An Exploratory Study of Constitutional Design in Three Island States: Seychelles, Comoros, and Mauritius

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This article explores the effects of constitutional design on conflict management and democratization outcomes in three African island states: Seychelles, Comoros, and Mauritius. As an exploratory framework, the article reflects upon Arend Lijphart's theory of accommodative constitutional design in view of political developments in the three cases, beginning around their independence and continuing into recent times. The case studies provide some general support to Lijphart's accommodative theory, and particularly to the need to facilitate broad representation and an overall sense of political inclusion, but they also raise critical questions regarding the effects of his institutional recommendations. Contrary to Lijphart's approach, majoritarian legislative elections might under certain conditions facilitate greater inclusion than proportional representation, and direct presidential elections could sometimes be more inclusive than a parliamentary executive. The findings on Lijphart's recommendations of group autonomy are less clear, particularly regarding the question of whether territorial autonomy might increase risks of secession.

Keywords: Constitutional Design; Lijphart; Comoros; Mauritius; Seychelles

I. Introduction

There is general consensus that institutions matter for conflict management and democratization, but there is vigorous debate regarding what constitutional design—broadly defined as the overarching institutional structure of a political order—works best for promoting peace and democracy under stressful sociopolitical conditions (Lijphart 2004; Horowitz 2008; Esman 2004; Grofman and Fraenkel 2008; McGarry, O'Leary, and Simeon 2008; Kuperman 2015). Notably, constitutional design is seen to have a particularly strong influence during periods of transition to democracy (Taagepera 1998). This article explores the effects of

constitutional design on conflict management and democratization in the political development of three island states east of the African continent—Seychelles, Comoros, and Mauritius—beginning around their independence periods in the 1960s and 1970s, and continuing into recent times.

As an analytical framework, this article considers political outcomes in the three cases in light of Arend Lijphart's theory of constitutional design, which recommends what are generally termed *accommodative* institutions, and advises against *integrative* institutions, as explained below. Lijphart's theory and institutional recommendations have been subject to much criticism and debate. His most notable critic is perhaps Donald Horowitz, who argues that Lijphart's approach risks exacerbating conflict and inhibiting democratization processes (Horowitz 2002, 2008). Empirical research provides some evidence for this critique, in both quantitative analysis (Selway and Templeman 2012; Elkins and Sides 2007) and case study methods (Reilly 2001; Spears 2013; Kuperman 2015). However, other empirical work supports Lijphart's approach, finding that accommodative institutions do contribute to successful outcomes (Reynolds 1999; Lindberg 2005; Sullivan 2005; Lemarchand 2007; Norris 2008; Cheeseman 2015; Butenschøn, Stiansen, and Vollan 2015). As will be seen, the case studies here elicit some support for Lijphart's approach, but they also suggest important qualifications regarding his institutional recommendations. Whether his theory is ultimately judged right or wrong, or somewhere in between, Lijphart's work remains relevant to any discussion of constitutional design for conflict management and democratization. Further exploration of his theory as applied to different sociopolitical contexts may thus be useful to scholars and practitioners in this area.

The three cases in this study could have much in common, because their shared status as small island states in a similar region might be expected to yield resemblances, and their politics

could tend to be more stable and conducive to democratic development, as some studies of small island states have found (Dommen 1980; Anckar 2002; Srebrnik 2004).[1] However, these cases also have many important differences, as will be seen, and they were not specifically selected for similarity in attributes other than constitutional design. The intention here is not rigorous testing of Lijphart's theory; rather, this comparative desk study represents an exploratory theory-building effort seeking practical lessons on the application of Lijphart's institutional model, and evaluating whether his accommodative approach might require modification or refinement in specific cases. With this more limited purpose in mind, the article employs historically-based counterfactual analysis—with each case compared to a hypothetical version of itself in which all is held equal except the variable of interest—to identify credible arguments about the effects of constitutional design by drawing upon "historical facts relevant to a counterfactual scenario" (Fearon 1991, 176). More generally, the article engages historical process tracing methods that are used "to study hypothesized casual mechanisms in individual cases" and to identify "generalizable causal patterns across cases" (Bennett and George 2001, 137).

Part II below reviews Lijphart's theory of accommodative constitutional design. Part III presents the three case studies, each beginning with a brief overview, followed by historical summaries and analyses of the effects of constitutional design on conflict management and democratization. Part IV summarizes the findings and discusses conclusions with respect to Lijphart's theory in general and his particular institutional recommendations.

II. Lijphart's Theory of Accommodative Constitutional Design

Lijphart's 2004 article, "Constitutional Design for Divided Societies," represents the culmination of decades of research, beginning with his study of the Netherlands in *The Politics*

of Accommodation (Lijphart 1968), and continuing with development of his well-known "consociational" theory in *Democracy in Plural Societies* (Lijphart 1977). In more recent work, Lijphart elaborates a more empirically driven theory of "consensus" democracy, which includes aspects of consociationalism, but encompasses more specific institutional recommendations (Lijphart 1989).[2] The principles of consociational theory were formulated specifically for plural—or divided—societies, while consensus democracy is more broadly applicable; however, Lijphart states that both design approaches are appropriate for divided societies, and he further indicates their compatibility with one another (40-41). In his 2004 recommendations for divided societies, Lijphart appears to merge his two theories, recommending the basic institutions associated with consensus democracy, while generally incorporating the consociational model (Lijphart 2004).[3] It is important to note, however, that Lijphart's definition of a plural or divided society is quite broad, including not only divisions along conventional lines of identity, but also cultural or ideological cleavages that are politically salient (Lijphart 1989, 39).

Approaches to constitutional design for conflict management and democratization can be classified along a spectrum ranging between competing aims of *accommodation* and *integration* (McGarry, O'Leary, and Simeon 2008; Kuperman 2015). In broadest terms, accommodative design approaches seek to ensure representation for all politically salient groups, while integrative approaches seek to unify these groups under a single national identity. Lijphart thus recommends highly accommodative design, and he advises against integration. According to Lijphart, the ideal constitutional design for peaceful consolidation of democracy combines two main elements: power sharing and group autonomy (Lijphart 2004, 97). Power-sharing institutions include proportional representation (PR) for legislative elections, and an indirectly elected parliamentary executive with a collegial cabinet (100-104). Institutions of group

autonomy include federalism or other formal decentralization, as well as provisions for non-territorial autonomy, including cultural or educational rights (104-105).

[Figure 1 about here]

The underlying logic behind Lijphart's accommodative theory is fairly straightforward, as shown in Figure 1. Power sharing and group autonomy are meant generally to ensure representation for all politically relevant groups and foster an overall sense of inclusion (Cheeseman 2015, 211; Butenschøn, Stiansen, and Vollan 2015, 21). PR elections guarantee broad representation of all groups according to their vote shares, and Lijphart particularly recommends a closed (or mostly closed) list system to facilitate representation of group interests through a strong party structure (Lijphart 2004, 101-102). The endorsement of a parliamentary executive is also consistent with support for a collegial power-sharing cabinet, in contrast with the unitary executive common under presidential systems (Butenschøn, Stiansen, and Vollan 2015, 26). Similarly, decentralized institutions of group autonomy are meant to appease potentially excluded groups by proactively granting certain autonomy rights, and federalism is particularly recommended when territorial divisions are prominent (Lijphart 2004, 104). Notably, while institutions of power sharing are specified explicitly, Lijphart leaves the particulars of decentralization and group autonomy more open to the needs and circumstances of individual cases (Lijphart 2004, 105; Butenschøn, Stiansen, and Vollan 2015, 18).

[Figure 2 about here]

The integrative institutions that Lijphart opposes include majoritarian—or "winner-take-all"—legislative elections, a directly elected president, and a unitary or centralized state structure without allowances for group autonomy. According to Lijphart, as shown in Figure 2, lack of representation and feelings of exclusion caused by these integrative institutions are more likely

to yield political instability and prevent consolidation of democracy in developing states. Not only does Lijphart categorically reject all forms of majority or plurality legislative elections, he is equally skeptical of mixed systems, indicating that they often fail to ensure adequate representation of minorities given likely deviations from proportionality (Lijphart 2004, 100). He also rejects presidentialism for its "zero-sum" nature, and because it tends to encourage personality politics over party competition (101-102). Furthermore, Lijphart's approach relies fundamentally on the notion that structural attempts to centralize power in a unitary state and integrate groups to a single national identity can be counterproductive, particularly in conflict-prone situations.

It is important to note that in criticizing Lijphart's approach, Donald Horowitz recommends not fully integrative constitutional design, but rather what are termed *centripetal* institutions, which may be classified as falling "toward the integrationist end of accommodationist approaches," around the midpoint of the constitutional design spectrum (McGarry, O'Leary, and Simeon 2008, 55).[4] Horowitz thus recommends "vote-pooling" majoritarian elections, including a legislative electoral system—such as the alternative vote—that requires voters to rank choices, which may incentivize formation of pre-electoral coalitions through competition for second or third preferences (Horowitz 2002, 23-25). Horowitz also endorses a presidential electoral system that requires winners to obtain a certain territorial distribution of the vote, in addition to a national majority or plurality, where this may work ensure a broader base of cross-group support (Horowitz 2008, 1217).

In sum, Lijphart's prescription for highly accommodative constitutional design is intended to foster an inclusive political environment in which all politically salient groups have meaningful opportunities to participate in government. Lijphart's theory thus generally predicts

an increased likelihood of peaceful consolidation of democracy under accommodative institutions, and it predicts greater risk of conflict, instability, and autocracy under more integrative institutions, including those recommended by Horowitz.[5] The next section proceeds to assess these predictions by tracing the effects of constitutional design on political outcomes in the three cases.

[Figure 3 (map) about here]

III. The Three Case Studies

1) Seychelles

The Seychelles archipelago includes over 100 islands in the western Indian Ocean, with the main island of Mahé roughly 1000 miles east of the African continent. Most of the present-day population of about 90,000 resides on Mahé, with about 25,000 in the capital city of Victoria. The Seychelles islands have no native population and were uninhabited when first colonized by French settlers and African slaves in the mid-18th century. The British took control in 1814 but did not settle the islands, and French culture remained dominant. Intermarriage was fairly common, with formal racial classifications abandoned by the early 19th century, and the current population shares a relatively homogeneous mixture of European and African descent. About 90 percent of the Seychellois identify as Roman Catholic, and virtually all share a common Creole language, although French and English are also used widely. The country has a relatively high level of socioeconomic development enabled by a robust economy based mostly on tourism and foreign investment (Franda 1982; Tartter 1995; Baker 2008; US State Dept. 2012b).

The British first granted limited suffrage in 1948, and by the mid-1960s two political parties had emerged, each headed by a London-educated lawyer: James Mancham's Seychelles Democratic Party (SDP), and France Albert René's Seychelles People's United Party (SPUP). Early competition between the parties seemed partially based in this personal rivalry, but there were also ideological differences, with the SPUP evolving as a socialist-leaning party and a stronger advocate of independence from Britain (Ostheimer 1975a, 168-170; Thibaut 1999, 775).

The first elections under universal suffrage in 1967 were held under a plurality voting system that gave Mancham's SDP a one-seat lead in the colonial legislature, although the SPUP obtained a slightly larger number of votes (Franda 1982, 15). The following year there were a series of bombings attributed to the SPUP, along with widespread protests and strikes. In 1970, a constitutional revision instituted a small–scale parliamentary system of government, retaining plurality voting in single-member districts for the legislature. In subsequent elections that year, the SDP won two-thirds of legislative seats with just over half the vote, and Mancham became head of the new colonial government (Ostheimer 1975a, 174; African Elections 2011).

There was increasing social unrest after the 1970 elections, with continuing strikes and protests and more bombings in 1972 that were again attributed to the SPUP (Ostheimer 1975a, 174-175). The electoral disproportionality under the plurality voting system, which significantly reduced the SPUP's legislative representation, was a clear source of conflict, but disagreement on the independence question and economic issues also increased tensions. In the next elections in 1974, the disproportionality became more magnified, with the SDP winning 13 of the 15 legislative seats with just over half the votes. The SPUP rejected the outcome, alleging unfair districting practices, and relations between the parties became even more embittered. There were

also reports of political repression by Mancham's government during and after these elections, including the jailing of SPUP activists (Tartter 1995, 211).

In 1975, in an attempt to appease the SPUP, the parties informally agreed to expand the legislature by 10 additional seats, which were distributed proportionately to the previous election's results. This gave 5 more seats to each party but still left the SDP with over 70 percent, and it thus failed to appease the SPUP's concerns (Hartmann 2007, 154; Taagepera 1998, 82). Indeed, one observer in 1975 wrote that democratic development in Seychelles seemed jeopardized by radicalization of the opposition, motivated in large part by objections to the electoral system (Ostheimer 1975a, 177, 186).

Although the SDP had initially opposed independence, it eventually succumbed to public opinion on the issue, and negotiations with the British concluded with a grant of independence in June 1976. The new constitution maintained the indirectly elected parliamentary executive and the newly mixed legislative electoral system, with two-fifths of the seats distributed proportionately, as per the 1975 agreement. Following independence, Mancham was named president[6] and René prime minister, with the parties agreeing to a grand coalition until the next elections in 1979 (Tartter 1995, 211; Franda 1982, 56).

One year later, however, in June 1977, the SPUP staged a coup d'état while Mancham was overseas. Although René initially denied involvement, he eventually took responsibility, arguing that the coup had been necessary to prevent Mancham from abrogating the constitution and declaring a one-party state (Franda 1982, 49-50, 65). It seems more likely, however, that the coup was motivated by the SPUP's reduced representation and its sense of having no chance to gain power through constitutional means, notwithstanding demonstrated support by about half the population. In fact, the legislative electoral system combined with the parliamentary

executive would likely have guaranteed the SDP's position in power, at least for the near future, so there would have been no reason for Mancham to abrogate the constitution.

René himself abrogated the constitution after the coup and ruled by proclamation for two years, until a new constitution—imposed in 1979 without referendum—formally instituted a one-party system. The new constitution provided for a directly elected president and a legislature elected through the original plurality system. René stood as the sole candidate for president in elections held in 1979, 1984, and 1989, all of which he won with reportedly over 90 percent of the vote (African Elections 2011). The shift from an aspiring parliamentary democracy to an effective presidential dictatorship was accompanied by political repression continuing through the years of one-party rule (Franda 1982, 56-67).[7] Nevertheless, Seychelles experienced relative stability during the years of the René regime, although the fear of a counter-coup was ever-present, and indeed there were attempts (Ofcansky 1995, 313-315).

By 1991, the regime began responding to international pressure for democratization. Mancham was permitted to return from exile, and the first multi-party elections since independence were held in 1993 under a new constitution, passed by referendum, which formally re-opened the system to multi-party competition. The 1993 constitution, an amended version of which remains in place today, provided for a directly elected president eligible for three terms of five years each.[8] The new constitution also reinstated the mixed legislative electoral system, with 25 seats elected by plurality vote in single-member districts, and up to 10 additional seats distributed by PR (Tartter 1995, 240; Thibaut 1999, 781). René won the presidency again in 1993, as his party won over 80 percent of legislative seats with just under 60 percent of the vote (African Elections 2011). The years of one-party rule had thus reversed the parties' initial

standing, with René now occupying the dominant position in a system that seemed designed to preserve that dominance.

René retained the presidency in two subsequent elections until his resignation in 2004, upon which he appointed his vice-president, James Michel, as his replacement. However, René continued to be viewed as the source of political power, and he remained head of the ruling party, renamed *Parti Lepep*, or People's Party (Baker 2008, 290). Michel won presidential elections by fairly small margins in 2006 and 2011, while his party remained dominant in the legislature. The opposition walked out of the legislature following repressive police actions against demonstrators in 2006, and it completely boycotted legislative elections in 2011, alleging fraud in the earlier presidential poll (Baker 2008, 288; Voice of America 2011). Michel secured a third presidential term in 2015 after winning a reported 50.2 percent of the vote in a runoff election, which the opposition alleged had been subject to irregularities (Thande 2015).

Overall, democratic norms in Seychelles have remained relatively weak.[9] However, in legislative elections in September 2016, a coalition of opposition parties for the first time gained a legislative majority, winning 15 of the 25 districted seats plus half of the PR seats (AllAfrica 2016). Then, on the day the new parliament was sworn in, President Michel shocked the nation by announcing his resignation and intention to pass the presidency to his Vice President, Danny Faure. The opposition called for a new presidential election, asserting that Faure had not been elected, and further suggesting that the reasons for Michel's resignation "were not sufficiently clear" (Uranie et al. 2016). Faure assumed the presidency, but the majority coalition used a new vetting and confirmation process to reject three ministerial nominations from the new president, although his vice presidential nominee was allowed to take office (Bonnelame and Uranie 2016). The future direction of politics in Seychelles seems quite uncertain at this time, and it remains to

be seen how much power the legislative majority can wrest from the executive, or whether the opposition could perhaps win the presidency in 2020 for the first real democratic transfer of power.

[Table 1 about here]

Table 1 reviews the progression of constitutional design in Seychelles, along with conflict management and democratization outcomes. There is a credible argument that early political instability in Seychelles was caused—at least in part—by constitutional design, in particular by the disproportional legislative electoral system. Indeed, Seychelles has been cited as a prime example of democratic failure related to poorly designed electoral institutions (Taagepera 1998, 82). The case could thus offer support to Lijphart's accommodative theory, particularly insofar as one argues that the 1977 coup might have been averted under a pure PR electoral system. While further research is necessary, and it may indeed be impossible to conclusively prove this point, there is a plausible basis for a counterfactual argument to this effect. The history of grievance relating to the disproportional results of the integrative electoral system began with the first pre-independence elections and worsened over time. The attempt to address this grievance by introducing a mixed system in 1974 seems to have failed because it did not provide full proportionality, consistent with Lijphart's theory. Most importantly, the elections prior to the coup were closely contested, with René's SPUP falling just short of winning a majority of votes. René might therefore have realistically perceived a constitutional path to power under PR. However, given the disproportional legislative elections—combined with the parliamentary executive—it seemed impossible for the SPUP to ever gain power, and so the decision to stage a coup could have seemed justified.

On the other hand, it is also plausible to argue that a directly elected presidency at independence might have prevented the 1977 coup, since that too might have led René to perceive a chance at gaining power through constitutional means. This suggests that presidentialism could actually have corrected somewhat for the disproportionality in legislative elections. Thus, it appears that a system of integrative legislative elections combined with a parliamentary executive might have been worse in this case than a fully integrative constitutional design with a directly elected president. This is a possibility that Lijphart does seem to consider, and it suggests a possible revision to his theory. The case of Seychelles demonstrates that while majoritarian presidentialism is formally an integrative institution with a zero-sum outcome, it could sometimes work to prevent zero-sum politics, at least over time, by providing a chance to gain power that might be absent under a parliamentary executive. In effect, presidentialism in Seychelles at independence might have been more inclusive than parliamentarism, which engendered exclusion when combined with disproportional legislative elections. So while Lijphart's theory may be correct insofar as a fully accommodative design could have been better for Seychelles, in the absence of such a design, a fully integrative system with a presidential executive might have been preferable to retaining the supposedly more accommodative institution of a parliamentary executive.

2) Comoros

The islands of Comoros lie in the northern end of the Mozambique Channel and have been described as "stepping-stones" between Madagascar and mainland Africa. The first settlers of Comoros arrived from Africa and Southeast Asia near the 6th century, and Shirazi sultans ruled the islands before colonization (Ercolano 1995, 145-147). France and Britain competed for

control throughout the 1800s, and by the early 20th century all of the four islands were firmly under French authority, although there was minimal settlement by French colonists. The current population numbers about 700,000—excluding the island of Mayotte, whose population of about 200,000 remains under French administration. The Comorian people are relatively homogeneous in terms of ethnicity, although vestiges remain of distinctions between African, Arab, and Austronesian ancestries. Identification with Sunni Islam is almost universal, and a common language also unites the population. Nevertheless, as discussed below, the islands themselves have become focal points for political conflict, and there has been difficulty creating a sense of national identity. Poor governance and widespread corruption have inhibited economic development, and Comoros has been ranked among the poorest countries in the world (Walker 2007; Baker 2009; US State Dept. 2012a).

Of the four islands, the southernmost isle of Mayotte, also called *Mahore*, was historically seen as most valuable (Ostheimer 1975b, 78-79). The early colonial administration was concentrated mostly on Mayotte, and the French relationship with the island became an early source of separatism when Comoros initiated self-government in the early 1960s (Newitt 1984, 47-51). In 1961, French authorities approved a self-governing constitution instituting a majoritarian legislative electoral system with single-member districts, and a parliamentary executive with a president indirectly elected by the legislative council. The following year the new government moved the capital from Mayotte to the city of Moroni on the largest island of Grand Comore, also called *Ngazidja*, which fueled emerging tensions on Mayotte (Newitt 1984, 47). By 1966, the Mahori Movement (MM) party was advancing separatism on Mayotte, and there were several anti-government demonstrations that year. In 1967, the French imposed a new constitution that instituted territorial representation in the colonial legislature and gave some

political autonomy to the islands, providing each with an elected governor and its own legislative council (Newitt 1984, 48-50; Ostheimer 1975b, 81-83).

The two national parties, the Democratic Assembly of the Comorian People (RDPC) and the Comoros Democratic Union (UDC), were originally distinguished more by personal than ideological rivalries. The parties formed a grand coalition after elections under the new constitution in 1967, but the following year there were major protests led by an emerging socialist party, and repression of student protesters contributed to splitting the coalition (Ercolano 1995, 151). By 1972, however, the coalition—excluding the socialists—was re-formed in support of Comorian independence. The RDPC won the popular vote in elections that year, but the majoritarian electoral system gave the UDC, led by Ahmed Abdallah, a majority of legislative seats (Newitt 1984, 51-56). The MM on Mayotte, insisting on that island remaining a French dependency, initiated a boycott of the central government following these elections (Ostheimer 1975b, 86, 91).

In 1973, there were violent pro-independence riots with burning of government buildings, triggering a declaration of martial law on the islands (Newitt 1984, 57). Pressure for independence mounted, and a June 1973 agreement with French authorities explicitly precluded Mayotte from remaining a dependency. A referendum was held in December 1974, and on Mayotte the vote was about 65 percent against independence, while on the other islands the vote was virtually unanimous in its favor. The French then delayed in formally granting independence, leading to a unilateral declaration in July 1975. Mayotte boycotted and insisted on remaining under France, although most of the international community recognized Mayotte as part of the new Comorian state (Ostheimer 1975b, 93-94; Newitt 1984, 58).

After independence, the parliamentary executive of the 1967 constitution remained in place, with Abdallah as head of government leading a grand coalition between the two main parties. However, less than one month into his term, Abdallah was overthrown in a coup d'état led by a former French military officer, Bob Denard. There were strong suspicions of French involvement in the coup, although it was never definitively confirmed (Ercolano 1995, 152). Opposition leader Ali Soilih of the RDPC, former minister of defense and justice, assumed the presidency in early 1976, and he declared a "social revolution" aiming to eradicate French influence in Comoros. However, the Soilih regime was destabilized in the following years by food shortages from removal of French aid, a major volcanic eruption, and an influx of refugees from Madagascar. Denard and his mercenaries then returned and overthrew Soilih in May 1978, reinstating Abdallah as president (Newitt 1984, 60-65; Ercolano 1995, 152-154).

In an effort to alleviate separatism on Mayotte, Abdallah instituted a new constitution in October 1978 that declared Comoros a federal union with *de jure* political autonomy for each island. However, the constitution also instituted a directly elected national president with broad authority for a six-year term, and constitutional amendments in the following years reinforced the *de facto* centralization of power around the presidency (Ercolano 1995, 155-158; Baker 2009, 216). During the 1980s, Abdallah restored relations with France, but economic development remained stagnant, requiring increased dependence on foreign aid and food imports. Abdallah survived several coup attempts during this period, maintaining an oppressive authoritarian regime while running unopposed in elections held in 1978 and 1984 (Ercolano 1995, 159-162).

In 1989, amid violent protests over a referendum to permit a third presidential term for Abdallah, Denard and his mercenaries staged yet another coup in which Abdallah was assassinated. Denard initially seized control himself, but following widespread protests and

strikes, Said Mohamed Djohar—a half-brother of former president Soilih—was installed as president (Ercolano 1995, 163-165). Djohar survived several coup attempts during the early 1990s, until another successful coup by Denard in 1995. This time, however, French troops intervened and permanently expelled Denard from the country (Associated Press 1995). French-backed Mohamed Taki was elected president in 1996, and he introduced constitutional amendments to further centralize power and limit the authority of the island governments. This led to widespread protests that deteriorated into violent conflict, the worst of which took place on the island of Anjouan, also called *Nzwani*, where an unsuccessfully secession attempt occurred in 1997 (Baker 2009, 216).

Following another coup in 1999, a new constitution was approved by referendum in 2001. This constitution—an amended version of which remains in place today—returned more formal autonomy to the islands, and it instituted a rotating federal presidency, with a primary election first held on one island, followed by a general election between the top three candidates.[10] For the legislature, the constitution retained the majoritarian system of single-member districts for over half the seats, with the remaining seats indirectly elected by island legislatures.[11] The leader of the 1999 coup, Azali Assoumani from Grand Comore, became the first president under the new constitution in 2002, although the opposition boycotted the general election (African Elections 2012).

In 2006, the presidency rotated to Anjouan in the first peaceful transfer of power since independence, and in 2010 the presidency rotated again to a representative of the smallest island, Moheli—also called *Mwali* (US State Dept. 2012a). However, separatist conflict continued on Anjouan, and African Union troops were called to intervene in 2008 (*Economist* 2008). In 2016, the presidency rotated back to the island of Grand Comore, as Assoumani was elected for a

second (non-consecutive) term, but only after the constitutional court ordered a partial re-run due to reports of violence and procedural irregularities (Africa News 2016).

Notwithstanding extensive formal autonomy under the constitution, power remains highly centralized in the federal presidency, and the division of authority between the federal and island governments is unclear in many areas (Baker 2009, 225-228). Furthermore, Comoros is still far from a consolidated democracy, and the state continues to suffer from poor governance and widespread corruption (222-224).[12] In contrast, development has been more successful on Mayotte, which became an official French department in 2011 following overwhelming support in a 2009 referendum (Larned 2011), and in 2014 Mayotte was formally admitted to the European Union under "outermost region" status (European Union 2016).

[Table 2 about here]

Table 2 reviews the history of constitutional design in Comoros along with conflict management and democratization outcomes. As in Seychelles, disproportionality in early legislative elections, combined with a parliamentary executive, may have contributed to conflict leading up to independence. PR elections might therefore have been preferable, in accordance with Lijphart's theory. Alternatively, again as in Seychelles, presidentialism early on might have helped counteract the effects of legislative disproportionality. Given the majority share of votes obtained by the RDPC in the pre-independence elections of 1972, that party could have perceived a possibility of winning a presidential election, conceivably obviating the need for extra-constitutional action to remove Abdallah in 1975. However, it is not clear whether the RDPC had any meaningful involvement with the first coup orchestrated by Denard, the reasons for which remain somewhat murky. Denard's personal motives, and the possibility of unofficial French involvement, might have made that coup essentially inevitable.

There has been increased stability and transition toward democracy under the 2001 constitution, although it seems too soon to predict whether Comoros can more fully consolidate democratic norms. The rotating federal presidency, which Lijphart himself mentions as a consociational modification (Lijphart 1977, 33), has been reasonably successful, with three peaceful rotations to date. The provision for indirect election of some national assembly seats by island legislatures also represents an accommodative modification, particularly given the salience of island identity as a focal point for conflict, but it remains unclear whether the island governments function well enough to provide a fair basis for national representation.

The case of Comoros also raises questions regarding the design and implementation of institutions of group autonomy as accommodative efforts to manage separatist conflict. The early grants of territorial autonomy to the islands were clearly inadequate to prevent the secessionist movement on Mayotte. One might wonder whether a more intensive or better implemented territorial autonomy—perhaps earlier institution of federalism—might have helped; however, given the popular opposition on Mayotte to separation from France, and the apparent French preference for that island to remain a dependency, it seems unlikely that any level of autonomy would have motivated Mayotte to remain in Comoros.

A perhaps more difficult question is whether Lijphart's recommendation of group autonomy might actually have contributed to separatist conflict in Comoros, particularly on the island of Anjouan. In Lijphart's defense, the *de jure* grants of political autonomy to the islands were never well implemented, and the initial secession attempt on Anjouan in 1997 occurred in response to the rolling back of autonomy. However, critics might counter that autonomy grants are by nature "conducive to secessionism" (Cornell 2002, 251), and that territorial decentralization is generally ineffective in constraining intrastate conflict (Lake and Rothchild

2005). If autonomy had been initially granted only to Mayotte—and perhaps abandoned as it became clear that island would not be re-integrated—might secessionist conflict on Anjouan never have developed? More detailed research is needed to evaluate this counterfactual, but it seems plausible based on this limited case study. It is worth noting that autonomy seemed initially targeted to address separatism on Mayotte, and there does not appear to have been any early indication of a need for autonomy on the other islands. It is also possible that problems forming a national identity in Comoros could be partially attributed to reinforcement of geographic divisions through territorial autonomy. The case might therefore demonstrate potential dangers in Lijphart's recommendations for group autonomy, and it perhaps reveals some limits to the benefits of accommodative design.

On the whole, however, it is difficult to disentangle any effects of constitutional design from other sources of political instability in Comoros. Pre-independence conflict over the status of Mayotte and the circumstances surrounding the unilateral declaration of independence, followed by attempts to limit French influence under the Soilih regime, placed the new state in opposition to its former colonial power. This problematic relationship, and its shadowy connections to the repeated coups d'état, fueled instability and conflict in Comoros in a manner that probably placed its fate the beyond reach of any institutional remedy. This highlights an important lesson regarding the limits of constitutional design in general: Even perfectly designed institutions—assuming they could be identified—may be incapable of successfully managing deeply-rooted sociopolitical conflict, particularly when such conflict is prevalent in early democratization (Taagepera 1998, 68).

3) Mauritius

The main island of Mauritius lies about 500 miles east of Madagascar in the western Indian Ocean. Almost all the current population of nearly 1.3 million lives on the main island, with about 40,000 on the island of Rodrigues another 350 miles east. Mauritius was uninhabited when first colonized by the Dutch in the 17th century. The French settled the island in the early 18th century, and it was transferred to Britain in 1810. The British abolished slavery on Mauritius in 1835, but great numbers of people—estimated at 500,000—were brought thereafter as indentured servants, mainly from India, and by the late 1800s nearly 70 percent of the population was of Indian origin (Toth 1995, 97-103). Unlike in Seychelles, however, intermarriage and assimilation in Mauritius was relatively limited, and ethnic or religious identity has always been politically salient, dating back at least to the Indo-Mauritian activism supported by Mahatma Gandhi in the early 1900s. The continued significance of ethnicity and religion in Mauritius is reflected in government, civil society, and popular culture, as well as in ancestral languages used alongside Mauritian Creole (Toth 1995, 115-116; Bowman 1991, 100-101). With these enduring identity-based cleavages, Mauritius appears to be the most deeply divided society—at least by conventional definition—of the island states in this study. Perhaps remarkably, however, it has emerged as the most stable, democratic, and economically successful of the three cases. Mauritius has thus been proclaimed a leading example of successful development in the face of deep societal divisions (Mukonoweshuro 1991; Brautigam 1999).

There is an extended history of attention to constitutional design in Mauritian politics, with constitutional reforms dating back to the 1940s seeking to manage the effects of ethnic and religious diversity—or "communalism." The colonial census classified the population into four community groupings: a bare majority Hindu group, a Muslim group of about 15 percent, 3 percent Sino-Mauritian, and the remaining 30 percent classified as "general population," which

included mostly Creoles of mixed African descent and a small number of Franco-Mauritians (Eriksen 1998, 15). The early political elite consisted mostly of these Franco-Mauritians, who felt threatened by the possibility of dominance by a Hindu majority under universal suffrage. In constitutional reforms of 1957, a PR electoral system was thus rejected for it tendency to mirror the communal census, and a majoritarian system of 40 single-member districts was instituted instead. However, an accommodative modification ensured representation for each of the defined identity groups, with the British governor empowered to appoint up to 12 additional seats on a communal basis. These seats were generally filled by losing candidates and thus became known as "best loser" seats (Simmons 1982, 95, 129-142; Mannick 1979, 120-122).

In 1963 elections, the mostly Hindu Mauritian Labor Party (MLP), led by Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, won just under a majority of the legislative council and formed a governing coalition with the Muslim Committee of Action (CAM). These elections were followed by demonstrations and violence between Hindus and Creoles after the mostly Creole Mauritian Social Democratic Party (PMSD) was excluded from the colonial cabinet. In 1964, there was an attempt at forming a grand coalition including the PMSD, but the effort broke down on the issue of independence, which the PMSD opposed. In May 1965, violence broke out again between Creoles and Hindus, necessitating the intervention of British forces (Allen 1975, 199-203; Simmons 1982, 162).

In reaction to the communal conflict, a 1966 constitutional commission recommended some accommodative modifications: The new constitution retained plurality voting but moved to three-member districts in an effort to increase the diversity of representation within constituencies.[13] The colonial legislature was expanded to 62 seats, with up to 8 additional seats allocated to best losers on a communal basis, although these were not permitted to change the

balance of power. The constitution required all candidates to make formal declarations of community affiliation in order to allocate the best loser seats. It also instituted a parliamentary executive with a large cabinet intended to broaden representation, and it included a provision requiring formal consultation with the opposition (de Smith 1968, 609-622; Mannick 1979, 123).

The 1967 elections were effectively a referendum on independence. The MLP formed a pre-electoral coalition with the CAM and a smaller Hindu party, and Ramgoolam became prime minister with his coalition winning over 60 percent of seats with 54 percent of the vote. The PMSD won 44 percent of the vote but less than 40 percent of seats, even after being allocated 4 best loser seats. Mauritius gained independence in March 1968, but again there was communal violence prompting intervention by British troops. There were also the beginnings of separatist demonstrations among the mostly Creole population on the island of Rodrigues (Allen 1975, 204; de Smith 1968, 612-613). In response to the conflict, the MLP and PMSD agreed to form a grand coalition, and a constitutional amendment was passed postponing the next elections until 1976. While the coalition did not endure, there was relative stability during this period with democratization essentially on hold. There were, however, protests by an emerging socialist party—the Mauritian Militant Movement (MMM) led by Paul Bérenger—which was gaining support from a more communally diverse constituency. Debilitating general strikes in 1971 and 1972 led Ramgoolam's government to declare a state of emergency and arrest MMM leaders (Allen 1975, 207-208; Toth 1995, 105-106).

By 1976, with civil liberties largely restored, the MMM won 40 percent of votes in the first post-independence election and gained almost half the legislative seats, while the MLP joined the PMSD in a majority coalition that allowed Ramgoolam to continue as prime minister. In 1982, however, the MMM rose to power allied with a new Hindu-socialist party broken off

from the MLP, as this collation swept all 60 elected seats—other than the two representing Rodrigues—with only 63 percent of the vote. The former ruling coalition won about 30 percent of the vote but was reduced to just 4 best loser seats, and in the first democratic transfer of power, Ramgoolam yielded the prime ministry to the new coalition's leader, Anerood Jugnauth. (Mukonoweshuro 1991, 212; Toth 1995, 107; Krennerich 1999).

Jugnauth retained power through the 1980s and early 1990s, amid shifting coalitions in contested elections with continuing communal overtones. Notwithstanding two failed assassination attempts on the prime minister blamed on the PMSD, there was relative stability during this period. In 1995, the MLP returned to power in coalition with the MMM, again winning all 60 seats with 65 percent of the vote, and Navin Ramgoolam—son of the first prime minister—took over from Jugnauth in the second peaceful transfer of power (Bowman 1991, 82-97; Srebrnik 2002, 282).

In early 1999, widespread communal rioting broke out for the first time since independence after a Creole musician died in police custody, and there were continuing violent incidents that culminated in a marketplace bombing late that year. There was also civil unrest on Rodrigues, prompting the intervention of a police force from the main island (Srebrnik 2002, 283). Around this period, the general notion of a "Creole malaise" emerged in relation to high levels of poverty in the Creole community and its perceived underrepresentation in public institutions. There was also apparently lingering resentment regarding a 1995 law that provided for the teaching of ancestral languages in schools—which excluded the Creole community having no such language (Miles 1999; Bunwaree 2002, 8).

Following elections in 2000, Jugnauth returned to power heading a new coalition, which was formed on an agreement that Bérenger would take over as prime minister in 2003. The

prospect of the first non-Hindu prime minister since independence propelled the coalition into power with Creole support, as it won about 90 percent of seats with just over 50 percent of the vote (Srebrnik 2002, 285, 287). This pre-electoral power-sharing agreement could be viewed as responding to the earlier instability without any formal change in constitutional design, instead relying on coalitional politics, which by then had become an enduring feature in Mauritius. More formally, in efforts to appease continuing separatism on Rodrigues, the constitution was amended in 2001 to grant governing autonomy to the island through a regional assembly.[14] Perhaps most important for the stability that prevailed during the early 2000s was the fact that Bérenger did actually take over as prime minister in 2003, in accordance with the pre-electoral agreement.

Navin Ramgoolam held the office of prime minister twice more after elections in 2005 and 2010, while in 2014 the 84 year-old Jugnauth returned once more to power, leading a coalition with the PMSD and one smaller party (Inter-Parliamentary Union 2015). However, the PMSD left the coalition in December 2016, and in a surprise move in January 2017, the elder Jugnauth announced his decision to step down and pass the prime ministry to his son, Pravind Jugnauth (Victor 2017). Opposition leaders voiced strong objections, leveling accusations of nepotism and calling for a national referendum or new parliamentary elections (Arouff 2017). However, the younger Jugnauth apparently retains majority support in the parliament, at least as of this writing. Even before these latest developments, there was a sense of impending uncertainty in Mauritian politics, made worse by separate corruption scandals involving Navin Ramgoolam and Pravind Jugnauth (England 2015). Nevertheless, the political system appears relatively stable, and the lasting consolidation of democracy in Mauritius does not seem seriously under threat.[15]

[Table 3 about here]

The major finding of this case is that a mostly majoritarian electoral system, combined with a parliamentary executive, has occasioned overall political stability and successful democratization, as illustrated by Table 3. This outcome contrasts with the previous two cases, where the initial combination of majoritarian elections with a parliamentary executive might have contributed to instability and hindered democratic development, and it seems contrary to Lijphart's prediction of adverse effects from a disproportional electoral system.

As demonstrated, Mauritian politics have been characterized by continually shifting coalitions; in fact, every government since independence has been a product of coalition, generally one formed prior to elections. This conspicuous feature of its politics may best explain Mauritian success: the continuing need to form inter-group coalitions to gain the legislative majority. The repeatedly disproportional electoral results might have been expected to provoke feelings of exclusion, but given the fluidity of political alignments, losing parties seem generally to have perceived a possibility of participating in government through a future coalition. Crucially, this pattern might not have emerged had a PR electoral system been in place, since then the Hindu majority would likely have succeeded in securing and retaining power without including other groups. The parliamentary executive appears to have been crucial as well, for a directly elected presidency could likewise have allowed the Hindu majority to rule on its own. Contrary to Lijphart's accommodative theory, however, some integrative disproportionality in legislative elections seems to have been key to successful conflict management and democratization in the Mauritian context of a deeply divided society with a majority identity group.

Nevertheless, there have also been major accommodative elements in Mauritian constitutional design. Although the main parties—with the primary exception of the MMM— were formed mostly along lines of communal identification, they generally have fielded candidates from other groups as well. As Joel Selway explains in his detailed analysis of Mauritian politics, the districts of the majoritarian electoral system interacted with the geographic distribution of groups to preclude an independent Hindu majority, while fostering incentives for communally-based parties to field candidates from other groups (Selway 2015, 166-174).[16] However, Selway perhaps pays insufficient attention to multi-member districting as an accommodative modification to an otherwise integrative electoral system, which provided opportunities for cross-group appeals that would have been absent with single-member districts (Brautigam 1999, 146-147). Furthermore, the best loser seats—which ensured that all major groups had at least some representation—can be seen as another modification consistent with Lijphart's approach.[17] Selway discounts the accommodative impact of these seats, indicating that they did not affect the incentives for cross-group appeals nor function generally as a power-sharing institution (Selway 2015, 194). However, his analysis arguably fails to account for the symbolic effect of this institution, particularly from the perspective that symbolism may be "as important as reality in ethnic relations; indeed, symbols are an important part of that reality" (Carroll and Carroll 1999, 192). Furthermore, the constitutional requirement of communal identification associated with the best loser seats reflects an accommodative approach to managing societal divisions, one that appears to have succeeded in maintaining stability "by institutionalizing, rather than eradicating, identity politics" (Cheeseman 2015, 223).

Moreover, other accommodative constitutional design elements may also have contributed to Mauritian success. The parliamentary executive, which facilitated power-sharing

agreements at two key historical moments—the grand coalition in the years following independence, and the informal agreement for executive rotation in 2000—may also deserve some credit for stability and democratization. Furthermore, Mauritian culture has reflected accommodative principles of group autonomy by preserving identity distinctions and allowing for expressions of ethnicity and religion in public institutions, including language rights (Eriksen 1998, 14-18). The 2001 provision for governing autonomy on Rodrigues also falls within this accommodative pattern. All these elements appear to have contributed to norms of social tolerance and an overall sense of inclusion that has generally prevailed in Mauritius (Eriksen 1998, 171-186). To the extent that these accommodative design elements were essential to Mauritian success, the case may offer support to Lijphart. However, the notion of majoritarian legislative elections fostering inclusion through incentives for cross-group coordination is clearly something Lijphart's theory fails to contemplate.

There may admittedly be other explanations for Mauritian success not directly associated with constitutional design. For instance, effective economic and social welfare programs may also have contributed to stability and democratization (Bunwaree 2002; Brautigam 1999, 156). Some have accordingly discounted the influence of high-level institutional design in Mauritius, instead attributing its success to competent state bureaucracy, vibrant civic networks, and an inclusive party system (Carroll and Carroll 2000, 132-138). However, none of these might ever have developed if Mauritian constitutional design had been less conducive to stability and democratization. Effective public administration and civil society, as well as general economic development, could certainly have been hampered by instability, and inclusive parties might never have emerged without the particular incentives of the electoral system. Although constitutional design probably cannot claim full responsibility for Mauritian success, it does

seem to have contributed significantly, and there are credible reasons to think the outcome might not have been as successful under a different institutional framework.

V. Summary of Findings and Conclusions

The main findings of the three case studies are as follows: Each country experienced some violent conflict around its independence period. In Seychelles, there was relative stability after the post-independence coup, but there has been overall failure to consolidate democratic norms. Integrative disproportionality in legislative elections was likely a motivating factor in the 1977 coup, and the parliamentary executive in place at the time reinforced that disproportionality. Had an accommodative system of PR elections been in place from the start in Seychelles, or alternatively a more integrative system of direct presidential elections, it seems possible the coup might have been averted, and democratic development could have been more successful. This counterfactual argument surely requires more evidence to be fully convincing, but it does appear plausible based on this limited historical review.

In Comoros, neither political stability nor democratization has been achieved, but it seems unclear whether changes in constitutional design could have changed the outcome. It is conceivable that electoral disproportionality contributed to conflict around independence, and that PR elections or a presidential executive might have improved matters somewhat. Nevertheless, tensions with France over the status of Mayotte, along with repeated interventions by foreign forces, would likely have hindered stability and forestalled democratization under any constitutional design. Accommodative provisions for territorial autonomy were clearly ineffective in reintegrating Mayotte, and they may have fueled added separatist conflict; however, these institutions were never fully implemented, making it difficult to draw inferences

about their effects. Even so, the rotating federal presidency introduced in 2001 represents an accommodative modification to an otherwise integrative institution that does clearly appear to have facilitated increased stability and movement toward democracy more recently.

In Mauritius, there has been both relative stability and successful democratization, with constitutional design arguably deserving significant credit. It is evident that fluid forming of political coalitions—encouraged by the majoritarian system modified with multi-member districts—was crucial to Mauritian success. These findings challenge Lijphart's blanket endorsement of PR elections, which in this case might actually have prevented the positive outcome. Nevertheless, several aspects of accommodative constitutional design do appear to have helped as well, including the parliamentary executive allowing power sharing at key moments, and provisions for group autonomy. Furthermore, the best loser seats, while not providing proportionality, have worked to ensure at least symbolic representation for all groups, and may thus have contributed to an overall sense of inclusion.

It is admittedly difficult to draw definitive conclusions from these brief cases studies, but some general lessons regarding application of Lijphart's theory do emerge. An initial point is that even in populations that are relatively homogeneous in terms of ethnicity or religion, such as Seychelles and Comoros, political cleavages that trigger instability and forestall democratization may nevertheless emerge based on ideology, personality, or just geography. This is consistent with Lijphart's expansive definition of a divided society. Furthermore, in populations that are deeply divided in the more conventional sense, like Mauritius, accommodative design elements may generally contribute to successful management of these divisions, as Lijphart asserts.

However, at least one major finding directly contradicts Lijphart's theory and recommendations. Although the findings overall support the accommodative principle that all

politically salient groups should be assured at least minimal representation, the case of Mauritius shows that majoritarian elections may sometimes provide a more inclusive basis of representation than PR. Specifically, in a deeply divided society with a stable majority group, some integrative disproportionality may be necessary to induce that group to share power, because strict proportionality could lead to permanent exclusion of minority groups from governing power. To be sure, a highly integrative and disproportional system may still pose problems. For example, outcomes in Mauritius might not have been so positive had the electoral system somehow effectively precluded the Hindu majority from forming the government. Nevertheless, the notion that majoritarian elections can sometimes be preferable contradicts Lijphart's theory, and may in fact be seen as supporting the argument of his main critic, Donald Horowitz, whose advocacy of centripetal constitutional design is meant to encourage essentially the same type of cross-group coordination displayed in Mauritius (Horowitz 2002, 2008; Reilly 2001). However, Horowitz's preferred vote-pooling system of ranked-choice voting—the alternative vote—was not needed in Mauritius; indeed, the case demonstrates that standard plurality elections in well-drawn multi-member districts can also encourage cross-group coordination and more moderate coalitional politics.

On the other hand, the findings generally support Lijphart's position that integrative disproportionality poses dangers when it causes a group to feel excluded from meaningful representation and a fair chance at sharing power, as seems likely to have occurred in Seychelles, and possibly Comoros as well. In cases like these with no stable majority, PR may indeed be preferable to majoritarian legislative elections, and the combination with a parliamentary executive could facilitate inclusive power sharing, as Lijphart indicates. However, in the absence of PR for the legislature, the more integrative institution of a directly elected presidency might

facilitate more inclusion than a parliamentary executive. This potentially more inclusive quality of presidentialism under some circumstances is something else Lijphart's theory does not seem to contemplate.

The findings are more ambiguous regarding Lijphart's recommendations for group autonomy, to the extent implemented in Mauritius and Comoros. In Mauritius, accommodating group identity through official recognition of ethnic and religious distinctions appears to have had positive effects, and political autonomy on Rodrigues also seems to have been successful. In Comoros, the more extensive attempt at territorial autonomy through federalism has been decidedly less effective, although inadequate implementation and other sources of instability make it difficult to draw conclusions from the case. Nevertheless, there is an indication that territorial autonomy may have contributed to secessionist conflict, or at least hindered development of a shared national identity. On the other hand, it is not entirely clear whether Lijphart, who is not as explicit on his requirements for group autonomy as for power sharing, would necessarily have endorsed territorial autonomy in Comoros early on, outside perhaps of Mayotte.

In sum, these three case studies provide some support to Lijphart's theory of accommodative constitutional design, and particularly to the need for facilitating broad representation and an overall sense of political inclusion, but they also raise critical questions regarding his specific institutional recommendations. Horowitz has accused Lijphart of promoting a "one size fits all" model of constitutional design (Horowitz 2002, 25), to which Lijphart has responded by pointing to the "enormous variation" possible within his accommodative approach (Lijphart 2004, 99). Lijphart surely recognizes the need to adapt accommodative institutions to social and political conditions, and to consider how sets of

institutions interact in practice. Nevertheless, his staunch advocacy of particular power-sharing institutions and wholesale rejection of integrative design elements raises doubts about the comprehensive validity of Lijphart's approach. It may indeed be the case that a blending of accommodative and integrative design elements addressed to the particular sociopolitical landscape may be most successful in managing identity-based conflict in different contexts (Butenschøn, Stiansen, and Vollan 2015, 13). Furthermore, the cases suggest a need to expand the vocabulary of constitutional design to consider less common options such as multi-member majoritarian districts, a rotating presidency, or other accommodative modifications to otherwise integrative institutions. A great deal of work remains in this area, and future research will hopefully evaluate these conclusions and further clarify how constitutional design can help in managing social conflict and facilitating democratization.

Notes

[1] But see Baldacchino (2012) and Veenendaal (2013), finding that small island states may also be subject to personalistic politics and autocratic tendencies. For a survey of the literature on small island states and

[2] According to Lijphart, consensus democracy "tends to emphasize formal-institutional devices," while consociational democracy "relies to a larger extent on informal practices" (Lijphart 1989, 40).

[3] Lijphart does not explicitly mention consensus democracy in his 2004 article, and he mentions the consociational model only in passing, but his recommendations are generally consistent with both models. The full model of consensus democracy includes some elements not addressed in the recommendations for divided societies, including a "corporatist" (versus pluralist) interest group system, bicameralism, rigid constitutionalism with strong judicial review, and an independent central bank (Lijphart 2012, 3-4). The full consociational model includes the institutional elements of a grand coalition and a minority veto (Lijphart 1989, 40).

[4] Horowitz indicates that his approach should also be classified as a form of power sharing and accommodation (Horowitz 2002, 23; 2008, 1216). See also Sisk (1996, x), indicating that integrative approaches like Horowitz's may also provide power sharing. For an empirical study of centripetal design, see Reilly (2001).

[5] To be fair, Lijphart states, "Within the category of majoritarian systems, a good case could be made for Horowitz's alternative-vote proposal, which I agree is superior to both the plurality method and the two-ballot majority runoff." However, he goes on to assert the existence of a "scholarly consensus against majoritarian systems in divided societies" and to question any deviation from PR (Lijphart 2004, 100). In other work, Lijphart states that Horowitz's vote pooling recommendations "do not differ a great deal from majority-rule democracy," and he criticizes Horowitz's view of incentives for moderation under the alternative vote (Lijphart 2002, 47-48).

[6] Of course the title president does not necessarily imply presidentialism, which is defined by direct popular election of the head of government.

[7] Freedom House (2017) classifies Seychelles as "free" in 1976, "partly free" in 1977-1978, then "not free" from 1979-1991.

[8] In April 2016, the constitution was amended limiting the president to two five-year terms.

[9] From 1992 through 2016, Freedom House (2017) classifies Seychelles as "partly free."

[10] 2001 Constitution of Comoros, Article 13.

[11] 2001 Constitution of Comoros, Article 20.

[12] Freedom House (2017) classifies Comoros as "partly free" since 1991, before which it was classified as "not free."

[13] The system of plurality voting in multi-member districts still in use in Mauritius, in which voters cast one vote for each available seat, is often called block voting.

[14] 1968 Constitution of Mauritius (amended through 2010), Chapter VI-A, Articles 75A-75E.

[15] It is perhaps concerning, however, that all prime ministers of Mauritius have been members of the Ramgoolam or Jugnauth families, other than the few years in which Paul Bérenger held the post.

[16] Selway also indicates that PR-based modifications to the electoral system could risk removing incentives for inter-communal coordination (Selway 2015, 175-178).

[17] Brautigam refers to the best loser system as a "consociational compromise" (Brautigam 1999, 147); see also Srebrnik (2002, 289).

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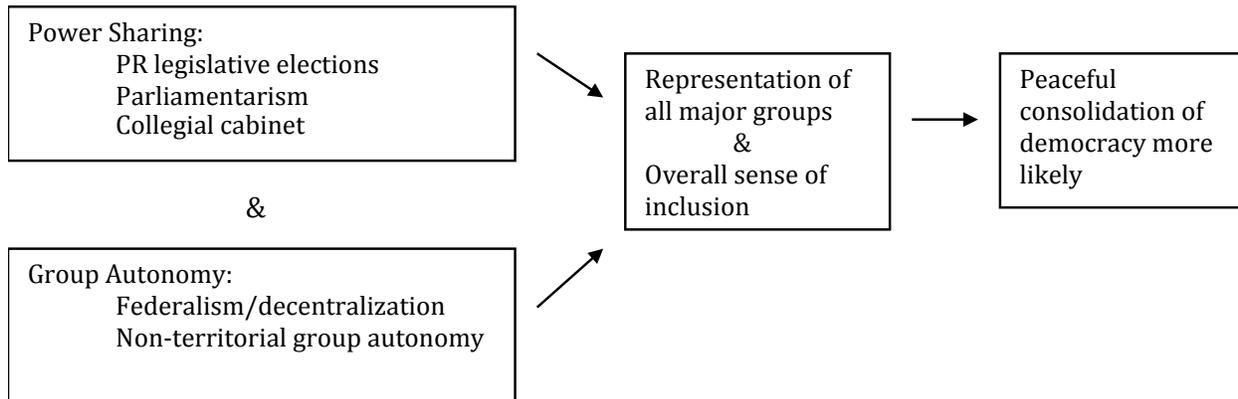**Figure 1: Lijphart's Accommodative Theory of Constitutional Design**

Power Sharing:
PR legislative elections
Parliamentarism
Collegial cabinet

&

Group Autonomy:
Federalism/decentralization
Non-territorial group autonomy

→

Representation of all major groups & Overall sense of inclusion

→

Peaceful consolidation of democracy more likely

Figure 2: Lijphart on Integrative Constitutional Design

Majoritarian democracy:
Majority/plurality elections
Presidentialism
Unitary executive

&

Integrative structures:
Unitary/centralized state
Policies of national unity

→

Lack of representation for all major groups & Feelings of exclusion

→

Peaceful consolidation of democracy less likely

Figure 3

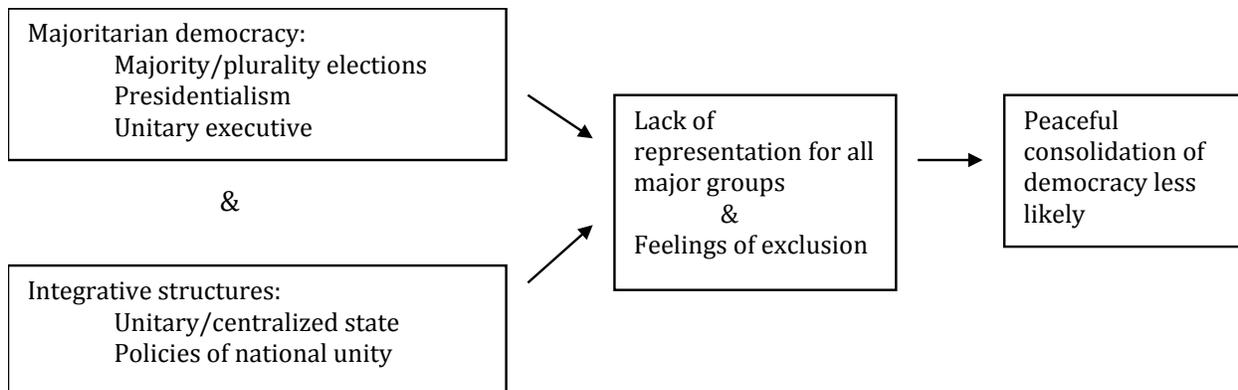(U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, 1996)

Table 1: Constitutional design and political outcomes in Seychelles, 1967-2016

	Legislative system	Executive system	Conflict outcome	Democratic outcome
1967-1974 (Pre-independence)	Plurality SMD	Parliamentary	Violence, strikes & protests	Transitional democracy
1975-1976 (Independence period)	3/5 Plurality SMD 2/5 PR	Parliamentary; grand coalition	Coup d'état	Transitional democracy
1977-1991 (René regime)	Plurality SMD (one-party)	Presidential (one-party)	Relative stability	Autocracy
1992-2016	3/5 Plurality SMD 2/5 PR	Presidential	Relative stability	Anocracy[2]

(SMD = single-member districts; PR = proportional representation)

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[2] The term "anocracy" is used to designate a regime type falling somewhere between democracy and autocracy.

Table 2: Constitutional design and political outcomes in Comoros, 1961-2016

	Legislative system	Executive system	State Structure	Conflict outcome	Democratic outcome
1961-1966 (Pre-independence)	Majority SMD	Parliamentary	Unitary	Relative stability	Transitional democracy
1967-1974 (Pre-independence)	Majority SMD	Parliamentary; grand coalition	Unitary; some autonomy	Violent protests; legislative boycott	Transitional democracy
1975-1977 (Independence period)	Majority SMD	Parliamentary, grand coalition	Unitary; some autonomy	2 coups d'état; de facto secession	Autocracy
1978-1989 (Abdullah regime)	Majority SMD (one-party)	Presidential (one-party)	Federal	Several attempted coups	Autocracy
1990-2000	Majority SMD	Presidential	Federal	Violent protests; several coups; int'l intervention; secession attempt	Anocracy
2001-2016	Majority SMD & indirect election	Rotating presidency	Federal	Relative stability; int'l intervention	Transitional democracy

(SMD = single-member districts)

Table 3: Constitutional design and political outcomes in Mauritius, 1957-2017

	Legislative system	Executive system	State Structure	Conflict outcome	Democratic outcome
1957-1965 (Pre-independence)	Plurality SMD; "best losers"	Parliamentary	Unitary	Communal violence	Transitional democracy
1966-1968 (Independence period)	Plurality MMD; "best losers"	Parliamentary	Unitary	Communal violence	Transitional democracy
1969-1975	Plurality MMD; "best losers"	Parliamentary; grand coalition	Unitary	Relative stability	Anocracy
1976-1995	Plurality MMD; "best losers"	Parliamentary	Unitary	Stability	Developing democracy
1996-2000	Plurality MMD; "best losers"	Parliamentary	Unitary	Some violence & separatist conflict	Democracy
2001-2017	Plurality MMD; "best losers"	Parliamentary; power sharing (2001-2005)	Unitary; some autonomy	Stability	Democracy

(SMD = single-member districts; MMD = multi-member districts)