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## **DECLARATION**

*“I declare that the dissertation/thesis, which I hereby submit for the degree PHILOSOPHIAE DOCTOR at the University of Pretoria, is my own work and has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at another university.”*

**SIGNED** .....

*(by Simon Muwowo)*

**DATE** .....

**PLACE**                    **UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA**



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## **DEDICATION**

*I dedicate this dissertation to my dear late father, Shubert Kolelawaka Zipute Muwowo (1937-2007) and to my dear late mother, Mirriam Nantumupe Nakazwe Muwowo (1942-2012) who through their love and discipline taught me to be very hardworking in life.*

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## **ABSTRACT**

# **MULTIPARTISM AND THE MATRILINEAL GOVERNANCE SYSTEM OF THE BEMBA SPEAKING PEOPLE OF ZAMBIA: AN AFRICAN THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE**

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## **PHILOSOPHIAE DOCTOR**

*This study is an African theological contribution towards the rehabilitation of an appropriate plural democracy which demonstrates a Zambian- African value system in governance. It is argued that Zambia's political salvation cannot come from the presently known majoritarian (Multiparty) democracy imposed by western countries as they are a disaster to the African political systems inherent in its cultural heritage. To this effect, the study proposes and discusses the consensus principle for an African political theology and practice as an appropriate model of engagement in Zambian politics that would unequivocally answer to democratic values of the Zambian context of governance. It is clearly argued that, the consensus principle in governance in African society is a common denominator in all African traditional politics. The matrilineal governance system of the Bemba tribe has been used as a point of departure.*

*It goes without question that Zambia's political history has been on crossroads for the past fifty years. The country has vacillated between Multipartism and One Party authoritarian governments. During the past fifty years of independence, Zambia has failed to reach a consensus for a people driven constitution that would permeate the*

*value system of the people in governance as such uncertainty hovers around the governance of the country whose foreign influence has plunged the country into massive tribalism and regional politics causing a danger to the unity and peace of the country.*

*It awes to these concerns that this dissertation aims to contextualise Zambia's political dilemmas and to locate the nature of multi-party democracy in a multi -ethnic country and the consequences thereof. The focus of the argument is that if well harnessed, the traditional African governance system of democracy by consensus has great potential to bring about political stability, accommodate diverse interests and accelerate social and economic development in all parts of the country without bias towards any particular tribe or region. While some African intellectuals would want to dismiss the indigenous models of governance as merely suitable in the pre- colonial era, this study contends that traditional concepts of governance can be part of the solution to political chaos that generally is characterised in several African states other than Zambia.*

## **ABBREVIATIONS**

<i>ANC</i>	<i>African National Congress</i>
<i>AU</i>	<i>African Union</i>
<i>CCJP</i>	<i>Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace</i>
<i>CCZ</i>	<i>Council of Churches in Zambia</i>
<i>CRC</i>	<i>Constitution Review Commission</i>
<i>CSO</i>	<i>Civil Society Organization</i>
<i>FDD</i>	<i>Forum for Democracy and Development</i>
<i>HP</i>	<i>Heritage Party</i>
<i>MMD</i>	<i>Movement for Multiparty Democracy</i>
<i>NCC</i>	<i>National Citizens Coalition</i>
<i>NGO</i>	<i>Non-Governmental Organization</i>
<i>PF</i>	<i>Patriotic Front</i>
<i>UCZ</i>	<i>United Church of Zambia</i>
<i>UDA</i>	<i>United Democratic Alliance</i>
<i>UNIP</i>	<i>United Independence Party</i>
<i>UNZA</i>	<i>University of Zambia</i>
<i>UP</i>	<i>United Party</i>
<i>UPND</i>	<i>United Party for National Development</i>
<i>UPP</i>	<i>United Progressive Party</i>

<i>ZADECO</i>	<i>Zambia Democratic Congress</i>
<i>ZEC</i>	<i>Zambia Episcopal Conference</i>
<i>ZESCO</i>	<i>Zambia Electricity Supply Cooperation</i>
<i>ZNBC</i>	<i>Zambia Nation Broadcasting Cooperation</i>

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

*Babenyé: The Bemba royal relics which are considered instruments of power passed on from one Chitimukulu to the other.*

*Bakabilo: The hereditary priest councillors of Chitimukulu*

*Bana Mfumu: Mothers of the Bemba chiefs*

*Bashilubemba: A council that constitutes the nucleus of Chitimukulu's cabinet*

*Bemba: A tribe in Zambia who are considered subjects of Chitimukulu.*

*Chitimukulu: The title which refers to the Paramount Chief of the Bemba tribe*

*Icinga: The territorial district of Senior Chief Nkula*

*Ilamfya: The Bemba supreme council for making decisions*

*Inchenje: An executive of the Ilamfya council which comprises leaders from every section of the Bemba decision making bodies and is presided over by Chitimukulu.*

*Ituna: The territorial district of Senior Chief Mwamba*

*Luapula: To cut across*

*Luba: A kingdom in Congo where the Bemba's migrated from.*

*Lubemba: The headquarters of the Bemba Country and also the territorial district of Chitimukulu*

*Lucenda : A village council of elders*

*Luchele Nga'nga: A white magician who the Bemba met after crossing river Luapula in the land of the unknown*

*Mukulumpe: The Chieftaincy title of the King of the Luba people*

*Multi headed hydra: An animal with seven heads but with one body*



*Mumbi Mukasa: The royal mother of Chiti, the delegation leader of the Bemba*

*Mwalule : The burial site of the Bemba paramount chiefs who dies while on the throne*

*Mwase: The title of the Chief of the Nsenga tribe*

*Mwine Lubemba : The name associated to the title of Chitimukulu as the owner of the Bemba country*

*Umushi : A description of a village with more than 20 hats*

## **LIST OF KEY TERMS**

*African Theology: A theology of Africans by African theologians from an African perspective*

*Bashilubemba: A nucleus of the Bemba paramount Chief's Cabinet.*

*Chitimukulu: The title which refers to the Paramount Chief of the Bemba tribe*

*Democratic system: An institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for peoples vote.*

*Ecclesia (Greek) "(An assembly) called out (of the world)", congregation. A term used both to refer to the church at large and to refer to a local congregation of any church.*

*Homo Afrikanus: Refers to the indigenous people of Africa, with African roots and cultural perspectives.*

*Ilamfya: The Bemba supreme decision making Council*

*Inchenje: An executive wing of the Bemba councils which comprises the representatives of the represented.*

*Muilti headed hydra: A term used to refer to an animal with seven heads but one body all in the struggle for food destined for the same stomach.*

*Multipartism: Refers to the concept of multiparty democracy*

*Multiparty Democracy: A political system which provides for the participation of many political parties in the legislative structure of a given government.*

*Societal accountability: Refers to the watchdog functions of civic associations, other NGO's and independent mass media over the actions of the state.*

*Theology: Systematic reflection on religion in general and on Christian religion in particular.*

*Vertical Accountability: One which enables citizens to hold their political leaders to account through the electoral channels at specified points in time.*

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1. PRELIMINARY REMARKS

The title of this dissertation is: Multipartism and the Matrilineal governance system of the Bemba Speaking people of Zambia: An African theological Perspective. In this dissertation an emergence of an alternative paradigm of democracy based on the model of the Matrilineal governance system of the Bemba speaking people is proposed. The said system will promote a better model of democratic governance, and will by and large promote better human rights in the politics of the 21<sup>st</sup> century in Zambia. We have explored inwards towards some of the indigenous democratic ideals and values within Africa and have comprehensively unearthed that traditional Africans had a system of democratic arrangement that is quite different from the western model and which can be built upon in contemporary African politics. It is within this deictic understanding that we have proposed a non-party consensual democracy based on the model of the governance system of the Bemba as an alternative messiah to many problems bedeviling contemporary Zambia especially the political problem of ethnic and tribal differences. It should be critically noted here that this attempt is externally induced by the urge to demonstrate that the Bemba traditional political system among other African tribes, had a similar experience with “some western states where consensual democracy is the adopted model such as New Zealand and East Timor” (Fayemi 2010:1). This is an African theological contribution towards the rehabilitation of an alternative plural democracy based on the matrilineal governance system of the Bemba speaking of Zambia which demonstrates a Zambian- African value system in governance as opposed to western Multipart Democracy practiced in Zambia in at least two of political paradigms i.e. from the years 1964 to 1972 and from the years 1991 to 2011 discussed in this dissertation. The period between the years 1972 and 1991, “Zambia experienced a one party participatory democracy system.” (Larmer, 2011:47-55) .It is comprehensively argued that Zambia’s political salvation cannot come from the presently known model of majoritarian democracy imposed by western countries as it has a number of defects because it excludes minority tribes in

Zambia mostly from Western, North Western, Southern and central provinces of Zambia in favor of majority tribes predominantly the Bemba, and their tribal allies, the easterners and the Copperbelt dwellers, to take the lion's share in the governance of the Republic of Zambia. This in itself is a time bomb, which may lead to high levels of exclusivism as a result of tribalism, racism and nepotism in the political system of the country thereby attracting civil strife even genocide in future. These signs of marginalization in terms of classification of tribes have from time and again manifested in the Zambian political arena in which the tribal and regional politics have taken Centre stage. History informs us that in 1962, " Kenneth Kaunda resigned from African National Congress, to form United Independence party based on tribalism by the Nkumbula led African National Congress party" (Larmer, 2011). To this effect, this dissertation proposes and discusses, "the consensus principle" (Wiredu, 1980) for an African political theology and practice as an appropriate model of engagement in Zambian politics, that would unequivocally answer to the democratic values of the Zambian context of governance. We argue that, "the consensus principle in governance in African society is a common denominator in African traditional politics e.g. among the Ashanti and the Akan tribes in Ghana" ([M.Fortes/E.E.Evanas-Pritchard(ed) (1940)] in addition to the Bemba speaking people of Zambia to mention but a few.

The consensus model among the Bemba speaking people has a foundation on Jurgen Habermas theory on deliberative democracy. In "the sphere and deliberative democracy" (1992), Habermas, the most prominent defender of deliberative democracy which we refer to as consensus democracy in this dissertation, emphasizes the "institutionalization" (Habermas,1992:368) question as a precondition to a successful democratic engagement. He formulates an institutionalization project which is "oriented by procedural paradigm of democracy." (Lubenow 2012:60). Therewith, he wants to solve the problem of how discursive formation of opinion and will can be institutionalized, reciprocal action between informal spheres of lifeworld with formal spheres of processes of institutionalized decision-making and how to change communicative power in administrative power. The habermasian political thought is directed to a democracy theory which culminates from the practice of a given culture but now thought in institutional terms. Hence, there is attention with presuppositions, institutional arrangements and

mechanisms of political control. Therefore, Habermas “elaborates a theory of procedural and deliberative democracy, from “sluices” model” ( Lubenow 2012:60).

He figures out that “Deliberation” is a “normative category which underlines a procedural conception of democratic legitimacy”( Habermas 1996:277) .This normative conception “creates a different conceptual matrix to define the nature of democratic process” ( Habermas 1996:277) which leads to regulative aspects of “publicity, rationality and equality” ( Habermas 2006:414). Even though there is also an empirical-explicative character, the emphasis of habermasian concept of procedural democracy is based on critical-normative character which is dynamic and is applicable in different contexts. It is worth noting that the procedural conception of democracy is a “formal conception and is based on normative exigencies of enlargement of individual participation on deliberation and decision processes” (Lubenow 2012:60) and also on the development of a democratic political culture. Thus, this conception is centered on formal procedures which indicate “who” participates and “how” to do it (or who is legitimated to participate or doing it), but it does not say anything about “what” must be decided. In other words, democratic process rules (regular elections, majority principle, universal suffrage, power alternation) do not give any orientation neither can guarantee the deliberation and decision “content”. For Habermas, two normative models of democracy have dominated the debate so far: “the liberal and the republican” (Lubenow 2012:60). Therewith, he proposes “an alternative model: the procedural” (Habermas 1996:277)

There is no doubt that normative conception of deliberative public sphere in formulated by Habermas means a reorientation of the theoretical focus in relation what constitutes public opinion hence, our proposition of the Bemba model as an alternative to Zambian governance. It goes without question that in habermasian language, deliberative democracy procedure “constitutes the heart of democratic process” ( Habermas 1992: 359).

In a nut shell, the consensus principle as a guiding rule in this dissertation has a concrete foundation on the conception of deliberative democracy in habermasian theory which considers citizens participation on deliberations and decision – making the central element of democratic process

This dissertation, however gives a comprehensive elaboration of the traditional political governance system of the Bemba speaking people who are a largest group of the matrilineal tribes in Zambia as guideline for an appropriate root for Zambian politics. For empirical data, I have drawn from the historical material published by anthropologists, Andrew D. Roberts in “A history of the Bemba, political growth and change in North-eastern Zambia before 1900” published in 1973 by Longman group Ltd and the book written by Audrey I Richards, “Land, Labour and Diet in Northern Rhodesia: An Economic study of the Bemba tribe” 1939 published by the Oxford University press and some literature written by some Zambian intellectuals on the Bemba. The hypothesis of the dissertation is that “a Non- Party system based on consensus” (Wiredu, 1980) as a general principle is both theological and ethically feasible as a central principle of political organization in Zambia which will prevent the evident delinquencies of both the “authoritarian one-party system and the multiparty system imposed by western democracies.”(Wiredu, 2000).

In this dissertation, we are inspired by the contribution of John S. Pobee, a renowned African theologian as a model of our methodology. In his book “ Toward an African theology,” (1979), Pobee in a statement of dialogue between Christianity and African traditional cultures, among the Akan tribe of Ghana defined “ A *homo Afrikanus* as a *Multi-headed Hydra*, displaying varieties not only *vis-à-vis* the non- African but also *vis-a-vis* other species of a *homo Afrikanus*” (1979:43-52). We view this definition as opening another dimension of understanding that an African person is created with a plural disposition which engages divergent models to achieve its desired goals. Now if politics are “culturally determined” (Muwowo 2010) as defined by many cultural protagonists; then the failure of Western Multiparty democracy practiced in Zambia is justified. It has not been rooted in the hearts of the people because it’s a foreign undertaking.

We have widely used Pobee’s definition of a *Homo Afrikanus* as a “*Multi headed hydra*”(Ibid) as a point of departure towards an indigenous Zambian- African plural democracy referred to as ‘democracy by consensus’, which was first propounded by Kwasi Wiredu (1980: 180-190) being proposed for the progression of Zambian politics. It is our opinion that in order to develop and sustain a democracy, which in its simplest terms means “a government of the people by the people” (Mutiso, 1975: 478) in Zambia which demonstrates the reality of an African culture in governance;

an African multifaceted nature which is evidenced in the gift of Africa's, "different stocks of languages, clans, and cultures needs to be appreciated "(Pobee 1979:44). Our opinion in the metaphor of an African society as a "*Multi-headed Hydra*" (Ibid: 43) needs to adhere to a full concept of the principle of consensus as a premeditated option to achieve a truly African governance system. Our argument is that, in an African society, the expectation of the members of society are the same and they are based on the foundation of "prosperity, fecundity and good health" (Bwalya, *verbum et Ecclesia* volume 33, No 2 of 2012). We do however take note that it's possible that "though the immediate perceptions of these interests may be different," (Wiredu, 1980) the goal is the same. We have considered a "multi headed hydra" (Linebaughs,2000), an animal with many heads all "locked up in a struggle for food but if they could, but see that the food was actually destined for the same stomach, the irrationality of the conflict would manifest in them that would lead to an ideal solution" ( Wiredu 2000). Our hypothesis question in this regard is "is there a chance for a solution?"(Ibid) The answer to every question in African society lies in the concept of 'Ubuntu' and that is, "human beings have the ability to cut through their differences to the rock bottom identity of interests."(Ibid) And, on this view, "the means to that objective is simply rational discussion (M.Mutiso, 1975 : 478). On the capabilities of this means, our African society is very explicit. they say, "no problem of human relations that cannot be resolved by dialogue."(M.Mutiso, 1975: 478). This is what Kaunda, former President of Zambia meant when he said, "in our African society solutions were arrived at through consensus" (Mutiso, 1975:476). Dialogue, of course, presupposes not just two parties (at least), but also two conflicting positions as the 'Multi- headed hydra' metaphor describes the nature of a homo Afrikanus. "One head does not hold council, nor was any suggestion that one voice might be entitled to be heard to the exclusion of others countenanced for one moment" (Wiredu, 1996) . A Bemba saying also states, "*Umunwe umo tausalanda*"(Mpashi, 1970) [one finger cannot pick head lice], says another Bemba saying. They also say "*Amano mambulwa kabili yafuma Mwifwesa yaya mu Culu*" (Ibid) [meaning: words of wisdom are from one man to the other even more wisdom comes from a pot stand to an anthill]. These Bemba parables, presupposes the idea of the principle of consensus as a basic foundation of any successful concept of governance in an African society.



With this value system in traditional political governance, we approach our argument with the Bemba model to political governance in Zambia. We chose the Bemba model based on research findings by Andrew Roberts (1973), who unequivocally states that “the Bemba’s are a very unique tribe as their entire political system, is ‘multi-ethnic’, ‘multi-clan’ and comprises those people and tribes who consider themselves as subjects of Chitimukulu, the Bemba paramount Chief” (xxvii). It is therefore an interesting level of engagement for an appropriate Zambian polity. Historically the Bemba tribe is regarded as being, “the most culturally and politically assertive in Zambia” (Ibid). Their origins from “the Lunda-Luba multi-ethnic empire that had once flourished in the 7th century in the Congo basin” (Ibid) empowers our argument on the unification of a plural governance system that has successfully administered its affairs for over 200 years in the present Zambia, without major disruptions and disputes. Demographically Zambia is heavily populated by the Lunda-Luba tribal offshoots, scattered across Luapula, Northern, Muchinga, Copperbelt, North Western and Central Provinces. There still exist cultural and linguistic affinities among the diverse tribes found in these regions however.

## **1.2. BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM**

The dimension the argument shall take is Pobee’s ‘*multi-headed hydra*’ metaphoric methodology whose definition is derived from an animal which has one body but many heads (Pobee 1979:43-44). In Greek mythology, “the *Hydra* was a nine-headed serpent slain by Hercules as one of his twelve labors: when any of the heads was cut off, two others replaced it” (Linebaugh, 2000). We shall repeatedly consider this concept as a model of in our methodology. This owes to the fact that, Zambia cannot attain a democratic system by using foreign ideologies of Multipartism only but also by means “of cultural perspectives inherent within its culture and context of its people” (Muwowo 2010). Firstly because, Zambia constitutionally “declares itself as the ‘Christian Nation’ governed by Christian values and principles” (Constitution of Zambia Amendment Act 18 of 1996). Secondly, Zambia, like any other society, is a product of culture, and therefore it does not exist in a vacuum but through a set of cultural values inherent in the traditions of their category of the African People (Pobee 1979:44). The approach for this undertaking is therefore, “to make attempts to rehabilitate Africa’s rich cultural and religious heritage” (see Tutu 1978:366; Parrat 2004:111) in order to acknowledge an effective means of conveying a theological

foundation of a viable democratic system in Zambia by taking into account the basic tenets that demonstrates the Zambian-African context as a foundation of governance.

To achieve a comprehensive analysis of the goal of our argument, we have first and foremost explored the definitions and perspectives of Multiparty Democracy in its broad understanding. Definitions of terms and etymologies of Multipartism have been dealt with in the section. The second section situates Multiparty democracy in Zambia in its current form. It discusses its legal frame work and to what extent these values have been practiced and implemented. The section has also provided benchmarks for the comprehension of the Zambian situation in detail and has made propositions for the future agenda. Thirdly, it has explored a Zambian- African model of Democracy by consensus decision making and examined it as a probable right path for a Zambian polity. In other words it has made propositions on what ought to be an indigenous African concept of Democracy applicable to the Zambian situation as opposed to the western imposed Majoritarian concept. Fourthly, the thesis has developed an ethical framework to consolidate a Zambian- African model of democracy. The essence of this discussion is to generate a philosophical dialogue between politics, culture and theology in Zambia.

The main argument is that, a system of governance which is truly genuine emanates from the culture of the people and not from imported concepts. Summary, a list of critical findings and recommendations will be covered in the last section.

It is our argument that political problems caused by the emergency of Liberal Multiparty Democracy from the west can only be solved by using African solutions and the traditional governance systems of the African society are the right path to liberation. The main contribution of the study is to explore an African democratic system, through African lenses and perspectives can mitigate the negative impact of Western Liberal Multiparty democracy in Zambia.

Our task in this study includes making a clear presentation of philosophical, theological and ethical criteria as a practical matrix which is founded on the culture of the Bemba speaking people of Zambia. It is a fact that there is an urgent need to present a Zambian- African framework which would capture African theological and ethical reflections of Multiparty Democracy relevant to the people of Zambia.

### 1.3. THE PROBLEM

The problem we wrestle with in our dissertation is: Do we have an African Democracy? Our answer is yes! We have an African democracy which needs rehabilitation. It existed in our African societies political governance systems “as a traditional method of conducting affairs through free discussions by people’s representatives in society” (M.Mutiso, 1975: 478). It was one which , “ operated by consensus” (Mutiso, 1975: 476), “An issue was talked out in solemn conclave until such time as general agreement could be achieved”(Ibid). It involved the participation of all people. The elders sat “ under big trees and talk until they agree” (M.Mutiso, 1975: 478).

We recognize and argue that this rich practice was watered down and overlooked by the colonizers who cared less about the African ways of governance and imposed western practices which have destroyed the spirit of African governance as evidenced by, un endingcivil wars, tribalism, nepotism, divisive competition and genocide of the same people, the *Homo Afrikanus*.

To this effect, we argue that Zambia, cannot attain an appropriate democratic system by using foreign ideologies of liberal democracy from the west but by means of cultural determination within the context of the *Homo Afrikanus*. By using the dimension of the African traditional method of governance, a concept of democracy by consensus is elaborated as a way to go for a Zambian- African polity.

### 1.4. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1.4.1. To describe the overall political and social crisis caused by Western Liberal democracy in Zambia.

1.4.2. To give a critical reflection and analysis of the Zambian experience of Multiparty Democracy from 1991-2011 to serve as a benchmark for the demonstration of a viable Zambian-African Democratic polity.

1.4.3. To develop a practical benchmark for the indigenous Democratic system in Zambia.

1.4.4. To appropriate that an indigenous African concept of democracy, is the best model towards achieving a universal participation of the people in the governance of the country.

## 1.5. MAIN ARGUMENT

We argue that the consensus principle based on the practice of the Bemba concept of traditional governance system is the right path for a Zambian plural polity that will avoid, both, “ the authoritarian one party system and the multiparty system” (Wiredu 2000) of governance influenced by western ideologies which by and large “is obnoxious” (Ibid). As a political decision procedure, we argue that the consensus principle bases its decisions “not based on the majoritarian vote” (Ibid) influence but takes care of the reasoning of the minority in society or country and in that case, democracy will take its original meaning as it will incorporate all citizens in decision making in the running of the countries affairs. The concept is “that each representative of the people should be persuaded, if not of the optimality of each decision, at least of its practical necessity, all things considered” (Wiredu, 1980:189).

We wish to demonstrate that the Bemba traditional political system was based Chieftainship. Every lineage in *Ulu Bemba* districts i.e. *Lubemba* country including the paramount Chief *Chitimukulu* had been elected by consensus on grounds of “maturity, reputation of wisdom and rhetoric abilities”(Wiredu, 1996:189). The idea of seniority in society or lineage, “was sometimes considered but not as a perquisite to the former.”(Roberts,1973). Lineage according to the Bemba, meant, all individuals of the royal clan of “*Abena Ng’andu* of the Crocodile (*Nquena*) ancestry.”(Ibid).The association of the lineage heads form the local government council called “*Bashilubemba*, who are the priests and the hereditary councillors of the Bemba country. The *Bashilubemba*, are the holders and the owners of the Chieftainship including the *Chitimukuluship* even though they are not eligible for being paramount in themselves. Andrew Roberts in A History of the Bemba wrote:

*The Senior Bakabilo are no mere servants of Chitimukulu but are themselves the hereditary holders of historic titles, some as old as the Chitimukuluship itself and they are in a real sense the source of chiefly legitimacy. First of all, they are the Senior Bakabilo of Chitimukulu, those who determine the most crucial issues, such as the royal succession. These men are known as Bashilubemba,*

*the elders of Ulubemba and these are: Chimba, Chitikafula, Kapukuma, Katenda, Munuka and Nkolemambwe. (Roberts 1973:15)*

The meetings of the council were presided over by the senior Chief of the district, the natural ruler of the locality, i.e. *Ituna*: is presided over by Senior Chief *Mwamba*; *Icinga*: Senior Chief *Nkula*, *Mporokoso*, by Senior Chief *Mumporokoso*, *Chikwanda* by Senior Chief *Chikwanda* and *Luwingu* by Senior Chief *Shimumbi*. A local council had authority only over local affairs. But representatives, of a number of councils constituted a general council of the Bemba country called '*Ilamfya*' which was presided over by Paramount Chief *Chitimukulu*, the *Mwine Lubemba* himself. *Ilamfya* was the biggest democratic unit of the Bemba people's democratic council at which all people who live in Bemba land are represented.

Irrespective of the level, deliberation was the most important feature of the traditional system of decision- making. Deliberations here have two methodological aims:

- a). to elicit differences of opinion,
- b). to iron them out in search of consensus.

The reaching of consensus in the Bemba political system , was a matter of principle, and discredited, the idea and practice of more difficult processes than decision by majority vote, yet they preferred the former to the latter because, it ironically dealt with through "free discussion" (M.Mutiso, 1975: 478) . The voting system, subordinates the will of the minority to that of the majority in the matter of a given decision, by the simple act of voting. For example, in the matter of the *Chimukulu* succession, the matter was not left to the '*BanaMfumu*' (Royal Mothers) but '*Ba Shilumba*' take the centre stage to reach consensus, " by seeking the goodwill of all members through sincere dialogue" (Wiredu, 1980:175)

Representation under the Bemba political system involved two things, first, the representation of each lineage in council, second, the representation of each representative in the making of each decision. Both representations were secured through consensus. The implication of this is that the people have the right to representation having their consent factored into every decision, through their representatives. In other words, consensual political system as practiced in traditional Bemba society recognized and observed the fundamental human right to

be represented in any political council in which decisions are made on the people's behalf. This type of human right, right to decisional representation in government, is the hallmark of consensual democracy, and arguably, is conspicuously lacking in majoritarian democracy.

By majoritarian democracy we mean a Multiparty system of politics in which the party that wins an election in terms of numbers, and the most seats in parliament is normally entitled to form government. In such a set up, "the losing party or parties become opposition, singly or composedly" (Ibid p. 176). Under this majoritarian model of democracy, one still finds the minority representatives casting votes. But the point is that they will be overridden by the votes of the majority which in practice ignores even the wise expertise of the minority people. This means the right of the minority and of their constituencies to be represented in actual making of decisions is rendered nugatory. This makes the struggle for power to be fierce and confrontational. Thus rather than promote consensus and cooperation, the multiparty system generates conflicts and disaffection.

This was highlighted by Paramount Chief *Mpezeni* of the *Ngoni* people of the Eastern province of Zambia who "asked President Rupiah Banda to tribally balance his cabinet because *Ngonis* are not represented" ( The post Newspaper, wed 12th May 2010).He said,

*" I have no minister in Cabinet. It is just other chiefs from here Eastern Province who are enjoying; Lameck Mangani (Home Affairs Minister) and Dr. Kazonga (Local government and housing Minister) are Chewas from Chief Gawa Undi. Dora Siliya( Education Minister and Peter Daka Agriculture Minister) are Nsenga. Maxwell Mwale (Mines Minister) is Kunda. So what do I have? Nothing! Not even a Diplomat," (The post Newspaper, wed 12th May 2010).*

With the utterances of Paramount Chief *Mpezeni*, there was a demand in some quarters that tribal balancing needed not to be provincial balancing but rather needed to be about adequate representation. As such, His Majesty the *Mpezeni* was complaining that among the five cabinet ministers from Eastern Province in Rupiah Banda's MMD cabinet, none of them were *Ngonis*. Without *Ngonis* in Cabinet, *Mpezeni* felt left out of national development. That intra—provincial tribal

conflict was the greatest danger to Zambia's democracy and development and to that effect it is our thesis that the consensus principle would be the right path to take cognizance of this problem.

We argue that the alienation of the right of being represented can be perceived to be one of the most persistent causes of political instability in Africa due to the fact that most African political movements are biased towards one's tribal affiliation. It is a known fact that in Zambia, certain groups of people and tribes have found themselves consistently in the position of the minority both numerically and politically and this means that they will consistently find themselves outside the corridors of power e.g., the political party with a candidate with the highest support of the Bemba speaking people will always win an election. This situation has led not only generated enmity in the society; but has also culminated into a condition where the fundamental human rights of decisional representation of the category of the people are permanently denied with impunity.

As a rescue to the consequences of the majoritarian (Multiparty) democracy in Zambia, we, argue that the alternative is not the return to the concept of Kenneth Kaunda's one party system which Zambia experienced from 1972 to 1991 as alluded to above, as that would be worse to human promotion and sustenance of the social order. The plausible democratic alternative for Zambia is a non-party state, which is built on the culture of consensus in contemporary Zambian - African society. We a non-party state model of democracy by consensus, "... is one in which parties are not the basis of power. People can form political associations to propagate their political ideas and help to elect representatives to parliament. But an association having the most elected members will not therefore be the governing group. Every representative will be in government in his personal as a representative of the people, rather than in associational capacity (Wiredu, 1980:179).

In the areas of filling to legislative and executive positions, we propose that "the elected representatives may elect a leader and charge them with the responsibility of forming an administration reflecting the consensus principle" (Wiredu, 1980). Under this democratic arrangement, the merit of ideas is the driving force, which promotes not just formal representation but substantive representation of the whole people of

the spirit of “democracy for all” (Mutiso, 1975). Hence, the possibility of being marginalized in the process of the decision-making is unlikely.

We further argue that this type of political arrangement will make it possible for all concerned to participate in power and it has the benefit of reducing the adversarial political practices and post- electoral conflict that is characteristic of the multiparty system in Zambia. This non- party consensual model of democratic representational government “is an African alternative to western multi-party democracy; is an antidote to unending crisis of fundamental human rights abuse in Africa” (M.Mutiso, 1975: 179). We envisage that in this political system, the citizen’s right to representation will be respected under this political arrangement where governments are not formed by parties, but by the consensus of the elected representatives.

The hypothesis and conclusion of our thesis is that the non-party governance system of democracy is an alternative for a Zambian- African polity. We argue on the basis of having a dispensation under which a government is formed not by parties, but by the consensus of elected representatives who form the Electoral College. In this way government, becomes a kind of coalition-a coalition not as a common acceptance, of parties, but a coalition of citizens. By this proposal, we are not against the formation of political associations to propagate certain preferred ideologies, but in councils of state, affiliation with any association will not necessarily determine the chances for a position of responsibility.

## **1.6. HOW IT IS ARGUED**

By definition, “Democracy, in Africa or anywhere else is Government by the people for the people” (Mutiso, 1975:478). In ancient Greek they practiced democracy as “a form of participation of all citizens” (Macpherson, 1973:25). We are compelled to argue that, one of the many gifts God has given to Africa is a system of culture and a traditional way of, “conducting affairs” (Mutiso, 1975:478.) amidst the diversity of languages and ethnic groups. This fact of “ Pluralism in society, not least in African society, appears to be part of divine economy” ( Pobee 1973: 19) whose task is to create a unified society through participation where by , “ the people- All” (Mutiso,1975 :478),settle their affairs through consensus. “It is often remarked that decision making in traditional African life and governance was, “rule by consensus” (Wiredu 2000).



It is our position that true and prudent democratic values are born of the culture of the people. There is considerable evidence that “decision by consensus (Ibid) was the order of the day in African deliberations as a principle of governance. It was not just an issue of rhetoric when Kenneth Kaunda, the first President of the Republic of Zambia when he said, “In our original African societies, we operated by consensus. An issue was talked out in solemn conclave until such time as agreement could be achieved, “(Mutiso,1975:476) or when Nyerere, Late former President of Tanzania also said, “In African society the traditional method of conducting affairs is by free discussion” (Ibid) and noted Guy Clutton- Brock with approval to the effect that, “the elders sit under the big trees and talked until they agreed” (Mutiso, 1975:478).

We strongly argue in this dissertation that though the concept of traditional governance dealt with smaller communities, the consensus principle in a non- party participatory democracy “is possible in a modified form” (Ibid) in that the centre of government will focus on “the coalition of citizens” (Wiredu, 1980). We wish to contend that pure plural democracy is one which is a government of “purely people’s representatives” (Wiredu 2000), who is not influenced by political party affiliations but people’s ideals and prospects. In this case such people would have to be elected from among the people themselves. Our point of argument is that where there is no political party, it is the representatives of the people elected by consensus who are recognized as the people’s voice, to propagate the development agenda of the people. The basis of democracy in this regard “are firmer than they can ever be where you have one, two or a multi- party system representing only a section of community and not all due to party preference.” (Mutiso, 1975: 478). Now our argument is that a multiparty system can be justified over some fundamental issue, otherwise it just encourages factionalism in which there is intra party struggle for power.

The philosophy behind a non- party based methodology of conducting elections is that “voters chose an individual, based on maturity, ability and courage to be there representative in parliament rather than, because of a political party affiliation.

We argue in this way because it must be understood that “ in Africa, we must take politics a little more seriously” ( Ibid) because for an African, life is a sacrament.

Therefore an appropriate type of government for Zambia should reflect the ideals of an African value system.

It must be noted that our argument based on a reliance by consensus is “not a peculiarly political phenomenon” (Ibid) but we argue that “where consensus characterizes political decision making in Africa, it is a manifestation of an imminent approach to social interaction. All this point to the fact that in African society, “interpersonal relations among adults, consensus is a foundation of the joint action which was taken on” (Wiredu 2000).

## **1.7. HYPOTHESIS**

The hypothesis of this study is that, a Non- party state of government by consensus is the best model of Democratic engagement in Zambian politics. In this way government, “becomes a kind of coalition-a coalition not as a common acceptance, of parties, but a coalition of citizens” (Wiredu, 2000) irregardless of tribe, gender and status in society.

## **1.8. METHODOLOGY**

1.8.1. Our approach to this research study begins by examining the meaning of John S. Pobee’s definition of the homo Afrikanus as a “multi headed hydra” (Pobee 1979:43) as a model of an indigenous description of what amplifies an African concept of democracy amidst, various contexts. A multi headed hydra, is a type of an animal with many heads but one body (Linebaugh, 2000) to depict one Africa but many contexts. This approach ushers the study into the indigenous multi-character of a homo Afrikanus in order to establish the point of contact with the proposition of the Multi facet being of an African, thereby establishing a model that defines the nature of an African democracy which, like a womb houses many descendants bearing different tags. The study of African cultures and practices serve as a basis for the rehabilitation of modern democracy as practiced in African society over a long period of time.

1.8.2 Secondly, our approach deals with the culture of the matrilineal system of the Bemba speaking people of Zambia as a model of an indigenous concept of a democratic governance system. This is done through available literature study on the Bemba speaking people. A study into multi ethnic governance system of the Bemba

people has conducted thoroughly. This gives special insight into the study of Bemba tribes, clans and their governance system and thereby develops and proposes an African democracy presented in this thesis. A number of books on the Bemba speaking people are available in most of government Libraries in Zambia. Notable ones being, “A political History of the Bemba 1953; History of the Bemba: Political growth and Change in North Eastern Zambia before 1900 by Andrew D. Roberts and Bemba, the African People, published by Kenneth Kaunda publishers). The basic argument on this perspective is to concretize a point that it is feasible that a Zambian-African concept of democracy falls within the cultural achievements of the African people. Although, the study may focus on the matrilineal system of the Bemba People as a model some African matrilineal tribes such as the Akan people of Ghana (Pobee 1979:44-52) will be cited in order to strike a balance in the understanding of democracy in the case for Zambia.

1.8.3 The forth approach develops some theological concepts of Democracy by consensus. This is a contribution of some theological and Christian insights on the consensus principle as model of democratic governance.

1.8.4 Lastly a Theological and ethical framework has been constructed after a critical reflection and analysis of the above contributions. This is what ought to be a major theological and ethical contribution to the study of Dogmatic and Christian Ethics.

## **1.9. CONTRIBUTION**

This study is a contribution towards a Zambian- African polity. It will also be very useful in studies of political Science in Africa. In short, it is a study of people, culture and politics in Zambia by a Zambian African Theologian. It is our hope that this study will contribute to public and ethical theological debates in the area of African Philosophy. In general, this work will be a philosophical, theological, social, political and ethical contribution to Zambia, Africa and the world.

## **1.10. LIMITATION**

The subject of Democracy and politics is too complex. We have however, limited ourselves to the understanding of the perspective of African philosophical theology. We also notice that Zambian politics from an African theological perspective is not a

well-developed area hence our engagement on the subject is informed by dialogue with some subjects written and intended for other African countries and contexts.

The researcher is a male Zambian, a student of theology at the University of Pretoria. The study is limited to the Zambian experience even though it may have implications beyond.

## **1.11. SCOPE**

This dissertation is divided into seven chapters as follows:

### **1.11.1. Chapter One: Introduction.**

The first chapter is an introductory one. It gives overall indicators of the problem background, purpose of study, contribution, methodology, Literature review, limitation of the study and scope used.

### **1.11.2. Chapter Two: Multiparty Democracy: Unpacking the meaning and perspectives.**

The chapter deals with the definitions, perspectives and Etymological meanings of Multiparty, democracy and development. It provides the setting of understanding Multipartism in general and its implications for African governance.

### **1.11.3. Chapter Three: Zambia's Experience of Multipartism, 1964-1972; 1991-2011**

The chapter gives a detailed elaboration of the experience of Multiparty Democracy in Zambia from 1964-1972; 1991-2011. It provides tangible highlights on the effects of Multipartism in Zambian Politics.

### **1.11.4. Chapter Four: The Bemba Speaking People of Zambia in historical perspective**

The chapter gives a detailed account of the Bemba Speaking, people of Zambia, and their political governance system which operates by consensus decision making. It provides general practice of the Bemba speaking, as a benchmark of the dissertation.

### **1.11.5. Chapter Five: The Bemba matrilineal governance system as a basis for a sustainable democratic model by consensus in Zambia**

This chapter analyses and criticises the consensus principle as a path for a Zambian-African political engagement. It gives a general evaluation of the concept of an African model of democracy by consensus raised in chapter four and makes proposition for Zambia's future agenda.

#### 1.11.6. Chapter Six: An Ethical- theological framework

The chapter discusses the moral discourse of the concept of democracy by consensus and how it relates to ethical issues such as human rights, spirituality and gender.

#### 1.11.7. Chapter Seven: Conclusion

The conclusion is an overall reflection of the debate and recommendations the dissertation has raised

## CHAPTER TWO

### MULTIPARTY DEMOCRACY: UNPACKING MEANING AND PERSPECTIVES.

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

This Chapter seeks to unpack some of the meanings and perspectives of the general concepts of Multiparty Democracy from various standpoints in order to create a solid foundation to warrant a critical reflection, analysis and evaluation the consensus principle for an African concept of democracy that would play as a lunch pin to bring about a political salvation in Zambian governance system by means of rediscovering of an African model of democracy inherent within the culture and traditional leadership of the Zambian people.

The goal of this chapter is therefore determined to provide basic and relevant definitions and perspectives of Multiparty Democracy in general so as to necessitate a point of departure that leads to an evaluation of Multipartism in Zambia since its independence 24<sup>th</sup> October, 1964.

Essentially this is done in order to establish that the Homo Afrikanus, hereto referred as a “Multi- headed Hydra” in this dissertation, is a point of departure to sample that a Zambian –African traditional system of governance that would be the right path to a concept of democracy with African lenses.

The goal of this chapter alludes to the fact an analysis of the Zambian- African concept of governance cannot rule out the nature and the heritage of the Homo Afrikanus, the inhabitant of Zambia, who displays varieties “not only visa-a-vis the none African but also *vis-a vis* other species of a Homo Afrikanus” (Pobee 1979:43-52).

However this assumption cannot be arrived at without following the rules of what governs political ideologies from various perspectives. The argument is that a definite perception of political ideologies will lead to a fair proposition of an African concept of democracy applicable for Zambia as alluded to above. This chapter is divided into five major parts as follows: Multiparty democracy: the root meanings: unpacking the meaning and perspectives, Multiparty democracy and party systems

in Africa, Political parties and democracy in Africa, Democracy and democratic development as well as a summary and conclusion.

## **2.2. MULTIPARTY DEMOCRACY: The root meanings**

To arrive at a concrete definition and root meanings of the term Multiparty Democracy, this study will consult a conglomerate of the meaning of the term from the world of political science by political scientists as well as from the Christian perspectives. It is important to note that, though there may not be what one may directly call 'Christian Multiparty Democracy' due to the none use of the term 'party' in the bible, the argument in this dissertation is that the gospel speaks to every situation and therefore is not limited with any particular boundary. It is, therefore, imperative that this being the study of political science from a stand point of theology requires Christian insights and definitions by Christians. In other words, "the task that lies before this kind of 'dissertation' requires an integrative, comparative, and analytical approach" (Bwalya 2001:18) to the meaning of Multiparty Democracy if indeed it is to be ethically justifiable. A critique on each perspective will be done in order to strike the right balance of the argumentation and also to keep the flow of the dissertation in order to ascertain the problem which will be addressed later in the study.

### **2.2.1 GENERAL ETYMOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES OF MULTIPARTISM**

This section, discusses etymological perspectives of the concept of Multiparty Democracy which shall be used as a benchmark to critic and evaluate an African concept of democracy suitable for political governance in Zambia. It should be noted that it is not that easy to spell out a concrete definition of Multiparty Democracy except if an understanding of the term is a collection of different dimensions and perspectives. Part of the challenge is that "paradigms of Multiparty Democracy and democratic values have evolved without exhaustion over a long period of time" (Macpherson 1973:25). The first paradigm having prevailed in Athens during the time of Plato (c427-347 BC) and Aristotle (c384-322 BC). Oyugi (1988:51-52) in reference to ancient Athenian democratic paradigm points out that, "in ancient Athens, various sections of society participated in the running of the affairs of the state and government through various modes of recruitment of all free adult, so defined as citizens, who took turns in the running of the affairs of the state and in the decision

making process of the entire government.” (Oyugi 1988:52). However, he alludes to the fact that both Plato and Aristotle, “denounced the ‘Multiplicity of Democracy’ as quack and argued in favour of a politico-military elite rigorously selected and headed by a philosopher king” (Ibid :52). In the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, MacPherson points out that Multiparty Democracy was a kind of “Western Liberal Democracy”(Macpherson 1973:25). He states that “when the market economy developed to a highly sophisticated level, politics itself became a commodity in the society and there emerged the idea of choice between various brands” (Oyugi 1988:53). In that case,

*“Multiplicity of political parties with various programmes became the order of the day. The only rule of the game to be observed was that the social ideology of capitalism, liberal democracy was taken for granted as immutable. Parties and candidates had to operate within the perimeters of that general philosophy which promotes private enterprise and individual freedoms (Oyugi 1988:53; Macpherson 1973:24-25).*

Here we see, on one side of the coin, Multiparty Democracy is viewed as a commodity in the market society, on the other side of the coin it is a corporate social rule of citizens.

Basing on the perspectives highlighted above, it is necessary to explore albeit some general etymological definitions and perspectives of Multiparty Democracy in order to fill the gap of speculation. This is done based on the “philosophy that nothing exists from a vacuum” (Muwowo 2010). In exploring the etymological perspectives this study considers two etymological backgrounds namely, the Secular and the Ecclesial one. Ecclesial in the sense that, though this is a study of Political Science, it is done so from a perspective of theology. I agree with John S Pobee who pointed out that “Theology is understood as a discipline which is expected to suggest values to guide economic policy-making and political action.” (Pobee, in Fulljames 1993:66). He further stated that,

*“Social, political and economic aspects of the cultural context may provide the categories within which the non-negotiable element of the gospel is to be expressed and the development of particular theologies be regarded as legitimizing or subversive of particular political structures” (Ibid).*



This articulation suggests that, “the non- negotiable tenet of the sovereignty of God over all life” (Pobee 1982: 170) does not live out Christian involvement on issues affecting humanity (including politics). The concept of Multiparty Democracy is therefore is not void of a Christian or ecclesial etymological meanings and perspectives.

Before moving to the point of giving a modern perspective of Multiparty Democracy, I wish to present the etymological meaning of the term “Multiparty Democracy” Although the words Multiparty and Democracy are complimentary, in this context, they can only be defined as two separate words. The word Multiparty in itself is a compound word of two, Multi- which is plural and party which is group or section, or community. There was no corresponding word in Greek or Latin for me to draw some etymological roots from there.

According to the Dictionary of Government and Politics 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition Collin defined the word Multiparty as simply meaning, a situation where there are “several political parties existing in the same country” (1997:184). In addition, the Oxford English dictionary 2<sup>nd</sup> edition defined Multiparty as “comprising several parties or members of several parties and he further added the meaning as “an electoral or political system which results in the formation of three or more influential parties” (Murray 1989: 83).The immediate latest Oxford advanced learners dictionary only gives one definition in which it states that “Multiparty” simply means, “Involving several different political parties in the political system of a country (Ibid:1006).

Democracy on the other hand has its etymological meaning from the Greek words demos (people) and kratia (rule or authority) hence the meaning of the word simply states “rule by the people” (Bogdanor 1991:166). Bogdanor observes that,” although the root meaning is simple and even self-evident, both “rule by” and “the people” have been interpreted in markedly different ways” (Ibid). The words demo kratia some call them demo kratos [people & strength respectively] (Piano 1973:109-110), was first used by the Greeks towards the middle of the fifth century BC to, “designate a new conception of political life and practices it promoted in many of their cities and states.”(Robertson 2002:326).

In the use of the two central elements in the meaning of the word “Democracy “was problematic and was subject to interpretation. Bogdanor observes that “Before the

word *demo kratia* gained currency, Athenians had already referred it to certain kinds of equality as desirable characteristics of their political equality of all citizens in the right to speak in the governing assembly in which the *demos* (people) met to act on public affairs came to be seen as the sovereign authority”(Bogdanor 1991:166)

A critical search of these words indicate that when combined the root meaning of Multiparty (involving many political parties) and Democracy (rule by people) gives us a definition which will makes adjustments to the etymological meaning of the word “Democracy” as it does not center on the authority of the people again but the authority of political parties in the legislative structure of government. From the above deduction, the definition of the word Multiparty Democracy is therefore: - a political system which provides for the participation of many political parties in the legislative structure of government. The idea here is that a principle of this system of political engagement enables each party which in each self is a conglomerate of people (*demos*) to:-

- *Achieve the highest potential of development*
- *Exercise liberty which allows each political party the greatest amount of freedom consistent with order.*
- *Have equality which maintains that all men, women and children are created equal with equal rights and opportunities and; and*
- *Fraternity which postulates that individual parties will not misuse their freedom but will operate in creating a whole some society. (Piano 1973:109-110).*

This view is supported by Bogdanor who understands Multiparty Democracy as “a kind of mixed government” (1991:373).His view is based on the foundation that, “political theorists have always looked for a set of limits on the exercise of power of governments and to prevent that power being exercised by one section of the community to the detriment of other sections” (1991:373). He observed that “the theory of mixed government was based on two assumptions” The first one being that, “every section of community was likely to abuse its position if the government was left solely in its hands. Secondly, only effective check on the exercise of power by one section was the exercise of the countervailing power by other sections” (Ibid: 373).

In applying these assumptions to the problem of the control of power, the concept of Multiparty Democracy, “is an overly class –based concept” (Ibid: 373).which when applied in the right perspective provides development based checks and balances to the party in power.

This study uses interchangeably the words, Multiparty and Democracy as embracing terms to refer to Multiparty Democracy. When the terms western democracy and liberal democracy appear in this study, they should simply be taken as synonyms of the term Multiparty Democracy.

### **2.2.2 MULTIPARTY DEMOCRACY-SECULAR PERSPECTIVES**

In a quest to figure out concrete perspectives of Multiparty Democracy as a main subject matter of this thesis, it is necessary to give secular representative viewpoints of different scholars on how they have comprehensively articulated the concept of Multiparty Democracy from different dimensions. This is done to help, concretize the groundwork of the thesis to serve as a pointer to the eventual proposition of a Zambian-African concept of Democracy by consensus would provide a political liberation. The following writers are chosen to give their representative views of Multiparty Democracy:-

Bevir Mark and others base their definition of Multiparty Democracy founded on the theory developed by Gilles Deleuze (1925-1995). Deleuze developed a philosophy of multiplicity as a general term. The concept was developed in his book, “Bergsonism and explored its political ramifications” (Encyclopedia of Political theory, Vol 3 2010:911).

Deleuze (1995:853) defined multiplicity in the context of democracy and equated it to the concept of the western political theory which he spoke of as an embracing theorem. He went further by broadening his concept to the kind of political system which provides for equal participation of people in the governance of a country regardless of race, class, gender, language, state, society, person and party.

His definition of multiplicity or in simple terms Multipartism in politics aims at rendering political thinking more nuanced and generous toward difference as a basis for the participation of citizens in a democratic dispensation. Deleuze “employs

the term multiplicity as part of his broader project to overturn Platonism” (Bevir 2010:911).

Arising from Deleuze’s development of the theory of Multiplicity, Bevir Mark and others defined the term Multiparty Democracy as “a political system that is characterized both by democratic decision-making institutions and by the presence of two or more political parties who represent sectors of people from sections of life” ( Bevir 2010:911; Encyclopedia of Democracy 1995:853).

Jack C Piano shuns away from the traditional perspective and defines a multiparty system as “an electoral system, usually based on proportional representation that requires a coalition of several parties to form a majority to run the government” (Piano 1973:243). This definition is supported by Frank Bealey, who categorically states that the “term can be misleading because it is not used to mean a situation where there are several political parties, the normality in any democracy.” He adds, “It refers to the proposition where there are more than two parties in legislature and none of them has enough representation to form a single party government” (Bealey 1999:217-218).

Bogdanor, Vernon, defines Multiparty Democracy as, “a kind mixed government.” (Bogdanor1991:373) where by both the opposition and the ruling are given mandate to execute the duties of the state. He explains that the theory of a mixed government he outlines is based upon two assumptions that, “every section of the community was likely to abuse its position if the government was left solely in its hands”(Ibid) and “Secondly that the only effective check on the exercise of power by one section was the exercise of a countervailing power by other sections.” (Ibid).In this, Vernon emphasized on the idea, of political party liberty to work with the government of the day.

In applying these assumptions to the problem of control of power he defined “the theory of the mixed government as an overly class- based theory, unlike the later doctrine of separation of exercise of powers which looked for checks on the exercise of power through a functional distribution of authority.” The Blackwell Encyclopedia of political Science 1987, 1991: 373).

Collin PH. does not depart from the traditional meaning of Multiparty Democracy as he defines it as “where several political parties exist in the same country just like other scholars above.” (Dictionary of government and politics 2nd edition 1997:187).

Macpherson C.B., the popular political scientist, situates the concept of Multiparty Democracy system based on the concept of “the Western Liberal Market society which emerged first in England in the 17th century” (1973:25). The Liberal market society, Macpherson alludes to claims that the etymological concept of Multiparty Democracy from a western point of view is “a kind of consumer Market” (Ibid:25). As alluded to above, “when the market economy developed to a highly sophisticated level, politics itself became a commodity in the society and there emerged the idea of choice between various brands” (Oyugi 1988:53).

Schumpeter, 1942 takes another wave and defines democracy, as an institutionalized system and defines it as “that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people’s vote” (Ibid). Expanding on this definition, Dahl (1971) identifies seven key criteria that are essential for democracy. These include:

- *Control over governmental decisions about policy constitutionally vested in elected officials*
- *Relatively frequent, fair and free elections*
- *Universal adult suffrage*
- *The right to run for public office*
- *Freedom of expression*
- *Access to alternative sources of information that are not monopolized by either the government or any other single group*
- *Freedom of association (i.e. the right to form and join autonomous associations such as political parties, interest groups, etc.) [Ibid].*

Dahl’s definition of ‘formal democracy’ (Ibid) entail’s the essence of basic civil liberties that should, in principle, guarantee that an authentic democratic process is “inclusive, free of repression and enables citizens to participate in an informed and

autonomous manner.” (Ibid). However, the focus of this definition is still on contestation, of the electoral process itself which and is being evaluated as well in this thesis.

From the presentation of secular definitions of Multiparty Democracy, it is clear to note that though there are variations of perspectives, the concept still remains the same; it is the involvement of the Multiplicity of political parties in the democratic system of a country to create a balanced legislative wing of government.

According to the secular definitions of Multiparty Democracy, one ought to know above all that Multiplicity is the key word which is identified in all definitions regarding multiparty democracy.

### **2.2.3 MULTIPARTY DEMOCRACY-THE CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE**

In this section a presentation of some Christian perspectives of Multiparty Democracy is done. The definition is presented from the perspective of the Christian sources that have made an attempt to define it. It must however be noted that mostly when it comes to definitions and terms, the secular and Christian-religious definitions are the same. Perhaps they may just differ in detail basing on the level of emphasis. As in secular, Whalen P. John gives the definition of Multiparty Democracy as was understood in the ancient form when he states that, “Multiparty Democracy is characterized by direct participation of all citizens in legislation” (New Catholic Encyclopedia Vol 4 197:745). This was the concept that was practiced during the period of Plato (c427-347 BC) and Aristotle (c384-322 BC) which the duo rejected in favour of the politico-military concept and leadership by the Philosopher King. Whalen observed that the direct participation of citizens in a democratic society involves the following:-

- *Universal Adult suffrage*
- *Representation in a legislature body of a fair proportion of the electorate*
- *Decision by majority vote of the electorate in determination of the major questions of policy*
- *Equality before the law*
- *Equality of opportunity*
- *Freedom of speech, press and assembly*

- *Freedom from arbitrary arrest and punishment*
- *Freedom in the exercise of religion; and*
- *Exercise of the individual activity consonant with social requirement.*

Pope Leo XIII (1810-1903) whose real name was Vincenzo Gioacchino Raffaele Luigi Pecci, however, understood democracy in terms of Christian popular service and called it 'Christian Democracy'. According to him, the concept of Christian democracy which he authoritatively laid down in his Encyclical "Graves de communi" (18th January, 1901), declared democracy to be the same as "popular Church action" (Benigni 1908). He further strengthened the root meaning of Christian democracy to mean action taken as an "organized movement with a definite programme to deal with the pressing problems that come before it" (Graves de communi-18 January 1901). The Catholic Encyclopedia define the word "popular" in the words of Pope Leo XIII to mean people, not as much as they are a nation or collective whole but as the fourth estate (New Catholic Encyclopedia Vol. 4, 197). For that reason, the church or popular action was rated as Christian democracy due a common participation of people in upholding the values of God's creation.

If we are to consider the basic understanding of the concept of democracy in its root meaning, both secular and Christian views make people's participation at the Centre of the general understanding of democracy. In other words, for a Christian religious world view of Multiparty Democracy, it also incorporates all other human rights inherent with the social requirements of the people. All other Christian definitions of democracy by reformers and other Christian bodies fall under the general umbrella of this understanding.

#### **2.2.4 AN EVALUATION OF DEFINITIONS AND PERSPECTIVES.**

The general feature of all definitions and perspectives of Multiparty Democracy is that Multiplicity is the key word which reflects in all definitions of Multiparty Democracy. The authority of people's participation has also emerged to be the central part of democracy. It has also come to light that democracy should be understood from a broader perspective. It does not end at the power of the people (demo kratia), but should also be seen as a basis for various types of freedom inherent in the social requirement of the people in a democratic country or society.

### 2.3. PARTY SYSTEMS IN AFRICA

In order to comprehend the various dimensions of party systems in Africa, as a first step, it is important to distinguish between the party system and the party as a single entity in order to strike the right balance between the two. Mainwaring and Scully (1995: 4) define a party system as “the set of patterned interactions in the competition among parties”. Arising from the definition, Basedau (2007: 108) stresses that: a party system is therefore, “more than just the sum of political parties in a given country”. [...]. The capabilities of this means are that what makes several parties work as a system in this context are the nature of the relations between the parties and the stability of interaction between them. Moreover, “the party system has to be conceptualized as a subsystem of the political system.” (Ibid: 108). More precisely, “the party system is characterized by its intermediate position between society on the one hand and state and government on the other hand.” (Ibid)

In addition, a party system can be characterized by a number of quantitative and qualitative features, including the overall number of parties, the strength of individual parties, the degree of fragmentation and polarization, as well as the interaction between the parties.

In trying to categorize different party systems, the easiest approach is the simple counting method, which allows the differentiation between one-party systems, two-party systems and multi-party systems as a first step.

Corresponding with these categories, Bogaards (2007: 169f.) Distinguishes three party-system functions: aggregating social cleavages (two-party system), translating social cleavages into political cleavages (multi-party system), or blocking the politicization of social cleavages (one-party system).

It is worth noting that Giovanni Sartori (1976) has so far provided the most popular and convincing typology of party systems. Instead of applying purely numerical criteria, he combines quantitative and qualitative criteria to create a typological framework that considers the number of relevant parties, the fragmentation and the ideological polarization of the party system.

For the numerical criterion, Sartori introduces a counting method that only considers “relevant” parties, which are identified not only according to their strength in elections



and their representation in parliament but also according to their “coalition potential” or their “blackmail potential”:

*In summary, we can discount the parties that have neither (i) coalition potential nor (ii) blackmail potential. Conversely, we must count all the parties that have either a governmental relevance in the coalition-forming area or a competitive relevance in the opposition area. (Sartori 1976: 123)*

Based on the three categories mentioned above, Sartori formulates seven different types of party systems. The result of his method is a typological framework that distinguishes between the following systems:

- *one party,*
- *hegemonic party,*
- *predominant party,*
- *two-party,*
- *limited/ moderate pluralism (three to five parties),*
- *extreme pluralism (more than five parties), and*
- *atomized (Sartori 1976: 125)*

When taking a look at the different types of party systems that can be identified in Africa, it is important to note that most African party systems, “cannot be considered as structured party systems” (1976: 244) but rather have to be perceived as what Sartori calls “fluid politics” (Ibid:). Many party systems in Africa are not clearly structured and are barely institutionalized, and some are simply there for convenience and therefore, remain fragile. Often party systems in Africa appear to be in a phase of transition or are once again undergoing restructuring processes time and again. “This is particularly obvious when taking a look at the high volatility between elections, the number of new party foundations, and the processes of party fusion, splitting and dissolving” (Emminghaus 2003: 107). Thus, a categorization of African party systems according to the common types has less explanatory power. Nevertheless, it is relevant at least in this critical evaluation of African political systems to take a look at the party systems that are found in Africa and to find out which ones are the most common types. We will discuss one by one in order to give a fair evaluation of African’s political systems.

We first and foremost identify the one-party system or in other words a one-party state of governance. This type of party System was common in Africa among the founding fathers and political parties that had an independence agenda from the late 1960s until the early 1990s. That was a time during which most African states were governed by ‘authoritarian regimes.’ such as Kenneth Kunda of Zambia, Kamuzu Banda of Malawi, Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, Mobutu Seseseko of Zaire etc. These kinds of systems were justified by a variety of arguments such as “emancipation from imposed “Western” (colonial) concepts and the protection of national unity.” (S.W.Rohio, 1975: 478-479).The fear of leaders during the one party sate era was that Multipartism would be divide society, particularly along ethnic lines, also benefited the justification, and the fight against so-called “tribalism” was a popular argument of authoritarian leaders. Finally, in a number of the one-party states there was a movement like ideology, often related to an initially socialist ideology, in which the promotion of development was presented as a “national project” that needed strong leadership.

Salih and Nordlund (2007: 44f.) distinguish between two types of one-party systems. On the one hand, there are single-party states where the constitution only allows one political party in the country. These were mainly found in state socialist regimes, where the one and only (communist) party were closely connected to or almost identical with the political system. On the other hand, there are the so-called “de-facto” single party states, in which the “constitution was not changed to mandate one party, but in reality the ruling parties in these countries gained and kept a monopoly on power, dominating all branches of government” (ibid: 45). This kind of system worked for Zambia from 1972 to 1991 where the United Independence Party (UNIP) was the only party that was allowed in the country after the ‘Choma declaration’ of 1972.(Larmer, 2011)

This distinction is almost identical with Sartori’s distinction between one-party states and what he calls “hegemonic party systems”. In his description he states that

*the hegemonic party neither allows for a formal nor a de facto competition for power. Other parties are permitted to exist, but as second class, licensed parties; for they are not permitted to compete with the hegemonic party in antagonistic terms and on equal basis. Not only does alternation not occur in*

*fact; it cannot occur, since the possibility of a rotation in power is not even envisaged. (Sartori 1976: 230)*

The second category is the multiparty system, which can again be separated into sub-categories. In two-party systems power basically alternates between two major parties that are competing with more or less equal chances of getting into power. Typically, coalitions are not necessary and other existing parties only play minor roles. Erdmann identifies Ghana and Cap Verde as the only two stable, i.e. institutionalized, two-party systems (Erdmann, Basedau 2007: 11). In contrast, the pluralistic version of a non-dominant multiparty system is characterized by competition between more than two parties which increases the likelihood of coalitions. With regard to the institutionalized systems Sartori distinguishes again between moderate and polarized pluralism, depending on the degree of ideological differences between the relevant parties.

In Africa, a number of non-dominant party systems are present, but only few institutionalized exceptions exist, with Mauritius being an outstanding exception with institutionalized moderate pluralism (ibid.; Salih, Nordlund 2007: 52f.). The extreme version of pluralism, a pulverized party system, with a highly fragmented and conflictive party system is – against skeptical expectations because of the ethnic fragmentation – hardly found in Africa, with Benin being the only case. Instead, data show that most of the multiparty systems in Africa can be classified as predominant party systems. According to Erdmann and Basedau (2007: 8), “the effect of multiparty elections in Africa is rarely that of high fragmentation of parties, but rather the emergence of a dominant one party”. Randall and Svasand (2002b: 35) observe that “on the one hand African party systems contain an ‘impressive’ number of political parties, but in terms of ‘effective number of parties’ there is a high degree of concentration around one or two”. All in all, van de Walle (2003: 298) concludes, “the emerging modal party system in the region consists of a dominant presidential party surrounded by a large number of small, highly volatile parties”.

*“Firstly, dominant party systems should not be confused with single-party systems, although they share some similar characteristics. Secondly, often the distinction between dominant and hegemonic party systems is quite difficult. While in dominant party systems there is still a certain degree of*

*competition and at least a certain chance of alternation in power, in hegemonic systems fair competition is not given and alternation is hardly possible, if not impossible”(Salih, Nordlund 2007: 48f; Gentili 2005: 8).*

With regard to the impact on democracy and democratic consolidation, dominant party systems are seen as rather negative, whether in a highly authoritarian or quite competitive context. Salih and Nordlund (2007: 51) point out four challenges to democracy resulting from dominant party systems:

- *they impede competitive politics, which contributes to political apathy and low voter turnout [...];*
- *Dominant parties dominate the legislature and could monopolize the lawmaking process to promote the predominant party’s economic and social interests;*
- *Governments formed under the system are less accountable to the legislature, which they dominate, and the opposition, which is too small to be effective; and they encourage government to develop the arrogance of power and become irresponsible to citizen demands.*

From the above discussion on party Systems in Africa, we deduce that party systems in Africa, are not static. They are unstructured and fragile in different dimensions. This can be evidenced from the various political paradigms that have rocked the African political situation leading to authoritarian regimes, civil wars, military coups and unnecessary divisions either on ethnic or tribal grounds. These eventualities appeal for a lasting form of governance system that is born and bred from the African soil.

#### **2.4. POLITICAL PARTIES AND DEMOCRACY IN AFRICA**

Having discussed party systems in Africa in the previous section, a presentation on the meaning and importance of the philosophy political parties is vital to be discussed in this section. This owes to the fact that when it comes to western democracy, political parties are the key players in the functioning of every democracy and consensus exists that the concept of democracy is indivisibly linked to the concept of Multipartism.

It appears to be an “incontrovertible fact among most political observers” (Kuenzi, Lambright 2005: 423) that political parties are an essential requisite for any democratic political system. In fact as defined by various scholars above, for a democracy to work, political parties must play a key role in the promotion of good governance in a country. “They perform several roles critical to the functioning of a democracy as they are the central means to aggregate interests and thereby translate mass preferences into public policy” (Sartori 1988: 254) and

*“representative institutions that endow regimes with legitimacy; provide ideologies that represent social, economic and political interests; and produce leaders who through democratic elections per se form the machinery of government (Ibid) or opportunities for political participation” (Salih, Nordlund 2007: 20).*

In the light of the above functions, it is obvious that political parties have a major influence on plural politics. Furthermore, “they also demonstrate the manner in which parties carry out these functions is an indicator of whether a particular democratic system is institutionalized or fragile” (Ibid 20).

With the changing perception of political parties, the initial fear that parties are a divisive force that promotes particularism and have the capacity to undermine national unity and the political order has decreased in favour of the realization that parties are essential for democratic participation and competition. This, however, “does not negate the possibility that the existence of multiple political parties can generate political and social disorder” (Kuenzi, Lambright 2001: 438). Yet, while this is a challenge that should be dealt with by the political system and the rules and norms for settling differences between the parties (Sartori 1988: 253), there is still a general consensus among most scholars that political parties play a crucial role in political stability and democratic consolidation. Thus, Salih and Nordlund (2007: 20) state that “democratic consolidation can hardly be achieved without political parties playing a significant role not only in the debate but also by practicing the principles and policies they advocate”. Similarly, other authors like Nolte (2000) and Olukoshi (1998) emphasize the essential role of political parties in establishing and consolidating democracies. While Olukoshi (1998: 76) argues that “the institutionalization of a multi-party system is [...] indispensable to the principle and

practice of democracy”, Lipset (2000: 48) even makes this “indispensability” a core element of his definition of democracy when he states that, “Democracy in a complex society may be defined as a political system which supplies regular constitutional opportunities for changing the government officials, and a social mechanism which permits the largest possible part of the population to influence major decisions by choosing among contenders for political office, that is, through political parties” (Ibid). Randall and Svasand (1999: 4) emphasize that

*it is evident [...] that political analysts see the actual or potential contribution of parties as varying at different stages of the democratization process. In general the perception is that their contribution gets increasingly important as the process evolves and is especially central to successful consolidation.*

This is underlined by their statement that

*although it seems that strong parties are not necessary for inaugurating democratic regimes [...], they are almost certainly necessary for the long-term consolidation of broad-based representative government (Ibid).*

We see that for a proper implementation of Multiparty Democracy, Political parties are vital in the whole project of democratization. It should however, be stressed that such political parties should be mandated within their political ideologies, to serve the masses and not themselves alone. Brief case political parties, especially in Africa, have been a thorn in the political sphere of the African continent and if political parties are to really be an instrument of a genuine democracy, then legislation on which political party is given a free way to participate in elections needs to have much firmer guide lines if democratization should make sense.

## **2.5. DEMOCRACY AND DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENT**

This section seeks to analyze the complex relationship between Democracy and Development. When discussing democratic development, it's not distinguished from the definition of development from other types of development which deal with all dimensions of life such as, “social development, educational development, and cultural development” (Bwalya 2001:29).

This is done so with an assumption that, the essence of any democracy , “should produce development as an outcome” (Menocal 2007) and for this reason, a discussion about developing a viable democracy for Zambia needs to be evaluated in order to assess if it meets the general criteria of democratic values.

Section II begins by defining basic concepts of democratic systems and development. It is worth noting that some of the definitions in this section are related to some of the definitions above. It also highlights the importance of democracy as a process and development as an outcome. The section then goes on to assess some key linkages between democracy and development.

Section III, discusses a particular modernization theory and the emergence of democracy; the argument that democracy is a pre-requisite for development is dealt with more comprehensively in this section. This section also looks at some of the challenges posed by emerging democracies and proposes taking a new look at modernization theory for some insights.

Section IV concludes by summarizing a few key texts in the literature, which in the aggregate point to the fact that the evidence linking democracy and development in one way or the other remains inconclusive and highly contested. On this basis, the section highlights the intrinsic value of the democratic process, while also noting that the expectations placed on any democracy should generate development outcomes and therefore needs to be tempered.

Section V conclude by suggesting that, when thinking about democracy and democratic development, it is essential to ‘bring cultural and traditional governance systems back in’, and that the international community needs to think about how the different goals it seeks to pursue interact and to grapple more seriously with the ensuing tensions is any.

## **2.6. DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM.**

Departing from the minimalistic definition of a democratic system by Schumpeter, and Dahl who defined a democratic system as ‘that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people’s vote’”( Schumpeter,1946) , O’Donnell 1996 and Schedler et al. 1999, define a democratic system in a more

substantial terms and states that it is “one that gives greater prominence to the role and importance of accountability.” as a main basis of democracy. Three dimensions of accountability are distinguished i.e.:

- *Vertical accountability, which enables citizens to hold their political leaders to account through the electoral channel at specified points in time;*
- *“horizontal accountability, which refers to accountability mechanisms that exist within the distinct bodies of government itself, whereby state institutions are authorized and willing to oversee, control, redress and, if need be, sanction unlawful actions by other state institutions” (O’Donnell 1996); and*
- *“Societal accountability, which refers to the watchdog functions of civic associations, other NGOs and an independent mass media over the actions of the state” (Schedler et al. 1999).*

Following the definitions above, AmartyaSen (1999a) has argued, that, it’s evident that “democracy has become a universal value” and therefore needs to be harnessed with a developmental concept “where it exists and to defend it where threatened” (Boucher 2000).

The main point here is that when democratic system is viewed comprehensively in both, minimalistic and Substantive ways, it then works as a prerequisite to development. In this case when we think of a form of democracy, we must think development as an outcome.

## **2.7. DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT: OUTLINING THE TERMS OF THE RELATIONSHIP**

The answer to the question about the links between democracy and development depends on how one defines ‘development’. If one follows Sen (1999b) and adopts a definition of development as ‘freedom’ – “a suitably broad definition that incorporates not only economic indicators but also freedoms like human and political rights, social opportunities, transparency guarantees and protective security,” (Ibid) then by definition, “democracy must lead to development.” (Dahl, 1971)).

In addition, recent debates on a, “rights-based approach to development also focus on participation, accountability, and other elements that are very similar to those



values underlying substantive forms of democracy” (UNDP 2000). However, it worth noting that, “while there is enormous value in understanding development in such a holistic way,” (Menocal,2007) such an approach poses conceptual problems. “Defining development in terms of many of the attributes inherent to democracy makes it more difficult analytically to make a distinction between the two terms and to be able to disentangle the nature of the relationship between them.” (Menocal, 2007).

Following Joseph Stiglitz (2003), development in this thesis, is understood as a “transformation of society that goes beyond economic growth alone to include social dimensions like literacy, distribution of income and life expectancy,”(Ibid) etc. In addition, “development must include some dimension of the redistribution of wealth as well” (Leftwich 2005) to the greater majority.

We opt for a definition of democracy (as outlined above) that focuses on the process that leads to development as an outcome. We contend that a democracy should produce better socio-economic outcomes because it focus is the people. As Sen (1999a) and many other have argued, “the democratic process does have intrinsic value on its own right, and it should be expected to arrive at policy decisions in a way that is inclusive, participatory, broadly representative of different societal interests, transparent, and accountable.”(Ibid). In particular, following the Sen Tradition, the importance of participation in one’s development through open and non-discriminatory democratic processes is fundamental.

Once the intrinsic value of democracy has been established, it must make a difference, and that difference is societal development. It is in this regard that “ The growing recognition of institutions as key factors in shaping developmental outcomes “( Commission for Africa 2005; Fritz and Rocha Menocal 2006 and 2007) and the movement of more poor countries toward democracy sharpens the relevance and the stakes Democracy/development debate .

## **2.8. MODERNIZATION THEORY AND THE EMERGENCE OF DEMOCRACY**

According to Menocal, 2007, the modernization approach to democratization is “understood as the emergence of democracy as a consequence of the transformation of class structure, the emergence of a bourgeoisie, economic development, increasing urbanization, the prior development of democratic values, and other cultural and religious factors.” (Ibid)

Thus, according to this argument, the emergence of democracy is “endogenous to the process of economic and social development” (Ibid). There is a simple, linear progression toward modernization that ultimately culminates in democratization as understood today. In other words, “once a non-democratic regime acquires a certain level, or ‘threshold,’ of economic development and social maturation”

(Menocal 2007), it will inevitably become a democracy. According to the “modernization approach” (Ibid), then, the appearance of democracy should be seen as the crowning achievement of a long process of modernization that affluent countries can finally afford.

It is however worth noting that, the advent of the so-called “Third Wave of democratization” (Ihonvbere, 1998) that swept across much of the developing world beginning in the 1980s challenged this concept of ‘prerequisites’ for democracy. Many of the movements towards formal democracy since then have taken place in countries where such transformation would not have been expected based on low levels of economic development and other socio-economic indicators. “A large number of countries experiencing a transition to democracy during the Third Wave fell in the bottom third of the Human Development Index” (Diamond, Przeworski and Limongi 1997). We note that the third Wave transitions also defied cultural arguments positing that “democracy is incompatible with certain faiths and religious values” (Menocal 2007).

### **2.8.1. DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT: FIRST’ ARGUMENT.**

It is worth noting that the core of the argument that democracy helps promote development rests on some of the key institutional features of democratic systems

we have discussed above namely: its accountability mechanisms and checks and balances provisions. These features play an essential role in limiting the abuse of executive and state power more broadly, and through elections and other processes, they also provide a predictable, transparent, periodic, and reliable system of rewards and punishments.

According to Sen (1999a), for example, it is above institutional characteristics of a democracy that explain why famines have never occurred in democratic systems. In a comparative analysis of policy reform in Central Europe after the transition to democracy in 1989, David Stark and László Bruszt also find that “executives that are held accountable by other state institutions and held in check by organized societal actors produce more effective developmental policies”.

It is therefore important to point out that , “a system of governance that emphasizes the importance of transparency and accountability, and it also calls for broadly inclusive and participatory decision-making processes,” (Rocha Menocal and Rogerson 2006) possesses an essential condition to the effective promotion of development. It is evident that there are several advantages to an open, democratic, and participatory process to policy-making from a good governance perspective – even if this implies that decision-making processes are more protracted and less ‘efficient’ in the short term. Following Sáez (2005), they can be summarized as follows:

- In the first place, participation allows for the creation of alliances of various interests in favour of set objectives.
- Second, it creates a sense of ownership of adopted decisions, even if they oppose certain interests defended by them.
- Third, it contributes to sustainability of policies over time: it reduces the chances of backlash if participation is solid and decisions taken are considered legitimate in their origin and outcome.
- Fourth, participation ... fosters ... more informed decisions. Lastly, participation permits society to demand more accountability of those in charge of public policies.



However, the good governance agenda may tend to espouse a view of politics which may be overly naïve and idealistic, and it can impose demands with regard to the quality of governance which are far beyond what is needed at low levels of development (Khan 2005). It also tends to assume too easily that ‘all good things go together’ (Fritz and Rocha Menocal 2007) and that democracies will lead to policies favouring redistribution.

As Bardhan has warned, democratic decision-making processes are not always ‘pretty’ from a developmental perspective, and they do not necessarily lead to the enactment of policies that are conducive to development. The fact that decision-making processes are intended to be more participatory and inclusive does not automatically make them developmentally more effective. Indeed, greater access to the state also means that the bureaucracy can more easily be politicized. As Bardhan has put it, among other things all cases of public pressure that democracy facilitates help development... Democracies may be particularly susceptible to populist pressures ... and other particularistic demands that may hamper long-run investment growth and development more broadly’ (Ibid)

### **2.8.2. DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT: SECOND ARGUMENT**

Adrian Leftwich (1995) has been much more explicit about the kind of political system that may be required to sustain a developmental state. As he has argued, that, “when and if developmental states are democratic, they can be thought of as ‘authoritarian democracies’ as the case of Botswana, where basic characteristics of a democracy exist, such as free and fair elections, but where human rights are less of a priority and some stability is brought about by one party rule and strong control exerted by bureaucracies.” (Ibid). Leftwich has also suggested that it is unrealistic to assume that political and economic development goals (alongside equity, stability and national autonomy) can be achieved simultaneously, at least from past historical experience.

In his view, “dominant-party democratic developmental states hold out some prospect for at least achieving respectful levels of growth and the distribution of its benefits that will make a real difference to the majority of the population under essentially democratic conditions” (Ibid). Fareed Zakaria (2003) has made a very similar point. In his book *The Future of Freedom: Illiberal Democracy at Home and*

Abroad, he argues that the goal should be to support 'liberal autocracies', given that authoritarian regimes seem to have a state (ibid). In his view, order itself was the most important goal of developing societies, independent of the question of whether that order was democratic or not. All that Evans says on this matter is that, "by its very success, the developmental state may, in the end, be its very own 'gravedigger': having successfully nurtured strong business and working classes through its policies, these then turn upon the state to demand greater political freedoms and, ultimately, democracy" (Menocal 2007). The trouble is, of course, that, in much of the developing world, democracy has been established without the prior achievement of such developmental success.

Superior developmental record and the Przeworski et al. finding that democracies seem to become stable once they manage to surpass a certain level of economic development.

Challenges posed by emerging democracies: Towards a new consensus on a fresher look at modernization theory.

As has been highlighted above, the advent of the Third Wave of democratization throughout the developing world, "confirms the thinking that there are no structural preconditions for the emergence of democracy." (Menocal 2007) On the other hand, only a limited number of countries that have undergone transitions to democracy have succeeded in establishing consolidated and functioning democratic regimes. Against this backdrop, many analysts seem to be reaching a consensus that structural factors – such as underlying economic, social, and institutional conditions and legacies – may in fact have a considerable impact on the prospects of democratic consolidation. It is telling that, with only very few exceptions, all democracies that can be considered fully consolidated are wealthy. Lipset's (1959) dictum four decades ago that 'the more well-to-do a nation, the greater the chances that it will sustain a democracy', has withstood the test of time.

In fact, revisiting his 'prerequisites' argument in 1994, Lipset has proposed that, while higher levels of income may not be a precondition for democratization processes to start, they may be nonetheless advantageous for democracy to endure and become consolidated. In a much discussed quantitative analysis, Przeworski

and Limongi (1997) also find that economic development has a very important impact on the sustainability of democratic systems.

Above all, democratic consolidation requires the evolution of a democratic political culture where all the main political players (both in the elite and the mass public), parties, organized interests, forces and institutions view and accept democracy as 'the only game in town'. In other words, the democratic process is the only legitimate means to gain power and to process demands. Admittedly, the building and strengthening of such a democratic political culture is bound to take a long time, and this is the main challenge hybrid regimes are facing today.

This discussion on the links between development and the consolidation of democracy is in no way intended to suggest that all wealthy democracies have reached a stage of 'perfection' and that there is a linear trajectory toward that end point. In fact, as several analysts have pointed out, wealthy (and mostly Western) democracies can also suffer from serious democratic deficits, manifested, among other things, in low levels of voter turn-out, the decline of associationalism, and sectors of the population that are less than tolerant (e.g. Putnam 2000).

Some analysts have also argued that it may not be high levels of development as such, but rather the way in which this wealth is distributed among the population that is responsible for fostering the appropriate conditions for democratic stability and consolidation. Democracy is more easily maintained when wealth is distributed in a more or less equitable manner across society, because it is precisely a more even distribution that prevents class polarization and fosters moderation. Hence, appropriate social and institutional mechanisms need to be established to ensure adequate distribution. In the words of Larry Diamond (1992), 'to the extent that the benefits...of economic development...are grossly mistributed...it may do little to promote democracy'. (Ibid).

### **2.8.3. DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT: INCONCLUSIVE FINDINGS**

As can be discerned from the discussion above, there are several different arguments that can be harnessed to support both the view that democratic institutions play a crucial role in promoting development and the counter-view that

authoritarian regimes may be more effective in this endeavor, especially in poor countries that need to catch up more rapidly. The terms of the debate are far from settled. The existing literature seeking to identify the causal relationship between democracy and development remains inconclusive, suggesting just how complex and non-linear the linkages between these two forces are. For every study providing evidence for the argument that either a democratic or an authoritarian regime is more conducive to development, another one can be found that makes the opposite claim.

For example, in their book *The Democracy Advantage: How Democracies Promote Prosperity and Peace*, Joseph Halperin et al. (2005) make a strong case for the developmental benefit of participatory and accountable systems of governance over time, as compared to authoritarian regimes, arguing that the better performance of democracies can be attributed to their relatively greater propensity for establishing institutions of shared power, information openness, and adaptability. The authors find that low-income democracies outperform autocracies across a wide range of development indicators. They show, for *In Democracy, Governance, and Economic Performance: Theory and Evidence*, Yi Feng (2003) also finds that democracy has a positive impact on economic and social development, though mostly through indirect channels. The channels the author describes include policy certainty, political stability, the establishment and enforcement of rules that protect property rights, the promotion of education, the ability to promote private capital, and the reduction of inequality. A democratic regime is seen as vital in bringing about these indirect benefits because it is a system that provides for regular government change while inhibiting irregular/erratic/unconstitutional change. Yet, as the discussion on the 'development first' school above suggests and as many analysts have also shown (Leftwich 2005, Zakaria 2003, Haggard 1990), these indirect benefits are not the exclusive domain of democracies: (some) authoritarian regimes also seem quite capable of providing stability, the rule of law, the protection of property rights, and basic social services

In fact, in an ambitious and controversial study looking at the causal relationship between democracy and development and the direction of this causal relationship in 135 countries (including established democracies and democratizing countries) between 1950 and 1990, Adam Przeworski and his collaborators (2000) find that,

“while political institutions do matter, regime type as such has no significant influence on states’ economic growth and national income.” According to the authors, “whether democracy fosters or hinders development remains an open question, and the results of the relationship between regime type and economic development are inconclusive.”(Ibid). The main lesson from their analysis may be that different political regimes may be capable of implementing similar policies, and that it may therefore be more fruitful to look at the kinds of institutional arrangements that are in

#### **2.8.4. THE CASE FOR DEMOCRACY**

Sen (1999) has put it, “if all the comparative studies are viewed together, the hypothesis that there is no clear relationship between economic development and democracy in either direction remains extremely plausible”. And the same can be said about the inconclusive evidence of authoritarian systems in promoting economic development. If in addition to this mixed track record, which points to the complex and non-linear relationship between democracy and development, one takes into account the formidable shift to formal democracy that has taken place in some very poor countries throughout the developing world, then the case for democracy as a system that has intrinsic value in and of itself is a very powerful one. This also speaks of the need to support these emerging democracies, which remain weak and unconsolidated, while tempering expectations about what these democracies can be reasonably expected to accomplish in terms of development, especially in the short term.

#### **2.8.5. CULTURE AND DEMOCRACY**

How the international community can best support some unconsolidated democracies or hybrid regimes remains, of course a central challenge. In a recent contribution to the ongoing debate on the relationship between democracy and development, Leftwich (2005) revisits this relationship from a more nuanced and thought-provoking perspective. He argues that, while democracy and development have become the two central goals of Western governments and development agencies in the developing world, it is essential to recognize that these two processes may not always go hand in hand in a mutually reinforcing manner, and they may in fact pull in opposite directions. Moreover, both democracy and



development need a strong social and cultural comprehension if indeed it is to underscore a genuine approach to a democracy that leads to development.

It is a considerable fact that since the end of the 1990s, there has also been a growing awareness within the international community that “state institutions matter and that the orientation and effectiveness of the state is the critical variable explaining why some countries succeed whereas others fail in meeting development goals” (Fritz and Rocha Menocal 2006). However, “current thinking and international discussions on democratization in the developing world seem to be based on the assumption that today’s emerging democracies are being built on the foundations of coherent, functioning states” (Fukuyama 2005). Most of the literature presupposes that “a more or less effective state exists before a democratization process starts” (Linz and Stepan 1996).

But in reality, many of the countries stuck in incomplete democratization processes, especially poor ones, are not only trying to democratize but also more fundamentally to build effective, capable states. Poor state capacity and inadequate provision of social services mean, furthermore, that human development is low, especially in the poorest countries. This combination of low state capacity and low human development implies that “poor countries[ African countries] pose novel challenges for external democracy promotion and protection – ranging from options for party financing and organization, to political and civic culture, to the types of social structures prevalent in situations of widespread poverty,”( Ibid) which are mostly patronage-driven. Importantly, the questions to be asked should not only be how these conditions affect the prospects for democratization and democratic consolidation, but also how efforts to establish and strengthen democratic systems affect state capacity, service delivery, and other dimensions of governance, such as corruption.

In an argument that echoes Leftwich’s (2005) point about the tensions embedded between democracy and development, Thomas Carothers (2002) has posited that, to the extent that international democracy assistance has considered the possibility of state-building as part of the democratization process, it has too “easily assumed that the fostering of democracy and state-building are one and the same thing.” (Ibid) However, the conflation of these two processes is at best problematic. As Leftwich

found to be true for democracy and development, the relationship between democratization and the building of effective and capable state institutions can sometimes be complex. To some degree, these two processes also tend to pull in opposite directions. For instance, “ democratization often entails establishing checks and balances mechanisms and diffusing power more evenly across a greater number of actors both within and outside government, while strengthening state capacity may call for greater autonomy and centralization of power” (Fritz and Rocha Menocal 2006)

We are challenged by the literature which explores the effects of democratization on other development goals, such as growth, poverty and inequality, and corruption, and such analyses have concluded that “positive spill-over effects from democratization for other areas of governance and development are not automatic. Sometimes the impact may even be negative, as in the case of corruption.”(Manocal 2007). If the literature is right about potentially negative effects; and about the fact that democratization does not automatically yield benefits for equity or state capacity, then such tensions need to receive far greater attention as the international community thinks about policy and practice. One of the central challenges for donors therefore remains to become more fully aware of the fact that, when they make choices about how to support democracy and how to promote development, they also need to take into consideration how their activities in one realm affect the other – and how these in turn affect broader state-building efforts that may or may not work holistically with democratization efforts on the one hand and development efforts on the other.

## **2.9. SUMMERY AND CONCLUSION**

This chapter has unequivocally defined and unpacked the meaning and various perspectives of the words Multiparty Democracy. It has provided the basic and relevant definitions and perspectives of Multipartism in general so as to necessitate the point of departure that leads to an evaluation of Multipartism in Zambia.

It has established that Multiplicity of participation in politics is the root meaning that cuts across the essence of a democracy that can produce results. The terminology, ‘ Homo Afrikanus’ in reference to the African people has been defined in the metaphor of a ‘Multi headed Hydra’ which depicts the nature and character of the African

people in the affairs of a given country in Africa. The terms Homo Afrikanus, has been used as a point of departure to sample that a Zambian- African traditional system of governance is the right path to the concept of democracy with African lenses.

Secondly, the chapter has identified clearly the root meaning of the word 'Democracy' which comes from two Greek word, 'demos' and 'Kratia' to mean people and power respectively. It has established that in democracy, it is the values and aspirations of the people who wish to be governed that have authority and not socially and politically imposed ideologies. A conglomerate of terms and perspectives from the world of political science by political scientists as well as from the Christian perspectives where consulted and consensus has been reached that the concept of Multiparty Democracy refers to the full participation of citizens with all rights involvement in the democratization of a country. For this reason, the chapter has established a lynch pin that though there is no concept known as multiparty democracy due to the non-use of the term party in the Bible, it has established an understanding that since the gospel speaks to every situation, it is not limited with any particular boundary. For this reason, the chapter has given some Christian insights and perspectives of multiparty democracy by Christians and philosophers.

Thirdly, the chapter has established the general etymological perspectives of the concept of multiparty democracy which are used as bench marks to critic and evaluate a Zambian-African form of democracy suitable for political governance in Zambia.

It has established that paradigms of Multiparty democracy and democratic values have evolved without exhaustion over a long period of time starting from Plato (c427-347 BC) and Aristotle (c384-322BC) and made reference to the ancient Athens, where various sections of society participated in the running of the affairs of the modes of the recruitment of all free adults so defined as citizens who took turns in the running of the affairs of the state and in the decision making process of the entire government of the time.

It has also established that multiparty democracy is a kind of Western liberal democracy. It has been established that politics are a kind of commodity in the

society and that the emergence of Multipartyism has to do with people's choice which political party or association is the most ideal.

Fourthly the chapter has defined and examined multiparty democratic systems in Africa. This has been done in order to comprehend the various dimensions of multiparty democratic systems in Africa and as a general feature. This is has been done in order to situate Zambia which is the Centre of discussion in this thesis.

Seven different party systems in African politics have been identified as follows:-

- One party system
- Hegemonic party system
- Predominant party system
- Two party system
- Limited moderate pluralism
- Extreme pluralism and
- Atomized party System

Fifthly, the chapter has discussed political parties and democracy in Africa. It has comprehensively given the meaning and importance of the philosophy of political parties in Africa as a whole. It has stressed that in Multipartyism, political parties are the key players in the functioning of every democracy and the concept of democracy itself is linked to the concept of Multipartyism. It has highlighted that the implementation of multiparty democracy, political parties are vital in the whole project of democratization.

Sixthly, The chapter has discussed the key words of democracy and development and the establishment of the linkages between the two. It has established that the idea of democracy is too linked to the concept of development as an outcome. It has stressed that in a quest for multiparty democracy and development, there is a role of both vertical and horizontal accountability where by it is a prerogative of citizens to hold their political leaders to account through the electoral channel at specified points in time.

Arguments with regard to democracy and development have been comprehensively dealt with in this chapter.

The conclusion of the chapter is that the international community must aim at supporting some unconsolidated democracies and must take this as a central challenge in the project of democratization. We base our conclusion based of the concept that democracy is a rule by the people and therefore democracy itself should be open to be reform by some of the ideals and practices that may not have western roots but with fully fledged contextual roots imbedded in the culture and traditions of the people in which democracy is expected to flourish.



## CHAPTER THREE

### ZAMBIA'S EXPERIENCE OF MULTIPARTISM-(1964-1973; 1991-2011)

#### 3.1. INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter has defined and unpacked the root meaning of multiparty democracy, and established the key linkages between democracy and development. It has also established the general understanding of political parties and party systems in Africa as a whole and has by and large provided the setting towards an understanding of Multipartism as the main subject matter of this thesis.

This particular chapter offers a critical reflection and analysis of the experience of Multipartism in Zambia from the period 1991 to 2011. In order comprehensively undertake an analysis of Multipartism in Zambia for the period under review it is imperative to include various dimensions of understanding both historically and experiential ones in terms of how Zambians have embraced Multiparty Democracy. It should be noted that, our proposal is to discover the gaps that has led Multipartism not to flourish in Zambia as expected in any given country in the world.

As a point of departure, four crucial dimensions have been identified as key in the assessment of Multiparty democracy in Zambia and to what level it has been promoted and institutionalized as a general feature in the democratization process. These are:

- The legal framework of Multipartism in Zambia: To what extent is the multiparty system guaranteed and protected by the constitution of the Republic of Zambia, and to what extent do the laws in the country reflect the multiparty political dispensation?
- An analysis of political institutions : Do they provide the pluralistic democratic approach in governance?
- The Democratic attitudes of politicians: To what extent are the principles of democracy and Multipartism reflected in political practice and in the way in which political actors particularly conduct themselves? Do the politicians accept competition and do they compete in a fair and tolerant way?

- Democratic culture in society: Has the multiparty ideology won the hearts and the minds of the people? Is there a wide consensus on the democratic and pluralistic political system and do the people understand and support it?

A critical reflection and analysis of the experience of Multipartism in Zambia in this chapter, gives a wide range of dimensions in the light of the above points. It is definitely obvious that Zambia has had critical delinquencies to solve the problems that have come with a democratic package, especially in a country with 73 tribes and various ethnic groups. One of the challenges is breaking the regional barriers of tribal and regional political parties.

It is in this regard that a historical dimension is very important to an adequate understanding of Zambia's journey to Multipartism and the challenges that has limited the processes of democratization in Zambia. It is out of this that will help us comprehensively build a Zambian-African model of democracy which is derived from the traditional governance system of the Bemba Speaking people as a model. We shall limit our analysis from 1991-2013.

The chapter is divided into four major parts namely:

1. Multipartism in Zambia in a Historical perspective
2. The reality of Multipartism in Zambia
3. Assessing Multiparty Democracy, 1991-2011
4. Summary and Conclusion

### **3.2. MULTIPARTISM IN ZAMBIA IN A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**

Much as the new multiparty dispensation attained its 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on October 24<sup>th</sup> 2011, Zambia's experiences with multiparty politics date way back to the time of attaining independence from Britain in 1964. However, self-governance in Zambia was characterized with a number of challenges. From the onset at independence, Zambia sought for self-governance under a multiparty system because of its multi ethnic, and multi tribal nature of the country. This demonstrates clearly the consciousness among Zambians at that time that the free association of people in political parties and the competition among those parties for power to govern the country guaranteed genuine and substantial democracy.

However, the early experiences with multiparty democracy in Zambia were rather disillusioning and the several challenges experienced made it inevitable for that first attempt at political pluralism to fail. In retrospective, these negative experiences remind us of the fragility of an open and competitive political system and its reliance on committed, responsible and credible actors on all sides and at all levels. After taking over power from Britain on 24<sup>th</sup> October 1964, Kenneth Kaunda and the United Independence party (UNIP) regime, promised , “ a tolerant and vibrant multiparty system” (Ihonvbere, 1998). Nevertheless , the promise was short lived and the country soon was palanged into un controlable, un democratic ways of managing the concept of Multipartism, that caused division amongst politicians there by affecting the general citizenary leading to the 1968 referendum whose main aim was to push an agenda that would eliminate the opposition political parties. The referendum set a stage for Kenneth Kaunda and the UNIP to introduce, “a one party participatory democracy in 1972” (Larmer, 2011) there by leaving UNIP as the only political party while pressing a ban on all other political parties.

The biggest experience of Zambia’ first seven years of Multiparty democracy was that it was marred by, “ Profound and ultimately irresolvable tensions” (Larmer, 2011:53). The tensions in the first republic developed between “ Factions and ethno-regional grouping which ultimately resulted in the introduction of a UNIP one-Party state in 1972” (Ibid).

One of the challenges that were responsible for this was that, Zambia as a nation has had 73 tribes and basically 73 ethnic groups spread across the country, each one, possessing a particular territory with different cultural and traditional belief systems. The different ethnic groups could not trust each other in the running of the affairs of the nation as a whole due to their uncommon ideologies that could meet their desired aspirations, most of them tribal and regional biases. Each regional block chose to support their own leaders from their region and ethnic groups which undermined the whole concept of Multipartism in Zambia because no particular political party could claim to be national in nature with full representation from all parts of the country.

Giacomo Macola’s study of Harry Nkumbula, president of the African National congress, a Tonga by tribe from Southern province of Zambia said, “Harry Nkumbula



demonstrates the extent to which the ANC continued to represent the particular interests of the large numbers of the Zambia in Southern and Central provinces despite UNIP's attempts to undermine the main opposition party" (Larmer, 2011: 56). With this particular example, the failure of Multipartism started with the political actors whose energy and efforts could not depart from their regional inclinations into becoming national instruments. This is what caused the first division between and within the ruling party.

Multipartism and regionalism in Zambia's first constitutional Multiparty democracy deal caused formation of new political parties. The process Ultimately led to the breaking away from UNIP of the United Progressive party (UPP), led by former vice president Simon Kapwepwe in 1971" ( Larmer 2011: 53) . Kapwepwe (1922-1980) , from Chinsali, Muchinga Province of Zambia representing the Bemba speaking people, was a very influential politician in Zambia and served as the first vice President of the Republic of Zambia under UNIP. Others that defected at an early stage from UNIP were Mr. Nalumino Mundia (1927-1988) from Barotseland, a politician who fought for the plight of the Lozi people of Barotseland. He resigned his ministerial position and formed, the United Party (UP) which had a following of the Lozi people.

### **3.3. THE EXPERIENCE OF MULTIPARTISM IN THE FIRST REPUBLIC, 1964-1973**

UNIP'S hegemonic strides and dominance of the politics of Zambia in the first three years after independence from Britain was very detrimental in the promotion of Multipartism. It was then that the perceived Unity that brought about independence was soon discovered not to be " a love for each other but hatred against a common enemy" ( Muwowo, 2010).

It is noted that "the struggle for self-rule-created tensions of the country" (Lamer 2011:55). It goes without saying that President Kaunda realizing the mess UNIP had caused, "Sought through his policy of 'tribal balancing' to ensure that the party and state leadership were nationally represented" (Ibid). Still Harry Nkumbula's "ANC continued grip on the Southern Province left UNIP southerners such as Mainza Chona and Elijah Mudenda without provincial base and the mobilization of such bases was [...] to become a central part of UNIP'S ethno-regional politics" ( Lamer

2011:55). This kind of behavior made all political actors begin to do things according to the demands of the people of their descent because Kenneth Kaunda himself, was not perceived as a Zambian but a Malawian without any tribal affiliation in Zambia though he claimed to be a “ Bemba of Chief Nkula in Chinsali on the basis of his birth place” ( Ibid).

In Barotseland (Western Province) Kenneth Kaunda’s “ party’s apparent victory over the Lozi royal authorities was short lived” (Ibid: 55). This was after the “abolition of the Barotse National Government in the local government act of 1965” ( Larmer 2011:55). That led to the only powerful political leader within government, Nalumino Mundia who “Sought to bolster his position through the distribution of state spoils, resigned from his position and UNIP and chose to form a new political party – the United Party ” (Ibid) which represented the Lozi people of western Province as alluded to above.

It goes without question that the United Party (UP) “ gained support through its criticism of UNIP’s perceived neglect of the western Zambia, reinforced by the defeat of Lozi candidates in 1967 Central Committee” (Larmer 2011:56) which was another tribal effort to destroy the people of difference in the Multiparty dispensation in favor of the people they wanted. When Mundia, “attempted to gain foothold of the Copperbelt in early 1968” (Ibid) crushes between the ruling party- UNIP and the UP led to a “Spiral of interparty violence there by prompting Kaunda to respond” (Ibid). It is then that Kaunda decided to brand UP’s activities as a “danger to national security, peace and Order, and employed his emergency power to ban the party rusticate, most members of its executive, including Mundia, sending them to remote rural areas” (Ibid).

That was the first attempt to crash and silence Multiparty politics in Zambia. Because it was only one party which was banned at the time,- not all- due to the constitution provision for a Multiparty system the, ANC which was very active and strong, “ took advantage of the decision to incorporate the former UP by persuading most members of the banned party to join its organization” ( Ibid). The move threatened the power of hierarchy of UNIP and Kaunda. In the general elections of December 1968 to the dismay of UNIP and foreign observers “ Nkumbula’s party, doubled its parliamentary contingent by supplementing it traditionally safe

constituencies in southern and central provinces with eight of the eleven Barotseland parliamentary seats” ( Larmer 2011:56).

The multiparty practice of the time was perceived a serious threat to UNIP rule and therefore he “provided a decisive blow to Kaunda expressed hope that Zambia might become a one party state by popular consensus” (Ibid). Considering Multipartism as a tool for confusion as arguments were forwarded from different sections of the UNIP government. The prominent justification for the system was a strong rejection of multiparty systems as not being appropriate for the Zambian context of political dispensation especially that Zambia had one particular agenda, to build a strong foundation as one people under the motto “One Zambia, One nation”. The task was above all, to incorporate all ethnic groups under one agenda of the nation in order to necessitate national development. The motto still remains the icon of Zambia’s political ideology for a strong spirit of nationhood which Multipartism has failed to foster today. One political figure in the UNIP government, who served as a Member of Central Committee, Mama Chibesa Kunda Kankasa said “the one party state was introduced for the sole person of developing the country because Multiparty democracy proved to be a disruption in pursuing the national agenda” (Interview 02/05/2013). She argued that, “while Multipartism was good, it proved to be more individualistic and party centered, not for the nation” in this she meant, in Multiparty democracy, policies are usually done at winning the support of the people and often very reactive to the opposition parties. “You can never be right in the eyes of the opposition who are also in search of power for their own good” (Ihovbere 1998:226). Her argument was based on the concept that “Multipartism and development do not go hand in hand, it’s either you choose one of the two” ( Oyugi 1998:52). Following the various arguments, the UNIP leadership was not, “ however willing to accept the reality of Multiparty politics in which it spoke only for its areas of regional and socio-economic support” ( Ibid).

The strategy Kaunda now used was that, he had to appoint members from all regional major ethno- groupings to its National structure. “ Kaunda’s ethnically balanced appointments, in order to promote nation building” ( Ibid) and also to enable him move the motion convincingly to the general public concerning the reality of a one party state and its advantages. However, the action, promoted tensions within the party as all Ministers and other members of the central committee had

concluded that they could not work together, because, of the tribal lines that had been drawn already. It could be viewed that some positions in government were kept for certain tribes only and not others.

### **3.4. ABOLITION OF MULTIPARTISM IN ZAMBIA, AND THE FORMATION OF A ONE PARTY STATE.**

After the two political parties the United party and the African National congress had gained foothold in almost half of the country and established themselves in Southern, central and western provinces, Simon Mwansa Kapwepwe from the northern province, now Muchinga, launched a new political party called, the united progressive party which “was publicly launched on 22<sup>nd</sup> August 1971”. (Larmer 2011: 61). Kapwepwe, a former vice President and freedom fighter who was fully backed and supported by the Bemba speaking people, the largest of the Zambian population told the crowd that, “ Independence is good, but is meaningless and useless if it does not bring fruits to the masses. He criticized financial indiscipline in government and declared that UNIP was undemocratic and stagnant. He also raised the possibility of merging with the ANC,” (Larmer 2011:69).

The launch of the UPP sent shivers to the ruling party UNIP because the merging of the UPP with the ANC meant a zero option for UNIP and that the entire nation would rise against UNIP and Kaunda. Since Simon Kapwepwe was a Bemba speaker, and Bemba’s claimed the lion’s share of the electorate in the country meant a serious surge would emerge.

Larmer reports, “the launch initiated a wave of public demonstrations of loyalty by UNIP members and a flurry of denunciations of the UPP vitriolic telegrams denouncing the new party and those supporting it flooded into UNIPS headquarters likening Kapwepwe to Judas Iscariot and the devil” ( Larmer 2011:70).

It was at this time that the political climate of the 1971-1972, charged that talk of Multipartyism was talk of an enemy of instability. It is a fact that the norms of Multiparty democracy were not welcome as, “ the UNIP leadership was not however willing to accept the reality of a multiparty politics in which it spoke only for its areas regional and socio- economic support” ( Ibid) and not for the nation building but destroying it.

It's obvious that the UPP became the biggest threat to UNIP among other opposition political parties and for the fact that, Kapwepwe and Nkumbula were willing to form a pact to oust UNIP from power. The other aspect was that Simon Kapwepwe was considered an indigenous Zambian of Bemba descent while Kaunda was a foreigner as eluded to above. Larmer clearly records, " during this period, UPP supporters wrote and distributed unattributed circulars claiming that Kaunda was a foreigner on the basis that both his parents were born in Malawi" ( Larmer 2011:67).

As UPP was advancing its popularity support for Kapwepwe was noticed at the highest institution of learning in Zambia at the time. " The University of Zambia 'UNZA' emerged a centre of opposition to the UNIP leadership" ( Ibid: 69). UPP remained resilient and focused that branches of the New party were opened every day. " peter Lubusha, then working in Maamba Collieries in Southern Province recalls that three UPP branches were established in the mine and surrounding areas" ( Ibid:71; Peter Lubusha interview, Chinsali 15/04/2005). " Alfred Chileshe, a rail worker in Livingstone estimates that 15 % of his colleagues were active UPP supporters" ( Larmer 2011: 71). Key areas such as Copperbelt which were Multi ethnic in nature all chose to support the UPP. "When you win support there on the Copperbelt, its automatic you have got Luapula Province and Northern Province [...] because people in the other provinces depend on their sons and daughter to tell them here is what they follow [...] so we wanted to get leadership here and then send the same leadership from here to go to Luapula and Northern" (Interview: Chisata, April, 2005; Larmer 2011:71).

When Kaunda and UNIP assessed the state of Multipartyism closely, by looking at its advantages and disadvantages, it was obvious that it was not ideal for Zambia due to Zambia's huge regional ethnic groupings and inclinations. Kaunda moved to convert Zambia hurriedly into a one party state, and having discussed with Harry Nkumbula of the ANC, the two parties agreed at a meeting in Choma, Southern Province, the stronghold of the African National congress. Nkumbula signed a document called the " Choma declaration" on 27<sup>th</sup> June 1973 and immediately announced that he had joined UNIP. From that moment all political parties were banned and the end of Multipartyism in Zambia.

The arguments which were forwarded for the dissolution of the law that abolished Multiparty politics were the same as was in other African state. The suggestion were that, Multipartism was a tool for disunity in African society and African government system because there is , “ one party and that party is identified with the nation as a whole, the foundations of democracy are firmer than they can ever be. where you have two or more parties, each representing only a section of community” (M.Mutiso, 1975: 479) . As could be witnessed in the political fray of Multiparty democracy, division of regions and political ideologies only to meet the needs of a section of the country or region could be very detrimental to nation building. Julius Nyerere Former President of the Republic of Tanzania had this to say, “ In any country which is divided over fundamental issues, you have a civil war situation. on the other hand, you have two or a multiparty system[...] where the differences between the two parties are not then you immediately reduce politics to a level of a football match. A football match may of course attract some very able players. It may also be entertaining; but it is still only a game, and on the most ardent fans ‘who are not usually the most intelligent’ take the game very seriously” (Ibid). By this Nyerere, analyzed the one participatory, system in order to give chance only to technocrats to take centre stage in the governance and development of the nation unlike Multipartism which would by and large attract people who may not have the interest of the nation or even a special know how to participate. The idea he puts forward for the defense of a one party state, was to avoid, division which would lead to civil strife and even under development. The confusion and fantasy of Multiparty democracy in the first Republic fall short of the African tenets of governance and therefore it failed to take root in Zambia and it was abolished by the Kaunda led UNIP government.

### **3.5. THE EXPERIENCE OF MULTIPARTISM 1991-2011**

The year 1991 became another land mark in Zambia’s history of Multipartism following the winds of change to return to Multiparty politics rejecting the one party participatory democracy which had been at work since 1973. “ Unable to resist the winds of change that were blowing across the continent with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the cold war in the early 1990’s” ( Ihonvbere, 1998: 226) a new Constitution Review Commission (CRC) headed by Prof. Mphanza Patrick Mvunga “ was appointed by Kenneth Kaunda to draft a new constitution that will restore Multiparty democracy ( Ibid). The Constitution was promulgated on August 31/1991.

In the absence of time for a proper constitutional review due to the mounting pressure of the general citizenship who had gone on rampage rioting and campaigning against UNIP and Kenneth Kaunda, the commission simply drafted certain sections of the constitution to allow Multiparty politics which had been banned in 1973. “The constitution was essentially a transitional document designed to meet the needs of the time (Ibid). The 1991 constitution established major political institutions and lifting the ban on the suspended political parties. It “up help and adopted a presidential system, an election system by simple majority” ( Ibid). The constitution also recognized the right to political organization and the right to form political parties under the new constitution. The first multiparty elections for parliament and presidency since the 1960’s were held on October 31<sup>st</sup> 1991. Fredrick Chiluba, a former president of the Zambia Congress of Trade Union was elected president of the Republic of Zambia by 75% of the votes on the Movement for Multiparty Democracy ticket defeating Kenneth Kaunda of the United Independence Party. Prior to the elections, “UNIP and Kenneth Kaunda were certain that they would win the 1991 elections in spite of the massive following which the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) enjoyed and in spite of the international good will in the latter’s favor, the UNIP was certain that it could successfully rely on rural interests and the power of incumbency to win the elections” (Ihonvbere, 1998: 226).

The process leading to the general elections was “ rough and full of accusations ,efforts to manipulate the state and resources, appeals to the masses for support and some violence ( Joseph,1992,1991). The competition brought about by Multiparty democracy percieved at first glance that it was very un African as the process itself indicated that it had total rejection of the African culture as values were compromised among other degrading activities. “ UNIP tried to explit the power of incumbency and its control over media” (Ibbid) but in all fairness it could not convince the people that it had new ideas.

Fredrick Chiluba on the other hand had the backing of the trade union comprising all civil sevants who felt oppressed in a one party authoritarian regime of Kenneth Kaunda and UNIP. In the October elections, “ the UNIP was roundly defeated

winning only 25 parliamentary out of 150 seats in parliament and losing the presidency to the MMD (Ihonvbere, 1998: 227; Bratton, 1994) with over 75% of the votes. It was a known fact that the elections were a total rejection of a one party participatory democracy that allianated the people of Zambia from 1973 to 1991.

Despite the change, to Multipartism, which the Zambians opted for, soon there were very little knowledge with the public with what it meant to have a Multiparty democracy as a concept of dealing with politics in Zambia. Even the political actors themselves, the very experience of how politics were played, it was like “ a football match with a lot of spectators”(M.Mutiso, 1975) but who could not play the game.

It is a fact that in the aftermath of the victory of the MMD, “ No one bothered to ask how the MMD planned to convert itself from a Movement ‘ made up of difference including conflicting interests’ into a government in post- UNIP Zambia” ((Ihonvbere, 1998: 227). Conflicting difference in the sense that when people worked as a movement, every one was focused on defeating a common enemy , that was not addressed. Secondly, “ the MMD never placed before the Zambian people how, it planned to challenge, recognize and redefine the philosophical basis of the politics and power in Zambia” (Ibid). Finally “ how it would wean the institutions and structures of the state as well as how it would wean the situations and structures of the state and society away from the authoritarian legacies of the UNIP (Ibid). Those were the hard questions that one needed to ask with regard to the leadership of the MMD in power.

However, “ the victory of the MMD was greeted by the western analysts and the western governments as a shining example to other African countries. The smooth transition from Kaunda’s authoritarian one party system to a liberal Multiparty political arrangement was seen as a sign that democracy would not only thrive in Zambia but also that it would facilitate economic growth and the recovery[...] due to Chiluba’s trade Union background” (Ihonvbere, 1998: 227).

The reaction of the western countries to Zambia’s transition however lacked merit. Firstly they did not overhaul and probably understand the reasons why Multipartism was a failure in the first republic not only in Zambia but also in other states in Africa who at independence adopted a multiparty system but soon went into one party participatory democracies. Secondly the political actors in Zambia as well did not



take time to analyze the concept especially the fact that the new multipartism, comprised the same people who were ministers and senior party members in UNIP who had just moved senselessly to join a mob of a movement that took little to understand African concepts of democracy even governance that would bring about peace and tranquility including development to mother Africa..

### **3.6. THE REALITY OF MULTIPARTY DEMOCRACY IN ZAMBIA**

In just barely two years after winning power from UNIP, MMD, administration became worse. “ Contrary to its campaign promises infrastructures are still the very bad shape. The MMD government has not been able to rehabilitate most roads, public buildings and services. Though it does lack the foreign exchange, corruption within the government makes most Zambians believe that the government is just like the previous one” (Ihonvbere, 1998: 230) Those were the complaint of the general citizens of Zambia in the aftermath of the 1991 elections. Corruption became the biggest sickness among the political actors as they all wanted to enrich themselves and their families. That soon limited the MMD’s ability to sustain democracy and the reform programs in order to fulfill their campaign promises. As a result, “democracy in Zambia” ( Ibid:230) had not reduced corruption but made it extremely worse.

The MMD began to lose touch with the Zambian people and as it were in the first republic political parties began to be formed along tribal and regional blocks and again it posed a challenge to the ruling MMD. Through divide and rule Multipartism began to tear the nation apart and in no time the nation began to be divided along provincial, regional and ethnic groupings as Knees, noted, “ Plural democracy in Zambia has not brought ethnic groups together. It will be recalled that the original leadership of the MMD was dominated by people from Western Province” ( Knees Van Donge, 1995:199). We notice that as political ideologies and regionalism cropped in, a lot of “ political elites defected from UNIP to join MMD,” (Ihonvbere, 1998: 231 ). The defection brought about a lot of Bemba’s who command the biggest population in Zambia and soon the move was overturned and the MMD was perceived as a Bemba party because the President Chiluba was Bemba speaking. Ihonvbere reports, “ regions and major ethnic groups see the Bembas as dominating the government and unduly diverting resources to the North East” (Ihonvbere, 1998: 231).

Politics of Marginalization from the Tongas of Southern province, the people from Northern Western province and others resurfaced on the political scene of Zambia for the second time in history, an indication that Multipartyism was a dangerous dividing tool and an enemy to Zambia's democracy. Tribal politics superiority and Marginalization could be seen in reality for example in Eastern Province which was a UNIP territory because Kenneth Kaunda could easily be identified with them due to the Chewa tribe from Malawi, "the original 25 parliamentary seats won were from eastern Province" (Ihonvbere, 1998: 231). It is a proven fact that Zambia's Multiparty political landscape is a danger to the Zambian society and its people due to too many ethnic groups which have not been able to comprise, due to ill trust. "Ethnic and regional identities and loyalties have severely divided Zambian politicians and politics. Today none of the political parties can strictly be regarded as national in character" (Ihonvbere, 1998: 232). Each political party claims grip in its region with the United Party for National Development (UPND) taking grip of Southern Province. It is a no flying zone in Zambia's political dimension. "Flourship regional politics" (Ibid) became MMD's dilemma and no plan within the multiparty system would solve it as the government was adamant, "to introduce regional autonomy despite the overwhelming recommendations of the Mwanakatwe constitutional review commission" (Nyakutemba, 1995).

In the absence of a suitable solution which this dissertation aims at establishing, "Zambia would experience far-reaching implications for stability, governance and nation building" (Ihonvbere, 1998: 231). It is a considerable fact that when Chiluba discovered the breakdown in the nation with political parties established along regional blocks which Kaunda experienced too, the MMD aimed at building strong support with Churches and also having declared Zambia, the Christian nation whose legal framework was provided for in the preamble of the 1996 amended constitution. However in an attempt to bring the church into political manipulation, the MMD, "steadily created a platform for religious tensions and conflicts in Zambia/. Conflicts between the state and religious interests" (Ibid). The historical side of the state and church deal was in line with the MMD manifesto before 1991 elections that it would declare the Zambia, the Christian Country. And certainly upon winning elections, on December 29<sup>th</sup> 1991, "the MMD and Chiluba, "declared Zambia as a Christian

nation” ( Muwowo,2010) which was later provided for in the amendment Act No 18 of the 1996 Constitution of Zambia. The declaration however, declared a commitment to “ Freedom of thought, conscience, belief and proclamation of religion” ( Act No 18).

*“ by placing one religion above the other which was merely tolerated” ( Muwowo,2010) the party seemed to encourage religious tensions in addition to tribal tensions that had divide the country already. “ Regions are at war withi and between themselves” (Ihonvbere, 1998: 232)*

By 1995 the first most significant division that rendered Multipartism tenets as quack in the context of Zambia was that, “ over 34 opposition parties and movements” (Ihonvbere, 1998: 232) emerged and all of them from different regions of the country to challenge the MMD. Instead of providing checks and balances and display maturity, politics of hatred undermining, indiscipline etc began to introduce yet again foreign elements threatening the peace of the country which was not a case one party state.

Many political parties that were led by former leading members, cabinet ministers and even veteran founding members of the MMD. “Derrick Chitala, former Statehouse deputy Minister and Dean Mungomba, former deputy development minister, formed the Zambia Democratic Congressn (ZADECO) after they were dismissed by Chiluba. The Caucus of National Unity (CNU) was formed by some founding members of the MMD. When Chiluba sacked Emmanuel Kasonde, Arthor Wina and Humphrey Mulemba as Ministers in April 1993, they formed the National Party ( NP). They were promptly joined by thirteen other parliamentarians like Akashambatwa Lewanika and his sister Inonge Lewanika” (Ihonvbere, 1998: 232) ,

Though the new parties did not show any powess and threat to the MMD, the action, were the early indicators of the inefficiency of Multipartism to produce a constructive governance system in Zambia and a genuine appeal for a Zambbian African model of democracy that would without question be responsible for the deliveries of the country.

The action for the formation of opposition parties diluted the essence of the unity and nation building which in actual sense is the starting point for the down fall of a Multiparty political system.

In order to try and serve the country from further democratic disaster that has entered Zambian politics, Major Wezi Kaunda , as General Secretary of UNIP decided to “ Intiate the contravertial zero option in politics as a strategy to oust the Chiluba government from power through legal means” ( Schraeder, 1994:77; Rasheed, 1995:10; Ihonvbere, 1995b) in 1993 so that UNIP which has learnt through it 27 years rule could correct their mistakes and serve the country from catanastrophe. Wizi’ plans was a proven hypothesis and as a result “ the episode forced Chiluba to through the MMD dominated parliament, impose a state of emergency, arrest numerous UNIP leaders and activists and charge them to court, (Schraeder, 1994:77 ).

UNIP chose not to retreat and Kaunda decided to come out of retirement to recontext again Chiluba as it was definite that, the marjority of the people wanted Kaunda back. Kaundas come back was pecieved as a huge threat to the MMD and Chiluba as Ihonvbere reports “ the emergency of Kenneth Kaunda on the Zambian political scene, the revilization of UNIP and the growing influence of some opposition parties” (Ihonvbere, 1998: 232) threatened MMD’s stay in governance hence dropped the ideals of Multipartism set of values and began to implore tactics of the one party state to defend their supremacy in power. Kaundas popularity had re emerged and on one hand the one party state was percieved to be better off than Multipartism which had threatened the country with tribal wars.

Chiluba “reacted to Kaunda’s growing influence with panic” (Ibid). He decided to amend “ the constitution to redefine the qualifications for contesting for the presidency to include a requirement that both parents of the candidate must be Zambians by birth or descent; has been domiciled in Zambia for a period of at least 20 years” ; and “ a person shall not, while remaining a Chief, join or participate in partisan politics” ( Government of Zambia, 1996:639; Ihonvbere, 1998: 233). These provisions were primarily aimed at preventing the leadership of UNIP from contesting the 1996 presidential elections against Chiluba and subsequent ones. “Both President Kaunda and Chief Inyambo Yeta, President and Deputy of UNIP

respectively, were disqualified as Kaunda's parents were Malawian in Origin and his deputy is a traditional leader" (Osei-Hwedie, 2007: 44).

In addition, the constitutional amendments made provision for the tenure of the office for the President, "disallowing any candidate who had served two terms from testing the presidency" ( Government of Zambia, 1996:642). Again a move directed at preventing Kaunda from contesting the presidential elections against President Chiluba. This in effect, left President Chiluba, the MMD presidential candidate with no substantial challenger in the 1996 general elections since Kenneth Kaunda and UNIP boycotted the general elections due to the constitutional amendments that disqualified President Kaunda and his deputy Chief Inyambo Yeta from contesting. " The four presidential contestants who lodged their nomination papers in November, offered no credible opposition to Chiluba's candidacy while making the elections somewhat less competitive" (Osei-Hwedie, 2007: 42). Chiluba returned power with a landslide victory against his closest rival Dean Mugomba of Zambia Democratic Congress (ZADECO) in an election marred with apathy following UNIP's non participation.

It is conclusive from the above that the amendments to the constitution in the eve of the 1996 elections generated controversy because they were seen as a political manipulation of the legal document to neutralize and eliminate competition to the MMD presidential candidate by political opponents. The kind of action was a clear assault to the democratic values of the 1991 constitution. Chiluba's action , " was received with a lot of opposition and an unfavourable reaction from within and outside Zambia. "Kaunda fought for Zambia's independence and ruled the country for 27 years. To now amend the constitution on the eve of the 1996 elections and only after Kaunda announced his interest in the presidency and in the light of UNIP victories in by-elections in Mbala, Mpulungu and Mkushi, where MMD candidates were defeated" (Ihonvbere, 1998: 233 ) was perceived as a very serious oppression by the political actors and the Zambian citizens at large.

Panic made Chiluba begin to expose Kaunda's failures to justify his ill deeds instead of consolidating democracy and democratic values he had preached about. Phobia made him " throw open to public view Yugoslav- constructed security tunnels under the state house in Lusaka. Chiluba argued that the tunnels were used by Kaunda

to torture political opponents although in all fairness he failed to prove that torture had taken place” ( Nyakutemba, 1995).The multiparty political land scape became more and more hostile because of “ repressive and intolarant tendencies”( Ibid) which Chiluba used to work directly against democratic consolidation in Zambia.

In all these, the indication was that, “ the government is unable to legititimize, and mobilize the people behind an agenda” ( Ibid) of democracy but rather chose to use authoritarian tactic which UNIP used in the one party state which the Zambian people rejected.

Between 1996 and 2001 after UNIP went inactive, “ Opposition parties struggled to articulate alternative political ideas and retreated into regional maginalization in ways that replicated opposition parties during the first and second republics” (Larmer 2011: 258). New poilitical partis were formed increasing the number of registered political parties to just about 40 but all being popular in their regions of descent. Such parties were: The United Party for National Development (UPND) “dominated by the ‘Bantu Botatwe’ – that is leaders from Illa, Tonga and Lenje ethnicities from Southern and central provinces” ( Larmer 2011:258) led by Anderson Kambela Mazoka, a very charismatic leader that almost won the 2001 elections. Other parties formed were, the Forum for Democracy and Development (FDD) led by Former Vice President in the MMD governement, LT. General Christone Tembo, the National Citizens Coalition (NCC) led by television Evangelist Pastor Nevers Mumba, the Hiritage Party (HP) led by Former Vice President in the MMD government, Brig. General Godfrey Miyanda and the Patrotic Front (PF) led by former Minister Without Portifolio and MMD Chief, Micheal Sata among other smaller political parties. A number of Political parties such as the HP and FDD were formed as a result of its leaders being expelled from the ruling MMD for opposing “ Chiluba’s bid fo an unconstitutional third term in office” ( Larmer 2011:259) while the Patrotic Front leader Micheal Sata resorted to form a new party after he was denied being appointed to succeed Fredrick Chiluba as MMD Presidential candidate in preference to Levy Patrick Mwanawasa who later became the 3rd President of the Republic of Zambia.

Chiluba’s advances to keep himself in power for a third term was thawrted by the pressure of the Civil Societies such as the Oasis Forum, established by the Church mother bodies and the Law society of Zambia which “ led a successful campaign

that prevented Chiluba from standing for a third term as president in 2001” (Ibid). It should be noted that Chiluba's efforts further fragmented the opposition who had to share the votes in the elections. The MMD, “ Nevertheless successfully utilised state resources to remain in office enabling the election of the Levy Mwanawasa, Chiluba's chosen successor with just 29 percent of the vote” (Larmer 2011:259). Mwanawasa was a Lamba-Lenje by tribe from the Copperbelt and central provinces which meant that there was a bit of a shift in terms of electoral support from the Bemba, though some still remained with MMD because of Chiluba's support.

In 2006, though Mwanawasa secured a victory for the second term, “ the election was also marked by the sudden and largely unanticipated emergence of the Patriotic Front ( PF) led by Michael Sata as the leading opposition party leader. Since 2001 Sata had built his party into a significant political force on the copperbelt and the Northern Zambia, some times by taking wholesale control of the MMD branch structures, based on branches of the mine workers Union and local catholic church networks. Sata won 29 percent of the Presidential vote and Patriotic Front MPs won almost every urban parliamentary seat. The Party also gained control of the most urban Municipal councils” ( Electoral Commission of Zambia General elections 2006, Presidential – National result by candidate, 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2006; Larmer 2011:261). The strides Sata and the Patriotic front made speaks volumes following Zambia's political development. He was a Bemba speaker from Northern Zambia.

In 2008 “ Zambia unexpectedly went to polls again following the death of Mwanawasa, but a sympathetic vote went to Rupiah Banda from the eastern province, Zambia's vice President under the MMD ticket who used state machinery during the short period of campaign. when the votes of the 2008 were cast, “ the overall result was similar to 2006; the PF won 38 percent of the vote and came close to defeating MMD. Sata was just 35000 votes behind” (Ibid). It is worth noting that “ PF support was again concentrated in urban and Bemba –speaking areas although Sata increased his share of the vote. This was because MMD support declined dramatically from 1.2 million to 720,000” (Ibid).

Though Banda and the MMD retained power through rural support, and benefited from the advantages of incumbency,” ( Ibid), the Bemba speaking people made a resolution to return power and in 2011, Micheal Sata, a Bemba speaker, won the

[presidence defeating the ruling party MMD, by using the tribal influence of the Bemba.

In a nut shell, Zambia's experience of Multiparty democracy continues to face the challenges of regional and tribal politics which to a larger extent poses a challenge to peace.

Underlying Zambia's transition to democracy is a debate about the nature of political system in governance. We are convinced that democracy must definitely be revisited if Zambia must make important strides.

### **3.6.1. POLITICS OF TRIBE FROM KAUNDA TO BANDA**

At independence in 1964 Zambia's first president naively thought that Zambia had entered a new era of post-tribal politics. Kaunda had managed to, "convince the Litunga to have Barotseland proceed to independence with the rest of Zambia as one nation" (Barotseland Agreement of 1964). He had also supplemented the efforts of some protestant mainline churches, spearheaded by European missionaries, such as the London Mission Society, the Livingstina Free Church of Scotland Missions, the Zambia district of the Methodist Church, indigenized church of Barotseland( which was preceded by the Paris Evangelical mission society in the Zambezi basin), the European free Church Council of the Copperbelt and the predominately African Union Church of the Copperbelt" ( UCZ, constitution ,2004) to unite and form the United Church of Zambia (UCZ) which was inaugurated barely four months into power on 16<sup>th</sup> January, 1965. President Kenneth Kaunda was the Guest of Honour at the inauguration. His United National Independence Party was the symbol of unity in Zambia and Africa as a whole. The national motto was quickly hoisted to be "One Zambia One Nation." (Larmer, 2011) For Kaunda, he had achieved his dream; a united Zambia had been formed and needed to concentrate on nation building by democratically engaging all Zambians to foster development.

However, just three years into power, Kaunda realized that the Zambian tribes were not as united as he had thought. The first post-independence UNIP convention "saw a very bitter tribal fight. The Bemba—Tonga pact had at the UNIP convention bitterly defeated the Lozi—Nyanja alliance." (Larmer, 2011) Kapwepwe was elected UNIP's vice-President to the consternation of Kaunda and Kamanga an easterner had been



defeated. In fact, “it was during this time, that some UNIP members started doubting Kaunda’s loyalty to the Bemba tribe since he had Malawian parentage.” (Larmer, 2011). Kaunda knew very well that he needed to do something more to overcome this new era of tribalism that had started to engulf the nation.

To overcome this, Kaunda retraced and reemphasized his loyalty as, “a Bemba subject of Chief Nkula in Chinsali.” (Ibid). He also made a point to try and persuade Kapwepwe to step aside since two Bembas could not possibly hold two top positions in both UNIP and the government. Kapwepwe reluctantly obliged and “Kaunda quickly brought in Mainza Chona, a Southerner to replace Kapwepwe.” (Ibid). But that deeply displeased Kapwepwe and several other Bemba hegemonists, who latter proceeded “to form the UPP, a party mainly popular in Luapula, Northern and Copperbelt provinces.” (Larmer, 2011).

To cure the issue of tribalism Kaunda started what he called Tribal Balancing. In this new arrangement he made sure that the provinces were well represented in government. It was so intentional that you could actually predict who would be in Cabinet and who would not. However, the position of Prime Minister was almost exclusively reserved for Barotseland. Out of six Premiers, from 1973—1991, four were Lozis and the other two were Tonga. This was KK’s tribal balancing at its best. It was mostly dictated by province more than it was dictated by specific tribes.

When Chiluba came into power, the intentional and deliberate tribal balancing was effectively overruled. Chiluba would appoint people on “merit.” (Ihonvbere, 1998) However, it still remains to be answered why under Chiluba almost all Chief Executive Officers in state companies had Bemba names such as “Chungu, Musenge, Musonda, Mwansa, etc.” (Munsha Wa Munshya, May 15, 2010). From just this it may be clear, “that appointment on merit may have meant tribal merit as well.” (Ibid). But even if that was a reality with Chiluba, he was never accused of playing tribal politics except if it were a Lenje or some other tribe doing the same thing, some vocal quarters could have condemned the practice. It was a growing norm among some Zambians that only non-Bemba speaking peoples are were capable of tribalism is erroneous. Comparing all the past presidents on tribal appointments Chiluba appointed more people in his cabinet and parastatal companies that were Bemba more than any other president, and yet the tribalistic label has not stuck with

Chiluba. As assessment into Zambian politics needed to seriously address the predisposition.

However, when leaving power in 2001 Chiluba wanted to have a minority tribe but using the Bemba influence to take over. The honour fell on Levy Mwanawasa—of both Lamba and Lenje heritage.” (Munshawa Munshya May 15, 2010). Of course the move affected the election results in that year as Mwanawasa only won the election with a small percentage of “only 29% of the votes cast” (Larmer, 2011). Even without objective evidence, Mwanawasa was, “quickly accused of appointing a family tree in his cabinet (Lusaka times, 21/01/2007). But once objectively assessed Mwanawasa’s cabinet was more tribally balanced than Chiluba’s at any given time. Mwanawasa also brought in some tribal diversity in parastatal companies. However, “when he appointed Sisala as ZESCO Managing Director, more tribalistic accusations were levelled against him” (Munshawa Munshya May 15, 2010). Mwanawasa tried to please the Bembas by appointing them to the Vice-Presidency. He only revolted when he lost the Bemba vote in 2006.

However, under Banda the issue of tribalism took on a new shape all together. In the past it was sufficient that provinces could be represented in the Cabinet. As such, Eastern Province would not normally complain if a Chewa, Tumbuka, Ngoni, or Kunda was appointed to Cabinet. But Paramount Chief Mpezeni of the Ngoni people of eastern province, “asked President Rupiah Banda to tribally balance his cabinet because Ngonis are not represented” (The post Newspaper, wed 12<sup>th</sup> May 2010). He said, “ I have no minister in Cabinet. It is just other chiefs from here eastern Province who are enjoying, Lameck Mangani (Home Affairs Minister) and Dr. Kazonga (Local government and housing Minister) are c

Chewas from chief GawaUndi. Dora Siliya( education Minister and Peter Daka Agriculture Minister) are Nsenga. Maxwell Mwale ( Mines Minister) is Kunda. So what do I have? Nothing! Not even a Diplomat,” (The post Newspaper, wed 12<sup>th</sup> May 2010). with the utterances of Paramount Chief Mpezeni, there was a demand in some quarters that tribal balancing needed not be provincial balancing but rather needed to be about tribes. As such, His Majesty the Mpezeni was complaining that among the five cabinet ministers from Eastern Province Rupiahs cabinet none of them were Ngonis. Without Ngonis in Cabinet, Mpezeni felt left out of national

development. That intra—provincial tribal conflict was the greatest danger to Zambia’s democracy and development. Similarly in Luapula Province, there were complaints that the MMD sidelined Southern Luapulans (mostly Ushis) in preference of the Northern Luapulans (Lundas, Bwiles, etc.). Northern Province was even more dynamic, Hon Godfrey B Mwamba while to be elected Member of Parliament for Kasama, said that “Northern Province belonged to Bembas, ignoring its multi-ethnicity.” (The post Newspaper, wed 12<sup>th</sup> May 2010)

All in all, Zambia’s Multi-ethnic nature remained a challenge in Zambia’s democracy. It was practically impossible for a President to appoint all 73 tribes to cabinet and foreign all at once.

### **3.7. ASSESSING MULTIPARTY DEMOCRACY, 1991-2011**

On a very general level, one would expect an enhanced process of democratization as a result of the reintroduction of Multipartism in Zambia in 1991. Indeed from the onset of the re-introduction Multipartism by the UNIP government in 1991, which clearly stated in the constitution by the Mvunga Constitution Review Commission, Zambia made a big improvement guaranteeing at least basic democratic standards and the element of party competition in politics since 1991 to 2011. However, the competition did not appear to be taking place among equal competitors. The governing party always dominated the system and political parties remained weak in their performance as essential actors in a democracy. The party system was characterized by a high degree of imbalance, which was typical even of many other African states, with a dominant ruling party facing a weak and often a fragmented opposition. It meant that the “normal” struggle among more parties with similar potential was not and not yet given awing to the fact that political parties in Zambia were either, ethnic or regional parties. Of course it needed to be taken into consideration that the multiparty system in Zambia was extremely challenging due to too many ethnic groups which did not seem to move with unity in diversity. It remained interesting and relevant to see what shape it would take given the new models of democracy we wish to propose for a Zambian- African concept of Multipartism. But at this stage one can hardly talk of a balance between the different parties perhaps what we notice is the challenge of the balance between the different ethnic groups which gave birth to regional political parties as a situation affecting

Multi party politics in Zambia. The strength and the dominance of the MMD vis-à-vis the other political parties between 1991 and 2011 were very obvious. All in all, it could be argued that democratization had taken place in Zambia to a certain extent since the country had already left behind a period of the one Party participatory democracy that was not fulfilling the standards of a pluralistic society. But the system remained with a lot shortcoming with regard to its democratic content. When the types of party systems described in chapter two were to be taken into consideration, the Zambian transition from one party state to Multipartism could as well be described as a transition from a hegemonic to a dominant party system while the imbalance in the system and the dominance of the Movement for multiparty Democracy could easily be seen by any observer as oppressive.

The wide range of data gathered depicting the experience of Multipartism in Zambian politics includes, among others the following:

- the negative historical experience with political parties and the resulting mistrust towards them;
- the “hangover” of the Movement system and the legacy of the one party state politics without multiparty competition;
- the performance of the MMD – first as a Movement and later as a party – including the successful establishment of a certain degree of peace and stability
- the benefit of incumbency on the part of the MMD. The strategic, financial and constitutional advantage of the party in power;
- the lack of a level playing field and the lack of freedom and fairness in campaigns and elections;
- the weakness of the opposition parties due to fragmentation and lack of unity, lack of professionalism, weak structures, and ethnic differences.

All the arguments and concerns raised above lead to a possible explanation as to why Western Liberal Multiparty democracy is not an ideal of engagement in Zambian polity.

The following discussions depict the general assessment of the experiential dimension of Multipartism in Zambia.

1. Zambia's context of Multiparty Democracy in Praxis
2. Weaknesses of opposition parties in Zambia
3. Political parties in parliament
4. Capacity to Campaign
5. Respect for Democracy and human rights
6. Corruption in Political parties and political actors
7. Fictionalization of parties
8. Parties in Government
9. Ethnicity

### **3.7.1. ZAMBIA'S CONTEXT OF MULTIPARTY DEMOCRACY IN PRAXIS**

From the moment political parties were liberated to participate freely in Zambia as provided for in the 1991 Constitution, the period between 1991 and 2011, demonstrated an era, of increased party political activities, an increased number of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's), the Church and civil society groups in providing checks and balances to the government. Political parties demonstrated their ability to contribute to the well-being of democracy in various ways. Parties actively fought for human rights, pressed for alternative policies as well as exposed the weaknesses of the government's positions on several issues. Constant checks and balances to the ruling government either through parliament or often through civil society organizations (CSO's) could be witnessed as a growing norm in Zambian public life. Political parties also demonstrated their ability to mobilize voters during local government and general elections, evidenced by the increased number of opposition members of parliament from the initial " 25 seats in 1991" (Larmer, 2011) to more than half of the 150 opposition seats in parliament from the period 2001 to 2011. The ruling MMD experienced a decline in national election results as follows: 75 percent in 1991, 65 percent in 1996 and 29 percent in 2001 . This reduction in the MMD's share of votes was an indication of the growing strength of opposition parties, and the , population's dissatisfaction with government policies especially between 1991 and 2001. It was also the period during which a number of political parties were formed in regional blocks.

In terms of programmes presented in party manifestos, particularly prior to the 2006, elections when Levy Mwanawasa's New deal MMD government was in power, in the midst of MMD's declining in popular vote,

*“ Mwanawasa who as a young lawyer had represented some of the accused of treason against the one party state, surprised observers by launching an anti- corruption crusade. He engineered the removal of Chiluba's immunity from prosecution and a case was brought against the former president in 2003”(Larmer 2011:259).*

Also, the MMD presented a manifesto that detailed the achievements and plans of its government. Mwanawasa, and finance Minister Ngandu Magande who promised “Prosperity for All”, Zambians through the Agriculture sector and by introducing, “the wind fall tax on all mining companies” (Larmer, 2011) in mineral resources in Zambia, “oversaw Zambia's poverty Reduction strategy programme (PRSP), implemented from 2002-04 under heavily indebted Poor countries (HIPC) initiative. PRSP was a repackaged economic liberalization programme requiring further privatization, but its completion in 2005 led to a decisive reduction in the country's debt burden from US6.7 billion to US500 million” (Lamer 2011:260) . The government also, continued a zero tolerance crusade against corruption which saw former President Fredrick Chiluba and his former finance Minister Katele Kalumba charged with several charges of corruption that had raped the Zambian economy.

On the other hand, the manifestos of the opposition political parties highlighted governance issues such as an increased battle against corruption that needed to include, people that were serving in government then as it had become a pandemic in the government through the award of un tendered projects to people who were serving in government. The opposition parties pointed at the corruption involving the Global Fund for Aids Prevention, Malaria and Tuberculosis in which high profile government officials were implicated at the Ministry of health. Michael Sata and the opposition Patriotic front argued that the government was “ more responsive to the demands of the donors and international investors than to the Zambian people.” ( Larmer 2011:261). He “articulated the increasingly critical attitude of Zambians towards foreign investors in general and Chinese investors in particular” ( Ibid). The opposition also criticized the government's excessive expenditures on public

administration, its undermining of the institution of Parliament, and its adamancy in “adopting a new constitution through the constituent assembly.” ((Larmer, 2011). Political parties further scored some realistic policy outcomes such as their opposition to the sale of Zambia Telecommunication company to Iqbal Green of Libya, the concession of the Zambia Railways, commercializing of the Zambia National commercial Bank as well as the sale of Finance bank to First National Bank of South Africa.

Parties also exposed the weaknesses in the electoral system by petitioning the courts of law regarding a lot of electoral malpractices and campaigned on the importance of having an independent electoral commission other than one that has direct control of government. Opposition parties withstood the harassment and violence unleashed on their leaders and supporters by the cadres of the ruling government. As mentioned above In the run-up to 1996 elections for example, President Chiluba, “ through the MMD dominated parliament, imposed a state of emergency, arrest numerous UNIP leaders and activists and charge them to court” (Ihonvbere, 1998: 233). Frustrating enough, was governments use of the Zambia police had intensified a campaign of harassment targeting assemblies organized by the opposition parties using the 1955 public order act which limited the freedom of assembly as a tool to prevent the opposition from selling their policies to the public. The public order act of 1955 stipulates that, “persons organizations wishing to hold an assembly, public meeting, and a procession must first apply for a permit” (Ihonvbere, 1998). However, opposition activists have challenged this kind of treatment and argued that “ the right to assemble is God-given, not given by the state” (Ibid). Legal struggles in courts of law were a key instrument used by parties which helped to compel the MMD government to open up political space but still with limited freedom. “Such repressive and intolerant tendencies” (Ihonvbere, 1998) worked directly against democratic consolidation.

### **3.7.2. History of Political Parties in Zambia since the re-introduction of Multipartyism in 1991.**

The history of political parties since Zambia enacted its constitution to reintroduce multiparty democracy in 1991 is an essential reference point for the state of politics in Zambia. Generally, the political parties that emerged as a response to plural

democracy were more pragmatic than ideological and were rooted in democratic principles and values. Basically, the euphoria that engulfed most African countries that were previously under one party state of politics saw African elites, who had attained education in universities in Europe, spearhead the wind of change. In fact the participants comprised mostly very zealous young men and women full of knowledge to contribute towards national development through a transparent more friendly political system. However, the people who were at the helm of leadership in the political parties were largely inexperienced in managing affairs of the state, and had not been adequately prepared by the outgoing one party system of Kenneth Kaunda's UNIP government to manage a system which demanded checks and balances synonymous with democratic institutions in present day politics hence nepotism, tribalism and corruption became a part of the culture of governance. The most unfortunate thing was that the final decision to enact the constitution to re-introduce Multipartyism by President Kenneth Kaunda came earlier than expected and without allowing parties to establish themselves in an environment characterised tribal regions and chiefdoms became the basis of their weakness as Zambia had over 73 different ethnic groups and tribes.

Furthermore, the two major parties that were later to play a leading role in shaping the political destiny of the country under Multipartyism, the United National Independence Party (UNIP) and the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD), were shaped by the events of the one party authoritarian democracy that had previously been rejected in favour of Multipartyism. Although they were led by charismatic leaders such as Fredrick Titus Jacob Chiluba and others, the parties had had barely enough time to prepare to assume the mantle of national leadership if UNIP lost eventually exited. The result of grouping all the tribal regions into accepting change without adequate preparation of the citizens' psyche was to lead to the formation of a state that was politically divided, thus encouraging the politics of 'divide-and-rule'. It is this historical background that has led to the present-day recruitment in political parties based on tribe, region and language by almost all political parties. Zambia is still struggling with the effects of Multipartyism and its role in the division of the country.

It is worth noting that parties in Zambia, just like elsewhere in Africa, whether they are in government or in the opposition, were neither formed nor based on serious



values but on personalities and sectarianism. Added to the tribal and religious divisions that were central to the formation of these parties were the methods put in place to exploit national resources and to employ citizens. In the case of Zambia, a culture of 'eating' developed and each region, tribe and religion bitterly struggled for a share of the 'national cake'. The pursuit for leadership and control of each party's leadership therefore became an avenue for a particular group of people to gain access to political power and national resources at the expense of others. Specifically, this method of work was never to be a good foundation for the future political opposition to build on.

Pursuing access to political power and control of national resources sometimes resulted in unprincipled and unholy political marriages to get into power. The first such marriage of convenience was UPND, UNIP and FDD alliance called the United Democratic Alliance (UDA) in 2006 which was designed to undermine the MMD that was steal enjoying national support of political power and whose chances of continuing as a major political player in multiparty politics were evidently high. Because that alliance was never grounded in firm principles and ideological thought, it led to bitter tribal divisions between the North and the Easterners, mainly comprising the Bemba's and Ngonis respectively who were the main supporters of the UNIP and FDD, and the people of Southern Zambia who are predominantly Tonga's and constituted the bedrock of the United Party for National Development (UPND)

This unconventional political arrangement by the UDA intended to gain access to political power by whatever means was to lead to the 2006 crisis and the political chaos that ensued thereafter in that the little known force to reckon with Patriotic Front party led by the Populist Michael Sata caused an upset by winning the majority of Local government elections pushing the UDA to third place while the MMD maintained its first position by winning the national presidential elections with Levy Patrick Mwanawasa as President. An upset was caused by the last minute pull out of the Bemba support against other candidates from other regions by supporting their own Michael Sata.

In 2010, the formation of the PF/UPND pact seemed to resemble the main intentions of the UDA alliance of 2006 to ally in order to topple the incumbent regime. However,

a number of political parties avoided such as the Forum for Democracy and Development (FDD) pulled out of such a co-operation not so much over the vision or the direction the political parties would take, but rather over the strength of the parties and the type of candidate to be selected as presidential flag-bearer. The other contentious issue that saw the FDD quitting the co-operation was over the question of whether or not the opposition would participate in the forthcoming 2011 general elections. Edith Nawakwi the president of FDD insisted that the new people driven constitution needed to be put in place before elections. She strongly argued that the current constitution favoured the ruling party and therefore needed to be changed and a new one adopted through a constituent assembly. Whatever the case, the PF/UPND pact could not work as the two parties could not agree on fundamental issues one of them being the choice of the Presidential candidate. This clearly indicates a lack of principle and firm convictions among political players, which is perhaps one of the most important hindrances to the positive development of the opposition parties in Zambia. It also points to the level of immaturity of some of the leaders who wish to become an alternative to the ruling government.

### **3.7.3. Tribal and Religious Aspects**

In Zambia, as in other African countries, politics is practised along ethno-regional lines. Generally, the parties that are formed are supported through personalities and organised groupings, especially tribal and religious ones, in the absence of established party structures as elaborate channels to be used to win nationwide support. Most party activities end up being conducted in the capital city, Lusaka. The views and aspirations of the majority of the voters who live in the rural areas in poverty-stricken conditions tend to be ignored. It is, therefore, arguable that the way in which party functionaries relate with the realities is based on rhetoric and is largely devoid of values and principles of common national interest. This approach to party activities has bred a narrow membership base hinged on tribal, religious and other forms of sectarian allegiance rather than on ideological convictions and both subjective and objective conditions obtaining in the country. It is also quite clearly evident that tribal and religious influences dictate the nature of the policies and leadership within these parties.

For Example the National Christian Coalition led by the Television Evangelist Pastor Nevers Mumba to counter against the MMD's advancing the scourge of corruption in the country was formed in 1997. Its message was that of fighting for moral upright leader's void of corruption and condemned other religious groups that benefitted from the corrupt practices of the government. By 2002, the NCC was still struggling to appeal to a broad section of Zambians because of its historical genesis as a religious movement. In fact, the party's founder and President Nevers Mumba struggled to win the loyalty of several forces within the political arena who did not support him largely because he was a Clergy. The NCC was since dissolved in 2002 and all the members joined other political parties. Narrow thinking in Zambian politics continues to be a threat to Zambia's democracy.

This tribal and religious allegiance is also one of the factors that shaped the hierarchy of the United Party for National Development by Hakainde Hichilema after the death of its founding President Anderson Kambela Mazoka. Just like the Democratic Alliance led by Charles Milupi is predominantly a Tonga region party with a high concentration of the people of Southern Province as its main supporters.

The same can be said of the MMD which, apart from being predominantly supported by Northerners, also managed to win some parliamentary seats in North Western and Western provinces under the leadership of Dr. Levy P. Mwanawasa. The party became under pressure to redefine itself after the death of Dr Levy Mwanawasa its second President in 2008, who was succeeded by his vice president Rupiah Bwezani Banda from the Eastern Province. With Banda's election as president of the MMD, the leadership of the party still remained Northern-oriented enough to win massive support enough to win an election.

#### **3.7.4. The MMD and Incumbency 1991-2011**

Zambia's political system is established on the basis of Western multiparty democracy, with a strong British influence. This means that the system is built on the three different arms of government, namely the Judiciary, the Executive and the Legislative. Whereas this particular system remains the ideal to ensure democracy and personal freedoms, for a country like Zambia which is still considered a developing nation, it can have negative outcomes, which has to a certain extent affected the performance and readiness of the opposition as a government-in-

waiting. Between the years 1991 -2011 within the mainstream parliamentary representation, there were special interest groups which were represented as either nominated members or elected through electoral colleges. All districts in Zambia had a woman representative. In addition, there were ex-officio members, the youth, the disabled, workers' and army representatives. To have a significant impact on policy when motions were presented, a quorum had to be satisfied, that is a two-thirds majority had to be fulfilled if any bill was to be passed. The opposition was constrained by the reality of numbers in effecting any meaningful contribution to policy debates and consequently oversight of the Executive. The ruling MMD maintained an absolute majority in Parliament as it enjoyed an overwhelming two – third majority which shows how formidable party the MMD was. Managing to triple all the opposition members combined clearly shows that the opposition still had a long way to go before it was able to replace the MMD. It would not even be conceivable that the opposition could sponsor and pass a bill that was not favoured by the ruling party.

However, much as the MMD'S government's performance was marred by shortcomings with regard to service delivery, it had to a large extent improved the standards of living of the ordinary Zambian citizens far better than the country was under one party state.

Furthermore, the failure of the political opposition to facilitate alternative policy proposals on key sectors like the economy, public service, security, roads etc, as they had often been more vocal about what they did not want rather than what they actually stood for. Being the incumbent party, the MMD was still a force to be reckoned with in Zambia's political arena as far as the opposition was concerned. The ability to access state resources as well as having the upper hand in terms of mobilisation structures had further strengthened the MMD's capacity to withstand opposition tactics and even counter them. It is still deeply entrenched within key sectors of the economy such as agriculture, security and energy where it had a strong influence. That had made it very difficult for the opposition to make any significant impact on the nation. Having such privileges and abundant resources at their disposal, the MMD had fully tightened its grip on power, frustrating efforts by the opposition to assert themselves on the scene and to offer counter-efforts to mobilise the masses to replace the incumbent government which had for the last past 20

years based its programmes on the fundamental principle of “prosperity for all”. Whereas some of the policies the MMD government had implemented had largely been unsuccessful, it could be credited for at least introducing them. For example the MMD government has implemented Universal Primary Education (UPE), which increased affordability and accessibility to primary education for the average Zambian child. Despite the apparent shortcomings of that policy, the opposition had failed to give alternative policy advice and sensitise the public to the better strategies they would employ to implement the UPE programme should they assume control of government.

### **3.7.5. Donor Support to Opposition Political Parties**

For as long as the main funders of opposition party activities remained largely foreigners and outsiders, the perception and the reality would remain that the same parties were primarily accountable to foreigners. For effective democracy to be established in Zambia, and internally within the different political parties, Zambians needed to be encouraged to create ownership by making the necessary contributions that would facilitate party activities. At the very least over 50 percent of the necessary resources needed be raised internally among the membership and well-wishers within the country. What is true, though, is that political opposition activities in Zambia had been largely funded by foreign donors, development partners, and foreign missions, which included the United States of America and the British Government. The support to most politically active organisations, including political parties, was targeted at increasing activism in dialogue and deepening democratic participation among ordinary persons. However, in offering this support to the political parties which heavily relied on those funds to organise their activities, the different donor and support agencies insisted on particular approaches of engagement and in the process distorted the natural development of those parties, and sometimes forced choices of issues to champion into their plans. Part of the strength of the MMD party had been the ability to access resources from within and therefore it rarely used external funds in organising party activities, which allowed the freedom to choose any strategies and approaches, free of any outside influences.

### 3.7.6. WEAKNESSES OF OPPOSITION PARTIES IN ZAMBIA

Much as would appear that the ruling party was responsible for the failure of democratic rule in the country, a critical analysis of the opposition parties in Zambia indicated that they had serious weaknesses in their level of engagement in the political affairs of the country. These include:

- the failure of the opposition parties to cooperate, unite and work together as a team affected the work of the opposition that led to fragmented election results. For example while UPND, FDD, and UNIP agreed on an interparty alliance that formed the United Democratic Alliance (UDA) in 2006 elections, the Patriotic Front ( PF) , which was the strongest opposition party , had stayed out of it, and openly criticized fellow opposition parties. The Copperbelt, Northern and Luapula provinces and Bemba land in general were a PF stronghold and won several parliamentary seat but fall short of the presidential victory because it did not cooperate with other parties that were strongholds in other areas also. For Example the UPND, in 2006 won almost all the seats in Southern Province while UNIP performed very well in eastern province. If the opposition PF had joined forces with the others, victory for the opposition was going to be certain;
- the main opposition parties devoted most of their resources to the presidential elections and neglected the financing of their parliamentary candidates which resulted in low levels of representation in parliament, especially in 1996 and 2001 elections ;
- Opposition parties lacked sufficient financial resources to run their programmes. While it was expected that parties would raise resources locally from among their supporters, that strategy still relied on three confounding factors:

(a) parties had not been permitted to campaign freely in the whole country as permits to do that was limited due the provisions of public order which the police enforced each time the gathering involved opponents of the ruling party. Their rallies were constantly denied by the state and if they attempted were dispersed and declared as “illegal gatherings”

(b) some of the supporters of the opposition political parties did not come out openly to express their support for their preferred party, for fear that the government could harm their interests, for example through being sacked from a government job or being denied business opportunities. Some supporters of the opposition parties also were afraid of intimidation by security agencies;

(c) most of the would-be local financiers of opposition parties played a double game, giving some support to the ruling party and some to one opposition party or other. At the end of the day, the ruling party received more financial resources than the other parties. Moreover, MMD had the state resources for its campaigns and there by disadvantaged the opposition parties (Larmer, 2011). However opposition parties were also accused of lacking consistent alternative policies to those of the government. Some critics pointed out that even where opposition parties had alternative policies, either they were abstract in content or they were not skillfully articulated to capture the imagination of the voters (interview with a key respondent).

### **3.7.7. POLITICAL PARTIES IN PARLIAMENT**

The 2001 and the 2006 multiparty elections ended the MMD's monopoly of politics in Parliament, where they acted and passed bills that only put the ruling party on advantage. For the first time in the history of democracy in Zambia opposition political parties would put pressure on the ruling party even if they did not have enough numbers to pass certain bills because the MMD would use the divide and rule concept. Despite the dominance of the MMD, the debates were largely free and democratic except that the opposition's proposals would fall off when subjected to a vote. Multiparty politics had impacted on the performance of Parliament in various ways. For example, there were the government side, and the opposition side and the independents, who sat on either side. Those on the government side, always wanted to be loyal to the government and supported some unprogressive bills that put the opposition in a tight corner.

The following table reflects the members of parliament representing various political parties from 1964-2006

<u>Political Party</u>	<u>Election Year</u>					
	1964	1968	1991	1996	2001	2006
<u>United National Independence Party (UNIP)</u>	55	81	25	-	13	-*
<u>Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD)</u>	-	-	125	131	69	74
<u>Patriotic Front (PF)</u>	-	-	-	-	1	44
<u>United Party for National Development (UPND)</u>	-	-	-	-	49	-*
<u>Forum for Democracy and Development (FDD)</u>	-	-	-	-	12	-*
<u>United Democratic Alliance (UDA)</u>	-	-	-	-	-	27*
<u>United Liberal Party (ULP)</u>	-	-	-	-	-	2
<u>Heritage Party (HP)</u>	-	-	-	-	4	-
<u>National Democratic Focus (NDF)</u>	-	-	-	-	-	1



<u>Zambia Republican Party (ZRP)</u>	-	-	-	-	1	-
<u>African National Congress (ANC)</u>	10	23	-	-	-	-
<u>National Progressive Party (NPP)</u>	10	-	-	-	-	-
<u>National Party (NP)</u>	-	-	-	05	-	-
<u>Agenda for Zambia (AZ)</u>	-	-	-	02	-	-
<u>Zambian Democratic Congress (ZDC)</u>	-	-	-	02	-	-
<u>Independents</u>	-	-	-	10	1	2
Others	-	01	-	-	-	-
Total	75	105	150	150	150	150
*UPND, FDD, and UNIP contested the 2006 election under the UDA alliance						

Table 1 an extract from the Electoral Commission of Zambia

As the above table indicates, the majority of members of parliament belonged to the ruling party. In the first and second Republic, the UNIP government dominated parliament and in the third Republic, the MMD dominated parliament and so on and forth. One would notice that those members of parliament who belonged to the ruling party could hardly criticize the government's position on any issue and in so doing frustrated the wishes of the people who sent them to parliament.

In the constitution of the republic of Zambia, the President is allowed to appoint 8 members of parliament and therefore gains advantage in taking control of parliament proceedings. A term for members of parliament in Zambia is for five years.

The fact that the Zambian people have successfully conducted elections and have managed to elect some opposition members of parliament to represent them, shows their determination to plural participation in governance.

### **3.7.8. CAPACITY TO CAMPAIGN**

The capacity to campaign depended on whether a party had well-established structures, programmes and personnel to extend its campaign. However, there were also structural weaknesses on the part of the opposition. Due to the doctrine of regional politics, most political parties were only strong in their own regional and ethnic areas and in such places you would find complete structures. Also most of the parties in Zambia existed only in name, and were based at their headquarters only without any structure trickling down to the grassroots. It was, for example, difficult for citizens to recall the names of most of the over thirty or so registered parties in Zambia and that resulted in limiting the people's choices when it came to elections. On its part, the MMD used the state apparatus to frustrate the activities of the opposition political parties. The Zambia police often denied the opposition parties permit to assemble under stating insufficient officers to maintain law and order during such assemblies if confusion erupted often from interparty crushes by the cadres. The police and other security agencies did not perceive themselves as servants of the state but as agents of the ruling party and its leadership. Since 1991, the government had appointed the successive Inspectors General of Police from within the police ranks but often it was people who were a political cadre of the ruling party. Thus in dealing with the opposition parties, the heads of police sometimes exceeded their official limits. For example after the 1997 coup organized by Zambia army officer Captain Stephen Lungu alias Captain Solo, Chiluba instituted an arrest of Kenneth Kaunda on 25<sup>th</sup> December, 1997 despite Kaunda having immunity from prosecution ( The Post News Paper 26<sup>th</sup> December, 1997). Chiluba suspected Kaunda to have had a hand in the failed coup plot. Working on commands, they did not advise the state on the implication of the action but acted under the influence of political authority and directives from above.

### **3.7.9. RESPECT FOR DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

Under the MMD leadership between 1991-2011, there had been an improvement in respect for human rights and the practice of democratic participation especially in the first three years of Multi-party Democracy. For example, most Zambians who had left the country during the UNIP and Kaunda's one party system who were victimized in one way or the other returned back to Zambia. The government also established the Human Rights and the Anti-corruption Commissions which oversaw and protected citizens from human rights abuses. The government had put in place laws that enabled the establishment of the Non-Government Organizations (NGO,s) that looked into the interests of the disadvantaged groups in society. Civil society organizations also had been given space to actively point out the failures of the government. Some of the human rights civil society organizations had a hand in shaping the agenda for the protection of human rights in Zambia. Despite the existence of these human rights NGOs and the Church, however, the state of human rights remained poor, especially the state's violation of political rights (UN Human rights report, 1997). State agents had been indicted for spreading terror during campaigns and elections by limiting, the political rights of political parties to hold public rallies. The National television, the Zambia National Broadcasting Cooperation gave limited coverage to opposition political parties during campaigns.

### **3.7.10. CORRUPTION IN POLITICAL PARTIES AND POLITICAL ACTORS**

The world over, political parties play controversial roles in society. On the one hand, they are defenders and advocates of human rights and accountability. On the other hand, they are accused of secrecy and corruption. In Zambia, historically, people generally regard parties as corrupt organizations. For example after President Levy Patrick Mwanawasa succeeded President Fredrick Titus Jacob Chiluba in 2001. The first task was to overhaul the entire political system in Zambia in order to create a good environment in Zambian politics. President Mwanawasa had a record of hatred against corruption in governance that when he served as the country's vice President, "resigned in mid-1994 in the heat of accusations about abuse of office and power"(Ihonvbere, 1998: 230) and rampant corruption by President Chilubas led MMD government. The period of Chiluba's rule from 1991 to 2001 was surrounded by politicians who were in politics to amass wealth for themselves and

not to serve. That is what Nyerere, late former President of the Republic of Tanzania called “the bad side of Multiparty democracy” (M.Mutiso, 1975: 478) where by Multiparty political governance has the ability to attract both good and bad politicians and most of them whose interest was not to serve but to enrich themselves. Ihonvebere records, “ Ministers like Rodger Chongwe ( Legal Affairs) has used their positions to illegally acquire acres of la. Ronald Penza, Derrick Chitala and Matthew Ngulube have also grabbed land illegally” ( Ihonvbere, 1998: 230; Mwiinga 1995b). Dirty and corrupt politics of the stomach and firm characterized politics to the detriment of the reputation of Multiparty politics in Zambia. For example, another former foreign affairs Minister, Vernon Mwaanga “ who had been arrested in 1984 at Frankfurt international airport on drug trafficking charges, continued to be accused of running a drug gung [...]Sikota Wina another founding member of the MMD as well as Princess Nakatindi Wina, had to resign from the government following several accusations of drug trafficking” ( Ibid). One would easily note that, “ in spite of Chiluba’s personal ‘born again’ claims, Zambians see him as ineffective and unable to control his ministers who obviously do not share his visions for a one Zambia” (Ibid).

Corruption among the political actors, especially after liberalizing the economy enabled government officials who were on the spotlight abuse their status and authority and there by rape the Zambian economy. Corruption also brought about a sophisticated web for tribalism and nepotism. Lorch (1994) reports “ Persuasive corruption has also promoted widespread skepticism even among earlier supporters of the Movement for Multiparty Democracy and the MMD’s ability to sustain democracy and reform programmes. Democracy in Zambia has not reduced corruption, if anything it has made the situation worse.”

It is therefore not surprising that when President Mwanawasa took over in 2001, despite being an MMD himself, succeeding Chiluba his personal friend, “ launched an anti corruption crusade. He engineered the removal of Chiluba’s immunity from prosecution and the case was brought against the former president in 2003” (Larmer 2011:259). Mwanawasa, indicated to the Zambian people that, his interest was for Chiluba to explain the whereabouts of the billions of Zambian resources so that the country would begin to build on a solid foundations of democracy. He preferred that instead of the Zambian courts of law to try Chiluba, he opted for an independent

court and the London High court handled Chiluba's proceedings. " A London court found that Chiluba had effectively stolen US 57 million of the government funds." (Ibid). However, by the time of Mwanawasa's death in 2008, the London high court judgement was not yet registered in the Zambian High court as provided in the Zambian statutes to effect the return of the stolen money. However, lack of political will to recover the money for the Zambian people proved futile. Chiluba eventually died on 18<sup>th</sup> June, 2011 months before the general elections that ousted the MMD government.

Generally, the experience of rampant corruption in the period 1991-2011 was the worst in Zambian Multiparty history.

### **3.7.11. FICTIONALIZATION OF PARTIES**

Parties in Zambia as alluded to above, had historically been factionalized on the basis of ethnicity and region. The MMD, the PF and the UPP were perceived as a Bemba political parties with Bemba regional support in Northern, Copperbelt, Luapula and Muchinga Provinces; The United Party of National Development (UPND) and the African National Congress (ANC), were perceived as Tonga political parties and had a regional backing from Southern, North Western and Central provinces; UNIP, and FDD, were perceived as having a stronghold in Eastern provinces of Zambia. The voting pattern in Zambia's politics had continued to be regional just as the political parties had formed on the basis of region and ethnicity. In terms of political parties and religious affiliation, the MMD maneuvered to win the church especially the Pentecostals after President Chiluba's declaration of Zambia as a Christian Nation. The MMD was seen in public view, making donations to Christian Churches, and when in power, monopolized the National television by broadcasting Christian programmes that promote high values. However, between 2001 and 2011, the competition to political power was dominated by the MMD, UPND and the PF.

### **3.7.12. PARTIES IN GOVERNMENT**

It was noted that between 1991 and 2011, opposition parties played a key role in shaping the agenda of the MMD government as well as suggesting alternative policy ideas. In Zambia, history confirms the zeal of the Zambians in participating in nation

building despite some dictatorial tendencies from the ruling party. The strength of the republic of Zambia was the successful transfer of power from Kaunda to Chiluba in 1991, from Chiluba to Mwanawasa in 2001, and from Rupiah Banda to Michael Sata in 2011. The only hiccup was the transfer of power from Mwanawasa to Banda in 2008 because of the demise of the former. However, in terms of policy direction, the Zambian government was transparent to the entire nation and the opposition had exercised its full rights to contribute towards national development.

In 1991 in the work of multiparty democracy, most of the members of the new opposition UNIP crossed the floor and joined the MMD in government. Between 1991 and 2001 the opposition were high dominated if not silenced by the ruling party MMD because they had over 80 percent of the seats in Parliament. In 2001, in the work of the UPND, and a stiff competition from FDD and UNIP plus a number of Independent candidates, represented in parliament, the multiparty system had however made some positive changes. There were at least 65 opposition members of parliament between 2001 and 2006 and about 80 opposition members of parliament between 2006 and 2011. However, the MMD had also signed protocols of cooperation with some independent MPs, either to support its positions in Parliament or not to oppose them. Some independents had been offered ministerial positions in government while others were believed to have been paid to support the government. It was also believed that some MPs elected on opposition party tickets had been paid by the MMD either to cause trouble in their parties or to support the government positions in Parliament. There seems to be some “political prostitution” among the independents.

Many political observers argued that the opposition parties represented in Parliament had not provided the necessary alternative leadership. On several critical issues, such as the debate on government to provide a road map for a people driven constitution that had not been provided for in Parliament, and other critical policy matters. The opposition was blamed for preferring to be reactive rather than proactive in order to bring tangible debates that would lead to policy changes. Nevertheless, on the formal level, there was a semblance of a functional multiparty Parliament. There was the Leader of the Opposition elected by the opposition members of parliament who enjoyed the benefits, privileges and space to talk on behalf of the opposition members.

The above niceties aside, some opposition Members of Parliament had had it rough outside the House. Some of the opposition Members of Parliament who were perceived to be level headed were violated against and implicated with charges and tried by the courts of Law. While the opposition parties and their members had struggled in Parliament to make a contribution to good governance, the structure of the government in Zambia was built on patronage politics.

### **3.7.13. Ethnicity**

This is a persistent problem in Zambian politics since reintroduction of Multipartyism in Zambia. The Lozi people of Barotseland had been making demands to succeed from the rest of Zambia because they felt oppressed and neglected. Both the government and opposition parties had been analyzing the Barotse issue and the response remained inconclusive. As a result, some Lozi's arose and started doing politics along tribal lines and the rest of the exercise was on going by 2011. The Tonga people of South Province and the Bemba all fight for supremacy within Zambia leaving the minority tribes feel unaccommodated within the political system of Zambia, thus, literary exist without representation in Parliament and other decision making positions.

### **3.8. SUMMERY AND CONCLUSION.**

This Chapter has surveyed the key issues of Zambia's experience of Multiparty democracy from 1964-1973 and from 1991-2011. It has looked at the nature of the state of Multipartyism in Zambia and its reluctance to promote and deepen multiparty democracy, even after opening up political space the constitution of 1991. State institutions, especially the security wings of the state, are perceived as working for the wishes of the ruling party. Other institutions of the state, especially the judiciary, are generally perceived as being fair to all Zambians. However, there are indications that such institutions are being "tamed and trimmed" by the ruling elite to compromise their independence. The Chapter also highlights the resilience of political parties and their ability to survive political "storms" in a multi ethnic country with 73 tribes. The strategy to "kill off" parties has never succeeded and the people of Zambia have been willing to serve their country despite limited freedoms of expression hence the intermittent return to multiparty politics in 1991.

It has been established that, multiparty politics in Zambia have not brought the country together but has enhanced tribalism and regional politics to such alarming levels that political parties have increased being formed along regional blocks. It has been noted that, tribal and regional politics, started way back immediately after independence and it has been difficult for any given government to successfully implement tribal balancing as it is practically impossible to have every single tribe to be represented. It's been noted that, even if Kaunda introduced the National motto of ' One Zambia, One Nation' the motto itself has not been translated into practice under the multiparty dispensation. Firstly, because each section of Zambia's 73 tribes wants to benefit from the national spoils instead of focusing on making a contribution to the nation. Experience has shown in this chapter that, the concept of Multipartism in the context of Zambia, has had its negatives despite successfully conducting elections that have seen five presidents elected over a period of 50 years.

It has been established that, the reason why UNIP and Kenneth Kaunda opted to impose a one party participatory democracy, was in an attempt to search for a viable democracy that would defeat the problem of tribal and regional wars in order to promote nation building based on one national agenda and the concept of tribal balancing in the governance of the state. The one party state, too, had its on short comings as a result people's call to go back to multiparty democracy which was re-introduced in 1991.

The chapter has noted that, to revert to multiparty politics in 1991, did not bring with it any new magic. The experience of tribalism returned, authoritarian tricks to kill the opposition resurfaced, corruption and plunder of national resources became rampant and poverty levels increased to alarming levels. We therefore deduce that both the one party state and multiparty democracy are a threat to Zambian governance and the Zambian society at large.

On the basis of negative experiences of both one party state and multiparty democracy, which have by and large been a divisive tool, a starting point for appropriate political moral criteria to mitigate these delinquencies is ideal. Zambia's role is to find a political system that will use measures to unite the country and work for national development. The argument is not about building on western imposed



criteria for democracy but it's about how best we can rehabilitate the broken pieces of our rich African system of conducting affairs and applies it to the broader spectrum of our countries governance. African traditional systems have proved to be very paramount in bringing our various tribes and people of difference over a long period of time.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE BEMBA SPEAKING PEOPLE OF ZAMBIA IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

#### 4.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a concrete historical survey of the Bemba speaking people of Zambia, hereto referred as a model of a political governance institution by consensus decision making. In this chapter, we elaborate how the Bemba tribe has practiced its political governance system and how it has responded to the problem of 'multiplicity' as a point of departure in the context of 'multi ethnic', 'multi local' and 'multi clan', challenges in its over 300 years of traditional political governance in Zambia.

It is evident that the Bemba speaking people did not appear to question the reality of living in a complex society which embraces divergent traditions and practices that were different from their own. From what is already known, "even the pre- colonial history of the Bemba, promised to be of interest for various reasons. The Bemba past evidently comprised a process of growth and change which were relative to some of the currents in Central African history" ( Roberts: xxv).

With what Roberts identifies, the Bemba speaking people demonstrate an important point of departure into our process of seeking to rehabilitate democracy and democratic governance applicable to the Zambian- African governance system.

In establishing the case for a Zambian- African polity using the Bemba model, we contend that the Bemba tribe, of the many tribes historically captured

*had formed an extensive and relatively unified political system in which a number of chiefs were subordinated to a single paramount. Such a system is prima facie likely to preserve longer memory of the past in oral traditions than small scale political systems for concepts of the time are limited by social horizons and the number and variety of inter linked groups of whose several pasts history must take account ( Ibid).*

Even if there are similar tribes that may have had a structured political system in Zambia such as the Ngonis of Eastern Province, the *Lunda's of Kazembe* in *Luapula* valley among a few others, non could be “compared in scale with that of the Bemba” ( Ibid) in their approach to Multi ethnic and multi clan concepts that serve as a uniting factor in a successful governance system. Therefore, if one wishes to figure out a Zambian political system that would by and large be representative of a structured political entity, all embracing and participatory political organization, the Bemba are more plausible.

## **4.2. THE BEMBA SPEAKING PEOPLE**

The Bemba speaking people of Zambia can be precisely defined “as those people who consider themselves subjects of Chitimukulu, the Bemba paramount Chief” ( Richards 1930:23; Roberts 1973: xxvii). They are scattered around four of the provinces of the Republic of Zambia namely Northern, Muchinga, Luapula and the Copperbelt. A substantial number is found in the Central province while many others are scattered across the country, making them to be the largest occupants of Zambia with “the population standing at 33.3 percent” ( Zambia central statistics report 2010) out of 13 million Zambian population, according to the 2010 countrywide census by the Central Statistics department. The Headquarters of the Lubemba territory is in Kasama, the Provincial headquarters of Northern Province of Zambia. The Bemba chiefdoms are scattered in the following government districts of Zambia, “Mungwi, Mpika, Kasama, Chinsali, Mporokoso and Luwingu” ( Ibid).

We shall now look albeit at a detailed account of the Bemba country and the Bemba speaking people, to ascertain our point of departure in the discussion of a consensus model for a Zambian African polity.

### **4.2.1. THE ORIGIN**

The Bemba speaking people are a very interesting tribe politically among the Bantu tribes currently living in present day Zambia whose history and governance system is of great importance in our theological discourse. They are saturated in all the districts of Zambia at least, and their Language, *Icibemba* complements English as a national language. It is said that, their origin to the current *Lubemba* country was “the Belgian Congo” (Pritchard, 1969: 85), presently known as the Democratic Republic

of Congo ( DRC). They “ declare that they were originally an offshoot from the great Luba people which inhabited the *Kasai* district” ( Ibid). The great ancestor of the Bemba was “ known as *Chiti Muluba*”( Ibid: 85), the name which directly suggests that he came from among the *Luba* tribes of the Congo and therefore historically confirms that the Bemba migrated from there. There are still a number of indicators which demonstrate the authenticity of the Bemba historical data with regard to the Bemba origin. Firstly, the similarities of the cultural practices of the Bemba and the ‘*Luban*’ people of the Luba people of Congo. Audrey notes

*the fact that the first ancestor of the Bemba is known as Chiti Muluba [ Chiti the Luban] substantiates this tradition together with the cultural similarities still noted between the two peoples and the fact that Luban words no longer understood by the Bemba commoner are still used as part of the religious ritual at the paramount chiefs court ( Ibid)*

Therefore, in terms of the historical data coupled with the cultural and language similarities establishes that the Bemba are originally the offshoots of the Congo tribes with *Luban* ancestry.

It is believed that moving from the Congo to present day Zambia

*the first arrivals apparently crossed the Lualaba river, which forms the western boundary of the present territory about the middle of the eightieth century and travelled North and east until the established their first headquarters near Kasama the present administrative centre of the Lubemba country ( Ibid).*

Consensus has been reached with regard to this historical survey in the sense that “ the migration took place at almost the same time” ( Ibid) when the white settlers had already started the exploration of most parts of Africa and since they were skilled in writing, some written records regarding the migration treks can be substantiated by various historical data

Also consensus has been reached that among the Bemba tribe’s “history dates from this period, since the composition of the invading group still determines the title to chieftainships and the order of the precedence of a number of the order of clan” (Pritchard, 1969: 86) . Though it is claimed by some scholars that the Bemba “fore

fathers found the country empty on their arrival” ( Ibid) in present day Kasama, it is indisputable that the Bemba “ formed a quiet distinct political unit” ( ibid), that demonstrates an organized group that systematically used the gift of natural inheritance to govern a variety of sophisticated people.

#### 4.2.2. FORMATION OF THE BEMBA TRIBE

The Bemba tribe is an offshoot of the migration story in which a group of brothers and sisters together with some wise men and retainers fled from a very powerful chief called *Mukulumpe* who ruled “in the country called *Luba* or *kola*” ( Roberts 1973) in the Congo basin in the early 18th century. It is said that Chief *Mukulumpe* “had a number of sons by different wives” (Roberts 1973). He had a character of marrying any woman who looked attractive to him who later bore him several children who were expected to take over from him since they practiced a patrilineal tradition in which if the father died, the son would succeed.

However, a story is told that one day Chief *Mukulumpe* “ heard of a woman with ears as large as an elephant’s who said she came from the sky and belonged to the crocodile (*Ng’wena*) clan” ( Roberts 1973) and practiced materlineal succession. She claimed that she was a Queen where she came from and the royalty was preserved through the female descendants. Her name was called “*Mumbi Mukasa*” ( Roberts 1973). It is told that Chief *Mukulumpe* was attracted to the woman and decided to marry her.

Other researchers such as Henry Kanyanta Sosala (the current *Chitimukulu*, Paramount Chief of the Bemba people) in his unpublished article entitled ‘The Descent of the Bemba, 2014) believes that

*Queen Mumbi Mukasa was a chieftainess in the tribes in Ethiopia- in the royal line of Queen Sheba the Jew, but unfortunately she committed a serious offence for which she could have been executed but traditionally nobody could spill royal blood, a plan was devised to have her escorted to a distant land and be abandoned there” ( Sosala, 2014).*

He explains that “Queen *Mumbi Mukasa* was abandoned in the country called *Luba* or *kola*, were Chief *Mukulumpe* married her” (Sosala,2014). By this, Sosala dispels the idea of *Mumbi Mukasa*, dropping from the sky but rather agreeing with the

concept that she came from Ethiopia based on research by Roberts( 1973) when he says while at Luba “ chief’s descent went from father to son and *Mumbi Mukasa* was of divine origin, her sons were the first in the line to succeed their father chief *Mukulumpe*” As a wife to *Mukulumpe*, *Mumbi Mukasa* bore three sons namely “ Katongo, Nkole, Chiti and a daughter, Chilufya Mulenga” ( Roberts 1973) .

Though Chief *Mukulumpe* had several sons and daughters from other women, the children he bore from a mysterious woman, Queen *Mumbi Mukasa*, were very industrious that at some point they decided to construct a very huge tower in comparison to the biblical story of Nimrod after Noah’s ark in Genesis 11, an action which Sosala (2014) mentioned in his article that “ their mother, *Mumbi Mukasa*, may have been of Jewish descent and could have told her children the magnificent story of the tower of Babel” and the children tried to emulate their ancestors exploits but ended up killing many people when the tower fall on them, as Andrew Roberts (1973) puts it, “.. But the impetuous young men built a great tower, which fell down and killed many people”. Such action was first and foremost a disaster of the Kingdom of *Mukulumpe* during his reign as the whole country blamed him for marrying a strange woman who bore him equally mysterious children. It is not known whether, *Mukulumpe* killed *Mumbi Mukasa* or banished her from the Kingdom etc. But after that incident, she was not mentioned again in the Bemba legend.

For the sons, out of rage, Chief *Mukulumpe*, “Put out Katongo’s eyes and banished Chiti and Nkole from the land” (Roberts 1973) but kept their sister *Chilufya Mulenga* in the palace. Despite doing that the chief, realized it was not secure for him to banish them just like that, as they could launch an attack on him. He decided to call them back but then “dug a game-pit on the path, meaning to trap and kill them as they re-entered the capital” (Roberts 1973). They didn’t suspect anything fishy “but *Katongo* though blind warned his brothers of the danger by tapping out a message on the talking drum” (Roberts 1973). The two sons escaped death and so out of embarrassment their father Chief *Mukulumpe* punished them by “making them sweep the royal courtyard” (Roberts 1973). The action they considered offended their dignity as it was meant to; again there were trouble” (Roberts 1973). Some versions as told by Rev. Fr. Labrecque (1971), states that “*Chiti* and *Nkole* interfered with their father’s younger wives” also and that made Chief *Mukulumpe* regard them as perpetual enemies.

The insecurity, ill-treatment among others, made *Chiti* and *Nkole* decide to leave the Kingdom for good “taking with them their half- brothers (from other wives) *Chimba*, *Kapasa*, and *Kazembe* and a number of retainers who later became councillors in *Bembaland*” (Roberts 1973).

The move the duo made was to completely start a new tribe, in pursuance of their mother’s matrilineal line as they were raised to believe. They chose to go “east, to the unknown land- some carrying seeds in their heir- until the middle of *Luapula* river” (Roberts 1973). However, in the formation of the new tribe which was going to depict the matrilineal descent’ different from that of their father in *Luba’s* tribe, they needed their sister *Chilufya Mulenga* , whom they had left behind, to bear them children who would succeed and maintain the royal blood in the matrilineal sib of the new tribe. At river *Luapula*, “ the fugitives paused and the leaders realized that in their haste they had left behind not only their brother *Katongo*, but also their sister, *Chilufya Mulenga*, who *Mukulumpe* had shut up in a doorless house” ( Roberts 1973).

Without *Chilufya Mulenga*, the new tribe would not be achieved because anything they would do would be a replica of the *Luba* Kingdom which they rejected at all costs based on the conviction of the matrilineal divine descent of their mother, *Mumbi Mukasa*. As a rescue, “they dispatched their half-brother, *Kapasa* with a few retainers to go back and abduct *Chilufya*” (Roberts 1973). The curtail worked very well and *Chilufya* was abducted “but on the way to *Luapula*, *Kapasa* seduced *Chilufya*” (Roberts 1973) and had sex with her half-sister who became pregnant. When *Chiti*, learnt that *Chilufya* was pregnant and “discovered that *Kapasa* was to blame” (Ibid), he disowned him but still maintained the child who was born and given the name *Chilufya* after the mother.

The Migrants knowing that the team was complete marked a transition and frontier from the original dynasty to be symbolized by the crossing of the river *Luapula*. The river in the language of the *Luba* kingdom was called ‘*Bemba*’. The river *Luapula* at the time was flowing heavily. *Sosala* (2014) notes that “it was probably in the rainy season when the river was full” The two brothers made an agreement that the one who would cross first would become the leader of the delegation. Between the two royal brothers, *Nkole* who was older in age was not as vibrant and the younger

brother *Chiti* and as expected, *Chiti* stepped forward to cross the river first because he was not only courageous, but was more determined to begin a new frontier in the unknown land. He crossed the *Luapula* river (*Bemba*) “assisted by chief *Matanda* of the Bena Mukulo on the east bank” (Roberts 1973). Sosala (2014) writes, “and to seal his leadership in the new world,” *Chiti*, decided to thrust a spear into the tree and declared:

*Nine Ntalasha Matanda*

*Nine Mukulumpe wacibili wa mwene ubwikalo*

*Ifwe tuli babemba pantu twayabuka Bemba mukusokola ubwikalo*

*(I am the first to cross the great river into the unknown; I am the new king Mukulumpe in the new dispensation; we are the Bemba [river], because we have crossed the river (Bemba) to discover our new destiny.)*

It is from that moment and by declaration by *Chiti* that the *Bemba* tribe was formed and from that very moment, they began to seek an establishment and so they continued in their migration as a new people detached from the *Luba* people in Congo basin. In the new world, the *Bemba* as they were now called “were uncertain of where to go next” (Roberts 1973). It is said that, they mysteriously met a white magician ( *Luchele Ng’anga* ) , “ who directed them to go eastwards” ( Roberts 1973). In the *Luangwa* valley, the migrants encountered an *Nsenga* chief *Mwase*. It is told that *Mwase’s* wife called *Chilimbulu* “was very beautiful, and her stomach was adorned with elegant cicatrisations. *Chiti*, greatly desired *Chilimbulu* and one day he contrived to seduce her while Chief *Mwase* was out hunting” ( Roberts 1973). When *Mwase* came back from hunting, he found “ *Chiti* having sex with his wife” ( Roberts 1973) . Roberts (1973) records that the two “chiefs fought and *Chiti* was grazed by a poisoned arrow. He soon died and *Nkole* with his followers sorrowfully bore his corpse away with them turning northwards in search of a suitable grave in which to bury *Chiti*” ( Roberts 1973) . At *Mwalule* in present day *Chinsali* the provincial capital of Muchinga Province of Zambia “ a man called *Chimbala* gave *Chiti’s* people permission to bury their leader in his grave yard” ( Roberts 1973). In their midst a visitor who had come to trade in *Chimbala’s* area by the name of *Kambotwe* was appointed by *Chiti’s* people as the keeper of the grave in the taking of the title



*Shimwalule* and his matrilineal descendants as perpetual servants of the *Bemba* royal family.

After the burial of his younger brother and the leader of the migrants, *Nkole* took over and assumed the responsibility of leadership of the Bemba tribe. He “dispatched a party to avenge *Chiti*’s death by killing chief *Mwase* and *Chilimbulu*. This was done and their bodies burnt at *Mwalule*” ( Roberts 1973). It was such a historic revenge that some oral traditions of the Bemba elders state that before *Chilimbulu* ( the woman that caused the death of the first leader of the Bembas to be killed) was burnt, her belly skin was removed and seasoned that to this day, its considered as one of the royal relics (*Babenye*) passed on from one *Chitimukulu*’s successor to the other until now.

The episode of the revenge ended on a very sad note. After burning Chief *Mwase* and his wife’s bodies at *Mwalule*, “the smoke from the fire choked *Nkole*, who also died and he too had to be buried at *Mwalule*” (Roberts 1973). At this the Bemba had a leadership vacuum, as *Chilufya*, *Mulenga*’s son, the rightful successor of his two uncles in the matrilineal arrangement, was still young and they had not arrived yet at a suitable place where they would set their establishment. The symbol of leadership, for the migrants were the two bows, one which belonged to *Chiti* the first leader and the other from *Nkole* which *Chilufya Mulenga*, their sister had initially kept because the migrants had made a declaration that their succession would be through the matrilineal sib and the only legitimate successor to *Chiti* and *Nkole* was *Chilufya*, “a son of their sister: (Roberts 1973). Roberts (1973) records that since “the boy was too young; *Chiti*’s half-brother *Chimba* took charge of the bows of *Chiti* and *Nkole*. The migrants left *Mwalule* and crossed *Chambeshi North*” ( Roberts 1973) . The other half brother *Kapasa* , who had committed incest with his half-sister, *Chilufya Mulenga* lived in disgrace and as such he decided to part company with the rest. “ he settled on his own in *Bulombwa*, driving out the *Iwa* tribe of Chief *Kafwimbi* and his herds of cattle” ( Roberts 1973) . It should be noted that everyone who parted company with the migrants after the crossing of river (*Bemba*) Luapula was already identified as a *Bemba* and through this the *Bemba* territory expanded. By this time some *Bembas* had settled in Luapula, under the leadership of *Kazembe*, another *Chiti*’s half-brother, others in *Mpika*, near *Mwases* area, others in *Mwalule*, *Chinsali*

and still others established new villages driving out the locals they found as deemed fit to them.

#### 4.2.3. ESTABLISHMENT

While the matrilineal royal clan was seeking where to establish the New kingdom, with Chimba as the acting delegation leader, the migrants travelled west of *Mwalule* ( present day Chinsali district) up the river called “ the *Kalungu* river” ( Roberts 1973) a few kilometers from *Kasama* town in the Northern Province of Zambia. By the river banks, “two men, *Kabwa* and *Chikunga*, came upon a dead crocodile, rotting on the river bank” (Roberts 1973). Suddenly the discovery of a dead crocodile, draw the attention of the migrants who connected with what *Mumbi Mukasa*, mentioned about when she told Chief Mukulumpe, that, “ she was a Queen of the crocodile ( *Ng’andu*) clan” ( Roberts 1973). Now “since chiefs as children of *Mumbi Mukasa*, were of the crocodile clan ( *bená Ng’ndu*), this was taken to be a very a good omen” ( Roberts 1973). The migrants decided to make their capital at Ng’wena on the Kalungu and they settled in the surrounding country.

The place near *Kalungu* river was therefore established and the Bemba royal establishment. By 1930, when Dr. Audrey Richards conducted the first research into the Bemba tribe, “found a very big village of men and women of the Bemba land” (Roberts,1973). Today the Bemba royal establishment and Kingdom is one of the biggest in Africa.

#### 4.2.4. HANDING OVER POWER TO CHILUFYA AS FIRST CHITIMUKULU

As *Chimba* was still leading, the boy *Chilufya* became a man and *Chimba* decided to hand over the bows of leadership together with other relics ( *Babenye*). As Roberts reports “*Chimba* handed over the bows of *Chilufya’s* uncles *Nkole* and *Chiti*” (Roberts 1973) in Praise he shouted “*Chilufya Ca Mata Yabili*” meaning I am *Chilufya* of the two bows of leadership. In appreciation to his uncle, his father’s half-brother, *Chilufya* decided to give one bow to *Chimba* to establish a new village of the keepers of the palace if any King of the *Bemba* died. And so *Chimba* went up the *Kalungu* river and established his palace at “ *Chati Ndubwi*” ( Roberts 1973).A few miles from the original palace. With the new villages and settlements, “ the *Bemba*

became many. New villages and chieftainships were founded and many chiefs were appointed to lead in various territories.

*Chilufya* took the name of the uncle *Chiti* whose bow he kept and named the *Bemba* paramountcy as *Chitimukulu* (*Chiti*, the great). When *Chilufya* died, many chiefs succeeded him and presently the current *Chitimukulu* *Kanyanta Manga II* is number 38 since the establishment of the *Bemba* Kingdom. Roberts (1973) reports that the influence of the *Bemba* has been rampant as “ most of the people who have come under *Bemba* rule closely resemble the *Bemba* in their social customs, not only are they all matrilineal, most of them belong to a common network of clans. Intermarriages between the *Bemba* and their subject peoples have been frequent” ( Roberts 1973)

### **4.3. LIFE STYLE AND IDENTITY**

By life style, and identity, we refer to the general tenets that define the practice and involvement of the *Bemba* people in public life as well as individual lives. It should be noted that the *Bemba* people more than any other tribe in Zambia, command a considerable influence in the identity of the *Zambian* people in general in every sphere of life including politics. It is therefore imperative that we highlight some of the characteristics that define the *Bemba* speaking people.

#### **4.3.1. BACKGROUND OF THE BEMBA ECONOMIC SYSTEMS**

The *Bemba* had a simple subsistence economy. They were eminently shifting cultivators and their farming methods were fully adapted to the natural conditions of a given area within the *Bemba* country. Crop rotation was eminent and varied from one area to the other. As Richards remarks, “ the *Bemba* people were also involved in long distant and domestic trade, hunting, fishing and relied somewhat on the bush for the provision of the wild plants and fruits for food” ( Richards 1970:18). Cattle keeping were rare since “a third of the *Bemba* country was *tsetse* fly infested” (Peni, 2006). So crop farming remained a part of their primary activities in the entire *Bemba* country.

#### 4.3.2. THE ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES OF THE BEMBA IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

“Bembaland was situated at the eastern end of the great central savannah and like most of the plateau it was well wooded and well watered” (Garvey 1994:1). As a consequence, agriculture was the main economic activity of the Bemba people. “Besides the growing of finger millet, the staple food, sorghum, maize, groundnuts as well as sweet potatoes were also grown” (Roberts 1973: xxviii).

The *Bemba* lived in small villages each constituting 30 to 50 huts. Each individual village, which was governed by a village headman appointed by the district chief, was an economic unit and the headman/woman spearheaded all the economic activities in collaboration with the members of his/her respective village. The mere fact that each chiefdom had autonomy within its boundaries to exercise its economic activities without direct instruction from the Chitimukulu was convenient enough bearing in mind that “the *Bemba* chiefdoms covered are of more than 20,000 square miles (Roberts 1973:165). Since there were no modern means of transport as we have today, each village was better placed to organize and carry out its economic activities in its own context through bargaining, consultation, discussion, ultimately by consensus.

“Agriculture was organized on a slash and burn system, whereby trees were pollarded to provide wood ash fertilizer for cultivation and as a result villages were shifted every few years as the woodland was used up” ( Garvey 1994:3). The type of shifting cultivating, locally known as *chitemene* caused incalculable damage to the environment and a Onwuejeogwu observed, “it also affected the composition of the village when some people were not comfortable with moving to a new place(Ibid:88). The Bemba grew enough staple food, finger millet, to keep them for nine months and cassava lasted throughout the year. And as can be deduced from the gossip and the stories in the villages, there was endless talk about what has been eaten before, what is eaten at present moment and what was in store for the future (Richards 1970:44).

The Bemba had also a mechanism of putting food in large quantities in granaries which would keep them going up to the next harvest season. Chief’s granaries were generally bigger than those of commoners. Maybe this is because each family was

expected to pay tribute to their respective chiefs after the harvest. Roberts pin points that the “power of the Bemba chiefs as of other elders, derived to a large extent from their command of material wealth and their ability to circulate it among their subjects” (1973:182). Though the territorial chiefs had an upper hand in maintenance of food reserves against time of scarcity, they did so not for personal gain or “aggrandizement but for the good of the whole kingdom.” (Peni, 2006) In times of scarcity, Chiefs had an economic obligation to also share with subjects what was stored at the palace’s granaries.

“A noticeable feature of any village was the *nsaka* or shelter , a roof structure supported by bare poles where men of the village would sit, eat and talk,” ( Garvey 1994:9). This was one way to promote democratic involvement of the people of the village in “free discussion” (M.Mutiso, 1975) was promoted to enhance public opinion in the issues regarding the running of the village or territory. Each household on a daily basis took the meals it had prepared to the *insaka* to be shared with the others. Simply put bring and share type of life style characterised the general practice of the *Bemba* people. This inculcated in young people the need to share with others and explains why the spirit of sharing was a predominant feature in the *Bemba* life style, “something that greatly helped to stabilize the country during economic quagmire caused by natural disasters” (Peni, 2006)

The *Bemba* country also had a lot of ivory and “a great abundance of rich saline grass in *Chibwa* marsh [traditional salt] on the Lwitikila river in *Chinama*: the ash from this diluted and filtered into pots in which the solution was evaporated by boiling; the residue was then left in pots to crystallise in the form of small cakes” ( Roberts 1973:187). This salt was sold to neighbouring countries in exchange of guns, cotton cloth and other commodities needed by the Bemba people. Traders from East Africa had a lot of influence over trade in many African kingdoms save for the *Bemba* hegemony. Conversely, “the *Bemba* used the people they traded with to increase their monopoly over surrounding tribes” (Roberts 1973:198). As a matter of fact, the *Bemba* considerably “benefited from dealings with people from East Africa and Portuguese expeditions” (Peni,2006) perhaps more than any other tribe because not only did they demand a lot from those they traded with but they “were feared because of their warrior mentalities.” (Roberts 1973:198). Hence , some

unscrupulous “ foreign traders rarely settled, hunted or raided in *Bemba* country” (Ibid:200) except those who were honest and fair in this enterprise.

It should be borne in mind that the *Bemba* economic system was predominately concerned with how much food was available and stored for future consumption. And as can be deduced from the preceding paragraphs, there is every reason to believe beyond any reasonable doubt that the economic system at that time served the needs of the people in their own context. In other words, they were not poor people per se.

With the opening of the Copper mines on the Copperbelt province in present day Zambia from the early 1930's to date, the largest group of migrants to the Copperbelt became the *Bemba*. As Roberts (1973) clearly states, “Nowadays, many *Bemba* earn a living on the mines of the Copperbelt and send money home to relatives in Bembaland” (Roberts 1973). The rural urban drift of people in the history of Zambia has been dominated by the *Bemba* and as such, Copperbelt, which has the largest population in Zambia, comprises the Bemba speaking people. This is what amounts to the influence of the *Bemba* tribes in most parts of Zambia who mostly are very talkative and have a very influential life style. No wonder the Zambian political atmosphere always favours the general feeling and opinion of the *Bemba* speaking. Andrew Roberts (1973) wrote: “ most of the people who have come under *Bemba* rule closely resemble the Bemba in their customs. Not only are they all matrilineal; but most of them belong to a common network of clans” (1973: 20-21).

Arising from this historical description it should be borne in mind that the *Bemba* economic system and life style in public life was by and large predominately concerned with how much food was available and stored for future consumption while other things remained secondary. And as can be deduced from the preceding paragraphs, there is every reason to believe beyond any reasonable doubt that the *Bemba* life style and their economic system was more concerned with collective participation of citizens which culminated into recording a huge progress in food security and production.

#### 4.4. DISTINCTIVE MARKS OF THE BEMBA SPEAKING PEOPLE

The *Bemba* speaking people demonstrate an example of a proud African tribe that is coherently kept together regardless of cultural diversities they have encountered over the years in their occupation of present Northern and Muchinga provinces of Zambia. This sense of pride is implanted within their common heritage. First and foremost the district feature of the *Bemba* is that they all have “the common name ‘babemba’ [the *Bembas* in plural] (Pritchard, 1969: 86). They express their sociological identity “with a good deal of pride in such phrases as ‘*five babemba*’ [we the Bemba] (Ibid) an expression of a pluralist society i.e. one which can only be identified in unison and not singular. They use collective expressions to enhance unity and the pride of their tribe. All the responses to their answers even when responding to a greeting, they use pluralistic expressions. Now this is a tradition that emphasises that, the *Bemba*, are to act together in all matters of social, political and community orders which includes, making collective decisions, in all matters of life such as marriage, leadership, funerals etc.

The second distinctive mark of the *Bemba*, is Language which is used as a primary means of communication and is expressed in pluralistic terms. Often their pronounced identity through language is meant to distinguish them from “those of the surrounding peoples who are still sometimes referred to contentiously as slaves [*abashya*]” (Ibid: 86).

As part of language, the Bemba phrases are in form of parables (*Imilumbe*) and proverbs (*insoselo*). These are hallmarks of the *Bemba* tribe and its people in their expressed identity. The language itself, [*icibemba*] “forms a distinct dialect in their eyes, although it does not differ very considerably from the neighbouring *Chibisa* or *Lala*” (Ibid) in the central and Muchinga provinces within Zambia. For the *Bemba*, language has been used as a tool in establishing a distinct identity of the *Bemba* people in public life. It is a sense of their pride which makes them poses certain attributes which manifest in their plural disposition often wanting to lead and establish structures that work together for the common purpose of their being.

Thirdly the *Bemba* have a “tribal mark” (Pritchard, 1969: 87). Much as it is very difficult to speak of the *Bembas* as tribal, their tribal mark is identified in the way they are able to identify each other regardless of how far they are from their home land. They are often found in groups and often work well with their tribes mates. This attribute is what has made them remain united everywhere they go over a long time. They always take over the show wherever they find themselves, be it community, or political platforms.

Fourthly, the *Bemba* have “common historical traditions of the people” (Ibid). This entails that the *Bemba*’s long history of triumph in governance issues is demonstrated vis-a-vis in the way they have maintained a common ground in the way they do things. Even in the context of providing leadership, the *Bemba* have a common strategy, regardless of the differences in chiefdoms i.e. the traditions that govern *Ituna* chiefdom or territory in Kasama , is related to the traditions that govern *Icinga* in Chief Nkula’s chiefdom or territory in Chinsali and so on and so forth. Audrey(1969) expresses it in this way, “ ...even the young *Bemba* at the present day speak with pride of the coming of their fathers from *luba* and take delight in describing the military exploits of their ancestors and the ferocity of the old chiefs” (Ibid). This presupposes that in *Lubemba* or *Bemba* country, one does not find a people that forget their history so quickly. They have actually developed parables, stories and proverbs which constantly make them live with pride as they use them in day today livelihood.

Lastly but not the least the *Bemba* marks are expressed as an ultimate “allegiance to a common paramount chief, the *Chitimukulu* whose overlordship of the Bemba territory is unquestioned” (Ibid). The capabilities of this means that the *Bemba* state has established the traditions of the governance system which is most significant in their total surrender to the paramount chief whose *Bemba* land in *Lubemba* country is the custodian of the traditions of the *Bemba* people. The paramount chief is the common denominator of all the chiefdoms and therefore the paramount chief is the symbol of their unquestionable authority of the *Bemba* territories

#### **4.5. THE SOCIAL GROUPING OF THE BEMBA SPEAKING PEOPLE.**

By social grouping, we mean, the traditional way in which the *Bemba* people are identified in connection to the entire *Bemba* society. It also means the social classes



or categories of the *Bemba* people in the order of their birth and connection to the royal line of the *Chitimukulu* and the hereditary councillors. It should be noted that, a person's name and identity in the community is determined by ones birth and connection to royal line and mainly this is considered through matrilineal descend in the family. The family of one's birth also entails the kind of responsibility that person will execute within the *Bemba* establishment.

#### 4.5.1. KINSHIP

The *Bemba* appreciate that the success of the country depends on a structured social organization system. In this case from their origins, the *Bemba* respect for kinship was very paramount in order to maintain order peace and tranquility in society. Socially the Bemba “are a matrilineal tribe practicing matrilocal marriages” (Pritchard, 1969:87) as alluded to above. This means kinship can only pass from brother to brother or from brother to sister's son. They strongly regard the womb of the sisters as a queen mother (*Bana Mfumu*) as a symbol of the family line. “Descent is reckoned through the mother and a man is legally identified with a group of relatives composed of his maternal grandmother and her brothers and sisters, his mother and her brothers and sisters his own sisters” (Ibid). This means that all people in the *Bemba* country are identified through a common female ancestor. it is the relationship with “the membership of this group which determines succession to different roles and offices in the order of their status in community” in a matrilocal society the man does not determine a place of residence but his wife would.

However, despite the matrilineal orientation, the *Bemba* kinship system is in some ways, bilateral in nature in the sense that for a family unit to be complete, it must involve the paternal side of the family. This is why in the recent past the definition of family was broadened. In the Bemba society in this regard

*“the kinship group to which a person constantly refers in everyday affairs is the lupwa [family], a bilateral group of near relatives on both sides of his family (i.e., a kindred), who join in religious ceremonies, matrimonial transactions, mortuary ritual, and inheritance [...] certain important matters such as issues pertaining burial, counseling etc. this group is more important to a Bemba sociologically than his matrilineal sib (Richards1939: 17)*

. “A patrilineal emphasis has been increasing in recent years, including a broadening of the father's authority within the family” (Richards 1939: 17; Richards 1940: 87; and Richards 1968: 173-178). Some of the smaller *Bemba* chiefdoms are “under the custodian of the Senior Chief's children and some close relatives who are appointed based on their value to articulate the important matters of the *Bemba* society.” (Sosala, 2014)

Super imposed upon this kinship base is a “highly centralized, hierarchical, and authoritarian political system consisting of three main levels of organization: the state, the district, and the village.” (Richards 1968: 173-178). As previously noted, the state or country is ruled by a Paramount Chief called *Chitimukulu* whose office is hereditary within a royal line. His authority is nearly absolute, and “he is believed to have supernatural powers.” (Roberts 1973). The *Chitimukulu* is assisted by the council of *bashilubemba* “consisting of 30 to 40 hereditary officials (the bakabilo), many of royal descent, and each responsible for some special ritual duty kept secret from the ordinary members of the society.” (Roberts, 1973).

#### **4.5.2. CLAN**

The main attribute of the *Bemba* people socially is that each member does not operate as individuals, they “belong to a wider descent group, the clan- *umukoa*, which as a matter of inheritance is traced in a woman's line” (Ibid:87). The clan forms a great deal in terms of the social organization which becomes a basis for a major role in establishing a social class of the *Bemba* because

*“each umukoa is distinguished by the name of an animal, plant or natural phenomenon, such as rain. These natural animals, plants and natural phenomena explain the character of the clan in which a person is born. Clans are in effect exogenous, since man may not marry a woman he calls mother, sister or daughter and these terms are extended to the limits of clan membership on the maternal side” (Roberts, 1973)*

Basically, “it is through his clan affiliation that a man traces his descent or rank if he belongs to the royal clan- i.e. He or she then holds the right to succeed to certain offices, such as “hereditary councillorship on the maternal side” (Roberts, 1973: 87). It is noticed that among the *Bemba*, social organization, there are classifications of

clans which play as a prerequisite in order to play major roles in society. Of course these classes do not by any means disqualify any, to certain privileges, because in whichever role by nature of the birth right, which is followed coupled with experience and rhetoric abilities, people find themselves useful to the *Bemba* society. Of course as a matter of birth right, “some clans have a higher status than others, according to whether their original ancestors arrived in the country as part of the following of the first *Chitimukulu* or alternatively, split off as a separate descent group” (Ibid).

This is where the line of royalty derives its authority and credentials in the *Bemba* society. It is for this very reason that “the crocodile clan [*bená Ngandu*] is the *mukoa*[clan] of the of the first migrant chief and stands highest in status, while various others such as the fish clan, millet clan[...] are said to be of similar antiquity” (Ibid: 88).

It is worth noting that following the classifications of the clans, “all the *imikoa* [clans] are paired with opposite clans that perform reciprocal ritual duties for each other,” (Ibid:88). Rituals are basically performed in traditional sites as part of the *Bemba* religious practice of which the *Chitimukulu* functions as the high priest. This is what can be termed as a participatory system of democracy among the *Bemba* traditional culture. The pairing of clans with the opposite also considers the line of the first expeditions and also those who chose to remain in the conquered areas that later became *Bemba*land. Though they were considered commoners, they still were given responsibilities to do and as such they for a social class of their own as Roberts records, “This form of social grouping does not seem to affect the political organization at all” (Roberts, 1973), it basically supplemented it in the sense that “even minority clans have a place and role to play in the wider group of the *Bemba* society.” (E.E.Evans-Pritchard, 1940). It is the social groupings which eventually culminated into the formation of a stronger political organization of the *Bemba* royal establishment.

Further, clans as they are tended to evolve to another level in the *Bemba* society. They came as a result of eventualities that ordered the royal line to grant them social status other than the one they had previously. For example, if a clan served the royals better or offered some kind of generosity, they would be given a new role and a new status that would be hereditary. This is what counts when a smaller lineage

appears to attain full status and eligible for more noble responsibilities as Prichard's clearly states that, "within the clan, smaller lineage groups are recognized."(Ibid) These may have no distinct name in the past but simply being referred to as "houses" [*amayanda*] (ibid) of the same clan. The idea here is that in the *Bemba* society, social groups are not static. They evolve and as a result. The concept of participation of all citizens regardless of their social and identity background is usually valued and a new status earned based of their ultimate loyalty to the ideals of the *Bemba* people.

#### **4.6. LOCAL ORGANIZATION**

The term local organization refers to the basic political structure of the *Bemba* people which served as a vehicle of ruler ship and development in *Bemba*land. These were organized units which depicted the concept of decentralization as a model of promoting development and economic prosperity of the people through collective participation at every level of leadership. Here now marks our point of departure in analyzing the organization in terms of local governance.

##### **4.6.1. VILLAGE**

It is well noted that "the local unit in the *Bemba* society is a village-*umushi*" (E.E.Evans-Pritchard, 1940). A village forms a nucleus of community life of the *Bemba*. In it all the people including a chief and village headmen belong together to form a community that works together for the common good of each other. Among the *Bemba* society, a village only qualifies when it has an average of thirty to fifty family hats and "is a kinship unit first and foremost" (Ibid: 89). A kinship, in the sense that, a village is expected to "comprise people who are near relatives, both from the paternal and maternal side" (Sosala, 2014). This is the reason why female children, who reach marriage age, are advised to attract their husbands to join them in their village.

There are procedures for the granting of the village status in the *Bemba* country as there must be enough reasons to warrant its status. As the first step, " a village comes into being when middle- aged or elderly man has acquired a big enough following of relatives to justify his applying to the chief for permission to set up a village community on his own" ( Ibid: 89). This kind of organization of a social group

with a following is very challenging in the *Bemba* society because the person applying must possess certain leadership qualities that warrant people, relatives and non-relatives to find his village a safe place. “Determination of the village is purely on merit of a proven leadership quality as well as the consensus of elders” (E.E.Evans-Pritchard, 1940) of the would be village to convincingly prove support of the strong leadership qualities of the applicant. “The care of the village consists in the first place of the headman’s own matrilineal family group, i.e. is married daughters with their husbands and children probably members of his matrilineal descent-group i.e. his sisters and their children” (Ibid: 89). This suggests that the man who happens to be a headman should above all be a good steward of his family ( *ulupwa*) who will be willing to be part and parcel of the village.

It is said that “a successful head man will be able to attract more distant relatives to him both on the patrilineal and matrilineal side” (Ibid). From there the village may not be static, as it grows, it may further split and have new villages established to form other political units of the *Lubemba* country. However, in the case of the villages for men and women of status such as the hereditary officials of the chief or the paramount chief, “they may remain permanently fixed in one village” (Ibid) without having them move to other villages as they are expected to be near the chief in order to be available any time they are needed.

The establishment of villages does not only come from the applicants only. It is noted that “in every district, there are a number of new villages brought into existence by the chief’s favour and therefore specifically dependent on his support” (Ibid: 89). This is a result of the chief’s council’s recognition of the growing villages and decides to create new ones by the popular consensus his council. The new villages “ include communities newly gathered together by commoner headman as described as well as existing villages which have been given with or without the inhabitants good will to relative of the chief” ( Ibid 90).

This kind of system is what amounts to the growth of the villages that have since been divided from the initial “160 villages in Chitimukulu’s district in 1933” (Ibid) to countless villages as the population has grown at a very fast rate.

#### 4.6.2. THE BEMBA TERRITORY

Like any other political organization, the Bemba have a very large country and to administer the affairs of the Lubemba country, the country is divided into districts called *Ifyalo* (plural-*icalo*-singular) “The *icalo* is a geographical unit with a fixed boundary and a name dating from historical times” (ibid: 91). The districts are governed by senior Chief’s while the “*Lubemba* the country of the Bemba” ( Ibid 91) is governed by the Paramount Chief Chimukulu, while other chiefdoms such as *Ituna*, *Icinga*, *Mumporokoso*, *Chikwanda*, *Luwingu* are governed by Chief *Mwamba*, Chief *Nkula*, Chief *Mumporokoso*, Chief *Chikwanda*, and Chief *Shimumbi* Luwingu district respectively. These people are senior chiefs and they receive full recognition from the Republic of Zambia, and they are appointed by consensus by the council of *ba shilubemba*, the *Bemba* councillors.

The “*Icalo* is also a political unit” ( Ibid) and as alluded to above is basically governed by “ a chief with a fixed title” ( Ibid). This is what amounts to the second category of the political organization of the *Bemba*, where by a number of villages are subordinated to a territory which forms a political structure called *icalo* to spear head development . “ there are several types of chief”( Ibid) who rule the *icalo* according to the *Bemba* statutes and every one of them is charged with the responsibility to ensure peace and harmony in the villages in which they are lord over. “ Each of these chiefs is known by the same title *Imfumu*” ( Ibid). *Imfumu* in the *Bemba* society may mean a person who in other contexts may be referred to as a King and is given the due respect that goes with the office. Though there are various districts in the Bemba society, “ each *icalo* is more or less self- contained unit, a replica of the social structure of the other” ( Ibid:91). But its operations are autonomous and the decisions made in councils are also decisions of the district. The only unification for the harmonization for the difference of opinion is when all districts (*ifyalo*) meet at the *Lubemba* council. Mwamba Peni (2006) in this respect outlines that

*One of the defining characteristics of the Bemba political system was that it was a decentralized one...the territorial chiefs in collaboration with the general populace planned and made decisions about their welfare under a high degree of independence in their own domain, without consulting either*

*Chitimukulu or his council of advisors. Be that as it may, the over lordship of Chitimukulu was highly acknowledged. According to Bemba people decentralization was regarded as a viable tool for economic development in as far as responding to the needs of the people all levels of society was concerned. It triggered people to fully and effectively participate in the developmental processes because the people owned the very process of development*

In fact, the strength of such a system is that, the kind of autonomy which territorial chiefs enjoy, enables the smooth running of *Lubemba*. In the unpublished article, (the dissent of the Bemba, 2014) Henry Kanyanta Sosala talks about this system during the colonial era,

*Through native authorities, chiefs were able to mobilize the resources of the community and repair roads and schools in their areas. This was a surest way of taking power to the people at grass-root level” he adds, “...it was believed then that democracy is strongest when its institutions such as the native authorities are virile at the local level. These native authorities served as agencies of the colonial government and at the same time acted as crystallizers of the public opinion. And for this chiefs were much respected by their subjects ( Ibid)*

As political units, “ the each capital has its own court, however small” ( Ibid). The courts are a system for the promotion of justice among the *Bemba* peoples. The courts include, providing disciplinary actions against members who do wrong in society. All the citizens regardless of their clan or *ulupwa*, are accommodated in the *Bemba* society. The traditional priests, ( *Bashimapepo*) play a major role in providing the justice, the people need in the *Bemba* society. The suspects if found guilty are charged with bringing items to the chief as a form of punishment for evil doing.

In the district, the head of the district who is the chief in this matter “has rights over the labour of his own villages” (Ibid) and commands respect in all matters of authority within his district and he is responsible for the protection of symbols of traditional oneness. In this case a good chief is only admired when he is a good custodian of the people he leads and that he is expected to be a unifying personality. It is only in

this that a chief is regarded as a saviour of the people, especially in times of war, famine, calamities and domestic quarrels.

#### 4.6.3. SOCIAL CLASSES

In the *Bemba* society social classes of clans and near relatives is regarded as very paramount as it determines the kind of responsibility one is given within the *Bemba* society. First and foremost a social class is, “ based on kinship with the chief.” (Evans-Pritchard, 1940) . It is worth noting that connection with the chief, has to do with ones clan because it is a clan which is a basis of recognition for certain responsibilities and even rank according the Bemba norms. According to Richards (1973), “ over thirty clans are represented in Bembaland, named after animals and other natural phenomena”. This means, such clans put together, have a particular roll to play within the Bemba society.

However, there is one particular clan which is of great significant in the *Bemba* society. The clan is called the people of the crocodile ( *Bena Ng’andu* or *Bena Ng’wena*). This is considered a royal clan, who are believed to been descendants of *Mumbi Mukasa* , the wife of Chief *Mukulumpe*, the father of *Katongo*, *Nkole* and *Chiti*. It is believed that “ All members of the royal crocodile clan (*Bena Ng’andu*) are entitled to special respect, precedence on ritual and social occasions, and sometimes to claims on the people’s services” (Evans-Pritchard, 1940). It is only through the crocodile clan that one would dream of becoming a Chief, rising even to the position of paramount Chief. Audrey Richards notes that “the potential heirs of a chief within his own branch of the family- that is to say, his brothers, maternal nephews, or maternal grandsons- are treated with particular deference.” (Evans-Pritchard, 1940) and have their own special rituals and social prerogatives different from other clans.

The *Bemba* treat female gender with high respect and are given a place of honour as the producers of Chiefs that would rule the people of *Bemba* land. Audrey states “ Women of the royal line ,the mothers ,sisters, maternal nieces, and grand daughters’ of the chiefs are called Queen mothers (Bana Mfumu) and are treated with the same deference as are the men of the family.” (Evans-Pritchard, 1940) . There is however, the highest form of deference that is given to the supreme Queen mother. The supreme Queen mother is the mother of the paramount chief,



*Chitimukulu*. As it states, “The mother of the paramount is highly honoured, succeeds to a fixed title “the Candamukulu) takes part in tribal councils, and has several villages of her own.” (Evans-Pritchard, 1940). There is also another deference given to the sisters of the chief, who are equally the mothers of future chiefs. They are equally “ privileged persons, protected and supported by their royal brothers, and usually granted one or more villages to rule (Evans-Pritchard, 1940)

It is worth noting that it’s not only members of the royal clan, but also persons, who merely belong to the *ulupwa* of the chief, can claim high rank in certain responsibilities. These are the chiefs near relatives on his paternal side, and his sons. However, it was subject to the consensus of the *Bashilubema*. In principle, some fathers of chiefs were nobodies and were quickly forgotten due to the maternal succession, but some have been famous men, honoured by their sons when the latter succeeded to the throne .The children of chiefs on the other hand, though not members of the chiefs clan, and therefore not heirs, are also entitled to only some special privileges, as the bana *bamfumu* (‘children of the chief’) form a class of their own as royals. They are brought up at the court, where they are treated in many ways more favorably than the heirs themselves and are able to claim headman ships and even chieftainships. Even the half-brothers of chiefs, through other fathers (*bakaulu*), have rights to special treatment in courts.

In the recent past it has been noted that in special cases some members who do not belong to the royal clan have claimed a rank within the *Bemba* society. These are people who merely belong to the family (*ulupwa*) of the chief “i.e. his relatives on the parental side and his sons” (Evans-Pritchard, 1940). This is evidence in the royal line of Chief *Mumporokoso*, who is a mere son of the chief and has been given the rank to govern the people within *Bemba* land. The change of the political governance to include some parental relatives owes to the fact that in the past, “some fathers of chiefs were nobodies and were quickly forgotten though some may have been famous and honoured by their sons who later succeeded to the throne” (Evans-Pritchard, 1940).

Others who do not belong to the royal line are the children of chiefs. They are not members of the chief’s clan and not even heirs to the throne. However at the discretion of the royal line they “are also entitled to special privileges as the children

of the chief from a class of their own. (Evans-Pritchard, 1940). This awes to the fact that since “they are brought up at the court, were they are treated in many ways more favourably than the heirs themselves” (Evans-Pritchard, 1940), they are given privileges to leadership and even a lesser chieftainship in villages. Audrey notes that “ even half- brothers of chiefs, through other fathers called ‘*bakaulu*’ have rights to special treatment at the court” (Evans-Pritchard, 1940).

This open arm privilege of the *Bemba* demonstrates an extent to which the *Bemba* governance system tends to be democratic in its sharing of power within the *Bemba* society and its citizens.

In addition to the class of various personalities “ are descendants of close relatives of dead chiefs[....] any person who claim to be maternal nephew, grandson or son of a chief is succeeded by a man who continues to hold the same rank by inheritance ( *ukupyanika*) system” (Evans-Pritchard, 1940). It is however important to stress that some groups who are outside the royal clan are regarded as ordinary people ( *abapabi*)” (Evans-Pritchard, 1940).

Audrey notes that such people in olden days, “there was a slave class below-men and women captured in battle or enslaved to their people for some crime” (Evans-Pritchard, 1940). This social class has since diminished in modern society.

#### **4.6.4. OTHER FORMS OF SOCIAL GROUPING IN BEMBA SOCIETY.**

One of the most fascinating things about the *Bemba* models unlike other within the African Society is that the Bemba do not regard age as a primary factor to a social class but rather they look at seniority. Audrey notes with excitement that “age is not a principle of the social grouping of the *Bemba*.” (E.E.Evans-Pritchard, 1940). Precedence is

*“reckoned on the basis of seniority [.....] described in the different stages of life, suckling, infant, child adolescent, unmarried, old[...] but there are no regiments based on age as it is in the south, and parts of East Africa, and the boys initiation ceremonies so often found associated with such institutions do not exist among this group of central Bantu. (Evans-Pritchard, 1940).*

In pursuing this norm, a person may be young in age but very senior in social class or status due to the seniority of his family in the arrangement of the matrilineal sib. As such age does not matter in any way.

In conclusion, we can say that the Bemba norms with regard to the classification of class and identity through the royal line demonstrate a very interesting level of engagement in African theology. It is worth noting that societal grouping in the *Bemba* society provides a good point of departure in the study of Multipartism and democracy in African society.

#### **4.7. THE BEMBA DOCTRINE OF SUCCESSION**

Succession among the *Bemba* as noted above, is through the matrilineal sib in which transmission of power is from maternal brother to brother and then to sisters male children. This doctrine, which the *Bemba* espouse is in line with the line of Queen mother “Mumbi Mukasa” (Roberts 1973) the wife of “*Mukulumphe*” (Ibid) a chief in “*Luba or kola*” (Ibid) who was the father of *Chiti*, the leader of the migrants that “crossed river Luapula” (Ibid) to form the *Bemba* tribe, the inhabitants of *Lubemba* country of the *Bemba*. Since time in memorial the *Bemba*’s have by and large demonstrated their commitment to this succession doctrine with tested experience of over 300 years of their traditional leadership in present day Zambia. We shall look at some of the main features which justify the matrilineal belief in the Bemba succession tradition.

##### **4.7.1. FORMATION OF A CHILD AND IDENTITY**

According to the Bemba norms, “it is believed that a child is made from the blood of a woman which she is able to transmit to her male and female.” (Evans-Pritchard, 1940) Children. They believe that though “a man can possess this blood in his veins, but female children, who belong to a different clan.” ” (Evans-Pritchard, 1940). This is the reason why, in the *Bemba* society, the parental family “have no legal obligations to their children under the matrilineal system.”(Ibid). The basis for this is the physical continuity of the mother’s line of ancestors which is the basis of legal identification with her descent group and it is through such that children born of the sisters to the chiefs are mainly taught the customs and teachings of the matrilineal society.

It is said that “a royal princess might even produce an heir by a slave father in the old days without lowering her child’s prestige. ” (Evans-Pritchard, 1940)”. In this kind of arrangement Audrey notes that,

*the relationship between brother and sister, which is very close one, legally and ritually, is based on the fact that the two were born from one womb, and in the case of the royal family it appears to be equally strong when the two are children of different fathers. These theories of procreation account, not only for the matrilineal descent of the Bemba, on which succession to chieftainship is based ,but also for the rank accorded to the royal princesses as mothers of chiefs, and the headman ships and other positions of authority given them.*

This particular doctrine in the Bemba matrilineal society signifies the importance of the womb as a symbol of life. The womb is regarded as one that generates life and therefore it is a significant point of departure in the establishment of chieftainship. It is said in the oral tradition of the *Bemba* people that the only one who knows the genuine father of the child is the mother. At this they dispel the patrilineal societies that transfer of power from father to son may invite a community to be led by a slave. The Bemba feel, the community is more precise and comfortable that the chief’s sister’s son is the right heir to the throne.

#### **4.7.2. THE INFLUENCE OF THE DEAD OVER THE LIVING**

The second doctrine of the *Bemba*, is their belief in the “influence of the dead over the living [.....] as a basis for political authority.” ” (Evans-Pritchard, 1940) .

*“The spirit of the dead man (umupashi, plural .imipashi) is thought to survive as a guardian presence associated with the land or village site formally inhabitants, and as a spiritual protector of different individuals born in the same lineage group and called by the same name.” (Ibid)*

It is believed that

*“the spirit of dead chiefs become tutelary deities of the land they ruled over and responsible for its fertility and the welfare of its inhabitants. They can be approached by the successor to the chieftainship at various sacred spots in the territory and at the sacred relic shrines (babanye) in his own village.*

This is what amounts to the belief that “the chief is said to be powerful because he has a great spirit” (Evans-Pritchard, 1940). The *Bemba* in this regard describes the chief “as the *umwine calo*, ‘owner of the land’” (Ibid). It is worth noting as Audrey noted, that the doctrine of the

*“Influence of the dead over the living inhabitants of a district, or the members of a descent group, is very similar to the general Bantu pattern in which a spiritual being is believed to be involved in the day to day livelihood of the living. The Bemba social identification between the dead man and his appointed successor seems to me to be particularly complete.”* (Evans-Pritchard, 1940)

#### **4.8. THE BASIS OF AUTHORITY IN THE BEMBA SOCIETY**

In African society in general, there are various religious and non- religious models of authority. Each one of them, with their distinct values and services to its people. Each of them has a specialized task to carry out in the community certain responsibilities for the well-being of society and its leadership. It should be noted that, the Bemba among many other African tribes have established models of leadership, which are a basis of carrying out authoritative services to the community and the traditional government.

In the first instance, we wish to state that positions of authority in the *Bemba* society, “consist of the following offices: territorial ruler (Chiefs and head men); administrative officers and councillors; [...] priest, guardians of sacred shrines and magic specialists with economic functions; [...]; and army leaders” (E.E.Evans-Pritchard, 1940) etc. These offices are regarded as the primary basis of authority in traditional political organization of the *Bemba*. It is through these channels that form the true basics for an African polity of inclusiveness. The following are the position and courts through which the regard as a primary authority for their day to day welfare.

##### **4.8.1. THE HEADMAN.**

*Bemba* headmen are described as looking after, keeping ,or actually ‘herding the people’( *ukuteka bantu*).As senior kinsman of most of the villagers, “a headman is responsible for the discipline of the children and young people; he hears cases informally and directs some economic activities.” (Chuba B. S., 2011). There are few

activities carried out by the whole community in common expect fishing and hunting, but besides organizing these latter pursuits a good headman initiates each new agricultural process and encourages and criticizes the younger men and women. Land is not of often a matter of dispute in this area. “The headman does not allot individual plots, but listens to cases should any arise.” (Evans-Pritchard, 1940) He is said to ‘feed his people’ and actually does so if they are in need, besides dispensing hospitality to strangers.

The head of the village acts as its ritual head. “In the old days, he put up one village shrine to his own ancestors and one or more others to the dead chiefs of the land” (E.E.Evans-Pritchard, 1940). This practice is still performed in out –of-the-way parts of the country and in most places, “prayers are offered to these tutelary deities, whether shrines are built to them or no.” (E.E.Evans-Pritchard, 1940) The headman, like the chief, also “influences the life of the community through his own person.” (Chuba B. , 2011). He must “‘warm the bush’ (*ukukafye mpanga*) by an act of ritual intercourse with his wife before the huts of a new village are occupied.” (E.E.Evans-Pritchard, 1940). Other responsibilities of the headman include the following:-

- Blesses seeds for sowing, axes for tree-cutting, and first –fruits.
- He presides over the special divination rites connected with villages’ activities, such as the founding of a new babies or individuals who are sick.

In performing these functions, it is believed the fire of the headman “stands for the life of the community as a whole and must be ritually lighted when occasion demands” (E.E.Evans-Pritchard, 1940)

- In the political hierarchy, the headman has his definite place. No *Bemba* may cultivate land except as a member of a village group, and the headman is responsible for organizing the supply of tribute and labour which must be paid to a chief by the community as a whole.
- He accompanies his villagers to court when they have cases to present and often speaks for them.
- He transmits the orders of a chief to his people and nowadays those of the Government.

The sanctions for his authority nowadays are mainly his popularity, together with the strength of his kinship group.

#### 4.8.2. THE CHIEF.

The functions of the different types of chief differ only in degree. All are said to “look after their people ,to ‘work the land ’,and ,with reference to their supernatural powers ,to ‘spit blessings over the land ’(*ukufunga mate*)” (E.E.Evans-Pritchard, 1940).Their political duties consist in the administration of their capitals and also of their territories as a whole “.A large *umusumba* means plenty of coming and going ,enough workers for joint enterprises, a large panel of advisers for court cases, many messengers to keep in touch with the surrounding villages-in short, the possibility of keeping the tribal machine running” (E.E.Evans-Pritchard, 1940).

- To maintain and even augment such a community by his popularity and his reputation for generosity is one of the of the chief’s important political tasks. He has also to keeping the tribal machine running.
- He has also to keep contact with the people widely dispersed over his *icalo*
- to appoint new headmen, amalgamate old villages,
- to decide as to the selection of heirs to old titles.
- To integrate his people as a political unit

As a judicial authority ,the chief presides over his court with advisers selected from his village, and in the old days “he alone could hear charges of with crated and ,in the case of the greater territorial chiefs, put the accused to the poison ordeal(*mwafi*)” (E.E.Evans-Pritchard, 1940)

In the economic sphere.

*“he initiates agriculture activities by performing the customary ceremony before each season begins; he makes big gardens with the aid of tribute labour from which he is able to fill large granaries and thus find the wherewithal to feed his following; he controls directly certain fishing hunting enterprises: and he criticizes and directs the gardening work of his own villages” (Peni. 2006)*

Other responsibilities of the chief are spiritual. He acts as a mediator between the people of God. He performs rituals that are inherent in the beliefs and customs of the people as such, the ritual duties of a chief consists of

- observation of the taboos for the protection of his own person and the safety of the sacred relics at his disposal and,
- carrying out of a number of rites for the sake of his whole *icalo* in the case of the paramount, for the whole tribe.

These responsibilities consist of “economic rites, tree-cutting, sowing, and first –fruit ceremonies, those performed in case of national calamity, and for success in war in the old days” (Evans-Pritchard, 1940).

All in all, the chief “was formerly bound to protect the people from witches and used to employ a special doctor at his court to destroy, by burning, the bodies of those found guilty of this offence” (Chuba B. , 2011)

In the old days the chief “organized military expeditions” (E.E.Evans-Pritchard, 1940) although he did not necessarily take part in the fighting .As one chief put it , “If we were killed ,the whole *icalo* would fall to pieces”(Ibid). As such “the ruler had certain military captains in his following, could call up men to fight, direct their operations from afar, and arrange for the performance of war magic for success before battle and for purification from the stain of blood after it.” (E.E.Evans-Pritchard, 1940)

In conclusion, we can state that the functions of the chief were numerous. They ranged from, spiritual, military, political and economic leadership of the people

#### **4.8.3. PRIESTS**

The priests in the *Bemba* society are very authoritative and highly respected. They are responsible for the intercession and purification before God on behalf of the community. They are very pivotal during times when the village or town experiences critical situations such as serious natural disasters for instance famines, epidemics, draughts and earthquakes. The paramount Chief, chiefs and headmen all consider the priestly office as very paramount because above all, it is only the priest who represents the people before God for the healing of the community. In small village



communities, where all know each other intimately, the task of the priest is manageable. The office of the priestly is a voluntary role and is regarded as a social responsibility to society. However, those the priest serves so graciously normally take to him some token of appreciation, usually in kind.

#### **4.8.4. RAIN MAKERS**

Rain makers are those people who are charged with a responsibility to make intercession on behalf of the people for the rain to fall. The Bemba society as noted above, is an agriculture group and they survive on farming. The rain makers in this regard are very useful in difficult times of draughts when communities had no received rainfall as expected and they desperately need water for their farms, gardens and daily use.

The role of the rain makers in this regard does not imply that one makes rain himself but prays for forgiveness and mercy from the supreme being alone (*Iesa mukulu*) as it is only the supreme being alone who can mercifully allow rains to shower on his people. Experience among the Bemba and other African societies elsewhere demonstrates that, “God granted mercy and rains showered on his people and this is the unwavering faith of the rain maker” (Chuba B. , 2011) acting on behalf of the faithful society in the power of the almighty God through the unshakable faith of the rain maker.

#### **4.8.5. MEDICINE MEN AND WOMEN**

Medicine men and women are key in the provision of health to the community in *Bemba* society. These people are very experienced with traditional means of healing its people who are sick and those with spiritual and other physical ailments in society. Their homes are full of people from all walks of life and villages, sometimes from very far places who come to be assisted medically.

They use bush herbal medicine, traditionally passed on from one generation to the other, and they carry the title traditional healers or Doctors. Sometimes they administer healing to the sick through the use of music, especially in the case of those who sickness is as a result of evil spirits. Before the coming of modern hospitals and clinics, the Bemba community had these special medical attendants in addition to the ordinary members of the community who on their own may know

certain herbs to cure some ailments. As in other African communities medicine men and women do not normally charge for the healing but it is their contribution to society. However people who bring patients simply as a way of courtesy bring with them food items, often cassava, millet, mealy meal, chickens and sometimes goats as a matter of acknowledging their service and commitment to save the people from deadly diseases.

Diviners can be understood as people who have the ability to prophesy in order to determine the causes of events in the Bemba community using various ways but often using incantations to the spirit world for revelation. Like the prophets in the mentioned in the Christian Bible, the diviners possess authority to see the future and they take responsibility by warning the people out of impending circumstances of the prevailing social status in the community. This specific role requires that one who performs this duty must be of a meditative mind, blameless and a man of integrity if one has to yield to their message.

#### **4.9. ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS**

In the *Bemba* society, these officers are found at the palace of the chief or the paramount chief. These include, executive officials who administer the business of the palace and those who carry out the directives of the chief in the chiefdom. The administrative officers are charged with responsibility to head one or two divisions within the palace for the smooth running of the business. They maintain the record of the palace and take inventory of the land and property belonging to the chiefdom as well as keeping the records of the entire chiefdom.

Other responsibilities of the administrative officers included the following

##### **4.9.1. KEEPING THE PEACE OF THE VILLAGES AND CHIEFTAINSHIPS.**

This responsibility involves, collaborating with village headmen, educating people in villages on the importance of good living and ensuring that the people in the Bemba society are hard working in ensuring that they cultivate the land and produce crops for themselves and sharing with others in the community. They also take note of the people who may be having disputes and the officers collaborate with specialist village counsellors to help them make peace with one another in the community.

#### **4.9.2. ORGANIZING TRIBUTE LABOUR**

By tradition *Bembas* of all genders show devotion to the paramount Chief and territorial chiefs by providing free labour both practical and symbolic. The Bemba subjects assemble at Chitimukulus mwine Lubemba's village to cultivate in the chiefs farm and at the time of harvest they come to help in the harvest as well. Administrative officers in this regard are charged with the responsibility to coordinate the work and also make logistics for feeding of labourers who come to work. Usually they work with village headmen and sub chiefs in the villages to collect contributions in terms of food from the villagers for the sole purpose of feeding the other villages who would be working for the paramount chief on a particular day.

#### **4.9.3. ALLOCATING LAND FOR NEW VILLAGES AND FOR FARMING**

The third responsibility of the administrative officers is that they are charged with the responsibility to allocate land to people, for building house to expand the villages and for farming purposes. The Bemba people are very rich in land and villagers apply to get a piece of land for their families. Since they keep the inventory of the land itself, the officers ensure that people in the villages are given enough land and they monitor them year after year and give reports to the Chief, even the paramount.

#### **4.9.4. ARRANGING HOSPITALITY**

The chief especially the paramount, receive a lot of visitors mainly from the government and tourist. If a villager has important visitor, they take them to the palace to introduce them and pay homage to the chief. The administrative officers keep the records of visitors and make appointments with the chief. This is an important task at the capital as the palace needs to be administratively sound. If visitors must visit other palaces, other than the palace, the administrative officers collaborate with designated village headmen, or sub-chiefs to ensure that the visitors are safe in the Lubemba chiefdom.

#### **4.9.5. MESSENGERS OF THE CHIEF**

Another important role of the administrative officers is to act as messengers of the chief in touch with the scattered villages of which some could be over a 60 miles from the chief's palace. In other words, the messengers are a conveyor built of the

chief to the villages as they have to go and from the villages to either deliver information in form of oral messages or in form of letters. They are also responsible for to summon the people the chief wants to have audience with some times.

#### **4.9.6. APPREHENDING CRIMINALS**

The administrative offers also work in collaboration with headmen to apprehend people who commit crimes in society such as witches, wizards, thieves, adulterous, etc. This is one of the major roles that enhance the removal of wrong in villages and communities. The criminals who are apprehended are then bound to appear before a judicial court at the chief's palace at the *Bemba* capital.

#### **4.10. MILITARY PERSONNEL**

Military is a special unit at the *Bemba* capital and in all territorial and sub chiefs of the *Bemba* chiefdom. These are paid up staff whose role is to provide security to the Chief and also to maintain law and order at the palace and communities. They are also specially trained in the norms and rituals of the Bemba chiefdoms for the purpose of understanding the protocol of the Bemba people. In case there is war, they are charged with the responsibility to recruit, able young men to go to war and fight. Presently the military (abashilika) are attached to each big chieftainship and stationed where the territorial chief is. Some of the military personnel are hereditary with ritual functions connected with magic while others are appointed by the chief. These military personnel do not just fight physical battles on behalf of the chief but they also fight spiritual ones by ensuring that wizards and witches do not harm the chief with magical power. Often they work as advisors to the chief in the area of preventing the magical power from harming the chief. If need be, they engage the services of the diviners and when the chief is under attack with an ailment, they engage the medicine men. This is a very secretive and sensitive unit stationed at the palace.

#### **4.11. JUDICIARY**

There are two traditional courts at the chiefs palace where the accused appear and if found guilty are ordered to pay something as punishment. One is outside the palace and the other inner circle. The one outside the palace is presided over by an

appointed Elder in the order of advisors while the inner one, is presided over by the chief. Procedure is laid down by the *Bemba* traditional councillors, *bashilumemba*.

All cases that take place at the sub chief's court in villages, elderly and wise men of the village attend. The senior or the paramount chief sends his advisors to attend such sessions while the power to decide the fate or to free someone rests in the local council of elders.

If unsatisfied, cases go on appeal from sub-chief to chief then to the paramount. In the event of a case of extreme difficulty. Upon receipt of the case, the Paramount Chief *Chitimukulu* can summon from the village of the accused his hereditary priests and councillors. The witnesses are presented to the traditional court, before the paramount chief and each party to the case marshalled by the chief's advisors.

Senior men present claps to the paramount chief at each point made to mark the recognition of the authority of the court and the chief himself sums up and gives judgement once all the witnesses have presented their case.

The advisors only speak when asked a point of precedent or law and influence the chief's final decision by decision. As in other African societies, such as the Akan and the ashants of Ghana, the chiefs judgement is often of his advisors that is why they say, ' there is no bad chief, only bad advisors" (Wiredu, 1996).

#### **4.12. ADVISORY**

In the *Bemba* tradition and culture, the advisory committee of elders plays a pivotal role in the running of business at every level of leadership in *Bemba* grouping, from community level to the paramount in council. The Bemba entire Bemba chiefdom relies on the work of men and women charged with the responsibility of advising the leaders, even the paramount, in reaching a consensus, in order to rule the chiefdom fairly. The committee of advisors is such an authoritative committee in all matters of the *Bemba* decision making process.

There are three types of advisory committee of elders who administer duties at different stages among the Bemba traditional societies.



#### **4.12.1. THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF THE SUB- CHIEF**

The advisory committee of elders at this level is called *Lucende* and comprises village elders and relatives of the chief with a special knowledge in historical traditions of the *Bemba* way of life. These men and women form a panel at which they discuss the main issues of the village including developmental issues. In the *Bemba* tradition, people chieftainships are locally encouraged to formulate better ways of sustaining their own livelihood of the people in their area.

#### **4.12.2 . THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF THE TERRITORIAL CHIEF**

Territorial chiefs usually have a number of sub chiefs under them with a lot of villages. The chief of the territory is assumes the title of Senior Chief i.e. Senior Chief Mwamba, Nkula, Chikwanda etc. The advisory committee of elders at this level comprises hereditary officials who combine their political and judicial roles with ritual functions. These are experienced and trained people in all traditional matters of traditional governance of the Bemba and they play a main role in all decisions made by the Chief. These are men and women who together with other senior chief form part of the Nucleus of the Paramount council at Lubemba chiefdom.

#### **4.12.3. THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF THE PARAMOUNT CHIEF CHITIMUKULU**

At the headquarters of the *Lubemba* Chiefdom lies the supreme advisory committee, which is a special division that together constantly deals with high profile matters that affect the *Bemba* people. In this regard, the paramount chief's advisors are called councillors in the name of bakabilo. These officials, who are over seventy in number form the advisory council and deal with special matters of the Bemba Chiefdom. These men are as old as the chitimukuship itself and they are well vested to deal with all traditional matters of the land. They are the custodians of the Bemba relics in their own right and they have authority to appoint and even to remove the paramount chief Chitimukulus.

They claim respect equal to that of the chief and they call themselves real *Bembas* and they may not leave the *Bemba* territory for as long as they are expected to be closer to the paramount chief at all times.

#### **4.13. DUTIES OF COUNCILLORS**

##### **4.13.3. Ritual**

They give oversight with regard to ritual activities of the palace and they are able to advise the chief on what to do and not what to do. They are custodians of the chief's sacred relics as well as the *Bemba* ceremonies such as *ukusefya pa Ng'wena*. Each one of them has an individual ritual duty or privilege such as lightning the sacred fire or forging the blade of the hoe that is to dig the foundations of the new capital.

Other officials at the paramount, consists of the near relatives of the chief himself. In this case, the paramount mother and probably the eldest son of the chief play an important role.

We can basically state that, the system of the *Bemba*, bases of authority, demonstrate, the division of power and the participation of people at every level. It is noted that “ the *Bemba* system of government is not a democratic one in the sense of the word” ( (E.E.Evans-Pritchard, 1940), but the affairs of the chiefdom itself is in the hands of the body of hereditary councillors whose offices and most of whose deliberations are secret” (Ibid). However, it still displays tenets because each lineage is represented in council.

#### **4.14. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

This chapter aimed at giving the history of the *Bemba* speaking people of Zambia and the essence of their political governance system to play as our point of departure in our search for a *Zambian African* polity that would unequivocally be a model of good governance.

It has established that, the *Bemba* speaking people became a nation and established themselves in *Kasama*, the Northern Province of the Republic of Zambia. Their Headquarters is at *Lubemba*, where the paramount Chief *Chitimukulu* has a throne. It has also been established that the *Bemba* are not a small tribe, as they claim 33.3 % of the *Zambian* population amounting to four million *Bemba*

speaking people living in Zambia spread throughout Zambia but predominantly the highest population is spread in the government districts of Kasama, Mpika, Chinsali, Luwingu, Mporokoso and Mungwi.

The chapter, has established that, the *Bemba* people, are defined as those people who consider themselves as subjects of paramount Chief Chitimukulu. Over thirty clans and lineages are among the masses of people who form the Bemba tribe in Zambia. They have a common name called '*babemba*' [the *Bembas*] which they express with pride as '*fwe babemba*' [we the *Bembas*].

The chapter has also established that, the *Bemba* Chiefdom is divided in seventeen Territories, called chieftainships, and each *Bemba* territory has a Senior Chief under whom are Sub- Chiefs, village headmen and councillors. These play a major role as political institutions. This chapter has clearly explained the political significance of these territories, as the *Bemba* government system which is a decentralized one in which each chieftainship enjoys the autonomy to make decisions in their domain without necessarily consulting either the paramount Chief or his advisers. The chapter demonstrated this as one of the good ideals of the *Bemba* governance system.

The chapter, also, unpacked the role of various persons in the *Bemba* society with specific roles such as the diviners, rainmakers, village headmen, chiefs, etc. This attribute of the *Bemba* people, showed, the democratic nature of the Bemba people in as far as participations in the running of the Chiefdom is concerned. It also looked at the value and the roles of priest's councillors, and the councils where discussions for good governance are done. This demonstrated the full nature of the *Bemba* people's engagement and reliance on each other for the prosperity of society.

The chapter, also, demonstrated the traditional way of making decisions in the *Bemba* society and government. It has been noticed that the rule of consent by consensus takes centre stage in as far as the rulership of the *Lubemba* chiefdom is concerned. It has been explained comprehensively that, where consensus, characterizes decision making, people see themselves as custodians of the decision that has been made. This is why, chiefs, and headmen were also appointed by consensus. It has arguably, been established that among the *Bemba*, we see a



model that when rehabilitated can be used effectively as a good path for the  
Zambian African polity.

The challenges this chapter, poses, inspire us into proposing, an examination of the  
Bemba model of governance with an African Christian perspective. We envisage  
that the desire to establish an African political identity manifest itself at all levels, be it  
political, and religious of an African society. Therefore our ultimate task is to  
compressively examine the principle of consensus for a Zambian African polity. It is  
our desire to see Zambia, demonstrate its God intended purpose in African polity.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE BEMBA MATRILINEAL GOVERNANCE SYSTEM AS A BASIS FOR A SUSTAINABLE DEMOCRATIC MODEL OF GOVERNANCE BY CONSENSUS IN ZAMBIA

#### 5.1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, we make a critical assessment of the Bemba matrilineal governance system as a basis for democratic model by consensus decision making in Zambia from an African Christian theological perspective. We are of the opinion that assessing the concept of democracy by consensus decision making of the Bemba provides a dialogue between the African traditional governance systems as an alternative form of political governance ideal for a multi- ethnic country such as Zambia. This is a pinnacle of our dissertation as it elaborates the important task of African Christian Theology in the rehabilitation, or renovation process of politics of identity for an authentic governance system with authentic African flavour. In making a strong case for an alternative democracy, we have engaged different African Theological and Philosophical Scholars who have made attempts in the past in the fight for government systems that reflect an authentic African Culture.

We note with ultimate concern that “since the attainment of political independence in many African countries in the 1950s and early 1960s a good number of African politicians have been searching for an authentic African identity with great difficulty” (Chuba, 2011). The task forced the construction and reconstruction of various models that to an extent would mirror the culture of the traditions of Africans in their operations of leadership and governance in African political dispensations. The point of emphasis has always been that “colonial systems have not proved suitable for African states” (Chuba, 2011). They have basically been an instrument of division of the people in Africa to an extent that civil strife has not found a resting place. All this is due to lack of appreciation of African Traditional practices that would by and large be a channel under which good and peaceful government systems could be established. The strongest argument is that, “ with due respect to foreign democracy, that European democracy does not have monopoly and that an African system of

government is an alternative which will be more suited to the traditional, cultural, and temperaments and conditions of the African people” (Chuba, 2011). It goes without question that, Zambia of all nations, within the shortest period of time since “amending its constitution in 1991” (Larmer, 2011) to re-introduce Multipartyism has experienced massive, divisions of people, along tribal, ethnic and regional lines. The concept of One Zambia One Nation as a national motto has lost its flavour in the process and therefore calls for a form of democracy that would concretely unite the country despite the diversities.

A cry to figure out a Zambian- African identity in the governance of the republic of Zambia is not new. When Zambia had just attained independence in 1964, it adopted the multiparty system (Lamer, 2011) as a model of political governance which was later abandoned due to its divisive nature in a country that had over 70 tribal and ethnic groupings whose pertains of “voting was along tribal and regional” (Lamer, 2011) lines. In that case, the concept of democracy based on majority decision, proved to be a wrong model for political governance in Zambia. In a search for a unitary African identity that would overcome tribal and regional barriers, Kenneth Kaunda and UNIP “abandoned the concept of Multiparty democracy in 1972” (Lamer, 2011) and “developed a one party participatory system of government, guided through a participatory democracy, similar to a traditional system” (Chuba, 2011). The one party system were a wave of political dispensations across the African continent whose “western forms had completely failed to foster unity” (Chuba B. , 2011) leading to civil wars. As a result, under development, poverty and many more effects fall on the African nations.

For the proponents of one party system, it was argued that it was a reflection of African traditional systems, “under this traditional system, there is only one chief in a village that is traditionally and honestly responsible to the people who installed him or her to the throne as the corporate personality. He or she is a symbol of the tribe or nation and local people had traditional power to de-stool him or her if found wanting” (Chuba, 2011). Traditionally, unitary under a leadership installed by the people for the people, demonstrated the participatory democratic value of the African society. Though the one party state, reflected some of the values of an African identity, it soon became an authoritarian entity that abandoned the ideals of participation and therefore could no longer be sustained even though it had achieved certain goals

regarding uniting all the people of Zambia, and made some successes in the area of development. It however, lacked the basic criteria for arriving at the form of putting up the government with the full consensus of the people since there were only one party in government with its leaders imposed on the general public. The authoritarian model of imposing leadership and determining everything without an ideal consensus lacked the African flavour and therefore became not ideal for Africa and Zambia.

In considering the Matrilineal governance system of the Bemba speaking people as an alternatives democracy in Zambia, this chapter comprehensively analyses the political system of the Bemba speaking people and how it would foster to maintain Zambia's ethic motto of 'one Zambia one nation'. The chapter emphasises the process of democracy by consensus as a deliberate effort to go beyond decision of governance by majority opinion. As it has been mentioned in preceding chapters, "it is easier to secure majority agreement than achieve consensus" ( Wiredu,2000). For the Bemba political practice, majority opinion is not in itself a good enough basis for decision making for it deprives the minority of the right to have their will reflected in the given decision, or to put it in terms of representation, it deprives the minority of the right to representation in the decision in question.

Awing to these reasons, this chapter, demonstrates the traditional governance system of the Bemba speaking, in a way that communicates to the culture and traditional practices of governance of the Zambian African people themselves. The climax of thesis is that, the current political system in Zambia needs to be overhauled or even eradicated and thereby create new systems of governance that permeates the involvement all the people in the decision making of the country through the representatives of the people chosen by the consensus of the people themselves as an alternative.

Methodologically, we endeavour to use an African Theological approach to engage with the concept of consensual democracy inherent in African traditional governance system of the Bemba speaking people, we discussed in the previous chapter, for a Zambian African political alternative democracy of participation. We make reference to the Traditional political system of the Ashanti people of Ghana whose political ideals are similar to that of the Bemba system. We contend that the "desire to

establish African identity manifests itself at all levels, political and religious, of African society” (Chuba, 2011). It is in this context that we aspire towards a substantive African Christian Theology as a guide for a political system that is all embracing and unitary. The existence of God is so immanent in African societies and for Zambia in particular, the nation has a constitution that declares itself “a Christian Nation guided by the principles of the sovereign God” (Muwowo, 2010). This alone makes the discourse on democracy “polemically complex and pervasive” (Fayemi, 2010) in the political practice of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Democracy as defined in chapter two of this dissertation is perceived within the context of Multipartism or “of majoritarian democracy” (Fayemi, 2010).

## 5.2. POINT OF DEPARTURE

In our point of departure, we wish to point out the fact that, “in the drive towards democracy in Africa” (Fayemi, 2010), successful Zambian governments from President Kenneth Kaunda to President Michael Sata, in the period between 1964 to 2011 have predominantly been influenced and forced to govern the country with an imperialistic “multiparty system of democratic governance” (Larmer, 2011) despite fundamental evidence that foreign political systems have brought about ethnic divisions, hate and politics of confrontation. We note with dismay that “while it is arguable that such democratic system has brought with it some gains” (Fayemi, 2010), the basic question is, “how substantial are these supposed benefits and to what extent has this majoritarian democratic model built on the strengths of indigenous institutions of politics” (Fayemi, 2010) in Zambia. These are some of the hard questions raised in our quest to argue for an indigenous concept of democratization in the Zambian governance system. The system that would reflect neither an authoritarian one party dictatorial system which Zambia embraced from “1972 to 1991” (Larmer, 2011) nor the current Multipartism but one that demonstrates an ideal practice of participatory democracy imbedded in the rich Zambian African Traditional cultural system, the rule by consensus decision making. This marks our fundamental basis for argument as we ultimately contend that Zambia’s political emancipation can never come from the “presently known model of majoritarian democracy” (Wiredu, 1996) but through one which is “culturally determined” (Muwowo, 2010) culminating from the Zambian African society system. In African society, there is pluralistic participation but it is one whose practical aspect basically

thrives on the consensus of people. With that cultural model of democracy, we contend that many of the delinquencies affecting Zambia i.e. ethnic rivalries, politics of hate and “violation of human rights inclusive will effectively be challenged and perhaps solved” (Fayemi, 2010) through an appropriate mode of problem solving. We shall now, look into the details of the Bemba tribe of Zambia to cultivate the way consensus democratization is practiced and how is a good alternative model of engagement in our discussion of consensus democracy as an alternative democracy and good governance in Zambia.

### 5.3. THE POLITICAL GOVERNANCE SYSTEM OF THE BEMBA

It worth noting that as we have discussed in preceding chapters that “ the Bemba socio-political system is neither democratic nor an absolute Monarchy” ( Peni, 2006) As a matter of fact, it is not even a combination of the two but rather one that may be compared to the federal system but not in the same capacity. In the federal arrangement it is understood that its “ a system of government in which individual states of a country have control over their own affairs, but are controlled by a central government for national decisions” ( Wehmeier 2000:428). But when it comes to the Bemba, “the Bemba dynasty is Chitimukulu *Mwine Lubemba* ( owner of Bemba land)” ( Peni, 2006) based in Kasama, the capital of the Northern Province of Zambia. As we noted in chapter four of this dissertation, the Bemba country is constituted of three main districts (*ifyalo*). Each district has a Senior Chief who is assisted by the *Bakabilo* who serve as watch dogs over the chiefs and their people as far as maintaining the principles of the Bemba kingdom is concerned. Each district is a fixed territory with a given name dating from the middle 19<sup>th</sup> century. We mentioned in preceding chapter that “each Bemba chief in this regard including the Chitimukulu *Mwine Lubemba* governs a district which makes autonomous decisions through its council of elders” ( Peni,2006). For example, Chitimukulu governs *Lubemba*, the capital of the Bemba country; Mwamba governs *Ituna* and *Nkula Icinga* on the south of the *Lubemba* respectively. But in all manner of governance, “all chiefs have a common allegiance to Chitimukulu, the Bemba paramount Chief” ( Roberts 1973). There is a hierarchy in terms of seniority of the chieftainship as well as the territory which one rules. After Chitimukulu *Mwine Lubemba*, the second most important chief was and is “senior Chief Mwamba in the *Ituna* traditional district in Kasama. Third important chief is Nkula in *Icinga* traditional district in Chinsali while

Chief Makasa, owned his seniority among the other territorial chiefs amounting to 30 by virtue of being the most senior among the sons of Chitimukulu who had been created as chiefs” ( Peni 2006) . In practice, each territorial chief exercised power under a high degree of independence in their area of the domain while at the same time “acknowledging the over lordship of Chitimukulu” ( Peni, 2006).

It worth noting that the lesser chiefs called the *Mushika*, followed the territorial chiefs in rank in the political hierarchy, Then below the *Mushika* finally came the village headmen, commonly known as *bamwine mushi* (plural) or *mwine mushi* ( single). The headmen were at the bottom and answerable to the *mushika*, they were however very important in looking after their subjects welfare. However it was the Chitimukulu who was the only and still is the *Mwine Lubemba*. He exercised an overly pre-eminence in ritual performances but did not monopolize political, military or economic control in the entire Bemba country save for matters that were of concern to the whole Bemba country (Roberts 1973).

That having said, it is worth noting however that every Bemba belongs to a particular descent group, what is normally refers to as a clan ( *Umukoa*). As a matter of fact, ones clan is a determinant factor in as far as one’s role in a given society is concerned. The only clan with profound political significant is the *ben Ng’andu* who have the right of succession to many chieftainships in the Bemba country. Depending on their genealogical seniority, and their personal qualities, these men have been promoted from lesser chieftainships culminating in that of Chitimukulu (Roberts 1973: xxix). Moreover women belonging to the loyal family i.e. the mother of the Chitimukulu or a chief and royal princesses may also hold chieftainship ( Sentker 1978:38)

Roberts succinctly notes further; “A Chiefs authority was limited by virtue of the very fact that he or she rather his office was divine. He was only the earthly vessel, to speak, for the abiding principles of the chieftainships by which in turn the strength of the land was maintained (Roberts 1973: xxxi). As for checks and balances, a group of men, known as *Bakabilo* had an upper hand in the distribution of the authority of the chiefs. Since they themselves were from non- loyal families they were not eligible to aspire for any chieftainship. Be that as it may, “they determined chiefly succession and they could compel the attention of the Chitimukulu and other chiefs because

they are the source of chiefly legitimacy. To this extent, they can be said to represent both the principle of the chieftainship and the Bemba people against the fallings of any particular Bemba chief (Roberts 1973: xxxi).

The *Bakabilo* protected the ordinary people and the Bemba principles against any blatant abuse of the power by the chiefs. On the other hand, they had so much power that they could remove any chief from office as well as chase away any ordinary citizen whose life added no value to the Bemba kingdom. On the other hand ordinary people had a revolutionary right to dismember or even to overthrow any of the *Bakabilo* who was not representing them properly. All in all, the socio-political system of the Bemba was a decentralized one and left no loophole in which any persons could manoeuvre at the expense of the others. In simple terms, no one was above the law. Be that as it may, leadership was just confined to a particular lineage even when they were plenty of the ordinary people with leadership qualities. Simply put a single minority of the *bona Nga'ndu* monopolized the leadership which was inimical to the Kingdom when chiti and Nkole died as there was no one to succeed them so they had to wait for the nephew of the fallen kings, Chilufya Mulenga, to mature and succeed his uncle (Roberts 1973:42). One wonders what could have happened to the Kingdom during that time if they had faced a military or economic crisis.

Be that as it may, the political system was organized in such a way that every individual felt a sense of belonging and ownership and consequently held his or her own ground for the betterment of the whole community and the whole country. Simply put, the political system was very close to the people which is prerequisite for the formulation and implementation of policies which are not far distanced from what is on the ground.

#### **5.4. DEMOCRACY, DECENTRALIZATION AND REPRESENTATION**

One of the defining characteristics of the Bemba political system is that it was a decentralized one. As mentioned already in the preceding paragraphs, territorial chiefs in collaboration with the general populace planned and made decisions about their welfare under a high degree of independence in their area of domain, without, neither consulting *Chitimukulu* nor his council of advisors. Be that as it may, the overlordship of *Chitimukulu* was highly acknowledged. According to the Bemba people,



decentralization was regarded as a viable tool for economic development in as far as responding to the needs of the people at all levels of society was concerned. It triggered people to fully and effectively participate in the developmental processes because the people owned the very process of development.

On the contrary, the prevailing situation in the Zambian governance system at the moment is that the government is highly centralized in the sense that power of governance is given and limited to a few non-elected individuals who make very important decisions on behalf of the general population who they don't represent by popular consensus. Sometimes these people only come from one region there by creating a non-balanced tribal state of government. An example to illustrate this point would suffice. Take for instance;

*The president apart from being head of state is also leader of the ruling party, chief executive of government, and commander in chief of the armed forces. He also has appointing and transferring authority over the judiciary and de facto command over the legislature. This represents a remarkable concentration of power and authority which is common in post-colonial African states and dangerously potent with a great potential for personalized dictatorship. ( Mbikusita –Lewanika 1989:92-93).*

Needless to say, most of the policies made in the past have been imposed on the people either by the government or by the donor community. Conversely, the bulk of them are very divorced structures are too large and remote from the ordinary citizens who have no say in policy formulating implementation. As a result, the executive has taken too many responsibilities and promised too much to their citizens and have not been able to deliver the goods and services premised (Pierre 2000:141) and as a consequence, have failed to combat the ever increasing tribal rivalry which has divided the country into political regions without authority.

All in all, centralization has outlived its usefulness in Zambia and need to be replaced by completely autonomous constitutional regions with independent systems that by and large would promote the participation of all citizens in decision making. In the contemporary Zambia society, if constitutional regions were empowered by giving them the autonomy to formulate and implement policies on their own, local needs will be met and the minority groups and tribes would also have a share in the national

cake. This is not an attempt to play the role of the “steering wheel to enhance economic development in these areas but also to allocation of losses (Pierre 200:103). In essence, decentralization is an effective means of promoting regional local and communal interest and provides the opportunity for innovation, reinvention of economic policies rooted in the local culture.

In this case.

*“effective decentralization of power would also promote the necessary social and institutional organizational framework for an economic democracy, under which individual communities, enterprises and various administrative and extensive involvement in national development” (Mbikusita- Lewanika 1990:93).*

This will ultimately engrain in citizens a sense of belonging and a sense of national ownership of all public institutions and thereby spur them on to make a meaningful contribution to the communities in which they live and the country at large.

Time has demonstrated that most socio- economic problems are vigorously addressed under the communal decision making system which in the Bemba society is a primary factor. In the communal political dispensation, “one promotes his own views at the same time respecting that of others and ultimately seeks a mechanism to harmonise the two” (Peni,2006).It is worth noting that “ across western Europe and the united States there is a clear pattern that from the early 1960s onwards, the growth of the central government has been slower than that of sub- regional governments” ( Pierre 2000:87). Hence, this is ample evidence to show that decentralization is well placed to effectively address economic issues which are typical to the environment of a particular area. “Its strength is derived from the people who constitute the engine of social- democratic developments.”(Hewitt,2014). That is why, “when Germany decentralized its government in 1949 soon after the damage of the second world war, the new political dispensation led to a sustainable economic growth and development (Pierre 2000:167).

One of the proponents of decentralization in Zambia candidly notes that this political dispensation:

*calls for new constitution framework providing for a firmly institutionalized open and decentralized democratic system of government. This should be based on broadly representative councils at the community, district and provincial levels, with a national assembly as the apex and supreme organ of state. The national assembly which is directly and nationally elected by the people as a whole, should not as is currently the case, be subordinated to any other organ, such as political party, which is necessarily socially narrower. These councils, including the national assembly, at each of their level should have their own corresponding and independent executive administration and judicial systems, accountable to the people through respective elected representatives. All these organs should be strongly institutionalized, so as to guard against the forces of centralization and dictatorship and facilitate a free and open system of governed, founded upon conscious sovereignty of the people and real freedom of association at various local levels (Mbikusita-Lewanika 1990:164).*

The central government in its entirety, no matter how good those who constitute it cannot practically meet the demands of the people from various spheres of society. Hence the past governments have hovered over the country without having strong links with the people they rule. This portrays the government as the leading actor of the country and turn citizens into mere spectators.

Over and above, despite the influence of the global forces as well as the presence of corruption in society, decentralization has down the ages proved not only to be an engine for a sustainable economic growth but also to provide an opportunity for popular participation in the making and implementing of public policies. As Kaamba classically puts it, “it glides a spirit of paternalism and paternalism hampers the spirit and growth of the local initiatives and local responsibility” (Kaamba 2006:32). History has attested that “there can be no equitable economic development without effective participation of the masses.” (Peni,2006). Thus we argue that people are more productive when they are veritable stakeholders than simply mere spectators. Therefore, if the centralisation of power in the central government is done away with and local government structures formulated instead one would see a more productive state of governance. As a matter of fact, it would be easier for people to

know which policies and type of leaders are right to represent them in the running of affairs on their behalf.

In the Bemba political system, the *Bakabilo* played an instrumental role of curbing any attempt of blatant use of power by the chiefs in the Bemba country or diversion by ordinary people from the principles on which the Bemba country was founded. *Bakabilo* guided the Bemba principles without fear or favour. And since their positions were hereditary, they could not be removed by any chief. However, ordinary people had the revolutionary right to dismember them or overthrow them when they did not represent the people properly. It is important at this stage to up park the role of *Bakabilo* in the light of national development and so show how the absence not effective and independent mechanisms for checks and balances has ruined the economy of Zambia.

#### **5.4.1. THE MECHANISM OF CHECKS AND BALANCES**

The major problem with the contemporary system in Zambia is that

*“the republican constitution gives the sitting president overwhelming power to manipulate government institutions to his/her own advantage. And despite earlier attempts to reduce the powers of the president, it has ironically been increased” (Rakner 2003:14).*

This particular system simply entails that Zambia continues operating within “the framework of the colonial masters and post- independent rulers who took over the political system in it enticing form as it created a platform for their political manoeuvres.” (Chuba B. , 2011) For instance, the president appoints the army chiefs, the inspector general of police and directors of public companies. He also nominates the auditor general, anti-corruption commission and the drug enforcement commissioners who are simply ratified by parliament.

For instance, Bratton writes, “During the selection of the parliamentary candidates, the MMD headquarters often pushed local preferences aside, creating an unfortunate precedence of the arbitrary, patrimonial decision- making” (Bratton 1994:118). The adopted members of parliament once elected were expected to submit to the whims of the party president and its structures. They would then “pass laws in line with the ruling party’s political framework” (Peni,2006) and not

necessarily the people. They are in parliament only to serve the interest of the president whatever or however it took to do that. And since the ruling party has always had a two- third majority in parliament since independent, it has time and again passed laws in its own favour.

The predominant feature “in the current system is the centralization of power in the incumbent president and the extensive use of the state resources for political gain (Rakner 2003:16). This is notoriously manifested itself when for example when one

*“President Chiluba rubber stamped parliament by establishing the much criticised presidential discretionary fund and allotted US\$5 million by establishing disburse as he wished. The amount of money allocated to the same was in 1999 neither disclosed to parliament nor accounted for raising speculations in certain circles of the Zambian society” (Raskner 2003:129-130).*

Worse still,

*“parliament in 2000 set aside US\$ 400 million for the establishment of the office of the district commissioners who reported directly to the President. This move was seen as an attempt of the former president to use the district commissioners to campaign for his third term of office (2003:113).*

Besides that, the government

*“in the year 2000 spent a staggering amount of 100 billion Zambian Kwacha on new cars ad 50 billion Zambian Kwacha on merely serving cellular phones for government officials. Half of that amount was allotted to ministries of health and education. And this money was not properly accounted for (Drevensek 2000:19).*

Given the above examples, it clearly shows how a political system that does not have proper mechanisms for checks and balances can abuse the entire governance system which by and large affects the people on the grass root who may not have been given an opportunity through their representatives to contribute towards development.

As for the Bemba political system, people had it at the back of their minds that full development of the country largely depended on the calibre of leaders that were equipped with vision and foresight who were chosen by the people as representatives to various councils of the Bemba society we shall discuss in detail. Though inheritance to chieftaincy was a prerogative of a special clan called *Bena nga'ndu* of the royal matrilineal descent group, not all persons who belonged to that group clan could become a chief or king but only those found capable by the council of *Bashilubemba*, who are the custodians of Bemba chieftaincy. *Bashilubemba* are the royal councillors of Chitimukulu. As referred to in preceding chapters, *Bashilubemba* who are the senior *Bakabilo*

*are no mere servants of Chitimukulu but are themselves the hereditary holders of historic titles, some as old as the Chitimukuluship itself and they are in a real sense the source of chiefly legitimacy. First of all, they are the Senior Bakabilo of Chitimukulu, those who determine the most crucial issues, such as the royal succession. These men are known as Bashilubemba, the elders of Ulubemba and these are: Chimba, Chitikafula, Kapukuma, Katenda, Munuka and Nkolemambwe. (Roberts 1973:15)*

It is important to note that at the heart of the Bemba, the leadership model was the notion of *ubuntu* whose leadership credentials were verified by various courts of councils responsible for making decisions within the *Bashilubemba* group. Kapolyo clearly states that “*ubuntu* indicates the presence in one’s life of such human characteristics as kindness, charity and love of one’s neighbour, it thus means the essence of human, humanness” ( Kapolyo 2005: 35). Hence when the Bemba person say “ *uyu muntu*” ( this is a person), they simply imply that the life of that person embodies all qualities above. According to the *ubuntu* leadership model, a leader was expected to be humble, caring, thoughtful, hospitable, mature, honest, considerate and virtuous. As a consequence, the Bemba country in old days greatly and visibly emphasised the importance of forming people from a very tender age in as far as being *umuntu* was concerned. Hence each village had a common place where people would gather every evening to that effect. Kapolyo writes that there is need on;

*The training of the community in virtue so that good deeds and treatment of the other people as abantu will naturally be self-evident. All the other virtues are expressive of the actions a person takes in favour of the other people. Selfishness is not a part of being umuntu. One must share what one has with others and especially the members of one's family, clan, tribe and friends (Kapolyo 2005:40)*

Over and above, the Bakabilo looked for someone with qualities of *umuntu* to be a leader and that was done based on one's historical engagements for the well-being of society. Anything to the contrary was not entertained at all. In this regard, vicious, inhumane, barbaric, greedy, dishonest and selfish individuals were not given any chance to be leaders at all even if by virtue of their birth they qualified. In fact they were not regarded as human beings according to the *ubuntu* concept.

#### **5.4.2. COUNCILS FOR MAKING DECISIONS IN THE BEMBA POLITICAL SYSTEM**

Councils are a governing body of chiefdom or a village in the Bemba society. This is because "it is often remarked that decision making in traditional African life and governance was a rule by of consensus" (Wiredu, 1996). As such the primary stages at which decisions are expressed are through a council of leaders of the village or town. The councils are established, first at the village level and at the chieftainship level.

Kenneth Kaunda and Julius Nyerere, Zambian and Tanzanian former presidents respectively, both spoke about the rule by consensus in an African political society. "In our original African societies, we operated by consensus. An issue was talked out in solemn conclave until such time as agreement could be achieved" (Rohio, 1975) said Kaunda. And Nyerere, on the other hand, expressed it in this way, "in African society the traditional method of conducting affairs is by free discussion" and quoted Mr Guy Clutton-Brock with the approval to this effect that, "the elders sit under the big tree and talk until they agree" (Rohio, 1975). The importance of these statements by both former African leaders point to the fact that, decision making by consensus, was basically an instrument through which governance rested on across the tribes in the African continent. "Where consensus characterises political decision

making in Africa, it is a manifestation of an imminent approach to a social interaction” (Wiredu, 1996) .

It was believed as a general practice of the Bemba that the basis of consensus decision making was through the council of elders and leaders of a village or town. It was through such organization at which consensus was established for the well-being of the citizens in an African society arrangement and “nowhere was African society a realm of harmony [...] it was a restoration of good will through a re appraisal of the importance and significant of the initial bones of contention” (Wiredu, 1996).

We wish to express our ultimate argument for a democracy by consensus decision making with regard to the Bemba Political system as an alternative owing to the fact that it displayed a considerable basis as a foundation at which the solution to Africa’s political dilemma would rest.

There are three stages of councils which are a foundation for consensus decision making in the Bemba society as follows:-

#### **5.4.2.1 LUCENDE: Village Council**

The village council is the nucleus of community life in Bemba society. It is led by a village headman and “is a kinship unit first and foremost” (E.E.Evans-Pritchard, 1940). Members of the council “consists of the headman’s own matrilocal family group” (E.E.Evans-Pritchard, 1940) from among whom, some people are appointed as representatives in the council of the village. When one is appointed a member in the council, it then “determines ones succession to different offices and status in the community” (E.E.Evans-Pritchard, 1940) which includes being a representative of the people in the higher courts of the Bemba governance hierarchy. The primary criteria for appointment to the council were determined by ones “wisdom, a sense of civic responsibility and logical persuasiveness” (Wiredu, 1996). The reason for ascertaining such qualities amounted to the fact that, a village was the first court in the political process of the Bemba governance system, and the first stage where, consensus first demonstrated its practicability. In that case, it was incumbent upon the representatives in the village council to posses’ consultative attributes in order to rehearse with other senior members of the clan or lineage group in order to



comprehensively engage substantive discussions for the development of the village or town. Decisions were only arrived at after the consensus of both the council and the representatives of the people agreed on a particular issue. It's worth noting that, by virtue of natural inheritance, it was the village council which elected different clans or lineage group to represent the people of that village at the next court of political decision making- the Territorial Council.

#### **5.4.3. THE TERRITORIAL COUNCIL (Chieftainship Council)**

The entire Bemba Chieftainship is divided into districts. Each particular district is referred to as Bemba chieftainship and "is a geographical unit with a fixed boundary and a name dating from historic times" (Roberts, 1973). There are seventeen gazetted Chieftainships namely: *Ituna, Ichinga, Chikwanda, Luwingu, Mumpolokoso, Mpepo, Nkolemfumu, Nkweto, Mwaba, Chimbala, Makasa, Munkonge, Mubanga, Mukwikile, Chipalo, Shibwalya Kapila and Tungati*. Each mentioned chieftainship has a natural ruler called a Senior Chief and under him are a number of Sub- Chiefs who together form a nucleus of the chieftainship council which deliberates issues from within the territory of a designated chieftainship. The title and responsibility of the senior chief once conferred upon a person "is for life unless, moral, intellectual or physical degeneration sets in" (Wiredu, 1996).

Unlike at the village council arrangement, membership to the chieftainship council has to do with one's connection to " a wider descent group, the clan which is traced in the woman's line" (Roberts, 1973) because , " the Bemba are a matrilineal tribe [...] in which descent is reckoned through the mother and a man is legally identified with a group of relatives composed of his maternal grandmother and her brother and sisters, his mother and brothers and sisters and his own brothers and sisters" (Roberts, 1973). The Bemba people, on a wider scale are one kind of species who comprise many clans. "Over thirty clans are represented in Bemba land named after animals and other natural phenomena" (Roberts, 1973). Each clan has a seat of representation at the territorial council as such every head of a particular clan is automatically a member of the council which is a governing body of the town or village. The significance of this arrangement in the Bemba council is to facilitate the point at which consensus, becomes a primary "watch word at the level of the municipal council, which consists of the lineage heads" (Wiredu, 1996). This

undertaking reaffirms the characteristic of the decentralization system of the Bemba political system in which “ the territorial chiefs in collaboration with the general populace planned and made decisions about their welfare under a high degree of independence in their own domain, without consulting Chitimukulu, nor a council of advisors” (Mwamba, 2009).

According to the Bemba people, representation in the chieftainship in council played a major part as a viable tool for as far as responding to the needs of the people at all levels of society was concerned. It triggered people to fully and effectively participate in the development process because the people owned the very process of the decision through their representatives in council. The Senior Chief of the chieftainship presides over all matters of the council because his “position lies in its basic hereditary status” (Wiredu, 1996) in the crocodile (*Bena Ng’andu*) clan, “the one clan with political significance” (Roberts, 1973) among the Bemba speaking. The crocodile clan is “the one to which is reserved succession to many strategic chieftainships” (Sosala, 2014). These are the men who are real descendants of the Chiti, the Father and founder of the Bemba Chiefdom and they claim rights to perpetual succession and are appointed through the procession of consensus of the lineage clan called Bashilubemba, the royal priest councillors of the Bemba paramount Chief Chitimukulu.

In the Territorial Council, “the personal word of the Chief, does not overrule the discussion and impose his thoughts. In fact “the personal word of the Chief was not law. His official word on the other hand is the consensus of his council and it is this capacity that may be law” (Wiredu, 1996). This kind of attribute reaffirms the fact that “there are no bad kings, only bad councillors” (Wiredu, 1996). It is with such understanding that “it becomes apparent that the council is strongly representative with respect to both the nature of its composition and the content of its decisions (Wiredu, 1996) owing to the fact that the presence of every clan or lineage was permeated at every level of power in the Bemba chiefdom. It is born out of this that every village, town and chiefs councils become the starting point of the political power because “ representatives from these councils constituted divisional” (Wiredu, 1996) representation at the Supreme council of the Bemba, presided over by the Paramount Chief who is the supreme Traditional ruler of the Bemba state and government of the Bemba Chiefdom.

#### 5.4.4. THE COUNCIL OF BASHILUBEMBA: The Paramount Council

The council of *Bashilubemba* commonly referred to as *Bakabilo*, are the priests and hereditary councillors of the Bemba Chiefdom. They form the nucleus of the Paramount Chief Chitimukulu cabinet. They are the custodians of the entire Bemba chiefdom's practices and traditions, as Audrey states, "the affairs of the '*icalo*' [Bemba country] are in the hands of a body of hereditary councillors whose offices and most of whose deliberations are secret" (E.E.Evans-Pritchard, 1940).

The Council of *Bashilubemba* are first of all, "senior councillors of *Chitimukulu*, those who determine the most crucial issues such as the royal succession" (Roberts, 1973). They are known as the "fathers or elders of *Lubemba* [Bemba Chiefdom]" (Roberts, 1973) and are the main advisors of the Paramount Chief. They are responsible for "accounting for the origins of chieftainship and illustrate the power and majesty of individual chiefs" (Roberts, 1973) and they account for the performance of each chieftainship for the well-being of the Chiefdom.

The council of Bashilubemba, which is presided over by Paramount Chief Chitimukulu, are essential to the maintenance of the chieftainships" (Roberts, 1973). In status, they are a conglomerate of village headmen, but politically they are "subordinate to Chitimukulu and they are excluded from chiefly office, yet while they derive their prestige from association with the institution of the chieftainship, they are very conscious that they are in a real sense the source of chiefly legitimacy (Roberts, 1973).

Because they are distant and excluded from chiefly legitimacy, *Bashilubemba* in council have an independent mind in the dealing of affairs in the Bemba Chiefdom. In council, the *Bashilubemba*, "represent chieftainships; at the same time they are critics of the holders of the chieftainship" (Roberts, 1973).

The authority of the Council of Bashilubemba covers the entire chiefdom and they discuss matters that deal with the welfare of the citizens of the Bemba land. Andrew Roberts records, "this is the truest of the *Bakabilo* of *Chitimukulu*, for these are not

concerned only with the paramountcy; but all the more important chieftainships” (Roberts, 1973).

The Bashilubemba that form the hereditary council are descendants of six lineage heads. These are “*Chimba, Chitikafula, Kapukuma, Katenda, Munuca and Nkolemambwe*”. Their current representation of these lineages in council adds up to seventy two of them, each one of them with a specific ritual duty with the Lineage of Chimba, being the head above all the hereditary councillors.

The meetings of Bashilubemba in council are usually “private and only resolutions are made public” (E.E.Evans-Pritchard, 1940). With regard to all successions of the royal clan, Bashilubemba have the final say and are the only guide with supreme control over the chieftainship. They even have power to remove a chief even the paramount, for a reason, that could risk the throne of Chitimukulu.

#### **5.4.5. ILAMFYA COUNCIL: The Bemba Supreme Council and highest decision making body.**

The *Ilamfya* council is the highest decision making body of the Bemba Chiefdom. It has the biggest representation in the decision making of the Bemba people and has the capacity to even “overrule the Chitimukulu in succession” (Sosala, 2014). Representation to this supreme council includes all senior Chiefs and sub chiefs, who are natural hereditary rulers of the chieftainships, all village headmen and elders of the villages, representing various clans and lineages, priests and Hereditary Councillors among other participants representing the various sectors of the Bemba Society. “These are the people who bring all matters affecting various chieftainships and villages to the supreme Council” (Sosala, 2014).

The most interesting part of *Ilamfya* Council of all councils is that “it is open to all citizens’ contributions on any issue. The colonial government officials were allowed to forward their cases before the council as well if they needed the support of the native people in the colonial era” (Sosala, 2014). The main function of the *Ilamfya* council is to give an opportunity for the people, to bring issues that affected them as citizens of *Lubemba* chiefdom. The concerns also came from the different villages, clans and sections. This is one way to promote, the participation of the people in the development process of the Bemba Chiefdom.

However, when the matters are brought to the council and reasons given for submitting their concerns and recommendations, matters that require a decision to be made were then handed over to an “executive committee of the council called *Inchenje*’ which consists all the chiefs, sub chiefs, *Bashilubemba* and two councillors from each chiefdom who finally examine the issues and pass decisions by popular consensus” (Sosala, 2014). The process through which matters are examined is through rational discussion to arrive at a decision. Brelsford (1965) gives an example of how the supreme council overruled the decision of the Paramount Chief Chitimukulu, when he reported,

*in 1942 when the post of Chief Mpepo was vacant, Kafyama, a pushing and aggressive character from the junior house Mushimba bullied Paramount Chief Kanyanta into nominating him, tentatively as Chief Mpepo over the head of Mutale Lusankula Nshika, the rightful heir. Senior Chief Mwamba Mubanga objected and later two of the Paramount’s councillors confessed that it was only Kafyama’s insatiable ambitions that had won down Chitimukulu. The Superior authority (Ilamfya Council) finally vetoed the appointment.*

This particular example, shows how the supreme council through its *Inchenje* executive is able to use the power of consensus to salvage the insatiable greedy of the people and solve a political problem that would have brought about division and civil strife in Bembaland

## **5.5. PRELIMINARY CONCLUSION**

In the light of the above, it is worth noting that the Bemba political system valued the importance of consensus and good governance as a primary tool for decision making, “ now this inherence to the principle of consensus was a premeditated option” (Wiredu, 1996) in the Bemba traditional society. We note that across the entire Bemba concept of leadership dialogue was most important and tool for reaching consensus and that took place through legitimate councils whose representation was derived from the citizens of various clans in the Bemba community whose governance system was a decentralized one.

We identify that the reaching of consensus “was based on the belief that ultimately, the interests of all members of society are the same although their immediate

perceptions of those interests may be different (Wiredu, 1996). This concept is “given in an expression of a “Multi-headed Hydra” (Pobee, 1979), an animal with seven heads, all locked up in a fight for food. “ Now if they could see that the food was in any case destined for the same stomach, the irrationality of the conflict would manifest to them” (Wiredu, 1996). This is what depicts the necessity of consensus decision making in the Bemba society in which the belief is that “there is no problem of human relations that cannot be solved by dialogue” (Wiredu, 1996).

It is through such metaphors, sayings and examples that give us the foundation that prizes “rational discussion as an avenue to consensus among adults that the capacity for and persuasive discourse was made one of the most crucial qualifications for the high office (Wiredu, 1996). It is worth noting that the consensus principle in this regard, could be perceived as a concept of democracy in the Bemba traditional society.

## **5.6. THE BEMBA’S PERSPECTIVE OF DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION**

According to Julius Nyerere, the word “democracy in Africa or elsewhere, is Government by the people. Ideally, it is a form of government whereby the people- ALL the people –settle their affairs through free discussion” (Rohio, 1975). More comprehensive definitions were addressed in Chapter two and the general conclusion was that, the concept of democracy was simply the free participation of citizens in determining their form of governance and the people who would represent them as leaders. This section endeavours to give a comprehensive description of the participation of the Bemba speaking people in the political governance of Bembaland as our model of discourse. We have mentioned previously that “over thirty clans are represented in Bembaland” (Roberts, 1973) apart from the dominant crocodile clan who claim the chieftainships of the Bemba Chiefdom. We have defined the Bemba, as “those people who consider themselves as subjects of *Chitimukulu* the Bemba paramount Chief” (Roberts, 1973). The Paramount Chief is in this sense the custodian of Bembaland and responsible over the general ruler ship of both the Bemba, and the people who come to take refuge in *Lubemba* Chiefdom.

This description is premised on the demonstration of the extent to which democratic representations in Bemba councils embrace the different clans in Bembaland and how democracy by consensus decision making finds its practical implementation in

the Zambian African Traditional society. In the History of the Bemba, it is believed that “the integration of the tribe depends chiefly on the sentiment of the tribal cohesion and loyalty to the paramount as a means by which the activities of the different districts are brought under one control in the widely dispersed group” (Roberts, 1973). Thus, among the Bemba, the drive for development relies basically on the participation of the majority decision making through councils of representatives of the community. This underpins democracy for the Bemba in which all members of society have a role to play in the governance of its political dispensation.

To figure the fundamentals of democracy in this view is aimed at proposing, “deliberate efforts to go beyond decision making by the majority opinion” (Wiredu, 1996) in light of the concept of consensus as a vital resource for the rehabilitation of the Zambian democracy. The concern is to strongly examine the tenets under which majority opinion is attained. It is argued that “decision making by majority opinion” (Wiredu, 1996) often lacks an authentic representation of the whole citizenry. Some decisions are made out of public influence or mob psychologies which often have the capacity to overlook the important aspects of genuine decision making in the majoritarian arrangement. Rev. Dr. Gavin Taylor, a Methodist Church of Southern Africa Minister, in his book, ‘If you have ears’, quoted Richard H. Niebuhr’s book entitled ‘Moral Man and Immoral society’ pointed out that in decision making, “Individuals are more moral than society [...]; society, as it is represented by groups or institutions, is more immoral than the individual person acting on her or his own” (Taylor, 2002). This particular description of the capability of an individual person decisions compared to the bigger group’s decision, points to the fact more often than not, it’s a lot easier to win numbers in a group where an independent person’s opinion is not expressed substantively per say than to achieve consensus which incorporates good wishes and thoughtful decisions of the minority, an action that would really be representative.

For the Bemba, as it is, with some notable tribes in African Traditional political governance systems such as the Ashanti and the Akan tribes of Ghana, resist the aspect of majority opinion as “not being good enough basis for decision making for it deprives the minority of the right of representation in the decision in question” (Wiredu, 1996). As a responsible traditional practice, various clans, villages and

chieftainships bring matters affecting various chiefdoms, to the Bemba supreme council, *Ilamfya*, which is a council open to all citizens contributions on any issue as discussed above. However, “the final decisions are made by the council’s Executive committee *Inchenje* which consists of the chiefs, sub-chiefs, *Bashilubemba* and two councillors from each chieftainship who finally examine the issues at hand and pass the decisions (Sosala, 2014). These honourables are representatives of the people in their villages and towns. This concept of decision making among the Bemba, demonstrates that the process to arrive at a proper direction needs to first and foremost assess the decisions of the majority and the minority who include passive members of society to have their suggestions put into consideration in the making of the final decision by the representative executive of the supreme Council. There, the people’s representatives, who represent even the minority groups have a chance to debate and have the wishes of their subjects “reflected in the making of the decision in question” (Wiredu, 1996).

In this description of the Bemba supreme council’s models, there are two ways of representation that have been noted as vital for analysis in the model of an African Traditional Political system of democracy

- a. The representation of all clans lineages, villages, chieftainships and councils at the supreme council, where all matters be it social, political, economic etc. are presented to the council by various heads and representatives of the people.
- b. The representation of the will of a representative in the making of a given decision in the Executive Committee (*Inchenje*) which has a representation of the peoples representatives by the will of the people of a section of people.

It is argued that in the two types of representations, outlined above; the first one is formal one, owing to the fact that the supreme councils were an official gathering or body for the making of decisions. However, the decisions made by the majority in the council most likely would lack substantive flavour, marked by a concrete analysis of the issues that led to the making of decisions if the representation of the people’s representative has not registered his wishes on the supposed decision. The second type of representation on the other hand is a substantive one. The decisions of this particular one are arrived at after consideration of factors, first of the will of the



representatives in council and secondly the rationality of the representative of the people in the executive committees as Wiredu (1996) puts it, “it is obvious that you can have formal representation without substantive correlate yet the formal is for the sake of substantive” (Wiredu, 1996).

The idea here is that the absence of a substantive discussion before a decision is arrived at would be regarded as an accomplished and can be challenged by other councils either by *Bashilubemba* council or the Territorial council. However it is worth noting that as a matters of principle, the Bemba do not live the matter of importance hanging, “they were quite able to discuss and shrewdly adapt some old tribal precedent to modern conditions” (E.E.Evans-Pritchard, 1940). We can rightly say, on the Bemba stand point, “substantive representation is a matter of fundamental human right which is a commentary attribute to democratic governance. Each human being has the right to be represented not only in council but also in counsel in any matter relevant to his or her interests or those of their groups” (Wiredu, 1996). This particular position of the Bemba traditional society indicates that consensus is very paramount in the making of the interest in making of national importance.

### **5.7. CONSENSUS DECISION MAKING**

It is argued that the pursuit of formal representation at a bigger platform with the majority of peoples representatives though legitimate but without the aspect of substantive representation is bound to divide and “induce disaffection” (Wiredu, 1996). This is where one views that the system of decision making in use either at national or at a local level should be done not to “cause some groups periodically to be in substantively unrepresented minorities” (Wiredu, 1996). In this case, “seasonal disaffection becomes institutionalized. The results are well known inclemencies of adversarial politics” (Wiredu, 1996). From the Bemba position, “Consensus is the antidote” (Kiros, 2001) of political satisfaction and fulfilment.

It is noted that “a number of governments in Africa are in a crisis because they lack an ingredient” (Kiros, 2001) that can overcome the problem of animosity caused by the failure to appreciate the basic tenets of good governance. It is important to consider the cardinal and central principle of the Bemba political system in that the rule by consensus is a mechanism of a progressive ideology that provides its people with decisive rights, i.e. “right to making decisions that reflect their wishes either in

the village or clan” (Kiros, 2001). This concept suggests that even in the absence of consensus as a primary base for decision making, the idea is that a system of governance proposed in whichever way should not be “based on the majority principle” (Wiredu, 1996) but a substantive dimension to arrive at decisions that reflect people’s wishes.

## **5.8. CONCEPTUALIZATION OF DEMOCRACY BY CONSENSUS**

The bearing of the considerations of the form of Decision Making by Consensus through the lenses of the Bemba model conflicts with “the forms of democracy [...] generally systems based on the majority principle” (Wiredu, 1996). The majoritarian concept of democracy focuses on the multitude decisions which may either, make a decision out of desperation or based on the wave of the general populace without giving it a thought. This is what the ideology which entails that “the party that wins the majority of the seats or the greatest proportion of the votes [...] is vested with government power” (Wiredu, 1996). This is kind of system has generally come with side effects predominantly dividing a country like Zambia into ethnic grouping and making the political game adversarial.

It is noted that despite the fact that the principle of the majority should be a principle that would provide alternatives, often “parties under this scheme of political things are organizations of people of similar tendencies and aspirations with the sole aim of gaining power for the implementation of their policies” (Wiredu, 1996) which often are not different from the others campaigning to fulfil the same promises. In making the argument in in conceptualizing of democracy by consensus, we raise the conflict that exists between the majoritarian system of democracy i.e. one which relies on the decision by the majority decision only to form government and the consensus arrangement which does not only rely on the majority mandate but also “the consensus of peoples representatives” (Wiredu, 1996) .

We however do not dispel the fact that in pre-colonial African politics of consensual kind there were various and even dangerous disagreements. “Royal families could harbour serious rivalries in the quest for succession. The populace could react adversely to the policies of the council of the state and manifest their animadversions quite demonstratively. What is more, the council itself could be a theatre of sharp disagreement” (Kiros, 2001). Despite all those, the strength is that such

“circumstances are what consensus is made of “(Kiros, 2001) whereby, the hotness of the discussion led to rationalism which in term produced the results of consensus in the decisions. Definitely, the African society, recognized the importance of different minds with different imputes, and therefore genuine engagement with issues made the outcome, as one which brought about development and peace. That goes with a saying that “if all concerned were permanently of one mind, there would actually be no need for a council, and no need for a quest for consensus” (Kiros, 2001). In this “consensus, incidentally, proves to be a confirming instance of the adage that too much of everything is bad” (Kiros, 2001).

We do not at all argue that all disagreements can be solved by “consensus in all circumstances” (Wiredu, 1996) but we argue for the concept that ‘will’ power to consensus should be a primary factor in determining the outcome to the decision thereof. It is believed in traditional African politics, “the African elders who would sit under the big trees and talk till an agreement was reached as to what was to be done undoubtedly” (Kiros, 2001) possessed that kind of will power to consensus decision making.

Our contest is against a multiparty party system which is a back bone of corruption and hatred that has raped the essence of governance. It has a lot of implications in the governance system of Zambia for example awing to the fact that “winning an election under multiparty conditions means winning against other parties” (Kiros, 2001) who ironically lose and get out of power and the concept definitely means they will not be part and parcel of the formation of government policy even if they possessed certain qualities that would help steer the nation. Further the experience of loss may also make them become despondent and prone to all sorts of anti-government protests and rivalry that do not help in a multi ethnic context. This is where the consensus rule wins in that, a person considered to poses certain abilities will always be part and parcel of governance and their contributions always represented in the decisions made.

## **5.9. POLITICAL PARTY IDEOLOGY**

The Bemba traditional system of government “was not a party system” (E.E.Evans-Pritchard, 1940) in the sense of the word party, because its “affairs of the *Icalo* [Country] are in the hands of a body of hereditary councillors” (E.E.Evans-Pritchard,

1940) who together formed a considerable body of elders that represented various clans and lineages in Council as we have discussed in certain sections above.. These clans and lineages in question “were parties to the project of good government” (Wiredu, 1996). Every Bemba village, chieftainship and town was fully represented at every level and therefore, the Bemba traditional government could be defined as a form of coalition government of citizens who were expected to foster the common good of all the people when they participated in determining the direction of the state. “The sense in which the system in question did not feature parties is that none of the groups mentioned organized themselves for the purpose of gaining power in a way which entailed others not being in power or worse being out of it” (Wiredu, 2000).

The concerned system was set up for the appropriation and the underlying philosophy of “cooperation, not confrontation” (Wiredu, 2000). The idea for this non-party concept of the Bemba traditional form of government was based on “morality and communication” (Kiros, 2001) that would provide a framework for a social order in which people worked together in unison. It is worth noting that “traditional societies [...] featured a variety of forms of association occupational, recreational, and in most cases political” (Kiros, 2001). These provided the basis under which the essence of the traditional governance brought about both social cohesion and unity of purpose in everything they did unlike working in grouping and fighting to be in authority.

It is a considerable point of experience that “all traditional African societies were communalistic” (Kiros, 2001) and therefore talk of political parties was perceived as an ingredient for sectarianism and did not work for the common good of the community. When we refer to the communalistic society, we mean “one in which extended kinship linkages, play a dominant role in societal relations” (Kiros, 2001). Kinship may be the equivalent of a person who is a citizen of a country who has all rights to political power even to the position of being elected President of a country. Thus Kinship in this context, means, a citizen of the clan or lineage in the village who has all the rights to participate in councils to the point of becoming a Chief, Village headman or councillor.

In this dissertation, however, we confine ourselves to kinship to the matrilineal case of the Bemba tribe which would “consist of one’s mother and one’s siblings, one’s

mother's siblings and children of their daughters and at the top a grandmother" (Kiros, 2001). It is through this domain in which governance in traditional society was a matter of "human relations in which sense of obligations and rights and reciprocity is developed on the basis of natural feelings of sympathy and solidarity" (Kiros, 2001) in this case, the basic rule in terms of political participation under this order, appeals to the concept of governance that has a feel and connectivity to one another fostering the golden rule, that would not make others voted out but are all in the same ball game. "This unit- still pursuing the matrilineal angle-links up through the siblings of the grandmother and the children of their daughters, with an extensive network of analogous kinship units which in a given town constitutes lineage" (Kiros, 2001). It is this natural spectrum which forms and "easily acquires a community wide scope" (Kiros, 2001)

This whole philosophy of life for a traditional African political system of the Bemba presupposes "the ethos of a communalistic society" (Kiros, 2001) and gives the underlying scope of important relation to the ethics of human community" (Kiros, 2001)

In this regard, the interests of the community and government are shared and extend that "individuals adjust their interests to the interests of other persons even at the possible cost of some self-denial" (Kiros, 2001). In traditional African society the most direct way of communicating this is by considering " the practice of mutual aid in traditional Agriculture" (Kiros, 2001) practice is not a rule of some kind but the principle underscores " the pursuit of harmony of human interest to the advantage of society in general" (Kiros, 2001).

This is where the point of contact is in the general understanding of political leadership which the nationalist movements considered to emulate the one- party state of government system to the traditional form of leadership in the traditional African society when Julius Nyerere in the defence of one party state said, "... where there is one party and that party is identified with the nation as a whole, the foundations of democracy are firmer than they can ever be where you have two or more parties each representing on a section of the community" (Rohio, 1975). The same was likened to a Chief, in traditional African society who was installed by the

people as a “symbol of the tribe or nation and local people had traditional power to de-stool him or her if found wanting” (Chuba B. , 2011).

This is the aspect of the traditional system to which the advocates of the one-party system appealed in their attempts to prove its African ancestry and authenticity. The illusory analogy was this “in a one-party system there is no conflict of parties. No party loses because the party wins.” (Wiredu, 1996). However, the comparison is out rightly faulty due to the fact that in the traditional set-up “no party lost because all the parties were natural partners in power or, more strictly, because there were no parties” (Wiredu, 1996) and therefore, the argument for the one party state lacked merit in this sense.

Without regret, “the disappearance of the one-party system from the African scene is, and should remain” ( Wiredu, 1996) a thing of the past as the suppression and authoritarian principles it later embraced raped the essence of the African project of emancipation and therefore should remain forgotten . However, our rationale for mentioning that subject is not to flog a dead horse; it is, in fact, to paint out the good parts of a bad case. One valid point which was made again and again by the one-party persuaders “is that there is no necessary connection between democracy and the multiparty system” (Wiredu, 2000). An associated insight was that indigenous African systems of politics, at least in some well-known instances, offered examples of democracy without a multiparty mechanism which was a valid rationale though the applicability of the project remained un African and in all fairness it reverted and readopted the “foreign systems which have not proved any better” (Chuba B. , 2011) in the past.

## **5.10. DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

It is worth noting that, the fierce campaign on the world today is centred on Democracy and Human Rights. The two are considered as the “most burning issues of contemporary national and international politics” (Fayemi, 2001). It’s also important to note that the way democracy itself is promoted and practiced in different parts of the world today has “exposed the concept of democracy to some definitional haze and diverse forms of interpretations (Villoro, 2000). As we have noted elsewhere in this thesis, the concept of democracy is pervasive in modern values and political system. By the same use of the word, different theorists and ideologists

and scholars generally perceive and use the concept differently to mean many different things. However, “the multi- dimensional nature of the meaning of democracy is unconnected with various typologies” (Fayemi,2010)

In chapter two of this dissertation we have been able to give different definitions of the typologies of democracy we are referring to which included liberal, socialist, popular, direct, participatory, non- party, consensus and deliberative democracies. Despite the different meanings and perspectives, we concluded that elements in the meaning of democracy were central to all the typologies such as “free and fair elections, open, accountable and responsible government civil and political and human liberties and democratic society” (Bole, 1995)

On the other hand, “the idea of human rights stress the universal humanity” (Fayemi,2010) which human beings must share and enjoy with one another as a complimentary to democracy because its nature is basically shown forth in action and expression of rights of human beings, “ these rights have been variously defined explained and justified from one historical epoch to another with shifts and modifications here and there” ( Rosenbaum ( Ed) 1980).

But then what are Human Rights? In this dissertation we limit the definition of human rights as those rights in which “all human beings enjoy simply by virtue of their humanity” (Wiredu, 1996). Once these supposed human rights are denied they “would constitute a grave affront to man’s natural justice” ( Fayemi,2010)

According to Osida Eze, human rights are very vital in making democracy a vital tool to development. He therefore speaks of them as those rights that “represent demands or claims, which individuals or groups make on society, some of which are protected by law and have become part of the *lex lata*, while others remain aspirations to be attained in the future” ( Eze, 2001).

In the same line but different dimensions, UO-Umozuruke another philosophical scholar conceives of human rights as “Claims which are invariably supported by ethics and which should be supported by law made on society, especially by its official manager, by individuals or groups on the basis of their humanity” (Umozuruke, 2001). These arguments, present an aspect that for human beings to

present a set of relevance in this world, human rights are vital in making them attain an ultimate goal of human existence including a form of governance.

Following the definitions presented above, human rights can be classified in several different ways as they apply to different situations notable ones being “civil, political social economic and cultural rights” (Oyekan, 2001).

### **5.10.1. CIVIL RIGHTS**

Civil rights are personal rights belonging to an individual by virtue of being a citizen of a country in which, freedom of speech, the right to vote, having due process of law, equal protection of the laws, and protection from unlawful discrimination are guaranteed to all citizens. Under these laws, all persons have a right to receive health care and human services in a nondiscriminatory manner. For example, you cannot be denied services or benefits, simply because of your tribe, religion, ethnic group and disability etc.

### **5.10.2. CULTURAL RIGHTS**

Cultural rights are rights related to art and culture, both understood in a large sense as rights guaranteed to a person or group or nation to exercise their culture as embedded in their traditions. The objective of these rights is to guarantee that people and communities have an access to culture and can participate in the culture of their election as they deem fit. In other words, cultural rights are human rights that aim at assuring the enjoyment of culture and its components in conditions of equality, human dignity and non-discrimination. They are rights related to themes such as language; cultural and artistic production; participation in cultural life; cultural heritage; intellectual property rights; author’s rights; minorities and access to culture, among others.

### **5.10.3. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RIGHTS**

Social and economic rights are rights that encompasses the whole range of rights including education, adequate housing, social security, and health; the right to work and labor rights; and the right to an adequate standard of living. The purpose of these rights is to ensure that the minimal conditions required to enable living with



dignity are met for every person within a nation. The government of the Republic of Zambia has often denied its responsibility to ensure the social rights of its citizens. The Church and civil societies in Zambia keep fighting for social and economic rights to be enshrined in the Constitution. Without these rights, basic rights are a luxury that is available only to those who can afford.

#### **5.10.4. POLITICAL RIGHTS**

Political rights are rights that involve participation in the establishment or administration of a government and are usually held to entitle the adult citizen to exercise of the franchise, the holding of public office, and other political activities. Like civil rights they also guarantee the citizens' rights to freedom of speech, the right to vote, having due process of law, equal protection of the laws, and protection from unlawful discrimination are guaranteed to all citizens.

It must be understood that "while these rights are best observed and recognized under a democratic setting than any other form of government" (Fayemi, 2010). It's worth noting that they have been recognized and to a larger extent adopted and enshrined in numerous international conventions. The most important of these conventions is "the international Bill of Human Rights proclaimed and adopted at various times by the general assembly of the United Nations (Fayemi, 2010).

While it is important it is important to pursue human rights contextually

*"significantly human rights is not merely a matter of a specific state. It is rather a common cause of concern for all governments and all peoples of the world community though, in recent times, this claim of universality of human rights has been a subject of controversy as there is the argument on the particularistic characterization of these rights" (Bologun, 2008).*

Arising from that, presupposition "now are various regional charters on human rights such as the charter on human and people's" (Fayemi, 2010). It is worth noting that while undoubtedly, there are certain peculiarities in human rights that make particularism possible and meaningful, "the supposed dilemma between the two perspectives become insignificant when we realize that human rights in both are geared towards the same goals, respect for culture human values and dignity,

tolerance of ideas and beliefs and promotion of peace and human development.” (Fayemi, 2010). Human rights at the universal level spell out the highest ideals, while the multicultural diversifications give the universal standards regional flavour that eases their acceptability and implementation.

### **5.11. DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN KWASI WIREDU’S PHILOSOPHY**

Human rights, as earlier clarified, “are claims that an average human being is entitled to make simply by virtue of their status as human beings” (Fayemi, 2010). Kwasi Wiredu a scholar in African Philosophy, attempts an analysis of the fundamental of human rights from an African perspective. This is done in order to establish the key linkages between the concepts democracy and human rights of an African person and to what extent should they be embraced. The analyses of the problem are about what Africans consider to be a matter of human rights in the area of political governance that have been denied by the international conventions on human Rights. In addressing the problem of human rights in African philosophy, Kwasi Wiredu, examines the Akan conception of a person as a case study towards an African concept of democracy and human rights inherent in the our world today. It must be noted that the Akan conception of life and the Bemba is exactly the same.

In this context of argument, the Akan people, a tribe in Ghana represent African traditional beliefs that define the African person. According to Wiredu, “the Akan conception of a person has both descriptive and normative aspects that are directly relevant not only to the idea that there are human rights, but also to the question of what those rights are. This examination will help us in our quest towards figuring out the necessities for an African conception of democracy which is a primary factor in African traditional governance systems applicable to Zambia as the title of this chapter stipulates.

#### **5.11.1. DEFINITION OF PERSONHOOD FOR THE AKAN TRIBE**

A person according to the *Akan* thoughts is a composition of three elements, which are the life principle (*Okra*), the blood principle (*Mogyia*) and the personality’s principles (*Sunsum*). *Okra* is a divine element from God, which everybody possesses. It is the same in all men and makes all persons to have an intrinsic value. Associated with this value is a concept of human dignity, which implies that

every human being is entitled in an equal measure to a certain basic respect. Explicating on the relevance of *Okra* aspect of a person to human rights, Wiredu says “*Okra* is the right of each person, as the recipient of a destiny, to pursue that unique destiny assigned to him by God” (Wiredu, 1996). In other words, with *Okra*, everyone has the right to do his own thing, and be ready to accept responsibilities of one’s own choices. Through the possession of *Okra*, *Mogya* and *Sumsum*, a person is situated in a “network of kinship relations that generate a system of rights and obligations.” (Wiredu, 1996). Of first appearance in the world; one is totally defenseless, dependent and need care and protection of others. During this early childhood days, Wiredu noted that “one has the greatest right to receive help, care, love and affection.” (Ibid). All these can be said to be the right to be nursed. *Mogya* (literally blood) is held by both the Akan and the Bemba, to come from the mother and is the basis of lineage. There is a right attached to it, and this is the right to land, at least a plot, from the ancestral lineage holdings. These human rights are entitlements of every Akan by virtue of being a human being. Though Wiredu noted that “in traditional Akan society, there was no state backing in terms of sanctions for violators of the rights. However, they were deeply felt and complied with by member of the society.” (Wiredu, 1996).

Moreover, Wiredu observes some other veritable harvests of human rights in traditional Akan society. These include

*“the right of any well-defined unit of political organization to self-government, the right of all to have a say in the ens stoolment or destoolment of their chiefs or their elders and to participate in the shaping of governmental policies, the right of all to freedom of thought and expression in all matters: political, religious and metaphysical, the right of everybody to trial before punishment, the right of a person to remain at any locality or to leave” ( Wiredu, 1996).*

among others. The observance, recognition and strict adherence to all these rights were, according to Wiredu, facilitated by the Akan democratic political system.

However, these ideals are no longer the order of the contemporary world, as there are apparent and severe violations of human rights. Human rights abuses are of many kinds and causes. Violations may come from individuals or from governments.

The former may be rightly termed private transgressions; the latter constitute political oppression. While both are condemnable, the latter is what principally engages contemporary concerns with human rights. As Wiredu notes, “it is a multi-faceted problem, but it is quite clear that the greatest part of it comes from the ways of governments” On the basis of the above, Wiredu noted and considered one general kind of human rights abuse in African political world. This human rights abuse, he called “denial by governments, the right to decisional representation of citizens.” (Wiredu, 2000). Many African governments have been in the forefront of this abuse of right to political representation. Wiredu argues that “the majoritarian democracy, which is routinely recommended and even practiced by most African states have been responsible for many of the violations and abuses of human rights.” (Wiredu, 2000) and therefore must be rejected in Africa in preference to the African model of democracy by consensus decision making.

#### **5.12. PROSPECTS FOR A ZAMBIAN CONCEPT OF DEMOCRACY.**

Having looked at the political system of the Bemba and the conceptualization of human rights from various dimensions, we envisage the fact that Zambian, political salvation for governance needs to take full cognisance of its African roots if indeed it is to develop a stable environment within the context of the Zambian African people.

In this chapter, we have comprehensively identified some of the values of governance of the Bemba speaking people, and have identified the rule by consensus as a general norm in the running of the affairs in the traditional African society. Well, comparing with the trend of multiparty democracy in the meaning of the word, we definitely may not find a word, party traditionally because the Bemba traditional system of running government “ was not a party system in the sense of the word party [...] which is a basic to majoritarian democracy” (E.E.Evans-Pritchard, 1940). However in a wider spectrum, the clans “were parties to the project of good governance” (Wiredu, 1996).

As we noted in the previous section, at every level of authority, the Bemba have a council through which deliberations are conducted in a manner that people are well represented and decisions made that reflect the people. “ the sense in which the system in question did not feature parties” (Wiredu, 1996) presupposes the idea

that “ none of the groups ( clans) mentioned organized themselves for the purpose of gaining power in a way which entailed others not being in power or worse being out of it” (Wiredu, 1996). The system of the Bemba political organization itself is put in place for the participation in power and “the underlying philosophy was one of cooperation not confrontation” (Wiredu, 1996). This aspect of political organization does not portray any element of parties, either, a none party system or Multipartism, but rather emphasizes the concept of participation of all without parties.

### **5.13. THE POLITICAL SYSTEM IN CONTEMPORARY ZAMBIA.**

Politics in Zambia takes place in a framework of a presidential representative democratic republic, where by the president of Zambia is both head of state and head of government and of the plural form multiparty system. Executive power is exercised by the government. The executive is made up of the president and his cabinet whose responsibility is to make national policies as well as to implement the law of the land. The republican president, who is elected by a popular simple majority vote for a term of five years is constitutionally not allowed to serve more than two terms, has prerogative to appoint cabinet ministers and deputy minister from serving members of parliaments. The president has also constitutional power to appoint high commoners, service chiefs, chief executives of parastatal companies, and heads of the Zambia defence force. Legislative power is vested in both the government and the national parliament which consists of 150 elected members from all the constituencies across the country. However, the republican president has constitutional powers to nominate eight members of parliament who together with the elected ones all serve five years terms.

Zambia is divided into ten provinces, each administered by an appointed Minister who essentially performs the duty of a governor. The provinces are divided into 103 districts. Each district is divided into wards which are represented at the district level by the local councillor. All in all, governance from state-centric perspective is the ultimate defining characteristic of the contemporary political system in Zambia. This trend portrays the government as the leading actor in the country and turns citizen into mere spectators or mere participators. Such a system gives the impression that government is the appropriate legitimate unchallenged vehicle for social change and economic development’ (Pierre 2000:4)

Zambia's political system is considerably centralized in the sense that decisions with regard to the welfare of the people and the country at large are made by the central government. Moreover, most of them are far distanced from reality prevailing on the ground. As a matter of fact the constitution gives the president overwhelming power to abuse his office for personal gratification and glory. As a result, the entire past president's tenure of office has been characterised with the pursuit and advancement of the interests of few individuals and groups who are related or in good books with the powers that be. The president can hire and fire ministers at will; he even engineers the adoption process of the aspiring members of parliament with the view of turning them into rubber stamps once they are elected to parliament. The mechanism for checks and balances is here but it is either dormant or abused by the system.

Worse still, the ruling party at different times has used its two- third majority in parliament to pass laws which favour its political programmes. Even with a balanced parliament, it has become fashionable in Zambia to defect to the ruling party. This is mainly because the defectors are looking for ministerial jobs (Kabanda 2003:8). This entails that politics in Zambia is a matter of economic survival rather than of service to the people and the nation at large. As a matter of fact, it is very difficult to develop your area if you belong to the opposition party. One Umberto observed that the prevailing philosophy in the Zambian political circles is that your area cannot develop if you vote for the opposition. This has been heard in the campaign messages of the ruling party (Umberto 2003:11). Therefore, the state machinery only benefits those who support the ruling party while the wider majority are suffering with no tangible service delivery.

#### **5.14. THE SEARCH FOR AN AFRICAN IDENTITY FOR THE ZAMBIAN POLITICAL GOVERNANCE**

Africa in general, is caught up in a web of practicing systems that are unfounded within the ethos and governance of our traditional societies. "Some government systems which Africa has copied gullibly from foreign nations may deserve overhauling in order to find their legitimacy or discard them all together" (Chuba, 2011). It has been proved in Zambia and in other African countries, elsewhere that it is no longer healthy and even "dangerous to adopt them randomly in a belief that all

African traditional forms of government are completely unsuitable or barbaric” (Chuba, 2011). Our search for an African identity in political governance, should depend on the foundation of Africans and dispel the “notion that only government systems from overseas are viable for Africa” (Chuba, 2011). It is argued that such notion can even negate local efforts and consequently “making Africa dependent on the other adjudicating systems rather than become Judiciary independent” (Chuba, 2011) as this would be another attempt to re-colonise Africa. For our African Christian theology, we envisage that Africa by and large, has “ got government systems which she has been using successfully in her governance for generations and which she can renovate to excellence and place on the global table for others to emulate” (Chuba, 2011). The governance system of the Bemba speaking people is one such example with an effective system which when harnessed is another landmark contribution to the world. The Ashanti and the Akan tribes of Ghana as well as the Lonzi of Western Zambia among others in Africa have in the history of Africa recorded magnificent traditional systems of governance, which when put together could provide an agenda for an authentic Africa political identity. Henry Kanyanta Sosala, in his unpublished article , the Descent of the Bemba, observes that in an African political system, “ there is a conviction that the embodiment of Knowledge, intellect, and wisdom including mega-talent and multi-gifts are all confined within the inner circle of the political party in power never elsewhere” (Sosala, 2014) as such it makes it very difficult, to embrace the purported democracy in the same way it operates in the West to an extent that politics are reduced “ to a level of football match. A football match may of course attract some very good players. It may also be entertaining, but it is still only a game and only the most ardent fans [who are not usually the most intelligent] take the game very seriously” (Rohio, 1975). Any criticism from outside, a party system, no matter how wise or reasonable is only considered to be deliberate and calculated malicious attempts to throw the infallibility of the ruling in doubt.

Mwamba Peni, in his book, *The Bemba Political System as a basis for a sustainable Development in Zambia*, stresses the point that foreign systems of political governance, has over looked the traditional ethos completely that the concept of democracy or participation by all appears to be consumed in a web of political authority. He says,

*“the president appoints the army chiefs, the inspector- general of police and Directors of public companies. He also nominates the Auditor- General, Anti-corruption and the drug enforcement commissioners who are only ratified by parliament yet they are just party’s adopted cadres and they are there only to serve the interest of the President. And since the ruling party has always had a two-third majority in parliament since independence, it has time and again passed laws in its own favour” (Peni, 2006).*

Much as the party or multiparty system of government, may record a success, in the western countries, the ideologies that embrace it perpetrate, a power struggle to a point of risking people’s lives. Political parties in Zambia for example, are “personal to holder and the fundamental weakness in this state of democracy is the question of removal of the founding leader of a political party” (Sosala, 2014). Yes the trend is so powerful to an extent of disregarding other people who would even do better.

Sosala (2014) laments the failure of democracy and alludes to the fact that the failure is as a result of adopting a foreign model of governance other than developing an indigenous one that could simply be polished and produce an acceptable entity of good governance. He states,

*“We hoped to see our country become a nation based on parliamentary constitutions or the west minister model and enjoying responsible democratic government but unfortunately we are at the tail-end of history, after fifty years of self-rule, having even gone through the so- called one party participatory democracy and it is now very clear that the Westminster model as a model for Zambian democracy has absolutely and totally failed” (Sosala, 2014).*

This particular voice from Sosala the Paramount Chief of the Bemba People points us to re-evaluate the political system and to a higher extent make an authentic alternative system of governance for Zambia. A lot of deficits can be noted. The national assembly itself is drawn along political party lines, so much that the agenda for representation is reduced to nothingness. The real power of the national assembly to represent people is indirectly surrendered to the civil society groups.

In a fare well speak to Zambia, the former Germany envoy to Zambia, His Excellence, Erich Kistof pointed out that the national assembly was a major



disappointment and he went on to state that, since his arrival in the country it was strange to observe that the national assembly didn't play a major role in many national matters despite being elected representatives of the people. He said in a statement,

*"I wish the national Assembly being elected representatives of the people can be proactive when dealing with national matters instead of the civil society. The civil society is not elected [...] the chiefs were also to play a major role in areas where government is not present"* (Sunday post 10th July, 2005).

At this Sosala (2014) raises a question as to "why have Western political systems totally flopped in Africa? [he says] political party systems were not thought when the nationalists were fighting for our independence and were therefore forced to adopt their former colonial masters political systems" (Sosala, 2014). We observe that the foreign systems though systematically supported and promoted by the owners of the ideology have only put Africa into unredeemable slavery.

Gambian President, Yahya Jammeh in a statement of tribute to Zimbabwe also lamented,

*"We Africans cannot see ourselves with pride and say we are independent. We are not, let no body fool you. If you are independent, how can you talk about freedom? Say, if I feed you, I will tell you when to eat and will decide what you are going to eat. So how free are you? Hence how can you have democracy?"* (Business Tribune of Zimbabwe 16th August, 2002).

The implication of President Jammeh's statement is that there are a lot of hard questions which African countries must give answers to if indeed political emancipation has to occur. In a radical, sense, Africans must figure out the meaning of independence freedom and democracy. Africans failure to independently re-define itself through its organs in order to allow a total constitutional revolution; which allows the concept of governance to emanating from African roots will result into alienation for the next thousand years. This is why, poverty, continues to be the un defeated enemy as Uganda's President Yoweri Museveni lamented about Africa's poverty when he opened the 78th Zambia Agriculture show in Zambia in 2004. He said,

*“No single African country has advanced in the last 47 years because of concepts that have no bearing on the survival of its citizens. This is the opposite of the Asian countries like Singapore that have shaken off their under development to be counted among the fast developing countries. What is the problem of Africa? If we look at countries coming out of wars, they are backward. Those that were at peace and under colonialism are also backward. We should identify our problems and embark on concepts that work. Africa has attained middle age, but it is still backward in terms of development. Africa is the most backward continent on the globe and the sub-Saharan Africa is the frontier of absolute poverty in the world” (Sunday Mail, 1st August, 2004)*

In assessing the various voices of African leaders, church and traditional leaders from all walks of life, time is ripe to push the agenda for Africa’s authentic political system. The task is possible. For a long time the role of traditional governance systems proved to deliver the prospects of the indigenous people and that is what we believe led to the creation of nationalist movements which brought about independence. Africans challenge now is a radical overhaul of foreign political systems in a quest to establish an African identity in politics which manifests itself at all levels, be it political and religions of African society.

We envisage that signs of change for identity began to show up and they climaxed between 1968 and 1975 when Zambia, Malawi, Uganda, Tanzania and many other African countries that had been founded on the premise of Multipartism, soon discovered that it was not viable or practical in an African context due to its capability, to divide people, along tribal and ethnic affiliation and soon became an ingredient of civil strife.

During that period of time the African countries mentioned “developed one party participatory system of government guided through a particular democracy” (Chuba, 2011) which was purported to be similar to the traditional system. “under the traditional system, there is only one chief in a village, that is traditionally honestly responsible to the people who installed him or her to the throne as the cooperate personality. He or she is a symbol of the tribe or nation and local people had traditional power to de-stool him or her if found wanting” (Chuba, 2011).

Traditionally, that was perceived to be “a government of the people, for the people and by the people in the meaning of the word democracy itself” (Chuba B. , 2011) Though that was an attempt to try and give an African identity which would have been developed into a more viable African system, “it was abandoned later because it was not Western democracy” (Chuba, 2011) even if for the time being it had served the Zambian country, for example, for 27 years and made a land mark history in uniting the country for the first time, under the motto One Zambia, One Nation with one leader and all the tribes united together for the common good.

The most valuable attribute and ingredient which would be a good basis of governance lies on the basis of encouraging participation in governance based on the premise that, ‘ “... democracy is a government by the people” (Rohio, 1975) an attribute which is inherent in all African traditional ways of running affairs. Julius Nyerere, former, late president of the United Republic of Malawi in a quest to give an African identity to political governance alluded to the fact that, democracy did not mean any further than ideally “a form of government where by the people-ALL the people-settle their affairs through free discussion” (Rohio, 1975). Going by this understanding, it means democracy, may take many forms but the climax of it is that, it must be a participatory entity in the political operations of the country.

This kind of dimension places the African setting in executing democracy i.e. in every African community elders of the village of the town gathered to discuss matters that concerned the general welfare of the citizens and provided such direction that was necessary, of course there was a leader of every community who was either a headman or a chief and those leaders had advisors and in all things there was a proper representation of the people either in council or in the executive. Rev. Dr. Bwalya S. Chuba, a Zambian scholar in his book *God of our Fathers and Mothers is our God*, states that,

*“In most African nations if not all, there is the Insaka [Lappar] (in Bemba of Zambia) Silyele (in Lozi), Ipembo (in Namwanga), Mphaala (in Nyanja) for male members of a community and Icibwanse [Lappar for the Female]. These are important institutions in an African community. Each of them serves as the heart and brain of the African culture where cultural elements, whose image the affluent world is currently denting and threatening with extinction, are*

*vehemently re-shaped and reactivated in a desperate attempt to preserve the invaluable African identity” (Chuba, 2011).*

In his giving the examples of these institutions and the role they played in ensuring the smooth running of villages or towns, Chuba (2011) states that, “ they above all promote unity of purpose and service in an African community” (Chuba, 2011). It is the more reason why Nyerere, was so hard in stressing that, “ in African society the methods of conducting affairs was through free discussion [...] elders sat under the big trees and talk until they agree” (Rohio, 1975). Kenneth Kaunda, former President of Zambia also pointed out on the same though for him voiced out the fact that “in our original societies we operated by consensus. An issue was talked about in solemn conclave until such times as agreement could be achieved” (Rohio, 1975).

While all these statements were made in a quest to promote and defend the one party system, we reaffirm that, across Africa, “the reliance on consensus is peculiarly political phenomenon” (E.E.Evans-Pritchard, 1940). We note that where consensus was taken based on political decision making in Africa, “it is a manifestation of the immanent approach to social interaction” (Wiredu, 1996) which the Bemba speaking people of Zambia have used for over 300 years in Zambia since they left the Luba Chiefdom to establish themselves along the *Kalungu* river of Kasama.

## **5.15. EXPLORING THE OPTION OF A NON - PARTY CONSENSUAL DEMOCRACY**

Arising from the experience of the failure of the one party authoritarian participatory democracy which was championed by Kenneth Kaunda from 1972 and 1991 which turned out to be a bad element in the governance of Zambia and the divisions and regional politics brought about by the majoritarian, Multiparty democracy from 1991 through amendment of the Zambian constitution, we propose a consideration of the non-party government by consensus decision making as a model for democracy in Zambian politics. This model presupposes the idea of a “government by people’s representatives” (Rohio, 1975). In this situation, it is a concept whereby it is “the affairs of several million people that are to be settled by discussion” (Rohio, 1975). This idea is aimed at establishing the fact that, the people of Zambia would require representatives not of political parties but of the people directly elected for the purpose of “taking a direct part in the discussions in parliament without being

intimidated by anyone. Parliament in practice under this model would be one which is a collection of spokespersons or representatives whose main task is to engage freely in the making of decision that affect their people who were chosen freely by the people from among themselves. The president of the country is on the other hand elected from among the representatives themselves and the due authority to install and de-stool is in the hands of the parliamentarians and not the general public who know little about the candidates that would foster development and promote good governance. This concept is different from the one party system because in the one party, representatives of the people are “identified with a political party” (Rohio, 1975) which by and large, ties the representative to certain party ideologies which more often than not, corrupts the essence of representation because the representatives themselves are caught up on crossroads, i.e. loyalty to the party and loyalty to the people. History informs us that the one party turned out to be authoritarian in nature and therefore lost the ideals of democracy of representation.

Multipartism on the other hand, has proven to be a channel of division and factionalism within the governance system as noted in Chapter three of this dissertation. History informs us that since Multiparty democracy was introduced in Zambia and enshrined in the constitution of the republic it has “encouraged the growth of factionalism” (Rohio, 1975) This to an extent encourages fights and therefore there is “no question of national unity” (Rohio, 1975) due to the differences in political ideologies by different political parties whose interest is to foster party agenda and not the peoples ideal and prospects.

We argue that, multiparty has proved to be a weapon of tribal hatred and therefore has the capacity to bring about revolutions when this happens the nation is likely to fall prey to confusion. Furthermore, the reason why the word ‘revolution’ is generally associated with the armed insurrection is that the existence of the really fundamental differences within any society poses a ‘civil war’ situation and has often led to bloody revolution” (Rohio, 1975). The fight for power in Zambia in recent years has “divided the nation in regions” (Lamer, 2011). The cold war between the Bemba’s of the Northern Zambia and the Tonga’s of Southern Zambia has the capacity to plunge the nation into war. Talk of the fight between the people of Barotseland and the Government of the Republic of Zambia over the “Barotse Agreement of 1964” are all

products of Multipartism where “minority tribes are suppressed both in representation and tribal balancing in government” (Munshya, 2010).

It is worth noting that “in any country which is divided over fundamental issues you have the ‘civil war’ situation” (Rohio, 1975). Now in the context of Zambia, “over 35 political parties were registered between 1991 and 2011” (Lamer, 2011) formed along tribal, regional and ethnic lines. This in actual fact shows that there are over 35 different ideologies based on different fundamental issues thus “reduce politics to a level of a football match” (Rohio, 1975). Now in a football match it may in actual sense “attract some very able players; it may also be entertaining; but it is still only a game and only the most ardent fans[ who are not usually the most intelligent] take the game very seriously” (Rohio, 1975). It is a fact that in Zambia’s multiparty democratic dispensation it is noted that some of the very usual and intelligent members of society and citizens have been destructed by the “hypocrisy of the party game called politics” (Rohio, 1975). And have decided to withdraw and therefore leave politics to people that are not really good players in the political field. Because parties are established along political party policies and ideologies, more often than not useful people “see no party whose ‘line’ they could support without reservation” (Rohio, 1975). In this practice, they are left with no way of serving their country in the political arena because even appointments or positions of service to cabinet or elsewhere are done along party lines.

We contend the fact that politics of a country like Zambia, governed by a multiparty system cannot be national politics at all, “they are the politics of the groups” (Rohio, 1975) whose interests and agenda is more often than not of small concern to the majority of the people. It is important to note that in the case of Multipartism, “major parties differ on minor issues” (Rohio, 1975). But because they are fighting to be in power, the small or minor fundamental issues would end up putting the country at risk. It is a matter of fact when we argue that parties under this scheme of political things are “organizations of people of similar tendencies and aspirations with the sole aim of gaining power for the implementation of their policies” (Wiredu, 2000). In other words the competitions that the imperial multiparty democracy brings is often unnecessary and can work well if the concept of democracy is non- partisan, a model of governance by consensus.

Now we note that, in spite of the political actors from various political parties would be seen fighting, they do not differ in fundamental issues except in their quest for political power, a case that is not sustainable in the practice of democracy and leadership in an African society. Let us push further the case of political parties in a multiparty party arrangement. It is a fact that they all differ only on minor issues as noted above because the underlying principle in Multipartism is simply to gain power and this does not work well in a country we argue. We believe that all parties may “have the interests of the people at heart (Rohio, 1975) as they claim in their political campaigns. Let us say they all believe that education is generally a good thing and everyone must have access to basic education within a frame. That it should be made available to everybody; they all believe that a fair living wage should be paid to all workers; and they all believe that medical care should be within the reach of all and so on.

Our argument is when we examine the elements that make up good governance, the mentioned points are all fundamental and it is not likely that “ any political party today would dare tell the electorate did not believe in them” (Rohio,1975). We assume that under these fundamentals it is imperative that whichever party may win the elections “its aim will be to provide the people with as many of those benefits as it can” (Rohio, 1975). In this case we see it as ambiguous that political parties are supposed to be the drivers of governance in which the opposition or even the ruling party present their manifestos to be elected only to implement the same fundamental policies.

Given the fundamental mandate of consensual democracy for Zambia, it would be far more sensible for political parties to be abolished and “let the electorate choose the best individuals from among them all” (Rohio, 1975). This would make sense because the individuals would then meet in parliament to discuss the details of the job and corporate in getting it done. The government in this case would be formed not by parties “but by consensus of the elected representatives” (Wiredu, 2000) and from among the representatives a President. The President in a non- party state would then use the same process of consensus decision to form cabinet. Government in other words becomes a form of coalition where by all sections of society, tribe and regions would have elected their representatives who directly represent them and not those representing political parties as the case is now. This would be a true “coalition not as in the common acceptance of parties” (Wiredu,

2000” but a coalition of the citizens of the country. This would now be the real meaning of democracy fully informed by the African value system of conducting political affairs, whereby lineages and clans represent the people in council.

It is however worth noting that this concept of governance in a none-party arrangement system does not dispel “the formation of political associations” (Wiredu, 2000). Associations in this arrangement would only work only at a point of propagating certain preferred ideologies but in cabinet or “the council of state, affiliation with such association” (Wiredu, 2000) would not affect the representatives privilege for appointment for a position of responsibility. This concept would promote and advance the concept of One Zambia, One Nation motto, but at the same time would enable the identification of passive but important members of society to be given chance to participate in the governance of the state.

The theory behind our argument against a party based method of conducting elections in a multi-party dispensation is that, “people chose a policy rather than a personality” (Rohio, 1975). This type of method definitely has disadvantages. Firstly, the elections of the representative is not adequate because what people aim of voting for is a policy. This implies that the expectation of having a people’s representative who the electorate believe would adequately represent them is bound to pose the limitations. Secondly, the challenge arises when there is no difference in policy and if there is a difference over fundamentals “which inevitably involves disunity and potential revolution, the best choice is between individuals “that is the best choice of the individual for the job” (Rohio, 1975). This in fact is what we argue for when we talk of a non-party dispensation where the choice of representatives is totally best on one’s ability to deliver to represent people well in the making of developmental policies. We retaliate that, more often than not, fundamental government policies are the same and these are agreed upon in the House of Representatives. This is what we argue should happen in the case for Zambian democracy, in which a national leader such as the President is elected or appointed simply to be a chararist to spearhead fundamental policies that have been agreed and ratified by peoples representatives as ideal and fundamental to the aspirations of the people. We therefore, endeavor to propose political associations within a non-party state which we believe would be channels for a desirable pluralism but what



would be “without the Hobbesian proclivities of political parties” (Wiredu, 2000) as they are known in a multiparty democratic system of politics.

The advantage of a party system also would liberate the representatives of the “constraints of membership in parties dedicated to wrestling power or retaining” (Wiredu, 1996). Their job in this respect would be motivated by the objective merits of given proposals that ulterior considerations. We argue that in such an atmosphere, “willingness to compromise and without it the prospects of Consensus will be enhanced” (Wiredu, 1996). Experience informs us that all successful “Zambian governments have failed to deliver a people driven constitution” (Lamer, 2011) since 1964 despite at least four successful constitution review commissions recommending clauses that would enhance good governance. The flopping point of such recommendations has been the Zambian parliament whose voting pattern on national issues has been along political party lines and for the interest of the people in government. There are a lot of implications on governance for example the constitution development which dates back to the British colonial government especially from the 1950’s still has power where by some colonial elements such as “the 1955 public order Act” (Lamer, 2011) remains in the constitution of the independent state and is used to limit the freedom of expression by political parties and civil society organizations.

It is therefore our argument that if Zambia’s democracy is to produce substantial results, it must be understood that politics have to be taken more seriously because all the policies made affect the people and should be remembered that political governance in Africa and Zambia has to be taken from African lenses. “In any human society compromise between individuals is not only desirable” (Rohio, 1975). In this case we view a point of compromise within the promise of a non-party state formed out of the consensus of the people as being the channel through which the common good and not sectional interests of the people are met. This is how the African society lived and was governed where by individualism was tempered with or subjected to the “good of society as a whole not merely to the good of a part of society” (Rohio, 1975)

We contend that where there is non-party politics, government is directly identified with the people on the ground and “foundations of democracy can be firmer” (Rohio,

1975) as it is in the case study of the Bemba traditional political system referred to above. The focus of this concept is that the underlying principle and centre of gravity are the people who in this arrangement would have more opportunity to exercise real choice personalities as their representatives rather than choice of a policy or parties whose foundations are representing only a section of a community. Experience in Zambian politics shows how limitations to freedom has been in a Multiparty dispensation and the system as proved to be “fatal to democracy” (Rohio, 1975).

The experience of Zambia since independence has shown how both the “authoritarian one party system and the majoritarian system” (Wiredu, 2000) have proved to be fatal to an extent. But in a non-party arrangement parliament would allow peoples representatives to argue freely.

With this practice and value system, we contend that democracy by “consensus is not just an optional bonus [...] it is essential for securing substantive, or what might also be decisional, representation for representatives” (Wiredu, 2000) and through them for the citizens at large. This kind of method can be referred to as a “matter of fundamental human rights” (Wiredu, 2000) for a Zambian African polity. We argue that consensus in a non- party system arrangement is a political practice where by it requires in “principle, that each representatives should be persuaded” ( Wiredu, 2000) to take part in the making of decisions at least as a practical necessity of government. Now this is where we believe “rational discussion” (Rohio, 1975) is most valued.

Furthermore, the non- party state by consensus, “should not be confused with decision making on the principle of the supreme right of the majority” (Wiredu, 2000). In this case decision making on the principle of supreme right of the majority prevails but up the minority to accept the proposal in question, not just to live with it which later is the basic right of minorities under majoritarian democracy. However, our contention is that in “a consensus system, the voluntary acquiescence of the minority with respect to a given issue would normally be necessary for adoption of decision” (Wiredu, 2000). This is the role in which the non- party by consensus decision making would work to deal with the divisions where by the government is identified with the whole nation and has nothing to fear from the discontent of any excluded section of society for there is no such section of society. Those forming government

would of course be replaced from time to time in order to keep the spirit of nationhood alive. The whole essence of this alternative to political direction ‘would have nothing to do with the over throwing of a party’ (Rohio, 1975) because there is no such party and the non-party has nothing to fear from criticism and “the free expression of ideas” (Rohio, 1975). This is where the government of Zambia would find real direction in that the people and the nation have everything to gain from constant injection of new ideas from within the nation and outside. The advantages are that any member of society who is a citizen would be free to stand as a candidate if the so wished.

Further, there would be no need to continue with the current artificial distinction between politicians and civil servants, “ a distinction desirable only in the context of a multiparty system where the continuity of public administration must be thrown out of gear at every switch from one party government to another” ( Rohio, 1975). This would for once enable the nation to think not in terms of “a single national movement, instead of a number of rival factional parties” (Rohio, 1975). This would remove the barrier that excludes the whole group of most intelligent and able members of the community from participation in the discussion of polity simply because they happen to be civil servants. In a non-party political government which is identified to the whole nation through representatives’ participation in political affairs must be recognized as the right of every citizen no matter what capacity they may have chosen to serve their country.

## **5.16. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

This chapter has comprehensively discussed the traditional political system of the Bemba speaking people and demonstrated the system of running political affairs as a basis for our proposition of Non- party democracy by consensus as a plausible alternative to Multiparty democracy and the one party state of political governance in Zambia. Two things came up as strengths in the political system of the Bemba, which we examined to be a basis for building a foundation to an effective government.

- a) The non-party basis of representation
- b) Reliance on consensus.

The chapter raised intellectual concerns and passionately proposed the emergence of an alternative paradigm of democracy in Zambia that would promote better human rights which are espoused in our indigenous democratic ideals and values with the view of demonstrating that traditional Africans has had a system of democratic arrangement that is quite different from the western model and which can be built upon in contemporary Africa.

Within the deistic understanding we proposed a non-party consensual democracy as a plausible political messiah to many of the problems bedevilling contemporary Zambia especially the political problems of politics of tribalism, innuendos, hatred, malicious, division based on ethnicity and the formation of political parties along tribal lines. It also would deal with the problem of human rights as part of the agenda for Africa in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It was noted that this attempt “externally induced by the urge to demonstrate that traditional African societies had a similar experience with such western states where consensual democracy is the adopted mode [such as New Zealand and East Timor]” (Fayemi, 2010). The argument was based on the fact that the application of “fundamental aspects of human rights” (Fayemi, 2010) which is called the right of decisional representation under the cultural and political rights, was a primary concern that the this human right had not been taken seriously on the Zambian political fray whereby peoples voices could not be heard due to the policy of party politics that represent only a section of society i.e. their own political parties.

The analysis of the chapter, strongly argued for a consensual democracy based on the model of the Bemba and the Akan tribe of Ghana and it totally rejected the one party dictatorial and the multiparty democracies in Zambia as the duo had been very “repressive of the oppositions” (Lamer, 2011). It was argued that that political repression has a fundamental effect of an abuse on the right of decisional representation of the citizens.

It was indicated in the application system in the running of the affairs of a country, that the two principals were very cardinal i.e. adherence to consensus implied a non-party approach to governance as a primary factor. It is therefore important to state that if decision is to be by consensus, the formation of government will have to follow suit. It was argued that once the Zambian government was no longer formed on the

basis of parties, which are a source of division then such organizations would lose their most distinctive character as mechanisms for the conquest of state power.

With such an attribute, it was argued that negative characteristics such as their adverbial and aggressive attitude would disappear. It has also argued that democracy involving political organizations free of such traits would be both conceptually and pragmatically different from multiparty democracy “therefore, it will in the truest sense be democracy with a truly human face” (Kiros, 2001). Such a democracy is what the traditional African society promises, not only among the Bemba of Zambia, but also the Zulu of South Africa, the Buganda, of Uganda, the Akan and the Ashanti of Ghana to name but a few.

It was argued that apart from the moral excellence of consensus as an ideal method of governance in a Zambian African government system, it is a human right, for a traditional African society, and as such the need for it is a matter of life and death. Kwasi Wiredu’s philosophy on democracy and human rights was examined and pointed out clearly that in African society, the life principle (*Okra*), the blood principle (*Mogya*) and the personality principles (*Sunsum*) of an African person regardless of ethnic group are hallmarks that makes up a true *homo Afrikanus*

It was noted that post-colonial politics brought in a democracy which had limitations its multiparty disposition did little to bring about unity. The effects of it culminated into dividing Zambia into regions and ethnic groups through politics of confrontation and tribe. The bearing of ethnic configurations and other divisions in Zambia like other bore nothing but a danger for the country mainly as a consequence, “small ethnic groups have been politically marginalized in the face of dominance of larger ones” (Kiros, 2001).

This chapter has presented a challenge to Zambia intellectuals, theologians, historians, philosophers, political scientists, economists, anthropologists, sociologists and constitutional scholars to put their heads together and explore the rational, conceptual basis and a constitutional framework for a non- party system of politics based on consensus. From the multiplicity of the disciplines “it can be inferred that the issues surrounding this idea are legion” (Kiros, 2001).

In a quest on how the nation would be governed in the absence of political parties, a road map for a non-party state of government as ideal for Zambia was proposed. It was based on the traditional governance system of the Bemba speaking people of Zambia, although in a broader sense, other models from other tribes in African were also referred to. It was noted that, a non-party state, was a stronger basis for democracy because it had its foundations based on the traditional African political system whose principle of government was a rule by consensus decision making. Further, the non-party political system embraced the freedom of political associations which to an extent provided for the interactions of people based on certain ideologies.

It was argued that both the one party system and the multiparty systems which Zambia had experienced in the past were not only incompatible with freedom of political association but also with the freedom of expression for the minority groups. It was argued that political association in the non-party polity would in fact be an exceedingly important point of mediation between civil society and the state, because as a forum of discourse, they would belong to civil society just like literary societies, while as vehicle of political education and representation, they would be directly connected with state. Another significance was noted was that political associations in a non-party state would enlarge political orientations beyond ethnic concerns which would be a boom to Zambian politics.

In this case, when ideological specific policy considerations motivate political associations, “tribal antagonisms are likely to be greatly reduced or altogether overcome” (Kiros, 2001). Examples of the effectiveness of the non-party system was likened to the analogy of the civil society in which tribal or ethnic considerations hardly play any role in their operations just like the nationalist movements of the pre independence era.

## CHAPTER SIX

### AN ETHICAL – THEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

#### 6.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses an ethical-theological framework for a Non-Party democracy by consensus decision making based on the Bemba as a practical alternative to the current Zambian multiparty democratic system whose ideals have been a source of division in Zambia's 50 years of political independence from Britain. It has been argued in this dissertation that Zambia among other African nations is a product of African traditional governance systems whose foundations were anchored on traditional democracy whereby the elders settled the affairs of the people "through rational discussions" (Rohio, 1975).

It is our firm contention that "throughout the African Diaspora during the pre-colonial era, African political systems were essentially democratic" (Bradley 2005:414). By the pre-colonial era, we refer to the period "prior to the Berlin conference of November 1884-February 1885" (Bradley 2005:414) which paved way for the scramble for Africa by European powers for "their own colonial interests" (Bradley 2005:414). As recorded by several anthropologists, there is strong "evidence of democratic governance in indigenous African states" (Busia, 1967) which when rehabilitated, after a long period of abandonment would demonstrate a true governance system which would be consistent with the nature and culture of "the *homo Afrikanus*." (Pobee, 1979). The main argument for the democratic nature of the pre-colonial African societies owes to the fact that, though they could not be perceived as democratic from the western lenses, in the meaning of the word today they were democratic in the sense that "they exhibited all the common characteristics of consent of the people and a balance between centralized and decentralized power, all intended to prevent the abuse of authority by any one person" (Osabu-kle 2000). It should however be noted that much as we may fantasise the authenticity of the democratic nature of the pre-colonial African democracy "the systems sometimes did manifest exclusion, for instance elitism and male domination" (Bradley 2005:414). But, these are the areas that in the rehabilitation process of African governance would be taken into consideration in order to meet the standards of modern society within the tenets of the African ethos.

It is out of this profound history of Africa's democratic value system that we endeavour to formulate an ethical- theological frame work to guide our proposal for a Non- party democracy by consensus as a new direction for a Zambian African political system. It is a theological framework owing to the fact that Zambia's peculiar constitutional provision as "a Christian nation by declaration" (Muwowo, 2010) attracts a theological approach to its democratic model uniquely coined with the African traditional system of governance referred to above.

It is our firm contention that "democracy is a configuration of governance molded by the general values biases and nuances of a given culture" (Bradley, 2005). As a matter of fact, every governance system is "culturally determined" (Muwowo, 2010) and as such we envisage that the reality of Zambia's democracy is rightly positioned within the cultural context of the Zambian people within the African continent as we have argued in the previous chapters of this dissertation. Arising from this stand point Zambia can be perceived as a nation on crossroads with regard to the pursuit of a truly Zambian- African democratic system owing to the following:-

- a) It is an African nation whose constitutional provision depicts the Christian value system as a principle of nationhood. Whether, this is feasible, remains a matter of theological interest.
- b) It is an African nation whose foundation and ethos is purely informed by African tradition and cultural practices.
- c) It is a multi-ethnic country with several ethnic groups whose tribal and ethnic inclinations of the people more often than not antagonise against each other.

With these reasons, it calls for serious theological and ethical thinking in the formulation of a moral framework or guide that by and large informs the Zambian situation if indeed the proposition of a Non- Party model of democracy by consensus is to be feasible in the Zambian situation. In the following section, we want to look albeit in details at some distinctive marks of the Zambian context as a point of departure in our ethical theological framework.

## **6.2. DISTINCTIVE MARKS OF THE ZAMBIAN CONTEXT**



By distinctive marks of the Zambian context, we mean the unique qualities that define the Zambian people's way of life both the general identity of the Zambian people and the constitutional provisions of the country which have influence in their political governance of the country. These distinctive marks are what define the general practice of the African Zambians level of engagement in public life.

### **6.2.1. THE ZAMBIAN CHRISTIAN NATIONHOOD**

Zambia is constitutionally a Christian nation whose Christian nationhood emanates from a Presidential decree. The declaration of Zambia as a Christian national was made by Fredrick Chiluba, the second President of the Republic of Zambia on 29<sup>th</sup> December, 1991. In June 1996, an amendment to the constitution of Zambia Act of 1991 to include the Zambian Christian nation declaration was effected and "from that moment, Zambia became officially, the Christian Nation" (Muwowo, 2010). It is believed that because all the Presidents of Zambia from independence where "fruits of missionary work" (Muwowo, 2010) the path they followed to lead the country, could only be feasible within the framework of Christian ethics and values. This owes to the fact that Christianity was the basis for their engagement into the liberation struggle which later gave birth to Zambia's independence on 24<sup>th</sup> October 1964. "Kenneth Kaunda ( 1964-1991), Fredrick Chiluba ( 1991-2001), Levy Mwanawasa (2001-2008)" (Muwowo, 2010) Rupiah Banda (2008-2011) and Michael Sata (2011- ) were all products of the Christian missionary enterprise which evangelized the gospel from late 19<sup>th</sup> Century and established mission centres across Southern Rhodesia which later became Zambia at Independence. Kenneth Kaunda in particular was a son of a missionary of the Church of Scotland from Livingstonia mission in Modern day Malawi. Fredrick Chiluba and levy Mwanawasa grow under missionary influence and inspiration on the Copperbelt Province of Zambia. Rupiah Banda was influenced by the Anglican communion of the Church of England and Michael Sata is a product of the Roman Catholic missionaries under whom he attempted to train as a priest. It's worth noting that all presidents of Zambia in the past and present have been a lynch pin in the development and propagation of the Christian values within the Zambian governance system.

Against the Christian missionary influence to politics in Zambia, when Dr. Fredrick Chiluba was elected president of the Republic of Zambia in October 1991 with Levy

Mwanawasa as his vice president, “he declared on 29<sup>th</sup> December, 1991, that Zambia was a Christian nation in covenant with God” (Muwowo,2010). Standing between the pillars of the Nkwazi Government state house building president Fredrick Chiluba made the Christian nation declaration on behalf of Zambia as follows:-

*“On behalf of the nation, I have now entered into a covenant with the living God and therefore, I want to make the following declaration. I say here today that I submit myself as President to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. I likewise submit the government and the entire nation of Zambia to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. I further declare that Zambia is a Christian nation that will seek to be governed by the righteous principles of the word of God. Righteousness and justice must prevail in all levels of authority and we shall see the righteousness of God exalting Zambia. My fellow Zambians let this message reach all civil servants in all government departments. The time of corruption and bribery is over. For too long these wicked practices have been destroying and tearing down the nation. Now the hour has come for our building up. The hour has come for our stability. Proverbs 29:4 declares “Who is greedy for bribes tears down a nation, but by justice a king gives the country stability.”* (Times of Zambia 20.12.1991).

Arising from the declaration “president Chiluba believed that by decree, Zambia would be governed by the principles of God and that God would be the father of the nation” (Muwowo, 2010). This implies that the context for Zambian governance and democracy needed to overcome the obstacles that are brought about by injustice, inequality, tribalism, nepotism, segregation, division, etc. The foundation of the nation then must achieve all manner of Godliness if indeed the concept of the declaration created a context of the reign of God in which all people are regarded as general participants in the democratization of Zambia especially the fact that “the Zambian Christian nationhood became a strong weapon and threatened God’s wrath for all who were opposed to it” (Muwowo, 2010). This was emphatically stressed in 1995, by the then vice President of Zambia of the time Brig. General Godfrey Miyanda in an interview by Frank Mutubila’s Frank talk programme on Zambia national broadcast cooperation ( ZNBC) when he said,

*“Zambia has become the ‘chosen nation’ the ‘new Israel’. The leaders are anointed, hence nobody has a right to question them or disagree with them. Hence the view of the opposition is seen as representing evil since they always go against God’s chosen leader” (ZNBC: August 1995; Muwowo, 2010)*

Another example was during the presidential address to the nation in the aftermath of the 28<sup>th</sup> October 1997 abortive military coup led by “Captain Solo”, President Fredrick Chiluba of Zambia repeatedly quoted words of scripture in his address to the nation by saying:-

*“In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, I say no weapon formed against our government, no weapons surely formed against us, shall ever prosper. Yes, they surely gathered together but not by the Lord, and those who have gathered together have fallen ..... every inch of our soil is Christian and belongs to the Lord. The Lord Jesus is in full control. Be not afraid; don’t be intimidated, there shall be no power greater than that of our Lord Jesus. For he who is inside us is greater than the enemy outside and those with us are more than those against us. Be not afraid the Lord is keeping his hand on our nation ... We shall continue with the Lord’s programme, we shall continue with the political programme, we shall continue also with the economical programme” (ZNBC: 1997, Times Of Zambia: 29.10.1997).*

These words in the absence of a clearly defined the relationship between the church of Jesus Christ and Zambia as a nation. It awes to such a context that “Chiluba Christianized every aspect of government administration, established a new ministry called Ministry for Religious Affairs and could publicly donate money to the Christian churches” (Muwowo, 2010) because to him it was justified because the church and the state, had to be viewed as one.

The President’s actions caused a rift on how a nation could interpret the role of the Church in determining the form of Government since the Christian values were to be a yard stick of government operations. Of course it definitely calls for a Christian form of government in which injustice, tribalism and nepotism are overcome. However, instead of the declarations role to bring the Zambia people together, it “caused a major rift in the church-state relations and also among church

organizations. Those who supported the declaration saw themselves as allies of the political administration and the true “Christians.” Those who were apprehensive were perceived as pseudo-Christians and against the political administration” (Muwowo, 2010). Such an encounter introduced a new context of politics in Zambia in which apart from the dominant vices that separated the people of Zambia, the Church and church affiliation was added as one of the principalities. In the context of such new challenge, “the Christians who supported the Christian nation declaration saw it as a challenge to Christianize politics” (Muwowo, 2010). One Pentecostal pastor of the Pentecostal assemblies of God was quoted as having said, “70 to 80 percent of the Zambian 8.5 million was Christians.” Therefore, “there was nothing wrong with declaring the country Christian.” The inference here was that since Zambia’s population was mostly Christian then it could implement Christian principles and laws in its governance” (Muwowo, 2010). In addition a Zambian Christian Lawyer Dr. Beatrice Kamuwanga in an article published by the state newspaper argued the role of the declaration in the legal process by stating that,

*“a clause of discretion” gave the ruler some room for making a judgment. She perceived the declaration as a “value standard” than a legal one. She argued that that since every system operated within a context of values, there was nothing wrong with the choice of a value system. “For Christianity in Zambia values-integrity, hard work, honesty, kindness, righteousness, sincerity and justice were looked at as some of the hallmarks of Christianity” (Muwowo, 2010)*

In her analysis, she viewed the declaration as a challenge to the formulation of a government of the people based on Christian values in order to enhance a democratic value that glues together the diverse tribes and ethnic groupings under a Christian ethic in governance. Because not everybody agreed with a new version of transformation towards a Christian ethic in governance, it encountered many flaws especially when the some sections of the Christian community proposed that government needed to grant the church mother bodies authority to determine its destiny in a real sense. That assertion meant that the nation needed to evolve converting every section of government adopt Christian value systems, including the Christian’s model of choosing leaders of the purported Christian nation. Debates on the subject of Christian nationhood were taken to churches, schools, communities,

clubs and the civil society for people to give their inputs and decide a way forward for their country in the new vision. However, in all the debates, the topic of interest was on “What constitutes a Christian nation” (Muwowo, 2010). The topic became high on both secular and Christian’s agenda in both form and informal organizations.

In Church organizations, when independent protestant churches and bodies predominantly the Pentecostal churches supported the Christian nation declaration by the Head of State, the Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (CCJP) strongly opposed the Christian declaration by contending that “there should be a separation between the Church and state (CCJP Report: 1996). This owes to the fact that, the order of the Church and the order of the state “are in tension with each other” (Muwowo, 2010). That is to say, the mission of the church is to evangelize the gospel, while the state is to provide an environment conducive for evangelisation to be made possible just as it would to for other developments. It should not be an agenda to consume each other at all.

The pressure of the debates on what constituted the Christian nation declaration by President Chiluba led to the appointment of “ the *Mwanakatwe* commission which was instituted in 1993 to bring reformation to the constitution of the republic of Zambia to also critically look at the declaration and thereafter make recommendations” ( Muwowo,2010). The move attracted high level of debates between “the Christian bodies themselves not to mention the people of other faiths” (Muwowo, 2010). Those who belonged to the Pentecostal fraternity, in Zambia “highly supported the declaration” (Muwowo, 2010) in their submissions to the Mwanakatwe constitution review commission. They argued strongly that “the declaration would bring righteousness and blessings to the country” (Muwowo, 2010). They envisaged a situation in which the gospel would be freely preached without acquiring police permits and also in a context without much challenge from other faiths. But on the other hand Christians belonging to the Zambia Episcopal Conference (ZEC) and the Council of Churches in Zambia (CCZ) “submitted to the constitution review commission against the declaration of the State Christian” (CRC Submissions: 1996). They stated that “Christianity must not be imposed but should be accepted willingly” (Muwowo, 2010). The basis of argument for the two mother bodies’ where aimed at promoting the free choice of the people in the determination of their Christian practices let alone political determination.

After an engagement with different sections of the people, in Zambia from the grassroots, “during the amendment to the constitution, parliament adopted a clause to enshrine the Zambia Christian nation declaration” (Muwowo, 2010). The criteria used to adopt it are still not known to the public. One of the positive things about the clause is that affirmed the Christian nation declaration, but it also acknowledged the importance not to alienate people’s choice to religion. It emphasized that the Christian nation declaration was only meant to give a religious identify of Zambia as Christian. The amendment clause reads as follows,

*“We, the people of Zambia by our representative, assembled in our parliament, having solemnly resolved to maintain Zambia as a Sovereign Democratic Republic; Determined to uphold and exercise our inherent and inviolable right as a people to decide, appoint and proclaim the means and style to Govern ourselves; Recognize the equal worth of men and women in their rights to participate, and freely determine, and build a political, economic and social system of their own free choice; Pledge to ourselves that we shall ensure that the state shall respect the rights and dignity of the human family, uphold the law of the State and conduct the affairs of the state in such a manner as to preserve, develop, and utilize its resources for this and future generations; Declare the republic a Christian Nation while upholding the right of every person to enjoy that person’s freedom of conscience or religion; Resolve to uphold the values of democracy, transparency, accountability and good governance; and further resolve that Zambia shall ever remain a unitary , indivisible, and multi-party and democratic sovereign state. Do hereby enact and give to ourselves this constitution.” (The constitution of Zambia amendment Act No. 18 of 1996)*

This act which was placed in the preamble of the national constitution “caused more mixed feelings in Zambia and abroad as by virtue of including it in the Zambian constitution became law and therefore binding” ( Muwowo,2010). From that moment it was viewed that the government had brought the church into politics of religious separation thus adding more division to those that were done at regional and tribal levels. The implication of the constitution amendment in this regard was viewed as causing serious contradictions which the Zambian people could not comprehend

politically in that “You cannot favour one religion and at the same time honestly uphold the propagation and exercise of other religious beliefs that are doctrinally and in matters of faith opposed to the state-chosen religion.” (Anyangwe: 2006)

It is worth noting that the declaration itself singled out the Christian religion that in itself causes an understanding of the core principles of the country. In a democratic country every citizen has freedom of choice and freedom of conscience. Articles 11, 19 and 23, all in one way or the other guarantee everybody in Zambia the enjoyment of fundamental human rights and the freedom of thought and religion (*Constitution of Zambia 1991*)

The Christian Nation Declaration was not only in conflict with Zambia’s constitutional Bill of Rights; it was also inconsistent with international human rights instruments to which Zambia had subscribed such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights. These international instruments all guarantee the right to freedom of religion.

*“When a state singles out one religion and declares it established as the religion of the nation, which in effect is what the Christian Nation clause does, the state is in breach of these international human rights norms, which also points out the political implications of having a ‘Christian Nation’ declaration, especially today when there are political tensions between Muslims and Christians due to the USA-led war on terrorism.”* (Muwowo, 2010)

The declaration was in the first instance taken lightly but it soon became “a handy tool for Christian fundamentalists. It is not just there for symbolic value” (Anyangwe 2006). Following the examples of the Afrikaner nation, “the new Israel” (De Gruchy 1979: 239), which gave birth to Apartheid South Africa in 1948, “it has to be taken seriously and one has to be mindful of the declarations outward consequences” ( Muwowo,2010) to a complex country like Zambia. The fear still continues to be on the well-meaning Zambians that

*“supposing a Christian fundamentalist was to ascend to the high office of the President of the Republic of Zambia, the declaration could come in handy as*

*a tool to impose, willingly, Christian fundamentalist tenets and dogmas on all the people of Zambia. This would definitely be an injustice to the people, for Christianity is not about imposition but should be accepted willingly through individual profession of faith in the Christ” (Anyangwe, 2006)*

It is quite evident that the declaration of Zambia as a Christian Nation implies that the Government of Zambia also has to be Christian in every sphere. It will not make sense to have a non-Christian Government run the affairs of a Christian Nation! If then the Christian nation is considered, which the constitution does, there should be only Christian members of parliament, Christian ministers of Government, Christian Judges and all civil servants would have to be true Christians in order to manage, in Christian fashion, the affairs of the Christian Nation.

The laws of Zambia would have to be consistent with Christian doctrines, dogmas and practices. In effect that would mean that the Bible, Christian doctrines and dogmas; not the Constitution, would be the supreme law of Zambia. “The Bible will become the linchpin of Zambia’s educational system, even as the Holy Koran is in Islamic States,” (Anyangwe, 2006)

That being so, Christian leaders i.e. priests, ministers and pastors, whatever office they might hold in their respective Christian churches, would in effect be the real leaders of the country since they had the authority, by virtue of having been called to holy orders, to interpret the Bible, just like the Mullahs and the Ayatollahs in certain Islamic states, as the effective political rulers. The context here is that “even if there is a President or Head of State he will just be a figurehead because he will not have the power to determine and dictate authoritatively the Christian direction of the nation, nor the necessary holy inspiration to see whether a proposed measure or piece of legislation is consistent with the Bible. He must depend on the sacred office of the Church” (Muwowo, 2010)

The scenario is that the Christian nation declaration continues to be one of the distinctive marks that determines the political context of Zambian identity; which in a real sense nonetheless poses potential conflicts not only between Christians and other religious groups but also among the various Christian denominations who



might get embroiled in a 'holy war' to ensure that their own brand of Christian teaching gains ascendancy into determining political stake in governance.

### 6.2.2. ZAMBIA, AN AFRICAN NATION

Zambia as a nation belongs to the family of the African continent and its people whose culture and world views are diverse but they all rest on similar interests. The African people are a unique species of the creation of God. John S. Pobee defines the African people as a 'homo Afrikanus' a "multi-headed hydra displaying varieties not only *vis-a-vis* the non-African but also *vis-a-vis* other species of the homo Afrikanus" (1979). This definition implies that those who are called Africans living in and within the African continent they remain one people in body, mind and soul with similar interests and aspirations despite being found in particular groups or places in terms of country, social class, tribe or clan. It's worth noting that "ecological factors have shaped diverse physical types of the African man on the continent with different languages and cultures" (Pobee 1979) yet these factors do not uproot the reality of the beliefs and unique common cultural genes found in all of them. In this case we envisage that a Zambian – African would display some similar African experiences that an African from another country would. These experiences cut across all dimensions of an African person be it "Political economical and social" (Chuba, 2011).

When we talk of Africa, it is a vast continent with "an area of about eleven and half million square miles, a population of more than five hundred million and ethnic identity comprising more than one thousand groups" (Mugambi, 1989) which speaks of a diverse people, with different cultural practices and identities yet their interests are the same, "although their immediate perceptions of those interests may be different" (Wiredu, 1996). This conception based on the commonality of interests make the African people one in thought and dialogue in determining the essence of their being.

The composition of the African people shows that there are "nearly fifty nations in the continent with different constitutions and varying histories [...] there are several linguistic groups which can be grouped into clusters, according to similarities in linguistic structures of their mother tongue" (Mugambi, 1989). When John S. Pobee

(1979) gives a perspective of an African as, “a homo *Afrikanus*” and defines her as “a multi-headed hydra delaying varieties not only vis-a-vis the non-African but also vis- a- vis, other species of the homo *Afrikanus*”. He acknowledges the fact that, an African person has a plural disposition when it comes to their practical life style. No wonder in the history of the world, only the African people have varieties of languages more than any other people in the world. Africa has “at least four major stocks of languages: Afro-asiatic, Niger-Congo, Sudanic and click. There are at least three cultural groups: Caucasoids, Negroids and Hamites.” (Pobee, 1979). These diversities demonstrate the metaphor of a “*homo Afrikanus* as a multi headed hydra and African cultures legion” (Pobee, 1979). However, the recognition of these diversities cannot be used to overlook the reality of the aspiration for a commonality in the African experience and heritage which in essence defines who an African is. It is true that “certain sociological and cultural factors are peculiar” (Mugambi,1989) to Africa and African identity and therefore, we have a ground to argue for an African Theology that can speak to various situations to Africans let alone to its democratic model of governance. For example, “ kinship as a social institution among the matrilineal society has continued to hold an important place in decision making in Africa” (Mugambi,1989) as well as the common political destiny of African countries in which, “Africa has the most world resources but its people remain poorest and oppressed” (Mugambi,1989). It is against this back ground that Africa can be understood as “a homogenous unity comparable and contrastable with other continents” (Mugambi, 1989) in the world.

Secondly, the African people have a “religious ontology” (Pobee 1979). Religiosity permeates in all aspects of the Africa traditional practices i.e. in all communal deals, social institutions are all bound up with religious political institutions. All these are connected with the spirit world in which God the Supreme Being is at the centre. In this regard all of life for an African person is a religious practice i.e. “Birth, puberty, marriage, death, widowhood and installation for traditional offices” (Pobee, 1979).

Leadership and the form of government have religious inclinations which call for the manifestation of the Supreme Being, that is to say “the office of government of the African people is centred on a chieftom whose authority is a composite one (Pobee, 1979). He is believed to be a person of wisdom and of good rhetoric abilities, able to

defend his people in times of war and provide leadership in times of crisis while making intercession on behalf of the people to the spirit world.

The following are other attributes of a Chief or a leader in an African society:

- a) He is a judge who provides justice for all citizens. One who treats his people fairly and is an honour to the community.
- b) He is a commander in Chief who directs the affairs of the people and is entrusted with such authority to ensure that he offers directives that work for the interest of the community he serves.
- c) He is a legislature who contributes to the formulations of laws in society that would promote dignity for all
- d) He is the executive and administrator, who heads the executive function of the entire community
- e) He is a Religious leader whose office is sacred and coined with ritual duties that connects his people with the sacred office of the Supreme Being.

In nut shell, the Chief,

*“is the focus of the unity of the tribe. His ritual functions are connected with ceremonies through which the people express their reverence for ancestors and gods and their dependence on the them and also their sentiment of the solidarity and continuity. The chief’s position is bound up with strong religious sentiments” (Pobee 1979)*

Which are a basis of leadership in African society. The implication of this is that every leader of a nation in Africa should a religious one, that is to say one who acknowledges the role of God in the leadership of a country, as it is a duty of every leader in the African society.

The third aspect of the African people’s world view is the recognition of the importance of blood connection with one another. This is what counters distance disparities in the African society. The African people are connected or rather chained to one another as an attribute to community building. That is, one’s identity is only perceived as being connected to a wider group such as a lineage, a clan, tribe and

nation embedded in the general believe that, “I am because I belong to the family” (Pobee, 1979). This attribute could be translated to be the same as belonging to a citizenship of a country in which all citizens are connected to one another because they are all are all children of mother Zambia all connected and bound by the Independence order which states that “all those who were in Zambia at the time of independence on 24<sup>th</sup> October, 1964 automatically become Zambia citizens by descent” (Constitution of Zambia). The blood connection here is the constitution of Zambia which forms the Zambian family. A family, which is a basic unit consists of “the living, dead and the yet to be born” (Pobee, 1979) and connection to one another involves all the three. This conception in itself determines the view of the African people and as such is very paramount. This implies that in an African society, the family units are extended groups going beyond the immediate family. These could be grandparents, blood relatives, in laws, neighbours, friends etc. These constitute a dynamic unit together with parents and children. This could be translated to mean apart from those who were not citizens of Zambia at independence, there are those are born after independence, as well as those that come from other countries and apply for citizenship. All of them are Zambians who are connected by the Constitution and therefore are one family coming from the same womb called Zambia, the royal mother and therefore are eligible to leadership and the Kingship of the nation.

In summary, when one thinks Africa, community, family and kinship emerge to be paramount it determining the distinctive marks of the African people, a family which sets the political context for Zambia.

The diagram below shows the basic differences between African and European Cultural values extracted from Wilber O’Donovan’s analysis between the cultures of the two peoples in order provide a more comprehensive understanding of the distinctive marks of the political context of Zambia (O’Donovan 1986)

African Cultural Values		European Cultural Values
1. Strong community values ( group participation/decision)	1	Strong individualistic values ( Individual initiative, individual decisions)
2. Community identity	2	Individual Identity

3. Community living style	3	Private living style
4. Extended family emphasis	4	Immediate family emphasis
5. Holistic approach to life	5	Categorical approach to life
6. Importance of the event	6	Importance of schedules and clock time
7. People – oriented priorities	7	Task-and goal-oriented priorities
8. Real- life ( situational) thinking	8	Abstract and academic thinking
9. Preference for real-life learning	9	Preference for academic learning
10. Spiritual world- view	10	Scientific world-view
11. Emphasis on spoken communication	11	Emphasis on written communication
12. Emphasis spoken agreements based on relationships	12	Emphasis on written agreements based on policies created by committees
13. Respect for the Elderly	13	Respect for the educated
14. Traditional inherited leadership	14	Elected (democratic) leadership
15. Death is a passing into the spirit world (survivors must perform rituals)	15	Death is a practical problem ( Survivors need counselling and support)
16. Resolve conflicts through a mediator	16	Resolve conflicts face- to- face
17. Practical (ritual) approach to spirit realities	17	Intellectual response to spirit realities
18. Practical ( ritual) approach to religion	18	Intellectual approach to religion
19. Vulnerability seen as a weakness	19	Vulnerability seen as a strength
20. Much interest in the spirit world	20	Little interest in the spirit world

Diagram 2

As can be noticed in the diagram above, the African Cultural value system tends to be communal and interdependence on one another while the European Cultural value system tends to be individualistic and independent. This ideal calls for serious consideration in the determination of a political governance system in any African setting.

### 6.2.3. POLITICS OF TRIBE AND ETHNICITY IN ZAMBIA

The third distinctive mark of the Zambian context are politics of tribe and ethnicity. It's worth noting that at independence in 1964 Zambia's first president Dr. Kenneth Kaunda "naively thought that Zambia had entered a new era of post-tribal politics." (Munshya, 2010). He had managed to convince the *Litunga*, the King of the *Lozi* tribe in present day Western Province, to have "Barotseland proceed to independence with the rest of Zambia as one nation" (Lamer, 2011). He had also assisted in supporting the London Mission Society, the Church of Scotland, the district of the Methodist Church of Britain, the Paris Evangelical Church among other protestant missionary societies doing mission in Southern Rhodesia to negotiate and form a United Church. The negotiations were successful which led to the union and formation of the United Church of Zambia which was inaugurated on 16<sup>th</sup> January 1965, barely four months into power of the Independent Zambia. President Kenneth Kaunda was the Guest of honour at the Inauguration service which was held at Mindolo Ecumenical Foundation in Kitwe.

Kaunda's United National Independence Party (UNIP) was the principal brand of unity. The national motto was quickly hoisted to be "One Zambia One Nation." (Lamer, 2011) to depict the unity that had been attained leading to the independence of Zambia from Britain. For Kaunda, he had achieved his dream; a united Zambia had been formed but little did he know that "the unity that bound the country together to attain independence to overcome colonialism was a common hatred of colonial domination and the imperial regime, not Christianity, or a common love for each other" (Muwowo, 2010). As such barely three years into power, "Kaunda realised that the Zambian tribes were not as united as he had thought" (Munshya, 2010). It was evidenced during the first post-independence UNIP convention in 1968 which saw a very bitter tribal fight. "The *Bemba—Tonga* pact had at the UNIP convention bitterly defeated the *Lozi—Nyanja* alliance." (Munshya, 2010). Tribe and ethnic campaigns characterised the entire system, and for the first time, the unity, peace and harmony which was enjoyed prior to the introduction of the multi system was instantly lost. To the consternation of Kaunda and Kamanga, on tribal pecuniary advantage "Simon Kapwepwe was elected UNIP's vice-President an easterner had been defeated" (Munshya, 2010). In fact, it was during this time, that some UNIP members started doubting Kaunda's loyalty to the Bemba tribe "since he had

Malawian parentage” (Lamer, 2011). The era of tribal politics engulfed the nation for the first time, a sign that something had gone wrong in the political arena.

To overcome this, Kaunda retraced and reemphasized his loyalty as “a Bemba subject of Chief Nkula in Chinsali.”(Munshya, 2010). He also made a point to try and persuade Kapwepwe to step aside since two Bembas could not possibly hold two top positions in both UNIP and the government. Kapwepwe reluctantly obliged and “Kaunda quickly brought in Mainza Chona, a Southerner to replace Kapwepwe” (Lamer, 2011). But this deeply displeased Kapwepwe and several other Bemba hegemonists, who later proceeded to found the “UPP, a party mainly popular in Luapula and Copperbelt provinces” (Munshya, 2011).

The inauguration of a one-party (UNIP) state by Kaunda in 1972 was made in order to arrest “the trends perceived towards ethnic and provincial parochialism.” (Lamer, 2011) The UNIP government under Kaunda believed that it had succeeded in containing “ethnic and tribal parochialism by introducing a one party state through the Choma declaration” (Lamer, 2011).

Throughout his political career Kaunda, took account of the prevalence of ethnic and tribal allegiances through what he called ‘Tribal Balancing’ thus he allocated political portfolios according to the relative strengths of tribal and ethnic loyalties. In this new arrangement he made sure that the provinces were well represented in government. It was so intentional that you could actually predict who would be in cabinet and who would not. However, the position of Prime Minister was almost exclusively reserved for Barotseland. “Out of six Premiers, from 1973—1991, four were Lozis and the other two were Tonga” (Munshya, 2010). This was Kenneth Kaunda’s tribal balancing at its best. It was mostly dictated by province more than it was dictated by specific tribes.

When Chiluba, second President of Zambia came into power in 1991, “the intentional and deliberate tribal balancing was effectively overruled.” (Munshya, 2010). Chiluba would appoint people on what he publicly called “merit.” However, “it still remains to be answered why under Chiluba almost all parastatal chiefs had Bemba names such as—Chungu, Musenge, Musonda, Mwansa, etc.” (Munshya,2010) which actually means that appointment on merit may have meant tribal merit as well. But even if

this is the reality with Chiluba, he was never accused of playing tribal politics because predominately the Bemba have an upper hand in the running of Zambia. However, if it's a minority tribe doing the same thing, some vocal quarters could condemn the practice the practice without delays and throw the country into unnecessary debates. This assumption among some Zambians that only non-Bemba speaking peoples are more capable of tribalism is erroneous. Comparing all the past presidents on tribal appointments Chiluba appointed more people in his cabinet and parastatal companies that were Bemba more than any other president, and yet the tribalistic label has not stuck with Chiluba.

However, when leaving power in 2001 Chiluba favoured a minority tribe to take over. "This honour obviously fell on Mwanawasa—of both Lamba and Lenje heritage" (Munshya, 2010). Even without objective evidence, Mwanawasa was quickly accused of appointing a family tree in his cabinet. But once objectively assessed one would see that Mwanawasa's cabinet was more tribally balanced than Chiluba's at any given time. Mwanawasa also brought in some tribal diversity in parastatal companies. However, "when he appointed Sisala as ZESCO Managing Director, more tribalistic accusations were levelled against him" (Munshya, 2010). This again plays to our thesis that several Zambians believe, erroneously, that only non-Bembas are more capable of tribalism. Mwanawasa tried to please the Bembas by appointing them to the Vice-Presidency just to win Bemba support. He only revolted when he lost the Bemba vote in 2006 and turned to an Easterner

However, under Rupiah Banda, fourth president of Zambia the issue of tribalism had taken on a new shape all together. In the past it was sufficient that provinces should be represented in the Cabinet. As such, "Eastern Province would not normally complain if a Chewa, Tumbuka, Ngoni, or Kunda is appointed to Cabinet" (Munshya, 2010). But chiefs demand that their people should be represented in Cabinet. His Majesty the Mpezeni, Paramount Chief of the Ngoni people of Eastern Province complained that among the five cabinet ministers from Eastern Province in President Banda's cabinet "none of them are Ngonis." (Munshya, 2010). Without Ngonis in Cabinet, Mpezeni feels left out of national development. This intra—provincial tribal conflict remains the greatest danger to Zambia's politics. Similarly in Luapula Province, there were complaints that the MMD had started to sideline Southern



Luapulans (mostly Ushis) in preference of the Northern Luapulans (Lundas, Bwiles, etc.). Northern Province is even more dynamic. Hon Geoffrey Bwalya Mwamba said while campaigning that “Northern Province belonged to Bembas, ignoring its multi-ethnicity” (Munshya, 2010).

The challenge for Zambia's political context is that One Zambia One Nation is on crossroads as the country has 73 different ethnic groups yet, tribal and ethnic politics continue to eat the little peace that is there. If the provinces stop intra-province tribalism and begin to look at themselves as one people only then can Zambia progress. But the challenge remains, i.e. the model of democracy which is able to facilitate the unity of tribes and ethnic groups otherwise, if we continued on this path, we may just end up being one Zambia and no Nation.

### **6.3. PRELIMINARY CONCLUSION**

It is worth noting that the context of Zambia is peculiar owing to the three basic distinctive marks that inform the setting in which politics are done. This particular context leads us towards an attempt to formulate of an Ethical -theological framework for a Non- Party democracy by consensus that comprehensively responds to Zambia's peculiar situation. Here now lies our point of departure.

### **6.4. MODELS OF AFRICAN DEMOCRATIC PRACTICES**

It should be noted that African societies existed long before the scramble for Africa and the European invention. Nowhere in the history of Africa, do we trace a situation of non-democratic governance system. Each community or society had a way of participatory ways of conducting affairs which could be reflected in the organizations of communities before the Europeans came to destabilise and declared them barbaric. It should be noted that, the life style in African society was community based and people were identified as a community rather than individuals. As such, in terms of running the affairs, a functional model of decentralization was central to the traditional governance of the African society.

There are diverse forms of democracy that are very special to the African continent. “Localized governance and community input models were quite prevalent in the pre-

colonial era as well as to the colonial eras” (Bradley, 2005). The imprints of these traditional governance systems are evidenced today through the cultural heritage chiefdoms and kingdoms in African society e.g. among the Bemba of Northern Zambia, the *Lozi* of Western Zambia, the *Akan*, and the Ashanti of Ghana and the Zulus of South Africa to mention but a few. This section of our dissertation gives an exposition of some African democratic political systems which would serve as a bench mark for the conceptualization of a Zambian African non-party democracy by consensus decision making. The systems we are referring to as models are implanted in the hearts, souls and minds of the African people but have been suppressed heavily by western styles of political ideologies. Here now lies our point of departure.

#### **6.4.1. COMMUNALISM**

The first model of an African democratic engagement owes to the communalism style of conducting affairs which was first expressed at the local level of the African society. That is to say the “relation between the individual and the collective reflects the communal character of the African society” (Ake, 1993) whose primary attribute was total dependence on one another in a community as a basis of settling affairs. “Consensus building, discussion, and accord” (Bradley, 2005) were the hallmarks of the ordinary peoples compromise process that appeased the majority of the general local populace in African society. It was actually communal and associational groups of the native authorities in the colonial era that formed a “defence mechanism against the colonial regimes” (Bradley, 2005). Communalism in African society, worked as a social necessity whereby social interactions of the people became a basis for the promotion of democracy.

It goes without saying that as a political practice “communalism has existed in Africa in various forms in the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial eras (Rodney, 1982). It has been a long standing tradition in that the basic unit of political significant in the African society were villages as such a “village assembly characterized various local villages” (Sosala, 2014) that is where village elders and head men presented “issues directly to the village citizens with everyone having input into the discussions and ultimate decisions (Harris, 1987). That is how the individual was “connected not only

with the state but with his with his or her ethnic, religious, class and kinship groups” (Bradley, 2005). It owes to such connections that democracy in Africa was critical.

According to (Ake, 1993), the concept of communalism could also be referred to “Consciential arrangements”. This means, it is a model whereby ethnic groups, nationalities and communities were used as the Constituencies for representation” (Bradley, 2005) which in itself was a form of decentralized governance within the African society. In such a form of governance, “there is equal accentuation on both individual on communal rights” (Bradley, 2005). The territorial chiefs, sub chiefs and the village headmen all worked together in their autonomously units and made decisions that did not have to depend on the Paramount chief on his counsellors as we noted about the Bemba Chiefdom in chapter four of this dissertation. The people owned the decisions for their development. Development was inevitable in such an arrangement and thus the challenge of ethnicity was eradicated. It should however be noted that, the fact that there were no difference of opinion at all. Actually the arrangement had disagreements but that did not mean “ethnic prone politics (Mazrui, 1997) would minimize the chances of democratic rule at all. Yes this is where consensus jets in as a means to eradicate such perceived disagreements.

In this model, we see the strength of community based politics in the African society.

#### **6.4.2. NON- PARTY MOVEMENT DEMOCRACY: THE CASE OF UGANDA**

In Uganda, a test of Non- Partism movement democracy worked as a litmus test towards and authentic African democracy that would by and large eradicate the delinquency of tribal and ethnic wars in politics brought about by Multiparty Democracy. However, “the system was abandoned because it was not western democracy” (Chuba, 2011). It goes without saying that the non- party movement model of democracy in the context of Uganda was used a plausible alternative to avoid or to a larger extent minimise “the inherent volatility of ethnic and class linkages and Multipartism” (Bradley, 2005) in a country that has just come out of civil war. It was argued that “multiparty electoral competition” (Bradley, 2005) had proved to be un African and “not a sure test of democracy” (Bradley, 2005) because in most cases it did not represent the wishes of the people but “represented the policies of their individual political parties” (Rohio, 1975). According to Michael Parenti (1995) “the best measures of democratic rule are not its procedures [that is multiparty

competition voting] but its “substantial out puts” (Wiredu, 2000). That is to say the constructive benefits and their “social justice outcome” Parenti, 1995).

Uganda’s “non-party system also called movement democracy or movement system” (Haynes, 2001) had been “quiet successful to the extent that it” (Bradley, 2005) completely “mitigated ethnic and class violence” (Bradley, 2005) during the period 1996 and 2001. The strength of this concept, which has been a cry by most African Scholars such as Kwasi Wiredu in Cultural universals (1996), was that it was able to bring all stake holders to the round table and build and development agenda for the country. In the case of Uganda, this political thought was propounded by Museveni, “Leader of a successful insurgent army” (Bradley, 2005). Yoweri Museveni (Born 15<sup>th</sup> August 1944) “led the guerrilla movement in the 1980’s and eventually assumed power in 1986 with his national resistance Army” (Kasfir, 1998). It’s worth noting one of the characteristics of the movement democracy was the suspension of “any political party involvement in local and national elections” (Bradley, 2005). By that Museveni believed that the character of multiparty democracy which was tried in the past was nothing but a disgruntled system which “revolved around regional, ethnic and religious affiliations, was antithetical to nation and state building (Hansen and twaddle, 1995).

The foundation of the none-party movement system in the case of Uganda, “was based on a framework of mass participatory democracy which all Ugandan citizens, regardless of affiliation” (Bradley, 2005) where members of the national movement and therefore were “eligible to vote, actively participate in local and national politics” (Bradley, 2005).

#### **6.4.2.1. THE STRUCTURE**

Uganda’s democratic system of non-parties movement was “ structured was structured in such a way as to advance participation” (Bradley,2005) of the citizens in the development agenda of the country and also to ensure that all ethnic, tribal and regional groups and represented in government in one way or the other. The administrative structure in this case involved a series of councils “known as local committees” (Bradley, 2005). The form of representation was configured in such a way that all sections of society, where represented. The composition of the local

committees consisted of “representatives directly elected by citizens of the various villages” (Kasfir, 1998). Furthermore, “each sequential upper-level council including the parish, county and districts” (Bradley, 2005) comprised representatives elected by the previous level of governance. The idea here meant that individual villages, through their representatives were able to argue and fight for the decisions made and the implementation of programmes that were based on the people’s wishes. The system in this case, was able to create “ fluidity, stability and transparency” (Bradley,2005) system of the government of Uganda which until 2001 achieved so much development and won praises internationally in the way its economy benefitted the people. The secret was that the people owned the development programme.

Historically the Ugandan case of Non-Party movement Democracy demonstrates a viable point of departure towards an authentic democratic system which is consistent with the African culture. For Uganda, evidence shows how people supported the model in the presidential elections in 1996 and 2001 in which “ Yoweri Museveni won 75 and 69 percent of the popular vote, respectively” (Bradley,2005) and surprisingly “ the referendum of the latter past 2001 resulted in an astounding 88 percent in favour of the non-party system of democracy” (Bradley,2005). It is worth concluding that the non- party system in Uganda “brought relative stability (Haybes, 2001) with a characteristic of peace and unity ideal for a multi ethnic society in African countries including Zambia.

Here we see a model of necessity for the progression of democracy in any African country.

## **6.5. THE CHIEFTAINCY MODEL**

This chieftaincy model of democratic governance, presupposes that, representatives of chiefdoms are recognized as legitimate participants in the governance of the state a long side elected political leaders. The concept was practiced in “Botswana” (Nyamnjoh, 2003), “Mozambique” (Harrison, 2002), and “South Africa” (Oomen, 2000). In other words it is the “practice of primordial chiefs playing an active role in the administration of the government at the national and local levels” (Bradley, 2005). In short, as matter of recognition of traditional authority by “post-colonial governments of Botswana and South Africa” they embraced chiefs as “functioning

[...] administrative” (Bradley, 2005) extension officers in order to foster development from the grass roots and enhance participation of all citizens in the general administration of national affairs through their own representatives. The idea here was not a matter of political interest as such but was based on a perception that since chiefs were natural rulers of the people in an African society whose mandate emanated from the people who installed them it was inevitable to grant them rights of representation in government. Further, they were viewed as “legitimate power brokers, representatives of clans, and genuine voices for their respective local communities” (Harrison, 2002). In this regard one can say that chieftaincy representation as a model “vividly represents another version of democracy contrary to western democratic notions” (Bradley, 2005).

The chieftaincy model, as in the case of Botswana, Mozambique and South Africa had the mandate to coexist with modern trends of democracy but in the same crucial role as the “civil societies play [...] in “developed” democracies in the west” (Bradley, 2005). Their role in this regard was to “provide somewhat the same function by negotiating on behalf of the local citizens” (Bradley, 2005). Francis Nyamnjoh in his book “Chieftaincy and the negotiation of Might and Right in Botswana Democracy argued that it was “important to develop approaches that are sensitive to the reality of intermediary communities between the individual and the state” (Nyamnjoh, 2003) and in reality what it means when the chiefs are incorporated as legitimate partners in governance. In fact, it was one way to balance the state of governance that satisfies both the indigenous in African society and western donors. It can be noted that this practice of democracy was “ more than legislative, executive and judicial institutional parameters, having the right to vote, campaigns and so on” (Bradley, 2005) it was however about “ opening space for all challengers at all levels” (Bradley, 2005) in order to meet the demands of various sections of groups that together make up society. In this regard, talk of chieftaincy institutions in this model bore two sides of the coin, they were “either adapted to the contemporary socio-political setting, or even have been specifically created for or by it” (Harneit-Sievers, 1998).

In Zambia, during the British Colonial rule, “chiefdoms were run on semi-autonomous basis as today’s local governments.” (Sosala, 2014). They worked on the concept of indirect rule as a way of ensuring development reached the people without their

intervention. After years of struggle they discovered that there was need to come up with an approach to governance that was purely going to be embraced and therefore enhance participation. When an indirect rule was implemented, the main objective of it was “the recognition of the native authorities to help Africans enhance their own traditional institutions in governance” (Sosala, 2014). The Idea here was that during the time of the colonization, the colonial masters found functional institutions which were very effective in the dissemination of development to all the people. Having noticed the effectiveness of the system the British colonialists had to affect strategies on how they would effectively run a government that would produce results. As such “in 1936, the new policy of indirect rule found expression in a series of important ordinances such as native courts ordinance and native authority ordinance” (Sosala, 2014). The ordinances mentioned have a special mandate to accomplish. They were centred on the policy of devolution of power to the grass roots where the central colonial government was unable to reach in order to fulfil the development demands of the people. The limitation of there went to as far as failing to raise funds from the natives because their model was centred on tax collection and the majority of the people were not in employment. It was in that regard that, the introduced another ordinance which “permitted native treasuries to be set up.” (Sosala, 2014). The native authorities through their protocol of the participation of all citizens’ could raise some funds using various means but predominately they were raised through “court fees and fines, bicycles, dogs, fire arms and game licences” (Sosala, 2014). It was at this point that the government agreed to pay to the various treasuries 10 percent of native (or poll tax) collected either inside or outside the district from Africans belonging to the tribe” (Sosala,2014).

We can deduce that the fact that the recognition of the effectiveness of the native authorities ability to deliver in the case of Botswana, Zambia, Mozambique and South Africa means that, the democratic values of the African people on this basis can be guaranteed and therefore a legitimate model upon which to base in the formulation of an authentic framework for Non- party democracy by consensus. It awes to this fact that as model of democratic governance the diffusion of power to involve chiefdoms “ are viable alternatives to democratic governance” (Bradley, 2005) and on this foundation one can look to them as a plausible foundation upon which the build a Zambian-African polity.

## 6.6. MULTIPARTISM: FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF AFRICAN THEOLOGY

Time is ripe for African Christian Theology to position Multiparty Democracy informed by western concepts and imposed on the African continent as a sin, unjust and ungodly practice for being the source of division, civil strife, tribalism, sectarianism and genocide in African nations whose original foundation of political practice is informed by the traditional concepts. These traditional concepts were abandoned due to pressure of western countries whose interest was to control the African countries for their own interests following the Berlin Conference of November 1884 to February 1885.

We contend in this dissertation that governance is a gift from God and any vice that undermines the peaceful nature of it, is ungodly and unjust. In our engagement of Multipartism and African theology, we argue that if the concept of multiparty democracy is to be the way to good governance in every nation, then it must be a dynamic one. It must surely be informed by the “incarnation nature of Christianity” (Bevans, 2009) a character that would enable it to emerge out of the culture of the people in the African context as a determination for political engagement. The character of incarnation culminates from the model of God at the time he decided to save the world. He took an initiative that would attract a response that would be natural within the traditions and the culture of the people. When John’s gospel records “God loved the world” (John 3:16), he expressed it to a degree that out of that love, “God wanted to share God’s self with men and women and invite them into the means of a life giving relationship with the Godhead” (Bevans, 2009). The basic interpretation of this means that the nature of sharing, be it power, food, expression, love and togetherness must all lead to life giving concept with one another and with the company of God. But this ideology presupposes that “if God was going to do this, the means of communication would have to be in a way that human beings could fully grasp a way that expressed the reality of what this invitation into friendship and relationship was all about” (Bevans, 2009). As expressed by John “God became flesh” (John 1:14) and his expression was not generally but particularly owing to the fact that there cannot be a concept that could be universal even if the basis goals are the same. In this action “ God became flesh, a human being, in the person of Jesus, a Jew, son of Mary, a male” (Bevans, 2009)



The implication of this is that “God became flesh in a human person of such and such height, with particular colour; heir with particular personality traits etc.” (Bevans, 2009). In this way he was to be raised with a particular people and out of them emerges salvation for all. In a single sentence, the process of incarnation as a practical matrix of God “is a process of becoming particular and in and through the particular, the divinity could become visible and in some way [...] become graspable and intelligible” (Bevans, 2009). This matrix follows naturally that the message of God, “if it is to touch people, we have somehow ourselves to continue the incarnation process. This presupposes that through African Christians and theologians, God becomes “...African, Black or brown, poor or sophisticated. Christians must be able to speak to inhabitants of the 21<sup>st</sup> century” (Bevans, 2009) African about the reality of God’s nature who is born among us. This includes God as a participant in both political and social life of the people of Africa. It arises from this particular dimension that Christianity, “if it is to be factual to its deepest roots and to its most basic insight, must continue God’s incarnation in Jesus by becoming African people with African forms of political practice which are fully informed by the cultural practices of the African people. Rev Padilla when speaking about doing a contextual mission in any part of the world had this to say:

*The incarnation makes clear God’s approach to the revelation of himself and of his purposes. God does not shout his message from the heavens; God becomes present as a man, among men. The climate of God’s revelation is Emmanuel and Emmanuel is Jesus, a first century Jew, the incarnation unmistakable demonstrates God’s intention to make himself known from within the human situation. Because the very nature of the gospel, we know this gospel only as a message contextualized in culture” (Padilla, 1979)*

In this conception of Theology, we argue, a situation where a true African democracy should situate itself in a position whereby it is challenged by the incarnation nature of the gospel and Christianity if indeed it is to be meaningful in African states and bring about harmony to God’s people being governed by foreign ideology. African Christian theology has to be understood in this way.

The second aspect of the incarnation nature of Christianity that challenges imperial democracy implanted in Africa is the sacramental nature of Christian reality of the

doctrine of incarnation which “proclaims that God is revealed not primarily in ideas but rather in concrete reality” (Bevans, 2009). The real encounter of Jesus is in the flesh and as such “we encounter God most fully (Bevans, 2009) because he came to be born among humanity. Thus the “sacrament of the encounter with God” (Schillebeeckx, 1963). The nature of God’s encounter with human cultures “continues to take place in our world through concrete things. God is encountered in the remembering of the Christian community gathered around the table on which are bread and wine, in oil given for healing or as a sign of the vocation, in gestures of forgiveness or commissioning” (Bevans, 2009). These practices do not have meaning in themselves but they are consecrated ritual moments that point “beyond themselves to the whole of life” (Bevans, 2009). They proclaim “deep faith in the fact that the world and its inhabitants and their deeds and events are holy and that at any time and in any place and through any person, these persons and things can become transparent and reveal their creator as actively and lovingly present to creation” (Rahner, 1971). Our argument here is that “if the ordinary things of life are so transparent in God’s presence” (Bevans, 2009), we can therefore speak of cultural prospects, human experience and events in history as truly “sacramental and so revelatory” (Bevans, 2009). This could be expressed in the way people live their lives, govern themselves and do things in a unique way. In this way, if Christianity has to be true to “real dynamic of Christianity’s self-understanding must be “unpacked” of its sacredness. In Africa, the sacramental nature of life is a real experience and is expressed through the rights of passage at “birth, puberty, marriage and death” (Mugambi, 1989). Talk of democracy and the form of government in Africa, it should be part of the sacramental project of the African people in which the divinity of God (gods) are expressed and appeased.

The third dimension of Christianity’s conceptualization as a theological discourse for the transformation of African democracy arises from a “shift in the understanding nature of the dimension of revelation” (Bevans, 2009) as being a plausible factor in the determination of an African theological nature of democracy that is rooted in the African world view of governance. In this conceptualization revelation is conceived as the offer of God’s very self to men and women by means of concrete actions and symbols in history and in individuals daily life” (Bevans, 2009). The implication of this for African theology, presupposes that the revelation should be understood with the

perimeters of “God’s self-communication to men and women: the giver as such is the gift and the person to whom the gift is given is thus called to his or her personal fulfilment” (Rahner, 1978). Culminating from this understanding, faith was therefore understood as a personal response as well as a self-gift of a person to God” (Bevans, 2009). This conception dispels all manner of dimensions that come with imposition and forcing nature responding to an action is coupled with willingness which shall be expressed naturally from ones understanding of things.

Where a gift cannot be considered as valuable one, Stephen Bevan suggests that “God in offering God’s self would certainly take time and effort to make that offer relevant “(Bevans, 2009). This calls for the church in Africa, “who represent and continue God’s work in the world to do no less than God like. We are to be faithful to our basic vocation of preaching the true nature of God in all spheres of life including political and social economic civil among others. This interpersonal conception of revelation, points to the necessity of an African Theology that takes serious and interprets the actual democracy in African society in which men and women experience God for their daily African life style.

The fourth dynamic matrix of African Theology of democracy the Christians conceptualization of the “catholicity of the Church” (Bevans, 2009) expressed in the apostles creed. The concept of catholicity implies the very nature of what the church should try to be in the world and a universal entity whose mission, is aimed at the whole people of God. According to the dictionary of Christianity (2000) the word catholic comes from two Greek words, *krata* and *holos* and points to the all-embracing, all inclusive, all accepting nature of Christianity” (Bevans, 2009) . This understanding of Christian faith presupposes the oneness of the people regardless of their ethnicity, tribe, race, region, clan and religion. To be catholic in the meaning of the word means being “receptive to the sound achievements of every race and culture” (Bevans, 2009). This is what it means when look at the African traditional cultures, regardless of the diversities “Catholicism pays respect not to the mind alone nor only to the will and the emotions, but to all levels and aspects of human existence” (Dulles, 1988).

Implanted in our African society, the catholic phenomenon talks translates into the universality of all persons and therefore determines an approach that “champions

and preserves the local and particular rather than a band uniformity” (Bevans, 2009). The practical disposition of Christianity as a primary entity for this conceptualization is endowed with “ a dynamic that moves toward unity through a rich diversity, through conversation and even argument among people of particular personal, cultural and historical experience” (Bevans, 2009) . This is where the African theology of Democracy emerges from. The universality of the church presupposes the participation of all persons because the actual essence is the “ full grown humanity of Christ requires all the Christians generations, just as it embodies all the cultural variety that six continents can bring” (Bevans, 2009).

It’s worth noting that the diversity of cultures and ethnicity within this complexity requires a complete dialogue to take place and a channel of achieving goals whereby “all persons and cultural groups have to dig deep into their own social situation, personal experience and cultural existence to see how these interact with God’s offer of friendship and relationship in Jesus Christ. Thus the dynamic of catholicity calls for a contextual approach to theology by its very nature” (Bevans, 2009). This conceptualization challenges African theology with a model of engaging with social issues of people of plurality.

The last dynamic matrix of Christianity that would inform African Theology of Democracy lies in the “Doctrine that is at the heart of Christianity: the Trinity” (Bevans, 2009). The Trinitarian thought implies that concept of togetherness and oneness in the practice of every activity and for African theology of Democracy. It’s worth noting that the “contemporary understanding of God as Trinity” (Bevans, 2009). Speak of God as a “dynamic relational community of persons whose nature is to be present and active in the world, calling “and persuading it towards the fullness of relationship that Christian tradition calls for” (Bevans, 2009). It is through God’s works for salvation in the midst of human contexts such as cultures, its events, its suffering, joys, governments etc. that God manifests himself in. It awes to this very fact that the teaching about “Gods dialogical nature is the source for the church’s catholicity and theology’s need to embrace and wrestle with the concrete” (Bevans, 2009).

African Christian theology has a lot to offer to the world of democracy to Africa because “ Christian faith in God as Trinity opens up a vista of Gods marks in the

works, events, in peoples experience and cultures, in natural worlds” (Bevans, 2009). African theologians here need to do theology of democracy and guide the Africa project because God is present and acts particularly.

### **6.6.1. POINT OF DEPARTURE**

From this particular stand point we address Multiparty democracy from an African theological perspective. We envisage that in order to make its stand point in the framework of democracy, by consensus decision making as an icon of democratic practice in Africa, African theology will have to begin from the fundamental level of the understanding the concept of Multiparty as a point of departure. Thereafter it will be necessary to assess its human expectations from an African nation.

For far too long, often in many African countries, Zambia inclusive, “the principalities and powers have sought allegiance loyalty and slavish obedience of people without seeing themselves contracted to fulfil reciprocal obligations” (Setiloane, 1976). This is the case especially in Zambia, where the government would claim divine ordination “as a Christian nation” (Muwowo, 2010) but denies the right of consent to be ruled by such principals that goes with a God ordained nation. Arising from our analysis, we shall attempt to draw out what would be African theology’s understanding of what democracy should be about if indeed it would be an ideal authentic practice in Zambia’s political discovery.

In this level of engagement, while there are several definitions of African theology. In this particular engagement we shall define it as “a verbalization of religious experience and feelings of the African people” (Setiloane, 1976). We shall attempt to demonstrate that Africans attitudes to Democracy are indeed deep seated and emerges out of their African cultural background. This conceptualization does not mean to say they are not ‘Christian’. On the contrary we hope we shall again show that these genuinely deep seated African cultural insights of democracy and good governance do not only corroborate Christian teaching at its best but immensely illuminate the Biblical basis out of which draws its life. It’s worth noting that an often ignored reason hind the easy acceptance of Christianity as a way of life on African soil lies in the fact that its message was first heard as a confirmation of the values and principles of the African traditional communities taught; aspired to and striven for

in the traditional African world view “for the did have a strong sense of moral equity concerning the behaviour of man as he lived” (Setiloane, 1976).

It’s worth the strong sense of moral equity that African people had established themselves and lived within their own understanding of life.

## **6.7. PRE- COLONIAL RULERS OF AFRICAN TRADITIONAL SOCIETIES**

When Europeans arrived in Africa, following the Berlin conference of November 1884-February 1885, they found African people living in groups “bound together by Lineage and language and a common origin” (Setiloane, 1976). These groups were called tribes and they were organized as to the political units of the culture of the African people as inherited from their ancestors. The first unit of organization in which the people were grouped was called a village. A village could be understood as a “nucleus of community life” (Chuba, 2011). It was led by a village headman who was a member of the royal family for whom succession to higher offices was preserved. All the people of the villages belonged together and the affairs of the people were governed by popular consensus of the people’s representatives. The unity which was expressed was just like “Christians will claim to be one in and with Christ, the great Chief” (Chuba, 2011).

A group of the villages and their leaders all together fall under the rulership of a King in the same way “church leaders and their fellow Christian form one body of Christ” (Chuba, 2011) in this way the “the church is ideally a Christian village in an area where all are believers” (Chuba, 2011) and united with Christ to foster the good works of salvation to all. A King presided over the affairs of the village and as such a good King was “admired custodian of the people and one people expect to be a unifying personality” (Chuba, 2011). Similarly, Christians have a new and perfect King “Jesus Christ, under whose reign” (Chuba, 2011); kings of this earth should still remain the greatest of all.

The whole tribe was granted privileges of the village so as to enhance the development of all citizens and the following were the general practices of the people of the tribe as outlined by Chuba (2011).

- a) The whole tribe received education for their empowerment at *Isaka* (Education School for men) in the case of the male members of the

community or at *Icibwanse* ( Education school for women) in the areas “of health, craftsmanship, morals, womanhood or manhood” (Chuba,2011). The teachers were respected elders of the community who were specifically trained to prepare all the people in the village for valuable service. Important matters of governance were also extensive handled at this level of preparation.

- b) People in general including orphans, widows and aliens, were included in the corporate life of the whole tribe. Thus aliens were taken care of and orphans, widows and widowers found comfortable atmosphere in a traditional African community. The community leadership organized communal festivals as recreational forces as part of the corporate life.

When the Europeans came and found that Africans had *imfumu* (Kings) , “they refused to use the term “King” for that leader as King would be equated with their own kings back home. They called him chief as most of the first contracts were on a military basis” (Setiloane, 1976). Chiefs developed a nuance in meaning that has “degenerated it a military ruler- (*kaptain*) and the impression that it was attained by superiority in military prowess. That was the first rape on the ruler ship of the African people. It should be noted that some of the serious blunders that were made therefore in some of the treaties with Africans were not made with the Kings or the rulers per se but they were done with army officers in the battle field who chose to hide their Kings for fear of the enemies. The army officers cared little about the preservation of traditional land as at that time; most African people were nomads, i.e. following after the favourable conditions of their people from place to place.

As was noted of the Bemba in Chapter four, African rulers, synonymously chiefs derived their authority from their birth from “a royal clan” (Roberts, 1973). There were two systems of lineage, one was patrilineal lineage, and ruler ship, which meant inheritance to leadership, proceeded from father to son and brother to brother of the royal lineage. There was also a matrilineal lineage arrangement, we have discussed in this dissertation whose tradition for succession is from a royal Queen mother. In this arrangement, when the uncle died, the nephew could succeed. In this regard, succession was from Uncle to nephew and then nephew’s brothers.

In the tribal group, “the ruling family directly descended from the founder of the group by whose name the whole group was known” (Roberts, 1973). The paramount chiefs of the Bemba for this matter are “called *Chitimukulu*” (Roberts, 1973) because they succeeded the royal seat of the “delegation and founding leader of the Bemba from *Luba* in the Congo Basin” (Roberts, 1973) called *Chiti (Mukulu)*” (Roberts, 1973) which in direct translation means *Chiti* the great one. Succession would not be seniority in age as a consideration but “family seniority in the group would also be determined by lineal proximity to the original source” (Wiredu, 1996). Choices of a King had to go through a very serious process of rational discussions in order to arrive at the one the ancestors approve to be the ruler of the people.

The whole group, tribe or village would either in fact or fictitiously relationship with this source of origin. Indeed there would be later appendages resulting from conquest and others who would have sought and found asylum. Among the Bemba people, the expansion of their territory in Northern and North eastern Zambia was characterized by such. “All those who considered themselves as subjects of *Chitimukulu* the Bemba Paramount Chief” (Roberts, 1973) were considered the Bemba people.

Certain responsibilities and territorial ruler ship was given to the smaller Chiefs who could have joined the hegemonic group at the source. For example the “*Bashilubemba* known as *Bakabilo*” ( Roberts, 1973) among the Bemba people left “*Mukulumpe* Chieftdom in *Luba* at the same time as *Chiti*” (Roberts, 1973) the founder of the *Lubemba* and as such they became the “ source of chieftainship of the Bemba” ( Roberts, 1973) because as hereditary councillors , the tradition of inheritance of the Bemba chieftainship was passed on by word of mouth from one generation to the other and was regarded as a secret to be known only by the people of this hereditary descent group.

The ruler ship in African society in general extends “beyond the realm of the living into the ancestor” (Setiloane, 1976). Of which Jesus Christ has been described by African theologians as the greatest of the ancestors. Every family has a long line of ancestors It traces itself from and to whom it owes gratitude for protection and substance “collectively call these ancestor sustain and uphold the total role that the ancestors of the royal house hold are considered exactly in the same order of



importance as they were while they were alive and themselves headed the group. The ruling head in this case “derives his powers and rights not only out of primogeniture but from his ancestors who are not only his but also the ancestors and protectors of the whole group” (Richards, 1940)

The respect, honour, loyalty and allegiance” (Richards, 1940) an African ruler received from his subjects were /are not offered to him as a person alone but representatives of the fore bearers. In this was considered “the prototype of the group and is respectfully addressed as such” (Setiloane, 1976). Among the Bemba, “the most important social institution other than the family is chieftainship” (Roberts, 1973). Chieftainship continues to command respect and stimulates local pride. The Chief is the one that ensures the good relationship with ancestors and continues and command respect as he brings dignity to the community by conducting himself well in both private and public affairs. He ensures the prosperity and the well-being of all. He ensures that all subjects are given an opportunity to participate in the governance of the people. It arises from this, that, “a good chief is an admired custodian of the people and one people expect to be a unifying personality” (Chuba, 2011). It is only in this sense that a chief is regarded as a saviour of the people, especially in times of war, famine, calamities, and domestic quarrels.

When the early missionaries came and described African rulers as “ un impressive people with mediocre physical appearance and lacking in personality” ( Setiloane,1976 nonetheless, these leaders commanded the respect, loyalty and allegiance of their people, “for it was not their physical appearance and achievements that their premiership lay and was displayed” ( Setiloane,1976) but it was a connection to their ancestors, the real founders of African ruler ship to whom all the honour and respect was directed through the living leaders.

## **6.8. PRE-COLONIAL DEMOCRATIC PRACTICES**

Pre-colonial African democratic practices can be separated into two main types of systems i.e. those that were decentralized and those with centralized systems. Pre-colonial decentralized democratic systems were called segmented political systems (Potholm 1979). Segmented here refers to a decentralized system of governance marked by the diffusion of political power. That is, there is no central political authority to which the members of a particular community or territory owe fealty. In

other words, as the late Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, Thomas “Tip” O’Neill, once quipped, “all politics is local.” Decentralized systems did not have centralized governance systems, administrative bureaucracy, centralized judicial systems, or sharp divisions in rank or status (Fortes and Evans-Pritchard 1940).

Pre-colonial centralized systems in Africa, in contrast, were characterized by central authority, administrative machinery, and judicial institutions. These centralized political systems encompassed hierarchical and concentric levels of governance at the national, regional, state, and local levels. The localized groups had the least amount of authority, much like Western liberal or constitutional democracies. These pre-colonial political systems were the types of political systems that correspond to what Western democratization studies consider as the “normal” form of political organization (Schraeder 2004). That is, “a political authority controls a centralized state that can uniformly apply policies throughout a given territory, and the inhabitants of this political system owe their allegiance to the state” (Schraeder 2004:30).

## **6.9. PRE-COLONIAL DECENTRALIZED SYSTEMS**

There were at least five types of segmented systems in pre-colonial Africa, indicating the diversity of governance that was linked to particular customs, language, cultural history, and population, much like today’s Western-style parliamentary (England) and presidential (the United States) democratic styles.

In pre-colonial Africa, the most decentralized type of segmented political system was the band organization (Potholm 1979:12–14). These band organizations shared the same language, customs, and cultural history, that is, they were quite homogenous. Today’s Scandinavian countries would be a good comparison in that they, too, are quite homogenous. In the band organization, the population was divided into hunter-gatherer groups that ranged in size depending on the level of economic well-being or hardship of the community. If the economy was going through a difficult phase, the groups tended to be relatively small, 10–12 individuals; in good economic periods, the groups could range up to several dozen (Potholm 1979). Moreover, the hunter-gatherer groups were mainly comprised of members of extended families. This extended family concept is still quite prevalent in many

communities throughout Africa for cultural and economic reasons (that is, for agricultural purposes, because most Africans still live agrarian lifestyles). However, the band organization is rare in Africa today, with a few exceptions like the San people of Namibia and Botswana (Barnard 1992). Consensus decisions and face-to-face communication were the order of the day for these organizations and all adult males participated (Potholm 1979). A caveat is appropriate here; this particular form of governance was not gender sensitive.

Another type of pre-colonial decentralized, democratic African governmental system was the classical segmented system (Potholm 1979). The classical segmented system involved more interaction between clans (individual groups based on kinship), clan families, and extended family groups. The lines of interaction were vertical as well as horizontal. Clans literally could number in the tens or hundreds of thousands and still trace their collective lineages back thousands of years to specific founding members (Potholm 1979). The Somali ethnic group in the Horn of Africa exhibited the classical segmented system (Lewis 1961). Because the groups tend to be quite large, organizational structure is based on groups of leaders or committees, reminiscent of Western-style democratic caucuses. The clans' affairs were managed by these committee groups, which fostered compromise as well as competition and conflict between clan families; the latter was especially true during severe hardships like drought and famine. Thus, competition and compromise were inherent in pre-colonial governance systems as in today's marketplace of democracies.

Decentralized democratic pre-colonial systems in Africa came in a variety of forms, even hybrid forms. The universalistic segmented system was a slightly more centralized version of the classical segmented system (Potholm 1979). This type of governance system was characterized by and unified by age-grade systems, which were more significant than one's clan affiliation. That is, the period a person was born in meant that he or she was assigned to a particular age-set, which differentiated groups of varying ages. Age-sets provided a more systematic organization of the social, political, and economic affairs of the particular nation. A new age-set was created every 5 years and the system was based on 5-year blocks of time (Potholm 1979). Thus, every male and female born within that period constituted a member of the group. The age-sets in a universalistic segmented

system predetermined an individual's assumption of responsibilities within the society. The theory was that every individual was suited for specific tasks at different intervals in their lives. The system was an ascribed system that augmented the chances for military victory, given that turf wars and expansion efforts were the norms of the day, much like the battlegrounds of nineteenth- and twentieth-century Europe. One of the most well-known and respected universalistic segmented groups is the Maasai in East Africa (Spear and Waller 1993). The Maasai were known for their military might and successful hunting techniques. Today, there exist about 300,000 Maasai, mainly along the Kenyan–Tanzanian border (Spear and Waller 1993).

Yet another form of a pre-colonial African system that was decentralized and democratic was the ritually stratified segmented system. The ritually stratified segmented system is a variation of the classical segmented system in which the independent clans are unified in the spiritual sphere by a commonly revered spiritual or religious leader (Potholm 1979). This particular brand of pre-colonial African system is akin to Catholicism and the Pope in that there is a spiritual head that is highly respected by Catholics for his divine revelations. The spiritual or religious leader in the ritually stratified segmented system served not only for religious purposes but also as a symbol of national unity. Presiding over religious ceremonies was more salient than actual involvement in political affairs; indeed, the spiritual leaders were incapable of mandating reluctant and ambivalent clans to adopt certain courses of action (Potholm 1979). A good example of an African ethnic group that engaged the ritually stratified segmented system is the Shilluk people of Sudan (Evans-Pritchard 1948).

The final pre-colonial decentralized African system of government that will be discussed is the autonomous village system. The autonomous village system is synonymous with the ancient Italian city-state model of governance during the Renaissance period. Unlike the aforementioned examples of decentralized systems, which were mainly nomadic or semi nomadic, the peoples of the autonomous village system were urban dwellers. The autonomous village system comprised groups of thousands, and these groups served as the pillars of the local political organization (Potholm 1979). In this type of system, people shared a similar language (Swahili), a

common religion (Islam), and an ethnicity (Arab and Persian). This system of governance, although it varied in governing style depending on the population, nevertheless had a diffusion of power that enabled each village to cater to its particular locale. For example, some of the autonomous village systems were comprised by only the polity (nation) and the political ruler; others were characterized by a polity and council or by a ruler, polity, and council (Potholm 1979).

Pre-colonial African nations that practiced decentralized governance of one or the other types described above include the Zulu, the Bemba, the Bankole, the Akan, the Ga, the Ijaw, and the Ewe (Fortes and Evans-Pritchard 1940). In effect, democracy as a concept even during the pre-colonial era was not alien to Africa.

#### **6.10. PRE-COLONIAL CENTRALIZED SYSTEMS**

There were essentially two types of pre-colonial centralized, democratic political systems: the pyramidal monarchy system and the associational monarchy. The pyramidal monarchy was a common form of centralized governance (Potholm 1979). The pyramidal monarchy system in pre-colonial Africa was characterized by a central authority (that is, a king or oba) in control of a central government (Potholm 1979). The system was pyramidal, with the king as the “top dog.” However, the king did not exert absolute control over his kingdom. The king worked with a council and clans or clan families (Potholm 1979). Likewise, the formal powers of the kingdom’s subgroups were typically formalized through the creation of some type of royal council, which included leaders from the non-royal clans and other ethnic groups (Potholm 1979). The pyramidal monarchy was a type of federal system like the United States, in which federal power is counterbalanced in a kind of checks and balances. The oba’s power was balanced by the council and vice versa.

For example, the entire Yoruba empire was headed by a sacred leader who was drawn from the royal blood line of the Yoruba kings and a royal council (Potholm 1979). The sacred leader’s powers consisted of appointment of provincial governors and the ability to declare war (commander-in-chief). The royal council’s powers included such things as the selection of the sacred leader’s successor from a list provided by the royal clan in the case of his death or incapacitation and the ability to impeach the sacred leader (Potholm 1979). The Oyo empire of the Yoruba people of

current day southwest Nigeria is one of the best examples of a pyramidal monarchy (Smith 1988).

The associational monarchy form of government was similar to the pyramidal monarchy in many ways, especially with regard to maintaining a federalist system in which no royal clans and other ethnic groups had a degree of autonomy from the central authority (Potholm 1979). However, the associational monarchy had “associational” groups that eclipsed particular clan and ethnic attachments. That is, the “associational” groups were intermediaries much like modern civil society actors in many democracies. The groups were the liaisons or mediators between the local villages and the central authorities. The arbiters were responsible for such meaningful activities as collection of taxes and promotion of “socially acceptable behaviour” (July 1992:98). This mix of central authorities and civil society intermediaries served to integrate the political system as well as unify the system directly and indirectly, thus creating a quite stable system of centralized governance. Kenneth Little (1967) has pointed to the Mende people of Sierra Leone in West Africa as a quintessential example of an associational monarchy.

But such an emphasis in the democratization process overlooks the salience of traditional loyalties with regard to governance in Africa. For example, many areas of national life are still governed by pre capitalist relationships, especially in relation to land tenure. Thus, in order for democracy to “stick” in many parts of Africa, it may be necessary to radicalize the basic institutions of governance at the grassroots level (Mabogunje 1995). The grassroots level is where locally based nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) are having an impact in the democratization process. But, unfortunately, such grassroots organizations are often resisted by the national bureaucrats and other so-called outside experts

### **6.11. THEOLOGICAL DEBATE**

Before entering into an arena of pointing out what we would call the perspective of African Theology as regards democracy and its dealings, it seems appropriate to make clear what we believe lies behind the hermeneutic of African theology. African theology maintains that “theology is a verbalization of the existential experience of divinity” (Setiloane, 1976). Naturally different people have different experiences of

the same divinity meaning all experiences of divinity point to one God as expressed in Dt 6 “ Behold, O, Israel, the Lord thy God is one”. In this case each group of peoples interprets or understands divinity and its workings at any one time out of its aggregate historical experience of life and the view thereof.

Although we may stand in “common Christian solidarity of confession” (Setiloane, 1976), each group nevertheless has its own understanding and view of that which we together commonly confess. This is the uniqueness of each group's confession (called theology) is based on and to a great extent is moulded by its historical experience called culture. In African theology, “Africans encounter the materials of the Christian faith” (Setiloane, 1976) [the bible and teachings of the Church] with the whole history from the beginning of time and existence, and how it has schooled them to comprehend, appropriate and live with reality. This presupposes what is meant by culture, without denying others their expression according to the path we each have travelled from time immemorial. It is in this immense journey that African traditional practice including religion, therefore becomes “our universal path to the universal revelation of divinity through the man of Nazareth and his cross on Calvary. In other words our hermeneutic key then is our traditional historical existential experience of divinity in community from the beginning of time. What representatives of other cultural groups have had difficulty in accepting is this stubbornness in claiming the uniqueness of our understanding of the reality when they claim to have been the tutors who brought us to the foot of the cross. Perhaps we should refer them to Paul's words in the epistle to the Galatians that a child who is the heir is totally under the direction of the tutor, but when it has attained adulthood it might even instruct its arts while tutor ( Gal.4:1ff).

#### **6.12. AFRICAN THEOLOGY' PERSPECTIVE OF DEMOCRACY**

The starting point of the African theological perspective of democracy lies in Paul's Epistle to the Romans. “The powers are ordained by God” (Romans 13). This actually implies that, rulers, political governments and institutions are “through the working of the divinity” (Setiloane, 1976). God is the starting point of leadership and governance of God's people. The African traditional view, and therefore African theology, would enthusiastically echo Peter when he states: “for the good ordering of society” i.e. life together. Our historical traditional life shows this all the way in the

prescriptions it sets for the responsibility democracy and democratic governance e.g. conducting ritual for the transmission of the graces and beneficence of divinity to the people. In fact in this view of the whole sphere of society being an arena of the divinity's activity (i.e. sacred and secular dichotomy) the African traditional concept bears witness to the fact that it considers that democracy is under the charge- and that means for judgements- of divinity

Secondly, democracy exists for the people by the people in the community to subject themselves to it (i.e. to participate and pursue its ideals) is without question. The African traditional situation would even say that wilful and persistent disregard of civil power as Vice regent of divinity would be seen as an apostasy against divinity and therefore punishable. That is why treason is such a serious offence punishable even with death.

However, African theology drawing from African traditional practice would never view any democracy as absolute regardless of the level of engagement. All rights and powers of such an authority are vested in the divinity and the authority is under its judgement. "How shall I meet my father's?"

When democracy ceases to be the transmitter of the graces ad benefits of Divinity, i.e. execute what has been entrusted to it, it forfeits its validity.

Such a forfeiture of validity means an extrication of the people from its authority and rule. Should it, however, persist, to exert itself as authority, then it becomes the "abomination of desolation... standing in the holy place (Matthew 24:15), a hindrance to the peoples access to divinity, viewing itself as the final point of reference, and as such expendable. Here we come to a belaboured question uprising against western democracy imposed on African countries. African theology would therefore stand by this and perhaps even advocate it as an act of faith, thus reminding us of Islam's teaching on the "jihad"

#### **6.12.1. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

We have argued in this dissertation that when any people become Christian they willy-nilly and even unconsciously bring with them into their Christian understanding



values, insights and perceptions inherited from their pre Christian past. The world has reacted rather judgementally to the frequency and multiplicity of coups d'état in Africa since the departure of colonialists. Perhaps the world should stop and look and listen. Is it not still the Africans traditional very religious understanding that actuates the dramatis personae in this drama; that a democracy that has ceased to transmit the beneficence of the life from God, on whose behalf it acts as an authority, loses validity? To our argument, African theology to falter would be sin.

### **6.13. AFRICAN PHILOSOPHICAL PREMISES**

This section discusses some important philosophical contributions of various African scholars with regard to considering an option back reconsidering rehabilitating the pre-colonial concepts of governance as they are models that are well established in our African traditional and cultural systems. It's worth noting that, due to the auto pilot kind of influence by the west, most African governments are still thriving on foreign ideologies despite them being not viable for a sustainable democracies which demonstrated a willingly and genuine participation of people in their own political domain. It is a known fact that "African people's idea of democratization is essentially derived from their own historical knowledge, experience, values and capabilities" (Bradley 2012). These ingredients are essential for governance and democratization. It awes to these facts that various African scholars in philosophy have each one posed challenges in the reconstruction of African democracies in the following premises

#### **a) Infusing governance institutions**

Akin Mabogunje (1995) has suggested that by infusing governance institutions at the local level with new and uniform operational rules, such institutions can help foment democracy. In effect, he argues for taking the attributes that characterize the NGOs that are having an effect at the local level and consolidating them into a national forum for governance giving democracy another viable avenue to germinate and mature. In effect, the ability of the state to raise revenue, that is, taxes, is made less cumbersome, if not more palatable, to citizens if democratic dividends are made transparent. Legitimacy and stability are also likely to increase when citizens feel that they have a stake in the day-to-day governmental processes of democracy.

He proposes the need for the establishment of a consensus-oriented dialogue with regard to decision making, constitutional legitimating of the rule of ethnic groups, and decentralization of political power so that local and regional autonomy becomes feasible as advocated by such African scholars as Kwame Gyekye (1992), Kwasi Wiredu (1996), and Olusegun Oladipo (2001).

#### **b) Relevance of traditional political ideas in contemporary African life**

Kwame Gyekye (1992) a prominent African Philosopher has argued for the relevance of traditional political ideas in contemporary African life, indicating as discussed here earlier that there was a democratic order in pre-colonial Africa that could prove advantageous for modern day Africa. By this, he dispels the idea of thriving on foreign concepts of democratic governance which he maintains, remain the product of the empirical regimes which continues to haunt African governments. The main task he suggests is go back to the roots, the pre-colonial ideals and then try to polish them in order to make them incarnate in today's world.

#### **c) Non-party polities in Africa**

Kwasi Wiredu (1996), another eminent African philosopher, has argued for non-party polities in Africa with similar arguments we have posed for the Zambian challenge of a democracy by consensus decision making. Wiredu, views the Western model of Multipartyism based on majority rule as not securing a reasonable system of democracy in African multiethnic countries. He gives an example of Nigeria as one of the multi ethnic countries in Africa whose democracy needs to be coined to meet the challenges of the African people. Wiredu contends that in at least some of traditional Africa's systems of governance, there is the potential for democracy based on a consensus model.

#### **d) Traditions of political rule**

Both Gyekye (1992) and Wiredu (1996) have posited that viable political institutions can be developed on the basis of Africa's own traditions of political rule, such as around the rule by consensus. More succinctly, they claim that the traditional systems of government in precolonial times did have democratic features on which a new political system could be built. Although both Gyekye and Wiredu make explicit

and persuasive arguments, a critical question revolves around how an African country with so many diversities which not only have a myriad of internal factions but also external forces like financial donor mandates can become more democratic? This remains a big challenge in most African states.

#### **e) Liberal democratic tenets**

David Held (1995) has suggested that democracy in modern times be defined in terms of a set of liberal democratic tenets, including

- (1) the centrality in principle of an impersonal structure of public power, that is, a constitution to help safeguard rights, and
- (2) a diversity of power centers within and outside the state or, in other words, an institutional arena that promotes open dialogue and deliberation between alternative viewpoints and agendas.

Even in the absence of a clear analysis, the democracy by consensus does have a clear path for both safe guarding of rights as well as a diversity of power centres and for us, we view the African system as a fully packed system of democracy which is open to reform to meet the modern times because, the model it takes remains that of arriving at consensus decision making.

#### **f) The traditional African political order**

Olusegun Oladipo (2001) has posited, the traditional African political order was based primarily on kinship and guided almost entirely by an oral tradition and a body of unwritten conventions. However, it did not lack the core ingredients of a democratic order as identified by Held (1995). Oladipo (2001) has found the following basic components in the traditional African democratic order. First, power was derived from the people for whom it was held in trust. These conditions of democratic governance were safeguarded by the provisions for the removal of rulers and the specifics for such removal; witness the case of the Akans of Ghana and the Bemba of Zambia. And although the monarch's power was hereditary, he (or she) could be removed from office for such offenses as oppression and arbitrariness in governance, corruption, and neglect of state affairs. These points were culturally based within the charter of leadership that defined the social order between the king and his people. That is to say, public officials were accountable to the citizenry. It is

therefore prudent to state that in traditional (pre-colonial) African societies, there existed a system of checks and balances essential for any democracy that was meant to ensure that the king did not become authoritarian in his or her rule. This was a practical matrix among the Bemba and the Ashanti of Ghana that a chief or king who did not comply with the general ethos of the people was removed and replaced by another one who was fit for public office.

### **g) Reliance on dialogue and consultation**

K.A. Busia (1967) stresses on the reliance on dialogue and consultation as a means of decision making was, and still is in many instances, a democratic feature of African governance. K.A. Busia (1967:28) expressed this democratic feature when he wrote:

*When a Council, each member of which was the representative of a lineage, met to discuss matters affecting the whole community, it had always to grapple with the problem of representing sectional and common interests. In order to do this, the members had to talk things over; they had to listen to all different points of view. So strong was the value of solidarity that the chief aim of the counselors was to reach unanimity, and they talked until this was achieved,*

T. Uzodinma Nwala (1985:168) expressed this same idea, with specific reference to the Igbo of southern Nigeria:

*“Unanimity and all the rigorous processes and compromises . . . that lead to it are all efforts made to contain the wishes of the majority as well as those of the minority. In short, they are designed to arrive at what may be abstractly called ‘the general will of the people of the community.’”*

Decision making in the African traditional democratic order was based on consensus rather than on majority rule as in Western models of democracy.

### **6.13.1. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

From the perspective of African Scholars, it is worth noting that most of the traditional governance practices share the same traditional heritage so what has been presented in this section of the dissertation is not something foreign to Africa's different contexts. Other questions may arise as to whether the seemingly 'primitive' political systems can be viable tool for democracy in the 21<sup>st</sup> century amidst, the forces of globalization. Frankly speaking, the aspects of political philosophies tackled in this section are still of paramount importance in any progressive society and globalization has no negative effect on them.

### **6.14. AN AFRICAN FRAMEWORK FOR DEMOCRACY IN AKE'S PHILOSOPHICAL PARADIGM**

An African framework for democracy in Ake's Philosophy entails Ake's attempt to achieve more viable tools for the attainment of genuine democracy which emanates from the culture of the people. It is said that, foreign concepts will always fail to take root. A philosophical framework in this dimension, requires a multifaceted approach in order to establish key linkages that would promote the good authentic democratic praxis the following premises

#### **1) DEVELOPMENT SCHEME FOR AFRICA**

Ake (1996) has suggested a development scheme for Africa that is people centered and based on empowerment, confidence building, self-realization, and self-reliance. According to Ake, such a development framework operates in a kind of democracy that emphasizes social, political, and economic rights, recognizes collective rights, inclusiveness, and the development of institutions, and empowers people to participate in decision making at the local, state, and national levels. Ake's development scheme is intended to make Africa's "second independence" period a reality. By "second independence" he means not only an economic transformation of Africa, but also a political and social metamorphosis that involves collective responsibility and consensus building. Such realities, he argues, provide the building blocks for democracy given the continent's pre-colonial and colonial past. The

following four steps are part of Ake's (1996) call for real development in Africa. Inherent in these processes of economic development are transparency and accountability, essential to any democratic rule. Ake (1996) first calls for a populist development strategy. That is, the people have to be the agents of change, the means, and the end. The state is neither the focus nor the primary beneficiary. Ordinary citizens have to be the agents of change and the foundation of all development policies. Transparent policies in which the people are directly engaged will help ensure ownership and a sense of political efficacy. Such efficacy should lead to greater political engagement and participation in civil society activities that are quintessential for the nurturing of democracy.

Secondly Ake (1996) proposes self-reliance for the ordinary citizens. Development cannot be provided on a "silver platter" to the people by the state or outside entities. Development has to be experienced. Ake posits that self-reliance under colonial rule meant posturing against foreign domination and was a protest against dependency and external control. Self-reliance in Ake's paradigm is about collective responsibility, which includes taking control of the resources needed to create development and engaging in the administration and execution of the program. In other words, self-reliance means "by the people, for the people." Ake goes on to say that the genuine revolution in Africa will be about self-reliance. He understands that colonialism has dealt Africa serious blows and left lingering constraints such as leaders' snug accommodations with external patrons. Such external dependency by and large includes reliance on entities like the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and former colonial state benefactors. He admits that exiting from such colonial circumscriptions will be difficult, but he believes it is necessary for development to occur.

Ake's (1996) third step in his proposal for African development involves empowerment and confidence. He suggests that this lack of confidence may be Africa's greatest obstacle to development, declaring that it is entrenched and has a long history dating back to the colonial era. Overcoming this lack of confidence can only occur when ordinary citizens desire an overall better quality of life, which Ake argues should "spill over" into political development as well.

The fourth step that Ake (1996) calls for is self-realization rather than alienation. He proposes that if ordinary people possess or have ownership of their own development, the development process will not become an exercise in alienation. That is, by augmenting self-realization, the polity will find inner strength and be that much better equipped to articulate policies that are amenable to their local conditions. And by articulating such policies, the populists can eventually institutionalize practices that will create even more involvement, a cornerstone of democracy.

In conclusion, Ake (1996) advocates that Africa should not be forced by outsiders to develop; the people should be given the chance to develop politically and economically on their own accord, based on their own traditions and value systems.

## **6.15. EPISTEMOLOGICAL PREMISES**

In this section our quest is to provide a framework for Zambia. Contend on the view that democratic consensus is the ideal path through which a democracy that carries a unique Zambian value system can be founded. We demonstrate that democratic consensus is an essential by product of the pursuit of “epistemically warranted beliefs about political action and organization” (Feuerstein, 2012). This ideal basically should lead us into an attempt to figure out what political beliefs are best supported by experience of the people in Zambia.

### **6.15.1 Point of Departure**

It is worth noting that the “prominence of democratic consensus ideals is connected with the rise of deliberative models of democracy” (Feuerstein, 2012) and the delinquencies connected with moral pluralism. The concept of deliberative model raised requires that “democrats hold that political legitimacy” ” (Feuerstein, 2012) whose ideology is centred on the need for “equal and widely inclusive process of deliberation among the citizenly” ” (Feuerstein, 2012). This view means that where plurality of competing moral views are the most important “aim of deliberation should be some form of consensus” (Princeton, 1996). For our application of the perspective, we shall consider the theories alludes to the concept of consensus will be referred to as theories of democracy.

The previous chapters have established that multiplicity is the main problem under investigation in the field of democratic governance. It is used as a point of departure for consensus theory and practice. Consequently it defines the values of “the democratic game” (Rohio, 1975) we hold that in the figuring out of an authentic framework for democracy for Zambia “the realization of the consensus as providing the reasons” (Feuerstein, 2012) for the process is very paramount.

In the formulation of an ideal framework, we take consensus as a new point of departure and proposes it as a model which can ensure that there is adequate democratic participation in political governance for every person if only this concept is viewed as a moral criteria for a just, fair and accountable political system. Consensus is a theological concept and general framework within which the values of a *homo Afrikanus* are practiced. The eventual question of this chapter is - does African Christian Theology appropriate it as a model of its praxis?

In order to provide a setting for the framework, it is important to note that consensus practices have been handled and appropriated on a variety of grounds but most of all with regard to the matrilineal governance system of the Bemba speaking people of Zambia in this dissertation. One dominant perspective of criticism in this thesis, notes that the quest for consensus towards the path to an ideal democratization in Zambia can promote “valuable forms of dissent and the essential expression of individual or localized ground interests” (Mouffe, 1997: 347-76).

The second criticism alluded to the fact that ignoring the concept of consensus decision making as a model of conducting political affairs in Zambia, could inevitably lead to “disagreement in a pluralistic society” (Femia, 1996). The formulation of an ideal framework that informs a Zambian African path for consensus decision making is very paramount to the attainment of a free society where the democratic citizen in the country ought to exercise the civic duties for the development of the country. The critique we offer is very cardinal in at least two principles. First, the establishment of the consensus model promotes attempts to moderate and qualify in various ways the role of consensus ideals.

The path of criticism that we offer is substantially stronger against western democracy, practiced in Zambia and we contend that such a practice must be removed from the constitution act of the 1991 and abandoned completely. Secondly,



our criticisms of consensus decision making practice serves to figure out the indispensable role of epistemic moral standard in political deliberation whose aim is to arrive at informed decisions of a people. This concept figures out the role of essential necessity for epistemic norm in civic lives and demonstrates the need for an “epistemically motivated account of deliberation that takes a recognizably democratic form” (Feuerstein, 2012). This idea therefore, lends support to the growing body of work on epistemic democracy and demonstrates the vital concerns that “epistemic accounts” (Feuerstein, 2012). Should look at in the framework.

Importantly, our argument that we should ignore western forms of democracies as a political practice does not imply that the western forms are not a valuable approach to achieve development at all. The analogy is that in the context where their isn't multiplicity of ethnic groups with several unique practices and regions, western concepts of democracy is likely to flourish and produce the desired objectives.

#### **6.16. APPROPRIATING THE CONSENSUS MODEL**

The consensus model of political governance though it has been practiced worldwide for generations, scholarly “the early definitive statements of consensus theory came from Habermas and Cohen” (Feuerstein, 2012). For both philosophers Jürgen Habermas (Born 1929) and Joshua Cohen (Born 1951) they allude to the fact that proper democratic decision making “consists an ongoing process of inclusive discursive exchange among the citizenry” (Feuerstein, 2012). Although both succumb to the idea that one cannot expect full agreement among the citizenry, in actuality, a rational and unforced consensus “remains deliberation's ideal end point” (Kiros, 2011). Therefore, Habermas's democratic principle in this vein holds that “only those statutes may claim legitimacy that can meet with the assent of all citizens in a discursive process of legislation” (Feuerstein, 2012). Similarly Cohen argues that democratic legitimacy is a matter of arriving at “reasons that the persuasive to all who are committed to acting on the results of a free and reasoned assessment of alternatives by equals” (Ibid)

Now despite the fact that Habermas and Cohen characterize deliberative norms in terms of framing a perspective in this context, it is worth noting that each of them in their unique concepts envision the scenario of consensus as a “regulative ideal for actual democratic practice” (Feuerstein, 2012). The implication of this Habermas's

view is that the “real – world democratic institutions ought to be organized around the provision of liberal rights essential to free and equal discourse” (Habermas’s, BFN). These rights should above all include “rights to representation of the representatives” (Wiredu, 1996). In addition, the democratic society would also depend, in Habermas’s view, “on the existence of a free and robust sphere of the civic contestation” (Habermas BFN, 329-87). There is where the municipal and the other localized systems are to be valued as vital participants in the civic operations of a city or town.

Cohen’s scenario also holds the fact that “ideal deliberative procedure is intended to serve as a model for institutions to mirror” (Cohen, 1996) in assessing the democratic model in this respect, we note that it differs from standard contractarian models of ethics or justice so to say. But on the other hand their primary stand point targets to “provide a recipe for democratic practice and not only a procedural definition of political legitimacy” (Esrlund, 2008). We note that Cohen’s and Habermas’s views have one central point, in their analysis of the consensus model which is centred on two pillars in the practice of deliberative process to achieve consensual democracy.

- a) The legitimacy of democratic laws and institutions depends on some essential was on whether they could be the object of “free, equal and universal agreement” (Feuerstein, 2012).

This particular concept implies that democracy is not static but rather espouses the value that “democracy will evolve in ways that will enhance its meaning and give depth and sustainability” (Claude Ake 1996). However, this kind of democratic practice would

## **6.17. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

The main aim of this chapter was to critically explore and justify that an African democracy by consensus decision making is possible through a critical engagement of an ethical theological framework applicable to the Zambian situation. An ethical theological framework, worked out that a non-party government by consensus is both ethically and theologically feasible for African political engagement.

Consensus has been reached that African democracy in general is not built on nothingness but is concretely built on our African traditional practices of governance. The chapter clearly demonstrates the fact that, if Africa needs to develop, in terms of developing a governance system that is applicable, our pre-colonial traditional practices of democracy are a pre-requisite to be examined and harnessed to meet the current challenges of democratization in Zambia and elsewhere in Africa.

The chapter has established that it is incumbent upon Christian theology including ethics to offer moral criteria for a democracy by consensus decision making, which in African tradition and culture is viewed as a value system rather than a theoretical one. The chapter has comprehensively established that following the pre-colonial system of governance which was a decentralized one first and foremost, Africa has a foundation upon which to build a more sustainable democratic governance system which by and large would combat critical delinquencies of tribalism, nepotism among other problems which could be a recipe for civil strife or even genocide witnessed in the last forty years in the African continent. The challenge is on African peoples themselves to re-evaluate the systems of political governance that would in turn help in re-establishing new ventures of democratization in Africa in order to develop and bring about change in our continent today.

Theological insights in the light of the Zambian context as a Christian nation were evaluated, and the underlying conclusion was that, Zambia's peculiar situation requires a solid theological foundation, if democracy is to have meaning.

Various African philosophical and theological voices were sighted who together, voice that African governance system requires a complete overhaul, if indeed it is to be emancipated from oppressive structures of western democracy which has by and large raped the African continent.

The conclusion of the chapter re-emphasises that a non-party governance system by consensus is an ideal model for democracy in Zambia and Africa as a whole. The ball is now in the hands of all well-meaning Africans to exercise responsible and a more realistic approach to governance in Africa through a vivid inspiration from God. Action is now so that in the formulation of the national constitution, such proposed models can be embraced in order to bring about change in our governance systems

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### 7. SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND WAY FORWARD

In this chapter, our discussion will focus on the following questions. What should be the future direction of democracy in Zambia following the proposals for a non-party state government by consensus that has been presented? How can Western and non-Western models of democracy be reconciled and propagated in order to come up with a more suitable model for a Zambian African political system? How can scholars in the West be helped to better understand and tolerate non-Western models of democracy as ideal for the African continent? And why is Zambia a good place to explore non-Western models of democracy?

Well, it's worth noting that future considerations regarding the development of democracy in Zambia should, first and foremost, be multifaceted. We have comprehensively argued through our methodology that "a homo Africanus is a multiheaded hydra" (Pobee 1979) whose disposition is plural in both character and action. For this reason, the major task that is ideal for Zambia should be such that any model to be considered must be adaptable to the unique nature of the continent's traditional and cultural value systems if indeed positive results are to be attained. A reality that "the vestiges of colonialism such as authoritarianism and ethnic, religious, and class cleavages are still quite entrenched in many locales" (Bradley, 2005) possess a challenge that democratic models have to be able to accommodate and account for such realities.

There are many types of accommodations which can be made to combat the realities of the chaotic Zambian multiparty governance system which has raped the country into massive tribalism and regional politics. For example, genuine representation of all ethnic and religious groups in legislatures might be a starting point. It is a fact that our Zambian multiparty political system is biased towards certain tribes, who determine the direction on behalf of people who they don't physically represent. And even though bonafide representation might mean increased legislative incrementalism or gridlock, such representation could help quell civil unrest, especially in the Western Province where the demand for service delivery has led to massive demonstrations for the restoration of the 'Barotse

Agreement of 1964'. In order for the Lozi tribe to enjoy a lion's share of the national cake. This and many actions, have by and large promoted tribal and regional politics in Zambia as a result of multiparty democracy principles which are really alien to the African concept of doing politics.

Furthermore, considerations of democracy in Zambia would need to be advanced if neopatrimonial or in other words 'big-man democracy' could somehow be avoided, short of a military coup d'état and bloodshed as a result of failure to work on a contextual system of governance. In Zambia and elsewhere in Africa, the answer to quench political rivalry cannot be multiparty elections which have in the past proved to be a weapon of division. For instance "the October 1993 brutal assassination of Burundi's duly elected president, Melchior Ndadaye, only 4 months after the country's first peaceful multiparty elections." (Bradley, 2005). Our main foundation of the proposal is not based on the position taken here that multiparty elections should be abandoned, no! but that other avenues of negating potential discord should be considered seriously especially those with a Zambian African flavour.

For example, nonpartism as we alluded in chapter six in connection with Uganda might be a possibility path for Zambia's peculiar situation. Obviously, Uganda's "movement system" may not have been perfect in line with the western models, but the question is, what democracy in the world is without its limitations We believe that the talk of Multipartism is often just a superficial attempt at appeasing the majority of the population in a democracy which more often than not thrives on propaganda. It is our firm proposal that in a quest to pursue a win-win situation, the root causes of discontent in the practice of multiparty democracy will have to be investigated more judiciously and honestly throughout the African continent in order to re-establish the key linkages for a more sustainable model of democracy with African lenses.

We note that cleavages in the Zambian African context goes beyond the usual suspects of ethnic, religious, and class differences. The problems dealt with in most cases include economic disparities of the people and weak pluralist institutional practices enshrined in the national constitution which by and large exclude the wishes of the minority groups to be overlooked. It is our firm contention and proposal that democratic models that are truly genuine do address the political

conditions in particular contexts in Africa and elsewhere which will help increase the chances for democratic maturation within the African ethos.

On the question of how Western and non-Western models of democracy proposed can be reconciled to enhance a tolerant political governance system based on a Zambian African context, first and foremost, Western democratic leaders and their foreign policies must take seriously that Zambia among African countries is at a different stage of democratization thus, the need to be treated differently based on its contextual situation. Of course even the constitution provision which declares Zambia as the Christian nation makes it have a different political context which should be handled uniquely if indeed a way forward is to be established.

Second, Western and non-Western models of democracy for Zambia can be reconciled if the West realizes that Zambia has demonstrated a prudent commitment to macroeconomic reform or has “implemented a significant level of political glasnost” (Bradley, 2005) is worth investing in politically, economically, and diplomatically. Another potential area of reconciliation between Western and non-Western models of democracy for Zambia would involve Zambia’s commitment to embody macroeconomic reform and at the same time seek to promote economic development without democracy.

Thirdly, on the reason why Zambia is a good place to explore non-Western models of democracy! The first reason centers around the uniqueness of the Zambia itself in terms of its languishing legacy of colonialism, Multipartism, one party state and again Multipartism. It is a known fact colonial vestiges such as authoritarianism and tribal politics have wreaked havoc on the nation of Zambia politically, economically, socially, and diplomatically. However, in spite of seemingly insurmountable odds, Zambia has survived and even prospered in some areas while it continues to experiment with its own brands of democratic models as well as other forms of political rule that would be ideal for the Zambian situation. Additionally, Zambia is a good place to explore non-Western models of democracy because it is arguably the most heterogeneous country and, thus, encourages models of democratic governance that can understand this richness which includes the Christian nation value system.

Zambia is indeed a good place to examine non-Western models of democracy “minutely because it is quintessentially ripe for investigating models of democracy that require bargaining among a vast array of groups. (Bradley, 2005) ” Moreover, religion plays an integral role and contributes to one’s identity and group orientation. It is our firm contention that a Zambian model of democracy needs to take into account this religious factor of the Zambian context.

The ball is now on the researchers to move forward to seek to construct more comprehensive models of democracy ideal for a Zambian African context. They must remember that one size does not fit all. What is good for the west may not be a cup of tea for others. Variables such as the levels of education, modernity, gross national product, and the like must be cautiously aligned against the backdrop of ethnic identity, religious attachment, cultural realities, and communal directives in order to identify the varying numbers of possible types of democratic transition that are feasible. Moreover, histories of colonial legacies must not be set aside as only being tangential to discussions of democratic consolidation. Indeed, Zambian- African perceptions about the nature of democracy “when linked to the realities of such international factors as globalization, structural adjustment programs, World Bank and IMF demands, and multinational corporation opportunities” (Bradley,2005) must be viewed as not always in the best interest of democratic rule. Such accommodating policies may, in fact, “only exacerbate native elite control” (Ibid).

It should be noted that modernity and colonial vestiges will continue to challenge democratic development for a Zambian- African polity due to the ever changing prospects of our time as a result democratization will always be a challenge in the foreseeable future and would need to be nurtured if indeed it is to have meaning within the context of the people. However, non-Western notions of democratic rule must be facilitated and reconciled from within the Zambian context as well as in Africa and beyond. “But even though protracted vestiges of colonial rule have to a certain degree been a bane on African democratic development” (Bradley, 2005) alternative democratic practices should continue to germinate throughout the African continent in general. In the end, contemporary and future research on democracy must view seeking indigenous African notions of democratic governance as a

primary task as this dissertation has hoped to demonstrate the political system of the Bemba speaking people as a basis for democracy by consensus in Zambia.

In conclusion, after analysing the various paradigms, models and systems of democracy from various perspectives including the theological one, the challenge for Zambian democracy is to consider the non-party alternative, democracy by consensus decision making. The challenge of tribalism, nepotism among other vices that have invaded the political fray of the Zambian present governance system, if left unchecked will eventually lead to a regrettable breakage in society. In the non-party system of governance, the government of the republic of Zambia will not be formed based on political party affiliation but by the consensus of elected representatives who represent various sections of the Zambian society. The Zambian government in this case will become a coalition, not of political parties but a coalition of citizens. In this arrangement, political associations to propagate preferred ideologies would be encouraged but in councils of state, affiliation with any such association does not necessarily determine the chances of selection for a position of responsibility. We gave several examples of this kind of arrangement when we comprehensively discussed the political organization and system matrilineal governance system of the Bemba speaking people of Zambia.

Furthermore, in the non-party system of governance two things will be expected in order to encourage the spirit of oneness. First, “political associations will be avenues for channeling all desirable pluralisms” (Wiredu, 1996) but they will be without the backing of political parties, as they are known under multi-party democracy. And secondly, “without the constraints of membership in parties relentlessly dedicated to wrestling power or retaining it” (Wiredu, 1996). This be the case representatives will be more likely to be actuated by the objective merits of given proposals than by ulterior considerations. In such an environment, willingness to compromise, and with it the prospects of consensus will be enhanced to a higher degree and level of engagement.

Consensus will not just be an option bonus for Zambia but it will enhance a kind of substantive decisional, representation for representatives and, through them, for the citizens at large. This was comprehensively discussed when we discussed the



Ilamfya and Inchenje supreme and executive councils respectively of the Bemba speaking whose main concern was not only to arrive at a decision based on the majority people only but also took into considerations the views of the minority to reflect in the decision in question.

In the light of the foregoing flaws and antimonies of the notion of multiparty democracy as a foreign construct, the apparent conclusion is that it has helped to open a way into the discovery of human rights, its realization and promotion in the 21st century Africa. While this dissertation is not totally discrediting Multipartism, the `discovery of the to decisional representation, rooted in ancient African tradition, and which currently is lacking in both the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights makes good reading. The stance of the dissertation is that our exploration of the necessary interconnectedness of consensual democracy and the right to decisional representation should go hand in hand.

It goes without question that given the string of problems, which the notion of multiparty democracy is fraught with, it stifles the possibility of an alternative democracy in Zambia based on the Bemba model we have comprehensively overhauled, that will promote better human rights to decisional representation in contemporary Zambian politics. Future research into the Bemba governance can explore further, how, every citizen of Zambia, can be made to participate fully in the development of the country through decisional representation.

Shortcomings in the multiparty democracy open away into this possibility of an alternative democratic theory. This is important in order to provide a sound theoretical foundation of democracy that will give credence to, and foster the respect, observance and promotion of the right to decisional representation in contemporary Zambian politics. While we have made our contribution to indigenous African understanding of human rights and democracy, the challenge before contemporary African theologians and philosophers is to continue and further expand the discourse beyond this framework especially in the area of rights to representations in African governments. This will be done with no other aim than to reflect on how to emerge a viable, strong and better model of democracy for the promotion of the right to decisional representation in 21st Century African politics.

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