

The Architecture of Political Monopoly

Challenging the Hegemon in Zambia and Zimbabwe

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Abstract

Zambia and Zimbabwe share a common postcolonial political history. Both countries have for many years been dominated politically by the former liberation movements UNIP and ZANU (PF). This thesis attempts to account for why, despite their similar political hegemony, UNIP was overthrown by the opposition through democratic elections but ZANU (PF) was not. Central to the study is the theoretical attempt to integrate agency and structure by conceptualizing structures as resources and agents as capable of reflexive action. Political hegemony in Zambia and Zimbabwe is argued to be based on the availability and exploitation of both formal and informal structural resources. Such resources provide actors with a finite repertoire of tools which they are capable of employing according to their choices and convictions. The different political outcomes in Zambia and Zimbabwe are therefore explained by the variations in available structural resources as well as the different choices that UNIP and ZANU (PF) made when it came to deploying those resources.

Key words: structural resources, reflexive agency, Zambia, Zimbabwe, democratic transition

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Table of contents

1	Introduction.....	2
1.1	Purpose of Investigation.....	2
1.2	Most Similar Systems Design	3
1.3	Theoretical considerations.....	4
1.3.1	Towards an Integrative Conceptual Base.....	4
1.3.2	Structural Resources.....	6
1.3.3	Agency	6
1.4	Material and Disposition	7
2	UNIP and ZANU	9
2.1	Political Development post independence	9
3	Formal Structures.....	11
3.1	Zambia’s One-Party State	11
3.2	Zimbabwe’s de facto One-Party State.....	12
4	Informal Structures	14
4.1	Zambia.....	14
4.1.1	Concentration of Power.....	14
4.1.2	Patronage.....	15
4.1.3	Misuse of the State	16
4.2	Zimbabwe.....	17
4.2.1	Concentration of power.....	17
4.2.2	Patronage.....	18
4.2.3	Misuse of the State	18
4.3	Balancing Structural Resources	20
5	The challenge to Hegemony	22
5.1	The Trade Unions.....	22
5.2	Resurrecting civil society	23
5.2.1	Zambia.....	23
5.2.2	Zimbabwe.....	24
5.3	The Elections: Hardliners and Softliners in a Changing Context	26
5.3.1	Zambia.....	26
5.3.2	Zimbabwe.....	27
6	Conclusions.....	29
7	References.....	31
7.1	Articles	31
7.2	Books.....	32

1 Introduction

Democracy, its formation, its difficulties, and optimal design has for decades been a dominant focus within the social sciences. Theories of third waves, consolidation, liberalization and transitions have flourished in scientific journals and widely debated books. However, the focus of such studies has been and continues to be unbalanced geographically. While south America and in particular Eastern Europe seem prime candidates for democratic research and theory building, Southern Africa remains (in comparison) relatively unexplored. Hence, students of southern African democracy are often forced to apply research designs and theories formulated with widely different contexts in mind in order to tackle formulated problems. In any case, the lack of high amounts of context based studies of democratic transitions in Southern Africa challenges the researcher to think outside the metaphorical box and legitimizes the intriguing task of combining relevant theories and approaches in order to pursue democratic studies set in the particular African context.

1.1 Purpose of Investigation

Zambia and Zimbabwe are two countries with a very similar political history which nonetheless have taken two very different political trajectories. Both Zambia and Zimbabwe were subjected to British colonial rule and have since independence for decades been dominated by the liberation parties the United National Independence Party (UNIP) and the Zimbabwean African National Union (ZANU). The ruling parties' political hegemony was manifested through their exclusive access to formal and informal structural resources with which they constructed similar systems of control. After decades of one party rule both UNIP and ZANU (PF) were finally faced with a mounting political opposition with its roots in the labor movements. For the first time since independence, the two liberation movements were subjected to elections in which the outcome was by no means predestined.

Kenneth Kaunda's UNIP were defeated at the polls by the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD), while Robert Mugabe's ZANU (PF) retained power despite fierce political opposition in the form of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC). UNIP and ZANU (PF)'s control of the political arena was similar in strength and composition. Yet while the MMD managed to unseat Kaunda the MDC failed to dispose of Mugabe. This raises the following questions:

In what ways did UNIP and ZANU (PF) utilize structural resources in order to construct their political dominance?

Why, despite UNIP and ZANU (PF)'s similar political hegemony, was the opposition able to defeat the ruling party in Zambia through democratic elections but not in Zimbabwe?

1.2 Most Similar Systems Design

This comparative study of Zambia and Zimbabwe will employ a Most Similar Systems Design (MSSD). Initially based on J.S. Mill's method of difference, the MSSD seeks "to identify the key features that are different among similar countries and which account for the observed political outcome"¹. The MSSD in combination with the method of difference aspires to reduce the number of theoretically relevant variables through control². In this study therefore, the intention is to identify the key variables that are different in the otherwise highly similar countries of Zimbabwe and Zambia in order to account for the different political outcomes. The strength of MSSD is that it is particularly well suited for area studies such as the one I wish to pursue. "The intellectual and theoretical justification for area studies is that there is something inherently similar about countries that make up a particular geographical region of the world"³. Zambia and Zimbabwe do not only share a border, they have an astonishingly similar history, religious development, political development, and culture.

Like any other research method, the small N case studies approach has received criticism. The most common objection to this method is the "degrees of freedom" problem. In this view, there are too few cases to allow for the full and scientific testing of all potentially relevant variables. However, this objection presupposes that the purpose of the cross case investigation is to test an overwhelming number of variables using the same (often statistical) model. When the qualitative comparison serves a different purpose, namely to test a proposition with fewer variables, the small N problem might be argued less considerable⁴. Significant for this study is also the usefulness of a comparative small N case study in combining cross-case comparison with intense within-case analysis.

¹ Landman, Todd *Issues and Methods in Comparative Politics: an Introduction* p. 29

² Ebbinghaus, Bernhard "How the Cases You Choose Limit the Questions You Ask: Selection Problems in Comparative Research Design" p. 16

³ Landman, Todd *Issues and Methods in Comparative Politics: an Introduction* p. 30

⁴ Ebbinghaus, Bernhard "How the Cases You Choose Limit the Questions You Ask: Selection Problems in Comparative Research Design" p. 15

“Within-case analysis adds more leverage to the understanding of pattern, process and events, it helps to get a more micro-level or historical foundation of macro-level characteristics of a case”⁵.

1.3 Theoretical considerations

This comparative study of Zambia and Zimbabwe will inevitably have to take into account not only the structural framework and conditions that delineate and control the opening up of political space and possibilities for subsequent democratic transitions in each country, but also the agents that operate within that framework. Any synthesis of the voluntarist and structural approaches to the study of politics is met with problems and criticism. There have been attempts to integrate agency and structure, especially within the study of regime change. Anthony Giddens among others have pointed out that structures are both “medium and outcome of the practice they recursively organize”, but so are actors in the sense that they both the product as well engineers of the social systems within which they operate⁶. However, as of yet, there does not exist a satisfactory and widely accepted synthesis of the two approaches.

In their conceptions of agency, voluntarists and structuralists are naturally distinguished “by the extent to which human action is understood as a consequence of social relations”⁷. In general terms one could argue that voluntarists conceive human behavior as underdetermined by social structures. In this view then, agents, their identities, interests and agendas during periods of possible regime transformations cannot be explained by positioning them within a greater social and economic structure. Structuralists on the other hand treat agents as part of, and defined by, the greater social structures within which they operate, and view “their choices and actions as results of these positions”⁸.

1.3.1 Towards an Integrative Conceptual Base

With regard to the scope of my study therefore, I will attempt a synthesis of the two approaches in order to account for both macro and micro level variables relevant for this comparison. A fully integrative approach requires a fully integrative conceptual base that goes “beyond undersocialised and oversocialised

⁵ Ibid p. 17

⁶ Cohen, Ira J. *Structuration Theory :Anthony Giddens and the Constitution of Social Life* p. 151

⁷ Mahoney, James & Snyder, Richard ”Rethinking Agency and Structure in the Study of Regime Change” p. 5

⁸ Ibid

conceptions of agency as well as constraint and generative models of structure”⁹. Fortunately recent work in sociology might shed some light on how to an integrative conceptual base might look. A conceptual formulation that treats structures as resources and human agency as the capacity to appropriate and “potentially transform structural resources in a self-conscious, reflexive manner”¹⁰ will be attempted in this thesis. Such an integrative conceptualization has not previously been attempted within the field of transition studies, and as a result the integration of structure and agency will need elaboration and further operationalization. By conceptualizing structures as resources I will argue that they both enable action while simultaneously constraining action. Structures in this sense enable action by providing tools that actors use in pursuit of political projects. On the other hand they constrain action by restricting the range of possible projects. Contrary to the constraint model, structures as understood here are not barriers that obstruct agency, but rather structures limit agency in the sense that there is a “finite repertoire of tools for action”¹¹. This repertoire is not static or irrevocable but can potentially be modified and improved by actors. Instead of directly determining human agency as in the generative model, the resource model understands structures to operate as environments that demarcate possible actions without necessarily determining which action is chosen.

Conceptualizing human agency as reflexive allows for an understanding of actors as self conscious and with the ability to deploy structural resources. At the same time actors in this perspective are able to modify their behavior in response to changing situations and conditions granting them the ability to choose different resources depending on the context. Hence agency never occurs in isolation from structural constraints, but the ability that actors have to choose how to use structural resources (as well as modify these if need be) means that agency is neither a given result of generative structures. One issue that is not discussed in the theoretical literature pertaining to this integrative method is the possible difference in resources available to different actors. Depending on their access to resources, agency will be more or less restricted for different actors. It is my understanding that in politics access to resources is ultimately determined by the position that actors hold in relation to each other, and as that relation changes so might the availability of resources. This paper deals primarily with political power and the ability to pursue political agendas, an ability that to a great deal will be determined by the available repertoire of tools for action. Actors already in a position to deploy structural resources will choose to use those resources in order to maintain their position; if possible they will modify and improve the repertoire available in order to enhance their ability to remain in a position giving them access to those very structural resources. To be blunt, political contest can be viewed as a continuous battle for access to structural resources by different actors

⁹ Mahoney, James & Snyder, Richard “Rethinking Agency and Structure in the Study of Regime Change” p. 24

¹⁰ Ibid

¹¹ Ibid p. 25

carried out on a political arena where one actor is less constrained by structures because of their access to them.

Conceptually granting actors the ability to choose how to use structural resources can also help explain different political outcomes in what seems like two very similar structural environments. Likewise, the idea that actors possess the capacity to modify and improve structural resources might help to account for why two initially similar structural conditions have evolved differently and subsequently provide actors with a different repertoire of tools.

1.3.2 Structural Resources

Structural resources in this paper will be understood as to exist in two forms, formal and informal. Formal structures refer to the structures that outline and govern the political arena namely the official rules that regulate political participation and dictate how power is divided and wielded. In other words I will examine and compare the structures that constitute the formal political system. In contrast, informal structures refer to rules and social practices that through their constant repetition form a political culture and contribute to what Patrick Chabal and Jean-Pascal Daloz term the informalization of politics¹², and what other refer to as neopatrimonialism. In this thesis I will use the broader definition of political culture to include patterns of political behavior. Political culture can therefore be understood as:

“the subjective perception of history and politics, the fundamental beliefs and values, the foci of identification and loyalty, and the political knowledge and expectations which are the product of the specific historical experience of nations”¹³

Political culture in this sense is constituted of informal structures that generate rules regarding what is politically possible and what is politically necessary. Informal structures examined in this thesis and which lead to an informalization and personalization of politics through the development of a political culture are: patronage, concentration of power and the misuse of state resources.

1.3.3 Agency

This study is not only concerned with structural resources but just as much with how actors are able to choose, transform, and improve such resources to attempt the realization of their political agendas. Central to this study will therefore be the

¹² Chabal, Patrick & Daloz, Jean-Pascal Africa Works: Disorder as Political Instrument p. 1

¹³ Kuper, Adam & Kuper, Jessica (Ed.) The Social Science Encyclopedia p. 610

examination of the main political actors in Zambia and Zimbabwe and how these actors have been both constrained as well as favored by the presence of structural resources. This thesis will primarily focus on the two ruling parties, UNIP and ZANU (PF), due to the fact that they for long periods of time have been the sole actor on the political arena. I will of course account for the creation and growth of the two opposition movements, MMD and MDC, and how their existence perhaps limits or changes the structural resources available to UNIP and ZANU (PF).

The analysis of the my actors reflexive agency can perhaps be better understood by in part assuming some of the ideas laid forth by Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe Schmitter in their study of transitions from authoritarian regimes. O'Donnell makes a distinction between what he labels "hard-liners" and "soft-liners", which he argues are two groups typically present in authoritarian regimes¹⁴. The first category connotes people that regard the reproduction of authoritarian rule as both possible and desirable, not necessarily by rejecting outright all democratic forms but by engineering some façade behind which they can maintain, emphasize and guarantee the "hierarchical and authoritarian nature of their power"¹⁵. According to O'Donnell there are various forms of hard-liners and while some adopt the position out of opportunism and a means by which to accumulate wealth and power, others champion the nature of authoritarian rule based on conceptions of democracy as something cancerous and disorderly which ought to be eliminated from political life¹⁶. Soft-liners on the other hand might be just as staunch in their rejection of calls for democracy, and do not necessarily hesitate to use repression as a political tool. What makes them soft-liners according to O'Donnell is their increasing awareness that the "regime they helped implant [...] will have to make use, in the foreseeable future, of some degree or some form of electoral legitimation"¹⁷.

1.4 Material and Disposition

This thesis partly makes use of theoretical literature focusing on the relationship between actors and structures. As mentioned earlier there is no real consensus regarding an integrative approach to the study of how actors and structures work in unison to create outcomes. I have therefore chosen to study democratic transitions using a somewhat innovative theoretical conceptualization of actors

¹⁴ O'Donnell, Guillermo & Schmitter, Philippe C. *Transitions form Authoritarian Rule: Tentative conclusions about Uncertain Democracies* p. 15

¹⁵ Ibid p. 16

¹⁶ Ibid p. 18

¹⁷ Ibid

and structures. James Mahoney and Richard Snyder's article regarding the difficulties and possibilities of using an integrative approach to the study of regime change has been invaluable to me. The empirical material used in this thesis is secondary material published for the most part in well respected scientific and academic journals. A substantial amount of the literature I have used is written by African scholars and academics which I believe ensures a more holistic engagement with my subject than if I had only used empirical material of Western origin. There is a substantial amount of material that deals with Zimbabwean and Zambian politics, not all of which should be considered objective. The current political and economic crisis in the country means that Zimbabwe especially is a highly debated case, but that material can have a subjective purpose to either vilify or praise the current political leadership. Throughout this study I have therefore focused on maintaining a critical and unbiased approach towards my material.

As for the disposition of this thesis I would like to emphasize that empirical material is intertwined with analytical as well as theoretical discussions. I am of the opinion that a mix of empiric and analytical discussions is the most effective way to ensure that my theoretical conceptions are not neglected. Further more such a disposition means that I avoid a scenario where an overview is difficult because the analysis has been made in separation of the empirical material.

2 UNIP and ZANU

UNIP and ZANU are products of discontent with older liberation movements in Zambia and Zimbabwe. The African nationalist movement in what was formerly Northern Rhodesia split in 1958, and the faction that became UNIP pursued a much more progressive and militant line than the moderate and traditionalist mother-party the African National Congress (ANC)¹⁸. While the ANC were critical of the racist and oppressive aspects of colonialism, they were more prone to compromise than the much more radical UNIP who declared its opposition to colonialism itself and refused to negotiate or compromise regarding complete decolonization¹⁹. The transitional government that was formed ahead of full independence in 1962 was a coalition of UNIP and ANC who steered the colony towards full independence. In the preindependence elections held in 1964 UNIP secured enough National Assembly seats to govern alone without the support of the ANC, and Kenneth Kaunda became Zambia's first President.

ZANU was also formed following a split in the then dominant African political party in southern Rhodesia, the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) in 1963. Of the two parties, the Shona dominated ZANU generally pursued a more unyielding and progressive line than ZAPU. After fifteen years of war the Rhodesian Front was finally forced to realize that an independent Zimbabwe was inevitable and reluctantly agreed to negotiate. Only after extreme pressure by the Frontline States in Southern Africa had ZANU and ZAPU agreed to form a loose alliance ahead of the Lancaster House negotiations regarding the transfer of power into African hands. ZANU won a majority of the vote in the preindependence elections held in 1980 and could govern alone. However, the party extended an olive branch to both the major losing parties, Ian Smith's Rhodesian Front and ZAPU. Both parties agreed to become part of a Government of National Unity (GNU) headed by Zimbabwe's first Prime Minister Robert Mugabe²⁰.

2.1 Political Development post independence

As the new ruling parties of their respective countries, UNIP and ZANU dominated political developments following independence. However, neither

¹⁸ Bratton, Michael "Zambia Starts Over" p. 82

¹⁹ Kalinga, Owen J.M "Independence Negotiations in Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia" p. 255

²⁰ Ibid p. 35

party was completely autonomous due to the constitutions which had been brokered with the former colonial power prior to the preindependence elections. Among other things those constitutions guaranteed a number of seats in parliament reserved for whites as well as restrictions regarding possible amendments to the constitution²¹. In addition both UNIP and ZANU faced African political opposition in the form of the other liberation movements ANC and ZAPU. These parties may have lost the independence elections, but their mere existence guaranteed at least some form of restrictions on the new ruling parties.

²¹ *Constitution of Zambia*, 1964, section 31 & Stiff, Peter *Cry Zimbabwe* p.27

3 Formal Structures

3.1 Zambia's One-Party State

The multiparty elections following 1964 were often characterized by intense campaigns and widespread rumors of coercion, intimidations and overzealousness²². UNIP continued to win all important elections during the era later termed the first republic (1964-73) but their margin of victory shrank considerably as the ANC scored electoral gains at UNIP's expense in the Southern and Western provinces. In 1971 the ruling party was confronted with yet another political opponent as a new party called the United Progressive Party (UPP) was formed with base support in the Northern provinces²³. Still UNIP remained calm and while avowing their preference for a one party state continued to assure its members that it could continue to win its desired monopoly through the ballot box. UNIP's confidence was in many ways natural as the existence of opposition parties was precarious and their operations, legitimacy, and political space was undermined by UNIP's image of nation builder and increasing "identification between the State, the Party, and the Government, which allowed little room for 'loyal opposition'"²⁴.

However, in the run up to the 1973 elections UNIP was confronted by the possibility that a combined UPP-ANC challenge could cost them parliamentary majority. Faced with this challenge the ruling party resorted to coercion. The UPP was declared illegal and banned from the elections and several of the party's most prominent leaders were detained charged with threatening national unity on behalf of the white racist regimes to the South²⁵. UNIP's allegations were without merit and the events threatened to throw Zambia into political chaos. So at a time when national unity was at its lowest and political opposition at its peak, Kaunda and UNIP decided to appoint a Commission whose purpose became to draw up an new constitution as the basis for a one-party state. All previous attempts to forge a political structure capable of bringing unity and development had failed. To readdress the problem and to ensure that UNIP remained dominant "meant entirely recasting the political base on which Kaunda and UNIP hoped to maintain power"²⁶.

²² Bratton, Michael "Zambia Starts Over" p. 82

²³ Ibid p. 83

²⁴ Pettman, Jan "Zambia's Second Republic-the Establishment of a One-Party State" p. 231

²⁵ Ibid p. 235

²⁶ Ibid

The Zambian one-party state was formally created on 13 December 1972. However, UNIP feared that the continued alienation of the political opposition could weaken the legitimacy of the Second Republic and therefore appealed to the leadership of both the ANC and UPP to join the only legal political party UNIP. Several prominent figures in within the two parties agreed and UNIP had finally managed to erase every trace of political opposition²⁷. The power enjoyed by Kaunda's UNIP was theoretically limitless. The new constitution enshrined the principle of party supremacy "giving directives issued by UNIP's Central Committee precedence over any parliamentary or governmental decision"²⁸. As leader of the only legal party, the President appointed all senior party and governmental officials.

3.2 Zimbabwe's de facto One-Party State

Following the 1980 elections, ZANU made sure that any institutions capable of force and coercion were firmly place in the hands of ZANU ministers²⁹. Robert Mugabe assumed the Defense Portfolio himself, and even went as far as to reshuffle the contents in portfolios given to ZAPU ministers in order to ensure that they did not contain powerful elements. ZANU soon had monopoly over the branches of government and institutions capable of violence and coercion, thus consolidating Mugabe and his party's grip on power³⁰.

However, similar to UNIP's situation in Zambia, ZANU still had one obstacle to overcome before their grip on power was absolute. Like the ANC in Zambia, ZAPU had lost the preindependence elections but still enjoyed substantial support especially from the rather large Ndebele population in Matabeleland. Again, there are similarities in UNIP and ZANU's strategy to rid themselves of political opposition. Like the UPP in Zambia, ZAPU was accused of plotting against Robert Mugabe's government and were expelled from the GNU. Their dismissal took on more horrifying proportions when ZANU decided to strike down their old political rival once and for all. The military operations in Matabeleland cost tens of thousands of lives and wiped ZAPU off the political map in Zimbabwe as the party was "swallowed" by ZANU when they were forced to sign the Unity Accord in 1987³¹.

By 1984 ZANU's (with the addition Patriotic Front or PF) political dominance had subjected parliament to little more than a rubber stamp. The ruling party

²⁷ Pettman, Jan "Zambia's Second Republic-the Establishment of a One-Party State" p. 241

²⁸ Bratton, Michael "Zambia Starts Over" p. 83

²⁹ Gregory, Martin "The Zimbabwe Election: The Political and Military Implications" p. 28

³⁰ Olsson Selerud, Kristian "Clinging to Power: The Initiation, Reproduction and Maintenance of Neopatrimonial Rule in Zimbabwe" pp. 11

³¹ Ibid pp. 12

handpicked ministers as well as members of parliament and their selection was primarily based on willingness to toe the party line. To overcome the restrictive clauses stipulated in the independence constitution negotiated with Britain, ZANU (PF) declared a state of emergency which they reinforced every five years in order to allocate powers to Prime Minister Mugabe he would otherwise not have been granted. In 1987 the constitution could again be amended and ZANU (PF) quickly made sure to abolish the office of Prime Minister and replace it with an all-powerful executive President³². The powers given to Mugabe were immense. As executive President he combined the roles as head of state, head of government, and commander in chief of the defense forces. Furthermore he was given the authority to dissolve parliament and declare martial law, as well as run for an unlimited number of terms of office³³. Add to this Mugabe's control of appointments to virtually all senior posts in the civil service, military and police and what you have is a President and ruling party with a virtual stranglehold on government and "unlimited opportunities to exercise patronage"³⁴.

There was however one battle Robert Mugabe and ZANU did not win. In contrast to UNIP, ZANU (PF)'s political dominance did not lead to the establishment of a one-party state despite Mugabe and other party official's outspoken political vision and preference of such a system³⁵. The reasons why Zimbabwe did not follow in Zambia's footsteps regarding the one-party state are still unclear. Some scholars attribute it to the fact that Zimbabwe was practically already a one party state, and some members of the politburo and ruling party saw no need to make it a de jure one party state³⁶. Additionally, it is argued that before ZANU (PF) "swallowed" ZAPU "President Mugabe always got everything he wanted from the Politburo; after unity, he did not"³⁷. In any case by 1992 ZANU (PF)'s hold on power was absolute, and even though Zimbabwe remained only a de facto one-party state, there was no political opposition capable of threatening their hegemony.

³² Stiff, Peter Cry Zimbabwe p.243

³³ Meredith, Martin Power, *Plunder and Tyranny in Zimbabwe* p.79

³⁴ Olsson Selerud, Kristian "Clinging to Power: The Initiation, Reproduction and Maintenance of Neopatrimonial Rule in Zimbabwe" pp. 12-13

³⁵ Gregory, Martin "The Zimbabwe Election: The Political and Military Implications" p. 28

³⁶ Olsson Selerud, Kristian "Clinging to Power: The Initiation, Reproduction and Maintenance of Neopatrimonial Rule in Zimbabwe" pp. 13

³⁷ Sithole, Masipula "Zimbabwe's Eroding Authoritarianism" p.134

4 Informal Structures

4.1 Zambia

As previously defined, an understanding of political cultures and what shapes them needs to consider the subjective perception of history and politics in each country. A country's political history contributes greatly to the creation of the beliefs, discourses, values, and expectations that determine what is politically possible. In short the political culture defines the subjective reality of what is politically necessary and right as well as what actions are considered possible in the use and maintenance of power.

The political culture in Zambia is a product of history as well as the social and political norms that determine action. Almost a hundred years of colonial rule will undoubtedly generate an understanding and perception of what political power entails. There is not use in analyzing political behavior in isolation of its historic roots. During colonialism the governing elite monopolized all forms of power and economic resources, violence was used in a discriminatory fashion as was the allocation of wealth and resources. For colonial administration this was as much a pleasure as a necessity in order to control the much larger African population. "The values of participation and competition were obviated by the hegemonic statism of colonial structures and the power considerations of its allied political culture"³⁸.

4.1.1 Concentration of Power

This view of what political power entails, and how it can be used to remain powerful and at the same time enrich oneself has been reproduced in the post colonial setting. At first, Zambia's version of "one-party participatory democracy" did permit at least some political competition. UNIP allowed for open primary elections within the party itself and permitted as many as three candidates to run for every parliamentary seat. Presidential elections consisted of a simple yes or no vote for a single UNIP candidate. The candidate was always Kenneth Kaunda

³⁸ Diamond, Larry Political Culture & Democracy in Developing Countries p. 64-65

who won overwhelming victories every single time. However, the system as such was still too “open” and in order to counter the risk that political leaders with agendas different to that of UNIP’s Central Committee might infiltrate the party and rise to key positions, the UNIP Central Committee began to manipulate the electoral rules. To once and for all consolidate the concentration of power in the hands of a UNIP elite and Kaunda in particular, the Central committee therefore made it policy to disqualify unwanted or suspect candidates after the primaries. Bids to contest Kaunda for the party leadership were squashed with ease by simply changing the requirements for presidential candidacy³⁹. The Second Republic successfully made Zambia a place where “party control was greatly increased over the political process, the complexion of parliament, and over mass dissent”⁴⁰. The creation of the one party state meant that UNIP had legitimate control of the resources attached to the state, and that the party could in effect use those resources much to their liking. However, all that power was further concentrated into the hands of a UNIP elite, thus dismantling the few possibilities for internal opposition to the system.

4.1.2 Patronage

Another way to increase both control and legitimacy was to erect a system of patronage. UNIP has made it informal policy to award favors to elite members of the party and larger bureaucracy. Indeed, the official slogan for many years was “it pays to belong to UNIP”⁴¹. For UNIP, the patron-client ties served as a primary means to maintain power, and the dispersal of patronage was both arbitrary and excessive. One especially favored tactic to award important individuals for their loyalty has been to expand the ministerial cabinet. Following the introduction of the one-party state, the Zambian cabinet grew substantially from 14 to 27 ministers at its peak in 1988⁴². In addition to ministers, the party maintained a “central committee representative, a political secretary, a permanent secretary, and chairpersons of youth and women's leagues” in each of Zambia’s nine provinces⁴³. In every one of the countries fifty six districts similar arrangements were found and several officials were also given access to an official car, a house and other luxuries that came with their new appointment. Africa confidential wrote in 1987 that “Kaunda has always neutralized his opponents by finding them government or party jobs rather than facing grievances head on. . . .One result is that the party is now bloated with full time functionaries drawing salaries from government coffers, many without clear job descriptions”⁴⁴. Illustrative of the lengths at which

³⁹ Ibid p. 84

⁴⁰ Ibid

⁴¹ Burnell, Peter “Taking Stock of Democracy in Zambia” p. 19

⁴² Von Soest, Christian “How Does Neopatrimonialism Affect the African State? The Case of Tax Collection in Zambia” p. 10

⁴³ Von Doepp, Peter “Political Transition and Civil society: the Cases of Kenya and Zambia” p. 18

⁴⁴ Ibid

UNIP went to assure itself of loyalty is that by 1985 “the party filled over 40,000 public offices Zambia’s capital Lusaka alone”⁴⁵.

4.1.3 Misuse of the State

UNIP’s and the one-party state’s legitimacy therefore rested solely on the ability to dominate the political arena with the legitimate powers vested in the state and by making it worthwhile for party members to support the current system. In order to finance its system of patronage, UNIP had to acquire funds and accumulate wealth needed to buy loyalty. One way of doing so was to use the state as a means to expand its role in the economy and penetrate sectors previously dominated by foreign capital⁴⁶. UNIP created large and powerful parastatals such as the Zambia Industrial and Mining Corporation (ZIMC), the Mining and Development Corporation (MINDECO), and the Finance Development Corporation (FINDECO). Through the control of these corporations the government was able to extract surpluses and “accumulate capital to support its political programmes” as well as use the bureaucracy for massive primitive accumulation⁴⁷. “This process of expanding state control put vast public resources and privileges at the disposal of the Zambian elite” and at the same time it misused those state resources to entrench a patronage system and further concentrate political power⁴⁸. Despite a Leadership Code obliging all Cabinet and Central Committee members to separate public office and private interests was issued by Kaunda a “general pattern emerged of misusing public functions and resources”⁴⁹.

In accordance with their policy of “no expression of discontent” UNIP successfully took control “of the print and broadcast media, including the country’s only two daily newspapers, the *Times of Zambia* and the *Daily Mail*⁵⁰. Especially the former newspaper has been thoroughly used as a mouth piece for the ruling party producing editorials and texts emphasizing the importance to support UNIP as well as disgracing any opposition towards the party⁵¹.

⁴⁵ Von Soest, Christian “How Does Neopatrimonialism Affect the African State? The Case of Tax Collection in Zambia” p. 10

⁴⁶ Ihonvbere, Julius O. *Economic Crisis, Civil Society and Democratization: The Case of Zambia* p. 50

⁴⁷ Ibid p. 51

⁴⁸ Ibid

⁴⁹ Von Soest, Christian “How Does Neopatrimonialism Affect the African State? The Case of Tax Collection in Zambia” p. 11

⁵⁰ Ibid p. 84

⁵¹ Ihonvbere, Julius O. *Economic Crisis, Civil Society and Democratization: The Case of Zambia* p. 120

4.2 Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe has also suffered under colonial rule, and like Zambia it has been subjected to the political culture generated by the colonial administration. Contrary to Zambia however, the liberation movements in Zimbabwe fought a long and bloody war of independence. Due to the oppressive nature of the Rhodesian racist regime, both ZANU and ZAPU were forced to become militant and militaristic liberation movements. The political organization of ZANU assumed an eastern block formation, and due to the reality of the struggle the party became commandist and regimentalist in its operations and management style⁵². The political culture fostered by the colonial experience and the subsequent military operations has led to the establishment of informal structures by which ZANU (PF) exerts its dominance.

4.2.1 Concentration of power

In order to ensure that the institutions of that state were in fact tools of the ruling party rather than the public, ZANU (PF) made sure to concentrate virtually all political power within a small party elite. Especially the institutions capable of coercion were placed firmly under party control, and an elite fighting unit named the fifth brigade was formed which swore allegiance to Robert Mugabe himself. . Shortly after its formation in 1981, ZAPU leader Joshua Nkomo questioned its existence, and more importantly its role. He accused Mugabe of forming an independent fighting force and meant that the Fifth Brigade was “a ZANU (PF) army and not part of the National Army”⁵³. Sadly Nkomo had every right to fear the 5-Brigade and their unofficial loyalty to ZANU (PF). Ever since their formation, the 5-Brigade has instilled fear in the Zimbabwean population. Their mere presence is usually enough to break up an anti ZANU (PF) rally or demonstration. For Nkomo, his fears were manifested in the genocide carried out by the 5-Brigade on the Ndebele people during 1982-84. It is estimated that somewhere around 15 to 20 thousand people were murdered or never heard off again during these years⁵⁴. The 5-Brigade operation against the Ndebele population was dubbed *Gukurahundi*, meaning the storm that destroys everything⁵⁵. In addition to the fifth brigade, the CIO and ZRP (Zimbabwe Republic Police) “are widely seen as tools of the ruling party”⁵⁶.

⁵² Makumbe, John “ZANU-PF: a Party in Transition?” p. 34

⁵³ Joshua Nkomo quoted in *The Citizen* Johannesburg, September 1, 1981

⁵⁴ The Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe “Breaking the Silence” p.225

⁵⁵ The 5-Brigade itself is often referred to under the same pseudonym

⁵⁶ Sithole, Masipula “Zimbabwe’s Eroding Authoritarianism” p.133

4.2.2 Patronage

As in Zambia, the ZANU criterion for landing a top job in government was loyalty rather than competence. The new elite in Zimbabwe consisted exclusively of ZANU (PF) high ranking party officials, Ministers, members of parliament, as well as those in charge of the most powerful coercive institutions: the Army, the Central Intelligence Organization (CIO), Zimbabwean Republican Police (ZRP) and prison services⁵⁷. Not long after independence, this new elite found great pleasure in adopting the lifestyle formerly reserved for whites only. They moved into expensive houses, drove luxurious cars, dined in the finest restaurants, and bought spacious farms, hotels, and successful businesses⁵⁸. ZANU (PF) made it common policy to buy loyalty in order to entrench their position even further thus making all attempts to democratize any part of the country's institutional and bureaucratic arrangement impossible. The most obvious, blatant, and recognized award for personal favors portrayed by the ruling party came in association with the land reform where ZANU (PF) issued commands to seize predominantly white owned land as a means to silence growing dissent with the regime and allocate new land to ex combatants and African farmers⁵⁹. While some land was redistributed, most of the seized property was used to fuel the patron-client system. Among the new owners, Mugabe's relatives, senior civil servants, military and police officials, CIO members, numerous ZANU (PF) members of parliament, war veterans, and businessmen loyal to the party, made out the majority⁶⁰. "The list of those who were allocated the most fertile farms read like a Who's Who in the Zimbabwe hierarchy"⁶¹.

4.2.3 Misuse of the State

Like UNIP, the Zimbabwe ruling party needs funds in order to fuel their system of patronage, and what better source than the state itself? Until the beginning of the 1990's, the ZANU (PF) party was financed by public funds that had been channeled through the Ministry of Political Affairs⁶². An estimated US\$ 4 million was paid out to the ruling party each year⁶³. After receiving heavy criticism from

⁵⁷ Olsson Selerud, Kristian "Clinging to Power: The Initiation, Reproduction and Maintenance of Neopatrimonial Rule in Zimbabwe" p. 14

⁵⁸ Meredith, Martin *Power, Plunder and Tyranny in Zimbabwe* p.81

⁵⁹ Mpisaunga, Etherton *Zimbabwe: The Next 25 Years* p.103

⁶⁰ Ibid p.135, Hill, Geoff *What Happens After Mugabe?* P.78-79

⁶¹ Campbell, Horace *Reclaiming Zimbabwe* p.146

⁶² Olsson Selerud, Kristian "Human Rights in a Neopatrimonial Society: the Case of Zimbabwe" p.

⁶³ Sithole, Masipula "Zimbabwe's Eroding Authoritarianism" p.130

various directions regarding this dubious finance plan, the ruling party instead passed the Political Parties (Finance) Act in 1994. This act guaranteed public financing for any party retaining 15 seats or more in Parliament. Until MDC (Movement for Democratic Change) entered the political scene in 2000, ZANU (PF) had all but 3 seats in Parliament, thus making them the sole beneficiary of the Act⁶⁴. As the economy plummeted, the ruling party has used confiscated resources and borrowed money to maintain its patronage system. Parliament seats were almost doubled for the purpose of legitimizing the payment of a higher number of influential individuals, and during elections the ruling party has often used state resources to bribe voters with food handouts and farm equipment⁶⁵.

The Zimbabwean judicial system is also being manipulated in order to further the wishes of the ruling party. While the judges continued to do an unbiased and exemplary job, the environment they work in was quickly deteriorating. In fact, there is a general perception that “the bench is being politicized”⁶⁶. Such apperception is not unfounded given assertions by Mugabe, Government Ministers, ZANU (PF) supporters and militia leaders that they will not accept unfavorable decisions made by the courts⁶⁷. There are cases where magistrates, prosecutors and lawyers have been arrested and detained without clear charges. More worrying is the case where Justice Majuru of the Administrative court had to seek asylum after threats to his life had been made following a judgment ordering the opening of the forcibly closed Daily News paper, the only independent media in the country. There has been legislation passed aimed to limit the court’s jurisdiction to grant bail in dealing with certain cases where “seemingly political interests have been the deciding factor on who to prosecute and detain”⁶⁸. The declining independence of the justice system in Zimbabwe is further enhanced considering the conscious effort by the government to fill the bench with sympathetic judges. ZANU (PF) linked judges have controversially been elevated to powerful positions in favor of other, more experienced judges and have even been rewarded land, making them a beneficiary of patronage hence buying their loyalty⁶⁹.

⁶⁴ Ibid

⁶⁵ Olsson Selerud, Kristian “Clinging to Power: The Initiation, Reproduction and Maintenance of Neopatrimonial Rule in Zimbabwe” p. 17

⁶⁶ Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum “Are They Accountable?” p.5

⁶⁷ Ibid

⁶⁸ Zimbabwe Human rights NGO forum ”Statements by NGO’s on the situation of Human Rights in Africa with Reference to Zimbabwe” p.2

⁶⁹ Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum “Are They Accountable?” p.18

4.3 Balancing Structural Resources

The systems that Kaunda's UNIP and Mugabe's ZANU employed in order to cement their hold on power are similar in strategy and effect. Both governments sought political monopoly through domination of the political arena. Such monopoly was acquired through the engineering of both formal as well as informal structures favoring the liberation parties. Structures were used as a means to oust political opposition and consolidate their formal as well as informal control of the state and its fundamental institutions.

In the spirit of national unity and development Kaunda therefore announced UNIP's decision to form a one-party state where his own party was the only legal political actor on the re-forged political arena. The one-party state system meant that only Kaunda and UNIP had access to the powers vested in the state and that all political activity not condoned by the ruling party was in fact illegal and punishable by law. Institutions within the state such as the security forces, police, intelligence service, and judiciary were, as declared by the constitution, loyal to UNIP alone. This massive formal centralization of political, coercive and judicial power within the ruling party effectively guaranteed its complete hegemony. UNIP and the state became synonyms, and the resources that the formal structures of the state represented were readily available for UNIP to use in order to maintain its stranglehold on power. Yet, it can be argued that by creating a one party state and relying so heavily on formal structures for political dominance, UNIP were ill equipped to deal with an emerging political opposition.

Just like for UNIP, ZANU (PF)'s main political adversary the first years of independence was their fellow liberation movement ZAPU. While UNIP had resorted to establishing a one-party state in order to criminalize political opposition, ZANU (PF)'s tactics were far more repressive. The military campaign against ZAPU not only eradicated virtually all political threats to ZANU (PF)'s political hegemony, it also illustrated the mentality and political culture that the ruling party would come to adhere to. In contrast to Zambia, Zimbabwe was only a *de facto* one-party state and the ruling party relied much more on informal structural resources in order to control the political arena. While UNIP's informalization of politics could in fact be done formally in the sense that the party had the legitimate authority to centralize power and use state resources for its own benefit, ZANU (PF) had to go about matters a different way. Because it lacked the constitutional authority to equate the party with the state and thereby formally employ the structural resources imbedded in the state for its own purposes, Zimbabwe's ruling party had to rely on a political culture which through its constant repetition ensured ZANU (PF) exclusive and complete control of the state apparatus.

However, the conceptualization of structures as resources means that they both enable action while simultaneously constraining it. I have argued that structures in fact limit agency in the sense that they only provide a "finite repertoire of tools for action". This is where the integration of structures and agency may help explain

the different political outcomes in Zambia and Zimbabwe. As I have chosen to discuss agency in terms of reflexivity rather than determination, it is important to understand that outcomes might often depend on the way in which actors deploy the resources available to them. Because actors are capable to a certain "range of motion" their repertoire of tools does not remain static or predetermined, but can in fact be modified and improved.

Both UNIP and ZANU (PF) relied on formal as well as informal structural resources to wield power. The difference between the countries is the way that the ruling parties balanced the use of informal and formal structural resources. UNIP chose to construct a formal one-party state which gave it direct access to the powers vested in the state in order to pursue its political agenda. It was on the basis of the authority that their formal one party system gave the Zambian ruling party that UNIP could implement and benefit from a political culture marked by the informalization and personalization of politics. ZANU (PF) by contrast relied on the opposite composition and balance between formal and informal resources. By promoting and reinforcing a political culture that legitimized the personalization of politics and generated a *modus operandi* by which it was legitimate to use public office for personal enrichment and empowerment, ZANU (PF) were able to employ the state and its resources in order to pursue its own political agenda and ensure complete control of the political arena.

5 The challenge to Hegemony

5.1 The Trade Unions

Trade Unions in Africa have a long tradition of political engagement stretching back to their involvement in the struggles against colonial rule. Today, all across Southern Africa labor and trade unions are generally regarded as powerful political actors and policy influencers⁷⁰. The Zambian Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU but here addressed as ZaCTU) and the Zimbabwean Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU but here addressed as ZiCTU) have a very similar history as initial products and extensions of the ruling party which have subsequently turned more autonomous until finally becoming nothing short of oppositional to UNIP and ZANU (PF).

Prior to the creation of ZaCTU, UNIP had made repeated interventions in the existing trade unions in an attempt to secure their support and cooperation in development. In 1965 the ruling party therefore launched ZaCTU in an attempt to once and for all advance this purpose⁷¹. In Zimbabwe there was no single distinguishable Union at the time that ZANU took power. However, Mugabe's government wasted little time in establishing one using the same rhetoric as UNIP had done fifteen years earlier. Shortly after independence therefore, ZANU launched the ZiCTU⁷².

In both Zambia and Zimbabwe the system of labor control was semi-corporatist and the "Zimbabwean and Zambian states put in place legislation that unionized all workers and created a centralized 'one industry, one union' labor movement"⁷³. Both governments also sponsored the conferences that lead to the creation of trade union confederations in Zambia and Zimbabwe and did what they were capable off in order to empower those confederations. Both UNIP and ZANU wanted to engineer strong yet autonomous trade unions that could function as the ruling party's "partner-in-development" by providing assurances of both

⁷⁰ Webster, Edward "Trade Unions and Political Parties in Africa: New Alliances, Strategies and Partnerships" p.1

⁷¹ Bartlett, David M.C. "Civil Society and Democracy: A Zambian Case Study" p. 435

⁷² Moyo, J.N "Civil Society in Zimbabwe" p. 9

⁷³ LeBas, Adrienne "When do Parties Compete? Party Formation and Conflict in Zimbabwe, Zambia and Kenya" p. 29

wage and strike restraint⁷⁴. The construction of such a puppet union was obviously yet another way of informally concentrating political power into the hands of the ruling party and extending party control even further. However, since neither ruling party wanted to make it too transparent that they were using the trade unions to shore up support for government policies while simultaneously effectively controlling a large part of the population, ZaCTU and ZiCTU were given formal institutional autonomy. That autonomy would prove crucial as to the unfolding of union-state relations. Both UNIP and ZANU soon discovered that they could not control the demands or the actions of organized labor in the ways they had intended. Both labor movements “gradually increased their autonomy from the government and they formed tighter links with their membership”⁷⁵.

5.2 Resurrecting civil society

5.2.1 Zambia

Despite their massive attempts UNIP never succeeded in stamping out the “independent communities, movements, and organizations that constituted Zambian civil society”⁷⁶. As the one-party state effectively outlawed disagreement in the form of political competition, the locus of opposition had shifted from the political arena to other forms of organization. Students organizations, church groups and the business community all helped shape the ever growing movement that constituted Zambian civil society. But the core of Zambian civil society remained the ZaCTU whose numbers grew steadily during the years of one-party rule until they were twice that of UNIP’s⁷⁷. Indeed, the trade union had become the ruling party’s primary opponent by continuously addressing both economic and political issues throughout the 1980’s. Efforts taken by the regime to thwart or undermine the increasingly powerful Union such as passing regulations aiming to limit its autonomy in 1985 were met with scorn and instead further augmented vocal labor opposition to the government⁷⁸.

By the end of the 1980’s the Zambian economy suffered greatly due to global price declines in its main exports, poor economic policies, and most of all the cost of establishing and maintaining patronage and corruption as informal structures. The subsequent doubling of maize prices hit the Zambian people hard and while UNIP called for belt tightening measures, they were heavily criticized for their

⁷⁴ Ibid

⁷⁵ Ibid

⁷⁶ Bratton, Michael “Zambia Starts Over” p. 84

⁷⁷ Ibid

⁷⁸ Von Doepp, Peter “Political Transition and Civil society: the Cases of Kenya and Zambia” p. 20

own lavish spending and luxurious way of life⁷⁹. UNIP's remaining legitimacy as governors of the country was quickly dissolving and the public began to side massively with the organizations and movements that dared criticize the ruling party. By the end of 1989 ZaCTU resolved to spearhead a campaign for the restoration of multiparty democracy and in March 1990 the leader of ZaCTU Frederick Chiluba declared that "the ZaCTU believes that the one-party system is open to abuse; it is not the people in power that should direct political change, but the ordinary masses"⁸⁰. Backed by ZaCTU and all major civil society organizations Chiluba called on Kaunda to hold a national referendum on political pluralism⁸¹. Kaunda, who perhaps overestimated his own popularity, chose to agree to such a referendum but before it could be held economic condition worsened and public discontent spilled over. Food riots and demonstrations filled Zambia's main cities erupting into conflict with the security forces, and following several deaths and arrests, civil society took a final step towards once and for all contending UNIP's political hegemony⁸². In the face of such outspoken dissatisfaction with current political structures, Kaunda acceded to demands for immediate multiparty democracy thereby turning a constitutional referendum into the first multiparty election in 27 years. In December 1990, independent political parties once again became legal and in January 1991 the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) was created and elected former ZaCTU leader Frederick Chiluba as its party president⁸³.

5.2.2 Zimbabwe

ZiCTU developed along the same trajectory as its Zambian counterpart and at its extraordinary congress in 1988 it severed all ties with the ruling party. This did not become ZANU (PF) too much since it was a belief in ruling party circles that the "ZiCTU had been neutralized and had ceased to be a force to reckon with"⁸⁴. In the wake of new structural adjustment programmes dictated by the World Bank, ZANU (PF) adopted UNIP's strategies to control the labor movement. In 1992 the government passed the Labor Relations Amendment Bill, a piece of legislation intended to pre-empt mass protest by the labor movement at the imposition of the World Bank economic policies. ZiCTU reacted by launching massive national demonstrations on June 13, 1992.⁸⁵ Those demonstrations were

⁷⁹ Ibid

⁸⁰ Bratton, Michael "Zambia Starts Over" p. 85

⁸¹ Ibid

⁸² Ibid, Doepp, Peter "Political Transition and Civil society: the Cases of Kenya and Zambia" p. 21 and Bartlett, David M.C. "Civil Society and Democracy: A Zambian Case Study" p. 433

⁸³ Bratton, Michael "Zambia Starts Over" p. 86

⁸⁴ Kagoro, Brian "The Opposition and Civil Society" p. 15

⁸⁵ Ibid p. 13

ruthlessly beaten down by police and the subsequent structural adjustment package adopted by ZANU (PF) eroded several of the gains made by labor in the last decade. This obviously worked to strengthen the ruling party's view of ZiCTU as neutralized⁸⁶.

However, the new leadership under Morgan Tsvangirai helped increase the interaction between representatives and the general membership, extended its mandate to include the representation of all working people in Zimbabwe, and strengthened internal democracy mechanisms⁸⁷. The transformed movement therefore soon began to comment on political circumstances regarding labor while simultaneously continuing to perform its traditional union role. One main reason for ZiCTU's radicalization as well as the politicization of civil society as a whole was the economic development. Much like in Zambia, the ZANU (PF) government had failed to pursue economically viable policies, and while the economy suffered and daily life for ordinary Zimbabweans got worse, patronage continued to eat away at what was left⁸⁸.

Following ZANU (PF)'s crushing victories in both the 1990 and 1995 elections, civil society did not wait around for the government to resurrect the idea of a one-party state. Instead a consensus soon formed that the most effective way to improve governance in Zimbabwe would be to craft a new constitution⁸⁹. Their efforts finally culminated in the formation of the National Constitutional Assembly (NCA) in 1997. This resistance to the ever increasing authoritarianism portrayed by the Mugabe regime was spearheaded by law societies, student organizations, church groups and especially the ZiCTU⁹⁰. The developments within civil society with the joining of forces by the main movements and organizations meant that ZiCTU had support in its engagements with the regime. The NCA continued to grow and soon the ruling party became aware of the power and legitimacy that the organization was accumulating. ZANU (PF)'s solution was quite simply to steal the constitutional process from the NCA. In 1999 the ruling party appointed a Constitutional Commission charged with the task of producing a draft constitution which was to be submitted to a national constitutional referendum. The NCA were furious as was civil society on a whole and claims that ZANU (PF) would not consider what the people actually wanted but would instead engineer a constitutional alternative that would not threaten their political dominance⁹¹. "Concluding that a flawed process could only produce a flawed product, the NCA decided to lead the campaign to reject the Commissions draft constitution"⁹². On the day of the referendum ZANU (PF) were presented with their first ever electoral defeat as the "No" side triumphed

⁸⁶ Ibid

⁸⁷ Ibid

⁸⁸ Moyo, J.N. "Civil Society in Zimbabwe" p. 13

⁸⁹ Sithole, Masipula "Fighting Authoritarianism in Zimbabwe" p. 61

⁹⁰ Sithole, Masipula "Zimbabwe's eroding Authoritarianism" p. 136

⁹¹ Sachikonye, Lloyd M. "Whither Zimbabwe? Crisis & Democratization" p. 19

⁹² Sithole, Masipula "Fighting Authoritarianism in Zimbabwe" p. 164

and the ruling party engineered constitution was rejected by a clear majority⁹³. But ZANU (PF) was faced by yet another problem, one with the potential to deal a much harder blow than a lost referendum.

In the midst of the constitutional debate, with Zimbabwe heading for its first referendum since independence, and political participation on a rise, ZiCTU, the NCA and several other organizations judged the time for full frontal political confrontation to be right and launched the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC)⁹⁴. Just as in Zambia it was the former head of the labor movement that was chosen as party President, in this case Morgan Tsvangirai.

5.3 The Elections: Hardliners and Softliners in a Changing Context

The understanding of agency as reflexive means that actors are self conscious and in part have the ability to utilize available resources according to their own desires and convictions. Actors in this perspective are also endowed with the capacity to modify their behavior in response to a changing environment which means that they have the ability to employ different resources depending on the context. In the end actions will depend just as much on the nature of the agent as on the availability of structural resources. It is the combination of which tools are available with the choice and decision of how to use them which accounts for the outcome. This is where O'Donnell and Schmitter's distinction between hardliners and softliners is applicable for explaining the actions of UNIP and ZANU (PF).

5.3.1 Zambia

O'Donnell's argument that softliners might appear just as opposed to democracy as hardliners, but that they finally come to the realization that their regime will inescapably require some form of electoral legitimacy almost perfectly explains UNIP's actions in connection with the changing Zambian context. Despite their intolerant and politically closed one-party state system, UNIP conceded to the demands made by civil society and ZaCTU.

⁹³Melber, Henning "Zimbabwe's Presidential Elections 2002: Evidence, Lessons and Implications" p. 13

⁹⁴Kagoro, Brian "The Opposition and Civil Society" p. 20-21

In Presidential and Parliamentary balloting on October 31st, 1991 the Zambian voters were faced with an unfamiliar situation. For the first time since 1972 more than one party was involved in the electoral completion for power. The run up to the historic elections was not without its fair share of controversy. Charges of fraud and inappropriate behavior were made by both sides, but centered predominantly on how UNIP abused state resources to pay for and execute their election campaign. However, in the end MMD saw most of their requests granted by the courts and UNIP. Especially the Zambian courts played a crucial role in the pre election run ups. Since the one party state had been deconstructed, the courts no longer had an obligation to adhere to whatever the ruling party decided and so it could work on its own to ensure fair and just elections. As such the courts ruled against UNIP in key cases concerning the use of public resources for political purposes, and the electoral commission was highly impartial when it came to enforcing and adjusting electoral rules⁹⁵.

In addition to this, the UNIP leadership made certain concessions that doubtlessly benefitted the opposition. Among other things Kaunda, to the surprise and dismay of hardliners in his party, conceded to demands to allow international observers and constitutional limits on executive power⁹⁶. All together the MMD were given as good a chance as they could to fairly and freely challenge UNIP for power.

When the votes had been counted it came clear that the MMD had won an historic victory. With 76% of the vote Fredrick Chiluba ousted Kenneth Kaunda from his 27 year reign as President of Zambia. Further more the MMD captured an astonishingly 125 out of 150 National Assembly seats. "The legal and political hegemony of a single ruling party was, at least for the moment, replaced by a plurality of competing political ideas and institutions"⁹⁷.

5.3.2 Zimbabwe

ZANU (PF) can hardly be regarded as anything else than a hardliner. Zimbabwe's ruling party neatly constructed an official multiparty façade behind which the patronage and misuse of state resources guaranteed the "hierarchical and authoritarian nature of their power"⁹⁸. The opportunism on which informal structures are both based as well as generates attracts a certain breed of politicians and civil servants. Adherents to a political culture advocating and authorizing almost any means to remain in power can not be regarded as anything but

⁹⁵ Bratton, Michael "Zambia Starts Over" p. 92

⁹⁶ Ibid p. 91

⁹⁷ Ibid p. 81

⁹⁸ O'Donell, Guillermo & Schmitter, Philippe C. Transitions form Authoritarian Rule: Tentative conclusions about Uncertain Democracies p. 15

hardliners. The choices ZANU (PF) made in relation to competitive elections stand in stark contrast to those made by UNIP.

In the Parliamentary election in 2000, ZANU (PF) faced defeat for the very first time since independence. Just months before the election, several electoral surveys showed figures that would give the MDC a victory comparable to that of the MMD in Zambia⁹⁹. However, the run up to the elections was marked by violence and coercion on behalf of the ruling party. Systematic intimidation was accompanied by electoral manipulation on a large level as constituencies were redrawn and the voters roll included fictitious and deceased names. The courts and the police stood idly by as the MDC were beaten, killed, and cheated. Despite the tremendously unfair campaign and subsequent election, the MDC managed to win 49% of the vote¹⁰⁰.

The Presidential election in 2002 saw Robert Mugabe pitted against Morgan Tsvangirai. The pre election period was characterized by the same tactics that ZANU (PF) has used to successfully two years earlier. Police and military were deployed throughout the country to instill fear in the opposition. Just prior to the elections large public sums were used to grant huge pay increases to military, police, and judiciary personnel. Food was handed out to all who could provide a ruling party membership card and Mugabe travelled throughout the country in state helicopters and vehicles. It was estimated that roughly 95% of all TV broadcasts and newspaper articles were focused on ZANU (PF). Any complaints made to the courts were rejected, and it stood clear for all to see that the “independent judiciary was undermined systematically, the courts gradually turned into a gallery of Mugabe followers”¹⁰¹. When the result was in Robert Mugabe has won 57% of the vote compared to Morgan Tsvangirai’s 43%. Only regional election monitor groups were allowed inside the country and their reports were all but balanced and unforgiving. Just the fact that all provinces supporting Mugabe reported a voter turnout in the area of 60%, while Tsvangirai’s provinces had a more normal 50% turnout points towards the fact that the election was rigged¹⁰².

⁹⁹ Melber, Henning *Zimbabwe's Presidential Elections 2002: Evidence, Lessons and Implications* p. 23

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid* p. 25

¹⁰¹ *Ibid* p. 60

¹⁰² Chan, Stephen Robert *Mugabe: A Life of Power and Violence* pp. 204-208

6 Conclusions

UNIP and ZANU (PF) both founded their political hegemony on a utilization of a combination of informal and formal structural resources. UNIP exploited the fact that they won the independence elections to erect a de jure one-party state, thereby cementing its control over the political arena. Formal access to the state apparatus and resources embedded within it meant that Kaunda's party could move onto legitimizing the existence of the one-party state itself. UNIP's dominance in Zambian politics was based on the formal structures demarking the one-party state with which UNIP erected and utilized informal structures to guarantee its survival. As mentioned earlier, ZANU (PF) hegemonic position in Zimbabwean politics was based on the opposite balance between formal and informal structural resources. ZANU (PF) relied on the construction of a political culture that excluded anyone from power if they did not play by the informal rules. Patronage allowed for the centralization of power which in turn enabled the misuse of state resources. ZANU (PF) were so successful in establishing a culture of personalized politics and informal structures that guaranteed their control of the political arena that they were a de facto one-party state.

The threat to UNIP and ZANU (PF) in form of the opposition movements was remarkably alike. Yet Kaunda lost and Mugabe won. I believe that the different outcomes can be explained by the composition of which structural resources the ruling parties employed to control the political arena, and how they went about using them. The available tool box depends on which structures are present and in this case which structures that represent the foundation of UNIP and ZANU (PF)'s political hegemony. But that tool box can be deployed in various ways, and to explain political outcomes we must therefore also focus on how actors have chosen to utilize available structural resources. UNIP softliners chose to concede to the oppositions demands and liberalize the political opposition. By doing so UNIP deconstructed the one-party state and thereby also forfeited its exclusive access to the formal structural resources that guaranteed its political hegemony and control of the political arena.

ZANU (PF) on the other hand primarily relied on informal structural resources for its political hegemony. Mugabe's party used the reversible chain of control compared to UNIP. Zimbabwe was all along a formal multiparty democracy which officially allowed free electoral competition for power. Their control of the political arena was based on the access to informal structural resources given to them through the constant reproduction of a political culture of personalized politics. ZANU (PF) never relied on the formal system to exclusively support them, they controlled the informal structures which in turn gave them complete control of the formal structures. Further more ZANU (PF) had no problem with using the power that those informal structural resources gave them to thwart any

political threats. Their self conscious choice to develop, improve and ultimately utilize the resources on hand to defeat MDC ensured their continued stay in power.

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