# From Liberation Movements to Ruling Parties

## How useful are Dominant Party System frameworks in explaining Southern African former National Liberation Movements?

### Abstract:

Both within academic and contemporary circles, the nascent nature of the South African democracy cannot be denied. Although many may illustrate the massive strides made within the South African democratic project, it is by no means a 'consolidated democracy' with its greatest test yet still ahead: The transition of power away from the ruling liberation party, the African National Congress. While many African states, both within Southern Africa and across the continent at large, have suffered massive political, economic, social, and humanitarian crises subsequent to liberation, South Africa has largely escaped such calamities. However, it can be argued that the continued avoidance of similar calamities rests upon the continued maturation of the South African democracy. Although many scholars have written about democratic consolidation from sociological, economic, and broadly political positions globally, Southern Africa is unique due to the presence and concentration of liberation movements turned ruling parties. Due to their respective histories of opposing the rule of colonial governments, or white minority regimes, these 'liberation parties' ascend to power with a vast amount of popular support, and in turn legitimacy, leading to the erection of dominant party structures. Despite possessing strong political, economic and moral mandates, these liberation movements have subjected their electorates to massive service delivery failures, and in many instances autocratic behavior, hindering, irreparably damaging, or completely reversing the democratic advances made. As such, it is vital to not only evaluate the post liberation ability of formerly liberation movements, but also to critically examine the nature of these liberation parties, and their effect on the advancement of democratic principles, this paper intends to focus on the latter.

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# Introduction

With over half a century having passed since the onset of Frederick Cooper's (2002) *"golden decade of African independence"*, and nearly three decades since Francis Fukuyama's (1992) '*End of History'*, the progress of democratization made in Southern Africa has proven to be anticlimactic. While many scholars initially posited that democratic virtues, and ideals would proliferate throughout the region, recent history has contradictorily displayed the; erosion, denigration, and deconstruction, of democracy within these recently liberated states (Adejumobi, 2000). While National Liberation Movements—who where often viewed as '*embodiments*' of democracy itself—conceptually represented *the answer* to all of Southern Africa's woes at the time, they are now conversely viewed as *part of the problem* (Suttner, 2006. Reddy, 2005). Due to National Liberation Movements conflating their own self-will, and the progression of democracy, these movements have ultimately adopted a perspective akin to—yet in direct opposition with—that espoused within Francis Fukuyama's (1989) "End of History". Specifically, directly contradicting their previously espoused democratic ideals, these National Liberation Movements are viewed as holding the belief that; as they had successfully vanquished colonialism, history would now dictate that they should—or in fact *will*—stay in power for ever (Southall, 2013).

Thus while National Liberation Movements certainly allowed for, and successfully assisted in directing Southern Africa's transition towards democratic rule, scholars are now skeptical about their future trajectories—reinvigorated the academic study of democratization within the region (Lauth, 2004. in; Bogaards, 2007). Unsurprisingly, the emerging research has illustrated that the democratic transitions that have occurred across the region have broadly failed to achieve their assumed goal, namely;  the establishment of robust, multi-party, electoral democracies (Bogaards, 2004, 2007). As such, numerous scholars have attempted to dissect these nascent democracies, creating frameworks that track, and measure their development, along with explaining, and predicting the obstacles their future progressions may face (Lauth, 2004. in; Bogaards, 2007).

However, while numerous conceptual frameworks have been used to explore the above phenomenon, the predominantly utilized explanatory framework—specifically exploring the obstacles hindering Southern African democratic consolidation—is that of *Dominant Party Systems,* and their relationships with the now governing, *former,* National Liberation Movements within the region (Southall, 2014). Thus, as an initial response to both to: Professor Matthijs Bogaards' (2004:192), who stated that "There is an urgent need for systematic research into the nature, sources, conditions and consequences of dominant party systems [in Southern Africa];" along with Raymond Suttner's (2006) titular question 'Dominant Party Theory: *Of What Value*;' this paper will attempt to provide an initial evaluation of Dominant Party System frameworks, specifically regarding their relevance within Southern Africa. Fundamentally, such an evaluation seeks to answer; *How useful are Dominant Party System frameworks in explaining Southern African former National  Liberation Movements?*

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# Literature Review

Utilizing the schema proposed by Harvard University political scientist Samuel Huntington (1991), the preceding decades are viewed as conceptually representing the *Third Wave* of global democratization —where over 60 states transitioned directly from authoritarian regimes, towards various forms of democratic rule (Diamond, 1999). However, while such achievements where initially lauded, it has subsequently become apparent to scholars that the challenges faced by states attempting to sustain their newly founded democratic regimes are comparable to, *and often greater than*, those faced when transitioning towards, and establishing such regimes (Schedler, 1998). As such, following the immediate aftermath that surrounded many of these transitions towards democracy, scholars have increasingly questioned the manner in which such regimes should: firstly, stabilize their currently tumultuous socio-political contexts, and most importantly; strengthen, and secure their newly founded regimes against future threats, and regressions towards authoritarianism (Ostrom, 1986). Thus, with the *Third Wave* having reached its conceptual end, scholars—particularly political, and social scientists—have placed increased attention upon what has since been termed '*Democratic Consolidation*' (Collier & Levitsky, 1997. Schedler, 1998).

Succinctly, the notion of a *dominant party* may broadly be conceptualized as referring to the category of political parties who; posses numerous successive electoral victories, *and thus,* who's future defeat cannot likely be envisioned as occurring within the foreseeable future (Suttner, 2006). Specifically, Gilomee & Simkins (1999) have defined dominant parties to be those which have sustained electoral dominance over a prolonged period, and who thus; exclusively enjoy *de facto* authority in the formation of governments, and the determination of the public agenda. While held as benign by some, dominant party theorists, such as Pempel (1990), Arian & Barnes (1974), and Giliomee & Simkins (1999) among others, argue that the sustained dominance of a single party will ultimately result in declining responsiveness to—and eventually the complete disregard of —public opinion by government (Suttner, 2006). While the disregard of public sentiment by a political party may appear antithetical (Starr, 1939), dominant party theorists hold that as a dominant party may *justifiably* assume that they will govern over an indefinite term—regardless of their actions—their accountability is greatly reduced, when compared with standard political actors (Bogaards, 2004). Thus, it is argued that such parties will axiomatically display increasingly authoritarian tendencies in their rule, ultimately

culminating in the irreparable erosion of the democratic principles present within their states (Brooks, 2004. Suttner, 2006).

Ultimately, dominant party theorists seek to categorize—and evaluate the effects of —divergent relationship patterns between a dominant '*polity*', other political actors, and the citizenry at large (Bogaards, 2004. Brooks, 2004). Succinctly, dominant party theorists view such systems as being "competitive systems in which electoral results are held constant," displaying the insignificant role played by opposition political parties (Arian & Barnes, 1974: 613). However, while opposition parties may be unable to tangibly affect the broader dominant party system, their presence within it is nonetheless required by the framework. Specifically, unlike within one-party systems, where opposition parties are prohibited by law, within dominant party systems they are not only permitted, but also afforded the opportunity to compete against the dominant party—even though their likelihood of success is held to be negligible (De Jager & Du Toit, 2013). Thus, while often viewed by *laymen* to be synonymous with *de jure* one-party systems, dominant party systems are fundamentally constrained to existing solely within electoral, multi-party democratic regimes (De Jager & Du Toit, 2013). Additionally, while dominant party systems may exist within broader democratic contexts, they are distinguishable from other multi-party systems—due to the extended predominant power vested within a single political party (De Jager & Du Toit, 2013). Elaborating upon the factors that differentiate dominant parties, scholars have categorized them as: '*pseudo-democracies*,' who possess only the procedural elements of democracy (Diamond, 1996); along with viewing these parties as participating in "plebiscitary elections, against token opposition" (Joseph, 1998:6). Consequently, while dominant party systems undoubtedly possess various democratic features, scholars view them as existing between authoritarian and non-authoritarian rule, within a conceptual '*gray zone*' (Carothers, 2002).

Drawing from the above, scholars have sought to explicitly incorporate the dominance held by a single party, along with the repressed role of opposition parties, within a coherent conceptual framework—namely that of dominant party systems (Gilomee & Simkins, 1999). Despite such attempts, tangible disagreement exists between scholars regarding delineations of dominant party system frameworks, with definitions differing regarding the inclusion of specific *minutia* (Gilomee & Simkins, 1999). However, broad analysis of the literature as a whole illustrates that conceptions of dominant party system frameworks all generally encompass four overlapping conceptual dimensions

(Arian & Barnes, 1974). Firstly, scholars almost universally incorporate predetermined, and often fixed, timespans that parties are required to sustain their political power over, prior to being classified as dominant (Bogaards, 2004). Additionally, scholars impose a minimum electoral threshold upon the above, thus requiring not only extended governmental tenures, but also quantifiable political dominance (Bogaards, 2007. Suttner, 2006). In conjunction with the above, dominant party theorists necessarily evaluate the specificity insignificant role played—and generally diminished position occupied—by opposition parties (De Jager & Du Toit, 2013). Lastly, dominant party theorists incorporate evaluation of the broader political context, or system, present within the state—although this is implemented to varying degrees (October, 2015). However, as noted above—while broad agreement exists among dominant party theorists regarding the consequences associated with the extended presence of dominant parties within a state, along with broadly encompassing the above dimensions—considerable conceptual disagreement exists between academics regarding the specific methodology that should be employed when measuring, classifying, and even defining dominant party systems (Van de Walle & Butler, 1999). Thus, while generalized conceptual definitions of party dominance, such as that of Giliomee & Simkins (1999) are often employed within discussions regarding party dominance, various scholars have attempted to more clearly delineate their conceptions, thus presenting empirically-based, measurable definitions (Bogaards, 2004).

Specifically, scholars such as James Coleman (1960), along with Nicolas Van de Walle and Kimberly Butler (1999), have presented conceptually minimalistic definitions of party dominance, requiring only that; a party surpasses a stated electoral threshold, of 70% and 60% respectively—for a single election. While unambiguously stated, the specific requirements included within these conceptually minimalistic definitions, stand in stark juxtaposition with the expanded definitions raised by scholars such as Sartori (1976), and Pempel (1990). Specifically, while Sartori (1976) similarly states that a party is required to surpass a given electoral threshold, set at 50%, Sartori additionally requires not only that; it be sustained over a prolonged period of three consecutive electoral cycles, but additionally that the presence of a divided government be absent. As with Sartori (1976), Pempel (1990) utilizes a reduced electoral threshold —when compared to either Coleman (1960) or Van de Walle & Butler (1999)— requiring that a party obtains a plurality of votes, and parliamentary seats, and additionally stipulates that it must be held consistently over a '*substantial period*.' However, while dominant party theorists almost universally posit that; the prolonged concentration of power within a single party

stimulates corruption, along with encouraging and enabling abuses of this power, they hold diverging views regarding the specific amount of time that is required to illustrate the dominance of a given political party (Bogaards, 2004. Suttner, 2006). Specifically, *on the one hand* are the views of scholars such as, Coleman (1960), and Van de Walle & Butler (1999), who posit that a single electoral cycle is sufficient for the classification of party dominance. However, *on the other hand*, standing in contrast with the above views, are scholars such as Ware (1996), and Pempel (1990) who posit that; party dominance can only occur once a party has maintained electoral dominance over an undefined '*substantial period*'—great enough that they may reasonably expect to maintain dominant indefinitely. Similarly, Greene (2009) also requires that dominance be sustained over a prolonged period, specifically requiring that it be held for at least five electoral cycles— twenty years—prior to a party being categorized as dominant. Existing between these two position are authors such as; De Jager & Du Toit (2013), along with Sartori (1976), who employ thresholds of two, and three consecutive electoral cycles for the classification of party dominance, respectively.

In addition to requiring specific timespans that dominance must be maintained over, scholars generally prescribe various minimum electoral thresholds that must be maintained by a party for it to be viewed as dominant (Bogaards, 2007). Existing on the low end of the spectrum, are the conceptually minimalistic requirements imposed by scholars such as Pempel (1990), who only requires that a party possesses a plurality of votes—thus allowing for the inclusion of divided governments. In contrast with Pempel (1990), thus existing on the high end of the spectrum, are scholars such as Coleman (1960), and Van de Walle & Butler (1999) who; require that a dominant party possesses at least 70% and 60% of the available parliamentary seats, respectively. Existing between these extremes are scholars such as Sartori (1976), who succinctly requires that dominant parties possess absolute majorities—the minimum amount possible while excluding divided governments. While scholars such as Pempel (1990), who do not preclude the presence of divided governments explicitly within their definitions, appear to stand in contrast with scholars such as Sartori (1976)—who do—it must be noted that Pempel (1990) additionally requires that opposition parties within the state occupy '*inferior bargaining positions',* in relation to that held by the dominant party.

This displays a fundamental aspect of dominant party systems, namely the insignificant role played by opposition parties, from which the negative effects of

dominant parties are seen as emerging from. As discussed by Professor Hermann Giliomee and Charles Simkins (1999)—among others—the extended tenure of a dominant political party is viewed to result in the erosion, denigration, and deconstruction of democracy—along with it associated values, norms, and traditions—within a society. Ultimately, as dominant parties need not consider the views and opinions of the citizenries at large (Adejumobi, 2000), their actions are viewed as precluding democratization progress, standing as the antithesis of democratic consolidation. Conceptually, democratic consolidation may be simply viewed as representing the *maturation* process through which nascent democratic regimes solidify their legitimate claim to rule (O'Donnell, 2009). Drawing from this initial conception, while numerous definitions for democratic consolidation have been presented within academic literature, they may generally be categorized as either *negative*, or *positive* conceptions (Huntington, 1991. Schedler, 1998). Specifically, negative conceptualization of democratic consolidation, view the process as merely representing the adequate avoidance of major democratic breakdowns, or *backslides*—which are viewed as representing the significant erosion of democratic virtues, and ideals domestically (Schedler, 1998). Alternatively, positive conceptualizations hold consolidated democracies as *complete*—having successfully entrenched democratic ideals, virtues, and values deeply within their domestic societies (Schedler, 1998).

While definitions such as the above provide uncontested academic utility, various scholars have advocated for the utilization of conceptualizations that encompass both sides of this dichotomous divide (Huntington, 1991. Hunnes, 2007). As such, scholars such as Philippe Schmitter (1992) have advocated that scholars abate the use of dichotomous conceptions rather, arguing that a state is to be viewed as having achieved democratic consolidation only when; various socio-democratic patterns of interaction are deeply entrenched within society, to the point where they can be viewed as acting in an *autonomous manner*. Similarly representing both the effective avoidance of future democratic regressions, along with the successful entrenchment of democratic virtues is the acclaimed definition of Samuel Huntington (1991)—who centers his conception solely upon the alternation of power between political rivals. Huntington (1991) simply proposes that a democracy is to be viewed as consolidated after it passes a *Two Turnover Test,* where; over the course of at least two electoral cycles, the incumbent political party is democratically voted out of office—and thus replaced by their opposition—without the occurrence of a complete collapse of democratic constitutional order within the state.

However, while Huntington's *Two Turnover Test* is widely utilized, primarily due to is simplicity, various scholars have criticized its minimalistic conception advocating for the inclusion of an expanded range of indicators for democracy, and not solely electoral results (Linz & Stepan, 1996. Bogaards, 2007). As such, within their conceptual definitions of democratic consolidation, scholars such as Guillermo O'Donnell (1993) have additionally argued that; democratic rule within the state should be upheld during times of extreme economic hardship, along with necessitating that significant anti-democratic sentiments should be absent within the general citizenry. Explicitly seeking to incorporate various social, and socio-political dimensions within their conceptual definition, are scholars such as Robert Dahl (1989), along with Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan (1996), representing conceptually comprehensive definitions.

Principally, Dahl (1989) proposes that mature liberal democracies all share five fundamental features, and thus democratic consolidation cannot be viewed as being achieved in their absence. Specifically, Dahl (1989) holds the following as required prior to a state being categorized as having achieved democratic consolidation: firstly, they must fundamentally ensure the effective participation of their citizenry, *insofar* as each domestic citizen possesses an equal opportunity to express their beliefs, and opinions, on a given policy matter prior to a final decision being reached. Secondly, all voters, irrespective of their relative socio-political standing within society, must posses an equal opportunity to cast their ballot, with each ballot additionally being equal to the next—thus viewed as all carrying the same *weight*. In addition to the above two requirements, Dahl (1989) argues that all voters must equally possess the ability to determine which issues are placed upon the social, and political agendas. Lastly, it is required by Dahl (1989) that all permanent adult residents within the state are equally afforded full citizenship rights, thus all equally possessing a legitimate stake within the political system. In an analogous manner, Linz & Stepan (1996) have argued that for democratic consolidation to be achieved several *factors* must not only be present, but in fact entrenched within the collective democratic culture of a state. Specifically, Linz & Stepan (1996) hold that: firstly, the prerequisite socio-political conditions necessary for the effective development of a free and lively civil society must be present and entrenched; and secondly that, an autonomous, robust, and staunch political sphere must be active, prior to a democratic regime being conceptualized as consolidated. Additionally, Linz & Stepan (1996) argue that: holding all political actors within a state—regardless of their party affiliation—as being subject to, and constrained by, the rule of law to its full extent; along with the active existence of an

effective state bureaucratic machine; and the presence of a deeply institutionalized, and uncontroversially independent economic sphere must exist domestically, as requirement for democratic consolidation.

Drawing on the preexisting literature, scholars such as Professor Said Adejumobi (2000) advocate for the explicit inclusion of socio-political factors within conceptions of democratic consolidation—as done by Dahl (1989), and Linz & Stepan (1996) above— arguing that their exclusion negatively effects the frameworks explanatory power. Specifically evaluating the African context, Adejumobi (2000) argues that the aspirations of, and obstacles faced by, regimes attempting to consolidate within the region cannot be conceptualize as: being restrictively limited to economic factors, as espoused by scholars such as Bernard, Reenock, & Nordstrom (2004); nor as being solely concerned with "*elections, and political rights*" , as espoused by Huntington (1991) through his *Two Turn Over Test.* Rather, Adejumobi (2000) holds the view that conceptualizations of democratic consolidations should encompass the characteristics of democracies that influence the *personal* existential realities of citizens, such as: better living standards; adequate social welfare provision; along with the scope, and depth, of civil liberties provided by the state. This is reinforced by Charles Tilly (2007) who, while acknowledging the value of approaches such as those of Dahl (1989), and Linz & Stepan (1996), argues that such conceptions are fundamentally flawed as they hold democracy to be a monolithic endpoint, which remains fixed in nature past the particular moment in time in which it was achieved. Thus, as an alternative Tilly (2007) argues that; while one may certainly be able to determine whether or not a state is democratic, scholars must remain cognizant to internal changes within in occurring overtime. It is as a result of these changes that Tilly (2007:) proposes that democracy, and thus democratic consolidation, should be conceptualized as an ever changing *'matter of degree'* rather than monolithically. Specifically, Tilly (2007:14-15) asserts that "a regime is democratic to the *degree* that political relations between the state and its citizens feature broad, equal, protected, and mutually binding consultations." Ultimately, Tilly (2007) can be viewed as holding democratic consolidation to be the entrenchment of a democratic political culture.

Through out the social sciences culture is undoubtedly held to be a crucial determinant factor constructing both the history, and social political identity of a state (Matlosa, 2003). Conceptually, political culture is viewed as acting both directly, and indirectly upon; economic, political, and social governance processes within a state,

either affording the states political system with broad, deeply-seeded stability from it may act, or it may stand against it (Meywood, 2013). Thus, held to be the principal factor influencing the norms, beliefs, and traditions contained within the '*social fabric*' of a society, political culture has been conceptualized as being the capstone through which the governance of a political system may either be promoted, or undermined (Matlosa, 2013. Heywood, 2013). Constructed as a product representing not only the collective political history, but also collective socio-cultural histories—and is thus equally rooted in national public events, and individual experiences—(Huntington, 1993), political culture is conceptualized as representing "politics of the mind" (Heywood, 2013:185). Specifically, political culture has been held to represent the formalized aggregate manifestation shared among a particular group of the psychological, and subjective dimensions of the political sphere that surrounds them (Huntington, 1993). Ultimately, drawing upon the above the progression of democratization, and the fate of democratic institutions, are viewed as primarily being influenced by the attitudes, values, and behavior patterns encompassed by the societies political culture. Thus, under such a view, the process of democratic consolidation is held as being achieved only when a states political culture has become democratic, to the largest degree (Matlosa, 2013).

Drawing from though similar to the above, various scholars attempted to break from traditional explanatory conceptual frameworks when evaluating the numerous Southern African states states currently experiencing democratic regressions (Sandbrook, 2000). Previously, scholars such as Bernard, Reenock, & Nordstrom (2004) have argued that the current state of Southern African democratic consolidation may be explained as emerging from the lasting negative effects of colonialism, specifically due the systematic economic underdevelopment of these states by former metropoles. However, rejecting the prominence placed upon economic factors, scholars advocate for greater importance being placed upon the socio-political factors—represented by societal political culture— present within the state within frameworks employed within the region (Adejumobi, 2000). Ultimately, such frameworks are utilized as explanatory instruments, evaluating the various attributes present within a state—specifically its leadership—that would result in, and may signal a likely regression towards 'de-facto' one-party, quasi-military, authoritarian rule (Giliomee & Simkins, 1999). While various factors are held to be responsible, scholars increasingly hold that the currently ruling governments, comprised mostly of former National Liberation Movements are responsible (O'Brien, 1999). Specifically, various scholars argue that there exists an *inherent logic* within these

National Liberation Movements, one which necessarily results in regression towards authoritarianism (Southall, 2014). From this view, it is argued that the National Liberation Movements formed, and now governing over Southern Africa poses—and promote the proliferation of—inherently anti-democratic political cultures, thus standing in fundamental opposition with further democratic consolidation (Southall, 2003. O'Brien, 1999). Emerging from their perceived political culture, it is thus held that these National Liberation Movements will follow the path of other African nationalist, and liberationist movements in constructing *de jure* single party states once they assume office (Southall, 20003). Thus, dominant party theorists fundamentally argue that following independence Southern Africa's National Liberation Movements will ultimately suppress, rather than incite democratization, holding their current construction of *de facto* single-party states through Dominant Party Systems, as representing an intermediary position within their attempted progression towards authoritarian rule  (Southall, 2003a:256).

 While held to be a universally applicable framework by its proponents, scholars such as Suttner (2006) have argued that dominant party theorists are guilty of inconsistently responding to the results produced by their framework. Specifically, while dominant party theorists categorize numerous states as possessing dominant party systems, the dominance held by certain political parties, such as those within; India, Japan, or Sweden for example, are generally not conceptualized as being detrimental, while its occurrence across Africa—particularly Southern Africa—is held to be deeply problematic (Southall, 1998, 2005. Giliomee & Simkins, 1999. Reddy, 2005). Take the Swedish Social Democratic Party (SSDP) for example; a party which maintained its dominance, virtually uninterrupted from 1932 till 2006 (Nordsieck, 2018), a period far exceeding the dominance held by many African parties (Bogaards, 2004). However, the extended dominance held by the SSDP is generally not held as having been problematic, primarily due to its outcome (Suttner, 2006). Specifically, while the SSDP undoubtedly possessed sustained dominance, Swedish democracy has not experienced the democratic regression, and erosions held by party dominance theorists (Bogaards, 2013). Ultimately, rather than experiencing democratic backslides, Sweden has developed a robust multi-party system, where; numerous small political parties all contests elections, with no singular party being able reasonably expect to assume power alone—necessitating the formation of coalition governments (Merkel & Petring, 2007). Such an outcome is explained by dominant party theorists—such as Coleman (1960), and Van de Walle & Butler (1999)—who employ relatively high minimum electoral thresholds within

their conceptions. Specifically, while the SSDP maintained dominance for over 70 years, the party has only twice posed an absolute electoral majority; first in 1940 with 53.8% of the vote, and narrowly in 1968 with 50.1% of the vote (Zacharzewski, 2014), thus precluding them from being classified as dominant under several conceptions.

Responding to cases such as the SSDP, dominant party theorists have generally sought to utilize conceptions with increased electoral thresholds, such as that of Sartori (1976), who requires dominant parties to possess absolute majorities. Furthermore, scholars such as Nicola De Jager (2009) have advocated for reducing the importance placed upon quantitatively massive electoral victories, rather stating that; it is the power and influence posses by this represent that should be of primary importance to dominant party theorists. Despite such attempts, scholars have still argued that the quantitative dominance possessed by certain parties may feasibly result in numerous outcomes, and not solely those dictated by dominant party theorist (Suttner, 2006). Succinctly, critics posit that dominant party theorists are guilty of falsely conflating the paths and outcomes of predominant, and hegemonic party systems (De Jager & Du Toit, 2013). Sartori (1976) defines a predominant party system as; possessing limited political competition, specifically with one party electorally outdistancing its opponents, yet nonetheless the possibility for an alternation of power exists. This is contrasted with hegemonic party systems which are essentially non-competitive systems, where; any alternation of power cannot feasible be conceptualized as likely to occur within the foreseeable future (Sartori, 1976). However, those who oppose the use of traditional dominant party system frameworks still argue that while the framework may be adjusted, for example by; altering the specific electoral thresholds and the timespan required for dominance, the framework fails to encompass reality of democratic consolidation (Suttner, 2006). This may be illustrated by the Indian National Congress (INC) who; while having historically possessed political dominance within the state, having governed for extended periods mostly free of interruption first from 1946 till 1996, and again from 2004 till 2014, various scholars hold their presence as having been beneficial, and not detrimental in directing positive democratization progress in India (Johari, 1996. Reddy, 2005). When evaluating the party models utilized within South Africa, and India Professor Thiven Reddy (2005) noted that the dominance possessed by India's INC was not detrimental towards their democratization, but in fact provided political stability conductive to the nations post independence democratic consolidation efforts. Specifically, the political stability afforded by the INC has allowed India's political system to slowly transition away from being lead

by a deeply entrenched dominant party, towards one populated with numerous, narrowly based regional parties, resulting in a robust multi-party system—and thus advancing democratic consolidation  (Johari, 1996. Reddy, 2005).

   Acknowledging the above thought, scholars have begun to broadly question if—or to what degree—the extended dominance of a single political party will result in the erosion of democracy, and the rise of authoritarian, anti-democratic political leadership within the Southern African context (Southall, 2014). As a result of such inquiry scholars have begun to posit that *neither* the presence of weak political opposition, *nor* the extended electoral dominance of a single party, are explicitly shown to affect Southern Africa's democratic consolidation in the manner held by dominant party theorists (Suttner, 2006). It is noted by these scholars that while static conceptions, and categorizations of democracy—along with the factors held as potential obstacles to its proliferation—may be applicable during within their respective contexts, it is of vital importance to remain cognizant of the continually changing, and greatly differing natures possessed by democracies (Bogaards, 2007). Thus regarding the evaluation of  dominant party systems, "the old pattern of moderate victories, regular alternation, and democracy on one hand, versus total victories in elections without choice, absence of alternation, and dictatorship on the other" must specifically be evaluated contextually (Bogaards, 2007:1212). Specifically, while often excluded within discussions—and assumed to be implied—it is argued that scholars should remain cognizant of the fact that "the same institutional container, namely a dominant single party, has the potential to hold quite different contents, depending on numerous other conditions" (Pempel, 1999:X-I). Under such a view, dominant party theorists are held as failing to differentiate between differing political cultures. Thus, it has been argued by scholars such as Southall (2005) that those who advocate for the utilization of dominant party system frameworks within Southern Africa inherently posses objections to the democratically decided reality present within the region, and as such wrongly conclude that the electoral dominance prevalent within the region signifies undemocratic political parties (Southall, 2005. Suttner, 2006). Furthermore, Southall (2005) additionally posits that dominant party theorists are 'guilty of blaming Southern African political parties for their own popularity'. Ultimately, while dominant party theorists may be justified in fearing the erosion, and complete break down of democracy, Suttner (2006: 280) states that "The dominant party debate in turn, negates focus on the character [...] of the ruling party/organization. It does not consider *why* the party is dominant and what this says about the *nature* and *history* of [the state]."

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# Context

Research conducted by Freedom House (2018)—an independent watchdog organization studying global expansions of freedom, and democracy— illustrates that as of 2018; only eight of the 49 states within Sub-Saharan Africa may be categorized as "Free"—utilizing their Democracy Index. Furthermore, the organization has broadly viewed the region as being characterized by the expansive presence of "entrenched autocrats [and] fragile institutions" (Freedom House, 2017). In line with the views espoused by Freedom House (2017, 2018), various scholars have additionally illustrated that since independence, Southern African states have experienced: continually changing regime structures (Tafirenyika, 2016); the initial attainment, yet eventual abandonment of peace (Adejumobi, 2000); cyclical economies which fluctuate between exponential growth, severe stagnation, and eventually rapid recessionary contraction (Qobo & le Pere, 2017); along with rampant corruption, and poor political leadership (Seepe, 2007).

Within the surveyed academic literature, while liberation movements are broadly conceptualized as a form of social movement, one committed to enact radical social change (Britz, 2011), two differing scholars of though exist regarding specifically delineating their conceptual definition (October, 2015). Representing the predominant approach are scholar such as Wallerstein (1996) who argues that, '*all types*' of liberation movements are fundamentally synonymous—specifically with each other, and broadly with general social movements (October, 2015). Specifically, Wallerstein (1996) argues that all liberation movements universally share the view that: there exists a specific group of individuals that are deliberately excluded from fully participating in political, social, and civil spheres of existence; and furthermore, there exists a specific group directly responsible for this oppression. Similarly, scholars such as Lodge (2014) have added that liberations movements only occur when oppressed social groups form mass organizations, based upon broadly shared social solidarities, and are thus able to mobilize popular support. Consequently, akin to social movements, scholars of the above view conceptualize the goals of liberation movements as a "struggle to free people and territories from oppressive regimes, whether these regimes are colonialist, domestic dictatorships, or oligarchies" (Clapham, 2012:5). However, while the liberation movements present within Southern Africa display themselves as being constructed with the aim of liberating individuals from the rule of oppressive regimes, though the implementation of

democratic regimes, following liberation the above scholars have illustrated that the region has experienced an contradictory wave of anti-democratic activity—supporting the views held by dominant party theorists (Seepe, 2007).

Responding to the contradiction raised above, scholars such as Southall (2013), Suttner (2006), and Salih (2007) have broken away from the predominantly utilized conception of the regions liberation movements, arguing that while a plethora of organizations indeed sought similar ends—namely the abolishment of oppressive rule— Southern Africa's *National Liberation Movements* are distinguishable as a specific sub-set, possessing uniquely identifiable histories, contexts, and trajectories. Specifically, drawing upon Dependency Theory the above scholars posit broadly that the nature of Africa's historical relationship with colonialism was such that it tended to structure the political economies of colonies in such a manner where they perpetually remained heavily dependent upon their former colonial powers (Cooper, 2002). The nature of this dependency was expected to persist long after the colonial elite had seceded political control to successor nationalist governments, thus motivating many colonialist governments to retreat when faced with rising domestic opposition (Gartzke & Rohner, 2010). However, the experience of anti-colonial nationalist movements within Southern Africa was divergent to that depicted by Dependency Theory above (Reddy, 2005). Unlike their counterparts within Northern Africa, nationalist movements in Southern Africa where confronted by incumbent colonial, and apartheid, governments who increasingly displayed hesitance to concede power, resulting in the utilization of increasingly revolutionary tactics, and rhetoric, in order to advance their liberationist agenda (Britz, 2011. Southall, 2005). Scholars have illustrated that the revolutionary tactics specifically employed within the region differ from other African states due to the use of guerrilla warfare, and insurrection (Johnson, 2003). Consequently, while all African liberation movements are viewed as being directed towards the seizure of political power—resulting in broad social transformation—scholars such as Southall (2013), Suttner (2006), and Salih (2007) conclude that; the methodology employed within the region differentiates the *National Liberation Movements*[1] found in Southern Africa from the generic form of anti-

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[1] Hereafter, this paper will take the term 'liberation movement' as referring to the conceptualization proposed by those subscribing to the first view, such as Wallerstein (1996), and Lodge (2014). The term 'National Liberation Movement' will thus be taken as referring specifically to the liberation movement existing within Southern Africa, as conceptualized Southall (2013), Suttner (2006), and Salih (2007).

colonial nationalist movements found both throughout the continent, and the globe (October, 2015). Additionally, these National Liberation Movements are often characterized as being dominant parties, the above scholars argue that this too must be discussed in a contextual manner.

Breaking from traditional conceptions of dominant party systems, those advocating for the utilization of contextually based analysis propose that as these National Liberation Movements generally all secure quantitatively massive electoral victories, their dominance should be conceptualized with respect to *influence*, rather than the traditionally employed measures (De Jager & Du Toit, 2015. Southall, 2013). Under such a conception, National Liberation Movements are to be viewed as dominant when their "doctrines, ideas, methods and style coincide with [and determine] those of the epoch" (Duverger, 1954:308). Thus rather than being measured with respect to the length of their governmental tenures, or the electoral results, scholars argue that a '*resource approach*' is better suited to evaluate the dominance of National Liberation Movements (De Jager & Du Toit, 2015). As proposed by De Jager & Du Toit (2015), National Liberations are conceptualized as drawing their dominance from their possession of a set of specific historic events that grant the party a unified symbolic image, from which they may; firstly, mobilize mass popular support, and secondly, through which they may cremate a '*historic block'* of voters guaranteeing sustained future support for the party. Additionally, National Liberation Movements may draw their dominance from: charismatic leaders linked to the above historic events; their power of appointment, and patronage; and a political culture that they utilize both as a source for symbols representing social identity, and as a marker of in-group solidarity (De Jager & Du Toit, 2015). Ultimately, the resource approach proposed above emerges due cognizance that the dominance of National Liberation Movements has less to do with the weakness of opposition political parties, and primarily emerges due to extensive access to the aforementioned resources through '*hyper incumbency advantages*' (Greene, 2009).

Nyakallo Makgoba

# Discussion

While often conceptualized, and evaluated, as an homogenous region, Southern Africa's democratization has manifested into vastly dissimilar existential realities (Cowen & Laakso, 2002). Thus, even when cases assumed to be analogous are evaluated, the utilization of generalized conceptual frameworks—such as dominant party system frameworks—fail to adequately encompass the political reality of these regimes (Southall, 2013). For example, as extensively discussed by De Jager & Du Toit (2013); while both the Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF), and the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) are characterized as dominant parties, the "*electoral-*authoritarian" system constructed by the former (Schedler, 2005), stands starkly in contrast with the "*illiberal-*democratic*"* context surrounding the later (Zakaria, 1997. Carothers, 2002). As distinctions such as the above have largely been ignored within traditional dominant party system frameworks, various scholars have argued that their claims of an '*inevitable trajectory'* towards authoritarianism, fail to adequately reflect the *varying contents*, within the dominant party *institutional container* (Suttner, 2006, 2004. Southall, 2003. Pempel, 1999:X-I). Thus rather than viewing the dominance of National Liberation Movements as; existing in absolutes, and monolithic in nature, it should be conceptualized as existing within multiple spheres, or contexts, and being negotiated between numerous factors (Alazzam, 2015. Suttner, 2006). Conceptually, the dominance of National Liberation Movements is viewed as existing within an electoral context, held as the sole context within dominant party system frameworks, but the first of three hierarchical contexts within the contextual approach advocated for above (De Jager & Du Toit, 2015. Suttner, 2006). Consequently, as dominant party system frameworks are restrictively conceptualized as exclusively evaluating electoral dominance the frameworks applicability is limited with regards to National Liberation Movements—as will be briefly explored subsequently, primarily through reference to Tanzania.

Electoral dominance has been conceptualized by scholars as the most ephemeral form of dominance a party possess (Alazzam, 2015). Specifically, while neither National Liberation Movements, nor their electorate may anticipate an alternation in political power occurring in the foreseeable future, political parties are nonetheless constrained by their political context, else their dominance will be short lived (Suttner, 2006. Cohen & Laakso, 2002). Loosely translated as the 'Party of the Revolution' Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) exists undoubtedly as a dominant party within Tanzania, having won all five parliamentary,

and presidential elections occurring in the nations' multiparty era (Nyaluke & Connolly, 2013). Having ruled over Tanzania during the nations single party era, the CCM was integrally involved in the states transition towards multiparty politics (Lindberg & Jones, 2010). However, following the nations 'flawed' first multi-party elections in 1995, where the CCM was widely accused of having engaged in non-democratic practices to ensure that they party would remain in power (Schedler, 2002), scholars have categorized the nations political system as being heavily underpinned by new-patrimonial practices period (Clapham, 1985). Thus, while the sheer dominance possessed by the party—such as Jakaya Kikwete's landslide 80% victory in the 2005 presidential elections (Lindberg & Jones, 2010)—are often justified upon ideological grounds by the party, dominant party theorists oppose this view arguing that the current multi-party elections merely represent a continuation of the preceding single-party elections (Samoff, 1987). This is as the party is viewed as having heavily benefited from effort that had been put into party organization during the one-party era, almost certainly ensuring its continued dominance within the newly developed multi-party electoral context (Nyaluke & Connolly, 2013). However, while the CCM may have gained additional organizational benefits from actions conducted within the single party era, the emphasis placed upon party-building during this period resulted in relatively high levels of public engagement in political meetings, and rallies (Hyden, 1980).

As a result of this, despite solely possessing a political mandate, even during the single party era the CCM's political elite were not immune from criticism, and broad expressions of discontent emerging from the public (Hyden, 1980). This is specifically illustrated by the fact that during the late 1980's, emerging during President Mwinyi's first term in office, two interlinked policy concerns dominated public political discourse, and thus became key policy issues in the party's campaign manifesto (Luanda, 1998. Hyden, 1980). Specifically, both while operating in a single-, and multi-party context, due to immense public outcry the CCM has been forced to address: Firstly, the need for broad economic development that benefited all Tanzanians, and not solely the political elite within the CCM; along with the need to end corruption, which was viewed by the public as militating the poverty reducing economic development called for above (Luanda, 1998). While the need to address both of these issues where widely espoused by the public, corruption—which had become a term that represented an embodiment of all that they perceived wrong with their government—took center stage (Nyaluke & Connolly, 2013). Thus, in response to the importance vested in eradicating corruption by the public,

during the last single-party election occurring in 1990, President Mwinyi's administration made fighting corruption the key policy issue in their campaign manifesto (Luanda, 1998). Specifically, Mwinyi pledged to address the public's calls to; reform systematic failures to collect taxes (Nyaluke & Connolly, 2013. Luanda, 1998), eradicate the widespread petty corruption that occurred among CCM official (Mmuya & Chaligha, 1992), along with responding to the perceived disregard for the interest of ordinary people by the CCM's political elite (Okema, 1996). As such, immediately following Mwinyi's reelection corruption involving politicians, and CCM officials was widely reported in both the privately, and publicly owned media (Luanda, 1998).

By monolithically categorizing National Liberation Movements as dominant parties, ignoring various contextual factors present within each state, dominant party system frameworks falsely conclude that these political parties will axiomatically disregard the sentiment held by their citizenry, shown to be possible by the CCM above (Mushi, 1997). However, as Mwinyi's term progressed public sentiment began to hold the view that he had failed to adequately tackle corruption, and neglected to take seriously his pledge to reverse the now widening economic inequalities that existed (Shivji, 2005). While dominant party theorists hold that Mwinyi's failures are characteristic of dominant parties, holding that the CCM would increasingly be characterized as acting in a similar manner subsequent to implementation of multi-party elections, before the first multi-party election in 1995, the CCM political leadership sought to distance itself from Mwinyi's government (Maliyamkono, 1995). Specifically, recognizing that the party had undermined both the trust of fellow CCM members, along with the trust placed in the CCM's leadership by the general public (Shivji, 2005. Luanda, 1998), the party endeavored to demonstrate the '*personal culpability*' of Mwinyi, characterizing his administration as an abnormality divergent from the party's norm (Luanda, 1998. Maliyamkono, 1996). As such, the party sought to distance itself from the Mwinyi administration, resolving to align itself with previous President, Julius Nyerere (Mukandala, 2001). Benefiting from the fact that Nyerere still possessed widespread public support, even being referred to as "*Baba wa Taifa*"—*Father of the Nation*—(Okema, 2001), Nyerere was integrally involved in attacking Mwinyi's record towards the end of his term (Nyerere, 1997), along with being actively involved in both the selection, and electoral campaign of the party's presidential candidate, Benjamin Mkapa (TEMCO, 1995). Principally, Mkapa based his electoral campaign upon the notion that the CCM was a party "which unlike other parties in Africa has succeeded in fulfilling its historic mission of building '*umoja wa kitaifa* [national unity]

and of building '*amani an utulivu*' [peace and tranquility]" (CCM, 1995). Extensively utilizing Nyerere's mass public support, Mkapa emphasized that the process of constructing a unified, broadly inclusive national identity did not occur naturally, rather emerging as a direct result of the action conducted by the CCM (1995). However, in order to achieve this, the party was forced to merge its proposed policy actions with those espoused by the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU), along with the Afro-Shiraz Party (ASP) (CCM, 1995:38-39). Mkapa, and the CCM have viewed these joint policy actions as sowing the "seed which [would birth] unity, love, solidarity, and trust among the men and women of Tanzania" (CCM, 1995:31).

Ultimately, the above action by the CCM, along with the steps taken to ensures its success, are viewed as representative of National Liberation Movements as a whole. Following liberation from oppressive rule, National Liberation Movements have all embarked upon extensive projects to construct unified national identities, based upon contextual cultural factors specific to each state—such as the 'Rainbow Nation' conceptually utilized within South Africa (De Jager & Du Toit, 2015). Such a task is two-fold: on the one hand, National Liberation Movements uplift the cultures and histories of previous oppressed groups, explicitly incorporating them in the states discourse; but on the other they deliberately suppress various factors previously present within the states political culture (Suttner, 2006. Butler, 2014). While viewed as antithetical towards further democratization by dominant party theorists, the suppression, and exclusion of various factors from within the states political culture is enacted in order mitigate the risk of perceived differences between members of their societies—such as deeply seeded colonialism emerging from colonialism—igniting civil unrest (Alazzam, 2015. De Jager & Du Toit, 2015. Suttner, 2006). Furthermore, while National Liberation Movements are conceptualized to be monolithic, homogeneous institutions, as displayed by the adoption of ASP, and TANU policy by the CCM above—and additionally; with the merger of the Tripartite Alliance between the ANC, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), and the South African Communist Party (SACP) within South Africa— National Liberation Movements are viewed to be "broad churches" encompassing numerous ideological groups from within their state under their umbrella (Butler, 2014: 159). While these measures are taken by National Liberation Movements to create, and maintain, a unified monolithic national identity, dominant party system frameworks ignore that this allows National Liberation Movements to enjoy large naturally emerging majorities in elections, drawn from within their 'broad church' (Alazzam, 2015. Butler, 2014).

Furthermore, dominant party system frameworks ignore the additional constraints that emerge from within this broad church (De Jager & Du Toit, 2015. Suttner, 2006).

Specifically, dominant party theorist inadequately incorporate the fact that the '*broad church*' of ideologies present within National Liberation Movements results in numerous factions within the party possessing vastly different political agenda, causing not only rampant internal conflicts but additionally causing these parties to construct inadequate policy proposals, as they attempt to please diverging constituents—ultimately constraining the parties policy options (De Jager & Du Toit, 2015. Butler, 2014). Making reference to South Africa's African National Congress (ANC), where under the charismatic leadership of Mandela—affectionally referred to as '*Tata'* [father]—these many factions where unified, directed towards achieving liberation prior to 1994, and shepherded by his subsequently (De Jager & Parkin, 2017. Butler, 2009). However, over time this unity has eroded, leading to the formation fo breakaway political parties by disgruntled constituents, specifically: following the dismissal of President Thabo Mbeki members formed the Congress of the People (COPE) (De Jager & Parkin, 2017); and the Economic Freedom Fighters, lead by former ANC Youth League President Julius Malema was formed in response to the sentiment of disenfranchisement held by the youth, and workers (Duverger, 1954). Ultimately, the internal divides present within National Liberation Movements, not only undermine their claims of legitimately being "the natural party of government," but additionally greatly constrain the dominance they are perceived as possessing (Butler, 2009. Duverger, 1954).

Extensively discussed within dominant party system discourse, scholars generally argue that the length of political dominance possessed by a party greatly affects the nature, and political reality of the surrounding them (Bogaards, 2004. Suttner, 2006. Pempel, 1990). It is suggested by proponents of this view that the longer a political parties governmental tenure is, the greater the likelihood is that they will ultimately submit to temptations to secure their future political dominance (Giliomee & Simkins, 1999). Ultimately, if they possess sufficient electoral dominance, it is argued that dominant parties will eventually attempt to amend the state constitution—viewed as constraining the reach of their dominance (Bogaards, 2007, 2004. Arian & Barnes, 1974). Succinctly, a dominant party many be viewed as having advanced beyond electoral dominance, to now possessing constitutional dominance, once: it succeeds in rewriting sections of the constitution, intentionally strengthening their dominance at the expense of opposition

parties; or when it successfully maintains constitutional rules that directly disadvantage their opponents, despite calls for reform (De Jager & Du Toit, 2015. Suttner, 2006). As dominant parties have traditionally been conceptualized as standing in opposition with constitutional democratic order, dominant party theorist hold the constraints provided by the constitution as limiting the extent to which authoritarian tendencies may be acted upon (Zakaria, 1997. Carothers, 2002). However, fears that once a National Liberation Movement possesses the ability to successfully pass constitutional amendments they will certainly rewrite certain rules in order to benefit themselves, have generally not come to fruition (De Jager & Du Toit, 2013).

Fundamentally, dominant party system frameworks are limited with regard to National Liberation Movements due to their failure to incorporate states who's democratic transitions accorded through peace pacts, and processes of negotiation, such as South Africa (De Jager & Du Toit, 2015. Butler, 2014, 2009. Southall, 2013). Emerging as the culmination of successful multiparty, and multi-actor negotiations that began in 1991 with the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA), the South African Consitituion of 1996–and the process through which it was created—is still held to exemplary (De Jager & Parkin, 2017. Southall, 2013). Embodying the principle of "good faith" the ANC, along with all parties involved where open to compromise in order to reach their common interests, illustrating their commitment to ensuring broad peace would soon be ushered into the nation (Gartzke & Rohner, 2010). As such, both the interim and final constitutions where respected as the highest law within South Africa, conceptualized at the time as not only being quintessentially binding, but also as being irrevocable components of a mutually binding social contract (Butler, 2009).

However, dominant party theorists generally disregard the importance of such negotiated transitions, arguing that they merely represented the sole means through which power could be transferred (De Jager & Du Toit, 2013). Fundamentally, dominant party theorists argue that as the options faced by National Liberation Movements during these negotiated democratic transitions where heavily constrained, their true intentions where concealed (De Jager & Du Toit, 2015. Suttner, 2006. Arian & Barnes, 1974). Thus, from this view it is argued that following the initial negotiated constitution, when next afforded the opportunity to amend constitutional rules National Liberation Movements would cease the opportunity to act unilaterally (Bogaards, 2007, 2004. Giliomee & Simkins, 1999). However, again making reference to South Africa, the generalized claim

held within dominant party system frameworks fails to come to fruition. Specifically, between 2004 and 2009, a period during which the ANC possessed the two-thirds parliamentary majority required to unilaterally amend the South African Constitution, no significant revision occurred (De Jager & Du Toit, 2015. De Jager & Parkin, 2017). The general failure of National Liberation Movements to universally abuse constitutional amendments may be illustrated by, again making reference to Tanzania. Specifically, while the electoral dominance possessed by the CCM was displayed as being constrained by public opinion, and sentiment, such a position is not uncontested, with attention being drawn to the first multi-party elections in Tanzania, occurring in 1995 (Okema, 1996).

A report produced by the Tanzania Election Monitoring Committee (TEMCO), an independent local consortium of election observers set up specifically to monitor the manner in which they where conducted, ultimately found no evidence of widespread, systematic manipulation being conducted by the CCM, and thus considered the election to be *free* (TEMCO, 1995:45-47). However, despite being held as having been *free*, the TEMCO report did not hold them to be *fair*, stating that administration of the election was faulty, with the CCM having deliberately taken steps to skew the process in their favor (TEMCO, 1995:48-49). Thus, while the CCM espoused the view that they fully supported the implementation of multi-party election within Tanzania, contradictorily they where found to have interfered within all stages, with observers specifically noting interference within the; the registration of voters, the counting of ballots, along with the announcement of results (Magunisi. *et al*, 1995). Additionally, as the CCM fully exploited the fact that speeches by former President Nyerere where still massively supported by the public: with his presence drawing in large crowds at political rallies (Okema, 1997); along with the *Radio Tanzania Dar es Salaam,* the only radio station with nation wide coverage, broadcasting his previous speeches following the evening news during a segment titled *"Wosia wa Baba wa Taifa"* [Words of Advice from the Father of the Nation] (Nyaluke & Connolly, 2013); opposition parties could not effectively campaign, effectively precluding any chance the previously possess to win (TEMCO, 1995). Thus, cognizant of the manipulation of the 1995 election by the CCM, dominant party theorist approached attempted constitutional amendments with skepticism. However, the Thirteenth Constitutional Amendment, passed in April 2000, proved anticlimactic. Specifically, three changes occurred: firstly, the previous requirement of 50% of votes need to win the presidential elections was reduced, now only requiring a simple majority of votes; secondly, while the President could now unilaterally nominate up to 10 members of

parliament, previous possessing no power, this has primarily been to ensure that; the third change of, increasing the number of seats specially reserved for women in parliament to 20%, was upheld (World Intellectual Property Organization, 2005 ).

Thus, while the CCM undoubtedly employed abhorrent measures within the administration of the 1995, they have since reinforced their adoration for democratic processes through their action. Furthermore, while viewed as having been *'free but not fair,'* large doubt exists questioning if the actions of the CCM in fact had ant major effect upon the final 1995 election result (TEMCO, 1995:78-79. Presidential Commission of Inquiry against Corruption, 2002). Ultimately, the claim held within traditional dominant party system frameworks that, if afforded the opportunity, National Liberation Movements will axiomatically utilize the constitutional amendments to; delegitimize their opposition, completely exclude the mobilization discourse that may result in mass mobilization against them, thus securing ultimate control of the states bureaucratic machinery (Butler, 2014, 2009. Southall, 2013), is disconnected with the patterns that have been displayed. Succinctly, dominant party theorist fail to recognize that while National Liberation Movements waged armed struggles to obtain political power, these struggles where directed towards oppressive colonial, and settler governments and not against democracy itself (De Jager & Du Toit, 2015, 2013).

Conceptualized to be the utmost degree to which a party can be dominant, and viewed as only being achievable once a party has secured, and entrenched their claims to both electoral and constitutional dominance, hegemonic dominance represents the point where the divisions previously existing between the party, state, and government are absent (Melber, 2003). Granting the dominant party: incontestable ability to redefine foundational aspects of the states symbolic identity; solely ability to determine what constitutes acceptable public discourse; along with unfettered scope in their powers of appointment, to name a few examples, hegemonic dominance conceptual grants a dominant party with *de facto* totalitarian authority—with the party positing the ability to reinforce this legally (De Jager & Du Toit, 2015, 2013). While National Liberation Movements almost universally possess electoral dominance, along with each having possessed the ability to successfully alter the constitutional rule of law within their states, they do not all possess hegemonic dominance. However, evaluations of Namibian democratic consolidation generally conclude that the extended dominance held by SWAPO has directly facilitated in broadly eroding the divisions existing between; party,

state, and government, thus indicating the hegemonic nature of their dominance (Melber, 2003). While generally dismissed by SWAPO, or justified as benevolent actions, scholars have increasingly criticized the party for utilizing public resources to bolster its electoral campaign funds, along with the cyclical redeployment of party loyalists between; civil service, parastatals, foreign diplomatic positions, parliament, and both the legislative, and executive branches of government (Melber, 2003). Furthermore, while following independence Freedom House (1999) stated that "Respect for human rights in Namibia has been among the best in Africa," numerous actions occurring under President Nujoma's reign have called the nations commitment both to human rights, and democracy at large into question.

Firstly, in 1999 when the 'Caprivi Liberation Army' led by former Democratic Turnhallee Alliance (DTA) President Mishake Muyongo attempted to forcibly seize the boarder town of Katima Mulio by force, eleven innocent Namibian citizens were killed (Melber, 2003). Responding to this, President Nujoma declared a national *State of Emergency*, implementing *martial law*, which suspend prohibitions: on warrantless search, confiscation, and seizure of private owned property; along with the detention of individuals without fair trail (Amnesty International, 2004). As such, government security forces arrested over 300 people on false charges which ranged from; High Treason, murder, sedition, public violence, and petty theft (The Namibian, 16 May, 2001). These detainees were not only arrested arbitrarily, but most were also beaten or tortured, and denied both legal representation, and medical care (Amnesty International, 2004. Melber, 2003). Speaking on the matter in front of an African Union Assembly, Nujoma's son, the then Deputy Secretary within the Ministry of Justice, coarsest stated that "There are excesses in every situation, look at the Americans, if they know there are civilians there, they anyway send their ballistic missiles. But we are told we must treat these people nicely under international human law" (Namibia Daily, 25 May, 2001). This disregard for basic human rights by Nujoma, was again displayed in 1999, when he unilaterally permitted Angolan governmental forces to attack rebel bases within northern Namibia belonging to the National Union for Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), resulting both in the murder of numerous unarmed civilians, along with necessitating that the Namibian Defense Force (NDF) engage in cross-board combat (Amnesty International, 2004). The last point that must be noted regarding Nujoma is his 20021 decision to bar governmental ministries not only placing advertisements within, but also from purchasing, *The Namibian* newspaper (Saul & Leys, 1995). Holding the paper as being an emend of the state (The

Namibian, 10 January 2008), having even utilized an interview with the paper in 1998 to accuse them of espionage (Lush, 1998), any interactions with the paper by those in government was a punishable act (Melber, 2003).

Drawing on actions, such as those of Nujoma displayed above, conducted by SWAPO dominant party theorists reiterate their previously held assumption, stating that; for Namibia to make any further democratic consolidation progress, the—hegemonic— dominance possessed by SWAPO must diminish, giving way to numerous smaller political parties, within a free and fair multi-party system (Melber, 2003). Precluding the potential for Namibian democratization under SWAPO rule, the above view stands in stark contrast with reports produced by several prestigious global NGO's, who have repeatedly suggested that recent trends indicate that Namibia's democracy has not been repressed to the point of failure, characterizing it as; not *merely* surviving, but modestly progressing towards consolidation (The Economist Intelligence Unit, 2015). While it cannot be denied that when coming into office in 2005, President Pohamba inherited a country which possessed greatly restrained press freedoms, and which had recently committed gross human rights violations, one cannot ignore the attempts made by his administration to reverse the actions of his predecessor (Cooper, 2016). Specifically, in 2011 Pohamba lifted Nujoma's ban on The Namibia, along with greatly increasing press freedoms (Cooper, 2016. Melber, 2003). This move was immediately recognized by the French based NGO, Reporters without Borders (RwB) (2003)—who specifically evaluate global press freedoms. While, RwB (2003, 2013) ranked previously ranked Namibia among the worst globally, at 56th position, following Pohamba's reform the nation now occupies 17th position—scoring above established western states such as; Poland, Switzerland, and Iceland.

In addition to the above, Namibia's record on political equality has greatly improved over Pohamba's tenure as president. While the nation still lags behind even fellow National Liberation Movements in eliminating  prejudice against LGBTQ+ individuals, outdated laws regarding sodomy are no longer enforced (Akawa & Gawanas, 2014). Additionally, the representation of women in parliament has increased from 25.0% in 2005, to 41.3% in 2016–levels above western liberal states such as Norway, Germany, the United Kingdom, and even the United States (De Jager & Parkin, 2017. Akawa & Gawanas, 2014). Furthermore, The Mo Ibrahim Foundation (2017)—an organization who measure: safety and the rule of law; political participation and human rights; sustainable

economic opportunity; and the development of human rights—strongly argue that despite SWAPO dominance Namibian democracy has made substantial progress towards consolidation. Specifically, the foundation has reported that Namibia's overall aggregate score has increased from 64.3% in 2000, to 71.2% in 2016, with participation and human rights scores rising from 68.2% to an impressive 75.5%—over the same period (The Mo Ibrahim Foundation, 2017). Thus, while certainly not held to be a world leader in this regard, Freedom House (2017) acknowledged that at the end of President Sam Nujoma's last term in office (2005) the country had progressed enough to score a modest 2.5, almost low enough for the country to be classified as a "Party Free" hybrid regime. Since assuming office in 2005, President Hifikepunye Pohamba's administration has seen the countries score being upgraded to 2.0–a categorization which it still possesses—firmly placing Namibia within the small group of African states regarded by Freedom House (2018) to be "Free".

Thus, as has been illustrate above, it is clear that while Namibia may have failed to achieve various requirements for *complete* democratic consolidation, the nations democratic sphere has not remained stagnant, nor reversed on the whole, as assumed by dominant party system frameworks (Akawa & Gawanas, 2014). The progression of Namibia's democracy is clearly illustrated within research conducted by The Economist Intelligence Unit (2015), who found—while not substantial enough to alter their overall categorization—that between 2006 and 2015 significant improvements within Namibia occurred in: the standards of governance, and of elections; upholding human rights, press freedoms, along with the strength of their democracy as a whole. As such, even National Liberation Movements conceptualized as possessing unfettered dominance, cannot universally be held to be constrained to the assumptions held within dominant party system frameworks.

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# Conclusion

The analysis conducted within this paper briefly sought to locate factors excluded within dominant party system frameworks that conceptually differentiate National Liberation Movements from the general form  dominant party. By acknowledging the calls emerging from various authors, advocating that scholars utilize contextually based frameworks, factors intrinsically existing within National Liberation Movements—such as their 'broad church' nature—where shown to generating constraints faced by the party. Additionally, it was illustrated that while traditionally conceived as acting unilaterally, National Liberation Movements, are may be constrained by external factors, such as the constitutional rule of law, various socio-cultural factors, along with public sentiment, a position not encompassed within traditional dominant party system frameworks. Thus it has been illustrated that, conceptions of dominant party system frameworks must acknowledge the fact that ultimately public opinion underpins the dominance possessed by Southern Africa's National Liberation Movements (Reddy, 2006).

Specifically as the political dominance possessed by a National Liberation Movement directly emerges from their citizens broadly acknowledging, and accepting their 'superior status and influence (Duverger, 1954), National Liberation Movements do not posses the unfettered mandates held by authoritarian, or dictatorial parties (Herbst, 2001). Thus, as with all political parties operating within electoral, representative democracies; a National Liberation Movement seeking to rule is necessarily required to win successive elections in order to obtain—and sustain—any measure of political authority (ACT Electoral Commission, 2015**.** Herbst, 2001). As such, if a National Liberation Movement where to vehemently disregard social opinion, and interests over a sustained period, as they are claimed to do by dominant party theorists (Bogaards, 2004. Brooks, 2004. Suttner, 2006), their actions would directly prevent them from successfully capturing political power, due to reduced electoral support, thus contradictorily inhibiting their ability to influence governmental, and social agenda (Alazzam, 2015. Suttner, 2006).

Thus, despite the claims of dominant party theorists (Bogaards, 2004. Brooks, 2004. Suttner, 2006), logic dictates that Southern Africa's National Liberation Movements would in fact need to remain responsive to their respective electorates, admittedly such

responsiveness may likely be only to a basic degree, else they risk significantly hindering the progression of their political agenda (De Jager & Du Toit, 2013).

Succintly, it is this papers view that traditional dominant party system frameworks fail to adequacy recognize the tensions, along with the interactions that occur between dominant National Liberation Movements within Southern Africa, and the structures of democracy that surround them. Thus while these frameworks may rightly display apprehension towards parties assumed to act without holding themselves to be accountable to their citizenry, claims that National Liberation Movements will do as such, and will additional unilaterally alter the constitutional rule of law in their favor are not substantive, with regard to the Southern African region. Ultimately, while the trajectory outlined within dominant party system frameworks may come to fruition within select cases, proponents must remain cognizant of the factors differentiation National Liberation Movement from states that have established one-party system in Africa. Specifically, the limitations present within dominant party system theories, with respect to the Southern African region, emerge as they falsely conflate the histories, and thus political cultures, of National Liberation Movements, with those of autocratic African liberationist, and nationalist movements.

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