

DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION IN MADAGASCAR, MALAWI, AND
MOZAMBIQUE

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DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION IN MADAGASCAR, MALAWI, AND
MOZAMBIQUE

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CHAPTER I

FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The 1990s marked an optimistic era in Africa's political history. After nearly three decades of authoritarian rule, often characterized by "political repression, corruption, human rights abuses, and economic mismanagement,"¹ leaders of various African nations finally participated in multi-party elections. Since then, these countries have faced a daunting challenge; transitioning from a simple electoral to a consolidated democracy. This thesis examines three specific sub-Saharan countries: Madagascar, Malawi, and Mozambique. All three nations have experienced a democratic transition and nearly two decades of open elections consisting of different competing parties. So how have they fared? Should we now consider them consolidated democracies? When examining three pivotal facets used in assessing the quality of democracy: elections,

¹ Guy Martin, "Preface: Democratic Transition in Africa," *A Journal of Opinion* 21, No. ½ (1993): 6.

political parties and civil society; it is apparent that there still are pitfalls existent in their paths towards consolidation. Though all three countries have completed great strides in political liberalization, the gap between electoral democracy and consolidated democracy has not been bridged. The discussion of democratic transition is a pertinent subject in contemporary African politics. All three countries examined in this thesis have followed a similar history: a long period of colonial rule, national independence around the 1960s, an Authoritarian regime, and an eventual democratic transition around the mid 1990s. Current transformations of authoritarian regimes in these cases, however, should not be mistaken for fully fledged consolidated democracy. As Michael Bratton observes, “political liberalization and democratization are simultaneous and complementary,”² but each is ultimately an autonomous process. The former is simply the disassembly of authoritarian regimes, while the latter requires deliberate construction of democratic principles. Madagascar and Malawi experienced a dictator with a dominant party for more than two decades after gaining independence from their colonial powers. All three nations have also held multi-party elections since the mid 1990s to break hegemonic

² Goran Hyden and Michael Bratton, *Governance and Politics in Africa* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1992), 29.

authoritarian practices. When examining several components of democracy beyond the electoral dimension, however, it is evident that all three governments are not yet in their consolidated form.

Organization of thesis

The first chapter of this thesis will lay out the major framework used to discuss the current state of democratic transition for our three countries. There are certainly many definitions and types of democracies as well as different criteria used in gauging the quality of democracies. This first section will elaborate on exactly which definition will be used for the research. Furthermore, it is difficult to pin point one democratic theory that has held empirically true for many African countries. This section will expand on those obstacles which scientists face when trying to paint the region, or the continent, with one brushstroke. Africa simply cannot be “treated as a monolith.”³ Lastly, the first chapter will outline the reasons why I have chosen these three sub-Saharan countries and why this research is relevant towards their transitions to possibly becoming consolidated democracies.

Each country will be assigned its own chapter. The main focus of the research is to assess the current state of each government and where they are currently on the democratic ladder. Though this thesis focuses on contemporary politics, it is imperative to briefly examine the colonial era as it establishes the pre-conditions existent in today’s African political culture. Each country study will outline major post-independence

³ Gretchen Bauer and Scott D. Taylor, *Politics in Southern Africa: State and Society in Transition* (Boulder, CO; Lynne Rienner, 2005), 2.

political events as well as recent elections. The goal is to focus on three major topics: 1. Determining roughly the time when each country started their transitioning process and analyzing pivotal elections which soon followed, 2. Identifying the types of parties and determining whether the country has been either a one party state, a one party dominated state with other smaller parties, a two party state, or a multiparty state, and 3. Identifying the role of civil society in each nation.

Essentially, my research has found that these three pivotal criteria have been problematic in all three countries. These setbacks have decelerated, or in one case, Madagascar, reversed the process of democratization. There are obviously other relevant and equally important measures used to determine a country's quality of democracy and some of these will be mentioned as well. Due to the limitation of the size of this paper, I can only examine three crucial components of each country's government.

This thesis is a comparative analysis between the democratic transitions of three countries in the sub-Saharan region. Therefore, the last chapter outlines the similarities and differences between the countries' pitfalls and setbacks. This chapter will also discuss the major challenges which these countries face in the future and prescribe possible recommendations which might help them foster better democratic principles.

Framework

What exactly do we mean by democracy in this context? What is the difference between electoral and liberal democracy? Why a three-country study as opposed to one, and why are Madagascar, Malawi, and Mozambique specifically examined in this thesis? These are some of the main questions which will be addressed in this chapter. But before

we examine these questions, it is imperative to first define and discuss the importance of democracy in general.

Though it is an ongoing debate among political scientists whether an idealist's liberal form of democracy is suitable for every African country, I firmly believe that studying the determinants and components of democracy are essential for several reasons. Many political scientists, such as Larry Diamond, Robert Dahl, and even earlier thinkers like Aristotle and Plato, agree that democratization is "generally considered a good thing and that democracy is the best form of government."⁴ The best realizable form of government is mixed or constitutional where freedom is constrained by the rule of law and popular sovereignty is produced by state institutions which contain order and stability.⁵ On a very broad level, liberty, coupled with the minimization of violence and freedoms from "torture, arbitrary arrest, enslavement, and genocide,"⁶ are clearly fundamental human rights. The democratic process also "promotes human development while providing the best means for people to protect and advance their shared interests."⁷

More specifically with the sub-Saharan context, stable democracies, which have endured for a considerable period of time in their consolidated form, are less likely to be in violent conflicts with one another. Furthermore, institutionalized democracies "appear to foster peaceful conflict resolution within their societies."⁸ Rudolph Rummel's extensive study on domestic conflict suggests that countries with authoritarian and absolutist leaders are more likely to enter into genocide and mass murder. According to

⁴ Larry Diamond, *Developing Democracy: Towards Consolidation* (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 1999), 2.

⁵ Gabriel A. Almond, *Political Science: The History of the Discipline* (Oxford: Oxford Press, 1996), 54-61.

⁶ (Diamond 1999, 3)

⁷ (Diamond 1999, 3)

⁸ *Idib.*, 5.

Rummel, “the only way to virtually eliminate genocide is through restriction and checking power.”⁹ This is done by fostering democratic freedoms. Empirical evidence has shown much violent political instability and economic hardships in many African countries, including those in this thesis. Hence the study of democratic consolidation in respect to peace, individual freedoms, expression, and overall stability is critical.

According to Larry Diamond, there are more than five hundred¹⁰ definitions and categories of democracies today. Conditions for what make up an actual consolidated democracy differ among social scientists. It is important to visualize the concept of democracy on a spectrum from a minimalist to a maximalist idea. A minimalist conception would be *electoral democracy*. Derived from Joseph Schumpeter, electoral democracy is defined as “a system for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people’s vote.”¹¹ This minimalist conception is a constitutional system where legislative and executive offices are filled through regular, competitive elections. Though popular among many scientists, it leaves behind a number of “expanded procedural concepts.”¹²

Liberal Democracy contains all of the elements of an electoral system, but it also requires the “absence of reserved domains of power for the military or other actors not accountable to the electorate.”¹³ Liberal democracies also exercise vertical as well as horizontal accountability of officeholders to one another where the power of the executive and other branches of the government is balanced and checked. Furthermore, it

⁹ Rudolph J. Rummel, “Power Genocide, and Mass Murder,” *Journal of Peace Research* 31, no. 1 (1994): 8.
¹⁰ (Diamond 1999, 7)

¹¹ Joseph Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy*, 2d ed. (New York: Harper, 1947), 269.

¹² Dietrich Rueschemeyer, Evelyne H. Stephens, John D. Stephens, *Capitalist Development and Democracy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 46.

¹³ (Diamond 1999, 10)

encompasses an extensive provision for “political and civic pluralism” where individual freedoms, interests, and values are protected beyond simple “periodic elections.”¹⁴ Larry Diamond lists ten major components of liberal democracy not found in the minimalist conception. Some of these include: control of the state, constraint of executive power, presumption of party alternation in government, freedom of expression of cultural-ethnic minority groups, alternative source of information with independent media, and citizens’ political equality.¹⁵

The definition of democracy used for this thesis falls somewhere in between these two extreme concepts. A good example of a midrange definition of democracy is Juan Linz’s conception. It is defined as

political systems that allow the free formulation of political preferences through the use of basic freedoms of association, information, communication for the purpose of a free competition between leaders to validate at regular intervals, by non violent means, the claim to rule without excluding any office of national decision-making from that competition.¹⁶

The medium definition of democracy is extremely suitable for the discussion of Madagascar, Malawi, and Mozambique. All three have obviously surpassed the electoral stage where each country have held open, free, and fair elections with competing parties. They are not however, liberal, nor in their consolidated forms, as there are still obvious problems in their governments. They are somewhere in between the transition phase and the consolidated form. Consequently, this thesis explores various issues concerning elections, political parties, and major facets in civil society which have hindered their process of democratic consolidation.

¹⁴ Ibid., 11.

¹⁵ Ibid., 11-12.

¹⁶ (Diamond 1999, 13)

Methodology

Political scientists assess the quality of democracy by examining several components of governments. On a broad scope, a government with a “quality democracy” is one that provides its citizens with a rich degree of “freedom, political equality, and popular control over public policies and policy makers.”¹⁷ It also must contain legitimate, lawfully functioning, stable institutions and it must satisfy citizens’ expectations of governance. Citizens of a good democracy have the “sovereign power to evaluate whether the government provides liberty and equality according to the rule of law.”¹⁸ Larry Diamond mentions more than eight dimensions on which democracies vary in quality. Some of these include: rule of law, competition, level of freedom, vertical and horizontal accountability, equality, and socioeconomic development. For this thesis, I will examine elections, political parties, and civil society. They are three pivotal sectors of democracy which have been weak for all three countries. Why are these three criteria important?

Elections and political parties are somewhat related. In this context, the question is not whether Madagascar, Malawi and Mozambique have held free elections; they have. Rather it is how these countries have conducted them; it pertains more to the structure, stability, logistics, and fairness of the multi-party presidential elections which have occurred after their democratic transition. Political institutions and party systems are “strongly related to the persistence and stability of democracy.”¹⁹ Institutionalized

¹⁷ Larry Diamond and Leonardo Morlino, *Assessing the Quality of Democracy* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), xii.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, xii

¹⁹ Larry Diamond, Juan J. Linz and Seymour M. Lipset, *Politics in Developing Countries: Comparing Experiences with Democracy* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1995), 33.

systems, which have a stable behavior, have proved to be more predictable and more enduring in the long run. Individuals and groups within a society that contain institutionalized systems can confine themselves to legal and constitutional methods without having to use force. While the outcomes of elections and political parties are always uncertain, “institutionalized democracies have rules that protect basic interests.”²⁰ Additionally, institutionalized interactions will always create a sense of “bargaining, accommodation, and trust among competing actors.”²¹

Political parties remain the most important mediating institutions between the citizens and the state, according to Seymour Martin Lipset.²² Forming viable political parties is also a valuable manner in “constituting effective opposition” in a democracy. Only political parties can mold certain identities and different preferences into “laws, appropriations, policies, and coalitions.”²³ Democracy cannot have stable and effective governance without an effective party system with a strong base of support.

Should the state or the people have more power? This is a recurring question among political scientists. Arguably an ideal democracy would contain a careful balance between civil society and the state. So what exactly is civil society? According to Larry Diamond, it is the “realm of organized social life that is voluntary, self-generating, self-supporting, autonomous from the state, and bound by a legal order or set of rules.”²⁴ It is comprised of various organizations both formal and informal which include interest

²⁰ (Diamond 2004, xii)

²¹ Guillermo O'Donnell, Philippe C. Schmitter, Laurence Whiteheads, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Comparative Perspectives* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press), 56.

²² Martin Seymour Lipset, “The Social Requisites of Democracy Revisited,” *American Sociological Review* 59, no. 1 (February 1994): 12-15.

²³ (Diamond 1995, 34)

²⁴ Larry Diamond, “Rethinking Civil Society: Toward Democratic Consolidation,” *Journal of Democracy* 5, no. 3 (July 1994): 5

groups, cultural and religious institutions, educational groups, mass media, civic, and developmental associations.²⁵ The major difference between civil society and other political groups is that they act in the public realm by relating to the state with no intentions of seeking political control. Political entities, such as political parties, have one main purpose and that is to “win and exercise state power.”²⁶

Civil society is vital in enriching the quality of democracy for several reasons. First, a vigorous civil society can limit the power of the state and “resist the tyrannical abuse of state power.”²⁷ Empirical evidence will show in the following chapters where civil society has been the main source of pressure for democratization. Student protests, religious institutions, and other groups unaffiliated with the government helped jumpstart political liberalization and eventual democratic transition in sub-Saharan Africa. Civil society also deepens, consolidates, and maintains democracy by “stimulating political participation, monitoring,”²⁸ and most importantly, limiting state power. They can hold elected officials accountable in between elections. In some ways, civil society also can identify and groom a diverse pool of potential political leaders. Elections are often monitored by autonomous groups in civil society; this in turn improves democracy.

One crucial manner in which civil society deepens the level of democracy is by “enhancing accountability, responsiveness, inclusiveness, and legitimacy.”²⁹ This is particularly true for this case study, and in some ways, for many other sub-Saharan countries. A weak civil society in Madagascar, Malawi, and Mozambique experience a

²⁵ (Diamond 1995, 27)

²⁶ Alfred Stepan, *Rethinking Military Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 5-21.

²⁷ Ibid., 27.

²⁸ (Diamond 1995, 28)

²⁹ (Diamond 1995, 29)

strong sense of mistrust towards the government. Finally, a society which has a strong “associational life”³⁰ creates a strong democracy where as a nation with a weak voluntary association of interest groups eventually will reinforce authorization rule, obstructing the development of democracy.

Mozambique, Madagascar, and Malawi were chosen for this case for a number of reasons. Southern Africa is one of the areas of the continent that “warrants systematic treatment as a region.”³¹ Mozambique and Malawi share their borders while the fourth largest island in the world, Madagascar, is located just 250 miles across the Mozambique Channel. I was born and raised there; politics in this Indian Ocean Island has always been a personal fascination.

In 2009, Madagascar experienced a military coup d’état and currently is headed by an interim leader, a young mayor from the capital city. Technically, this event categorizes the country as un-democratic. Nonetheless, I have chosen to keep it in this study because it serves as a strong empirical evidence of the fragility of transitional democracies in the area. Prior to the 2009 incident, the island experienced strong economic growth with infrastructural improvements as well as signs of better governance. Nevertheless, Madagascar’s republic was transformed overnight, experiencing a classic case of “reversal”³² in the democratic process; it serves as a fruitful case to examine.

³⁰ Ibid., 30.

³¹ (Bauer and Taylor 2005, 3)

³² Samuel P. Huntington’s last chapter in Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century explains the regressing democracies and reverse waves throughout history.

There is currently much literature which supports the study of a single country as opposed to a comparative analysis of a few countries. African politics, in particular the recent ongoing democratization process, however, presents a highly complex case which requires close examination of more than one sample. By “identifying a number of common empirical and socially constructed attributes within and across states and society,”³³ we are able to decipher common problems present in the region. With almost identical patterns of colonial, post-colonial, and post democratic transition experience, we are able to prescribe possible political reforms to enrich the quality of democracy.

³³ (Bauer and Taylor 2005, 3)

CHAPTER II

MALAWI

Malawi is a small, landlocked country in the sub-Saharan region surrounded by Mozambique, Tanzania, and Zambia. It was first established in 1891 and was known as the British protectorate of Nyasaland. Like the other two countries in this thesis, Malawi followed a very similar political and economic trend. First, it became an independent nation in 1964 and soon after, a self-declared “president-for- life,”³⁴ ruled the nation under heavy authoritarian practices for almost thirty years. An unbearably harsh economic decline in the 1980s, along with the “loss of international support” for the country, inevitably forced political liberalization in the early 1990s. Student protests and pressures from the local churches as well as international organizations paved the way for Malawi’s official democratic transition phase. In 1994, the country held its first multi-party election and thus far has experienced almost twenty years of its democratic transition period. This chapter will examine Malawi’s pre-colonial period, the colonial era, the post-independence era under Hastings Banda, and the three national elections which have occurred since the democratic transition phase has started. It will illustrate the “many pitfalls on the path to more democratic rules after decades of authoritarian rule.”³⁵

³⁴ (Bauer and Taylor 2005, 19)

³⁵ Ibid., 21

Pre Colonial Period

The original inhabitants of the area around Lake Malawi were “short-statured” people who looked similar to the Khoisan peoples of Botswana, Namibia, and South Africa. These hunter and gatherer population was known as “Akafula” in Malawi. The Akafula people later were dispersed and displaced by Bantu groups that moved in that region.³⁶ According to Malawian history specialist, Harvey Sindima, the Karanga people moved from the shores of Lake Tanganyika into contemporary Malawi around the ninth century. The Karanga people were agriculturalists and pastoralists who settled in the region primarily as farmers. The Bantu-speakers later settled central and southern Malawi between the thirteenth and sixteenth century. The vast and widely settled community of “Maravi” people was a collective part of those Bantu speakers. The ethnic groups of Malawians today: the Chewa, Mang’anja, Nyanja, Chipeta, Nsenga, Chikunda, Mbo, Ntumba, and Zimba ultimately derived from the Maravi people.³⁷ The Ngoni people from the south and the Yao, an affluent group of traders from the southeast, invaded Malawi in the nineteenth century. Another group from the neighboring Mozambique region, the Lomwe, fled into Malawi later that same century in order to escape harsh treatment by the Portuguese.³⁸

Most of the Maravi populations during the pre-colonial era were farmers. Later, however, they started possessing specialized skills in making cotton cloth, producing salt, and working with iron. The geographic location of Malawi made it a center of

³⁶ Bridgal Pachai, *Malawi: History of the Nation* (London: Longman Group, 1973), 1-2.

³⁷ Harvey Sindima, *Malawi’s First Republic: An Economic and Political Analysis* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2002), 8.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 9.

international commerce as it linked central and eastern Africa. The Maravi people often traded Ivory to Europeans and Arabs, a prized commodity at the time. Neighboring islands of Reunion and Mauritius in the Indian Ocean had European-owned coffee and sugar plantations, which required heavy manual labor. This prompted slave trading practices well into the nineteenth century in the sub-Saharan region.³⁹ The Yao people collaborated with Arabs as well as the Portuguese to eventually set up three major slave-trading centers: Zanzibar and the Portuguese ports of Quelimane and Inhambane. Slave trading integrated Malawi into the world economy, but according to Sindima, it had “deleterious effects.”⁴⁰ It separated families, destroyed villages, damaged the agrarian economy, and ultimately produced entrepreneurs acting as agents of foreign powers who weakened the indigenous political authorities.

Colonial Period

Malawi officially became a British protectorate in 1891 when the region was renamed as the British Central Africa Protectorate.⁴¹ Later in 1907, the name of protectorate was changed to Nyasaland. A legislative and executive council were established later that same year only for European residents, while the interests of the indigenous African population were represented by a Scottish missionary appointed by the governor.

Like other European colonial powers, the British exercised a system of indirect rule. In 1933, two decrees were setup: the Native Authority Ordinance and the Native Courts Ordinance. The former was primarily to recognize the roles of local chiefs and

³⁹ David Williams, *Malawi: The Politics of Despair* (Ithica: Cornell University Press, 1978), 29.

⁴⁰ (Sindima 2002, 13)

⁴¹ CIA factbook. <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/mi.html>

appointed native authorities. The latter established a system of local government and introduced a “new court system that involved setting up native courts that would rely largely upon customary law.”⁴² As in most other colonies, however, the system was conducted in an exclusionary fashion, where representation was centralized and hierarchical, and the colony was ruled by elite civil servants. Though these ordinances were setup to create a voice for the African population, much of the decisions were still made by the colonial power. As soon as the protectorate was setup, many local groups organized to address issues concerning colonial rule. Teachers, district clerks, and local chiefs came together to form coalitions with two purposes in mind: assert African opinion to the colonial powers and inform the native population of laws passed by the colonial state. These native organizations were initially sanctioned by the colonial state, but later were considered a nuisance and the British wanted them eliminated. In 1933, an official ordinance was passed to abolish the groups, but ultimately never succeeded. A larger regional association, called the Nyasaland African Congress (NAS), was formed in 1944. The president of the group, Levi Mumba, along with his constituents, called for “political representation, economic, social development, and racial equality.”⁴³ Another goal of the new organization was to create a sense of unity, previously lacking in the smaller, dispersed groups throughout the colony. In 1946 the British colonial government officially recognized the NAC as a representative for the native associations.

Other European powers along with the British in the Rhodesia region wanted to create a federation in order to protect their interest in the area. The formation of the Central African Federation between the northern and southern Rhodesia would guarantee

⁴² (Sindima 2002, 35-36)

⁴³ Ibid., 37.

access to Nyasaland's labor reserves for many European powers in nearby territory. Many Europeans were concerned that if such a federation was not formed, neighboring South Africa would eventually steal Malawian migrant labor force for their mining industry. The Nyasaland African Congress made it a priority to thwart the formation of the federation. The local population had several reasons for vehemently opposing a Central African Federation: 1. it was viewed as only beneficial for Europeans, 2. the Africans were worried that the racist policies found in southern Rhodesia might trickle into Malawi if the federation was formed, and 3. the main objective at this point for the Africans was to jump start the process of national independence. Despite opposition, however, the three colonies eventually combined to form the Central African federation in 1953.⁴⁴

Independence

The disappointing failure to stop the formation of the Central African Federation slowed the momentum of the NAC's nationalist sentiments. In 1955, however, African officials no longer were appointed but rather elected, and representatives were now able to participate in the legislative councils. A group of young outspoken, well-educated and confident students were among the first to form the Malawian nationalist movement. According to David Williams, they needed a more elderly figure to "win allegiance of senior members of Congress,"⁴⁵ and so they turned to Dr. Hastings Banda. Banda, who had returned from Ghana in 1958, led the nationalist struggle. He was welcomed with

⁴⁴ (Bauer and Taylor 2005, 24)

⁴⁵ (Williams 1978, 173)

open arms while some even considered him as a “Messiah.”⁴⁶ Many Africans viewed Banda as someone who could unite both modern and traditional views in the region.⁴⁷ Within a month, Hastings Banda was elected president-general of the NAC, but was detained with other African leaders when riots broke out concerning the resistance to the federation. While exiled, he and other members formally transformed the NAC to the Malawi Congress Party, MCP. After Banda was released, a constitutional conference was held in London in 1962. The process of granting Malawi full independence started shortly after and within 1963, the executive council was replaced by a legislative body; Banda was sworn in as prime minister. Malawi was officially granted full independence in 1964.

Banda’s Rule

Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda was a dictator and led Malawi as an authoritarian regime. Many political scientists have described his twenty-five-year presidency as “repressive, tyrannical, neo-patrimonial, and predatory.”⁴⁸ From the start, it was apparent that the self declared president wanted to centralize all facets of the government. Deborah Kaspin’s essay in the *Journal of Modern African Studies* explicitly depicts the framework of Banda’s oppressive regime. In her research, she described the various manners in which the president divided Malawi along ethnic identities. From the very start, a few young colleagues opposed some of Banda’s pretensions of absolute rule; consequently

⁴⁶ (Bauer and Taylor 2005, 25)

⁴⁷ Peter Foster, “Culture, Nationalism, and the Invention of Tradition in Malawi,” *Journal of Modern African Studies* 32, no. 3 (1994): 488.

⁴⁸ (Bauer and Taylor 2005, 25)

they were immediately dismissed. This, so called “cabinet crisis”⁴⁹ would set the tone for the leader’s eminent dictatorial policies for many years after.

Banda was able to exert absolute power in the Malawian government in three different manners: 1. centralize all political and economic power in his own hands, 2. persecute, exile, and essentially weed out any threat or opposition to this party, and 3. divide the country along ethnic lines in order to favor his own region and his own ethnic group. Within the first two years, Banda was able to “take over the Ministries Agriculture, Justice, Public Works, and Foreign Affairs.”⁵⁰ He constructed a one party system and in 1971, established himself as “president-for-life.” The judicial system, which was molded after the British courts, was completely transformed. A parallel system which followed traditional laws was created and was tightly controlled by the MCP. The dictator also single-handedly managed all economic facets of the Malawian government. According to Gretchen Bauer, Banda controlled as much as 50% of the national economy by taking over conglomerates of tobacco, insurance, manufacturing, and banking companies. Like many other political tyrants in the sub-Saharan region, the president also led a “grandiose lifestyle.”⁵¹

Banda took serious measures to punish political opponents. According to David Posner, any dissenters were detained and tortured in horrific prisons.⁵² Moreover, any member of the cabinet who was even suspected of opposing Banda’s policies was persecuted. Some fled the country, some were pursued by the MCP, and some were

⁴⁹ Deborah Kaspin, “The Politics of Ethnicity in Malawi’s Democratic Transition,” *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 33, no. 4 (December 1995): 603.

⁵⁰ (Bauer and Taylor 2005, 26)

⁵¹ (Bauer and Taylor 2005, 26)

⁵² David Posner. “Malawi’s New Dawn,” *Journal of Democracy* 6, no. 1 (January 1995): 134.

assassinated by Special Forces of the government. Even poets who insinuated opposition in their literature were persecuted. A few famous incidents concerning Banda's harsh punishments have been documented. The disappearance of the Chirwa brothers in 1981 is a famous example. The Chirwa brothers were known as "Banda's boys." These young men were abducted from Zambia and tried for treason in 1981.⁵³ Additionally, three ministers and an MP were assassinated in, what is known as, the "Mwanza incident of 1983." Famous poet Jack Mapanje was detained by the government for his apparent "seditious" poetry; he was held in prison for five year without any trial.⁵⁴

Banda was also able to the regional and ethnic division in Malawi in his favor. Malawi is primarily divided in three distinct regions: the North, Central, and the South. The north has always been less populated and not as developed as the rest of the country. Many of the population in this region were migrant workers who often traveled to South Africa and the Rhodesias. Scottish Presbetyan churches during the colonial era also established schools, which provided better education for citizens in the northern region. The citizens of the north hence had better chances to take the "lead in politics during the colonial period and also to move into good positions in the colonial and post-colonial civil service."⁵⁵

The central region of Malawi was the breadbasket of the country. It produced most of the agricultural products such as maize and other staple foods. Export crops like tobacco, tea, cotton, and coffee were also found in the central region. In contrast to the north, the central region was more densely populated and relatively behind in terms of

⁵³ Ibid., 134

⁵⁴ Richard Carver, *Where Silence Rules: the suppressions of dissent in Malawi*. New York and Washington, DC: Human Rights Watch, 1990), 75-79.

⁵⁵ (Chiriwa 1994, 97)

educational achievements. The south was the commercial hub of the country and it attracted people from neighboring countries like Mozambique. The south was also the most ethnically mixed, most urbanized, and the most economically advanced region of the country; “Malawi’s small manufacturing base was located in the south.”⁵⁶

According to David Posner, ethnic identities played an important role during the post-independence era in Malawi. Every official documentations contained information on one’s ethnic group and region. President Banda was ambiguous towards his attitude on the role of ethnicity. While he suggested that the people of Malawi were Malawians rather than parts of different ethnic groups, he always reminded everyone that he himself was a Chewa, the largest ethnic group. Banda’s policies clearly favored the central, southern region, and his Chewa ethnic group. Financially, money was being poured into these regions in a disproportionate manner. Culturally, the president made Chewa the official language and moved the capital city to the central region. Workers and civil servants from the north were “vilified by the president”⁵⁷ and political opposition from the north was punished unfairly.

Democratic Transition

There are three main reasons why Malawi finally started its democratic transition process in the mid 1990s. First, the economy had deteriorated drastically and living conditions were harsh. Secondly, international donors pressured Malawi to liberalize their government and they threatened to halt economic assistance unless Banda reformed his

⁵⁶ (Chiriwa, 1994, 99)

⁵⁷ (Bauer and Taylor 2005, 28)

political regime. Lastly, internal pressures from different religious organizations and opposition groups pushed for the eventual democratic transition.

In the late 1980s, Malawi's economy plunged; the country also entered into a structural adjustment program sponsored by the International Monetary Fund where the "costs of adjustment were being borne by those who could least afford it."⁵⁸ Inflation had gone up as much as 20% in the early 1990s and rates of unemployment, crime, and hunger reached its pinnacle. These factors made it unbearable for the Malawian people and they desperately wanted reform in the government.

Like many other developing African nations in the region, Malawi also received a large amount of money from international donors like the World Bank. At a 1992 meeting in Paris, donors suspended all new aid except for disaster relief, such as drought and refugee assistance. Reports found by the Amnesty International noted several human rights violations by the Banda regime. International donors demanded that political liberalization as well as basic human freedoms and good governance be demonstrated before any new aid would come into Malawi. Because Banda had a strong anti-communist stance during the cold war, many Western countries initially supported the Malawian president. When the Berlin Wall fell, however, there was no longer a need for them to stand behind the Banda regime.

Internal pressures also helped bring about the process of political liberalization in Malawi. In March 1992, Eight Catholic bishops released a pastoral letter that divulged

⁵⁸ Ibid., 28

corruption, repression, and human rights violations, “slandering”⁵⁹ the Malawian government. International groups, who had various interests in the country, also had an agenda to get rid of Banda’s dictatorship.⁶⁰ The Socialist League of Malawi, the Malawi Freedom movement, and the Congress for a Second Republic, were some of the groups which had formed inside the country with the intention of dismantling the dictatorship. By late 1993, students, civil servants, and utility workers took the streets and went on strikes in order to demand multiparty elections in Malawi. Over the years, the oppressive regime of Dr. Hastings Banda had created enemies within the country and both internal and external groups began to challenge the President. Some eighty⁶¹ opposition activists gathered in 1992 in Lusaka, Zambia to form the Interim Committee for Democratic Alliance. This organization was instructed to push for maximum political liberalization. When democratic activist, Chakufwa Chihana returned to Malawi to deliver a speech, he was arrested and detained by the Banda government. This prompted a huge riot and as a response, Banda dissolved parliament and held elections in June 1992 for 91 of the 141 parliamentary seats.

Nearly half of the MPs endorsed by Banda lost their seats in this election and political demonstrations continued until the Malawian president finally agreed to hold a referendum for March 15, 1993. More than 63 percent of Malawians voted to hold multiparty elections. Within a year after that, a national multiparty election was setup to start the official process of democratic transition. The election of May 1994 consisted of eight different political parties along with five presidential candidates. Only three of those five running for president made a significant impact at the poles: AFORD’s

⁵⁹ (Bauer and Taylor 2005, 29)

⁶⁰ (Ihonvbere 1997, 197)

⁶¹ (Ibid., 198)

Chakufwa Chihana, president Banda from the MCP, and UDF's Bakili Muluzi. Muluzi, a candidate from the southern region, captured most of the votes with 47.2 percent, while former president Banda and Chafkufwa Chihana received 33.4 and 18.9 percent respectively. Results in parliamentary elections were similar with UDF clinching 46.4 percent of seats while MCP and AFORD acquiring 33.7 and 19.0 percent respectively.⁶²

Malawi officially began its democratic transition phase on May 17, 1995. The country revised its constitution in order to address many problems found during Banda's twenty-five-year reign. The new constitution was neither "parliamentary nor presidential,"⁶³ but rather a hybrid of both systems where the president is elected directly and is able to appoint his or her cabinet while final legislative power is determined by the parliament. In response to Banda's president-for-life term, Malawi's executive now can only hold office for a maximum of two consecutive five-year terms. The former traditional courts were replaced by a judiciary that is "independent of any person or authority."⁶⁴ In sum, the new constitutional provisions created a system of checks and balances with entities independent of the authorities holding office.

Despite great strides in political liberalization, Malawi still faces many challenges towards its path to democratic consolidation. There have been four major elections since the democratic transition phase: 1994, 1999, 2004, and 2009. This next section will examine three pivotal criteria in which Malawi has demonstrated major pitfalls: elections, political parties, and civil society. As I have mentioned in the introduction portion, these

⁶² (Wiseman 2000, 644)

⁶³ Peter A. Mutharika, "The 1995 Democratic Constitution of Malawi." *Journal of African Law* 40, no. 2 (1996): 216.

⁶⁴ Peter von Doepp. "The Survival of Malawi's Enfeebled Democracy." *Current History* 100, no. 646 (May 2001): 236.

are not the only pertinent aspects of democracy, however, for this discussion these attributes have proven to be problematic in all three countries in this paper. They are deemed to be important as a basis of assessment.

Elections

Like in many sub-Saharan countries, holding a free and fair, and in some cases, a peaceful election has proven to be difficult. The 1994 national election in Malawi have been described as free and fair, however the one in 1999 was a different story. Bakili Muluzi was the outright winner of the 1994 elections with the single largest amount of votes (47.16%). The other two candidates received 52.3% combined together. The incumbent party and President Muluzi were re-elected during the 1999 election acquiring 51.3% of the votes cast.⁶⁵ The results were contested by the opposition on two major grounds: possible vote rigging⁶⁶ on the part of the UDF party and that the constitution requires the candidate to receive more than 50% of the registered voters' ballots. In the end the courts decided the case in favor of Muluzi. The question of vote rigging and ballot inadequacies was challenged by the Supreme Court of Appeal; however, in the end the courts decided that the allegations were invalid.

The Konrad Adenauer Foundation (KAF) is a German Political Foundation which started in 2002. Two researchers from the KAF, Dr. Nandini Patel and Dr. Heiko Meinhardt, have written a series of assessments on the democratization process in sub-Saharan Africa. They have found three major problems in Malawi's 1994, 1999, and

⁶⁵ Heiko Meinhardt, Nandini Patel. "Malawi's Process of Democratic Transition: An analysis of Political Developments Between 1990 and 2003." Konrad Adenauer Foundation, Occasional Papers, Malawi. (November 2003): 26.

⁶⁶ (Bauer and Taylor 2005, 36)

2004 national elections: 1. Fairness in elections, 2. unequal access to media, and 3. Campaign violence and intimidation.

John Wiseman described the 1999 elections in Malawi as being “relatively free but not wholly fair.”⁶⁷ When incumbent president Muluzi ran once again during the 1999 election, the opposition parties did not get “adequate air-time to address the masses.”⁶⁸ Radio was the main form of communication during the 1994 and 1999 election period. There was a clear lack of sufficient access by all the competing candidates. The ruling party had monopolized the most pervasive form of communication and used public resources to push their own agenda. The Malawi Broadcasting Company (MBC) continuously re-broadcasted political campaigns of the UDF party while very little air time was given to the opposition. The Electoral Commission, an independent agency, was unable to implement new legislation after inadequacies were shown during two elections in the realm of media fairness. Furthermore, Wiseman notes a bias on the part of the Chairman of the Electoral Commission, allowing the UDF party to “use state funds”⁶⁹ for their own campaigns. This pattern continued during the 2004 elections where the UDF enjoyed a considerable advantage as the incumbent party. International observers stated that the “2004 election lacked transparency”⁷⁰ with possible vote rigging and fraud.

Instances of violence and intimidation were prevalent during the 1994 election. Members of the ruling party as well as opposition parties were reported to have confiscated voter registration cards. Also, a large number of isolated cases of violence were reported. This included disturbances during party meetings and physical threats to

⁶⁷ (Wiseman 2000, 645)

⁶⁸ (Meinhardt and Patel 2003, 26)

⁶⁹ (Wiseman 2000, 641)

⁷⁰ (Bauer and Taylor 2005, 19)

candidates. The 1999 elections also had its fair share of small violent outbursts. In the northern region, small clashes broke out after the results of the 1999 elections were officially released. Public outrage turned violent and a mosque was set on fire by Anti-UDF demonstrators and homes of UDF employees were vandalized.

Another fundamental problem found in Malawian government is the fact that election results are heavily influenced by region. “Almost every analyst of the early elections observed the regional trend in voting,” which essentially demonstrated that people voted for candidates based on where they were from rather than their political views or policies. This proves to be very problematic for Malawi because of the population distribution. Almost 50% of the people live in the southern region, 39% live in the central region while only 11% live in the north. If the trend continues in future elections, the UDF would come out winners every time as the southern region is their stronghold.⁷¹ For both the 1994 and 1999 legislative elections, all the parties received almost identical votes as the population percentage of the regions they were from. 2004 presented a slightly different scenario as the UDF and AFORD combined together to form a larger party.⁷²

In general, election outcomes in Malawi since the start of the democratic transition process have been peaceful; no major war or civil conflicts have broken out. Elections, however, remains one of the areas that is still problematic and has made the road to democratic consolidation difficult for the nation. The Konrad Adenauer researchers suggest that elections should be conducted more efficiently.⁷³ Apart from

⁷¹ (Chiriwa 1994, 17)

⁷² (Bauer and Taylor 2005, 37)

⁷³ (Meinhardt and Patel 2003, 25)

logistical and administrative inadequacies, which stem from lack of planning and coordination, the Electoral Commission needs to enforce its guidelines. Opposition parties need to be given proper resources in a fair manner so as to not favor the incumbent party and president. Media airtime needs to be shared more evenly amongst competing parties. If the Electoral Commission achieves its task in regulating and enforcing its rules, it will also be regarded as a viable, independent, and legitimate agency.

Political Parties

Many legal reforms were created after the national referendum of June 1993. The creation of political parties in the new constitution allowed underground groups such as the UDF to participate in the government. The mid 2000 National Assembly was comprised of 26 official registered parties but only seven of them “have been functional at any given time.”⁷⁴ Political competition has been a problem in Malawi’s government. Decades of single party reign and corrupt practices by the authoritarian regime led by Banda clearly had an effect on political parties after Malawi’s democratic transition. There are three major issues concerning party politics: 1. weak institutional capacity, 2. lack of funding, and 3. continuous shift in alliances along with leadership crisis.

According to research conducted by Dr. Meinhardt and Dr. Patel, the “performance of political parties has generally been poor.”⁷⁵ There is a clear problem of institutional capacity where party leaders lack training. There has not been an effective system of identifying party members. During the dictatorship, Banda used membership cards as a form of party identification, but also as a coercive tool used by the state. This

⁷⁴ (Meinhardt and Pater 2003, 29)

⁷⁵ Ibid., 31.

was viewed as a “bad connotation,” hence it was abolished; the problem is that no new system has been created as a replacement. Now, there is “no reliable way of establishing party membership figures.”⁷⁶ The recruitment process is usually held at rallies and public forums.

Like in many other sub-Saharan governments, political parties fail to present a clear long-term program and vision. It is often confusing to decipher what they really stand for. This restricts competitiveness as each party’s platform lacks a clear agenda. Even the bigger parties have problems in stating their main ideologies and they rarely distinguish themselves from one another. According to Patel and Meinhardt the major Malawian political parties are somewhat affiliated with various international ideologies. For example, UDF is a member of the Liberal International, the AFORD party has some ties with the Socialist International, and the MCP has been known to have close relations with the Conservative government and former UK Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher.⁷⁷ None of these affiliations, however, are made public during elections and therefore the Malawian population has a very limited choice when it comes to voting along party lines.

According the Section 40 of the new Constitution, the government is required to fund any political parties that receives more than one tenth of the national vote. Hence the three major parties represented in the Malawian Assembly should receive money from the government. Funds that should be allocated to competing parties, however, have been known to be boycotted and suspended by the ruling party. Furthermore, funding giving by the state to the parties is very limited and supplemental resource is always needed. Political parties, including the ruling party, have not setup a sound fundraising

⁷⁶ (Meinhardt and Pater 2003, 31)

⁷⁷ (Meinhardt and Pater 2003, 32)

mechanism nor have they been successful in investments. Leaders and members are forced to pay out of pocket to sustain the resources needed. This is problematic because it “diminishes collective participation, ownership and accountability of parties.”⁷⁸

One of the major problems in Malawi’s post democratic transition government is the political parties’ continuous shift in alliance due to leadership crisis. According to Gretchen Bauer and Scott Taylor, “party politics in Malawi in the post transition decade have been marked by rivalry factionalism, shifting alliances, and complete U-turn by party leaders.”⁷⁹ Unlike other sub-Saharan countries, Malawi contains a few larger parties along with numerous smaller parties of “lesser significance.” Many other states in the region are primarily dominated by a single party. Because no one party dominates in the country, many leaders have often switched and formed larger coalitions in hopes of gaining control. There are three major parties in Malawi: UDF, AFORD, and the MCP. The UDF has been the ruling party since the post transition phase.⁸⁰

Communication within parties on major issues “from grassroots to the national level is almost non-existent.”⁸¹ After the election of 1994, the AFORD party joined with the UDF and they ruled as the majority group in the Assembly. In 1996, however, the coalition broke up and during the 1999 election, AFORD teamed up with the MCP. In 2001, then president, Chihana renounced this formation and supported UDF instead during the 2004 election. One major issue which caused fractures within the UDF party was Muluzi’s attempt to run for a third term; something the constitution does not allow. Members of the UDF, including the second highest ranked official, formed the National

⁷⁸ (Ibid., 33)

⁷⁹ (Bauer and Taylor 2005, 34)

⁸⁰ Ibid., 34.

⁸¹ (Meinhardt and Pater 2003, 33)

Democratic Alliance (NDA). This group was created as a direct response to Muluzi's attempt to run for a third term. Brown Mpinganjira, a former transports minister for the UDF party was soon expelled and the NDA became an official party in 2001.⁸²

The MCP, which has always been the opposition party, was the ruling party under Dr. Banda for almost thirty years. Because the former president was from the central region, the party gained most of its support from that region. During the 1994 and 1999 presidential race, the MCP came in second right after UDF. In 2004, it won most of the parliamentary votes. The MCP has had its share of leadership crisis within as well. There was a "factional split" after Banda's death. One portion of the party was led by John Tenbo, a close associate of Dr. Banda. The other was led by Gwanda Chakuamba, the party's new president at the time. Disgruntled MCP members alongside Chakuamba left the MCP to form the Republican Party. Consequently the MCP still acquired most of the votes in the 2004 legislative election and left the UDF "scrambling" for legislative partners in order to remain the ruling party.

Unlike other countries in the region, the opposition party "won a sizeable number of seats in the Malawi National Assembly."⁸³ This was the case for both the 1994 and 1999 election. Although the UDF had more seats than other parties, it lacked a small number to lock in the majority vote. AFORD and MCP formed a coalition and were in a strong position to be a viable contender to the ruling party. The role of the opposition party, however, was not always "constructive."⁸⁴ Even though the opposition coalition should be a strong power brokering entity, politicians join the government for financial

⁸² (Bauer and Taylor 2005, 35)

⁸³ (Meinhardt and Pater 2003, 29)

⁸⁴ Ibid., 30.

reasons rather than to enhance the government of Malawi. For example, the UDF party reportedly “resorted to luring opposition MPs to its side” in order to avoid another strong opposition for the 1999 election. Another explicit example is Gawnda Chakuamba’s decision to join the UDF party. Chakuamba, who was considered the “last principled politician” in the country, decided to team up with the UDF after he was promised a lucrative position in the government. The Malawian people also voted for him and his seven party opposition coalition in the hopes that legal challenges would be brought against alleged vote rigging on the part of the UDF. Instead, Chakuamba switched parties and joined the ruling party; clearly the Malawian people did not vote for this.

After more than two decades of one-party rule under the Banda regime, it comes to no surprise that the contemporary Malawian political party system still contains numerous problems. One of the obvious concerns is the parties’ inability to create distinct platforms along with long term goals. Due to lack of funding, primarily from boycotts and suspensions, political parties are also unorganized and do not exercise any sort of fundraising event. Furthermore, funds are often allocated disproportionately by the ruling party. Because no one party dominates in Malawi, leaders have resorted to continuous shifts in alliances in order hold better political offices. This is problematic because leaders have had to change their agendas, altering the platforms on which voters initially elected them in office for. Similar to other sub-Saharan countries, constituents in Malawi vote for political parties affiliated with their region or ethnicity rather than their personal ideologies or political agendas. The introduction of competing political parties, which ended the oppressive Banda rule, should be revered as great strides in Malawian democratic movement. The current political party system, however, still contains

numerous flaws, is not yet institutionalized, and remains to be one of the reasons why the gap between electoral and consolidated democracy has not been bridged.

Civil Society

It is clear that the role of civil society in Malawi during the post transition period has been very challenging because they were almost non-existent during Banda's long oppressive era. According to Wiseman, Malawi's "tightly controlled and highly personalized one-party state"⁸⁵ did not foster a very deeply rooted civil society. Though civil society was present in Malawi during Banda's era, it did not have any political role. The voice of the people, however, is a valuable component in today's challenge towards democratic consolidation; civil society in Malawi today is focused on governance, democratization and human rights issues. This section will examine different facets of Malawi's civil society: students, workers, the church and religious institutions, media, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

The general assessment on the role and efficiency of civil society is ambiguous in Malawi. Though the public sector outside of the government has undoubtedly shown a much stronger presence since the Banda regime, there still remain pitfalls which pose as major obstacles in the process of democratization. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, university students and other youth conducted strikes and demonstrations "in the call for democratic transition in the early 1990s."⁸⁶ The youth organization, however, has a "troubling heritage."⁸⁷ According to Bauer and Taylor, the Malawi Young Pioneer and the MCP Youth League during Banda's regime often had to resort to violence in order to

⁸⁵ (Wiseman 2000, 641)

⁸⁶ (Bauer and Taylor 2005, 38)

⁸⁷ Ibid., 38.

keep obedience and discipline within the parties. This violent trend unfortunately is still found in contemporary Malawian society. During the Muluzi presidency, the Young Democrats reportedly committed acts of violence “against those who have uttered any public statements”⁸⁸ critical of the ruling UDF government.

The church, and more specifically, the Catholic Pastoral Letter, also helped divulge political corruption in written publications, pressuring Banda’s government to liberalize and eventually hold multiparty election. Church leaders have been “primary contributors to national political discourse,” openly criticizing the government and questioning behaviors of political elites. The church also has worked to mediate between competing voices in the government. On a more local scope, however, most clergymen have refused to engage in “extensive grassroots civil society activism.”⁸⁹ The clergy wants to enhance their class position in Malawian society, which puts constraints in the democratization process. Like other countries in the region, the church plays a significant and influential role in culture; clergymen are often more trusted than politicians.

Non-governmental organizations have been an active participant in the process of political transition for Malawi. The Civil Liberties Committee (CILIC), the Malawian Institute for Economic Democratic Affairs (MIDEA), the Center for Justice and Peace (CEYCA), the Center for Human Rights and Rehabilitation (CHRR), the Center for Advice, Research and Education on Rights (CARER), and the Society for the Advancement of Women (SAW)⁹⁰ are just a few NGOs which have been created in order to focus on the rights of different groups. And while the creation of such groups has been

⁸⁸ (Bauer and Taylor 2005, 38)

⁸⁹ Ibid., 37.

⁹⁰ (Meinhardt and Pater 2003, 34)

a great start, they faced many challenges after the 1994 elections due to weak institutions and lack of long term goals. Meinhardt and Patel suggest that the NGOs kept a “narrow and closed”⁹¹ focus and did not make an effort to develop a sense of solidarity.

Additionally, founders of some NGOs have created their groups purely as a means of earning a living rather than honestly engaging the state and society with the process of political transformation.

The media is another entity which played an integral role in the 1990s transition. The British Broadcasting Corporation extensively covered the arrest and exile of Chihana while other forms of media such as the fax machine, photocopier, and personal computers helped take down the Banda regime. Since the transition, the media is no longer tightly controlled and the “new constitution provides for freedom of speech and of the press”⁹² in articles 35 and 36.⁹³ Article 37 guarantees “the freedom to every person to access all information held by the state so far as the right is required by him for the exercise of his right.”⁹⁴ And while there are more than a dozen small newspapers and many privately owned radio stations, the airwaves are still dominated by the Malawi Broadcasting Corporations, especially in the rural areas. This is problematic because the radio is the main form of communication in the rural areas and contents of MBC programming was reported to have been heavily pro-government in 2002.⁹⁵

While the media granted equal and fair access to all competing political parties during the 1994 election, it was not the case for 1999. The MBC and the general media

⁹¹ (Meinhardt and Pater 2003, 34)

⁹² (Bauer and Taylor 2005, 39)

⁹³ (Meinhardt and Pater 2003, 39)

⁹⁴ (Bauer and Taylor 2005, 39)

⁹⁵ Ibid., 39.

have been reported to be “clearly pro-government.”⁹⁶ Furthermore, more than 50⁹⁷ newspaper have closed down shortly following the 1999 election, mainly due to lack of funding and poorly written contents, mostly of which included defamation. While print media are mostly privately owned, the MBC and Television Malawi are “in effect controlled by the government.”⁹⁸ Journalists are often subject of threats and intimidation which clearly has impeded the growth of independency and neutrality in the media. According to Bauer and Taylor, “the media in Malawi are still struggling to play their rightful role in politics and society.”⁹⁹

Challenges

Malawi started its democratic transition phase in 1994 after disgruntled voters overwhelmingly opted to liberalize the government by ending Banda’s regime and by introducing a multi party system. Since then, however, several facets of the government have encountered numerous challenges. Elections, similar as in most neighboring countries, have been free, however, hardly fair. The incumbent party continues to have an unfair advantage on resources and media air time during campaign periods. The Malawian electoral commission has also been weak, unable to implement and enforce its rules and proper guidelines. This has undermined its legitimacy as an institution.

Civil society, on the other hand, has played a pertinent role in the country’s continual quest for democratization. The church, various NGOs, students, and workers

⁹⁶ Ibid., 39.

⁹⁷ (Meinhardt and Pater 2003, 39)

⁹⁸ (Meinhardt and Pater 2003, 39)

⁹⁹ (Bauer and Taylor 2005, 39)

have played an active role in shaping the country's political history. Media, however, is still dominated by the incumbent party for the most part. Despite the introduction of several privately owned media outlets, the ruling party has managed to monopolize air time during election campaigns, while the major broadcasting networks remains largely controlled by the government.

Unlike most other sub-Saharan countries, Malawi's political party system is not dominated by one particular party. Rather it is comprised of smaller parties which make up different coalitions. The party system continues to struggle to become institutionalized as they are weak logistically. Leaders are often lured by lucrative positions which have caused members of political parties to switch sides after they are elected. This has undermined the legitimacy of party leaders as they often have to change their agendas after they are elected in office.

Though major setbacks have been outlined in this chapter, the Malawian government still has many opportunities which can be capitalized. The fact that no one particular party has been able to dominate the National assembly should be regarded as a good thing. Rather than having to resort to create coalitions, however, each individual party needs to build a stronger foundation; establishing distinct ideologies with a clear long term agenda. The challenge will rest on the voters to elect public officials according to their platforms as opposed to their ethnic background and region. The national electoral commission also needs to enforce its guidelines during elections while the media should allocate equal air time to competing candidates during campaign periods. The church, NGOs, and active student protestors continue to be an influential power-

checking entity towards the government. This has certainly enabled Malawi to sustain a relatively stable democracy in the last decade.

CHAPTER III

MOZAMBIQUE

Unlike Malawi and Madagascar, Mozambique endured a civil war for almost twenty years after gaining national independence. Thus, Mozambique's contemporary politics faced a daunting challenge of reconstruction during its ongoing phase of democratization. The Mozambican case is regarded by many scientists as a success story for several reasons. First, the country has crafted a stable peace process between Renamo and Frelimo, but most importantly, it has reintegrated armed combatants into civil political parties. Furthermore, former president Joaquim Chissano's decision to voluntarily step down and not run for a third term in 2001 was a refreshing sign of good governance. Lastly, this sub-Saharan country has experienced strong economic growth envied by most neighboring nations. As for the subject of democratic maturity discussed in this thesis, however, it can be argued that Mozambique has not completed its transformation from electoral to consolidated democracy. This chapter will examine discrepancies still present in Mozambican government which include a dominant one party system unwilling to share power, electoral irregularities, media bias, and a weak civil society.

Pre Colonial Period

A few centuries before the establishment of a Portuguese colony, different Bantu-speaking groups traveled to Mozambique and established “sedentary communities or absorbing nomadic bands of hunting and gathering peoples.”¹⁰⁰ These groups co-existed peacefully for the most part; however, some violent conflicts were present due to competition of scarce land, cattle, and mineral resources. According to Allen and Barbara Isaacman, the period between 1500 and 1850 experienced a “process of population diffusion, economic and social interaction, cultural borrowing, assimilation, and conquest.”¹⁰¹ This is precisely the reason why Mozambique’s population today comes from different neighboring ethnic groups from around its borders. The Macua-Lowme and the Tsonga are the main ethnic groups of Mozambique which combined make up 70 percent of the population.¹⁰²

In the late 1400s, the Portuguese government set up posts around the southern coast of Africa in order to facilitate trade of goods and eventually slaves as well. In 1534, the Portuguese established the first trading post in the province of Inhambane.¹⁰³ Trades around the costs eventually spread inland when mining activities in South Africa and the Rhodesias were prominent. The Berlin Conference of 1885 established rules and determined which European country would occupy different regions in Africa. This so called “scramble” enabled Portugal to initially claim rights to inland Angola and Mozambique. According to Isaacman, Portugal’s position in Mozambique was weak. Financial problems, political instability, and the depression of 1871 back in Lisbon,

¹⁰⁰ Allen Isaacman, Barbara Isaacman, *Mozambique: From Colonialism to Revolution, 1900-1982* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1983), 11.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 11.

¹⁰² (Bauer and Taylor 2005, 113)

¹⁰³ Ibid., 113.

essentially were factors which led Portugal to ask Britain for support. The British willingly came to their aid as they were wary of German expansion in the Southern Rhodesia area at the time. The British-Portuguese co-operation lasted well into the 20th century. Britain was able to establish themselves as a regional economic power in the Sub-Saharan territory and they built ports and export links to the coastline of Mozambique. Meanwhile, Portugal sent a steady supply of unskilled Mozambicans to work in the mines of South Africa.¹⁰⁴

Colonial Period

It was not until 1914 that the indigenous population of Mozambique was starting to be fully subjugated by the Portuguese.¹⁰⁵ According to Chris Alden, the Mozambican economy was also under non Portuguese control, where the “bulk of the remittance”¹⁰⁶ of mine workers came back to the Rhodesian and South African companies. The situation changed at the beginning of the 1930s when the fascist Salazar regime took power in Portugal. The new government wanted complete control in the colony and they urged companies to develop trade in the region. Over the next four decades, Portugal sent roughly 200,000¹⁰⁷ landless peasants to Mozambique. The Portuguese émigrés dominated several aspects of Mozambican society while the indigenous population was kept illiterate, which did nothing to prepare the country for eventual independence.

¹⁰⁴ (Isaacman 1983, 11-13)

¹⁰⁵ Chris Alden, *Mozambique and the Construction of the New African State: From Negotiations to Nation Building*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), 2.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 3.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 4.

The UN General Assembly urged colonial powers to give independence to African nations. This was specifically stated in proposition 1514 (XV) drafted in 1960.¹⁰⁸ While Madagascar and Malawi and several other sub-Saharan countries eventually gained independence in the early 1960s, Portugal refused to adopt the resolution. Frelimo, a Black Nationalist movement, led by Eduardo Mondlane, was formed in 1962 and started the independence movement for Mozambique. According to Martin Rupiya, Frelimo was not explicitly a Marxist movement, though it was a recipient of “radical African, Arab, Eastern European and Chinese aid”¹⁰⁹ for its Marxist-Leninist stance. Mondlane had a dilemma; though he was concerned with Mozambican independence, he was also a “scientific socialist.”¹¹⁰ The Frelimo organization set up its headquarters in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, where Mondlane was assassinated in 1969. This caused ruptures within the party; the group was then headed by a three-person leadership council for a brief period of time.¹¹¹ Samora Machel, one of the new leaders of the party, “moved to the forefront and quickly consolidated his control”¹¹² over the party’s operations.

Independence

The first shots of revolution were fired in the northern province of Cabo Delgado in 1964.¹¹³ According to Rupiya, the Portuguese used harsh and extreme tactics such as napalm and scorched earth policies against the Mozambican force. Non-military locals

¹⁰⁸ Retrieved from <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/RESOLUTION/GEN/NR0/152/88/IMG/NR015288.pdf?OpenElement>

¹⁰⁹ Martin Rupiya, *Historical Context: War and Peace in Mozambique* (London: Conciliation Resources, 1998), 11.

¹¹⁰ Chris Alden, *Mozambique and the Construction of the New African State: From Negotiations to Nation Building* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001), 4.

¹¹¹ (Bauer and Taylor 2005, 115)

¹¹² Ibid., 115.

¹¹³ (Bauer and Taylor 2005, 114)

also “were not spared.”¹¹⁴ The fight for independence lasted about eleven years. In April 1974, there was a coup which overthrew the Salazar government in Portugal. Immediately after, all 60,000¹¹⁵ Portuguese troops were withdrawn and Mozambican independence was imminent. A few white colonists in the province of Lorenzo Marques discussed possible unilateral declaration of independence, but it never materialized. The Lusaka Accord of September 1974 “officially ended colonial rule.”¹¹⁶ Mozambique became an independent nation on June 25, 1975,¹¹⁷ and a provisional government, mostly comprised of Frelimo agents, was set up. No formal elections were held. Samora Machel, Frelimo’s party leader, was consequently the head of the new Mozambican independent state.

As noted earlier in this chapter, the population of Mozambique was not prepared to properly run the government and economy. Almost 90 percent of the Mozambican population was illiterate. Portuguese colonialism “had very shallow roots”¹¹⁸ and had very little investment in physical infrastructure as well. The educated and skilled Portuguese population fled the country after independence and most of them destroyed their own property. The new, predominantly Frelimo government, adopted a Marxist rhetoric which alienated many foreign investment; by 1977, the white population fell to 30,000.¹¹⁹ The Frelimo government conducted a Soviet-style political agenda and nationalized social services, land, and rented properties. Economically, this plan proved

¹¹⁴ (Rupya 1998, 11)

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 11.

¹¹⁶ (Rupya 1998, 11)

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 12.

¹¹⁸ (Bauer and Taylor 2005, 115)

¹¹⁹ (Alden 2001, 5)

to be disastrous. On the political front, the independent government was heavily centralized and all powers were concentrated in the Frelimo camp.

The Soviet Union and other Eastern European countries furnished economic and military aid. Mozambique held an ambiguous stance towards its Afro-Marxist rhetoric, however. According to Bauer and Taylor, though the country held close relationships with some Eastern bloc countries, it also aligned itself with the United Kingdom, United States, and even South Africa.¹²⁰ The Council for Mutual Economic Cooperation, an entity which decided who ultimately received funding in the communist group, rejected Mozambique's membership in 1981. Indeed, the country's "commitment"¹²¹ to exercise Marxist-Leninist ideologies was never genuine, but rather a method of acquiring funding from the communist bloc. By 1989, Mozambique ditched the Marxist Leninist moniker.¹²²

Civil War

Several internal and external factors led to the eventual civil war between Frelimo and Renamo. Though Frelimo undoubtedly had domestic popularity, growing frustration was beginning to build against the one-party rule. There were a number of smaller political groups vying for power in the country's government. They did not have local and regional support like Frelimo however. The economy was also rapidly declining. These internal factors helped set the stage for conflict. On the regional and international level, white minority groups in the Rhodesian region and Apartheid South Africa had strong sentiments against the Frelimo government. Mozambique at that time was a strong

¹²⁰ (Bauer and Taylor 2005, 116)

¹²¹ Ibid., 116.

¹²² Ibid., 116.

supporter of Robert Mugabe and the Zimbabwean African National Union (ZANU) as well as the African National Congress (ANC) in South Africa. Mozambique was also a staging area used by Zimbabwean guerilla forces to combat Rhodesian military.

Consequently, the Rhodesian Central Intelligence Organization established the group Renamo, initially known as the Mozambique Central Intelligence Resistance (MNR).

Renamo, in essence, was an outside entity created by the Rhodesian force, supported by South Africa, in order to destabilize, “sabotage communities, economies, and military installations.”¹²³ When Mozambique closed down its border to prevent access to transport and trade routes to Southern Rhodesia, it was seen as direct hostility and the situation was ripe for a full fledged civil war.

The Rhodesian force sponsored a few protesters mainly comprised of disgruntled Portuguese citizens and Mozambican mine workers from South Africa. Initially the Renamo rebel group was not seen as a big threat to the Frelimo government. In fact, upon the death of its first leader, Andre Matsagaissa, Renamo experienced turmoil and according to Dhlakama, the group was on “the road to destruction.”¹²⁴ South Africa, however, quickly took notice of the new rebel group and in 1982 set up new training camps comprised of young Mozambican volunteers. According to Vines, some were coerced to join and could not leave; those who were caught escaping were executed.¹²⁵ During the war, Renamo was known to commit atrocities and human rights abuses. As Carrie Manning states, the rebel group was “best known to the world for its grotesque

¹²³ (Bauer and Taylor 2005, 116)

¹²⁴ Alex Vines, *Renamo Terrorism in Mozambique* (James Currey, Indiana University Press CSAS: 1991), 17.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 17-20.

campaign of terror.”¹²⁶ They raped women, destroyed villages, mutilated, murdered innocent civilians, and coerced young children to join the rebel force.¹²⁷ Though the Frelimo government also committed atrocities, it did not come close to the brutality of Renamo.

The civil war lasted almost two decades, killing nearly 1 million Mozambicans and internally displacing an additional 2 million citizens. A few factors led to eventual cease fire and peace negotiations. Unlike its neighboring state of Angola rich with oil and diamonds, Mozambique lacked the resources to economically sustain the war. Furthermore, the region experienced one of its worst droughts at that time. Famine was taking a devastating toll on the Mozambican population. Globally, the end of the Cold War influenced the start of negotiations with South Africa, which led to the eventual end of the conflict.

The peace process lingered for several years however; the first initial attempt of negotiations took place in the border town of N’Komati. This meeting, which occurred on March 16 of 1984, was between President Machel and Prime Minister “Pik” Botha from South Africa. The pact, known as the N’Komati Accord,¹²⁸ resulted in both sides signing an “Agreement on Non-Aggression and Good-Neighborliness.”¹²⁹ The Frelimo government was to close down the ANC military bases in Mozambique while South Africa was to terminate supplying military aid to Renamo. Consequently, South Africa

¹²⁶ Carrie Manning, “Competition and Accommodation in Post-Conflict Democracy: The Case of Mozambique.” *Democratization* 8, no. 2 (Summer 2001): 146.

¹²⁷ (Bauer and Taylor 2005, 118)

¹²⁸ Cameron Hume, *Ending Mozambique’s War, The Role of Mediation and Good Offices*, (Washington DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1994), 11.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 11.

breached its promise and continued to furnish weapons, food, medical supplies, and support to the Mozambican rebel movement.

Due to the failures of the N'Komati Accords, violent clashes intensified between 1984 and 1988. On Sunday October 19 in 1986, a mysterious “plane crash”¹³⁰ took the life of then President Samora Machel. A more moderate candidate, Joaquim Chissano, was then placed as president of Mozambique. This, however, did not have much effect on the war. By late 1987, Renamo had gained substantial support from right wing western states and was starting to hold ground across the country. President Chissano was then essentially pressured to modify his policies. The Frelimo government had taken a heavy toll from the prolonged war and was forced to shift its non-aligned stance in order to appease the international community; notably President Ronald Reagan’s animosity towards left-wing Marxists regimes.

On the other hand, the international community was also taken notice of Renamo’s atrocious acts of violence. In 1988, a US State Department report made by Robert Gersony¹³¹ outlined gruesome tactics used by the rebel group, which included: “burying alive, beating to death, forced asphyxiation, drowning, and random shooting.”¹³² Thus, the United States ceased to provide aid and assistance to the Renamo group. Under the new South African leadership of F.W. de Klerk, aid given to Renamo also quickly decreased. Furthermore, the rebel movement’s policies turned more

¹³⁰ Ibid., 13.

¹³¹ Bill Frelick, *Renamo: The Khmer Rouge of Africa; Mozambique, its Killing Field*, (U.S. Committee for Refugees, 1989), 2.

¹³² (Hume 1994, 15)

ambiguous, without any “articulated ideology”¹³³ and pressures from neighboring regions urged for the peace process to start.

Various foreign states attempted unsuccessfully to jumpstart the peace process. This was most likely due to the perception that they favored one side over the other. Even religious groups like the Mozambican Christian Council attempted to unite seventeen of the country’s Protestant churches and ultimately setup the “Peace and Reconciliation Commission.” This also failed due to the church’s affiliation with the Portuguese government; remnants of disgruntled feelings during the struggle for independence. The Catholic lay community of Sant’ Egidio, however, was able to play a successful and integral role in the eventual peace process and security in Mozambique.

Sant’ Egidio is an Italian religious organization which started in 1968 by a group of students.¹³⁴ They helped citizens in the poorest neighborhoods of Rome. Sant’ Egidio’s involvement in Mozambique dates back to 1976 through the help of Don Jaime Goncalves. Goncalves, a young Mozambican priest who studied in Rome, sought assistance from the Sant’ Egidio community when the Frelimo government was accused of “confiscating” church property back in Mozambique. Since then, the group has been acting as an intermediary, creating dialogue between the local Catholic Church leaders and the Frelimo government. During the civil war, the non-profit, non-governmental organization provided massive humanitarian aid during the 1980s while publicizing the atrocities of the war back in Europe.

¹³³ Ibid., 15.

¹³⁴ (Hume 1994, 15)

Sant Egidio's involvement in the civil war is undoubtedly one of the crucial reasons why the country was able to reach a peace deal. The organization was viewed by the Mozambican population as trusted and impartial. They also had immense leverage and legitimacy considering the amount of humanitarian aid they were furnishing. Sant' Egidio was able to capitalize on this advantage and facilitated round table talks between Renamo and Frelimo leaders directly. In February of 1990, Dhlakama and Frelimo leaders met at a Sant' Egidio compound in Rome with the support of the Vatican to start negotiating the peace process. The success of Sant' Egidio is a pertinent example of *polyateralism*,¹³⁵ where a non-governmental entity was able to negotiate a peace deal between state actors.

Democratic Transition

It was not until October of 1992 that the general peace agreement was formally signed in Rome. The UN force was given the task to monitor the peace process with the daunting challenge of resettling over “millions of internally displaced persons.”¹³⁶ Mozambique started its democratic transition in 1994 when it held its first parliamentary and presidential elections.

Mozambique is considered as a success story by most political scientists. Indeed, after two decades of civil war, the country had a daunting challenge of peacefully reintegrating military factions into competing political parties. While examining the three facets of democracy in this thesis: elections, political parties, and civil society; it can be argued that Mozambique still experiences numerous obstacles which have impeded the

¹³⁵ Geoffrey Wiseman, “‘Polyateralism’ and New Modes of Global Diplomacy,” Discussion Papers No. 59 (Leicester: Leicester Diplomatic Studies Program, 1999), 36-37, 48-49.

¹³⁶ (Bauer and Taylor 2005, 117)

democratization process. The first election in 1994 is regarded as being free and fair. The remaining presidential and parliamentary race of 1999, 2004, and 2009, however, contain major pitfall and discrepancies. The two major political parties in Mozambique have always been Frelimo and Renamo. Frelimo have dominated the political scene since 1994 and a plan of power sharing in parliament seems to be non-existent. Civil society in Mozambique also remains fairly weak. Not surprising, after two decades of civil war, the people of Mozambique have not found a voice in the political arena. Media bias towards the Frelimo government is still rampant. This next section examines these three pivotal aspects which are used to gauge the quality of democracy. It is apparent that despite strong economic gains, Mozambique has not bridged the gap between electoral and consolidated democracy.

Mozambique is comprised of ten provinces. The capital city, Maputo, also has the status of a province. Each of these provinces contain a capital city where each of the provincial government's headquarter is located. According to Bauer and Taylor, Mozambique remains a highly centralized political system despite the numerous provinces. The majority of the political scene is centered in Maputo. The president, who is also the head of the state, possesses many powers as with most other executives in the Sub-Saharan region. The president of Mozambique is elected once every five years with a limit of two consecutive maximum terms and appoints governors for each province.¹³⁷

Elections

Since the transition and introduction of multiparty system, Mozambique has held four presidential elections; 1994, 1999, 2004, and 2009. The 1994 election was

¹³⁷ (Bauer and Taylor 2005, 122)

considered mostly free and fair. In fact, many scientists believe it is the most successful election the country has experienced to date. The first multiparty election at the presidential and parliamentary level was overseen by an electoral commission comprised of members from Frelimo, Renamo, and other smaller political groups. The United Nations, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and other international observers were sent to monitor and assist in vote tallying at various polling stations. Mozambicans came out to vote in record numbers; almost 90 percent of the population was recorded at polling stations.¹³⁸ Despite Renamo's apparent violent and atrocious behavior during the civil war, it garnered 112 seats or 44.4 percent of the 250 National Assembly seats. Alfonso Dhlakama, Renamo's presidential candidate, clinched 33.7 percent of votes in the executive race. Frelimo's Chisano came out on top with 53.3 percent of the presidential votes, while the party clinched 129 seats in the assembly.

The 1994 multiparty election completed and solidified an effective peace process between the opposing camps in Mozambique. Both parties accepted the election results without any violent recourse and the first open election successfully transformed the country from a one-party state into a multiparty democracy. Some scientists believe there are a few reasons for this success. Andrea Ostheimer is a liaison officer for the Institute for Security Studies in Maputo. She argues that the achievement of the 1994 election has been largely due to the various international presences and pressures. According to Ostheimer, the first multiparty election in Mozambique signaled "less about the advancement of democratization,"¹³⁹ rather than a genuine "home-grown" phenomenon.

¹³⁸ (Manning 2001, 146)

¹³⁹ Andrea E. Ostheimer. "'Mozambique: The Permanent Entrenchment of Democratic Minimalism?'" *African Security Review* 10, no. 1 (2001): 7.

It was simply part of a deal for the peace process during a time of “special context.”¹⁴⁰

Furthermore, Renamo was initially never a political party vying for electoral power, but rather a group financed by international donors between 1990 and 1992 as a “condition of the group’s full participation in the peace process.”¹⁴¹

The remaining three elections in Mozambique present a different story where numerous electoral discrepancies are evident. One of the major setbacks during the 1999 election is the vast decrease in voter turnout. Though 5.4 million registered voters in 1999 (or 68 percent) is a relatively high number for the region, it was a major decrease compared to 1994’s 7.1 million voter turnout, (almost 90 percent).¹⁴² The presidential race was close, with Frelimo’s Chissano defeating Dhlakma by a “margin of 52.3 percent to 47.7 percent.”¹⁴³ A year prior to the 1999 presidential race, Mozambique conducted its first municipal and local elections. According to Ostheimer, the country experienced its first “recorded setbacks when opposition boycotted the voting and 85 percent of the electorate abstained from the ballot box.”¹⁴⁴ In sum, Mozambique failed during its first litmus test in democratization: conducting effective local and municipal elections.

Renamo challenged the election results of 1999. However, the Supreme Court “found in favor of Frelimo.”¹⁴⁵ Though the vote discrepancies alleged by Renamo wouldn’t have altered the outcome,¹⁴⁶ it did “damage the integrity”¹⁴⁷ of the electoral

¹⁴⁰ (Bauer and Taylor 2005, 122)

¹⁴¹ Carrie Manning, “Mozambique Slide Into One Party Rule.” *Journal of Democracy* 21, no. 2 (April 2010): 152.

¹⁴² (Bauer and Taylor 2005, 127)

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 127.

¹⁴⁴ (Ostheimer 2001, 7)

¹⁴⁵ (Bauer and Taylor 2005, 127)

¹⁴⁶ Carter Center, *Observing the 1999 Elections in Mozambique: Final Report* (Atlanta: Carter Center, 2000), 27.

¹⁴⁷ (Bauer and Taylor 2005, 127)

commission due to its lack of transparency. Renamo, along with other political groups and some international observers demanded further investigation and a Parliamentary Advisory Commission was established to “revise parliamentary procedures” in elections and the overall structure of the National Electoral Commission. Due to partisanship, no major consensus was reached and the group failed to foster any concrete results. According to Carrie Manning, Renamo was unwilling to concede or compromise.

Other fundamental flaws in electoral practices were also present during the 1999 elections. According to Ostheimer, campaign funds were disproportionately distributed as the ruling Frelimo party did not abstain from using state resources during electoral campaigns. Funds were also given to the opposition party at the last minute, giving them very little time to prepare. Furthermore, as mentioned previously, technical problems were present in the tabulation process which undermined the credibility of the National Electoral Commission (CNE). Consequently, the court’s decision to favor Frelimo ultimately caused violent outbursts resulting in 40 deaths.¹⁴⁸ Arguably, Renamo was responsible as the party continuously made verbal attacks to Frelimo and even threatened to “form a separate form of governments in the six northern and central provinces.”¹⁴⁹ Overall, the nature of elections in Mozambique by this time tends to favor the incumbent Frelimo government. According to Carrie Manning, the 2004 and 2009 elections were the least democratic in Mozambican history.

Frelimo convincingly won the 2004 election both on the presidential and parliamentary level. Armando Guebuza took 62 percent of the votes while the Frelimo party clinched 160 seats. Renamo was only able to muster 90 seats while Alfonso

¹⁴⁸ (Ostheimer 2001, 9)

¹⁴⁹ (Ostheimer 2001, 9)

Dhlakama received 29.7 percent of the votes. The results of the 2009 elections had similar outcomes with Frelimo clinching 191 seats in parliament and 75 percent of the presidential votes. Both the 2004 and 2009 elections of Mozambique contained several discrepancies, notably within the National Election Commission (CNE). Frelimo has been able to “suppress political competition” by carefully choosing the composition of the CNE. The CNE was initially comprised of thirteen members, proportionally representing each party’s share of seats in the National Assembly. One of those members was directly chosen by the President. In order to include civil society in the electoral process, the laws changed in 2009. The newly revised electoral commission included five commissioners (three from Frelimo and two from Renamo) and eight additional members, “including the chairperson to be drawn from civil society.”¹⁵⁰ According to Carrie Manning, the selection of the new CNE was hardly transparent. In fact, the head of the new CNE was a well-known Frelimo activist.¹⁵¹

According to Joseph Hanlon, the CNE tended to formulate policies concerning electoral rules in secret. New legislation, which passed only months before the election, were never made public nor given to the competing parties. Hence, the competing parties had to adhere to new rules with very little time to accommodate before election time. Moreover, lists of provincial and national legislative candidates and tallies from polling stations were never released.¹⁵² This made it almost impossible to fact-check the results compiled by the CNE at the polling stations. According to Carrie Manning, many policies

¹⁵⁰ (Manning 2010, 155)

¹⁵¹ Ibid., 155.

¹⁵² Joseph Hanlon, “Landslide Victory for Frelimo and Armando Guebuza,” *Mozambique Political Process Bulletin* 43, no. 19 (November 2009): 4.

that would ultimately allow non-partisan observers to monitor the elections were “not made available;”¹⁵³ if they were, it was nearly impossible to obtain them.

During the 2009 election, the CNE was also able to carefully exclude many parliamentary candidates from elections. The new electoral commission apparently rejected about ten different parties and some seventeen others were barred from running in one particular district. A new party called Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MDM) was especially targeted and excluded from participating in the parliamentary race. Realistically, the MDM was probably not in a position to defeat either Renamo or Frelimo. Nonetheless it “threatened to make a strong showing to embarrass,” the incumbent and possibly foster larger support for the near future. The CNE also installed several requirements which presented obstacles for party members to be formally accepted in the race. Each party was required to present their candidates plus several alternatives in order to contest elections. Each candidate was also expected to provide a long list of documentations such as national ID cards, past criminal records, certified copies of birth certificates, voter cards, and other trivial pieces of paper. While the candidates from the incumbent party readily had these documents available, it was difficult for opposition hopefuls to “collect and authenticate costly information.”¹⁵⁴ Additionally, government agencies tended to act more quickly in providing legal documents to incumbent constituents as opposed to newly competing candidates.

In sum, elections in Mozambique still hold many discrepancies. The new electoral commission has carefully maneuvered its way into formulating legal obstacles for competition parties and candidates to fairly participate. As mentioned in the first chapter,

¹⁵³ (Manning 2010, 155)

¹⁵⁴ (Manning 2010, 156)

conducting a sound electoral process is one of the many ways a government can solidify political institutionalization. The election process in Mozambique has clearly not been fair during the last two national elections. This is evident on the national as well as on a municipal level where the incumbent has been able to wield the rules of the game in its favor.

Political Parties

As mentioned in the first chapter, political parties remain the most important mediating institutions between citizens and the state in a democracy. Therefore, it is crucial to have opposing parties actively participating in a leveled playing field. For the case of Mozambique, parties still demonstrate numerous problems which show strong signs of democratic minimalism. This section examines in depth the two main political parties: Renamo and Frelimo. While the ruling party has dominated every political sphere in the country, Renamo proves to be incompetent and unable to capitalize against Frelimo's weaknesses. Like many other sub-Saharan countries, both parties fail to present or foster a clear ideological platform. Mozambique's ruling party also has carefully crafted methods of preventing any sort of power sharing on various levels of government.

Carrie Manning points out the clear and obvious incompetence of the Renamo party. There is a lack of political experience within the group and some candidates are reported to only having a "secondary-school"¹⁵⁵ level of education. Logistically, similar to Malawi's case, the Renamo party lack proper funding, but this is probably due to Frelimo's monopoly over the state resources. Renamo has been headed by Alfonso Dhlakama since the civil war. He was the head of the rebel movement and later became

¹⁵⁵ (Manning 2010, 153)

the eventual leader of the political party. According to Manning, Dhlakama has no plans of consolidating power, not “even a minimum of organizational development”¹⁵⁶ within the party. Renamo is highly centralized and leadership is largely centered on Dhlakama’s own personal agenda.¹⁵⁷ Renamo’s leader also has been known to have strong personal animosity against Frelimo. Dhlakama’s vendetta has often conflicted with Renamo’s potential, as a party, to share power in the Mozambican government. With the expulsion of a few senior members in 2000, Dhlakama’s leadership in the party seems to remain unchallenged.¹⁵⁸

Renamo was initially created by an outside force in order to destabilize Mozambican society and military. Hence, it did not possess any sort of clear ideological agenda. Moreover, it did not have much grass roots support. Frelimo encounters similar pitfalls within its party as well. As mentioned previously in this chapter, the ruling party has always held an ambiguous stance on his economic and political programs. Though initially Frelimo embarked on a Marxist-Leninist platform, it quickly became “increasingly capitalist”¹⁵⁹ in the mid-1980s. By 1989, Frelimo dropped the Marxist-Leninism shortly after adopting “structural adjustment programs.”¹⁶⁰ Renamo, on the other hand, has never created its own platform and has always performed one role only: being anti-Frelimo.

According to some political scientists, Mozambique may resemble a two-party state, while in reality one party has virtually monopolized every facet of government. In

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 156.

¹⁵⁷ (Manning 2010, 156)

¹⁵⁸ (Bauer and Taylor 2005, 130)

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 130.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 130.

essence, Mozambique remains a one-party dominant state. Mozambican constitution also requires any political party to receive at least 5 percent of the national vote in order to be officially recognized. According to Bauer and Taylor, more than 18 percent of the population in 1994 actually voted for parties other than Renamo and Frelimo; because of the 5 percent rule, however, those voters were not represented.¹⁶¹ Frelimo has been able to monopolize power in Mozambique because it has been wielding the “rules of the game” in its favor. By using state resources and personnel, it has carefully “manipulated” legal institutions such as the CNE to minimize competition and guarantee minimal political defeat.¹⁶²

Civil Society

After two decades of intense civil war, Mozambican civil society was emerging in the political scene only after the first multi-party elections of 1994. Not surprisingly, the people have not found a voice in the government. As Bauer and Taylor assert, civil society in Mozambique appear to be less mobilized than in other countries in the region. Despite this fact, a few non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have been created in order to address issues of human rights and government criticism. Agencies such as the Mozambican Human Rights League and the Mozambique Association for Development of Democracy¹⁶³ are a few examples of such entities. A few independent media outlets also emerged during the past couple of decades; however, genuine non-partisanship within the media is still scarce or not yet mature.

¹⁶¹ (Bauer and Taylor 2005, 131)

¹⁶² (Manning 2010, 154)

¹⁶³ (Bauer and Taylor 2005, 133)

One of the strong determinants of a good democracy is civil society's ability to check and limit the government's power. Press freedom is a good gauge in evaluating the quality of a democracy. When discussing media in Mozambique, in this respect, it is almost imperative to examine corruption within the ruling party. An effective media in a civil society can be used as a free and inquisitive force to alert any malpractice within the government. In 1996, the media successfully uncovered a case of fraud, in the amount of \$14 million, during the privatization of Banco Comercial de Mocambique (BCM). Former Mozambican president Chisano was forced to "dismiss the Attorney General"¹⁶⁴ due to his failure to bring the people responsible to justice. This was a successful incident of an effective press uncovering a corruption case, which ultimately led to the expulsion of a few government officials.

On the other hand, the assassination of a well-known reporter, Carlos Cardoso in November of 2000, clearly demonstrated the "vulnerability of a critical civil society."¹⁶⁵ Carlos Cardoso was investigating wide spread banking fraud during the early 1990s, with some reported \$400 million missing from the Mozambican bank systems. Two articles published by Cardoso particularly questioned \$17 million worth of loans given to Antonio Simoes by five donors and were allegedly misused. Consequently, journalists Carlos Cardoso and António Siba-Siba Macuácuá were assassinated in 2000 and 2001 in order to cover up the scandal. Furthermore, nearly two months after the deaths of the two reporters, the government and the media released very little information about the incident.

¹⁶⁴ (Ostheimer 2001, 13)

¹⁶⁵ (Ostheimer 2001, 14)

The small number of independent media in Mozambique has faced numerous challenges. In 1990 a law regarding press freedom was enacted, which gave the privately owned media outlets virtual freedom to cover any political event. Consequently a few new private newspapers came out before the 1994 election. The two main newspapers in the country, *Noticias* and *Domingo*, were initially state-run, but were privatized in 1993.¹⁶⁶ After careful examination, however, it is the consensus that they are still state-influenced as two of the major shareholders in *Noiticias* are connected to the government. According to the Carter Center, these newspaper outlets also showed bias towards the Frelimo party during the 1999 election.¹⁶⁷ According to Taylor and Bauer, television stations have also been biased towards Frelimo while “demonizing” the Renamo party.¹⁶⁸ Two of the most successful independent news outlets are Metical and Mediafax. And although these two news outlets are able fax their contents directly to their readers, their impact is limited because of the Mozambique’s staggeringly high illiteracy rate.

Civil society in Mozambique has overcome the enormous challenge of peacefully co-existing after a long and brutal civil war. The government also introduced multi-party elections which resulted in a peaceful acceptance of the electoral outcomes. Thus, Mozambique has clearly had success in this realm. The elections which followed the internationally-observed democratic transition phase, however, present a different story. Constant irregularities on the part of the electoral commission marred the 1999, 2004, and even 2009 elections. Media bias, lower voter turnout, an unorganized party opposition, and a dominant ruling party unwilling to share power, have been the

¹⁶⁶ (Bauer and Taylor 2005, 133)

¹⁶⁷ (Carter Center 2000, 16)

¹⁶⁸ (Bauer and Taylor 2005, 133)

characteristics of contemporary Mozambican democratization process. It is evident that they face numerous challenges towards democratic consolidation.

Challenges

The current state of democracy in Mozambique is fair. Despite the numerous discrepancies in the electoral process and a dominant one-party rule under Frelimo, the Mozambican democracy has been relatively stable and peaceful. This is important due to the fact that just two decades prior, the country was experiencing a brutal civil war between Renamo and Frelimo. In essence, the Mozambican society has transformed the main combatants of the war into civil political parties. The democratic consolidation process, however, has been stagnant; a notion of democratic minimalism. Frelimo has had virtual monopoly over almost every sphere of the government. If the trend continues, the nature of democracy in the country will be very predictable and Frelimo will continue to hold a monopoly. As noted in this chapter, various elections have been fraudulent due to the simple fact that members of the CNE have been affiliated with Frelimo; thus influencing electoral outcomes.

Though another civil war in Mozambique is highly unlikely to happen as the country is heavily dependent on foreign assistance to maintain its economy, it is important to note that the democratic trend is sliding into a one-party rule. If such is the case, then it will closely resemble the period shortly after independence prior to the civil war. Hence, despite the democratic transition and the introduction of multi-party elections in 1994, the government is still struggling through its consolidation phase. Mozambique, like many other sub-Saharan countries, has “cracked the edifice of

autocracy;” however, it should not be mistaken for “fully fledged transitions to democracy.”¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁹ (Hyden and Bratton 1992, 29)

CHAPTER IV

MADAGASCAR

The fourth biggest island in the world, Madagascar, is separated from the African continent by the Mozambique Channel, some 250 miles off the south east coast. With more than eleven distinct ethnic groups, and one particular from Indo-Melanesian¹⁷⁰ decent, a few scientists have debated whether Madagascar is technically part of Africa. For this thesis, however, one thing is certain; geographically, the island is part of the Sub-Saharan region. More importantly, the Republic of Madagascar has faced numerous instances of election fraud, one dominant political party, and ongoing political instability since the start of its democratic transition in the early 1990s. For these reasons, the Malagasy government shares pitfalls found in neighboring states during the struggle towards democratic consolidation.

Politically, Madagascar has followed similar paths as other sub-Saharan nations. Like Malawi, it was ruled under an authoritarian regime for almost twenty five years shortly after independence. The former dictator, Didier Ratsiraka and the AREMA party, was finally challenged during the 2001 election and after months of political stalemate, Marc Ravalomanana successfully took over the island. The self-made business man was

¹⁷⁰ Raymond K. Kent. *From Madagascar to the Malagasy Republic* (Wesport Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1962), 52.

once again re-elected in 2007¹⁷¹ by a convincing landslide. In 2009, however, the capital city's young Mayor, Andry Rajoelina, ousted the president by what can only be best described as a classic coup d'état. The country has since been pulled off the list of electoral democracies by the Freedom House. It can be extremely helpful to examine the Malagasy case, however, as it depicts the fragility of sub-Saharan democracies. Prior to 2009, Madagascar enjoyed strong economic gains and its government was revered as a role model in the southern African community. This begs the question; what happened in 2009?

Pre Colonial Period

Theories about which group of people originally inhabited Madagascar remain widely debated among different scientists. Some theorists believe that "Phoenicians and Egyptians knew about the existence of Madagascar before the birth of Christ."¹⁷² According to Raymond Kent, the first "reliable" source, however, can only be traced back to the Arabs when they visited both Zanzibar and the "great isle" sometimes between 930 and 940 A.D.¹⁷³ When Arabs arrived on the island, they found it to be mostly vacant, which raises the question; who were the original Malagasy people? Geologists agree that the island was once part of Africa and eventually broke off.¹⁷⁴ Some speculate that the original habitants of Madagascar were bushmen who survived the cataclysmic split from Africa. Scientific research, however, speculate that no humans could have survived that event; rather the people who originally inhabited Madagascar

¹⁷¹ Malagasy presidential elections are held every 5 years, however due to the political crisis of 2001, Ravalomana formally took office only in 2002.

¹⁷² (Kent 1962, 4)

¹⁷³ Ibid., 4.

¹⁷⁴ Solofo Randrianja, Stephen Ellis. *Madagascar: A Short History* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2009), 22.

may have been sailors who came from different parts of the world. Madagascar's contemporary complex mosaic of Asian, European, and African¹⁷⁵ ethnic background supports this theory.

Prior to the arrival of Dutch, English, and French settlers, and even centuries before the eventual Francophone colonization in 1896, Madagascar already possessed a system of Oligarchy, which at one point controlled as much as 75 percent¹⁷⁶ of the island's population. The details of the various kings and queens who headed these monarchies during the pre-colonial period are beyond the scope of this thesis. A brief historical digression of the fourteenth to the nineteenth century, the Merina kingdom along with their struggle against the Sakalava Kings, and basic information on the hierarchical social system of that period, however, is essential.

In the early fourteenth century, the coastal regions of the island had small feudal kingdoms, predominantly headed by Arab chieftains.¹⁷⁷ The period between fourteenth and seventeenth century also experienced "pirate republics," where pirates from different European nations came and settled along the coasts of Madagascar in order to rebel against their own governments. The local population welcomed these pirates and traded goods, such as firearms and clothing, and even political ideas. For the most part, they co-existed peacefully. Around this same time, Madagascar also became a major trading post for the French and British East India companies. The posts were established on the coasts as well as inland; Kent describes the relationship between the local population and European traders as an "open door" policy. It was as early as the 1650s when the French

¹⁷⁵ (Kent 1962, 5)

¹⁷⁶ John M. Ostheimer. *The Politics of the Western Indian Ocean Islands* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1975), 33.

¹⁷⁷ (Kent 1962, 46)

initially had aspirations of colonizing the island. A French settler named Rigault notes of the rich soil and air of Madagascar; a perfect combination for a plantation and colony.¹⁷⁸

The Merina ethnic group resided in the center of the island. Geographically, they had an advantage because they were surrounded by high plateaus and forests, which often made invasions by other groups difficult. The pinnacle of the Merina Monarchy was in 1817, when they challenged the entire nation. By 1810, King Andrianampoinmerina was able to control “large chunks” of regions, which extended far beyond the central plateaus. This conquest was not merely military and economic, however. Socially, the Imerina Kingdom established a complex stratification of classes which included kings, courts, and slaves. At the top, the *Andriana*,¹⁷⁹ was the royal status and a class comprised of nobles and other subdivisions of nobilities of lower ranks, such as *petits seigneur* and *Menakely*. The *Hova-mainty* can be described as the upper and middle-class, which consisted mainly of merchants, traders, cultivators, and artisans. The slaves were divided into several groups. At the top, the *Hova-vao* were “privileged” slaves. The *Zaza-Hova* were formerly freed slaves who were unable to pay their debts and hence were reduced to a “temporary slave”¹⁸⁰ status. The *Tsiarondahy* were “royal slaves,”¹⁸¹ while the *Andevo* were at the bottom of the social class; they had no freedoms and had “no escape” from being a slave.

There was a constant struggle for empirical supremacy between the Sakalava Kings and the Merina Kingdom. During the mid-eighteenth century, the Merina were a “vassal state,” giving allegiance and paid tribute to the Sakalava empires of Menabé and Boina. Less than a hundred years later, the Imerina Kingdom took over the majority of

¹⁷⁸ (Kent 1962, 47)

¹⁷⁹ (Randrianja 2009, 113)

¹⁸⁰ (Kent 1962, 52)

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 52.

the island and Sakalava, in turn, became vassals of Imerina. Once the balance of power shifted, the Sakalava group was seeking military support from France. The French government and Sakalava unofficially formed an alliance, eventually crushing the Merina dominance. Ironically, France ultimately favored the Merina group for several reasons. First, in sheer number, they were the largest group on the island. Secondly, they already possessed a rich culture; most of them were educated and, politically, they had an institutionalized system of government. On the other hand, France had to suppress Merina hegemony in order to assert colonial rule. During the colonial expansion of 1880s, the French government sent General Joseph S. Gallieni to Madagascar in order to govern and establish the foundations of colonial rule.

Colonial Period

Upon his arrival on the island in the early 1890s, Gallieni immediately faced problems and frustrations with the Merina kingdom. As Solofo Randrianja states, “the authorities in Antananarivo failed to implement fully the 1885 protectorate and failed to respect the rights of the French citizens.”¹⁸² Gallieni had a few challenging tasks. The first order of business was to “liberate most Malagasies from the Merina yoke”¹⁸³ by eliminating their system of feudalism. The second, and ultimately one of the most relevant events in Malagasy colonial history, was to abolish slavery by enforcing the decree of June 1896. The French government also wanted the island to be self-sustaining. In practice, Madagascar would be taxed if “the administration received revenues.”¹⁸⁴ And lastly, the French colonial power needed to “pacify the still-rebellious”¹⁸⁵ peoples of

¹⁸² (Randrianja 2009, 155)

¹⁸³ (Kent 1962, 52)

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., 65.

¹⁸⁵ (Kent 1962, 66)

Madagascar. Ultimately, Gallieni achieved all these tasks. Some 15,000 colonial soldiers were brought to Madagascar and the Malagasy royal army put up “almost no resistance.”¹⁸⁶ The French general divided the island into military districts while the members of the Merina army and civil groups were placed under his officers. Though Gallieni met resistance from various ethnic groups, he nonetheless, managed to eventually forge Malagasy elders into his council.¹⁸⁷

The French colonial period between 1896 and 1972 in Madagascar was conducted in the same manner as other Francophone colonies. The French government insisted on implementing the disillusioned notion of “assimilation” where the Malagasy people were groomed to conform to French ideas and values. According to Kent, Madagascar became more advanced “than most of the European possessions”¹⁸⁸ in Sub-Saharan Africa. Several factors internal and international paved the way towards eventual independence. Increased globalization and fading traditional French networks in Madagascar sparked a sense of nationalism during the 1930s. Several prominent Malagasy elites, like Jean Ralaimongo, were able to travel to Paris and other European nations and witnessed freedom in industrialized countries. The 1947 revolt, which claimed as much as 1 percent of the entire population, was a clear sign that Malagasy citizens were seeking autonomy. Additionally, towards the end of the Second World War, the new Gaullist regime in France promised a new direction in its colonial African empire. This was pronounced in depth at the Brazzaville conference of 1944.¹⁸⁹ Furthermore, the creation of the Atlantic

¹⁸⁶ (Randrianja 2009, 155)

¹⁸⁷ (Kent 1962, 67)

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., 97.

¹⁸⁹ (Randrianja 2009, 173)

Charter and the United Nations were all possible signs of eventual sovereignty for the island. The so-called “myth of independence” ultimately occurred on June 26, 1960.

Independence

In order to fully understand the complexities of French foreign policy towards its former colonies, we must examine French president Charles De Gaulle’s agenda after taking over the 5th Republic in 1958. The above June 26, 1960 date has been coined “myth” simply because De Gaulle treated African independence as a step towards a prolonged relationship for years to come, rather than an end to all ties. The term “*garder la chasse*,” which literally means “keeping what you have hunted,” is an abstract term which symbolizes France’s tactics in maintaining various military, economic, and cultural influences over former colonies. De Gaulle’s notion of *Communaute*,¹⁹⁰ or simply Community, was comprised of the newly independent states and France. The Communaute would be answering to one president (the president of France), one senate, and one nationality. Furthermore, the president would also have decision-making powers over such critical areas as defense, economy, foreign relations, currency, and the procurement of strategic minerals.¹⁹¹

In order to facilitate this agenda and to keep France as the primary influence in Africa, De Gaulle created the Ministry of Cooperation,¹⁹² intended to show the African former colonies that they were not simply viewed as nations, but as nations with special ties with France. To be clear, the Ministry of Cooperation is entirely distinct from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. After World War II, the Franc Zone was created; it was a

¹⁹⁰ Alain Rouvez. *Disconsolate Empires: French, British, and Belgian Military Involvement in Post-Colonial Sub-Saharan Africa* (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 1994), 34-39.

¹⁹¹ John Chipman. *French Power in Africa* (Cambridge: Basil Blackwell Inc., 1989), 20-53.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, 103.

cooperation agenda between 14 African countries and Ministry of the Treasury. Regarded as the first pillar of neo-colonial structure, the Franc Zone performed three tasks: 1. it enabled transfer of funds between France and its former colonies, 2. it facilitated currency conversion into fixed rate in the zone, and 3. it centralized all of the monetary reserves of the African colonies into one location, namely the French Treasury.¹⁹³

Madagascar's independence and the characteristics of its first republic is a blatant example of *chasse gardée* and its state sovereignty was the subject of "continuing ambition of building a Greater France."¹⁹⁴ One of such examples is the inclusion of numerous French ministers in the first Malagasy Republic.¹⁹⁵ According to Phillip Allen, the disintegrated rural economy boasted "shallow" productivity while only the middle class, civil servants, and "non-Malagasy plantation concessionaries"¹⁹⁶ found the period rewarding. More than 75 percent¹⁹⁷ of foreign trade and domestic property were controlled by French interests.

President Philibert Tsiranana and the Social Democratic Party (PSD) presided over the First Republic with a self-contradicting program of nationalism and international dependence. Tsiranana was concerned with importing French products at a low price, which did very little to improve Madagascar's dwindling economy. As a close personal friend of De Gaulle, he protected French interests in order to guarantee the status and benefits of a protectorate. Similar to neighboring heads of state of that period, the president of the First Republic saw himself as the father of the country; he was a great

¹⁹³ (Rouvez 1994, 35-36)

¹⁹⁴ (Randrianja 2009, 156)

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., 157.

¹⁹⁶ (Ostheimer 1975, 28)

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., 28.

orator, impeccably speaking numerous dialects of Malagasy. He also held the commanding position of both chief of state and chief of government, never yielding nor sharing power. In 1972, medical students went on strike, demanding better living conditions. The protest quickly spread all over the island with several hundreds of thousands of students taking to streets. On the 13th of May of that year, security forces opened fire on high school and university student rioters; the violent clash resulted in several deaths. The First Republic ultimately ended and General Ramanantsoa was given a five-year mandate by constitutional decree to restore order.

The next three years proved to be the most tumultuous era in contemporary Malagasy politics. Ramanantsoa dissolved his government only after two short years due to continuing tensions, growing divide among the military, and possible state-wide ethnic clash. The general handed power over to former minister Colonel Richard Ratsimandrava on January 25, 1975.¹⁹⁸ Only one short week after taking office, Ratsimandrava was assassinated. Theories about who was responsible for his death are extensive. Some speculate that ambitious colleagues from his own party may have been the culprits. Others believe that members of the former governing party, PSD, may have been responsible. Ratsimandrava had a long list of enemies during this time; French business owners in fear of possible nationalization of major economic sectors and members of the future president Didier Ratsiraka's camp, were among that list. On February 15, 1975, power was once again dissolved and handed over to a council of military directorate represented by all branches of the Malagasy armed forces.

¹⁹⁸ (Ostheimer 1975, 62-63)

On the 21st day of December 1975, former naval officer and head of the military directorate, Didier Ratsiraka, formulated a referendum that would insure his presidency. In sum, it asked whether the Malagasy people accepted the Charter of the Socialist Revolution and Ratsiraka as their president in exchange for guaranteed justice, peace, and social equality. 96.3 percent¹⁹⁹ of voters agreed; Ratsiraka and his AREMA (the Vanguard of the Malagasy Revolution) party led the nation under soviet-style socialism similar to that of Mozambique's first republic. Ratsiraka implemented foreign policy measures similar to that of Tsiranana's. On the surface it was designed to be Nationalist, anti-colonial; in essence, anti-French. However, Kent argues that his agenda changed during his tenure. After all, the president spoke French eloquently, had great relations with Jacques Chirac, and ultimately solidified Franco-Malagasy ties during the next fifteen years. France's adoration for Ratsiraka would be evident in their stance during the 2002 political crisis.

The second republic gave extensive executive powers, which included a seven-year presidential term. The National Assembly consisted of 137 deputies, elected every five years. On the political front, the AREMA party was dominant, holding 81.3 percent of the seats (112 out of 137) during the 1977 legislative elections²⁰⁰; it contained more than 30,000 branches. Though Ratsiraka was unable to totally dismantle the existence of other minor smaller political parties like AKFM, the old PSD, MONIMA, and UDECMA, no other parties had legal voice in the government. The president's "boky

¹⁹⁹ Electoral Institute for the Sustainability of Democracy in Africa, (EISA). Retrieved from <http://www.eisa.org.za/WEP/mad1972referendum.htm>

²⁰⁰ EISA, <http://www.eisa.org.za/WEP/mad1977results.htm>

mena,” literally “red book,” aimed to nationalize banking sectors, insurance, and strategic industries.²⁰¹

The AREMA party and Ratsiraka, similar to Banda’s regime during the post-independence era, controlled every aspect of fiscal and political matters in the entire country. The state controlled more than 60 percent²⁰² of the economy. The country experienced some of the most notorious cases of corruption while under the AREMA regime. One of the thousands of such incidents was the disappearance of an entire cargo train full of merchandise from the port of Toamasina. Corruption was present at almost every level of government and was not limited within the political circle. Family members, public workers, and any personnel affiliated with corrupt members of the government stole whatever they could. Meanwhile the socialist state under the Boky Mena required unprecedented amount of money to fund its program. Conversely, the country’s productivity was meager and poverty rampant. Despite the country’s decision to implement a structural adjustment program²⁰³ by the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, Madagascar was still the 186th poorest country out of 204 states worldwide.²⁰⁴ Nonetheless, Ratsiraka managed to regain power during the presidential elections of 1982 and 1989; both of which are marred with suspicions of electoral fraud.

Democratic Transition

By 1991, the introduction of multiparty elections and the official start of democratic transition were imminent. Force Vive, headed by medical professor Albert Zafy, and other opposition parties pressured Ratsiraka to dissolve his authoritarian regime

²⁰¹ (Randrianja 2009, 195)

²⁰² Ibid., 195.

²⁰³ (Randrianja 2009, 199)

²⁰⁴ Ibid., 200.

by staging a six-month general strike. The FFKM, or the Council of Christian Churches, became the voice and mediator between the opposition and the incumbent. Other anxious political parties urged the military to take sides, however, they remained neutral.

Growing tensions ultimately resulted in a violent clash. On August 10, 1991, the presidential guards opened fire on a group of protestors causing claiming more than 50 deaths. The exact number is largely unknown and still debated even today. Negotiations were quietly assembled and a transitional government comprised of FFKM and opposition leaders presided over the country before a referendum was constructed. In 1992, 75 percent of the public favored the introduction of multiparty elections.²⁰⁵ Albert Zafy won the second round of presidential race, clinching 66.74 percent of the national vote against Ratsiraka's 33.26 percent.²⁰⁶

With the first introduction of multi-party elections and a fresh new president, there was a sense of optimism in Madagascar; the public had high hopes for Albert Zafy. His presidency, however, was short lived. The government of the Third Republic was filled with personal quarrels and incompetence. Sudden constitutional change after 15 years caused rampant corruption within the government. Several deputies allegedly voted among themselves to receive expensive four wheel drive vehicles shortly after taken office. According to Solofo Andrianja, some of Zafy's closest colleagues took substantial bribes in "dubious foreign investors"²⁰⁷ who defrauded the government of large sums of money. Furthermore, there were confusions among party members due to the lack of any democratic culture. Foreign donors, concerned with blatant and wide-spread fraud, froze

²⁰⁵ EISA, <http://www.eisa.org.za/WEP/mad1992results.htm>

²⁰⁶ EISA, <http://www.eisa.org.za/WEP/mad1993results2.htm>

²⁰⁷ Solofo Randrianja. "Be Not Afraid, Only Believe." *African Affairs* 102, no. 407 (2003): 311.

major investments. This in turn created a huge economic crisis and ultimately led to the impeachment of Albert Zafy in May 15, 1996.

The public returned to the polls in November of 1996. Despite his impeachment, Albert Zafy was eligible to run once again for president. To the surprise of many people, Didier Ratsiraka returned to the ballot as well, claiming himself as the experienced politician destined to “save” the island from the economic shambles. Ratsiraka ultimately won by acquiring 36.61 percent versus Albert Zafy’s 23.39 percent²⁰⁸ in the first round. The Malagasy constitution requires a second round of election if no candidate receives more than 50 percent of the votes. The second round of the 1996 presidential election experienced the blatant flaws of electoral conduct discussed throughout this thesis. Ratsiraka garnered 50.71 percent of the votes while Albert Zafy clinched 49.29 percent²⁰⁹. As mysterious as this, less than 1 percent margin may be, the more apparent fraud was the fact that members of the High Constitutional Court received cars “just days before”²¹⁰ the elections results were to be released.

The discrepancies did not stop at the presidential elections. Two years later, the AREMA party and Ratsiraka managed to finagle a referendum in 1998 that would increase executive powers and increase the number of seats in the assembly, ultimately giving the vanguard more power. The official results were 50.96 percent of votes for versus 40.04 percent²¹¹ of votes against the referendum; this time 30 percent of registered votes mysteriously disappeared.²¹² From here on, the AREMA party carefully crafted

²⁰⁸ EISA, <http://www.eisa.org.za/WEP/mad1996results.htm>

²⁰⁹ EISA, <http://www.eisa.org.za/WEP/mad1996results.htm>

²¹⁰ (Randrianja 2003, 311)

²¹¹ EISA, <http://www.eisa.org.za/WEP/mad1998referendum.htm>

²¹² (Randrianja 2003, 312)

methods of establishing complete control over every level of elections and territories.

Like in the case of Malawi, AREMA formed a coalition of 91 deputies in order to assert majority rule. They won over half of all mayor elections, “200 out of 336 provincial councilors, 53 out of 63 senators, and all governorship positions.”²¹³

Despite these developments, the Malagasy government at this point was chaotic and unorganized. The sentiment amongst the public was that of frustration which turned into lack of interest in politics all together. With an unpopular image, the AREMA team sought to decentralize the government, but this also proved to be ineffective as the decentralization agenda did not account for widespread corruption. The vanguard politicians, mostly comprised of senior officers from the authoritarian Second Republic, saw decentralization as a means to appease the public and to hold on to power. For better or worse, the general public viewed this as “politics as usual” and predicted that Ratsiraka and the AREMA team would once again be victors in the upcoming 2001 election.

With only two years of political experience as the capital’s Mayor, Marc Ravalomanana prepared for his presidential candidacy for the 2001 elections. The incumbent was notorious for plotting against opposition leaders prior to elections, therefore Ravalomanana announced his official ticket only a couple of months before Election Day. As a self-made millionaire, the young entrepreneur is of Merina decent; he owned the largest dairy company in the island, TIKO. His party, TIM (Tiako I Magasikara), or “I love Madagascar”, had widespread support from one of the biggest churches in the island, the *Fiangonan’I Jesoa Kristy eto Madagascar*, or FJKM.

²¹³ Ibid., 312.

Additionally, the young, then 50 year-old, Mayor had garnered support from various opposition leaders; some of them voluntarily stepping out of the race in order to back the TIM party. Running on a primarily religious campaign, Marc and his TIM party used the biblical passage, “Be Not Afraid, Only Believe,” as their slogan. Meanwhile, the incumbency was working diligently to once again try to manipulate the electoral process. Ratsiraka made sure the electoral commission was starved of funding shortly before election in hopes of bribing members; essentially influencing electoral results. International observers were invited to monitor the race. There was a sense that the people of Madagascar once again wanted change.

The 2002 crisis which lasted for more than six months stemmed from disputes over the results of the first round presidential election. Armed with extensive resources, the TIM party was equipped with dozens of helicopters and vehicles traveling to every polling station in the island. Their results gave Ravalomanana 52 percent²¹⁴ of the total votes, which would make him outright winner without the need of a second round. Ratsiraka, on the other, claimed the contrary, basing his results tallied by Interior Ministry, an entity comprised mostly of the AREMA party. On the very surface, election fraud seemed to have been the plausible case as witnessed in several prior instances. Nonetheless, Ratsiraka refused to justify the discrepancies between his tallies against those of the TIM Party, the KMMRs (party members of other opposition leaders), and outside election observers as well. Ravalomanana supporters were ardent in preventing a second round, fearing the government machine would manipulate future results. Ratsiraka and Ravalomanana both stood firm; while the incumbent based his arguments

²¹⁴ EISA, <http://www.eisa.org.za/WEP/mad2001results.htm>

on legality, the challenger claimed his position on the basis of legitimacy. The situation was ripe for widespread dispute among the opposition factions.

For the next six-months, the island experienced political deadlock, violent clashes in various parts of the island, and constant talks and meetings, which never materialized diplomatically. Several media outlets supporting Ravalomanana in the coastal regions were ransacked and burned. Widespread violence broke out both in the capital and several coastal regions. Ratsiraka's base of support was in the port city and province of Toamasina. In order to starve the capital city from resources and commodities unique to the coastal region, the AREMA supporters burned and destroyed bridges. Consequently, gasoline was scarce in Antananarivo, Ravalomanana's strongest support base. The two protagonists setup meetings in Dakar, Senegal with the African Union acting as the main mediating faction. At this point, it was clear that the politics of "*chasse gardée*" and *ancien régime* were prevailing. On one hand, France indirectly supported Ratsiraka and the AREMA regime during the crisis, while the African Union accommodated the capricious demands of Ratsiraka.

Senegalese president Abdoulaye Wade was chosen as the principle mediator for the crisis; though peace agreements were signed in what were known as Dakar I and Dakar II, they were never implemented, as the incumbent president continuously breached his end of the deal.²¹⁵ The military slowly trickled towards Ravalomanana's camp as he gained immense public support, with some reported 500,000 demonstrators daily. Marc Ravalomanana, basing his position on legitimacy and armed with immense public support, proclaimed himself as president. Various international nations and

²¹⁵ (Randrianja 2009, 208)

organizations attended the ceremony of the presidential investiture. To no surprise, France was amongst the last international countries to recognize the Ravalomanana government. Ratsiraka, meanwhile, took refuge in his luxurious Parisian apartment as he was formally exiled.

Marc Ravalomnana is first and foremost a business man. As Richard Marcus states, “he is a self-made millionaire, a capitalist, and Merina.”²¹⁶ He studied in Denmark. Though he comes from a privileged class, he grew up with humble beginnings. One famous story is that he started his dairy business venture by selling milk on his bicycle traveling door to door in rural parts of Madagascar. His political career started as the Mayor of the Antananarivo where he was known to successfully clean and repair the roads. His business success, as well as his political accomplishments in the capital ultimately carried him to the presidency. From 2003 to 2008, Madagascar experienced obvious economic success. Ravalomanana continuously opened sectors and persuaded donors to fund various programs in the island. The government was the first recipient of \$100 million under George W. Bush’s Millennium Challenge.²¹⁷ He pushed for the advancement of infrastructures, which included major road repairs throughout the entire island. The intent was to improve the efficiency of product transport between rural areas. It was the consensus among Malagasies that the nation was heading towards the right direction and things were improving.

The list of accomplishments made by Ravalomana during his presidency is extensive. He was able to spark a “flurry of international interest” and “investment by

²¹⁶ Richard Marcus. Marc the Medici? The Failure of a New Form of Neopratinomial Rule in Madagascar. *Political Science Quarterly* 125, no. 1 (Spring 2010): 11.

²¹⁷ Millennium Challenge. Retrieved from <http://www.mcc.gov/pages/countries/overview/madagascar>

multinational cooperation;²¹⁸ this included, but is not limited to: titanium dioxide mine developed by an Australian company, tar sands projects sponsored by France, and offshore exploration by several oil companies.²¹⁹ These ventures have unfortunately been at the expense of the poorest population of Madagascar. Undoubtedly, the island was enjoying economic gains²²⁰ compared to the previous AREMA era; however, the rural base remained poor. While corruption decreased, roads improved, infrastructures increased; these policies overshadowed a pressing domestic issue; more specifically, poverty.

A few additional factors also led to mass protests and demonstrations in 2009. These following events ultimately led to the resignation of Marc Ravalomanana. The South Korean company, Daewoo, began negotiations with the government in 2008 to lease 3.2 million acres of land in Madagascar.²²¹ This would enable Koreans to plant on, previously untouched, Malagasy soil for the next 99 years. It caused a stir in the island and prompted several riots. As an ardent supporter of the Protestant FJKM church, which he was the vice president of, Marc was also accused of suppressing religious and freedom of speech. Madagascar's population is approximately 41 percent Christian, 7 percent Muslim, and the remaining 52 percent practice indigenous beliefs.²²² While he did gain most of his support from the protestant church, various religious groups have challenged his policies and demanded better conditions for the rural poor. The closure of an

²¹⁸ (Marcus 2010, 16)

²¹⁹ Lauren Proch. Proch, Lauren. "Madagascar's Political Crisis." *Congressional Research Crisis*. 7-5700, (June 30, 2010): 9.

²²⁰ Real GDP Growth Rate

Retrieved from http://www.indexmundi.com/madagascar/gdp_real_growth_rate.html

²²¹ Vivienne Walt. The Breadbasket of Korea: Madagascar. Nov. 23, 2008. Time Magazine.

Retrieved from <http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1861145,00.html>

²²² World Factbook CIA. Retrieved from <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ma.html>

opposition television station sparked outrage and months of protests in the streets; tensions increased.

These events certainly helped give rise to opposition leader, Andry Rajoelina. The political strains between Rajoelina and Marc Ravalomanana started between the latter part of 2008 and the beginning of 2009. Andry Rajoelina, a former disc jockey, heads the TGV (Tanora malaGasy Vonina) party, taking the streets with thousands of protester. He won the Mayor race in the capital city, defeating Ravalomanana's candidate. The TGV movement accused the president of corruption and authoritarianism; they demanded his immediate removal. Mutinous soldiers and several protestors created havoc in the capital during several months of unrest. Looting, burglary, intimidation, and violence were rampant. The president, fearing a potential bloodbath, handed power to the military transitional government. By constitutional decree, similar to the unrest of 1972, the military is placed in charge to restore peace and stability during a political crisis. In 2009, however, the military handed power over to Rajoelina, performing an undemocratic transfer of power. The interim entity which is currently heading Madagascar is the HAT (Haut Autorité Transitionnel) or High Transitional Authority. Rajoelina is at the top.

Several international countries have condemned the events of 2009 citing an unconstitutional transfer of power; they have frozen all funding desperately needed to sustain the country's already poor economy.²²³ In an effort to regain order, several foreign mediators have organized round-table meeting between the two factions. While Ravalomanana has asked for a referendum among other electoral procedures, the HAT

²²³ The average Malagasy citizen makes an average of less than \$1 per day.

has vehemently refused. The nature of negotiations between Rajoelina and Ravalomanana is best described by a passage in a *New York Times* article:

The two have met in Maputo, Mozambique; in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; in Maputo once again; and in Johannesburg. Deals are made. Hands are shaken. Deals are broken.²²⁴

Nothing definitive has materialized politically in Madagascar as of May 2011.

Sources from the island have told me, “Anarchy is the best description of the current state of affairs.”²²⁵ Armed with guns and with military support, the mafia-style government has had to steal money in order to pay public workers. In the rural areas, traveling cargos of merchandise are often stopped and hijacked on the roads; no questions asked. The HAT government now uses the word “opposition” to refer to the democratically elected previous government. Furthermore, a life sentence was given to President Marc Ravalomanana at one point; consequently he is forbidden to re-enter the country.²²⁶ He is in exile, presumably somewhere in South Africa. Every institution created in the country, which is presumably a coalition of different entities, is, in reality, a group of handpicked HAT members. Ironically, some former protesters and leaders who have confessed their role in staging a “coup” are now being taken to jail by their own peers. The HAT has been re-shuffled three times since 2009. Andry Rajoelina has single handedly created a few referendums, the details of which can be confusing because no one really voted for them. They are simply written and implemented.

The effects of the 2009 coup have had a crippling effect on the entire island and some of these effects stretch far beyond the economic and political realm. Since the

²²⁴ “Madagascar,” *New York Times*, 25 May, 2010. Retrieved from <http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/international/countriesandterritories/madagascar/index.html>

²²⁵ Personal interview.

²²⁶ Barry Bearak, “Madagascar Bars Entry to President Ousted in ‘09,” *New York Times*, February 19, 2011.

crisis, almost one fourth of health clinics in the country have closed due to lack of funding. Additionally, numerous primary schools in a few rural areas have had to shut down while forced child labor has increased by a whopping 25 percent.²²⁷ Madagascar is rich in biodiversity; internationally funded programs which protected endangered species and flora-fauna, however, have since halted. One of such examples is three crucial Environmental Programs (EP) funded by the US Agency for International Development (USAID) which have been implemented since 1990. According to USAID, “Environmental preservation is hostage to economic development and economic development is hostage to good governance.”²²⁸ Furthermore, with no clear legitimate leader in place, systemic corruption is widespread, especially in the province and rural areas. On the economic front, inflation is through the roof; poverty has gone up 9 percent since the 2009 crisis. Most importantly, the victims of this prolonged fiasco are, ironically, the poor population.

Like the other two countries examined in this thesis, Madagascar has experienced major setbacks in its elections, political parties, and civil society. Madagascar first introduced its multiparty system in 1992. However, this democratic transition phase did not foster any development of good governance shortly after. In a span of ten years (1992-2002), there have been three presidents and three constitutional overhauls through a referendum. Additionally, the following 2009 crisis marks the least democratic transfer of government in all of in Madagascar’s contemporary political history. This section will examine the three pivotal facets used in assessing the quality of democracy in

²²⁷ Fanja Saholiarisoa, “Poverty Forces 2 Million Children Into Hard Labor,” *IPS News*, September 22, 2009. Retrieved from <http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=48552>

²²⁸ US Agency for International Development, “Paradise Lost? Lessons From 25 Years of Development Program in Madagascar.” USAID International Research Group. Retrieved from <http://www.rmportal.net/library/paradise-lost-madagascar-executive-summary-english/view>

Madagascar: elections, political parties, and civil society. The island has been crippled with recurring instances of election fraud, electoral manipulation, a dominant one party system despite the introduction of multiparty elections, and a vibrant civil society unable to push for reform.

Elections

After the tumultuous period between 1960 and 1972, Madagascar was headed by naval officer Didier Ratsiraka and the AREMA party. Even before the democratic transition phase started, the island already experienced instances of election irregularities. For this thesis, I will examine presidential elections of 1989, 1996, and the 2001. Electoral fraud was not limited to the presidential races. Discrepancies were also found during referendum elections as well as local and legislative campaigns.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, Didier Ratsiraka took over the Second Republic with his referendum shortly after a period of unrest with the assassination of Ratsimandrava. In 1989, Ratsiraka managed to acquire 60 percent of the votes. This ensured outright victory without the need of a second round. According to the independent group *Comité National pour l'Observation des Elections*, at least 15 percent²²⁹ of those votes were fraudulent.

The 1996 election between Albert Zafy and Ratsiraka was decided by a narrow margin of less than 1 percent. Members of the courts and electoral commission were given brand new vehicles shortly before the election. This, evidently clear, incident of fraud cost Zafy the race and the discrepancies prevented him from contesting a possible

²²⁹ (Randrianja 2009, 200)

second round. One again, the 1996 election, like some of the cases in Mozambique, is a blatant example of the incumbency manipulating the electoral process and institution. Didier Ratsiraka was able to influence the votes by bribing members of the High Constitutional Court just days before the election.

The 2001 election, which ultimately led to a six month political crisis, is yet another typical case of Malagasy electoral scam. Figures compiled by incumbent Ratsiraka did not match those accumulated by independent groups and those tallied by Marc Ravalomanana's team; there were around 500,000 reported bogus votes. The incumbent has always been suspected of conducting electoral fraud; the only difference in 2001 is that the contender had substantial resources to provide his own tabulation to refute the ruling party's initial claim. The outcome of the 2001 results undoubtedly was a first of its kind in Malagasy politics; a relatively new and unknown politician and businessman was able to challenge the *ancien regime* and political dinosaurs who have autocratically ruled the island.

Instances of vote fraud and irregularities are a recurring phenomenon in much of Madagascar's politics; it has undermined the electoral process and the institution. The culprit has been, for the most part, the AREMA party which dominated the political sphere for almost twenty five years in total. In sum, discrepancies in the electoral process have disrupted and destabilized the political scene during most of Madagascar's contemporary political history. Electoral fraud in 2001 serves as a prime example of its effects: political deadlock for more than six months, which threatened to divide the entire island and not to mention disturbing and crippling the national economy.

Civil Society

As noted earlier in Chapter 1, civil society consists of formal and informal organizations which are autonomous from the state; they are interest groups, cultural entities, religious groups, mass media, and educational institutions. Though they do not seek to assert control over the state, civil society serves the development of democracy in several ways. This is certainly evident in the case of Madagascar. This section examines how different sectors of the population helped shape the events of Madagascar's independent political history. The revolution of May 1947 was sparked by hundreds of thousands of people and eventually paved the way for independence. Student protestors, in 1972, challenged the government, while several riots in 1991 helped birth the democratic transition to a multi-party system. In 2002, the church played an integral role in supporting a candidate who successfully challenged a dictator. And finally, in 2009, angry citizens protesting over deepening poverty had a profound effect in destabilizing the government; the incident led to a coup d'état. A summary of different mass media outlets, NGOs, and CSOs in Madagascar will also be outlined in this section as well.

Like other former Francophone colonies, Madagascar's civil society has been engaging; compared to other sub-Saharan nations, they are active in political discourse. There have been a few instances where the populous have challenged the government. One of the most significant events of Malagasy political history is undoubtedly the revolt of 1947. Between March 29 and 30, 1947, violent clashes between French police and local rebel movements occurred across the entire island. The insurgents attacked a French army at Maromanga. There was reported hand-to-hand combat in Manakara and the rebels eventually seized that city. French authority lost almost the entire region of

Mananjary. During this time, many European settlers were beaten while some were killed. It took almost a year to suppress the 1947 revolt and by 1948, the French military finally wiped out remaining the rebel groups. While there were other international factors which influenced the French government to grant independence to the island, the uprising of 1947 was clear indication of a nationalist sentiment growing among the Malagasy nation. The death toll of the 1947 revolt differs depending on the source and it ranges from as low as 11,342 to 90,000. Kent believes 60,000²³⁰ is the closest legitimate estimate.

After Madagascar's independence, the masses continued to play an integral role in "checking" the government. During the First Republic, Tsiranana implemented a French cultural domination in the education system. Various students protested against these mandates; the riots quickly escalated into a general strike throughout the entire city. On May 13 1972, security forces of the government opened fire, killing 40 and injuring about 150 protestors. This day has become so relevant in Malagasy society, that even today, political discourse or protests are usually held on the 13th of May at the same location. The student revolt of 1972 is an example of civil society engaging in the political sphere in order to seek reform.

In an effort to suppress all possible threats against the government's dictatorship, Ratsiraka banned the practice of Martial Arts in 1984. Kung-Fu centers were common throughout the capital city; they were mostly comprised of outspoken youth from the middle class. As retaliation on the ban, 6,000 Kung-Fu members attacked Ratsiraka's personal security force called TTS (Tanora Tonga Saina) in 1984. The two groups would

²³⁰ (Kent 1962, 97)

clash numerous times throughout that year, however, on July 31, 1986, armored vehicles and helicopters sent by the government crushed²³¹ the Kung-Fu Headquarters in Antananarivo. The army killed the movement's leader along with 200 other followers. The youth in Madagascar, throughout its history, have always been engaged in politics often by protesting and risking their lives.

Protestors once again took the streets in 1989 in response to the AREMA government's continued oppression. After implementing a general strike, thousands of people marched to the presidential palace and on August 10, 1991, presidential guards opened fire on a crowd of demonstrators. This event is known as the *Massacre at Iavoloha*. The 1991 revolt, organized by the masses along with Forces Vives, helped spark negotiations to start the introduction of a multi-party system. After the riot, a transitional administration was put in place while a series of conferences in the provinces and a national forum in the capital were held. The 1992 referendum adopted the new constitution which introduced opposition parties, ending the Second Republic.

Without a doubt, Marc Ravalomanana emerged on the political scene with the support of the masses as well as religious groups; notably the powerful Protestant FJKM church. During the disputed election results of 2001, some 500,000 demonstrators urged Ratstiraka to hand over power to the democratically elected candidate. The support base of Ravalomanana during the crisis provided him immense legitimacy in the eyes of the international community. As mentioned previously, Ravalomanana also ran on a religious platform with the biblical passage "Be not afraid, only believe." As the vice president of

²³¹ (Randrianja 2009, 199)

the biggest Protestant denomination in the island, Marc “enjoyed considerable support”²³² from the church. Furthermore, it can be argued that religion has had a more pronounced role in society since Ravalomanana took the presidency. This was a stark difference from the previous president and AREMA party. Ravalomanana, on the other hand, is known for his fervent Christian faith. He received criticism for his outspoken views and his push towards a “Malagasy Christian state.” Most importantly, he successfully removed the word “secular” from the constitution through the referendum of 2007. Religion has been a big part of Malagasy society since the latter part of colonization; however, it did not have the impact on politics as it did with Ravalomanana and his rise to power.

Of the three particular facets of democracy observed in this thesis, mass media in civil society may be the most problematic sector in Madagascar. Throughout much of the independent era, media has been used primarily to push the agenda of the incumbent party. The biggest form of communication during the 1980s was the radio. These airwaves were monopolized by the AREMA regime. The main television station during the Ratsiraka era was TVM, Télévision Malagasy. It had signals strong enough to transmit throughout the entire island. To no surprise, TVM rarely criticized the government while pushing propaganda for the incumbency during campaign periods. When political liberalization occurred during the mid-1990s, neutrality in the media sector never materialized. This was evident during the 2001 crisis and the 2009 coup d'état. The Ratsiraka government used the airwaves in the provinces to entice ethnic clash during the political stalemate of 2001. Consequently media outlets supporting Marc Ravalomanana in the coastal regions were ransacked and burned.

²³² (Randrianja 2009, 206)

This trend unfortunately continued during the Ravalomanana era. The Madagascar Broadcasting System (MBS), the current largest media outlet in Madagascar, is owned by President Ravalomanana; his daughter Sara runs the operation.²³³ Needless to say, MBS rarely criticizes the TIM party nor the president. More importantly, the Ravalomanana government sent around 50 soldiers to confiscate equipment from the Viva studio and eventually ordered its immediate closure. Viva is the main opposition's media outlet and it is owned by Andry Rajoelina. Though the government's order to shut down Viva was a blatant violation of speech freedom, it is essential to note that the messages aired over the opposition news outlets were questionable. Its intent was clear as it increasingly lured a volatile, angry, and hungry mass to create havoc, lute, and destabilize society. This is evident by the events which occurred during the crisis. While the demonstrators during the 2002 political crisis gathered and rallied peacefully in the capital city, the events of 2009 was mainly comprised of groups of thugs ransacking Antananarivo.

Media in Madagascar has not been able to carry the simple task of reporting news without political bias. The reason for this is precisely because each dominant media outlet, such as MBS and Viva, has been owned by a president or head of the government. This is problematic. Furthermore, the few independent news agencies in the country do not have the resources necessary to compete against the incumbent's media conglomerates. Not surprisingly, the 1980s experienced a heavily pro-government media as it was run by an autocratic regime. This trend did not change despite political liberalization in 1992 and 2002. When Ravalomanana took over power, there was a sense of optimism; however, the government once again used its authority to suppress the voice

²³³ (Marcus 2004, 13)

of the opposition by closing down several news outlets critical of the incumbent. Thus, one can predict that the Viva studio, or any news agencies affiliated with the interim government, will now dominate the air waves as it is owned and operated by the Rajoelina team.

Non-governmental organizations, or NGOs, have helped some of the neediest population of Madagascar to survive. Aside from being one of the poorest countries in sub-Saharan Africa, Madagascar also experience violent cyclones yearly which can devastate crops, homes, and the rural economy. Organizations like Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and Caritas play a crucial role in guaranteeing basic food security and emergency preparedness in various regions of the island. Madagascar, unlike other sub-Saharan countries, has not been victim of the HIV/AIDS epidemic with only 1.1²³⁴ percent of the population infected. NGOs like Catholic Relief Services, however, plays an integral role in preventing future spread of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases by providing voluntary testing, counseling, and education. Several local civil society organizations (CSOs) have formed in order to address human rights, women's rights, and other civil issues. Some of these organizations include: Association SAFIDY, MIANGALY, ONG Ny Voara, Zoky Taratra, GAM, ACVIF ENVIMAD, and Vosegnan'I Vatovavy Fitovinany. Almost all major foreign donors have cut off government assistance following the 2009 coup; however, funding for humanitarian and disaster relief programs continues to flow. Hence, the presence of NGOs is now paramount as they take on the challenging task of aiding a vast rural population living below the poverty line.

²³⁴ CRS projects in Madagascar. Retrieved from <http://crs.org/madagascar/projects.cfm>

Civil society in Madagascar, throughout its political history, seems to be more mobilized than the other two countries studied in this thesis. The masses have been continuously engaged in politics; student protestors, demonstrators, along with religious groups have actively voiced their opinion throughout the development of the country's democracy. What remains debatable is whether the country has fostered real democratic reform based on the popular will through these protests. With demonstrations and protests, civil society has managed to decentralize sectors of the government, for example in 1992 when the democratic transition phase occurred. Shortly after, however, a referendum passed to increase presidential powers. In 2002, enormous public support brought Ravalomanana to the presidency, certainly as a reactionary movement against the continued AREMA hegemony. Ravalomanana, however, was not able to finish his mandate when thousands of angry protestors along with the TGV movement ousted the president. These events eventually helped bring about a coup d'état and now Madagascar faces a grim economic picture without foreign assistance. In essence, popular movements in Madagascar have been successful in removing political figures in office but the development of democracy remains fairly mediocre.

Political Parties

By 1975, Madagascar's political party system closely resembled Malawi and Mozambique's one-party dominant state. Like Frelimo shortly after independence and Banda's MCP, the AREMA vanguard party was unopposed and had complete control over most of the political sphere for nearly twenty five years. Ratsiraka and his one-party state were finally challenged in 1992 after angry protestors urged for political reform. Thus, multi party elections were introduced and Albert Zafy defeated the dictator while

the democratic transition officially started. Little reform was made, however; Ratsiraka and AREMA came back into power in 1996. The 2001 contested elections put Ravalomanana and his TIM party in power. Though President Ravalomanana undoubtedly emerged as a populist president, he has used extensive presidential powers in order to guarantee an assembly dominated by his TIM party. This next section will examine the AREMA and TIM party as they are essentially the only two parties that have had dominance in contemporary Malagasy politics.

After the assassination of Ratsimandrava, the vanguard party, AREMA, took control and began its one-party rule in 1975. Ratsiraka carried over the policies of the former president and designed the *fokonolona* to be the most basic organ of the socialist-democratic state. The 11,380 *fokonolona*, or village assembly, seemed to be, in theory, a Malagasy-style direct democracy, comparable to Tanzania's *ujamaa*.²³⁵ Development was to be put in the hands of each *fokonolona*'s citizens, creating a decentralized system. In reality, however, the peasantry and urban masses who were designed to be the beneficiaries of the system rarely had any influence. The entire operation quickly became a fief of the main AREMA umbrella.²³⁶ By March of 1977, AREMA asserted its dominance by garnering 81.75²³⁷ percent of seats in the *fokolona-fokotany* system nationwide during the national assembly election. They had exclusive power in the government while controlling more than 60 percent of the national economy. There were more than 30,000 AREMA branches throughout the island. The opposition parties, AKFM, PSD, MONIMA, and UDECMA, parties were required to join the National Front

²³⁵ (Randrianja 2009, 196)

²³⁶ (Randrianja 2009, 196)

²³⁷ EISA, <http://www.eisa.org.za/WEP/mad1977results.htm>

for the Defense of the Revolution. The main pillar of this National Front was Ratsiraka's AREMA party.

During the next two National Assembly elections, 1983 and 1989, AREMA continued its monopoly by occupying 85.40 and 87.59²³⁸ percent of seats respectively. It is important to note that the closest opposition party in line only held about 10 percent of the seats while the remaining numerous smaller parties occupied only about 1 percent each. When democratic transition started in 1992, President Albert Zafy's party, Forces Vives, held the most seats in the 1993 national assembly election with 33.4²³⁹ percent.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the introduction of a multi-party system in 1992 was an optimistic era in Malagasy politics. The dictatorship of Ratsiraka and the AREMA party were finally dismantled as the public overwhelmingly supported the need for political decentralization. The President and his party, however, were simply incompetent. Overwhelmed by a sense of chaos and disorganization, the new leaders were not able to capitalize on the opportunity. Similar to many other cases in other sub-Saharan experiences, the transition phase was also a period of ambitious politicians, using state funds and government positions to acquire personal wealth. This was certainly evident in Zafy Albert's camp. Numerous colleagues of the president voted among themselves to pass bills that would ultimately give them new expensive sport utility vehicles among other luxuries. Furthermore, widespread suspicion of fraud and embezzlement forced international donors to freeze assets and investment; this caused a substantial financial crisis. To no surprise, Zafy and Force Vives party were later

²³⁸ EISA, <http://www.eisa.org.za/WEP/mad1983results.htm> and <http://www.eisa.org.za/WEP/mad1989results2.htm>

²³⁹ EISA, <http://www.eisa.org.za/WEP/mad1993results.htm>

formally impeached. Ratsiraka was able to clinch victory once again during the following 1996 election. His AREMA party held 40 percent of the assembly seats; while this number is much lower, it is important to note that the runner up party, Leader Fanilo, only occupied 10 percent and more than 30 parties, including independents, shared the rest. Most of those remaining parties held less than 1 percent each. Therefore, despite the introduction of multiparty elections, the AREMA once again controlled the National Assembly and Madagascar was, once again, a one-party dominant state for the next five years to come.

In order to fully understand the TIM party, which emerged in 2002, we must examine presidential powers when Ravalomanana took over the island. This next section will illustrate briefly how businessman, Marc, used his executive powers to slowly shape the National Assembly into a one-party dominant system as well. Like many other sub-Saharan countries, the president was also the head of his party. Ravalomanana's main challenge in 2002 was constructing a legislature in his favor. As noted earlier, the previous Assembly was dominated by AREMA. Ratsiraka had appointed 30 senators; five of the six provinces were still under the control of his vanguard party. At this time, the constitution did not allow the president to dissolve the Assembly, though it did grant the executive the power to replace senators; Ravalomanana did just that by firing all 30 AREMA seats.²⁴⁰

The president also had the authority to "schedule elections," and in December 2002, Ravalomanana's TIM party won 102 out of the 160²⁴¹ seats available. Other non-partisan parties were behind the president as well; they held 22 seats. With a high voter

²⁴⁰ (Marcus 2010, 12)

²⁴¹ EISA, <http://www.eisa.org.za/WEP/mad2002results.htm>

turnout in the legislative elections, Ravalomanana's win helped crush the previous AREMA hegemony and solidified his legitimacy in the eyes of the African Union and the rest of international community. In 2007, Ravalomanana pushed for increased presidential powers through a referendum and he successfully passed this legislation. It transformed the original 6 autonomous provinces into 22 smaller seats. Later that year, the TIM Party clinched 107 out of 127²⁴² total seats, establishing full control in the National Assembly.

Dr. Richard Marcus, a Lecturer at the Department of Political Science at Yale University wrote an extensive article on Marc Ravalomanana and his TIM party in 2004. He makes a pertinent observation; he writes, "African states have been shaped by a history of domination by 'big men.'"²⁴³ Madagascar's political space, on the other hand, is defined by the country's social movements. Certainly, this is true for all of its presidents: Tsiranana was shaped by the events of 1947, Ratsiraka came into power following the chaos of 1972, and the 1991 uprising helped Zafy Albert clinch power. Marc Ravalomanana, however, simply emerged as a populist leader and single handedly created a resurgence of a nation in 2002. Ironically, this event has "now come to define him."²⁴⁴ So the question is then whether Madagascar, after 2002, experienced democratic reform when its people elected Ravalomanana or have they simply enabled a new form of neo-patrimonial rule where the "president's office is used more for personal gain"²⁴⁵ rather than public benefit.

²⁴² EISA, <http://www.eisa.org.za/WEP/mad2007results2.htm>

²⁴³ (Marcus 2010, 10)

²⁴⁴ (Marcus 2010, 10)

²⁴⁵ Ibid., 10.

Marc Ravalonana, the president, and Marc Ravalomana, the businessman, has merged his personal ventures with state affairs and the line which divides the two has been blurred. Several high-level employees in the TIKO industry have been awarded political offices. Guy Rajemison, former TIKO CEO Advisor became the campaign manager for TIM and was eventually appointed President of the Senate in July 2002. The Vice Prime Minister and Ambassador to the US. Secretary of State and Commerce both worked for TIKO. Chairman of Air Madagascar and JIRAMA, the company which provides water and electricity, were all former TIKO employees. Before elections, TIKO t-shirts with political slogans are dispersed throughout the country while prices of dairy products are strategically reduced. Furthermore, Asa Lalana Malagasy, a TIKO company, now holds a monopoly over all road construction in the island. TIKO has also managed to create alliances with major German and American companies and is now part owner of Pheonix, a state oil company which now has been privatized. These are just some of many cases where the president mixes state politics and business ventures; it has certainly created enemies within the political sphere. Thus, the logical question is whether the president's corporatist practices and virtual monopoly over politics and state economy lead to the events of 2009 and the installment of Andry Rajoelina?

Certainly, the discrepancies mentioned above did indeed spark a flurry of protest and outrage in Madagascar, especially in the capital city. To assume, however, that Rajoelina's current position is the end result of the popular will of the Malagasy people would simply be incorrect. The fact of the matter is that Rajoelina, along with members of the TGV movement, were ambitious politicians. They successfully tapped into the frustration of a few thousand citizens and used this chaos to rob the nation from their

efforts to seek reform. This is precisely why alternative democratic solutions, such as in the form of presidential impeachment or a referendum, were never carried out. Instead, the Mayor supported an array of violent protests throughout the city, which heavily disrupted daily life and eventually destabilized the government. Once the government was in turmoil, Rajoelina, behind closed doors, was able to negotiate with the military and decided he would be the next ruler of the 20 million Malagasy citizens.

Andry Rajoelina claimed that his intentions were never to run for president, but simply to head the transitional entity until order is restored in the island. As the head of HAT, he has scheduled, postponed, and rescheduled the next election date five times and the crisis has now lasted more than two years. What is the possible reason for the continued delay? It is simple; the Malagasy Constitution requires a presidential candidate to be at least 40 years old to run. Andry Rajoelina, set out to change the minimum age to 35 through a referendum in November of 2010. He claims 74 percent of the population voted for the constitutional revision. At the beginning of the crisis Rajoelina was 34 years of age.

If one word could summarize the democratic state of Madagascar since the mid 1970s, it would be “instability.” The assassination of Ratsimandrava in 1972 amidst growing ethnic tensions was the start of this instability. The most peaceful and stable era in contemporary political history took place during Ratsiraka’s autocratic reign. Though this period experienced some of the worst corruption cases in sub-Saharan Africa while. Violent protests in 1991, which resulted in numerous deaths, eventually paved the way for democratic transition. Not even a decade later, however, the government once again

experienced a six month political crisis. As lastly, despite a sign of strong economic gains while Ravalomanana took over, a military coup d'état occurred in 2009.

CHAPTER V

SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

One of the aims of this thesis is to compare and contrast the democratic experiences of Madagascar, Malawi and Mozambique. This section will outline similarities found in the cases studied. Expanding on certain recurring trends found in the countries may explain possible reasons for the lack of development in their democracies. At the same time, there are stark differences in each case; these dynamic factors can help explain the divergent paths numerous young African democracies are taking. Essentially, the fruitful task in evaluating the current state of democracies in Africa is not to conduct a simple cross-continental generalization, but rather to summarize, analyze, and explain the conflicting transitions occurring throughout the region. This section will summarize the similarities or differences found in each country's colonial experience, post independent government, and during the post democratic transition period. This section will also examine the three countries in this thesis in context to the larger sub-Saharan region.

Colonial Experience

All three countries were subjugated under a slightly different colonial experience. Without a doubt, out of the three, the Lusophone colony of Mozambique was the least prepared to run an independent government. As Cameron Hume underlines, “there was practically no education for blacks,”²⁴⁶ and the opportunities for advancement was non-existent as most of the economy was dominated by semi-skilled Portuguese emigrants. Additionally, very little capital was invested in Mozambique and almost 90 percent of the population was kept illiterate. Even few prominent leaders of the Frelimo party were reported to only having a secondary school education. Most importantly, after 477 years of colonial rule,²⁴⁷ disgruntled Portuguese citizens used a *cut-and-run* tactic, destroying personal property and infrastructure, leaving the country in shambles. Thus, from the start of independence, Mozambique was struggling to effectively run a sovereign government and economy.

Madagascar, under the Francophone colonial yoke, became “more advanced than most of the European possessions in Africa south of the Sahara.”²⁴⁸ The island’s 35-40 percent literacy rate, comparatively speaking, was much higher than in neighboring colonies. Unlike Mozambique, Madagascar’s educational system during colonization had as much as 50 percent more schools per-capita than in French West Africa. The *Academie Malgache*, which was comprised of some 300 Malagasy students, reportedly published more than 100 books;²⁴⁹ no other comparable institution existed in sub-Saharan Africa at the time. Much of these achievements could be attributed to the fact that

²⁴⁶ (Hume 1994, 5)

²⁴⁷ Ibid., 6.

²⁴⁸ (Kent 1962, 97)

²⁴⁹ Ibid., 98.

Madagascar already had an independent and functional government under the Merina Monarchy prior to colonialism. Independence in the island also differed drastically from Mozambique's cut-and-run policy. France continued to have a lasting influence in the former colony in the realm of politics, culture, and economy long after Independence Day. In this respect, Madagascar was better prepared to run an independent government compared to Mozambique.

Malawi, under an Anglophone colony, experienced a system of "indirect rule." The British government setup the Native Authority and Native Courts Ordinances. This system essentially was comprised of native courts along with customary law. In reality, it was conducted under an exclusionary fashion and was highly centralized. Furthermore, most of the decisions were still made by the colonial figures while the voice of local authorities was kept minimal. In order to address these pertinent issues, a nationalist movement began; several prominent Malawian politicians formed the Nyasaland African Congress (NAS). The creation of this entity is crucial; it was officially recognized in 1947 by the British government as an body that represented native associations. Europeans, as a reactionary measure, pushed for the formation of the Central African Federation in order to protect their interest in the area. Hence, Malawian politicians, even before independence, experienced a sense of unity with a governing body. Therefore, it can be argued that Malawi also was better prepared to run an independent government after colonialism. Of the three countries, France holds the largest influence over its former colony; this is evident through various foreign policies in the post colonial era and, arguably, even to this day.

One Party Dominance

Shortly after the countries in this thesis were granted independence, all three ruling parties, AREMA, Frelimo, and MCP, implemented similar one-party domination. As Kent stipulates, Tsiranana never yielded nor shared power during Madagascar's first republic. Likewise, Banda quickly asserted his monopoly over every sector of government and economy shortly after branding himself as "president for life." Similarly, Mozambique's first regime was criticized when its ruling Frelimo party controlled the political sphere. This was certainly one of the factors which led to turmoil in the country. Apart from the parties, it seems that two countries studied in this research, Madagascar and Malawi, also had very similar types of leaders shortly after independence. Banda, Ratsiraka, and their despotism are mirror images of each other. Though the AREMA regime did not exercise as violent approaches towards reprimanding its political opposition as did Banda, their long autocratic reign are both familiar cases found in many other sub-Saharan nations.

Different Democratic Transitions

During the late 1980s and early 1990s, many African democracies took the form of plural politics and multiparty electoral competition. According to Said Adejumbi, there were twenty eight former authoritarian regimes that liberalized their political structure and eight of those held multi-party elections between 1985 and 1991. By 1997, three fourths²⁵⁰ of all African countries were under a, so called, multiparty democracy. Two factors led to this momentous change. First, after nearly two decades of autocratic rule, the economies of countries like Malawi and Madagascar had deteriorated severely.

²⁵⁰ Said Adejumbi, "Elections in Africa: A Fading Shadow of Democracy?" *International Political Science Review* 21, no. 1 (January, 2000): 64.

This prompted a flurry of mass protests soon after. And secondly, global factors, such as the fall of the Berlin wall influenced the shift in international political economy world wide. Thus, market reforms and liberal capitalist ideology was slowly becoming the global norm. Africa then entered into bilateral and multilateral cooperation with western institutions like the World Bank (WB), International MF, and the European Union (EU). Major donors like the United States, France, and Canada required countries to implement certain democratic criteria before they could receive economic assistance. Furthermore, the United Nations' worldwide efforts to ensure human rights, democratic principles, and rule of law trickled into Africa.

Democratic transitions in Africa, which occurred mostly in the early 1990s, unfolded under different circumstances throughout the continent. As Adejumobi assert, there were four patterns of political transitions which influenced the context and outcomes of its democracies. The first scenario is when civil society took initiative and engaged the state in “fierce political battle,”²⁵¹ and marked its will through the course of the transition. In this particular pattern, new political actors ensured that the transition was transparent and that electoral laws were changed in order to engage in free and fair electoral competition. These new actors also prevented the ruling party from influencing electoral bodies, judiciary, and the press. The opposition in this case was able to oust the incumbent through elections; this particular scenario happened in Malawi, Benin, Zambia, Congo, and Cape Verde.

Another scenario is where the civil society took the initiative to bring about reform, but the process was “hijacked” by the ruling party. In this particular case, the

²⁵¹ (Adejumobi 2000, 65)

existing autocratic laws were either not modified at all or very little change was made; government control remained at large in the hands of the incumbent party. Some examples of this democratic transition scenario are Kenya and Togo. A third pattern is where the state took the initiative to liberalize the government through what has been referred to as “guided democracy.” The ruling party in this case regulated then manipulated the electoral process and simply imposed its will on the population. In the end, very little was achieved in the realm of democratic reform. Particular examples of this case are Nigeria, Algeria, and Ghana. In Nigeria, the military single-handedly annulled the election results of 1993. A similar situation happened in Algeria in 1992. The fourth possible scenario is when political transition turn into severe political conflicts and civil war. Notable examples of this case are Rwanda, Burundi, Sudan, Liberia and Somalia.²⁵²

Mozambique and Madagascar do not fit perfectly in any of these four scenarios. After more than one decade of civil war, the democratic transition in Mozambique was formulated in conjunction with the general peace agreement between Renamo and Frelimo. In essence, the transition was molded by the civil combatants and several international supervisors such as the United Nations, the Vatican, Sant’Egidio, and other mediating factions. Most importantly, in the case of Mozambique, it was neither the civil society nor the state who initiated political liberalization. War fatigue, a rapidly declining economy, and several international factors were the catalyst for a general peace agreement and eventual formulation of a multi-party system. In essence, the impetus for the Mozambican transition was “fabricated” between international mediating factions and war leaders. Malawian and Malagasy grassroots movements toppled their autocratic

²⁵² (Adejumobi, 2000, 64)

regimes while Mozambique opened sectors of its government as part of a peace deal. Nevertheless, Mozambique's success was its ability to integrate former war enemies into civil political parties. In this case, the ruling Frelimo party remained in power after elections were held.

One could argue that Madagascar's case fits the first scenario; civil society took the initiative to liberalize the government in 1991. They were vociferous and they organized to successfully oust the dictatorship of Ratsiraka and his AREMA party. Elections were held and the opposition party (Forces Vives) rose to power through a transparent electoral process. The end result, however, is contradicting. The transition did not bolster any real democratic reform. One could even say the island experienced a reverse wave and eventual return to neo-patrimonial rule during the next decade. Similarly, Mozambique is slowly sliding back towards one-party rule as the incumbent enjoys virtual monopoly over several political sectors. And most importantly, there seems to be no change in leadership while the incumbent continues to win elections. Thus, the cases of Madagascar and Mozambique demonstrate the complexities of Sub-Saharan politics when attempting to generalize democratic transition trends in the region.

Elections symbolize popular sovereignty; it is an expression of the agreements made between the people and those who govern them. The most crucial question in this thesis is then why do African nations continue to struggle with the development of their democracies despite the presence of elections? The simplest answer is because there is a clear distinction between the form and the content of the phenomenon. In many African democracies, elections are regarded simply as a convenient political exercise for the ruling regimes during the transition phase. First, elections are merely implemented for

financial reasons. As mentioned previously in this section, international donors will continue giving assistance to democracies who conduct so called free and fair elections. Secondly, holding elections has been a public relations activity for the incumbent; it gives them a popular image in the eyes of the international community. Essentially these relatively young African nations include elections in their democracy solely by form and as a rubber stamp while rarely adhering to the electoral principles of good governance.

In general, there is also a lack of quality in the electoral process and this is evident in different sectors of each country's democratic institutions. Hence, the lack of significant change emanating from the electoral process is a recurring trend throughout Africa. One of such scenarios is the re-election of the incumbent party. For Mozambique, Frelimo has come back to power after multiparty elections were first held. They quietly continue to win elections during their period of "normal politics." For Madagascar, the ruling party was ousted, however, found its way back in power not even 5 years later. More specially, the ruling parties have had an unfair advantage during elections and there is certainly a lack of a "leveled playing field." Political scientists have outlined various criteria which constitute "fair" in an election. Some of such examples include:

- The abstention from the use of state resources by the ruling party during electoral campaign;
- Equal access of party representatives to polling stations;
- The equal treatment of complaints regarding irregularities; and
- The acceptance of election results by all participants.²⁵³

For the case of Mozambique, most of these criteria are not met. Certainly the "late disbursement of campaign funds," biased media, and Frelimo's "continuous use of state

²⁵³ Jorgen Elklit, Palle Svensson. "What Makes Elections Free and Fair?" *Journal of Democracy* 8, no. 3 (July 1997): 32-46.

resources”²⁵⁴ call into question the notion of level playing field. On the other hand, the six-month political turmoil in Madagascar stemmed from Ratsiraka’s refusal to “accept” the first-round presidential election of 2001. Out of the three countries studied, Malawi’s ethnic diversity seems to impact its elections the most. As mentioned in an earlier chapter, Malawians tend to vote for leaders based on the region they are from rather than their political platforms. This trend was well documented in the 1994, 1999, and 2004 election; fortunately this seems to be less apparent in most recent Malawian elections. Some leaders conduct blatant rigged elections; Ratsiraka’s 500,000 bogus votes in 2001 is a classic example. The quality of electoral process is undeniably one of the most important determinants of a consolidated democracy; all three countries have had various discrepancies in this sector. Another reason why the electoral process has had such a minimal impact on democratic reform is because most African political systems “tend to be dominated by one particular party.”²⁵⁵

How can we explain this ‘one-party dominance’ across the sub-Saharan region despite the reintroduction of political liberalization, multipartyism, and institutional reforms which support liberal democracies? Again, the answer can be found in the manner in which the electoral process has been conducted. Most rulers are subtly organizing “electoral coup d’état” by ensuring that members of their own parties occupy most, if not all, of the political arena. Some of these tactics include: stifling the opposition, or “reducing them to docility”²⁵⁶ according to Adejumobi. Evidence of this first example can be found in Madagascar and Mozambique. Members of Frelimo have

²⁵⁴ (Ostheimer 2001, 9)

²⁵⁵ Lise Rakner, Lars Svasand, *Multiparty Elections in Africa’s New Democracies* (Bergen, Norway: Michelsen Institute, 2002), 1

²⁵⁶ (Adejumobi 2000, 66)

“wielded” state resources in order to win elections at every level of government. Their dominance has significantly increased since the transition phase.²⁵⁷ Ravalomanana used extensive presidential powers to first fire all AREMA senators and later to quickly construct an assembly that was dominated by his own party. Hence, power brokering among competing parties is almost non-existent in the national assembly in all three countries. Two of the three, Madagascar and Mozambique, have one-party dominant systems. Malawi is the exception.

While most African party systems are dominated by a single party, the fragmented opposition is also generally weak and incompetent. This could be attributed to the fact that most African democracies contain what’s called a “fallacy of democratic demand and supply.” While the constituents have certain demands, thousands of politicians have flocked in the political sphere without any concrete, objective, engaging, and most importantly, distinct platform. Even with promising cases like Mozambique, where the main opposition holds considerable weight, the general competence of its party leaders is disturbingly weak. Alfonso Dhlakama’s highly centralized leadership of Renamo has “brought diminishing returns”²⁵⁸ and has undermined the party’s likelihood to win votes. For Madagascar, opposition hopefuls saw the economic crisis as a gateway towards the pinnacle of power and used the military to stage a coup. Malawi’s situation is no different; the government is one of the few ways one can acquire wealth, power, and prestige in the country. A more specific example of this was the ruling party’s success in luring opposition Gawnda Chakuamba to join UDF in return for a lucrative position.

²⁵⁷ Frelimo has held 53.3, 52.3, 63.7 and 75 percent of seats in Parliament during 1994, 1999, 2004, and 2009 elections.

²⁵⁸ (Manning 2010, 53)

While the incumbent party's hegemony across many African democracies has been a problem, the constituent's lack of a viable alternative has been equally troubling.

While elections and political parties are vital components of a democracy, a vigorous and autonomous civil society serves to "oppose and resist"²⁵⁹ the tyrannical abuse of state power. Throughout Africa, civil society has struggled to deepen, consolidate, and maintain democracy after the transition. Certainly, Madagascar, Malawi, and Mozambique are no different. Civil society in each country has played entirely different roles and each has had its shortcomings. Madagascar, out of the three countries, seems to have the most engaging population. Demonstrations over continued government oppression in 1991 were the impetus for the democratic transition in the island. In 2002, millions of Malagasy citizens stood behind a candidate to legitimize and solidify election results. And most recently, in 2009, thousands of protestors rallied throughout the capital city in order to voice their concerns over continued poverty. Hence civil society has had an impact in the government; it has successfully been able to address pertinent social issues and spark eventual regime change.

The problem, however, is the failure to bring about meaningful democratic reforms through these protests. Hence, while leaders are ousted, a slightly different form of neo-patrimonial rule found in the *ancien régime* prevails. In Malawi, religious institutions have played a prominent role in the continued democratization efforts. Similarly, the biggest protestant church (FJKM) in Madagascar was instrumental in bringing Ravalomanana to power. Several NGOs in all three countries have had a crucial role in enforcing various rights and also guaranteeing food security and basic shelter for

²⁵⁹ (Diamond et al. 1995, 27)

the poorest population. In sum, civil society has had an impact in the democratization process of all three countries. There is, however room for civil society during the consolidation process; it has yet to be filled.

One of the glaring similarities in all three cases is the use of media by the ruling parties. In Madagascar, the state-operated media outlets have been de-facto pro-government. Additionally the largest media firm that has surfaced the island is also owned by a president. To no surprise, Madagascar's MBS is rarely critical of the government. On the other hand, the largest opposition station is also owned by its leader. In Malawi, several independent news outlets are owned by individuals and "interests associated with particular parties."²⁶⁰ Frelimo's unfair use of media airtime and the UDF's complete control over the MBC are two similar manners in which ruling parties use state resources to suppress the opposition. Clearly, a genuine independent media is almost non-existent in all three countries. This in turn has restricted freedom of expression. A few pertinent examples are the assassination of two journalists covering a government embezzlement scandal in Mozambique and government orders to shut down opposition news outlet in Madagascar. Media continues to be one of the most problematic sectors in many contemporary African civil societies.

Conclusion

It is evident throughout this thesis that countries in various parts of the sub-Saharan region have taken dizzying and divergent paths in their quest for democratic consolidation. South Africa serves as a definite success story; the democratic transition brought about a multi-party system which represents various groups of differing

²⁶⁰ (Bauer and Taylor 2004, 39)

ethnicities and political ideologies across the country. Cases like Nigeria, Ethiopia, Uganda, and Zimbabwe, however, present a starkly different story where autocracy and rulers are continuously clinching to power. Cases like Mozambique, and Malawi, fall somewhere in the middle; stability and multi-party systems exist, but electoral process and democratic institutions are quietly skewed and manipulated by various politicians. And finally, Madagascar's recent events demonstrate a slow reversal towards autocracy. The next section outlines the different challenges for each country studied in this thesis.

Of the three countries in this thesis, Madagascar, without a doubt, faces the most challenging future. Crippled with a lingering political stalemate, dismal economic picture, and social chaos, the island has the daunting task of returning to normalcy. This will be difficult; however, it is possible. Empirical evidence has shown that civil society, throughout history, has shaped most of Madagascar's political events. In this respect, civil society can reverse the current trend; however it must do so via the ballot box and through a democratic electoral process. The current coup d'état certainly stemmed from frustrations over continued poverty within the rural mass, however its current leader's legitimacy is undermined by his refusal to partake in any sort of electoral process. This was evident by the sheer number of massive daily protests demanding his immediate removal. The first order of business for the island is to re-install democratic order and rule of law. This has far less to do with who should lead the country, but rather what steps to take so that the people can democratically decide the next course of action. The international community, notably the African Union and the South African Development Community, have not been successful in resolving the on-going crisis. It is, therefore, in the hands of Malagasy leaders and civil society to take on the task of restoring order.

Malawi, out of the three countries studied in this thesis, seems to have the most promising development towards democratic consolidation. Not surprisingly, the UDF, as the ruling party, does not dominate in the manner like Madagascar's AREMA and TIM or like Mozambique's Frelimo. The party system, however, is far from meeting its consolidated form and the government faces numerous challenges for the future. Malawians vote for party leaders based on their regional origins rather than ideology and political platform. Moreover, there are radical shifts in party alliance; it often occurs to benefit government officials rather than the constituents. Like many sub-Saharan countries, Malawi faces a daunting economic crisis, which at times struggles to fund the precious democratic elections it holds. The AIDS epidemic in Malawi also presents an immense challenge for country's development. According to a USAID health profile conducted in 2010, 35 percent²⁶¹ of the 15 million Malawians are infected with HIV. Despite the shortcomings and deficits, such as a weak civil society and weak political opposition, the development of politics and democracy in Malawi is encouraging. Unlike the case of Madagascar, a coup is highly unlikely as there is "no tradition of military interference in politics." The Malawians are generally considered peaceful and respect the integrity of the state. Most importantly, civil society does not have the desire or tendency to secede. Out of the three countries in this thesis, it proves to be the most promising case.

Nearly two decades have passed since Mozambique's historical general peace agreement was signed and a multiparty system was introduced. The country has enjoyed relatively stable economic growth while continuing to ensure state-wide peace. In this

²⁶¹ USAID Country Health Profile, Malawi. Retrieved from http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/global_health/aids/Countries/africa/malawi.html

respect, Mozambique has prospered. Additionally, the retirement of President Chissano in 2001, despite his right to run for another term, presented a genuine step towards good governance. There are numerous challenges for Mozambique, however. The political cleavage between Renamo and Frelimo is marred with exclusion and division. Hence, the party system is increasingly transforming into a one-party dominant sphere. This is evident through the results of the past two presidential and parliamentary elections. Frelimo's monopoly at every level of politics is a "potential source for conflict."²⁶² On the other hand, the role of Renamo as the principle opposition has been weak and incompetent. The Frelimo-Renamo dichotomy has been largely based on personal quarrels rather than the socio-political advancement of Mozambique. Moreover, the current president, Armondo Guebuza, is reportedly "even less prepared"²⁶³ to negotiate with the opposition. In sum, Mozambique has the challenging task of strengthening its democratic institutions and enforcing rules; preventing Frelimo from manipulating the system.

²⁶² (Bauer and Taylor 2005, 127)

²⁶² Ibid., 137.

²⁶³ Ibid., 137.

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