NOT ALL LIBERATION MOVEMENTS LEAD TO DEMOCRACY: A
COMPARATIVE CASE STUDY OF UGANDA AND ERITREA

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ABSTRACT

Across Africa, there are many examples of liberation movements that rose up and fought against colonialism and post-colonial authoritarian regimes. Such long struggles have generated hopes for a better democratic future where the past failures had created doubts about the prospects for democracy on this continent. Ideally, these liberation movements should provide alternative viable democratic governments. However, few comparative case studies have looked at failed democratization in African post-liberation states. This paper examines the state of African post-liberation regimes as they have transformed from armed liberation movements into governments after they have successfully seized power. Using two carefully selected case studies of Uganda and Eritrea, this paper identifies elite entrenchment as the primary factor that has undermined democracy and democratization, and how the increasing authoritarianism that has overtaken many of these countries in Sub-Saharan Africa can be overcome.

The form and content of this abstract are approved. I recommend its publication.

Approved: Lucy Ware McGuffey

DEDICATION

To my late father, Dorteo Ifude Abalu, and all those who have died for the freedom of my

South Sudanese people during the liberation struggle.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

African armed liberation movements occupy the center stage of civil wars in Sub-Saharan Africa as various groups resort to armed struggle in pursuit of power (Metelits, 2004; Boas and Dunn, 2007). With the Cold War over, and the evolution of a new geopolitical setting that developed by late 1980s, a number of liberation struggles have emerged and succeeded in seizing power. After more than five decades of independence, these post-liberation states were expected to set an example for African economic recovery and development including democracy. However, the continent continues to battle the scourges of political instability, economic decline, and the persistence of authoritarian rule. For instance, many of these movements fought against colonialists (as in Angola, Zimbabwe and Eritrea) or authoritarian regimes (as in Uganda, Rwanda and South Sudan) in order to achieved freedom of their people (Clapham, 1998).

The central objective of this study is to explain the problems that has faced post-liberation states' democratization process in Africa. I argue that the failure of democratization in Eritrea and Uganda is due to elite resistance that impedes the Uganda and Eritrea states' evolution towards democracy simply because the choices made by these regimes are often indicative of elites that are unwilling to share or give up their power (Bratton and van de Walle, 1997). In discussing possible obstacles to democratization, Samuel Huntington (1991) maintains that in Africa the obstacles are mainly economic. While I largely agree with the economic development influence of democracy as suggested by Huntington and modernization theory (Lipset, 1951), this

theoretical expectation of the connection between economic development and democracy has not occurred in Africa. Simply put, the dynamic of democratization in Uganda and Eritrea is influenced by elites with the desire to gain and concentrate power under authoritarian regimes, leading to resistance to change, limited openness and inclusiveness. As Gerschewski (2013) argues, the three pillars of autocratic regimes (legitimation, repression, and co-optation) have characterized many 'Third Wave' post-liberation governments. I will demonstrate how this applies to the case studies of Eritrea and Uganda. The study will therefore place the elite role in obstructing pathway transition to democracy and institutions of such struggles at the center of this analysis. In doing so, the study aims to address existing gaps in the literature by highlighting complex structural factors that are affecting a genuine transition to democracy for these African states.

Historical Overview

It must be stressed that most of the post-independence leaders who seized power through the barrel of the gun had generated some hope in their early years. The ruling elites believed that they could develop a democratic system based on good governance; after all, the armed liberation movements fought for democracy or self-determination. The leaders' intent was to maintain security and stability as well as promote good economic development to provide employment to their people. For these reasons, there was hope that the clamor for good governance was enough evidence that Africans were ready for democratic systems (Southall, 2013; Melber, 2012). Indeed, many scholars and foreign policy pundits including in the Clinton administration believed that Isaias

Afewerki of Eritrea, Yoweri Museveni of Uganda, Paul Kagame of Rwanda, and Meles Zenawi of Ethiopia, baptized as the "new generation of leaders" of this African renaissance and legitimized by the armed liberation struggle against corrupt, dictatorial regimes, were the new saviors of the continent. These four individuals were each considered hardworking, younger, generally more educated and pragmatic leaders, who would end the African legacy of turmoil and corruption that became the cancer of post-colonial African States (Oloka-Onyango 2004).

However, different case studies have showcased the greatest challenges of those liberation champions, who assumed state power in Uganda and Eritrea have caused untold human suffering which modern-day African states had to endure (Clapham, 1998). Repressive political systems centered around a governing ruling dominant one-party/movement have but typified these post-colonial liberation states, and such restrictions on political rights are becoming increasingly common in Africa. In Uganda and Eritrea, the elites strengthened their control over the state, and justifications for liberation have become an excuse for self-perpetuating power (for example, Yoweri Museveni and Isaias Afewerki have been in power for over two decades). The pace with which Ugandan and Eritrean societies moved towards single-party rule and military dictatorship came as a surprise for the masses who anticipated their post-independence elites to champion democracy (Salih, 2007). Cronyism, tribalism, corruption, and repression became the rule, not the exception. While many of these 'new leaders' seemed poised to lead their devastated societies out of authoritarianism, one must examine closely at what is actually happening on the ground. Internally, they behave like the kind of strong men they purported to oppose, except that they are more concerned with

economic growth and reform. They are each attracting foreign investment and increasing their trade relations with the global community (Connell and Smyth, 1998).

It is an understatement to say that this region faces complex challenges: civil strife, political instability, misrule, and authoritarianism. The integration of diverse ethnic groups within a single political system in African post-colonial states has proven difficult. Uganda under National Resistance Movement (NRM) and Eritrea under Eritrea People's Liberation Front (EPLF) Uganda and Eritrea have all experienced difficulties in making the transition from liberation struggle to government. These modern states left by colonial powers have so far provided instruments of authoritarianism in Africa (Carew, 1993). This is true where the state is the sole provider of individual and group benefits within the country, especially in an extractive economy. In such a society, the struggle to hold power increasingly resembles a zero-sum game.

In Uganda, state failure was at independence exacerbated by institutional decay and political mismanagement by President Milton Obote's regime, and culminated in the Idi Amin dictatorship (McDonough, 2008). Uganda's post-independence rulers tried to overcome its deep ethnic, regional, and religious divisions by consolidating power through the use of military force, but this approach made matters much worse. Like his predecessors, President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda seized power in the wake of the civil war in 1986, claiming that the immediate goal of the National Resistance Army/Movement (NRA/NRM) was to rejuvenate a democratic system of government in Uganda (Osaghae, 1992). Though the country was confronted with economic hardship and political instability, Museveni seemed at first to follow a more inclusive democratic path by supporting a "parliamentary democracy" that many enthusiastically embraced.

Mahmood Mamdani, a distinguished Ugandan scholar, proclaimed that the NRM regime achieved a high degree of democratization.

President Museveni advocated for an open economy (liberal economic policies), respect for human rights, a free press, and contested local elections. By early the 1990s, however, he was becoming less interested in multiparty politics and preferred centralized governance structures. He chose a system called the Movement, which he described as 'no-party' system. It is a system with the goal of uniting all Ugandans, and it is based on individual merits rather than party affiliation (Ottaway, 1999). Thus, the demands for wide political openings received lip service from the NRM elite who decided to shelve the earlier pledge to hold free and fair elections. These elites claimed that the state institutions and political organizations were faced with serious threats, thus a need to unite Uganda's diverse political groupings on a non-sectarian basis. Museveni instead imposed restrictions on political parties in Uganda and banned political rallies and meetings, limiting the ability of political parties to operate effectively (Kasfir, 1998; Oloka-Onyango, 2004). He argues that Uganda is still backward and not yet ready to open up for a multiparty system, that political parties divide Ugandans along ethnic and religious lines and encourages the kinds of ethnic conflict/civil war that tore Uganda apart during the 1970s and 1980s, when tens of thousands Ugandans were killed in political violence under the reign of Idi Amin and Milton Obote (Mamdani, 1996; Ocitti, 2006). Interestingly, under a no-party system, no one is denied the right to compete in an election for political office, but the same government has harassed and arrested political opponents. This allows the movement to some extent to co-opt and neutralize a fragmented opposition.

Critics of Museveni have argued you cannot have democracy without political pluralism. Real democracy requires more than one political party. As Tangeri (2005) pointed out, the once promising democratic transition under NRM faltered following the removal of constitutional term limits and the restriction of political activity. In absence of any serious organized opposition that may pose a serious threat to the hegemonic movement's status, the NRM leadership could count on privileged elites through access to patronage. These elites sought to use the state as the means to achieve political and economic stability, while at the same time increasing their own control over it. In this sense, the elite tended to undermine multiparty politics in Uganda in order to keep themselves in power.

Coming out of years of a long complicated struggle, Eritrea, like Uganda, was not immune to the structural challenges of a nation. While Uganda struggles with virulent ethnic and religious division, Eritrea's political culture has long been an authoritarian one, built upon secrecy and the arbitrary exercise of absolute power (Connell 2001). The struggle against Ethiopia had strengthened national unity, thus ethnicity was not an issue.

Like many African countries, Eritrea was crafted into a colonial state by Italian colonialism in 1890. Following the defeat of fascist Italy during the Second World War, which cost Italy its African possessions, the territory became a British Protectorate. In 1952, British administration came to an end, and resulted in United Nations (UN) resolutions, in which Eritrea became part of the Ethiopian Federal State in (Gebre-Medhim, 1983). It seemed obvious that Eritreans were denied their right to benefit from the principle of self-determination in the face of international legal norms. This has led to the Eritreans armed struggle for independence from Ethiopia that destroyed the social and

economic infrastructure of the society (Iyob 1995) – this comes as no surprise. Ironically, the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) established a stable government that did away with corruption and foreign aid (Ottaway, 1999).

Post-independence Eritrea under EPLF emphasized self-reliance and hard work, making policy choices and presenting what they called a 'guided democracy' or 'movement system.' It was a highly centralized military form of control with the intent to accommodate the different desires of its communities first, while also ensuring that social justice was exercised to unify and transform society (Connell, 2000). Ironically, Afewerki had no sooner won independence from the Ethiopian authoritarian regime than he proceeded to establish a repressive system. Afewerki's democratic rhetoric was far from being a champion of democracy; as opposition to the government is not tolerated. As a consequence, thousands of Eritreans have the fled the country, according to International Crisis Group (2014) Report.

Contemporary Context

According to leading human rights agencies, Eritrea is the worst ranked country in the world in terms of press freedom. Many critics, journalists, top government employees and party officials have been arrested, tortured, and locked away in undisclosed locations without legal proceedings (Human Rights Watch, 2009). Contrary political thoughts are rarely voiced in public because there is widespread fear of security forces that operate with relative impunity. In essence, the state of exception in Eritrea is more entrenched now under the leadership of Afewerki. In his book, "Homo Sacer: Sovereignty Power and Bare Life (1998)," Giorgio Amagben argued that a state of

exception occurs when the government has increased its power under the guise of perceived or imaginary threats against sovereignty, an individual leader can then suspend the constitution, and treat the population under his or her control as subjects by stripping them of their political and individual rights. This explains why there are many pessimists in the region as it has become clear that these victorious armed liberation movements will have to overcome their unconducive environment for democracy.

As Hyden (2006) notes, the legacy of the armed liberation movements across Africa has not always been appreciated. Indeed, these liberation movements that set up the new governments are influenced by their past military command structures. Violent culture inherited from protracted war has thus made transition to democracy more complicated. In Eritrea, for example, the military structure has been several decades in the making and the political structures created within the EPLF were devised to strictly deal with internal opposition. The EPLF considers unity and loyalty to be everything.

Whereas Uganda presents the most discouraging example of democratic setback in which decades of economic successes are being threatened by the movement leadership's tighter grip on power, and flawed elections that have only led to more corrupt government, Eritrea exemplifies repression and political stagnation. Despite the fact that none of these leaders are democrats, democratization has proceeded in varying paces in both countries. Elections have been regularly held in Uganda since 2006 to return Museveni to power. Eritrea has been under one ruler since independence, and the country is basically a one party-state that has not held a single free and fair election. These experiences of African liberation movements who seized power by force of arms illustrate clearly the numerous challenges that continue to exert significant negative

effects on democratization processes in Africa. The NRM and ELPF regimes are no longer part of the solution but central to the problem.

Statement of the Problem

While considerable academic and political interest followed the "third wave of democratization" (Huntington, 1991) that swept away many authoritarian regimes and, in a number of cases, replaced them with governments determined to endorse democratic elections in the continent, it is commonplace to argue, however, that this promising period equally revealed new challenges particular of which was the failure to consolidate democratization. Thus, the complicated nature of political actors/leadership, are part of Africa's experience in 1990s (Diamond, 1996). Furthermore, the initial enthusiasm surrounding the wave of democratic transitions in post-Cold War Africa quickly dissipated, as democratization scholars discovered that regime transitions were not often synonymous with democratic consolidation.

This paper does not seek to make sweeping generalization on the failures of democratization in Africa. For the most part, analyses in Africa tend to deal with the continent as a whole (Bratton and van de Walle, 1997). At least some of differences in the failure of democratization in the Uganda and Eritrea case studies can be better explained by the three pillars of authoritarian regimes that have been overlooked in much of the literature: cooptation, legitimacy and repression (Gerschewski, 2013). In these countries, elections may be held regularly as in Uganda, but elites consistently manipulate these elections to make sure that the incumbent maintain power (Schedler, 2006). At times, the liberation struggles are used to justify the rare "no-party" political

system and this has had significant implications for democratization in Eritrea. Indeed, transition from an armed liberation movement as in the cases of Uganda's National Resistance Movement (NRM) and Eritrea People's Liberation Front (EPLF) that fought its way to power was not an easy one. Hence, many scholars demonstrate a lack of understanding of Africa's post-colonial liberation transition, a puzzle that this study seeks to address.

Significance of the Study

The reason behind my selection of Uganda and Eritrea as case studies rested on a number of considerations. First, the Uganda and Eritrea cases serve as unique examples for analyzing the politics of liberation movement and democracy in African context. The fact Uganda and Eritrea endured decades of political instability, share similar experiences: societies fragmented along ethnic and religion lines; a ridden history of colonialism, decolonization, and difficult challenges of state building is another important factor for their selection. Second, both leaders (Uganda's president Yoweri Museveni and Eritrea's Isaias Afewerki) have taken over countries in a state of political and economic breakdown, revived their economies beyond everyone's expectations, and yet they are less concerned about the move to a democratic system. Third, the countries are often considered successful cases of African liberation movements and both generated great hope in their early years of armed struggle, but these two countries are far from setting positive examples. Seemingly, the path to democratic consolidation is never easy or clear-cut, nor is an answer to any of the foregoing inquires. They have now become embodiments for authoritarianism. Fourth, Uganda and Eritrea had victorious liberation

movements that removed corrupt and tyrannical regimes from power, but followed an unconventional democratic discourse, namely 'Movement system.' While both Museveni and Afewerki had strong military background, each was initially a revolutionary left-wing ideologue who managed to attain power of their country's leadership by means other than the ballot box. At the outset, both leaders were firmly against multiparty elections. Over time, however, their views on the issue of political system after liberation struggle differed: by early 2005, Museveni had become an advocate of limited democracy regime, but not the Afewerki's regime of Eritrea which presided over unusual 'no-party' political system/one-party-state, in which democratic space became increasingly closed in the new millennium. Finally, the two old liberation movements still control the state apparatus, and each country has its unique political struggle that needs to be documented to enable scholars to compare similarities or differences in order to understand democratization challenges faced by many post-liberation states in Africa.

Research Questions

This study examines failure of democratization in Uganda and Eritrea, and sets out to inquire about the impact of post-liberation movements' politics and the thorny issue of a transitional path toward democracy. In this thesis, the central question of the study is why, after more than two and a half decades of being in power, have the authoritarian regimes in Ugandan and Eritrea able to maintain power, and failed to make a genuine transition to democracy? Specifically, this comparative case study approach allows the paper to investigate why the NRM and EPLF regimes have become authoritarian.

Drawing from the experiences of liberation movements in Uganda and Eritrea, the countries that came to be known a "beacons of hope" in an otherwise volatile region, many scholars believe that the two countries have embarked on transition to democracy: the much discussed third wave of democratization that swept the continent and witnessed the collapse of many one-party military dictatorships across the African region. However, according to the Freedom House Index 2011-2012 report, Uganda and Eritrea are not electoral democracies. Freedom House's 2011-2012 report rated Uganda as "Partly Free" whilst Eritrea is classified as being "Not Free" and scored the lowest score possible, which is 7, in both political rights and civil liberties (Freedom House, 2012). In its Democracy Index 2012, the Economist Intelligence Unit categorized Uganda as a "hybrid," regime, which combines democratic and non-democratic elements, and Eritrea as an authoritarian regime. While Uganda has improved its democratic rankings, slightly moving toward multiparty politics, and given its extremely personalized political nature, I would argue that Uganda essentially remains a semi-authoritarian state compared to the authoritarian Eritrea regime's shrinking political space, which is considered one of the worst political regimes currently in the world. This seemingly contradictory analysis suggests that democratization in Uganda and Eritrea remains incomplete, replete with different outcomes. In other words, the democratization literature has struggled to explain the democratic deficit in Africa's post-liberation states.

Structure of the Thesis

This study is divided into six chapters, the first being the introduction. After discussing the general overview and analyzing the historical backgrounds to this study,

the second chapter of this paper reviews the main theoretical approaches in the study of democratization in Africa. The third chapter lays out methodology and theoretical explanations for democratization failure in Uganda and Eritrea by focusing on fundamental factors particularly relevant to the case studies. The fourth chapter considers the two case studies to explain what best explains democratization setbacks in each country. Chapter five presents findings obtained from the analysis and a discussion of the results will be presented. Chapter six summarizes the arguments of the study. The lessons learned may improve our understanding of post-liberation state's politics vis-à-vis democratization on the continent.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section will review the democratization literature in Africa and draw from insights that would help us understand the problematic democratic transition in Uganda and Eritrea. Indeed, there is a wide array of competing explanations for success and failure of democratization in Africa include Democracy in Developing Countries: Africa (1988) edited by Larry Diamond, Juan Linz, and Seymour Martin Lipset, they integrate analytically Michael Bratton van de Walle's Democratic Experiments in Africa: Regime Transitions in Comparative Perspective (1997), Democratization in Africa: The Theory and Dynamics of Political Transitions(1997) Earl Conteh-Morgan and Democratic Theory and Practice in Africa (1997) by Chege and Gitonga. These theories intend to describe, explain and predict democratization include the modernization approach and cultural processes in Africa. It is in this broad theoretical complexity and interplay of the structural, socio-economic, cultural, international, and domestic factors, believed by some scholars to be important explanatory variables in Africa's experience with democracy and democratization that can excite or depress both optimists and pessimists. Optimism has been generated by the multiparty elections of 1989, which swept the continent and witnessed the crumbling of several single-party states and military dictatorships. Pessimism, however, has been generated by the negative trends of late 1990s which saw the democratization process in Africa reversed or stalled.

Standard Approach

Several explanations have been offered for the struggles of democratization or authoritarianism in Africa informed by the impact of poverty, illiteracy, economic underdevelopment, culture and the nature of political institutions, vibrancy of civil society, low levels of industrialization, urbanization, and national unity (see Lipset et al., 1993; Huntington 1991; Przeworski et al., 1996; Diamond & Plattner, 1993). In general, democratization literature tends to be dominated by broad explanatory approach: Modernization, Transition and Structural approaches. Most of these studies are grounded in what became known as modernization theory, which has become the underlying hypothesis of the development approach in comparative politics (Almond and Powell, 1965). The main author of modernization theory is Seymour Martin Lipset.

In his seminal article some Social Requisites of Democracy, Lipset (1959) argues that there is a positive correlation between levels of economic development and democracy, and that when the people of a country enjoy a higher level of economic development or modernization, they will be more inclined to believe in democratic values and support a democratic system. Arguably, an increase in income, leads to an increase in the level of education; larger middle class who will demand regime transparency and participation in the government. Expanding on this observation and using economic indicators such as level of GDP per capita, he emphasized that "the more well-to-do a nation is, the greater the chance that it will sustain democracy" (Lipset, 1960, p. 31). In other words, the poorer a society, the less responsive its ruling elite will be to give up power.

In fact, other scholars have attempted to enrich the Lipset line of reasoning by not

only taking into account the examined factors, but also developing more complex models. Samuel Huntington's (1991) Third Wave attempted to establish a casual linkage between socio-economic indicators and the existence or lack of democracy. Huntington maintained that, richer countries are democratic and poorer ones are not. He further points out that those who are excited about promoting democracy beyond its traditional Western border lines, economic development for very late developing countries, particular Africa, may well be more problematic than it was in an advanced and modern Western world. This is because Africa is considered a traditional "backward" society in which social relations are regulated within the family, clan and tribe, results in very limited political participation that lacks the institutional ingredients to make democracy work.

The contention is that Africans lacked civic culture and were not fully infiltrated by Western Christianity. Huntington suggested that countries resistant to democracy after the 'Third Wave' of democratization remain authoritarian because they "had no prior experience with democracy" (p. 44). Hence, the role of cultural factors such as religion can have an impact on whether a country obtains or sustains democratization. On the contrary, the masses who recently engaged in the democratic uprising in Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya were not the poorest in the society. These are mostly educated and disaffected young professionals with high employment rates fighting for economic well-being, freedom, and human rights issues.

In relations to the African condition, however, some scholars point to a major contradiction that other countries, which are well endowed with natural resources, have constantly succumbed to authoritarian rule such in Nigeria and Angola (Kiloh in Potter et

al. 1997, p. 387). It is quite possible that there are some developing countries with significantly less than the threshold of the $6000 income per capita that have achieved democracy; for example, Botswana and Mauritius which became democratic few decades ago and only since then have enjoyed rapid economic growth (van de Walle, 2002). Similarly, Benin for example, has achieved multiparty democracy at the end of the Cold War without any significant level of economic development (Diamond, 2002). Therefore, in addition to economic growth, international dynamics, social, and institutional changes must complement development process to enable a democratic transition.

In the case of China, higher levels of economic of income do not necessarily lead to democratization as that dictatorship is increasingly maintaining their grip on power in the country (Ramaswamy and Cason, 2003). To Ottaway's point, economic factors are not the only conditions linked to the question of democratization. There are other African states that have experienced economic and debt crisis; however, few went on to consolidate democracies and settled on varying degrees of democracy. In the 1990s, Ghana, Mauritius, and Botswana established fairly stable democracies with relative experiences of multiparty rule and without enjoying the precondition of economic development thought necessary (Miles, 1999; Diamond, 2002). In brief, modernization theory provides considerable contributions to our understanding of democratization; however, it fails to provide sufficient explanation for authoritarian persistence in post-liberation states such as Uganda and Eritrea. Modernization theorists' main weakness is their lack of detail to political actors. Likewise, the collapse of authoritarian regimes in Latin America and Africa challenged structuralist arguments' main proponents'

contention that there is no direct connection between democracy and development.

The point of departure from economic development links to democracy came from Linz and Stephen's (1999) work that looked at the range of factors collectively such as a viable state, the rule of law and civil society among others. While this scholarship provides useful insights regarding structural factors that can influence the democratization processes, one must consider the economic development explanation as critical in shaping the debate on success and/or failure of democracy. The most important factor is the effect of modernization that oscillates and balances power between the elites and the masses. Haerpfer et al. (2009) maintained that, "democratic transitions could not be achieved unless some key actors incumbent, opposition or military willed free and fair elections into effect and accepted results" (p. 349). This does not mean that democratic politics is solely an elite affair. Some political analysts have exaggerated the extent to which common people are not interested in democratic politics.

Accordingly, other scholars of democratization began to investigate the decisions taken by elites and political actors. In a persuasive analysis, Schmitter and O'Donnell (1986) suggested that there is no democratic transition without human-agency, which is in this case an interaction between the elites and masses. However, recent democratization literature has altered these views; emphasizing the role of ordinary people against reluctant elites through positive non-violent means (Karatnycky, and Ackerman, 2005). Interestingly, Dankwart A. Rustow (1970) asserts that democracy is likely to stem from a large variety of mixed reasons. That national unity was the sole precondition necessary for democratization. He maintains that the transition to democracy begins with agreement on national unity, extent of political struggle for power

among contending forces/political actors, followed by a thoughtful decision by the political actors to adopt democratic rules by habitation. In his view, the implementation of democratic governance hinges on conscious decisions of a small circle of leaders (p, 356). In other words, it is crucial that elite develop institutions that represent interests of the people and exercise moderate power in society. However, it can be argued that political actors alone are not enough; other mentioned factors (education, large middle class, and urbanization etc.) enable political actors to drive political change.

Uganda and Eritrea cases revealed the significance of the violent legacy of the liberation struggles and fragile institutions in determining the nature of post-liberation politics. This fits well with the elites' authoritarian tendencies adopted by liberation movements in Uganda and Eritrea to counteract both domestic and external strong push towards democratization. On her description of the breakdown of democratic regime, in which she highlighted the failures of leadership, Juan Linz and Stepan Alfred explains that the collapse of democratic regime might have been avoided if key political actors had pursued other available options (Linz and Stepan 1978).

The Problematic Democratization in Uganda and Eritrea

Many scholars of democratization expected authoritarianism to continue to dominate Africa because they lacked the structural prerequisites associated with democracy (Huntington, 1991; Joseph, 1989; Lipset, 1959). Uganda and Eritrea have faced difficulties similar to those of many newly independent African states (e.g., tribal conflict, economic underdevelopment, and low literacy and educational levels). As noted earlier, although the structural approach is useful to explain democratization in Latin

America and Africa in more general terms, it is important, however, to understand what hinders democratization in Uganda and Eritrea. In his book titled "Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism," a prominent Ugandan academic, Mamdani (1996) contends that the present failures of democratization in Uganda stem from the inability of most post-independence African governments to reform the colonial approach of indirect rule via customary tribal authorities that prevails in rural Africa. He states that the modern African state in its colonial experience, most notably indirect rule's reliance on an ethnic basis. Divisions were not only inter-ethnic but also intra-ethnic as there was a split between the urban and the rural. Thus, efforts to reform the states have all since failed to achieve democracy, thus, tapping authoritarian possibilities in culture.

No doubt, post-independence Uganda and Eritrea as suggested by Mamdani, lacked capacity to replaced Movements' hierarchical authorities with more democratic institutions. Although Uganda is home to many ethnic groups, post-independence governments failed to accommodate existing ethnic divisions. For example, Uganda People's Congress (UPC) was founded to thwart Buganda dominance after independence, and specifically, to rectify the unequal development during colonial period by privileged groups from the southern part of Uganda. It was not surprising; therefore, that sectarian politics became the norm, in which political power was achieved through violent means.

Although the NRM regime under President Museveni promised an inclusive government through the no-party system, many members of political parties from the other ethnic groups were dismissed and detained (Tripp, 2010). NRM regime has given way to an increasingly bias towards western Ugandan, which has been seen as benefiting

economically from Museveni's rule. Indeed, democratic prospects are undermined by the strong tendency toward politicization of ethnic claims, in turn leads to zero-sum, winner-take-all politics in which some groups are included and others excluded. Against the above backdrop, it is clear that that a no-party system is intrinsically incapable of delivering democracy and is not an alternative to multiparty system.

In the case of Eritrea, the Italian colonial power developed a policy of social and political manipulation revolving around ethnicity, religion, and social stratification. The amalgamation of Eritrean diverse ethnic groups into a single colonial entity under a central imperial oppressive administration, led to the development of a single Eritrean national identity (Giorgis, 2014). According to Andebrhan Welde Giorgis, ethnicity was a crucial political issue, as it unleashed what he called "new social forces" (p. 38). During the armed struggle, liberation movement in Eritrea produced a certain distinct authoritarian political culture characterized by centralization, hierarchy, strong loyalty, and discipline.

Several scholars have argued that individuals exposed to political violence are more likely to engage in similar political behavior after the conflict has ended. Dorman (2006) and Melber (2003) agree that the militaristic and violent nature of the struggles has had a profound effect on the post-liberation political culture or structure. Central to this militarism mindset has been the use of violence against any perceived adversary. As Don Connell (2007) notes, EPLF's political culture has long been grounded on secrecy and exercise of absolute power by violent means. This adherence to hierarchical leadership structure "may generate political practice that prefigure undemocratic outcome in the wake of revolution success".

Eritrea's contemporary political culture has been an authoritarian one predicated upon arbitrary exercise of absolute power. Much has been written about the achievement of the EPLF in relations to the administration of rebel controlled areas during the war of liberation. More importantly, the capacity of the EPLF to mobilize different groups within and outside Eritrea with the pretense of working toward a future state was a key. Indeed, a variety of factors have made it possible for the EPLF to create an Eritrean identity based on values of unity and sacrifice that produced sustained nationalism. Additionally, EPLF insistence on successful promotion of the nationalism myth proved highly effective in relation to wide-spread loyalty towards the movement (Iyob, 1997a). As mentioned previously, the EPLF was primarily established to liberate Eritrea through military means. Correspondingly, the EPLF created nationalism which was not merely an ideological phenomenon but a concrete struggle for state power. The movement was organized according to the principles of democratic centralism, characterized by strict discipline and a centralized hierarchy of command (Pool, 2001; Connell, 2009).

While the EPLF has experienced success in the transition from guerrilla to government, the leadership moved towards one-party dominance. In a one-party state such as Eritrea, this dominance has been exercised through variety of methods: tolerance for only one dominant ideology, exclusion of opponents by force, and a constitution which centralized power in the hands of the leader. To this end, EPLF has resorted to authoritarian polices in order to promote and protect the interests of party elites. While the perceived threats to post-liberation states were real, in the case of Eritrea, they served a political purpose in perpetuating a militarized discourse that permits no opposition, shaping the post-liberation political culture (Dorman, 2006). Today, however, the ruling

elite in Eritrea are caught up in their reluctance to hold multiparty party elections.

Similarly, most African liberation leaders lacked a clear consensus on how to govern. For example, Uganda's National Resistance Movement (NRM) continued to hold elections, but have also undermined the democratization process by rigging the elections and limiting the political playing field. In this respect, elite actions have important consequences for the prospects for democracy. Although Uganda's National Resistance Movement (NRM) was meant to entrench, the depth of democratic control was inevitably limited in this one-party system that restricted opposition political activities and democratic rule after they won the war of liberation. Their elites, too, have experienced flaws in their post-liberation governance structures. To Georges Nzongola-Ntalaja's point, "the crisis of the state in post-colonial Africa is a function of its nature as an authoritarian control structure preoccupied with the political survival and material interests of those who control it" (Nzongola-Ntalaja 1987, p. 89).

Like the EPLF, the NRM regime began actively to restrict political space and centralize power (Tripp, 2004). Many political liberties have been related to the Movement's stance on multi-party politics. Museveni ensures Movement dominance through the legal instrument of institutionalizing the Movement system in the 1995 constitution (Oloka-Onyago, 1997). After more than two decades in power, the democratization process has been controlled and has reflected the aspirations and interests of the NRM leadership. The NRM carried out democratic reforms to consolidate its hold on power and broaden its support base. These examples clearly suggest that liberation and elections are not synonymous.

Colonialism and Democratization in Uganda and Eritrea

Besides the broader democratization theories discussed above, scholars have also looked at other specific issues, which in their analyses affect democratization in Africa. This includes the impact of colonialism and the problem of democratization in the newly formed artificial states. Similarly, the colonial legacy has shaped the character of post-colonial states and the nature of its politics. Thus, the experience of colonial and post-colonial rule has influenced the trajectory of democratic prospects in Africa such as Uganda and Eritrea.

Whereas modernization theory emphasizes the domestic obstacles to democratization, the colonialism line of thought focuses on external/structural limitations. Therefore, any attempt to explain the democratic gap in Uganda and Eritrea must locate the problem in its colonial and post-colonial historical context. African has gone through different liberation movements and political transitions that have had deep implications for the democratization process in the continent. The decolonization process waged by various African nationalist movements against the colonial powers (1950s/1960s), main objective was independence; the armed liberation struggles directed against indigenous regimes that were deemed illegitimate, as they were the creation of ethnic or regional discontent from within (1970s-1980s); and the post-colonial liberation movements directed against a repressive regime in power with the aim to alter state institutions by the use of violence, including establishment of legitimate and democratic stable regimes, particularly the post-1990s experience with multiparty politics (Cheru, 2012).

Since the era of colonialism (1885-1960s), African societies have experienced

drastic political changes, which have significantly affected every aspect of African life in general. The colonial powers established artificially formed nation-states and/or arbitrary territorial units imposed on Africa without any regard to for ethnic diversity. Pre-existing African traditional systems were abolished, withdrawn, and replaced with exploitative systems that alienated African people (Mbaku, 2004). The nationalists' movements were therefore faced by the challenge of forging unity out of diversity and uneven development. This meant that African colonized countries like Uganda and Eritrea did not enjoy the underlying consensus on shared nationhood.

At independence, the incoming Ugandan elites inherited imperial state structures and its institutions developed through coercive mechanisms, centralized authority, and economic controls, and Basil Davidson (1992) described it as a "curse" that included subjugation of ethnic groups within superficial political spaces. In doing so, colonialism gave special privileges to certain group (elites) over others within the same society (some tribes). The elites were incorporated into a world capitalist system but were made subservient to the colonial administrators. Not surprisingly, this discriminatory policy exacerbated ethnic tensions and political divisions within these arbitrary creations through what is became known as the colonial policy of divide and rule. In Uganda, British colonial rulers applied divide and rule through indirect rule policy that pitted the favored Buganda in the south of the country against the other ethnic groups in North. Unequal regional development between the poor south and the favored richer South further heightened ethnic animosity after independence (Jorgensen, 1981, p. 176).

Similarly, Italy as a small nation in Europe colonized Eritrea. Eritreans were in the peripheral South, a source of cheap labor and raw materials for the benefit of Europe

as well as mostly industrial global North. According to Richard Sherman, under Italian rule, Eritreans were treated as subjects, with no opportunity to participate in socioeconomic and political matters in the colony (Sherman 1980). The Italians established a centralized colonial state with extreme repressive machinery that exploited Eritrea's mineral resources, used the local natives in the production process as cheap laborers, and for handling raw materials for Italian industries. The exclusion of indigenous people from economic and political organizations, significantly affected the post-colonial legacy of Eritrea. It was this politics of exclusion (divide and rule) that caused many of Africa's inter and intra state wars. It was not surprisingly, that the Eritrean violent struggle for nationhood began with the dream of a people with a country of their own.

Dependency, therefore, underscores the nature of the historical legacy of colonialism such that it tended to construct the political economies of colonies so they remained deeply reliant on their former colonial powers. It is based on the exploitative and oppressive nature of the relationship between Africa and their former colonial powers in the West (Southall, 2013). In other words, it is a domination of the 'third world' by the developed and the extraction of resources from the former, maintenance of these unequal relations between the center and the periphery, and facilitated by elites who presided over the impoverishment of local masses which has resulted in tension and conflict (Nyong'o, 1989). Hence, this school of thought stresses rising class conflicts as impediments to Africa's smooth democratic development.

Similarly, resistance to colonialism as a system of economic exploitation, political repression and cultural oppression in Uganda and Eritrea, did not start with polished

elites. The armed struggles, as Nzongola-Ntalaja (2012) pointed out, were led by organizations of workers, urban unemployed and other exploited classes' revolts against colonial conquest, unfair and discriminatory practices of white supremacy and racist oppression. It was Museveni who reminded us that Uganda became "backwards" as a result of the economic exploitation and colonization by European colonialists (Museveni: 1997, 34-35). Consequently, the political crisis in the nature of the African state was a byproduct of colonialism itself. By implication, colonialism undermined the democratization processes in Africa so as to promote colonial interests. Kenneth Bauzon (1992) captures this when he argued:

> Colonialism per se was undemocratic, whatever form it took. Its political and administrative apparatus was meant for ruling, not as a vehicle of representation. And it was established for purpose of pursuing colonial policies, not for advancing the interest of the colonized... (p. 7).

Indeed, an argument that can be made is that negative colonial experiences have to some extent contributed to the non-democratic authoritarian rule in post-colonial Uganda where African people were denied basic freedoms and democratic rights (Dicklitch, 2002). The political structures were in effect undemocratic. Consequently, liberation movements in post-colonial African have struggled for equal rights and to some extent for democratization of the continent such as in Uganda and Eritrea.

In Uganda, for examples, African elites who replaced the colonial rulers deployed the same colonial laws and resources to sustain their political power; they were generally interested in enriching themselves (Nyong'o, 1997). This explains why revolution theorists such as Cabral assert that a pervasive legacy of colonial rule was the creation of

new classes in Africa (Cabral, 1972, p. 50-1).

Although colonialism inspired African nationalism, nationalists and post-colonial leaders could not hold these 'artificial' new states together and conduct free and fair elections. In fact, the modern state left behind by colonialists provided a dominant instrument for authoritarianism in Uganda and Eritrea. The new elites in these countries became ruthless dictators, relying on ethnic mobilization, and restricted political space, corrupt and distant from the masses. In Uganda, the elites did not foster ethnic cohesion or lessen political tension, but exacerbated them. This resulted in military coups and civil wars in which elites sought to secure their dominance and reinforced their grip on power (Jorgensen, 1981). In effect, the East-West rivalry during the Cold War period in 1970s and 1980s has made Africa a battleground between the two superpowers with each side backing and imposing its own dictators in the region, and often sustained by foreign aid (McGowan, 2003). Alas, the unaccountable elites who were considered the new power holders and beacons of African renaissance became repressive, corrupt, and far removed from the reality of everyday life on the ground.

In his book The Black Man's Burden, Basil Davidson observes that not only are the post-colonial states completely rooted in the authoritarian nature of colonial rule conferred on African nations prior to independence but, more importantly, "the acceptance of the post-colonial nation-states meant acceptance of the legacy of colonial political rule and its institutional dimensions" (Davidson, 1992, p. 162). This partly explains why George Muda Carew (1993) asserts that most African elites swiftly replaced the colonialists as rulers after the departure of the colonial administrators (Carew, 1993, p. 39). Otherwise, how can Uganda's president Museveni and Eritrea's

president Afewerki's more than two decades in power be rationalized, despite the loud protest that they relinquish power?

Similarly, African elites defended the institutionalization of the politics of patronage as a means to maintain national unity. Those elites who were able to retain power grew very rich, signaling the rise of the so-called 'big-men' rule in which powerful individuals retained power, used their control of state resources to build vast network of clients across political spectrum and ethnic boundaries. In Uganda, President Museveni was successful to stay in power for 28 years, while Afewerki has been ruling for almost 23 years.

Whereas the wars of national liberation played an important role to unify African people against colonialism and post-colonial repressive regimes (Clapham, 2012), Uganda and Eritrea's new elites have so far shown little commitment to the democratization process, and as a result democracy in these two countries has suffered severe setback. Paradoxically, the idea of maintaining unity was also thought to be more important than democracy in post-colonial Uganda and Eritrea. As Anyang Nyong'o points out, the historical failure of post-independence leaders to affect necessary political change can be linked to the disjuncture between the political elites who cling to power and the masses, provoking the alienation and disempowerment of the masses (Nyong'o, 1997). Not surprisingly, therefore, the post-colonial legacy complicated democratization processes in Africa and paved the way to one-party dictatorship under the pretext of national unity, as trends of erosion of democratic rules are visible across the continent.

In the light of above assessment, the consequences of this disappointment which emanates from unfulfilled expectations (e.g. economic deprivation exclusion from the

structures of state power) have led to the emergence of all kinds of social movements including the armed movements referred to by Hank Johnson as "insurrections" (Johnson, 2010, p. 138) in defiance of post-colonial repressive regimes across the African continent. In effect, many would argue that the post-colonial liberation movements in were born out of the unfulfilled expectations of African people concerning decolonization. Indeed, before the end of the Cold War, most of Africa was a stronghold of authoritarian regimes. However, the crisis of legitimacy, the peaking of protests during late 1980s and early 1990s, and demands for dismantling a one-party system, military dictatorship, and repression at the end of the Cold War forced several countries in Africa to transition to democracy. However, Uganda and Eritrea remained authoritarian regimes.

Despite the de-legitimation of the African post-colonial state in 1990s by the pro-democracy movements, democracy remained fragile and the elites continued to resist any democratic transformation that may empower the masses. In essence, the euphoria over democracy has not moved beyond the cycle of holding of elections. Similarly, the return to authoritarian past has been justified by elites with the argument that political stability, economic development, and nation building are more pressing issues than consolidating democratic institutions. By implication, this tendency allowed these liberation leaders to criminalize groups opposed to their rule by labeling them as 'unpatriotic.' Not surprisingly, therefore, the stress to preserve unity of the new independent states had degenerated into a justification of current authoritarian political system in Uganda and Eritrea. Therefore, the issues of liberation and democratization in Africa are intertwined.

CHAPTER III

THEORETICAL APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

I will in this chapter provide the method I have used to carry out the study, and present the overall research design describing the method of analysis. This study employs a comparative discourse case analysis that encompasses the available literature on this research topic, and explores some variations on the problematic nature of democratization processes in post-liberation movement regimes in Africa. The case studies not only play a significant role in analyzing a contemporary "real-life phenomenon" in the study of post-liberation politics in Africa, but also serve as a rigorous research approach (Yin, 2003). Furthermore, comparative studies provide detailed analysis on particular cases, and specificity when comparing different political systems, patterns, and processes.

The study, as stated previously, attempts to address the following question: Why the Uganda's National Resistance Movement (NRM) and Eritrea's People's Liberation Front (EPLF) regimes have become authoritarian and did not stay the democratic course? Taking the above main research question into consideration, I found it is also necessary to employ a qualitative descriptive research design (Bryman, 2008) incorporating historical analysis in order to able to explore other structural explanations missing in the reviewed literature concerning valuable insights and the factors that would have either sustain or thwart democratization in general. Thus, this study primarily looks at the two cases of Uganda and Eritrea in order to interpret the theoretical discussion. The analysis of liberation movements in Uganda and Eritrea allows this study to examine the role played by elites in the shaping of post-liberation regimes in Africa, and especially during

the unprecedented winds of democratic change in 1990s, an event that has been referred to as the "Third Wave" in which many African countries transitioned to electoral democracy, while others like Uganda and Eritrea remained basically authoritarian.

Through the comparative discourse case analysis of democratization of the two countries, and building on a theoretical framework provided by widely cited scholars of democratization in Africa, I intend to account for the varied democratic transition paths in terms of elite resistance to democratization in Africa's post-liberation movement regimes. Thus, in this respect, inherited post-war political institutions offer many African liberation movements' elites opportunity to shape and structure political rule in their own favor, such that incumbent leaders (elites) struggling with issues of legitimacy can arbitrarily alter a state constitution and electoral rule to determine election outcomes which help them retain power, and especially in Uganda and Eritrea where victorious armed liberation movements control state power.

In analyzing the cases of Uganda and Eritrea, this study will use materials from both secondary data including books and scholarly peer reviewed/journal articles about post-liberation politics and democracy in Africa, published government and human rights reports and other primary official documents such as country's' constitution, newspapers and online information that exists in the public domain for example materials from Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and International Crisis Groups. The difficulty with the printed data and secondary sources is that it can be distorted and incomplete. I should mention that I use newspapers and NGOs research with discretion and believe it to suffer from certain knowledge biases. My reason for choosing a comparative case studies approaches is because despite the limited research on NRM and

EPLF, much of the literature that does exist has not been fully exhausted. By bringing in untapped sources, the study informs its readers about current problems in post-liberation regimes.

Liberation Movements and Democracy

This paper will now turn now to the notion of liberation in an attempt to understand the importance of liberation movements in modern African politics. In this study, a liberation movement is defined as a major political organization that mobilizes oppressed peoples for purposes of overthrowing authoritarian regime, or imperialist domination and exploitation in the case of colonialism. For his part, Christopher Clapham refers to a 'liberation insurgency' as one fighting to free itself from minority or colonial rule (Clapham, 1998), and this definition clearly suggests that liberation is freedom from repressive rule. Moreover, this explains why the national liberation movements in Africa were perceived to be wide-fronts without specific agendas beyond independence.

While comparing between liberation movement in Africa, Ali Mazuri observes that whereas the "first liberation struggle was against Europeans colonial rule, which involved the seizing of the state by indigenous African forces and that the takeover would make the state instrument of progress; and the second liberation struggle in Africa was about the quest for democracy" (Mazuri, 1992, p. 9), More specifically, Ekeh (1997), notes that, 'liberation' is about democratic rights attainment from the internal autocrats within post-colonial Africa states (pp. 96-70). For him, liberation as freedom is at the core of democracy and democratization.

Above all, colonialism gave rise to the nationalist movements that were born out

of popular discontent to combat repressive conditions. In this respect, liberation involved armed struggle aimed at the total emancipation of the people from the domination of colonialism and neo-colonialism, as was the case in Algeria, Angola, Zimbabwe, South Africa, and Mozambique (Nzongola-Ntalaja, 1987). On the other hand, Amilclar Cabral defines national liberation as:

> The phenomenon in which a given socio-economic whole rejects the negation of its historical processes. In other words, the national liberation of a people is the regaining of the historical personality of that people, in return of history through the destruction of the imperialist domination to which it was subjected (p.102).

As such, liberation is imbedded in the human psyche and manifested in the drive for freedom from oppression. Therefore, liberation is a revolutionary process that opposes the colonialism with all its structures. For the Eritrean, for example, the process of revolution continued to be that of national liberation. As noted earlier, the struggle for Eritrea nationhood/self-determination was waged through military campaign against Ethiopian regime. The Eritrean people's revolution is a process of societal change toward an independent state where there is no exploitation of humanity by humanity. To Cabral's point, national liberation meant not only the right of the people to rule itself but also the right of the people to regain its history. Accordingly, a revolution is national because of Eritrean nationalities are in the process of creating an Eritrean national identity (Sherman, 1980). Indeed, most African liberation leaders viewed revolution as a process of radical social, economic, political, and institutional change.

Likewise, in the 1950s and 1960s, liberation and independence were synonymous with freedom from foreign rule. It was on this basis that post-liberation elites in Uganda

and Eritrea tend to use ideology in order to hearten national unity. As Nzongola-Ntalaja, 1987) pointed out, African elites were the only class capable of political mobilization of the African masses against colonial domination (Nzongola-Ntalaha, 1987). Indeed, they viewed themselves as capable liberators who knew what is good for the people. However, once independence was achieved, the popular coalition began to disintegrate because many African elites failed to provide basic needs to ordinary people. It was this post-colonial state failure to meet people's expectations, according to Nzongola-Ntalaja, that made a second liberation desirable (p. 92). Moreover, this explains why Cabral contended that colonialism created new classes in Africa whose members began to enjoy socioeconomic status in terms of wealth and occupation. In cases, such as Uganda and other the countries in Horn of Africa like in Eritrea, the response against bad governance resulted in armed resistance (Dorman, 2006).

Today, however, liberation means more than political independence from colonial rule. While these scholars define liberation in terms of decolonization, this paper examines the liberation in terms of a struggle against post-colonial authoritarian states that essentially became more concerned with serving the interests of those elites who hold power. These liberation movements, including NRM and EPLF of Uganda and Eritrea, have used violence against particular repressive regimes that have marginalized the bulk of their populations. As Fantu Cheru (2012) observes, the real source of Africa's democratic struggles has its roots in armed resistance to oppressive regimes. It is also true that throughout liberation struggles, most leaders in Uganda and Eritrea proclaimed among other things democracy, and that the ordinary people be given the opportunity to exercise their political rights in an orderly manner.

CHAPTER IV

CASE STUDIES: UGANDA AND ERITREA

Uganda's Experience with Democracy and Democratization

Uganda is a unique case study in the post-colonial African context because it is neither a liberal democracy nor is it strictly a one-party state. When he came to power in 1986 through guerilla warfare, President Museveni and his National Resistance Movement (NRM) demonstrated a clear ideological departure from past leaders. He introduced the "the Movement System" also as known as 'no-party democracy,' which is based on 'individual-merit politics' (Kasfir, 1998, pp. 50-51). He immediately restricted the activities of political parties in the country, and argued that the country needed to settle first.

A quick look at Uganda's past political history helps explains why African strongmen like Museveni have long made simplistic arguments that democracy is too dangerous to try because it breeds political violence and ethnic conflict. Uganda's political and economic problems have always been associated with the chaos, sectarianism, and violence of the past. Colonial administration amalgamated a highly diverse nation/region into a single entity. Through the policies of divide and rule, the British favored Buganda's Protestant chiefs in access to land and authority at the expense of Catholic and Muslims. Moreover, Buganda's location to the south of the country made it strategic as it was closer to Lake Victoria and the port. To Samwiri R. Karugire's (1980) point, these policies created further ethnic, political, and religious divisions in Uganda.

Uganda gained its independence from Britain in 1962, and inherited political structures that had been created by the departed British colonial power. The first post-independence government headed by Milton Obote's Protestant Uganda People's Congress Party (UPC) was characterized by politics of exclusion (Kasfir, 1998). He made an alliance with the third biggest party, the Kabaka Yekka (KY), which represented the interest of the Buganda kingdom, the largest ethnic group in the south, who were advocating for self-government. On the other hand, the Democratic Party (DP) agenda was to end the UPC's domination rule.

The broad collation government did not last long because executive abuses have been pervasive. Obote's regime was perceived to be favoring his northern region and own ethnic group at the expense of Uganda's other ethnic groups, a move that was not well received by the Buganda people. Moreover, the economic hardship in the country led to public discontent. As such, Obote's control over the struggling and government became uncertain. He decided to centralize power, instituted a single party system, and relied increasingly on patronage, coercion, and to some extent, disregarded the complex federal constitution that was adopted at independence.

The rift within his coalition government including the banning of political parties resulted in a confrontation between the central government and the local Buganda kingdom. As Nelson Kasfir pointed out, this authoritarian trend encouraged Obote to use military to defeat his opponents. It is against this "winner takes all" attitude (personalization of power) that each party sought to use the military support to achieve its political end (Kasfir, 1976). Indeed, a need to maintain national unity and stability was the excuse for outlawing the opposition parties.

However, the political stability and socioeconomic condition of the country deteriorated. In 1971, General Idi Amin, who hailed from the west Nile, toppled the Obote's regime and seized power through a military coup, and consolidated his grip on power by restructuring the state institutions and the military (Omara-Otunnu, 1987). Although Amin's takeover was celebrated in the streets of Kampala by Baganda people who faulted Obote for destroying the Bugandan kingdom, Uganda became known for its political turmoil during Amin's reign of terror, which ushered in a long period of authoritarianism (Karugire, 1988). Furthermore, the takeover of civilian government by the army had dealt a serious blow to a democratic process in the country. Shortly after, Amin's lack of domestic and international support had him ousted from power by the Uganda National Liberation Front (UNLF) with the help of Tanzania's army in 1979. By the end of 1980, Milton Obote had returned to power for a second full term (Karugire, 1988). Karugire further notes that the military culture has become so entrenched in society that a civilian cannot preside over Uganda without the support of the army.

The foregoing analysis reflected Uganda's violent post-independence political history, based on complicated and unstable political alliances, which helped pave the way for military dictatorship. Similarly, when Museveni seized power in 1986, he declared that armed resistance against Obote's regime was to free Uganda from the corrupt elites' rule. That, no one should think that the resistance was a mere change of guard; but a fundamental change in politics of Uganda (Museveni, 1997). He promised to reestablish the rule of law and return the country to civilian rule/democracy. However, twenty-nine years later, Museveni remains in power, which suggests that perhaps his intentions or ojectives were not different from his predecessors who kept civil liberties under tight

control. According to Omara-Otunu (1991), the NRM regime intended to maintain control over political discourse in the country. Thus, the country's negative past political experience, sets the debate as to whether multiparty democracy is a suitable model for Africa.

Like many other African ruling elites who denounced democracy as a Western model that was inappropriate for Africa, the proponents of the 'Movement' system like Museveni strongly believe that multiparty democracy was divisive by nature and could lead to ethnic fragmentation and political disorder. Given that fact, multiparty party elections were often fraudulent and disputed by many post-liberation leaders, Museveni went on to suggest that the voters should be given an opportunity to participate in an individual merit-based as opposed to party based system (Museveni, 1992). He argued that a non-partisan democratic system could foster unity and political stability as well as change the way Ugandans could participate in politics at the grassroots levels. As Museveni (1997) writes:

> There are no healthy grounds for party political polarization in Uganda at this time because of the absence of social classes. What is crucial for Uganda now is for us to have a system that ensured democratic participation until such time as we get, through economic development, especially industrialization, the crystallization of socioeconomic group upon which we can then base healthy political parties (p. 195).

Indeed, one of the arguments that have always been advanced by the NRM was to reconstruct state institutions. Similarly, in their analysis of multiparty elections in Africa, Michael Cowen and Lisa Laasko (2002) found that where the ruling party had control

over the electoral process, multiparty competitive elections was nothing more than elite democracy, in which incumbents allow multiparty elections, but may place barriers (unfair conditions/lack of a level playing field) on opposition parties' ability to campaign freely. Unlike the opponents, the incumbent has access to state resources (money), and unmatched media coverage. The resulting overwhelming electoral victories may contribute to an atmosphere that dissuades voters from supporting other opposition parties. This has created new opportunities for corrupt African leaders to overstay their power.

In the Ugandan case, post-independence leaders managed to rally mass support to bolster their continued rule most notably from their ethnic groups. For example, in the early 1960s, the Uganda People's Congress (UPC) consistently relied on ethnic affiliation, an alliance by the elites of northern and eastern Uganda against their opponents (Kasfir, 1991; Carbone 2008). Thus, electorally, Obute's regime attracted strong support from his northern region. It is not surprising, therefore, that since the 1990s; Uganda's current leadership has been good at keeping up with the rhetoric of good governance, political reforms, free and fair elections. In response, many Ugandans came to embrace Museveni's regime. As such, the NRM claimed to be a people's movement, despite its ideological conviction and insistence of the 'no-party' Movement that opposed multiparty democracy governance.

Political Co-optation and the NRM Regime

Having rejected the procedural winner take-it-all democracy, the NRM party employed a unique democratization model to hold on to state power by nurturing a

popular participatory system of governance through the Resistance Councils (RC). This NRM instituted a movement set ups also known as 'no-party system' Movement system based on concept of individual merit basis that was endorsed by the 1995 constitution of Uganda, as an alternative form of grassroots democracy. Elections at the village and district levels were held in 1989 and 1992 (Kasfir, 2000). Local participation was through local council meetings, which were open to all adults of voting age in a village.

The Resistance Council constitutes a committee of representative who are elected on individual merit basis as opposed to their political affiliation. It was a grassroots decentralized political-administrative framework designed to bridge the gap between the central government authority and the grassroots at the bottom. The Resistance Committees were supposed to deliver basic services, restore law and order, strengthen national unity, and combat government high-level corruption at the local levels (Carbone, 2008, P. 39). In short, Resistance Councils' structures provided opportunities for citizens to participate in the governance of state affairs. Indeed, Museveni asserted that there was a fundamental shift of power to the mass of ordinary people at the grassroots since he came to power.

However, Omara-Otunu (1991) observes that the Resistance Councils began to effect what he called "hegemonic control" of the population, and they were far from being democratic (p. 43). Furthermore, Resistance Councils (RC) did not only expand the Movements structures, but have become an important source of political mobilization for the NRM regime from village to district, monitoring political activities at the grassroots. This has made it quite difficult for other civic organizations who did not pledge allegiance to the Movement to exercise their political rights without fear (Dicklitch

1998:79-81; Burkey 1991; Oloka-Onyango 1991). Under the term of 1995 constitution, executive powers were held by the president, directly elected for a five term. Meanwhile, it restricted political party activities until a referendum would be held on the matter in 2000, in which Ugandans would be free to then continue with the no-party Movement system or to organize any other kind of democracy (Kirya, 1998).

Therefore, the 'no-party' Movement system in Uganda can be thought as an authoritarian regime, in which every major political decision is tied to the "big-men," who use patronage politics. For example, Museveni appointed the leader of the Democratic Party (DP) as a deputy vice-president and minister of foreign affairs, and co-opted other opposition political rivals from different ethnic, regional, and religious groups whose views do not correspond to the ruling NRM party line (Dicklitch, 1995). Over the years, Museveni exercised personal power through patronage, corruption, and intimidation. As Michael Bratton and Nicholas van de Walle noted, in the absence of formal democratic institutions, decision-making power is concentrated in the hands of strongmen, surrounded by sycophantic politicians, mostly the elite, who are there to share the spoils (Bratton and van de Walle, 1997). It was not surprising therefore, that Museveni's regime relied on his lieutenants through the Resistance Councils (RC) for grassroots support, and the "broad-based" government to appoint opposition politicians in his NRM regime. When opposition parties and civil society are weakened, the transition to any subsequent democratic regime becomes problematic and, it is not surprising, that the executive branch exercises influence over both the legislature and the judiciary. Indeed, the president's broad powers and overwhelming majority of the ruling party in Ugandan parliament have guaranteed the executive a legally secure monopoly on power.

Furthermore, under the 'no-party' Movement system, the army occupied a central political position that went beyond its constitutional mandate (Carbone, 2008, pp. 40-41). It was the guerrilla leader Museveni who counted on the loyalty of the armed forces. Hence, co-optation of the military in politics was provided in the 1995 constitution. The provision for military representation (Special Interest Groups/the UPDF Act) in Uganda's Parliament allows ambitious high-ranking military elites to compete in elections and have influence over political decisions (UPPC. 2005). Consequently, some of Ugandan People's Defense Forces (UPDF) officers who joined politics are being scrutinized and closely monitored by the NRM regime. It is not surprising; therefore, that cooptation distances high-ranking military elites who would have otherwise posed a threat to the incumbency. In addition, it will be difficult for some of these military elites who are engaged in politics to plan and execute coups since they have many tasks at hand. Indeed, co-optation, tight control over the army, and elevation of elites' family members to key political posts has led to entrenchment of one-man rule. As such, Museveni's control over the state army has gone unchallenged (Carbone, 2008, p46). Patronage, typically in the form of government contracts, tenders, and jobs, is his preferred tool and the one that he used to render Parliament ineffective.

The National Resistance Movement and Repression without Violence

By the late-1990s, the democratization process stalled. According to Carbone (2003), Museveni's appetite for power grew as he and the ruling NRM elites became increasingly intolerant of dissenting voices from within the country, particularly those who disagreed with the principle of the Movement system or did not accept Museveni's

tendencies towards authoritarianism. In spite of economic liberalization and strong donor support, the NRM regime failed to establish democracy. Generally, a combination of domestic and external factors helped sustain the regime rule. Domestically, sociopolitical coalition was cemented by the NRM's unilateral military takeover of state power by Museveni, while the external assistance received by Uganda's political economy helped shield the regime from any pressure because of the proclaimed successful implementation of structural adjustment (Carbone. 2008). Arguably, Uganda was perceived by Western governments as an island of stability in an increasingly troubled East African region. Specifically, significant economic growth supported by foreign aid has led to the rise of domestic constituencies with interests in the status quo, enables Museveni to consolidate his political dominance in the country.

Following mass political protests for multiparty democracy in the 1990s, the economic importance of foreign aid to Uganda can hardly be overlooked. The NRM regime has received substantial financial assistance from international donors since it came to power in 1986. On capturing power, Museveni espoused socialist economic program. However, given the economic crisis confronting Uganda after the liberation war, the NRM regime adopted neoliberalism policy by accepting the proposed Structural Adjustment Program (SAP), as a way to have an access to those opportunities offered by international financial institutions that the NRM regime badly needed for their political survival. Despite the fact that there were some conditions attached to funding from the International Monetary Fund and World Bank, such as privatization of public sector, tight budgets, and entrenchment of the civil service in order, primarily, to save on salary costs, the NRM regime had no choice but reluctantly pushed the economic reforms policies

through. For example, Uganda has privatized more than half of its state controlled companies, liberalized investment laws to facilitate the export of profit, encouraged foreign investment, and opened capital markets. Indeed, foreign aid contributed to an estimated one-third of Uganda's total growth during the 1990s (Reinikka and Collier, 2001, 43).

According to Collier (1999), Uganda's economy was among the fastest growing economy in the world in 1990s. World Bank (2000) figures show that growth averaged 5 percent a year, more than twice the regional average. The United States administration praised the NRM regime for its popular social economic reforms, particularly its program to eradicate poverty and combating HIV/AIDs (USAID, 2005). Other international donors including the IMF and the World Bank pointed out that Museveni not only has instituted positive economic reforms, but also has improved the country's human rights record. Unlike the previous post-independence regimes, Museveni's government liberalized all economic sectors, encouraged foreign direct investment, and opened up capital markets, which resulted in remarkable economic growth. This rapid economic growth supported by foreign aid, generated interest from both political and military elites with stakes in the system. As Bratton and van de Walle (1997) observes, that "the political elites in Africa have used external resources as a means to consolidate their own hold on power" (p. 47).

Accordingly, Museveni was able to utilize the impressive economic improvement in the country to his advantage and for the NRM regime stability. It can be argued that this economic success directly influenced both domestic and international's perceptions of the NRM regime, and Museveni's competence as a progressive political leader.

45

Therefore, it is not surprising that the 1990s impressive economic condition demonstrated considerable opportunities for Museveni to overstay in power. In this regard, however, foreign aid has a negative effect on democratization as it was not easy for international donors to insist on multiparty democracy in Uganda's case, where opposition and political activists were harassed and tortured by security forces as Museveni's regime prepared to compete for the presidential election planned for 1996 (Amnesty International, 1992).

Interestingly, the NRM regime has allowed mass media to flourish in Uganda. For example, independent newspapers openly criticized the regime. As argued earlier, however, this does not mean that the relationship between the NRM regime and the press has been cozy. In effect, the NRM regime continued to detain political opponents and prosecute journalists who reported on issues such as a high-level corruption and human rights (Human Rights Watch, 1999). Paradoxically, the restrictive political measures contradict the no-party democracy principles and popular participation claims, which are supposed to guarantee civil liberties to all Ugandans. Thus, the foregoing analysis clearly shows that while the influence of foreign aid may have contributed to cosmetic political reforms, and motivated the NRM elites to entertain the idea of multiparty elections, rapid economic growth helped legitimize the status quo (NRM regime) in Uganda.

Recognizing that the restriction on civil liberties by the NRM regime would lead to the end of political pluralism, the international donor community led by the United States and, European Union (E.U.) governments started exerting pressure on Museveni to open up political space in Uganda. According to the U.S. State Department's (1997) country report, Uganda's no-party system limits the rights of citizens. Succumbing to

domestic and international actors' pressure for multi-party democracy, Museveni reluctantly urged Ugandans to choose between the existing Movement system and a multiparty system in a referendum held in 2000 (Magaju and Oloka-Onyonga, 2000; Bratton and Lambright, 2001). Museveni and the ruling NRM elites crisscrossed the country campaigning against multiparty politics and persuading voters that political parties would divide Ugandans along ethnic, regional, and religious lines. He argued that Ugandans belonged to a single class of peasants and therefore did not need multiparty democracy, but an inclusive 'movement' to promote unity and political stability (Museveni, 1998; Kasfir, 1998). In this context, the NRM was exempted because it is not a declared political party.

Legitimation of the NRM Rule through Reform Process

In the 2000 referendum, voters in Uganda endorsed Museveni's "no-party" Movement system despite his regime's ban on political activities outside the Movement, a national umbrella political organization to which, in theory, all candidates and voters belong (*New York Times*, 2000). However, the opposition boycotted the referendum and questioned its legitimacy because they believed that the government's sponsored public referendum exercise sought to take away basic political rights of freedom of association and assembly (Mugaju and Oloka-Onyango, 2000). Despite the low turnout, however, the referendum did take place and the elites and those in rural areas sided with the NRM regime.

Col. Kizza Besigy, who used to be Museveni's personal physician during the war time, delivered a far reaching critique of the Movement system. He presented an

"insider's view" in a newspaper and decried increasing intolerance for the internal opposition and accused the NRM regime of being undemocratic and corrupt (Besigy, 1999). He later challenged Museveni in the presidential elections in 2001 in a campaign replete with violence and intimidation, and was forced to flee into exile. Unsurprisingly, the ruling NRM elites endorsed Museveni's candidature, and Museveni easily won the 2001 presidential election that was held under a 'no-party' Movement system (Carbone, 2003). This is a clear indication that Museveni was anxiously losing his political power dominance within the ruling NRM party.

It was not until a decade ago or so that the Western donor community, including political observers and academics, began to criticize the country's political landscape. Many African scholars have argued that President Museveni has solidified "personal rule" in Uganda, and doing so has moved the country towards a "semi-authoritarian"/hybrid regime (Carbone 2003; Tripp, 2004). In effect, many would argue that characterization of the movement system as transitional pending sufficient economic growth can easily serve as the justification for the indefinite political domination by the ruling NRM elites (Kasfir, 1998). Meanwhile, emergence of the internal contradictions among some of the key figures within the Movement became serious by the 2001 presidential elections. Additionally, since Museveni's personal ambition was challenged by some group of NRM dissidents calling for pluralist reforms within the ruling NRM party, splits grew. Museveni dismissed three of his key outspoken cabinet members who were critical of his political dominance and concentration of power on the presidency (Makara, et al., 2009).

With the momentum building against him, in 2005, the country changed its

constitution from a no-party system to multiparty system through another controversial referendum. This is because under the old 1995 constitution, President Museveni's stay in power was constrained by two terms limit in office. Therefore, in his efforts to get around this limitation, the NRM's regime reversed the no-party system in favor of multi-party politics, against years of its own rhetoric under which the ruling elite had initially campaigned. Museveni argued that his 'no-party' model defeated sectarianism that had been responsible for upheavals which almost gripped Uganda for decades (Mwenda, 2007). However, Kasfir and Twebaz (2008) pointed out that, the reason for this reversal was purely elimination of two-term limits and the leadership's desire to maintain power.

Museveni traversed the country seeking support from Ugandans for a return to multi-party politics, arguing that the measures would promote development program in Uganda (Museveni, 2005). Museveni justified the move on various grounds including that there is unfinished work to be done by his ruling NRM party, and that any likely successor will likely "mess up" Uganda. Nevertheless, the opposition elements, who had long advocated a reintroduction of political parties, this time called for a boycott and denounced the regime's move to return to multiparty politics, arguing that the incumbent elites planned to entrench themselves in power, and there was no transparency on the government's real motives for the referendum.

Despite the low turnout, more than 90 percent voted in favor of a return to multiparty politics (*BBC News*, 2005). Instead, Museveni aggressively used the influence of patronage in parliament to lift presidential two-term limits to secure a third term (Tangri and Mwenda, 2010). To this end, Museveni and the ruling elites succeeded in securing passage of a resolution in favor of a national referendum seeking to amend the

constitution to lift the presidential two-term limits. Once the decision was reached to move the country towards multiparty democracy, and in order not to lose control of power to opposition elements, the NRM regime established a wide board-based government and co-opted some prominent opposition members into Museveni's government.

While coercion is arguably the most effective way to eliminate a perceived threat, co-optation in this regard, is used as a means to expanding power by bringing opposition, or neutral figures into the system, usually through appointment, and amalgamating them to the regime's structures. The NRM expanded its power by creating or using existing semi-official bodies to include individuals of certain professions, economic class, or educational strata. Other soft power options include the use of populism and strategically dispersed economic benefits. To secure the 322 votes from the members of Parliament which is enough to lift the limit on presidential terms, Museveni's lieutenants dished out free money through bribery, blackmailing, and intimidation (Mwenda, 2007, p. 24).

As argued earlier, the regime was thus able to control internal and external oppositions by extending the Movement's invitation to Uganda's elite to join in ruling the country. As Lewis (2005) writes, the complexity of modern society makes it hard for dictators to rule alone, since all dictators need the support of some individuals in order to maintain their command. In Uganda's case, for example, vocal critics of the NRM regime including members of parliament, cabinet ministers, and members of civil society were punished into submission by the NRM. For example, some of the NRM members of the parliament, and cabinet ministers who did not support the constitutional amendment that removes the two-term limit for the president, lost their jobs, and the president's favor

(Mwenda, 2007). Perhaps not surprising, these individuals constitute the elite tier of dictatorships. Moreover, when the NRM incorporated real and potential opposition members to consolidate its power, political participation was allowed, because the protracted transition enabled the NRM to control democratization process.

Under the NRM, elites have taken over the important government institutions and rum them in a fashion that rewards its clique (Tangri and Mwenda, 2010). In this respect, a weak political opposition cannot resist a powerful and dominant NRM government. Therefore, it is not surprising that Museveni was elected in 2006 and 2011 to a third and fourth terms, amid widespread claims of rigging, voter intimidation and violence (White, 2006). Indeed, the NRM regime is still the dominant party in the country that is calling the shots and particularly, in a society such as Uganda where the rules of the game are defined by elites in power. It is not surprisingly, therefore, that Museveni relied on rhetoric of fairness and a partial democracy ploy of legitimation in order to mobilize mass support for his regime.

Reluctant Democratization: The Case Of Eritrea

Eritrea is a small, northeastern African country covering about 125,000 square kilometers (48,000 square. mile), with an estimated population of 5.5 to 6 million. Like many other African colonies, Eritrea's borders were arbitrarily drawn by the colonizing European power. Since achieving its independence from Ethiopia in 1991, Eritrea has been touted by many foreign observers as a shining model for democracy in Africa. During his African tour in March 1998, President Clinton singled out Eritrea for praise from among a small group of African countries (included Uganda, Ethiopia and Rwanda)

as leading an African renaissance, (Oloka-Onyango, 2004). As the most impressive liberation movement in Africa, many believed that the victorious Eritrea People's Liberation Movement (EPLF) leadership would learn lessons from postcolonial African history in order avoid the mistakes of the past committed by their predecessors.

There were early indications that showed that the country had made some progress towards democratic development, such as the ratification of Eritrea's new constitution in 1997 after a popular consultation process, freedom of press, and a fairly good record of human rights (Abdulkadir, et al., 2011). Consequently, Eritrea began its transition with development of state institutions, and especially a democratic system required for a well-functioning, accountable democracy.

In their research, Bratton & Chang (2006) find that "Democratization requires a set of state structures that enforce law and order, respect human rights, respond to popular demands, govern by constitutional means, and control official corruption…" (pp. 1076-7). They have supported the need for a country to state-build and democratize simultaneously throughout their research. Indeed, the Eritrean people were broadly consulted on the writing of the constitution, and the EPLF regime promised to introduce multiparty democracy system. A broad-based civic consultation process was carried out, where constitutional commission members visited villages throughout Eritrea, and Eritrean communities abroad, to present and discuss key principles of the new Constitution: the separation of powers; the type of government; the role of the military and political parties; and how human rights should be protected and enforced (Connell 1997: 140). Although elections were promised, the EPLF under Afewerki's reign had no intention of relinquishing power (Ottaway, 1998. p. 202). Surprisingly, many foreign

observers did not necessarily see this as problematic, despite the regimes authoritarian tendencies. This is because the government was widely admired for its discipline and nation-building's determination (Pateman, 1990).

After seizing power, the EPLF established a Provisional Government/transitional government for Eritrea in 1991, which traced its legitimacy from its historic mandate in achieving the liberation of Eritrea from Ethiopia. In the 1992, EPLF begun to build the structures of provisional governments, with the hope that local governance would be a participatory process (Mekonnen, 2006). The focus was on local and decentralized authority, which reflects the tension between the popular democracy and the need to set and implement national development policy. According to Sarah R. Dorman, "Eritrea People's Liberation Front fighters assumed administrative and governmental roles and the EPLF central committee became a legislative branch of government" (Dorman, 2006, p.1091). The EPLF leadership ensures that political appointees at the executive branch levels are being selected from among the ranks and files of the ruling EPLF. Afewerki retained the power of appointing all provincial governors, who in turn nominate the administrators of sub-provinces for approval by the EPLF regime (Government of Eritrea, 1996). Conversely, criticism has been made of the constitution-making process on the basis that it was designed to legitimize the elite role of the EPLF in drafting a constitution fitting for its future role in Eritrea (Hedru 2003: 436).

Although the EPLF was essentially a military organization with strong sense of hierarchy, it continued to cultivate the image of a democratic movement during its war with Ethiopia of liberation with Ethiopia. However, like other liberation movements in Africa that have turned to de facto single-party regimes, Isaias Afewerki the leader of the

EPLF who received his military training at the height of Cultural Revolution in 1960s, and was influenced by Maoist ideology, has remained Eritrea's only president since 1993. During its liberation war for independence, the EPLF invoked Marxist-Leninist theory to instill revolutionary discipline and political consciousness/patriotism in its fighters, and the general population as well (Pool, 2011, pp. 60-61). Intrinsically, the last two decades have demonstrated Afewerki's obsession with total control of state and its governing institutions. He exercised absolute power through the tight hierarchical structures that concentrated power in the hands of the president's office.

While the EPLF was seen by Eritreans and others as one of the most powerful liberation movements in the third world whose main objective was to establish a democratic state, present Eritrea's politics, Dan Connell (2011) seem to suggest that EPLF is grounded on demonstrated efficacy of the one-party system with no clear positive road map to a multiparty party system. In essence, the Eritrea's current political history reflects a dead-end toward a genuine democratic transition. He further notes:

> The roots of the present despotism lie within a movement that arose under conditions of unrelenting political repression necessitating secrecy and subterfuge for its very survival, that came under attack at one time or another from nearly every major regional and global power, and that, like most of its liberation movement contemporaries, drew on Leninist traditions of highly centralized authority for its inspiration (Connell, 2011. p. 420).

There is no doubt that it is this entrenched legacy of autocratic liberation culture that shaped Eritrea's post-liberation politics. During the independence war, most Eritrean displayed willingness to sacrifice their lives in pursuit of what was regarded as common

good. Others may have turned blind eye to oppression due to fear or in the interest of common good (liberation). According to Dan Connell, EPLF's tight organizational structure helped in the production of disciplined and unquestioning cadres of followers/fighters (Connell, 1998). Unfortunately, this may have contributed to Eritrea's current malaise. Today, however, Eritrea has backtracked from democratization process to an increasingly becoming a one-party authoritarian state.

Eritrea, Repression and Bumpy Transition

Like other national liberation governments turned repressive, the political establishment in Eritrea tolerates no open dissent. Since coming to power in 1991, the EPLF has not allowed any political opposition to emerge within Eritrea. The country has shown what Bratton and Van de Walle, (1994) called the institutional legacy of "big-man" politics in authoritarian regimes. The big-man politics to some extent reflects patron–client relationships, in which elite collude with the top leadership to get and maintain access to wealth and privileges; in return they contained dissent from below.

Eritrea's post-independence regime under Afewerki. systematically dismantled the formal institutions in order to facilitate whole effective personalized rule (Kibreab, 2009). At the heart of these designed polices lie the intolerant ruling elites, who perceived everything not controlled by the ruling elites as representing a threat to national security. For example, thousands of Eritreans suffered in 'secret' detention camps throughout the country, including government critics, civil servants, peasants, students, journalists, and Christian and Muslim alike, all are liable to be regarded as a threat to the regime and thus vulnerable to arrest, torture and disappearance (Amnesty International

2008b).

Over the last two decades, Afewerki's EPLF regime pushed the country into armed confrontations with its neighbors, namely Sudan, Djibouti and Yamen. In mid-1998-2000, President Afewerki rushed the country into a sequence of military mobilization and political repression during its border war with Ethiopia, contrary to the EPLF's stated popular democracy principle (Gilkes and Plaut 2000; Dorman, 2007).

To many political observers, the Eritrean-Ethiopia border war had to do with Eritrean sovereignty (Berekteab, 2009). Eritrean government unilaterally deployed its army and occupied a disputed old border area with Ethiopia because it intended to achieve the 1993 failed demarcation of the emerging sovereign Eritrea state and territory. Thus, the war was portrayed as an Eritrean making or invader. Yet, Eritrea has accused Ethiopia of sending in thousands of settlers to the along the disputed border of two countries in an attempt to push out Eritreans. Indeed, the country has been under a permanent state of emergency since. As such, the implementation of the constitution and national elections were postponed indefinitely without explanation (Connell, 2011). Civil and political rights (freedom of expression, freedom of assembly, and freedom of free and fair elections) have since been eroded, and denied to the Eritreans. The EPLF regime instituted a mandatory military national service, in which all men and women are conscripted into army, used as forced labor, and regularly subjected to violence (Amnesty International, 2013).

Therefore, the overwhelmingly militarization and mass mobilization not only serves the purpose of eliminating dissent and reinforce the role of military in cowing the society, but might employed by the EPLF regime as a device of legitimation in order to

retain power. This phenomenon of state repression has been well captured by Seyoume Hameso who noted, "any expression of dissatisfaction or grievance with the state is not tolerated as it is equated with a direct assault on the ruling elites or the president, who, in power, built his personality cult" (Hameso, 2002, p, 6).

In the mid-2000, major differences started to emerge from within the EPLF leadership. The border war between Eritrea and Ethiopia unleashed tension in the country. The president was criticized for his role in the war and some people began to challenge the regime's repressive rule (Connell, 2005). A group of scholars and professionals wrote an open letter to the President, criticizing his government for inhuman conditions of enforced 'national service' and the tendency towards authoritarianism (Kibreab, 2009, p. 31). In the early 2001, some reformists within the ruling EPLF party named the Group of Fifteen (G-15), comprising senior government and top party officials, calling for democratic reforms were jailed, and suspected dissent were rounded up and imprisoned, including students of Asmara University. In their signed letter to the president, the group stated that the government has been reduced to one man rule, and demanded that the ruling EPLF regime keep its promise on democratization (Kibreab 2009, pp. 34-37).

Not happy with growing dissent and demands for democratic reforms, President Afewerki ignored the G-15 petition, including the EPLF's established comprehensive manifesto for reform further called for implementation of the constitution, in which elected government was supposed to be in place by 1997. Instead, Afewerki employed brutal repression against his political opponents who dared question regime's policy and closed down independent media outlets, restricted citizens' movements inside and outside

the country, and accused the G15 of committing treason against the country (Tronvoll, 1998). On the contrary, Amnesty International argued that the G15 did not 'advocate violence but were arrested because of their peaceful criticism of the government (Amnesty International 2002a). Many have argued that the outbreak of war gave Afewerki a strong reason to derail democratization, and justify the concentration of power in his hands.

According to Human Rights Reports' estimation, there are at least 10,000 political prisoners in Eritrea who remained in arbitrary dentation without formal charges for over a decade. Furthermore, the EPLF leadership suspended all independent media; closed down domestic and foreign non-governmental organizations (NGOs); detained and tortured thousands of ordinary Eritreans perceived as a threat to the regime's survival were pushed to flee the country as refugees in the neighboring countries. Thus, the incarceration of civilians was not only to inflict fear and insecurity, but also to suppress all dissent in order to perpetuate authoritarian rule. It is not surprising that some independence advocacy groups described Eritrea as the most repressive state in the world in terms of violation of civil liberties and human rights (Freedom House, 2008; 2012; 2009; US State Department; 2008, Human Rights Watch, 2007, 2009; Amnesty International, 2013). Consequently, Eritrea has degenerated into a police state, and is one of the most militarized societies in the world (International Crisis Group Report, 2010).

The above analysis illustrates a legitimation strategy used by the EPLF regime as diversionary tactic. When Eritrea and Ethiopia fought a devastating border, the EPLF regime was faced with a deteriorating economy, and public discontent, and thus many viewed the Eritrea situation as a means for bolstering domestic support and unifying an

increasingly divided military institution.

Unlike Uganda, Eritrea is not a major recipient of donors' aid, and most available economic indicators show a bleak picture. Unfortunately, however, the Western donors' communities cannot bring pressure to bear on the EPLF regime to adhere to democratic norms (good governance and respect for human rights). Foreign aid to Eritrea has been suspended by Western donors' communities and the international monetary institutions due to postponement of the multiparty elections and restrictions on civil rights (IMF, 2003). Throughout the post-independence period, the country's economic growth has been small or stagnant. As the United Nations Development Fund (UNDP) reported in 2013, Eritrea remains one of the poorest countries in the world, with Human Development Index ranking of 181 out of 187 countries, scoring an index of 0.381 (UNDP, 2013). Furthermore, the national economy is centralized (government command economy) in one party – the EPLF. This has squeezed out the private sector and marginalized the small business, thus, individual or businesses can survive without patronage. The intensity of the zero-sum-game politics is particularly in Eritrea. Accordingly, this gives the EPLF regime economic leverage to co-opt and coerce intellectuals, businesspersons, and high-ranking government officials who would have questioned the president's leadership abilities and his monopoly over political power.

Although the EPLF exhibited corporatist tendencies, in which the private sector was envisioned as the number one economic actor, its leadership abhors the free market because of perceived potential democratizing effect. There are established views, which maintained that market economy is as the important precondition for democratic political, thus, control over the country's resources (national economy), and enables the Afewerki

and his ruling EPLF elites to reward party loyalists (Kibreab, 2009, p. 294-298). Thus, the politics of self-reliance, which captures the ethos of the EPLF regime, is one in a sequence of extreme nationalism policies directly linked to the leadership's efforts to build its legitimacy and control society (Harris, 2006).

Unfortunately, the nationalism that was assumed to benefit the people perpetuated itself to benefit of elite in Eritrea. Afewerki, for example, granted increasing favors from the state; both financial and material, on high-ranking officers (International Crisis Group, 2012). To maintain control over the population power and secure loyalty, Afewerki placed the military directly under the executive control while building patronage through clientelistic networks by buying the support of the military men who have little oversight from the center. Similarly, loyal legislators and government ministers are rewarded with lucrative government deals/contracts.

Likewise, all areas of politics and the workings of the state have long been dominated by a powerful executive body embodied in a one person, President Afewerki. Although initial efforts were made to institute political pluralism, the country has not moved past a dominant executive/personal rule. It is, thus, a combination of factors such as a culture of arbitrary power and undemocratic institutions that happen to govern the independent nation are those of a liberation movement that won the war through the barrel of gun. This tradition was further exacerbated by, an authoritarian rule and personalization of power in post- independence Eritrea.

It is not surprising, therefore, that elites in Eritrea pursued an aggressive foreign policy in order to deflect popular attention from internal problems. Nevertheless, Eritrea is not different from other African post-colonial governments that have centralized

power, in the name of national identity nationalism. Indeed, some scholars have argued that authoritarian regimes sometimes exploit ideologies, history and ethnicity as a visible tool in order to maintain political stability (Lynch and Crawford 2011; Beissinger, 2008; Christopher Clapham 1993). These tactics generally seek to exclude a certain group, I would further argue that Eritrea's authoritarian regime's adoption of a legitimation argument is based on both external and internal threats.

The Movement and Eritrean Aborted Democracy

As argued earlier, transition from liberation movement to government was not an easy one, and particularly not for the African liberation movements that fought their way to power through the barrel of gun. Unlike NRM no-party democracy in Uganda where inclusive political and administrative system permitted intra-national dialogue and intuitional reforms, the Eritrea's post-liberation experience with the Movement system has largely been rhetorical, and far from being institutionalized. EPLF reconstituted EPLF into a mass political organization and renamed EPLF as the People's Front for Democracy and Justice (PFDJ), a prototype of political 'Movement' with some commitment to the multiparty politics; whereas it is openly distrust free competitive elections and party politics (Iyob, 1997, pp. 658-663). Although the Constitutional Assembly ratified the constitution of independent Eritrea in 1997, which guarantees citizens popular participation in all aspects of political; economic, social, and cultural life, the EPLF regime, has failed to have the constitution implemented.

Similarly, the constitutional provisions regarding democracy and good governance were not observed either (Connell, 2007). At its third Congress held in 1994,

it appeared real political reforms would emerge. The EPLF regime reiterated its commitment to democratic system during which a pluralistic constitution adopted to encourage popular participation, and the resolution of the Congress by the National Democratic Program (1994) states "In the context of our society, democracy is dependent not on the number of political parties and on regular elections, but on the actual participation of the people in the decision making process at the community and national level…" (p. 15).

The above sentence clearly indicates that the ruling EPLF was not committed to multi-party democracy. Regarding the issue of multi-party, President Afewerki explained that democracy and political pluralism are realized through domestic developments of people giving rise to specific socio-economic system, equitable allocation of resources and peace. He underlined that the western style of democracy that runs counter to the prevailing reality and paves the way for external interference through fomenting division along the lines of religion, tribe and region is not acceptable at all.

Unlike Uganda's case where the NRM regime let the people choose between the Movement System and the Multi-party System through a referendum, the Eritrean initial transitional constitutional arrangements, however, was conducted under the full control of the victorious EPLF. Participation from other organizations was limited to the few members who decided to toe the ruling EPLF's line and joined the transitional government as ordinary citizens. Thus, formation of political parties cannot be allowed to operate in the country.

Consequently, both the NRM and EPLF seemed to be committed to nurturing the Movement system as an alternative to multi-party democracy system. Unlike Uganda,

there are no registered political parties in Eritrea as the ruling EPLF regime claims to be a national movement. As such, democratic elections have not taken place since the country gained its independence from Ethiopia after 30 years long struggle for independence. President Afewerki exercises legislative as well as executive powers (Clottey, 2012).

Interestingly, Museveni and Afewerki have cautioned Africa in its democratization agenda. Instead, they put much emphasis on nation-building and participation rather than multi-party democracy. These two post-liberation leaders maintained that there is no need for regular multiparty elections that do not create economic opportunities and prosperity, but instability and political disorder. With dire poverty, they argued that Africa is still pre-industrial with multi-ethnic, multi-religious society, and therefore, multi-party politics would be counterproductive since political parties run by elites tend to follow ethnic, religious and regional lines as opposed to ideological convictions (Ottaway, 1998, p. 210). This implies that democracy can be achieved without elections on basis of multiparty competition. Thus, the ordinary people's priority is not democracy, but rather immediate basic human needs like food, shelter and healthcare. Similarly, economic development and democracy argument was routinely invoked as a justification for denying or restricting democracy in Africa. It was argued that the road to democracy takes over time and must be grounded in the culture of the local African people. In Eritrea's case, it means that the ruling EPLF should remain in power forever. This is because it will take a while for the country that emerged from 30 years of war to experience socioeconomic development.

Like the NRM in Uganda, which blamed Uganda's unstable national history on faulty experience with multiparty politics, the EPLF maintains that Eritrea's nationhood

had suffered from divisive politics organized along ethnic and religious line (Bariagaber, 1998). Like many African lost-liberation leaders who have all used anti-colonialism propaganda, where national unity is achieved through creating an external enemy, Afewerki has built on nationalism and portrayal of the Ethiopian regime as the enemy responsible for all of Eritrea's miseries.

In Uganda, the no-party system was introduced after a popular mandate was secured through a referendum which allows individual to compete in elections on merit basis. The country has a political system that is hegemonic, but operates under the disguise of multiparty electoral politics. In contrast, the EPLF simply transformed its supposedly representative deliberative organ into a provisional sort of parliament. Eritrea's ruling EPLF/PFDJ is the only recognized political entity that has never held an election. As a matter of fact, institutions of democracy which have to function as checks and balances to unaccountable powerful executive, did not exist in the post-independent Eritrea, and Afewerki has seized the opportunity to consolidate his personal rule. In other words, the EPLF regime is highly exclusionary because Afewerki rule by decree. To the Eritrean scholar, David Pool's point, there is neither democracy nor justice in Eritrea (Pool, 2001).

Although the international NGOs played crucial roles during the 30-year war of independence, for example, providing humanitarian activities/emergency relief such as nutrition, health services and education to the rebel controlled areas; the EPLF regime adopted a hostile approach towards them, and expelled all foreign NGOs from the country (Kiberab, 2009). This is because the regime sees autonomous civic organizations as open to foreign funding, manipulation and involvement in domestic political activities.

In this sense, the EPLF perceived NGOs and civil society group as a threat to national sovereignty. As such it has become increasingly intolerance to opposition activities. Indeed, the greatest threat to democratization in Eritrea is the country's lack of independent media and political intolerant on part of the ruling EPLF regime.

Unlike Eritrea, in Uganda, the ruling NRM government had allowed the civil society organizations and other interest groups to conduct their business freely. Thus, there is no doubt that the 2005 reintroduction of transition to multi-party democracy has allowed the country to move forward. It should be noted that national elections were held in 1996, 2001, 2006, and 2011; however, the holding of no-party elections does not constitute a transition to democracy, simply because civil and political rights are not respected in Uganda. And where the ruling NRM party has a majority seats in the parliament, the regime effectively used the parliament to pass key legislation (Salih, 2007). But, Uganda's National Assembly which is dominated by the NRM members, continued to serve not as counterbalance to the presidency but as a rubberstamp for the NRM regime's policies. In their efforts to maximize their chances for political survival, the ruling elite in Uganda decided not to initiate real political changes. President Museveni outmaneuvered the pro-democracy groups/opposition by undertaking some economic and political reforms. As such, he was able to retain state control, rather than establishing a more open political structure which could preserve a strong effective political system. In this respect, one can blame the elite for being unwilling to share or give up power.

While Uganda and Eritrea's parliaments have lacked real power, and more often seem prove to be useful tools for absorbing elite into the government, their processes

diverge significantly. In Uganda, for example, the opposition is encouraged to join the ruling party by officially becoming NRM members. Hence, affiliation with the ruling NRM party secures the benefits of patronage. As has always been the case, elites who are loyal to president gain access to state funds, and in the process, the regime wins by asserting control over elite and opposition respectively. Thus, without the political will for democracy on the part of the ruling elite, I would argue the road to real democracy in Uganda will indeed be long one.

In contrast, the Eritrea's regime continued to deny its citizens basic political rights and civil liberties. Afewerki dismantled the rule of law, silenced and indefinitely incarcerated political opponents, and forged a single-party/Movement system. No citizen is ever allowed to compete against Afewerki, and party membership is restricted (Hedru, 2003). Moreover, Eritrean President Afewerki has used siege mentality and nationalism to continue repression at home and hostility externally toward its neighbors. Contrary to the ideology of the one-party state, in which the party is depicted as representative of a strata of the population and an agency of people's power, the EPLF served as an instrument of power for propaganda and political control. ith no functioning constitution, Eritrea's National Assembly members are not elected through a competitive and universal suffrage; rather, they were former liberation fighters selected by the ruling EPLF leadership. As such, critical national decisions are rubberstamped and passed through consensus due to the intolerant of the EPLF leadership toward alternative ideas (Donnell, 2005). I would argue that the repressive history of the Eritrean incumbent ruling elites, characterized by self-promotion and a quest for personal advancement at any cost, suggests that the prospect for democracy in Eritrea will remain bleak as ever.

CHAPTER V

DEMOCRATIZATION OR AUTHORITARIANISM: ELITES JUSTIFICATION

Having explored problematic transitions in Uganda and Eritrea; I will examine elite justification in those countries, and the extent to which elites have undermined the democratization process. For the purpose of this study, elites are narrowly defined as small, privileged leadership/political actors at the highest level of government such as ministers or those attached to official government including presidential advisors, members of parliament (MPs), top party officials, and politicians who dominate the political process. Other elites include businessmen and intellectuals that serve political power, ranking military personnel, leaders of ethnic groups, and senior civil servants. The elites' varying amounts of power depend on how developed their patronage networks are, and their commitment to elite unity. The higher one climbs in a political system, the deeper one's stake in the system becomes. In brief, the elites are small, privileged portion of the population of Africa, who dominate the masses but also rotate leadership position.

In Uganda's case, elites possess the greatest ability to make key policy change in their respective societies because they control the reins of government and set the rules of their political systems. Similarly, elite actions in Uganda and Eritrea tend to shape the countries' experiences with democratic transition (Vallalon and vonDoepp, 2005). Alas, elite had helped protract authoritarianism by being bought off through targeted material benefits in return for regime's political support. As a consequence, this tactic being used by incumbent elite outside the formal institutional framework of governance to increase

the likelihood of corruption and patronage networks in which the ruler controls spoils of office and use their position for private gain (Bratton and van de Walle, 1997).

Therefore, it is not surprising that elites in Uganda and Eritrea viewed multi-party democracy as divisive and inappropriate for Africans. Similarly, incumbent elites' continued justification of authoritarian rule was based on the arguments of a consensus politics that preserves unity and development first and procedural contestation last. Equally disturbing, these liberation leaders/elites who seized power through violent means of armed struggle banned factionalism in the form of African democratic values, citing past elections in Egypt, Kenya, and Democratic Republic of Congo that have led to clashes not only between the different political parties, but between the different ethnic, religious, and regional groupings that follow them.

Although it is difficult to expect elites to move toward smooth transition to democratization in post-war societies, no one expected post-war Uganda and Eritrea to move towards stable democracy. Interestingly, Uganda and Eritrea liberation leaders were all aiming at the total deconstruction of state structures and the replacement of these by new and often more democratic ones. Conversely, it is now clear that these liberation movements are led by elites whose challenge against the dictatorships of the first generation of African leaders has gone wrong. As a result, centralization has encouraged corrupt state structures that have in turn provided the ground for the elite entrenchment.

Research has revealed that elites who have come to power through violence are likely to maintain their positions through violence (Gurr, 1988). Therefore, it is no overstatement to say that Eritrea is currently a one-party state under siege by its own ruling elite who control the government and terrorize the population. In its 2010 report,

the International Crisis Group described Afewerki as a dictator, who uses conscription, imprisonment, and violence to pound his people into submission. Likewise, the Ugandan previous violent political experiences clearly suggest that in an environment where politics of exclusion and banning of political activities are the norm and transitions to democracy are likely to fail. Indeed, this failure rests squarely with the incumbent elites and their desire to retain power. Particularly to blame are key establishment agents who, being deeply ingrained in the system, are most directly responsible for the transition failure.

Uganda and Eritrea Justification for Authoritarianism

The extent to which elites are willing to overstay in office and maintain their grip on power through authoritarian means is clearly demonstrated in cases of Uganda and Eritrea, the two post-liberation states who claimed to be democratic. Conversely, the NRM and EPLF's regimes not only pursue zero sum politics, but have outlawed opposition groups and rejected the very idea of the existence of democracy that depends on periodic competitive elections in which all the adults citizens have the rights to organize, participate in politics, compete for public office, and choose their representatives and government in a free and fair voting exercise (Bratton and van de Walle, 1997, p. 217). Alas, these tendencies have sowed the seeds of authoritarian rule in Uganda and Eritrea.

Accordingly, there is widespread agreement that the ruling elites are primarily responsible for democratic transition (Linz and Stepan, 1978). However, recent studies have shown that post-liberation elites are beginning to initiate more open political

systems in reaction to international and domestic pressure (Bratton, and van de Walle, 1992; Joseph, 1997; Way, 2005). In Uganda and Eritrea, for example, the elite embarked on managed transition to limited democracy (Movement democracy). These African liberation leaders, namely Museveni and Afewerki, know that change is inevitable, and thus they aim to control the transition process in an effort to ensure their continued rule. It is not surprising that liberalization of political space has been more about keeping power than about creating an inclusive process. Thus, the justifications for the establishment of a mass political movement/dominant one-party state by elite over their respective political systems in Uganda and Eritrea stemmed most notably from Marxists who insist on the suppression, if not elimination, of all political parties that they claim divide the people into hostile factions. In other words, a Movement system or no-party state has the means to rally the masses for development purpose which opposition groups would only be keen to undermine.

For example, in the run up to 2006 election, Uganda police used tear gas to disrupt opposition political rallies organized by the Forum for Democratic Change (FDC) party leader Dr. Kiiza Besigye and his supporters, who had gathered in Kampala where FDC was supposed to launch its party identity card. Confronting Besigye, the Kampala Extra Regional Police Commander, Grace Turyagumanawe, said "I asked him (Besigye) to respect the concerns of Kampala traders who wrote and said that political party activities disrupt their business" (Sunday Vision, Novembers 19, 2006). To this effect, the NRM regime portrays opposition and dissent as enemies of the country and quite often labels them as dangerous to societal progress.

Drawing upon the Leninist concept that the African masses need to be led by

elite, the dominant regimes, and in this case the one-party state, was envisioned as the forefront of promoting and safeguarding socialist revolution in Africa (Liebenow, 1986). As argued earlier, post-independence governments were generally concerned with the economic development of African societies, and how best to develop their societies and quickly satisfy the rising popular demands for the fruits of liberation struggle. Further, these post-liberation governments claimed the role of guardianship, arguing that taking those actions is necessary to protect the security, stability, and territorial integrity of the sovereign country.

Similarly, Afewerki has advanced the same view that for the sake of industrial development and national unity, it was necessary to establish a mass political "Movement" to fight against poverty. In Eritrea, the EPLF was preoccupied with building a unified society and for this reason the elite advocated for a Movement system. On several occasions President Afewerki and the ruling EPLF elite have maintained that democracy without participation and the equal right to opportunity for social services and better living conditions is meaningless. According to this view, by restricting political rights and civil liberties, the ruling EPLF regime can focus on constructing the necessary environment for economic development first by limiting the kind of turmoil that might come about in competitive electoral politics, which quite often disrupts the very foundation of the nation state itself.

On the contrary, the EPLF regime rarely makes the lives of Eritrean people better (Iyob, 1997). It is often the opposite. During the 23 years in power, incumbent elite in Eritrea started manipulating the ordinary population by denying them democracy, particularly given the failure by EPLF regime to meet material expectations (socio-

economic well-being) of the Eritrean people, together with rampant corruption, have undermined political legitimacy to the point where the incumbent elite had to deploy violence in order to stay in office. President Afewerki and many Eritrean elites believe that until the country gets on firm footing, it does not need elections. Repression is necessary because Eritrea faces a security threat from the hostile neighboring Ethiopia. Unlike Uganda, elites in Eritrea seem to be guided mostly by cost-benefit calculations. Thus, the dynamics of the transition, especially the consolidation of incumbent elite power coupled with general public apathy towards politics, provides a rather bleak political future for Eritrea's democratization.

In contrast, in Uganda, Museveni's NRM regime presided over successful and sustained economic growth in the 1990s, extending patronage networks and keeping many elites and their local constituencies closer and under control (Mwenda, 2007). This strategic move on part of Museveni has prevented political violence and the civil war cycle that the country has witnessed in the past. Additionally, the deterioration in civil liberties in Africa's post-liberation states reflect the determination of elites to hold on to power at any cost. Levitsky and Way, argue that the ruling party's violent past enhances its capacity and tendency to use violence as a means to retain power in the future (Levitsky and Way, 2005, 0. 871). Indeed, the militarized structures and institutions of ruling NRM and EPLF parties forged during guerrilla wars persisted after they seized state power. In a nutshell, democratic transformation in Uganda and Eritrea will not be easy, and as I argued earlier, without the political will on the part of the elites to compromise and respect the rule of law, democratization will remain elusive.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

This thesis has explored impact of post-liberation movement governments on the democratic political system in Africa, and drawn attention to some of the obstacles and impediments to democratic transition. It was argued earlier that studies on democratization in African post-liberation states are limited, and those that are available tend to focus on Latin America, and Southern and Eastern Europe. However, various studies that focus on Africa's democratization tend to deal with the continent as a whole. Therefore this study has been one of the few attempts to bring the complexity of democratization in Africa's post-liberation movement to the attention of its readers.

While the case studies of Uganda and Eritrea in this paper do not cover the entire collection of post-liberation politics, they do point to some repeated themes among these transition contributed to their disappointing attempts at pursuing a liberation and democratic agenda. Thus, the two cases of Uganda and Eritrea have been selected because they allow the reader to look at the African liberation discourse vis-à-vis the political actors/elites who may influence democratization process in the continent. Specifically, this comparative case study approach allows the paper to investigate the question, why have the African post-liberation regimes in Uganda and Eritrea become authoritarian?

For example, some scholars argued that the prospects for democracy in African remain elusive (Clapham, 1993). Indeed, this has often been the case with Uganda and Eritrea where established ruling elite cling to power, and provide obvious obstacles to the

democratization process. It is on this basis that Africa's post-liberation movements in the 1990s drew significant international attention in Uganda and Eritrea, mainly because the world would like to see whether transition from liberation structures to government ones will be successful.

In this paper, I argued that in the last two decades, African post-liberation leaders have not yet decided to take more critical steps toward democracy, most importantly holding competitive multi-party elections. For far too long many people have suffered in the name of liberation and democracy that has only benefited the few elites. Presidents Museveni in Uganda and Afewerki in Eritrea are classic examples of African despots left exposed after the end of the Cold War, but who managed to survive what Huntington terms the "third wave" of democratization that swept military dictatorships from power, leading to free and fair elections in many countries including much of Africa. Whereas liberal democracy consolidated in few countries in Africa, for the most part there was democratic stagnation of democratization like in the post-liberation states in Uganda and Eritrea. Democratic transition in Uganda, for example, resulted in institutionalization of illiberal democracy, where ruling elites could retain power and legitimize their authoritarian rule by falsification of election results and violation of civil liberties.

It has been suggested in this study that post-liberation states that had hitherto controlled the transition with the intention of promoting one-party dominance, such as Eritrea, continue to undermine the democratization process. In addition, Eritrea did indeed undergo a transition, but not toward democracy. Rather than ushering in a new era of political liberalism, the ruling elite helped consolidate the EPLF's hegemony. The EPLF under Afewerki's rule has been the worst example of how a liberation movement

can turn against its people. Today, Eritreans are caught in a dilemma between expectations bestowed by the masses on a liberation leadership that ended colonization and the elite's capture of liberation. Since there no sufficient system of checks-and-balances in the form of independent state institutions, opposition, or civil society groups to hold the ruling EPLF party accountable, it is unlikely that Eritrea will become a real democracy any time soon.

It is indeed a sobering experience for Uganda and Eritrea to awaken to the reality that not all liberation movements lead to democracy. It not surprising, however, that the key actors/elite have shown deep disrespect for democratization in both Uganda and Eritrea, the two countries that faced overwhelming institutional obstacles, linked to the intolerance of democratic pluralism, application of violence against dissent.

Throughout the course of the liberation struggle, both NRM and EPLF were engaged in violent conflict, which transform into hostility towards opposition in the post-liberation dispensation. These liberation leaders strongly believe that they are the only legitimate representatives of the people, and should be allowed to cling to power. As mentioned earlier, both NRM and EPLF have seized power, and extended their control over the state. Hyden's (2006) analysis is crucial in light of the emergence of one-party states in postcolonial Africa. He asserts that anti-colonial movements are inherently authoritarian in their governance systems. Indeed, Africa was under colonial rule for an extensive period of time, in which colonial interests were not compatible with the creation of a large middle class because of the perceived fear that this class might have provided a great challenge to colonial privileges. And just as in the colonial times, only few African elites control the political and economic destines of Uganda and Eritrea.

Thus, the absence of a strong middle class hurts any prospect for democratization because without opposition parties lack the resources for mass mobilization around genuine issues of reform. In Uganda in particular, political reform was initiated by the NRM regime in a society that displayed higher levels of elite resistance to democratic rule. Not surprisingly, the violent repression of dissent was much more pronounced in Eritrea.

In summary, elite resistance was the primary root cause of authoritarianism in Uganda and Eritrea. Therefore, these cases clearly show that the road from liberation is a long one, with several structural challenges to democratization, such as institutional and historical legacy, all of which call for a long-term holistic response. Others, though, can be addressed in the short term depending not only on the genuine reforms instituted from the above by the elite, but also on constant pressure from below and outside. It is therefore important that civil society groups, academia, and international development partners mobilize towards addressing the prevailing challenges. These actors must work towards promoting active citizenship and reduce the culture of skepticism that characterizes the Ugandan and Eritrean societies. Unfortunately, given the repressive nature of Uganda and Eritrea, the opposition and other civic groups are unable by themselves to assert sufficient pressure on these countries' leadership to cause substantial change. Thus, the prospect for real democracy remains elusive.

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