INTEGRATION IN THE SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY REGION

PEOPLES' AGENCY, POPULAR PARTICIPATION, AND DEMOCRATIZATION

EDITED BY

KORWA GOMBE ADAR, DOROTHY MPABANGA, KEBAPETSE LOTSHWAO, THEKISO MOLOKWANE, AND NORBERT MUSEKIWA

African Studies • Political Theory

"What is democracy without peoples' agency, participation, and sense of belonging? The answer is in this timely, rigorous comparative study of Southern African Development Community. This volume will influence studies on SADC for decades to come."
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"The authors examine the role that the people play in the formation of regional identity in regional integration studies. Focusing on the SADC region and introducing new concepts, specifically *sadcness* and *sadcnization*, this book offers new theoretical approaches in the study of regional integration. It can be used as a guide and reference for policy makers as well as researchers in the study of African regional integration. It should be in all government institutions, NGOs, as well as libraries."
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"In exploring the possible realization of *sadcness* and *sadcnization* in Southern Africa through regional integration, this book employs the doctrine of popular sovereignty to underscore the role of the people as primary agents and beneficiaries of integration. This book uniquely contributes to the ongoing debate on regional integration, making it a timely text for students of international studies and related courses and a reference tool for policy makers, governments, and diplomats."
— MERCY KABURU, United States International University–Africa

"This book tackles the deeply challenging question, why citizen-centered integration is key to democratization of regional institutions. The editors and contributors build on this cognition to initiate a fundamental debate premised on the understanding that 'peoples' agency' is and will remain central to SADC's integration. This book is widely enriched in well-ordered ontologies, addresses the *punctum caecum* of most African institutions in fulfilling their development emancipation, and as such is ideal for historians, political anthropologists, political scientists, and public administration scholars."
— FRANCIS ONDITI, Riara University, Kenya

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To all the people of Southern Africa (people of the region) from Bailundo, Huambo Province (Angola), Moralane, Central District (Botswana), Antamotamo, Nosy be, Antsiranana Province (Madagascar), Alua, Nampula Province (Mozambique), Phapazela, Limpopo Province (South Africa), and Semchembu, Midlands Province (Zimbabwe).

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Foreword

In the aftermath of international events, globalisation is being reshaped. There is the rising geo-political presence of China, the economic, social, and international vulnerabilities laid bare by the COVID-19 pandemic and the globally polarising effects left by the war enacted on Ukraine, amongst others. In such a context, regions continue to assume ever greater strategic importance as regional economic hubs for integration and as centres which adapt international norms to suit regional purpose. Importantly, Africa as a region is currently enacting the African Continental Free Trade Area (ACFTA) to foster integration based on expanding intra-regional trade and production.

The prominence of African (sub-)regional organisations is linked to how credible and effective they are seen to be. Following September 11, 2001, this was generally informed by an international interest in maintaining international stability. Commentary on how effective regional organisations have often been at the expense of considering the value of public participation. Instead, there has been a preoccupation with the management of *state-centred* security issues.

This rigorous comparative study, however, concerns itself with the relative absence of public participation in Southern Africa's regional organisation, SADC.

SADC grew out of SADCC forty years ago in 1992. As a child of the 1990s, economically speaking, its approach was neo-liberal. Whereas its predecessor aimed high with reference to state-sponsored industrial development aimed at structural change to transform income generation, SADC adopted a neo-liberal argument for market-led growth in the kind of globalisation driven by global financial markets. Development was simply meant to alleviate poverty. This approach side-lined notions of economic democracy. This also underplayed having vibrant political democracies and active public participation.

While economically markets were privileged inside SADC, the source of most SADC-sponsored activity was state-centred security-related issues

Chapter 1

Angola

The Challenges of National and Regional People-Driven Integration and Democratization

Nuno Fragoso Vidal

Angola is a founding member of the Southern African Development Coordination Conference (SADCC), which in the early 1990s was transformed into the Southern African Development Community (SADC). Over the years, Angola always expressed an official commitment towards the organization and its purposes. However, insofar as those purposes comprise democratization and integration through popular participation, the government's commitment becomes more dubious and hesitant due to a much troubled and long political path. The country has a long tradition of authoritarianism since the colonial period through independence and the civil war (which ended in 2002), through the transition to a multiparty and liberal system since the 1990s, and through the still much controversial electoral political stabilization from 2008 onwards. The party in power since independence in 1975—the MPLA (Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola) reinforced its strength and might at all levels through the 1990s transition, pushing forward its hegemonic drive. Considering a long civil war and the post-war reinforcement of the hegemonic drive, a people-driven national integration and democratization is still to be achieved and a challenge to be added when considering the regional challenge of people-driven integration and democratization within a future SADC's regional parliament.

This chapter provides an analysis of such political dynamics and the main obstacles to an SADC parliamentary process of a people-driven regional integration and democratization. The chapter unfolds in five parts: the first

characterizes the post-independence structuring of the Angolan political system within a single-party setting; the second deals with the adaptation to a new multiparty and market economy system through a much troubled electoral process and resumed civil war; the third focuses on the recovering of political legitimacy after the end of the civil war through military victory, elections and constitutional consecration of hegemony; the fourth considers the resistance by counter-hegemonic forces; the fifth reflects on the challenges put forward by the SADC Parliament project on such structuring and fundamentals of the Angolan political system.

THE STRUCTURING OF THE ANGOLAN POLITICAL SYSTEM THROUGH A SINGLE-PARTY SOCIALIST REGIME

Conflict and authoritarianism have characterized Angola since colonialism. The nationalist war against the Portuguese (1961–1975) promised freedom from a long colonial repression, but independence in 1975 marked the beginning of a civil war (which had effectively started even before Independence Day—11 November 1975), with major foreign involvement right from the start. With few interruptions or relatively less intense war periods,[1] the conflict lasted for almost 27 years—up to February 2002, when the rebel leader of the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), Jonas Savimbi, was killed in action, and a peace memorandum (Luena) was signed in March that year.

Despite the civil war being in place between 1975 and 1977, there was a period of relative civil freedom in independent Angola, governed exclusively by the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), after repelling the other two movements from the main cities—UNITA and the FNLA (National Front for the Liberation of Angola). However, in May 1977, an aborted coup inside the MPLA, led by Nito Alves and José Van-Dunem, resulted in a major purge with massive killings all over the country and accelerated an authoritarian and repressive one-party Socialist regime. Fearful state security services became instruments of surveillance and political repression. Non-state media were closed and the right to association was limited to party and mass organizations, such as the labor union of Angolan workers—UNTA, the Organization of Angolan Women—OMA, and the MPLA's Youth—JMPLA (Vidal, 2007a).

The judicial system became "militarized," juxtaposing civilian and military courts with the ability to impose heavy penalties, including death penalty (mainly for political and security crimes) and functioning under a vague and almost limitless revolutionary legitimacy. The judiciary became politically

dependent, under direct influence of the party and ultimately of the President of the Party/President of the Republic (Vidal, 2007b).

The civil war became a main factor of further social and economic fragmentation. Resources became more and more absorbed by the war effort. The agriculture and industrial production were severely damaged, and the economy became almost exclusively dependent on the oil revenue (Hodges, 2001). As the war raged high, the conflict increasingly assumed an ethnic overtone and accentuated the urban-rural divide (Messiant, 1994). The developmental gap between Luanda and the provinces, as well as between the coast and the interior also got deeper. In the early eighties, most of the population was already facing extreme poverty aggravated by the disruption of the health and educational systems (Vidal, 2007a). Violations of human rights by both sides of the conflict became regular as well as impunity for perpetrators of those crimes, as reported by several international organizations throughout the whole war (Human Rights Watch, 1994). The prioritization of defense and internal order contributed to the undermining of democracy, transparency, and accountability (Human Rights Watch, 1999; Human Rights Watch, 2000). Within a war context, with no civil society organizations, legal opposition, or even freedom of expression allowed, with a militarized and politically dependent judicial system, a culture of fear, intimidation, and repression became entrenched.

As the war increased in intensity in the 1980s, within the context of the Cold War (Messiant, 1994), the whole dynamics of repression and authoritarianism deepened, culminating in the decline in public services; justification of all kinds of abuses on civil and political rights and freedoms; support for an ever-increasing centralization and concentration of power in Luanda and at the presidency;[2] disruption of internal production that resulted in increasing economic dependency on oil revenues; intensification of social fragmentation insofar as people resorted more and more to personal and informal solutions for their growing problems instead of public demands on public institutions and consequently eroding state institutions and collective/public consciousness (Vidal, 2007a).

The single-party period clearly marked the structuring and institutionalization of an MPLA's hegemonic project, with an assumed party control of all areas of state-society organization, concentrating power at the party presidency/presidency of the Republic, centralizing administration through the so-called Socialist "democratic centralism," overlapping the party and the state, juxtaposing the executive, the legislative, and the judiciary (Vidal, 2007b). Increasing socio-economic problems and rising costs of war opened the way for cautious economic reforms from 1987 onwards (Ennes-Ferreira, 1995). Officially, the Socialist model lasted until the third MPLA Party Congress of December 1990. Complex negotiations with South Africa, the

United States and Cuba led to the withdrawal of Cuban troops and Namibia's independence, paving the way for the 1991 Bicesse peace agreement between the MPLA and UNITA and the 1992 multiparty elections—the first ever in Angola.

RETAINING HEGEMONY THROUGH THE TRANSITION TO A MULTIPARTY/ MARKET ECONOMY SETTING

A constitutional revision in 1991 (law 12/91), approved the basic principles of a multiparty democracy, defining Angola as a democratic state based on the rule of law. Other complementary legislation was approved, including the right to assembly and demonstration (law 16/91), the freedom of association (law 14/91), freedom of the press (law 25/91), the right to strike (law 23/91), and independent radio broadcasting (law 16/92). The new legal setting opened the space for the emergence of opposition political parties and civil society organizations, including the private media, independent labor and professional unions, and NGOs. State radio, television, and newspaper became somewhat more pluralist, and a wave of strikes took place in 1991 and 1992. Nevertheless, it soon became clear that the regime was not willing to give up on its hegemony and that the new institutional framework did not necessarily mean significant change. A political strategy to secure power came to the fore and basically consisted in the control of the five main areas assuring hegemony in the new multiparty/market economy setting: the legislative (including the electoral management body and electoral legislation), the executive (state administration, logistics, and resources), the judicial, the media, the private and state economic sectors (Messiant, 1995).

Accordingly, and with a long governing experience, controlling the state institutions, administration, and resources, the President and the party in power were able to unilaterally change most of the new legislation at will, setting the legal pace of the transition before elections, while the opposition was essentially focused on the election day. Most of the new laws were approved between March 1991 and September 1992 by the People's Assembly, (i.e., the parliament of the single party system), which clearly represented an advantage to secure power through the transition (Messiant, 1995). The new private sector was put under the MPLA's control, with the privatization process mainly benefitting the old MPLA governing elite, which was now transformed into an entrepreneurial class dominating the new private sector (Aguilar 2003, 2005). Along with the already controlled state media, the new private media was also kept under close surveillance, through their appointed Boards of Directors. The new/emerging civil society organizations

faced severe constraints and were strongly permeated by the party in power, being extremely fragile and dependent on foreign funding (Messiant, 1999). Opposition parties had their activities constantly disrupted with all kinds of disguised political and administrative maneuvers to undermine their operation (Vidal, 2007b).

Being in control of the main source of state funding, oil revenues, the ruling party was able to channel a significant amount of state funds for electoral purposes, including general distribution of material benefits. The state administration and logistics that were still under partisan control all over the country were used in favor of the MPLA's electoral campaign (Messiant, 1995). Under those circumstances, the 1992 electoral results gave the MPLA a 53,74% win of votes at the legislative election, and José Eduardo a 49,56% win at the presidential election, requiring a second turn for the presidential election (see table 1.1). UNITA did not accept the electoral results of the 1992 election (see table 1.1). UNITA did not accept the electoral results of the 1992

Table 1.1: Electoral Results, Registered Electors and Electoral Abstention Since 1992[3]

Electoral Year	1992	2008	2012	2017
Registered voters	4.828.626	8.307.109	9.757.671	9.317.294
Abstention in %	8,7%	12,5%	37,1%	43%
% of votes per party / nº of parliamentary seats	MPLA 53,74% / 129	MPLA 81,64% / 191	MPLA 71,84% / 175	MPLA 61,1% / 150
—	UNITA 34,10% / 70	UNITA 10,39% / 16	UNITA 18,66 / 32	UNITA 26,7% / 51
—	FNLA 2,40% / 5	PRS 3,17% / 8	CASA-CE 6% / 8	CASA-CE 9,5% / 16
—	PLD 2,39% / 4	NDUE 1,20% / 2	PRS 1,70% / 3	PRS 1,3% / 2
—	PRS 2,27% / 6	FNLA 1,11% / 3	FNLA 1,13% / 2	FNLA 0,9% / 1
—	PRD 0,89% / 1	—	—	—
—	AD-C 0,86% / 1	—	—	—
—	PSD 0,84% / 1	—	—	—
—	PAJOCA 0,35% / 1	—	—	—
—	FDA 0,30% / 1	—	—	—
—	PDP-ANA 0,27% / 1	—	—	—
—	PNDA 0,26% / 1	—	—	—

election and war resumed, representing a new contraction of the political and civil space that had opened during the electoral campaign. Such contraction was partially loosened during the Lusaka peace agreement implementation period (1994–1998) but contracted once again as war raged high from late 1998 up to 2002. Political pressure on the private media was reinforced through state security and judicial activity, resulting in several arrests and lawsuits against journalists (Amnesty International 1999, 2000).

Parallel civil society organizations, the so-called government friendly civil society organizations were funded to support the regime (Messiant, 1999), while multitudes of opposition political parties faced the challenge of internal factions which according to some opposition leaders were instigated and sponsored by the MPLA to foment division and weakness, a process referred to as "Renovadas" (renewed), starting with UNITA itself, which had to face an internal scission in Luanda with the UNITA-*Renovada*, led by Eugénio Manuvakola (Vidal, 2007b, p. 142). Despite several attempts by the Angolan social movements for a negotiated peace settlement (e.g., the Pro Pace Movement; Comerford, 2005), the regime by late 1998 had opted for a military solution, which finally succeeded with the killing in combat of UNITA's leader, Jonas Savimbi, in February 2002. The cease-fire and the Memorandum of Luena (April, 2002) was signed by the victorious MPLA and the defeated UNITA without any external or internal participation, an unbalanced relationship of forces that would from then on characterize the Angolan political system, consecrating the hegemonic project of the MPLA.

RENEWAL OF POLITICAL LEGITIMACY AND CONSECRATED HEGEMONY THROUGH ELECTIONS

With the military victory and the maintenance of the control of the main variables sustaining power (legislative, executive, judicial, media, private and state economic sectors), the MPLA renewed the legitimacy of political power and its relative hegemony through the first post-war electoral win in 2008, with 81.64% of votes at the legislative elections (*cf. infra*, table 1.1). With more than two thirds of votes at the 2008 elections and in face of a new international context, which combined the oil prices' boom and Western financial crisis, the regime saw the opportunity to expand its legitimacy and strength, approving a new Constitution in 2010, which consecrated the decades-old process of power concentration and centralization, with an assured presidential supremacy over the legislative, the executive, and the judicial branches, but now within a multiparty setting. Accordingly, the President, besides being Commander-In-Chief of the Armed Forces (appointing the whole military and national security structures), is Head-of-State, Chief-of-the-Executive,

presiding over the Council of Ministers, appointing and dismissing Ministers of State, Ministers, Deputy-Ministers, and Secretaries-of-State as well as provincial Governors and Vice-Governors, the Governor and Deputy-Governor of the Central Bank, Judges at the Supreme Court, at the Constitutional Court (also able to judge electoral disputes), Judges at the Audit Court, Judges at the Supreme Military Court, the Attorney-General, Deputy-Attorney of the Republic and respective offices, as well as the Military Attorneys at the Supreme Military Court, and last, but not least, members of the Supreme Councils of the Judiciary.[4]

The move was so ostensive with the centrality of the president over the whole system to the extent that some constitutionalists characterized it as "superlative-presidentialism" (Moreira, 2010). Ignoring the domestic and international criticism, the president was now to be elected as the first name of the candidates' list produced by the majority party, discarding any possibility of being directly elected by the people. Under the strong personal leadership of its President, the MPLA was able to retain a tight control over the State apparatus and its resources for the sake of political hegemony, maintaining the public and private sectors of the economy under tight political control, while still significantly restricting the political and civil space of opposition parties and civil society organizations. The record-high oil revenues (from the oil Bonanza of 2002–2014) even prompted an ambitious internationalization of Angolan (elite) capital, heavily invested in Portuguese strategic sectors such as banks, communications, energy, media, and insurances (Soares de Oliveira, 2015).

The partisan control of the state apparatus, administration, logistics, media, executive, legislative, and judicial power, cumulatively with record-high economic growth rates up to 2013/14, reflected in three consecutive electoral victories with more than two-thirds of voting in each plebiscite since the end of the civil war (81.64% of voting in 2008; 71.84% in 2012; 61.70% in 2017; *cf. infra* table 1.1). Worthy of mention is the fact that after 38 years in power, former President José Eduardo dos Santos (who succeeded the first Angolan President Agostinho Neto at his death in 1979), decided not to run for a new mandate, announcing João Lourenço, his minister of Defense, as the party's candidate for the presidency at the 2017 legislative/presidential elections, and therefore his immediate successor. The electoral campaign followed the same old electoral strategies and mechanisms essentially set since 1992. The party machinery once again carefully prepared for new elections in August 2017. Although within a relatively unfavorable context, characterized by a financial and economic crisis out of a steep and extended downturn in oil prices,[5] the control over the state administration machinery, state resources, control of the legislative and the judicial, as well as the Electoral Management Body and the State media, all proved crucial (Vidal, 2017).

After assuming the presidency, the new President tried to portray himself as a reformist committed to tackling corruption that he blamed on his predecessor, Dos Santos. Major financial scandals with complex international ramifications erupted in 2017 and continued uninterrupted from then on. The new administration inherited "a looted state with empty coffers" as Lourenço himself complained (Costa, 2018). President Lourenço pushed forward his electoral campaign promises to fight corruption, attempting to recover part of the loot, estimated in October 2020 at circa $US 24 billion, but officially expected to be much higher. According to Lourenço, it had already been confirmed that the bulk of looting was made through fraudulent contracts with the state-owned oil company, Sonangol ($13.52 billion), illegally withdrawn from government-run diamond companies Sodiam and Endiama ($5.09 billion), and the remaining from other sectors and public companies ($5.19 billion) (Keeler, 2020). The financial dimension of these scandals and the fact that they had taken place at the heart of public companies revealed the lack of transparency and major obscurity characterizing the management of public affairs and how far was civil society from its watchdog role on public affairs and public/political participation.

Several positive signs indicating a new era for civil society participation in politics were announced by the President, who even invited several members of civil society organizations for a meeting in December 2018, asking for their support and partnership. However, after more than four years in office, the fight against corruption by the new "Lourenço" administration revealed itself as highly selective, unmercifully chasing a few for the media spotlights, such as the former President's family, while sparing (sometimes explicitly protecting, against all evidences of corruption) innumerable tycoons intimately related to the previous administration, such as General Higino Carneiro, Banker Álvaro Sobrinho, and even Manuel Vicente (although Vicente is supposedly escaping lawsuits due to his immunity up to 2022 elections). Although wisely less repressive than his predecessor towards public demonstrations against the regime and government, after the first 2 to 3 years in office, the new administration left no doubts that the old party and state machinery for hegemonic purposes remain intact. There remains, as strong as ever, a tight grip on the media (public and private), over the legislature (including the electoral register and electoral logistics management and supervision), on the judiciary (with all sorts of attempts to annul the congress of the main opposition party and the election of its new leader that represented a major electoral threat to the MPLA), and over the state administration logistics and resources (with an expansion of state jobs in electoral year) and on the private and State economic sectors (Pacheco, 2022).

Even leaving aside the discussion on Lourenço's political sincerity for an effective political change, due to the long existence of the system, its extension, and ramifications through society as a whole, it would be hard to obtain a substantial change in such a short period. The Lourenço administration is composed by members of the all-time MPLA's elites, including the new President Lourenço, a long-time top-rank member of the state, party, and military structures, as well as his wife (former minister and deputy-minister of planning for 15 years in the previous administration of Dos Santos). Within such context of restricted liberties and despite all the civil and political rights consecrated at the constitution, it has been hard to foster an effective participative democracy in Angola. An alarming indicator is the rising abstention over the years and successive elections, from 8,7% in 1992, to 12,5% in 2008, to 37,1% in 2012 and 43% in 2017 (*Jornal de Angola*, 2017; see table 1.1).

COUNTER-HEGEMONIC FORCES

As previously characterized, after almost three decades of transition, the Angolan political system, in different shades and shapes, became much more complex and sophisticated at the central and local level, with significant international ramifications, with ever effectively defused and systemically concealed forms of dominance and authoritarianism (Vidal, 2017). This said, it does not mean that the regime's hegemonic drive of the last decades has managed to completely smash counter-hegemonic forces and people-driven political participation and inclusion in effectively democratization processes. The regime's committed and imaginative efforts to find new and more sophisticated (concealed though legal) forms of dominance (Vidal, 2017) is also a sign that the pressure for political inclusion, participation and effective people driven democratization, has also been growing.

One must have in mind that the "transition" phase took place within a socio-political and economic background of harshening living conditions for most of the population in the country. The "transition" implied the convergence of multiple simultaneous transitions, from war to peace, from centrally planned economy to market economy, and from one-party regime to multiparty rule and therefore it opened several fronts for popular demands. The process opened some effective space for counter-hegemonic forces and therefore a breach for some pluralism and some effective democratization, especially during electoral processes (Vidal, 2017). These spaces, once open, are extremely hard to totally close, especially because such spaces became the international foundations of the new political legitimacy and international recognition. It is within this new political playground that opposing forces interact. On the one side, we have been seeing the regime and its government trying to distort pluralism and democratization, as a strategy to maintain political hegemony through the dominance of the main variables determining

power (Vidal, 2017). On the other side, we also see actions taken by other actors in society (e.g., individual citizens, civil society organizations, media, churches, political parties, unions, etc.), trying to get the government to abide by the law on fundamental rights and freedoms, and attempting to take the most out of the opportunity created by the transition processes for pluralism and effective participatory democratization.

As previously explained, so far, the balance on that struggle has undoubtedly pended to the hegemonic forces in power, insofar as electoral processes in different contexts (1992, 2008, 2012, 2017) have been reaffirming the MPLA's hegemony in the multiparty era, reaching a two-thirds majority of seats at the parliament in every election since 2008. Leaving aside the already outdated transition paradigm (as explained by Carothers, 2002), it must be acknowledged that long authoritarian traditions resisted, rendering void the protection of individual and minority freedoms, as it was the case in several other countries throughout the continent (Brosche et al., 2020; Borzyskowski and Kuhn, 2020; Birch et al., 2020; Asunka et al., 2019; Kovacs & Bjarnesen, 2018; Agbiboa, 2018). In fact, within the argument that certain features of the previous illiberal single party system resisted and adapted "transition" (or change), it was more of a resistance and adaptation of previous features and logics of the previous model than a roll-back (Diamond, 2008; Merkel, 2010), or than a malfunctioning of certain new liberal institutions (Kapstein & Converse, 2008). Notions of competitive authoritarian regimes (Levitsky & Way, 2010), or "new" competitive authoritarian regimes (Levitsky & Way, 2020), have been used to characterize such realities.

Adding to the hegemonic authoritarian forces we would have to consider the emergence of global alternative sources of military, economic, and diplomatic support, mainly China and Russia, something that significantly reduces the external cost of authoritarianism. Such support would eventually strengthen the "new competitive authoritarianism," structurally grounded on populism and elections through several distortions and blockages on institutions providing for people participation and effective democratization, tilting the political and civil society participation playing field. The case of Angola seems to be a good example of such dynamics. Having to cope with a major reconstruction plan after 27 years of civil war that ended in 2002, the government sought for funding through an international donors' conference, including the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, which immediately associated several conditions in terms of transparency, accountability, human rights, and civil-political liberties. Faced with such conditionality, the government found a way out in 2003/2004, with China willing to fund the country's reconstruction with oil-backed loans, free from any such conditionalities

and with better financial conditions than the IMF. With the new partnership and the oil revenues, the government felt sufficiently comfortable by 2004 to simply give up on the donors' conference, altogether with the attached civil-political conditionalities.

Chinese loans substantially increased, and Angola became the top recipient of Chinese loans in Africa with a total of more than $43.2 billion from 2002 to 2018 (of a total of $145.562 billions of Chinese loans in Africa for the same period), with a peak reached in 2016 with $19.3 billion, prior to 2017 elections. Of the $43.2 billion, $10 billion were simply to recapitalize Sonangol (Brautigam et al., 2020), the oil company at the center of looting scandals previously discussed. As for the relationship of the MPLA with Russia, that goes back to Soviet times with a peak in the 1970s and 1980s, during the civil war, regaining impetus in 2015. Since then, Angola has become the third-biggest African client for Russian arms (Deutsche Welle, 2020). Russia has also been increasing its long-time presence in the mining and energy sectors, and Angola (along with Mozambique, Zimbabwe, and Namibia) was among the group of countries visited by Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov in March 2018 in the run-up for the Sochi summit. By then, according to the minister, "our African friends note the need for Russia's active presence in the region, and more frequently express interest in holding a Russia-African summit" (Klomegah, 2020, p. 27).

The attraction for renewed models of authoritarianism is not only in the more obvious terms of renewed sources of aid and investment, but mainly in terms of political legitimating discourses to deal in more effective and efficient terms with growing domestic demands and activism for democratization, that do exist despite all the attempts to constrain them. Despite all the strength of the pro-hegemon forces and tendencies in Angola, as in so many other countries, the struggle for democratization and political participation, political inclusiveness, and, in the end, for people-driven democracy and development, continues. Besides the referred rising abstention, another alarming sign for the regime is the loss of circa 20% of voting from 2008 to 2017, and the rising of so-called revolutionary youth movements and voices that do escape the usual civil society organizations to opt for a more open confrontation with the government (Vidal, 2015). Another concerning sign for those in power is the rising popularity of a renewed UNITA with its new leader that is not from the usual UNITA sociological background of the central plateaux, but an urban, mixed-race, engineer trained in Europe, turning around the traditional matrix of the Angolan political framework and, for those reasons, attracting a significant part of the MPLA electorate as never before.

THE SADC PARLIAMENT TO PROMOTE
PEOPLE-DRIVEN INTEGRATION
AND DEMOCRATIZATION

Although the SADC Treaty (Article 23) provides for the involvement of people of the region and key stakeholders in the process of regional integration, and clearly states that "SADC shall co-operate with and support the initiatives of the peoples of the Region . . . to foster closer relations among the communities, associations, and people of the region," people-driven participation in such processes is far from effective. Likewise, even though Article 5 states that "the objective of SADC shall be to promote common political values, systems and other shared common political values, which are transmitted through institutions which are democratic and effective," that is also a distant reality for countries like Angola, although it is a founding member of the SADC. People-driven integration and democratization processes are usually difficult in countries with a long history of authoritarian and hegemonic rule, characterized by an excessive power concentration and administrative centralization, political/party/regime control, and overlap of executive, legislative, and judicial powers, along with a politically controlled media and economy.

Nevertheless, this does not mean that overcoming such national challenge must be a pre-requisite to overcome the regional challenge. On the contrary, the analysis here provided on the evolution of the Angolan political system and its dynamics supports the argument that the regional push towards popular participation and integration can be an important facilitator and incentive to a somehow slow or stalled national process of people-driven democratization. To move forward with specific strategies, mechanisms, and institutions facilitating the regional process, is essential to move forward with the national process. Both processes might be mutually and cumulatively reinforcing but having in mind that the whole SADC parliament process must be constructed and structured with a new spirit of inclusiveness, participation, and transparency, to cut with a past of suspicion on top-down structures that were usually politically manipulated by the party/government for hegemonic purposes. The importance of such new spirit of inclusiveness might also dissipate the common sense that regional structures are mere extensions of national governments/parties in power on their own strategies to retain support and legitimacy at the regional/international level.

In these terms, it is necessary to assure that decision-making processes at the future parliament are inclusive (objectively concerning the life of common citizens and able to be influenced by them through electoral processes), and transparent to the citizens of member states, and that information flows

openly (freely) from the regional (SADC) to the national and local levels and vice-versa. A parliament that does not represent the people and does not exist for the people and by the people, would represent another distant, foreign, structure/institution. People ownership of the process, that is, to create a spirit of what has been termed *sadcness* in this book, is essential to make it effective, meaningful, and sustainable as an institution to promote regional integration and democratization, within a process that could, in whole, be termed as *sadcnization*.

Angola, as a sovereign state, ratified the SADC treaty, which by implication legitimizes a nexus between SADC and Angola at the international (regional) level on the one hand, and Angola and its people at the national level, on the other hand. Specifically, by ratifying the treaty, Angola, a sovereign person of international law, engages in *social contract* which has linked it directly at the regional level as well as national level. This *social contract* also links the people of Angola—the sovereigns—to a regional level. In this case, three sovereign entities are inextricably linked at play, namely the people of Angola (embodying their sovereignty at their state of Angola), the state of Angola (who is the embodiment and guardian of the people of Angola's sovereignty), and SADC (who derives its sovereignty from the member states and therefore from the peoples of the region). A network is thus created to strengthen all these three entities organically bonding them within a process of *sadcnization*. Such network can only be legitimate, effective, and efficient, if it is rooted within the peoples of the region, if the peoples of the region sense that they are included and, in the end, own the process in what is here termed a sense of *sadcness*, and if the three entities understand and respect the foundational characteristics of the social contract that organically bonds and functionally articulates them, creating a sense of what was here called *sadcnization*.

Although the centrality of political parties within that articulation between the people and the future SADC parliament is undeniable, a productive relational-foundational-representational nexus between the sovereignty of the people of Southern Africa and the SADC parliament's legitimacy should also include other important stakeholders, such as a free media, an effective networking between Civil Society Organizations (CSO) of member states, and between CSO and the parliament, and the involvement of academics and research centers. A free and effective media is necessary to help the SADC parliament to perform its role as a regional forum of public information on regional issues and regional political agendas, to help citizens of member countries to get involved, feel involved, and demand for involvement and for specific policies. It might also be helpful in harmonizing several indicators on socio-economic data and raise public consciousness on specific public policies and budget allocation, as well as political accountability on such

issues. A specific SADC regional news' service might well be an important top-down stimulus to foster free media processes and an open flux of information from the parliament to citizens of member States and vice-versa.

CSO would benefit from and be supportive of more civil space for political participation at the national level, resulting from the dynamics fostered by an SADC regional parliament. There are already a few CSO, more or less related to the SADC, in pursue of an increasing articulation between CSO at the regional level and to facilitate the relationship with the SADC policy decision making bodies. We can find organizations such as the SADC Council of Nongovernmental Organizations (SADC CNGO), the Southern African Trade Unions Coordinating Council (SATUCC), the Fellowship of Christian Councils in Southern Africa (FCCSA) and its program on the Economic Justice Network (EJN), or the Southern African People' Solidarity Network (SAPSN), among several others. These organizations try to coordinate civil society engagement at the regional level, trying to assume an increasing protagonist role. Experience of such networking might be an added value to the process of expanding such collaborations with the future SADC parliament and the promotion of a closer relationship between local communities and the SADC parliament.

Last, scientific research centers and academics must be valued and stimulated by the SADC parliament and all SADC institutions to participate in the whole process of regional integration and democratization. Knowledge produced by independent academic research is essential to support policy decision-making processes on regional policies in several technical, socio-economic, and socio-political dimensions. Their contribution is crucial to SADC parliamentary discussions over several regional policies that do need to be fed with sound knowledge and research for its effectiveness and efficiency at the regional level and local level, articulating both in the most productive way. Involvement of such institutions will give credibility to the whole process in the eyes of the people.

CONCLUSION

As explained here, through the peculiarities of the Angolan case, the people-driven integration and democratization is still a dream. There are myriad challenges to be overcome at the national, regional, and even international level. Remnants from an authoritarian past, that is still too present, do represent a challenge, as well as the new authoritarian international trends that are emerging and reinforcing the prevailing hegemonic forces with inherent adverse implications on democratization. In Angola, we have been witnessing

opposite forces at play. On the one side is the regime and its government led by the same party since independence in 1975 trying to distort pluralism and democratization since the multi-party transition started in 1991. This is aimed at maintaining political hegemony through the dominance of the main variables determining power (Vidal, 2017). On the other side, we also see actions taken by other society sectors (e.g., individual citizens, some civil society organizations, media, churches, political parties, unions, etc.), trying to get the government to abide by the law on fundamental rights and freedoms, and attempting to take the most out of the opportunity created by the transition processes for pluralism and effective participatory democratization.

As previously explained, so far, the balance on that struggle has undoubtedly pended to the hegemonic forces in power, insofar as electoral processes in different contexts (1992, 2008, 2012, 2017) have been reaffirming the MPLA's hegemony in the multiparty era, reaching a two-thirds majority of seats at the parliament in every election since 2008. As economic/political approach to international authoritarian illiberal tendencies over the last years might also represent an added strength to hegemon forces. Nevertheless, despite all the strength of the pro-hegemon forces and tendencies, in Angola, as in so many other countries, the struggle for democratization and political participation, political inclusiveness, and, in the end, for people-driven democracy and development, continues and is necessary, as there is a resilient and strong will from significant sectors of society striving for political inclusion, participation, and effective democratization. Peace and development of the region and its peoples would greatly benefit from integration and democratization at the national and regional level. The envisioned process of strengthening regional political-economic integration through the institutionalization of an SADC parliament might well represent a major support for the national people-driven democratization, along with the expected impact at the regional level. A regional push towards popular participation and integration can facilitate and push forward a stalled national democratization process. At the regional level, there is a need to create an effective relational-foundational nexus between the people and the SADC parliament for regional integration and democratization, but that implies a *social contract* relating the people of member countries (the sovereigns), Angola for the case being, the state of Angola (embodying the people's sovereignty), and SADC (deriving its sovereignty and legitimacy from the member states and from the peoples of the region). If the three entities understand and respect the foundational characteristics of the *social contract* it would be easier to organically and functionally, effectively and efficiently, articulate them, within the construction process of what is termed *sadcnization* in the book. Above all, it was here argued that in order to be sound and sustainable, the path must be owned by the people, what has been termed *sadcness*.

NOTES

1. Those periods of relative or official cease-fire included the peace protocol of Bicesse, signed in 1991 and respected up to 1992, until September elections with war resuming right afterwards, and the peace agreement of Lusaka, signed in 1994 and officially being implemented up to 1998 (although with several low intensity military clashes and accusations of non-compliance by both sides), when the MPLA decided that it was not being respected by UNITA and that it would from then on be left aside as a military solution would be sought from the government side, which effectively came to be achieved in February 2002, with the killing in combat of the rebel leader, Jonas Savimbi.

2. In the mid-80s, the regime had reached the peak of power concentration and administrative centralization: it was run by President Eduardo dos Santos, exerting to the full his functions as President of the Party, Head-of-State, Head-of-Government and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces (Vidal, 2007).

3. Table constructed by the author based on official data provided by the Electoral management Body, the National Electoral Commission (CNE—*Conselho Nacional Eleitoral*). MPLA—Movimento Para a Libertação de Angola; UNITA—União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola; FNLA—rente Nacional para a Libertação de Angola; PLD—Partido Liberal Democrático; Partido de Renovação Social; PRD—Partido de Renovação Democrática; AD-C—Angola Democrática—Coligação; PSD—Partido Social Democrata; PAJOCA—Partido Aliança Juventude, Operários e Camponeses de Angola; FDA—Fórum Democrático Angolano; PDP-ANA—Partido Democrático para o Progresso—Aliança Nacional Angolana; PNDA—Partido Nacional Democrático Angolano; NDUE—Nova Democracia União Eleitoral; CASA-CE—Convergência Ampla para a Salvação de Angola.

4. See arts. 119.º to 124.º of the Angolan Constitutional Law, 2010.

5. Insofar as oil still represents one-third of the GDP and over 95% of the government's exports (The World Bank, 2020), The steady decrease in oil prices since the second semester of 2014 represented a major financial and economic crisis.

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