

**DEMOCRATIZATION IN MALAYSIA:
A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF TWO
OPPOSITIONAL POLITICAL WAVES
(1987-1996, 1998-2013)**

by

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**Thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy**

April 2017

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to take this opportunity to praise Allah Al-Hamid the Most Praiseworthy and Ar-Rahman Ar-Rahim for His Bounties and Love. I am perpetually grateful to Prof. Dr. Ahmad Fauzi Abdul Hamid my main supervisor who shaped my disciplinary training and has been exceptionally patient and supportive during this journey to bring the dissertation to its conclusion. I am also thankful to Dr. Faridah Jaafar, my co-supervisor for her intellectual inspiration and emotional support. She has been mentoring my writing and has always been there during my emotional breakdowns and achievements along the way. I take the opportunity to express my thanks to Dr. Azeem Fazwan Ahmad Farouk for inspiring my interest in Malaysian politics which was previously absent from my research interest dictionary. I want to thank all my interviewees who generously gave their time to assist my project by answering my questions and replying my emails.

I owe a debt of gratitude to Universiti Utara Malaysia for their financial assistance. I am ever thankful to the School of Distance Education, the School of Social Sciences and Institute of Postgraduate Studies Universiti Sains Malaysia for the technical support and assistance. My thanks also go to my mentors and colleagues at the Department of International Affairs, School of International Studies, UUM for their continuous moral support, comments and ideas. The hours of discussions and debates especially with Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mohd Azizuddin Mohd Sani and Dr. Siti Darwinda Mohamed Pero have helped me a lot in critically viewing Malaysian politics. Last but not least, I am thankful to my husband Mohd Amir and my son Muhammad Arief for their concern and patience throughout this journey.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABIM	Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia or Islamic Youth Movement of Malaysia
AGM	Annual General Meeting
ALIRAN	Aliran Kesedaran Negara or National Consciousness Movement
APU	Angkatan Perpaduan Ummah or United Movement for the Ummah
AUKU	Universities and College Universities Act
BERSIH	Coalition for Clean and Fair Elections
BA	Barisan Alternatif or Alternative Front
BH	Berita Harian
BN	Barisan Nasional or National Front
BERJASA	Barisan Jemaah Islamiah Se-Malaysia
BMF	Bumiputera Malaysia Finance
CAP	Consumers' Association of Penang
CEC	Central Executive Committee
CIJ	Centre for Independent Journalism
CRC	Civil Rights Committee
DAP	Democratic Action Party
DART	Delineation Action and Research Team
EAIC	Enforcement Agency Integrity Commission
EC	Election Commission
EOI	Export-Oriented Industry
FDI	Foreign direct investment
FELDA	Federal Land Development Authority
GAGASAN	Gagasan Demokrasi Rakyat or People's Initiative for Democracy
GE	General Elections

GERAK	Majlis Gerakan Keadilan Rakyat Malaysia or People's Justice Movement Council
GERAKAN	Parti Gerakan Rakyat Malaysia or Malaysian People's Movement
HAMIM	Parti Hizbul Muslimin Malaysia
HINDRAF	Hindu Rights Action Front
ICPMC	Independent Police Complaints and Misconduct Commission
IPF	Indian Progressive Front
ISA	Internal Security Act
IT	Information Technology
ITM	MARA Institute of Technology
JAC	Judicial Appointment Commission
JAKIM	Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia or Department Islamic Development Malaysia
JIM	Jemaah Islah Malaysia
K-economy	Knowledge-based economy
KeAdilan	Parti Keadilan Nasional or National Justice Party
KIMMA	Malaysian Indian Muslim Congress or Kongres India Muslim Malaysia
KLCC	Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre
MACC	Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission
MAS	Malaysian Airlines
MCA	Malaysian Chinese Association
MERAP	Malaysian Electoral Roll Analysis Project
MIC	Malaysian Indian Congress
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MP	Member of Parliament
MSC	Multimedia Super Corridor
MTUC	Malaysian Trade Union Congress
NDP	National Development Policy

NDP	New Development Plan
NEP	New Economic Policy
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NOC	National Operations Council
NST	New Straits Times
NSTP	News Straits Times Press
OPP	Outline Perspective Plan
OSA	Official Secrets Act
PAP	People's Action Party
PAS	Parti Islam SeMalaysia or Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party
PBB	Parti Pesaka Bumiputera Bersatu or United Traditional Bumiputera Party
PBS	United Sabah Party or Parti Bersatu Sabah
PEKEMAS	Parti Keadilan Masyarakat Malaysia or Malaysian Social Justice Party
PI	Penang Institute
PKR	Parti Keadilan Rakyat or National Justice Party
PPP	People's Progressive Party
PPPA	Printing Presses and Publications Act
PR	Pakatan Rakyat or People's Coalition
PRM	Parti Rakyat Malaysia or Malaysian People's Party
PSRM	Parti Sosialis Rakyat Malaysia or Malaysian People Socialist Party
PWTC	Putra World Trade Centre
ROS	Registrar of Society
RTM	Radio Television Malaysia
Semangat 46	Parti Melayu Semangat 46 or Spirit of 46
SEAPA	Southeast Asia Press Alliance
SERI	Socio-economic and Environmental Research Institute
SNAP	Sarawak National Party

SUARAM	Suara Rakyat Malaysia or Malaysian People's Voice
SUPP	Parti Bersatu Sarawak or Sarawak United Peoples' Party
TV3	Sistem Televisyen Malaysia
UM	Utusan Malaysia
UMNO	United Malays National Organization
WAC	Women's Agenda for Change
WAMI	Writer's Alliance for Media Independence
WAO	Women's Aid Organization
WCI	Women's Candidacy Initiative
Y4C	Youth for Change

**PENDEMOKRASIAN DI MALAYSIA: SATU KAJIAN PERBANDINGAN
ANTARA DUA GELOMBANG POLITIK KEPEMBANGKANGAN (1987-
1996, 1998-2013)**

ABSTRAK

Tesis ini mengkaji peranan dan fungsi kuasa politik pembangkang dalam meningkatkan parameter demokrasi terhad di Malaysia. Ia bertujuan untuk mengetahui peranan kuasa politik pembangkang dalam politik Malaysia dalam objektifnya untuk memberi sumbangan kepada pembentukan politik negara melalui peningkatan demokrasi. Tesis ini juga bertujuan untuk meneroka bagaimana dinamika tingkah laku pembangkang, iaitu pilihan dan strategi parti-parti politik pembangkang, kesepakatan di antara pembangkang rasmi dengan pembangkang tidak rasmi menyumbang kepada pendemokrasian. Tiga persoalan kajian telah dibentangkan, pertama, bagaimana demokrasi terhad menyumbang kepada perkembangan kuasa-kuasa politik pembangkang di Malaysia? Kedua, apakah faktor-faktor dalaman dan luaran yang menyumbang kepada kuasa politik pembangkang disatukan dan mampan? Akhir sekali, bagaimana kuasa-kuasa politik pembangkang menyumbang ke arah pendemokrasian di Malaysia? Soalan-soalan ini dijawab melalui kaedah perbandingan-sejarah dengan membandingkan dua gelombang politik kepembangkangan di Malaysia yang berlaku dari tahun 1987 hingga 1996 dan dari 1998 hingga 2013. Hasil dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa demokrasi yang terhad mempengaruhi penubuhan politik pembangkang yang bersepadu yang terdiri daripada pembangkang rasmi dan tidak rasmi. Kuasa politik pembangkang berjaya mempengaruhi pendemokrasian disebabkan oleh faktor dalaman dan luaran

persekitaran politik Malaysia. Faktor dalaman adalah kepimpinan, peranan masyarakat sivil dan daya barisan pilihan raya pihak pembangkang. Manakala faktor luaran adalah kekuatan dan kelemahan parti dominan, khususnya UMNO, peranan Internet dan kumpulan pemikir atau *think-tanks* juga menyumbang kepada pengukuhan kuasa politik pembangkang. Kajian juga mendapati bahawa terdapat hubungan berbentuk kitaran antara peningkatan kuasa politik pembangkang dengan peningkatan pendemokrasian, kedua-duanya dihubungkan oleh kewujudan nilai ekspresi diri di kalangan rakyat. Kewujudan nilai ekspresi diri ini menyebabkan hubungan kitaran antara kuasa politik pembangkang dan pendemokrasian sentiasa subur seperti yang ditunjukkan dalam Model Pembangkang Politik dan Pendemokrasian.

**DEMOCRATIZATION IN MALAYSIA: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF
TWO OPPOSITIONAL POLITICAL WAVES (1987-1996, 1998-2013)**

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the role and function of oppositional political forces in enhancing the parameters of limited democracy in Malaysia. It intends to find out the role of oppositional political forces in Malaysian politics within the presumed objective to build the nation through the enhancement of democracy and explores how the dynamics of oppositional behavior, i.e. choices and strategies of the opposition political parties, cohesiveness of formal and informal opposition enhance the parameters of democracy. Three research questions are laid out, first, how does limited democracy contribute to the development of the oppositional political forces in Malaysia? Second, what are the internal and external factors that contribute to a consolidated and sustainable oppositional political force? And finally, how do the oppositional political forces contribute towards democratization in Malaysia? These questions are answered in the chapters through the utilization of the comparative-historical method by comparing two oppositional political waves in Malaysia that occurred from 1987 to 1996 and from 1998 to 2013. The findings suggest that the limited democracy forces the establishment of oppositional political force which is an integrated force consisting of formal and informal opposition. This oppositional political force's effort to promote democratization is influenced by its strength and sustenance in oppositional politics which is an effect of internal and external events in Malaysia's political environment. The internal factors are leadership, the role of civil society and the electoral force they built. The external events are the strength and

weakness of the dominant party, in particular UMNO, the role of the Internet and think-tanks which also contribute to the strengthening of oppositional political forces. The underlying explanation relating to the oppositional political forces and democratization is the existence of values of self-expression among the citizens. The existence of self-expression values result in a cyclical relationship between oppositional political forces and democratization as shown in the Oppositional Political Forces and Democratization Model.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Malaysian politics is unique due to its multi-ethnic background and it is this unique blend of politics that has contributed towards the country's survival for so many years without serious ethnic conflicts (Lim, Gomes and Azly, 2009). The government, under the administration of first The Alliance then later the Barisan Nasional (the National Front or BN) has had the opportunity to rule Malaysia for more than 50 years since its independence in 1957. The lengthy years of the BN ruling have given it the opportunity to construct and mould the practice of democracy in Malaysia. The practice of democracy is also reflected through the existence of various forms of political parties, the holding of regular elections, the right and freedom of the people to participate in politics, the room for opposition to establish political parties, closely administered electoral processes, wide surveillance on socio-political activities as well as media reports and coverage of Malaysia's socio-religious, economic and political affairs.

From one dimension, democracy in the country has provided an avenue for any opposition to participate in the general elections (GE). Among the significant opposition political parties are the Islamic-based Parti Islam Se-Malaysia (Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party, or PAS), the liberal-democratic based Democratic Action Party (DAP), the Malay-based Semangat 46 (Spirit of 46), and the liberal-progressive multicultural-based Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR). The opposition's primary concern in the early years after independence was to win seats in the general elections. Mobilization for opposition support was normally confined to its party members.

Occasionally, this radius of influence will expand during the period of an election campaign where massive mobilization takes place. However, in recent times, the civil society groups tend to side with the oppositional political forces as the former aimed to gain stronger advocacy for their interests. Thus, the opposition appears to have an integrated front. The integration has formed an oppositional political force that has reinvented their primary motives. In the last two general elections of 2008 and 2013, the integrated force has heavily diluted BN's many strongholds.

1.2 Statement of problem

The opposition is improving its position in Malaysia's politics, reflecting a considerable change in Malaysia's democracy. The opposition coalition outnumbered the dominant party, BN in popular votes in the 2013 general elections (GE13) for the first time in the Malaysia's political history. The GE13 witnessed a stiff competition between BN and the opposition. The election turned out to be a setback for BN when the opposition, Pakatan Rakyat (People's Pact or PR), captured 51 percent of the total popular votes, outperforming the BN by 4 percent. The opposition won a total of 89 parliamentary seats; an addition of 7 seats from what they had obtained in the previous GE12 in 2008. The result of the GE13 has verified the label "mother of all elections" proclaimed by the media prior to the election.¹ At that time, many were confident that

¹ Refer Yang Razali's news article in Nation Multimedia which can be accessed from <http://www.nationmultimedia.com/opinion/Malaysias-mother-of-all-elections-a-turning-point-30204105.html> and in The Malaysian Insider which can be accessed from <http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/sideviews/article/the-mother-of-all-elections-yang-razali-kassim>; and Suhaimi Sulaiman's news article in Astro Awani Online News Portal which can be accessed from <http://english.astroawani.com/opinion/ge-13-mother-all-elections-let-me-tell-you-what-i-think-11660>.

BN would see the end of its fifty-six years of uninterrupted rule. Nevertheless, BN won but its track record of forming a government in every election is now broken, its future uncertain.

The change in the Malaysian democracy prompted by the opposition can be traced back to the 2008 political tsunami (Ahmad Atory, 2009). In an analysis of the effect of GE12, Mohd. Azizuddin (2009, p. 97) stated that “Malaysia is beginning to embrace the new politics of deliberative democracy, leaving behind the old politics of consociational democracy.” Others have expressed similar sentiments about Malaysian democracy in the post-GE12. Among the major ones are, increasing support towards the multi-racial based political parties (Freedman, 2006; Weiss, 2006; Karim Raslan, 2008), end of hegemony of BN (Tan and Lee, 2008; Pepinsky, 2009), democratization in media practice (Norani, 2003; Jun and Zawawi, 2008; Samsudin and Latiffah, 2011), elevation of political participation (Loh and Saravanamutu, 2003; Mohd Azizuddin, 2009) and the substantive role of civil society (Verma, 2002; Loh, 2009; Case, 2010). Such changes occasioned Malaysia’s political analysts to adjust their conceptions. Prior to the 2008 GE, scholars have had different expressions on the democracy operated by the BN government. It was viewed as an authoritarian democracy (Tan, 1990; Crouch, 1992; Rodan, 2009), semi-democracy (Case, 1993, 2002), hybrid democracy (Diamond, 2002), and quasi democracy (Zakaria, 1989). Even though different expressions are utilized to reflect Malaysian democracy, they refer to a similar notion, that democracy in Malaysia is limited in practice.

Malaysian politics is undergoing a political transition in the country’s history and some have predicted that the country will encounter more major changes ahead, brought upon by the opposition. The opposition political coalition has become more

cohesive than ever before. It is able to mobilize a large segment of civil society and take control of economically strong state governments². It also garnered strong support from the alternative media which has a wider coverage of the nation's citizens compared to the traditional print media.

Historically, Malaysian politics experienced initial encounters with the oppositional wave in the 1980s. However, the wave failed to produce a big impact against BN. Why and how in the 2000s, opposition became strong in spite of the limitations imposed by the dominant party BN needs to be examined. What makes this oppositional wave stronger than the first oppositional wave? How did this oppositional wave manage to reach this level of strength, leading many political analysts to believe that democratization is strengthening? Hence, in general, this thesis intends to answer these questions by exploring the relationship between the opposition and the democratization process in Malaysia. The thesis attempts to accomplish the following research objectives.

1.3 Research Objectives and Key Questions

1. To examine how the limited democracy imposed by the BN government has led to the existence of the oppositional political forces in Malaysia.
2. To identify the internal and external factors that contribute to a consolidated and sustainable oppositional political force.

² 2008: State governments in Kedah, Perak, Penang, Selangor and Kelantan
2013: State governments in Penang, Selangor and Kelantan

3. To evaluate the role of the oppositional political forces in the democratization of Malaysia.

These research objectives can be achieved by answering the following research questions:

1. How does limited democracy contribute to the development of the oppositional political forces in Malaysia?
2. What are the internal and external factors that contribute to a consolidated and sustainable oppositional political force?
3. How do the oppositional political forces contribute towards democratization in Malaysia?

1.4 Significance of the study

The main significance of this study are as follows:

1. It extends the existing knowledge in the area of political science focusing on oppositional political forces. Existing studies have been focusing on either political parties or on society-based oppositional political activities. Thus, this study combines both political parties and societal participation in an integrated oppositional political force.
2. It provides a chronological overview of the activities of oppositional political forces in Malaysia from 1987 to 2013. This approximately thirty-year account provides historical background for the study of oppositional political forces in Malaysia.

3. It introduces the “Oppositional Political Forces and Democratization Model” that reveals the political impact of the oppositional political forces on democratization.
4. It assists the government in its nation-building project by offering useful information regarding the strategies used by the oppositional political forces.
5. It constructs the parameter of oppositional political waves in Malaysia for future research.

1.5 Research Methodology

This study uses qualitative research methodology by employing the Comparative-Historical Research Method to understand the emergence of two oppositional political forces in Malaysia. This method identifies the core themes embedded in the two oppositional political waves. These themes are important to explain not only how the opposition became a consolidated political entity but also to explain the involvement of oppositional political forces in a democratic polity, thus contributing to democratization in Malaysia. This method is appropriate to examine events of a different time as to produce a political discourse on the examined issue (Hopkin, 2002; Mahoney, 2004).

1.5.1 Comparative-Historical Research Method

Comparative-Historical Research method is a method that is derived from the historical method which is also known as historiography. In historical method, a researcher “explore either what happened at a particular time and place or what the characteristics of a phenomenon were like at a particular time and place.” (Lange, 2013, p. 12). Similar to historical methods, comparative-historical research method explores the characteristics and causes of a particular phenomena. However, comparative-historical research method employ comparison as a means of gaining insight into one or more phenomenon (Lange, 2013, p. 14).

The comparative-historical research method has been chosen for the purpose of this study because it provides a useful method to focus on comprehensive structures and large-scale processes. In addition, comparison is useful in deriving similarities and differences in both waves identified in this study. Historical method or historiography may lead to abundance of information and narrative explanations to the two oppositional political waves identified. Hence, comparative-historical research method provides a narrower scope in explaining both waves.

This method is suitable for the purpose of this study since it is designed to analyse a big picture and scope of events such as democratization. Often, the answers obtained from this method are for questions such as, “What are the causes of democratization or revolutions?”. Hence, this method focuses the attention more on the cause at the macro-level which this study refers to the two oppositional political waves. The causes and effects of an event are identified by systematic comparisons of relatively few cases to grasp the themes that appear throughout the two waves (Ritter,

2014). The comparative-historical research method is useful to search for relevant causal factors for long-term processes that are mostly rooted in the historical trajectories (Ritter, 2014, 99).

The scope provides useful clues in explaining the social and political activities among the oppositional political forces from macroscopic level to the level of groups and individuals. The fundamental processes that appear within the social and political activities perform as the themes that are identified as the similarities or differences between both oppositional political waves. It is important to discover the temporal sequences and the unfolding of events over time to grasp the fundamental occurrences within a society (Mahoney & Rueschemeyer, 2003, p.7)

Comparative-historical research method has been utilized by many scholars to make comparison on two identified case studies. One of the studies that employed comparative-historical method was done by Lange. Lange analyzed the experience of Botswana and Malaysia in their successful state building and in exploring their causal mechanisms linking crises and state building (Lange, 2009). This method has also been applied to study the rise of democracy and authoritarianism (Moore, 1966; Wood, 2000), and also other macro-level phenomena such as revolutions (Skocpol, 1979; Goldstone, 1991, 2003; Wickham-Crowley, 1992; Foran, 2005), state formation (Young, 1994; Ekiert, 1996), racial and ethnic relations (Brubaker, 2001), national economic development (Evans, 1999; Adams, 2005), and the emergence of women's rights (O'Connor, Orloff, and Shaver 1999; Charrad, 2001). In the context of Malaysia, this method has been applied in the study of comparing the rise of democracy and authoritarianism in Malaysia and Indonesia after colonial era (Syed Farid, 1997),

Malaysia's involvement in the world economy from 1824-2011 (Azlan, 2012), and Malaysia's political economy from 1800-1957 (Abdullah, 2010).

1.5.2 Focus of the Study

The study focuses on two oppositional political waves; first, from 1987 to 1996, and second, from 1998 to 2013.

Oppositional Political Wave 1: 1987-1996³

The first oppositional political wave is identified by the intense oppositional activities that had caused the government to launch the massive crackdown known as “*Operation Lalang*” in 1987. This operation witnessed the detention of 106 dissenting individuals whom Mahathir called “the saboteurs of democracy” (Weiss and Saliha, 2003, p. 36) for igniting sensitive racial issues. The detainees were NGO activists, opposition politicians, intellectuals, students, and other groups who were detained without trial under the Internal Security Act (ISA)⁴. Other detainees were several former UMNO members. In the UMNO party elections of 1987, the party was split into two groups; Team A led by Mahathir and Team B led by Razaleigh Hamzah. In the party election, Mahathir was challenged by Razaleigh for the president's post which Mahathir won by a narrow majority. After UMNO was banned in 1988,

³ In Khoo (1997), the oppositional wave was pre-extended from 1981 until 1996.

⁴ Among the detainees were opposition leader and DAP Secretary-General Lim Kit Siang, DAP Deputy chairman Karpal Singh, MCA Vice-President Chan Kit Chee, and PAS Youth Chief Halim Arshat. Other non-political detainees were Aliran Movement President Chandra Muzaffar, Publicity Chief of the CRC Kua Kia Soong, and WAO member Irene Xavier. See Weiss (2006 p. 124)

Razaleigh established Semangat 46, an opposition political party as an alternative to UMNO Baru⁵.

Razaleigh, through Semangat 46 took the initiative to be the de-facto leader of all the opposition forces. He enhanced the degree of the wave by cooperating with the main existing opposition political parties, namely PAS and DAP. This collaboration produced a significant change in the oppositional politics since the opposition as been previously fragmented. Semangat 46's collaboration with PAS produced Angkatan Perpaduan Ummah (APU), a cooperation of several Islamic-based political parties: PAS, Semangat 46, Barisan Jemaah Islamiah Se-Malaysia (BERJASA), Parti Hizbul Muslimin Malaysia (HAMIM), and Kongres India Muslim Malaysia (Malaysian Indian Muslim Congress or KIMMA). The wave was strengthened when DAP agreed to form a coalition with Semangat 46 through the Gagasan Rakyat with several other opposition parties, namely, Parti Bersatu Sabah (United Sabah Party or PBS) and Parti Rakyat Malaysia (Malaysian People's Party or PRM). Their efforts were then further intensified by the oppositional activities executed by the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and individual activists. Among the notable NGOs in this wave were Aliran Kesedaran Negara (National Consciousness Movement or ALIRAN), Suara Rakyat Malaysia (People's Voice or SUARAM), and the Bar Council.

The wave of change passed through two general elections of 1990 and 1995. The oppositional political forces in this wave had a profound impact in the 1990

⁵ UMNO Baru (New UMNO) was Mahathir's effort to revive the disbanded original UMNO party. The suffix "New" was later dropped and UMNO (Baru) was legitimated as the successor of the original UMNO party. It retrieved the old UMNO's assets with most of its leaders were selected from Team A of the old UMNO, the team led by Mahathir.

general elections when they snatched Kelantan and Sabah from BN rule. However, this wave declined during the 1995 general elections due to Gagasan Rakyat's foreclosure prior to the elections and the problematic relationship between PAS and Semangat 46 in APU. Thus, the 1995 election results favored the ruling coalition with an increase in the total number of votes, parliamentary seats as well as the percentage of parliamentary seats. It was the highest electoral achievement of the BN since Mahathir led the BN coalition (Chin, 1996, p. 393). A year later, Razaleigh disbanded Semangat 46 and rejoined UMNO. This marked the end of the first oppositional political wave.

Oppositional Political Wave 2: 1998-2013

The second oppositional political wave started in September 1998 when the masses took to the streets to launch a protest movement known as the "*Reformasi*." It was initiated by Anwar Ibrahim, the Deputy Prime Minister who was sacked from the government and UMNO by the then Prime Minister, Mahathir Mohamad. The *Reformasi* movement involved a range of oppositional activities such as civil disobedience, demonstrations, rioting, and online activism. The main goal of these activities under the voice of *Reformasi* was to call an end to corruption, cronyism, discrimination, privilege and social inequality as well as the resignation of Mahathir.

The *Reformasi* movement has marked a turning point for a more consolidated and united oppositional political force. Within one year, *Reformasi* had bred two non-registered alliances, known as Majlis Gerakan Keadilan Rakyat Malaysia (People's

Justice Movement Council or GERAK) and GAGASAN⁶ (People's Initiative for Democracy). GERAK is a cooperation between the opposition political parties PAS, the Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia (Islamic Youth Movement of Malaysia or ABIM) and the Malaysian Islamic Reform Society (JIM). GAGASAN comprised of a cooperation between DAP and the Malaysian People's Party (Parti Rakyat Malaysia) with an NGO, SUARAM.

This particular oppositional political wave heightened during the 1999 general elections. *Barisan Alternatif* (Alternative Front or BA), a coalition of opposition parties was established by combining four major opposition political parties, viz. PAS, DAP, PRM as well as the newly registered *Parti Keadilan Nasional* (National Justice Party or KeAdilan). KeAdilan was led by Wan Azizah, Anwar's wife and proxy for the opposition leadership. This front shook the legitimacy of the single party dominance of BN in the GE10 in 1999 when BN's majority in the parliament was reduced by 15 seats. BN won 147 seats while the BA won 42 seats.

This particular wave however experienced a big setback in the 2004 GE. It thereafter experienced a significant rise when it posed significant challenges to the BN in the general elections of 2008 and 2013. In GE11 in 2004, the BN government won a landslide victory but its fortune were scaled back in the consecutive general elections with fewer than two-thirds majority votes in both elections. For the first time in Malaysia's electoral history, the incumbent ruling coalition lost the battle to the oppositional political forces in terms of popular votes (Khoo, 2013). Therefore, the analysis of the second oppositional political wave focuses on the era from the

⁶ Note that this Gagasan is different from the Gagasan Rakyat in the first oppositional political wave.

beginning of *Reformasi* and ends in the year of 2013. This thesis sets the parameter of the second oppositional political wave until 2013 – the year of the latest general elections which help to explain the current development of democratization in Malaysia.

1.5.3 Types of Data, Interview Protocol and Method of Data Analysis

This study employs two types of data collection methods, namely through interviews and document study.

Types of Data

This thesis relies on two types of data: primary and secondary data.

Primary Data

Primary data is the raw data obtained from the original source. One of the methods to collect primary data is through the Elite Interview method. This method was conducted with several key participants to obtain some ideas and arguments that are absent in the printed sources. The key participants in this research is also known as ‘elite’. Harvey defines elites as “those who occupy senior management and Board level positions within organizations” (2011, p.5). In this research, elite refers to those who hold top positions in their organizations. According to Geoffrey Pridham (1987, p. 72), utilizing elite interviews as research tools have two ‘objective’ and ‘subjective’ advantages. Objective advantages refer to confirming data by cross-checking information from other sources, either verbal or printed (see Goldstein, 2002). And subjective

advantages include revealing attitudes through in-depth interviews. He adds that studying political parties in a liberal democracy is more satisfying because the information about the parties is usually obtained from printed sources such as the press. These political parties make their details available to the press and even access to the researchers. However, in researching for elite attitudes and behavior, it is insufficient to rely on document-type sources as the quality of the data might vary depending on one's perceptions (Pridham, 1987, p. 73).

This research employs semi-structured interviews⁷ because it may harness more in-depth information compared to fully structured interviews (Sinclair and Brady, 1987; Kezar, 2003). The interview questions vary from one elite to another, depending on their affiliations, their positions and their experiences in the oppositional political force. All in all, the interview questions pose several common themes; perspective on democratization in Malaysia, personal role in the oppositional political force, personal opinion on the driving factors that contribute to the establishment, and the rise and/or fall of the oppositional political waves. **Table 1.1** lists out the respondents who were interviewed.

⁷ Sample of the interview questions is in Appendix A.

Table 1.1: List of Primary Data: Respondents

No.	Name, position, tenure	Date of interview	Place of interview
1.	Mohammad Safiai Saad <i>Grassroot supporter for Team A in 1987</i>	25 October 2010	Sintok, Kedah
2.	Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah <i>President of Semangat 46 (1988-1996), MP Gua Musang</i>	26 October 2010	Kuala Lumpur
3.	Zaid Kamaruddin <i>Steering Committee of BERSIH 2.0 and 3.0; and President of Jemaah Islah Malaysia (JIM) (2006-2011)</i>	18 July 2011	Kuala Lumpur
4.	Dr. Chandra Muzaffar <i>Deputy President of KeAdilan (1999-2001), President JUST</i>	23 September 2011	Penang
5.	Teoh Ai Hua <i>Press Secretary of Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi (January 2004-April 2009)</i> <i>Special Officer to Tun Mahathir (April 2009-September 2013)</i>	13 January 2014	Sintok, Kedah
6.	Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad <i>Prime Minister of Malaysia (1981-2003)</i>	2 May 2014 and 12 January 2015	Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya
7.	Dr. Mustafa K. Anuar <i>Secretary-General of Aliran (2011-now)</i>	7 October 2014	Email interview
8.	Haji Jas (nickname), PKR Representative <i>(Political advisor of Nurul Izzah)</i>	2 December 2014	Kuala Lumpur
9.	Dr. Ariffin Omar <i>Senator from DAP (2013-2015)</i>	3 December 2014	The Parliament, Kuala Lumpur
10.	Dr. Loh Kok Wah <i>President of Aliran (2011-now)</i>	6 February 2015	Aliran's Headquarters Penang
11.	Saifuddin Abdullah <i>Representative from UMNO (now PKR member, Secretary of Pakatan Harapan)</i>	4 June 2015	Kuala Lumpur

Primary data were also gathered from original documents such as archival materials, surveys and statistics, speeches and government reports. Among the sources referred to are reports from the Election Commission (EC), Merdeka Center, Government

agencies, Ministries, Malaysian Plans, Election Manifestos, ANFREL Report and news coverage from newspapers.

Interview Protocol

Key participants were identified based on their affiliations with one of the groups studied in this thesis such as the dominant party, formal opposition, NGOs, and individuals. Hence, the key participants represent each group in order to have a better understanding of their different perspectives and stances on oppositional political forces and democratization.

The protocol used to collect data from interviewees are as follows:

Step 1: Researcher identified a few personnels to be key participants for each group.

Step 2: Researcher searched for their contact details.

Step 3: Researcher contacted the key participants either through email or phone conversation.

Step 4: Researcher sent student verification letter, interview application letter and list of interview questions.

Step 5: Researcher was called for the interview.

Step 6: Researcher recorded each interview using audio recorder.

Step 7: Researcher transcribed the interview conversations.

Step 8: Transcribed interview conversations that are used in the thesis were verified by a scholar who is an expert in English and from Political Science background.

*Sample of interview questions is included in Appendix A.

Secondary Data

Secondary data were gathered from several sources such as journals, periodicals, news portals, surveys, blogs and YouTube videos. These sources provide useful chronological information along with necessary facts and figures as well as texts of statements by subjects and candidates that are studied in this thesis. Since the internet is “making a whole range of different forms of data easier for the researcher to locate, acquire and search” (Burnham, Gilland, Grant, and Layton-Henry, 2004, p. 203).

Method of Data Analysis

Interview data is analysed using discourse and frame analysis method which is proposed by Lindekilde (2014, p. 212). The method requires the researcher to code the interview data based on the themes of the research. Then, during the interview session, the researcher records each conversations with an audio recorder. After the session, the audio is transcribed using Express Scribe Transcription Software which is obtained from the internet. The transcription is then analysed by categorising the text with themes of the thesis. Later, the quotes are taken and put in the thesis body to support the researcher’s arguments. The researcher has verified the English for interviews that were conducted in Bahasa Melayu⁸.

⁸ The verification letter is shown in Appendix B

1.6 Thesis Breakdown

This thesis is divided into the following chapters:

Chapter 1 is the introductory chapter which gives an overview of the thesis, the statement of the problem, research objectives, key questions, significance of this study as well as the research methodology.

Chapter 2 is the analytical framework chapter that is built from extensive related works with regard to democracy, democratization, and opposition. The review of the literature draws an analytical framework that is used as the research design to guide analyses and structure the whole thesis. The analytical framework is applicable for the Comparative-Historical Research Method for the two oppositional political waves.

Chapter 3 provides the historical background of Malaysian politics that is related to the philosophical foundational of oppositional political forces in Malaysia. This chapter scrutinizes the existence of the oppositional political wave as a result of the limited democracy that is imposed by the dominant party. It is useful to understand the underlying factors pertaining to the existence of oppositional political forces to know how they strategize and the motivations behind their tactics and strategies.

Chapter 4 offers the internal and external factors that contribute to the success of the second oppositional political waves. It analyzes their strategies which consist of the leaders' choice of agenda and issues as well as the characteristics of the support system within the oppositional force. This chapter will also include the external factors that contribute to the relative success of the oppositional political forces, namely the media, access to information and the strength of the dominant party, UMNO. It also offers a

comparative study of the first oppositional political waves and the relative success of the second oppositional political wave.

Chapter 5 illustrates the relationship of the oppositional political force and democratization. Three crucial elements have been identified, namely the rise of political activism, electoral democratization, and the existence of ‘self-expression values’. This chapter discovers that the relationship between the oppositional political forces and democratization is portrayed in an ongoing cycle. The loop of relationship explains that both oppositional political forces and democratization mutually affect one another.

Chapter 6 concludes the whole thesis by presenting the thesis’ key arguments, thesis findings and proposes several suggestions for future research.

Chapter 2: Oppositional Political Forces and Democratization: Literature

Review and Analytical Framework

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the definition of concepts and analytical framework that will be used in this thesis. It is derived from the literature review; firstly, based on the general idea of democracy and opposition from liberalist and elitist perspectives. Secondly, the oppositional political force's choice of strategies and activities for promoting democracy, and lastly, the contributing factors for the sustenance of oppositional political forces.

2.2 An Overview of Democracy: Concept and Practice

Currently, there is a growing list of definitions of the word 'democracy' (Storm, 2008). According to the Oxford English Dictionary (McLean and McMillan, 2009, p. 139), democracy is defined as "a system of government in which all the people of a state or polity are involved in making decisions about its affairs, typically by voting to elect representatives to a parliament or similar assembly." State-opposition relationship in a democracy depends on the type of democracy applied by the government. A government that is ruled by a dominant party normally adopts an elitist-type democracy (Schedler, 2002). Meanwhile, opposition groups are normally interested to promote a liberal-type democracy (Jung and Shapiro, 1995). This divergence of interest between the government and the opposition tends to shape the state-citizen