



UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

**USING A DYNAMIC STRUCTURAL APPROACH TO ATTEMPT TO
DEVELOP A THEORETICAL SOCIOLOGY OF MALAWI**

BY

**MPHATSO MOSES KAUFULU
(BSoc.Sc., UNIMA; BSoc.Sc. Hons., UKZN)**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
DEGREE OF MASTER OF SOCIAL SCIENCE BY FULL DISSERTATION**

IN

SOCIOLOGY

IN THE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCE OF THE COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES

OF

**THE UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL, PMB
2013**

Declaration

I, **Mphatso Moses Kaufulu**, declare that

1. The research reported in this thesis, except where otherwise indicated, is my original research.
2. This thesis has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university.
3. This thesis does not contain other persons' data, pictures, graphs or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons.
4. This thesis does not contain other persons' writing, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other researchers. Where other written sources have been quoted, then:
 - a. Their words have been re-written but the general information attributed to them has been referenced
 - b. Where their exact words have been used, then their writing has been placed in italics and inside quotation marks, and referenced.
5. This thesis does not contain text, graphics or tables copied and pasted from the Internet, unless specifically acknowledged, and the source being detailed in the thesis and in the References sections.

Name of Candidate

Name of Supervisor

Signature

Signature

Date

Date

Dedication

To my late father and mother, Dr and Mrs Kaufulu.

To my sister, Mrs Chisomo Kaufulu-Kumwenda, and her newly born son Jedidiah Joshua (JJ).

To my uncle, Ron Mponda for his belief in me, and his timely support.

And lastly but not least, to Dr and Mrs Sanson, for their never-ending sacrificial support for my numerous endeavours.

~ Moses Mphatso

List of Acronyms

Afford	-	Alliance for Democracy
BCA	-	British Central Africa
CR	-	Central Region
DC	-	District Commissioner
FISPs	-	Farm Inputs Subsidy Programmes
FRELIMO	-	Frente de Libertacao de Mocambique
GDP	-	Gross Domestic Product
MBC	-	Malawi Broadcasting Corporation
MCB	-	Malawi Censorship Board
MCM	-	Media Council of Malawi
MCP	-	Malawi Congress Party
MCPWL	-	Malawi Congress Party Women's League
MEC	-	Malawi Electoral Commission
MHRC	-	Malawi Human Rights Commission
MWG	-	Malawi Writers' Group
MYP	-	Malawi Young Pioneers
NAC	-	Nyasaland African Congress
NR	-	Northern Region
PL	-	Pastoral Letter
PM	-	Prime Minister [of Malawi]
RC	-	Roman Catholic [Church]
RBM	-	Reserve Bank of Malawi
RENAMO	-	Resistencia Nacional Mocambicana
UDF	-	United Democratic Front
VP	-	Vice-President [of Malawi]
VRG	-	Valid Re-employment Guarantee

Table of Contents

Declaration	i
Dedication	ii
List of Acronyms	iii
Table of Contents	iv
Epigraph	vii
1 Finding Sociological Roots	1
1.1 Sketching the Premise	1
1.2 A Preliminary Historical Overview of Malawi	7
1.3 The Rationale and Structure of the Work	10
1.3.1 Rationale.....	10
1.3.2 Structure	12
2 History and Sociability	14
2.1 Introduction	14
2.2 An Overview of the Socio-Political History of Malawi, 1964 to 2012.....	15
2.2.1 A Sketch of Nyasaland as a Colony	15
2.2.2 Malawi’s Migrant Labour: Looking Backwards from the 1970s.....	20
2.3 From Nyasaland to Contemporary Malawi	25
2.3.1 The Idea and Origins of Post-Colonial Malawian Nationalism	25
2.3.2 Tying these <i>Claims</i> to Historical Events	48
2.3.3 The Public Eye	65
2.4 Theorizing the Sociology of the Malawi Society	67
2.4.1 An African “Modernity” and its Rationality	71
2.4.2 Acting Appropriately and Consciousness	77
2.4.3 The Role of History and Acting in the “Now”	80
2.4.4 Differential Access to Power: the Malawian Historical Canon	83
2.5 Conclusion	86
3 History, Sociability and Intersubjectivity	88

3.1	Introduction	88
3.2	The Society Presented So Far	89
3.3	Intersubjectivity as “the Centres of Our History”	90
3.4	Researching Social Ontologies – towards Social Objectivity	93
3.5	Some Instances of Social Ontologies	95
3.5.1	The Broadcast Media and Newspapers	95
3.5.2	The Academy	101
3.6	Intersubjective Objectivity	105
3.7	Conclusion	106
4	Proposed Sociological Theory of Malawi.....	108
4.1	Introduction	108
4.2	The Epistemic Foundations of the Theory	108
4.2.1	Episteme 1: Conformity as Disguised Rebellion	108
4.2.2	Episteme 2: Social Life as Performance	109
4.2.3	Episteme 3: The Sociability Imperative	110
4.2.4	Episteme 4: History as Intersubjectivity	111
4.2.5	Episteme 5: The Inclination towards Standards	112
4.3	The Theoretic System: A Summarizing Synthesis	113
4.4	Conclusion	115
5	Further Contributions and Prospects	116
5.1	Introduction	116
5.2	The Politics of Intersubjectivity	116
5.3	Limitations: The Questions of Society, Multiple Spheres, and Research Bias	122
6	Concluding Summary: An Overview of the Work	127
7	Bibliography	130
8	APPENDICES	143
8.1	MALAWI PRESIDENCY ELECTORAL RESULTS, 1993 – 2004	143
8.2	Malawi President Banda’s order splits chiefs.....	146

8.3 The Petition Presented to the Malawi President on 20 July [2013]..... 148

Epigraph

“A condition is now said to prevail which is at the same time excessively organized and chaotically disjointed. Great magnitudes of human beings exist in an atomized manner... each only concerned for his own advantage and at the same time obscurely conscious of the power of the crowd...”

– Horkheimer and Adorno (*Aspects of Sociology*, 1973 pp. 90)

1 Finding Sociological Roots

1.1 Sketching the Premise

Malawi is a former British colony that attained its Independence in July of 1964. Prior to 1964 the territory that Malawi occupies was part of a larger territory called British Central Africa (BCA) which also comprised of the geopolitical areas now occupied by Zambia and Zimbabwe. In an attempt to deter the encroachment of other colonial powers in that particular region of the African continent, more particularly the Portuguese, the British government declared the BCA territory which is now occupied by Malawi a British Protectorate in 1891, and named it Nyasaland. Thereafter, the protectorate saw a more focused consolidation of the State and its functions over the Nyasaland territory following the ratification of the colonial constitution in 1907 called the Order of Council. It is the premise of this study that the consolidation of a Nyasaland state significantly contributed towards the development of the ideology that undergirded the efforts for decolonization. These ideologies, it will be argued, accrued largely from a concept of nationalism¹ that spawned from the centralization of power via the establishment of the Nyasaland colonial state, spurring particular kinds of political efforts, awareness and organizations that accrued from Nyasaland's unique population demographics. Nationalism became an inherently self-contradictory concept which translated into particular pursuits for specific kinds of relationships between those who were or would be governors and those who were or would be governed.²

In Chisiza's³ article written in 1963, from which the sociological vision of this research is drawn and developed, he considers what he thought were the more central problems associated with the task of establishing a popularly sustained government which could efficiently – not only galvanize unity – but also drive the development challenges of African states, particularly

¹ The contestations around this term “nationalism” will be further rendered in the literature review section. In this introductory section, the term shall loosely entail all concerted efforts to achieve Nation-State complete with distinct territorial boundaries.

² See Chisiza (quoted in McCracken 1998) and his contradictory views of governance by consent versus his calls for a strong benevolent dictator; universal suffrage of all Africans as equals versus his articulation of the kind of women contemporary and sophisticated African men want. These are one instance of a loosely adhered to conception of the universality human rights. Also Chisiza essay entitled “The Outlook for Contemporary Africa, 1963”.

³ Dunduzu Chisiza was amongst the early renowned nationalists who greatly assisted the Nyasaland African Congress (NAC) in its grassroots mobilizations particularly from the early-mid 1950s up until independence in 1964 in Nyasaland (now Malawi).

Nyasaland (now Malawi). To this paradox, Chisiza envisaged various necessities that would enable the state to run efficiently while keeping development efforts at the fore. It is not of interest at this point of the study to outline all the necessities he envisaged. However, while he did not mention it explicitly, the necessities he considered seemed to envisage – and it can be inferred from his writings – that a government’s legitimacy could only stem directly from the complete or total unification of all the support of the people for that government’s leadership (Chisiza, 1963). And therefore *that* new African leadership, in order to prevent the incidence of numerous *supports* all pulling the state in opposing directions, had to choose one amongst themselves to stand as the more prominent leader while his comrades voluntarily choose to be that leader’s subordinates. This voluntary subordination, in this study’s view, would only serve a minimal function if it were done behind closed doors, and hidden away from the public eye. However, if done in the public eye, this support – in which the comrades voluntarily submitted to the to-be prominent leader – would help channel the various *supports* that each liberator enjoyed towards that one newly appointed supreme leader.⁴ By necessity therefore, this subordination was not only voluntarily carried out, but it was formally coded into Acts which permanently subordinated the leader’s comrades under his authority.⁵

This mood as evidenced in Chisiza’s writings demonstrably illustrates at least two positions he must have held. The first is that he saw little effectiveness in a government system which was characterized by institutional order – rather, he believed that given the challenges of the newborn African nation, only strong and individual centred leadership at the helm of the African state would yield the best outcomes and in the quickest way. This view should not be dismissed as it is still widely held even today.⁶ The national leader in Malawi is allowed a certain amount

⁴ It is important to note that following transition from NAC to Malawi Congress Party (MCP), the number of active branches and the overall membership of Northern Malawians to MCP dropped dramatically. Musopole, a very militant and charismatic grassroots anti-colonial activist who enjoyed tremendous support in Northern Malawi, would later openly declare his support of the newly established MCP and pledge his allegiance to Banda in a move to consolidate Northern support towards the MCP and Banda in particular.

⁵ See Nkhata (An Introductory Note on Malawi, In Press) as he outlines the various amendments to the Malawi Constitution after independence in 1964. Secondly, the formalization was of necessity because it emphatically forwarded the message to the people of the co-freedom fighters subordination to the appointed supreme leader.

⁶ See two articles by reporter Mwale (John Z Tembo Pleads with President to Repeal Bad Laws, 2012) and (Injunctions Bill Repealed, 2012) on Zodiak Online (a news website by a popular private radio broadcaster in Malawi) in which the chief of opposition in the Malawi Parliament appeals to the President to repeal what was widely considered an “unfair” law. This is interesting because in spite of the fact that Malawi is a constitutional democracy, the president’s *power* to decree and override regulations is still widely expected.

of disregard for protocol in order to further some greater cause in the interest of the nation. Power asymmetries can be seen as largely originating from this tendency whereby the populace are expected to live by regulation and law – the extent to which of course is dependent on how *close to power* they are – while the leader can largely decide when and how the law applies.⁷

Secondly, and more subtly, this mood also gives away the uncertainty that might have been felt by the *liberators* as they sought to create a government that would preside over a population of fellow Africans who were quite ethnically and regionally heterogeneous on the one hand and yet had only recently banded together and supported the surmounting of an oppressive colonial regime. Bear in mind that Malawi was largely united by the need to attain independence which temporarily silenced the very pronounced political undercurrents of ethnic identities. This plight for independence however emanated largely from antagonisms of natives within the administrative satellites throughout the colony as ethnic groups sought to maintain while others sought to sever state-clientelist linkages between themselves and the state which were maintained through their colonially ascribed traditional authorities (Berman, 1998). As a result the liberators sought to *establish a strong handle of control* over what constituted African culture and what did not, as this would facilitate the creation of a “way of life” that everyone would be expected to subscribe to, and which was in line with some grand vision of nation-building⁸. A practical way however was to have it emanate from a central place – from a sort of fountain of knowledge; from an infallible leader.

The political solution, therefore, to the *huge* potential of the occurrence of an ungovernable population due to their heterogeneity (largely embedded in ethnic politics of identity), led Chisiza to believe that the surest way to attain a popular government was to make certain that the epicentre from which support was to be garnered had to be a single and central place –

⁷ Mamdani (1996, 2001) illustrates in his publications the tension between civil law and customary law in colonial Africa. Civil, he states, had to do with the rule of law which entailed inherent checks on the usage of State power; this law was enjoyed by non-native populations who were regarded as races. Customary law however was the fusion of all judicial, executive and legislative powers into one entity called a chief to govern, in the “spirit” of his custom, those of his own ethnicity. As such customary law was asymmetrical, arbitrary and prone to excesses, and furthermore it was the predominant law that natives or indigenous people came to know; a law enacted at a ruler’s discretion but nonetheless backed by a powerful central government.

⁸ H. K. Banda, from his practice in Great Britain, told a journalist that while leniency was to be exercised on the part of the liberators with regard to their own people, it was a fact that the people’s inability to see things the way the liberators saw then stemmed from their ignorance. It was therefore his view that the people of Nyasaland had to be guided or shown the way towards decolonization and then later *development* [Quoted in McCracken (1998)].

embodied by a single individual who would be presented as the greatest one from amongst his peers. Such centralization of popularity would defuse the potential of fragmented populisms emanating from the prominence of several liberators, each one mobilizing various populations with their individual charisma.⁹ More seriously however, and as will be demonstrated further below, is that centralization of popularity around a central figure who embodied true “nationalism” or the values of nationhood prevented the ethnically diverse population from free interethnic and interregional engagement by channelling their dis-integration towards the State. Overtime, these *hostilities* culminate in gross interethnic suspicions and an increased obsession with the State as a source of control over others.

In Chisiza’s own words, African states had to surrender willingly to a benevolent dictator provided that the dictator worked in the best interest of everyone in those states (Chisiza, 1963). However, once you acquire a dictator[ship] then you also relinquish the right to decide what your own best interests are. As highlighted above, this sentiment encapsulates the early roots of a state orchestrated mode of control rife with the attempts to invent and fabricate various forms of culture in the name of nationalism and more broadly *Africanism*.

Furthermore, it captures vividly the “theatrical” aspects of political and public life prevalent then and even now, in which the true intentions or strategies towards an esteemed outcome are presented via social “performances” that then get passed down and around the societal whole of that concerned state. Overtime these performances become very densely layered forms of acting and spectating¹⁰; the vast majority of this acting and spectating itself being only supported by the actively spoken discourses or narratives and exhibited actions that supposedly champion vague definitions or descriptions of African culture or nationalism. In the last instance, these performances create a society densely saturated by social action which itself harvests its

⁹ See Mkandawire (Ethnicity, Language and Cultural Violence: Dr Hastings Kamuzu Banda's Malawi, 1964-1994, 2010) in which he describes, unintentionally, the heterogeneous population of African settler tribes of pre-colonial and colonial Malawi. He further describes the enormous resistance mounted by the two major Northern tribes (Tumbuka and Ngoni) against the imposition of ChiNyanja/ChiChewa as the *Lingua Franca* for Malawi. Such resistance, he argues, consolidated the northerners’ identity around the common language of Tumbuka as opposed to the central and southern dwellers who spoke ChiNyanja/ChiChewa.

¹⁰ See cultural performances in Jeffrey Alexanders’ (The Strong Programme: Origins, achievements, and prospects, 2012) in Chapter one where he presents the successes and challenges of cultural theorizing from the perspective of the Strong Programme. Cultural performances draw from socio-historical contexts that enable as well as disable certain kinds of social action from occurring. This view adds weight to Alfred Schutz’s (The Phenomenology of the Social World, 1967) view that action, because it carries social content, is therefore loaded with the deliberate intention of making it recognizable to other actors.

legitimacy from the ever growing litany of narratives about one's commitment to nationalism or a national cause.¹¹ In a nutshell, social performances have in themselves only a minimalist commitment to the national cause but are backed by very compellingly spoken narratives and actions that stamp those performances with an overpowering *nationalist* legitimation.

It was from a closer examination of Chisiza's thinking, therefore, that a uniquely sociological view could be developed; that,

1. firstly, the euphoria following liberation can be seen as pacifying a people who just arose from a prior period in which their ways of life had been fundamentally disrupted and disregarded by selling them a very sentimental but vague narrative about nationhood and the very exact activities that should be performed in order to ascertain its realization;
2. secondly, as a result of a vaguely grasped notion of "we-ness" or "Africanness" that population allows the political liberator to also become the designator of what is an appropriate way of life; and that
3. lastly, this handing down of what is an appropriate way of life forms the basis for two conditions¹²,
 - i. firstly, the need for every member of that population to be *shown* how to live especially with regards to the well-being and direction of the new nation; and
 - ii. secondly, and subsequently, for that population to be pruned of the ability to resist and to question both in the name of submitting to a greater national goal.

These attitudes on the part of the populace are of necessity since the large part of their struggle towards independence was through the donation of their numerical volumes in various protest actions – actions that added a great amount of weight to the liberators' arguments and negotiations about the impossibility of sustaining a colony. This weight, however, is largely not seen in the eyes of the populace. The liberators too give it limited recognition.¹³ It is rather

¹¹ This sentence captures the key theme of this study and that is, via cultural hegemony and the deliberate constricting of discursive space by the political establishment, action content carries with it a visible *recognizability* even though that *recognizability* is not readily describable within the everyday lexicon or vocabulary. It is as if some action is crudely practical and not available for literal or verbal description; but more on this theme in this study's subsequent chapters.

¹² See also McCracken (Democracy and Nationalism in Historical Perspective: The Case of Malawi, p. 234) published in 1998 in which Malawi's first president, Banda, celebrates the "African hierarchical way of life" and seeks to enforce it as the basis for socio-political life in independent Malawi.

¹³ The position of this paragraph is derived from an article by Kalinga (Resistance, Politics of Protest and Mass Nationalism in Colonial Malawi, 1950 - 1960. A Reconsideration, 1996) in which, it can be concluded, that the

perceived by them, and the liberators did nothing to dispel it, that their numerical volumes in protest were but a minimal contribution towards the efforts already set in motion by *those who know best*, who were the liberators.

By extension, the vision of what would be attained following liberation or independence is by default ascribed as something that is only definitively known by the liberator. In which case, following the acquisition of the newly independent state, the liberator climbs to the status of the supreme knower of African culture (or way of life) as well as the expert on other ways of life lived by the other peoples of other places foreign.¹⁴ The liberator therefore logically becomes the designator of what is most *prudent* for that newly birthed nation.

In a nutshell, the three outlined conditions parallel reasonably with other sociological considerations about the origins of social domination, and how it is that domination is able to mask itself from being rightly seen as a force that very actively subordinates others while significantly elevating the status of yet others within one and the same society.¹⁵ In attempting to develop further a keenly sociological focus on societal-state evolution, or perhaps more appropriately, societal-state unfolding, this study thus sees the Malawi society as largely reducible to social performances. The study borrows concepts from the traditions of the Strong Programme and its cultural turn (Alexander & Smith, 2012); the hermeneutic phenomenology of Alfred Schutz (*The Phenomenology of the Social World*, 1967) and Dramaturgy and the

early activists largely articulated the suffering of the Nyasaland African people in words that eventually furthered their own interests primarily because of their ability to speak the languages of the governors (who control the State and its territory) and the governed (who just wanted change).

¹⁴ Again, H.K. Banda, A.J. Banda and D. Chisiza's quotes in McCracken (1998) are instructive. They depict a clear intention to formulate a contemporary African State which kept to the "positives" and rejected the "negative" attributes of Western and African political culture. Evidently, this designation of what is appropriate for the nation of Malawi could not be achieved systematically, and therefore it became a designation left to the mercy of the prominent liberationist leader.

¹⁵ For further readings on the "masked" processes of domination as espoused by Critical Theory, one can refer to anyone of the numerous introductory textbooks to social theory such as Adorno (*Introduction to Sociology*, 1993 [2000]), Elliot (*Contemporary Social Theory: An Introduction*, 2009), Harrington (*Modern Social Theory: An Introduction*, 2005) and Callinicos (*Social Theory: A Historical Introduction*, 1999) as well as the more sophisticated renditions of critical theory scholars such as Hehndahl (*From the Eclipse of Reason to Communicative Rationality and Beyond*, 2001), Koepnick (*Aesthetic Politics Today: Walter Benjamin and the Post-Fordist Culture*, 2001), Horkheimer (*Critical Theory: Selected Essays*, 2002), and Tompkins (*Post-Colonial Studies: Performing History's Unsettling*, 2007). A more detailed "phenomenological" and "cultural performances" angle of cultural hegemony and masked domination will be provided in subsequent chapters.

performative nature of public life by Goffman (The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life, 1999[1973]). The study attempts to present social action as conjured or inspired by intention but rendered or displayed by convention. Casting social action in this way also requires an attempt to consider the problem of researching intersubjectivity; after all conventionalizing intention in the context of other actors cannot be separated from intersubjectivity. Moreover, the epistemic considerations of African social theory, as writers such as Mbembe (African Modes of Self-Writing, 2001) and Mamdani (2001) shows, are particularly useful in demonstrating the formulations of culture and other social codes which effectively “*other*” others within the framework of social performances which are seen as the constituents of social action.

The first three assists the researcher to describe the social world of the everyday social actor, aiding the social conceptualization of the ontologies that would assist the researching and investigating of intersubjectivities and to some extent subjectivities themselves. The last one, amidst other African thinkers, assists in the conceptualizing of a phenomenological existence vastly constituted within the historical processes of African political dispensations. This last consideration is particularly helpful in writing about the African social actor as a differently equipped from the *modernist* actor who dominates much of western social theoretic thought.

1.2 A Preliminary Historical Overview of Malawi

Malawi attained its independence from Britain in 1964 following the intensification of the “pro-liberation” efforts of the Nyasaland African Congress (NAC) – later known as the Malawi Congress Party by 1959 (Kalinga, 1996). The efforts leading up to the eventual attainment of independence ranged from outright guerrilla tactics, to more modest grassroots mobilization alongside dialogue and negotiation with the colonial government.¹⁶ The former methods were characterized by very aggressive campaigns with the aim of invigorating locals to resist a majority of colonial government programmes (McCracken, 2002). The latter methods focused particularly on challenging the tenets of the colonial government as aided by arguments about the universality of human rights and dignity which became more and more typified with the desire to realize self-rule and self-determination (Tangri, 1986). Using the language of Mamdani (2001), the former represented the attempts of localized natives around administrative centres to break-free from the customary basis of colonial *in-direct* rule while the latter represented the efforts of natives to be recognized as citizens – that is as races rather than ethnicities – worthy of rights which were apparent under civil law which was enjoyed by non-natives.

¹⁶ See John McCracken’s The Ambiguities of Nationalism: Flax Musopole and the Northern Factor in Malawian Politics, c. 1956-1966 (2002).

As NAC membership grew, the sustainability of a colonial government in the Nyasaland region became increasingly undermined. Vast territories in the Northern Region (NR) of Nyasaland became largely ungovernable where people simply rejected the new agricultural methods of growing crops and refused to gather for various state organized community meetings championing good agricultural practises. In some instances, the cultivating fields were undressed or destroyed (McCracken, 2002). Furthermore, early attempts to impose ChiChewa as the national language were equally met with strong resistance in the North backed in part by the leadership of the Scottish missionary schools which had been established there¹⁷ (Mkandawire, 2010).

In other regions such as the South, riots began to occur such as the ones in the southern region district of Chikwawa following the detention of some chiefs by the colonial government (Kalinga, 1996). The increased incidences of outright resistance, and even civil unrest, are attributed by and large to the returning of young, educated African *nationalists* from abroad who were conversant enough with the local way of life to communicate and mobilize support effectively. At the same time, they showed a greater ability, as a result of their western education, to challenge the colonizers on their own terms (Kalinga, 1996). They were thus able to better channel the widespread discontent into a focused political weapon against the colonial establishment. Kalinga (1996), however, notes that these young nationalists did not carry a vision of independence that would address the circumstances of the majority of Africans, and that rather they carried visions consistent with their acquired tastes as young African professionals with economic and political ambitions which would best be achievable within the prevailing political economy. Thus, the political economic structure of Malawi after independence would remain largely unchanged.

After successes in the struggle to get African representatives in the District Councils as well as the Nyasaland Legislative Council, and then a period of just under two years in which the Nyasaland British Protectorate was governed with the assistance of an African prime-minister (PM), Nyasaland gained its political independence from the British government (Englund,

¹⁷ ChiChewa, as Mkandawire (2010) shows, was largely spoken peoples who lived in the central and southern region of Malawi as a lingua franca. The tribes of the north, notably the Tumbuka, Ngoni and the Tonga, communicated amongst themselves in the Tumbuka language and as such, saw the attempts to impose ChiChewa as the official language as the elevation of the Chewa tribe over themselves. It should be noted that the Scottish missionaries who saw the North as their region of the country took an opposing stance to the English who set up the colonial capital at Zomba in Southern Malawi.

2005). The leader installed for the *Presidency*¹⁸ was Hastings K. Banda, who had only recently served as PM, after he had been called back from his medical practise in Ghana to lead the NAC in 1957.¹⁹ However, within two weeks of ascending to the presidency, his cabinet revolted against him, citing his intolerance to criticism as well as his growing dictatorial tendencies as reasons for the rebellion (Baker, 2003). By this time, however, Banda had already consolidated sufficient power to conclusively suppress the “cabinet crisis”. He then proceeded to exile the majority of his former colleagues with some dying under mysterious circumstances (Forster, 1994). What followed after this brief rebellion was a three decade long authoritarian rule in which the Malawi State and all spheres of public and private life increasingly came under the domination of Banda and his Malawi Congress Party. In 1966, a new Constitution was passed and assented to by Banda, officially turning Malawi into a Republic, and therefore elevating Banda to both Head of Government and Head of State. A Bill of Rights was rejected and kept out of the 1966 Constitutional Act as rights were seen as benefitting only the privileged minority who had economic interests to preserve while halting rapid transformation for the afflicted majority who stood a real chance to gain substantially from affirmative State programmes. In 1971, another constitutional amendment was carried out in which Banda was made the Life-President of Malawi (Nkhata, In Press). All members of the Malawi Legislature from 1964 up until the referendum of 1993 were directly appointed by Banda without elections.

Come 1992, and with the publication of a Pastoral Letter (PL) written by the Bishops of the Roman Catholic Church in Malawi (RC) and read out in all its churches countrywide, Malawi saw increased and more focused public activity against the dictatorship. International pressure too was mounting mostly channelled through aid freeze-outs (Mitchell, 2002). Banda eventually accepted to pave way for a referendum in which Malawians would decide if indeed they wanted to have a multiparty system of government as opposed to the single-party rule they had lived under for some thirty years. The outcome of the ballot was in favour of *multipartyism* by 66%, and Malawi’s first general elections happened the following year.²⁰ A new constitution was also drafted and ratified in which human rights had been once more brought to the fore (Brown, 2004). Furthermore, the constitution spelt out an organization of government differentiated into

¹⁸ See footnote 19 below.

¹⁹ It should be noted that in actual practice, Banda remained Prime Minister of Malawi until 1966 when a new constitution turned Malawi into a Republic. Prior to this constitution, The Queen of England remained the Head of State while Banda was the Head of Government. Following its ratification, Banda then became both Head of State and Head of Government (Nkhata, In Press).

²⁰ See appendix for Malawi’s presidential electoral results from 1993 to 2004.

three main and co-equal branches, namely, the Executive, the Legislature and the Judiciary.²¹ Various other organs were also introduced through the new constitution such as the Malawi Human Rights Commission (MHRC) and the Office of the Ombudsman (Malawi Constitution, 1994 Act). However, as Nkhata (In Press) notes, the present constitutional order still maintains a bias towards the executive in which the president wields considerable powers over the state establishment.

This constitutionally championed organization of state came with it numerous promises as well as challenges, not only arising from the implementation of this new supreme law but primarily from the interpretation of that law following three decades in which a contrary political culture had been learned (Brown, 2004). In this study, this historical narrative of Malawi is expressed in a sociological framework so as to uncover from that history the sociological roots for this particular sort of Malawi's nation-statehood.

1.3 The Rationale and Structure of the Work

1.3.1 Rationale

The aim of the study is to attempt to understand how social forms lead to particular political outcomes. An extensive case collected out of the historical record of Malawi is used to illustrate the broad social movements at different historical times and the political conventions that accrued from such social moments or movements. However of particular interest is the *political* which is seen as emanating not merely out of the interplay amongst institutionalized conventions pertaining to organizational entities – but more sociologically, the human person(s) whose activities and intentions are what animate the organizations themselves into their specific activities. Africa, and particular to this study – Malawi, has sufficient evidence in its history that has necessitated this eventuality in which institutions seem to wear a humanely temperamental face as opposed to the more objective institutional orders seen in the Western societies of Europe for instance. Scholars such as Chinsinga (2006, 2008), Mandani (1996, 2001) and Mbembe (1993, 2001, 2005) present substantial evidence as well as arguments for the same in which varyingly they inquire into the problems of non-objective institutions, the African human actor and the lack of progress out of an apparently unsatisfactory state of affairs. However, a gap still exists – and that is, why is social action which is produced by African social actors allowed

²¹ It should be noted that the constitution was hurriedly drafted and ratified within four months. Upon completion it went through parliamentary scrutiny and presidential approval all within one day. See Nkhata's presentation of these events in his article in the "Oxford World Constitutions" (Introductory Note to Malawi, In Press).

to persist to sustain an undesirable status quo when the people themselves seem evidently incensed with that same status quo.

In this study, it is hoped that a lens that looks at social performances as imperatives for sociability or social competence will contribute towards an answer for this very difficult question. Africans – or Malawians – are seen as rational and at the same time, they are seen as participating in an elaborate social sphere in which a particular kind of competence is expected. This competence as well as its strong expectation is seen as emanating out of a previous period in which the different statuses ascribed upon Africans be they ethnic, regional or other denied them fair contestation over the valued things of the emerging capitalist societies brought on by the colonization project. However, as more breakthroughs were realized which enabled Africans the space to attain statuses that allowed them more participation in the staking of claims for society's valued things, acting *appropriately* became imperative so as to hold together a new dispensation of rampant reclamations. With such a view, the problematic of skewed institutions, antagonistic individual and group agencies, and the general political organization of the African society and state are recast in a light that makes them more comprehensible and meaningful – and more importantly redeemable in view of the efforts to better our lot on this continent.

Malawi is thus selected as a case study with a myriad of experiences from which many lessons could be drawn. Firstly it was a British colony from 1891 up until 1963. Secondly, it was an African-headed dictatorship from 1963 up until 1993. Then it became a democracy from 1994 onwards while maintaining certain cleavages of autocracy into around 1995-96 when judicial power seemed to rise to the fore of state and society business. Between 1995-96 and 2012, Malawi has oscillated between the extremes of democracy and autocracy most notably expressed not just in the high places of power such as the executive or the judiciary, but more interestingly even in the public spheres of daily interaction. These oscillations however and as will be seen were not random but rather rooted in a logic emanating from the sociability imperative which induced specific forms of social performance which made certain positions within that continuum the natural and most prudent equilibriums. These equilibriums – it is presented below – were almost entirely in view of the matrix of goals that various individuals and groups or sectors wanted to see realized aided by their sustained efforts to perform socially in a manner that ascertained their realization. This study is thus not concerned with the object qualities of social things or institutions but rather the social meaning of things.

1.3.2 Structure

As such, this dissertation will have the following structure. It will have a section dedicated to a detailed historical account of Malawi from when it first became a British protectorate in 1891, through its autocratic period after independence, and into the era of democracy. This will assist in developing the arguments that will be anchored from Malawi's particular historical processes. As such, the following parts of this historical section will be devoted to establishing the epistemic bases, out of that historical narrative, that fomented into the kind of State and Society Malawi was post-independence and into democracy. Consequently, such foundations or epistemic bases should lead us into pertinent discussions about an African Modernity vis-à-vis the African social actor within a social context brought about by a unique historical progression.

In the next section, the historical evidence as well as the epistemic basis developed from it will be used to further theoretically construct social life and society generally in the Malawian context. This will involve adding to the historical narrative a sociological rendering or reading that would develop the added platforms whereupon the society of Malawi becomes appreciated beyond the mere political descriptions that historical inquires often lead to. The sociological rendering therefore will be built from inquiring into what the basis of order is in Malawi, and how that order – which implies a cleaving to a status quo – is able to allow change without undermining itself. With this mode of inquiry, the broader matters of the intentionality of consciousness and what will be later called the politics of intersubjectivity will be brought into the discussion to lift the dissertation out of its political descriptions into a sociological enterprise of social theorization; the whole time bearing in mind that analysis is not about what would be seen as the objective reality of things such as laws and other institutions around which social life is organized but rather the social meaning or life of these things as they are perceived by Malawian actors. The implications of which will lead us to ask other interesting questions pertaining to research itself pertaining to how we can begin to see a way out of research bias while at the same accepting ourselves as members of the very entities we study.

The third and final section of this project will summarize the contributions made towards broader field of African social theorization culminating in a proposal of a sociological theory of Malawi defined within the limits of the social meanings and lives. It will also look into the pertinent limitations encountered by the study and propose ways through which they can be salvaged in order to arrive at more precise and accurate models which take on a similar approach to the sociological study of African States. Following which, a conclusion will be presented in which the core concerns of this work will be emphasized so as to refocus its sometimes broad

considerations back towards the core matter of the entire project. At times elaborate discussions are carried out – but these are for the limited intentions of theoretically constructing the Malawian lived experience or the world of perceptions. After Bibliographical items and appendices sections, the thesis will be closed.

2 History and Sociability

2.1 Introduction

In this section, a more detailed discussion of the socio-political history of Malawi since independence in 1964 is presented along with a sketch of Malawi's political scene as a colony before independence. However, the review places particular emphasis on particular periods whose events more explicitly illustrate points of departure for a more sociological rendition of the Malawi Society's unfolding over time. This is particularly because of the interesting question of why Malawi has followed a particular course of socio-political unfolding when alternatives throughout its history could have been found and followed. Especially when seen in light of the preliminary historical presentation of Malawi just provided, there seems to be a tendency to break out of one form of oppression only to reinstitute a different one at the next stage.

Of necessity to developing the argument for this study, this review also looks at the works of scholars in political science particularly in those works that grapple with the concepts of citizenship, nation and nationalism especially as they impact on sociability, and other broader societal and political matters. This is mostly because such concepts have largely been seen almost as ideals representing inherent attributes and qualities that need to be drawn and implanted into the African context to fix its anomalies; when in fact their real political and social implications stem more not from those ideological attributes but rather the historical contexts that spawn sets of social and political phenomena which only later came to be brandished under the banners of such concepts (see Mamdani, 2001).

Secondly, a detailed discussion is conducted towards developing the social theoretic positions from which a dynamic structural sociological view of Malawi is developed. The core matters under this section of the review are to show how this research arrived at epistemic positions that anchor the actual practise of conducting research, the approach that was adopted in the write-up of such a study's findings, and eventually why such findings should be considered as acceptable knowledge within the discipline of Sociology. Pushing this angle also requires an interrogation of what enables and facilitates sociability in Malawi. Sociability, because the unfolding of the State-Society which is essentially the question into which this study seeks to inquire, is thought to be animated into actual State-Society outcomes or results. In this connection, sociability in the Malawian context is shown in subsequent sections as an imperative from which the eventual conditions of State-Society originate. As a consequence of this, sociability as a notion thus invites a discussion into the question of intersubjectivity. This is because sociability – or the

commitment towards being socially able or competent – is inextricable from the notion of intersubjectivity which crudely is said to be the ability of people to pre-empt or anticipate the perceptions and subsequent actions of others in any social context.

Finally, this section closes having attempted to present the relationship between the place of history as the stock of social knowledge that informs sociability with reference to the processes of thought as a social feature which enables the individual to appropriate historical stock to an on-going social context; but the underwriting impetus for human activity is seen as emanating from consciousness whose feature, as social theoretic literature has largely agreed, is essentially *intentional*. This intentionality is because consciousness is always conscious of or toward something. From these preliminary sketches, a more in-depth discussion develops in the subsequent chapters of this study culminating in a brief characterization an African Modernity.

2.2 An Overview of the Socio-Political History of Malawi, 1964 to 2012

2.2.1 A Sketch of Nyasaland as a Colony

Prior to 1964, Malawi was a British colony as were others in Southern Africa such as Zimbabwe and Zambia. However, functionally, Malawi was largely a pool of labour for the mines and farms of Rhodesia (present day Zambia and Zimbabwe) and South Africa (Kaunda, 1995) at least up until the BCA territory which Malawi occupied became a protectorate in 1891.²² There was little intention by the colonial government prior to that time to either develop the colony's economic productive capacity or to integrate that territory under an expansive and adequately consolidated state. There were, therefore, minimal formal economic opportunities within the territory. However, after 1891 when the Nyasaland Protectorate was declared, the area saw a marked increase in State presence and organization over the protectorate, evidenced by the growing volume of State policies aimed at achieving very specific goals.²³ This presence manifested in the form of a sustained stifling of political participation due to a heavily centralized and growing European oriented State, which relegated locals to the activities of regulated small scale peasant farming, involuntarily “lending” of their labour to the emerging European owned tea and coffee estates, and to the continuation of the tendencies of looking external to the protectorate for economic employment opportunities (Chirwa, 1997).

²² After which estate owners, missionaries and various state functionaries began to decry the tendency of Malawian men to leave the protectorate in search of employment abroad; see Chirwa (1996).

²³ Such as the soil conservation and, forest and animal reserves policies; see McCracken (1970).

The centralized political system of Malawi during British rule became deliberately designed to complement and reinforce the colonial economy of Rhodesia. Malawi became part of the Rhodesia Federation in spite of bitter resistance from the locals through the Nyasaland African Congress (NAC), which was formed largely in reaction to this Federalization in 1944 albeit amongst the greater goals of one day achieving self-rule.²⁴ Rumours first surfaced in the mid-1940s about the colonial government's intention to consolidate Nyasaland into the Rhodesian Federation.²⁵ By 1953, when the Federation was established which saw an even greater expansion of the State mostly in terms of planning and policy coupled by a stronger stifling of the participation of the indigenous people in the State's political life, the State maintained a deliberate exclusionary stance towards African involvement in State politics while extending its capacity to engineer the social landscape so as to allow the Nyasaland government meet its obligations to the just instituted Federation (McCracken, 2002).

However, to sustain and ascertain the stability of such a mode of governance, modalities of indirect rule were implemented in which local chiefs were incorporated into the colonial governing structure (Kalinga, 1996) facilitating the formations of patronages, and ethnic and/or regional identity politics. The official core functions of these recruited chiefs was to oversee the collection of taxes for the colonial government and to serve as recognized community or village courts for the settlements of minor offenses and disputes that frequently arose within their jurisdictions.²⁶ Their unofficial functions, however, were to create localized intimacies with territorially defined natives who lived in the various administrative centres so as to mask the authoritarianism of the colonial State (see Berman, 1998: 312).

African civil servants were also hired into the colonial civil service. Their recruitment and upward mobility in the civil service and bureaucracy was limited to all capacities outside the decision-making posts that played pertinent roles in the furthering of the colonization and federalization projects, such as those of the provincial as well as district commissioners. This leads to the conclusion that their uptake into the colonial civil service was largely done to ensure that the colonial establishment had sufficient hands-on-deck to keep the government bureaucracy working while leaving little to no room for the expression and active representation of popular African opinion in as far as the design and implementation of government

²⁴ See Nkhata (In Press) An Introductory Note on Malawi.

²⁵ It should also be noted that the State is said to have significantly expanded in its functions as a result of the Federation, which enabled it to fund its programmes beyond its revenue levels within Nyasaland.

²⁶ Also seen in Kalinga (1996) and McCracken (1998, 2002).

programmes was concerned (see Kalinga, 1996). The political and economic objectives which were at the heart of the colonial programmes, and which informed the formulation of all colonial government policy positions, were all but beyond the input of the recruited African civil servant.²⁷ The presence of the African civil servants in the government bureaucracy, in other words, did not translate in the creation of a State that was more open to public or popular input. It perhaps served to induce the creation of new African tastes that corresponded with the features of State establishment and the political economy it reproduced over the colonial territory (Berman, 1998). Even the largely urban personalities who would form Nyasaland's organizations of resistance such as the NAC would not escape the lure of these new tastes.

The stances taken by the colonial federation states of Nyasaland and Rhodesia echo strongly the arguments given and sentiments explored in Scott's acclaimed book "Seeing Like a State... (c1998)". Throughout this publication, Scott demonstrates, with evidences from various parts of the world, how the default posture of governmental business is to achieve a schematic that enables it to easily administer its population and the resources with which its territory has been endowed. Likened to the arguments given for the Malawian case, evidence is given of how the German state disrupted customary methods of planting and caring for forests for more systematic and supposedly scientifically informed methods which allowed easier forest administration so as to suit its planning needs which were themselves spawned out of an interest to systematically grow a market economy. In France, he shows how the initial organic expansion of Paris was offset to impose a style of city planning that enabled governance efficiency by, amongst others, imposing wide and straight streets to facilitate troop-mobility to potential insurrection sites of the city, while adding other services such as water to various other parts as well.

Closer to Malawi, he mentions Ethiopia and Tanzania as countries whose governments sought to relocate huge proportions of their populations to suit agricultural and demographic schemas for engendering rapid development even though a deeper analysis into these State activities shows that the practical aims of these projects were to achieve a simplified model through which governance and administration could be easier carried out at least from the standpoint of the State (Scott, c1998). In all these examples, States through governments imposed a

²⁷ See Chinsinga (The Interface between Tradition and Modernity: The Struggle for Political Space at the Local Level in Malawi, 2006: pp. 257-258) for a rendition of how locals were taken up into the colonial establishment in order to mask, and, thereby further, subjugation and domination. So also Kalinga (1996) in his "Resistance, Politics of Protest..."

developmental model that not only allowed the roll-out of government programmes but also facilitated the creation of a basis whereupon governments more directly and efficiently governed various populations.

Scott's critique in conjunction with the historical record provided here for Malawi reveals the real underlying intentions for the political structure which was superimposed by the colonial State in Malawi. The Governor, who was the highest officer of the colony, presided over both the executive and legislative branches of government as their respective heads. The Governor directly made all appointments to all strategic positions of the colonial government at the National, Provincial, and Districts levels. Even the eventual inclusions of non-official African members to the Nyasaland Legislative Council in 1955 were the result of the Governor's direct involvement (Nkhata, In Press).²⁸ This overarching and heavily centralized concentration of State power in one individual bode well with the colonial objectives given to the governor by the British government as well as the new demands which would later be pressed upon him by the Federal Government of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. The centralization of power enabled the Governor to rapidly set-up a viable administrative centre within a colony by speedily stomping out resistance to foreign rule in the entire territory that would be under that centre's jurisdiction. However, these activities were to be carried out with the greater aim of developing the Nyasaland colony into a self-sustaining economic region which would further require the active formulation of plans and policies for income generation, such as the initial tax regimes for wage-labour which were later extended through the incorporation of the local chiefs, and the usage of free labour for agriculture production in the estates.²⁹ The three mentioned outcomes would address the economic viability imperative bestowed upon the Governor to achieve – but in order

²⁸ The Nyasaland Order in Council of 1907, arguably Malawi's first Constitution, cited in Nkhata (An Introductory Note on Malawi, In Press) outlines the Governor's powers. It must be noted also that this Order in Council spelt out the first official territorial boundaries of the Malawi/Nyasaland British Protectorate established in 1891 largely to deter the encroachment of other European colonial powers.

²⁹See Kalinga's (Resistance, Politics of Protest and Mass Nationalism in Colonial Malawi, 1950 - 1960. A Reconsideration, 1996) take on how the characteristics of the middle-income, educated African liberationist or nationalist resulted in a disconnect between his/her vision of a nationalized Nyasaland/Malawi and the actual plight of the people who were largely rural, uneducated, and therefore required a fundamentally different organization of State and economy to cater for their needs. He also articulates, in passing, the core objectives of the colonial government as outlined in the main text.

to achieve them, the colonizer had to construct a political architecture of power which eased the governance and administrative difficulties associated with realizing such a goal.³⁰

As such, the colonial government structure, and its network of personnel working at various authorities within its establishment, and within its paternal network of co-opted traditional African leadership, was designed for the implementation of top-down programmes handed down from the executive to all other organs of the state with the aim of socially engineering Malawi into an easier colony to govern in line with the programmes and projects that would be tied to the overarching colonization project. This design was not intended for the uptake, consideration and implementation of opinions of the governed beyond just the *politically prudent* functions of providing a mechanism through which foreign governance could be made feasible, political surveillance could be effective and patronage linkages for the State could be effectively cemented. And thus, the appointment practises in the colonial government only served to produce instrumental authorities (in the case of the European appointees) and puppet authorities (in the case of Africa appointees) within the government structure whose role was to further the objectives of the Nyasaland colonial project. Moreover, because of the relative success of the colonial government over vast periods of time in meeting its obligations, it may also have crystallized the idea that the most efficient form of government was one that was characterized by a strongman at the top, in the fashion of a heavy-handed British Governor; supported by that strongman's loyalists whose loyalty could only be truly ascertained via a system of direct appointments; supported by a *robotized* and unfeeling civil service whose role would be to *personnel* the establishment with the adequate hands and legs to keep it running – all this in conjunction with an extensive network of patronage.³¹

Perhaps more interesting is the likelihood of the colonial government having engrained the understanding that a State could be successfully maintained even within the contexts of resistance by the majority³² with the use of the various colonially learnt State schemes of

³⁰ This is what Scott (c1998) advances; that the business of governance seems to intrinsically require governments themselves to firstly construct governable categories of people and nature which they then go on to govern.

³¹ Elsewhere above in the introduction D. Chisiza's assertions that a strong and prominent leader – or a benevolent dictator – was necessary to foster the rapid realization of national goals were perhaps also learned from living under the colonial establishment.

³² These observations have also been made from noting several speeches and statements released by other prominent leaders of the NAC in response to the various activities of other native participants in the liberation struggles of Malawi. In general, the gist of the statements strongly render the message that government was the supreme authority in determining the direction a nation would take, and government therefore also reserved the

rewards and benefits, punishments and losses through the vehicle of governance and administrative systems which had successfully kept the African populations during colonialism politically dis-orchestrated and internally-antagonist while allowing those in power a clear view of what was transpiring on the ground aided by directly appointed persons and a heavily personalized State machinery.

As such all that needed to change was the *nationality* of the Governor, opting rather for an African whose will, it would later be *imposed* going into Independence (and as seen in Chisiza's considerations about the necessity of a benevolent dictator), was the true reflection of the interests and will of the entire African populace perhaps in a similar but more authoritarian manner as was the will of the European Governor a reflection of the interests and will of the European settlers in Nyasaland, and of his government in Britain. The identity politics of ethnicity and regionalism brought about by state patronage during colonialism would augment and fashion themselves around the authoritarian African leader and his State, culminating in the continuously *hidden prominence* of such politics of culture and identity as a central aspect of the post-colonial state after independence.³³

2.2.2 Malawi's Migrant Labour: Looking Backwards from the 1970s

It would also serve some importance to consider the effects that Malawi as a pool of migrant labour must have had on the emerging *collective* psyches of the Malawian people. It has been mentioned above that natives could either work on personal and/or estate farms, engage in various crafts within the village economies, or look externally for opportunities in [South] Rhodesia and South Africa.

Professor Chirwa of the University of Malawi has published extensively on this particular subject of Malawian/Nyasaland labour during and after the colonial period. The accounts for the remainder of this section pertaining to the outward orientation of Malawian labour are primarily drawn from two of his publications around this migrant labour issue.³⁴ Migrant labour in Malawi

right to channel, even by force, all activities within its boundaries towards its greater national goals. See McCracken (Democracy and Nationalism in Historical Perspective: The Case of Malawi, 1998, pp. 236, 240 and 247) for quotes of speeches made by Banda, Chipembere and Chisiza respectively to that effect.

³³ See for instance Berman (1998) but more on this will be discussed further below. The prominence of cultural and identity politics is presented under the banner of nationalism; it thus motivates political content but is borne as some other cause.

³⁴ Chirwa in "No TEBA... Forget TEBA": The Plight of Malawian Ex-Migrant Workers to South Africa, 1988-1994 (1997), and The Malawi Government and South African Labour Recruiters, 1974-92 (1996) indeed details the economic and social events that influenced the political decisions around migrant labour in Malawi after

was so extremely entrenched within the Malawian way of life to the extent that it required the government to make and reverse difficult economic decisions in the later 1960s and throughout the 1970s. For instance, Christiansen (1983: 312) notes that Malawi had been a net exporter of labour at least since 1900 up until the 1970s.³⁵ In 1977 for instance, 15% (some 333,000 workers) of the total active labour force of Malawi was abroad – or more significantly, that 10.3% of the entire population of Malawi (around 487,000 people) were abroad in 1972 (Christiansen, 1983: 319).

In his article *the Malawi Government and South African Labour Recruiters 1974-1992*, Chirwa (1996) demonstrates how increasingly problematic president Banda's establishment found the outward orientation of Malawian labour. The president himself, because of his interests in the Press conglomeration of companies (Press Corp)³⁶, sought to increase the labour available for recruitment into Press Corp estates. Using the aircraft crash of 1974 in which 74 migrant labourers died in Francistown (Botswana) as they returned from South Africa as a basis for detailing the negative effects of migrant labour, he suspended all labour recruitment programmes in Malawi that same year.³⁷ This was followed by a chorus of political songs composed by the Malawi Congress Party Women's League (MCPWL) who sang them at political rallies in the different districts that the president would visit for various State and Party functions. The songs poetically highlighted the *false* promises of migrant labour, its negative and detrimental impacts on society particularly families while championing that Malawian labourers would be better off focusing on farming either on their own pieces of family land or in the emerging estates.

The details for the suspension of recruitments in Malawi were later officially articulated by the Ministry of Labour. The Ministry noted in particular a document abbreviated VRG – short for Valid Re-Employment Guarantee – which was issued to Malawian miners at the discretion of

independence primarily from the 1970s onwards. However both accounts make reference to fact that the migrant labour which became an increasingly political issue in the latter 1960s had its origins in the colonial period. This also affirms Kaunda (1995) assertions about the “labour pool” function of Malawi for the Rhodesias and South Africa.

³⁵ This is due to the fact that no accurate records were kept by the State prior to this time since the Nyasaland Protectorate only came into existence in 1891, and its constitution in 1907.

³⁶ Press Corporations was a “public company” in which Banda held the majority shares on the *behalf* of the Malawian people. See Chirwa (*The Malawi Government and South African Labour Recruiters, 1974-92*, 1996, p. 630).

³⁷ Note that by this time, labor recruitment bureaus had been established in Malawi to which Malawian men could make applications to work in the South African mines. Such was the extent of the outward orientation of Malawian rural labor. See Chirwa (*The Malawi Government and South African Labour Recruiters, 1974-92*, 1996).

their mining employers in South Africa. This certificate was issued to an employee after they had completed 45 weeks of employment with a mining company; and had demonstrated good social behaviour in the workplace and the worker's hostels. The certificate guaranteed the employee of his job when he took leave in Malawi, and offered him a bonus if he returned early whilst promising relative upward mobility for those the company deemed to be career miners as their skills improved. The Ministry of Labour took particular issue with this certificate, stating that it was:

- a. tantamount to a bribe aimed at keeping Malawian labourers in South Africa,
- b. the basis for discrimination against new-comers to the labour force who were finding it increasingly difficult to find jobs in the South African mines as the numbers of those who held these certificates grew, and lastly
- c. disrupting the Malawian men's responsibilities to their wives and families because of its "early-returners" bonus clause.

Chirwa states emphatically that these arguments were not new. They had been made before in Malawi's colonial period in which an assortment of missionaries, white settlers, clergy and traditional leaders voiced similar criticisms against migrant labour (Chirwa, 1996: 633). Two particularly interesting criticisms levelled during the colonial period by the various critics were that migrant labour:

- a. Firstly, deprived women of the male labour they needed for agricultural productivity (even though the per capita hectares of land per family had already started to decline largely due to the displacement of natives to accommodate European estate owners).
- b. Secondly, that it contributed to moral decay as it tempted women who had to wait for long periods of time for their husbands to pursue extramarital affairs and even begin sex-work in the urban areas.

The essence of these criticisms was that migrant labour removed men from their duties as husbands to their wives and bread-winners for their families. In both cases, men had neglected their responsibilities due to their work obligations in the South African mines and had thus contributed directly towards the decay of the family, which was seen by government, as the basic social unit of the Malawian society (Chirwa, 1996). These were therefore the very same old...

"...arguments. They had been made before...but this time... they were the manifestations of attempts by an ultra-conservative State both to control women in the

name of championing their cause and to victimize men for the [trumped up] purpose of protecting their wives and families” (Chirwa, 1996, p. 633; words in parenthesis not in original text).

The decision to ban migrant labour recruitment however became even more complicated against the backdrop of the Oil Shock of the 1970’s as a result of the middle-eastern embargo which escalated Malawi’s transportation costs both for imports as well as exports alongside the constraints of its internal trade logistics. The demand for Malawian agricultural exports also declined in the oil importing countries of Africa such as Zambia for instance. Furthermore, the per capita acreage of arable land available to a family unit was declining largely due to the combined effect of the expansion of the estates as well as the rapid growth of Malawi’s population (see Christiansen, 1983 for figures).

The Mozambique conflict between the Portuguese colonial government and the guerrillas of the FRELIMO (Frente de Libertacio de Mocambique) movement contributed further to these social and economic problems. The conflict blocked Malawi’s shortest route to the ocean, contributing to an even higher escalation in transportation costs amidst an already widening trade deficit.³⁸ Real incomes plunged as estates failed to find external markets to sustain growth levels that would allow them to absorb the rapidly increasing labour force. Not surprisingly, unemployment levels increased and the Malawi Government grew concerned with the potential political instability that could emanate from such high levels of unemployment. Following a series of renegotiations with the South African government, the ban on labour recruitment was lifted in 1977 under a new agreement between the Malawi Ministry of Labour and the South African Chamber of Mines vis-à-vis South African government (Chirwa, 1996).

The point being made is that migrant labour had become an integral part of Malawian life especially as it provided the new Malawian nationals with livelihood sources whose origins were

³⁸ It must be noted that Banda had struck a pro-Portuguese political stance with the colonial government of Mozambique in order to facilitate Malawi’s interests in accessing the Indian Ocean through the Nacala Corridor to the Bierra Port in Mozambique. However, as the FRELIMO Guerillas gained more and more ground in their armed struggle against both the Portuguese colonial government and its sympathizing African movement called RENAMO (Resistencia Nacional Mocambicana) which was co-funded by the Apartheid Government of South Africa and the colonial governments of the Rhodesias, Malawi’s access to the Indian Ocean via the Mozambique territory became impossible. Malawi’s political and economic corporation with Apartheid South Africa was viewed negatively by the FRELIMO movement as well as other African States who saw Malawi’s contrary position as huge impediment towards the decolonization of Mozambique and other colonized territories. See also Chirambo (“Operation Bwezani”: The Army, Political Change, and Dr. Banda’s Hegemony in Malawi, 2004).

external to the designated territory of the Malawi nation. This is fundamental because perhaps it signals a dualism which would be consistent with some of the positions that will be taken further below – a dualism of nationalistic sentiment handed down by an authoritarian State establishment, on the one hand, and a *silent* apolitical commitment to individual enterprise as demonstrated by the continuous effort to find opportunity beyond just the Malawian territory, on the other.³⁹

Furthermore, Chirwa (1996) makes an interesting observation when he notes that back at the mines in South Africa, other Malawians had begun to complain when their colleagues who had gone back to Malawi on leave did not return for work. The exact regional or ethnic composition of the Malawian workers in South Africa is not detailed; however, from the evidence given by Christiansen (1982), it is safe to presume that the body of workers in South Africa was ethnically and regionally mixed⁴⁰, but the bite of their ethnic cleavages seemed defanged while in South Africa where the only identity likely to have mattered was one of Malawian citizenship. Posner (2004), studying the relations between the Chewa and Tumbuka of Zambia also makes a similar observation stating that because of the relatively smaller demographical sizes in relation to other ethnicities of Zambia and the population at large, the Chewa and Tumbuka of Zambia have not seen each other as rivals. Their counterparts, however, just beyond the Malawi-Zambia border in Malawi as a result of their huge demographic size in relation to other Malawian ethnicities and the Malawian population generally have developed and maintained strong political rivalry. These observations along with the arguments proposed by Berman (1998) add substance to the argument that Malawi's politics of ethnicity are perhaps sustained by and embedded in attempts to achieve, sever or maintain patron linkages with the State between various ethnic groups, and, as such could be modestly understood as bearing some reflection of political efforts to seize control of the State.⁴¹

However, these large scale manifestations of the politics of ethnic identity should also alert us to the silent commitment of the individual towards individual or personnel goals amidst strict authoritarianism. Ethnic cleavages are indeed clearly apparent on the broad national scale manifesting for example in the regional patterns of voting that are seen in present day

³⁹ This dualism, as will become clearer below, can for now be described as “Social Action” deliberately intended to communicate socially appropriate messages which are in this case in tandem with MCP's version of Nationalism while harboring the individual propensity to achieve goals that speak to very immediately personal ends. See below.

⁴⁰ In 1977, around 522, 726 Malawians had returned from abroad against a total population of 5, 547, 460 (Malawi Population Census, 1977: Final Report, 1980). Also see Christiansen (1982).

⁴¹ A more robust discussion providing more support for this position is detailed below.

democratic Malawi.⁴² At the individual level however, the tendency to be outwardly politically correct towards the State establishment could also denote a more inward egocentric strategy motivated by the quest to realize personal goals which may not always necessarily be motivated by the need to elevate one's region or ethnicity. This tendency of group aggregation and disaggregation is explored further below when this dissertation considers the problem of Malawian nationalism. From the discussion on Malawian nationalism, an argument is presented in which the holistic effect of numerous Malawian individuals seem to seek the placement of a set of standardizations through which ethnic cleavages or alliances could be undermined so as to further individual goals. However, during times of perceived intensified politics of identity – channelled through by a very nepotistic State – ethnic identity politics regroup and broadly contest for political space in that same State albeit under the guises of nationalism.⁴³

2.3 From Nyasaland to Contemporary Malawi

2.3.1 The Idea and Origins of Post-Colonial Malawian Nationalism

2.3.1.1 The Concept of Nationalism

There is on-going contestation within the scholarly enterprise of the political sciences as to how best to describe or define the concept of Nationalism, more particularly within the context of the Post-World War II period which saw the birth of several *nations* in the Sub-Saharan regions of Africa. These new incidences required a break from the traditionally held descriptions and definitions of nationalism largely borrowed from the European and American histories. It is important to note, even as Rotberg (1966: 34) argues, that the term nationalism itself only came to be affixed to and widely accepted within the processes of decolonization much later than when these pro-independence processes had first emerged in the colonies. However, that being said, it was widely held (upon Rotberg's own admission) that nationalism seemed to denote the

⁴² See Appendix under section 6.1 for the regional and ethnic voting patterns of Malawi from the 1993 Referendum Vote as well as the 1994 and 1999 Presidential and Parliamentary Elections.

⁴³ Again, an examination of the Appendix 6.1 illustrates how at the Referendum in 1994, all regions and thus ethnic groups voted in favour of a democratic government; yet in the following year, all regions voted overwhelmingly for a candidate from their region. In 2009, almost all regions voted contrary to regional patterns following a five year term in which the government was seen as promoting no sectorial over any other; but within 9 months of re-election, various tribes and regions saw themselves as being marginalized from the State culminating in the massive nation-wide demonstrations of July 2011. In the petition (also available in Appendix 6.3) that was presented to the President, Malawi was described as a Despotic Kleptocracy – a country whose government was led by power hungry individuals whose concern is to loot and plunder the establishment for the sole welfare of themselves and their friends and families at the expense of everyone else outside that circle.

functional outcomes following the political, economic as well as cultural conditions that were beginning to pervade in Africa, and which mirrored those of the European continent following the French and Industrial Revolutions.

The rise of nationalism, as conceived of and pertaining to the European model, obtained from the marked increases in populations, the higher volumes of commerce, as well as a critical saturation of ideologies which put pressures on the State. These pressures required the State to assume greater importance, and achieve greater levels of complexity within its functioning (Rotberg, 1966). The populations of States saw a remarkable rise in the differentiation of professions, the specialization of skills, the greater articulation of professional ranks, and other unique and newly emergent bureaucratic formations which generally came to be organized around the principle political authority of the State.⁴⁴ Rotberg summarily concludes by stating that, generally, the greater interdependence – accorded by the heightened specializations – transmuted itself into a greater sense of loyalty to, and resulting in the ever growing status of, the State. This assertion in sociological terms is tantamount to positing that the disaggregated, differentiated and largely culturally unaffiliated human person sought from the State the standards and regulations by which that human person could intermingle with others in predictable and stable modes and patterns – modes and patterns best expressed within what we could now term architectures of modernity.⁴⁵

This *functionalist* argument or presentation typically draws further weight for its position from inquiries into what are seen as the commonalities amongst European populations prior to the establishment of distinct *nationhoods* around a common State.⁴⁶ Some of these commonalities include the role of the Monarchies and the Churches which assisted in the creation of standardizations around which daily life via the organs of their regulating institutions came to be organized. Others include the common linguist traditions of, for instance, the German speaking ethnicities of that region of Europe (with the notable exceptions perhaps of European countries such as Switzerland) which awakened as sense of shared cultural heritage and collectiveness amongst those people (Rotberg, 1966). These two political and cultural conditions, either

⁴⁴ This summarized description of the social and economic factors can contribute to the well-articulated functions of the “modern” State can be seen in the writings of Historical Sociologists such as Philip Abrams (Historical Sociology, 1982)

⁴⁵ See Callinicos’ (1999) historical review of social theory and particularly how modernity as a condition is inextricably presented as the institutionalization of individual autonomy brought on by the enlightenment and scientific knowledge.

⁴⁶ See also Brass (Ethnicity and Nationalism, 1991) and Nodia (Nationalism and Democracy, 1994)

through the mechanisms of the regularizing standards set by the Churches or/and Monarchs, and the later revolutions against those same entities; the consolidation of a sense of common cultural heritages of people of common ancestry or close histories; or both, resulted in the formations of nations, governed by States which were overseen by a popular sense of shared stake in that State, its polity, economy and corresponding territory (Rotberg, 1966). This “we-ness” obtaining from those political and cultural conditions however came to be disbanded by the specializations and the resultant “organic” solidarities that emerged particularly with the birth of the modern metropolis.⁴⁷ It is as if to say that the primordial projects of cultural and political-economic integration were taken over and brought to a more stable form of nation-statehood by Durkheimian mechanical solidarities and Weberian legitimating structures of authority which defused much of the inherent problems of the earlier rudimentary forms of nation-statehood.⁴⁸

It should also be noted that the awakened popular mood, as evidenced above, towards the functioning of the State at its rudimentary and embryonic level, was already ripe to see the role of the State come to be largely a facilitating one in which the “promises” and “visions” of the revolutions and the disbanded cultural heritages taken over by “mechanical” solidarities would be protected and furthered. The State would assist the full development of these individualism “ideals” by allowing its citizens the freedoms necessary to achieve maximum individual productivity in the expanding commercial enterprises within its designated territory.⁴⁹ This condition is discussed in more detail further below and in subsequent chapters particularly as it helps demarcate the profound difference between modernization as an external societal condition as well as an internal structure of mind as opposed to modernization as an ontology,

⁴⁷ A similar polemic will be seen in Berman’s (1998) work as he presents arguments for the basis of post-colonial States after African countries attained independence.

⁴⁸ See Starr’s (1999) *The Structure of Max Weber’s Ethic of Responsibility* and Muller’s (1994) *Social Differentiation and Organic Solidarity: The “Division of Labor” Revisited* for a synthesis of certain implications of the works of Max Weber and Emile Durkheim on social cohesions or solidarities.

⁴⁹ This is essentially what any functionalist argument implies – that institutions or “states of order” come to be because they are of necessity and it is that necessity that causes them to come to be. See the introductory definitions and renditions of functionalist arguments in Macionis and Plummer (*Sociology: A Global Introduction*, 2012), Henslin (*Down-to-Earth Approach*, 2006) and Haralambos (*Sociology: Themes and Perspectives*, 2008). More sophisticated but still very distinctly functionalist descriptions of social and political analysis can be found in the works of authors such as Talcott Parsons (*The Evolution of Societies*, 1977) and Robert K. Merton (*Social Theory and Social Structure*, 1957). The teleology of the functionalistic argument is however largely still not transcended.

manifesting as any object or set of objects with their vast social and political inter-relations, upon a broad and contestable social landscape or Life World.⁵⁰

It should be noted that the functionalist angle seen in the analyses cited from the political sciences scholars will not lend a functionalist premise to this study. Its incorporation at this point is entirely to complement the social historical argument espoused by this study pertaining to the Sociological roots of nationalism, as well as the condition of the Malawian society and State as it is seen today. In subsequent chapters as this study develops the limited role of these arguments will become clearer to the effect that even these functionalist definitions and descriptions of nationalism as well as the conclusions that can be derived from them pertaining to the condition of society and State in Malawi will accordingly be recast as the outcomes of a dynamic structural sociological process rather than the mere outcomes of the “organic and mechanic solidarities” of the Malawi society and State.⁵¹

2.3.1.2 Origins of Nationalism in Nyasaland/Malawi

The geographical area of what later became the colony of Nyasaland was made up of several ethnicities, given to various traditions and forms of cultural life, who hardly shared much collective sentimentality towards each other with regard to what the various present cultural and geopolitical renditions of nationalism would denote (see Mkandawire, 2010). For the intents of this study, an account of the social typography of the Nyasaland “open-territory” prior to colonization is in order.

It has been found from the historical literature that pre-colonial Malawi was largely an open territory populated by various tribes and whose people felt affiliated and differentiated by their

⁵⁰ Alfred Schutz’s (The Phenomenology of the Social World, 1967) phenomenology for instance silently assumes that the recipes for social action are learned and therefore manifest themselves in actions, indeed with the assistance of a calculating, but simultaneously devoted mind to those recipes. This implies that social action, even within great variety, expresses itself as an “agency” awareness of societal order, and therefore further implies that individual consciousness, though intentional, is utmost the optimization and application of learned things. There is therefore linearity between social action, consciousness and societal order. Here, the study seeks to render the intentionality of consciousness as resourced by learned things but acting upon a social ontology or a field. Consciousness is thus the broad canvas from which action emanates, even though it becomes truncated into the narrow recipes that denote the social appropriateness of action. Action is there the performed conformity of a rebelling social actor.

⁵¹ See the sub-sections under the section below entitled “Social Theorizing the Sociology of the Malawi Society” in which the argument for a dynamic structural sociology will consider and attempt to escape the fatalistic-social determinism of the structuralist social theoretic traditions via the anchor of actions and cultural performances. Structuralist social theory can be read in Elliot (Contemporary Social Theory: An Introduction, 2009).

tribal roots (see Mkandawire, 2010; Langworthy 1970). Mkandawire notes an interesting point that the Yao tribesmen's coming into the southern parts of what is modern day Malawi denoted the onset of the period of the conquest and capture of weaker [ethnic or other] groups and the subsequent selling of those groups as slaves on the Eastern African coast (2010: 24). He further states that the arrival of the Ngonis later on from southern Africa threw southern Malawi into further turmoil because of their appetite for warring against and conquering other groups. Later, the Ngoni's would move north and settle next to the Tumbuka along the Dwanga River border which demarcated between the Tumbuka kingdom in what is now Northern Malawi and the Chewa Confederacy in what is now central Malawi (Mkandawire 2010: 24-25). The Malawi social terrain was therefore made up of tribes, with particular claims to specific territories, routinely involved in conflict as well as the formulation of inter-tribal treaties, but largely unaffiliated to one another in terms of what could be understood as a nation.

However, even though pre-colonial Malawi was an open landscape populated by various groups of tribes involved in various cultural, economic and political activities and exchanges (see also Langworthy, 1970), ethnic identities of that time ought not be mistakenly looked at as having been stable and fixed overtime. Nor should any specific tribes be understood as having consisted of homogenous groups, seamlessly and univocally bound by universally shared traditions and customs. Berman (*Ethnicity, Patronage and the African State*, 1998) delivers a powerful historical argument as to why to assume such would be erroneous. He describes how African societies prior to colonialism were already ridden with conflicts and tensions, and various processes of cultural invention and meaning-making that are common to all peoples and societies of the world. He asserts that ethnic identity in pre-colonial Africa was neither fixed nor was it stable overtime. Rather, ethnic identity shifted and aligned itself as the pre-colonial political situation unfolded. However with the onset of the colonial state – its political economy and its role in plugging the African continent to western capitalist economies – very strong Patron-Client linkages were formed between the state and various African groups. These patron-client linkages, around the demarcated administrative centres within the colonies, forged more or less stable forms of ethnic identities which came to be reinforced and politicized by the “political and economic” rewards that were administered to the State's clientele and the concurrent withholding of such rewards from the “others” that were less politically viable to the State. Ethnic consciousness therefore developed and crystallized into its more solid and enduring forms as a result of the intense contestations amidst the attempts to maintain or achieve the

status of a *State client* with those attempts to eliminate competitors under the banner of “*they-are-not-of-our-tribe*”⁵² and should therefore be excluded.

The coming of the British Central Africa (BCA) colonial administration, particularly after 1891 when the Nyasaland Protectorate was established, typified Malawi with the formation of a State which exercised expansive power over a given territory – a territory beyond which existed other Colonial States which correspondingly exercised control over those neighbouring territories.⁵³ The historically loosely affiliated African ethnicities or tribes of the now “closed” Nyasaland territory were provided a common referent, namely the Nyasaland Colonial State (Tangri, 1986). Through its administrative satellites in the colony, it developed patron-client relations with “ethnicities” which fell under the jurisdiction of those satellites’ territories, and administered rewards and punishments in its divide and rule posture. Kandawire (1980) in his article *Village Segmentation and Class formation in Southern Malawi* noted in passing – for this was not the primary concern of his publication – the very arbitrary divisions of groups of the same people into constituents of four nationalities namely Malawian, Mozambican, Zambian and Zimbabwean which rapidly transformed previously open territories into zones that then required travel documentation for crossing the instituted national borders. Furthermore, anthropologists and missionaries did their part in “classifying” various *mannerisms* and *temperaments* to be associated with different groups of Africans. Some of the classifications that have endured deep into the discourse of independent Malawi are of the “troublesome educated [Tumbuka] northerners” and the “timid Chewa” of the central region. At various levels, political and economic postures and activities of the colonial State constructed seemingly enduring identities.⁵⁴ Those identities that became the State’s clientele ascertained a measure of *better* treatment and those who did not sought to establish a basis towards that entitlement. Ethnic rivalries were hence created and became sustained in this way. According to Tangri, these

⁵² See Berman (1998, pp. 305-341) for a fuller account of how identities were constructed as a result of the divide and rule, political economy and capitalist modernization projects of colonial states.

⁵³ Nkhata (Introductory Note to Malawi, In Press) states that the formalization of the Nyasaland territory as a British Protectorate in 1891 and the subsequent adoption of the Nyasaland Order of Council was largely down to deter the encroachment of other colonial powers in that region such as the Germans in the present day Tanzania and the Portuguese in present day Mozambique. The point being the referent of the State was seen by natives as it organized the lives of other natives who were designated under their colonial authorities and then eventually in their own lives as the Nyasaland State assumed a more formal organization after 1891. Either way, the “we-ness” was spawned.

⁵⁴ See also Lwanda (2006) Kwacha: The Violence of Money in Malawi’s Politics, 1954-2004, pp. 525-544

antagonistic tendencies of the State became increasingly pervasive and far-reaching in their impact on numerous native ways of life of the Nyasaland colony.⁵⁵

In subsequent years, the narrative of the colonial African became an increasingly ambivalent one. Increasingly and continuously the narrative became punctuated by the on-going efforts to re-calibrate the *Nyasaland African's* relationship with the State through the central government and the efforts aimed at re-negotiating the *ethnic African's* relationship with the decentralized State in the administrative satellites (Tangri, 1986: 143). These efforts at re-calibrating that relationship arguably emanated from the expectation that a favourable change in these relationships would automatically translate in a correspondingly favourable change in the living conditions of [the concerned] Africans.⁵⁶ These ongoing efforts of re-calibration were therefore in this study's view the early building blocks of the localized "we-nesses" brought about by the presence of the satellite administrative centres of the common authority referent.⁵⁷ But concurrently, they were also the building blocks of a broad collectivization of Nyasalanders as nationals. These colonial national and local centres not only *helped* better articulate the collective Nyasaland African's shared subordinate position with other natives of the Nyasaland territory, but more fundamentally, as Berman puts it, they also differentiated Africans into varying strata of power and wealth within the colonial political economy, as they varied the exercise of their control and power over the particular territory along with all of the various inhabitants of that territory (Berman, 1998: 312-317). The Nyasaland African was, therefore, recruited into a "game" in which the State, its total geographical territory, its areas of decentralized satellite jurisdictions, and the fluid and shifting nature of that African's identity (as a native national vis-à-vis a member of an ethnic identity) became the immediate stakes.

At the national level, the implementation of programmes by the State to oversee activities such as the agricultural practises of the natives (in the south, central and northern provinces), the collection of taxes, the establishment of national forest and animal reserves, and the

⁵⁵ For instance, the State began to implement and enforce policies for forestry and game reserves, and demarcate which land could be used for cultivation and with what agricultural practices and so on (See McCracken, *Experts and Expertise in Malawi*, 1982).

⁵⁶ See McCracken (1982) for a fuller appreciation of just how pervasive the State had become to native ways of life as he describes the role of various European *experts* in the formulation of policies that often caused disruptions in the native ways of life and thus were faced with resistance from time to time.

⁵⁷ Indeed Mamdani (2001) argues along similar lines demonstrating how clientelism endures even to this day within an array or myriad of relations amongst those who become citizens and those who become subjects in post-colonial Africa. However, the vision of citizenship proposed in this dissertation becomes clearer in its subsequent sections.

incorporation of the chiefs into the tax collection regime were experienced collectively as domination and control in which the activities of *all natives* became actively sanctioned and regulated by the State. However, at the regional, district and local community levels, through the territorial jurisdictions of the decentred colonial governments and particularly with the State's recognition of certain traditional authorities as legitimate instruments of indirect-rule, patron-client links were forged around territorially identifiable groupings of natives (Berman, 1998). At these decentred levels, where the circumstances were favourable, natives sided with the authorities and resisted the efforts of "others" to challenge the statuses-quo,⁵⁸ thereby simultaneously resisting a collective sentiment which could be brought about by joining forces with "other" Nyasalanders by further entrenching their collective domination in the pursuit of preserving a patronage with an administrative satellite. The mechanism of these ambivalent postures however continued to be rooted and experienced strictly in the terms of politics of ethnic identities.

Thus, the impact of the authoritarian colonial state albeit felt collectively was defused by the relative levels of opportunity and domination experienced from the perspectives of colonially constructed groups be they ethnic or regional or any other.⁵⁹ While colonialism at the national level was not administered on the basis of some grand criteria of differentiated African individuals or groups but rather as a deliberate stance towards an aggregated collective of native Nyasaland Africans, in its decentralized satellites it facilitated the formations of politicized ethnic identities anchored around decentralized State patronages.

Berman proceeds to present the argument that due to the rise of modest industrialization in the urban centres of the colonies, such as Harare (in Zimbabwe), Lusaka (in Zambia) or Blantyre (in Malawi) for instance, job seekers left the patron-client infested satellites in search of wage labour opportunities in the factories and industries. This observation also asserts silently that patronage was therefore inherently political, and discharged with an emphasis to mask

⁵⁸ See footnote 59 below.

⁵⁹ Mkandawire (2010: 25-28) seems to suggest that the Tumbuka and Ngoni people in the north of Malawi had come to forge a common identity through the use of their native and learned language of ChiTumbuka respectively and their more favourable unions with the Scottish missionaries of the North who provided them with good education and access to work opportunities within their missionary and governance structures. He seems to arrive at this conclusion by highlighting the united resistance against the usage of ChiChewa as the official colonial language that the colonial State was trying to implement. Perhaps other such regional identities were beginning to emerge elsewhere in the South for instance where the State's agricultural policies were particularly pervasive (McCraken, 1982).

domination. This is what would explain the limited opportunities and the mass influxes into the growing urban centres for apolitical occupations. However, Berman argues that this incidence of *proletarian-ism* instigated the first seeds of conservative nationalistic sentiment stemming from the emergence of individualized proletarian Africans who had broken free from the patronages of the agrarian-solidarities of the satellite regions prior to these African metropolises. His claim is based on his observation of the conservative nature of African nationalism – that it depicts a duality of the African’s concurrent needs to remain connected to the modernistic order of business in the metropolises (capitalism) while hoping for a change in the political personnel at the helm of that capitalism translating in a better political arrangement for that individual African. This rendition – in sociological language – speaks of an awakening of the African and his/her turn towards a more institutionally [or apolitically] embedded society. While the argument is compelling, this study prefers to push a slightly different argument albeit it towards a somewhat similar conclusion.

The alternative argument proposed is as follows. Nationalistic sentiment, which was indeed conservative, arose from the promise of controlling the state itself as it had been constructed and presented to Africans as a supremely powerful entity of control as well as a very viable source of personal and group benefits. Indeed within the context of proliferated and highly politicized ethnic identities, the state represented a readily available vehicle of furthering the interests of some select groups while suppressing the aspiration of other groups seeking that same State entity – after all, ethnic hostilities had by now been fully entrenched. Further evidence for this kind of argument is quite prevalent in contemporary Malawi’s regionally embedded voting patterns that illustrate that even the democratic practise of casting a vote still gives-away the political desire of ethnic or regional groups to control the State establishment (see appendix for Malawi’s voting patterns). Further below in this dissertation, it is seen that in instances where the State has shed its ethnic cleavages for more non-ethnic or non-regional postures in its running, the Malawian collective has emerged and voted overwhelmingly in favour of that particular State, temporarily overcoming the ethnic cleavages of the electoral process.⁶⁰ The emergence of industry, as proposed by Berman, is therefore an insufficient one on its own to have ushered in corner-to-corner nationalism amidst politicized and politically constructed

⁶⁰ See Malawi Electoral Commission (MEC) Presidential election results of 2009 at <http://www.mec.org.mw/Elections/2009ResultsReports/tabid/98/Default.aspx> in which Malawi voted for the first time across regional and ethnic cleavages. President Mutharika won convincingly in the Chewa stronghold districts of Kasungu and Lilongwe, even Dedza, and much of the entire Northern Region (NR).

ethnic identities. A further element in the form of ambitions to seize the State was equally essential.

The shared domination therefore was adequate to have inspired a broad nationalist sentiment of Africans even amidst the politicized ethnic identities at the decentred levels. The rise of such sentiments carried within them the descriptions evident in the numerous definitions of what nationalism today implies. Further below in this same section, the salient assumptions carried by definitions of nationalism will be appraised so that the sociological processes involved in nationalist processes can be given their due regard. However, for the time being, the most prominent features of nationhood developing in relation to a State as derived from the political science literature would designate Nyasalanders as having been:

- a. Organized politically, socially and economically around a common principle referent of power namely, the Colonial State
- b. Designated under that principle referent of power within a distinct geographical territory, outside which the referent's power collapsed, and evidently succumbed to the emergence of yet another power that was the principle one in that other territory,
- c. Designated under a common economy from which lay the stake of their material livelihood; and overtime
- d. Brought them to share a common thread of a collective history produced by the familiar conditions brought about by the common referent exercising its influence over Nyasalanders of a now distinct and "collectively" shared territory.⁶¹

These four features describe the most telling aspects of the various *nation* definitions in contemporary political science (Barrington, 1997). More profoundly, however, the following observations below can be made from the conditions listed above. The observations illustrate the now clearly visible stake that the Nyasaland African, who was now beginning to aspire towards political emancipation, had in the colonial State and its territory. The Nyasaland African began to see that:

⁶¹ See some definitions of "Nation" in the authors Smith (Nationa Identity, 1991), Tamir (The Enigma of Nationalism, 1995), Nodia (Nationalism and Democracy, 1994), and Barrington ("Nation" and "Nationalism": The Misuse of the Key Concepts in Political Science, 1997). Also, see Migdal (2001: 16) where the territorial and monopoly of power aspects of the state for their definition of the State.

- a. control over the colony could perhaps *only* be administered through the vehicle of the State which organized not only the political arrangements of the Nyasaland territory but consequently its social and economic arrangements as well;
- b. beyond the colonial boundaries where *other* Africans who were subjected to the requirements of their own states, and, therefore, whose struggle was in achieving better conditions under that other state's territory. This *othering* due to the territorial boundaries served to develop a "collective" within a concerned State (in this case Nyasaland) that was similar in its content but "*territorially*" distinct from the other African collectives who were now seen as dealing with struggles outside the Nyasaland territory. Thus, the native *Nyasalanders*' stake became inextricable from a strong vested interest in matters happening within the Nyasaland boundaries; and,
- c. therefore, that better social, economic and political conditions within Nyasaland as facilitated by the State would be translated into better conditions for the Nyasalanders, distinct and separate from the others outside that territory;
- d. Lastly, that their history, in spite of the ethnic and tribal heterogeneity and rivalry, was now primarily defined by their common position, socially, economically and politically, in relation to, and as a result of, the Colonial State.⁶²

It can also be argued that patron-client links further escalated these nationalist ambitions perhaps in at least two ways. Firstly, the client could have begun to aspire to become the patron. And secondly, that the "other" non-clients of the patron-client link between state and various clients could have by default resorted to *nationalism* because in it was the potential to abolish the "outsider" position that they now had been accorded in relation to the State. It can be said therefore that the seizure of the state was therefore a set of "ethnocentric endeavours" masqueraded as collective nationalistic sentiment.

In as far as this nationalistic sentiment is concerned, it is therefore not surprising that when rumour in the early to mid-1940s began to circulate the colony about the intention to consolidate the North and South Rhodesias with the Nyasaland territory under a common Federation, African leaders (of the NAC) implored the Throne of England to exercise its powers to protect the territorial integrity of the Nyasaland colony from all enemies within and without.⁶³ In

⁶² The observations are listed in a corresponding manner to the previous list above. See also Midgal (2001) *State in Society*, pp. 3-40.

⁶³ The enemy from within as evidenced by the intention of the Nyasaland Governor to undermine the Nyasaland territorial integrity by fusing it with the territories of North and South Rhodesia (McCracken, 1998)

another instance, Hastings K. Banda, from his medical practise in Britain, would implore NAC leaders to challenge the establishment for better conditions for the African person within the Constitutional Law of Nyasaland, and only default to efforts outside that law when it became clear that the legal attempts were bearing no fruit (McCracken, 1998).⁶⁴

These two illustrations are crucial because they denote a developed sense-in-kind of Nyasaland African collectivism within distinct geopolitical boundaries, organized by a single and widely recognized principle authority – albeit largely populated by an unwanted personnel – and articulated as an aspiration towards better relationships between themselves and that principle authority. This collectivism was neither articulated in a call for the outright overthrow of the State nor was it loaded with a widespread corner-to-corner ideology, but rather it became an intention to re-organize that State to accommodate Africans – motivated by a diversity of political interests – within the Nyasaland borders. It should be noted that the agenda for independence did not generate discourses associated with the return to a pre-State society as was the case before the Nyasaland territory was colonized, but rather it bred discourses pertaining to self-determination via the seizure of the State and the subsequent control of its territory. The aim was therefore not to overthrow the State per se, but to vacate its unwanted personnel. In fact, later on after independence, H.K. Banda, the president of Malawi, openly stated that he would not *nationalize* personnel just for the sake of nationalization. Rather he would only nationalize when African competence to run those offices or capacities was available. In this scenario, he is acknowledges the importance of the State and its function to the extent that even he, a staunch nationalist, would not be willing to undermine the State and those functions just for the sake of nationalization – rather, Africans had to wait until their skills had been adequately built up.

The NAC's unsuccessful campaign⁶⁵ against the consolidation of Nyasaland with the Rhodesias also demonstrates that, by this time, an “awareness” of the Nyasaland people of the Nyasaland territory as their rightful homeland. Thus, from the imposition of a foreign institution of control therefore came some of the first seeds of the idea of nation-statehood stemming from a fluid sense of “we-ness”. From that “we-ness” came the activities and efforts that have today come to be labelled under the broad term of *Nationalism* – which describes “the condition of on-going

⁶⁴ This request by H.K. Banda is interesting because it also brings to light the thinking that the State was perhaps not the problem but rather the faces or races behind that State who enacted laws that did not suit the African populace. That point illustrates further that, by now, that State as an incontestable feature of society has been accepted, and that what distinguished Nyasaland peoples from other peoples was the existence of this centre of administration which had control over their distinct territory.

⁶⁵ Nyasaland became a part of the Rhodesian Federation in 1953 (Nkhata, In Press).

processes, spurred on by the acquisition of a *we-consciousness*, ultimately manifesting themselves and their outcomes as the intentional endeavours to gain control over a defined territory seen collectively as a homeland” (Brass, 1991). This definition to an extent bodes well with this dissertation’s historically based argument of Malawi’s nationalism in as far as it acknowledges the fomenting of a general mood and its subsequent content towards the acquisition of a colonial State. It is however lacking in as far as capturing those efforts that are spurred on by specifically ethnocentric interests, which unwittingly contribute to the mood towards nation-statehood. This is primarily because the definition is retrospectively appropriated upon a political condition after its attributes and characteristics are already borrowed from other earlier nations such as those of Europe for instance.

As such, the nationalist mood, especially within the context of colonialism, as Motyl’s (1992) argument suggests, stems from ideas about nation-Statehood that must derive from the State itself, or that such ideas must come to the fore primarily because of the presence of the State. This is particularly persuasive when one considers that there were no prior States before the colonial State from which such ideas about nation-Statehood – as it is understood and more importantly practiced today – as a concept of governance expressed within territories, organized around central principle authorities, and so on, could have been derived even from within the contexts of tribal empires and alliances such as those mentioned by Mkandawire (2010). But to accept that nationalism is merely the content of sentiment drawn from a “we-consciousness” is to unwarrantedly, in as far as the sociology of this study is concerned, bestow upon people the mantle of being the complete authors and conscious determinants of their nation-statehood and its subsequent societal processes. This is erroneous for the simple and timeless sociological position that society and its processes are not and cannot be entirely comprehended by social agents (human beings).⁶⁶ As human beings, we do in fact make decisions to act within social contexts but we lack the capacity to fully understand all potential ramifications that crop out of our actions. The vaguely grasped ramifications however are part and parcel of the societal unfolding process. Later, even the methodology of this study gives due regard to this and attempts to demonstrate how knowledge can still be generated from within such a limiting reality.

⁶⁶ As seen in Foucault (The Order of Things, 1966), Giddens (The Constitution of Society, 1984), and Bourdieu (The Logic of Practise, 1980). These prominent social theorists and philosophers show very clearly within their writings the human person’s limited knowledge, and unwitting participation in social processes that in some instances are to that person’s own detriment.

Nationalism, as observed from the manner in which political science debates are primed, describes what political characteristics exactly constitute nationalist processes⁶⁷ (Rotberg, 1966). As earlier mentioned, to do such would be to bestow upon people with the fallacious capacity of being the knowers of the totality of their society as well as the exact consequences of every set of actions they take. Rather than take such a flawed assumption, this study gives due regard to the sociological conditions that then develop into the historical processes involved, the subsequent ideas that activate those historical processes into seemingly concerted activities and efforts, and the eventual outcomes emanating from such processes in the building of nation-statehood. The definition of nationalism given above therefore provided the groundwork only for the conscious aspect, but left out an account of those inherent societal modalities that accrue even from actions and intentions that could have been geared towards alternative outcomes, such as the drive to preserve ethnic patronage linkages or to acquire them – that is, the “ethnocentric” efforts that unwittingly contributed towards processes of nationalism. Malawi as it is understood and appreciated today as abiding by several of the characteristics that describe statehood is the outcome of all those socio-political processes, collectively intentional or unintentional, that caused its formation. It is therefore imperative that these be adopted into an account that seeks to understand the birth of that brand of Malawian nationalism.

2.3.1.3 From Ideological Roots to the Practise of Nationalism

The ideological roots of the nationalist movement in Malawi can be seen as having accrued, on one hand, from the experiences of the natives of the Nyasaland territory, as those experiences transformed the native population into a markedly distinct one from other neighbouring African populations. On the other hand, the contestations amidst ethnic identity politics for the acquisition of State power through patronage at first and the seizure of the State later unwittingly contribute towards nationalism as well. The argument for this case has already been presented above. However, moving from the mere acquisition of the “collectivism” towards the implementation of a particular kind of Nationalism such as the one seen in Malawi requires further consideration.

⁶⁷ It must further be noted that the “process” aspect of the nationalism definition is only implied and narrated as a condition of any given state of nationalism by some scholars. Further below, following more rigorous efforts to refine the concept, the notion of efforts as processes emerges as a key feature of nationalism – a condition characterized by continuous actions towards attaining or/and sustaining the *pillars* of a nation – those pillars, give or take one or two more aspects, are largely the four already outlined the section “Origins of Nationalism in Nyasaland/Malawi” above.

The particular kind of nationalist impulse that characterized Malawi after independence has its roots in the way the national awareness became actuated into specific efforts towards the realization of specific goals and anticipated outcomes of the nationalistic project. It has already been alluded, for instance, that the relationship between the native Nyasalanders and the colonial State was the object of on-going efforts to re-calibrate it at whatever level and inspired by divergent motives. These efforts perhaps were more isolated at the onset of colonial rule and started to seem more collaborative as colonialism grew stronger and more pronounced (McCracken, 2002). The histories of the various Nyasalanders came to be ordered by and around the social, economic and political arrangements brought about by the colonial State, turning them into legitimating narratives about the positions of various Nyasalanders in relation to power (see Tangri, 1986). This rendition of the very complex processes that eventually produced *nationalism* is deliberate especially within the ethnic, tribal, racial and other socio-political heterogeneities of the Nyasaland social topography.⁶⁸ Furthermore, one cannot ignore the effect of the Nyasaland African Congress after its formation in 1944, which brought into the political context a seemingly non-ethnic and non-regional body led by *western educated* and arguably *elitist* Africans some of whom worked as civil servants within the state bureaucracy itself. Lwanda (2006) provides a very detailed account of how the NAC in attempting to meet its “liberation objectives” progressively and increasingly developed networks of patronage throughout the country firstly by appealing for voluntary donations and then later by reverting to coercive means, and yet still maintaining widespread support. What is particularly interesting about Lwanda’s presentation is that as the NAC appealed to more Africans, and achieved various strategic victories such as a majority in the Nyasaland Legislative Council in 1961, patronages increased as various actors envisaged returns on their *investments* upon NAC’s ascension to power.

It is important to re-emphasize the central and decentralized centres of state power and how they interfaced with the various political identities of Africans during that period, and secondly the fact that the NAC’s non-ethnic and non-regional *feel* had rendered identity politics as irrelevant in seeking patronage with it – its patronage being necessarily secured through donations from anyone for efforts to be carried out on behalf of the African whole. In the first case, the central and decentred centres of state power antagonized the political ethnic identities culminating in an effect that seemed like a joint and orchestrated resistance to the establishment – that is, a general state of political and economic discontent; while in the latter case, the non-identity politics angle

⁶⁸ A picture of these complexities is already presented in the previous section about the Origins of Nationalism.

of the NAC dissolved the constructed ethnic cleavages of this colonial period as a basis for interacting with the NAC albeit by forming an alternative economically embedded political identity against the colonial establishment. This newer identity rooted in the giving of donations to the NAC, a less ascribed and a more individually determined status than ethnic or regional identities, was more compatible with the African general discontent, which priority was already manifesting in resistances and patronages to the State at its various levels;⁶⁹ intentionally and unintentionally translating in the unfolding of a specific direction of Malawian socio-political history. After independence, however, McCracken (2002), Lwanda (2006) and Mkandawire (2010) recognize that state efforts overtly directed towards ethnic and regional criteria – distinctions which had largely remained blanketed under the narrative of liberating themselves from “the common colonial enemy” – re-emerged markedly.

This ethnic or regional State targeting was carried out largely from beneath the veil of the very sentimental message of nationalism, a term that had now become the subject of the relentless efforts of the political elite to define and control. Nationalism was now, on the one hand, construed as the concerted and consolidated efforts of building a nation especially via the vehicle of government or the State more generally,⁷⁰ even at the expense of certain individual privileges.⁷¹ This view is widely carried within Malawi even today in government’s policy documentation, as well as in the public speeches made by Malawi’s leadership from time to time. Institutionally, the State and its various office bearers must demonstrate a level of commitment towards nation-statehood⁷² – the standards for such demonstrations are not stipulated but they are embedded in Malawi’s political history, making these demonstrations therefore instruments towards political goals. On the other hand, however, nationalism was also rendered as a process that required establishing and enforcing an unfettering loyalty to the “nation” in order to arrive at a “good” society. This second aspect was particularly powerful, and

⁶⁹ Though Lwanda’s account is primarily an economics analysis of the historical trajectory of Malawi’s political process, it perhaps without the author’s intentions does not undermine the political outcomes spurred on by actions intended at completely different outcomes.

⁷⁰ See Chisiza (1963) and others such as Sangala and Chipembere (prominent leaders of the NAC) quoted in McCracken (1998) expressing their unreserved comments on the need for all other “movements such as unions” to submit or be subordinate to the *Congress* – the nationalist movement – in the interest of the Nation.

⁷¹ See 1966 Constitutional Act quoted in Nkhata (In Press); the bill of rights is rejected supposed in view of fostering a stronger executive and therefore more rapid social and economic development.

⁷² The point being made here is that State policy, no matter how distilled and professional it is, carries learned socio-historical practices which allow it to be acceptable and legitimate; and therefore the State and its office-bearers are an elaborate performance. This aspect will become more apparent in the subsequent sections.

sociologically critical,⁷³ at least for this stage of the analysis. This is because it heightened a sense of individual obligation towards a generalized but largely alienated other, and placed the state as the champion of the *collective cause* of the *generalized citizenry* and not of the *individual citizen*. This condition will be the central focus of this discussion. Furthermore, it will complement the already inherent dialectic of “individual-centrism” and “ethnocentrism”, vis-à-vis “nationalism” carried over from colonial times.

Firstly, the power of this second construal emanated right from the politicized heterogeneity of the Malawi population. At Independence, the political rhetoric about nationalism as aided by the official State virtues of unity, obedience, loyalty and discipline was rife.⁷⁴ However, the political and economic ambitions of various political identities were still very much within the reach of the public “imagination”. An added category to the list of identities was perhaps that of citizenship. This identity however was tied to the four listed virtues of independent Malawi and therefore construed citizenship to the nation-statehood of Malawi as a submission to State values that were being championed by the political leadership. This further blanketed regional and ethnic political identities; silencing or masking them under the more nationalistic sentiments of Malawian citizenship⁷⁵ (again Mkandawire’s (2010) “regional identity around language” is suggestive). The State, therefore continued to be seen through the lens of how it related, and what it promised, to one’s ethnic or regional identity, even though the ability to speak about such matters (real or imagined) had been removed through the one-party authoritarian rule. To this day, this lens still manifests – as it did at independence – as a very fluid and highly ethnically or regionally charged “social and political” critique of the establishment, guided in principle by how positively or negatively various State stances on different matters affect one’s ethnic or regional identity – impeding or enhancing the supposed immutable and unbridgeable privileges and rights of citizenship – even though the political space to speak about these matters has remarkably increased relative to the era prior to democratization.

⁷³ That is, it was hegemonizing and the basis of authoritarianism as it instrumentalized ethnic hostilities into modes of control and surveillance.

⁷⁴ Unity, Discipline, Loyalty and Obedience were the MCP proposed pillars for building the Malawi nation after independence, see Lwanda (2006).

⁷⁵ Another way of looking at it is that many saw their associations, ethnic or tribal, as significant factors of their roles as citizens of the Malawi State. That is these associations mattered in the formulation of one’s citizenship. This is easily inferred from how the “nation” concept is still even at this period very vague and yet it requires citizens to make real sacrifices for the sustenance of that vague vision. The ideal Malawi is thus made up within that vagueness of ethnic and tribal aspirations, arbitrarily actuated and/or dismissed by the State, in the passage towards the acquisition of an ideal nation.

The strongest albeit *crudest* evidences for these *fluid and highly charged ethnic/regional political identities* are found in the voting patterns in Malawi during the referendum in 1993 and the Presidential elections of 1994. Banda's tribe (the Chewa) who are predominantly found in the central region voted for the continuation of single party rule in 1993 and for Banda himself as President in 1994 whereas other regions in the north and the south overwhelmingly voted for multiparty government in 1993 and presidential candidates of their own ethnic or regional group in 1994. The evidence seems clear. In the 1993 scenario, the Chewa, and other central region tribes, to which Banda *belonged* saw greater security in their place in relation to the Malawi state in the continuation of his rule and therefore voted overwhelmingly in favour of single-party government.⁷⁶ The other regions overwhelmingly voted against the single-party government to oust the "*Chewa*" leader, hoping to install a member of their own ethnicity or region in the subsequent presidential election of 1994.⁷⁷ As a result, come 1994, no presidential candidate got on outright majority at the presidential polls as the vote had been split by the three regions of Malawi which each voted for a candidate who was from their own ethnicity or from their region.⁷⁸

The regional rates of voter turnout were perhaps more striking. Kaspin (1995) details how in the north Chakufwa Chihana (leader of the Alliance for Democracy, AFORD and a Tumbuka) won 91% of the presidential vote against a total voter turnout of 51% of the total northern population. Similarly in the south, Muluzi (leader of the United Democratic Front, UDF and a Yao) won 91% of the vote in his home district of Machinga, which also registered one of highest voter turnouts in southern Malawi. The other place with a matching voter turnout and also the location of an emphatic victory for Muluzi in the south was Mangochi whose population is also

⁷⁶ The central region voted 67.5% in favour of single-party rule against 32.5% in favour of multiparty democracy (African Elections Database: Malawi Referendum 1993 accessed on 10th July 2013).

⁷⁷ The northern region voted 89.3% in favour of multi-party democracy against 10.7% in favour of single-party rule. The southern region similarly voted 85.2% in favour of multi-party democracy against 14.8% in favour of single-party rule). In 1994, each of the three regions voted in favour of the Presidential candidates from their regional blocs, thus Banda won the central region with 743, 739 votes against 321, 581 of his highest challenger; Bakili Muluzi took the southern region with 1, 062, 336 against the 218, 964 votes of highest challenger; and lastly Chihana won the northern vote with 404, 837 against 33, 650 votes of his highest challenger (African Elections Database: Malawi Referendum 1993, Malawi Presidential Elections 1994 accessed on 10th July 2013).

⁷⁸ See Malawi Presidency Electoral Results in the Appendices sourced from the websites of the Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa – EISA, Malawi Electoral Commission – MEC, and the African Elections Database – AED. Muluzi won the Presidential elections with less than 50% of the total vote (47.2%), followed by Banda with 33.4%, and then others.

predominantly Yao. The total voter turnout of the south was 38% of the regional population, but other demographic factors could explain for the differences between the northern and southern turnouts, for instance, the proportion of the population eligible to vote. Banda took the central region emphatically. Very notable also was the case in which the Ngoni of Mzimba in the north voted for Chihana while the Ngoni of Ntcheu in the south voted for Muluzi.⁷⁹ This indicates, as Kapsin (1995) suggests, that the political identities of ethnicity and regionalism are not necessarily channelled toward actual shared ethnic roots as the real basis for ethnic consciousness but rather in regionally or territorially embedded narratives of a particular identity, amongst other identities, and its relation to [state] power.

In their respective regions therefore, the Ngoni of the South associated with the more politically visible Yao, while those of the north associated with the more politically visible Tumbuka tribes respectively. However, the lack of an outright legitimating majority vote across regions and ethnicities meant that social performances⁸⁰ would have to come to the fore as a means of garnering support. Such performances would necessarily lend themselves to what had already successfully kept the Malawian public “consensual” during the totalitarian era, albeit within the newer context of higher liberality which would accord identities greater vocabulary and hence more fluidity for their (re-)invention. The context allowed for the further intensification of nation-building rhetoric and its relevant “dances” or performances.

Secondly, while the State had remained and maintained its status as the legitimate locus of power in the Malawi territory, through its strong and very arbitrary positions on what constituted unfettering loyalty versus treacherous disloyalty to the “nation”, it activated self-regulation and self-policing within the generalized public. This it achieved by developing a subtle but powerful ambivalence of unity and disaggregation. The unifying factor for the public was the common referent found in the State. It was this common referent that made the *whole* population of Malawi Malawians as the State assumed the actual processes of nationalism or nation-building on “everyone’s” behalf and through the *expressed will of all well-meaning Malawians*.⁸¹ The disaggregating factor, however, was in how the State dealt with *individuals* on the basis of their loyalty and treachery to that process of nationalism. This took away the security that could have

⁷⁹ See Kapsin (2005).

⁸⁰ This concept will be further elaborated below as this dissertation begins to contextualize all that has been presented thus far into the already mentioned sociability imperative of the Malawi society which is embedded in a shared history which gives rise to social performances.

⁸¹ In McCracken (2002) Musopole, one of Malawi’s most militant activists during colonial rule, makes a speech in which he states that Kamuzu [Banda] knows best and all who meant Malawi well were to rally behind him.

been obtained from an immutable status of *singular* citizenship by introducing an uncertainty to that status under the gaze of the State, and in relation to other “generalized” Malawians who, as an aggregate or a collective, were Malawian citizens. It should be borne in mind that this second *sociologically critical* condition carries on within identity politics of citizenship (plagued by nationalist sentiment), and the usual contestations of ethnicity and regionalism presented in the discourses of “nationalism itself” in order to mask their ethnic and regionalist motivations. Citizenship, definitively, became the interface of *apolitical* social exhibitions, which in the Banda era registered as an unfettered conformity to the expectations of the establishment and its nationalist project – with the other identities remaining the motivators behind various actions.⁸² That is to say, citizenship became about overt outward portrayals of conformity or of a strong *disinterest* in political matters in order to obscure the very intensely political motivation behind such a commitment in the first place.

Ethnic and regional cleavages would thus under this mechanism – compelled by their carried over political aspirations from colonial times as well as the new ones afforded by post-colonial Malawian citizenship – pledge their commitment to the *Malawian cause*. To do so was to endorse and rally behind Banda which was politically expedient and the potential basis for developing a patronage with the Malawi state at whatever level. Evidence, however, shows that Banda was more lenient towards *citizens* from the central region than he was towards *citizens* from other regions with whom he dealt with on the basis of their other identities of ethnicity and region (see Lwanda (2006) where he personally examines the visitors register of Mikuyu Prison – a major detention facility during Banda’s era; Kaspin (1995) also shows how central region development projects were better funded by the government for longer periods than those of other regions). However, due to the limitations on public deliberation over political matters, politicized identities of ethnicities or regions would be prevented from free horizontal engagement that would help defuse the ethnic and regional cleavages of independent Malawi afforded by free social exchange. As a result, these political identities would unwittingly lend an important hand to the establishment by turning regional and ethnic identities into the

⁸² We can derive from the book *Malawi Literature after Banda and in the Age of Aids: A conversation with Steve Chimombo* (2010) that being a citizen was to be apolitical and inadvertently pro-State, while being political was to lose citizenship by automatically gaining some identity that attracted State sanctions. Similar determinations can be made from Mphande’s (1996) “...Banda and the Malawi Writers’ Group...” in which the desire to be expressive in their writings was deliberately rendered by the members of the Malawi Writers’ Group in nationalist concepts, seemingly criticizing colonialism while simultaneously loading the writings with anti-Banda establishment content as if to *apolitically* speak politically.

fundamental bases for interethnic and interregional hostilities and suspicions, thereby enhancing the social anxieties and insecurities conducive for political surveillance. In order to escape such anxiety and attain some security under this surveillance, all political identities would become “apparently” subservient to the politically empty status of citizenship, going on the overdrive to depict a great commitment towards Banda’s State and furthering with that commitment the unintended consequence of heightened interregional and interethnic suspicion and subsequently even greater surveillance. The hegemony was thus in a way self-sustaining as unwillingly Malawians clung evermore tightly to their estranged citizenship, rehearsing what was expected of them by the alienated others through the hand of the State, short-circuiting horizontal interregional and interethnic integration, and sustaining an unwanted status quo from the perspective of the non-central region and non-Chewa groups.

The real content therefore of Malawian citizenship carried with it the colonial undertones of “aggregated Nyasaland Africans”. While, as mentioned above, identity politics pertaining to ethnicity and regions carried over their political aspirations with regard to the state, citizenship as a status obtained irrespective of ethnicity or region, but without its immutable assurances and characteristics,⁸³ positioned the public itself as the granter of citizenship and the individual as one who borrowed and enjoyed this citizenship status for as long as they remained a member of that public. Public membership itself was based on that public’s approval; and that approval was itself dependent upon that individual’s continued appropriate conduct. The sanctioning power of public approval or disapproval was through the State which as a result became the instrument of the *expressed wishes of the Malawian people* – that is the general public. At the individual level therefore, citizenship was without content in and of itself; it merely provided space for the individual to participate in the conventions of the status quo; it allowed the space to not be politically active in a manner that contravened the socio-political conventions.

The content of Malawian Citizenship therefore – at least from the gaze of individuals – was pragmatically carried by everyone as a collective in Malawi. This citizenry was made up of everyone within the vicinity of the individual’s social conduct but excluding the individual himself or herself or any other individuals as singular citizens in their own right. This was

⁸³ Recall that the Constitutional Act of 1996 which turned Malawi into a republic did not include a Bill of Rights. A Bill of Rights speaks to individual entitlements with regards to one’s position to their State. By allowing a Bill of Rights, the aggregated citizenship of Malawi would have failed, and social and political surveillance necessary for sustaining hegemony would have not been possible. In the later sections of this dissertation, the emergence of the Judiciary as the introduction of individualized citizenship is presented to further this point.

however never in isolation to the self-defining and politically supported identity of the Chewa.⁸⁴ That notwithstanding, the content of that citizenship was limited to conformity to the State as the only permissible discourse. All other contrary content was to remain out of the public sphere, no matter how real it might have felt for individuals, be they Chewa or otherwise.⁸⁵ The Malawian public as a nation became therefore what largely constituted citizenship. It was this general citizen who monitored the individual, listened to their speeches and interpreted their actions, and sanctioned transgressors through the arm of the State, which embodied the generalized citizens' (or nation of Malawi's) *expressed wishes*.

There was an extensive network of the ruling party's Malawi Young Pioneers (MYP) who were essentially the establishments ruthless primary mode of public surveillance; however, anyone in the public was potentially an informer and so acting and speaking appropriately was the most prudent way to conduct oneself.⁸⁶ The irony is that most Malawians as individual members – to varying extents at least in relation to themselves and state power, and mitigated by an ethnic identity – of the public might have felt the same way about the citizenship of the generalized others within the vicinity of their social conduct. Political control was therefore at least from a sociological perspective inherent to the society, and therefore, inevitable in as far as its extreme characteristics were concerned, such as for instance speaking no *evil* of Banda even from within the vicinity of one's own house.

Being a Malawian thus became a strict performance centred on ensuring that one's actions would never be interpreted as disloyal or treacherous to the "nation" – that is, the generalized citizen. This is why it was not uncommon to hear government officials and the president himself

⁸⁴ Lwanda (2006) notes that even though Banda permitted cultural dances of other tribal groups such as the Ngoni's Ingoma dance for instance, only the Chewa's Nyau dances had been consolidated as a permanent aspect of State functions. Elsewhere, reference is also made of the declaration Banda made to make ChiChewa the national official language resulting in the deliberate removal of other languages such as ChiTumbuka from the radio and from textbooks. The Chewa had thus been raised to the status of the self-defining ethnic other. Institutionally, as the study will discuss further down, the 1966 Constitutional Act which repealed the Bill of Rights in the interest of rapid national development also illustrates that violations of individual rights would be made in the name of safeguarding the greater collective good – see Wanda (*...Rights of Detained and Accused Persons in Post-Banda..., 1996*).

⁸⁵ Further below a review of the Malawi Writers Groups activities as well as the practice of the media will substantiate this position.

⁸⁶ See Lee et. al. (Malawi Literature after Banda and the Age of AIDS: A Conversation with Steve Chimombo, 2010) and Mphande (Dr Hastings Kamuzu Banda and the Malawi Writers Group: The unMaking of a Cultural Tradition, 1996) where accounts about the Malawi Young Pioneers are narrated.

label disloyal actions as acts of treachery to the “nation”, the generalized citizen. It is furthermore interesting how treason against the Malawi people, in its application throughout Malawi’s history from independence, has only ever applied to an act against the people of Malawi in relation to the head of State or the President.⁸⁷ The public as the sum of many *single* individuals was therefore united in its allegiance to the Malawi Nation by intentionally acting appropriately towards the *generalized* or *aggregated* citizen. Failing to successfully transmit “*nationalist*” messages to the *general citizen* through one’s actions attracted the consequences of their disapproval which were carried out by the State in the defence of their collective citizenship, on one hand, and in the concurrent public portrayal attesting to the absence of any kind of individual rights accorded to any one *individualized* citizen, on the other. The message was loudly heard as “we are all Malawians together” as opposed to “every one of us is a Malawian in our own personal capacities”. To pursue any individually spawned “idea” (good or bad) which challenged the status quo was to automatically undermine the rights of the collective.⁸⁸ Conversely, to champion any idea, (good or bad) which enhanced the status quo was to work for the greater good of the Malawian collective. In short, the political identities of ethnicity and region, inherited at independence with the added contribution of *apolitical* Malawian citizenship, became the very basis for authoritarian rule as it channelled ethnic, tribal and other prejudices into self-sustaining societal modes of surveillance and subsequent State control as people denied of a real social emancipation reverted to an allegiance to the State propelled by their suspicion of the unknown but “always-watching” others.

In the preceding paragraphs, the discussions seek to primarily develop a sketch upon which a general view from whence the social conditions that led to the particular forms of power and social organization generally can be appreciated. However, a sociological view of the society of Malawi would be inadequate if it side-stepped a recognition of the hierarchies and strata of power and how such power differentials organize the numerous activities of that society.⁸⁹ Other

⁸⁷ The notion that treason is presented as an affront to a people for a threat aimed at a sitting president when in fact the designator of what constitutes a treasonous act is the sitting president him/herself glaringly exposes the hegemony of control that Malawi has lived under. So it is forced upon the people of Malawi that their will is expressed through the head of state and that to do violence against the head of state is to do violence against the people of Malawi.

⁸⁸ It is therefore understandable why the Malawi Congress Party’s drafted and enacted constitution of 1966 rejected individual rights. The rights of the individual were nothing more than an obstacle towards the economic emancipation of the collective. All citizenship was therefore to be at the aggregate and never at the individual levels.

⁸⁹ This will be discussed further in the conclusion section of this study below.

writers have also suggested that beyond just class and power strata the notion of generational strata in which varying levels of influence are accrued by virtue of one's age aided by the discourses of the "all knowing and beyond reproach elderly" and the "youth who must be taught how to behave well".⁹⁰ This concern is discussed further below under the section "An African Modernity and its Rationality". There, power is seen as *historical* reference for performances or social action undertaken by a lower proximity to, or direct control over, actual formal institutions, and as a "*legitimation*" for the social actions or performances for those with higher proximity to, or direct control over, actual formal institutions. This is important because actual hard power is of the State, but performances or social actions are portrayals that maximize legitimation so that a socially necessary level of legitimacy is sustained to maintain stability (seen below as *the social imperative*). The complexities around this initially simplistic description of how power works is further disambiguated in that subsequent section below.

2.3.2 Tying these Claims to Historical Events

The arguments and claims presented in the preceding sections of this literature review can be evidenced by "tying" them against some very *well-known* historical events of Malawi. Social action is seen as intentional – to deliberately carry meaning for a societal audience. This view of social action strongly suggests that social actors draw several aspects of their action not just from immediate contexts, but rather, that the content of their action towards a context is premised upon widely held notions of *appropriateness* which are themselves resourced from that society's stock of shared history. The historical and sociological accounts have already been provided in earlier sections of this study. This resourced characteristic of social action therefore is inherently and intrinsically constituted with content priority loaded by broad conventions. However, a somewhat liberating feature of this kind of social action is in its intentionality as well as its *strategic-ness* onto any context. More discussion around this notion is presented in the section "Social Theorizing the Sociology of the Malawi Society".

Below, general angles through which social action – loaded with performance – are outlined with historical evidence and accompanying arguments. Firstly, the nation as an *aggregated citizenship of Malawi as opposed to individualism* embedded in rights is further expanded. Secondly, the question of political control or autocracy as *the expressed wish of the nation* is also elaborated. Subsequently, the onset of Democracy amidst a climate of disrupted horizontal interregional and interethnic integration is also discussed under the subsection *Democracy and*

⁹⁰ See Lwanda (2002) *Paper Tigers: The Rise and Fall of the Independent Media in Malawi...* and Mchakulu (2007) *Youth Participation in Radio Listening Clubs in Malawi*.

Suspicion. These last two subsections will help better highlight how the same social action holistically contributes to the status quo of both the dictatorial as well as the subsequent democratic dispensations of Malawi. With the process of democratization comes the institutionalization of a powerful and autonomous Judiciary as representing the *Re-individualization of Citizenship* in which the individual re-asserts their hollow status of Malawian citizenship through the expansive power of the Malawi Courts. This enables them to challenge the entire state as well as all concerned individuals in relation to a stake they might have in a particular matter. But this new judicial assertion organizes the courts as the central institution of social stability without inducing similar objective institutionalisms in the other branches of government such as the Executive and the Legislature. As such, were social circumstances permit, oscillations between autocracy (political control) and individualism (rights embedded citizenship) become a permanent feature of the Malawi society which are illustrated under the subsection *the Ambivalence of Control versus Disaggregated/Individualized Citizenship*. Finally, a discussion is presented in which, amidst the said ambivalence, *Individualized Citizen and the Performances of their Re-found Individualism* are outlined and presented in order to depict a picture of social action in contemporary Malawi.

2.3.2.1 The Nation as “Aggregated/Generalized Citizenship” over Individualism

Only two weeks after independence from Britain Malawi experienced what is popularly called the *Cabinet Crisis*. This cabinet crisis happened following the revolt or rebellion of eight out of a total of ten Malawi Cabinet ministers who had only in recent months formed the first native government of Malawi together with Kamuzu Banda. They cited growing heavy-handedness, intolerance and dictatorial tendencies by the incumbent as some of reasons for their revolt. Banda however had garnered sufficient influence by this time to stomp out this rebellion which led in subsequent months and years to the exiling, the detention as well as the deaths of some of those who had staged the rebellion even though the rebels had only recently been Banda’s co-lieutenants during the fight for independence. Wanda (1996) notes that the terror unleashed by Banda and his regime was unparalleled even by the colonial rule that preceded his government. News about of this cabinet crisis was widely reported by the Government and the members of a very “regulated media” as an affront, not just to Banda, but to the Malawi nation aimed at undermining public order and security. Such an affront was not in the best interest of the people of Malawi, and therefore, was befitting of the very heavy-handed clamp-down used by the government to curtail them.

Under the guise of working towards the preservation of public security and order, he enacted his *de facto* powers into law, introducing an amendment to the Preservation of Public Security Act in 1965 which empowered the Minister⁹¹ to detain without trial any person(s) deemed to be working against the public interest. The minister could also suspend or amend any law other than the Constitution and empower any authority to act in a manner so as to realize the intentions of various “regulations” of that Act. This Act by and large empowered the Minister responsible to do whatever they wanted in the interest of public order and security, and pre-empted any challenge in the Courts against these arbitrary detentions without trial. At the local level, the Act also empowered any authorized officer to detain without warrant any person who in that officer’s judgement warranted a detention even in the absence of a detention order from the Minister responsible, and that person (after a further amendment of that Act in 1977) could be held in detention for as long as it suited the officer who had detained them. The law for arbitrary detentions was decorated in the sentimental language of “the public interest”, drawing its legitimation from the tensions already rife within the politically fragmented population of Malawi (see Wanda, 1996 for a more detailed account of such draconian laws).

Later on in 1971, Banda would be declared Malawi’s president for life as a result, and so it was publicized, of his visionary and exceptional stewardship over the wishes of the Malawian people.⁹² This declaration was *not* the expressed wish of Banda but rather the wish of the people who had bestowed this responsibility upon him following the overwhelming pedigree of his credentials and accomplishments as Malawi’s leader since 1964. Following the declaration, Banda cemented his strangle-hold over the length and breadth of Malawi’s social and political landscape right from the content of the education curricula used in schools all the way up to scholarly material used in the University; from the political processes of the national assembly, and through to the economy.

Dissent was not tolerated, and was rendered as un-Malawian or as an attempt to undermine the advancement and development of Malawi, or even as a sinister intention to undermine the public interest. Malawi’s true citizens were therefore all those who submitted to the totalitarian rule, and lived strictly within its stipulations – those stipulations being what constituted true

⁹¹ The Minister whose portfolio included public order and security was always President Banda himself; see Chirwa (2005) and Wanda (1996).

⁹² This was following the ratification of the 1966 Constitution which turned Malawi into a Republic. Later, in 1971 a constitutional amendment by the MCP dominated Parliament would see Banda accorded a provision in the 1966 Constitution Act as Life-President of the Republic of Malawi. See Nkhata (Introductory Note to Malawi, In Press).

Malawian-ness which was for the people's own good. The infidels were those who resisted such stipulations, transgressing against the social order with the deliberate intention of doing irreparable damage to the nation in their attempts to sabotage Banda's development plans for the country. These were the enemies of Malawi. Such infidels included the *unpatriotic* ministers of the 1964 cabinet crisis, whose names were subsequently removed from the Malawian academic and socio-political discourse. Malawi's well-wishers were those who had supported Malawi's best and greatest advocate – Banda – throughout that period, and had declared him Life President of the Republic. After all, no one else was more committed to the Malawian nationalist cause as was Banda.⁹³ There was therefore a moral sentimentalist ambiance about the entire Banda establishment which distanced its atrocities on certain persons and groups by portraying them as the consequences of a great level of commitment towards bettering the lives of the collective. Banda himself is on record for having said he would do whatever it took at whatever expense to develop the nation – demonstrating such a great love for Malawi to the extent of being willing to make such painful sacrifices for it.

The simple point being illustrated here is that while the establishment continued to deepen its stranglehold on control over the Malawian people, the message accompanying such vivid oppression was of ensuring the general good. At the same time, everywhere an individual turned, they saw other individuals exuding activities or *performances* which showed a great level of agreement with and commitment to the activities of the establishment. As such, in a real sense, the individual was presented with the opportunity to play along so as to escape misinterpretation (and its severe sanctions) by acquiring the security of being a part of the generalized public to which membership was accorded by acting in an appropriate manner – that is, a manner that showed no dissent to state activities. This seemingly un-coerced commitment to the status quo was what being a Malawian entailed; that is, it is what citizenship was.

2.3.2.2 Control as the “Expressed Wish of the Nation – Generalized Citizens”

To be individualistic was in a way co-equal to being un-Malawian.⁹⁴ Arguably, the definition of Malawian-ness was a commitment to the national cause, as evidenced in the actions of the collective Citizen all around the *individual* Malawian. By the 1970's a culture of silence had

⁹³ Banda has appropriated the traditional titles of Ngwazi (Conqueror), Mkango (Lion), Nkhoswe 1 (the first counsellor and care-taker) as additional mantles of his presidency presenting himself as the all-knowing and all-powerful caretaker of the Malawian people.

⁹⁴ Being individualistic or perhaps being prone to creating one's own aesthetics was akin to being political and therefore un-Malawian. See Lwanda (2006) where he describes the images of Banda, and the Malawian dress-code.

already been activated across the country. Silence was powerful in that it prevented the horizontal integration needed to allow the heterogeneous society of Malawi to begin dealing with the political prejudices that were inherited by the nation at independence. As such, the political fissures inherent within the Malawian population became more emphasized or pronounced aided by the culture of silence that prevailed.

This argument is especially compelling when one considers that group distinctions are hinged upon demarcations of “we” and then “them”. They are therefore demarcations that to a large extent thrive upon a mystified vision of an “unknown” and “uncommon” other. They are in their very essence rooted in a sense of suspicion about the other until such a time as when the group adopts an adequate “group” vocabulary to typify the other as something else that is “known” and “common” – or conventionally typified (see Schultz, 1967).

In a totalitarian social order in which a “*citizenized*” populated is made up of numerous groups, the unknown otherness of another group separate from one’s own will by default be viewed with “suspicion”. Suspicion in the sense that a member of a group becomes consciously aware of their lack of control over the certainty of the meanings their various actions would be rendering to an audience belonging to another group, while being prevented from engaging the other member upon any other grounds for fear of being misunderstood and reported to the State. In Malawi however, ethnic groups being the largest, and other subsequent smaller groups, bore great suspicions of other ethnic and other groups largely as a result of the carried over hostilities from colonialism into independence. In such a context, a sure way through which such a suspicion would be mitigated would be in sticking to the performances of nation-statehood denoted by a variety of actions and speech acts which constitute and emanate from the sole reference of commonality – in this case the politically empty concept of Malawian citizenship.

This citizenship becomes important therefore for that purpose of portraying a commitment towards the nation. Inadvertently, this pro-citizenship performance cunningly serves to reproduce and sustain the suspicions and their fragmenting effect by presenting their actors as true adherents of the authoritarian State. In turn, the observers of those pro-citizenship actions then become compelled to act appropriately to demonstrate that they too are just as committed to that same citizenship, again due to their fear of being misunderstood by the perpetrating actor. Various actors and observers therefore come together to create a grand impression of a commitment towards united nation-statehood, when in fact, their actions are intentioned to obviate misinterpretation as a result of living in a politically uncertain and heavily authoritarian society. Banda’s establishment sought to ensure that there would be enough suspicion and ethnic

disintegration to defuse the potential for creating alliances born out of horizontal integration. Again, Afford, MCP and UDF's disproportionate electoral patronages of North, Central and South regions of Malawi illustrates this.

Such pro-citizenship action can thus be mistakenly designated the title of a "united nation"; when conversely, it would be better typified as the outcome of living in a society characterized by "silent" suspicion which can only be best and safely managed through such commitments towards performances or actions motivated by the need to not be misunderstood. Similar political forces as the ones that engendered the creation of ethnic political identities also lend their hands to the formation of unity discourses. These become the overarching narratives necessary for allowing any one Malawian to appropriately saturate individual social contexts with a diversity of acceptable actions even when the motivations for such actions would be rightly understood as being aimed towards anything other than a commitment towards the national whole. This unwittingly created the space and emphasized the need for greater social control, so as to add a greater amount of clarity on matters of appropriateness, particularly as they pertained to one's obligations to Malawian-ness or apolitical citizenship. This need for greater certainty in one's obligations was the result of fear – a fear of the consequence of being misunderstood to the detrimental effect of only adding room for greater State domination.

The relationships between a notion of nationalism and dictatorship, as well as considerations of how social actions or performances provided grounds for further domination is discussed further under the section "Social Theorizing the Sociology of the Malawi Society," particularly in view of the eventual collapse of Banda's dictatorship.

2.3.2.3 Democracy and "Suspicion"

The conditions that underwrote the performances of Malawian-ness were thus embedded in the need to obviate misinterpretations that solicited severe sanctions from the State. They were drawn from a pragmatic suspicion manifesting itself in the actions that warded off misunderstandings. However, the coming in of a democracy, after a period of some thirty years in which "certainty" was established via the performed content of the actor introduced a highly introspective and *performance-inclined* Malawian to a societal stage of performance that was much more open to the pursuit of individual goals.

This is an interesting notion because the Malawian was already a highly versatile social actor who knew how to perform and how to "pledge allegiance" to the nation through those performances. However, with the coming of a wider space of action which provided the

privilege of *self-defence* if one's actions were misunderstood, the Malawi societal stage became increasingly open to a vast variety of performances which draw their justification from the vaguely defined notion of nationalism under the umbrella of democracy. The actor therefore becomes a master of adding more and more content to their actions, which permits them to venture into more and more spheres of the expanding public space. However, the speech acts (or discourses) that are used to accompany such actions are developed from the nationalistic “we-ness” or “collectiveness” of the period prior to democracy. This then enables the creation of a hybrid democratic system in which tenants of democracy become at times enablers and at others obstacles towards very egocentric goals. Individualism, charged by egocentric-ism, is therefore appropriated within the discourses of Malawian-ness even when the outcome, and the very nature of the content carried by an action, are fundamentally and indisputably self-serving.

Bakili Muluzi, Malawi's first president under a democratic dispensation, was particularly gifted with this ability of misdirection. At political rallies he would distribute money in the millions of Kwachas to party supporters, and would then say he was doing it in the national interest because it was important for those who had something to share with those who had less. At other times, he would say that he was doing it to help eradicate poverty (Lwanda, 2006). This cast a veil over the more pertinent questions such as how he, on a presidential salary, could afford to give out so much money at his numerous rallies, let alone the other contentious nuances surrounding such acts as done by a sitting president. The point being made here is this, it could not be that Malawians generally did not actively speculate about the likelihood of fraud in the sourcing of that money but rather that the discourse of nationhood was particularly overpowering. And this is a crucial point because it exemplifies an important position of this study which is that more than what things are professed to be in the real material world, they are interacted with in terms of what they denote socially.

Beyond the powerful patronage these actions by Muluzi harvested even as they are evidenced in the ambivalent relationship the independent press of Malawi for instance had with the Malawi government as argued by Lwanda (2002), the assortment of antagonisms, criticisms and applauds around the distribution of money by the head of state by different actors seemed to short-circuit themselves as the president shifted patronage to different groups at different times. Those who benefited hailed the president as a *nationalist* or remained silent; those who did not benefit criticized him as bad leader. At different times, the former would become the latter and the latter would become the former. Consequently, *nationalism* or working in the national interest would become a legitimating discourse for actions that were self-serving. The

“egocentric” action by the president therefore “legitimized” itself within the same trappings of a shared moral obligation towards the nation shown through his giving to the poor or the needy, even though a deeper reading into these activities would portray their contrary motivations.

This ability to back performances with legitimating and overpowering discourses contributed to the proliferation of action which however was not channelled towards sustaining the State nor was it in the national interest. And such is how Malawi achieved its so-called lost decade from 1994 to 2004.

2.3.2.4 The Judiciary as the “Re-Individualization” of Citizenship

The rise of Judicial Power in Malawi is widely attributed to the ratification of the Malawi constitution in 1994 (Chirwa, 2005). However, countries with similar constitutions are not always typified by similar practices within the operations of their States. There is therefore a socio-historical aspect to any kind of constitutionalism just as there is the same aspect to any kind of nationalism altogether.

The performances or social actions angle of this study expresses this observation very vividly. All social action is loaded with content derived from the society and towards the society. It is actuated with the double intent of “arguing” for its own legitimacy to its spectators while hoping to realize an individualistically motivated goal (see more on this below under “Social Theorizing the Sociology of the Malawian Society”). However, in the absence of a common objective normative thing, such as a State which is organized everywhere symmetrically by law and regulation, social action as described in Malawi begins to encompass ever expanding spaces within the public arena provided it has the backing of a discourse. As such, the stabilizing standardizations and regulations of the State become fluid codes open to manipulation (a sociological condition which could also be called “*corruption*”).⁹⁵ It is precisely this state of flux and fluidity in the State set-up particularly in the arms of the executive and the national assembly which facilitated the hybridization of the Malawian judiciary whose function was more and more becoming one of standardizing and providing a sense of stability in the fluidity

⁹⁵ Mamdani (2001) speaks of the dual judicial systems of customary law for in-directly ruling indigenous groups of natives (ethnicities) and the civil law that was accorded complete with rights and privileges to races or non-natives. A closer reading of his positions enables us to appreciate how in the long run the systems, regulations and legislation that were meant for the application of civil law after independence became conflated with the need for parallel customary law which was not consistently systematic in its application. Thus, both the governed and the governors acquired the knowledge of how laws and their systems were ultimately manipulated by people rather than applied objectively or in the spirit of what they entailed.

of the rest of the State setup. A newspaper survey online will show how the Judiciary, especially from the High Court upwards has gained an extraordinary trust by journalists and citizens of its impartiality and well-informed judgements. It extremely rarely encounters significant criticism from the general public that would parallel the kind levelled against parliament and the executive for instance.

The heightened performances, each blanketed by legitimizing discourse, did not only serve to enable the *social acceptability* of egocentric goals. Furthermore, they removed the security of maintaining entities of individual interest from those who sought to appropriate them as their own. These entities could be ownerships or possession of material as well as immaterial “goods” of value. The judiciary therefore provided the added theatre of legitimizing the realization of specific ends when the regular performances could not outdo each other. The courts as such resolved *legitimation-stalemates*. This too becomes evident in the manner in which the public, including politicians who knew few limits in their politically motivated quests to maintain power, were largely unopposed to the processes of establishing of a very powerful judicial arm of government.⁹⁶

This argument however is not to undermine the real societal needs for the Courts to “legitimately” provide the settlements of claims brought by people who suffered in numerous ways under the previous regime of Banda. These are still accorded their due importance. However, the importance of such considerations does not underemphasize the *performative* nature of social life in Malawi. A *performative* nature that was expressed as a growing need to position an organ of “normative” objectivity that would provide the basis for some kind of social order following the performances that obscured standards in the other two pillars of government; namely the executive and the legislature. The most logical way through which such a need could *consensually* be arrived upon was if the Malawian people themselves, particularly the more politically and economically powerful, found it expedient to surrender some of their influence to the massive and broadly expansive powers of the courts. This surrendering of influence being motivated by the realization that most other things in the State were in great

⁹⁶ See Nkhata’s (In Press) articulation of the constitutional ratification process of 1993-94 where all politicians and civil society seem more concerned with passing a constitution that elevated Judicial Power at the expense of a closer scrutiny of the nuances that would make it practical, such as the prerequisite necessity to curb Presidential powers while granting a real independence to Parliament from the executive so as to truly arrive at a practical separation of powers concept borrowed from the American constitution.

fluidity as a result of unbounded social action supported by misappropriated “nationhood” discourses.

Furthermore, judicial power, though very expansive is moved and not automatic. This permits for a certain measure of control on the power of the Judiciary which would allow the other spheres of social action to remain largely autonomous and unaffected. Again, Mamdani (2001) makes similar observations when he argues for instance that citizenship – a concept he uses to denote the right to access the rights and privileges of a state – is a contested space primarily because it sanctions who can or cannot lay a claim upon the valued things of society such as property and even the force of law. In this dissertation, citizenship is seen as having been an hollow concept in Malawi which is only enjoyed by those who remained overtly apolitical up until democratization when it then became a concept contested not for purposes of attaining it – for it was automatic – but rather for the purposes of saturating it with content that enabled concerned individuals and groups to make numerous legitimation claims within the social sphere. It is therefore precisely this rampant laying of claims that creates a sufficient threat on other claims of ownership over the valued things of Malawian society that requires the powerful institution of the courts to protect those claims that are already made, such as property. This power is only accepted and obeyed because it *appears* less arbitrary and more systematic thus making it *appear* predictable and hence stable unlike the powers that flow from the executive and the legislature which *appear* arbitrary powers like those espoused under customary law as articulated by Mamdani (2001).

In the final outcome, the ascendancy of judicial power truncates in the re-birth of the individual citizen beginning the journey towards institutionally embedded and coded entitlements by eroding and fragmenting the aggregated citizens via their ability to “move” the great powers of the Malawi Judiciary. In moving the courts to halt and decide against anyone or any organ of the Malawi State, the citizen not only imposes an incontestable standard pertaining to their entitlements over various possessions and entities but also begins to ascertain the coming to the fore of the immutable right of individualized citizenship – citizenship with more *political* content such as to fly in the face of political leadership as well as all other actors no matter their ethnic or regional grouping, nor their numerical volume. Such a condition begins to undermine even the “we-ness” as a basis for nationhood towards a more “divided we stand” posture. This continues to occur albeit still within the discourses of “we-ness” upon which individual actions are still primed. However, this tension between “social action” and “legitimizing discourse” would begin to cause the development of newer discourses which would also enter into public

life struggling for their own power to categorize and legitimize social action. See more on this below under the section on “Social Theorizing the Sociology of Malawi...”

2.3.2.5 The Ambivalence of Control versus Disaggregated/Individualized Citizenship

As has already been put forward, Aggregated Citizenship entails automatic dictatorship because it manifests in self-regulation and self-policing within a context of high suspicion towards numerous and generalized others. Secondly, aggregated citizenship in terms of its social content is intensely and deliberately communicative towards the generalized other to deter the potential sanctions which could arise from an incidence of miscomprehension or misunderstanding upon the individual brought about via the *national* organ of the State. The content of the social action is therefore aimed at and actuated upon a social context but drawn from the prevailing discourses of an allegiance to nationhood.

Within a democratic setting, these discourses are used as *legitimizers* for social action and its outcomes under a new arrangement in which the individual is accorded a hearing before an action by the State can be taken against them. Therefore, the emergence of an individualized citizen manifests itself as a challenge on State control over its previous right to act automatically on behalf of the aggregate citizens upon *deviant* social action. However, there remains the singular belief in the need to sustain a deliberately channelled effort towards realizing the developmental goals of the nation albeit within the emerging context of individualized citizenship.⁹⁷ The mutual existence of self-serving “individualized citizenship” and the project of “collective nation-building” manifest in an ambivalence towards State control and individual-centric citizenship.⁹⁸ The results of individualism are more pragmatically within the control of the actor, and therefore, promise more immediate returns. State projects have to do with societal

⁹⁷ This belief of effort channeling could emanate from the collectively held stake in the Malawi economy for instance whose performance entails the accessibility of things such as food, clothing, housing, employment and other general opportunities.

⁹⁸ Here also, Mamdani’s (2001) views are insightful. He shows for instance the tension between political power (which is top-down and *aimed* to bring about rapid development) and human rights (which is a Trojan horse argument by white civil society to protect its place of privilege following the collapse of the colonies). Two things of import emerge: firstly, the language of rights is used against the language of development in order to halt, in the first instance, a seizure of private property in the name of development and in the second instance, to champion the seizure of private property in the name of development. However, both languages hide the self-centred interests which reside behind both languages which are to retain property for the first instance, and to seize property for the second one for motivates that may not be entirely in the sole spirits of development or human rights. This is precisely what this dissertation has termed social *performance*: the usage of social discourses to obscure self-centred pursuits.

collectivism whose returns, though greater in magnitude, are dependent on the committed efforts of numerous other actors – whose commitment, however, cannot be conclusively ascertained by the individual actor.

This condition therefore allows for the mutual holding of inherently contradictory concepts towards “State control and forfeited individual rights” on the one hand, and “individual-centric citizenship and excessive fluidity” on the other (see Mamdani’s (2001) tension of developmental political power versus preservationist human rights).

This ambivalence can be seen in the lacklustre attitude generally held towards the powers of the president. For example, the president of Malawi is expected to be the benevolent custodian of the state while also jointly being expected to work within the limitations on the usage of presidential power as determined by a constitutional democracy. This line is however extremely vague as will be illustrated below but it is quite easily seen in the manner in which the Constitution Act of 1994 was drafted.

In the Malawian constitution the executive, even after the removal of the single-party government, enjoys expansive powers again for the purposes of fast-tracking development (even at the expense of certain rights), and yet within that same constitution, the Judiciary is given broad and expansive powers to block and review any action of the executive (in order to respect and preserve rights) if so moved by anyone with appropriate standing in relation to that matter brought before the courts (Malawi Constitution Act, 1994; Nkhata, In Press). The legislature is given the traditional powers of enacting laws, while the more extraordinary powers of say impeachment remain largely subverted by the presidential system of government that Malawi is. The legislature is therefore a celebrated political forum whose contributions to the Malawian society are largely mitigated by the involvement of the two more dominant branches of the Executive and the Judiciary.⁹⁹ In recent times, parliament has demonstrated little ability to impose itself on any matter in an independent way. Its actions are either blocked by Court Injunctions when citizens and even Parliamentarians challenge their legality (in view of human

⁹⁹ In 2010-2011, the Malawi parliament was evidently under duress by the president to enact legislation that was clearly not in the interest of the public if not for the mere accumulation of power for the president. After the president’s sudden death, the same parliament with the same members repealed all the laws they had themselves recently enacted at the behest of the new president, Joyce Banda. Through the Courts, various citizens had shown defiance to the presidency by moving the judiciary to block various actions and decrees by the executive, for instance, the decree to ban all public demonstrations. See articles on these events at <http://www.mwnation.com> search Parliament Repeals Laws.

rights violations), or induced or overridden by the executive (in view of developmental prerogatives).¹⁰⁰

In 2004 when President Bingu wa Mutharika came to power, and later formed his own political party following a breakaway from the UDF on whose ticket he got elected, he began to exercise powers that were largely in spirit unsupported by the Malawian Constitution.¹⁰¹ However, because of the *perceived* economic successes¹⁰² of his *unconstitutional* actions, he was widely heralded as a visionary and revolutionary leader who, as a result, was accorded the leeway to override “regulations or laws” in the national interest by the public. These overridden “regulations and laws” were however the very foundations whereupon individualized citizenship (embedded in rights) was anchored, and yet, in the interest of the “Malawi nation – as an aggregate” these regulations or “expressions of individualized citizenship” could be from time to time muted. For instance, there were questions as to how the Malawi Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) had been able to run for four consecutive years from 2005 to 2009 when Parliament had voted against MBC’s government funding because of their overtly pro-government and anti-opposition slant in their programming. These concerns rang on deaf ears in the public domain, as the population remained fixated on the 7 per cent plus Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rates, and the successes of the Farm Inputs Subsidy Programmes (FISPs) which had empowered farmers to produce more than enough staple food for the country following previous years of famine. Once more, those who opposed Mutharika were construed as the enemies of the

¹⁰⁰ Consider the injunction that has kept the speaker’s hands tied for close to two years on the matter of declaring vacant the seats of MPs who crossed the floor from one political party to another in parliament. Also, other incidences include when parliament voted to suspend Kalinde MP for misconduct in the house only to have the Courts block that decision and re-instate Kalinde back into Parliament; source <http://www.zodiakmalawi.com> search *Kalinde* and *Section 65*.

¹⁰¹ The Malawi Supreme Court of Appeal ruling “In the matter of the question of the crossing the floor by members of the National Assembly” is illustrative. This ruling was never implemented by the President, who actually requested it in the first place through Presidential Reference. Upholding this ruling would have had implications on his tenure, as he would have lost members in parliament who were keeping him from impeachment. He would thus open parliament, force them to discuss other business, and once the impeachment issue came up, he would use Presidential Powers to close parliament. See also *Malawi Leader Suspends Parliament Over Budget Row* (Mail&Guardian, 20 June, 2008; <http://mg.co.za/article/2008-06-20-Malawi-Leader-Suspends-Parliament-Over-Budget-Row>)

¹⁰² See www.finance.mw.gov for recent reports on their homepage from around 2004-5 on macro-economic performance; Malawi is said to have achieved economic growth of over 7% since 2005 up until 2009-10. See also the Reserve Bank of Malawi website www.rbm.com which also has monetary reports attesting to the same successes.

“nation” without a real assessment of the *individual* merits or de-merits of the concerns they were raising.

Come 2009, following a “landslide” victory at the national polls, Mutharika would take a more visible and deliberate posture in effecting certain policy positions by the Malawi government now blanketed in his own “nationalism” concepts. It would not be unfair to speculate that Mutharika saw his popularity which for the first time had cut across regional and ethnic divides as a basis from which he could begin to construct a political and cultural hegemony that would consolidate his powers as president (see Chirambo, 2009). There are several similarities between Mutharika’s attempts to realize this and what Banda did to realize his own hegemony from the 1960s to the early 1990s. Put simply, those who wanted Malawi to attain to even greater strides in its development objectives were to surrender certain individual freedoms and allow the president the leeway to make unilateral decisions, which Malawians would later be thankful for. Generally, in the interest of Malawi, certain sacrifices – often in the form of political opponents – would be undertaken. The difference between Mutharika’s time and that of Banda was not just marked by the existence of a vibrant and growing independent press (print and oral) and the availability of information gadgets within the context of a more interconnected globe but also in the breaking open of the monotonies that prevented people from speaking out about the unintended messages being pushed out by State propaganda outlets (Chirambo, 2009). While in Banda’s time suspicions around the intentions of government were kept within the individual and out of the public sphere, in Mutharika’s time whatever people thought a “message” meant could be spewed onto the public sphere via the many channels in the media as well as in everyday conversations, as well as in their actions.¹⁰³ And as the state overtly pursued and sanctioned dissenting individuals and groups, the more illegitimate the state *appeared* and the more it undermined its government’s longevity and stability.

The Malawi economy declined sharply particularly during and after 2010 due in part to the global recession as well as a poor rainy season for the rain-fed agriculture. The national budget of 2010 introduced more taxes to make up for the lack of traditional support of the donor community because of Mutharika’s increased antagonistic stance towards them.¹⁰⁴ Under these

¹⁰³ When this study proposes some techniques of researching intersubjectivity, this notion of the “other side of a message” will be elaborated. The presence of silence could be seen as indicating both an enabling as well as disabling discourse pertaining to the accessibility of certain performances in the social sphere or public domain. An intriguing account from Mponela in Dowa District in Malawi is used to illustrate this point further.

¹⁰⁴ A standard search on the Nation Newspaper website mwnation.com with the key words *British Ambassador Expulsion* will bring out numerous columns, reports and opinions on the state of the Malawi Economy vis-à-vis

circumstances the notions of individualized citizenship once more began to rise to the fore. Here, as the collectivism of aggregated citizenship was collapsing, regional and ethnic tensions were re-emerging, and people needed their individual rights re-emphasized so that they could take a more deliberate posture in matters that most affected them – that is, to disband from the conformity to an aggregated citizenship into a pluralism of individualism whose content would be backed by the *legitimizing* efforts of the concerned social actor.

Mutharika and his regime were repeatedly challenged, through the Malawian civil society as well as the Malawi Judiciary, on scantily elaborated grounds of constitutionalism.¹⁰⁵ They condemned his disregard for “individual” human rights such as the freedoms to peacefully assemble, to express one-self and to freely associate with organizations and groupings of one’s choosing without political sanctions. They also condemned a secretive government, and called for the respecting of citizens’ rights to open, inclusive, transparent and accountable government. However, what is very interesting about these various admonitions is the lack of clearly articulated demands to render and establish nationhood as a concept founded upon “individualized citizenship” rather than “aggregated ones”. This is inferred from the manner in which the demands are channelled not as calls for an elaboration of constitutional provisions by say an enactment of enabling legislature but rather as directed calls at the president for him to pursue a *self-informed* attitude of accommodating alternative views, desisting from the intimidation of perceived political rivals, intentionally submitting to the authority of the courts and other self-regulated temperaments towards various individuals, groups or organizations.

The telling feature about the content of these requests is that they were anchored upon the ambivalence stated above which further portrays “individual citizenship” as a practical logic of sociability or a sociability imperative in Malawi, and “aggregated citizenship” as a collectively orchestrated effort towards nation-building as “dictated” and handed down by a benevolent leader.¹⁰⁶ More so, therefore, the constitution was not read in terms of what it absolutely implies

ailing diplomatic relations with donor countries. Note that Mutharika had ordered the expulsion of the British Ambassador because of a leaked cable to London in which the Ambassador had called him autocratic.

¹⁰⁵ See Appendix 6.3 for a full petition to the President from a coalition of civil society groups presented on July 20th, 2011 sourced from the online Newspaper Malawi NyasaTimes at www.nyasatimes.com search “CSO Petition”

¹⁰⁶ Further down in the Methodology section, this notion of the “content” of social action will be important in overcoming the objectivity problem from subjectivity. Content will be shown as carrying aspects of intersubjectivity which enables the social researcher to “see” or “visualize” the social ontology that informs the specific rendering of a particular social action in a particular context. Social action is therefore constituted at least

but rather in terms of a content that would be socially legitimate and vaguely intentional, by drawing upon the social, political and historical practices of the Malawian society.¹⁰⁷ This ambivalent stance is inherently always open to incidences of political totalitarianism activated by the need to arrive at a concept of nationhood precisely because nation concepts are drawn or excavated from the sentimental past of Malawi's history. And yet this ambivalent stance is also expressed as a haphazard individual-centric resistance informed by a perceived threat in the establishment towards one's ability to attain egocentric, ethnocentric or generally group-centric goals which are however intentionally portrayed as an affront on the "vague" national collective. The repercussions of such a situation or condition necessarily result in some of the observations to be further elaborated in the section "An African *Modernity* and its Rationality".

2.3.2.6 The Individualized Citizen and the *Performances*¹⁰⁸ of their Re-Found Individualism

There is therefore in actual practise the emerging individual citizen who, in spite of his or her ambivalence towards control and individualism, is very much an individual in terms of his or her ability to appropriate relevant content to his or her action to realize certain ends. While it is in the interest of this social actor to operate within a context of fluid normatives such as law and other regulations in order to achieve the most desirable outcomes, he or she also needs enduring standards upon which a sense of security from other "strategizing actors" can be ascertained. And therefore, as individuals and in view of their respective interests, the normative features of the society must be enhanced, but particularly with regard to personal rather than collective gain.¹⁰⁹

by intentionality (that is it seeks to arrive at an end or outcome) and contextual-ity from which it relies on socio-histories to acquire acceptability and legitimacy in the eye of the spectating other.

¹⁰⁷ This speaks to the heart of the matter of this study which posits that all social action is pre-loaded with social content derived from socio-political and historical resources of a society and actuated upon specific social contexts as a means of deriving the legitimacy of that social action.

¹⁰⁸ Note that "Performance" as can be seen in the discussions speaks of the production of social action which is intended to render a meaning that is recognizable to and by others but with the intention of realizing an outcome which is not always necessarily in the interest of the people to which that action seeks to pacify or appease.

¹⁰⁹ This is particularly interesting because it also demonstrates how those in power or who have more entities or possessions to lose tend to facilitate the creation of stringent and clear regulations and laws that help protect their interests. More on this will be discussed further below. For now, however, it is interesting to note this need for security – even though differentiated by stakes – amplifies the coming to the fore of regulations and laws which begin to undermine the "free" autonomy of the actor who willing appropriates content for their own ends.

That being so, the individual actor must therefore see in the public circles performances that depict increasing clarity as regards the principle regulations and laws that organize daily life – and this includes norms and other *uncoded normatives* of societal value because their content is embedded in history and therefore immediately recognizable by others. This need is expressly political as obscurity is likely to result in general resistance albeit from egocentric standpoints. Consequently, these performances that grant the public circles a sense of “security” manifest as deliberate intentions to be transparent about what is the undergirding and ordering principle for social organization. These performances have recently expressed themselves, for instance, in *greater* intra-party democracy on the part of Malawi’s political parties. Or even as expressions of the fallibility of the leadership as they admit to mistakes or miscalculations or “errors of *good-intentioned* judgement”.¹¹⁰ At the core of these performances is the need to standardize what would otherwise be a very unpredictable social terrain in which the individual actor would not be able to anticipate the outcomes of his or her own actions, nor predict the performances of others with whom he or she shares the public arena.

It is important to not underestimate the role of the increasing openness of the Malawian society to the rest of the globe post 1993-94. Various ideas, through the vehicles of the constantly evolving media instruments and gadgets, accordingly inform and influence public opinion (Lwanda, 2002). An inquiry into exactly how this happens is beyond the scope of this study. However, it would be unwise to assume that the outcome of such external influences as they amalgamate with internal tussles of meaning making and projecting within the Malawian society would translate in any case into uniformities in attitudes about or dispositions towards the Malawi social typography. It is therefore prudent to assume rather that non-uniform attitudes and dispositions characterize the Malawi social typography¹¹¹, and that these activate the performances that manifest themselves in the more visible changes in the unfolding of the

¹¹⁰ Recently, the Malawi President admitted to having erred in a labour deal with South Korea that would have seen, it is alleged, some 100, 000 Malawians exported to that country to work, gain skills and repatriate their wages and attained skills back to Malawi after their contracts there had expired; heard on Zodiak Broadcasting Station via their live radio streaming service at www.zodiakmalawi.com. Also, various reports on that same site show that Malawi’s most dominant political parties either have held or are about to hold the most publicized conventions for the selection of party leaders. These conventions have not been the most transparent, but they have been the most publicized and have been particularly branded as a sign of a refreshing of those parties traditions. Search *Party Conventions* at www.mwnation.com the website of one of Malawi’s leading newspapers called The Nation.

¹¹¹ And this in turn is consistent with strategic social acting since the content of the action is not derived from ideology per se but from the pragmatics that ensure that a certain strategy is likely to yield the best returns. Pragmatism therefore highly subjective and violates the uniformity argument altogether.

Malawi society as outlined above. These changes being all of them rooted in a quest for standards that help arrest the potentially infinite outcomes that could accrue from the social actions of other Malawian actors in the subjective view of the individuals looking upon the public sphere while plotting the social content that will accompany their own actions.

Nonetheless, this should not provide the pretext for stating that Malawi can only proceed in a unidirectional manner towards clear norms. The ability of the social actor to break into previously uncontested spaces would as such be undermined or downplayed. A very interesting new avenue for instance would be the avenue of morality as a social code derived directly (indeed through mediating religions) from God. This avenue or sphere is an eminent frontier for new social performances to emerge in the struggle for legitimation – particularly because matters of God cannot merely be deployed for achieving affirmations from the past, but can also be used to affirm present actions based on God’s intentions for the future.

2.3.3 The Public Eye

The public eye, in aggregating the isolated vantages of the previous accounts above, is therefore the “general” eye that is always looking upon the individual actor, and expecting that actor’s social action to be backed by *appropriate* content. This eye cannot see or determine the intentions of the *heart* of the actor in any meaningful way. Its role is therefore confined only to the judgement of actions based upon limited but growing discourses of rightness or wrongness brought about by the need for “standardization” albeit not in the absence of the older “we-ness” discourses as well. The individual actor must therefore act within this public eye’s gaze in a manner in which their egocentric goals are realized with minimal transgression to the historically informed code of conduct that is expected in any given social context. This is a question of legitimation and not necessarily one of fear or suspicion as was the case in the Banda era. Perhaps the extent to which such propensities to approximate closely to the boundaries of appropriateness beyond which an action would become inappropriate are determined by the various stocks of influence that organize people into varying strata (Horkheimer, 1973), and perhaps also to some extent the individual temperaments of specific actors.

Yet this study presumes what is seen in the *Habermasian* view that in most cases, people will tend towards *consensus*, even though at a later stage the conceptualization of achieving or

tending towards consensus espoused by this study breaks somewhat from the type advanced by Habermas' theory of communicative rationality.¹¹²

Furthermore, while always under the gaze of the public eye, the actor is also a part of the public eye looking at other actors and expecting them to “conform” to societal standards. Public life is therefore the continuous situation of living concurrently within and outside public view¹¹³; actively seeking to appropriately rebel against societal standards while emphasizing that others conform totally; actively supporting those actors whose actions make it more likely for one's own to yield desired outcomes and condemning those actions of actors who make it more complicated to realize the intended outcomes of one's own. The extent to which this varies is pivoted upon the aggregate and individual citizenship ambivalence – which will later be seen as a confluence in which the prerogatives of the state and the expectations of the society are negotiated by actors into specific social action. And yet from the individual's standpoint it can be argued that where there is a greater belief in the State, there will also be the higher tendency to see the “self” conform to the *laws* of Malawian-ness. And this is because that belief, as already shown elsewhere above arises precisely when the State is seen to be dealing with every member of that society on the same recognizable and predictable terms. However, where there is a lower belief in the State, the tendency will be higher to see “others” conform to state and society obligations with the individual attaining a higher propensity to rebel legitimately or in a manner that would short-circuit the objections of others against that individual's actions.

The grand scale effect however of these antagonisms translate into more rigorous attempts to achieve liberty of action at the *individual's subjective* level by inextricably participating in the design and implementation of more and more standards for social living at the *societal level*. This situation in which social forms translate into political outcomes is brought about by a growing realization that the basis for the individual liberty to act *or deploy effective performances* derives from its dependence on the existence of standards that enable the efficient harvesting of such information as would permit a successful action to be created and actuated upon that same social setting. The more stable the social setting is, the more accurate the

¹¹² A discussion around Habermas' work alongside the works of others such as Giddens and Bourdieu on the question of intersubjectivity and social competence is presented below. When Intersubjectivity is discussed, the tending towards consensus notion will be challenged and an alternative view will be proposed.

¹¹³ The individual is at once outside public view in terms of their intentions, and within public view in terms of the actions with which they seek to achieve those intentions. This similar to what Horkheimer and Adorno (*Aspects of Sociology*, 1973 pp. 90) stated – humans are “each concerned for their own advantage and at the same time obscurely conscious of the power of the crowd...”

information harvested, and therefore the more certain the results of a social action or strategy. Stability assures the actor by reducing the uncertainty accompanying any of the actors actions, and limiting the field of the strategies from other actors towards the spheres of value or interest of the first actor.

The public eye is thus constituted by;

- (1) All individuals together actively enforcing the “laws” of society while,
- (2) They together attempt to outwit those same *laws* in the pursuance of their individual goals through social performances which,
- (3) Are constituted by content deemed approvable and appropriate before that public eye.

This is never in the absence of *legitimizable* fluid alliances and coalitions that emerge and disappear over time.

2.4 Theorizing the Sociology of the Malawi Society

Up to this point, the discussion has depicted action as what is *empirically* visible, and that which is actuated upon a canvas of society and state normatives. The normative has also, up until now, been portrayed as that complex mixture of state formalities and societal norms, which characterize and hurdle the contextual canvas upon which any kind of action can be appropriated. The line that divides therefore the State from the Society has been blurred, and requires some disambiguation which would allow the study to systematically build a more holistic – but by no means complete – *picture* of the Malawi Society.¹¹⁴

Thus far, what has been central to this study has been the implicit argument that what the largely *unknown* playing field of the Malawi society has to do not only with what is merely perceived by an individual social actor even as their social vocabulary enlarges or is reconfigured by their daily experiences, but furthermore, what is collectively or mutually perceived as a reality regardless of its material tangibility. The implicit argument governing this posture is that the

¹¹⁴ See Migdal’s (2001) *State in Society: Studying how States and Societies Transform and Constitute one another*, where there is an attempt [in Part 1: The State-in-Society Approach, page 3 to 40] to show the boundaries between State and Society. Again, the State is cast as that entity which provides the backbone of regulation and standards, and the society is everything else which is organized around those stipulations. Migdal accepts that these two entities so to speak influence one another, but what is missing is a recognition of the fact that the State and the Society are animated by people who are the only “living” entities with the capacity to appropriate the expectations of either one of those entities. The divide between state and society therefore is within the domicile of actions; more on this below.

powers of sociability and its proceeds are vested within this mutual perception. It is important to immediately dispel what might be perceived as an insidious romanticism of functionalism by mentioning that this mutual perception – this intersubjectivity – should be typified as a mutual stake manifesting as an ordered colloquial contestation over the known and even unknown potential *harvests* obtainable out of sociability. The *sharing* of norms and values therefore occasions the themes under which social actors argue for the legitimacy of their actions and their resultant proceeds whatever they might be without carrying with it the weight of the functionalist “consensus doctrine”.¹¹⁵ The canvas of the Malawi society is therefore always expressly political, but the nature of its politicking is almost always geared against that fact; that is, it is always aimed towards proving its neutrality. This superficial neutrality could be misread as an indication of a total internalization of norms when in fact it portrays a sociability enabling pragmatism.

Through the historical account provided, it is seen that State patronage raised the ugly head of identity politics within the colonial atmosphere of excessive State hegemony. The population, through these patronizing divide and rule postures of the State, acquired a heightened sense of awareness and together with the perhaps the unintended consequence of a more focused attentiveness to the State. Come independence, aggregation is garnered which further hinders horizontal integration and prevents the now “independent people of Malawi” from coming to meet each other.

The power of this second generational order of divide and rule is anchored precisely upon the prejudices, suspicions, and political ambitions carried over from the previous dispensation. This order is reproduced through the sentimental message of unity, discipline, obedience and loyalty as pillars for building the Malawi nation preached by the liberating party (the MCP), overtime forging an otherwise abhorred alliance between the State and the internally disintegrated population of Malawi. This alliance is cemented at the level of actions in which members of the citizenry adhere more closely to the stipulations of State in their social activities. The dictatorship is therefore enabled through action to transcend from State hegemony into societal hegemony. State hegemony on its own would require the use of repressive force that would be very difficult to mask or disguise. As such, by building upon the message of nation-building and depicting dissenters as enemies of that project, societal hegemony is ascertained as State

¹¹⁵ Later on – with the assistance of Reich’s (2010) work on Intersubjectivity – it will be seen that norms along are incapable of prescribing the beginning of an interaction. They are limited to informing it after it has already taken place. This is discussed with particular reference to Parsons Double-Contingency stalemate or *nihilism*.

stipulations become the only appropriate way of living consistent with the nation-building project. All other ways of living become opponents to that project of nation-building and are thus crushed under the force of a sanctioned way of life – that is a new social hegemony overwhelmingly presented as a popularly-approved way of life.

Citizenship in this scenario is therefore the quest to be overtly apolitical, which itself entails the exaggerated performances of allegiance to the establishment. Through such performances, the dictatorship flows across the bridge of action into the social.¹¹⁶ As a result, the various individuals and groups of Malawi, the majority of which are disgruntled with the State, but are concurrently disintegrated ethnically and regionally to the effect of maintaining strong interethnic and interregional suspicions, pledge their allegiance through their performances to that same State in order to dispel the suspicious eyes of the unknown members that constitute the Malawian general public.¹¹⁷ In this regard, the society feeds back its unintended consent to authoritarian rule to the State through the same bridge of action.

Due to a mixture of international pressures, the changing trends in Southern Africa's regional politics, and the interventions of the Roman Catholic church which issued a letter that criticized the establishment, the disgruntled population is enabled to rise above the suspicions that held up the dictatorship (see Donge, 1995; Chirambo, 2004; Mitchell, 2002 and Lwanda, 2002). These occurrences permit them to band together not in a *camaraderie* manner but rather in an occasion that allows for the overlooking of earlier suspicions in order to overcome a common enemy.

The logics of the two periods of Malawi – the first, the period leading up to independence and second, the period leading up to the referendum – are strikingly similar. In both cases,

¹¹⁶ This “bridge of action” can be understood in the terms in which action is depicted in this study as those activities that are observable by others and convey a meaning that fits into a prevailing social decorum. In the dictatorship this decorum is pre-set under the guise of nation-building, while in democracy this decorum is achieved when actors exhibit performances that lay claim to socio-historically *rememberable* and/or imaginable content upon a social setting thereby giving those performances social legitimacy.

¹¹⁷ This is not unlike what Bhabha (*Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse*, 1984) describes as mimicry – a term he uses to describe the negotiation of the self (rooted in identity which denotes a kind of stasis or reluctance for change) which shares its history with other selves amidst the continuously unfolding process of history (which alludes to possibility of an unknown change). Mimicry negotiates the ambivalence of longing for change while being caught up in the routine activities that continuously default on that change. To mimic is thus to know of a better alternative: to perform as depicted in this dissertation is contextualize why there is an adherence to mimicry which has the impact of preventing a realization of that known alternative, which in this case is to overcome the dictatorship.

disenfranchised Malawians politically marginalized from the state display a superficial unity to overthrow an oppressor whose power attempts to maintain itself by keeping close the existing patronages it has with the various groups of that same society: the state ethnic-clientele of the colonial state before 1964, and the MCP government Chewa-clientele between 1964 and 1994. Again, in both cases, the discontent climaxes precisely when action abandons its commitment to State performances and, by ascribing to the discontent housed within people's consciousness, short-circuits the transmission of State power into the societal whole. In the colonial period, Nyasalanders/Malawians disband from the antagonisms surrounding state-clientele patronages and cleave to the NAC/MCP. Prior to the referendum of 1994, performances that helped implement the dictatorship begin to visibly break out of character, thereby sending out messages of insubordination. In both cases, the residual and hidden tensions of the unresolved horizontal ethnic and regional tensions seem temporarily dispelled. They however manifest themselves powerfully again in the next order of State, albeit in ways that are consistent with the new institutional arrangements of that period – under Banda, they enforce a dictatorship, and under democracy, they put into flux State formalities and Societal norms. This *superficial* unity that results in the tearing down of an oppressor does not escape the canon of history. It too becomes part of the legitimating canon that undergirds Malawian social performances.

As stated above, the critical difference of the residual momentum after the referendum was the coming in of democracy, a model of governance that caused the State to break decisively with the more or less similar configurations of the Malawian State under colonialism and then Banda's authoritarianism. Democracy, for all the wide and broad promises it captures, in this study narrowly entails the loading of the individual's citizenship with actual political content thereby creating an opportunity for which disbanding from the aggregation of the public as a general citizen, or stepping out from the population as an individual separate from the body of numerous individually insignificant persons into a singular citizen, can happen. The individual acquires the right to break away from the conduit role they once played in the previous dispensations with the democratic space to commission their thinking or thoughts upon the expectations of both State and Society, and to seek an *appropriate* appropriation of those expectations through their actions. Appropriation in this sense immediately implies intersubjectivity as key feature of that thinking process, and consciousness as the commissioner of thoughts.

The individual is thus no longer merely restricted to acting appropriately, but is also allowed the space to appropriate the socio-historical archive of the Malawian collective memory to argue for

the legitimacy of their actions. Here horizontal disintegration which led to a cleaving to the State is extended a rope that permits for neither a commitment towards integration nor a commitment towards the State. A third space so to speak emerges where both realities – of other Malawians (society) on the one hand, and of the State on the other – become entities full of malleable resources that permit the individual to act in any manner provided they can ward off any accusation, from State or Society, of undermining the nation with a compelling argument which speaks to the formalities of State as well as the social normatives which are collectively remembered or even just potentially imaginable by the public. All the individual has to achieve is a performance that only portrays such a *perceivable* commitment. *The nation* as a discourse remains salient within the intersubjectivity canon because history, real or imagined, cannot be removed from any people for the simple fact that it is the very thing that contextualizes sociability; the very thing which contextualized the collective purpose of the political uprisings and therefore inhering within it are the very basic things and their rules which permit sociability. Norms, values and all manner of appropriate things therefore become tools scattered about on the social landscape amongst other tools and resources, while the actor becomes an expert of their appropriation. This picture however must not be accepted without a reference to the dynamics of power, which permit varying levels of access to the appropriation of that history in the first place.¹¹⁸ What is poignant here is that power must dress itself in a legitimacy that is historically sourced, or *appropriately* “invented” or both.¹¹⁹ Social actions in this manner, old or new, must be *recognizeable* by others.

2.4.1 An African “Modernity” and its Rationality

The rationality that figures in this vision of the Malawian society is therefore not the one that has been assumed in most of classical and a large part of contemporary social theory as the pursuit of achieving harmony between rational actors and rational social architectures.¹²⁰ Indeed Mbembe, a prominent critic of the uncritical usage of terms whose conceptualization was

¹¹⁸ See further below where an argument is presented to the effect that history itself orders who appropriates it and to what extent it could be appropriated; and again because it is collectively shared or known or remembered.

¹¹⁹ This is similar to what Hobsbawm *et al* (The Invention of Tradition, 2012) argue where tradition, which attests to the history and identity of a people, is created so as to facilitate the invention of an appropriate history usually for the political purposes of attaining a social space from which interests parties can achieve a stake in the prevailing order of the social.

¹²⁰ Jürgen Habermas in his *Modernity: An Unfinished Project* (1980) attests to this argument when he states under the heading “the old and the new” of the self-celebratory tendency of modernity. He states that modernity “repeatedly articulates the consciousness of an era that refers back to the past of classical antiquity precisely in order to comprehend itself as the result of a transition from the old to the new” (cf. Calhoun *et al* (2012)).

intended to accurately denote a precise type of condition which in turn loaded them to some extent a measure of the axiologies that would allow those terms to acquire their intended critical angle, argues – and this study puts it poetically – that individuals strive to master their own states of nature, yearning to be imbued with a liberating rationality, and to be set free upon the rational modernistic order upon which they come to achieve the fullest realization of happiness.¹²¹ Here, the fullest freedom exists in the limits or confines of perhaps a probably infinite or at least ever-expanding rational order.

Indeed some thinkers of this kind of modernistic tradition have found a problematic which has come to be characterized as the agency-structure dichotomy, duality or dualism – depending on who is and from what angle they are talking.¹²² Further in the past, even thinkers such as Adam Smith encountered this problem in the way the individual rationalities of market agents, selling and buying products, came to be limited by the self-regulating market which seemed to develop an autonomous, reified existence capable of causing the individual rational agents to change their behaviours to better suit the market conditions that market itself set.¹²³

To become socially competent therefore seems to carry within it the unwanted effect of becoming coerced, induced and even completely hedged in on all and every side. More contemporary thinkers such as Habermas have even gone to the extent of uncoupling rationality into separate strands that would account for the conjectures among – put broadly – society's rationality (which he termed instrumental rationality), the individual's rationality (termed practical rationality), and emancipatory rationality which links one individual to another through communicative acts cast as contestations over claims to various *truths*. In this broad reading, Habermas argues that instrumental rationality – which he saw as the dominant strand of rationality that permits the production and reproduction of modernity's institutional order – has a

¹²¹ See Mbembe (2005), *On the Post Colony: A Brief Response to Critics*; and Mbembe (1992) *Provisional Notes on the Postcolony*.

¹²² Anthony Giddens sees it as a duality in his *Theory of Structuration* while Bourdieu seems to see it as a dualism in his *Habitus and Fields* theory. Habermas, discussed further below, sees it almost a conflict of strands of rationality which overbear and suppress each other resulting in the distorted or incomplete condition of the modernity project (Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity*, 1990; Bourdieu, *Structures, Habitus, Practices in The Logic of Practise*, 1990; Habermas, *Modernity: An Unfinished Project* in Calhoun et. al. eds, *Contemporary Sociological Theory*, 2012)

¹²³ See Callinicos (*Social Theory: A Historical Introduction*, 1999) in which this problem between the market as a reified rational thing and the individual as rational economic agents is strongly implied. Market's self-regulation suggests that individual rationality is a mere reaction to that market, further implying that individual rationality is not autonomous (or commissioned by agency) but rather induced or ordered by the market.

logic that enables it to realize its goals which, however, colonizes or regularizes the public domains of social life. This entails in his theory the manner in which individuals become instrumentalized in their everyday lives – that is in the way they actuate their practical rationalities – for the ends of the instrumental rationality. As illustrated above, the reified society again is *commodifying* human agency towards its own ends. Emancipatory rationality which is linked to communication, self-reflection, liberation, and utopian visions, is pushed out of those domains thereby limiting the extent to which individuals can contest, critique and reflect upon the modern condition by manner of acts of communication. This leaves daily life, which is animated by practical rationality or knowledge limited just to the mundane communications, understandings, and interpretations that consent to and necessitate the prevalent on-going oppressive modernity order set out by instrumental rationality (Calhoun *et al*, 2012). By bringing back the discursive communicative acts that inhere within emancipatory rationality Habermas sees a means through which this automated aspect of instrumental rationality could be resisted. Agency is a feature therefore arising from “the human capacity for language and the basic normative consensus that is implied by the structure of language and in speech rules” (Calhoun *et al*, 2012). Thus through the consensual adherence to the structure governing the usage of language there underlies a validity invested in the act of intersubjective communication in which actors observe practical rules of observations. That being so, it can still be seen in Habermas’ presentation that the human person is implicitly called to become more rationally aware on the one hand, alongside the persistent announcement of the discord amongst rationalities to which the ills happening in society can ultimately be reduced, on the other. The commitment towards aligning these rationalities in both cases (individual and societal) so as to synchronize them (communicatively) into harmony therefore remains intact.

The aim in this section is not to discredit these great seminal works. Rather, the intention is to demonstrate a profound difference between the society that has come under the banner of the West as opposed to the societies, and more particularly the Malawian one, which come under the banner of the Non-West world. The profound difference, as illustrated in this study, could perhaps be pitted at the point at which rationality is said to be occurring as the outcome of the processes of a modernized or structured mind/consciousness whose effect logically transforms society into an automated reality with the ability to induce certain if not all forms of human activity. This is opposed to this dissertation’s premise that views rationality as that which ascribes the appropriateness of any act when that act is actuated upon the social without

accepting a societally structured consciousness as the originator of social competence.¹²⁴ Even for the more pro-agency theorists, the actor acts more or less independently within the powers of their own creativity within the mitigating parameters of the learned things of their society. Again, a similar commitment towards the social is implicitly carried in this mode of thinking, both as a result of the recognition of the actor's ability to become unruly at will and also as a consequence of the learned things they carry which unwittingly validate to the individual the certainty of the "truths" about and of their social order. The notion of *unruly* itself is left intact without inquiring into the problem of what it is that the actor is becoming unruly about and thereby foreclosing the argument from a recognition of shared social ontologies which are the constitutive features of intersubjectivity – that is, the shared things that various actors become unruly towards. Furthermore, this concept of acting as those sets of activities affirming or rejecting the *rules* as done with cognisance of the social is downplayed within explanations of radical contextual analyses, or even within explanations that carry the binaries of observers as opposed to audiences in the Goffman *Dramatological* tradition.¹²⁵ The pro-structuralist thinkers, on the other extreme, see consciousness as a carrier of the mere actable rehearsals of historical processes in which the individual, as a consequence, comes to lose in totality their place as a valid point of departure for social analysis. The individual at every turn merely enforces history, and the greatest amount of agency envisaged here is the individual's ability to operationalize society's grand conspiracy (see Foucault, *The Order of Things*, 1989).

In the first case – that is the pro-agency stance – rationality is the ability to actuate one's content utmost at par with the general content of the society albeit from a mind that has been made or chooses to be civilized. In the second case – under structuralism – rationality is to act within and at the level of society where those actions are of no significance to the grand *rational* order of

¹²⁴ Questions need to be raised as to why consciousness must be first weaned out of a state of nature, and emancipated into a rational condition which seems to denude it of its prior order-of-nature abilities in order for it to function within the social. These questions arise because consciousness, even in its natural state without the features of an intelligible language, is already enabled to serve to the needs of the body that carries it, maintaining an awareness of space and time in relation to other objects. If the preceding holds, would it therefore be unreasonable to also hold that rationality is *learning-about* the social as opposed to the structuring of consciousness? More will be discussed around this question further below with reference to Winfield (2006) *Self-Consciousness and Intersubjectivity*; Caston (2002) *Aristotle on Consciousness*; and others.

¹²⁵ Goffman's Dramaturgy will be further discussed below in which certain aspects of his arguments will be shown to be giving away a silent commitment towards a structured mind, as opposed to a mind that knows what is expected of it by other minds. This will be with reference to Goffman's (1959) *The Presentation of the Self in Everyday Life*.

the society again aided by the *civilized-into-structure* mind. In-between, rationality is narrated within those same schemas lodged in the structured/civilized mind as being transmitted linguistically and symbolically from one person to another in contestations over legitimacies, carried on by actions, or in other instances, as a continuum of social systems and actions in which people's practices inform and are informed by social systems or structures.¹²⁶ These schemas which enable social competence are part and parcel of the respective structured/civilized minds of that society's individuals. What is missing, in the cases cited above, is the place of objects or things which do not confine their meanings to just that which is represented in a single consciousness – whose role intrinsically is to mould those things by virtue of its inherent intentionality towards objects evidenced by people's social competence – but also the realization that to contest or to mould a thing or an object is to strive to alter that which is collectively known upon realizing its vague *original* state of being as its original orientation in relation to all those who perceive it. It appears here therefore that consciousness seems already intent on rebelling by the very notion of thought which violates both the structurally robotized individual as presented by structuralists, the context dependent individual as espoused by the agency theorists, and the caged individual in the system-agency continuum of those who theorize in-between the two extremes. Perceiving in a social context is to see something for what it is *socially or collectively*; and then seeing it for what it can become by maintaining a due regard for the other minds concurrently observing that same thing or object. It is here that this dissertation suggests that the essence of sociability as well as its imperative lies.

Malawian rationality is therefore seen as performances actuating upon what up to this point has been referred as the normative which can be, for analytic purposes, broken down into a State and the Society dualism, and referring to both the formalities of the State and the *Norms* of society. As a result of the imposition of the state order and its institutions upon the Nyasaland/Malawi social landscape, the state, the economy it brought, and other subsequent institutions placed themselves as sets of *perceivable objects* before the African actor.¹²⁷ On the social side, the things the African knew to have constituted the recipes of living were forcibly cut into by the State as it forced its power of regulation over the activities of that new landscape. As a result,

¹²⁶ See Bourdieu and Giddens in Eliot (2009) Introduction to Social Theory.

¹²⁷ This argument is heavily supported by Mamdani when he articulates the civil and customary legal frameworks which were used to govern non-natives and natives in African colonies respectively (Citizens and Subjects, 1996). This extension to Mamdani's observation is that the post-colonies institutionalized a formal system which was not object. Rather, it was open to the impetus of various actors as was the case in the formal institution of customary courts.

the Society and State divide became acutely experienced by that African actor as a set of resources that sometimes complemented each other, at other times contradicted each other, and ultimately mitigated that Africans quest for realizing whatever things they so desired to realize. These at once complementing and contradicting features of the social landscape are learned by the individual and spur on performances which are equally competent in using them in those same complementary and contradicting patterns. This conceptualization of an African modernity helps explain for instance the excessive personalization of the African state by African leadership in spite of the written regulations that sanction state operations. Likewise, even as Hobsbawm *et al* (2012) shows, it also illustrates how the uncoded rules of the social such as norms are malleable to the *creative* impulses of those who seek to create a historical basis by which they can accord themselves a space for performance within the social setting. The State-Society dualism is therefore a collectively known space full of impressionable systemic as well as social elements that are open to individual or group impulses provided there is some basis for such impulses. And it is precisely this knowledge of the impressionability of the modern space that illustrate the learned mode of thinking that can become appropriate actions acquired by an African consciousness within that modernistic space.

This angle may in some aspects mirror the arguments of phenomenologists, and may even seem to concede to some of their propositions pertaining to the human state of habitual consciousness, and their associated techniques of bracketing so as to distil what is perceived by the individual as opposed to what is really out there in the world (see Schutz, *On Phenomenology and Social Relations*, 1970). The difference between the project of phenomenology and the stance taken here might be seen as small but it is very significant. Firstly, the stream of habitual consciousness as given by Schutz (1970) sees attentiveness as a disruption to a natural continuous order that requires the individual to more deliberately optimize amongst action recipes before slipping back into the more passive state of consciousness. Here, this passive-attentive tendency is thrown into turmoil by suggesting that the Malawian experience, induced by its inherent contradictions and foreignness, has resulted in a heightened state of alertness or attentiveness. What might be seen as a *Habitual passivity* or the tendency to slip into a reduced state of awareness when operating within *a normal situation* can equally be viewed as entailing a heightened awareness arising from a keen realization of the consequences of a change. *Passivity* hence can therefore be seen as the intense contentions amongst highly political individuals and groups wanting to appear neutral or apolitical.

2.4.2 Acting Appropriately and Consciousness

Next is the place of the notoriously difficult concept of consciousness which has been touched on in passing in a few places above. This concept is essential to this study because it helps to throw more light upon the matter of an African modernity particularly as a space characterized and animated by social action or performance. The space of African modernity, as shown above, is a canvas full of impressionable systemic as well as social objects within the already discussed processes of legitimation. Consciousness especially within this context attests to that general learned attitude in which most – if not all – things are impressionable or malleable; and that this fact about the impressionability of things is equally known by other minds within that social context. It is exactly this condition, of the mutual knowledge of the impressionability of things or objects, which enables the paradox of wanting stable systems and social normatives while at the same time undermining them; that is, wanting historical change while enforcing a stasis as seen in Bhabha's concept of mimicry (*Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse*, 1984). Furthermore, sociability as an imperative – which is an angle this dissertation as pushed – finds more weight within this concept of consciousness by illustrating that the extra-cultural nature of consciousness which is intentionality has no need to be cultured into modes of rightness or wrongness aside from the argument that consciousness pays due regard to other consciousness-ess contesting for their own ends within one and the same social system in which they all have a stake. Ends and common-stakes thus give away the notion of co-perception which in this study is seen as the basis whereupon the sociability imperative is anchored. Sociability is thus warranted by the fact that people often see the same things as well as the same implications of those same things (Coleman, 1994).

In phenomenology, and especially through the bracketing technique in which the learned ways of perceiving and being in the world are interrogated and suspended, we inadvertently become all the more aware of the primacy of what is perceived in social life (see Wolff, *Phenomenology and Sociology*, 1978: 499-500). This *focus* on perception is shared by this dissertation although it is only consequentially arrived at in phenomenology. However, phenomenology shows little commitment to presenting consciousness as occurring at a level perhaps beyond the phenomena of the social in which that consciousness oscillates between the states of habitual passivity and induced attentiveness relative to the learned way of being in the world. In this dissertation

consciousness is presented as *extra*-societal but whose content, when seen in performances, could misleadingly suggest that its entirety was domiciled within or truncated into the social.¹²⁸

The linkage between the two – that is consciousness and actual performance – is at the location of thoughts (the loaded materials of what people know about and with one another in relation to the world around them) where the intentionality of consciousness into appropriate social content occurs. The content of consciousness is therefore not seen as the isolated actions or performances actuated in the shared social realm but also as the efforts of that consciousness to co-exist with any other. Indeed, to *think* so as to find a manner of acting appropriately can be seen as one consciousness's *recognition* of another or others. And this is for the reason that an awareness of notions pertaining to appropriateness can only be directed towards other thinking people who know what to be appropriate entails (Coleman, 1994). This *recognition* perhaps summarizes the unquantifiable essence of consciousness into those activities, mitigated by thoughts, which make that consciousness only appear in the mundane and routine performances which are done to make one person *recognizable* to another. The sheer complexity of such a process of conforming in order to transgress, or being similar in order to realize diverse outcomes, perhaps attests to the magnitude of consciousness and how it is socially *limited* by the thought process – the process of optimizing or thinking through the shared content of the social. Thought is, therefore, seen as the conscious function of optimizing the perceived objects scattered upon a social terrain via the vehicle of sets of actions or performances which would be appropriable given the truncating sets of collectively *recognizable* features of the social presented by State-Society. It is as if thinking were the process of taming the vast instincts of consciousness into forms that bode well with others – thus the process of thought is a process of rebelling appropriately, or conforming rebelliously, as elsewhere surmised.

In addition, if it is acceptable to see social life as ordinarily the daily business of performance done with an intention towards a certain outcome, then due recognition must be accorded to the fact that a performance is collegially intended to transmit a message. And if intention is that which operates behind the performances, then it cannot hold at the same time that social life could collapse into a state of habitual consciousness with the occasional relapses to a state of

¹²⁸ See Winfield (Self-Consciousness and Intersubjectivity, 2006) where he argues that even in the absence of others, consciousness would still retain its self-validating feature. The extension of which implies that consciousness within society is not to be taken to mean consciousness is society or encapsulated by the workings of society. Consciousness in society has learned to work within society, drawing from its intrinsic intentionality to appropriate social thinks through the processes of thought.

attentiveness. This dissertation considers the notion of becoming alert as inherently implying an underlying notion of *monitoring* which must continuously be on-going up until that point at which, as Schutz (1967, 1970) mentions, something abnormal activates a heightened awareness or a more focused intentionality. However at that instance of abnormality, the said individual becomes more aware of their own thinking processes as opposed to an awareness of the *external* abnormality. In which case, the abnormality is by definition a conflict or contradiction within the content of consciousness pertaining to the ordinary behaviour of those objects as they are represented in the mind against that which is perceived as contradicting those *known* behaviours. In which case, heightened consciousness need not be juxtaposed with habitual consciousness for the mere fact that both instances are cases in which consciousness is habitually optimizing its own content for the purpose of generating action motivated by intentionality. These raised states of awareness are thus no more significant than the other cases in which awareness seems less aware of itself or its own processes. Therefore, people are always habitually alert regardless of them being alert to that fact; being carried along by that same motivating intentionality that seems to throw its light upon the social and the representations of that social on the mind itself. The process of thinking or optimizing amongst objects is thus not merely a matter in which consciousness presides over, perhaps to put it crudely, things that are tangible and imbued with societal relevance. It also has to do with those *objects* which may only exist in their representations found in the domain of memory; those objects that can be or are imaginable as per the historical canon of the Malawian society.

The concept of a habitual consciousness becomes even more problematic when the “public eye” already described above is added in the analysis, because it cuts across the observer and actor binary. If acting, as has been already argued, entails both performing and observing, consciousness would ordinarily always be busied with observing others and performing for others with its own ends in mind. In this case, again the habit of consciousness cannot be divorced from a continuous state of alertness; and intentionality cannot easily seat alongside the assertion of habitual passivity espoused by Schutz (1967). Rather, consciousness whose very essence is always intentional is consistently and permanently aroused and alert to the social objects it routinely seeks to optimize appropriately with respect to other consciousness-es.

This description tallies well with the incidences of Malawian *contradictions* where there appears to be the concurrent existence of social things such as witchcraft, polygamy, constitutional order, religious fundamentalism, morality, condom usage, corruption, Ubusu/Umunthu¹²⁹,

¹²⁹ The Bantu peoples of Africa’s philosophy of community and co-existence.

ethnicity, parliament, the judiciary, chiefs and other obviously incompatible concepts that constitute the Malawian social experience.¹³⁰ The argument is not that the Malawian actor knows all there is to know about their social habitat but rather that they are aware of the institutive power of the entities that surround them on the one hand, and the fact that those entities are activated or animated by other Malawians who equally recognize that power.¹³¹ There would appear therefore to be a mutual knowledge of the instrumentality of all things that constitute the perceived social sphere(s). Furthermore, there appears to also be the presence of a learned habit that more things could be brought into play should the performance to a specific conducive context be executed right. As a result, all things that can be useful become useful towards the numerous goals of the various actors and their group associations. Learning about the order of the society is therefore less about the internalization of social realities that have a structuring effect on consciousness that transforms it into a conduit of sorts for that rational order. Rather, here the actor can be seen as having learned *how to be intentional* in the rational or objective order. This learned way of thinking about that order is what equips actors to realize what kind of instruments can be drawn upon into the sorts of performances that allow their actions the legitimation they require, without the rapid forgetting or erasure of what the permissible alternative could have been at a time prior to the new expectation. The old and temporarily inappropriate performance could just as easily become a resource for the future. To put it extremely, all of Malawi's *rememberable* history becomes available for appropriation at a given social context. What is actuated from that history however is mediated by the learned mode of thinking which allows its resultant actions to be recognizable by others when carried out. As such, sociability is asserted but without needing to cross-over into analyses about the *structure* of consciousness.

2.4.3 The Role of History and Acting in the “Now”

In social theoretic and even philosophical presentations by and of the West, forgetting is akin to weaning oneself from a prior state of underdevelopment to a more advanced stage of

¹³⁰ It should be borne in mind that these contradictory concepts are only contradictory to the extent that they are co-present in terms of their absolute connotations or definitions. In the real social setting however, these concepts are deployed tactfully to accompany a performance and as such emerge and disappear in a manner that facilitates their mutual co-existence – a mutual co-existence that is impractical only the stage of a performance and yet harmonious within the space of the mind or of consciousness. This is because performances draw from historical definitions which allow its spectators to recognize the logic or direction of that performance as it is being appropriated.

¹³¹ Again, consciousness is aware of other consciousness-es, which is precisely why social life is governed by some sets of rules or procedures. See Coleman (Foundations of Social Theory, 1994).

development. It is similar to the shedding of a state of nature to attain the greater clarities of civilization. It is a progression from a parochial, rudimentary state to a more sophisticated and developed state. To look back into one's own history is to aggressively emphasize the progression, and to undermine the earlier rudimentary levels of existence. This process of looking back emphasizes those points at which *informed* choices caused the West to opt for a superior course of history over an inferior one.¹³² That is, to look into history is to refer to the "that thing which we once were but are no more precisely because we abandoned it for this something better we are today". There is thus an inherent commitment to keeping records, writing and the *systematic* revisiting of those records to emphasize the greatness of or to improve the now. In some instances in which the now is not so great the more *rationalized* mind, equipped with newer techniques, asserts itself nonetheless intricately picking out the errors that were overlooked at the time they were committed. Even in a failed now, the present mind and its techniques still purport themselves as superior in which one kind of history is exalted and another is shamed.

Conversely, in the Malawian setting, what is forgotten could be understood as that which is intersubjectively known to be inappropriate at a given time or times, and at a given space or spaces. It is akin to collectively, through that intersubjective awareness, co-echoing what is and what is not. This is not to depict the Malawian as one who is incapable of losing any single bit of *history* from memory. What the argument seeks to present here is that the thrust for progress accompanied by the throwing off of the primitive for the more civilized as seen in the West's approach is not as tenaciously pursued in the Malawian context.¹³³ Indeed the sentimentalism that has come to ensemble *African culture* as something that was disrupted and corrupted by western colonial imperialism has only made this need to keep remembering even more emphatic. The point being that what is lost from Malawian memory is lost due to the natural limitation of the human mind or minds to retain information accurately coupled by the social condition that actively warrants the creation or invention of history as opposed to the intentional systematic forgetting throttled on by a commitment towards emphasizing one kind of historical narrative over another as seen in the West.

¹³² See Habermas's *Modernity: An Unfinished Project* cited in Calhoun (Contemporary Sociological Theory, 2012); also see Wolff (1978: 500b) as he glorifies Western culture's own cultural ability to question itself systematically through standardized methods of science.

¹³³ This might be evidenced lack of an entrenched writing and record keeping tradition, preferring the usage of the oral tradition in which things are not merely lost in terms of historical accuracy, but things become resources for future events precisely because of that inaccuracy which is endemic to the oral tradition.

This term history, which keeps recurring, ought to be disambiguated somewhat as well. It has so far been used in two ways. Firstly it has been used within the context of a factual and chronological documentation of events followed by the generation of casual explanations pertaining to the unfolding of the Malawian society – that is, in its academic or scholarly sense. This is particularly the order in which history appears in the first sections of this study up to the section titled *An African Modernity and its Rationality*. Its second usage emerges especially in this section in which history refers to that which can be called upon because it is or can be collectively remembered; that which can be imagined in relation to something that can be remembered; which draws its power primarily from this mutual perceptibility; and has within it the malleability for potential exploitation; all to validate an action within a specific context through social performances – that is history in its political or social sense.

This *diabolical* role of history is in fact not strange. Some historians have noted for instance that before colonialism the territory that is now Malawi heard what were essentially claims embedded in historical tales whereupon kings and chiefs legitimated their power. When stronger kingdoms emerged, chiefs sometimes conjured stories linking various widely known events to demonstrate their connections to the new powerful leader or in other instances to attest to the validity of their own chieftaincies and kingdoms if they came under challenge (Berman, 1998). Disgruntled deserters of one kingdom could raise themselves to the status of chiefs in other territories riding on the tales they would tell about their shared lineage with a well-known ruler of a large or dominant kingdom (Berman, 1998). During colonialism, as patronage grew in the divide and rule posture of the State, numerous chieftaincies sprung up and told *known* tales, adding validity or proof to the agitations and competitions for State recognition. During Banda's regime, the president himself inaccurately conjoined various aspects of Malawian history, and disregarded others, with regards to the process of de-colonization to present himself as the God-Ordained ruler of the newly independent country. He also appropriated aspects of the Chewa matrilineal culture to present himself as Malawi's ultimate guardian and further is paternalistic hegemony (Lwanda, 2006). Bakili Muluzi, Malawi's first president in the democratic dispensation, told the well-known tales about the Malawian people's torturous past and how he was committed to eradicating poverty via cash hand-outs at political rallies. More recently, Bingu wa Mutharika, Malawi's president who died in office in 2012, told stories of why he went into exile, conveniently side-stepping his personal problems with Kamuzu Banda, and only emphasizing his detest for the colonizer, thereby expressing the view that his exile was only because he was too proud to be ruled by a colonial government (Lwanda, 2006). He deliberately avoids mentioning his problems with Banda as he too was at this time committed to creating a

hegemonized State-Society, embedded in his own personality by rehearsing Banda's authoritarian script (Lwanda, 2002). The resource of history permits therefore the actuation of action upon a context everywhere punctuated with contextual appropriateness.

2.4.4 Differential Access to Power: the Malawian Historical Canon

The canvas of social performances should not be taken as a level playing field in which all actors have equal access and acceptability to deploy an element or elements of Malawi's historical canon. History itself has its dominant actors, and the events that are recalled to undergird the performance about to be taken, were carried out by certain dominant figures upon other inferior figures, permitting the victors of those tales to achieve a *something valuable*. This inherently implies that those victors would shed a something undesirable with or against the will of other historical actors. Elsewhere above an argument has been presented in which the shed thing of history is not forgotten, it is merely side-lined from the active mainstream canon, but still remains a *rememberable* artefact which could be called upon for the legitimation of a performance for another time and space. However, within the historical canon are these images which depict the victors and the losers, and the acquired and the lost, to the extent that there is a salience within that canon that prescribes in some measure who may or may not access its content to contextualize an intended set of actions or a performance. This distinction of who may do what with the history of Malawi, which inheres within that very history, is a huge part of what organizes both the face-to-face contextual politics of performance as well as the broader *performative* architecture of the State-Society.¹³⁴

This power of history is effected at the "thought and action location" where the vastness of consciousness becomes limited to the appropriateness of action in terms of who may carry out what action at what time or space, as argued elsewhere in this study. Also, mention has already been made that during the dictatorship there was a cleaving to the empty status of citizenship, presented as a commitment to the State, so as to acquire the security drawn from being apolitical, and therefore showing how power under Malawi's authoritarianism was precisely confined to those spaces that kept the people disaffiliated and therefore "committed" to the State. Later with the onset of democracy, the individual is afforded the opportunity to creep into these spaces that were priory denied via the new opportunity now granted by the allowance to launch a defense and level a legitimating claim upon the historical canon and any number of its collectively *rememberable* or *imaginable* contents. In this study's view, the most prominent

¹³⁴ The historical account for this proposition has been repeatedly expressed in the various sections of this dissertation.

expression of such incisions into new annals of power comes with the arrival of the powerful Malawian Judiciary, whose powers are broad in their ability to interfere with any situation under contention, but are limited by the manner in which they are grounded in a symmetrical code governing their application. Such power is thus perceptively, and within the pragmatics of contesting for political space, less of an affront to the collective because of its inherent formalistic regulation, as opposed to the more arbitrary ones such as those of parliament and the executive, which are drawn more excessively from the creative appropriation of the contents of a malleable historical canon. The extents to which the powers of the judiciary seem to be without bounds and are at the same time restricted depict the standardizing role of that institution. This way of looking at that institution could perhaps reduce the usual puzzlement over its *mysterious* ability to *appear* independent when all other institutions seem too *apparently* interfered with.

These prior arguments are important because they parallel vividly with the structure of power within the Malawian society and state. Both the institutional order and social normative draw excessively from the historical canon, while at the same time, due to the room accorded to the actor to defend themselves when questioned by others, the historical canon continuously incurs distortion to the benefit of expanding the historical content of the canon so as to allow more actors to appropriate its elements to undergird their own performances. This emphasis here is on expanding the canon even though in actual effect, the appropriations of that canon's contents more accurately describe efforts to keep as much of that canon's malleable content available to self, and largely unavailable to others.¹³⁵ To act seems to imply therefore the intention to prevent others from acting with regard to a certain material or symbolic thing, or outcome.

Interesting debates regarding gender equality for instance could stem from an interrogation of this relationship between the canon of history (inclusive of all its tales and their malleability) and power relations between men and women in the Malawian society. Also, such a view would assist in understanding why the Banda regime for instance had an obsession with conformity that even regulated the way people styled and presented their very own bodies. Lwanda (2006) shows for example that Banda's face was imprinted on the very clothing worn by people and hang in the rooms in which people worked and lived. The State even prescribed what an appropriate presentation of the Malawian body should be; short and kempt hair for the men, and long dresses that *preserved* the female body's decency for women. These conformity obsessions could be understood as the violent attempts to prevent people from participating in the

¹³⁵ This has elsewhere been described as the obsession to see everyone conform totally while wanting to rebel completely.

appropriation and projection of the nation's histories, by denying them access even to personal aesthetics. This monopoly over Malawian history was in actual practice tantamount to keeping people from creeping into those *spaces* of creative appropriation which necessitated *political* citizenship; a type of citizenship which could have undermined Banda's dictatorial regime.

Political inclusion, therefore, just as it was denied in the Banda dictatorship and the time before that, inheres in the Malawian context almost entirely in busting open the historical canon in order to permit more and more people to have a string to attach to their performances, and to load it with newer content. At the same time, while busting the canon is intensely and inextricably the content of individual performances, the flux it creates contributes to an ever increasing instability in the both the institutional order and the social normative to the extent that the Malawian public begins to unwittingly demand for stabilizing features in both these arenas of state and society.¹³⁶ In some instances, certain contents of history or call them norms *sensed* to contain excessive political power are frozen and kept out of the discourse, and are therefore effectively turned into a set of standardizations. They remain parts of a known out-of-reach historical resource. This keeping out-of-reach too is an appropriation geared towards silencing certain contents and therefore denying certain others from tapping into their legitimating power.¹³⁷ In other instances, bureaucratic processes become emphasized to reduce the flexibility of the institutional order, and therefore help to ascertain higher levels of predictability. In both cases, the totalizing effect is a commitment to greater formalization at the societal level while the creative impulses at the individual and other localized levels continue to contest that canon.

¹³⁶ For instance, the Malawi Judiciary. Also, Coleman's (1994) arguments pertaining to social exchange strongly suggest that while there is a lack of individual commitment towards the collective, the shared stakes resident in the society from which livelihoods and community derive account for the commitment towards maintaining a stable social order with set rules for living.

¹³⁷ An example of such a resource could be the parental connotations attached to the office of the president of Malawi. So overpowering is this connotation that it caused the young freedom-fighters to request Banda to return from Ghana in 1957 to lead the MCP because he was an older male person who could be entrusted by the public with the role of leadership. They thought Malawians would not rally behind "boys". Secondly, these parental connotations also dispel strong criticism because parental connotations are closely related to the norms of respect and reverence for the elderly. They also depict the elderly as the stores of wisdom – the knowers of Malawi's history. Thus a fierce critic of the incumbent is easily brushed aside for showing no respect for the parent of the nation as well as possessing less knowledge about Malawi than the incumbent leader. The sheer political force that could be unleashed following the dislodgement of this element of the canon in relation to the position of the president and their establishment causes it to be appropriated as an element of history which is **self-evidently** and **irrefutably** Malawian – but only as a result of recognizing it as a historical resource whose power is best left alone.

Under such a condition, formalities ought to not necessarily be glorified as the unintended and yet beneficial happenstances of a confused social situation. Instrumental formalities of this kind are and remain highly prejudicial and asymmetric rooted in – in the best case – the individual or localized tendencies to perform only that aspect of action which is *rememberable* by the collective, and – in the worst case – the aspects reproduced and actuated by those with the highest platforms for their voices to be heard, who *claim* to *supposedly* possess the greatest access to and most accurate reading of history, and who are backed by the rewarding and punishing forces of the State. Such a society could pessimistically be typified as representing a structurally entrenched commitment to the status quo.

While this commitment to the status quo is not completely dispelled by this dissertation, it is neither completely embraced. As already mentioned, the status quo continues to be *that* as the result of the total effect of actors who in principle have no real commitment to *it* as a trusted grand order from which they obtain a livelihood, so to speak (see Coleman, 1994). Rather this superficial commitment is attributed to the social turbulence from a great amount of fluidity arising from the discord afforded by isolated or individualized performances seeking to cement and dispel the semi-temporal statuses quo of contexts. This ambivalent commitment is however thought in this dissertation as being somewhat diluted by the possibilities of what is imaginable and appropriable; the chances of that which is imaginable and appropriable to break into the public domain; and the potential effects it would have in the on-going contestations for a legitimating narrative of power for anchoring any kind of performance (Bhabha, 1984). Social change can therefore be seen as an inherent feature of consciousness, truncating itself in thoughts to produce *recognizable* performances, without a grand, everywhere symmetrical, commitment to the status quo beyond just the social contexts or sets of social contexts in which actions must result in desirable outcomes. Admittedly, as shown in the historical presentation, the ramifications of these actions or performances can culminate in grand momentums favourable for change, seemingly orchestrated in a given direction, and undergirded by a legitimating quasi-ideology even when essentially most people could rightly be seen as acting entirely for their own purposes and ends.

2.5 Conclusion

A detailed outcome of Malawi's history from its independence in 1964 to around 2012 is provided in this section. A sketch account of Malawi as a colony from 1891 up until its independence is also given. This sketch was primarily for the reason of adding a context whereupon the eventual picture of Malawi as an independent state could be better appreciated.

Furthermore, a discussion of how Malawi acquired its particular brand of nationalism is carried out – a nationalism shown to have emanated from the particular criteria of social, economic and historical processes that galvanized or induced certain kinds of activities leading into Malawi's independence over and above the orchestrated efforts of the liberation movements.

These pre-independence activities emanated from a diversity of politically motivated interests which were ethnically and regionally embedded, and as such directed towards the State. However, these political ambitions were never resolved by the new African leadership. This was particularly because they occasioned a new avenue for political hegemony. By establishing a powerful rhetoric of nation-building drawn from the struggle for independence, a kind of state culture was created which suppressed all other forms of culture that might have originated from the society itself. This suppression of cultural creativity is akin to the elimination of dissent. As such, Malawian life became about mastering the script handed down by the State, and acting it out in order to portray oneself as an adherent of that project of nation-building. In sum, dissent is inherently divorced from the society, and political surveillance becomes automatic and self-perpetuating as the members of Malawi's society become the surveying spectators for total conformity.

As a result of this, the social actor in Malawi acquires a great ability to perform in a manner that conveys the expected message while maintaining a hidden ambition to acquire towards those things they deem worthy of pursuit at the personal or group level. It is in this regard that the impressionability of most things social – if not all – pertaining to state and society become all the more apparent. There is thus an inherent ambivalence of wanting to achieve total autonomy while expecting others to conform totally to state and societal expectations. This situation is all the more heightened with the collapse of the dictatorship in 1993 and the onset of democracy from 1994 and onwards, eventually requiring a standardizing institution to manage the fluidity. This is where judicial power enters the stage and functions as a stabilizing centre of power.

African Modernity is therefore hinged upon the vast array of State and Societal resources that are impressionable by anyone provided they have a legitimating narrative that would permit their deployment. The legitimating narrative however is itself wrapped up in the differential accesses to the malleable content of Malawi's historical canon. Consequently, the appropriation of historical content to one's performances is therefore a political activity disguised as a lack of interest to politics.

3 History, Sociability and Intersubjectivity

3.1 Introduction

This section now turns to “intersubjectivity” – a term tasked with the responsibility of capturing the paradoxical social condition where the numerous minds in a society which are impervious to each other seem able to understand each other as if they were able to transcend each other’s opacity (Reich, 2010). A few and perhaps even minor adjustments to the manner in which the problem or paradox of intersubjectivity has been presented by various thinkers are proposed. This is particularly with respect to the manner in which intersubjectivity has been implied in the discussions under History and Sociability.

Reich’s (2010) article presents a very useful summary of the philosophical and sociological renditions of this problem, with itself ending upon an announcement of sorts of a solution to the paradox. The aim of this section will be to contribute to such on-going attempts of resolving the intersubjectivity paradox by sketching a kind of philosophy that could help to guide the process of thinking about intersubjectivity as well as conducting research into and around this tedious concept. This is vital for to this research enterprise because it will further develop the idea of the role of history as a legitimating *adhesive* that enables action to remain recognizable (and thus acceptable to others) while maintaining its internal commitment towards realizing personal or group goals. The society’s historical stock will thus be seen as the abstract field in which intersubjectivity works: in which it arbitrates within those local contexts what is appropriate as opposed to what is not.

This dissertation’s commitment to maintaining a level playing field between social researchers and the various actors in the society¹³⁸ is also discussed in relation to intersubjectivity. This is because even as Sociologists and other social scientists strive to generate specialized knowledge, through systematic techniques (Horkheimer & Adorno, 1973), the manner in which various specialities interact within the social whole, with each one specifically laying a professional claim about the distinctness of the subject matter it is particularly concerned with, makes it too highly a complicated matter to dismissively accord certain crafts an elevated status, including those in the social sciences and Sociology. There are therefore adequate grounds from which the role of intersubjectivity even within the academy should be admitted.¹³⁹ As such a more modest

¹³⁸ The argument for this commitment is more properly presented further down.

¹³⁹ See Weber’s problematic term of “understanding – *verstehende*” summarily entails that before anyone can ask casual questions calling for explanation, one must understand what they want to ask casual questions about - that is,

posture would be more beneficial – as will be seen further below – as it allows for greater political viability for those academic enterprises, such as this one, which seem very concerned with the task of facilitating the development of fairer forms of social organization. Lastly, this section develops a sketch philosophy of how Intersubjectivity could perhaps be seen as a way towards social objectivity following a closer interrogation of what this concept implies in as far as the social agents involved and engaged in interaction are concerned.

3.2 The Society Presented So Far

So far, the society as presented in this study is made up of the formalities and the normatives which are, before the actor, the features that enable or disable certain performances. There is therefore a recognition of the more stable features that provide the general backdrop whereupon or against which social content can be actuated or displayed.

Secondly, the actor has been presented as an appropriator of various material and symbolic content with a keen interest to see certain outcomes. But here, emphasis has been placed on the aspect of social competence which is generally the awareness of other consciousness-es. In the next few paragraphs, this awareness of other consciousness-es or minds show that co-awareness or mutual cognition should not necessarily mean that action is directed towards other consciousness-es or minds, but rather that action is always towards the mutually perceived object moderated or punctuated by that awareness of the other consciousness-ess or minds' equal ability to see that same object.

Thirdly, and by extension, that the world people live is accordingly made up of social ontologies which stem from the mutual awareness of material and symbolic things. Social ontologies could be viewed as the realm of things as they are mutually perceived as opposed to things as they essentially are.¹⁴⁰ Especially as it pertains to material objects, the thing – as in the Decartes tradition – can be reduced to just a vane object with whatever real features it possesses (Descartes, 1999). However, here and in line with what other thinkers (Husserl and Schutz), the thing or object is not merely its base essence but rather it also wears the socio-historical content from which a particular kind of perception of that thing or object in that society derives from. However, under Social Ontologies, the thrust towards seeing objects as they really are is left alone. Thus material and symbolic things become more or less the same category of things as

one must be able to first interpret the problem and thereby logically put it for understanding before explanation (cf. *A History of Sociological Analysis*, 1978: 501).

¹⁴⁰ Which is an intentional reversal of the phenomenological bracketing technique proposed by Husserl seen in his *Philosophy as a Rigorous Science* (1965).

such because their perceptibility is largely with regard to what they entail socially as opposed to what they are in the real material world.

The performances therefore that follow these things or objects attest to the possession of the knowledge that actor has with regards to those things or objects, and therefore, drawing from the historical archive of that society to legitimate their actions with regards to those objects. The world thus becomes recognizable to all by performances while these so-called social ontologies become intersubjective objects around which any kind of performance is primed or played-out.

3.3 Intersubjectivity as “the Centres of Our History”

The problem now is situated squarely on the concept of intersubjectivity. As mentioned above, Reich (2010) presents a very well balanced approach to understanding the intellectual undercurrents that have contributed to developing its somewhat confused comprehension by scholars at least up to the point at which the article was published. Reich identifies three dominant canons within the intersubjectivity discourse which are listed as three distinct questions. These questions motivated the angles taken by the numerous scholars who dealt with this concept.

The dominant canons are;

- (a) on the matter of Other Minds,
- (b) on intersubjectivity as mutual knowledge of an object,

And lastly,

- (c) the problem of double-contingency.

On the matter of Other Minds, the discussions as Reich summaries them revolve around the problem of opacity, which was promptly recognized at the very onset of this chapter. Without the ability to directly read into the thoughts of another person, people’s ability to still be able to arrive at understanding or to limit the occurrences of misunderstanding presents an obvious paradox. On Intersubjectivity as mutual knowledge or co-awareness of an object, the opacity problem seems to be temporarily overcome but at the expense of arriving at another problem of co-perception. The most obvious and intuitive solution seems to be communication or the intentional endeavour of various persons to strive to be understood in a certain fashion. And with it, the temporarily overcome opacity is made all the more intense. This then requires that very complex typologies be developed in order to categorize the various cognitive and social

levels of communication, such as lying as opposed to telling the truth, are concerned. The person now comes to cognitively carry the tensions of the two worlds of outward portrayals versus inward motivations.¹⁴¹ This is markedly dissimilar to performance which is essentially the continuous surface state of acting within limitations as a learned way of living as opposed to an all-the-time cognitively engaged activity of how to carry-out a certain kind of action. This is warranted because history – that collectively shared canon or stock of things – already prescribes definitional limitations regarding the use of its various resources. Intentionality on the part of consciousness is its endemic pursuit of realizing outcomes which, as already demonstrated, only occasionally becomes aware of its own processes of thinking once the on-going monitoring aspect of consciousness stumbles upon a discord between the world outside the mind and the content of the mind.

The problem of double-contingency, which was brought about by Parsons following his attempts to resolve the opacity and co-awareness problems, arises when Parsons argues that intersubjectivity is achieved with due regard to the conventions of broader society. Thus, in every situation involving any number of persons or actors, prior knowledge of what is expected comes to feature and helps decide what is expected of them in that particular context. However, with this announcement, a *nihilism* ensues in which social actors find themselves unable to act because they have no certain means of knowing what the others would expect them to do within those very vague social conventions. Expectations brew more expectations as actors continuously send and receive indications of what the others intend to do given that context and the broader societal conventions. In short, the existence of norms is insufficient as it pertains to action primarily because norms do not pre-empt who should proceed to act once the context or the *Stage* emerges. Norms only regularize actions after this incapacitating oddity of intersubjectivity has already been overcome. Reich (2010) summarily makes the contribution that intersubjectivity can perhaps be understood in the terms of human sociobiological evolution in which the human state of consciousness has learned to read the bodily dispositions of others and to make inferences from them as non-intentional giveaways of internal bodily states, while adhering concurrently to the more intentional signals transmitted via linguistic communication.

¹⁴¹ Interestingly Husserl who is considered the founder of Phenomenology with his renowned slogan “Back to the things” effectively announces a foreclosure into looking at things as they collectively appear through the veil of culture preferring to inquire how they appear to people as individuals. With that posture, the intersubjectivity logically conflates with communication, and the lines between minds are entrenched ever more deeply. See Wolff (1978: 501). This intellectual mood might have lent its hands to the Parsionian problem of double-contingency.

He leaves the rest of the nuances to empirical research specifically aimed at looking at what the complexities of interaction are.

This dissertation proposes a few tweaks to the generally outlined problems of intersubjectivity rendered above. Firstly, the assumption that intersubjectivity is arrived at is seen to be misleading particularly to the extent that social action is assumed to be docile or directed at no one until there is an instance in which an *interaction* becomes inevitable. Preferably, this study argues that intersubjectivity is always on-going. This is attested to by the fact that people even in states largely devoid of direct interactional engagement with others portray actions which are recognisably *persons-consistent* (Coleman, 1994, pp. 34-47). This is as if to say that the state of ordinary normality already entails non-direct but nonetheless intentional engagement. The fact that the *behaviour* of people varies considerably when they are in isolation as opposed to when they are in the company of others goes to further this notion that ordinarily people are already intersubjectivity engaged once they make the entry into the public domain. Consequently, the instance in which *face-to-face* interactions present themselves ought not to be seen as the coming to the fore of a stage. Rather, they could be seen as part of a continuous procession of an already occurring stage, or the merging of different individual actors onto the same stage, so to speak, brought about by the continuously rolling intersubjective canvas in the background of that instance. Intersubjectivity is thus not achieved; it is the continuously undergirding platform whereupon the various performances are staged. Intersubjectivity is thus neither static nor fixed, it is always under the intrusions of actors who look to it to not reproduce it but stake a claim for a different set of actions out of the collectively known roster of its contents. With this angle, the Other Minds problem of opacity grappled with by Schutz and Husserl, the double-contingency problem of Parsons, and intersubjectivity as the mutual knowledge of an object seen in the arguments of some existentialist philosophers, become more manageable.¹⁴²

One implication of this argument can be summarized by this question: what then is the social essence of human action? A second and subsequent implication could also be summarized in the question: how then do we think of the idea of communication which is everywhere present at the point of interaction? With regards to the former, human action entails a brutal intent upon an object and thus, human action in its essence is pure intentionality towards that thing or object that the individual seeks to affect. Performances are therefore aesthetics and elaborate contingences that accompany that action for the purpose of the co-present minds. As such, there is the thing – the social ontology – that is the object to which action is brutally geared towards,

¹⁴² See Reich (2010) “Three Problems of Intersubjectivity – And One Solution”.

and then there is the co-present mind whose unknown intentions must yield to the performance that legitimates the equally unknown intentions of the perpetrator towards that social ontology or thing. In the latter question, communication which is facilitated largely by the resource of language collapses into the realm of performances precisely because it is unnecessary as regards the question of acting upon or towards social ontologies. Communication and its linguistic processes are thus exclusively for the other co-present mind: social actors do not communicate with the social ontologies they encounter, they only communicate with other social actors.

Communication is thus the process of speaking about and around the social ontology in play. Within this conceptualization, communication particularly as a linguistic exercise, involves turning a certain number of its signs or symbols into representatives of the social ontology-(ies) in question, and then using the vast remainder of its other signs and symbols to haggle around and about an aspect of that social ontology. In this process, the performance of language manages to both institute the object under contest as well as to argue about what that object can become, what that object is, and what that object is not.

It is in this regard that this study made its decisive break with the communicative rationality of Habermas, and other similar agency theories presented above in which individuals are shown to be engaged in the transmission of *arguments* back and forth between and amongst themselves, and thereby unwittingly conflating communication as intersubjectivity itself or in the best case as a process of achieving an intersubjectivity reminiscent of a consensus. Here, social ontologies are the building blocks of intersubjectivity, and therefore transform the concept of intersubjectivity from one that is worked towards into one that is continuously present. Communication inclusive of language, on the other hand, becomes the entirety of the performance that masks the brute intentionality of action. Furthermore, communication thus functions as the persistent reminder that we all know what we are talking about precisely because language resides seemingly symmetrically in all of us – as such, people assume that we all must know the same things. As the argument for the historical canon presented in the previous section goes, social ontologies can accurately be seen as centres of shared public history in which the society as a whole recognizes itself based on the manner in which it *normally* presides over various situations.

3.4 Researching Social Ontologies – towards Social Objectivity

This study seeks to make this minor proposition into the difficulty of researching intersubjectivity. The place of the mind and its internal processes need not feature as the dominant preoccupation when the need to research intersubjectivity arises. The focus rather

ought to be mainly on attempting to expose the social ontology at play by inquiring into what features of the linguistic communication process have attained a centrality in a specific interaction.

As mentioned above, any communicative process of an interaction entails haggling or contending about a thing which at that point in time attains a centrality. This thing or object, as it is perceived and contested in view of its various affordances or implications, becomes necessarily reified, and is dealt with as if it were real as a result of what its various affordances enable or prohibit in relation to those involved in the emergent focused mutual perception. Even though its power to enable or hinder can be traced back as the potentiality of the reaction of other minds to a performance dimmed by them as warranted or unwarranted by the social ontology, the focus of the haggling process on and around this thing as if it were a real thing presents that thing as if it had affective power intrinsic to itself. Thus even in the case of a material object, as it has already been indicated, its material essence is of little value beyond the obvious fact that it exists at a particular place and at a particular time. Beyond its mere existence, it is clothed in symbolisms which ultimately position it at par with other things which only exist as symbols. To that extent, the social ontologies of both material and immaterial things are housed in their social relevance or their social meaning – that is, what they entail socially.

A communicative act therefore takes heed of all these socially ascribed characteristics of the object(s) in question. To that effect, a communicative act will always give away or inadvertently point towards the centre(s) around which its entire engagement revolves. This is primarily because to communicate is to focus in on a particular thing, amongst several others which may be varyingly present in any given context, which carries its own sets of prerequisites and requirements – that is, its own sets of history – which entail how an interaction ought to proceed with regards to that particular object within that given setting. The rendering of the communicative act will therefore be characterized by a process of enforcing an historical aspect of that social ontology, elaborating on its potential usages perhaps as it stands alongside other social ontologies, or even attempting to repel it as inadequate in contrast to other ontologies that could be brought into the haggling. This presentation thus depicts only the simplest scenario in which two socially *equal individuals* enter into an interaction. In an actual societal setting in which various individuals themselves bear on their very bodies and persons the various symbols of their society, the communicative process would not mirror this optimistic democratic model. However, for the intents of presenting an alternative towards how intersubjectivity could be

investigated or researched, this study proposes that any interactive encounter will give away the central things around which it is instituted.

3.5 Some Instances of Social Ontologies

Below are a few illustrations presenting the most basic application of this proposed research method in the areas of the media (both broadcast and print), and in the academy. The common or *ordinary* interactions found in the society outside the academy could be seen as requiring a reduced intensity of vigour in the process of identifying and describing the social ontology in question as opposed to the academy. However, the simplifying factor is that communication at whatever level will oscillate back and forth between the broad canvas of social ontologies and the central ones involved in an interaction. At this point, many taken for granted social ascriptions pertaining to that social ontology come into play, giving the communicative process a distinct character in which certain things may not even be said because they are obvious or perhaps even forbidden, while other things may be emphasized because they keep the perception of that object confined to a particular perspective or even challenge it, and so on. The dance itself, so to speak, of communication around the central object(s) cannot hide the things that are mutually *seen* and contested. The key is to infer into the communicative process to distil precisely what the ordering collectively perceived things in any interaction could be.

3.5.1 The Broadcast Media and Newspapers

If it is accepted as earlier argued that intersubjectivity is not achieved but rather that it always present and on-going, then even the activities of presenting stories into the public domain will carry the saliences of the social ontologies that would determine both the manners in which that story is written as well as received. It has already been pointed out also that bodies and persons, as well as institutions (such as the Judiciary for instance) acquire statures or symbolisms, thus making them social ontologies in their own respects, and therefore requiring certain performances in the recognition of the ascriptions necessitated by those symbolisms. Therefore, the sayer of the story too is a social ontology whose symbolism, itself aided by the performances of the one who is saying it, also configures the kind of reception the story will get vis-à-vis the sayer's on styles of telling that story in recognition to the social ontologies involved in its telling. Below, two cases are taken to show particularly a macro-level social-ontological communicative process.

Take for instance the case of the Zodiak Broadcasting Station (ZBS) – a private radio station *widely known and recognized* for its impartial and professional reporting¹⁴³ – which was chosen by the Malawi Electoral Commission (MEC) in 2009 to be the official broadcaster of the general elections. The government, acting as MEC, preferred ZBS to its own Malawi Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) which is still regarded as the most expansive broadcaster in that country. What was interesting in this matter in a way that furthers the arguments presented in this study were the concurrent and conflicting messages being sent at once by one and the same government pertaining to these two giant broadcasting houses. On the one hand, MEC emphasized the integrity and credibility of ZBS especially in the very serious matter of electoral results broadcasting.¹⁴⁴ On the other hand, the executive branch of government – while upholding the MEC decision – emphasized that same professionalism of MBC by continuing to use it as an outlet of its electoral propaganda. The contradiction is in the very opposing senses in which these two presentations of media houses continued to be emphasized without necessarily creating a tangible tension within the public domain. To the extent of praising the professionalism of ZBS the government was at the same time and to a similar extent admitting to the strong bias of its own MBC to itself, and that if the elections were to be widely received as credible then MBC was not to be officially mandated to air the election’s results. And yet in as far as State propaganda¹⁴⁵ was concerned, the MBC was in the government’s *opinion* a free and fair radio station which only reported news exactly as it happened, and therefore the so-called propaganda was not propaganda at all – it was merely the professional MBC attesting to the merits of a great government that was serving its people in the best way. MEC did not challenge this MBC *professionalism* either. Obviously, there is a clash of presentations here because

¹⁴³ The Media Council of Malawi (MCM) on their website have a slide-presentation in which Zodiak Broadcasting Station is hailed for its ability to remain impartial in its programming and commercially viable to the effect of beginning to usurp the MBC in terms of listenership because of its impartiality and professionalism (<http://www.mediacouncilmw.org/update-July-2/Balancing%20commercial%20interests%20editorial%20interests%20ppt.pptx>)

¹⁴⁴ “Zodiak’s total political output may be much smaller than, say, that of MBC or Joy Radio but is it fairly well balanced which is a creditable achievement for a station moving towards its first election period” - Malawi Electoral Commission, MEC, commenting on ZBS, quoted on the MCM website, www.mediacouncilmw.org

¹⁴⁵ MBC, since its inception after independence in 1964, has always been the mouthpiece of the party in government. See a report to this effect by the Nation Online newspaper titled, “MBC: Public or Party Broadcaster?” at <http://mw-nation.com/mbc-public-or-party-broadcaster> posted on 1 May, 2013.

ZBS's preference was an automatic discrediting of the MBC; or conversely, MBC's integrity should not have necessitated MEC to opt for ZBS.¹⁴⁶

The fact that these decisions were made by the same government, albeit it in the separate organs of the executive and the *independent* MEC, entail that both organs were acutely aware of what was at stake – that thing or social ontology was presenting *a legitimate general election*. What would warrant the presentation of a legitimate election was to have an apparently impartial MEC as the organizing authority of the election as well as radio station widely *perceived* for its impartial programming which was ZBS. As such, these ascriptions of the thing called *a legitimate election* were presented to the public, failing which the thing they wished to present namely a legitimate election would have become something else other than that, such as a sham election. Even more interesting was the reception this decision received from the rest of the private media of Malawi. So devastatingly crippling was the effect of this decision to choose ZBS that it silenced the small but extremely militant private media sector of Malawi who *forcibly* had to *see* this as a victory for the often state-shunned private media sector of Malawi. They could not have peered too deep into the implications of such a decision without being portrayed by the government as a sector whose intention was merely to discredit everything the State did even when it was to their favour. This coupled with the higher agenda of the private media in Malawi to attain more recognition and visibility compelled them to hail ZBS's nomination as the official broadcaster as a good thing to the effect of ignoring that same State's heavy-handedness over MBC's programming and the resultant lack of credibility and integrity seen in that broadcasting organization. Intersubjectivity thus constituted by the social ontology of the things – MBC, ZBS and a legitimate election – thus ascribes a course of events in the collective in spite of the all too apparent presence of the concurrent awareness of alternative perspectives.

To provide another example of this kind of inquiry, a newspaper report that featured in The Daily Times Newspaper on 31 August 2013 with the heading “**Malawi President Banda's Order Splits Chiefs**” is equally illustrative. In this report, a journalist presents the events which followed the presidential directive or order issued by President Joyce Banda that all chiefs who had been working as chiefs in their respective areas but had not been receiving their honorarium

¹⁴⁶ Gondwe, an online journalist, reports that lengthy meetings amongst political parties had been conducted over the choice of the election's official broadcaster, and from those meetings it transpired strongly that MBC would not have facilitated the staging of a credible electoral process. See his report titled Zodiak Radio Appointed Malawi's Elections' Broadcaster, 18 May, 2009 at www.bizcommunity.com/article/415/59/36017.htm.

stipends from the government were to be immediately recognized and added to the government payroll.¹⁴⁷ Following this directive, according to this report, chieftaincy splinters emerged, villages got divided and one area in the district of Thyolo in southern Malawi saw a notable increase in the number of beneficiary chieftaincies. The various concerned authorities gave varying contradictory accounts of what happened which in the jargon of this study would denote the actual processes of ascribing things of social relevance to the performances that had been or would be later staged. Those later performances are not examined; rather the report itself as written by that journalist will be the focus of this next illustration. The journalists' manner of reporting could point us to certain things that seemed to constitute the context into which this report would be published. The report opens like this;

Divisions and disorder have erupted in Thyolo district following President Joyce Banda's recent declaration that chiefs who have been working without getting honorarium be introduced onto the payroll.

This week alone, the district has witnessed an attack on houses of the newly elevated Senior Chief Thomas and TA Changata on suspicion that they had been getting bribes to crown new chiefs to enjoy the honorarium.

Senior Chief Thomas, Group Village Headman Mankhamba, the police and Thyolo District Commissioner (DC) have since confirmed the chaos in separate interviews but with accusations and counter-accusations. (See Appendix 10.2 for the entire report)

The journalist who reports on this issue presents the *chaos* of it all without emphatically announcing who – which *could be* the president – is responsible for it. The journalist says *divisions and disorder [have] erupted in Thyolo district following Joyce Banda's recent declaration that chiefs who have been working without getting honorarium...* and so on. The difficulty of reporting this story has to do with the highly political issue of chiefs being recognized as *working* voluntarily and therefore deserving an honorary stipend for those selfless services.¹⁴⁸ The journalist would not dare to dispute this service aspect of the chiefs without

¹⁴⁷ See appendix 10.2 for the entire report sourced from the Daily Times online at <http://timesmediamw.com/malawi-president-bandas-order-splits-chiefs>

¹⁴⁸ In Malawi, chiefs are seen as the custodians of culture, and their work is deemed at least by politicians as important. The Vice-President of Malawi at the Chewa tribe's Kulamba Ceremony held in Zambia under Paramount Chief Undi, whose Jurisdiction traverses the Malawian and Zambian borders, emphasizes the role of traditional leadership in Malawi and Zambia's development efforts in news report titled "Chakwera, Kachali (VP)

preparing to deal with the hailstorm of *debates* or more accurately attacks and defenses such a disputation would ignite. So, to avert such an incidence, the reporter cunningly casts a shadow of doubt on the chiefs' roles as voluntarily working servants who would then require an honorary stipend by highlighting the corrupt business as well as the violence that *erupted* as these honorarium deserving servants went about dividing and subdividing their localities as a direct result of the president's directive. There is no direct mentioning of these particulars, but the events as they are reported convey that message nonetheless

In the third paragraph, the journalist surmises the futility of the situation by showing how the other authorities charged with the responsibility to resolve these very kinds of chaotic situations shift the blame around from one to the other. The police for instance confirm having made eight arrests in relation to the violence that ensued but the District Commissioner's (DC) office when asked responds with the statement;

“As far as my office and the Local Government are concerned all is in order regarding chieftaincy issues in Thyolo.”

None of the authorities interviewed by the journalist in this report so much as track backwards to look into what caused the incidence in the first place because doing such would be to involve the directing authority – the president – who made that declaration. The journalist makes sure however that their readers know precisely *where* the chaos came from by opening the entire report and even including it in the reports headline, that it was the president who had made the declaration that had led to this [unnecessary or avoidable] instability.

And thus the words that are printed for the reader seem to encircle this thing or these things which the journalist is very aware of which seem(s) to cause the kind of approach seen in the presentation of this matter. Beyond just the journalist being aware of this or these thing(s) is the fact that those things are equally imaginable by the readers of that news report, and hence the clever writing style that accompanies and furnishes the crude events. This or these thing(s) could be listed as (a) the over self-indulgence of the president who should probably have not made the directive in the first place, (b) the questionability of the so-called *voluntary work* done by the traditional leaders in this case chiefs as evidenced by their greed motivated territorial divisions,

Attend Kulamba Ceremony” (Nyasatimes, 2013) sourced from www.nyasatimes.com/2013/09/01/chakwera-kachali-attend-kulamba-ceremony

and lastly (c) the *as usual* hand-tied authorities who rarely decisively intervene in problems of this nature especially when they are caused by the President's office.¹⁴⁹

These social ontological things therefore institute the oddity in the preference of ZBS over MBC in airing the election results while the same government uses the same discredited MBC as a champion of its own propagandist campaign with no reprimand from MEC. Secondly, social ontologies also seem to be undergirding the writing of the report about President Joyce Banda's declaration. The aim is not to merely recite the events in the Daily Times Newspaper – which the journalist fulfills, but more importantly the intention to contest the ascriptions of certain widely known things that could perhaps acquire a general public disapproval associated with the power of the president, the place of chiefs in Malawian society, and the *undesirable* manner in which various authorities conduct themselves in relation to such issues.¹⁵⁰ The performance in the latter case is the style of presentation that is added as an aspect to the report that enables the contentious issues to be seen even without necessarily speaking directly to them or about them. In which case, the journalists and the media house's responses to an allegation about attacking the president, or undermining the institution of the chiefs, or presenting the authorities involved in a bad light, could easily be dispelled with the response that they were only reporting the events as they happened.

In the first case, the action of the government is organized in such a manner as to win the general elections but the performance is the selection of the ZBS and the *presentation* of MEC as an independent organ in a context in which the MBC is widely known to be pro-government. Instead of causing a tension out of the contradictory presentations staged by the government, social ontologies confined the general deliberation of the matter in such a way as to lead them into applauses for the selection of ZBS (and hence government's commitment to electoral legitimacy). The action in both cases is thus informed and aimed towards social ontologies of ZBS' credibility and a legitimate electoral process, and the three social objects extracted from the journalists' report in the Thyolo chieftaincy wrangles.

¹⁴⁹ It should be noted that the implications of such a technique require rigorous engagement with the concerned people of the society under study. It is maintained by this study that a diligent reading into any kind of communicative act will exhibit certain kinds of structures that seem to order it in a particularly unique progression. Thus the rest of the investigative endeavour only requires the further researching of what it is that is causing interactions to develop in certain kinds of directions.

¹⁵⁰ Furthermore, this attests to the argument already made that an African modernity is a canvas in which the members of that society know the impressionability of things or objects of the state as well as the society by other social actors.

3.5.2 The Academy

The scenario in the academy might be somewhat more complicated unless it was broken into two broad categories. One could be the category of intra-academic discourses and practices alongside the concerns of how knowledge comes to be such within the institution of the academy. Social Constructionists have presented philosophical arguments pertaining to this complex question, and have contributed to the social sciences' and even sciences' understanding of the social processes that inhere within their methods, and some of the techniques that could be used to limit the extents of these *prejudices* or *biases* (see Layder, 2004; Kaiser, 1994; & Turner, 2009). The second could be the process through which that which is taken for knowledge in the academy diffuses into the social sphere and amalgamates or gets amalgamated with other social content or *knowledges*. This process is pertinent in this study's view because it points to the condition that informed the epistemic seamless posture that this study has sought to achieve, and that is to reduce the inequality between social researcher as an expert of social things and the ordinary person as a naïve actor in a soup they are not equipped to systematically understand or decode.

This argument will remain confined to just that nexus between academic knowledge as a thing whose purest quality can best be achieved when it housed within the institution of the academy, and the general content which institutes all of the society's sociability albeit without a general reflexive systematic. At such a nexus, the social scientist or the academic, regardless of the soundness of their knowledge and the techniques they use in order to acquire it, and indeed clothed as a professional and carrying the symbols that accrue with that, is another actor who seeks to present an angle to the very same social and material things that make up the world people live in. Even if it were assumed that the social scientist were able to deliver a pristine lecture in a language that every member of the Malawian society could understand well, their message would only enter a social setting in which it became appropriated with other things that were already there – or it put it in sum, it would be distorted, contorted, dispelled and/or appropriated against other things that would themselves either be promoted, demoted, created and/or eliminated as a result of that message. To that extent, therefore the processes in which academic knowledge infiltrates into the public domain is as much political as all other modes of sociability to the extent that even the most detached and objective researcher would have to succumb to seeing their findings attain in the best case a status that compounds certain social ontological narratives pertaining to the use of power while dis-equipping or neutralizing others.

In the authoritarian Banda era after 1964, a culture of silence ensued. Indeed the detentions of renowned Malawian literary writers such as Jack Mapanje tell much about the extent to which even the academy had been gripped by the dictatorship. Lupenga Mphande (1996) provides a very detailed account on the events that transpired post-1964 and particularly with regards to the Malawi Writers Group (MWG) founded in April of 1970 at the Chancellor College campus of the University of Malawi. Banda's deliberate appropriation of cultural and historical things in order to engender his own hegemony is extensively interrogated. However, what is notable also is the manner in which the academy, particularly in the department of history, learned the limits to which historical inquiry had to submit in order to prevent a head-on collision between the academics of that department and Banda's authoritarian state. In this situation, the techniques of academic inquiry pertaining to that field as well as the fields of sociology, philosophy and other studies which seemed to have inherent interest in asking political questions, had to be moderated in line with the order of that era. Academic output and publishing was thus directed away from political matters, focusing entirely on subject matter without overt political implications.

However, in attempting to focus on that aforementioned nexus, the case of the Malawi Writers Group (MWG) is particularly illuminating when examined alongside an interview conducted with Professor Steve Chimombo who was also a member of the MWG and had been writing Malawian Anthology and poetry during Banda's regime.¹⁵¹

Chimombo interestingly notes that in view of the stringent censorship requirements of the Malawi Censorship Board (MCB) during Banda's era, individual writers somehow just knew the type of content the board would pass for publication and what content was likely to be rejected. In instances where writers found themselves in trouble with the authorities over a publication that had earlier missed the scrutiny of the MCB, Chimombo alludes to how academics would point to their research to show how a piece of written material was about a particular event that had happened for instance during colonialism and how that piece of writing was aimed at exposing the ills suffered in that era. With this approach however, the academic participates in exalting the President for having successfully halted that entire colonial project. For instance, his poem called "the Rainmaker" earned him an audience with John Tembo, the Minister of State during the latter part of Banda's rule, who thought that the poem was about the question of succession – that is, it seemed to be speculating about who would succeed Banda after he had stepped down from the presidency. Chimombo recalls having brought with him his field manuscripts as

¹⁵¹ This interview is found in Lee's (2010) *Malawian Literature after Banda and in the age of Aids: A Conversation with Steve Chimombo*, pp. 33 – 48.

evidence of his anthological research, presenting it to John Tembo and thereby demonstrating that the poem was about certain traditional activities associated with the ceremonies of making rain. Thus even the manner of writing in literature had been crafted into a presentation of *apolitical* appropriateness – backed by credible academic [research] evidence.

Chimombo also mentions the usage of the things of religion and culture to mask and advance the expressly political nature of the censorship board's activities, and therefore alluding to what has already been argued elsewhere in this study that culture as something centrality commissioned by the State was presented as a code of living that defined Malawian-ness when in fact it was aimed at rendering empty what would be ordinarily political the status of citizenship after 1964. Furthermore, if uniformity of dress and bodily or personal presentation was a means to restrict a creativity that could undermine political suppression thereby inducing a resultant cleaving to the conventions spelt out by the State, then the creativity in writing too had to be banged into a uniformity that made the arts similarly – albeit against their wills – supporters of the regime. The academy, through that nexus, thus unwillingly transmits the *evidence* to the public of the rightness or legitimacy of the Banda regime.

The crossover into the question of investigating intersubjectivity arises here in that firstly there are the vaguely articulated stipulations that provide the reasons for the need for censorship, housed somewhere in the politically controlled notion of Malawian culture. However, it is widely understood by Malawian writers that censorship indicates that no one is to write anything that undermines or *seems* to question the President and his regime. Obviously questioning the regime had little to do with asking directed questions that challenged Banda's regime but rather in saying things that collectively could be understood as rendering a rebellious message. This entails the co-recognition of a social ontology which writers as well as their potential readers or audiences co-perceived. Consequently, writers such as Chimombo compiled evidence to dispel the accusations of having spoken against Banda even when those accusations are not expressly mentioned – which was the case with Chimombo's audience with John Tembo following his poem about Rainmaking.¹⁵² The aim of Chimombo's evidence is to show the apolitical nature of his work but to the effect of simultaneously presenting himself as a supporter of the regime. Here the social ontology – *speak no evil of Banda or his regime* – around which academic writing and the social conventions during the MCP dictatorship again accounts for the performances that surround Chimombo's and others' writing activities towards their audiences

¹⁵² Chimombo had not be charged with having done anything wrong, but he nonetheless knew what the real issue was which is why he decided to carry his evidence on his way to see John Tembo in Blantyre.

and readers, as well as the set of activities associated with pacifying the authorities such as the situation that emerged leading up to Chimombo's unpleasant audience with John Tembo. There is a co-awareness of what this social ontology or thing entails or requires.

The social ontology of *speaking no evil of Banda or his regime* is equally visible in the Malawi Writers Groups' (MWG) activities and the content of their writing. These events are taken from Mphande's (1996) extensive article on the activities of MWG called *Dr Hastings Kamuzu Banda and the Malawi Writers Group*. The group was made up of various students, some of whom were in Literature studies, who meet regularly to share pieces of writing, mostly poetry, for the *ordinarily* studious purposes of discussions. In view of the context of Malawi's political hegemony, Mphande describes modes of writing that were loaded with imagery of times prior to, but with striking parallels with, Banda's rule. The poetry for instance often described authority structures and persons that were dominant and pervasive during colonialism in terms of the social atrocities they carried out – but the atrocities themselves were vivid with similarities to the *now* of the time in which the poetry was written.

One example, “The Struggle for Independence”, a poem presented at one of the group's meetings read;

I became crazy, picked up
A stone and threw it at
The white District Commissioners car
And a glass broke and I shouted
Kwacha!!! Freedom!!! Unconsciously¹⁵³
~ Frank Chipasula

The substance of this poem is expressly nationalistic in total tandem with Banda's own rhetoric about pushing or forcing the *Whiteman* out of Nyasaland/Malawi for the purpose of attaining self-African rule. However the political project hidden within this pro-Banda nationalism is in the mentioning of the self, becoming aware of its own suffering, mobilizing itself into action, and throwing a stone at the Whiteman's car, only to unconsciously – entailing the ordinary eventuality of Banda's *great* nationalism – shout Kwacha!!! (the MCP created political slogan of “a new dawn” for Malawi) and Freedom (as something not brought to oneself by another but rather by the realization of one's own circumstances in the midst of oppression).

¹⁵³ Quoted in Mphande (1996)

The use of this kind of imagery presents the conformity and thus the apolitical presentation of the writing, while the less apparent aspect of the poem expresses the presence of a rebellious attitude intrinsically obtainable or acquired from the experience of oppression.¹⁵⁴ As the dictatorship and its censorship got stronger, the writing became increasingly cryptic involving more imagery of the past circumstances conscribed with the oppressive situation of the present (see also Lee, 2010, in *A Conversation with Steve Chimombo*). This writing, through the MWG open discussion forums enters the public domain through the other students in attendance many of whom were non-writers, presenting the academic discourse of literary work in the double-bound manner of expressly exalting the current regime, and at once “*unintentionally*” openly criticizing it. There is thus a shared understanding of what is being said behind everything that is being said, and overtime as seen in the interview with Chimombo, various writers begin to be systematically sought after by the State for detention or exiling. Intersubjectivity here is thus illustrated by the thing *speaking no evil of Banda and his regime*, the implications of that social thing, and the manner of writing that contends it by challenging the legitimacy of its co-appearance. Anthony Nazombe, another renowned Malawian anthologist, agrees with his aspect of intersubjectivity when he notes that with the end of Banda’s authoritarian rule, Malawian writing experienced a tremendous loosening up from its previous grout-ridden and cryptic style as the necessity to hide one’s intended message behind thick imagery was no longer necessary (Mphande, 1996).

3.6 Intersubjective Objectivity

The point pursued in the two expositions is this; intersubjectivity entails communicative acts that surround a thing that has emerged as the prominent or central thing in an interactive process. This thing is co-perceived and as such, the performances that surround it during the communicative act are necessarily drawn with that thing in mind, and are actuated with utmost regard to that central thing.

In the first case given in the previous section, the journalist shows an understanding of the implications around the social ontologies of the things they are reporting about, and in pushing their own *action* towards influencing the way those things are perceived, they exhibit the style of reporting that presents the *collectively imaginable* conflicting nature of these things that are in

¹⁵⁴ Mphande (1996) seems to suggest that because of Banda’s obsession with European aesthetics seen in his British dress code of a three-piece suit, a trench coat, hat (irrespective of weather conditions) and his refusal to speak in an African language throughout his rule typified him as the *Whiteman* who may have been the object of such poetic criticism.

their separate spheres so to speak widely held as mere objects amongst numerous others in the Malawian social setting.

Similarly, the ZBS and MBC case shows the co-perception of the object of a legitimate election, and with regard to that object, government moves in its respect in a set of actions that are apparently contradictory but essentially in accordance with a due regard to that object. In like manner, the writers of the MWG recognize the co-perceptibility of the objects of *speaking no evil of Banda and his regime*, and develop writing styles that conform at face value but rebel in the veil of pro-Government presentations. The rebellious side of the writing is what eventually earns some of them their detentions and exiles, yet more importantly, the fact that the hidden message is seen and understood gives away the shared-ness of the perception of the central object about which the message in the writing is seen as launching a challenge against.

In this way, intersubjectivity lends an important hand to objective research because it allows the researcher to recognize their own involvement in the interaction that ensues by peering into the social ontologies that emerge as central features in that investigative engagement. By refusing to take for granted the trajectory of an interaction, the embedded social ontologies that institute the interactive process and their communicative acts can be traced and exhumed, thereby permitting the things that are apparent to the members of that society to be somewhat captured albeit imperfectly. Nonetheless in their imperfect renditions, they are recognized as present, and their role of influencing the manner in which that interaction progresses is acknowledged.

The outcome of such observations may not translate into repeated patterns that would always accurately predict the outcomes of human interaction, but the logic of them is no less appreciated through the understanding that individuals' possess an *intentional* consciousness which implies inherent rebellion, in which the thinking process illustrates the recognition of co-present minds on the one hand, and co-perceived things on the other. The communicative process thus entails a haggling that enables the adding of performances to present brute action as acceptable before the co-present minds and towards a co-perceived thing. And in that regard, empirically observable modes of action are informed by the mitigating factors of the individual's learned mind, their acknowledgement of other minds in terms of what is collectively perceived, which then produce the sociability imperative that seems inherent to almost all social settings.

3.7 Conclusion

This section sought out to present the society as so far presented by this study. It demonstrated how the social terrain in which state and societal objects are capable of being used as resources

by various actors avoids collapsing into an arbitrary process of social claims via the medium of history upon which the politics of intersubjectivity are primed.

Consequently, intersubjectivity is thus seen as process in which there is a known mutual perception of things which then wards off arbitrary overtures by actors within the social sphere with regard to the things of that society primarily by requiring that there be at least a claim to history that would warrant or sanction their usage – that is, legitimize them. In that sense intersubjectivity illustrates a political mechanism of arbitration vested in history and is therefore accorded the mantle of a “centre of our shared history” in this section.

By extension, because of the power intersubjectivity has in arbitrating or sanctioning the deployment of performances, intersubjectivity is thus conceptualized as emanating or drawing from social ontologies. The term Social Ontology could be understood as a poetic way of conflating the symbolic and material objects present in a social setting into a common category. This category is of all things which bare social significance or relevance and as such carry social meaning whether they are real in a material sense or symbolic (that is lacking in material). This is precisely because the contestation prevalent in a social setting has to do with things that are co-perceived as socially significant to the eventuality that their material essence or the lack of it has little to do with how they are perceived as carriers of value.

A few examples of how intersubjectivity, anchored upon a historical background, could lead to certain eventualities are illustrated in the Daily Times reporters’ bulletin about chieftaincy wrangles in Thyolo District of Malawi, and the selection of private radio ZBS over public radio MBC as the official broadcaster of the elections in 2009. Furthermore, the role of intersubjectivity even within the academy is illustrated by citing the commentary of prominent Malawian anthologist Steve Chimombo (Lee, Mwikisa, & Lederer, 2010) in conjunction with Mphande’s (1996) account of the Malawi Writer’s Group established by students of the University of Malawi. In these illustrations, performances are uncovered and presented in view of the real outcomes they seek to achieve in spite of the apolitical manner in which they are staged or portrayed. As such, the Malawian Anthologist as well as the activities of the Malawi Writer’s Group demonstrates acute political interest through presentations that show a disinterested or an apolitical attitude. These instances are highlighted to serve two functions. Firstly, to demonstrate that intersubjectivity is on-going and rests upon the sets of co-perceived things called social ontologies. And secondly, that if these social ontologies can be isolated so as to expose their *central things*, then they can be studied objectively to the effect of understanding what realities, material or immaterial, participate in a particular course of societal unfolding.

4 Proposed Sociological Theory of Malawi

4.1 Introduction

So far, the discussions embarked on in this project in spite of their other interesting outcomes have only to a large extent implied the central goal of this work. In this section, that central goal or premise is now directly presented.

A lengthy discussion conducted across the previous three sections of this dissertation has touched on a number of considerations. Arguments pertaining to the particular brand of Malawian nationalism were presented in which, to put it generally, socio-historical processes played a pertinent part in ushering in a self-perpetuating political hegemony. The presentation posits that because of the political aspirations that were widespread in the previous colonial era, and the resultant institutionalization of a powerful rhetoric about nation-building backed by State force, the disintegrated regional and ethnic groups which aspired for state power in order to achieve political and economic control over Malawi cleaved to the State in order to display allegiance to the State. Out such a condition, social performances became the order of daily life.

In more detail, the Sociological Theory proposed for Malawi by this dissertation is outlined below firstly beginning with a set of epistemic bases whereupon the broader theoretic system is anchored and then followed by a summarizing synthesis of how conceptually this theoretic system works.

4.2 The Epistemic Foundations of the Theory

4.2.1 Episteme 1: Conformity as Disguised Rebellion

This is the first basic episteme. Conformity to the State, as the historical evidence shows in the first section, cannot be taken to represent the end of political ambitions to seize and control the State. This is because even as late as 1993-94 (thirty years after independence), the voting patterns in Malawi went along ethnic and regional lines. Therefore, the daily activities people were involved in during the dictatorship which resembled social tranquillity and stability are accounted for in terms of a gross scale of suspicion in which the only way mistrust could be managed was if a dispelling message was sent to the other members of that society. Such a message could not be arbitrarily generated and portrayed again because of the regional and ethnic suspicions that prevailed. Therefore, it could only be received and transmitted from the

very same centre of power to which everyone aspired to have control over. That centre of power was the State.¹⁵⁵

By banding around this message, and performing for others, people were then able to manage suspicion by making certain that they were not being misunderstood for being politically ambitious by the politically ambitious others of that same society. It is in this manner that ethnically and regionally disintegrated people helped sustain a State establishment that they themselves would have rather seen collapse. To this effect, conformity and even general sociability in the Malawian context cannot be seen as a uniformity of ideals amongst those who seem to adhere to it. Conformity can equally be seen as the mask disguising a rebellious demeanour – or in other words the political activity of wanting to seem apolitical.

4.2.2 Episteme 2: Social Life as Performance

In a connected fashion, if conformity can be seen as disguising political ambitions, then it follows that the disguise is directed at a potential interpreter or spectator who has the capacity to read the message carried by that disguise. As such, the disguise therefore must have a vocabulary that is shared by the spectating others, further implying that the wearer of the disguise is equally capable of reading the other disguises worn by the spectating others. This is because people perform to meet expectations. It is precisely this grand collaboration of competent yet unaffiliated *masqueradors* that leads to the conclusion that social life in Malawi is about portraits which saturate the social landscape and veil the unknown motivations behind them. With this conceptualization, we automatically begin to see the demarcations as well which divide between the realm of social things called social ontologies and the psychological space of the individual which we have grossly seen as the origins of motivation whatever those motivations might be.

The question “what is the motivation that inspires the wearing of such disguises?” can be rephrased in a different form without losing its essence or spirit. That form can be, “what are the costs to be incurred if someone was not to wear those disguises?” The discussions conducted particularly in the History and Sociability section suggest that there is a tension in which people seek to remain legitimate or acceptable actors within a social setting albeit with its limitations while those same people nurse internal ambitions to realize goals or outcomes whose realizations are restricted by that same commitment to remain legitimate and acceptable. The

¹⁵⁵ The details for this argument have already been presented the subsection From Nyasaland to Contemporary Malawi under the broader heading History and Sociability.

negotiation between these opposing conditions requires therefore a mechanism that enables the actors to appropriate upon themselves the things of society that enable them to navigate towards those outcomes. This process of appropriation is what translates into a performance – which in a rudimentary definition can be seen as presentation of *arguments* that appeal to social expectations in order to appease other spectators into allowing the performer to realize a certain goal. Therefore, action intended to *effect* the wanted or contested social ontological thus dresses in a performance in a simultaneous projection of meanings to spectators and an effective action towards the wanted or contested thing.

4.2.3 Episteme 3: The Sociability Imperative

The sociability imperative which is a term coined to capture this mutual tension in which action must be robbed in performances which potentially make that action more elaborate and less effective draws logically from the second episteme. As Coleman (1994) argues, human beings or people have no reason to act appropriately in a social context except for wanting to remain acceptable members of that social system. Indeed the term *Social Context* implies that basic idea because the sociality of a context is precisely the mutuality of perception and participation in a collectively indulged order. Performance is therefore the endeavour to remain integral to the social context by way of truncating the motivations behind an individual's numerous activities into a code that makes them appropriate to that order.

Importantly, this is precisely where the dynamisms and structuralism of the social setting can be conceptualized. Within the Sociability Imperative there is the aforementioned tension of transgression within conformity, or conformity to achieve transgression. This tension can also be seen as an institutive element of social life in which structure – that tendency for society to maintain a status quo – is enforced by social actors in their performances that make those social actors recognizable and to seem normal. The dynamism – an innate tendency for change – is present through the availability of the transgressing ambition which seems to always ever so slightly bend the rules of the social in view of the outcomes it wishes to achieve. This is way, in order to better illustrate this, the study delved into a discussion about consciousness as a way to clearly render this tension. There, it was suggested that consciousness as Schutz (1967) and Husserl (1901, 1965) argued is in essence intentional because consciousness can only be about being conscious of something. But thinking – the civilizing or sociability enabling mechanism of consciousness' intentionality – is what accounts for performance. In which case, consciousness is to action what thinking is to performance.

4.2.4 Episteme 4: History as Intersubjectivity

The next question therefore has to do with the substance of performance. From where does the substance that makes up a performance come from? Here, the arguments presented under History and Sociability about the role of history in the process of acting in the “now” are illustrative. While there is indeed the possibility of making claims based on anticipated events that are yet to come, history from which the identity, traditions and cultures of a given people are forged presents an inherently overpowering capacity to institute what is right or wrong, appropriate or inappropriate within a social setting. This is because, as illustrated previously in the argument about *social contexts*, sociability or the competence of participating in a shared order seems to always be acquired upon familiarity and recognizability. The order is precisely *that* to the extent that it is both familiar and recognizable. By extension, a normal situation becomes abnormal once its events cease to follow their expected sequence stored in the memory of the collective, and as such, people typically act or perform in a manner that is – as this dissertation puts it in another place – *persons consistent*. That is, a manner that is in harmony with the general course of history – that is, the *social context* or the order.

In this manner, history is seen as the instituting power or force behind legitimate social activity. And by extension, since history in this fashion undergirds the security of the collective in terms of appropriateness and inappropriateness, then history is equally the basis upon which intersubjectivity is built. This is because an individual is collectively recognizable on the basis of their historically expected activities, just as the collective is recognizable to the individual as fellow adherents of those same activities. It is therefore in everyone’s interest to portray that they are in sync with the historical stoke of their social setting not only in order to be recognizable and acceptable, but also in order for them to see what others see and to be a member of that collective public eye. Through history, people do not only acquire the capabilities to perform before others but also the right to call others to conformity.

If it is accepted that history carries out this function within the Malawian setting, then it must also be accepted that Malawian intersubjectivity is largely rooted in Malawi’s history. As such, through that history, Malawians more or less see the same things; comprehend more or less the same implications pertaining to those things; and by extension know the performances they ought to generate when acting within the context of those things. To put it simply, history is the basis of their intersubjectivity.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵⁶ See the section History, Sociability and Intersubjectivity for a more in-depth presentation of this argument.

4.2.5 Episteme 5: The Inclination towards Standards

In the preceding epistemic foundations, two general features can be seen. Firstly, there is the dynamism caused by the need to transgress whose effect seems to be pulling the society into discord. And then there is the structuralism caused by the concurrent commitments to adhere and conform through the wearing of masks or performances whose effect counters the *disorganizing* impulses of the dynamism. This study proposes that the force of the dynamism is usually less than the force of the structuralism as long as the entire societal project remains viable over time (see Horkheimer, 1973 summarized in footnote 158). And this is for the following two reasons;

Firstly, there is a great desire to hold others to conformity because, as already shown, *straight-jacketed* others are more predictable in terms of the kinds of actions they are likely to roll out as performances upon the social context. Their predictability reduces the fluidity or uncertainty of the social terrain thereby allowing the individuals – in this instance seen as centres around which social life occurs – unload their own performances upon the social context with certain outcomes in mind.¹⁵⁷ But these centres are numerous, and so the grand scale effect of these *calling-others-to-conformity* impulses are that they further impose the structural stasis which everyone seems motivated to overcome from their individual perspectives.

Secondly, the putting on of the disguises, masks or performances, as shown in the previous episteme of History as Intersubjectivity, emphasize the shared and collectively known history itself. The consequence of which is a self-imposed limiting of the intention to transgress which occurs right at the point at which performances are staged and portrayed for others. The force of the dynamism is therefore in this sense overpowered by the individual himself or herself when they *civilize* their ahistorical appetites into a socially acceptable code. In this regard, the dynamism element of society is thus overwhelmingly an opportunistic process, nested within the gradual distorting processes of transgression which reproduce disfigured, defaced and structurally-compatible novel elements of the broader structural dictum of social things.

Therefore, the Malawi social setting seems inclined to maintain contextualizing standards that enable the individual sources of activities to be regulated by the overarching banners of appropriateness and inappropriateness. These standards, rooted in history and as such the

¹⁵⁷ We have argued that this was the basis for the self-perpetuating dictatorship, and also the reason for the rise of judicial power in Malawi following democratization when the legislative and executive arms of state became increasingly fluid due to their inability to limit the excessive encroachments of politicians.

constitutive parts of intersubjectivity, generate the social context and by extension guide the sociability imperative that occurs upon that context.¹⁵⁸

4.3 The Theoretic System: A Summarizing Synthesis

The five epistemic foundations seem to imply the familiar concept of a general, vague and yet tangible central feature into which the epistemic pillars are tied. That central feature can be summarized as a *normative* made up of all the impressionable social things of the society with reference to the society's material and economic bedrock.

Impressionability, as argued under the sections History and Sociability and History, Sociability and Intersubjectivity, is the hallmark of the Malawian society because it depicts the continuous business of sociability as a process involved with the appropriating and resourcing of any social ontology through the mechanism of action provided there be a legitimating performance. In this sense, and as already alluded to, the State and Society dichotomy is truncated by the vehicle of action as the social things of both of those realms are reduced to mere appropriable resources. It has been argued that this is because post-independence Malawi's institutional system consisting of both the State bureaucracy and the cultural code of the society, were visibly subordinate to the powerful personalities who were running the dictatorship of Kamuzu Banda. As such, institutional objectivity and cultural autonomy was stifled giving rise to a situation in which society's members became acutely aware of the personalistic impulses that moved the institutions as well as the culture of Malawi to take varying forms at various times of Malawi's history.¹⁵⁹ These personalistic impulses however did not occur in a vacuum – rather they occurred under discourses of nation-building during the dictatorship and rampant claims to history in the era of democracy. This is seen by this study as evidence of a macro-level demarcating veil between the aggregated divergent motivations of the public and the epiphenomenal expressions – performances – that characterize Malawian society. But this macro-level effect does not divorce itself as an *other* from the micro-level contextually defined activities. The argument for this is provided below.

The normative around which the epistemic foundations are rooted is fundamentally institutive, and therefore, from the view of that society's members, requires no characterizing description

¹⁵⁸ This argument must be taken in conjunction with Horkheimer's (1973) observation: in the absence of the undergirding material circumstances from which are drawn the epiphenomenal expressions of society such as performances the sociability imperative would collapse because there would be no societal-wide stake anchored upon that society's economic bedrock from which the need to preserve that society could emanate.

¹⁵⁹ See the full argument in Theorizing the Sociology of the Malawi Society under History and Sociability above.

that would accord it a definition. In that manner, this normative points us to the very process itself through which the dynamism and structural tensions occur to enable gradual societal change. A tension to which itself is endemic and from which it is inextricable as the distorted, defaced and structurally-compatible novel elements begin to find expression into the social whole. The *dynamic structural* aspect of this theory therefore resides here in this tension between a motivating transgression and a performing conformity.

The society of Malawi is thus in the extreme case a system completely open to *action* impulses in which all systemic things be they bureaucratic or cultural in nature are known to be the impressions of other actors hidden behind a *normative* veil. The limiting factor from such an extreme case has to do with mutual stakes that are implied by the expressed epiphenomenal performances. What therefore animates or operationalizes this theoretic system without contradicting the structuralist foundations whereupon the Malawian society is anchored are the density of actions – dressed as performances – which in a distorted manner reproduce the structural stasis thereby proliferating themselves into newer versions of structures. There is therefore no distinction between the macro and micro levels of society outside of an analytical perspective that is informed only by a research question. This emphasis therefore can merely be admitted to by the researcher in question without becoming relegated into either the categories of a structuralist or agency adherent.

This theoretic conceptualization entails therefore that we can only ever investigate either into structures as on-going equilibriums of never-ending tensions between transgressions and conformities, or the centralized social ontologies involved within those haggling processes that pre-empt certain on-going equilibriums. In the first case, it means that social action can be looked at as structure, while in the second case structure is has to be seen as social action. In both cases, research is the simultaneous investigation into action and structure because these concepts within this theory are the products of one and the same process of dynamic structuralism. As such, agency is endemic in structure and structure is endemic in agency within the undefined space of tension which this study calls the instituting *normative*.

What are therefore instituted by the normative are the social ontologies which become the things around which the haggling process occurs, and which cause the gradual change in the normative for the emergence of newer epiphenomenal expressions.¹⁶⁰ And because certain social

¹⁶⁰ We acknowledge that this argument implies the occurrence of multiple centres of haggling which we have called *multiple spheres* from which can be posed more interesting questions. This matter is discussed further under the

ontologies become the centres of haggling, researchers can isolate them, infer into their implications based on the performances they solicit, and make contextual generalizations that anticipate a societal unfolding process. In this way, it is possible to look into the undefined instituting normative.

4.4 Conclusion

This section presented the five epistemic foundations from whence the character or nature of the Malawian society is obtained. The arguments for why these five foundations are considered epistemic are presented in conjunction with the historical evidence found by this study and the discussions carried out in previous sections.

Secondly, the *dynamic structural* aspect of this theory is explained. Basically, that dynamic structuralism is anchored around what is called a *normative* to which the five epistemic foundations are tied. The normative represents the very creative process of the society in which an adherence to what is known is challenged by a lesser inert force to transgress. A mutual stake embedded in the material and economic viability of the society is the force that warrants that *normative*, the absence of which would lead to an overpowering dynamism (excessive transgression) that would undermine the *always-in-a-state-of-becoming* structural component. The *normative* is therefore the tension within an always unfolding structuralism which cannot be divorced from the animating power of people obtained from action (as transgression) and performance (as conformity).

The research implications for this are discussed but only as theoretical summarizations of the posture taken by this study to see the research endeavour as part and parcel of the overall business of performance. The more detailed arguments for this are found in the History, Sociability and Intersubjectivity section of this dissertation.

Lastly, it is admitted that if the normative is institutive of social ontologies, then the existence of several spheres of haggling or contestation is automatically implied by this theory. However, the discussion around this matter is presented under the subsection Limitations: The Questions of Society, Multiple Spheres and Research Bias primarily because this implication of the theory was not part of the core project of developing a social theoretical system of Malawi. As such, this will therefore be expressed as loose-end that would require further inquiry.

section Further Contributions and Final Remarks in the subsection Limitations: The Questions of Society, Multiple Spheres and Research Bias. See below for this section.

5 Further Contributions and Prospects

5.1 Introduction

An honest appraisal of this project is now carried out pertaining perhaps to some of its more obvious limitations. The aim is to demonstrate the avenues of further work around those limitations which would culminate in the development of more refined and accurate theoretic models that would contribute to a more wholesome understanding of the Malawian society, and perhaps even African societies more generally.

The matter of intersubjectivity is once more discussed in view of the interesting new avenues of it presents in the appreciation of the inherent political nature of human beings. Subsequently, a further discussion is conducted in which the epiphenomenal character of this research is presented and related to the material basis whereupon social life is anchored as argued by Horkheimer (1973). The discussion will admit to the fact that epiphenomenal performances must not be mistakenly understood as autonomous. Rather their material social origins must be given their due importance. In that case, this limitation presents itself as a prospect for further study.

A discussions pertaining to the implications of multiple contexts or spheres that are implied in the haggling or contestation process over social ontological things is conducted. Lastly, the dissertation devotes some space to acknowledge the unresolved matter of research bias with regard to the incomplete philosophical sketch proposed for researching intersubjectivity through social ontologies.

5.2 The Politics of Intersubjectivity

The lack of a concrete form of any social ontology has to be recognized. The reasons for assuming this posture emanate from the presentations made in this study of the haggling or contention that inheres within communicative acts, as well as from the great seminal works of the prominent sociologists who have contributed to a further understanding of the concept of intersubjectivity. The communicative rationality of Habermas¹⁶¹, even though it conflates intersubjectivity with the use of language and thereby rendering communicative processes as back-and-forth exchanges of subjectivities, illustrates equally well the asymmetrical stocks of social knowledge that various actors in the social sphere possess. But rather than accept an arbitrary process through which various mental universes of *knowledge* somehow arrive at a set of common and contextually relevant tools for achieving a consensus about what should

¹⁶¹ Quoted in Calhoun (eds.) *et al* (Contemporary Sociological Theory, 2012)

characterize an engagement, this study suggests that contexts are already pre-set, firstly as evidenced by the thinking process (which gives away the idea that people already know what is at stake), and secondly, through the notion of *contextuality* itself (which speaks of a readily available awareness of a setting or set-up). As such, the *asymmetricality* of the various contents of consciousness-es or minds manifests in a default apolitical or disinterested attitude or demeanor towards the context – that is, of the on-going intersubjective canvas – up until there is an intention to affect a thing. This is assumed because any strategic act implemented towards that thing is necessarily a performance towards other minds and at once a brutal intentionality towards the thing. Human beings have no other reason for thinking about the *right* manner in which to affect an *anything* if not for the co-present others (Coleman, 1994, pp. 28-31). Clearly, intersubjectivity is thus observable through communicative acts that make up the performances with regard to the thing that the brute act is intended to affect.¹⁶²

What is thus seen as failure to achieve intersubjective understanding, in this dissertation becomes intersubjective misunderstanding or misreading and even intersubjective collapse, particularly when there emerges a violent or disruptive engagement amongst members of a common society. It would be interesting to see if this manner of looking at a communicative failure would add insights to categories ordinarily seen as instances of failed intersubjectivity as seen in Reich's (Three Problems of Intersubjectivity - and One Solution, 2010) attempt already discussed. Furthermore, it would be interesting to ask the question if intersubjectivity can therefore be artificially instituted to induce the co-awareness of things that were not priority immediately accessible in any social context or that were blocked out due to other things that weighed heavily on the social ontological fields of sociability.¹⁶³ Perhaps the evidence of such already exist, for instance, in peace-building studies in which members of conflicting groups are made aware through campaign programmes of the "other" things which are conjointly at stake within the specific conflict. In Malawi, outreach programmes aimed at curbing the scourge of HIV/AIDS through the transmission of messages that challenge certain lifestyles, emphasize

¹⁶² See previous sections above.

¹⁶³ See Rubinsten (2001) *the Dialectic of Structure and Culture* in *Culture, Structure & Agency: Towards A Truly Multidimensional Society*, pp. 137-147 Ch. 7. A discussion on Affordances as opportunities that emerge when culture, seen as a set of collective practices and outlooks, accords instances of opportunities out of the things available in a society is undertaken. Converse of which also implies that the visibility of other kinds of opportunities not supported by the cultural system is denied or blocked. The discussion agrees with the argument about collectives except for recoiling from the social ontological aspects of intersubjectivity in its adherence to the back-and-forth communication transmission model earlier discussed.

others, and even propose the creation of yet others, can be seen as loading newer content to the social canvas – as if empowering people by permitting them to appropriate newer and novel content to the so-called historical canon.

However, this posture hints at a strong undergirding narrative of power necessary to break into spaces that enable the creation of any new thing. Without adopting the extreme view of seeing power as the private property of a select few while admitting to the greater ability of some actors to create, challenge or add aspects to social ontologies – the legitimation imperative which manifests at face-to-face encounters which facilitate the haggling and contestations of those engagements, also factors in the extent to which any very powerful actor or entity can arbitrarily create or challenge or adapt a known thing on a societal scale.¹⁶⁴ Furthermore, haggling or contestation need not imply the intention to undermine sociability – rather its intention emphasizes sociability primarily because its entire premise is rooted in an understanding of the co-present minds and the co-perception of things.

The great complexities of detailing these processes – and this study will bravely posit – are seen in the extremely dense and polemic writings of political philosophers like Achilles Mbembe (*On the Postcolony: A Brief Response to Critics*, 2005; *Life, Sovereignty and Terror in the Fiction of Amoss Tutuola*, 2001; *Provisional Notes on the Postcolony*, 1993). Central to such writings for instance are the features that could be seen crudely as pathological obsessions within what Mbembe calls [African] Postcolonies with preserving and adhering to the very activities and imaginations that too apparently perpetuate the daily experience of suffering of those same people. As if demonstrating an inherent inability to discard the hurtful things collectively experienced or the reluctance to forget and detach from the past, thus manifesting in colloquialisms of concurrently celebrating and resenting the very things people participate in and expect from their social settings. Similar sentiment is seen in the writings of Nyamnjoh (*Cameroon: A Country United by Ethnic Ambitions and Difference*, 1999) in which he puzzles over the irrational co-presence of suffering as brought about by blatant abuse of power and out of control corruption, and widespread concurrent commitments to those exact things at all levels of society. He illustrates how Cameroonians seemed to be united by the very things that divide

¹⁶⁴ This is similar to Foucault's view of the capillary nature of power which flows as a network across the entire social whole providing opportunities for resistance, or in this regard, historical appropriation and legitimation. For a critical commentary into the work of Foucault see Burchell *et al* (*The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality with Two Lectures by and an Interview with Michel Foucault*, 1991).

their society, and give it its particular kinds of societally broad contradictions such as the paradoxical hatred of and involvement in corrupt and fraudulent activities (Nyamnjoh, 1999).

Without dismissively rendering all outcomes as explicable by the proposed framework in this study, it can be argued that looking at the grand order of a society in which contradictions are rife and overt may not provide an analytical edge that allows an appreciation of what goes on in our societies. Rather, if the social setting is ontologically set by both social and material things, already loaded with the prerequisites that emerge from them which are collectively perceived and embedded in some shared historical account – accurate or false, the societal tendency to keep returning to a less than satisfactory condition of living can be accounted for in the very rational appropriations and executions of individuals or groups at any and every level based on what their respective settings require. And yet, little is taken away from the potential to escape this cyclical fatalism because the problem becomes less about the minds' lack of an ability to transgress which is held by the very presence of that ability of transgression and its inextricable involvement in maintaining the undesirable order.

This therefore raises the coefficient of human involvement in the maintenance statuses quo, desirable or undesirable, thereby allowing change to become envisaged within a framework that informs all minds of the presence of different affordances within the given social ontologies as well as the introduction of yet others. Outside the realm of this abstract argument, political dictatorships attest to this inherent power of change through their intense control and regulation of information flows and human movements into and out of their territories, as if to violently limit people's imagination.¹⁶⁵ But as already mentioned, the potential to imagine an alternative is inherently there, requiring only the power to demonstrate it and thereby challenge the dominant social ontology.

If it can be posited therefore that political life is embedded in intersubjectivity especially as regards the argument that political control entails a limiting of symbolic creation or innovation, then there must also be a social ontological thing whose co-perception is precisely defined in terms of a lack of co-perception. Its invisibility is evidenced by communicative acts and general performances that seem to deny its existence, and therefore pointing to the co-perception of the invisible thing as potentially powerful to the effect of radically reorganizing the contexts of social settings from specific localities, and even up into the broader social domain. In

¹⁶⁵ Alongside other examples in the world, the Cameroonian political situation of censorship (Nyamnjoh, 1999) as well as the censorship in Malawi referred to in various parts of this study illustrate the connection between modes of social organization and the extent to which the free-play of symbolic things is permissible in a society.

recognizing its sheer inscriptive power in relation to convenient modes of life around other social ontologies, that thing assumes a place of invisibility expressed as a collective understanding to leave that thing undefined within the prevalent exchanges, but nonetheless emphasizing its existence by the performances that skirt around its grey spaces. An interesting example could be used to illustrate this point, recalled from the memory of the researcher, and only chanced upon during a research excursion in 2009.

Malawi is a nation that prides itself for its *high sense of morality*.¹⁶⁶ Yet in certain contexts, the occurrence of certain activities that would, in an honest application of this moral definition, be *ruled* as impermissible and condemnable are permitted. The researcher encountered at a place called Mponela, where there is a trading centre in the central region district of Dowa, the occurrence of such kinds of activities which at that time only puzzled them. While conducting research with a department of a College of one of the Universities in Malawi which required lengthy trips deep into the rural places away from the small trading centre, it was stumbled upon that after the tobacco farmers of the surrounding areas of the trading centre had been to and returned from the auction floors in Lilongwe city where they were presumed to have sold their produce, *Mahule*¹⁶⁷ from that city would get on minibuses and come to Mponela to entertain and celebrate with the men.

This *finding* was not part of the research question for which the researcher had gone to Mponela, however what was very striking was that when the girls from the city had arrived, a small boy (in the estimation of the researcher being between 6 and 9 years old) passing by where the researcher was conducting an interview announced to everyone there – men and women included – that the “girls have arrived”. It was only after the interview that the researcher then sought more information about what the boy had said and realized that the girls – known to be *mahule* from the city – somehow transcended the derogatory and dirty implications of that title and became mere entertainers who celebrated with the men the successful selling of their tobacco harvest. At that point, their revealing attires did not matter nor did their seductive dancing. Somehow this taboo associated with *Mahule* and the norms around *decent* attire

¹⁶⁶ This too could be taken for a thing or a social ontology. Searching the terms “Atheism” and “Humanism”, and “Homosexuality” on www.nyasatimes.com, www.malawitoday.com, and www.mwnation.com will reveal these strong perceptions of morality and self-righteousness as people comment on these controversial matters. Furthermore, until an impending Judicial Review is completed which commences on December 2nd, 2013 the Malawian Penal Code still penalizes same sex relationships (Lee R. , 2013)

¹⁶⁷ A derogatory word used to describe sexually *loose women* and sex-workers generally. Its connotations have to do with a lack of self-control and self-respect as well as the offering of sex to get money or even favours.

particularly for women had temporarily disappeared in an absence of descriptions, culminating in the construction of a social ontology that was permissibly there precisely because its distinguishing *negative* aspects had been made invisible.¹⁶⁸ At this point the *mahule* were just girls, and whatever transpired behind the cotton screens of the drinking places was *just entertainment*.

The researcher recalls repeatedly asking different people on the way back to his motel what it is that these girls exactly did. The responses were vague, revolving around the general theme of “it is just a celebration” or it is just “a kind of entertainment” and “nothing more” – perhaps preventing the researcher’s inquisitive mind from delving into conclusions that would suddenly reinstitute the invisible *moral* implications stemming from what may have been actually taking place between the men and *mahule* from the city in those drinking places; and let alone asking the question of whether it was *right* for Malawians to conduct themselves in that manner. One woman who had completed an interview for the actual research for which the researcher was there said that a male friend of hers had told her that he had paid MwK4000.00 (equivalent to ZAR222.22 at that time’s exchange rate of ZAR1:MwK18) for one of the girls from the city to dance exclusively for him one night at the one of the drinking places.¹⁶⁹ Nothing further should be added to the narration of these events so as to avoid fabricating it with things that never happened.

The crucial point being that communicative acts, actuated with the cognisance of social ontologies, also from time to time may embody performances that pay due regard to shared things whose co-perception is vitally kept outside active recognition for purposes of enabling other kinds of activities to be legitimately instituted. Perhaps this temporal dismissal could account for tangencies in which certain contextual set-ups permit gross transgressions of the

¹⁶⁸ Note that this happened in 2009 between March and November on a research trip that involved traveling to the three districts of Ntcheu, Dowa, and Nkhota-kota. The areas around Mponela in Dowa district are rural where being conservative is thought to be strongly adhered to.

¹⁶⁹ Other interesting developments that were encountered while there were for instance a *Bikers* tradition right in the heart of another rural village some 20km from the Mponela trading centre where a makeshift dirt track had been cleared and exotic second-hand bikes were being driven aggressively at speed on that track creating a lot of noise and dust in that one village. The researcher, coming from an urban setting, was intensely interested in what was going on even though the villagers seemed rather unperturbed by it. Upon asking some passers-by, the researcher was told that money earned from the Tobacco sales was used to purchase the fancy albeit second-hand *big* bikes. On this particular day, five motor-bikes were seen in this mini bike rally; recalled from memory. See Reserve Bank of Malawi (RBM) Exchange Rate Archives at www.rbm.mw/archive_dfbr.aspx

norm in a manner that is accommodated by the presence of communicative acts performing to keep those norm transgressions hidden, and thereby limiting the excessive loading of novel content entering the canon of the collectively *rememberable* history.

5.3 Limitations: The Questions of Society, Multiple Spheres, and Research Bias

This study is not without its limitations. Broadly construed, the limitations have to do with the categories listed in the subtitle above. The picture portrayed thus far has been rendered so as to demonstrate the epiphenomenal life-world logics of social life and how they create the vivid lived experience of a society's members on a day to day basis. As a result of this commitment to render an epiphenomenal picture of society, the added difficulty of multiple social spheres emerges, rooted precisely in the arguments for social contexts which imply a kind of interplay between a primary overarching *cultural* system or framework and the secondary sub-systems occurring everywhere within and around it. The researcher's role in limiting the extent to which bias is controlled raises questions as well particularly in view of a proposed method of investigating intersubjectivity.

In the question pertaining to society, the epiphenomena presented in this study speaks of sociability, a term that has varyingly carried the connotations of social competence embedded in not only the shared things that constitute the social canvas of the general social setting, but also the ever-present awareness of co-perception – that is the awareness of other minds. The study is thus grounded around this central theme around which the various other political concepts have been shown to have their power and place within the domain of everyday epiphenomenal existence; the realm at which individuals or groups involved in the *apparent things* as well as their associated stakes strive to pay recognition of all others in view of those *things*.

But then there is a deeper level which is meticulously presented in an essay by Horkheimer and Adorno (*Society in Aspects of Sociology*, 1973 Ch. 2, pp. 16-33) from where much of these so-called epiphenomena have their somewhat abstract causes. There is an institutional bedrock, lending its influence to much of the sociability epiphenomena through the manner in which certain modes of life remain relatively fixed and, before the everyday social actor, relatively autonomous. For instance, the presence of the State and the formal cash-economy with its modes of production as well as the stipulations social actors must abide by in order to achieve consumption. Paying due regard to this observation requires the honest admission that while social ontologies duly institute contexts, the nature of social ontologies themselves are not in a state of free play. Or perhaps to put it in another way, that sociability is not the value-free levitated business of co-perception and co-presence about other selves in relation to a thing

under dispute or contention but rather that the contentions over things are embedded in a value system connected to a predominant institutional order, such as the State or/and cash-economy for instance. The politics of sociability are thus generally patterned around this bedrock, and thus a sociological critique cannot end at the elevated realm of epiphenomenal existence. At a more advanced level of study, the interconnections between the deeper and higher levels would, as such, have to be illuminated and demonstrated with particular emphasis to the Malawian society.

Furthermore, if contexts can temporarily banish specific elements of a shared historical canon, enabling seemingly disconnected spheres of contexts such as the case at Mponela in Dowa district, then it would be of great importance to further develop a systematic model that shows the relationships between the dominant and the disconnected, and how these two, if at all they do, speak to each other. In which case, such a model would be delving into answering the question of whether or not *culture* only describes the active material and symbolic vocabulary of any people (in the social anthropological sense); and the elements that merely institute social ontological things for sociability (in this study's sense); or even those things that a culture does not seem to provide room for in its material and symbolic vocabulary. This aspect has been implied throughout this study – albeit it only emphatically with the Dowa example – even though the suggestion given so far is limited, only presupposing that social ontologies can also take a “no-name” status in order to aid certain activities to happen which if found out would be vehemently denied by the very same people who were participating in them.

If this is indeed accurate, how do these radical de-contextualizations come to be; and under what conditions do they break into the dominant canon. Within the work of Bourdieu (cf. *Contemporary Sociological Theory*, 2012) for instance, *Habitus* – the structured predisposition to act – emanates not just from a broad appropriation of the cultural elements of the social. *Habitus* is formulated from the more specific domains in which individuals grow up, manifesting as distinct predispositions of action of certain members of a common social placement as it were. This ties into the definition the role of class in the formulation and maintenance of multiple cultural systems within a broader general vocabulary of cultural symbols and materials.

Others find this broader vocabulary as inadequate and postulate that what has been seen as a broader culture could in fact be the outcomes of very heterogeneous actors co-opted into a common stake whose rules and expectations are determined by an indifferent and objective institutional order. But here, the institutional order is not at the deeper level seen in

Horkheimer's observation (Society, 1973 pp. 23-29) but rather in what accrues from social actors seeing the institutional as it is, pursuing the opportunities available, while maintaining cultural difference (see, Radej and Golobic, *Divided We Stand: Social Integration in the Middle*, 2013). This study sees merit in this argument but insists that because the coming to the centre of the State in Malawi was not the outcome of the complexity of human *sociations* but rather the imposition of an order by foreign agents, the State as something inevitably accrued from the activities of society's members, and just beyond their boundaries of comprehension, did not happen in the Malawian context. The State rather actively added its dimension to the social landscape, carving into place the Malawi society as it came to be. Its violent action of doing this was apparent even though the outcome of this was obscure. The institutional order in Malawi was thus objective only to the extent that it was known as an indispensable power that presided over social life generally, while its activity in doing such was visibility at the command of other actors.¹⁷⁰ And so, necessarily, the institutional gap-filler fails, and the sole entity left to account for social activity has to do with, as already indicated, the remnant modes of life (State and its political economy), and a general cultural definition that enables epiphenomenal sociability alongside emerging de-contextualized spheres defined in an apolitical category in respect to a presiding one. Thus the question remains of how these various spheres interact and influence each other while remaining connected to that bedrock.

In view of this, interesting questions could be raised that would help further inquiries into patronages that probably emerge around actors whose activities facilitate the activities of others thereby combining into webs of allegiances amongst the diversity of players involved in specific stakes which occasion them the proximity to influence or effect social ontologies. This kind of inquiry would build further upon the basic elements presented in this dissertation on the politics of identity not just as the mere instances of the intention to brutally effect an object with the recognition of co-present minds, but also the networks of relations with other actors hoarding ambitions with regard to that or those same object or objects.

Coleman's (Foundations of Social Theory, 1994, pp. 29-31) Exchange Theory arguments strongly suggest that there is a collective interest in maintaining spheres of statuses quo within broader statuses quo which he ties to economic bases. However, while the existence of economic interests as motivations for action could be taken as a given, the actions that warrant the accessibility of those interests to actors within a context of fluid institutions as is the case in Malawi cannot be so easily geometrically plotted. More comprehensively, actions can be

¹⁷⁰ Recall again Mamdani (1996) and his civil and customary law binary or dualism.

anticipatable within the dictum of symbols and other socio-historical content that form the basis for what is imaginable and therefore legitimately executable within a given social context, the relationship that actors have amongst themselves, and the relative opacity of the setting from the broader social sphere.¹⁷¹

And then lastly, and in a connected fashion, arise the question of bias. The researcher has been demoted to the level of the ordinary actor, and the researcher's methods are thus as dialogically implicated as all other social processes. The study proposed that this political involvement, though undesirable, provides an exploitable bridge through which that which is known in the academy adds itself, aided by the variable prestige of that academy, to the social. Yet this is at the expense of admitting a two-way street in which what is of the academy becomes of the public, and what is of the public squeezes itself into the academy. Social ontologies that permit intersubjectivity thus prevail in both spheres, and the role of the researcher, it is proposed, is to become aware of the influence these social ontologies have in both the academic enterprise generally, and more specifically in the researching of the social ontologies themselves.

The technique proposed is likened to the phenomenological technique of bracketing articulated in Husserl's *Philosophy as a Rigorous Science*¹⁷² – but in reverse. The key here is not to distil all that is taken for granted in the sociability process down to its bare essence, but rather to outline the contours of the very things, material or symbolic, that make up the sociability process. The study has only outlined in a few paragraphs a set of sketches that point towards a comprehensively systematic technique but has largely failed to present a fully developed and reproducible schematic. The main reason for this has been the scope and space limitations of the study to which the write-up had to abide. To compensate for this and attempt to rescue the rudimentary sketch provided, the study commits substantial sections to illustrating how instances can be rigorously engaged to expose their social ontological assumptions – as in the case of the Daily Times journalist's report about the President's declaration concerning chiefs' honorarium payments; the choice of the ZBS over the MBC for the task of broadcasting electoral results by a government whose propaganda was actively propagated by the same MBC; the grout-ridden and cryptic style of writing that plagued Malawian anthology during the dictatorship; and then the *Mahule* from Lilongwe city who travelled to the *conservative* trading centre of Mponela to entertain men.

¹⁷¹ Recall the Mponela narration of how spheres to an extent are able to confine their own imaginable resources which enable certain kinds of actions and activities to happen without violating the broader conventions.

¹⁷² Cited in *Phenomenology and the Crisis of Philosophy*, 1965 pp. 71-147; New York: Harper and Row.

While the sketch as well as the analytic demonstrations do point towards a potential technique for intersubjectivity research, there remains the need to furnish them further so as to show how bias could be substantively reduced or at least accounted for, and thereby developing an analytic barrier that preserves the sanctity of academic objectivity.¹⁷³ Such a barrier would provide the outcomes of such rigorous engagements, and indeed all other engagements in the academy, a greater degree of certainty, and therefore acceptability.

¹⁷³ See Bilsky & Cobitz (Ludwig Wittgenstein: Philosophy in Extremis, 1954) in which Wittgenstein's unconventional style of demonstrating his analysis was done by illustration as if to render the skill rather than to write-up a catalogue of steps to be executed in order to achieve it. Thus this illustrative approach is founded, but here it is to do with space limitations rather than an inherent methodologically informed reluctance to design an executable system.

6 Concluding Summary: An Overview of the Work

This study sought to attempt to develop a Sociology of Malawi through a dynamic structural approach. The justification for a *dynamic structural* approach has been implicitly discussed throughout the historical presentations of Malawi and explicitly tackled when the Sociological theory was presented. The prominent historical processes that were central to the formation of the Malawian society were the colonialism factor because of their forceful creation of a society which collectively assembled activities in that priory open territory around a common authority entity called the State. From this forceful creation, the study demonstrates how nationalism or a sense of collective identity emerges as a unique and distinct consciousness from other external peoples outside the established territory of that State. Due regard is also given to the created political identities of ethnicity and regionalism out of the patronages forged amongst Nyasaland Africans in distinct areas governed by the satellite centres of the State.

Furthermore, it was argued that the institutionalization of the capitalist economy into the Nyasaland context contributed to the creating of new African tastes derived from the new economic order. These new tastes and the created ethnic and regional consciousness of various people propelled the ambition to attain self-rule as an aggregated effect of *disaggregated* political and economic ambitions. Come independence, new African leadership is instituted – but the character of the State and the structure of its economy remains unchanged. Politically ambitious ethnic identities, feared to destabilize the newly born nation, attract political manipulation and repression that result in failed interethnic and interregional integration, creating a climate of gross suspicion. These suspicions contribute to the establishment of an autocracy as they induce pro-State social performances to ward off misinterpretations which could lead to sanctions. The Malawi population thus becomes highly political and demonstrates this by committing to prove the opposite. Citizenship as such becomes nothing more than the exhibition of apolitical or pro-state content – everything to the contrary is rendered sinisterly anti-Malawian, and attracts brutal sanctions from the State acting on behalf of other citizens. The *performative* aspect of social life in Malawi is thus fully instituted.

Come democracy in 1994, performances no longer need to be pro-State – rather, they just need to be legitimate. Action thus explodes on the Malawian social scene resulting in an increased state of flux and fluidity. Actors more freely appropriate the things of their society in order to claim legitimacy but at the expense of undermining the stability of their own entitlements and positions. There thus emerges an inherent hunger within the social setting to acquire clarity and some form of standardization. With this, the Malawi Judiciary emerges as the highest and

broadest expression of an institutional normative, while in the localized contexts, history finds itself in the doubly-bound position of proving the legitimacy of an actor's performance as that actor strives to transgress while being used to restrict others from acting freely so as to limit the fluidity.¹⁷⁴ The similarity between the institutional and social aspects is that both are visibly *personneled* by actors, and therefore are open to varying levels of influence. The argument is that this visibility of actors behind the veil of the institutional set-up owes its origins to the imposition of the State in the first place, and its subsequent personalization throughout colonialism into independence. As such, the divide between society and state, within a model of appropriation and performance, is argued to be right within the domicile of action after consciousness optimizes between the two concurrent obligations or expectations, and effects its own action in view of its desired outcomes.¹⁷⁵

These obligations or expectations, in a society that is almost entirely *personalized* by visible actors beneath the veils of the institutional as well as the social expectations, are in fact not just the general expectations arising from internalized norms. Rather, they are the indications of social ontologies by which the society's intersubjectivity is *instituted*. Sociability is thus the process of on-going intersubjectivity characterized by the co-perception of social things, and haggling or contestation about those co-perceived things. By implication, social ontologies also therefore denote things that are collectively made invisible as a reaction to the dominant things that order daily life. This as has been seen provides a basis of the inherent intensely political character of Malawian social life.

A technique is sketched to point towards how intersubjective research could be carried out, albeit with due regard to its complexities, with the study reverting to a demonstration of two randomly selected instances in the Malawian context. One is of a journalist who writes an apolitical report full of political implications and another is of the actions toward electoral broadcasting taken by the Malawi government which somehow escape their own inherent contradictions. Both these random instances qualify simply because in a symbolic analysis, any instance that involves symbols qualifies automatically for analysis (See Garfinkel, 1991). The analysis there shows the social ontologies that informed both the writing and the governmental decision, and because they were both carried out with regard to a known thing, both actions successfully realize their ends. With this however, the epiphenomenal nature of social performances are given their due regard in the light of the observations made by prominent

¹⁷⁴ This is also where the instituting normative becomes more implicit to the discussions of this study.

¹⁷⁵ Again the undefined space of tension within the normative finds expression in this argument.

sociologists such as Bourdieu (cf. Calhoun, 2012), Adorno and Horkheimer (1973) who indicate in their writings that there is an undergirding order from which such epiphenomena erupts from. Thus people are not aimlessly engaged in the creation of and participation in symbols, but that there is essentially an orientation towards certain things which are themselves mediated by an ordering societal process or an under-arching societal logic.

At this point, it became pertinent that a Theoretic Synthesis be presented in which a list and description of epistemic foundations are outlined followed by summarizing synthesis of how the theoretic system conceptually works in the Malawian society. The implied notion of an instituting *normative* is the explicitly tackled and argued leading to further connected arguments aimed at showing how the instituting normative provides a way out of the micro-macro divide or dichotomy. It is posited deductively that this dichotomy is essentially of an analytical origin, arising out of an overemphasis on certain aspects of the instituting normative which ultimately skews analyses into either an agency or structural focus. A close reading of this dissertation also shows this struggle to render arguments in a pro-agency or pro-structuralist way do not emphasize one aspect over the other of what is essentially in this work's view the same thing.

And lastly, a concession is made to the effect that in the absence of a properly articulated technique for researching intersubjectivity the burden of accounting for research bias remains ominous. Perhaps in a bigger study, a greater amount of effort could be designated towards this problem so as to develop a comprehensive framework that could guide objective intersubjective research. This is how "Using a Dynamic Structural Approach" this work attempted "to Develop a Theoretical Sociology of Malawi".

7 Bibliography

- Abrams, P. (1982). *Historical Sociology*. Somerset: Open Books Publishing.
- Adorno, T. W. (1993 [2000]). *Introduction to Sociology*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Alexander, J. C., & Smith, P. (2012). The Strong Programme: Origins, achievements, and prospects. In J. Hall, L. Grindstaff, & M.-C. Lo, *Handbook of Cultural Sociology* (pp. 13-34). London: Routledge.
- Alexander, J. C., Marx, G. T., & Williams, C. L. (2004). *Self, Social Structure and Beliefs*. California: University of California Press.
- Baker, C. (2003). Revolt of the Ministers: The Malawi Cabinet Crisis 1964-1965. *The Journal of African History*, 367-369.
- Barrington, L. (1997). "Nation" and "Nationalism": The Misuse of the Key Concepts in Political Science. *PS: Political Science and Politics*, 712-716.
- Berger, P., & Luckman, T. (1966). *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*. New York: Doubleday.
- Berman, B. J. (1998). Ethnicity, Patronage and the African State: The Politics of Uncivil Nationalism. *African Affairs*, 305-341.
- Bhabha, H. (1984). Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse. *Discipline: A Special Issue on Psychoanalysis*, 125-133.
- Bhabha, H. (1985). Signs Taken for Wonders: Questions of Ambivalence and Authority under a Tree outside Dehli, May 1817. *"Race", Writing and Difference*, 144-165.
- Bilsky, M., & Cobitz, J. (1954). Ludwig Wittgenstein: Philosophy in Extremis. *Chicago Review*, 88-102.
- Black, D. (2000). Dreams of Pure Sociology. *Sociological Theory*, 343-367.
- Bottomore, T., & Nisbet, R. (1978). *A History of Sociological Analysis*. London: Heinemann.
- Bourdieu, P. (1990). *The Logic of Practise*. California: Stanford University Press.
- Bourdieu, P. (1993). *The Field of Cultural Production*. Columbia: Columbia University Press.

- Bourdieu, P., & Wacquant, L. (1992). *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology*. Chicago: Polity Press.
- Brass, P. (1991). *Ethnicity and Nationalism*. London: Sage.
- Brown, S. (2004). "Born-Again Politicians Hijacked our Revolution!": Reassessing Malawi's Transition to Democracy. *Stephen Brown*, 705-722.
- Burchell, Graham, Gordon, C., & Miller, P. (1991). *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality with Two Lectures by and an Interview with Michel Foucault*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Calcagno, A. (2009). Foucault and Derrida: The Question of Empowering and Disempowering the Author. *Human Studies*, 33-51.
- Calhoun, Gerteis, Moody, Pfaff, & Virk. (2012). *Contemporary Sociological Theory*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Callinicos, A. (1999). *Social Theory: A Historical Introduction*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Caputo, J. D. (1997). *Deconstruction in a Nutshell: A Conversation with Jacques Derrida*. Fordham University Press.
- Caroll, M. P. (1978). Levi Strauss on the Oedipus Myth: A Reconsideration. *American Anthropologist*, 805-814.
- Carroll, M. (1978). Levi-Strauss on the Oedipus Myth: A Reconsideration. *American Anthropologist*, 805-814.
- Caston, V. (2002). Aristotle on Consciousness. *Mind*, 751-815.
- Chaffee, D., & Lemert, C. (2009). Structuralism and Poststructuralism. In B. S. Turner, *The New Blackwell Companion to Social Theory* (pp. 124-140). London: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- Chigawa, M. (2008). The Concept of Crossing the Floor Under Malawian Constitutional Law. *Malawi Law Journal*, 185-208.
- Chinsinga, B. (2006). The Interface between Tradition and Modernity: The Struggle for Political Space at the Local Level in Malawi. *Civilizations*, 255-274.

- Chinsinga, B. (2008, June). Malawi's Democracy Project at a Crossroads. *Towards the Consolidation of Malawi's Democracy: Essays in Honour of the Work of Albert Gisy, German Ambassador in Malawi*, pp. 7-20.
- Chinsinga, B., & Kayuni, H. (2010). The Contemporary Political Context in Malawi: Challenges, Opportunitites and Prospects. *Centre for Multiparty Democracy in Malawi (CMD-M)* (pp. 1-14). Lilongwe: CMD-M.
- Chirambo, R. (2004). "Operation Bwezani": The Army, Political Change, and Dr, Banda's Hegemony in Malawi. *Nordic Journal of African Studies*, 146-163.
- Chirambo, R. M. (2009). Democracy as a Limiting Factor for Politicised Cultural Populism in Malawi. *Africa Spectrum*, 77-94.
- Chirwa, D. M. (2005). A Full Loaf is Better than Half: The Constitutional Protection of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in Malawi. *Journal of African Law*, 207-241.
- Chirwa, W. C. (1996). The Malawi Government and South African Labour Recruiters, 1974-92. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 623-642.
- Chirwa, W. C. (1997). "No TEBA... Forget TEBA": The Plight of Malawian Ex-Migrant Workers to South Africa, 1988-1994. *International Migration Review* (pp. 628-654). New York: The Center for Migration Studies of New York, Inc.
- Chirwa, W. C. (1998). Aliens and AIDS in Southern Africa: The Malawi-South Africa Debate. *African Affairs*, 53-79.
- Chisiza, D. (1963). The Outlook for Contemporary Africa. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 25-38.
- Christensen, R. E., & Kydd, J. G. (1983). The Return of Malawian Labor from South Africa and Zimbabwe. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 311-326.
- Coleman, J. (1994). *Foundations of Social Theory*. First Harvard University Press.
- Descartes, R. (1999). Meditations on First Philosophy. In J. Perry, & M. Bratman, *Introduction to Philosophy: Classical and Contemporary Readings* (pp. 116-139). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Donge, J. K. (1995). Kamuzu's Legacy: The Democratization of Malawi: Or searching for the Rules of the Game in African Politics. *African Affairs*, 227-257.
- Donge, J. K. (2002). The Fate of an African 'Chaebol': Malawi's Press Corporation after Democratisation. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 651-681.
- Dorward, A., & Kydd, J. (2004). The Malawi 2002 Food Crisis: The Rural Development Challenge. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 343-361.
- Elliot, A. (2009). *Contemporary Social Theory: An Introduction*. New York: Routledge.
- Englund, H. (2000). The Dead Hand of Human Rights: Contrasting Christianities in Post-Transition Malawi. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 579-603.
- Englund, H. (2005). Philosophy, Political Economy and the Banda Regime: Malawi's First Republic: An Economic and Political Analysis by Harvey J. Sindima. *The Journal of African History*, 369-370.
- Englund, H. (2007). Witchcraft and the limits of Mass Mediation in Malawi. *The Journal of the Royal Anthropology Institute*, 295-311.
- Forster, P. G. (1994). Culture, Nationalism, and the Invention of Tradition in Malawi. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 477-497.
- Foucault, M. (1989). *The Order of Things: An Archeology of the Human Sciences*. London: Routledge Classics.
- Garfinkel, H. (1991). *Studies in Ethnomethodology*. Wiley: Polity Press.
- Gellner, E. (1992). *Nations and Nationalism*. New York: Cornell University Press.
- Giddens, A. (1984). *The Constitution of Society*. CA: University of California Press.
- Giddens, A. (1990). *The Consequences of Modernity*. Oxford: Polity Press.
- Gilman, L. (2001). Purchasing Praise: Women, Dancing, and Patronage in Malawi Party Politics. *Africa Today*, 43-64.
- Gilman, L. (2004). The Tradition of Women's Dancing, Hegemony, and Politics in Malawi. *Journal of Folklore Research*, 33-66.

- Gilman, L., & Fenn, J. (2006). Dance, Gender, and Popular Music in Malawi: The Case of Rap and Ragga. *Popular Music*, 369-381.
- Goddard, D. (1965). Conceptions of Structure in Levi-Strauss and in British Anthropology. *Social Research*, 408-427.
- Goffman, E. (1967[2008]). *Interaction Rituals: Essays in Face to Face Behaviour*. New Jersey: Transaction Publishers.
- Goffman, E. (1999[1973]). *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. Peter Smith Publisher.
- Goffman, E. (2012). The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life. In Calhoun, Gerteis, Moody, Pfaff, & Virk, *Contemporary Sociological Theory* (pp. 46-61). Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Gondwe, G. (2009, May 18). *Zodiak Radio Appointed Malawi's Elections Broadcaster*. Retrieved from Biz Community: www.bizcommunity.com/article/415/59/36017.htm
- Gordon, C. (1977). *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and other Writings 1972-1977*. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Grossberg, L. (1982). Intersubjectivity and the Conceptualization of Communication. *Human Studies*, 213-235.
- Haas, E. (1986). What is Nationalism and Why Should We Study It? *International Organization*, 707-744.
- Habermas, J. (2012). Modernity: An Unfinished Business. In Calhoun, Gerteis, Moody, Pfaff, & Virk, *Contemporary Sociological Theory* (pp. 444-450). Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Haralambos, M. (2008). *Sociology: Themes and Perspectives*. London: Collins Educational.
- Harrington, A. (2005). *Modern Social Theory: An Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hehendahl, P. U. (2001). From the Eclipse of Reason to Communicative Rationality and Beyond. In P. U. Hehendahl, & J. Fisher, *Critical Theory: The Current State and Future Prospects* (pp. 3-30). Berghahn Books.
- Held, D. (2007). *Introduction to Critical Theory*. London: Hutchinson.
- Henslin, J. M. (2006). *Down-to-Earth Approach*. New York: Free Press.

- Hobsbawm, E., & Ranger, T. (2012). *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hoffman, J. (1988). *State, Power and Democracy: Contentious Concepts in Practical Political Theory*. Sussex: Wheatsheaf Books.
- Honneth, A., & Joas, H. (1991). *Communicative Action*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Horkheimer, M. (2002). *Critical Theory: Selected Essays*. New York: The Continuum Publishing Company.
- Horkheimer, M., & Adorno, T. (1973). *Aspects of Sociology*. London: Heinemann.
- Husserl, E. (1901). *Logische Untersuchungen, Zweiter Theil: Untersuchungen sur Phanomenologie und Theorie der Erkenntnis*. Tübingen: Niemeyer.
- Husserl, E. (1965). Philosophy as Rigorous Science. In Q. Lauer, *Phenomenology and the Crisis of Philosophy* (pp. 71-147). New York: Harper and Row.
- Husserl, E. (2012). Philosophy as Rigorous Science. *The New Yearbook for Philosophy and Phenomenology*, 249-295.
- Ignatieff, M. (1993). *Blood and Belonging: Journeys into the New Nationalism*. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux.
- In the Matter of the Question of the Crossing the Floor by Members of the National Assembly, [2007]MWSC 1 (The Malawi Supreme Court of Appeal June 15, 2006).
- Jones, A., & Manda, D. L. (2006). Violence and 'Othering' in Colonial and Postcolonial. Case Study: Banda's Malawi. *Journal of African Cultural Studies*, 197-213.
- Kaiser, D. (1994). *Bringing the Human Actors Back on Stage: The Personal Context of the Einstein-Bohr Debate*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kalinga, O. (1998). The Production of History in Malawi in the 1960s: The Legacy of Sir Harry Johnston, the influence of the Society of Malawi and the role of Kamuzu Banda and his Malawi Congress Party. *African Affairs*, 523-549.
- Kalinga, O. J. (1996). Resistance, Politics of Protest and Mass Nationalism in Colonial Malawi, 1950 - 1960. A Reconsideration. *Cahiers d'Etudes Africaines*, 443-454.

- Kalipeni, E. (1992). Population Redistribution in Malawi since 1964. *Geographical Review*, 13-28.
- Kalipeni, E., & Zulu, E. M. (1993). Gender Difference in Knowledge and Attitudes toward Modern and Traditional Methods of Child Spacing in Malawi. *Population Research and Policy Review*, 103-121.
- Kandawire, J. A. (1980). Village Segmentation and Class Formation in Southern Malawi. *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, 125-145.
- Kaspin, D. (1995). The Politics of Ethnicity in Malawi's Democratic Transition. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 595-620.
- Kaunda, J. M. (1995). Malawi: The Post-Colonial State, Development, and Democracy. *Africa: Rivista trimestrale di Studi e documentazione dell'Istituto italiano per l'Africa e l'Oriente*, 305-324.
- Kerr, R. B. (2005). Food Security in Northern Malawi. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 53-74.
- Kishindo, P. (1995). Sexual Behavior in the face of Risk: the case of bar girls in Malawi's major cities. *Health Transition Review*, 153-160.
- Koepnick, L. (2001). Aesthetic Politics Today: Walter Benjamin and the Post-Fordist Culture. In P. U. Hehendahl, & J. Fisher, *Critical Theory: Current State and Future Prospects* (pp. 94-118). Berghahn Books.
- Kwacha: The Violence of Money in Malawi's Politics, 1.-2. (2006). John Lwanda. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 525-544.
- Langworthy, H. W. (1970). Understanding Malawi's Precolonial History. *The Society of Malawi Journal*, 30-47.
- Layder, D. (2004). *Understanding of Social Theory - 2nd Ed.* London: SAGE Publications.
- Lee, C., Mwikisa, & Lederer. (2010). Malawi Literature after Banda and the Age of AIDS: A Conversation with Steve Chimombo. *Research in African Literature*, 33-48.

- Lee, R. (2013, November 3). *Malawi High Court to Review Sodomy Laws*. Retrieved from Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa: <http://www.osisa.org/lgbti/malawi/malawi-high-court-review-sodomy-laws>
- Lwanda, J. (2002). Paper Tigers: The Rise and Fall of the Independent Media in Malawi, 1961 - 2001. *The Society of Malawi Journal - Historical and Scientific*, 1-23.
- Lwanda, J. (2006). Kwacha: The Violence of Money in Malawi's Politics, 1954-2004. *Journal of South African Studies*, 525-544.
- Macionis, J. J., & Plummer, K. (2012). *Sociology: A Global Introduction*. Pearson/Prentice Hall.
- Mail&Guardian. (2008, June 20). *Malawi Leader Suspends Parliament over Budget Row*. Retrieved from Mail&Guardian: mg.co.za/article/2008-06-20-Malawi-leader-suspends-parliament-over-budget-row
- MALAWI ELECTORAL COMMISSION. (2009). *2009 ELECTORAL RESULTS REPORT*. Blantyre: MALAWI ELECTORAL COMMISSION.
- Mamdani, M. (1996). *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of late Colonialism*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Mamdani, M. (2001). *When Victims Become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism and the Genocide in Rwanda*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Maybury-Lewis, D. (1988). Claude Levi-Strauss and the Search for Structure. *The Wilson Quarterly*, 82-95.
- Mbembe, A. (1993). Provisional Notes on the Postcolony. *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, 3-37.
- Mbembe, A. (2001). *African Modes of Self-Writing*. Witwatersrand, RSA.
- Mbembe, A. (2005). On the Postcolony: A Brief Response to Critics. *Qui Parle*, 1-49.
- Mbembe, A., & Mitsch, R. H. (2001). Life, Sovereignty, and Terror in the Fiction of Amoss Tutuola. *Research in African Literature*, 1-26.
- McCracken, J. (1982). Experts and Expertise in Malawi. *African Affairs*, 101-116.

- McCracken, J. (1998). Democracy and Nationalism in Historical Perspective: The Case of Malawi. *African Affairs*, 231-249.
- McCracken, J. (2002). The Ambiguities of Nationalism: Flax Musopole and the Northern Factor in Malawian Politics, c. 1956-1966. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 67-87.
- Mead, H. G. (1934). *Mind, Self and Society: From the Standpoint of the Social Behaviourist*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Media Council of Malawi. (2009, July 2). *Media Council of Malawi Publications*. Retrieved from Media Council of Malawi: www.mediacouncilmw.org/update-July-2/balancing%20commerical%20interest%20editorial%20interets%20ppt.pptx
- Mellor, R. (1989). *Nation, State, and Territory: A Political Geography*. London: Routledge.
- Merton, R. K. (1957). *Social Theory and Social Structure*. Free Press.
- Migdal, J. (2001). *State in Society*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Mitchell, M. (2002). "Living Our Faith": The Lenten Pastoral Letter of the Bishop of Malawi and the Shift to Multiparty Democracy, 1992-1993. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 5-18.
- Mkandawire, B. (2010). Ethnicity, Language and Cultural Violence: Dr Hastings Kamuzu Banda's Malawi, 1964-1994. *The Society of Malawi Journal*, 23-42.
- Motyl, A. (1992). The Modernity of Nationalism: Nations, States and Nation-States in the Contemporary World. *Journal of International Affairs*, 307-323.
- Mphande, L. (1996). Dr Hastings Kamuzu Banda and the Malawi Writers Group: The unMaking of a Cultural Tradition. *Research in African Literature*, 80-101.
- Muller, H.-P. (1994). Social Differentiation and Organic Solidarity: The "Division of Labor" Revisited. *Sociological Forum, Special Issue: The 100th Anniversary of Sociology's First Classic, Durkheim's Division of Labor in Society*, 73-86.
- Mulwafu, W. (2004). The Interface of Christianity and Conversation in Colonial Malawi, c. 1850-1930. *Journal of Religion in Africa*, 298-319.
- Mwale, W. (2012, May 24). *Injunctions Bill Repealed*. Retrieved from Zodiak Online "Zikachitika Mumvera Kwa Ife":

http://www.zodiakmalawi.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=5044:injunctons-bill-repealed&catid=42:banner-stories&Itemid=102

Mwale, W. (2012, April 8). *John Z Tembo Pleads with President to Repeal Bad Laws*. Retrieved from Zodiak Online "Zikachitika Mumvera Kwa Ife": http://www.zodiakmalawi.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=4751:jzu-pleads-with-president-to-repeal-bad-laws&catid=42:banner-stories&Itemid=102

Myambo, K. (1975). Malawi University Students; 1967-1971. *The Society of Malawi Journal*, 40-53.

Nation Online. (2013, May 1). *MBC: Public or Party Broadcaster?* Retrieved from Nation Online: mwnation.com/mbc-public-or-party-broadcaster

NATIONAL STATISTICAL OFFICE. (1977). *Malawi Population Census*. Zomba: National Statistical Office.

Ndewgwa, S. (1997). Citizenship and Ethnicity: An Examination of Two Transition Moments in Kenyan Politics. *The American Political Science Review*, 599-616.

Newell, J. (1995). 'A Moment of Truth'? The Church and Political Change in Malawi, 1992. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 243-262.

Nkhata, M. J. (In Press). Introductory Note to Malawi. In *Oxford World Constitutions*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Nodia, G. (1994). Nationalism and Democracy. In L. Diamond, & M. Platter, *Nationalism, Ethnic Conflict, and Democracy*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Nyamnjoh, F. (1999). Cameroon: A Country United by Ethnic Ambition and Difference. *African Affairs*, 101-188.

Nyasatimes. (2013, September 1). *Chakwera, Kachali Attend Kulamba Ceremony*. Retrieved from Nyasatimes: Malawi Breaking Online News: www.nyasatimes.com/2013/09/01/chakwera-kachali-attend-kulamba-ceremony

Pachai, B. (1973). Land Policies in Malawi: An Examination of the Colonial Legacy. *The Journal of African History*, 681-698.

Parsons, T. (1951). *The Social System*. Glencoe: Free Press.

- Parsons, T. (1977). *Social Theory and the Evolution of Action Theory*. Free Press.
- Parsons, T. (1977). *The Evolution of Societies*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.
- Parsons, T., & Edward, A. (1951). *Toward a General Theory of Action*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Philen, R. C. (2005). Reflections on Meaning and Myth. Claude Levi-Strauss. *Anthropos*, 221-228.
- Phiri, K. (1983). The Concept of Culture in Malawi: A Brief Report and a Working Bibliography. *The Society of Malawi Journal*, 19-26.
- Posner, D. (2004). The Political Salience of Cultural Difference: Why Chewas and Tumbuka are Allies in Zambia and Adversaries in Malawi. *American Political Science Association*, 529-545.
- Power, J. (1992). Individualism is the Anti-Thesis of Indirect Rule: Cooperative Development and Indirect Rule in Malawi. *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 317-347.
- Power, J. (1998). Remembering Du: An Episode in the Development of Malawi Political Culture. *African Affairs*, 369-396.
- Probst, P. (1999). "Mchape" '95, or, the Sudden Fame of Billy Goodson Chisupe: Healing, Social Memory and the Enigma of the Public Sphere in Post-Banda Malawi. *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, 108-137.
- Radej, B., & Golobic, M. (2013). *Divided We Stand: Social Integration in the Middle*. Slovenian Evaluation Society.
- Reich, W. (2010). Three Problems of Intersubjectivity - and One Solution. *Sociological Theory*, 40-63.
- Reserve Bank of Malawi. (2013, September 6). *Daily Foreign Exchange Bureaux Rates - Archive*. Retrieved from Reserve Bank of Malawi: www.rbm.com/archive_dfbr.aspx
- Rotberg, R. I. (1966). African Nationalism: Concept or Confusion? *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 33-46.
- Rubinsten, D. (2001). *Culture, Structure & Agency: Toward A Truly Multidimensional Society*. London: SAGE.

- Russel, B. (1993). *Our Knowledge of the External World*. London: Routledge.
- Sacks, H. (1972). Notes on Police Assessment of Moral Character. *Studies in Social Interaction*, 280-293.
- Schutz, A. (1967). *The Phenomenology of the Social World*. Illinois: North Western University Press.
- Semu, L. (2002). Kamuzu's Mbumba: Malawi Women's Embeddedness in Culture in the Face of International Political Pressure and Internal Legal Change. *Africa Today*, 77-99.
- Shaw, R. (1997). The Production of Witchcraft/Witchcraft as Production: Memory, Modernity and the Slave Trade in Sierra Leone. *American Ethnologist*, 856-876.
- Shutz, A. (1962). Choosing Among Projects of Action. In A. Shutz, D. Haag, & Nijhoff, *The Problem of Social Reality* (pp. 67-96).
- Smith, A. (1991). *National Identity*. London: Penguin Press.
- Stambuli, K. (2002). A Descriptive Analysis of the Food Crisis in Malawi. *The Society of Malawi Journal*, 1-30.
- Starr, B. E. (1999). The Structure of Max Weber's Ethic of Responsibility. *The Journal of Religious Ethics*, 407-434.
- Strauss, B. (1964). Malawi's Path as an Emerging Nation. *Public Administration Review*, 166-169.
- Tamir, Y. (1995). The Enigma of Nationalism. *World Politics*, 418-480.
- Tangri, R. K. (1986). The Rise of Nationalism in Colonial Africa: The Case of Colonial Malawi. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 142-161.
- Tavory, I., & Swidler, A. (2009). Condom Semiotics: Meaning and Condom in Rural Malawi. *American Sociological Review*, 171-189.
- Thibault, P. J. (1991). *Social Semiotics as Praxis*. Oxford: University of Minnesota Press.
- Thornton, D. (2001). The Development, Design and Adoption of the Insignia of the Malawi Army. *The Society of Malawi Journal*, 43-55.

- Tompkins, J. (2007). Post-Colonial Studies: Performing History's Unsettlement. In J. G. Reinelt, & J. R. Roach, *Critical Theory and Performance* (pp. 71-84). University of Michigan Press.
- Turner, B. S. (2009). *A New Blackwell Companion of Social Theory*. Sussex: Blackwell Publishing.
- Vandoepp, P. (2005). The Problem of Judicial Control in Africa's Neopatrimonial Democracies: Malawi and Zambia. *Political Science Quarterly*, 275-301.
- Vandoepp, P. (2006). Politics and Judicial Assertiveness in Emerging Democracies: High Court Behavior in Malawi and Zambia. *Political Research Quarterly*, 389-399.
- Wanda, B. P. (1996). The Rights of Detained and Accused Persons in Post-Banda Malawi. *Journal of African Law*, 221-233.
- Weate, J. (2003). Achille Mbembe and the Postcolony: Going Beyond the Text. *Research in African Literature*, 27-41.
- Winfield, R. D. (2006). Self-Consciousness and Intersubjectivity. *The Review of Metaphysics*, 757-779.
- Wolff, K. (1978). Phenomenology and Sociology. In T. Bottomore, & R. Nobet, *A History of Sociology*. Heineman: London.

8 APPENDICES

8.1 MALAWI PRESIDENCY ELECTORAL RESULTS, 1993 – 2004

14 JUNE 1993 REFERENDUM									
REGION District	Results				Total Valid Votes	Invalid/Blank Votes	Total Votes	Registered Voters	Voter Turnout
	Multiparty System		Single Party System						
	Number of Votes	% of Votes	Number of Votes	% of Votes					
Dedza	34,628	25.56%	100,840	74.44%	135,468	3,972	139,440	184,589	75.5%
Dowa	20,345	14.93%	115,958	85.07%	136,303	3,429	139,732	194,010	72.0%
Kasungu	48,960	28.05%	125,600	71.95%	174,560	4,982	179,542	232,276	77.3%
Lilongwe	105,110	28.23%	267,168	71.77%	372,278	12,512	384,790	591,460	65.1%
Mchinji	34,559	31.54%	75,012	68.46%	109,571	6,854	116,425	196,393	59.3%
Nkhotakota	35,965	47.03%	40,515	52.97%	76,480	2,856	79,336	133,866	59.3%
Ntcheu	74,655	74.74%	25,227	25.26%	99,882	1,089	100,971	142,550	70.8%
Ntchisi	11,224	21.93%	39,946	78.07%	51,170	883	52,053	64,204	81.1%
Salima	34,586	45.07%	42,147	54.93%	76,733	1,859	78,592	94,472	83.2%
CENTRAL	400,032	32.46%	832,413	67.54%	1,232,445	38,436	1,270,881	1,833,820	69.3%
Chitipa	37,165	91.16%	3,603	8.84%	40,768	305	41,073	58,404	70.3%
Karonga	61,038	94.14%	3,799	5.86%	64,837	539	65,376	110,603	59.1%
Nkhata Bay	54,990	92.59%	4,399	7.41%	59,389	822	60,211	129,514	46.5%
Rumphi	43,943	86.79%	6,687	13.21%	50,630	712	51,342	59,300	86.6%
Mzuzu City	73,281	80.71%	17,520	19.29%	90,801	1,031	91,832	110,980	82.8%
Mzimba	122,152	91.67%	11,093	8.33%	133,245	1,117	134,362	160,538	83.7%
NORTHERN	392,569	89.29%	47,101	10.71%	439,670	4,526	444,196	629,339	70.6%
Blantyre	197,938	86.70%	30,363	13.30%	228,301	2,107	230,408	271,152	85.0%
Chikwawa	80,364	76.54%	24,631	23.46%	104,995	1,878	106,873	194,987	54.8%
Chiradzulu	70,578	89.21%	8,539	10.79%	79,117	3,455	82,572	98,605	83.7%
Machinga	181,186	91.31%	17,240	8.69%	198,426	2,813	201,239	344,753	58.4%
Mangochi	179,697	90.94%	17,911	9.06%	197,608	3,711	201,319	352,263	57.2%
Mulanje	145,111	79.35%	37,775	20.65%	182,886	8,480	191,366	347,006	55.2%
Mwanza	29,137	71.46%	11,639	28.54%	40,776	749	41,525	74,890	55.5%
Nsanje	47,929	82.59%	10,106	17.41%	58,035	818	58,853	106,287	55.4%
Thyolo	122,823	81.30%	28,259	18.70%	151,082	2,403	153,485	186,262	82.4%
Zomba	146,632	86.70%	22,496	13.30%	169,128	1,603	170,731	260,163	65.6%
SOUTHERN	1,201,395	85.18%	208,959	14.82%	1,410,354	28,017	1438371	2,236,368	64.3%
National Total	1,993,996	64.69%	1,088,473	35.31%	3,082,469	70,979	3,153,448	4,699,527	67.1%

17 MAY 1994 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

REGION District	Candidate (Party)				Total Valid Votes	Invalid/ Blank Votes	Total Votes	Registered Voters	Voter Turnout
	Hastings Kamuzu Banda (MCP)	Chakufwa Chihana (AFORD)	Kamlepo Kalua (MDP)	Bakili Muluzi (UDF)					
Dedza	93,488	2,980	503	34,307	131,278	4,732	136,010	182,812	74.4%
Dowa	95,178	4,434	834	17,779	118,225	3,037	121,262	148,090	81.9%
Kasungu	94,249	27,186	601	21,749	143,785	2,947	146,732	180,462	81.3%
Lilongwe	274,739	29,856	1303	77,509	383,407	8,159	391,566	457,595	85.6%
Mchinji	67,452	3,156	412	25,983	97,003	2,242	99,245	124,806	79.5%
Nkhotakota	33,867	11,056	269	27,526	72,718	1,737	74,455	87,841	84.8%
Ntcheu	23,057	3,543	588	69,801	96,989	2,485	99,474	129,918	76.6%
Ntchisi	28,637	1,516	222	13,561	43,936	1,566	45,502	56,893	80.0%
Salima	33,072	3,039	429	33,366	69,906	2,072	71,978	92,950	77.4%
CENTRAL	743,739	86,766	5,161	321,581	1,157,247	28,977	1,186,224	1,461,367	81.1%
Chitipa	4,351	40,098	156	828	45,433	528	45,961	53,462	86.0%
Karonga	3,647	64,121	249	2,023	70,040	1,470	71,510	84,501	84.6%
Mzimba	18,999	202,865	764	10,487	233,115	2,833	235,948	272,908	86.5%
Nkhata Bay	3,672	50,053	392	4,993	59,110	932	60,042	72,051	83.3%
Rumphi	2,981	47,700	193	2,506	53,380	578	53,958	62,273	86.6%
NORTHERN	33,650	404,837	1,754	20,837	461,078	6,341	467,419	545,195	85.7%
Blantyre	28,682	17,144	1,241	171,088	218,155	3,212	221,367	267,599	82.7%
Chikwawa	34,615	3,019	1,207	50,981	89,822	2,197	92,019	121,318	75.8%
Chiradzulu	6,097	1,045	278	60,372	67,792	1,337	69,129	98,812	70.0%
Machinga	14,835	3,244	819	195,082	213,980	4,184	218,164	258,690	84.3%
Mangochi	15,571	6,871	1,038	184,230	207,710	0	207,710	256,162	81.1%
Mulanje	34,347	19,495	1,044	109,975	164,861	5,733	170,594	257,006	66.4%
Mwanza	9,550	1,747	461	26,232	37,990	1,255	39,245	49,192	79.8%
Nsanje	29,658	1,607	919	23,891	56,075	1,968	58,043	71,305	81.4%
Thyolo	26,095	10,060	693	94,459	131,307	3,441	134,748	174,357	77.3%
Zomba	19,514	7,027	1,009	146,026	173,576	3,135	176,711	214,253	82.5%
SOUTHERN	218,964	71,259	8,709	1,062,336	1,361,268	26,462	1,387,730	1,768,694	78.5%
National Total	996,353 (33.44%)	562,862 (18.89%)	15,624 (0.52%)	1,404,754 (47.15%)	2,979,593	61,780	3,041,373	3,775,256	80.6%

15 JUNE 1999 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

REGION District	Candidate (Party) [Coalition]					Total Valid Votes	Invalid/ Blank Votes	Total Votes	Registered Voters	Voter Turnout
	Gwanda Chakuamba (MCP) [MCP- AFORD]	Kamlepo Kalua (MDP)	Bakili Muluzi (UDF)	Bingu wa Mutharika (UP)	Daniel Nkhumbwe (CONU)					

Dedza	144,937	3,937	69,509	704	924	220,011	5,210	225,221	238,353	94.5%
Dowa	133,392	3,212	45,841	543	643	183,631	6,033	189,664	201,082	94.3%
Kasungu	163,396	3,005	50,025	657	1,469	218,552	3,269	221,821	236,987	93.6%
Lilongwe	417,532	7,090	142,015	1,385	1,713	569,735	10,070	579,805	634,120	91.4%
Mchinji	87,453	2,304	53,938	587	769	145,051	2,780	147,831	159,895	92.5%
Nkhotakota	55,373	1,488	54,262	531	653	112,307	1,649	113,956	120,162	94.8%
Ntcheu	30,246	2,742	131,229	1,461	1,053	166,731	3,586	170,317	181,841	93.7%
Ntchisi	41,924	1,333	32,496	317	279	76,349	1,646	77,995	82,528	94.5%
Salima	50,106	2,129	55,597	516	501	108,849	3,573	112,422	120,235	93.5%
CENTRAL	1,124,359	27,240	637,912	6,701	8,004	1,801,216	37,816	1,839,032	1,975,203	93.1%
Chitipa	57,851	554	6,330	68	576	65,379	289	65,668	70,801	92.8%
Karonga	88,977	617	5,366	142	612	95,714	1,361	97,075	100,279	96.8%
Mzimba	286,788	2,889	27,639	543	3,209	321,068	2,007	323,075	332,262	97.2%
Nkhata Bay	72,912	1,108	14,636	297	1,008	89,961	1,030	90,991	95,399	95.4%
Rumphi	67,160	505	7,159	62	401	75,287	409	75,696	80,165	94.4%
NORTHERN	573,688	5,673	61,130	1,112	5,806	647,409	5,096	652,505	678,906	96.1%
Balaka	10,400	1,803	111,723	508	540	124,974	2,813	127,787	136,913	93.3%
Blantyre	86,662	3,739	262,974	1,756	1,199	356,330	5,914	362,244	405,434	89.3%
Chikwawa	83,109	2,712	68,228	557	639	155,245	3,868	159,113	174,316	91.3%
Chiradzulu	10,697	1,454	107,161	549	420	120,281	2,493	122,774	128,439	95.6%
Machinga	6,193	2,399	175,735	801	648	185,776	4,113	189,889	200,400	94.8%
Mangochi	21,160	4,311	275,940	1,367	1,158	303,936	8,124	312,060	323,713	96.4%
Mulanje	38,615	5,269	165,050	2,162	1,730	212,826	5,391	218,217	232,107	94.0%
Mwanza	13,256	1,252	50,901	429	478	66,316	1,594	67,910	72,093	94.2%
Nsanje	60,315	1,048	30,575	244	257	92,439	2,312	94,751	99,538	95.2%
Phalombe	14,750	2,130	97,693	1,241	972	116,786	669	117,455	125,223	93.8%
Thyolo	37,565	4,235	174,327	3,448	1,586	221,161	7,144	228,305	235,178	97.1%
Zomba	26,021	4,591	226,336	1,198	910	259,056	4,324	263,380	284,359	92.6%
SOUTHERN	408,743	34,943	1,746,643	14,260	10,537	2,215,126	48,759	2,263,885	24,17,713	93.6%
National Total	2,106,790 (45.17%)	67,856 (1.45%)	2,442,685 (52.38%)	22,073 (0.47%)	24,347 (0.52%)	4,663,751	91,671	4,755,422	5,071,822	93.8%

20 MAY 2004 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

Candidate (Party) [Coalition]	Region			National Total
	Central	Northern	Southern	

Bingu wa Mutharika (UDF)	309,537 (22.52%)	93,421 (18.37%)	792,628 (55.01%)	1,195,586 (35.97%)
John Tembo (MCP)	888,283 (64.62%)	17,776 (3.50%)	31,906 (2.21%)	937,965 (28.22%)
Gwanda (RP) [Mgwirizano Coalition]	Chakuamba 98,607 (7.17%)	373,539 (73.47%)	363,972 (25.26%)	836,118 (25.16%)
Brown Mpinganjira (NDA)	41,721 (3.04%)	18,472 (3.63%)	226,127 (15.69%)	286,320 (8.61%)
Justin Malewezi	36,399 (2.65%)	5,240 (1.03%)	26,173 (1.82%)	67,812 (2.04%)
Total Valid Votes	1,374,547	508,448	1,440,806	3,323,801
Invalid/Blank Votes				89,764
Total Votes				3,413,565
Registered Voters				5,752,028
Voter Turnout				59.3%

*Sources: African Electoral Database (<http://africanelections.tripod.com/mw.html>);
Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa (<http://www.eisa.org.za/WEP/malawi.htm>)

8.2 Malawi President Banda's order splits chiefs

Divisions and disorder have erupted in Thyolo district following President Joyce Banda's recent declaration that chiefs who have been working without getting honorarium be introduced onto the payroll.

This week alone, the district has witnessed an attack on houses of the newly elevated Senior Chief Thomas and TA Changata on suspicion that they had been getting bribes to crown new chiefs to enjoy the honorarium.

Senior Chief Thomas, Group Village Headman Mankhamba, the police and Thyolo District Commissioner (DC) have since confirmed the chaos in separate interviews but with accusations and counter-accusations.

Mankhamba said Senior Chief Thomas divided her village without informing the owner about it and allocated it to someone else outside the Mankhamba chieftaincy.

It was suspected she was getting bribes from the group which came with their person to be crowned Headman for the newly "found" village to enjoy the honorarium.

"On Tuesday, around 2am, I got a tip through a phone call that this group had organised some gifts—a goat and a dish of pounded maize—to give to the Senior Chief Thomas.

“I sent my brothers on a spy mission, and tracked the group until it arrived at Senior Chief Thomas’ house,” she said.

Mankhamba said after the group had entered the Chief’s house, the spies went close to the window and saw the group giving the Chief K10,000 cash, the pounded maize.

She said the spies, then, burst into the house when the group was about to give her the goat, an action she said was aimed at using the goat as exhibit for corruption.

“It was during the processing of trying to wrestle the goat from the group that there was some chaos which resulted in the breaking of windows of the Chief’s house.

“But they finally managed to get the goat— a brown he-goat— and we went with it to police as exhibit, before showing it to the DC as evidence of our claims to corruption,” Mankhamba said.

She said she received a cold welcome at the DC’s office, as she was told she was a junior chief who could not challenge a senior chief.

Village Headman James, who is Mankhamba’s brother, corroborated the story, saying the main problem in the area was that the order the chiefs were given to divide the village was creating chaos in the area.

Another chief, who did not want to be mentioned, said he was surprised that Senior Chief Thomas was trying to appoint a non-Mang’anja Chief to rule them.

Senior Chief Thomas, in an interview on Thursday confirmed getting gifts from the would-be chief. She, however, denied describing the gifts as a bribe, saying they were part of introducing the newly chosen person to her.

“Those gifts were brought as part of introducing the new chief to me but those opposing it descended onto my housing, smashing windows.

“I reported the matter to police who came and collected the broken glasses and off they went, nothing tangible has been done till today,” Thomas said, adding she would be returning the gifts remaining at her home.

Traditional Authority Changata in the same district experienced a similar ordeal as some irate residents from Loti Village stormed the chief’s house, breaking doors and windows.

Thyolo Police spokesperson Edith Likaka, while confirming the arrests of eight people in relation to the incident in TA Changata's area, referred this paper to Thyolo DC for details.

On his part, Thyolo DC Bennet Nkasala said all this was happening following misunderstandings over President Banda's order on honorarium.

"As far as my office and the Local Government are concerned all is in order regarding chieftaincy issues in Thyolo.

"It's about misunderstanding by some chiefs due to their deep rooted enmity. Some of them don't want others to be introduced to the payroll unless they are their relatives," Nkasala said.

He also heard about the gifts' issue but said his office did not get any evidence on the same. Cheiftaincy wrangles in Thyolo are not uncommon; some Ngomano Villagers were displaced following differences on the appropriate heir to the chieftaincy.

Recently when Thomas was being elevated to the senior chieftaincy, Inkosi Bvumbwe from the district got a court order stopping the President from elevating Group Village Headman Magi to Sub Traditional Authority.

*Source: August 30, 2013, reported by Simeon Maganga of BNL Times, Malawi
<http://timesmediamw.com/malawi-president-bandas-order-splits-chiefs>)

8.3 The Petition Presented to the Malawi President on 20 July [2013]

POOR ECONOMIC AND DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE IN MALAWI

"Uniting to Resist Poor Economic and Democratic Governance

"A Better Malawi Is Possible"

CONCERNS & RECOMMENDATIONS

In legitimate exercise of the rights and freedoms enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of Malawi, We, Members of Civil Society have joined hands with Workers, Faith Communities and Concerned Citizens from all walks of life, to hold peaceful country-wide mass demonstrations today, the 20th July 2011 upholding the theme: "*Uniting for Peaceful Resistance Against Poor Economic and Democratic Governance – "A Better Malawi Is Possible"*". These demonstrations are part of a series of nation-wide mass actions that will continue to respond to such crises until feasible solutions have been found and implemented.

Malawi is currently facing a series of catastrophes on multiple fronts due to economic mismanagement and democratic derogation by the incumbent leadership and administration. The current leadership and administration continue to disregard caution and advice regarding the crises, choosing to engage in empty political rhetoric without providing any actionable solutions or alternatives. Any dissenting or alternative views result in adversarial clamp

downs, a practice that is unacceptable within the current democratic dispensation that we all fought hard for and are prepared to defend at all costs.

The challenges currently facing Malawi are too numerous to mention, however the following issues may suffice to demonstrate the cause of our discomfort;

ACUTE FOREIGN EXCHANGE (FOREX) SHORTAGES

Malawi has experienced acute shortage of foreign exchange for over 2 years, with no end in sight. Indeed, there is cause to believe that the current shortages are the worst in all our 47 year history since the attainment of independence.

Significant numbers of people scramble in queues for forex that may be available at any foreign exchange point, in a pathetic display of fruitless desperation.

The acute shortages have had many consequences such as:

- scarcity of products and services due to difficulties in importation of essential products; Malawians who utilise foreign currency have searched in vain:
 - i. to pay expenses when travelling abroad
 - ii. when purchasing products which are not produced locally
 - iii. to send school fees for dependants studying abroad
 - iv. to pay for examination fees to foreign education providers
 - v. when accessing treatment for vital medical facilities

Numerous reasons, such as poor tobacco sales (which used to provide 74% of our forex inflow has dwindled by over 70%), have been forwarded to explain the shortage of forex in Malawi, but these show a clear divide between advice from economic experts and rhetorical defences from the current leadership and its administration and, in so doing, merely serve to increase confusion and uncertainty.

However, one fact remains indisputable and that is: the forex crisis continues to escalate and the current administration has failed to demonstrate the ability to reverse the situation any time soon.

ACUTE FUEL SHORTAGE: MALAWI IS NOW LABELLED AS A 'FUEL QUEUE NATION'

This year has seen the most acute fuel shortages in Malawi in 47 years of independence. A common scene that greets the eyes at every filling station is extremely long queues of cars, with people waiting for hours or even, days to get access to a few litres of fuel.

The acute and incessant fuel shortages have caused shrinkages in transportation which limit people travelling. Service providers are unable to transport products around the country, leading to shortage of products and services. Stocks in supermarket and grocery shelves are gradually dwindling. Critical services such as health services have not been spared and workers face a daily struggle in commuting between workplace and home. Freight hauliers have been severely constricted and more disaster looms if the status quo remains unchecked. All these are visible signs of economic regression which, if not checked immediately, could result in a total breakdown.

Reasons provided by the current administration regarding the causes to the fuel shortage have been unsatisfactory and at times embarrassingly derisive. There has been a clear divide and at times contradiction in reasons provided by the Petroleum Importers Limited, the Ministry responsible and the Leadership. However most people will agree that the current leadership and its administration has not demonstrated to the nation the ability to reverse the dismal situation any time soon and the resultant sense of uncertainty merely serves to intensify the sense of doom and gloom afflicting the nation.

ELECTRICITY SHORTAGES

Never has Malawi suffered more from acute electricity shortages in all its 47 years of independence than within the past 2 years despite the fact that, after all these years, only 6% of the population had access to electricity.

The recent announcement by ESCOM that power cuts will be implemented for 8 hours every day for the rest of the year have only increased the sense of despair amongst the people who cannot lead normal daily lives without fear of blackouts.

Industries are hard hit with insufficient power to enable optimal production of vital products which may even substitute imports. Work-flow is constantly interrupted by equipment switching off intermittently. Huge costs are incurred in repairing equipment that have been damaged by power fluctuations and the cost of installing massive generators in an effort to keep going. Indeed, a classic example is the failure of ESCOM to guarantee supply of adequate power to Paladin for processing uranium at Kayelekera thereby necessitating installation of massive diesel generators, which need 3000 litres per day to ensure production – this meant that ESCOM lost out on potential extra business of millions of Kwacha every month due to its own inefficiency and incapacity to be innovative.

It is apparent to most that the current leadership and administration has not demonstrated to the nation that they can reverse the situation any time soon in spite of the need for tangible solutions. There should be a clear time frame as to when the problem will be over. As it remains, the energy drain remains a pain without any solution in sight.

LACK OF ECONOMIC PRUDENCE

The current leadership and administration has continued to excessively and irresponsibly squander public funds without consultation and with cavalier disregard for current economic hardships afflicting the populace created by the mismanagement.

The list of anomalies lengthy, but some major issues include the following:-

- In 2010, the President secretly authorised the purchase of a private jet costing US\$13 million - equivalent to half the budgetary support that Malawi's major donor contributed. The purchase went on regardless of condemnation from different stakeholders within Malawi and beyond. The amount spent was equivalent to annual salaries of approximately 5,000 nurses or approximately 11,555 primary school teachers. The infamous Presidential Jet remains a sore point since it appears to have no place in an impoverished country like Malawi which must cater to other priorities such as combating poverty and illiteracy before succumbing to consumerist luxuries..
- Since the first Cabinet of 29 Ministers in 2004, the size of the current Cabinet has grown to 41, leading to a monthly wage bill of over MK15,000,000.00, which would fund monthly salaries of 428 nurses or 1,000 primary school teachers. It is important to note that this Cabinet of 41 also includes Deputy Ministers who, in most cases, have been

awarded the position as a reward for political favours and not on merit. Thus these Deputy Ministerial positions could easily be vacated without any loss in efficacy;

- At the beginning of 2011, the President secretly awarded a contract to his wife, the First Lady, Callista Mutharika, leading to a payment in arrears, of MK6,400 400 for the period before the contract was signed, and subsequent salary of MK1,300,000 per month – ostensibly for doing charity work. The contract coincidentally expires at the expiry of term of office of President in 2014 and was pushed through despite condemnation from various sectors of society. The First Lady's salary is equivalent to monthly salaries for 30 nurses or 93 primary school teachers.
- The contract for the construction and management of the (in)famous Nsanje Inland Port was awarded in a non transparent and dubious manner to Mota Engil, a foreign construction company who appears to enjoy presidential favour. The same company is rumoured to have built a palace at Ndata Farm (the President's personal estate) and has now won a concession for oil and gas drilling in the Lake.

Regardless of the above manifestations of economic imprudence, Government shamelessly offered lame justifications to exonerate themselves whilst indulging personal avarice without due regard for public responsibility.

CORRUPTION AND ABUSE OF POWER

There are strong suspicions that this leadership and administration is condoning corruption and abuse of power by a 'favoured few'.

Recently, the Malawi Housing Corporation sold houses to selected staff, Cabinet Ministers, and DPP officials at grossly reduced prices, leading to a net loss of over MK100 million. The leadership and administration remain quiet and the Anti-Corruption Bureau appears unable to investigate further thereby giving rise to fears of officialdom turning a blind eye to such misdemeanours.

During his 2 terms of office, the current President appears to have amassed significant wealth that does not tally with his salary of approximately MK 2,000,000 per month. Within 3 years of being power in 2007, Mutharika purchased land in Thyolo at an alleged price of MK 70 million. He then proceeded to develop part of the land at an exorbitant cost which requires clear explanation to allay suspicion.

Massive corruption appears to be the order of the day. Malawians witness a few individuals in Government who have amassed massive wealth at public expense. These individuals build expensive houses, owning fleets of cars and indulge openly in displays of fabulous opulence that seems to have accrued without a visible source. The Government may be aware of this but no visible steps are being taken to stop such malpractices or to recover wealth gleaned in such dishonest manner.

DISRESPECT OF THE RULE OF LAW

The current leadership and administration has tended to exhibit deliberate disregard of the Constitution and the rule of law.

Amid public condemnation, the current leadership and administration abused its majority in Parliament to pass an amendment to Section 46 of the Penal Code allowing the Minister for Information to ban publications 'deemed to be contrary to the public interest'. This law has taken Malawi backwards in terms of guaranteeing media freedoms contained under chapter VI of the Constitution.

Again, amid widespread public condemnation, the current leadership and administration has abused its majority in Parliament to pass the Civil Procedure (Suits By Or Against The Government or Public Officers) (Amendment) Bill, 2010 otherwise popularly known as the infamous 'Injunctions Bill', which denies supplicants the right to instant relief when their rights are under threat by any Government agency or officer. The President recently assented to the bill notwithstanding massive public outcry, condemnation, a revolt amongst DPP MPs in Parliament and a court injunction against the assent of the bill

Apart from the bills cited above, the Government passed the Police Act which empowers the Police to search any house without a search warrant, the Pensions Bill, the Local Courts Bill (previously known as the infamous Traditional Courts), a Constitutional amendment on timing and methodology of Local Government Elections, and the Protected Names, Flags and Emblems bill which changed the national flag at huge cost whilst dismissing widespread protest as drunken ravings.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

It goes without saying that the current leadership and administration is simply not interested in conducting Local Government elections.

Since election into power, there have been deliberate efforts to avoid or interrupt the holding of local Government elections in Malawi. Recently the Electoral Commission was closed (with a questionable abuse of power) on allegations of massive fraud involving huge sums of money. The Government consequently reopened the Commission without any official explanation on the outcome of their initial investigations. The administration is now attempting to amend the law to allow for local Government elections to be held after the expiry of their term of office thereby giving rise to profound suspicion that something is being covered up.

In addition, new appointments will soon be made to the Commission and these are already raising alarm signals due to the candidates being considered and the opacity of the process. The neutrality and very integrity of the Commission may be compromised irrevocably in the public eye if the matter is not handled with extreme transparency.

In any case, it is quite obvious that the current administration will not hold local Government elections these 2 terms of office, despite any constitutional requirements to the contrary.

THE UNIVERSITY OF MALAWI CRISIS

The current leadership and administration has failed to resolve the current stalemate between the University Council and its 2 constituent colleges (Chancellor College and Polytechnic) despite all the effort and posturing.

For over 100 days, the leadership and its administration has remained adamant in refusing to recognise legitimate demands by the academic staff unions from the 2 constituent colleges, leading to an unnecessary standoff. This has cost students valuable learning time and disrupted the general academic calendar.

This can easily be described as the worst crisis in the history of the University of Malawi, but it has evolved as such largely due to the intransigence and truculence of the Establishment which takes its lead from the Head of State in adopting inflexible stances that militate against all effort at conciliation.

POLITICAL INTOLERANCE AND VIOLENCE

The current leadership and administration appears of late to be leaning towards tactics that promote violence and intolerance against critics and those with differing views:

- During the 2 terms of office, the President has deliberately demonised his Vice Presidents, thereby deliberately weakening their offices which are enshrined in the Constitution. The failure to work with Vice Presidents has seriously disrupted the role of the Office of the Vice President in the performance of governmental duties;
- In recent times, the President has deliberately crippled the office of the Vice President based on personal grudges and differing views. This year, the budget of the Office of the Vice President was significantly reduced to a pittance. The President continues to castigate the Vice President in public rallies, calling her names whilst she continues to hold her peace.

This issue appears to emanate from the thorny question of succession – i.e. who will take the office if the President is incapacitated? The Constitution gives that role to the Vice President and this apparently is the root of the problem because the President wishes to choose his own successor and is unable to do so whilst the Vice President is in place.

- This year, the President instructed the ruling DPP party youth cadets to 'protect him' as a response to widespread criticism on his governance style. The instruction was followed by the DPP leaders publicly stating that they will use 'all possible means' to protect their leader. Since that instruction, some Civil Society leaders who have previously spoken on various issues have been attacked or received threats, leading to general fear and terror. Experts have cautioned that such public remarks by leaders have potential to lead to violence or conflict thereby creating a 'culture of fear' that is becoming more visible by the day.
- There are many indications that the current leadership does not accept any criticism or dissenting views. Those who have dissenting views, within the ruling party or generally, are destined to face violence or adversity in one way or another. This has led to fear among institutional heads or ruling party officials which prevents them from offering alternative views that may run contrary to the Party line.
- Following a leaked cable in which the British High Commissioner confidentially described challenges facing Malawi for the Foreign Office in London, the President took the unprecedented step of deporting the British Envoy from Malawi back to the UK. This contributed to the deportation of the Malawi envoy from the UK and subsequent withdrawal of the British contribution to the Malawi budget (30%). This serves a vivid testimony of the sheer arrogance of our leadership who can throw out a relationship that has nurtured and supported Malawi for nearly 50 years at the drop of a hat – regardless of the cost to the Nation in general and the poorest sectors of society in particular.
- When civil society were organising a 'bicycle march' demonstration regarding fuel crises facing the country, the current leadership and administration threatened to prevent the planned demonstration. To obstruct Malawi citizens from exercising their rights to demonstrate, the leadership attempted to introduce prohibitive monetary deposits as a requirement prior to holding mass demonstrations. During the current mass demonstration, there are already reports of the leadership threatening to disrupt the mass action by mobilising rabble rousers to disturb the march.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In summary, we conclude that the current leadership and administration has failed to convince us that the issues raised will be resolved or reversed anytime soon. As such, we would only be convinced otherwise when concrete and actionable solutions with short term time frames and deadlines are proposed.

In light of the raised selected issues, we demand the Government to take the following steps:

- Sell the Presidential jet and minimise all foreign trips by the Head of State;
- Ban all importation of luxury cars (M/benz, Limousines and Luxurious 4x4s). Any new cars for the President, Ministers or State Officials must reflect our impoverished state and should thus not be as ostentatious as in the past;
- All foreign trips by Ministers and State officials must be severely curtailed forthwith;
- Superfluous costs such as the new 'eavesdropping' machine being installed at a cost of US\$6 million at MACRA merely to assuage creeping paranoia in an unconstitutional manner must be discontinued and reversed forthwith;
- Zimbabwe must immediately repay the US\$20 million that has long been outstanding for food supplied by Malawi. The payment can be made in cash or in fuel;
- Scrutinise all fertiliser imports for the previous year to track the fairness of the pricing – all those who have inflated their costings must be brought to book and penalised for the full amount of overpricing as well as harsh penalties for committing the crime.
- Scrutinise all fuel imports for overpricing practices and bring the perpetrators to book. All forex gained through such malpractices must be returned to Malawi immediately;
- Massive fuel importers such as Paladin (usage: 3,000 litres diesel per day) must use their own forex reserves to bring in their fuel and should not drain Malawi's scarce reserves;
- Allow independent importation of fuel by any entrepreneur who has the means – this will break the stranglehold monopoly of PIL and open the market for free competition;
- Paladin's exports of 'yellow cake' must be checked to ensure that a fair market price is being charged and the proceeds are being brought back to Malawi without any transfer pricing;
- Gemstone exports must be monitored closely by trained experts to ensure that fair values are being declared. Malawi may have been short changed for decades in this area due to lack of capacity and negligence;
- It may be necessary, in the short term, to listen to the IMF and devalue our currency in order to gain their approval which would then open the doors for other Donors to come in and pump much needed forex into our flagging economy. The inflationary aspects of this can be countered by other anti-inflationary measures.
- It is essential to immediately mend fences with our long term development partners, the British Government by apologising for the diplomatic faux pas and making amends. Their contribution to our economy is too significant to shrug off with cavalier disdain – especially when it means that the poorest sections of society will be worst afflicted by the suspension of British aid.
- The bloated Cabinet must be trimmed to 14 members and their fuel and air time allowances adjusted to reasonable levels with immediate effect;
- The newly approved MK 1 million monthly allowance for each Member of Parliament must be revised downwards to a reasonable level with immediate effect;

TIME FRAME

We hereby propose that:

1. Within 1 month; adopt measures and actions so that there is availability of and access to forex.
2. Within 1 month; adopt special measures to avail adequate forex to Petroleum Importers Limited and other suppliers so that they are able to import fuel without interruption.
3. Within 1 month; the ESCOM board and top management should be replaced with independent experts who, within 3 months, must demonstrate that the acute electricity shortages have begun to reverse.
In addition, form a consultative forum which solicits input from all stakeholders who may have valuable information, ideas and new concepts with which to tackle the issues of capacity and cost of power generation;
4. Within 1 month, The Anti-corruption Bureau should commence an investigation of all people implicated in the recent Malawi Housing house sale scandal.
5. The Anti-Corruption Bureau should start investigating ALL Cabinet Ministers and public servants on the unexplained wealth that some seem to have accumulated whilst holding office. The Penal Code calls upon all citizens to explain the source of their wealth, all moneys stolen should be returned.
6. Within 1 month; The President should fully declare his assets, explaining sources of funds to acquire and develop Ndata farm.
7. Within 1 month; The First Lady's contract should be nullified and all earnings refunded back to Government.
8. Within 1 month; Law Commission should set up a special law commission to revisit the Penal Code and the Injunctions Bill, which should lead to submission of recommendations within 3 months.
9. Within 1 month; The President should demonstrate good faith towards the Office of the Vice President, starting by returning her official motorcade.
10. The Government should commit to hold Local Government Elections by end of this year.
11. The University Council should immediately reinstate the four lecturers dismissed during the academic freedom stalemate, and issue a statement committing that no spies will be allowed in lecture rooms.
12. Within 1 month; the deported British High Commissioner should return to resume his duties in Malawi.
13. Within 1 month; Issue a circular nullifying the instruction to require a deposit of MK 2, 000,000 for mass demonstrations.

Failure to meet any of these demands will further support our stand that the current leadership and administration cannot govern this country in an equitable and democratic manner and that our fear of regressing into an autocratic kleptocracy is valid. We hope to be proven wrong and pray for a transformation that will set the ship of Malawi onto its rightful course for the benefit and wellbeing of all Malawians.

A Better Malawi is Possible!!

Viva Democracy Viva!!!

20th July 2011