MUTIPARTISM AND NATIONAL INTEGRATION: THE KENYA CASE

Independent African countries that were born in no party or single party systems are now changing to multiparty. This is done with the aim of enhancing greater participation by all in the management of statecraft. This, it is believed will bring about democracy. Using E. R. Services’ Law of the Local Discontinuity of Progress, this study aims at understanding why Kenya opted for multipartyism, a change which is radical given that it was tried and failed immediately after independence. Is this change promoting ethnically based political parties and, and if so, is it not then a self-extinguishing democratization process? Is this change ushering Kenyans into a narrow social base society with real ethnic antagonism as opposed to National Integration? A look at the voting pattern in the first multiparty elections in Kenya and an analysis of the Kenyans attitude shows that Kenyan ethnic groups are busy outdoing one another, each trying to acquire rulership power. However, the bottom line is that multipartyism is not just a cyclic process of replacing one party with another. It involves cooperation and tolerance. Both the ruling party and the opposition have to work towards some unity in the eminent diversities if one has to talk of an integrated nation.