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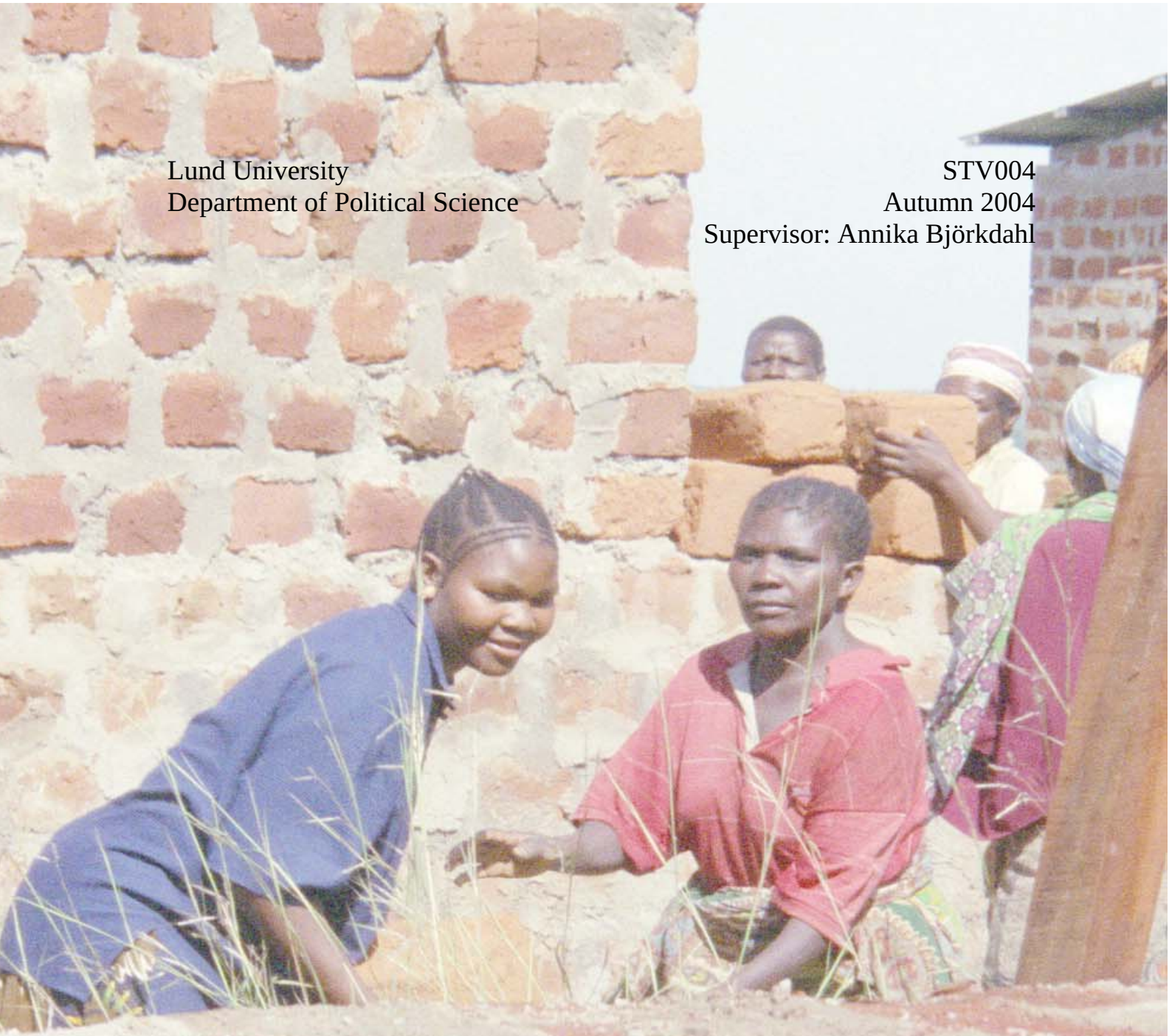

Democracy as Interaction

A Minor Field Study of Local Political Practises in Rural Tanzania

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Abstract

This thesis examines the logics underpinning local political practises in a rural African context, from a democratic theory perspective.

The thesis carries a threefold aim. Firstly, the empirical aim is to contribute to better empirical understanding of local political practises in a rural African context, by visualising democratic practices previously not sufficiently acknowledged. Secondly, the theoretical object aims at theory development through deepened and widened theoretical insights into local political practises in a rural African context. Thirdly, the methodological aim is to narrow the gap between normative democratic theory and empirical research on democracy in the Third World, through anchoring the analytical tool in a normative democratic theory discourse.

The thesis is conducted as a case study in which Ulemo ward, Iramba district in central Tanzania constitutes the empirical ground. The material is primarily collected through interviews with local decision-makers and citizens, and by participating observations of political meetings.

Using two different models of democracy—one liberal and one deliberative—as the analytical tool, the thesis concludes on interaction as the primary democratic logic of the case under consideration. Consequently, the political practises in question are labelled *democracy as interaction*.

In the epilogue the model of "democracy as interaction" is briefly put in context. Moreover, it is argued that by challenging the predominance of the liberal account of democracy in this field of research, we might visualise political practises which has so far been neglected and overcome the prevailing Western bias in studies of African politics and Third World democratisation.

Keywords: Local politics, Democratic theory, Democracy as interaction, Africa, Tanzania

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1 Introduction

1.1 The Initial Puzzle: Providing a Background

This intellectual and geographical journey started, as so many others, with a puzzle, an unsettling but stimulating wonder of how things fit together, things that we have seen, heard of or experienced and yet do not quite understand. At the beginning of this journey my experience of African society and politics was very limited and indeed they still are. But with regard to a specific environment and a certain point of view I am now more informed and less puzzled, although this is, as always, a perspective-dependent and amendable new understanding.

From a short stay in part of rural Tanzania a few years ago, and the subsequent regular contacts with that area, my impression was that their seemed to be a vivid local democracy with a seemingly deliberative touch. At the same time, virtually all public and academic discussions on democracy in Africa dealt with the success and failure of bringing back western-style, national multiparty democracy to the continent. Although these happenings were, no doubt, both important and interesting, the silence on rural democratic practises surprised me. It surprised me since the majority of Africans are rural dwellers, living in agriculturally based societies where the most important decisions are arguably not nation-wide but local. In addition, it did seem reasonable to believe that attempts from the international community of furthering democratic governance would start by recognizing existing political structures.

I was thinking: How comes my observation of rural democracy does not seem to have any significant equivalence in the Western academic debate on African democracy? It could be a coincidence, of course. It might be the area which I happened to visit that was exceptional. However, I did not think so. To be honest, I still do not know since it is the area first yielding my interest that also constitutes the object of study in this thesis. The following analysis and argument, though, give reasons to believe that the discrepancy has a more fundamental and systematic root. A root which goes back to questions such as: Which level of government is focused in research on African democracy? What models of democracy are employed and how does normative and empirical research relate?

1.2 Spelling out the Point of Departure: on Aim and Research Question

Based on the initial puzzle that we delivered in the subsequent section the thesis has a threefold aim, on three levels of abstraction. Here these aims will be spelled out so as to clarify the point of departure of our thesis. We will finish this section by bringing these aims together in a research question which functions as our guide as the journey starts of.

Firstly, this thesis aims at providing a better empirical understanding of local political practises in rural Africa. I claim that the local level of government in general has received far less attention in studies of African democracy than the national one. In addition, the local level does not seem to have been firmly pulled into the largely increased scholarly interest in African politics after the virtually continent-wide return to multiparty democracy. By focusing on the local level and applying several accounts of democracy, one of which is seldom used in the genre, I hope to visualise democratic practices in Africa otherwise not seen and thereby contribute to a more balanced and full description.

Secondly, my thesis aims at being theory developing as I employ two different models of democracy and thereby challenge the predominant position of the liberal concept of democracy within the literature on democratisation in the Third World and African politics (compare Hydén 1998, p. 9–10). Moreover, the second model of democracy, the deliberative one, has not often been used within the genre. Applying new and various definitions of democracy bring the prospect of deeper and widened theoretical insights into local political practises in a rural African context. Furthermore, in this way the meaning of democracy is contested and thus the prevailing liberal account, rooted in a Western context, is not taken for granted.

Thirdly, by anchoring the models of democracy in the normative debate I aim at narrowing the gap between normative democratic theory and empirical research on democracy in the Third World. Through informing the analytical tool with normative democratic theory we point out the inherently normative implications of any concept of democracy and highlight the interdependence of normative and empirical theory.

Putting these respectively empirical, theoretical and methodological aims together, we might express the research question guiding the thesis, like this:

> *Which are the logics underpinning local political practises in a rural African context, seen from a democratic theory perspective*?

2 Theoretical Framework

2.1 On the Importance of Theoretical Positions and the Prevailing Liberal Account of Democracy

In the first chapter we provided the background to our thesis and its point of departure. Here we continue by laying the theoretical foundation; by stating from which pre-conceptions we encounter the empiricism and using which analytical tool. Someone might object that this chapter is a bit lengthy. To my mind, however, most successful journeys start with good preparations. So, let us start with the basics.

As Lundquist (1993, p. 122) points out, different theoretical positions are paying attention to different empirical phenomenon. In other words, how the researcher defines key concepts has a crucial impact on what is empirically observed. With Badersten (2002, p. 142) we can assert that every theoretical specification results in restricting the range of possible outcomes, i.e. by specifying what we are looking for, we inevitably limit what can be found. Put in a nutshell, the researcher's conceptional framework always causes him to consider some aspects, while ignoring others.

Elofsson (1998, pp. 74–75) puts this insight in relation to the realm of studies of democratisation when she recognize the dominance of a liberal account of democracy: "By the fact that many of the most prominent researchers on democratisation […] has agreed on the advantage of a very limited definition of democracy and the liberal form of democracy, studies of democratisation has taken the goal of procedural democracy as given, instead of problemising the character of democracy" [my translation]. The predominant and unchallenged position of liberal democratic values in the literature on democratisation has also been illustrated by Thörn (2004), in her idea analysis of which democratic values are emphasised within the genre. As a consequence, she argues that a greater interaction between normative democratic theory and empirical democratisation theory would be fruitful. An essential work that emphasises the gap between normative democratic theory and democratisation theory is Lincoln Allison's (1994) *On the gap between theories of democracy and democratization.*

If we accept the argument that definitions of key concepts strongly influence the researcher's empirical results, it is a serious problem that the essentially contested concept of democracy (compare for example Premfors 2000, p. 22) generally fails to be thoroughly problemised within the literature on democratisation. In contrast, within political philosophy and normative democratic theory the character of democracy has

over the years been extensively and thoroughly debated. Some might claim that the roles of normative and empirical research are quite different; definitions of democracy in empirical studies on democratisation is first and foremost a matter of finding an efficient, measurable and distinct concept that can easily be applied in empirical investigations. However, when working with an inherently normative concept as democracy, even a definition intended for empirical investigation has normative implications, as it connotes a certain view of what democracy *ought* to be. Indeed, no theoretical statement is free from value. Put in another way, normative and empirical research cannot be regarded as independent of one another, but as closely related and difficult to fully separate in practise (Lundquist 1993, p. 85). Moreover, the normative aspects of democratisation—and the need to problemise it—are emphasised by the fact that it is often used as a condition for receiving foreign aid. Thus, which perspective of democracy is employed, might also have material consequences for the countries concerned.

Hence, a crucial problem is the homogeneous, one-sided and unchallenged view on democracy used in the literature on democratisation[1]. This taking-it-for-granted approach is in a way best illustrated by what is *not* mentioned in the literature on democratisation. Larry Diamond (1999), a prominent researcher on democratisation, pursues a rather comprehensive discussion on the underpinnings of liberal democracy at the start of his *Developing Democracy*. In a chapter labelled "Defining and Developing democracy", he points out that there is a lack of consensus on the meaning of democracy. But, this is, in fact, only stated in regard to the disagreement over which sub-types of (liberal) democracy should be applied, leaving aside any discussion on the fact that even fundamental values, underpinning the concept of democracy, are contested within the social sciences. A similar neglect can be noted in the otherwise rather thorough discussion on earlier, current and future approaches to democratisation, in the introduction to *Democratisation in the Third World* (Rudebeck and Törnquist 1996). Almost every aspect of research on democratisation is commented, except for the fundamental question of what democratic ideal is employed in democratisation theory.

The observation of a dominant liberal and Western perspective is also noticed in relation to the African context specifically. Schraeder (2000, pp. 24, 37), a prominent scholar on African politics and society, asserts that the liberal tradition points out the Western practises of democracy as the model that African societies should adopt and maintains that this liberal tradition has dominated the study of African politics and society.

In sum, despite the essentially contested nature of democracy in political science and society at large, the liberal account has, in effect, been taken for granted in the realm of democratisation studies and the studies of African politics in general.

2.2 Democratic Perspectives of the Thesis

We have asserted that the one-sided liberal account of democracy within the studies of Third World democratisation and African politics is indeed problematic, as the theoretical framework employed shapes what is empirically visualised and at the same time carries normative implications. The critical reader, however, objects that all research is inevitably guided by some pre-conception; we have to know what we are looking for to be able to find it. Thus, every approach to research means that we, explicitly or implicitly, limit the range of possible outcomes. This objection is important as it clarifies that the problem is theoretically unsolvable. The important question, therefore, is how we act upon this fundamental insight. One possible and, to my mind, plausible approach is to use *different* normative accounts that are systematically contrasted to the empiricism (Badersten 2002, p. 142). Through such a procedure, multiple definitions of democracy would simultaneously encounter the empiricism of the Third World and a wider range of possible outcomes would thereby be provided.

Following from this argument I will apply two separate models of democracy in order to illuminate rural political practises from different angles. I will apply a deliberative model of democracy emphasising participation and a consensus-seeking deliberation among equals, and a liberal model of democracy focusing on competitive elections and the effective aggregation of individual preferences through a party-based system and the use of voting.

There are two reasons for using the deliberative account of democratic theory. Firstly, the deliberative democratic perspective have for the last couple of decades seen a somewhat remarkable revival within political philosophy (Badersten 2002 pp. 84, 163) and is therefore one of the most prominent models within the normative debate. Secondly, and as we briefly touched on in the introduction, my pre-conception is that the political practises of the area in which I will conduct my investigation, are somewhat oriented towards a deliberative account of democracy. Therefore, applying a deliberative concept of democracy, along with another, will be fruitful given the context in question. The main reason for applying a liberal account is it's hitherto dominance within studies of Third World democratisation and African politics. My liberal ideal type will virtually fully include (but to some degree extend) what has so far been the predominating account of democracy in the genre. The liberal model is, in addition, very important within normative democratic theory. By simultaneously applying two models of democracy, rather than one, the prospect of achieving a full and many-faced understanding of rural political practises is greater.

From my fundamental methodological standpoints—that the researcher's conceptional framework always cause him to consider some aspects, while ignoring others, and that no theoretical statement is free from value—follows that there might very well be other useful interpretations of the political practises I study, besides the one I present. Subsequently, my description will not be unprejudiced or universal, but one useful and valuable line of argument among others. This does not mean, however, that any description or analysis is as meaningful as any other. But merely that our knowledge about the society is always temporary and dependent on the employed

perspective and the pre-conceptions of the researcher (compare Badersten 2002, pp. 79–83). Thus, it is still crucial that I present explicit reasons in favour of my interpretations, so that the reader can evaluate them properly.

In conclusion, I have a theory developing ambition as I will use a different concept of democracy—the deliberative one—than what has usually been done in similar studies. Moreover, I simultaneously employ more than one account of democracy and anchor them in the normative democratic discourse, neither of which is common in the literature on Third World democratisation and African politics.

2.3 Reflections on the Use of an Ideal Typology as the Analytical Tool

When defining democracy as a concept used for empirical studies it is, as Rindefjäll (1998, p. 28) states, important to find a balance between a definition too broad to function effectively in practise and a too narrow, failing to capture essential features of democratic practises. One way of dealing with the quest for openness, while not leaving behind the necessity of a functioning analytical tool, is the use of ideal typologies. An ideal type is an analytical construction that is used to bring order and understanding to studies of a complex and disparate reality (Badersten 2002, p. 31). An ideal type highlights and emphasises core characteristics while leaving less important aspects aside (Badersten 2002, p. 31; Esaiasson *et al.* 2003, p. 154). Which characteristics should be deemed essential or at the core is to a great deal dependent on the research question at hand, and therefore an evaluation of an ideal model should be done with respect to it's capability of structuring and bringing understanding to the specific study-object (Badersten 2002, pp. 31-32; Esaiasson *et al.* 2003, p. 155). It is crucial to clarify that an ideal type can never be a true description of a reality; rather, it is a deliberate analytical reduction. Thus, it can never be true or false, merely more or less useful for a specific enterprise (Badersten 2002, pp. 32–33). This character of the ideal type makes it especially compelling to social scientists (like myself) that do not believe that we can grasp the world "as it really is", but merely within the limit of our own experiences capture some important aspects, which, in addition, are constantly changing. It is compelling because when applying an ideal type we openly and clearly admit that we are using analytical constructions by which we can visualise some aspects of the world previously not seen, while ignoring others.

In this study, I will construct one ideal type of a liberal account of democracy and one of a deliberative democratic account. This ideal typology will then serve as the standard to which my empirical material will be compared, when analysing my case. By using these contrasting models I will be able to highlight different aspects of democratic practises and visualise what has so far not been sufficiently acknowledged. The openness is achieved through the non-empirical character of an ideal type; no real world phenomenon can match or fail to match a criterion, but will instead simply be contrasted with the explicit standards that the ideal types provide. The effectiveness of the ideal model as an analytical tool is afforded by its reductionist character; the standard to

which the material should be compared is clear-cut, which facilitates the structuring of a many-faced and complex empiricism.

When constructing an ideal typology it is several aspects that should be taken into consideration. As we concluded earlier the balance between openness and usefulness is a crucial one when constructing an analytical tool. Even if, as we just discussed, the use of an ideal typology itself provides one part in solving this dilemma, the question of how general the characteristics of the ideal types should be remains to confront. The trade-off between generality and precision is theoretically unavoidable. Where on the scale we end up can and should therefore be motivated in pragmatic terms in relation to our specific ambition and research question. I argued earlier that one problem of the predominating perspective is the homogeneous and context-laden (i.e. Western) character of democracy. Considering that my field study will be conducted in a different socio-cultural context than mine and most other political scientists, it is essential to enable a fairly generous range of possible outcomes. The striving for rather general and abstract ideal types is therefore a way of avoiding the problem of exclusion stemming from transferring detailed accounts to new contexts. When using concepts in unfamiliar environments it is, to my mind, appropriate to give generality priority over precision. It should be admitted and borne in mind though, that this generality puts more demands on me, as a researcher, when conducting the analysis; I need to carefully argue how specific features in the political process can be related to abstract characteristics of democratic theory. As a result, the importance of explicit reasoning is emphasised, as the element of interpretation becomes even more central with a less precise analytical tool. For obvious reasons it is also crucial that the two accounts of democracy is constructed on the same level of abstraction, leaving the same range of possible outcomes.

Due to the inherently normative and contested character of democracy I have argued that empirical studies on democracy and democratisation should be informed by and anchored in the normative debate on democracy within political philosophy. I will therefore construct my ideal types on the basis of the liberal and deliberative normative accounts respectively. The efforts of constructing rather general ideal types is another reason in favour of founding the typology on political philosophic grounds, as the typology's characteristics then will be more value-oriented than institutional. It might be important to, once again, clarify that this typology will not be a true description of something existing. Thus, the ideal types is inspired by the respective normative discourses but does far from fully grasp them; the ideal types should be regarded as deliberately stylized and reductionist reconstructions of two different normative accounts of democracy[2]. Their worth should first and foremost be judged according to their analytical qualities in relation to the present case and purpose.

2.4 Two Models of Democracy: Constructing the Ideal Typology

2.4.1 Some Introductory Notes

All models of democracy, I would argue, share a common interest in the two value-laden and essentially contested concepts of liberty and equality, although with different emphasis, different connotation and different internal relations (compare Holden 1993, chapter 1, Premfors 2000, chapter 2). In short, various combinations of equality and liberty constitute the foundation of democracy.

However, while theoretically most significant, those concepts will not be part of my ideal typology. This is motivated by the fact that these two fundamental values are first and foremost substantial, i.e. related to the proper outcome of democracy, whereas my research question is concerned with the processes, i.e. how local politics is conducted.[3] A plunge into liberty and equality as fundamental values of democracy would necessarily mean a thorough and rather complicated discussion, due to the inherently contested character of these values and their many complex connotations and mutual relations. Keeping in mind that the ideal typology should be constructed exclusively to analyse my research question it seems defensible, perhaps even desirable, to exclude such an examination.[4]

In the following constructions I attempt to reveal process-related characteristics, on different levels of abstraction, which constitutes important building blocks in democratic theory.[5] These constructions start out with trying to identify the ideal types' *social ontology* and their view on *preference-formation*. From this dimension we localise which social units are considered preference holders and how these preferences come into being. We continue with an attempt to discuss the models view on *inclusiveness* and *participation*, i.e. who participate in the political process and to what extent. The next step is to discuss their *modus operandi*. Under this heading we include three aspects, namely primary decision-making method, dominant character of the political process and primary agent within the political process. I finish by discussing conventional *process values* which distinguish what should be regarded prerequisites for a democratically legitimate political process. Using this approach will, hopefully, result in rather comprehensive but still coherent models in which the internal logic is visualised, thus resulting in a useful analytical tool for the study.

2.4.2 The Liberal Model of Democracy

In the liberal model of democracy the individual, no doubt, constitutes the building block of the democratic process. Thus, the account is individualistic in the sense that it is the individuals who are given primary ontological status (Holden 1993, p. 14, 67; Premfors 2000, p. 24; Langhelle 1998, pp. 65–66). This means that it is only individuals (not groups or communities) who are preference holders. Moreover—and more importantly—in the liberal model the preference-*forming* is also tied exclusively to the individual herself. Hence, it is the individual who autonomously forms her views and

standpoints and the preferences are therefore considered exogenous to the political process (Holden 1993, p. 46-47; Premfors 2000, p. 24). Put in another way, the end of the democratic process is to effectively aggregate the individuals' autonomous preferences (Premfors 2000, p. 27; Hansson 1992, p. 29).

Next, we turn to the degree of inclusion and participation. These are central dimensions within normative democratic theory. The inclusiveness of "the whole people within a relevant society in making the basic determining decisions on important matters of public policy" (Holden 1993, p. 8) is at the very core of democracy itself. Thus, this inclusiveness is part and parcel of the liberal democratic model as well. The degree of participation is important because it shapes the nature of the democratic process and to a great extent stems from the perspective's ontology (compare Lundquist 2001, p. 131). The aggregative approach to preferences within the liberal model results in regarding a representative form of government the preferred one. As the preferences are individually fixed, the important task is to sum up and combine them in an effective manner, and thus the point of extensive political participation is limited. It should be acknowledged, though, that some considerable variation exists within the liberal tradition regarding the view on political participation. But in general a liberal model of democracy would primarily be associated with an indirect, representative, as opposed to a direct or participatory account of democracy (see for example Held 1997, p. 19; Lundquist 2001, s. 122, 131; Premfors 2000, pp. 26–27; Beetham 1994, pp. 62–63). In a representative approach to democracy, elections, for somewhat obvious reasons, appear a crucial element (Holden 1993, pp. 58–62; Beetham 1994, pp. 62–64).

Related but still distinct from the standpoint on participation is what I label the *modus operandi*, i.e. the dominant character and the primary means and agents of the political process. Once again, it is helpful to return to ontology and the way of dealing with preferences within the political process. In coherence with the aggregative approach the main purpose of the political process is to determine which individual preferences are shared by most people (Weigård and Eriksen 1998, p. 39). Therefore, it is consistent with what has been said earlier that the primary means of the political process within this model is *voting*, as opposed to discussion or reasoning (compare Weigård and Eriksen 1998, p. 39). The second component of the modus operandi is the *character* of the process. We have concluded on elections and voting as the pre-eminent techniques of the political process within the liberal model. This taken together points to a *competition-oriented* character of the political process; it is the choice between competing alternatives which is the constitutive element of the political process within the liberal model. This defining characteristic of competition or conflict within this model is clearly portrayed by Premfors (2000, pp. 26–27, 35) and also appears a central feature in Weigård and Eriksen's (1998, p. 39) description of the liberal tradition. The third component of the *modus operandi* concerns who is the dominant agent of the political process. We concluded on the liberal model as a representative approach to democracy. In a modern discourse, a representative, liberal democracy almost invariably means a party-based democracy (compare Held 1997, pp. 210–216). This goes back to the autonomous view on preferences and the aggregative approach to the political process; the crucial task of the political process is to aggregate the individuals' autonomous preferences. Thus, in times of mass democracy political parties—representing competing policy alternatives—constitute the most effective way to ensure

that the individual preferences with largest support are also guiding political action (compare Holden 1993, pp. 80–81).

To recapitulate, we can establish that the political process within the liberal model is a competitive aggregation of individual preferences using voting as the primary technique for deciding on issues and elections for appointing the representatives responsible for deciding on the lion's share of those issues. Political parties, representing competing policy alternatives, constitutes the primary agent of the political process.

But which process values should characterise the political process in order to make it legitimate? In the following we describe three process values in order of significance within the model.

The value of *accountability* is in the liberal model closely associated with the representative approach to democracy. That the representatives are hold accountable to the people is essential for the legitimacy of the representative model, as virtually all power between elections is granted to those elected or, more precisely, to the political parties (Darwall 1983, pp. 53–55). At the same time this ability to exercise control is considered one of the main virtues of a liberal representative model (compare Premfors 2000, pp. 25–27; Holden 1993, p. 74). Accountability is therefore the value given the prime position in this model.

The existence of *publicity* in regard to the political process and the information related to decision-making is crucial to make all other democratic values meaningful (Lundquist 2001, pp. 138–139). This openness of government is regarded important to democratic quality by Beetham (1994, pp. 56, 64), a distinctively liberal democrat. Dahl (1992, p. 41) too establishes that access to important information is a crucial criterion of a democratic process. This grants the value publicity the second place of importance within this model.

Reciprocity is a value that connotes such virtues as consideration, tolerance, understanding and trust (Lundquist 2001, p. 138). In the liberal model this is mainly associated with the pluralistic character of democracy, i.e. the mutual affirmation of the right to different opinions and the acceptance of those differing views. This is linked to the fundamental value of freedom and equality underpinning democracy as such (Holden 1993, pp. 19–43). Thus, the value of reciprocity is not often mentioned explicitly within the liberal tradition and is the process-value included that are least emphasised within this model.

2.4.3 The Deliberative Model of Democracy

The deliberative model of democracy carry the view of the individual as the constituting entity of the political process; it is only individuals who can be preference-holders. However, though preferences are seen as explicitly individual, they are also regarded as shaped, reshaped and reproduced within social processes rather than as individually fixed and prior to interaction (Weigård and Eriksen 1998, p. 44; Dryzek 2000, p. 31; Gutmann and Thompson 1997, p. 356; Holden 1993, p. 47). With Premfors (2000, p. 34) we could, then, assert that this approach to preferences is *interactive* instead of aggregative.

As we established in relation to the liberal model the inclusiveness is indeed an essential part of democracy itself, as it goes back to the fundamental democratic value of political equality (compare Held 1997, p. 17). Thus, inclusiveness is part and parcel of the deliberative democratic model too. The principle of inclusiveness obviously demands *some* participatory practises, but to what extent, varies between different democratic traditions (Whelan 1983, p.14). The deliberative tradition usually embraces a participatory approach to the political process, stating that an extensive political participation is important both as an intrinsic value of individual moral development and as a prime method of problem-solving (Weigård and Eriksen 1998, p. 40; SOU 2000:1, pp. 36–37). This participatory approach is consistent with the interactive view on preference-formation; it is in participatory fora of social interaction that we form and reform our point of view.

Moreover, the first part of the model's *modus operandi* is directly related to the interactive and participatory approach. The primary instrument of social interaction is, no doubt, the conversation or dialogue. Thus, as participation and social interaction are central to the model, so is dialogue or *deliberation* (compare Lundquist 2001 p. 125). Indeed, the deliberation stands out as the very core of this model of democracy (see for instance Lundquist 2001 pp. 124–127; Dryzek 2000, p. *v*). Dryzek (2000, pp. 1–2, 174) clarifies that a deliberation is a reflective dialogue on essential matters among equals. By the reciprocal listening and public reasoning, the individual preferences are continuously amenable to revision (*ibid.*). To sum up, while the primary means of the political process within the liberal model is voting, in this model it is public deliberation (compare Weigård and Eriksen 1998, p. 39).

Closely related to this is the character of the political process. An essential component of the public deliberation is the striving for modifying the initial individual preferences into a shared and generally acceptable viewpoint. Hence, the decision-making is characterised by a search for *consensus*; through the public deliberation the participating actors reconsider and try to reach common ground (Premfors 2000, pp. 31–32; Lundquist 2001, pp. 124–126). The deliberation is thus a consensus-oriented method of decision-making, although consensus is not regarded a necessary pre-requisite for considering a decision democratic. Moreover, it is fairly commonly admitted within the deliberative tradition that consensus often is difficult to reach and that a truly objective account of the public good never can be established (compare Premfors 2000, pp. 31–34, 56–57). Still, it is assumed that the mere effort of reaching mutually acceptable solutions furthers the quality of the political process (*ibid.*). In short, consensus, as part of the *modus operandi* of this model, should be considered a guiding principle for the deliberation rather than a necessary outcome of the political process. Regarding the third component of the modus operandi, as a consequence of the participatory approach to democracy, the citizens constitute the primary agents of the political process.

To sum up, we can establish that the political process within the deliberative model of democracy is a consensus-oriented interaction where individual preferences are shaped and reshaped through a participatory deliberation, with citizens as the primary agents.

But, just as we did in regard to the liberal model, we will now try to define what should characterise this process in order to regard it a democratically legitimate one. We describe three process values in order of significance within the model.

Reciprocity is the most essential of the three process-values that the leading deliberative democrats Gutmann and Thompson (1997) expresses. By reciprocity they mean that the arguments expressed for the outcome of the deliberation should be acceptable, in principle, to all of those bound by the decision (*ibid.*, pp. 52–57). A similar view can be understood from Cohen's criterion of equality which states that nothing but the proper argument should be considered in the deliberation (Weigård and Eriksen 1998, p. 43). This implies that only arguments addressing a shared or public interest would be successful within the deliberation. Bohman (2000, p. 25) also argues in a similar fashion. The value of reciprocity is not only coherent with but indeed crucial to the search for consensus which characterises the deliberative model. Therefore, this process value is regarded the prime one in this model.

Publicity is in the deliberative sense somewhat related to reciprocity. By publicity Gutmann and Thompson (1997, p. 95) mean that the arguments brought up in favour of a viewpoint within the deliberation should be public. This openness (in a similar but less strong way than the value of reciprocity) calls for arguments that others could accept or at least inhibit arguments based on self-interest (compare Gutmann and Thompson 1997, p. 127). The importance of access to relevant information is motivated in the same way as in relation to the liberal model, i.e. by the fact that it is necessary to make the other values meaningful; necessary to asses the public decisions (compare Gutmann and Thompson 1997, p. 95). Taken together, this puts publicity as the second process value in the deliberative model.

Gutmann and Thompson (1997, p.128) points out *accountability* as a third process value to be cherished. It implies that the participants of the deliberation must be accountable to all bounded to the outcome of the deliberation. However, the value of accountability is (as a consequence of the mostly participatory approach) not often expressed as an important process value within the deliberative tradition. For example, accountability (or something approaching it) is not included in Cohen's list of criteria of the deliberation (Weigård and Eriksen 1998, pp. 43–44). The participatory approach, in fact, makes the ability to exert responsibility less crucial as there are no, or to a far lesser degree, representatives to hold accountable. On the other hand, when there are, it is considerably more difficult to hold individuals (or specific groups) accountable for their decisions in a consensus-oriented and deliberative political process as compared to a liberal, competitive and party-based one. Thus, accountability ends up as the deliberative model's third and last process value in this ranking.

2.4.4 The Models of Democracy Constructed: Providing an Overview

Our ideal typology, consisting of the two models of democracy, has now been constructed. In this section we merely intend to provide a compact record of their core characteristics and make some clarifying remarks.

Most core characteristics of the models constitute clearly divergent approaches and often what could be understood as opposites[6]. When it comes to the process values, however, they are the same in both our models. The differences between the models are constituted by the different ranking or hierarchy of those values and the somewhat different connotations of the values within the two traditions, as the values of publicity and reciprocity take on more extended or thicker meanings in the deliberative model (while accountability basically means the same). The reason that the values are still considered comparable across the models, and thereby possible to meaningfully rank, is that they share the same core meaning and, thus, the thicker connotations also encompass the thinner.

Table 2.1: Two Models of Democracy: a Summary of Core Characteristics

Components	**The Liberal Model**	**The Deliberative Model**
Preference-formation	Aggregative	Interactive
Form of government	Representative	Participatory
Primary decision-making method	Voting	Deliberation
Dominant character of the political process	Conflict	Consensus
Primary agent of the political process	Parties	Citizens
Process values, with ranking*	1. Accountability 2. Publicity 3. Reciprocity	1. **Reciprocity** 2. **Publicity** 3. Accountability

* Process values in bold indicates that they connotes a thicker, extended meaning.

3 Research Design, Method and Material

In the first two chapters we clarified our aim and research question and laid the theoretical foundation by constructing our analytical tool. In this chapter we intend to spell out the research design, empirical focus and in which way the empirical material of this thesis was collected. All of these aspects will be accompanied by critical reflections and I will try to motivate my methodological choices.

When stating our aim we claimed that it was threefold, namely empirical, theoretical and methodological. The methodological aim—of bridging the gap between normative democratic theory and empirical democratisation theory—was addressed in chapter 2 and do not have any significant bearing on our research design. The two others, however, have. The aim of providing a better empirical understanding of local political practises in a rural African context, by visualising democratic practices otherwise not seen, indicates a wish to reveal so far neglected empirical phenomenon, to explore partly under-researched areas. The exploratory feature is also evident in our theory developing aim of deepened and widened theoretical insights into local political practises in a rural African context. In an article trying to clarify the utility of the case study as a research design Gerring (2004, p. 349) states that "[c]ase studies enjoy a natural advantage in research of an exploratory nature". Thus, the exploratory character of our aim points us towards the case study as the preferred research design. We could claim that the generating of new concepts or fragments of theory is generally dependent on a "close engagement with the particular facts of a particular case" (*ibid.*, p. 350). An engagement which is provided by the case study's limited and focused approach.

Drawing on our research question we might also assert that our ambition is descriptive, not explanatory or causal, as we wish to reveal the underpinning logics of local political practises. Often a mere descriptive ambition is regarded as mediocre. In a way that assessment might be fair as a causal ambition also includes a certain descriptive feature but, in addition, goes beyond that. On the other hand, a good descriptive study allows for a thick description, visualising parts of the world in a new way, while linking them to more general concepts and ideas. The demands that, however, should be put on a descriptive study is that it has a conceptual framework which structures the empirical analysis and that this framework generates an understanding which extends what could be obtained from the crude material as such (Esaiasson *et al.* 2003, pp. 35–36). Put in another way, the description originating from the study must be embedded in a scientific context; i.e. draw on and contribute to the scientific insights within the field. One way of positioning a descriptive case study within a context is to clarify what it is a case of. In our instance this can traced from our

aim and research question: the case we study is a case of local political practises in rural Africa.

Having said this it is time to spell out what is our case; to define the empirical ground of our field study. My case is the rural area of Ulemo ward, Iramba district in the Singida region, central Tanzania.[7] This area is to a large extent chosen for pragmatic reasons, as I have some earlier experiences from the area and a network at hand, which facilitates the conduct of the field study.[8] There is, however, also a methodologically more profound one. Drawing on our initial puzzle we recall that the area of concern also sparked our interest by the assumed presence of local democratic practises not widely discussed in the Western academic debate. It seems appropriate to start our exploration in the area which inspired the puzzle. If we acquire some new theoretical or conceptional insights here we might move on. If not, the approach seems less interesting to continue with. This resembles what Esaiasson *et al.* (2003, p. 181) labels *illustrative case studies* and goes back to our exploratory aim.

So what can and cannot be said based on our field study? It is, I believe, evident that the empirical insights made here cannot *a priori* be generalised to other cases of local political practises in rural Africa or even Tanzania. However, being a case of something more general, the theoretical insights made here might inform other cases of the same category; the interest of this field study is not exclusively on the case as such, but in what way it can help us understand and shed light on other similar cases as well.[9]

Having clarified and explained our research design, our case and the prospects of generalisability, we will now address the methods we used to collect the material and which problems and possibilities they infer. There are two main ways through which I have gathered the material for this thesis, namely interviews and participating observations. This, taken together with me living within the area for two months, make my approach (at least in the practical methods employed) resemble what Alvesson and Deetz (2000, pp. 221-230) describes as ethnography or partial ethnography; i.e. a combination of first-hand experiences and interviews. They argue that the researcher's longer presence within a context enhances the interviewing as such, due to a greater opportunity to relate to local conditions outside the interview. In addition, it obviously means greater opportunities of first-hand experience, as compared to only using interviews (*ibid.*).

Interviews with local citizens and decision-makers constitute the core of my material.[10] Interviews bring the interaction of the researcher and the respondent to the centre of attention (compare Esaiasson *et al.* 2003, p. 279). This constitutes both this method's primary problem, as the material itself is yielded by direct and significant influence from the researcher, and its prime virtue as it gives opportunities for following-up and finding the unexpected in areas which is not firmly covered by earlier research (*ibid.*, pp. 279, 281). When one is exploring fundamental political practises in a new context interviews (or the variant of focus groups)[11] and participating observations seem to be the only feasible techniques, perhaps complemented with the study of relevant political documents.[12] There were two rounds of interviews conducted. The interviews in the first round started by asking a very open question about the decision-making process of a local political issue, namely the establishment of the local secondary school.[13] This was then followed by more specific questions derived from my analytical tool. In the second round of interviews I asked questions based on the

impressions and understanding I acquired in the first round and they were therefore both more specific and more adjusted to the political context in question. I experienced that this opportunity to make follow-ups based on a contextual understanding was very useful, indeed critical, to several parts of the analysis presented within this thesis.

The participating observations of political meetings comprises another important but smaller part of my material.[14] After each observation I had a follow-up conversation with my interpreter and guide to the system in which he would make a summary and I could ask questions that had emerged from the notes I hade taken and the summary he had made. These were very important since the language barrier made me vaguely sense things but not until after these discussions could I make sense of them and confirm, modify or rule out my impressions. In a sense, then, my observations of political meetings acted more as thorough points of reference in discussions with my guide to the political system than proper participating observations.

The principle of selection as regard the interviews were twofold. The first criterion is intensity, i.e. I wanted to target the persons who had thorough experiences of local politics (compare Esaiasson *et al.* 2003, p. 286). In addition, I wanted this group of knowledgeable to be as diverse as possible, i.e. to represent different kinds of local political experiences. The second criterion, hence, is maximum variation (compare Esaiasson *et al.* 2003, p. 286). These two principles were combined so that politicians on different levels of local government were interviewed, as well as civil servants, a few citizens and some teachers (because of the initial focus on the establishment of a local secondary school). Within the categories I tried, when possible, to cover both men and women. The result, however, is that men are in a clear majority stemming primarily from their dominance in politics and within the public administration.[15]

When it comes to the participating observations they were of course limited by the meetings occurring during my stay in the area. Among the meetings conducted I tried to achieve maximum variation as to the kind of meetings I observed. Hence, I observed one public meeting of village, one village committee meeting and two meetings with the building and construction committee of the secondary school.

Since the language spoken within the area of our field study primarily is Kiswahili and most interviewees' knowledge of English and my knowledge of Kiswahili were indeed limited I had to use an interpreter for the majority of the interviews. The use of an interpreter brings some additional methodological problems. The interpretation is a potential source of misunderstandings within the interview situation, no matter the quality of the interpreter. It could be straight inaccuracies as well as ambiguities due to words carrying different connotations in different languages. However, the second problem, one could argue, is not a problem exclusive to the use of an interpreter but inherent to studies conducted in an unfamiliar cultural setting.[16]

Using an interpreter always makes you rely on another person for the successful accomplishment of your research. In this field study this dependence on the person being my interpreter—Mr. Dennis A. Kaali—was accentuated by the fact that he was also one of my interviewees and my primary guide to the political system in question. The last role refers to explaining the formal government structure, in cooperation with me selecting and handling most contacts with interviewees and in general showing me the way into the political system. The conflation of these three tasks is of course not ideal as the interests of the different roles may conflict. For instance, it is possible to

imagine that what one would like to convey as a politician being interviewed might influence which person I am introduced to or how a certain answer is translated. Later we discuss the issue of translation a bit further. Here we might assert that this is a concern which should not be denied, but on the other hand remind the reader that for practical reasons the luxury of choosing one's aides based on methodological ideals is seldom afforded in field studies as this one. While the supply is not tremendous you need an able interpreter, you need someone who can introduce you to the system and you need the well-informed interviewees. I am trying to reduce this problem by openly admitting to it, thereby providing the reader with a proper background for evaluation. I have not found that it systematically shaped the gathering of material in this study.

As regards the interpretation in practise, it generally worked well. However, I also faced troubles due to some role confusion. Within the first round of interviews my interpreter, apart from translating the questions, occasionally also tried to facilitate the responding of the interviewees by suggesting possible answers and the like. This was then discussed with the interpreter and I made clear that it was important for the quality of my study that the interviewees could answer without any external intervention. This was readily accepted by my interpreter and after agreeing on this more strict approach this problem ceased. The passages affected by these interventions have been analysed accordingly. I have not experienced that the interventions has carried any systematic bias.

Now we have, in addition to stating our aim and providing the theoretical foundation and analytical tool, as well clarified which design and what means we used to collect our empirical material. It is time to approach the real world, to analyse the local political practises of rural Tanzania.

4 Local Political Practises in Rural Tanzania: a Democratic Theory Perspective

4.1 Setting the Scene: an Organisational Overview

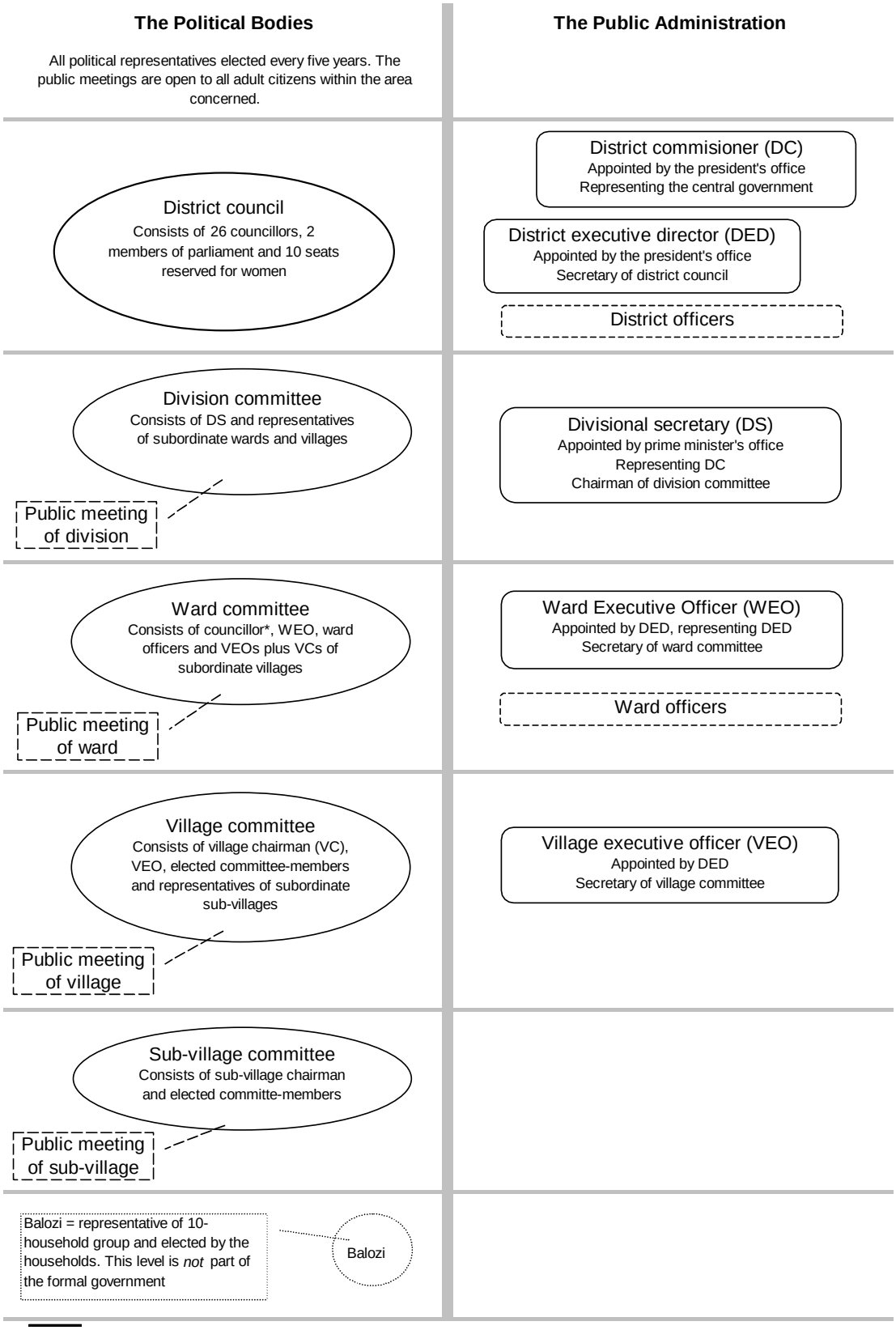
The purpose of this section is to provide an organisational outline of the political system of our study both visually (figure 4.1) and by portraying some basic characteristics verbally. Anyone who expects an extensive and detailed account of the formal structures will be disappointed. In this section, I merely intend to set the scene for the coming theoretically based analysis.

As could be seen from the organisational chart there are six levels of local government. The lowest level of balozis (i.e. leaders of group of ten households) is, however, not part of the formal government. Each formal level (except the lowest one) contains some members from subordinate levels of government. Moreover, the framework of the decision-making process means that issues travels through the system, beginning at the lowest level moving upwards and when a decision is made travels back down again for implementation (Kaali, 17th and 21st March 2005). The presence of members from lower levels of government in higher bodies together with the travelling of issues creates a feature of interconnectedness between the different levels of government, which is an important part of the system.

Each level of formal government, except for the highest level of the district, contains a public meeting and an elected committee. The role of the public meeting is to elect the representatives comprising the committees and act as a citizen forum of handling local political issues between the elections.

When we, in this way, have set the scene for our main analysis we are ready to step by step unfold the full story. The first of the subsequent scenes concerns social ontology and preference-formation.

Figure 4.1: Organisational Chart of Tanzanian Local Government[17]



*) The councillor acts as head of the ward and chairman of the ward committee. The councillor is elected by the public meeting of the ward and is a member of the district council.

4.2 Social Ontology and Preference-formation

The primary theoretical building block of our two models of democracy is their view on preferences and preference-formation. While constituting the building block of our models this component is also the most abstract and the least down-to-earth of our theoretical elements and therefore, I believe, the most difficult to grasp through interviews investigating individual's perceptions of political practises. There are, however, some rather informative points expressed within the material.

A male citizen (Malole, 18th February 2005), asked to develop how the discussions took place before agreeing to build the secondary school of Kizaga, says:

> The committee members all have their own opinions. When we discuss everybody is allowed to suggest anything he or she likes and after that we come to agreement. When we see this point is good we follow it, and if it is not good we don't follow it.

If we try to put this statement within our theoretical framework we understand that the preferences are clearly tied to the individual, but submitted to change within the political process. Each individual enters the political process with an initial preference which is, through the mutual exchange of arguments, amenable to revision, so that an agreement or consensus can be reached. This points us towards an interactive preference-formation, resembling what is characterised in the deliberative model.

Nonetheless, there are, as we will later explore further, many examples in the material that asserts that voting is used as a decision-making method. The core purpose of voting is to condense and sum up preferences in order to reach a decision. The presence of voting within a political system thus presents an aggregative feature, central within the liberal model of democracy. On the other hand, the search for agreement constitutes an unambiguous character of the political process. Indeed, agreement among the participating agents is, I would argue, one of the fundamental guiding principles of the decision-making processes in question. This feature is actually portrayed in virtually all interviews conducted. This is important as the search for agreement requires openness to *re*formation of preferences as a result of interaction, rather than an aggregation of the individual's autonomous preferences, as in voting. That is because without revised individual preferences it is obviously impossible to reach common ground if the initial standpoints are divergent. In other words, the search for agreement presupposes an interactive approach to preferences (in all contexts which are not politically altogether homogeneous).

So, how can we make sense of these seemingly contradictory tendencies within the material? I believe it is reasonable to understand voting as a last resort, or at least a late resort, within the political process (Reflections, 28th February 2005).[18] Therefore we could perceive the aggregative feature of voting as presenting itself only after the primary, interactive approach to preference-formation and decision-making has failed. This precedence of the interactive mode is for instance illustrated by the following answer by a village chairman (Manase, 1st March 2005) in response to a question on how they solve an initial disagreement within a committee meeting:

> As a chairman I am supposed to educate, suggest and persuade the few others who disagree. So that they come to compromise on the point with the many who agrees.

This is also emphasised by the councillor (Kaali, 31st January 2005) when he, after stating that they sometimes vote to find a solution to a disagreement, clarifies that the more common way is to search for an agreement: "Voting is rare. It must be a critical point to vote".

From the above quotation of the chairman we could interpret that the discussion in search for agreement concentrate on bringing acceptance for the opinion he holds. This could be an indication of the modification of preferences as while perhaps being reciprocal (all participants may change their initial preferences) also seems to be unequal (some agents have systematically more power within the interaction). A similar understanding of the modification of preferences could be found in the second interview with Kaali (17th March 2005). He says that in general agreement is attempted on the suggestion of the chairman, but later affirms that occasionally a committee member might persuade the chairman to change his or her opinion. This will be more thoroughly analysed in relation to deliberation as a method of decision-making (see subsection 4.4.1). Here it is enough to merely assert that the process of preference modification seems to be reciprocal but unequal.

Our discussion then, taken together, tells us that the political practises which we study do not fully coincide with any of the ideal types. Keeping the non-empirical character of an ideal type in mind this is in no way surprising, but rather a truism. More importantly it is also apparent that the practises in question corresponds more closely to the deliberative model when it comes to preference-formation, as the interactive approach are given priority over the aggregative.

4.3 Inclusiveness and Participation

In relation to both of our ideal types we established that inclusiveness is an essential part of democracy itself, since it goes back to the fundamental democratic value of political equality. We also concluded that the principle of inclusiveness obviously demands some political participation. The formal right of "the whole people within a relevant society […] [to make] the basic determining decisions on important matters of public policy" are in place within the political system in question, given that "the whole people" could be limited to all *adult* citizens (see figure 4.1). We could understand this as being the inclusiveness, i.e. the spread of basic political rights to all people.[19] The more difficult and, for our purpose, more important question, concerns the degree of participation, i.e. the intensity or extent of the citizens' political rights. This issue will be dealt with somewhat extensively here, so as to clarify who participate and in which way. This is important to grasp as it constitutes a significant separating characteristic of our two models of democracy.

From the organisational overview (section 4.1) we understand that there are two fundamental ways in which the citizens exert their political influence, namely through

electing the political representatives (committee members) responsible for discussing and deciding on political issues, and participating in the public meetings' policy discussions between elections. By contrasting these practises to our ideal types we learn that the representative feature of the liberal model is clearly portrayed in the system's election of representatives with a certain political responsibility. On the other hand, regular public meetings between the elections dealing with substantial political issues are a participatory feature which corresponds to the deliberative model. We could therefore assert that the political system at hand adopts both participatory and representative features, thereby embracing parts of both ideal types. The crucial task, in order to more fully understand the political practises as regards participation, is to further map out the respective roles of the committee and the public meeting.

In order to clarify their respective roles I asked two questions to the interviewees, one asking them to simply describe their respective roles and one scenario question asking what happens if the public meeting and the committee disagrees. The different roles are generally described as the committee discussing and making an agreement on an issue which is then informed to the public meeting so that they can receive this agreement. This is rather well illustrated by the following quotation of a village chairman (Sotery, 12th March 2005):

> The public meeting is the meeting for all citizens around the village, but the committee members are special members selected by the public meeting to discuss some points and agree together. When they have discussed and agreed they come back to the public meeting to announce to them: we have decided this after discussions.

Although this general picture is clearly portrayed, some variation exists within the material as to the degree of participation within the public meeting. One citizen (Malole, 18th February 2005) says: "When they, the committee members, take the report, as agreed, of course the public meeting has got to suggest things. And if it is a good point they receive it." While a balozi (Kilango, 28th February 2005) expresses: "The public meeting is to get the information of the agreement made by the village government. That is the difference: they are to receive what the committee has decided". Obviously, these are different perceptions of the role of the public meeting in relation to the agreements made by the committee. This could be more fully analysed by turning to the question on what happens if the public meeting and the committee disagrees. The councillor (Kaali, 17th March 2005) states that if this would happen the committee members should try to present reasons and try to convince the citizens of the public meeting so that they can agree on the committee decision. He, in addition, as all others who were asked whether such a situation is likely, asserts that it is not; it is actually very rare that the public meeting persists on not agreeing with the committee. The natural follow-up question is of course: How come they so seldom disagree if all important issues seem to be reported to the public meeting for some sort of acceptance? Kaali (17th March 2005) delivers an answer which coincides with a number of others':

> Because they trust their members of committee and the committee members have got to be careful when discussing things, to avoid the citizens to disagree. To think forwards and backwards before coming to the agreement. That is why it rarely happens.

We can note two components within these answers. First, the trust the citizens grant their representatives. The citizens have handed over the right to deliberate and make decisions on public matters to the elected members and therefore it is probably presumed that acceptance should be given unless there are particularly strong reasons for disagreeing. This, then, acts as a check on the public meeting opposing the committee decisions. Second, the carefulness shown by the representatives. As the representatives know that they have to present the decisions, and on which reasons they are grounded, to the public they try to foresee the reactions and viewpoints of the citizens as a group. This acts as a check on the committee members to agree on decisions that might be opposed or questioned by a majority of the citizens. Several interviewees (for instance Timotheo, 28th February 2005; Manase, 1st March 2005; Sotery, 12th March 2005) say that *if* the public meeting would disagree, the committee would have to rethink through having a new discussion on the issue. It thus seems the power of the public meeting is real, even if it is rather reluctantly exerted in confrontation with the elected committee.

From our discussion it seems fair to conclude that the primary problem-solving and decision-making forum is the committee meeting, while the public meeting serves as a locus of citizen control where the committee decisions are announced, evaluated and approved. However, I think some impressions from my participating observation (Observation, 5th March 2005; Reflections, 6th March 2005) of a public meeting could slightly modify and enrich this depiction.[20] My impression is that the public meetings are important opportunities of information to the citizens and that there are real chances to express a free and critical opinion. At the same time, the control exerted by the citizens is rather unsystematic and comes in the shape of an opportunity to dissent; a passive public meeting is a consenting public meeting. In addition to what was expressed in the interviews, during the observation and in an informal discussion with my guide to the system afterwards, I recognised that the opinions expressed by citizens also serve as an important input to the decision-making process within the committee. We could therefore argue that the public meeting acts as a citizen forum of in advance input to and retrospective control of the representatives' decision-making process, but not as an arena of extensive collective decision-making. Thus, the political system in question is closer to the representative form of government as portrayed in the liberal model than the participatory approach of the deliberative model. The presence of regular public meetings, with some policy relevance, however, adds a minor participatory attribute to the system.[21] More importantly, the public meetings together with the nature and role of the political parties significantly shape the character of representation, in such a way that it distinguishes itself from the liberal model (see subsection 4.4.3).

In this section, we have concluded on the presence of fundamental inclusiveness within the political system. Considering the degree of participation we established that the political system in question is predominantly representative as the primary decision-making is taking place within the elected committees. The existence of regular public meetings, however, represents a minor participatory feature.

4.4 Modus Operandi

4.4.1 Voting or Deliberation?

Our two models of democracy present different primary decision-making methods, namely voting in the liberal model and deliberation in the deliberative model. In a way, we have already discussed this rather deeply (although somehow implicit) as we examined the logic of preference-formation. In that discussion we established that the search for agreement is an overarching guiding principle of the political processes in question, but also that many interviewees mention voting as a decision-making technique in use. Moreover, we said that the apparent contradiction of the coexistence of an interactive approach to preferences and voting (which is founded on an aggregative approach to preferences) could be understood in such a way that voting is used only after the pursuit of agreement has failed. Using these conclusions as our starting point we will here take a closer look at how deliberation, the decision-making method associated with the interactive approach and the search for agreement, is portrayed within the interviews. We will also consider in response to which kind of questions voting is mentioned as a method in use. We round off this section by discussing how the presence of decision-making methods in general could be related to our ideal types.

In the first round of interviews, I used the establishment of the local secondary school as a case to get an initial image of the political practises. When I asked the interviewees to tell me about how this decision was made, several of them portrayed something approaching a deliberative method (for instance Kaali, 31st January 2005; Mngaila, 21st February 2005). A good illustration is also provided by the following quotation of a ward executive officer (Pangani, 17th February 2005): "The committee discussed and suggested and when they came to compromise they sent the report to the public meeting". Others (Manase, 3rd February 2005; Sotery, 3rd February 2005) did not mention the actual decision-making procedures in relation to the opening question, but did instead when asked to describe how a meeting would be like. Sotery (3rd February 2005) says:

> Everybody has to say how to handle the point discussed and then we come to compromise together, make the decision. If my committee discusses and gets a compromise I call the public meeting to handle this to them.

The decision-making method as made up of discussions and the search for agreement or compromise is clearly revealed in these statements. The deliberative feature of trying to present convincing reasons appealing to the notion of a public interest and thereby altering the agents preferences are sometimes underlined specifically. This could be illuminated by this explanation by Kaali made in a follow-up discussion of a participating observation:

> I talked about the necessity of having another fundi [kiswahili for carpenter] for the teacher's quarters. Because some people thought we should use the same, but I disagreed. When we talked in

> points they quite understood me what I meant and they saw the actual meaning of that. Now is when we came to agree. (Observation, 16th February 2005)

From the earlier discussion on preference-formation (section 4.2) we recall the assertion that the process of preference modification seems to be reciprocal but unequal. This is important when we try to understand the character of the deliberation as well. When constructing our ideal types we identified the deliberation as a reflective dialogue on essential matters among equals. If preference modification is unequal could we then maintain that the consensus-oriented discussions qualify as deliberations? Well, our discussions are equal in the sense that all participating agents have equal right to express and promote their views in order to convince all other agents. This fundamental equality is thus upheld. On the other hand, the power within the process is systematically unequally distributed, as the chairman (and somewhat the executive civil servant, see Kaali, 17th March 2005) are the agenda-setters and the supposed starting point of the discussion is to gather support for his or her suggestion. Thus, these discussions do somehow noticeably distinguish themselves from the ideal we have portrayed, while still upholding several fundamental principles of what characterises a deliberation (i.e. they are reflective dialogues on essential matters among, to some extent, equals). Whether it is appropriate to stick with the term *deliberation* is, I believe, a matter of judgement. Here we keep labelling these discussions as deliberations, with the motivation that it has an analytical and instructive value as it facilitates the differentiation of the liberal and deliberative model as regards primary decision-making method.

We can, then, I believe, conclude that the presence of deliberation as a decision-making method is evident.[22] But let us have a look at the existence of the liberal equivalent, voting. Many interviewees mention the presence of voting. It is not, however, expressed in relation to more general or open descriptions of how decisions are made or meetings conducted. It is virtually always in relation to the question "what happens if you disagree?" that voting is brought forward as a decision-making technique. This underscores our earlier conclusion that voting is used as a last resort when the deliberation has failed to produce an agreement. The coexistence of voting and deliberation as decision-making methods, and the primacy of deliberation within this political system, are neatly portrayed within the following quotation, featuring a dialogue with me and Pangani (17th February 2005):

> Due to democracy it comes some time to vote, to get the answer to that problem. We do vote if necessary.
> *- Most times vote or most times just agree?*
> If some agree and some disagree—there are strains—we have to vote. But not usually. The most common is the suggestion. […] If they do not agree comes the time to vote.
> *- When you disagree, when there are different views, do you try to vote quickly to get it over with or do you try to convince each other?*
> When some disagree we participate in persuading to let them understand our aim of that point, so that they can agree. And if we discuss and persuade them to understand our aim that is the time they agree.

To sum up, the decision-making methods used within the political system in question come from both the liberal and the deliberative model. The noticeable primacy of

deliberation, though, puts our political system considerably closer to the deliberative model of democracy.

4.4.2 Conflict or Consensus?

We have concluded on the present political system as searching for agreement through an interactive view on preferences and the use of deliberation as the prime decision-making method. From this, I believe, we are ready to assert that consensus constitutes the dominant character of the *decision-making* process. When constructing the deliberative model we stated that consensus, as part of the modus operandi, should be considered a guiding principle for the deliberation but not a necessary outcome of the political process. In a way, this is, as we have seen, close to the role consensus plays in our system. We might also recall, however, that the degree of participation came closer to a representative form of government as portrayed in the liberal model of democracy. This representative form of government (if it should be regarded as democratic) inherently calls for some sort of competitive elections and this was clarified when constructing the liberal model. Thus, while it seems safe to affirm that the *decision-making* process is guided by consensus, as we deal with a representative form of government the complete political process also consists of an *election* process for appointing those representatives. And this brings the prospect of a competitive feature drawn from the liberal model. This, however, has to be further examined: Are there indications of competition/conflict within the election processes?

There are, I would say, considerable indications of competition between individuals while there are equally strong indications of very limited competition between political parties. Putting it a bit bluntly, in the local political system I have studied, and it seems to be the case in most parts of the country, the CCM (Chama Cha Mapinduzi) is the only party that matters, while the political positions are very much up for grabs within the CCM. The perhaps most telling example is the recent race for the chairmanship of one of the villages I studied. In the election process there were seven candidates and all of them belonged to CCM (Sotery, 12th March 2005). In addition, in this election the citizens rejected the former chairman who was campaigning to be re-elected. In a similar but less emphasised fashion, it was the same concerning the election of another village chairman and the councillor (Manase, 1st March 2005; Kaali 17th March 2005). This phenomenon is also mentioned by Schraeder (2000, p. 187) as a general feature of Tanzanian politics and dating back to the one-party rule of Nyerere. It has, moreover, been confirmed in informal talks with a couple of Swedish observers of Tanzanian society. This is, I believe, an important observation and its implications will be dealt with extensively in the next subsection, which considers whether parties or citizens are the primary agents within the political process. Here our purpose is merely to evaluate whether the election process are characterized by competition or not. We can conclude that the impression is ambivalent as the answer depends on whether it concerns parties or persons. For reasons presented thoroughly in the next subsection (4.4.3) I believe that the more significant political actor is the individual representative, and therefore the crucial factor is the presence of competition among those, not among

political parties. Thus, I claim that the election processes are generally characterised by competition.

Now, let us leave the electoral part of the political process and return to the decision-making part, and a bit further explore its consensus-oriented character. My understanding of the consensus-oriented discussions is that many of them carry a somewhat top-down or paternalistic perspective. This mostly presents itself in an educational approach which could be exemplified by the following quotation of a village chairman (Manase, 1st March 2005):

> The most important task for me is to educate and supervise people. Some can understand easily while others have problem of understanding for their own benefit. Now, the most important is to educate and persuade and suggest making them understand what is supposed to be done for their development.

The perspective is top-down in the sense that the chairman enters the citizen interaction with the presumption that he have identified the common good and his task is to educate the citizens so that they might also embrace the same notion of the public good. A common way of expressing a similar approach is that you "administrate the people within the area" or "supervise their development" (see for instance Timotheo, 3rd February 2005; Pangani, 17th February 2005). This approach could on the other hand be seen as a reasonable result of the adherence to the discourse of a common good. In a representative form of government who should be the prime interpreter of the common good if not the elected leader? This view is somehow depicted by a balozi (Timotheo, 28th February) who was asked to explain the different role of a committee and a public meeting:

> When they [the committee members] have come to compromise they send the agreement now to the public meeting. We have agreed as a committee to do this and this and this. Because they are elected by the public meeting to do that.

The balance between responsiveness and education/supervision can and do, however, vary. A more bottom-up approach are expressed by Kaali (17th March 2005) and Sotery (12th March 2005) when they talk about receiving problems from the citizens to discuss in the committees and trying to provide an answer or solution to them. In this cases, the ones who primarily defines the consensus to be implemented are still the representatives (although controlled and questioned by the public meetings), but the starting point are issues identified by citizens.

Although the decision-making process often has a certain top-down or paternalistic twist to it, it seems that the outcome of the process is superior to matters of hierarchy, i.e. the power of the reached consensus is real. An incident which highlights this is the conflict between a senior civil servant and the elected politicians and junior civil servants (see Kinenke, 16th February 2005; Observations 8th and 16th February 2005; Reflections 18–21 February 2005). The source of the conflict is that the senior civil servant in practise often ignored or acted against a reached agreement within the committee and this had not altered after asking him to change. Because the senior civil servant was the person in charge of implementing these issues his actions were crucial to the outcome. These breakings of agreements were discussed and the rest of the decision-makers and civil servants decided to ignore him and go about with the projects

as agreed even if he would try to push it in another direction. It was clarified that him practising his own ideas and giving commands apart from made agreements was not acceptable within this political system (Reflections, 18-21 February 2005). Of concern for him and his family the politicians choose the strategy of excluding him from power instead of asking the district council to dismiss him.

To summarize, the decision-making process is characterised by consensus. The process of reaching consensus sometimes seems to be guided by a top-down perspective (it is reciprocal but unequal) but after consensus is reached this agreement is generally superior to individual views of senior persons in power. The election process, however, is characterized by competition as far as the most important aspect is concerned, i.e. the competition between individual representatives. Thus, when it comes to the dominant character of the political process, the present political system is characterised by both liberal and deliberative features.

4.4.3 Parties or Citizens?

In the last subsection the distinction between political parties and individuals as primary agents of the political process, was introduced by the backdoor. Here this distinction constitutes the key issue to analyse. We had to prematurely assert that the prime political agent in the present political system is the individual representative rather than the political party. In this subsection we will provide a rather extensive argument for this conclusion and try to develop our analysis a little. Thus, we will trace this conclusion back to the interactive approach to preferences and make a minor excursion in theories of representation, which might contribute to more general and theoretically grounded insights.

First of all, however, we have to make an important clarification. As part of the discussion on inclusiveness and participation (section 4.3) we concluded that our political system constitutes a representative form of government, as political issues are primarily handled by elected representatives. Some of these are elected to represent a political party.[23] Thus, it is evident that the prime actors within the political process are either the individual representatives (as in none of the models) or the political parties (as in the liberal model), not the citizens (as in the deliberative model of democracy). We have claimed that it is in fact the representatives as individuals and this will now be explained.

Although officially Tanzania nowadays is a multiparty democracy the dominance of CCM is unmistakable and I did not meet any representative elected for another party than CCM (even though I heard about one balozi within the ward I studied). This could be interpreted as CCM being very powerful when it comes to local political decision-making. This is, however, to my experience not the case. When asking the councillor (and my guide to the system) to describe the policy difference between the CCM and the CUF (one of the major opposition parties) the first time, in an informal conversation, the answer was that the CCM is an old and established party with a strong administrative capacity while CUF is new, unknown and not as organisationally capable. That is, when asked to describe the difference between the major parties, their organisational capacity not their policy content was presented. To some extent this was

repeated, but complemented with a minor policy-touch, in a formal interview as he, after a considerable time to think it over, answered:

> The CUF would say: We put school fees. But the CCM has tried to smash these fees. That is one big difference I can imagine. And how the government would be ruled must be different with the CUF compared to the CCM. (Kaali, 21st March 2005)

The impression that parties and how they compete are not policy-driven, but rather constitutes alternative groups of potential people in power, has also been confirmed in two informal talks I have had with one Tanzanian friend and government employee and my Swedish supervisor in field.

When I tried to get a clarification from two balozis (Kilango, 28th February 2005; Timotheo, 28th February 2005) of what it means for them to represent CCM my question was not understood. This is of course *per se* no argument for CCM not being a policy-driven party. It is apparent, however, that they have not put any real thought on what it means to represent CCM as a political party. It could be interpreted as a result of the predominance of CCM and that a political life apart from it cannot be imagined. To my mind there are, on the contrary, indications of the CCM being rather insignificant in relation to the local political process. I asked Kaali if he, as a councillor representing the CCM, receives any instructions or advices from the CCM on how to conduct his work. He (Kaali, 21st March 2005) answered: "Sometimes yes. But not actually. Not often." He later asserts that most of the time he make up his own mind and when asked if he remember any issues on which he sought or received advice from the party, he mentions that he asked how a local CCM body should be composed, i.e. a rather technical issue relating to CCM:s internal structure rather than a political issue of the local community. Although statements from one source only, it indicates that the policy-making power of the CCM is limited in local politics.

When it comes to the nomination process, however, the CCM has some influence (see Manase, 1st March 2005; Sotery, 12th March 2005; Kaali, 17th March 2005). As it is time for an election of, for instance, a village chairman the contestants fill in a form presenting their personal background and send it to the political committee of the CCM at the next level of government (the ward). After this committee examined the contestants it proclaims who is and is not regarded fit to run as a CCM-candidate. In the cases I know of (i.e. the election of two village chairmen and a councillor) it was more than one candidate representing the party and no ranking were made among those accepted. This procedure evidently gives some real power to the superior level of the CCM, as those regarded unfit or uncomfortable will be removed from the election process. On the other hand, it does not seem to affect the earlier impression of real competition within the party ranks, and, more importantly, it does not mean a systematic direction of policy but rather a "quality" control of individual representatives. This confirms the image of CCM at the local level as a loose federation of independent, but not too uncomfortable, individual representatives, rather than a coherent policy-driven organisation with party officials working to fulfil the policy goals promised in the party's political platform.

In order to link this observation to earlier and forthcoming research and grant it a more fundamental touch let us relate it to theories of representation. Sjölin (2005, chapter 2) distinguishes three main ways to interpret the role of the elected

representative, namely as a trustee, as a delegate and as a party representative. Each way provides rather different normative prescriptions. The theory of the representative as a *trustee* means that he or she should make up her own mind independent of any special interest or the opinion of specific groups (Sjölin 2005, p. 34). The trustee is elected to make individual judgments, on behalf of the electorate, which are guided by the public interest or the common good (*ibid.*, p. 35). The *delegate*, on the contrary, has a more restricted role as an envoy of the electorate and any decision made should be made on the mandate of the voters (*ibid.*, pp. 40–41). In most political systems it is practically impossible to limit the decision-making capacity of the representative to only those issues where he or she has a *direct* instruction from the voters (*ibid.*, p. 41). This theory can therefore be interpreted as whenever a controversial decision should be made the voters has to be consulted, or that all decisions where the representative lacks a direct mandate could be made by trying to imagine the will of the voters, but, when there are, the representative has to follow the instructions (*ibid.*). The theory of the *party representative* brings a new actor to the scene, the political party. The party representative is not primarily regarded as an elected individual but as part of the collective which his or her party constitutes (*ibid.*, p. 47). The prime loyalty, according to this theory, is to be shown to the party and the guiding principle for decisions should be the realisation of its political platform. Since elections in a mass democracy concerns the choice between competing political plans of action, neither the public opinion nor the common good is regarded as relevant reasons of action, but instead the fulfilment of the policy-goals pledged by the party (*ibid.*, pp. 47–48).

Drawing on our conclusions about the character of the political parties in Tanzanian local politics we can assert that the theory of the party representative does not seem to be applicable. When it comes to the theory of the trustee and the delegate it is not, however, instantly obvious how the present political system relates to it.

Let us recall our analysis of the roles of the public meeting and the committee (subsection 4.3), as this might provide some guidance. We concluded that the public meeting acts as a citizen forum of in advance input to and retrospective control of the representatives' decision-making process, but not as an arena of extensive collective decision-making. This citizen input and control hint at the delegate theory as it act as a restriction of the representative similar to the ones expressed within this theory. On the other hand, we noted that the public meeting is not really a forum of citizen decision-making and that if the public meeting would persist on disagreeing this would result in a new deliberation within the committee, not decisions within the public meeting or specific instructions to the representatives. This together with our system's search for a public interest and the independence of the agents participating in the deliberation, refer to the representative as a trustee. In a way, the logic of representation in our system could be seen as a blend of the theories of the trustee and the delegate. At the same time, I argue, it is qualitatively different. Thus, this logic does not mean that the representatives should guide their actions from evaluations of the crude public opinion, as in the theory of the delegate, but instead from judgments on whether the public could accept the decision after listening to, reflecting on and publicly discussing the reasons expressed in favour of that decision. The representative is supposed to search for the public interest or common good, but this is not understood as a static and abstract concept, as in the theory of the trustee, but as dynamic (amenable to change within the

political interaction) and concrete (anchored in the specific public which the politicians represent). That is, the logic of our political system prescribes an *interaction* between the voter and the elected, between the citizen and the representative. It is through this interaction that the mandate to seek the public interest is formed, reformed and monitored. And through this interaction the community are forming and reforming the definition of the public interest. We could, then, label this "the logic of interactive representation" (compare Premfors 2000, pp. 34–35; Sjölin 2005, pp. 213–217).[24] The interactive approach to representation could in fact be traced back to and seen as a necessary consequence of the interactive approach to preferences.[25] The preferences are not considered exogenous to the political process but as the persistently amendable outcome of interaction. Thus, the logic of representation cannot be based on fixed principles, whether in the shape of an in blank letter of authority or specific and predetermined instructions. It has to be a mandate which is sensitive to the ongoing revisions emerging from political interaction, a mandate comprising the interaction of citizens and representatives.

The logic of interactive representation is, however, a very demanding feature for both citizens and representatives, and several interviewees expresses political problems which can be related to this approach. A balozi (Timotheo, 28th February 2005) expresses that the lack of continual feed-back from political leaders to citizens constitutes the main problem of politics. Another says that the lack of people attending meetings (presumably the public meetings) and the subsequent lack of political education is the biggest problem (Kaali, 17th March 2005). Both of these interviewees expresses problem in the interaction between representatives and citizens, one pinpointing the failure of the elected to inform and the other the flaw of citizens to participate. While this interactive approach to representation constitutes one of the building blocks of this political system, in practise it also seems to be a vulnerable spot, rendering some problems.

Here I have tried to provide a rather extensive argument for the earlier drawn conclusion that in the present political system the primary agents are *individual representatives*, not political parties or citizens, as in our respective ideal types. We have asserted that the parties in our context seem not to be policy-driven and that CCM, while maintaining its position as the completely dominant party in Tanzanian politics, appears to exert very limited influence on local policy-making.[26] Lastly, we have concluded that the logic of representation within our political system could be understood as *interactive*, as it requires an ongoing interaction between citizens and representatives.

4.5 Process Values

4.5.1 Accountability

In this section we will examine the political practises from the viewpoint of our three process values. In the following we initially deal with the three process values separately and in alphabetical order to see what could be traced in our material using these as our guides. We finish off this section by trying to internally rank the values as they appear in the present system and contrast this to the hierarchy of our two models of democracy. We start by discussing the value of accountability and as we remember this value did not show any significant difference in connotation between the two models.

A balozi (Timotheo, 3rd February 2005), who was describing his task and the system in general, spontaneously related to a feature of accountability:

> There are some people that are elected to be a balozi but who are not doing their job well. Now, if you see such a man you have got to report to the sub-village chairman and ask him to have another leader selection.

This is at the heart of the process value of accountability; a representative (or group of representatives, i.e. a party) that is not regarded fit to continue are replaced by another one. On a straight question of what would happen if a lot of people are displeased with a leader or representative in the area, a village chairman (Manase, 1st March 2005) provides some more details:

> There is a special committee who calls him or her and says: You are doing badly, don't repeat this mistake. If he goes on, apart from the proper channel, he is supposed to be out of the leadership.

When it comes to politicians this special committee is within the political party that the politician in question represents and this committee has the power to dismiss the representative and a new election process will take place (*ibid.*).

The other of the two village chairmen (Sotery, 12th March 2005) has a more direct experience of exerted accountability, as he was elected to replace the former and longstanding village chairman, who competed for another term. I asked him why he thought the former chairman was rejected:

> [H]e did not do the job as it is supposed to be as a chairman. So, people disliked him. That is why he failed. […] [I]f he fails to fulfil the proper channels to organise the people, he is going to be kicked out before the time of five years. [But] […] the old man, the former chairman, had *some* lacks. That is why they waited for five years to pass. Had it been a very big problem of his task, he could have been sacked before.

This confirms what the aforementioned statements told us and, in addition, clarifies two levels of dissent relating to two ways of exerting accountability, i.e. non re-election and dismissal while in term of office. The role of dismissal while in term is somewhat downplayed by a balozi (Kilango, 28th February 2005) saying it is not easy to replace a representative performing poorly during the term of office, but he or she will not be re-

elected after the five years have passed. In general, it seems certain that accountability is exerted at the regular elections every five years, while responsibility during the term *could* be exercised but are so only reluctantly and if the problems are quite severe.

Let us note that the accountability referred to here is in relation to individual representatives, not political parties. This could be understood as a consequence of this system's logic of representation (see subsection 4.4.3). The questions I asked about accountability were, due to the preconception I had acquired, also focused on individual representatives. When it comes to political parties I believe it is correct to assert that, in essence, no accountability is exercised in our system. On the other hand, given the current logic of representation, that might not be a relevant aspect of accountability to require. However, although it seems evident that exercising accountability is formally part of the political process, several characteristics of the political system might, I believe, impede the ability to effectively exert responsibility. The interactive approach to preference-formation, the consensus-oriented, deliberative decision-making and the interactive logic of representation are features which all make it more difficult to pinpoint which person or group are responsible for the outcome. If a decision proves to be a failure, how could we identify who is primarily to be held accountable if preferences are not fixed, decisions are made through mutual modification of preferences and mandates are not clearly established? On the other hand, it seems reasonable to argue that the interactive and amendable approach to politics also gives the citizens greater opportunity to have a continual influence on government affairs, and hence the need of distinct links of accountability is not as important.

4.5.2 Publicity

The process value publicity is slightly differently portrayed in the two models of democracy. In both models the value of publicity is understood as the accessibility of information relevant to the political process. In the deliberative model, however, it moreover means that the reasons of the outcome of a deliberation should be expressed in public. The public meetings seem to serve both these purposes. Let us start with the informational one.

Earlier in this chapter we have learned that one role of the public meetings is to get reports and information on the agreements reached within the elected committees (see for instance Malole, 18th February 2005; Timotheo 28th February 2005; Manase, 1st March 2005; Kaali, 17th March 2005). Through this channel, then, the citizens are informed on government actions and priorities. Furthermore, once annually the public meeting receives a report on the use of government income (Msai, 14th March 2005). As regards information prior to decision-making in the committees, it seems there is a report delivered by the chairman of that meeting which is, when applicable, based on the discussions/agreements of subordinate levels of government on that particular issue (Mngaila, 21st February 2005; Reflections, 28th February 2005; Kaali 17th March 2005). My impression from the few meetings I observed is that there are rather extensive spoken information and background, but few documents presented. It generally seems that information in the form of documents is rather difficult to attain. To sum up the informational aspect of publicity, it seems that the verbal information is rather thorough

at both the citizen level and among representatives, while the accessibility of documents is quite low.

The second meaning of publicity within the deliberative model is more directly linked to the public meetings. In section 4.3, on inclusiveness and participation, we concluded that the public meeting serves as a locus of citizen control in which the committee decisions are announced, evaluated and approved. As the representatives know that they have to present the decisions, and on which reasons they are grounded, to the public they try to anticipate the reactions and viewpoints of the citizens as a group (Timotheo, 28th February 2005; Manase, 1st March 2005; Sotery, 12th March 2005; Kaali 17th March 2005). This acts as a check on the committee members to agree on decisions that might be opposed or questioned by a majority of the citizens. In other words, the public meeting is a forum where the value of publicity is checked up on and exerted. If the public do not think the arguments stood the test, the committee would have to rethink through having a new deliberation on the issue. Most importantly, however, this procedure functions as a mechanism upholding the value of publicity within the deliberation.

4.5.3 Reciprocity

Within the liberal model reciprocity is regarded as the mutual acceptance of differing views and the right to express them. This interpretation of reciprocity is also included in the deliberative model but, however, the meaning of reciprocity is also given a thicker connotation. It namely states that the arguments expressed for the outcome of the deliberation should be acceptable in principle to all bound by the decision.

The thinner interpretation of reciprocity is rather prominent within our material. For instance, a citizen (Malole, 18th February 2005) says: “When we discuss everybody is allowed to suggest anything he or she likes and after that we come to agreement”. In a similar fashion a village chairman (Sotery, 3rd February 2005) explains how a meeting is pursued: “Everybody has to say how to handle the point discussed and then we come to compromise together, to make the decision”.

If we turn to the thicker, deliberative understanding of the value of reciprocity it might, once again, be helpful to consider the role of the public meeting. The representatives, which are the ones who deliberate, are to report on their discussions and decisions to the public meeting. The public meeting, as the forum of citizen power, judges whether the decision made on their behalf is legitimate. This procedure, one could argue, requests arguments to be acceptable to all or as many as possible of those bound by the decision. In such a way the structure of the political system in question provides the institutional framework for upholding the value of reciprocity. This is, however, an argument based on derived logic, i.e. we infer that the certain kind of arguments we look for is actually expressed, from merely observing a supportive institutional framework. So, could we actually observe these arguments directly, when we study the political practises in question?

The material is a bit shallow in this regard but we do find a few good examples. For instance, the councillor (Kaali, 31st January 2005) explains how he argued for the local secondary school to be established in Kizaga, not Kinanpanda:

> I opposed simply because the one in Kinanpanda is a missionary school, while this is a government school. Why should we mix these ideas? I got supporters and we agreed.

The councillor, Mr. Kaali, is elected to represent the ward in which the sub-village of Kizaga is situated, while Kinanpanda constitutes another ward. In addition, Kaali lives very close to the area where this secondary school was built. It is possible that placing the school in Kizaga would mean personal political prestige for him in relation to his voters. But the reason he articulates is the general principle of not mixing two kinds of schools. Perhaps he never thought of the potential political gain. If so, we could argue, the political system has shaped the way he is thinking of and doing politics. Anyhow, within the deliberation he decided to express a principle addressing a general interest and thereby he managed to persuade the others, even those representing Kinanpanda. This is a rather illustrative example of the type of rationale we are looking for. Perhaps less neat but still addressing a sense of community, a balozi told me how they solved a disagreement within the same decision-making process of a secondary school. The disagreement concerned that some people in the area with no children going to (or about to go to) school did not want to contribute to the project, as decided by the local government. Timotheo (3rd February 2005) says:

> This was solved through the education of the concerned people, by the leaders. They had to be educated that even if you don't have a son or daughter you have to contribute simply because your brother, brother-in-law or your father has a boy who is coming to this secondary school. So, you participate anyhow.

In an informal talk Kaali expressed that only arguments expressing a public rather than a personal interest is accepted within the deliberation (Reflections, 28th February 2005). To my mind, however, it is not evident from this discussion to what extent group-specific interests are acceptable to put forward within the deliberation. It is also appropriate to recall our indications of an unequal distribution of power within the deliberation. That is, not only the strength of argument seems to count within the deliberation, since gathering support for the suggestion of the chairman systematically constitutes its point of departure (see sections 4.2 and 4.4.1). Thus, the ideal circumstances for the value of reciprocity do not prevail.

To sum up, we have concluded that reciprocity in the thinner (liberal) sense is clearly portrayed within our material. We have also established that the existing institutional framework could be expected to promote arguments that are acceptable to all or as many as possible of those bound by a decision. Although the material does not provide support for claiming pervasive reciprocal arguing of this kind, we have presented two rather persuasive examples indicating it does exist. On the other hand, we have earlier on concluded that factors apart from the strength of the argument influence the outcome of the deliberation, and can now assert that therefore non-reciprocal arguments might be accepted.

4.5.4 Ranking the Values

After our exposé of how these process values are depicted in the material it is now time to rank their internal priority within the system, i.e. to determine the values respective predominance within our system. We start from the bottom of the hierarchy.

The possibility of exerting accountability was rather widely portrayed in our material and we saw one recent example of accountability being exercised in regard to a long-standing village chairman, as a new were elected in competition with him. On the other hand, we concluded that several features, all related to the interactive rationale of the political system, make the exertion of accountability more difficult and, in addition, less important. Thus, the interactive logic of politics makes the value of accountability the least pronounced in our system.

Reciprocity in the thinner, liberal sense is, as we have concluded, evident in our political system. There also exists an institutional framework to foster arguments characterised by the value of reciprocity. Moreover, we have noticed a few convincing instances illustrating that such kind of arguments are used within the deliberation. It is therefore difficult to distinguish whether the value of reciprocity or publicity should be deemed the prime one. However, I argue that reciprocity should be regarded the middle value of the three. That is because the material does not provide support for claiming pervasive reciprocal arguing and since there are indications that it is not the strength of arguments alone that make people agree, but also structures of power.

Publicity is judged to be the prime process value in our system because it seems to be strongly upheld both in the thinner liberal sense and in the thicker, deliberative sense. The institutional arrangement of informing public meetings of the decisions made by the representatives constitutes a powerful mechanism of realising the value of publicity.

Contrasting this hierarchy of values with the ones of our two models of democracy we find that it does not coincide with any of them. Since accountability is placed at the bottom and publicity and reciprocity were regarded quite similar in importance, I think it is reasonable to argue that the hierarchy of values in our system is closer to the deliberative model. In addition, the system carries significant resemblance with the extended interpretation of publicity and reciprocity that characterises the deliberative model. We should note that the value of accountability is more pronounced in our system than in the deliberative ideal type, because of the important role granted to elected representatives. At the same time reciprocity is slightly downgraded in comparison with the deliberative model. In sum, then, as regards the process values our model end up significantly closer to the deliberative model, but at the same time it is both less deliberative and more liberal than this ideal type.

4.6 Democracy as Interaction: Attempting a Summary

Through a somewhat lengthy analysis we have attempted to reveal the underpinning democratic logics of the political system, using a democratic theory perspective. After this exposé, which has been guided by the two models of democracy constituting our analytical tool, in this section we aim at providing a summary of what we found and discuss what we can make out of it as a whole.

Concerning the view on preferences and preference-formation we have concluded that there are features of both aggregative and interactive approaches. We asserted, however, that the aggregative features function as a last resort in case the attempt on reaching an agreement, through modifying the initial preferences, fails. Thus, the interactive approach is given priority as it constitutes the preferred and most frequent one.

When it comes to inclusiveness and participation we affirmed that our system makes up a representative form of government as the primary decision-making bodies are the committees of elected representatives. Nonetheless, we claimed that the role of the public meeting as a citizen forum of input to and control of the representatives' decision-making process constitutes a minor participatory feature.

In our system both voting and deliberation are present as decision-making methods. Nevertheless, it is evident that deliberation in search of agreement constitutes the primary method, with voting used only when this principal strategy has failed.

Since we have concluded on our political system as largely being a representative form of government the political process actually consists of two separate sub-processes, namely a decision-making process (for making the decisions) and an election process (for appointing the decision-makers). Because our system carries an interactive approach to preferences and employs deliberation as the prime decision-making method, we asserted that the decision-making process are predominantly characterised by consensus. On the other hand, we concluded that it is reasonable to regard the election process as generally characterised by competition, although between individual representatives not political parties. On the whole, then, the political process embodies both conflict and consensus.

As regards the primary agents within the political process we have established that they are individual representatives, not political parties or citizens (as in the respective models of democracy). Moreover, we asserted that the parties in our context seem not to be policy-driven and that CCM as a consequence appears to exert limited influence on local policy-making. After consulting theories of representation we determined that the logic of representation within our political system could be understood as interactive, as it centres on a continual interaction between citizens and representatives.

The process values are (not surprisingly) all existent within our system and ranks as follows: 1) publicity; 2) reciprocity; 3) accountability. Moreover, both publicity and reciprocity encompass the thicker connotations given to these values in the deliberative model. Nonetheless, the value of accountability is upgraded in our system as compared with the deliberative model, while the value of reciprocity is somewhat downgraded.

If we try too grasp the larger picture it is, in my opinion, one feature that presents itself as more prominent and striking concerning this political system. It is the feature of

interaction. The political practises we have studied demonstrates an interactive approach to preferences where the initial, individual preferences are amenable to revision, just as the use of deliberation represents a priority of interaction when it comes to decision-making. Furthermore, the logic of representation is interactive as its key feature is a continual interaction of citizens and elected representatives. In our organisational overview we, in addition, noted a certain component of interconnectedness between the different levels of local government. Thus, we can acknowledge interaction as constituting the guiding principle between citizens and representatives, between government bodies and between the representatives within those bodies. Hence, it is to my mind reasonable and fruitful to regard *interaction* as the prime democratic logic of our political system. We could assert that the local political practises in question constitute *democracy as interaction.*

Contrasting the democracy as interaction[27] with our ideal types it is evident that it falls closer to the deliberative model. It is only when it comes to its representative form of government that it shows a closer relationship with the liberal model. This representative feature, however, pass on a competitive feature to accompany the consensus character of the political process. In addition, the blend of the dominant representative and the minor participatory attribute causes the conclusion on primary agent of the political process to distinguish itself from both ideal types. The importance of the three process values in the democracy of interaction is also a result of its dominant interactive attribute. The value of accountability is upgraded in relation to the deliberative model as a result of the representative form of government and the consequent logic of representation. Nevertheless, accountability is ranked as the least pronounced value since the interactive features of the system also makes accountability more difficult and less important to exert. The rank of reciprocity, as a very important but not the prime value, could be understood from the fact that successful, consensus-oriented interaction presupposes the presence of considerable reciprocity. At the same time reciprocity is more demanding than publicity and seems, therefore, to be less prevalent in political practise. Publicity being the key value could rather easily be derived from the prime role of interaction. If the political system is founded on communication and exchange, the value of publicity, in both the limited liberal sense and the extended deliberative meaning, is crucial to realise its democratic legitimacy (compare Sjölin 2005, pp. 13, 216).

Table 4.1: Democracy as Interaction: a Summary of Core Characteristics

Components	Democracy as Interaction
Preference-formation	Interactive
Form of government	Representative with minor participatory features
Primary decision-making method	Deliberation (voting as a last resort)
Dominant character of the political process	Consensus in the decision-making process Conflict in the election process
Primary agent of the political process	Individual representatives
Process values, with ranking[†]	1. **Publicity** 2. **Reciprocity** 3. Accountability

[†] Process values in bold indicates that they connotes a thicker, extended meaning.

5 Lessons Learned and Thoughts for the Future: an Epilogue

> The idea that democracy is an exclusively Western notion is a mistake. […] Africa has a great potential for democracy.
>
> *Amarthya Sen* [28]

The journey which this thesis constitutes has now come to an end, both in the literal and the metaphorical sense. In this epilogue we try to spell out the lessons we have learned on the way and to provide some thoughts for the future.

In the last section our research question, as expressed in section 1.2, got its answer as we concluded on interaction as the primary logic of democracy underpinning the local political system of Iramba district, Ulemo ward that constitutes our case. The political practises were accordingly labelled *democracy as interaction*. But how does the concept of democracy as interaction relate to the initial models of democracy; why did we not introduce this as a third model or, for instance, used it instead of our deliberative model of democracy (which it resembles but do not coincide)?

I believe we can assert that the model of democracy as interaction emerged as a result from our study and thus was not possible to introduce prior to the analysis. As we discussed in section 2.3 we can understand our ideal types (the two models of democracy) as normative models which cannot be true or false but merely function as clear-cut standards by which we can structure and visualise empirical phenomenon, i.e. they are non-realistic or *heuristic models*. When we contrasted these with our empiricism we gained new understanding and constructed the model of "democracy as interaction", which constitutes a description of the real world, i.e. it represents *a realistic model*. Putting it shortly, through the encounter of our heuristic models of democracy with the empiricism of political practises in rural Africa, the realistic model of democracy as interaction developed.[29] However, following from our fundamental methodological standpoints the realism is always conditioned; our knowledge about the society is at all times temporary and dependent on the employed perspective and the preconceptions of the researcher (compare Badersten 2002, pp. 79–83, 341). This, in turn, imply that, although I believe that the concept of "democracy as interaction" is meaningful and does visualise aspects previously not seen, it is not comprehensive even within its own context, but one of several possible interpretations of the reality.

Having put our key concept in theoretical and methodological context, let us briefly consider its applicability outside its original geographical and socio-cultural setting.

When, in chapter 3, discussing the generalisability of this study's results we claimed that the theoretical insights made here could beneficially inform other cases of a similar kind. In addition, might the model of democracy as interaction also be applied to a national, as opposed to a local, political setting? Some of the specific expressions of the model, such as the regular public meetings, fit uneasily with a large-scale political entity as the modern state, and so does a genuinely interactive approach to preferences. In short, many features of the model are anchored in the distinctively local and rather confined setting which I have studied. However, a more interactive touch to democracy, to complement the dominant aggregative logic, at the national level seems feasible. Something approaching this is outlined by Sjölin (2005, pp. 213–217) in the shape of an interactive logic of representation. The apparent presence of different democratic logics at the local and national levels raises questions such as: How are these logics interrelated within a system? Can they successfully be upheld simultaneously? What happens if they conflict? These questions can, for obvious reasons, not be further addressed here, but nevertheless constitutes interesting and important subjects of future research.

If we keep the local setting constant but instead travel across the globe, could democracy as interaction inform a Western debate on democratic crisis, either empirically or normatively? As we have noted in relation to concepts travelling in the other direction (from the West to Africa) a specific institutional setting is seldom fruitful to casually transfer neither for studying, nor for crafting democracy. The same does of course apply for transfers from Africa to the West. However, since our analytical tool was rather abstract and open in character many of the features of democracy as interaction are also rather fundamental and value-oriented. Thus, stripped of its particular institutional content, the fundamental logic of interaction might also inform a Western debate—empirical and normative—on local political practises.

Through answering our research question we have also addressed our threefold aim during the course of this thesis. The methodological aim was dealt with already in chapter 2, as the analytical tool was anchored in the discourse of normative democratic theory. Through the thesis it has then effectively structured our empirical analysis. The empirical aim was attended to throughout chapter 4 when we conducted the analysis of the local political practises of our case, visualising democratic practises previously not seen. Through the abstraction of the empiricism, intensified when summarising our analysis, we gained theoretical insights and constructed the model of democracy as interaction. In this way, we addressed the third aim of theory development.

To finish of, this brings us back to where we started: in the initial puzzle. We might recall that I was puzzled by the fact that my experiences of vivid local democracy in a rural setting had no significant equivalence in the Western academic debate on African democracy. This puzzle has not constituted our focal point but nevertheless our backdrop. And it has, although indirectly, been addressed throughout this thesis. We cannot deliver a conclusive answer, but we can, I believe, provide a tentative clue, drawing on our experiences from this case study. Here we have shown that the liberal account of democracy is predominant within research on African democracy and studies on Third World democratisation. We have also seen that employing new and various models of democracy and focusing the local level has provided us with new empirical and theoretical insights. Thus, a possible and, to my mind, plausible, understanding of

the divergence constituting our puzzle is that it stems from the predominant position of the liberal account. An account which fails to visualise the kind of democratic practises I noticed prior to this study. The critical reader might object that it can very well be the shift of focus from the national to the local level rather than the employment of several models of democracy that is the key to our new observations. This is a reasonable objection, but to my mind it is evident that several of the features visualised in this study resembles components of a deliberative model and these would, therefore, not have been revealed with only a liberal definition of democracy being employed. Moreover, I claim that the liberal model as such contains a bias towards the national level (just as the deliberative contains a local bias). The aggregative approach to preferences and the party-based system puts national elections and debates in the forefront, hence neglecting local political practises.

Furthermore, the liberal account, especially when equipped with a fixed institutional package, is firmly rooted in the Western context. As has been noted several times before in this thesis, all models focus on some aspects while downplaying and ignoring others. Thus, it is reasonable to believe that if we apply a single model of democracy which is apparently context-laden, we will not visualise democratic features which are different to or unusual within the context shaping that model. To conclude, the firm dominance of the liberal account of democracy is therefore not only scholarly unfortunate but also, in effect, ethnocentric.

Do I suggest that all scholars of African democracy and Third World democratisation should simultaneously employ several models of democracy in their research? Not necessarily. I do think, however, that every researcher should reflect on what will be visualised and ignored when applying a model and, in addition, critically asses the normative implications of his or her definition(s) of democracy. Moreover, the *community of researchers* on African democracy and Third World democratisation should abandon the narrow focus on liberal democracy and encompass several normative accounts of democratic theory.

Adopting such an approach to this field would, I believe, make the research intellectually more credible, and, in addition, less ethnocentric. Inspired by the above quotation of Amarthya Sen, we could claim that such an approach would help in overcoming the mistake of regarding democracy an exclusively Western notion and in recognising the potential for African democracy.

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Kaali, Dennis, 17th March 2005. Follow-up interview with councillor of Ulemo ward.

Kaali, Dennis, 21st March 2005. Second follow-up interview with councillor of Ulemo ward.

Kilango, Grace, 3rd February 2005. Interview with balozi.

Kilango, Grace, 28th February 2005. Follow-up interview with balozi.

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Malole, Wilson, 18th February 2005. Interview with citizen.

Manase, Timothy, 3rd February 2005. Interview with chairman of Ulemo village.

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Mngaila, Celina 21st February 2005. Interview with citizen.

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Notes

[1] It is important to clarify, however, that issues of methodology, theory building and specific definitions of democracy is vividly discussed within democratisation theory and different opinions expressed. Regarding such questions as whether democracy (and its opposite) should be considered a dichotomy or a gradual phenomenon, how to operationalise the attributes of liberal democracy, and even which attributes should be considered part of a liberal procedural account, the discussion is rich and the opinions divergent (see for example Collier and Adcock 1999; Collier and Levitsky 1997; Dahl 1989). My argument, however, is that the democratisation theory never really goes beyond the limits of the liberal perspective; the fundamental values of democracy is hardly ever challenged, and a single account of democracy thus prevail.

2 The critical reader might object that there will most likely be an overlap of democratic values between the two models of democracy. This can be considered a problem originating from the general character of the typology; it seems reasonable to think that the more abstract the accounts, the less separate their characteristics. How, then, can the ideal types function as effective analytical tools when they, to some extent, melt together? The primary way to separate the accounts—to the extent that they embrace the same values—is to determine the hierarchy of values within each ideal type, i.e. to clarify which values are given priority when they are incompatible or conflicting. It should be noted, though, that it is not to be considered a problem if some democratic practises can be related to both ideal types, as long as it appears meaningful and reasonable to regard them as separate accounts of democracy.

[3] One might add that process values are usually regarded as means to achieve the overarching ends of specific substantial values. Therefore, one could conceive of the focus on the process-aspect of the respective accounts of democracy as moving down the ladder of abstraction, thus attaining a more precise analytical tool, while still being far from presenting a specific institutional scheme.

[4] For a rather extensive introduction to the debate on liberty and equality in democratic theory see Holden (1993, chapter 1) and Premfors (2000, chapter 2).

[5] One way of conceiving my approach is that my ideal types' includes characteristics of two sorts, on two levels of abstraction, namely what Lundquist (2001, p. 113) labels democratic values and democratic constructions, while I deliberately and for reasons mentioned earlier exclude the third level of democratic institutions.

[6] This feature of the ideal typology resembles what Esaiasson *et al*. (2003, p. 156) describes as *polar* ideal types.

[7] The study is conducted as a *Minor Field Study* and has hence been granted a scholarship by the Department of Political Science at Lund University which is financed by Sida (Swedish International Development Cooperation).

[8] The fact that I am involved in a development co-operation project in the area that constitutes the object of my field study is a circumstance that might be both an advantage and a disadvantage. More specifically, in January 2002 I was one of the founders of the NGO Nduguföreningen, which is a small-scale organisation working to improve conditions of life in Kizaga and surrounding villages (within the Ulemo ward). I am now working as the chairman of Nduguföreningen and visited the area for a few weeks in the summer of 2000. Moreover, my brother-in-law, also one of the founders, was born and raised in the area. Overall, this results in a network at hand and an understanding of the area. This has, no doubt, been an advantage when it came to practical matters, such as getting an able interpreter and guide to the political system in this rural area. On the other hand, my double roles, as a researcher and a

representative of the NGO working with the village, might have influenced the description of local politics given by the citizens or indeed my interpretation of that description. Seen from another perspective, the researcher always influences, and is influenced by, his study-object (especially in a field study), and my research is not in any direct way related to Ndugu föreningens development co-operation. In addition, I never experienced that this had any immediate effect on the picture portrayed. Although this problem should not be ignored, but openly admitted, it is my belief that in this case the advantages have outweighed the disadvantages.

[9] I have not found reasons to suspect that our case is systematically different or deviant in any significant way, and hence it seems reasonable to believe that the insights it bring may enlighten similar studies. Compare the discussion on *typical cases* in Esaiasson *et al.* (2003 p. 183–184).

[10] In total I conducted 19 interviews with 12 interviewees of which I refer to 16 interviews and 10 interviewees in this thesis. The interviews were rather traditional semi-structured interviews based on an interview guide with initially open questions followed by more specific ones. In addition to what was spelled out in the interview guides I asked spontaneous follow-up questions and questions directed to the specific interviewee.

[11] I was considering using focus groups as a way to sum up and confront the different ideas portrayed in the interviews and my impressions from the participating observations. The language barrier, however, made it a rather difficult method to employ in practise.

[12] My ambition was to supplement the interviews and participating observation with the study of relevant documents, not least in regard to the specific political issue that constituted my entry point. I asked for these from the village and ward offices by they did not have such documents. In general, the system is not based as much on written documents as on oral information. The understanding that such documents could contribute with in regard to fundamental political logics is probably rather shallow, but on the other hand less dependent on the interaction between me and the study object. They would therefore have been a suitable complementary source of information.

[13] By initially studying a decision-making process with regard to a specific issue, rather than a set of local institutions, I gained the flexibility and openness so easily lost if I would have tried to define relevant institutions *a priori* in a different socio-cultural context.

[14] In total 4 participating observations of political meetings were conducted, of which I refer to 3 in this thesis. The observations involved quite limited involvement from me as a researcher, were of non-manipulated settings and the gathering of information was rather unsystematic (compare Esaiasson *et al.* 2003, p. 336).

[15] When I interviewed representatives of groups including both men and women (i.e. balozis and citizens) I talked to both men and women. The bias therefore is not an effect of my active selection, but rather of the homogeneity of the persons in power. It should be acknowledged, though, that by altering the groups I was targeting I could have reached more women as there, for instance, are several women among the group "members of village committees". This would have been a feasible strategy to better cover the perceptions of women. A strategy, however, I failed to employ. To my defence I might remind the reader that a gender analysis, or even a general power analysis, is not the intention of this field study.

[16] These concerns call for some caution when trying to interpret single words in making and reading our analysis. The risk of misconceptions from single words or sentences are emphasised as a result of both the unfamiliar context and the use of an interpreter. In the analysis I try to reduce this problem by making sure the statements are put in context and that I usually rely on several accounts for an interpretation.

[17] The organisational chart was drafted and revised in three interviews with my guide to the political system (Kaali, 31st January 2005; 17th and 21st March 2005). As it is based on interviews there might unfortunately be some errors and inconsistencies within the chart resulting from misunderstandings. The broad picture should, however, be rather accurate. I am grateful to my father, Alf Carlstedt, who helped me designing this chart.

[18] Referring to my own reflections might seem a bit odd. However, here and elsewhere where this is done it concerns informal talks I had with my informants and other informal observations which I documented together with the continual reflections I made.

[19] The concept of *inclusiveness* could be further qualified by distinguishing between *de jure* inclusiveness (i.e. the *formal* spread of basic political rights to all people) and *de facto* inclusiveness (i.e. the ability of people to *utilise* their basic political rights). Discussing *de facto* inclusiveness requires an examination of actual political opportunities and real power relations. Such an examination falls somewhat aside this thesis focal point as it would not directly contribute to answering our research question. Therefore, inclusiveness is here limited to mean *de jure* inclusiveness.

[20] It should be borne in mind that I only had the opportunity to participate in one public meeting, which calls for rather cautious conclusions.

[21] The presence of many levels of government, resulting in more elected representatives and smaller government entities, to my mind, also constitutes a minor participatory feature.
[22] Let me remind the reader of our conclusion from section 4.3 that it is the representatives which are the primary decision-makers, not the citizens. Subsequently, when talking about the presence of deliberation as a decision-making method, we primarily refer to deliberation among representatives.
[23] The information I have got is that the balozis, the sub-village chairmen, the village chairmen and the councillor are elected as party-representatives, while the sub-village and village committee members not necessarily has a party mandate.
[24] What is labelled an interactive mandate or an interactive logic of representation by Premfors (2000) and Sjölin (2005) are in a broad sense the same as I have identified here; it shares the component of interaction between citizens and representatives as the key principle of representation. Premfors' account is, in this regard, not very specific and is therefore difficult to further assess. The version of Sjölin, however, is somewhat different from what I describe as it includes policy-driven political parties as an important actor within the political process. It tries to amalgamate the theory of the party representative with an interactive approach giving the politician a less restricted role and the citizen more opportunities of political influence between the elections (Sjölin 2005, pp. 214–216). Then again, my description of political justification in relation to the public and input from citizens to representatives coincides with the principles depicted by Sjölin (*ibid.*).
[25] Just as the interactive approach to representation could be traced back to the system's logic of preference-formation, the theory of the party representative could be traced back to the aggregative approach to preferences.
[26] The absence of well-functioning policy-driven parties and the importance of individual representatives have been widely acknowledged in research on neopatrimonialism (see for example Chabal 2003). In this thesis this is studied from a different perspective. The aforementioned genre identifies a patron-client logic of politics, based on informal exchanges of material/economic benefits and political support. I spell out a political system based on another logic of democratic theory. These perspectives might very well be *complementary* since my focal point is to visualise political practises by applying models of democracy anchored in a normative debate, while the researchers on neopatrimonialism tries to identify what hampers the proper functioning of liberal democracy as we know it in the West. In addition, it might be complementary since I focus on the *local* level while researchers on neopatrimonialism mostly seem to cover the relationship between *national* politicians and civil servants and their subordinates. However, they are *rival* in the sense that I claim that the importance of individual representatives and the lack of policy-driven parties is part of a *different democratic logic*, rather than an undemocratic flaw presenting itself as an obstacle to establishing liberal democracy.
[27] Sjölin (2005, pp. 213–214) mentions – in relation to the discussion on interactive logic of representation—that the Swedish political scientist Leif Lewin has presented a democratic model labelled *interactive democracy*. From Sjölin's brief review of the model it seems to have some important similarities with what I label *democracy as interaction*, as regards the continual interaction between citizens and representatives. Unfortunately, I have not yet had the opportunity to study Lewin's original account.
[28] Quotation of Amarthya Sen from an interview in the Swedish journal *Axess* (Uddhammar and Erixon 2002, pp. 23, 24). The translation (back) to English is my own.
[29] The description of the relationship between heuristic and realistic models and the encounter of the empiricism has been inspired by Badersten (2002, p. 34).