Democracy’s Prerequisites

A case study of Mozambique’s transition to peace and democratization process

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Abstract

This thesis provides an account for the events leading up to the 1992 peace agreement and the following transition to democracy in Mozambique. In using process-tracing as a method, I have identified the factors that made the democratization process possible. My research is based on a theory by Leonard Wantchekon, which argues that democracy can arise directly from anarchy when elite actors actively choose to democratize. They do this as it will provide them with maximum benefits. In examining the elite actor-based prerequisites provided by Wantchekon and an additional factor, civil society, I have come to the conclusion that in addition to the importance of elite actors, the significance of civic actors must also be taken into account. The two views on the causes of peace and democratization in Mozambique should ultimately be seen as complementing each other.

Key words: Mozambique, civil war, conflict resolution, democratization, civil society
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1 Introduction

It is clear that in the Africa of today the “third wave” of democracy has seen its retreats as well as its advances. Newly established democracies have sometimes evolved into pseudo-democracies and in other cases democracy is used essentially as a cover-up for continuing brutal regimes. Nevertheless political liberalization has and is still making progress on the continent. Mozambique can be described as such a case where democracy and political liberalization, at least at first glance, has gained extensive ground in the previous years. Democracy is often the medicine prescribed by scholars and the international community as the means to end conflict, civil war in particular. Democratization, meaning the creation of democratic institutions, is therefore to a certain extent seen as a conflict resolution mechanism. If one examines the civil wars that have taken place since the Cold War in which a peace agreement has been realized, one finds that democratization has been a prominent feature of these agreements in most cases (Wallensteen, 2002:139). Democracy is consequently linked to peace in several ways, for example in the “democratic peace theory.” However, little attention has been paid to is the correlation between civil war and democracy. Can civil war provide a possibility for a transition to democracy in a country? The civil war that had raged in Mozambique for almost two decades, with victims numbering close to a million people, came to an end in the early 1990s. This took place at the same time as the country held its first free and fair elections. These facts lead up to what will be the focus of this essay, namely the relationship between civil war and democracy and what the specific factors enable such a relationship.

1.1 Statement of Purpose and Question at Issue

Since this thesis has its in my personal interest in questions concerning democracy and conflict resolution, its purpose is to examine how democracy can be used as a tool for settling civil conflict, by scrutinizing the possible link between civil war and democracy. This link is considered by scholars to be to a large extent a modern phenomenon (Wantchekon 2004:18). There has consequently been very little research done in this specific area. It is nevertheless an interesting field of

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1 Expression by Samuel Huntington and a today an established term in the democratization literature referring to the expansion of democracy in the world that is said to have started in Southern Europe in the mid 1970s (Huntington 1991).
research as nearly 40% of all civil wars from 1945-1993 were followed by an improvement in the level of democracy (Wantchekon, 2004:17). This field of research has received little attention both in theory and, even less in empirical testing. My purpose is to empirically test the implications of what is currently the most elaborated theory in this research area, proposed by Leonard Wantchekon. Wantchekon himself uses Mozambique as an example to prove his theory, although he has not further studied the case. This is where my contribution to the theory comes in. I wish to shed a light on the democratization process in Mozambique using Wantchekon’s theory as an analytical tool. The question I intend to answer is:

*Under what conditions does civil war end through competitive elections and what were those conditions in Mozambique that made such a process possible?*

### 1.2 Theoretical Approach

In answering this question I will use the theoretical framework established by Wantchekon. As this is a relatively new area of research and there is not much written on these questions, this choice of scholar is simple - Wantchekon is the political scientist that has by far performed the most extensive research in this area.

### 1.3 Method and Material

Since my intention is to examine the dual transition to democracy and establishment of peace in Mozambique and my ambition is qualitative rather than quantitative, I have decided to perform an in-depth case study. Qualitative methods are sometimes criticized for their limitations when it comes to the possibility of deriving generalizations using the results provided, but since I do not aspire, as my primary goal, to draw any general conclusions from my case, I find the method to be useful (Devine, 2002:199). I have more specifically chosen *process tracing* as a method since the purpose of my study is to map out in detail the events that led to democracy and peace being established in Mozambique (Esaiasson et.al. 2003:142). What process tracing implies is that one first of all needs to identify the actors that have played significant roles in the process and the decisions made by these actors. The goal is thereafter to examine the choices and considerations these actors have made in the process (Esaiasson et.al. 2003:143). A prerequisite for process-tracing is the existence of an already relatively well elaborated explanation-theory, meaning that there already is a causality established and that the focus instead lies on finding variables within this causal relationship, preferably on a lower analytical level (Teorell 2006:247).
Therefore, in using process-tracing as a method I will be mapping out the background of an empirical result, in my case the peace agreement and transition to democracy in Mozambique. I will thus be able to identify the factors that influenced the different actors in making their decisions and what impact the separate events can be said to have had on the final outcome.

I have decided to use a minimal definition of democracy throughout this paper as it provides methodological advantages. It is however accepted that the holding of elections is not, sufficient as a definition of democracy, or ultimately as a cause of successful democratization. In order for democracy to be thoroughly established and consolidated other prerequisites must also be satisfied, for example the establishment of a certain kind of institutions and also respect for civil liberties and a legitimate process of law. However elections are nonetheless a fundamental element of the democratization process, meaning there can never be democracy without elections.

As to what constitutes the empirical material chosen for this essay, it consists of secondary material related to the peace process and the transition to democracy in Mozambique. This material is written and produced by scholars and researchers with extensive knowledge of the case. Of course the issue of bias is everpresent with secondary literature but I have tried to solve this problem by using as varied literature as possible from a large array of sources to strengthen the validity of the study.

1.4 Disposition and Delimitations

In this first part of my thesis I present my area of research and the question at issue by relating my chosen topic to its contextual background and placement in a theoretical discussion. I further establish my question in relation to my methodological considerations and reasoning. In the chapter that follows I contextualize my research question by putting it in a theoretical context, and relating it to the research that has already been done within this field of study. This will permit me to outline the theoretical framework that will then provide the theoretical approach and analytical tools needed in order to perform this case study. Chapter three of this essay contains an overview and brief presentation of the historical background of Mozambique, and more specifically its history of conflict. Chapter four will then provide an analysis of the events leading up to the peace and liberalization processes being realized. I will do this using Wantchekon’s theory as an analytical framework. In the fifth and final chapter my results will be summed up and the question at issue will be answered. This chapter also contains a discussion of my results.

The aim of this paper is to map out the prerequisites that enabled Mozambique’s democratization process to take place. Due to space constraints and limitations in material, the results provided cannot be considered to provide a fully complex or thorough account for the events in Mozambique’s complicated conflict history. The focus of my study will therefore provide general insight into
the event and further focus on the aspects relevant for my study and the question at hand.
2 Theory

In this chapter I will begin by presenting a brief overview of the field of conflict resolution and democratization studies. This will be done in order to theoretically contextualize my research question. I will then account for the theoretical model of scholar Wantchekon, presenting the theory that will provide the analytical tool for the further analysis of my research question and case study.

2.1 Definitions

What follows are the key terms in this thesis: civil war, conflict resolution, and democracy. I will give as clear definitions as possible and also relate the terms to previous performed research.

2.1.1 Civil War

There are several definitions of civil war, as it is a problematic and evolving concept. However I have chosen to use the definition put forth by Wallensteen and Sollenberg:

“Civil War is a contested incompatibility which concerns type of political system, the replacement of central government or the change of its composition, secession and/or autonomy where the use of armed force between two parties, of which at least one is the government and the state, results in at least 1,000 battle-related deaths per year.” (Wallensteen and Sollenberg, 2000)

Civil wars consequently have specific features that are different from those of other types of war. They are often perceived to be more difficult to handle and also to have more serious consequences. The actors often share a history of conflict that is much longer the civil war itself. They can be divided in terms of ideological, economic and social factors as well as ethnicity. This is why intrastate wars often are linked to democratization as conflict resolution, since in order for these groups to be given room in society, a political system of a different kind has to be created, in which each party and every group is given equal access to power (Wallensteen, 2002:133).
2.1.2 Conflict Resolution

Today, the international community and international law provides norms for, and has helped in developing a generally accepted concept for what is to be considered as conflict resolution. The Cold War’s end provided guidelines for how internal conflicts are to be solved. These include among others principles of democracy, human rights, criminal justice and economic cooperation (Wallensteen, 2002:11). There is however no universally agreed upon definition of conflict resolution completely. Wallensteen defines the term as

“a social situation where the armed conflicting parties in a (voluntary) agreement resolve to peacefully live with –and/or dissolve- their basic incompatibilities and henceforth cease to use arms against one another” (Wallensteen, 2002:50).

Perhaps most important is to regard conflict resolution as not only the actual settling of the conflict and the signing of a peace agreement but also the maintenance of peace. However since the focus of this study is on the process preceding the signing of a peace agreement, the signing itself is what is intended when discussing conflict resolution in Mozambique.

2.1.3 Democracy

Regarding the definition of democracy, the most commonly accepted understanding of the term (in a research context, at least) seems to be a narrower one, including free and fair elections and some basic civil rights. Therefore this is also what I refer to when using the term throughout this paper. Wantchekon defines democracy as:

“a political system in which power is allocated by means of competitive elections whose outcome reflects citizens’ preferences, and both the losing party and the winning party abide by the elections” (Wantchekon and Neeman 2002:2).

Of course this method of defining democracy is of a minimalist nature meaning that many of the implications of the term will subsequently not be taken into account. Nevertheless, this definition is a good choice for my study since the question at issue is in what way democracy can be used to solve a conflict, (democracy as a tool so to speak), rather than an analysis of the implications of democracy or its sustainability.
2.2 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework presents the concepts that I will be using when analyzing my research question. My aim is to introduce the variables and prerequisites that enable a democratization process, such as the one Wantchekon discusses, to take place.

2.2.1 Post-Civil War Democratization

The theoretical framework for my thesis is, as already mentioned, to a great extent constituted by the work of Leonard Wantchekon, professor at the Department of Politics and Economics at the New York University. He has constructed a new and as of yet largely unverified hypothesis. In his article *The Paradox of “Warlord” Democracy: A Theoretical Investigation*, he argues that democracy can follow directly from war and more specifically be seen as a positive externality of war. This discussion has its origins in democratization theory and in the discussion regarding what prerequisites are necessary for democracy to arise, (i.e. as a by-product of modernization, the emergence of the bourgeoisie or an organized working class). The least written about cause of democracy is the presence of civil war (Wantchekon, 2004:17). What differentiates Wantchekon’s theory from other theories that deal with the transition from anarchy to order, is that his theory skips the intermediate authoritarian phase between the two stages. Other theories, such as those of Huntington and Mancur Olson all include such a phase (Sollenberg 2005:43).

What Wantchekon presents is a game theory approach to post-civil war democratization, in which democracy works as an arbitration mechanism. Post-civil war democratization differs from democratization following an authoritarian breakdown, in that its focus is on ending the civil war. The goal consists of creating socio-political order rather than fighting for basic political rights and political transparency. In the post-civil war context there is further no normative commitment to democracy. Rather it is a functional consequence of the peace agreement.² Why does one normally not distinguish between authoritarian breakdown and post-civil war democratization? According to Wantchekon the explanation can be found in the fact that countries such as Mozambique and Nicaragua, often quoted examples, were preceded by authoritarian rule. The authoritarian rule might have effects on the citizens choice of democracy, but there is nevertheless enough importance of the war as to make it necessary to

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² Wantchekon models a theory that only focuses on the process leading up to the signing of a peace agreement, meaning that if democracy later is consolidated or sustainable is of no consequence to his theory. His definition of democracy is consequently of a minimalistic nature.
separate the two. These two kinds of democratization processes appeal to different traditions of democratic theory with the post-civil war onetied to the Hobbesian and Schumpeterian traditions, meaning a focus on order and conflict resolution and a minimalist definition of democracy (Wantchekon 2004:18).

Post-civil war democratization or political liberalization is, as already noted, characterized by the parties’ need for political order. Citizens will also support democracy for its superiority with regards to providing protection and social order. Another key element is that democracy ensures the possibility to change the government in a non-violent manner. This means that post-civil war democratization will focus more on these aspects than other types of democratization will (Wantchekon, 2004:17f).

2.2.2 A Game Theory Approach to Democracy

The core question of Wantchekon’s theory is why warring parties choose to democratize. Wantchekon sees the “game” as consisting of three key players: the two warring parties and the citizenry. The object of the two warring parties is political supremacy, meaning power is what motivates them. Dominating possession of political power implies economic benefits, in particular the right to expropriate. The citizenry is motivated not by power, but by the benefits of security. The course of actions is as follows: when the conflict has reached a point of stalemate (an “inconclusive” conflict) the warring parties will agree on settling on a peace agreement that alters the government. At this point a third party is called in to arbitrate the process of establishing a new government. This third party may consist of either a foreign power, a single player or the citizenry of the country (Wantchekon 2004:19).

In the first stage of Wantchekon’s game there are three alternatives available to the warring parties 1) maintaining status quo, meaning that the war would continue 2) allowing external enforcement through an external actor, “Leviathan”3 and finally 3) democracy (Ibid:19).

Status Quo

If there is an agreement among the warring factions, their choice will be implemented. However if nothing is decided upon, then the status quo will remain (Wantchekon 2004:19). In a state of status quo, both factions have the possibility to expropriate freely to the extent that resources are available to them. Consequently, if status quo is the outcome, citizens will work less because they anticipate higher expropriation rates from the warring factions (Wantchekon 2004:20).

3 Leviathan as an external actor is not to be confused with an external enforcer, for example the United Nations, later needed in the consolidation stage. Leviathan is often another country.
Leviathan

If the Leviathan - most likely a foreign country - is chosen it will pick one of the factions to rule. The Leviathan and the chosen faction will then together eliminate illegal expropriation and provide the citizens with the security they need (Wantchekon 2004:19). Leviathan does not do this for free, getting a share of what is expropriated. In this outcome there is more expropriation than under democracy, but less than under status quo. Consequently both factions will never decide to invite the Leviathan option (Wantchekon 2004:21).

Democracy

If democracy is the outcome, expropriation will be banned and there will be an electoral process in which a tax rate will be set (Wantchekon, 2004:19). Both factions agree to abide to the outcomes of an election. The benefits of democracy have to be enforced by state institutions and an impartial police. For the implementation process an external force, for example the United Nations is needed in order to mediate and supervise the actual process. Democracy will ultimately be chosen because the benefits provided are minimum at the same level as those of status quo and Leviathan (Ibid, 2004:21).

2.2.3 Security Guarantees and Economic Incentives

What Wantchekon’s theory shows is that democracy can be seen as the likely outcome of a civil war if the parties involved believe they have the possibility to win future elections, and additionally because democracy will provide security. This is based on the premise that the parties involved in the war are dependent on the citizen’s investments and that the parties can profit from the taxation of the country’s population. This dependence explains why some civil wars result in democracy and some do not, according to the theory. In some cases the parties’ main income is instead dependent on other sources, such as drug trafficking, natural resources, or foreign aid (Wantchekon: 2004:19). In these cases we will therefore not see any popular arbitration according to the model. As a result, if the warring factions can show that they intend to lower the level of expropriation (as is the case when disarmament takes place) the citizens will in turn invest more (Ibid:20). Democracy is thus being created through indirect economic pressure.

2.2.4 A Neutral External Enforcer

Wantchekon also discusses another premise for his argument, the presence of an external enforcer. In choosing democracy there is the question of enforcing the payoffs of such a system. Who is to be in control of the police force and other state institutions while reconstructing authority in the country? In a newborn democracy the institutions needed take some time before being properly
established. This is where the role of an external neutral agent comes in, most commonly the United Nations and their peacekeeping operations (Wantchekon 2004:21). The role of the neutral external enforcer is therefore also related to the provision of security guarantees before and after elections which I have previously discussed.

2.3 Related Research

Margareta Sollenberg, a doctoral student, at the University of Uppsala has in her paper "From Bullets to Ballots: Using the People as Arbitrators to Settle Civil Wars", tried to test empirically some of the implications of Wantchekon and Neeman’s theory. She is one of the very few who has made such an attempt. Sollenberg tests and develops some hypotheses regarding the prerequisites for when democracy is the prevailing outcome.

Sollenberg tests four different hypotheses that she finds to be the consequences of Wantchekon’s theory. She tests the statement that the warring parties in an inconclusive conflict will be more prone to settling the conflict through competitive elections if they lack access to lootable natural resources. Her second hypothesis concerns inconclusive armed conflicts and the probability of a settlement through elections increasing if the warring parties are not supported by foreign countries. She also tests the implication of the theory that says that there must be an uncertainty in who will win future elections. She does this by formulating an hypothesis that relates this precondition to the heterogenity in the electorate, stating that the conflict is more likely to end through competitive elections if there is a larger number of ethnic groups than only one or a few predominant ones. Her fourth hypothesis relates to the external enforcer where she tests if the presence of such an enforcer will improve the likelihood that a conflict will end through competitive elections. What Sollenberg performs, however, is a quantative empirical test using a cross-sectional time-series dataset that includes all the armed conflicts during the period of 1989-2000 (Sollenberg, 2007:38).

Sollenberg, in her results, comes to the conclusion that Wantchekon’s theoretical model may provide a plausible explanation as to why some civil wars result in democracy (elections) and some do not. Out of the four hypotheses tested she finds that three can be verified some extent. She found support for the first one regarding lootable natural resources, as well as the second one, although with some reservations. The only hypothesis that did not generate a positive outcome was the fourth one, regarding the involvement of an external enforcer. One of Sollenberg’s conclusions is that she does find it meaningful to make the distinction between inconclusive civil wars and other civil wars when using Wantchekon’s theoretical mode (Sollenberg 2007: 57ff).
2.4 The Role of Civil Society

Putting Wantchekon’s theory into a wider context, it can be considered as a complement to the “top-down” democratization theories that claim that democratization is to be regarded as an elite product. This kind of democratization is prevalent when civil society is weak. Wantchekon argues that in Mozambique the people played a smaller role in the democratization process as only when they were invited by the warring parties (warlords as Wantchekon calls them), did they function as arbitrators in the process (Wantchekon, 2005:27). The role of civil society, according to many scholars, carries very little importance in transitions to democracy, as democracy has been seen to emerge in societies with a weak civic culture. However there are also scholars that are of the opinion that elite decisions and interests together with the will of the citizens should be seen as complementary factors in the democratization process (Wantchekon, 2004:29).

Nancy Bermeo gives a more nuanced picture of Wantchekon’s theory, exposing its weak sides. She brings up the work of other scholars that to some extent counter Wantchekon’s. There are voices, for example Dietrich Reuschemeyer, that point to the ambiguity in the “positive” by-products of war and argue that democracy in such a context will only be realized if the subordinated classes are able to pressure for more participation. Also scholars like Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan emphasize the importance of civil society when it comes to the nature of the consequences of war. They note that wars will have different effects on different kinds of dictatorships, depending on the nature of civil society and the ability of democratic groups to organize early elections (Bermeo, 2003:62).

Civil society does have an effect on the costs of electoral competition, meaning the willingness to democratize, according to Bermeo. A strong civil society is not as important as a tolerant and nonviolent one that explicitly support democracy. Therefore the democrats have to pay attention to groups that contain an array of citizens belonging to different religious or ethnic groups (Bermeo, 2003:168). In Africa, Bermeo argues, the importance of civil society has been bigger than previously recognized, and further states that civil associations are to thank for the many transitions to democracy in Africa in the early 1990s. However Bermeo does question civil society’s ability to actually help with the later consolidation and deepening of democracy (Ibid:169ff).

Nancy Bermeo sees the transition to sustainable democracy as a function of the elites’ capacity to raise the costs of violent competition and lower the costs of electoral competition. (Bermeo, 2003:164). Besides the state there are two forces that are able to control the costs of violence. These are civil society and the international community. Civil society can do this through what Bermeo calls “defensive but lawful mass mobilizations” (Ibid:165). Coup coalitions will not act unless they are sure that they have civilian support. The international community also provides a factor, and not only international peace-keeping forces as
previously discussed but also international civil society, i.e. human rights organizations. When these kinds of autonomous forces are present to bear witness, it raises the cost of violence (Bermeo, 2003:165).

Lowering the costs of electoral competition requires certain actions from different levels in society. It should be remembered that elections are not always successful and that there is also the possibility that they will cause a relapse to war instead. The democratizers, as Bermeo calls them, must make sure that the elections are not an all-or nothing proposition. All actors must stand a chance of winning in the elections and a loss must also possible. Then how is this done? Nancy Bermeo argues that the answer is to be found in the actions of “political elites, political institutions, and civil society” (Bermeo, 2003:166).

It is clear that Wantchekon’s theory gives little importance to the role of civil society in Mozambique in bringing about democracy. Was this the case? Can the democratization process in Mozambique be considered to fit in to the “top-down” category? I have decided to test Wantchekon’s theory by examining this additional factor. I do this because there is one actor that, according to many experts on the conflict, played a very important role in enabling peace in Mozambique, the Catholic Church. And in the case of Africa, the church must be considered to be a very important component of civil society. I will examine the role of the church in the Mozambican peace process further.

2.5 Theoretical Conclusions

Although some research has been done on the link between civil war and democracy, the theories presented here do not constitute general opinions among scholars. Even those who advocate that there is a correlation between war and democracy do not claim that this correlation should not be put under scrutiny or be questioned. This particular field of research is quite underrepresented. What is important to remember is that democratization does not provide one holistic solution ready to put in place. It has to do with arranging elections but also making sure that all other prerequisites for a stable democracy are fulfilled. However, as already mentioned what Wantchekon and Sollenberg are discussing is a minimal definition of democracy.

Ultimately I would like to sum up Wantchekon’s theory, in order to make it more accessible before moving on to the case of Mozambique. This is not an easy thing as there are no clear divisions between the different prerequisites needed for Wantchekon’s theory to apply and for the outcome to be democracy. The prerequisites are all connected to one another and in some respects impossible to separate. However I have chosen to see the theory as being based on four premises. These are 1) the civil war is inconclusive, meaning both sides have understood that they cannot win the war, 2), there are security guarantees for the looser in future elections 3) the elite is dependent on the citizen’s productive labour and 4) the presence of an external arbitrator, for example the United
Nations. If these prerequisites are fulfilled Wantchekon’s theoretic model applies and democracy is further the most likely outcome.
3 The Case of Mozambique

This chapter gives a brief presentation of the events leading up to the signing of a peace agreement in Mozambique in 1992, a description of the warring parties and the political context in which the events took place. This is provided in order to give an insight to the background of Mozambique’s democratization process and its prerequisites.

3.1 The Mozambican Conflict

Mozambique became independent in 1975, when power was transferred very unexpectedly and rapidly from its previous colonizers – Portugal – to the Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO), a Marxist organization from the country’s southern region. People in the center of the country did not support FRELIMO, and the policies implemented by them provoked protest reactions that were of both regional and ethnic character (Chabal 2002:200). Mozambique can be seen as split into two regions, the north and the south. Portugal never built a communications system uniting the two regions, and the fact that the capital is located in the far south (a part in the country considered to be an enclave in South Africa), further exacerbates the divisions between the regions. There are also strong ethnic divisions to be found in Mozambique (Chabal, 2002:185f).

That FRELIMO came to power when Portugal transferred its control cannot be seen as a product of the people’s choice or a democratic process. This meant that the way in which FRELIMO seized power effectively gave it the status of a revolutionary movement, rather than a political party (Ibid:193). The Mozambique National Resistance (RENAMO), in its turn, was a rebel movement created in opposition to FRELIMO, and was backed up first by South Africa and also, to a certain extent, Western right-wing groups. FRELIMO was given support from the Soviet Union and its allies (Weinstein, 2002:145). However when the cold war system broke down, the two sides in the conflict were deprived of their resources. FRELIMO’s and RENAMO’s armies were crumbling. This is what ultimately forced Mozambique and the two warring parties to seek help from the international community and, more specifically, the IMF and the World Bank (Chabal, 2002:213). FRELIMO’s socialist goals and efforts to be a one-party Marxist state were abandoned, and instead a constitutional reform was presented to Mozambicans that proposed the establishment of multiparty democracy with a market economy. RENAMO accepted being a political party in opposition to the government (Ibid: 220).
Having gone this far in the peace process, the UN then stepped in, setting up a United Nations Operation in Mozambique. The operation, which went under the name of ONUMOZ, was to function as the central organ in charge of the collection and distribution of international donor funds (Weinstein, 2002:148f). Also included in their missions were the demobilization of soldiers, and the creation of a new army. The elections that took place in 1994 proved to be a success, and the world was amazed by the ease and smoothness of the transition to democratic multi-party politics. Ninety percent of Mozambique’s citizens had voted. In 1999 the second elections were held and at the same time the economy was thriving with annual growth rates close to 10 percent. (Weinstein 2002:149f).

The most recent elections in Mozambique were held in 2004, and the result was a clear victory for FRELIMO and its leader, Armando Guebeza. According to the international human rights watchdog Freedom House, in spite of a rather low voter turnout (36 percent), and several other flaws, the elections were seen as generally free and fair. Freedom House considers Mozambique to be a “partly free” country. However the process of consolidating democracy in Mozambique has not been free of trouble. In 1999 FRELIMO was reelected but by a small margin and there were accusations of fraud by RENAMO. RENAMO even threatened to hold its own elections in some of the northern and central provinces. Mozambique today suffers from deep political divisions. In September 2005, supporters of the two groups were involved in a clash leading to the death of 12 people and 47 injured. Mozambique’s next elections will take place in 2009 (Freedom House).

3.1.1 Contextualizing the Conflict and the Democratization Process

The Mozambican conflict can be said to have been both regional and intra-state in character. Labeling the conflict a civil war would actually have been a rather controversial action during the war itself, as most people involved thought of the war as an external conflict. Thomas Ohlson, a scholar at the University of Uppsala, has addressed the issue of whether the war in Mozambique should be seen as a civil war, but he sees this as a discussion that mostly relates to the origins of the war and whom to blame. When discussing the likely causes of peace, they are to be found internally and, according to Ohlson, Mozambique’s armed conflict is therefore to be defined as a civil war (Ohlson, 1998:134). Intra-state conflicts or civil wars can further be divided into two different categories: conflicts that have to do with control of government and power over the state and conflicts over territory – so called “state formation” conflicts (Ohlson, 1998:11). The conflict in Mozambique falls into the second of these categories. In such conflicts the way out of conflict is closely linked to increasing the alternatives of

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4 Freedom House is an international non-governmental organization. It measures the level of freedom in different countries in relation to the current state of political and civil rights. The scale goes from 1-7 where, 1 is most free and 7 is least free. After being rated countries are labelled as Free, Partly Free or Not Free (Freedomhouse).
possible routes and outcomes of the conflict. If victory and defeat are the only possible outcomes, a resolution of the conflict is clearly hard to reach.

The democratization process in Mozambique is considered to be a part of the third and most recent of Huntington’s waves of democratization, one that took the form of a multinational and multi-continental phenomenon beginning in the 1970s and ending in the mid 1990s (Markoff, 1996:12). During this period, at least 30 countries transitioned from non-democratic to governments. The intervention by the international community in Mozambique’s civil war was additionally not in itself an isolated incident. The conflicts of the Cold War were often seen as part of the larger international context as the different states were perceived as controlled either by the pro-Soviet or pro-Western groups (Wallensteen, 2002:131f). In this way civil wars became a matter for the international world. The transition to democracy can additionally be said to be more problematic in a civil war context as the situation rarely implies that one can start building democracy from a clean slate. In civil wars there is always a history to take into account, making the process much harder. The Mozambican case offers evidence of this principle.
4 Implications of the Theory

I have chosen to divide this chapter into three parts, basically following the outline of the theory chapter, discussing three of the prerequisites necessary for Wantchekon’s argument to be applicable, namely the inconclusiveness of the conflict, the presence of security guarantees for the looser, and the presence of an external enforcer.

4.1.1 An Inconclusive Conflict

Civil wars must be inconclusive in order to qualify as viable cases under Wantchekon’s theory. An inconclusive conflict implies that the parties involved have reached a stalemate. It is hard to find the exact indicator for when a conflict is inconclusive, as it relates to how the two warring parties perceive the situation. Therefore Sollenberg uses “negotiations” as the indicator for when a civil war has reached a state of inconclusiveness. In doing this, focus will be on if the warring parties are actively seeking a settlement (Sollenberg, 2007:50f). In studying the case of Mozambique I have decided to use the same definition.

By the early 1990s the two warring parties realized that they had come to a stalemate, as there was no possibility for either side to win the war. This is significant, as no political settlement is likely to succeed as long as one of the factions still believes it has the possibility to win. The stalemate was due to the collapse of the external support and sponsoring mechanisms on both sides, resulting in there no longer being any resources for continuing the battle. The two parties were forced to look elsewhere for a solution (Manning, 2002:67). The costs of war should consequently be directly related to the warring parties willingness to enter into negotiations. This will not happen until the factions are too weary. Until that moment has arrived the warring parties will not be ripe for resolution.

Why, then, did this reducement in support from external actors take place? Ohlson discusses causes of the peace process by dividing them into two levels, a system level and regional level. On a system level, the international context can be said to have played a role in the process. He confirms the argument made by other scholars in the field, that the end of the Cold War created a conducive environment for conflict resolution. In the Mozambican case, there was no longer any financial support from Russia to the FRELIMO government. However, Ohlson says that it would be wrong to ascribe the system level too great an importance in the outcome, as the links between Mozambique and the Cold War were comparatively weak and as the conflict was driven by a strong regional and domestic logic (Ohlson, 1998:135). Consequently the regional level played a
greater role in the outcome. In 1992, conditions in South Africa that had engendered the conflict were altered. The conflict that had prevailed in the region had been de-escalating for some time and a democratic transition was on its way in South Africa (Ohlson, 1998:135). In this context, no regional actors were interested in the continuation of a war in Mozambique. Ohlson describes President Mugabe of Zimbabwe as playing a key role in the peace process by making President Chissano give recognition to RENAMO and its leader, Dhlakama. He did this by reassuring him that it would be safe to enter into negotiations (Ohlson, 1998:136).

4.1.2 Security Guarantees and Economic Incentives

Resolving a civil war and putting an end to its violence also means eliminating the security dilemma. Without this dilemma being resolved the risk of the two parts resuming weapons increases greatly (Wallensteen 2002:133f). Therefore the negotiations in Mozambique were dominated by the search for “guarantees”. Guarantees include assurance that there would be peacekeeping troops sent by the United Nations and also guarantees that a multiparty government would be created once RENAMO had laid down its arms. Nancy Bermeo argues that in order for democracy out of war to become an option, the costs of electoral competition must be lowered and the costs of violent competition must be raised (Bermeo 2003:163). Bermeo, however, emphasizes that elections should not be seen as a guarantor of democracy or conflict resolution, and that in some cases elections can even be the cause of a conflict, provoking coups or mass protests. Thus, losing an election must be considered an acceptable alternative to the warring parties (Ibid: 165f).

Consequently, the main focus of the peace process – and also the hardest part for the people involved – was the question of how to bring RENAMO into the process without risking it becoming a spoiler and resuming its arms. Much importance was therefore given to the recognition of the rebel movement’s status as a political rather than military actor. Using the experiences of other third parties involved in the process, namely Italian mediators and “Tiny” Rowland of Lonrho, that had formerly been in contact with RENAMO, its main interests in the peace process were identified. RENAMO’s focus and ambition in getting involved in the peace process was the obtaining of a maximum of material benefits. This is why other third parties including the United Nations realized that providing financial inducements and ensuring RENAMO’s security were crucial for the success of the process (Ohlson, 1998:137). It seems clear that RENAMO did not have any normative commitment to democracy as a political system, however by accepting it, other benefits so desperately needed were provided. This lack of a normative connection to democracy as a system is also something Wantchekon discusses in his theory, which predicts that warring parties will choose democracy since it
provides the most advantageous alternative when it comes to maximizing the economic benefits of their choice.

There were additional security incentives provided that helped in convincing RENAMO and FRELIMO to enter into negotiations. The warring parties explicitly based their peace agreement on the prerequisite that there would be amnesty for all actions committed prior to the time of the peace agreement. A passing of such an amnesty law was one of the first actions of the Mozambique parliament. With this law functioning as a security guarantee RENAMO was able to transform itself into a peaceful political party (Cobban 2005:1129). The timing of the peace process can also be seen as of great importance as the peace agreement was implemented four months before the UN established the first war crimes tribunal in history, the International Criminal Tribunal for Former Yugoslavia, the tribunal that further laid the ground for the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, also established by the UN (Cobban 2005:1130). This meant that in 1992 the UN had not yet assumed its role as prosecutor and in the case of Mozambique its role was more of a supportive nature. The United Nation’s function in the peace process can be said to have been like the role of a colleague to the Mozambican Government.

A premise for the application of Wantchekon’s model is that the warring parties are dependent on the citizen’s productive labour, and that there are no alternative income sources available to them, such as access to lootable resources or support from foreign countries. This was the case in Mozambique, where RENAMO’s leader Alfonso Dhlakama and the people that followed him believed that in a state where peace prevailed, power could be obtained – both political power and power over resources. The RENAMO elite had, during the civil war, obtained its resources from booty – meaning protection rents – that to the greatest part came from the Lonrho’s farms (a mining company) and the Beira pipeline. When these sources dried up, money would come from elsewhere (Vines 1996:146). Geological and other realities made it impossible for Dhlakama, the leader of RENAMO, to turn to alternative financing for the war, for example smuggling or the export of diamonds or other natural resources when the external support for the war ended (Ohlson, 1998:139).

4.1.3 A Neutral External Enforcer

The role of external enforcer can be related to Wantchekon’s argument concerning security guarantees. However, for mostly structural purposes, I have decided to discuss it separately. The role of the external enforcer, as Wantchekon describes it in his theory, was in the case of Mozambique played by the United Nations. After the signing of the GPA (the General Peace Agreement) the United Nations Security Council approved the establishment of a United Nations Operation in Mozambique, ONUMOZ. It had the mission to monitor and implement the peace agreement. (Rupia in Armon, Hendrickson and Vines, 1998). It also had the responsibility of collecting and distributing the international donor funds adn the UN itself made huge investments in demobilization of the previous soldiers. The
long term goal was to hold democratic elections in 1994 (Weinstein, 2002:149). The UN further pressured both party leaders to meet for talks, and in August 1993 this was realized when leaders Chissano and Dhlakama met for the first time on Mozambican soil. In establishing ONUMOZ, one of the security guarantees promised to RENAMO was provided. RENAMO had demanded extensive United Nations involvement in the implementation and monitoring of the peace agreement (Rupia in Armon, Hendrickson and Vines, 1998).

The role of the UN did, however, contain some problematic aspects. According to Wallensteen, peace agreements worked out with an external pressure involved are more prone to failure than others (Wallensten, 2002:52). Many felt that the peace that had been established was not an "African peace" (Chabal, 2002:222) meaning that it had not been a product of the negotiation of the African parties. Although perhaps not seen as having imposed democracy, third parties had played leading roles as representatives of Western diplomacy and the United Nations.

The role of the UN is an interesting and important aspect of the conflict resolution and democratization process in Mozambique, however according to some more related to the actual consolidation and implementation of democracy, not so much to the transition itself. The UN first stepped in when the groundwork enabling peace already had been done. Nevertheless, it can of course be questioned how much the awareness of the future presence of such an external actor influenced the decision to democratize and end the conflict in providing security guarantees.

4.2 The Role of Mozambique’s Civil Society

Most explanations that suggest solutions to intra-state wars assume that the decisions of the warring parties constitute the key factor in a peace process. With this in mind it is not surprising that much research on civil war in Africa focuses on these aspects when it comes to studying solutions to conflicts. The peace process in Mozambique does not differ in this respect, as it is for the most part described as a product of elite and structure. This said it can be implied that the significance of the role of civil society often is overlooked in research, for example the role that civil society can play in demanding the compliance of their leaders. However scholars have, although rarely, called attention to organizations, communities and individuals for their role in the peace process and consequently in bringing about democracy in Mozambique (Moran & Pitcher 2004:503).

In anthropologist Carolyn Nordstrom’s book, *A Different Kind of War Story*, the construction of a culture of peacemaking throughout the country of Mozambique, crossing the boundaries of ethnicity and politics, is discussed. Nordstrom concludes in her book, that contrary to many other accounts of the peace process in Mozambique, she finds it to be the opposite of “the Hobbesian premise” that elite constructed agreements bring peace. Instead peace in Mozambique was the result of the doings by the average Mozambican (Nordstrom, 1997:220). What Nordstrom speaks about is the construction of
peace, and consequently the transition to democracy in Mozambique as a bottom-up process – the opposite of the view in Wantchekon’s theory.

There are also scholars who argue that the two different views on the peace process and the transition to democracy (as either a top-down or a bottom-up process), should rather be seen as complementing one another. Moran and Pitcher bring up the additional roles of third parties, such as the United Nations, but they are also of the opinion that in addition to a third party enforcer, other factors and actors are present and of importance in the peace process. According to them, most existing theories overlook the role that local organizations and social forces can and do play in putting pressure on leaders guiding them in their decision-making (Moran and Pitcher, 2004:503). In Mozambique scholars have emphasized the roles of communities, organisations and individuals who were able to create peace zones during the war. Moran and Pitcher’s main point is that both fields should be combined, using insights from both agency based actors and elite and structural factors.

4.2.1 The Role of the Catholic Church

In Mozambique there is, despite of its colonial heritage, a large number of significant indigenous cultural resources including indigenous religions. This provided the groundwork for the Saint Egidio Community, since there was an array of religious resources and attitudes that already existed in the country. Even though linguistically Mozambique is a very diverse country, the larger part of the population adhere to some version of the idea of ubuntu (a Sub-Saharan ideology and religion). Cobban argues that all the existing religions in Mozambique helped play a role in the implementation of a “forgive and forget” policy that the the national-level amnesty provided (Cobban, 2005:1134).

As already mentioned, once there was no longer any funding enabling RENAMO to continue its fighting, the country can be said to have been ripe for resolution. The Sant’ Egidio Community was, with its already existing contacts on many levels in Mozambique, in a strategic position. Sant’ Egidio had a deep understanding of the conflict’s, which enabled it to play a constructive role in the peace process. What Sant’ Egidio ultimately did was to provide a neutral arena where the major actors could meet in order to negotiate on how the war was to be ended and how the spoils should be divided (Vines, 1996:146f).

When trying to find a solution to an intrastate conflict a complication that often arises is that governments are hesitant when it comes to recognizing an armed opposition as a legitimate party when negotiating (Wallensteen, 2002:51). This was the case in Mozambique, where RENAMO was considered by the FRELIMO government to be a movement of bandits. This description deprived RENAMO of its legitimacy as a political party, at the same time making it impossible to blame the government for a constantly worsening situation (Chabal, 2002:217). The Catholic Church in Mozambique was of major importance to the peace process, as it was, with its already established connections to both parties, able to play a role as an “informal leader.” The Sant’ Egidio Community was perceived as neutral by
the two warring factions. This enabled it to provide meetings and negotiations between the two parties that finally resulted in the signing of a peace agreement and cease-fire in 1992.
5 Summarizing conclusions

Under what conditions does civil war end through competitive elections, and what were those conditions in Mozambique that made such a process possible?

This is the question that I, in using Leonard Wantchekon’s theory as an analytical tool and framework applied to the case of Mozambique, have attempted to answer. I have found Wantchekon’s theory to be useful and that his assumptions correspond well with the case to a great extent. It is, however, evident that there are factors that played a role in the process that Wantchekon do not include in his theory. To sum up the analysis in the previous chapter, and in order to give some general conclusions, I will briefly present the earlier discussed factors.

One of the main points of the theory is that civil war must be inconclusive in order for the theory to apply. This is something that I found to be relevant for the case of Mozambique. The civil war in Mozambique was inconclusive. As I have shown, the two warring parties had reached a stalemate, and there were no longer any material resources or external support available to support a continuance of the warfare. The second factor that I discussed was Wantchekon’s prerequisite stating that in order for the two parties to end the violence, and choose to democratize there must be security guarantees. Wantchekon’s argument about the requirement of security guarantees is based on the premise that the warring parties, or warlords, are dependent on the citizen’s productive labour. There cannot be any alternative sources from which the resources to continue the war could be extracted, for example drug-smuggling or lootable natural resources (as in the case of Sierra Leone and its diamond industry). This is also something that applies to Mozambique, as when the external economic support from foreign countries disappeared, there were no other alternative economic resources available. The security guarantees that were required in the case of Mozambique mainly consisted of promises to RENAMO that they would get access to the material benefits that they needed, and also that there would be amnesty for actions committed during wartime.

The third factor that I discussed in relation to Wantchekon’s theory is the presence of an external enforcer, and whether such a presence influenced Mozambique’s transition to democracy. The UN provided economic incentives that enabled the transition, and they also constituted a security guarantee, as they were responsible of a non-biased implementation of the peace agreement. It is possible, in the case of Mozambique, that awareness of the fact that there would be an external enforcer of democracy once the peace agreement was signed did constitute a security guarantee, and therefore is to be considered as a factor that made the warring parties ready to negotiate. In having discussed these aspects, following the theoretical framework of Wantchekon, one factor that I believe
played a large role in the peace process and consequently in the bringing about of democracy was the Catholic Church in Mozambique, and more specifically the Sant’ Egidio Community. I have come to the conclusion, in studying the work of the church, that they did play a role in helping to bring about direct negotiations between the FRELIMO government and RENAMO. Negotiations that ultimately would lead to the formal ending of the war commenced in October 1992.

Wantchekon’s theory can be said to exemplify an ideal situation in which rational choices are made and the actors involved are fully aware of all the consequences that their choice implies. Wantchekon’s argument constitutes a game theory approach to democratization, and consequently adheres to rational choice theory. According to Marsh and Stoker (2004:68ff), a rational choice analysis can be considered as complementary to an analysis of a more structural character. This way of using rational choice theory can be particularly interesting when studying decision processes, as such processes to some extent involve elements of interdependence, meaning that the decision of one group in society is dependent on other groups’ decisions. I find that the central element in a rational choice theory is the simplification of complex connections and the making of predictions. This is why classical rational choice adherents see the democratic system as a product of economic processes run by individuals whose only purpose is to maximize the benefits of their actions. In this way of viewing things, democracy is reduced to being a prerequisite for an effective market economy.

Having said this, it seems clear that Wantchekon’s theory on how war can generate democracy as an externality, in the case of Mozambique at least, can be seen as a bit simplistic. The transition to electoral democracy in Mozambique could and should be explained on many levels with the help of, as I have previously shown, both internal and external factors. Another point that could be argued is whether democracy should be seen as a prerequisite for peace or vice versa. What comes first? In this essay I have regarded peace and democratization as having a synergistic relationship. That is to say that I have not separated the two terms or events when discussing causes as I believe that peace and democracy are interdependent processes, impossible to separate from each other, or explain using a one-way causal relationship.

There is a saying that success has many parents, which I find applies to the Mozambican case. Mozambique’s successful conflict resolution should be seen as resulting from the commitment to peace of all Mozambicans. Georg Sørenson claims that “a fixed model or law about democracy cannot be formulated” (Sørenson, 1997:28) and argues that democracy can emerge even if not all of the pre-conditions are lived up to and possible obstacles taken away. For every case in which democracy has prevailed, there are examples of other nations where the effect has been the complete opposite (Ibid:28). Bermeo also discusses the contextual aspects of democratization and that successful means to democratization in one country do not necessarily apply to another case. Much of the research done on post-war democratization has been on European and Latin American cases. Yet the nature of African military influence and also civil society is different from those of Europe or Latin America. Civil society in Africa has extensive problems, as population tend to be extremely dispersed and more
segmented than in other regions. Ethnic division is also a factor that makes the consolidation of democracy especially difficult since it makes the unification of civil society extremely difficult (Bermeo, 2003:171).

Evidently a range of different accounts of how peace prevailed and democracy triumphed in Mozambique can be found. This is not surprising, as the Mozambican case can be regarded as unique in many ways. Many factors can be said to have worked as causes and catalysts for peace and democracy. I have discussed a few in this essay, using Wantchekon’s theory as a model, but it is clear that many factors provided the prerequisites enabling the transition to democracy and establishment of peace. There is always a risk in using only one single causal explanation for how peace can be achieved in civil war, and it is evident after having studied the case of Mozambique that peace and democracy is a result of the efforts of single individuals and civil society as well as the willingness of leaders and the actions of third parties.

Finally, it has become clear to me that the holding of national elections, meaning the establishment of electoral democracy, does not always provide a guarantee for peace or a consolidation of democracy. In Mozambique the divisions run deep and the civil war had both local and a regional causes. In putting too much focus on elections, the attention to the weaknesses of the Mozambican political system risk being overlooked.
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**Websites**

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[www.freedomhouse.org](http://www.freedomhouse.org)