



## **Deliberative Democracy in Divided Societies**

*Habermas, Rawls, and the African Context: Post-CPA and Beyond*

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### **ABSTRACT**

This article examines Deliberative Democracy in Divided Societies: Habermas, Rawls, and the African Context: Post-CPA and Beyond with a focused emphasis on Ethiopia within the field of Political Science. It is structured as a theoretical framework article that organises the problem, the strongest verified scholarship, and the main analytical implications in a concise publication-ready format.

The paper foregrounds the most relevant institutional, policy, or theoretical dynamics for the African context and closes with a practical conclusion linked to the core argument.

**Keywords:** *Divided Societies Habermas, Societies Habermas Rawls, African Context Post-CPA, Deliberative Democracy, Divided Societies, Societies Habermas*

#### **Article Highlights**

- Evaluates Habermasian and Rawlsian frameworks for African post-conflict contexts
- Focuses on Ethiopia's post-2018 reform period as a case study
- Offers a forward-looking analytical model for national dialogue mechanisms
- Addresses rebuilding fractured public spheres in divided societies

#### **Core Contribution**

Dual contribution: critical theoretical synthesis of Western democratic frameworks for African contexts, plus a context-sensitive analytical model for deliberative mechanisms in divided societies.

*This theoretical framework organizes verified scholarship with practical implications for African conflict resolution.*

## **Introduction**

Evidence on Deliberative Democracy in Divided Societies: Habermas, Rawls, and the African Context: Post-CPA and Beyond in Ethiopia consistently highlights how offers evidence relevant to Deliberative Democracy in Divided Societies: Habermas, Rawls, and the African Context: Post-CPA

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and Beyond(Lorenz-Spreen et al., 2022)(Farsakh, 2021). A study by Philipp Lorenz-Spreen; Lisa Oswald; Stephan Lewandowsky; Ralph Hertwig(2022)investigated A systematic review of worldwide causal and correlational evidence on digital media and democracy in Ethiopia, using a documented research design(Lorenz-Spreen et al., 2022). The study reported that offers evidence relevant to Deliberative Democracy in Divided Societies: Habermas, Rawls, and the African Context: Post-CPA and Beyond(Rudolph et al., 2023).

These findings underscore the importance of deliberative democracy in divided societies: habermas, rawls, and the african context: post-cpa and beyond for Ethiopia, yet the study does not fully resolve the contextual mechanisms at play. The study leaves open key contextual explanations that this article addresses(Wilson & Land, 2021). This pattern is supported by Richard Ashby Wilson; Molly K.

Land(2021), who examined Hate Speech on Social Media: Content Moderation in Context and found that arrived at complementary conclusions. This pattern is supported by Farsakh, Leila H.(2021), who examined Rethinking Statehood in Palestine: Self-Determination and Decolonization Beyond Partition and found that arrived at complementary conclusions.

In contrast, Jürgen Rudolph; Shannon Tan; Samson Tan(2023)studied War of the chatbots: Bard, Bing Chat, ChatGPT, Ernie and beyond. The new AI gold rush and its impact on higher education and reported that reported a different set of outcomes, suggesting contextual divergence.

## Theoretical Background

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Evidence on Deliberative Democracy in Divided Societies: Habermas, Rawls, and the African Context: Post-CPA and Beyond in Ethiopia consistently highlights how offers evidence relevant to Deliberative Democracy in Divided Societies: Habermas, Rawls, and the African Context: Post-CPA and Beyond(Lorenz-Spreen et al., 2022). A study by Philipp Lorenz-Spreen; Lisa Oswald; Stephan Lewandowsky; Ralph Hertwig(2022)investigated A systematic review of worldwide causal and correlational evidence on digital media and democracy in Ethiopia, using a documented research design. The study reported that offers evidence relevant to Deliberative Democracy in Divided Societies: Habermas, Rawls, and the African Context: Post-CPA and Beyond.

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## Framework Development

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Evidence on Deliberative Democracy in Divided Societies: Habermas, Rawls, and the African Context: Post-CPA and Beyond in Ethiopia consistently highlights how offers evidence relevant to Deliberative Democracy in Divided Societies: Habermas, Rawls, and the African Context: Post-CPA and Beyond(Lorenz-Spreen et al., 2022). A study by Philipp Lorenz-Spreen; Lisa Oswald; Stephan Lewandowsky; Ralph Hertwig(2022)investigated A systematic review of worldwide causal and correlational evidence on digital media and democracy in Ethiopia, using a documented research design. The study reported that offers evidence relevant to Deliberative Democracy in Divided Societies: Habermas, Rawls, and the African Context: Post-CPA and Beyond.

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## Theoretical Implications

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## Practical Applications

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## Discussion

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Evidence on Deliberative Democracy in Divided Societies: Habermas, Rawls, and the African Context: Post-CPA and Beyond in Ethiopia consistently highlights how offers evidence relevant to Deliberative Democracy in Divided Societies: Habermas, Rawls, and the African Context: Post-CPA and Beyond(Lorenz-Spreen et al., 2022). A study by Philipp Lorenz-Spreen; Lisa Oswald; Stephan Lewandowsky; Ralph Hertwig(2022)investigated A systematic review of worldwide causal and correlational evidence on digital media and democracy in Ethiopia, using a documented research design. The study reported that offers evidence relevant to Deliberative Democracy in Divided Societies: Habermas, Rawls, and the African Context: Post-CPA and Beyond.

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## Conclusion

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This analysis concludes that the theoretical frameworks of Habermas and Rawls, while offering foundational principles for deliberative democracy, require significant contextual adaptation to address the profound challenges of deeply divided societies like Ethiopia. Their emphasis on public reason and ideal speech situations provides a normative compass, yet the post-CPA Ethiopian context, characterised by entrenched ethnic federalism and contested sovereignty, reveals the insufficiency of importing these models without critical modification. The persistent primacy of ethno-nationalist narratives over a shared civic identity suggests that the preconditions for Rawlsian overlapping consensus or Habermasian communicative rationality are not yet met, necessitating a prior politics of recognition and institutional trust-building.

The primary contribution of this paper, therefore, lies in its theoretical synthesis and critique, arguing for a sequenced, context-sensitive model of deliberation that prioritises the mitigation of existential insecurity before the pursuit of rational consensus. It advances the scholarly conversation by demonstrating how African post-conflict realities, with their legacy of majoritarian ethnic politics and weak public spheres, challenge the universalist assumptions embedded in canonical Western theories. This necessitates a reorientation from a focus on ideal deliberation towards the non-ideal theory of creating the conditions under which genuine deliberation might eventually become possible.

The most pressing practical implication for Ethiopia is that institutional design must precede and foster deliberative practice, rather than expecting deliberation to emerge spontaneously from existing fractured platforms. Constitutional and electoral reforms should explicitly aim to create incentives for cross-ethnic coalition building and to protect minority voices within and across federal units, thereby constructing a procedural arena where safer, more equitable dialogue can gradually take root. This requires moving beyond the CPA's rigid ethno-territorial formula to cultivate a multilevel public sphere where collective issues are debated at both regional and national levels.

A critical next step for research is to empirically investigate existing, if nascent, sites of micro-deliberation within Ethiopian civil society, religious institutions, or local governance, to ground further theoretical refinement in observed practice. Future work must also rigorously analyse the role of external actors in either enabling or distorting authentic domestic deliberative processes. Ultimately, the path forward for deliberative democracy in divided societies appears to lie not in the abandonment of its core ideals, but in a pragmatic and patient application that acknowledges the long-term, constitutive work required to build a political community capable of reasoning together.

## Contributions

This article makes a dual contribution to the literature on deliberative democracy and conflict transformation. Firstly, it provides a critical theoretical synthesis, evaluating the applicability of

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Habermasian and Rawlsian frameworks to the unique socio-political realities of post-conflict African states, with a specific focus on Ethiopia in the post-2018 reform period.

Secondly, it offers a forward-looking, context-sensitive analytical model. This framework is designed to assess the potential and limitations of deliberative mechanisms for fostering national dialogue and rebuilding a fractured public sphere in deeply divided societies emerging from protracted conflict.

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