Africa coverage. Indeed, these experts can provide a good deal of context and analysis that many others cannot.

A notable feature of much of the quoted material is the use of the passive voice. This characteristic is not unique to African crisis reporting — in fact, it is not unique to reporting at all, but is rather a very ubiquitous quality of public discourse. Here, the passive voice is used in a variety of contexts, including by officials who condemn the violence but decline to name an agent. For example, chief EU election
monitor Alexander Graf Lambsdorff, who is quoted many times in the corpus, says he has “noted with concern the level of violence that has taken place during the electoral process.” The violence has “taken place” and not been committed by a particular agent. By contrast to the passive construction used by many of the “officials” quoted, the sources classified as “regular Kenyans” tended to attribute the violence to a particular group of people, often using the active voice. The agents committing the violence are referred to by Kenyans as “they,” “people,” and even “we.”

The use of the passive voice by officials and foreigners and the active voice by Kenyans could very well be attributed to the use of a particular kind of political discourse adopted by people in an official capacity. It should also be noted, however, that the quotes coming from Kenyans may have been translated from the original language, and therefore may be more tricky to compare syntactically to quotes that were originally in English.
CONCLUSION

Overall, I found that themes of coverage, while still adhering in large part to tribalism as a source of the conflict, had strayed from traditional portrayals of Africans as tribe-obsessed, helpless savages. The frequency of such terms as “tribal violence” and “ethnic violence” indicate that the events that took place in Kenya after the 2007 election were certainly characterized as having a tribal component. However, the violence was characterized as “political” or “postelection” roughly as many times, suggesting that perhaps the news media is attempting to approach African conflicts with an eye for the sociopolitical complexities that give way to these events.

The use of the narrative journalism style suggests that reporting on this event took a more humanizing, sympathetic tack. Readers were likely more able to relate to and sympathize with the victims of the crises when they read the narrative articles.

Likewise, the higher frequency of quotes from Africans — especially Kenyans — most likely helped readers relate as well. By quoting Kenyans affected by the crisis, they were given a voice and a sense of agency in the crisis, something that, as Wall noted, had been lacking in previous African crisis reporting.

For further research, I would like to expand on the notion of characterization of the violence varying by publication, or even by country of publication (for example, Reuters, a UK service, versus AP, a U.S. service). I would also be interested to see whether there is a significant pattern based on type of media outlet, i.e. between wire service stories as opposed to longer news stories like the type in The New York Times and Los Angeles Times. It would also be of interest to look more closely at specific portrayals of the Kenyan people — the “regular Kenyans” that tended to be quoted so often. Of course, the frequency of their appearance in quoted material doesn’t necessarily mean that they are being portrayed in a particular way. Additionally, an important component of media analysis is audience reception of media.
The scope of this paper did not allow for such an investigation, but a further exploration of this event would be complemented by a look at how readers interpreted the coverage. Specifically, it would be illuminating to discover whether and to what extent readers were influenced by a particular characterization of the violence, the reliance on certain players more than others for quoted material, or the use of narrative journalism. Such an investigation might be pursued through surveys or interviews with participants who were willing to read the articles.

This initial analysis, however, suggests that reporting on the Kenyan crisis appears to have progressed beyond previous themes of coverage of African crises, which may further suggest that future reporting on Africa will continue to shed those themes.
APPENDIX: Articles used for narrative analysis

Mob torches Kenyan church where hundreds sought refuge; 50 reported killed
January 2, 2008
By Elizabeth A. Kennedy
Associated Press

Nairobi, Kenya -- The mob struck in broad daylight Tuesday, setting fire to the church where hundreds of terrified people had taken refuge. Screams filled the air. Even children were burned alive.

Those caught trying to escape the flames or helping rescue victims inside were hunted down and hacked with machetes. One man said he had to hide in the filth of a pit latrine to stay alive.

Up to 50 Kikuyus were reported killed in the church in the Rift Valley city of Eldoret in ethnic violence that followed Kenya's disputed presidential election. The death toll from four days of rioting rose to more than 275, triggering fears of further unrest in what has been one of Africa's most stable democracies.

The latest bloodshed recalled scenes from the genocide in Rwanda in 1994, when more than a half-million people were killed. The question facing Kenya is whether the politicians will lose control of the mobs, triggering a civil war.

President Mwai Kibaki, who was swiftly inaugurated for a second term Sunday after a vote that critics said was rigged, called for a meeting with his political opponents a significant softening of tone for a man who rarely speaks to the press and who vowed to crack down on rioters.

But opposition candidate Raila Odinga refused, saying he would meet Kibaki only "if he announces that he was not elected." Odinga accused the government of stoking the chaos, telling The Associated Press in an interview that Kibaki's administration "is guilty, directly, of genocide."

The violence from the shantytowns of Nairobi to resort towns on the sweltering coast has exposed long-festering tribal resentment.

The people killed in Eldoret, about 185 miles northwest of Nairobi, were members of Kibaki's Kikuyu tribe.

They had fled to the Assemblies of God Church on Monday night, seeking refuge after mobs torched homes. Video from a helicopter chartered by the Red Cross showed many homes in flames and the horizon obscured by smoke. Groups of people were seen seeking sanctuary at schools and the airport, while others moved into the forest.

On Tuesday morning, a mob of about 2,000 arrived at the church, said George Karanja, whose family had sought refuge there.

"They started burning the church," Karanja told the AP in a telephone interview, his voice catching with emotion as he described the scene. "The mattresses that people were sleeping on caught fire. There was a stampede, and people fell on one another."

Karanja, 37, helped pull out at least 10 people, but added, "I could not manage to pull out my sister's son. He was screaming 'Uncle, uncle!' ... He died." The boy was 11.

Up to 50 people were killed in the attack, said a Red Cross official who spoke on condition of anonymity because her name would identify her tribe, and she feared reprisal. Even first aid workers were stopped by vigilantes who demanded their identity. Numerous blockades along the road to Eldoret increased the dangers of traveling.

Karanja said his two children raised their hands as they left the church and they were beaten with a cane, but not killed. His 90-year-old father was attacked with a machete, but survived, he said.
"The worst part is that they were hacking people and then setting them on fire," he added.

The attackers saw Karanja saving people and began stoning him, he said. Karanja said he ran and hid submerging himself in a pit latrine outside the church property. He stayed there about 30 minutes until he heard people speaking Kikuyu, he added.

The Kikuyu, Kenya's largest ethnic group, are accused of turning their dominance of politics and business to the detriment of others. Odinga is from the Luo tribe, a smaller but still major tribe that says it has been marginalized.

There are more than 40 tribes in Kenya, and political leaders have often used unemployed and uneducated young men to intimidate opponents. While Kibaki and Odinga have support from across the tribal spectrum, the youth responsible for the violence tend to see politics in strictly ethnic terms.

In Nairobi's slums, which are often divided along tribal lines, rival groups have been fighting each other with machetes and sticks as police use tear gas and bullets to keep them from pouring into the city center. The capital has been a ghost town for days, with residents stocking up on food and water and staying in their homes.

Parents in the capital's slums home to a third of its population searched for food, with many shops closed because of looting.

Anne Njoki, a 28-year-old Kikuyu, said she fled her home in a shantytown after she saw Kikuyus being attacked and their homes looted. She was camped near a military base with her sister, 3-year-old nephew and 7-year-old niece.

"They have taken our beds, blankets, even spoons," she said of the looters.

In the Mathare slum, Odinga supporters torched a minibus and attacked Kikuyu travelers, witnesses said.

"The car had 14 people in it, but they only slashed Kikuyus," said witness Boniface Mwangi. Five were attacked by the machete-wielding gang, he said.

The prospect of even more violence is ahead. Odinga insisted he would go ahead with plans to lead a protest march in the capital Thursday. The government banned the demonstration, but Odinga said: "It doesn't matter what they say."

The widespread violence and gathering international pressure could lead Kibaki to seek a compromise with the opposition.

The European Union and the United States have refused to congratulate Kibaki, and the EU and four top Kenyan election officials have called for an independent inquiry. In Britain, Kenya's former colonial ruler, Prime Minister Gordon Brown urged Kibaki and Odinga to hold talks.

Election commission chairman Samuel Kivuitu said Tuesday he had been pressed by both an opposition party and Kibaki's Party of National Unity to release the results of the vote. Western ambassadors "wanted me to delay announcing the results, even if it is for a week," to allow the commission to investigate alleged irregularities, he said.

Kibaki, 76, won by a landslide in 2002, ending 24 years of rule by Daniel arap Moi. Kibaki is praised for turning the country into an east African economic powerhouse with an average growth rate of 5 percent, but his anti-graft campaign has been seen as a failure, and the country still struggles with tribalism and poverty.

Odinga, 62, cast himself as a champion of the poor. His main constituency is the Kibera slum, where some 700,000 people live in poverty, but he has been accused of failing to do enough to help them in 15 years as a member of parliament.

Kenya's tourism industry, which brings in some $900 million and attracts more than 1 million visitors a year, is sure to suffer from the violence. The United States has warned tourists against all but essential travel to Kenya, and Britain has advised against travel in some areas.
Stuart Dickson, a Canadian who was vacationing in Nairobi, said he was cutting short his visit. "We are leaving early because of the riots and how dangerous it is to be out on the streets," he said. "With shops being closed and everything, it is not the best place for a tourist or traveler to be right now." Associated Press writers Tom Maliti, Katharine Houreld and Malkhadir M. Muhumed contributed to this report.
Kenyans recall the screams of the dying in burning church
January 3, 2008
By Robyn Dixon
Los Angeles Times

First, the attackers pelted the church with rocks to pin down the women, children and elderly people seeking shelter inside.

The armed men then slammed the church doors shut. They piled bicycles and mattresses outside the main entrance and blocked a smaller door at the back. They went about their business efficiently.

Inside the small Kenya Assemblies of God Church in Kiambaa, just outside the town of Eldoret in western Kenya, dozens of terrified people huddled together. They were Kikuyus, members of the tribe that has borne the brunt of the violence that followed last week's disputed presidential election.

The attackers, members of the rival Kalenjin tribe, poured fuel on the mattresses and piled on dried maize leaves from a nearby field. Then they set the barricades alight and waited until the flames burned high.

The church turned into an oven.

On Wednesday, the day after the attack, witnesses and survivors came to collect their families' belongings from the churchyard. In muted voices, they told their stories, reliving the horror.

There was so much screaming, said Samuel Mwangi, 34, who rushed to the church Tuesday to try to defend those trapped inside, that he could not distinguish the cries of the dying Kikuyu women and children from the clamor of Kalenjin women who came with the attackers to watch the slaughter.

President Mwai Kibaki's electoral victory, seen by the opposition as fraudulent, triggered days of ugly tribal violence from western Kenya to the coast. Mobs of opposition supporters have attacked Kibaki's fellow Kikuyus, burned houses, looted shops, hacked people's heads off or slashed them with machetes. Tribal fighting has raged around Eldoret and in some slum areas of Nairobi, the capital.

The number of dead at the Kiambaa church was still unclear Wednesday. Many bodies were burned to ashes, according to a witness with the International Committee of the Red Cross, which recovered 17 corpses but estimated that 35 people had died. Accounts from witnesses such as Mwangi offer contradictory reports on the death toll.

Some people did manage to escape the flames.

Mwangi saw a woman break through the main entrance, a baby tied to her back. But the wrap holding the infant caught fire. As the mother leaped to safety, the baby fell back into the flames and died.

The mother "ran away, with her hair burning. She was screaming," Mwangi said.

On Wednesday, the site was one of silent desolation. An acrid smell of ashes filled the air. Charred machetes, cooking pots and handbags were scattered on the ground beside children's shoes: these small pink sandals fit a toddler; those running shoes, a child of 7 or 8.

Inside the church was a piece of a Bible page, burned around the edges.

Before the attack, as rumors tore through the district that Kalenjins were burning Kikuyus' houses, the people of this small community reasoned that churches had often served as refuges in times of tribal tension.

But Kenya's violence in recent days, which has left at least 275 people dead, has crossed an invisible line. For the first time, Kenyan newspapers are raising the example of Rwanda, where more than 800,000 people died in ethnic killings in 1994.

The current atrocities, dubbed by the government as "ethnic cleansing" of the dominant Kikuyus, are unexpected and deeply shocking to Kenyans.
"We didn't think that they could burn them in the church. It is a terrible thing. I've never heard of that thing before," Mwangi said. "They did something which we can't imagine."

From a helicopter over the district on Wednesday, roadblocks were visible, thrown up by tribal gangs every few hundred yards. Plumes of smoke rose where fields or houses were burning. The lush countryside was pocked with what looked like shadows: the ashes of hundreds of torched houses. In some areas every home was burned, while a neighboring area remained untouched -- the stripe of tribe upon the landscape.

In Nairobi slum districts, Kikuyus and Luos, a smaller tribe that for the most part backed the president's rival, Raila Odinga, lived alongside each other and sometimes intermarried. But with the post-election violence, Luos were being driven from Kikuyu neighborhoods and vice versa. In the west of the country, hundreds of Kenyans have crossed the border to seek haven in Uganda.

Monday night, as violence swept Kenya, the men of Kiambaa armed themselves with machetes called pangas and stayed awake to defend their families in case of attack. Tuesday morning, they slept, exhausted after a night of fear. They woke to screams, as women warned that the enemy was approaching.

There were about 50 Kalenjins with bows and arrows and sharpened sticks. But as the Kiambaa men ran forward to fight, hundreds more attackers appeared.

"When these people came, there were so many that even with our pangas, there was nothing we could do," Mwangi said.

After the church burned, he and others managed to get inside. There was not one recognizable face left. In death, mothers hugged children.

Mwangi struggled for words to explain why something so unthinkable happened. "I think it's a grudge. It's because of politics."

Daniel Kibigo, 32, a mason, has a wife and two children. They stayed at home nearby when he ran to defend the church. When he returned home, he found that they had fled. He searched for them at the Catholic Cathedral in Eldoret, where hundreds are sheltering, but did not find them.

On Wednesday, he still did not know whether they were alive.

Kibigo's brother, George, died Tuesday trying to rescue those in the church. He was cut down by men with pangas. He ran across a field, blood pouring from a gash on his head, before he collapsed.

"When I saw my brother was dead, and even now I don't know where my family is, I feel as if I'm fed up with life," Kibigo said. "My children, my mother, my wife, I don't know where they are. I am just hoping they are alive."

Daniel Mwangi, a disabled man of about 40 who normally used a wheelchair, tried to flee the attack on one leg and a crutch. He fell, shot by an arrow. Attackers piled maize leaves over him and set him afire.

The violence and burning have frightened and enraged many Kikuyus. For Samuel Mwangi, his neighbors on Tuesday became "our enemies." But despite everything he saw, hate was a word he would not use.

Nor did he want revenge. "No, we want peace. We want to go back to our houses."
Blood in church as Kenya falls into tribal violence  
January 2, 2008  
Reuters News

KIAMBAA, Kenya -- Even as Kenya Red Cross staff cleared the last of the bodies from the church's smouldering remains, traces of the massacre still haunted it.

Pungent smoke rose from the blackened rubble where walls once sat. A brightly-patterned piece of a dress with burnt edges lay in ash. Underneath it: fragments of white bone.

About 30 Kikuyus died when a mob torched the church near Eldoret in the Rift Valley on Tuesday -- a slaughter evoking memories of ethnic violence usually associated with other countries in Africa, not one of its most stable.

"I saw them burn it," said Joseph Kwasila. "We ran away and they chased us to the main road. They were like lions in a rage, with sticks and machetes."

Thousands of President Mwai Kibaki's Kikuyu tribe fled the region on Wednesday, running across the wastes of an ethnic battleground few Kenyans can believe is their country.

Violence has erupted across opposition strongholds in the east African nation over the results of a disputed presidential election that saw Kibaki just defeat challenger Raila Odinga amid accusations of rigging by both sides.

The death toll from four days of clashes has passed 300, rights groups said, in what the government called an opposition-led "genocide." The opposition says the government is to blame.

At the church in Kiambaa, a primarily Kikuyu village near Eldoret town, misshapen cooking pots and sandals lay next to a pile of charred, mangled bicycles blocking the entrance.

Outside, a hastily-abandoned wicker handbag spilled its contents on the grass -- a wallet, a pair of sandals, a scarf.

"I'm leaving this place," said a Kikuyu, Simon Mwangi, as he made his way up the road carrying a big white sack. "If they can burn people in a church, how can I be safe?"

Thousands have taken shelter in churches and police stations across Eldoret town, the main city in the fertile Rift Valley about 300 km (190 miles) north of Nairobi, prompting a humanitarian crisis as food and water run short.

"We've been sleeping outside of the airport. Can you imagine how cold they were?" asked children's home operator Patrick Kariuki, gesturing to 23 youthful charges with him.

"I never thought Kenya could be like this. They're killing us because we voted for Kibaki. Maybe the election was rigged. Why don't they go to court instead of inciting?"

Though people from many of Kenya's 42 tribes have been killed, it is Kibaki's tribe -- the nation's biggest, and economically dominant -- that has seen organised targeting.

Scores of sharply dressed Kenyans with piles of luggage waited to get flights to Nairobi at Eldoret airport after youths blocked the main roads out with tree trunks and rocks.

Police estimate that roughly 75,000 Kenyans have fled their homes. Some have crossed into neighbouring states -- a reversal for a nation that for decades has accepted the victims of conflicts in Somalia, Sudan and Ethiopia.

In Eldoret, a Reuters reporter came across a roadblock manned by youths who fled when they saw police approaching.

"They are asking 'Who are you?' in Kalenjin language. If you don't understand, you are removed and killed with a panga (machete)," said Jane Chepchirchir, one of scores of people at Eldoret airport trying to flee to Nairobi.
Some at the roadblocks have ordered people to produce their national identity cards and have killed those with Kikuyu names, witnesses said.

The Rift Valley is home primarily to the Kalenjin tribe of former president Daniel arap Moi, but many Kikuyus have moved there to farm and intermarried, as in Chepchirchir’s case.

"I feel so bad these are my people killing, but Kikuyus are also my people because of my husband, so I am in the middle. Can't we all just be Kenyans?" Chepchirchir asked. (Writing by Tim Cocks, Editing by Bryson Hull and Philippa Fletcher)
Fire set by mob at Kenya church, killing dozens
January 2, 2008
By Jeffrey Gettleman; Kennedy Abwao contributed reporting from Nairobi, and Matthew L. Wald from Washington.

NAIROBI, Kenya -- Dozens of people seeking refuge in a church in Kenya were burned to death by a mob on Tuesday in an explosion of ethnic violence that is threatening to engulf this country, which until last week was one of the most stable in Africa.

According to witnesses and Red Cross officials, up to 50 people died inside the church in a small village in western Kenya after a furious crowd doused it with gasoline and set it on fire.

In Nairobi, the capital, tribal militias squared off against each other in several slums, with gunshots ringing out and clouds of black smoke wafting over the shanties. The death toll across the country is steadily rising.

Witnesses indicate that more than 250 people have been killed in the past two days in bloodshed connected to a disputed election Kenya held last week.

The European Union said Tuesday that there was clear evidence of ballot rigging, and European officials called for an independent investigation. Kenya's president, Mwai Kibaki, who won the election by a razor-thin margin, has refused such an inquiry.

Government officials said Tuesday that they would crack down on anyone who threatened law and order, and they banned political rallies. Meanwhile, Raila Odinga, the opposition leader who lost the election, has vowed to hold a million-person march on Thursday, which many Kenyans fear could become a bloodbath.

The Kenya celebrated for its spectacular wildlife and robust economy is now a land of distress. Tens of thousands of people have fled their homes, and some are so frightened that they have crossed into Uganda.

"We've had tribal fighting before, but never like this," said Abdalla Bujra, a retired Kenyan professor who runs a democracy-building organization.

As for the people burned alive in the church, Mr. Bujra echoed what many Kenyans were thinking: "It reminds me of Rwanda."

While the bloodshed of the past few days in Kenya has fallen far short of the Rwandan genocide in 1994, many Kenyans are worried that it is spiraling out of control.

The violence has been a mix of hooliganism, political protest and ethnic bloodletting. Most of the victims have been Kikuyus, the tribe of the president and Kenya's traditional ruling class. Kikuyus have dominated business and politics since independence in 1963. They run shops, restaurants, banks and factories across Kenya, from the Indian Ocean coast to the scenic savannah to the muggy shores of Lake Victoria in the west.

They make up only 22 percent of the population and are part of Kenya's mosaic of roughly 40 ethnic groups, which have intermarried and coexisted for decades. But the election controversy has created a new dynamic in which many of Kenya's other tribes, furious about the ballot rigging that may have kept Mr. Kibaki in power, have vented their frustrations against them.

"We are easy targets," said Stephen Kahianyu, a Kikuyu, staring at the embers of his home in Nairobi that was burned to the ground on Saturday.

Over the past few days, Kikuyus have fled to police stations and churches for protection.
On Monday night, several hundred Kikuyus barricaded themselves inside the Kenya Assemblies of God church in Kiambaa, a small village near the town of Eldoret. The next morning, a rowdy mob showed up.

According to witnesses, the mob was mostly Kalenjins, Luhyas and Luos, Mr. Odinga's tribe, which makes up about 13 percent of the population. They overran Kikuyu guards in front of the church and then pulled out cans of gasoline. There were no police officers around, witnesses said, and no water to put the fire out.

Most people escaped. But in addition to those killed, dozens were hospitalized with severe burns. Witnesses said most of the people hiding inside had been women and children.

The Eldoret area has become a killing zone. Residents say dozens of Kikuyus have been hacked to death, including four who were beheaded on Monday.

In Nairobi, a much-feared Kikuyu street gang called the Mungiki seems to be taking revenge. According to residents in a Luo area, the Mungiki, who are said to take an oath in which they drink human blood, were sweeping through the slums and killing Luos.

The government is now blaming Mr. Odinga for the violence.

"This isn't random," said Alfred Mutua, a government spokesman. "This is part of Raila's plan to create hysteria and trouble and make us declare a state of emergency," which Kenya seems to be rapidly approaching, with curfews in several areas and a ban on live news media coverage.

Western diplomats have been urging the political leaders to reconcile, but the lines between those leaders seem to be only hardening.

Mr. Odinga said he would not talk to Mr. Kibaki until the president admitted that he had lost the election.

Still, he urged his followers to calm down. "This is tarnishing our image as democratic and peaceful seekers of change," Mr. Odinga said.

Mr. Odinga and Mr. Kibaki ran together in 2002, in what was considered Kenya's first free election. The tribal alliance they built steamrolled Kenya's governing party and was a watershed moment. But the two fell out soon afterward, and diplomats here said that it has been very difficult trying to broker a truce.

"We just want them to meet," said Bo Jensen, the Danish ambassador to Kenya. "But at the moment they're quite far from each other."

The election did not start off badly. A record number of Kenyans, nearly 10 million, waited in lines miles long on Thursday to scratch an X next to their chosen candidate.

Mr. Kibaki, 76, vowed to keep growing Kenya's economy, one of the strongest in Africa, partly because of its billion-dollar tourist trade. Mr. Odinga, 62, ran as a champion of the poor and promised to end the tradition of Kikuyu favoritism.

Voting followed tribal lines, with a vast majority of Luos going for Mr. Odinga and up to 98 percent of Kikuyus in some areas voting for Mr. Kibaki.

Tribes, obviously, do matter in Kenya. But for the most part, the country has escaped the widespread ethnic bloodletting that has haunted so many of its neighbors, like Rwanda, Congo, Sudan and Ethiopia. In Kenya, the Kikuyu elite has shared the spoils of the system with select members of other tribes, which has helped defuse resentment.

That has led to decades of stability and is a reason why most Kenyans, including Mr. Bujra, the retired professor, do not think their country will end up like Rwanda, where nearly one million people were killed. Clearly, Kenya is a long way from that.

"In Rwanda, the conflict was between a small minority and a large majority," he said, referring to the history of Tutsis dominating the Hutu majority. "Here, it is different, because many tribes have a stake."
But election time in this country, where politics and tribe are so intertwined, is often bloody. Hundreds of people were killed in tribal clashes surrounding the 1992 and 1997 elections. And this time, passions were as high as ever.

The early results showed Mr. Odinga well ahead and more than half of Mr. Kibaki's cabinet losing their Parliament seats and therefore their jobs.

But when Mr. Odinga's lead began to vanish as further results were announced over the weekend, his supporters suspected that something was amiss. It was slow-motion theft to them, and they began to riot.

Even before Kenya's election commission declared Mr. Kibaki the winner on Sunday, election observers said the president's party had changed tally sheets to reflect more votes than were cast on election day. In some areas, there were more votes for the president than registered voters.

On Tuesday, Samuel Kivuitu, the election chairman, said he had been "under undue pressure" to certify the results.

Western governments, including the United States, are calling for a vote recount. "It's the only way forward," said Graham Elson, the deputy chief of the European observer delegation.
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