Zambia -

The Problems of Democratic Consolidation

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Abstract

Democratization has not taken firm root in sub-Saharan Africa even though many democratic transitions took place in the beginning of the 1990’s. Sub-Saharan Africa suffers in other words from a frozen democratic consolidation.

This thesis creates a framework for analyzing why the path of consolidation is so rocky for the region and presents five different perspectives. Preconditions, the legacies from the old regime, Civil Society, the domestic elite and the global aspects are the five perspectives in the framework. Each aspect has a saying on why democracy tends not to deepen in sub-Saharan Africa.

With the framework created we move on to a case study of Zambia. This particular country is chosen for its history as a democratic role-model for the region. Zambia had its first democratic elections in almost three decades in 1991, but the development towards a truly functional and deep democracy is almost not present. The created framework is applied and the state of the Zambian democracy analyzed. As a conclusion this thesis argues that the legacies from the old regime and the terrible economy as precondition are the two biggest obstacles to the process of democratic consolidation in Zambia.

Keywords: Zambia, democratic consolidation, democracy, democratization, sub-Saharan Africa
1 Introduction

In the field of democratization it is widely discussed why democracy has a tendency of not succeeding amongst the developing countries. It is therefore not only in the field of economics that the term “developing countries” fit many African countries. On the political arena the literature on democratization in Africa is rich to say the least. This thesis follows the trace from the long series of literature and gives its own view on how we are to observe and analyze the democratic problems of the African continent.

Many sub-Saharan African countries have had ambiguous experiences with democracies since their independence from western colonialism. The first imposed western-like multiparty system was soon replaced by either authoritarianism or one party-rule in numerous African states (Grugel 2002, p. 171).

In traditional studies of democratization Africa was given no chance to democratize, simply put: “democratization was not suppose to happen in Africa” (Joseph 1999, p. 237). In the beginning of the 1990s, though, democratic optimism characterized the reports from Africa. Many spoke about Africa joining the third wave in democratization and a trend of democratic transition was started in Zambia when authoritarian president Kenneth Kaunda resigned in 1991 (ibid). In 1995 a pluralistic party-system was in function in more than three-quarters of the African countries, but this development did not improve further and democracy is now weak and threatened from various hinders (Grugel 2002, p. 172-173; Wiseman 1997 in Grugel 2002).

If optimism defined the beginning of the 1990’s then resignation and disappointment surely took over as years went by. Despite several successful second round elections in for instance Benin, Ghana and Zambia the early euphoria was replaced by grim realization (Ihonvbere 1997). One could argue that the democratic wave - after flooding Eastern Europe and Latin-America - stopped or peaked before arriving in Africa. Today the positive development has clogged and a consolidated fully functional liberal democracy is hard to find in sub-Saharan Africa. The trend at present can be explained with the words of political scientist Richard Sandbrook when he stresses that sub-Saharan Africa are experiencing “transition without consolidation” (Sandbrook 1996, p. 69). The inquisitiveness of why this is, leads to the purpose of this thesis.

This thesis has two objectives.
1) The first is to develop a framework for analyzing the state of democracy in sub-Saharan Africa.
2) The second is to emphasize how this framework is applied on an empirical case and in this thesis Zambia is the studied country.

The framework developed in the next chapter is meant to draw attention to the problems for consolidated democracy in Sub-Saharan Africa. This thesis operates with the following research questions: *In what aspects has the process of democratic consolidation in Zambia gone wrong? Or why has the process of a deeper and fully functional democracy in Zambia stopped?*

Many countries, including the analyzed case Zambia, have gone through a transition from authoritarian rule to some kind of democracy. The more specific outcome of the transition will be discussed later. The transition should in theory lead to various kinds of more or less consolidated democracies, but this has not happened in sub-Saharan Africa. Or if it has it is definitely a “less consolidated” democracy. The ambition of the later developed framework is to stress the most important perspectives of today’s problematic relationship between sub-Saharan Africa and consolidated democracies and the following case-study of Zambia will act as an example of “what went wrong?”

This thesis should furthermore have the constructive goal in setting up some criteria to where an effort can be applied to improve the possibilities for a fully functional democracy in the region.

Due to the quantitative limitations of this thesis both the framework created and especially the case study can not be completely satisfactory. All the same the framework will focus on some very important issues and the case study will emphasize these in practice. The limitation is always present in such a complex case as the one explaining the problems of democratic consolidation in sub-Saharan Africa and should therefore not interfere with the quality.
2 Theory

It is important to take a closer look at the definitions of the terms democracy and democratic consolidation, before moving on to developing the theoretical framework.

From an elevated number of different definitions of democracy this thesis uses a medium definition in contrast to both minimalist and maximalist definitions. Minimalist definition includes few criteria and many democracies, maximalist the exact opposite with few democracies, if any at all. The medium definition of this thesis includes more aspects than just elections (electoral democracy) and is more in the league of liberal democracies. Thus a state is not democratic just because it has (free and fair) elections. What about freedoms for individuals and groups for instance? (Whitehead 2002, p. 12f). Not to forget political- and media plurality and higher requirements for the officeholders.

A medium definition could be as the following, which is set up by political scientist Juan Linz in Larry Diamond’s book Developing Democracy:

“Democracies are political systems that allow the free formulation of political preferences through the use of basic freedoms of association, information and 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” (Diamond 1999, p. 13).

This definition is especially suitable if one is to analyze African experiences with democracy. One cannot expect to fit states with such a short democratic history into a maximalist definition with too severe criteria. And a minimalist definition wouldn’t work either as many sub-Saharan countries would be considered democracies even though something is clearly not working. Dealing with African democracies it is also important to stress the significant matter of the context (Whitehead 2002, p. 26). The understanding of the concept of democracy can easily vary from region to region let alone continent to continent.

Linz’s definition combines very well elections with freedoms for both individuals and groups, but the definition lacks perhaps a more specific mention of the importance of the rule of law and other more specific components. For this thesis though I find the definition adequate if it is remembered that there is no such thing as a perfect democracy and that democracy is a developmental object (Diamond 1999, p. 17-19).
A consolidated democracy on the other hand is when the democratic routine is “the only game in town”, but it is also when democracy is deep, functional and stable (Grugel 2002, p. 36-37).

This thesis argues that the consolidation phase starts when a regime can be labeled as an electoral democracy, but is not necessarily in the league of liberal democracies yet. The argument is in that matter partly based on the political scientist Staffan Lindberg’s (2006) work Democracy and Elections in Africa. His main statement is that democracy tends to take root in Africa after a series of three elections and that this series of elections not only improve the quality of election but also has positive effects on the spread and deepening of civil liberties (Lindberg 2006, p. 3). It is often seen that an elevated number of elections in a single sequence create the way from electoral to liberal democracy. Furthermore Lindberg finds that regime breakdowns very rarely occur after three elections.

Consolidation is therefore in this thesis achieved when the leaders only operate in democratic terms and when the democratic values such as individual and civic rights have reached even the very bottom of society. This thesis focuses in other words on the deepening of democratic values and the spreading of democratic quality. When using this definition this thesis leans on what Andreas Schedler (1998) states as a positive version of democratic consolidation. With the work of Lindberg in mind we can say that the negative version of democratic consolidation – the extension of democracy and the avoiding of democratic breakdown – is no longer the biggest problem in many new democracies. Once the three election-test by Lindberg is passed it is more appropriate to use the positive version of democratic consolidation where we are “Moving further on the "continuum of democracy" - by deepening liberal democracy and pushing it closer to advanced democracy” (Schedler 1998). In Schedlers work advanced democracy ranks higher than liberal democracy and therefore tends just to be an ideal (ibid.).

The differences between the definition of democracy by Juan Linz used in this thesis and consolidated democracy can be seen as small, but in reality they are not. It is important to emphasize that (liberal) democracy can be improved especially when working with new democracies. The argument of this thesis is that the road towards consolidated democracy starts when the state is an electoral democracy and continues through the process of becoming a liberal democracy and ends with the definition of a fully functional, liberal and deep democracy. It is in other words only democracies that can become consolidated democracies, with the latter as a superior form.

The distinction between transition and consolidation is an important one as pro-democratic factors in the transition-phase not necessarily play a positive role during consolidation. But it is also clear that some factors are present and important in both the transition and the consolidation phase.

2.1 Framework
What perspectives in analyzing a democracy are to be considered important when verifying the state of democracy in a certain country? This thesis argues that preconditions, the legacies from the old regime, Civil Society, the domestic elite and global aspects are five of the most significant perspectives to be analyzed and these five perspectives all together create the following framework.

It is clear that a complete distinction between the five aspects is not possible nor is it desirable. Interrelations occur and are sometimes strong as for example between economic precondition and aid dependency or between the legacy from the old regime and the domestic elite. The choice of perspective though does not weaken the framework as long as the interrelations are taken into consideration. Progress in certain fronts can of course occur while stagnation characterizes others, it is therefore important to view the consolidation-process in its whole (Burnell 2000, p. 33). In the conclusion of a case-study a discussion on what factor played the most important role, and not just a result on the entire consolidation-process, would be in its place.

The framework can in short terms be described as a framework of structural constrains build around actors such as the political leaders and the civil society, with a global aspect.

Various theoretical frameworks have been presented in the past with a classical discussion between structure and agency and between the internal and the external factors. The framework of this thesis combines the four to create a more complete support for the analysis. The following table shows how the five aspects in the framework of this thesis are related to the two important discussions in political science. Furthermore the table illustrates how the framework combines all the four perspectives in one construction.

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Table 1: The combination of the created framework and the expected perspectives in a scientific construction

The agency perspective is easier to trace when one deals with rapid change (such as democratic transition) while it could be argued that outcomes in the longer term (democratic consolidation for example) makes the structural perspective prevail (Burnell 2000, p. 30). This argument will be emphasized as we move on and each viewpoint in the framework will be further developed.

In democratization consolidation is, if not the most difficult, then certainly one of the hardest parts. After the multi-party election follows a long and troublesome road before the new democracy is fully functional and deep. This road has so far turned out to be too difficult to follow in most sub-Saharan states. The following
five perspectives each have a saying on how navigable the road to consolidation is.

2.1.1 Preconditions

The preconditions for democracy can be seen as the surroundings provided by the nation that one needs to address before creating a political regime such as democracy. There is however not much to do for the pro-democratic forces about the preconditions other than giving this matter consideration when creating democracy. The list of possible preconditions in democratization is long, but the preconditions that this thesis will consider are 1) economic development, 2) ethnic homogeneity and 3) natural resources.

1) The classic modernization theory as developed by Seymour Martin Lipset (1959) stresses the importance of economic development - in his case capitalism - for democracy and since then a constant discussion of the relationship between these two factors has taken place (Grugel 2002, p. 46ff). Many researchers though will agree on that democracy do best under positive economic environment.

Larry Diamond states that reducing the level of absolute poverty is by fare the most important issue in economic development, for democracy’s sake (Diamond 1992). On the same track is Przeworski when he argues that economic progress is crucially important for poor country democracies (Przeworski et al. 1996).

2) A traditionally widely discussed issue in democratization theory is what part religion plays in the process. Previously it focused on the role of Catholicism and is now focusing on the relationship between Islam and democracy. This thesis will not focus on the role of the religion per se, but rather on the importance of ethnic homogeneity. Ethnic diversities have to be dealt with carefully as history is rich on deep ethnic conflicts (Grugel 2002, p.79). It is therefore easier for a democracy to become stable in a state with ethnic homogeneity, but also important to remember that ethnical cleavages have been dealt with successfully in the past (Diamond 1999, p. 156f).

3) The last point in this structural perspective of preconditions is concerning resources. Under-developed countries with only one primary natural resource may find the path to democratic consolidation more “rocky”. Taken from the field of economics this could prove a case even in democratization. It is a fact that many problems in the developed world derives from having just one primary natural resource (Van der Walle guest lecture on Lund University autumn 2006).

2.1.2 The legacies from the old regime

As this framework is specialized to measure the state of democracy in sub-Saharan Africa it is impossible not to address the legacies from the old regime.

The term old regime can in this case both be equivalent to the western colonial regime and also the – often authoritarian – regime just prior to the democratic
transition. Unfortunately for most sub-Saharan states these legacies are often to be considered burdens to democratization. This argument is clearly expressed by Jean Grugel:

“The Legacies of the past weight to such an extent on the democratization project in Africa that they explain its failure” (Grugel 2002, s. 177).

The old regime builds an entire political system composed by for example habits and procedures. This political culture, consisting of beliefs, attitudes and sentiments concerning politics, is difficult to tear down in only a few years. If the old regime is strong enough it is not only the political system but also the whole society that needs to be recreated – a difficult if not impossible job for the pro-democratic forces.

It is clear though that democratization can succeed in spite of burdens from the old regime just as it can fail in spite of positive historical background (Burnell 2000, p.18).

2.1.3 Civil Society

The Civil Society undoubtedly plays a vital role in both the transition to democracy and in securing a consolidated democracy.

If Civil Society is to play such an important function in consolidating democracy then it obviously needs to have many roles in democracy. This thesis finds inspiration in Larry Diamond (1993 & 1999) and his “eleven commands” of Civil Society in democracies and in the combined approach of Grugel (2002). The five key functions of Civil Society that the author of this thesis finds important are listed below:

- Civil Society is supposed to check and monitor the power and press for reform when necessary.
- Civil Society is to provide an arena for political participation.
- Civil Society is to educate the population in democratic values and in this matter recruit new pro-democratic leaders.
- Civil Society is to help distributing information.
- Civil Society is to create channels outside the established political system for representations of interests.

Civil Society has to be independent to the state and is therefore the space between the state and the individual. Civil Society consists therefore primary of organizations, institutions and associations (Grugel 2002, p. 93).

A paradox in studying the Civil Society is the fact that it can be difficult to distinguish whether the state or the Civil Society is the primary democratic force. One could argue that only a democratic state can foster a democratic Civil Society, but on the other hand a democratic Civil Society can also put pressure on a non-democratic state.
With these five functions it is obvious that a strong Civil Society is needed to fully consolidate democracy. Having an African analysis as the purpose of this thesis it should also be discussed whether the civil society is independent or dependent on foreign aid and what the consequence of this is.

2.1.4 The domestic elite

Sub-Saharan Africa has a long history of personalist - and often military – regimes. With that statement made this thesis finds it natural to take a closer look on what role the domestic political elites play in the consolidation phase.

The consolidation-path is unsurprisingly more passable with the acceptance from the political and military elite. These two actors must accept the rules of the democratic game and work together to deepen and stabilize democracy and not just convert due to tactical reasons trying to retain power (Joseph 1999, p. 251). In this matter even the domestic opponents to democracy should give in and realize that the best way to have an influence on society is through democratic channels. This struggle between authoritarian and democratic forces is evenly matched in sub-Saharan Africa and is therefore important to include in the analysis if one is to say anything of the prospects for consolidated democracy (Joseph 1999, p. 252).

2.1.5 Global aspects

When taken the global aspects into consideration there are two basic ways to understand democratization. One is democratization as the spread of ideas and the other is democratization as an external force of ideas upon a state. The first is a wave theory or the believing in the snowballing effect while the second is emphasizing external pressure.

Dealing with sub-Saharan Africa it is important to reflect on the latter. The continent has been an area of foreign influence for centuries and the latest decades are no exception. In sub-Saharan Africa democratization is profoundly shaped by the outside - to the extent that it is difficult to separate internal factors from external (Grugel 2002, p. 187f).

When analyzing the difficulties of consolidation the international community plays an essential part, both with demands, pressure and aid from various actors such as nation-states, NGO’s and world wide organizations (e.g. UN and the World Bank). The economic and political conditionality which combines aid with democratic conditions is a factor that calls for great attention (ibid.). Experiences with conditionality have been some what disappointing in the past, but the factor is nevertheless vital in consolidating democracy in sub-Saharan Africa. An answer to the lack of success could be that conditionality should always remember the context of the country and try to avoid imposing of western ideas that cannot stand a chance in a different environment.
2.2 Conclusion

We have in the previous developed the framework of this thesis for analyzing democracy in sub-Saharan Africa. The framework includes structural aspects, actor perspectives and both internal and external explanations.

The understanding of the unsatisfactory experiences with consolidation should be answered analyzing the above five perspectives. Consolidation of democracy stands a better chance if the preconditions are not too severe; the legacies from the old regime are not too heavy burdens; civil society is undergoing a positive development and strengthening itself; the domestic elites gradually are accepting democracy as the only rule of the game; and finally if the international community supports the state in a right and fair way.
3 Methodology

After developing the theoretical framework for analyzing the state of democratic consolidation in sub-Saharan Africa this thesis continues with a single country case study. Before moving on to applying the framework this chapter discusses some methodological issues.

Danwark A. Rustow argues in his famous “Transition to Democracy – Toward a Dynamic Model” that the complexity of democratization calls for few cases (Rustow 1999, p. 24-25). I will continue this argumentation and state that the advantages of a single country study are greater than the disadvantages in this matter. The loss of comparison as a method is compensated for, by gaining a complete understanding of a complex case. The single-country study can be compared with medicine studies where one treatment is analyzed intensively (Landman 2003, p. 34-35). I will argue that this way of conducting a case study and apply a framework gains a lot in improving the result of the one studied case, contingencies are minimized and the value of the result heightened.

The created framework is obviously at any other researcher’s disposal and Zambia could easily be replaced by another - preferably sub-Saharan African – country.

Why is Zambia then chosen as case? Zambia is a representative case for the framework. Even though it in some aspects can be considered deviant, it is chosen as a representative case in the overall view. Zambia is also chosen because of its position as a role-model. It is interesting to analyze the “best-in-class” case and see how it is doing and why democratic consolidation has not yet been achieved or in other words why democracy has not been deepened. It is representative in the way that it has problems in all five perspectives that this framework analyses, but it is also deviant in the matter that it is “best-in-class” and therefore not entirely on the same level as the other sub-Saharan countries. The result of an analysis using the framework can therefore be different from Zambia to other sub-Saharan countries, as Zambia in some aspects can be considered more democratic. Having 15 years of democratic rule Zambia can give us an idea of how long it takes to deepen democracy in this particular region.

The foregoing developed framework can of course very well be used in other cases. This is in fact the whole idea of the framework. But since it is developed with an eye on the specific context of sub-Saharan Africa it can be discussed if the framework will loose quality when applied in other parts of the world. Obviously the further one moves away from the context, the more is changed. It will fit best in sub-Saharan Africa, then perhaps Africa as a hole, then again in other developing countries and in a final instance in the developed world. It is not said though that it is impossible to gain something from this framework even in the West, but more severe criteria and expectations are definitely necessary. One of
the advantages with the framework is that the different aspects can play different roles given the chosen context. In some cases the preconditions are the most important hinder to consolidated democracy and in other cases a weak or non-existent Civil Society is and so on. The framework could for obvious reasons also act as the basis for a qualitative study with the purpose of a comparison of a number of countries.

A final discussion concerning the methodology that this thesis will comment on is whether this study is theory developing or theory consuming (see Essaiasson 2005). It surely consumes various theories in a new creation. In that way it could be argued that it is both consuming and developing in the understanding that it creates a theory/framework and then consumes it with the study of Zambia. Whenever the framework is used in various case-studies a new aspect is to be considered most important and therefore the framework developed here is consumed.
4 Case study – Zambia

4.1 Introduction

In October 1991 the first free and competitive election in almost three decades took place in Zambia. This was a fundamental step in transition to democracy for the little sub-Saharan African state – one of the world’s poorest countries (Graham 1992). Before moving on to the analysis a short trip down the democratic history-lane is suitable.

In the years prior to the transition Zambia experienced, like so many African countries, the phenomenon of the single-party state system and personal rule (Nasong’o 2005, p. 1). This system maintained national integrity while building the state, but in the late 1980’s the transition phase to democracy reached sub-Saharan Africa and Zambia had its first multiparty elections in 1991.

Frederick Chiluba and his Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) won the elections, defeating sitting president Kenneth Kaunda and his United National Independence Party (UNIP). Kaunda had ruled Zambia since independence in 1964 - as a one-party rule from 1972 (Nasong’o 2005, p. 1). Most surprising was the peaceful transition, characterized by the fact that not a single act of violence or intimidation was reported. A report in The Economist from the elections though described that to vote was to gamble and that people believed that things could not get any worse (The Economist 9/11 1991). Nevertheless the first step towards democracy was taken.

This first step was actually one of the first democratic steps in sub-Saharan Africa and therefore Zambia has often been characterized as a role-model for its neighbors. The trend spread across the region and 37 of 48 sub-Saharan countries held multiparty elections between 1990 and 1996. By 2000 all but 5 sub-Saharan countries (Democratic republic of Congo, Eritrea, Rwanda, Somalia and Swaziland) had conducted multiparty elections (Nasong’o 2005, p. 2).

During the 1990’s president Frederick Chiluba disappointed the positive expectations for a possible democratic consolidation in Zambia and Zambia’s 1996 election was a second-rate to its “best-in-class” first election in 1991 concerning democratic quality (Lindberg 2006, p. 53). Chiluba tried to change to constitution allowing him to run for a third (and possibly fourth) turn as president but was “convinced” not do so shortly before the 2001 elections. Chiluba was therefore replaced by Levy Patrick Mwanawasa in 2001. Mwanawasa was a former vice president under Chiluba and he won after somewhat blurry elections.
Elections that the ten opposition candidates maintained were rigged and Mwanawasa won by only 40,000 votes out of 1.7 million votes (Burnell 2002, p. 1104). Mwanawasa and MMD however insisted that the elections were free and fair (Nevin 2002, p. 10).

The positive development in democratic quality as showed by the elections can be illustrated as a linear progress. The number of parties participating in the elections in 1991, 1996 and 2001 were 5, 11 and 15 respectively and the voter turnout in percent was 46, 58 and 68. It is therefore clear that multiparty elections has taken root in Zambia and in the following it will be analyzed whether the same can be said of democratic quality.

Levy Mwanawasa was voted into his second and last term as president on election night September 28th 2006 (http://africanelections.tripod.com/zm.html & http://allafrica.com/stories). The voter turnout was 70.8 % and Mwanawasa received 1.18 mill votes or approximately 43 %. According to African Elections Database 20 parties contested in the elections and the big winners were without a doubt MMD and Mwanawasa (http://africanelections.tripod.com/zm.html). It is therefore up to Mwanawasa and his MMD party to take Zambia further down the democratic consolidation path in the coming years - a surely difficult task which many have a critical view on. Illustrated with the words of one of the most severe critics C.F. Ake in an article by Ashutosh Kumar (2005):

“…the African elite support democracy only as a means of power, the international development agencies support it as an asset to structural adjustment and western governments support it ambiguously torn between their growing indifference to Africa and their desire to promote their own way of life” (Kumar 2005, p. 373)

This critique is according to this thesis too harsh, but as many prejudices it holds some truth. Exactly how true the statement is will be emphasized during the analysis.

Just how far Zambia has left in becoming a fully consolidated democracy can be measured in many ways. On of them is Freedom House and even though this thesis doesn’t build on the exact same variables as this organization it gives a hint on the state of democracy. According to Freedom House and their rating system Zambia has the status as Partly-free and both political rights and civil liberties are given the score 4 (from 1-7 with 1 as the best and 7 as the worst possible score) (http://www.freedomhouse.org/uploads/special_report/36.pdf).

With Staffan Lindbergs arguments in mind, that a country with a three-elections-sequence tends to be a more deepened democracy, this thesis operates with the statement that Zambia has gone through the democratic transition-phase and is now facing the problems of consolidation. Zambia has had four elections in the past fifteen-year-period and despite many problems on the way democracy is still the only game in town. Even though the domestic elite is divided in this question, as we shall see in the following, the fact that Chiluba did not run for office in 2001 is seen as a victory for the pro-democratic forces of the outmost importance. Chiluba is now charged with corruption and misuse of power and
Zambia has recently gained much of its democratic qualities (Lindberg 2006, p. 92-93).

Zambia has passed the “test” by Lindberg, but the country failed Huntington’s “two-turnovers-of-the-executive test”, having just had one turnover - in 1991 (Lindberg 2006, p. 83). With this said Zambia is undoubtedly on the borderline between transition and consolidation and this thesis has taken the standpoint that Zambia is at on of the first steps in the consolidation-phase.

Zambia has had fifteen years of practice in developing democracy. What is the state of democracy now? How far in the consolidation process has Zambia gotten? With the literature on democratization in mind and their emphasis on the problematic relationship between sub-Saharan countries and democratic consolidation the questions could be redefined in the following way: What is the biggest hinder to democratic consolidation in Zambia? What has gone wrong in the democratic process since the transition in 1991?

To answer these four interconnected questions the framework previously developed is applied.

Answering what perspective of the framework, that explains the best what needs to be improved, is based on the consumption that all five perspectives are equally important in consolidating democracy. This can be contradicted, but this thesis argues that the five aspects are all important and if one starts with the notion that one of them are far more important, then the answer is almost given before analyzing.

After analyzing the Zambian preconditions; the legacies from the old Zambian regime; the Zambian Civil Society; the Zambian domestic elite and the global aspects in the Zambian democratic consolidation phase, an answer is given to the state of Zambian democracy.

4.2 Preconditions

There is no doubt that almost all sub-Saharan African countries are in trouble when it comes to economic development as a basis for consolidated democracy and Zambia is definitely not an exception. The annual income per inhabitant in Zambia is just around 230 US $ and 83 % of the population of 10 million are classified as being poor (Cauvin 2001). Furthermore life expectancy is only 37 years for both sexes (http://hdr.undp.org/hdr2006/statistics/).

The economic situation has never been worse than at the moment as emphasized with these statistics. The numbers are obviously in sharp contrast with the fully developed countries in the West, but also compared to many sub-Saharan neighbors Zambia’s economy is devastating. States like Botswana, Namibia, Sierra Leone and Lesotho are normally not mentioned for positive results on the economic scene but are nevertheless making better results than Zambia. In fact Burundi is one of the very few countries (where the numbers are available) in the sub-Saharan region with a worse economy than Zambia (http://hdr.undp.org/hdr2006/statistics/). If one look at the HDI-ranking, where the
economy is combined with such things as life expectancy and adult literacy, Zambia is placed at number 165 out of 177 countries, not a first-class ranking, but it needs to be mentioned that the 12 states below Zambia in the ranking are all neighboring states in sub-Saharan Africa (http://hdr.undp.org/hdr2006/statistics/). The Human Development report from the UN shows that Zambia has done worse in HDI-ranking than the rest of the region, but also emphasizes that Zambia is better in turning income into education and health opportunities than the average sub-Saharan country (http://hdr.undp.org/hdr2006/statistics/).

Crucial for the democratic development in a poor state as argued in the framework, was the declination of both economic inequality and absolute poverty. Both of these parameters have unfortunately for the democratic development in Zambia been rising during the first decade of democracy. One could find many other parameters for economic development, but the ones used here give a clear picture of a country in economic problems and this does in no way make the road to consolidated democracy easier.

The second aspect concerning precondition of the used framework is the ethnical issue. The people of Zambia belong to 73 different ethnic groups, with 7 official languages and 30 dialects. The four largest ethnic groups are Lozi in the West, Tonga in the South, Bemba in the North and Nyanja in the East (Nasong’o 2005, p. 101). With this in mind it is impressing how little a threat the ethnical diversity is to the Zambian democratic development compared to many other countries, both African and others (Burnell 2000, p. 25). Especially when one considers that Zambia shares the ethnic structure of countries such as Nigeria, Uganda, Kenya and Mozambique, countries where ethnical problems seem to hinder democratic development in a much more severe way. Fortunately for Zambia the ethnic diversity is primarily visible in terms of language groups (Nasong’o 2005, p. 101).

Even though differences between the various regions occur, especially between the poor Eastern Region and the capital Lusaka, they are not to be considered severe. In fact the diversities are not greater than for instance those between the southern and northern regions of Italy. Research indicates clearly that the question of ethnicity was not a major factor in the electoral processes in Zambia (Hulterström in Nasong’o 2005. p.103). Of the 11 parties in the 1996 elections only the Agenda for Zambia (AZ) – based in Western Zambia - could be described as an ethnic party, receiving 1,4% of the national votes (Nasong’o 2005, p. 106). The numbers illustrate that the Zambian politics of inclusion, a rare case in sub-Saharan Africa, is nevertheless surely a positive sign for the consolidation process. Yet another positive feature is the cross-ethnic parties created in maximum coalitions in the Zambian elections (Nasong’o 2005, p. 116).

The last argument that this thesis will analyze as a precondition concerns resources and a special attention is paid to countries with just one primary resource. In short it is here postulated that this factor plays only a minor role concerning Zambia. Copper is with out a doubt the primary resource (80% of the country’s foreign exchange earnings) and it has created differences between the
internal regions, but it does not affect the consolidation phase notably. Both because it was privatized in the years 1998-2000 and also because Zambia is basically too poor, so controlling the primary industry is not enough as political legitimacy as in other parts of the world, i.e. the Middle East. Furthermore the industry is more or less out of the government’s hands and in this way one could say that it used to be in issue but has now changed position to the economic field. Having this said, it is with out a doubt more than difficult to run a poor country like Zambia with dropping copper prizes (Tordoff & Young 2005, p. 413).

Indirectly the copper resource affects the democratic development through the economic aspect as it is clear that the price on copper is of the outmost importance for the Zambian economy. The copper price had destructive effects on Zambian economy in the mid 1970’s and again in 1998 just before the privatization of the copper industry when the price dropped 27%. Zambian copper industry is underdeveloped compared to for instance Chile and this goes for almost all sub-Saharan Africa. The lesson of this region learned from Nigeria, is that a country without oil has an economy in decline (Burnell 2001, p. 199).

The economy is indeed a hinder for democracy in Zambia, but fortunately both the ethnical issue and the resource concern seems not to play a negative role. Zambia is rather ethnical homogenized and the country is so poor that their dependence on the copper resource is no crucial democratic problem. In fact Zambia is to be considered stable compared to the neighbors like Angola, Congo and Zimbabwe (Cauvin 2001). All in all it is clear that when it comes to the ethnical- and resource-based perspectives Zambia is in no way close to being the worst case in sub-Saharan Africa, but the economy is surely devastating. Democratic consolidation is difficult when more than 80% of the population live for less than 2 US $ per day (http://earthtrends.wri.org/povlinks/).

The precondition for further democratic development in Zambia is not near positive, considering the economics. The development in this field is disturbing for the consolidation of democracy. The ethnical issue is handled well in Zambia and is positive for a future deepening of democracy. The resource factor is questionable in Zambia and is in this thesis not considered to be very inflatable negatively on the democratic consolidation. It is nevertheless clear that the Zambians at the present time find it more urgent to address the problematic economy than the deepening of democracy.

4.3 The legacies from the old regime

On the long and winding road towards consolidated democracy one of the most significant hurdles is the legacy from the old regime.

Dealing with the legacies one has to acknowledge both positive and negative aspects, although it is clear from the start that the latter will prevail in Zambia.

First we will consider the positive elements of history.
Even though the Kaunda-regime was highly centralized ruled and power was concentrated in one person, Zambia has in fact experienced political competition. During the 1970’s and 1980’s elections to the National Assembly were characterized by actual competition and a number of ministers lost their seats (Burnell 2000, p. 18).

Zambia has never had to handle a situation of chaos, extreme human rights violations or conflicts in the beginning of a transition-phase as has many other countries (for instance Zambia’s neighbor South Africa or many South American countries). There were no deep wounds to cure so to speak (Burnell 2000, p. 17).

Another positive legacy from previous regimes is the - perhaps surprisingly considering Zambia’s geography – fact that Zambia never has experienced a “successful” military coup. On the contrary the big shift in Zambian politics came from pressure from Civil Society in 1991 (see 4.4) (Burnell 2000, p. 18).

The list of legacies from the old regime that have a negative effect on the ongoing democratic process is considerable longer than the positive ditto.

The large foreign debt is of course a negative left-over from the prior regime and is also described in the discussion of the economy in 4.1 (Preconditions) and partly in 4.6 (Global aspects).

On a basic level the limited experience with multi-party democracy is a burden for consolidated democracy in Zambia.

Another legacy from the old regime is the historical prevalence of personalism, clientelism and corruption that still is huge problems of today’s Zambian society (Sandbrook 1996, p. 69). An evidence from Zambia of today can be taken from the scandal of January 2007 when approximately 25 mill $ meant for housing allowance arrears for civil servants, was declared missing by the Finance Deputy Minister Jonas Shakafuswa (http://allafrica.com/zambia/).

Especially the “big-man-focus” of Zambian history is surely a burden for the future democratic experience. This burden is also evident when the long history of presidentialism is considered and there is a Zambian urge to subordinate all of state-apparatus to the ruling party and its strong leader (Burnell 2000, p. 19). This is not just a legacy from the Kaunda-regime, but is often traced back to the colonial model of Governor’s rule (ibid.).

Yet another legacy is the administrative weakness and social alienation left behind by both Kaunda and Chiluba (Brown 2005, p. 183). In addition to this it should be mentioned that Zambia suffers from a nearly total lack of political opposition. This has very much continued in the present democratic development where the coalition forces use more energy on internal conflict than to act as a true united alternative to the ruling party.

Moreover it is obvious in a new democracy as the Zambian that there is a general shortage of well-trained staff at every level of government. A legacy that can only be improved with a big effort and patience as a new generation of bureaucrats is needed in the state-apparatus (Burnell 2000, p. 23).

Furthermore some students of African affairs have emphasized the lack of a satisfactory degree of confidence and good feeling about the country amongst both the prior and present regime (Burnell 2000, p. 21).
Ironically enough the same factors that helped to bring down the old one-party regime are now burdening the new democratic one. Factors like negative economy and foreign aid are still producing problems for the rulers of Zambia (Burnell 2000, p. 17).

History or legacies cannot alone explain the difficulties of the troublesome democratic development in Zambia, but it clarifies many aspects that need to be considered when we take stock of the Zambian democracy. Taking a glen at the legacies above it is clear that the legacies from history are indeed burdens for the democratic consolidation phase in Zambia. The negative legacies are to be considered as the “stick in the pro-democratic wheel”.

4.4 Civil Society

The Civil Society in sub-Saharan Africa is generally considered weak and very much aid-dependent or even simply as consisting of foreign NGO’s.

Compared to these statements Zambia has for a long time been a positive example. Even though some pessimists dismiss the idea of a Civil Society in Africa, this thesis agrees with Shadrack Wanjala Nasong’o in the fact that the existence of a Civil Society in sub-Saharan Africa is beyond denial (Nasong’o 2005, p. 71). When compared to the West or to the democratization of Eastern Europe Zambian Civil Society has not much to offer and the current development can be interpreted both positively and negatively.

Burnell stresses on the negative side that:

“The infrastructure of civil society is evolving and becoming more complex rather than becoming obviously stronger in net terms” (Burnell 2000, p. 17).

A critique that may be argued against if one considers the short period of time at disposal for creating a fully functional Civil Society in Zambia. Another negative side of Civil Society in sub-Saharan Africa is that it seems to follow the same pattern as the rest of political life. It can be argued that many leaders of Civil Society do not necessarily serve the course of democratization but rather own selfish interests. This problem has been termed “MONGO’s” (my own NGO) as African personalism is not restricted to the political life (Nasong’o 2005, p. 86).

On the positive side and as an evidence of the growing importance of Civil Society in Zambia is the case of overruling Chiluba when he wanted to run for a third time as president. At that point Civil Society – externally sponsored – pressed the president to withdraw his idea. This is widely considered one of the greatest victories for Civil Society in sub-Saharan Africa (Brown 2005, p. 189 & Phiri 2003, p. 423).

Furthermore Civil Society played an important role in the transition to democracy in 1991 and in 1993 A Directory of Nongovernmental Organizations made by the Office of the President recognized 11 NGO’s handling democracy
and human rights and a bigger number of church-based organizations. Most recognized is the Mineworkers Union and the Zambia Confederation of Trade Unions where Chiluba was Chairman-General in almost two decades before becoming president.

In the current phase of democratic consolidation the following associations play perhaps the most important roles as Civil Society’s outposts: Institute of Policy Studies, Economics Association of Zambia, Legal Resources Foundation and the National Women’s Lobby group (Burnell 2000, p. 15). The latter is very much worth a notice as Zambian women suffers from oppression and gender NGO’s at a local level, like the one stated here, is surely a step in the right direction.

The churches are also working actively in Civil Society and both the Anglican Church and the Catholic Church have often criticized the political elite for ignoring the poor and for using their power for self-enrichment on several occasions (Burnell 2000, p.15-16).

Freedom House characterized 2005 as a year where Civil Society and the opposition challenged the government without notable success (http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=22&country=7091&year=2006). It should also be stressed though that an active civil society and opposition also in itself can be defined as a positive thing. Even though the results were disappointing, the fact that Civil Society tries to make an impact and is alive should stressed as an encouraging sign.

Zambian Civil Society plays an important and significant role in the present consolidation process as it puts pressure on the current government and strives to keep Zambia on the democratic path. Civil Society in Zambia serves as a bulwark against the state and its possible authoritarian tendencies. It is though important to be cautious with this enthusiasm and over-celebration of Civil Society as the main midwife of democracy in Zambia (Nasong’o 2005, p. 89).

With the foregoing analysis in mind this thesis argues that Zambian Civil Society has not yet peaked and has still a lot to offer in the democratic process – a continued strengthening is necessary for democracy to become consolidated. But the first fruit from the hard work has already begun to show. In one aspect improvement is desirable though. Civil Society in Zambia must develop its own strengths instead of looking to the international community for support, if it is to gain more political power and acceptance (Burnell 2000, p. 29).

4.5 The domestic elite

In the following we will take a close look at the domestic elite in Zambia and accentuate their role in the consolidation of democracy in the country. The (political) elite play for obvious reasons a significant role in the democratization process and their political culture is a key factor in the consolidation process.
The domestic elite or rather elites can be divided in two fundamentally different groups when it comes to their opinions to democracy. On one side there is not an election without a Kaunda running for president. Two of Kenneth Kaunda’s sons, Tilyenji and Wezi, have been up for election without ever keeping it a secret what they think of multi-party democracy (Cauvin 2001). On the other hand the pro-democratic elite are fighting back and there is little chance of going back to a political system as the one before 1991. With this said many accuse the majority of the elite of having almost no democratic values and for ignoring the poor and apparently using power for their own self-enrichment (Burnell 2000, p. 13). This fact combined with the historical tradition for strong leaders is not a good sign for making it down the path to consolidated democracy.

The first democratic Zambian president, Chiluba, tried all he could to turn Zambia into a “Chiluba-democracy” and acted very much like an autocrat caught in a democratic game (Lindberg 2006, p. 97). Critics of the political life in the sub-Saharan region have not been few and many argue that during the democratization process self-appointed military or civilian dictators were simply replaced by elected dictators (Kumar 2005, p. 373). This may hold some truth in the Zambian case, especially under the rule of Chiluba, but it is the opinion of this thesis that as the years has passed the strong leaders are becoming more democratic and to talk of Mwanawasa as an elected dictator would be a harsh exaggeration.

The Zambian elected politicians still have autocratic habits, even though it has improved in recent years (Lindberg 2006, p. 83). These autocratic habits become of less importance as times goes by and democracy is deepened in the Zambian political society. Although Chiluba disappointed the expectations during his eight years in office, there were clear differences between him and Kaunda. Chiluba allowed for instance much more criticism and the society was much more open as Chiluba faced critical questions in television and in press conferences (Nasong’o 2005, p. 183).

It is clear though that democratic consolidation requires elite consensus and this consensus takes years to develop in a country with no previous experience of deep democracy (Brown 2005, p.191). In Zambia the consensus amongst part of the political elite is missing and this part of the elite can be considered bereft of social capital, an obvious problem for consolidation of democracy (Burnell 2002, p. 1119).

Furthermore it should be emphasized that Zambia as many other underdeveloped countries suffers from the absence of a well-educated, sizeable, well trained and professional elite (Burnell 2000, p. 21).

Marina Ottaway puts the importance between political elite (and Civil Society) and democratic consolidation very well:

“Where basic economic and social conditions are not conducive, the survival and consolidation of democracy depend especially heavily on the political will of state elites and the commitments of ordinary citizens (Ottaway, 1997, pp. 3-7).”
The political will supporting democracy can be harder to find in Zambia than in many deeper democracies, but this has improved. The elite are divided and it might be necessary for a new generation of both politicians and autocrats to emerge before some sort of truly united democratic elite are present in Zambia.

4.6 Global aspects

A strong widespread theory in democratization says that democracy created with internal forces has a better chance to consolidate (with the exception of Germany and Japan). This was not exactly the case in Zambia. Democracy in Zambia was not literally forced upon the country, but it is clear that the pressure was great in a country very much dependent on foreign aid. In that way Zambia could nearly be classified as a Donor Democracy (Burnell 2000, p. 30). But in the present consolidation phase there is a broad consensus amongst Zambia-experts that external help has been close to useless (Burnell 2001, p. 196).

When dealing with the global aspects of the consolidating phase in Zambia one has to both look at the regional and the international factors.

Zambia share borders with eight countries and is placed in an area with little democratic experiences to say the least. Here are some examples. One neighbor is Zimbabwe with its famous autocratic ruler Mugabe, a state that has become constantly less stable in the past twenty years or so. Another neighbor is Angola, a state that has not experienced real peace since independence in 1975. Yet another neighbor is the Democratic Republic of Congo, a state that is currently counting its dead after one of the bloodiest civil wars in the African continent (Burnell 2000, p. 26). Even though Congo had its first democratic elections for ages in 2006 it is far from a role-model for Zambia. Other neighbors include Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia and Botswana, states which all have their particular problems and are not exactly democratic role-models for any country. The only neighbor with something of a democratic record to show is South Africa. And even this country is a new democracy with its own specific democratic problems and South Africa has gone through a different democratic transition process compared to Zambia. With this regional context in mind it is easy to imagine that the pro-democratic regional pressure is as good as non existent. The inspiration from the surrounding countries or support for democracy is therefore difficult to find. Actually Zambia was, in contrary to for instance Zimbabwe, one of the leading regional actors to stress the importance of a diplomatic solution to the civil war in Congo. It is on that background unlikely that Zambia will benefit from a democratic consolidation-wave or snowballing affect in the nearest future.

In the transition phase Kaunda and his UNIP-party were undoubtedly influenced by the events in Central and Eastern Europe and especially in Romania where Ceausescu – a close friend of Kaunda’s fell from power (Burnell 2000, p. 27). But after the transition and in the current phase towards a deeper democracy it is hard to see exactly where the inspiration is coming from. One “inspiration” is obviously coming from the donors. The donors act either with direct conditions or
with moral pressure on Zambia as a recipient country. Even though it can be difficult to trace the precise power of the donors (organizations, NGO's, single countries and so on) it is obvious that Zambia is very much constraint by foreign conditions when the country receives close to 70% of their GDP in foreign aid, equivalent to almost 85% of government expenditure (Burnell 2000, p. 27). Donor governments involve themselves in Zambian politics directly on the regularly World Bank Consultative Group meetings (Burnell 2000, p. 28). On these meetings specific requirements can be identified later on in Zambian politics but other than that it can be difficult to identify the fingerprints from foreign powers on Zambian politics. Goalposts and requirements from i.e. the World Bank are often seen as unfair by Zambian ministers and it is hard to draw a line between pressure- and support for democratic development (Burnell 2000, p. 29).

In the last years donors have focused exceedingly on poverty reduction and Zambia will therefore continue to receive great amounts of foreign aid.

The effort from the international community is fundamental for democratic success in an aid-dependent poor country like Zambia, but it could perhaps be redefined. Many scientists argue that international factors can actually play an important role in the transition-phase, but it is more doubtful in the current deepening- or consolidation-phase. Here it could be stressed that the internal structures of the country should supply the main positive aspects (Burnell 2000, p. 30). Lindberg stresses that a long-term democratic based aid for at least 12-15 years is necessary because he finds that a country is close to entirely democratic after three elections (Lindberg 2006, p. 3).

This thesis will argue that when a country is as poor as Zambia, democracy has very much its difficulties internal. Therefore external support and sometimes pressure is helpful in a deepening of democracy. Even beyond the fifteen years as the path of consolidation is indeed a long one. Combined with this external support the internal structures and actors should obviously play the main parts in the deepening of democracy if a complete consolidation is to be reached.

4.7 Conclusion

Even though Zambia in some occasions still can be considered a role model for sub-Saharan Africa there are serious issues to be addressed before one can even talk of the possibilities of a consolidated democracy in this African state.

In general terms it can be argued that the economy lays giant hinders on the way as does the legacies from the old regime and the domestic elite. Civil Society has to be improved although it is acceptable in an African context. The global pressure needs to be more intense in the consolidation phase compared to the transition phase; otherwise the important road to consolidation will never be completed.

To develop these results further we will return to the four research questions put forward in the introduction to this case-study (see 4.1). Firstly it was asked what the present state of democracy is and how far in the consolidation process
Zambia has gone. The democracy of today leaves much to ask for in many aspects and if the consolidation is started at all, Zambia is in the very first steps. With this in mind we can place this thesis in the more cautious camp, as labeled by Burnell (2000). There is no basis for arguing that democratic consolidation is well underway and Zambia’s democratic process can be described as “frozen” or perhaps very slow, although it is still too early to describe it as a false “start” on the road to democratic consolidation.

The remaining two questions concerned what went wrong or what the biggest hinder to consolidate democracy is? When applying the framework it is clear that Zambia in each of the five aspects can improve, but this thesis argues that two perspectives hinder democratic consolidation of Zambia the most: (1) The legacies from the old regime lays heavy obstacles in the way does (2) the economic precondition. The legacies consisting of personalism, corruption, weak state-apparatus and the amateur administration combined with the fact that absolute poverty prevails all over the country, is for this thesis the two aspects of most importance.

Civil Society can also be strengthened, improve its role in deepening democracy in Zambia and decrease the importance of the legacies from the old regime, but this seems difficult to do before the economy is improved. Civil Society in Zambia is considered one of the most important and strongest in sub-Saharan Africa. The deviant in using Zambia as a case for the framework is placed in this aspect. Civil Society is normally to be considered the biggest hinder to democracy, but in this case other perspectives tends to have a more negative influence on the democratic process.

The domestic elite are dependent on the legacy from the old regime and are slowly improving in the democratic game-rules, but it is nevertheless difficult to change the entire African context. The most positive aspect concerning the domestic elite is that the anti-democratic forces seem gradually to be outnumbered.

The global aspects play an important role in the economic life and therefore also in the political life. This influence should be used to support any internal development towards democratic consolidation in a long and consistent period of time.

In this result the structural perspectives tend to be of more importance and this is perhaps because of the length in a democratic consolidation process. Actors such as Civil Society and strong political leaders can of course play major parts, but according to this conclusion the surrounding factors lay - in the long run - the biggest hinders on the road to democratic consolidation. The hypothesis presented in the Framework chapter (see 2.1) saying that structure is more important than agency in the consolidation phase as therefore verified.

The final conclusion of this Zambian case study is that the economic situation needs drastic improvements and the legacies from the old regime needs to be done insignificant to the democratic development before one can speak of a hypothetic passable road to deepened democracy in Zambia.
5 Conclusion

This thesis had the objective of both creating a theoretical framework for analyzing the state of democracy in sub-Saharan Africa and afterwards apply it on a single-country study using Zambia as a case.

The framework was created picking aspects from both structural- and actor-perspective as well as internal and external factors was taken into consideration. The theory presented and discussed various definitions of democracy and consolidated democracy and ended up with using a *liberal* definition of democracy and a *positive* definition of democratic consolidation.

In the introduction it was asked where the consolidation phase in Zambia had gone wrong and why the process towards a deep and fully functional democracy had stopped. Applying the developed framework the reasons are many, but the primary answer given by the case study is that the disastrous economy and the legacies from the old regime are the two reasons of most importance why the consolidation-phase has not moved on. The same two aspects are therefore considered the biggest obstacles on the road to democratic consolidation, even though improvement in Civil Society, the domestic elite and the global aspect is necessary before a fully consolidated democracy can even come into consideration. This democratic fight is definitely an up-hill-fight against antidemocratic factors such as the mentioned legacies from the old regime and the extreme poverty. But a fight that in the long run can be won as the framework has in fact showed some minor positive signs for the once so famous role-model for sub-Saharan Africa. Zambian politicians and other actors in the consolidation process must be aware of the opinion stated by Ottaway:

“*Political organization must make up for the unfavorable underlying socio-economic conditions.*” (Burnell 2000, p. 31)

An invitation to all that hard work lies ahead as this is very much the case in sub-Saharan Africa in general and Zambia in particular.
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