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Politics as usual or exceptional elections?

A comparative study of sub-Saharan Africa's multiparty systems

Matthew Wall B.A.

Under the supervision of:

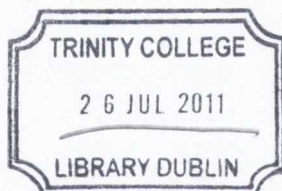
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February, 2011

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Abstract

This thesis studies multiparty systems in sub-Saharan Africa in the period 1989-2008. The characteristic of sub-Saharan Africa's party systems that shall be examined is the manner in which electoral support and legislative seats have been distributed among parties in national-level multiparty elections.

The research undertaken here seeks to contribute to the state of scholarly knowledge on this topic by focusing on the theoretical and methodological challenges that patterns of party competition in sub-Saharan Africa pose to comparative studies of party systems. In so doing, the thesis attempts to provide the most rigorous analysis available to date of the roles of political institutions, societal characteristics, and levels of political freedoms in explaining patterns of vote and seat distributions among parties in sub-Saharan Africa's multiparty elections.

Summary

The thesis investigates whether party systems in Africa can be explained as 'politics as usual' by examining the applicability of generalised theories of party system fragmentation to Africa's party systems. However, students of African party systems must balance a desire for generalisation with an acknowledgement of certain observable patterns of 'exceptional' political behaviour and competition (relative to established democracies) in the region. The exceptional patterns that this thesis focuses on both: (1) distinguish African elections and party systems from those in established democracies and (2) may influence the distribution of votes and seats across parties. Thus, while the thesis examines variables and theories from generalised accounts of party system fragmentation, it also provides analyses of novel independent and dependent variables, as well as looking at alternative theoretical approaches explaining the roles of certain variables. The methodological approach adopted in the thesis involves compiling data on dependent and independent variables for each country/election studied, and then analysing observed relational patterns among these variables. Theoretical accounts of the processes studied provide falsifiable hypotheses concerning the nature of these relationships; and these hypotheses are specified and investigated against the data collected.

Presidential elections are found to play a highly influential role in explaining both vote fragmentation and largest party seat share in the legislative elections studied. However, neither the level of societal diversity, nor the type of presidential electoral system are found to be significantly related to presidential vote fragmentation – the only significant predictors of which discovered in the analysis are: the powers of the presidential office, the occurrence of opposition boycotts, and the level of geographic concentration of ethnic groups. The analysis also indicates that the translation of societal

diversity to vote fragmentation/largest party seat share in African legislative elections is conditioned by a combination of the proportionality of the legislative electoral system and the extent to which ethnic groups are geographically-concentrated. Levels of political freedom and opposition participation are also shown to be consistently important for African electoral outcomes: vote distributions are more concentrated, and largest parties win a higher proportion of seats when the political regime restricts political freedoms and when opposition groups boycott elections.

The thesis concludes that certain expectations derived from our understanding of the operation of 'politics as usual' in the determination of vote and seat distributions are met over Africa's multiparty elections, these are: the role of legislative electoral systems in translating vote fragmentation to seat fragmentation, and the importance of election timing in conditioning the relationship between presidential and legislative vote distributions. However, conventional accounts give little leverage over the sources of vote fragmentation in Africa's presidential elections – a subject that would greatly benefit from further research. Furthermore, no empirical support is adduced for 'politics as usual' models of the effects of legislative electoral systems on vote fragmentation for the elections studied here. Instead 'exceptionalist' theory, addressing how electoral system effects may differ in new democracies, and accounts of the negotiation of electoral systems during the transition to democracy in sub-Saharan Africa appear to provide the most useful insights into the relationships between electoral systems, societal diversity and vote fragmentation in sub-Saharan Africa. 'Exceptionalist' independent variables, which seek to control for variable levels of political freedom, consistently correlate with patterns of vote and seat distribution and should be included in subsequent comparative accounts of multiparty competition in the region. Finally, a novel dependent variable, largest party seat share, was found to provide both technical and substantive advantages for understanding Africa's party systems, which tend to produce very large winning parties.

Acknowledgements

Writing this thesis has been a long and often strange journey, one on which I have probably learned as much about myself as I have about electoral systems, party systems, and so on! Hopefully, readers of the thesis will consider that the journey was worthwhile; certainly it would not have been possible at all without the advice, support, indulgence, and occasional distractions that my family, friends, and colleagues have provided.

I have been surrounded by wonderful colleagues during my time as a postgraduate at Trinity; from senior staff to my fellow postgraduates, and I have received terrific support and fantastic advice throughout. My supervisor, Ken Benoit, has done a great job at keeping the project coherent and moving forward, supporting me in funding the research, providing advice on seeking a job post-thesis, and occasionally giving me a well-needed kick in the behind along the way! Other staff members at Trinity have also been incredibly generous with their time, advice, and encouragement – particular thanks to Michael Marsh, Michael Gallagher, Jac Hayden, Raj Chari, Eddie Hyland, Gail McElroy, Elaine Byrne, and Robert Thomson for making my time as a postgraduate at Trinity both intellectually illuminating and personally enjoyable.

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sacrifices that they have made along the way, and for all of the love and joy that they have given to me.

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Chapter 1 - Introduction

Abstract

This chapter defines the subject to be addressed in the thesis, and elaborates how this subject will be approached. Arguments detailing the substantive significance of the thesis are then presented. It is argued that there are certain 'exceptional' aspects of African multiparty political competition that impact on the applicability of generalised theories of party system fragmentation to African elections. This thesis seeks to account for these factors in its analysis of African party system fragmentation and this chapter, which lays out a summary of the structure of the thesis, explains how it shall do so. The chapter concludes with an assessment of the contribution that this thesis represents to the understanding of party systems in sub-Saharan Africa, and to the topic of party system fragmentation more generally.

1.1 Elaboration of Research Questions and Methodological Approach

This thesis proposes to study the development of multiparty systems in Sub-Saharan Africa¹ in the period 1989-2008². The characteristic of party systems that shall be examined is the manner in which electoral support and legislative seats are distributed among parties and candidates in Africa's multiparty elections. More specifically, this thesis seeks to investigate sources of variation which help to explain patterns of vote and seat distributions across African party systems. In order to carry out such an investigation, it is necessary to balance two seemingly competing explanatory approaches: 'politics as usual' and 'exceptionalism'. The 'politics as usual' method relies on the exploring whether those empirical regularities (and analytical methodologies) that have helped us to understand party system development in established democracies are useful for understanding African party systems. The 'exceptionalism' approach focuses on the explanatory value of aspects of African multiparty political contestation that mark it apart from other world regions.

Herbst (2000: 3-8) elaborates his reasoning for adopting a similar theme in his study of state creation and consolidation in Africa. He argues that 'African political geography poses a completely different set of political challenges to state-builders compared to the problems European leaders faced' (p. 3). Ignoring the existence these pertinent exceptions to the norms of state development would mean that Herbst's study fails to engage with political realities. However, Herbst also cautions against an approach that focuses on solely on state-specific details to the exclusion of the findings of studies of state development outside of

¹ We note here that we follow other comparativists, area specialists, and commentators in excluding the Northern African countries of Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Morocco and Algeria from our analysis because of their divergent socio-cultural and political characteristics (Lindberg, 2006.) Having made this distinction, we employ the terms Sub-Saharan Africa and Africa interchangeably throughout the thesis.

² The time period chosen for this study reflects the dramatic increase in the number of *de jure* multiparty elections held in African states that took place in the early/mid 1990s onwards. We discuss the history of competitiveness of African elections in detail in chapter 3.

the region, which have worked towards developing generalised accounts of the origins and nature of the state. An inability to situate any study relative to work previously carried out will mean that it can offer only a limited contribution to our generalised understanding of the phenomenon being studied. In order to balance these imperatives, Herbst calls for 'an analytic perspective that allows the African experience to be understood in comparative perspective' (p.6), one which considers both pertinent differences between African and European states, while still searching for, and acknowledging, underlying commonalities. I seek to adhere to this approach in my treatment of Africa's party systems in this thesis.

The subject of party system fragmentation is among the mainstays of the comparative political science literature, and has even been instanced as an area of research that exemplifies the capacity of students of politics and political institutions to engage in a 'scientific' process of knowledge accumulation (Riker, 1982a; Shugart, 2005). However, there is a considerable hiatus between the sophistication of generalised theories of party system fragmentation – which are based principally on empirical examinations of elections in established democracies – and current understanding of this phenomenon in Africa's multiparty systems. We are still uncertain as to how well Africa's elections can be understood using the of 'politics as usual' approach, because we haven't thoroughly investigated whether theories that have been useful in explaining patterns of vote and seat distributions in established democracies are borne out in Africa's elections. This thesis seeks to do so by laying out the precise expectations of the existing political science literature regarding the institutional and sociological determinants of vote and seat fragmentation in competitive, national-level elections and then testing whether these expectations are met in an empirical analysis of Africa's multiparty election in the period 1989-2008.

We are also uncertain about what the 'exceptionalist' approach, applied to a comparative study, can tell us about patterns of vote and seat distribution in elections in Africa. I lay out several reasons why we may anticipate exceptional

patterns of electoral behaviour in African elections compared to other world regions later in this chapter. This thesis seeks to identify empirical regularities and irregularities that give us greater theoretical purchase over the extent to which African elections may be said to be 'exceptional'. However, the thesis also seeks to adapt aspects of its design to accommodate evident sources of African exceptionalism that have been given inadequate attention in previous studies. A first adaptation involves controlling for the variable levels of political openness that are observable across multiparty elections in the region. In order to adapt the analysis to incorporate this issue, I adopt an approach of controlling for political freedom and fairness using a graded measure throughout the analyses presented in this thesis. My reasoning for doing so is laid out in detail in chapter 3. Another methodological adaptation to evident departures from electoral norms in African multiparty elections involves studying dependent variables that are especially of interest in African elections, such as levels of vote fragmentation in presidential contests (chapter 4) and the proportion of seats won by the largest party (chapter 6). These variables have typically received less attention than legislative vote and seat fragmentation in the existing literature.

The application of any general theory of political behaviour to new cases in order to test whether they conform to our expectations of 'politics as usual' is potentially problematic. This is because the antecedent conditions which underlie a proposed relationship might not be present, or empirical measures may fail to capture the conceptual construct being investigated properly (Collier and Levitsky, 1997; Sartori, 1970; 1984; 1991). This thesis is underpinned by the contention that we cannot assume that measures of political concepts and models of political behaviour generated in American or European political environments can be directly transposed to a different economic, historical, cultural and political context. The unquestioning adoption of 'models taken straight out of Western textbooks about democracy and how it is meant to work (...) in studies that do not question the extent to which these are accurate or valid' (Hyden, 2006: 234) provides little analytic leverage in the African context, and can even lead political scientists to ignore, or at least to underestimate,

empirically significant factors (*ibid.*). As such, students of African party systems cannot afford to ignore evidence of exceptionalism (relative to other world regions) in their analyses.

In contradistinction to this point, theories of political behaviour and institutional effects developed over generations of political scientists, and tested against observation of elections in established democracies, should not be discarded *a priori* as inappropriate for African politics. Even if they are found not to be borne out, these theories represent useful building blocks and points of comparison for improving our understanding of Africa's political systems. Furthermore, the virtues of the comparative method for understanding political phenomena are no less significant in Africa than elsewhere; Bratton and van de Walle (1997) contend that 'sweeping generalisations about Africa as a whole are too often derived from case studies of individual countries' (p. 269). This thesis avoids engaging in a categorisation of African political systems according to a scheme of diminished subtypes; *i.e.* dividing states or sets of elections into groups which are fundamentally incomparable to each other and (predominantly) incomparable to systems in established democracies; a tendency among some Africanist scholars that has led to an explosion of categories of sub-classes of 'democracy' (Collier and Levitsky, 1997). Rather, the methodological approach taken here is that comparison is possible across African states and between emerging and established democracies generally, but that such comparisons must be carefully thought out and control for the substantial differences across cases that are found at both levels of comparison.

This thesis is situated in a broader body of work in political science which has sought to investigate how the institutions selected by a group in order to arrive at collectively binding decisions influence the outcomes that they mediate. This school of thought, most commonly labelled 'new institutionalism', argues that 'institutions matter' for a range of political outcomes of interest sufficiently to merit their study (for a summary of research adopting this broad approach see: Hall and Taylor, 1996). This approach is also characterised by an

acknowledgement that the form and functioning of political institutions are not constant across all societies; rather, they are understood to vary according to the context in which they operate and that they can be shaped by as much as they shape this context (Hall and Taylor, 1996; March and Olsen, 1989; North, 1990). In addressing the research questions proposed, this thesis will seek to evaluate the roles of several institutional and societal factors that previous inquiries have found to be relevant to party system fragmentation, and to investigate how these factors interact with each other in explaining the fragmentation of those African party systems where multiparty electoral competition is the *de jure* mode of political contestation.

The approach of this thesis to the study of Africa's party systems is comparative. This comparison takes individual elections as its unit of analysis and compares the results of elections that have taken place in a restricted region (sub-Saharan Africa) within a specified time-period (1989-2008). This large-*N* approach follows on from previous empirical comparative studies of the determinants of party system fragmentation (for a summary of these studies and their findings, see chapter 2 as well as: Benoit, 2006; Riker, 1982a; Shugart, 2005). However, it also goes beyond these studies, including novel independent variables and analysing alternative dependent variables, in an attempt to capture the unique dynamics of African multiparty competition.

Figure 1.1 outlines the principal relationships analysed in the subsequent chapters of this thesis. The dashed boxes represent independent variables considered, while the boxes with continuous lines represent the dependent variables explored. An arrow pointing from a dashed box to a box with continuous lines indicates that the variable in the dashed box may influence the observed values of the dependent variable. So, for instance, the arrow connecting 'powers of presidential office' to 'vote distribution in presidential elections' is explored in chapter 4, which examines whether the powers of the presidential office vis-à-vis the legislature influence the manner in which electoral support is fragmented in presidential races. Where a line from a

variable intersects with an arrow from one variable to another, this implies that the intersecting variable conditions the relationship between two variables. For example, the line from 'legislative electoral systems' which intersects with the arrow pointing from 'partisan vote distribution' to 'partisan seat distribution' is explored in chapter 5, where I examine the 'mechanical effects' of legislative electoral systems, which condition the relationship between vote and seat fragmentation. For each of these independent and dependent variables, I outline the theoretical and empirical expectations of the nature of their relationship (that is, our expectations assuming that we are observing 'politics as usual') based on a large existing comparative literature on the determinants of electoral system fragmentation. In each case, I then test whether these expectations are met empirically in Africa's multiparty elections.

While thoroughly examining the data for evidence of 'politics as usual', and employing methodological and analytical approaches from the existing comparative literature, I also seek to design and implement an aggregate-level analysis of African party systems that accounts for aspects of Africa's electoral 'exceptionalism'. These aspects are observed patterns of political behaviour and competition that both: (1) distinguish African party systems from those in established democracies and (2) influence the distribution of votes and seats across parties. In this sense, the 'political context' variable in Figure 1.1 is highly important; in the subsequent chapters I seek to control for aspects of political context that may bear on patterns of vote and seat distribution in the region. These include variations in levels of political freedoms across states and over time, the occurrence of partial or complete opposition boycotts in some elections, and variation in the number of consecutive elections that have taken place. While these factors can be assumed to be relatively unvarying in the established democracies that have been most-studied with regard to party system fragmentation, they vary dramatically across the elections studied here.

The 'bottom half' of the path diagram is concerned with patterns of vote distributions in Africa's direct presidential elections – these are examined both as

dependent variables in their own right, and as independent variables which can help to explain patterns of legislative vote fragmentation. To date, competition for executive office has received surprisingly little comparative attention in sub-Saharan Africa. Generalised accounts of party system fragmentation have also identified vote fragmentation in presidential elections as being closely related to vote fragmentation in subsequent (or simultaneous) legislative elections (Golder, 2006). However, in several comparative studies of the fragmentation of African party systems, discussion of the presidential race is considered as secondary to examining the role of legislative electoral systems. As I discuss below, Africa's states are overwhelmingly presidential, with directly elected presidents exerting considerable formal and informal power, giving us reason to believe that presidential elections are both sufficiently important to merit study in their own right and that they should be highly consequential for legislative races. As such, both 'politics as usual' and 'exceptionalist' approaches would indicate that students of African party systems should focus on the region's presidential elections. I therefore begin the inferential analysis section of the thesis (chapters 4-6) by dedicating chapter 4 to an analysis of the causes and consequences of presidential vote fragmentation in sub-Saharan Africa.

The 'top half' of the path diagram in Figure 1.1 looks at the influence of legislative electoral systems as political institutions that condition the relationship between societal diversity (that is, the degree to which society is fragmented into potentially politically relevant groupings), legislative electoral systems, and party system fragmentation. Chapter 5 of the thesis focuses especially on these relationships, comparing observed patterns in African elections to those in established and new democracies elsewhere, as well as looking at how electoral systems influence the translation of vote shares to seat shares across parties. While the path diagram in Figure 1.1 doesn't endogenize independent variables (for instance, there is no arrow pointing from 'societal diversity' to 'legislative electoral system') the implications of endogenous selection of electoral systems for understanding observed patterns of vote distributions in sub-Saharan Africa are explored in chapters 3, 4, and 5. Chapters

4, 5, and 6 all seek to shed new light on the role of societal groups' geographic concentration as a variable that may influence the relationship between societal diversity and partisan vote and seat distributions in legislative and presidential elections.

While chapters 5 and 6 each focus on a specific portion of the theoretical picture presented in Figure 1.1, chapter 6 incorporates both but considers an alternative characterisation of the dependent variable, 'partisan seat distribution' to the earlier chapters (which study the fragmentation of votes and seats). Chapter 6 investigates variation in largest party seat share in Africa's legislative elections. Situating this analysis in chapter 6 of the thesis allows me to build on the theoretical and empirical detail in which the 'top' and 'bottom' halves of Figure 1.1 are elaborated in chapters 4 and 5, and to include variables from both in the analysis. Chapter 6 focuses particularly on the importance of political context for understanding patterns of single-party dominance sub-Saharan Africa's *de jure* multiparty elections.

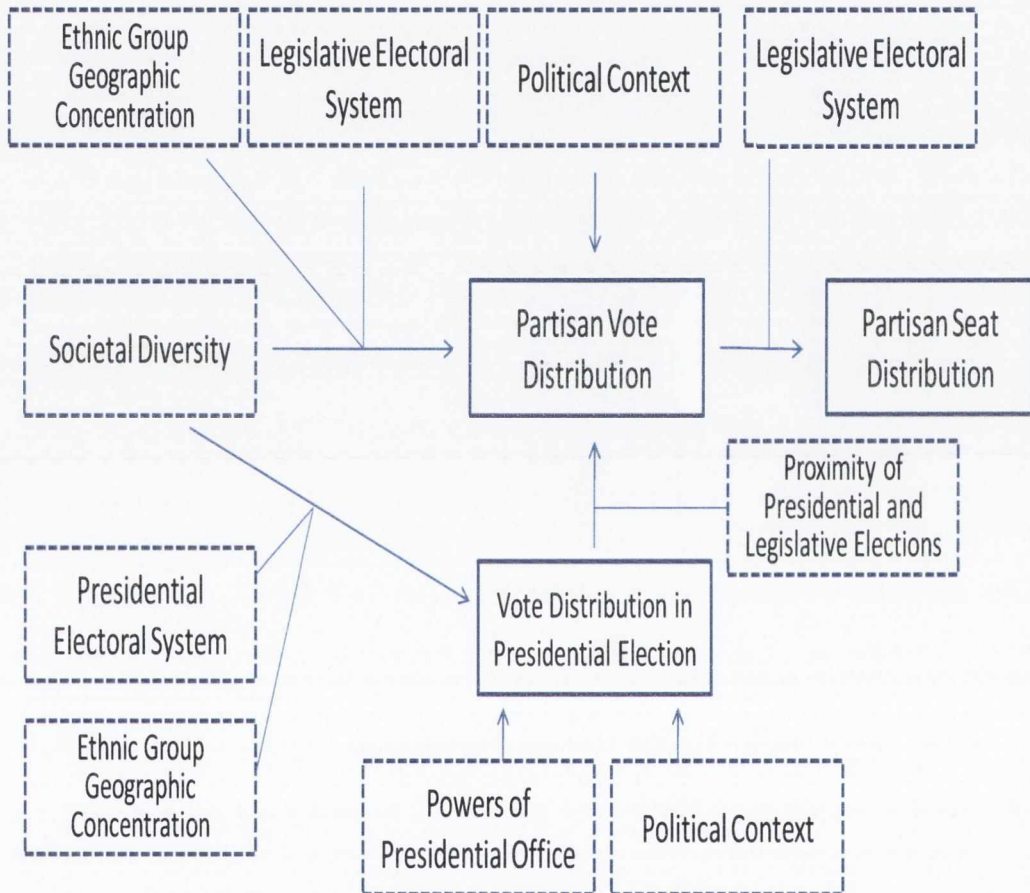
This thesis approaches the topic of explaining patterns of vote and seat distribution Africa's multiparty systems by pooling and analysing national-level election results. In the analysis, multiple regression models are used to examine whether observable implications of existing theories describing how the factors in Figure 1.1 relate to the distribution of votes and seats in multiparty elections are borne out. Examining theories that invoke causation using aggregate data poses severe problems to researchers, especially for researchers seeking to investigate the effects of political institutions such as electoral systems, which are, themselves endogenous to the political systems which they are purported to influence³. The aggregate-level approach is also ill-suited to uncovering the

³ I note here that the thesis seeks to address the electoral system endogeneity issue in several ways. Firstly, in chapter 2, there is a discussion of scholarly debates surrounding the extent to which electoral systems may be said to exercise an exogenous influence on party systems, which argues that electoral system effects can be modelled as at least partly exogenous to party system fragmentation. Secondly, in chapter 3, an account of patterns of electoral system selection across Africa is given, based on the work of Mozaffar (1997; 2004). Finally, chapter 4 considers the empirical implications of the endogenous selection of electoral

processes that underlie observed relationships. For instance, constituency or individual-level data would allow for a more nuanced investigation of the strategic voting process that underlies the observed relationship between electoral system permissiveness and vote fragmentation. On the other hand, the aggregate-level comparative approach employed in this thesis can provide a greater scope in terms of the number of countries and elections studied than mid-level or micro-level approaches. It can also inform possible future avenues for micro-level, process-explaining research. Indeed, the concluding chapter of this thesis seeks to identify how the findings presented here should inform future process-explaining research on African party systems.

systems for an analysis of the relationship between electoral system permissiveness and vote fragmentation; arguing that the results of the analysis presented in chapter 4 may be at least partially attributable to endogenous electoral system selection.

Figure 1.1 Theorized relationships between the main variables explored in this thesis.



A second level of comparison undertaken in this thesis takes *sets* of elections as its unit of analysis, with elections in established democracies being compared to those elections that have taken place in Africa from 1989-2008. This comparison proposes to examine the applicability of generalised theories of party system fragmentation to Africa's party systems. As such, I examine whether Africa's elections can be understood as 'politics as usual' or whether they are 'exceptional' in certain specific regards. Chapter 7 recaps the findings

detailed in this thesis, and discusses the light that they shed on how best to balance 'exceptionalism' and 'politics as usual' in order to study and understand Africa's multiparty systems.

The research presented in this thesis is intended to contribute to the gradual, reciprocal development of theory and observation that has characterised the evolution of our understanding of how sociological and institutional factors interact to influence the shape of party systems (for more on how this process unfolded, see chapter 2). Or, put more informally, this thesis is as much about what African elections can tell us about our generalised understanding of the relationships being studied as it is about what our generalised understandings can tell us about African elections. In the following section, I argue that this research agenda constitutes a topic of considerable substantive importance.

1.2 Substantive Significance of this research

While there are disagreements among students of elections with regards both to what elections *should* achieve⁴ as well as their relationship to the realisation of normative interpretations of democracy⁵; the holding of

⁴ There are numerous competing conceptualisations of the ends that elections should achieve. Disagreements abound over whether elections should be viewed as instruments designed to allow voters to evaluate government performance retrospectively and to empower majority governments with mandates, or whether they should instead be seen as a means of generating a group of political agents who are proportionally representative of the society that they come from (Powell, 2000). A similar debate questions the extent to which electoral results can be said to embody the 'will of the people' given the technical 'impossibility' of any voting system fulfilling certain basic criteria of preference amalgamation with three or more discrete options to choose from (Arrow, 1950), and whether elections should instead be viewed more narrowly as 'a method of controlling officials by subjecting their tenure to periodic electoral tests' (Riker 1982b: xi; see also Mackie, 2003 for a rebuttal of some of Riker's arguments).

⁵ Some argue that elections are the instruments that facilitate the realisation of modern democracy; given that direct popular rule is *de facto* inoperable as a result of the size and complexity of contemporary societies. Among the best known advocates of this approach is Joseph Schumpeter, who defined the democratic method as 'that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote' (1994: 269). Others argue that elections to public

competitive elections as the mode of selection for legislatures and executives has emerged as the *sine qua non* for modern representative democracy.

However, in those African states which are studied here, the extent to which elections have 'mattered', in the sense of representing a meaningful contest for political power, has varied significantly both over time and across states. Those advocating against the 'fallacy of electoralism' (Schmitter and Karl, 1991: 78) have long cautioned against the dangers of equating elections with democracy in African states. Apart from the formally uncompetitive elections that predominated across the region from the mid 1960s until the early 1990s (see chapter 3 for a discussion of these elections), many of Africa's *de jure* multiparty elections from the early 1990s onwards have been tainted by instances of vote-rigging, physical intimidation of party candidates and supporters, and contestation on the basis of the attribution of patronage, rather than national-level policy issues (Hyden, 2006; Lindberg, 2006; Manning, 2005; van de Walle, 2003). Furthermore, the ability of Africa's former one-party regimes to continue to predominate in multiparty environments has been widely noted; with this phenomenon being particularly widespread among those countries whose founding elections were 'late' (*i.e.* after 1994) (Baker, 1998; Bratton, 1998; Ishiyama and Quinn, 2006; Lindberg, 2006; van de Walle, 2002). Simply put, several of Africa's multiparty elections in the period studied in this thesis, while formally permitting multiparty competition, have been uncompetitive and illiberal in reality.

However, it is perhaps unfair to hold African elections subject to impossibly strict criteria for evaluation, as van de Walle (2002) points out: 'political patronage and electoral irregularities, both causes for much hand-wringing when they come to light in fledgling democracies, are hardly unknown

office *impede* the realisation of democracy; this argument is rooted in Aristotle's contention that 'it is regarded as democratic that magistracies should be assigned by lot, as oligarchic that they be elective' (for a detailed discussion on this point see Katz, 1997). A more nuanced view sees elections as necessary but not sufficient criteria for a modern state to be labelled democratic (Lindberg, 2006).

in the West, as the U.S. presidential election of 2000 reminded us. Nor are vacuous campaigns and overly partisan contenders found only in young democracies' (p. 67). From 1989 onwards, elections have undoubtedly become more contested across the continent, with opposition parties winning substantially more votes and seats than they did during the 1980s (Bratton and van de Walle, 1997). There have been several instances of elections resulting in leadership turnover in African states post-1990 (Lindberg, 2006; Posner and Young, 2007) with 30% of free and fair elections resulting in legislative or executive turnover between 1989 and 2003 (Lindberg, 2006: 57); this figure remains stable for the period studied in this thesis (see chapter 5). There is also emergent evidence suggesting that formal institutional rules are growing in importance in Africa's political systems, to the extent that some analysts now consider formal institutions to represent 'the primary source of constraints on executive behaviour' (Posner and Young, 2007: 127) or, at least, 'the principal game in town' (Bratton, 1998: 64) in African political systems.

Barkan (2008) has noted that, 'although legislative performance is uneven across the African continent, the legislature is emerging as a "player" in some countries' (p.124). As such, while it is important to avoid unthinkingly equating elections with democracy, one must also guard against the assumption that elections *never* matter for democratisation, an approach that Seligson and Booth (1995) label the 'anti-electoralist fallacy' (p. 18). While elections alone may not be sufficient for a state to be considered democratic, they are certainly a necessary requisite⁶.

The specific aspects of sub-Saharan Africa's national-level elections that this research will focus on; the number of political parties that compete in elections, and the manner in which votes and seats are distributed among them, are central characteristics of any political system. Empirical research has found

⁶ However, dramatic variations in levels of freedom and fairness of elections cannot be ignored in this study, as they impact on the shape of party systems. I discuss how I seek to account for this dilemma below, and, in greater detail, in chapter 3.

that the fragmentation of political power among parties has important consequences for a number of issues; including government formation and cabinet stability (Powell, 1982); party system extremism (Cox, 1990); macroeconomic outcomes (Roubini and Sachs, 1989); and levels of ethnic conflict and political violence (Horowitz, 1985; Powell, 1982). The degree of party system fragmentation, furthermore, is of particular importance for new democracies. The number of parties represented in national legislatures can leave a deep imprint on the legitimacy of democratic regimes, the responsiveness of government to the governed, and, ultimately, the likelihood that democratic institutions will endure. Taagepera (1998) likens the relationship between electoral system design and democratisation to that of containers and their contents: containers do not determine their contents, but a poor container can cause its contents to leak or become damaged. While well-crafted, appropriate electoral institutions cannot guarantee that a given political system functions as a democracy, poorly-crafted or inappropriate electoral institutions can 'leak, crack, or overflow' (p. 69) and undermine democratisation.

A focus on the number of parties is especially justified given the highly fragmented structure of many African national populations. The delineation of state boundaries by colonial authorities, which have largely been maintained post-independence, served to both divide similar cultural groups - a process described by Englebert *et al.* (2002) as 'dismemberment' (p. 1093), and to unite different ethnic groups within nation states - which Englebert *et al.* (*ibid.*) characterise as 'suffocation' (p. 1093). According to Alesina *et al.* (2003); sub-Saharan Africa has the most fragmented set of national populations of any world region across all of their measures of societal fragmentation. The 13 most ethnically-fragmented and 18 most linguistically-fragmented countries in the world, according to Alesina *et al.*, are all located in sub-Saharan Africa (p. 163). Only one African country (Comoros), out of the 44 covered in their sample, has a single ethnic group representing more than 90% of the population, whereas 17 out of the 28 industrialised countries in their sample display this trait. The presence of a large number of minority groups poses problems for normative

theories of the legitimacy of majority-based democratic decisions, especially when stable minority groups can find themselves permanently unable to influence the decision-making process (Lively, 1977). Easterly and Levine (1997) argue that the region's high levels of ethnic fragmentation also has more tangible consequences; they find that ethnopolitical fragmentation in sub-Saharan Africa helps to explain the 'growth tragedy' that has characterised the economic development of the majority of states there. Given the practical and normative difficulties associated with achieving democratic representation in political communities with high levels of ethnic heterogeneity, sub-Saharan Africa represents a region where the relationships between societal diversity, political institutions, and party system fragmentation are topics of considerable substantive importance.

It has been argued that measures of vote and seat shares of parties omit certain significant aspects of political competition, such as whether inter-party competition is centripetal or centrifugal (*i.e.* the degree of convergence or divergence of competing parties in a given system with regards to their policy positions)⁷ (Sartori, 1976). Another shortcoming of the approach adopted in this thesis is that parties are treated as unified entities, an assumption that fails to disclose variation in parties' internal diversity and levels of legislative discipline⁸.

⁷ This property of party systems has potentially significant implications for the dynamics of government formation, the nature of electoral competition, and the characteristics of public policy in a representative democracy. The polarization of the political system has particular resonance in the sub-Saharan region; Horowitz (1993) has argued that the extent to which electoral systems encourage accommodation and moderation among parties, rather than their consequences for party system fragmentation *per se*, should be the key consideration when it comes to electoral system choice in sub-Saharan Africa.

⁸ Legislative defections and poor party discipline have been observed in many African legislatures. For instance, Booysen (2006) discusses the importance to the development of the South African party system of floor-crossing in the legislature, after a constitutional amendment in 2003 created window periods in which inter-party defection of MPs is permissible.

Furthermore, national-level measures of party system fragmentation tell us little about the composition of regional and local governments, which can differ dramatically from national-level trends⁹ (Chhibber and Kollman, 2004).

Therefore, one should note that any analysis that focuses intensively on distributions of votes and seats among parties and candidates at the national level will leave out several significant aspects of partisan competition and cooperation, all of which are sufficiently important to justify investigation in their own right. Nonetheless, the insights that can be generated by studying vote and seat distributions, as well as the substantive effects of party system fragmentation with regard to issues such as competitiveness, government formation and survival, levels of ethicized violence, and the consolidation of democratic systems of governance, render it a topic worthy of the extensive academic scrutiny that it has already received in established systems, and of the type of in-depth investigation in African states that is carried out in this thesis.

In seeking to carry out such an investigation, one must bear in mind that there are several characteristics of multiparty competition across sub-Saharan Africa that 1) differentiate political competition in that region from political competition in Western Europe and 2) may impact upon the relationships that this thesis seeks to research. These characteristics are outlined in the next subsection, and their consequences for those seeking to understand party system fragmentation in sub-Saharan Africa are discussed.

1.3 African 'exceptionalism'?

It has been argued that the dearth of comparative literature on African elections up to the mid-to-late 1990s was due to their tendency to be

⁹ This theme is relevant in African political systems, for example, Pottie (2001) argues that, for many of South Africa's opposition parties, 'the possibility of access to power at the provincial level is certainly important (...) and gives them continued access to public life and political legitimacy as parties' (p. 41).

uncompetitive and, hence, of little importance for the distribution of power and authority in the vast majority of African states (Golder and Wantchekon, 2004). However, the dramatic increase that has taken place in the number of multiparty elections in sub-Saharan Africa from the early 1990s onwards has sparked scholarly interest. The various positions of researchers on this topic are summarized in the second half of chapter 2. A key problem in many of these accounts is that little heed is paid to the fundamental question of whether we should expect African voters and elites to respond to sociological cleavage structures and electoral incentives in the same manner as voters and elites in developed democracies, given the political context in which they operate. In this section I detail a number of features that: 1) distinguish Africa's multiparty systems from those of established democracies and 2) could impact on the relationships between societal diversity, political institutions, and party system fragmentation.

When seeking to engage in a comparative study of any aspect of politics in sub-Saharan Africa, a useful starting point is to acknowledge the considerable diversity of social, economic, historical, and political experiences to be found across the region, and to bear in mind that exceptions can be found to nearly any generalised statement about the conduct of politics in Africa. Brambor *et al.* (2007) are particularly critical of the notion of African 'exceptionalism' being invoked in order to explain an array of differences between political systems in Africa compared to those elsewhere¹⁰. However, it is worth noting that there exists a considerable degree of academic consensus over the existence of several characteristics that mark African political systems apart from those in established multiparty democracies in industrialised states (Hyden, 2006). These factors are: the centralisation of power in (normally presidential) executives, the electoral and administrative dominance of ruling parties in several states, the primacy of

¹⁰ Specifically, Brambor *et al.* (2007) dispute the contention of Mozaffar *et al.* (2003) that such 'exceptionalism' is to be found in the relationships between societal diversity, legislative electoral systems and party system fragmentation in sub-Saharan Africa, a contention that I examine in chapter 5.

ethno-regional political cleavage structures, variable levels of political freedom, and the relative novelty of multiparty electoral competition in many systems.

These (and other) features of political systems in sub-Saharan Africa pose difficult dilemmas for comparatively-oriented scholars attempting to study African politics; as Hyden (2006) notes, 'the challenge to political science that politics in Africa poses is that it is different enough from politics in other regions to call into question the usefulness of mainstream analytical categories' (p. 234). Arguably, there has been insufficient attention paid to the challenge of African exceptionalism with regards to such issues in existing comparative research of Africa's multiparty systems. In explicitly incorporating these factors into its analysis of Africa's party systems, this thesis seeks, firstly, to enhance existing scholarly understanding of the determinants of party system fragmentation in African multiparty elections and, secondly, to provide a more robust test than has heretofore been performed for the extent to which the supposedly generalizable theories, analytical concepts, and measures employed by political scientists to understand the fragmentation of party systems can be said to 'travel' to African elections.

1.3.1 Presidential Dominance

All of the political systems studied in this thesis – with the exceptions of Botswana, Ethiopia, Lesotho, Mauritius, and South Africa – are headed by directly-elected, fixed-term presidents (Bratton and van de Walle 1997; van de Walle 2001). Formal presidential powers are typically substantial: van Cranenburgh (2009) found that the constitutional powers of executives in Africa indicate significantly higher levels of executive dominance in African political systems than in other world regions. Even where a prime minister and cabinet which are responsible to parliament exist – as is found in quite a few of the cases studied in this thesis – the office of the president still predominates (Elgie, 2007). Presidents frequently bypass the national legislature and, at times, even their

own party infrastructures when announcing major policy decisions. However, a simple evaluation of the formal powers of the presidency radically underestimates the *de facto* extent of presidential dominance in many African systems. Presidential power is not typically grounded in the codified statutes of constitutional authority, but rather in personalized access to state-based resources (Bratton and van de Walle, 1997; Prempeh, 2008; van Cranenburgh, 2009). The office of the president in sub-Saharan Africa often acts as a kind of 'parallel government' (van de Walle, 2003: 310) and the presidential staff can rival the state civil service in terms of numbers of employees and monetary resources. Over-sized cabinets rarely meet, parliament is held in thrall to a powerful executive, regional and local government structures are, with few exceptions, weak or non-existent (*ibid.*).

To the political leaders who hold – or seek to hold – political power, the primacy of the office of the chief executive is not an abstruse point. Recent elections in Kenya and Zimbabwe both demonstrated the willingness of incumbents to rig elections to maintain their grip on power, but their manipulative strategies varied according to the electoral contest. In both countries elites were willing to concede defeat in legislative elections, but not in the crucial presidential contest. Therefore, the outcomes of presidential elections merit detailed attention in the African context, both as a dependent variable and as a predictor of legislative party system fragmentation. Chapter 4 of this thesis seeks to provide precisely such an analysis. Chapter 4 begins by asking: what are the sources of vote fragmentation in Africa's presidential elections? Jones (2004) indicates that presidential electoral system type and societal diversity bear strongly on the extent of presidential vote fragmentation, however this contention warrants testing in Africa's multiparty elections, such a test is carried out in chapter 4. The contention that the degree of formal and informal executive dominance of the legislature influences the degree of vote fragmentation in Africa's presidential elections is also examined in chapter 4.

In terms of legislative party system fragmentation, Posner (2007) argues that 'strong presidentialism has a number of implications, the most important of which is that it downgrades the importance of legislative politics and centralises the competition for national political power in multiparty elections' (p. 305). In this context, legislative elections may take on something of a 'second order' (Schmidt and Reif, 1980) character. This not to say that legislative elections in sub-Saharan Africa are meaningless – internal party competition for legislative candidacy can be fierce, and election to parliament often constitutes an important rung on the ladder of political recruitment. However, if one accepts that the presidential race trumps all others in most African political systems; it follows that the manner in which presidential contests are configured should exert a substantial impact on legislative electoral competition. Does presidential vote fragmentation influence vote fragmentation in the legislative race across African elections? Does it affect the largest party's share of seats in legislative elections? Does the relative timing of the presidential and legislative elections influence these relationships? Chapters 4 and 6 of this thesis provide the most in-depth examination of these topics undertaken to date.

1.3.2 The centrality of ethno-regional cleavages to political contestation

Manning's (2005) argument that 'the kind of pluralism presumed to be the basis of multiparty politics is absent in many African countries' (pp. 714-5) is widely reflected in the literature. Indeed, any sort of programmatic divergence among parties competing in national-level electoral campaigns in the region can be difficult to observe. In his list of 'typical characteristics which apply to most (African) parties' Erdmann (2004) discusses the prevalence of 'barely distinguishable programmes, which in most cases bear no relation to their policies' (p.65). For example, Sawyer's (2008) discussion of the 2005 Liberian election campaign notes that 'there are hardly any significant differences among Liberian political parties that can be discerned from their official pronouncements and declared programmes' (p. 6). Van de Walle and Butler

(1999) note that those few, small parties that *have* sought to differentiate themselves on the basis of policy issues have typically met with abject failure at the polls.

The nationalist movements that swept charismatic leaders to power across Africa in the 1960s, many of which have managed to maintain a hold on power into the multiparty era (Baker, 1998; Ishiyama and Quinn, 2006), were almost universally spectral affairs in terms of organisational infrastructure (Hyden, 2006: 29). Bogaards (2000) argues that 'in Africa, mass parties and, by consequence, structured party systems are conspicuous by their absence' (p. 168). Van de Walle and Butler (1999) further note that, while civil society organisations such as labour unions, student groups, and church groups played a significant role in the democratisation movements that swept across the continent in the late 1980s and early 1990s, 'with the installation of more competitive regimes, these groups have been oddly passive in the political arena' (p. 15). They cite the absence of formal links between labour or church organisations and most major African political parties both as evidence of this passivity and as a point of differentiation from patterns of party development observed in the West.

That is not to say, of course, that African parties lack any social basis. Erdmann (2004) argues that 'the crucial and predominant cleavage in most African societies is ethnic and/or regional identity' (p. 71) with van de Walle and Butler (1999) similarly arguing that 'cultural identities have been the major, if not the only, factor in differentiating parties' (p. 15)¹¹. Several authors have pointed out that regional identity often overlaps with – or even supersedes – ethnic identity as the primary partisan cleavage. For example, Reynolds (1999) argues that for Malawi's 1994 parliamentary elections, 'voting cleavages were

¹¹ Indeed, the attractiveness of ethnic and regional bases of political mobilization is such that even in Benin, where parties and candidates are explicitly prohibited by law from organizing along ethnic lines or making ethnically based campaign appeals, 80% of respondents to a 2005 Afrobarometer survey who indicated support for one of the three principal presidential candidates were from the same ethnic group as their preferred candidate (Seely, 2007).

motivated by regional loyalties and prejudices over and above ethnic loyalties' (p. 156).

Stoneman and Cliffe (1989) argue that, for the case of Zimbabwe, and in Southern Africa generally, ethnic correlations and regionalised voting patterns often mask complex and sophisticated economic and historical considerations of both voters and elites. In occupational terms, the vast majority of African citizens earn a living from the land, and individual welfare – especially in poorer societies – is tied to the fortunes of one's immediate locale and wider region. Consequently, many people do not define their identity according to what they do; instead, they use the markers of region and ethnicity, which often overlap, to distinguish themselves from each other (Barkan, 1995). Patronage, too, is easiest to deliver along regional lines, and elites can use corresponding ethnic markers as an efficient discrimination device (Hyden, 2006).

Ethno-territorial cleavages are certainly not unique to African politics, nor are accusations of party programmatic vagueness. Lipset and Rokkan note that ethno territorial cleavages were 'common in the early stages of nation-building' (1968: 11) in now-established democracies. The examples that they cite of the Catalan-Basque-Castillian oppositions in Spain, the Quebecois-English-speaking opposition in Canada, and the Walloon-Francophone divide in Belgium are still highly pertinent to the conduct of politics and to party competition in those countries more than forty years after the publication of their (1968) analysis. Furthermore, the literature on voting behaviour in Africa's multiparty elections is at a very early stage of development, and the full importance of non-ethnic considerations for African voters has yet to be fully explicated¹². However, what distinguishes African politics in the time period studied in this thesis (1989-

¹² There are indications that economic differentiation is an emergent source of politicised difference in some urban contexts in the region (Erdmann, 2004) and that the importance of ethnicity in voter calculus may be somewhat overstated in the current literature, given recent individual-level survey evidence (Basedau and Stroth, 2009). Bratton and Kimeni (2008) also use survey evidence to argue that while ethnic origins do appear to drive voting patterns, policy issues such as living standards, corruption, and federalism also structure voter's choices.

2008) from contemporary established democracies is the overwhelming predominance of ethno-regional support nodes for political actors and parties across the continent, as well as the paucity of alternative political cleavages around which parties have been launched.

In terms of party system fragmentation, the ethno-regional basis of party competition means that, instead of a series of competitive races between political parties in each district, African multiparty elections tend to feature an unusually high proportion of uncompetitive contests at the electoral district-level. Reynolds, in his (1999) study of plurality elections in Southern African countries in the early-mid 1990s, notes that 'in southern Africa competitive seats have never amounted to more than a tiny fraction of the legislative body' (p. 205). The idea of strategic co-ordination between voters and elites (Cox, 1997) is at the heart of scholarly understanding of party system fragmentation. However, voters' incentives to vote strategically decrease as levels of certainty over which candidate will win at the district-level increase. This is because those voters who do not prefer the dominant party candidate realise that there is little to be gained from deserting their most-preferred candidate, as there are no alternative candidates with a realistic chance of winning¹³. If many African elections are characterised by landslide victories by candidates at the district-level (Reynolds, 1999) then one would not anticipate a high incidence of the type of strategic voting that is required for electoral systems to shape vote distributions.

The centrality of ethno-regional cleavages to political contestation in the majority of African polities therefore presents severe challenges to the

¹³ There is considerable empirical evidence supporting the contention that voters are more likely to be influenced by electoral system-generated constraints in competitive districts: Spafford (1972), Lemieux (1977) and Cain (1978) all report that the Liberal vote in Britain is smaller in those constituencies where there is a close race between the two major parties: given a greater chance to influence the outcome, some Liberal supporters appear to desert their most-preferred party. Nadeau and Blais (1993) demonstrate that minor party voting in Quebec has been similarly influenced by contextual strategic factors, and Cox (1997) finds less evidence of strategic co-ordination in uncompetitive districts than in competitive districts in the UK.

assumptions that underlie the mainstream characterisation of the causes of party system fragmentation in the political science literature. Given these challenges, any study of party system fragmentation in African political systems should, firstly, seek to provide a theoretical discussion of how ethno-regional patterns of contestation may affect the relationships between societal diversity, electoral systems, and party system fragmentation. The significance of ethno-regional competition across sub-Saharan Africa also demands that any scholar seeking to measure the effects of societal diversity should provide sustained attention to issues of its measurement, which, as is demonstrated in chapter 3, is not a straightforward matter. In this thesis, hypotheses are therefore tested across multiple measures of societal diversity, in order to avoid basing conclusions solely on the properties of any single measure.

Another factor that must be taken into account, given the prevalence of regionalised voting patterns and cleavage structures in sub-Saharan Africa, is the role of geographic concentration of ethnic groups. Several previous studies of African party system fragmentation have integrated a measure of ethnic group geographic concentration into their analyses (Brambor *et al.*, 2007; Mozaffar *et al.*, 2003; Mozaffar 2004; 2006; Mylonas and Roussias, 2008). Mozaffar *et al.* (2003: 382-383) argue that the physical proximity of group members is of central importance in explaining the relationship between ethnicity and party system fragmentation in sub-Saharan Africa's multiparty elections. They contend that this is due both to logistical difficulties in organizing geographically dispersed groups in many African countries due to transport and communications deficits, as well as the extent of 'pork barrel' or 'communal contention' politics, which focus on competition for the allocation of state resources to groups' geographically-defined territories in the region (see also, Hyden, 2006). Their argument is that levels of societal diversity in African states are typically extremely high, with each ethnic group also being internally sub-divided. As such, many African societies are divided into an excessively large number of small groups, a situation that 'encourages the formation of intergroup coalitions that (...) help to reduce the number of parties and party system fragmentation' (p.

381). They contend, however, that geographic concentration of groups can 'offset' (p. 386) this tendency for high ethnic fragmentation to translate into low levels of vote fragmentation. High levels of geographic concentration can mean that minority ethnic groups are sufficiently regionally concentrated to be usable as a target for pork barrel contestation, as well as having members who have sufficiently frequent interactions and open lines of intra-group communications to form logistically viable political organizations. Only when groups are highly concentrated, they argue, is it likely that societal fragmentation positively related to party system fragmentation in sub-Saharan Africa. The role of geographic concentration is therefore central to the analysis of Africa's party systems provided in this thesis. Throughout chapters 4, 5, and 6 the analysis seeks to isolate the significance of geographic concentration for African party system fragmentation. In chapter 5, a direct comparison is performed between models that have been deployed to investigate party system fragmentation in established democracies (which have not included measures of groups' geographic concentration) with models that include variables accounting for the role of groups' geographic concentration.

1.3.3 The modal system in African multiparty competition: dominant parties facing fragmented oppositions, with weak party organisational infrastructures

In his assessment of Africa's emerging party systems since the introduction of multiparty competition in many states in the early/mid 1990s, van de Walle (2003) observes that 'the pattern that is emerging across much of the region is one with a large dominant party surrounded by a bevy of small, highly volatile parties' (pp. 302-303)¹⁴. The data collected for this thesis support van de Walle's contention; the average vote share for the largest party was 57.2%, with the average seat share being 64.3%. Perhaps unsurprisingly in this context, rotation of power resulting from elections is rather rare, and the

¹⁴ Bogaards (2004) puts it even more simply, stating that 'dominant parties dominate in sub-Saharan Africa' (p.182).

continuing dominance of many former dictators (or their cadres) in the multiparty environment has been noted by several scholars (Baker, 1998; Ishiyama and Quinn, 2006; van de Walle, 2003; Young, 2004). Where opposition movements were victorious in early multiparty elections, many have since become almost as entrenched as their predecessors (Bogaards, 2004; van de Walle, 2003).

In terms of the organisational infrastructures of African parties, Bratton and van de Walle (1997) summarize the prevailing view that many African opposition parties appear to be 'little more than collections of notables held together by clientelism and the promise of access to state resources; rarely effective at the grassroots level and often lack[ing] significant mobilization capability' (p. 251). Opposition parties rarely have stable fee-paying mass memberships, reliable sources of non-state funding, the logistical competence of salaried professional staffs, or the support and loyalty of elected representatives (Randall and Svåsand, 2002; van de Walle and Butler, 1999). Research based on 200 parties in 15 countries in the region found that 75% of those parties investigated had no offices at the polling station-level, while 62% had no district or provincial coordinating offices (Salih and Nordlund, 2007: 81). Erdmann (2004) notes that, even where ruling parties have invested significant state finances in their party infrastructure, giving the impression of well-developed party organisation, 'this impression could be misleading (...) even a brief visit to the often dormant and even derelict headquarters of ruling parties will supply visual clues; the usual (that, is abandoned) state of the party offices after loss of power confirms it' (p. 65).

The combination of weak party organisational infrastructure and the neo-patrimonial claims that underlie political competition in many African states means that opposition parties, with little or no access to state resources, often struggle to endure in the political wilderness (Bratton and van de Walle, 1997; Teshome, 2009). This hostile environment, combined with highly personalised

nature of many opposition parties¹⁵ (Monga, 1997; Teshome, 2009) has generated a political culture where 'many individuals in (African) politics believe that they are nothing unless they lead their own party' (Hyden, 2006: 42) meaning that there are few incentives for opposition groups to cohere. Looking again at the data collected for this project, oppositions were considerably more fragmented than the party systems as a whole: the average party fragmentation score for the 149 elected legislative assemblies studied in this thesis, according to the Herfindahl-Hirschman index¹⁶, was .384. However, when the largest party is excluded from all cases, this figure decreases to .248 – indicating that oppositions are typically considerably more fragmented than the system as a whole in sub-Saharan Africa¹⁷.

The combination of large dominant parties and fragmented oppositions is problematic from the point of view of the applicability of theories of the role of legislative electoral systems in shaping party systems. The role of legislative electoral systems in party system fragmentation is typically held to be that of imposing a maximum limit or 'upper-bound' (Cox, 1997: 139) on the number of viable candidates in the electoral race at equilibrium. Duverger (1963) likens this effect to that of a 'brake' on a car. This hypothesized relationship is discussed in greater detail in chapter 2, for my purposes in this chapter; the important point is that a given electoral system's effects on a party system are typically held to be contingent upon the extent to which the political elites and voters are

¹⁵ Where, according to Monga (1997), 'quite often, a political party south of the Sahara is little more than a platform for a single individual, a structure whose rules can readily be changed to suit its founder, whose charisma and money are its main engines' (p. 157)

¹⁶ See chapter 3 for a discussion of the measurement and interpretation of the reciprocal of this index, Laasko-Taagepera's (1979) 'effective number of parties' index. In the untransformed index, which ranges from 0 to 1, as values approach 1, the extent to which seats are 'concentrated' in the possession of a small number of parties increases (with a score of '1 indicating that a single party possess all of the seats).

¹⁷ Indeed, the extent of opposition fragmentation is arguably a substantively important topic in its own right. For example, Paul Biya's Cameroon People's Democratic Movement (CPDM) was able to avoid a situation of divided government following founding legislative elections which had not secured a CPD majority, by forging a parliamentary alliance with a small, regional party, the Movement for the Defence of the Republic (MDR) (see Takougang, 2003 for further discussion). This option would evidently not have been available to the CPDM in the face of greater opposition unity.

fragmented. As African societies are characterised by greater levels of ethnic, linguistic, and religious diversity than those of any other continent (Alesina *et al.*, 2003), one would expect that the number of candidates and parties putting their names forward for election would typically exceed the bounds set by all but the most permissive of electoral systems. However, the *de facto* political situation in Africa, with a preponderance of dominant single parties, means that the number of viable candidates/parties at the national level often falls *under* the maximum bounds set by electoral systems. When elites are mostly concentrated within a single party, the effect of all but the most restrictive of electoral systems may be difficult to discern.

Furthermore, the presence of parties that dominate in terms of vote and seat shares poses significant technical problems when it comes to constructing a comparative measure of party system fragmentation. The measure that has been used in most empirical applications is the Laasko-Taagepera (1979) index of fragmentation. As Taagepera (1999b) points out: 'with the effective number of parties (...) difficulties arise when disparity in party sizes is such that the largest share (...) surpasses 0.50 (meaning absolute dominance), while N still indicates a multiparty constellation' (p. 497). This drawback of the Laasko-Taagepera (1979) index is particularly exposed in African systems, given the prevalence of dominant parties there, and the usefulness of the metric for evaluating African party systems has been openly questioned (Bogaards, 2004). In the African context, therefore, it may be the case that measures which focus on the extent of dominance of the largest party are more informative or, at least, capture a substantively different and important attribute of party systems, compared to those which seek to measure the fragmentation of the system as a whole. In this thesis, therefore, chapter 6 comprises a sustained analysis with a focus on largest party seat share as a dependent variable.

1.3.4 Variations in levels of political freedoms

The mainstream political science literature with regard to party system fragmentation has been grounded in studies of established democracies. In previous comparative studies of the sources of party system fragmentation, minimum democratic credentials have typically been specified for elections to be included in the analysis (Mylonas and Roussias, 2008). When engaging in a comparative study of the determinants of party system fragmentation in sub-Saharan Africa, however, one is forced to acknowledge that there is considerable variation with regard to the rights afforded by incumbent regimes to opposition parties and candidates. For example, Lindberg (2006), generally an optimist with regards to the influence of multiparty elections on democratisation in Africa, acknowledges that some of these elections represent 'mockeries of the democratic process' (p. 95).

Beyond outright incidents of fraudulent vote counts, Bratton (1998) outlines several significant impediments to free and fair competition in some African elections, including: 'the disqualification of leading candidates, the spotty coverage of voter registration, the lack of internal democracy in ruling parties, the abuse of government resources during the campaign, and the growing government hostility towards watchdog groups' (p. 5). Furthermore, even outside of election time, the 'day-to-day practices of the state are often marked by abuse' (van de Walle and Butler, 1999: 16) with regards to opposition groups as well as levels of horizontal accountability; institutions such as a free press and independent judiciary often find themselves harassed and compromised by the regime.

In the face of these barriers to genuinely open competition, it is possible that many of the implicit assumptions that underlie the literature on strategic coordination of voters and parties/candidates to the constraints imposed by institutional frameworks are simply not met. These include freedom of entry into politics on the part of elites, and freedom of voters to express their opinion and

to choose which group to support. When these conditions are absent, single-party dominance may obtain regardless of the values of variables typically assessed in comparative studies of party system fragmentation (Mylonas and Roussias, 2008). Suppression of political opposition may have a specific and even quantifiable influence on party system fragmentation. Generally, one would expect that such suppression would lead to a greater proportion of the vote being concentrated in the ruling party, resulting in lower overall levels of party system fragmentation; this hypothesis is investigated throughout the analyses presented in this thesis and especially in the analysis of largest party performance chapter 6.

Given the prevalence of illiberal regimes in African multiparty systems (Lindberg, 2006; van de Walle, 2002; 2003) one is left with a choice between restricting one's analysis to those elections which pass some minimal threshold of fairness, or including all multiparty elections and controlling for (and analysing the effects of) variations in levels of fairness of elections. Some studies have taken the former approach: dividing African elections into categories for analysis on the basis of their democratic credentials. These analyses have uncovered significant differences between 'free' versus 'not free' elections in patterns of competitiveness and turnover, and with regards to evidence of strategic adaptation to electoral system constraints (Lindberg, 2005; Mylonas and Roussias, 2008). However, the principal difficulty with this approach is explored in chapter 3; namely that the dichotomy between 'free' and 'not free' elections ignores the presence of a large number of elections on the continent that do not neatly fit into either of these categories. Indeed, most of the elections studied here fall between these two extremes into Freedom Houses (2010) 'partly free' category, a point that is developed in detail in chapter 3. In this thesis, therefore, all elections that formally allowed multiple parties to compete are included in the analyses in chapters 3, 4, 5, and 6, with control variables deployed to account for the variable levels of political freedom and fairness that characterise the political regimes in the region.

1.3.5 The novelty of multiparty electoral competition across the region

As the literature on strategic desertion of electorally non-viable candidates makes clear, coordinated desertion can only take place when voters and elites have some idea of candidates' levels of support in the electorate (Cox, 1997); information which is difficult to establish without having held a number of successive elections. As I discuss in chapter 2, findings regarding the determinants of party system fragmentation in 'new' democracies have generally been less supportive of mainstream theoretical accounts of party system fragmentation than those in established democracies. Clark and Golder (2006) argue that this is because such effects only obtain given a degree of stability in the political system, and that such an equilibrium usually emerges only after several repeated elections under the same rules.

It may be the case that many African democracies are still simply too young for electoral systems to have exerted their theoretically-anticipated effects. Any study of African party system fragmentation should acknowledge that there exists considerable variation across countries in the number of consecutive multiparty elections that have been held. This factor is taken into account in this thesis; chapter 3 outlines the varying electoral histories of the states studied, while chapters 2 and 5 focus on how the findings of studies of electoral systems effects in 'new' democracies (Birch, 2005; Clark and Golder, 2006; Moser 1999; Moser and Scheiner, 2009; Singer and Stephenson, 2009) inform our expectations with regard to party system fragmentation in Africa. In chapter 4, the question of whether plurality electoral systems in presidential elections appear to be exerting a greater influence where several successive elections have taken place under plurality rules is addressed, as is the contention that the first multicandidate presidential race held under plurality rules tend to result in higher vote fragmentation than subsequent elections. In chapter 6, the contention that the relative paucity of successive multiparty elections in many states can help to account for the tendency for single-party dominance discussed

above is investigated, by treating the number of consecutive elections that have been held and whether a given election was 'founding' (*i.e.* marking a transition in regime type) as independent variables in the analysis of the sources of largest party seat share.

1.4 Structure of the thesis

This thesis seeks to take into account the above-discussed characteristics of African politics, and to investigate whether and how they impact on patterns of party system fragmentation. A major advantage of a thesis-length study of this topic is that it can thoroughly ground the empirical analysis both in the existing literature and in the historical context of elections in this region. Another advantage is that several different aspects of Africa's party systems can be addressed within a unified theoretical and methodological framework.

Chapter 2 is divided into two parts. It begins by summarizing the existing literature on party system fragmentation; focusing on efforts by scholars to devise generalizable theories of party system fragmentation. This section also outlines a number of empirical studies that have sought to examine whether the substantive implications of such theories are borne out when tested against cross-national comparisons of party systems in both established and 'new' democracies. In the second part of chapter 2, the existing literature on African multiparty elections is discussed; focusing on comparative efforts to account for party system fragmentation in Africa's multiparty elections post-1989.

Chapter 3 begins with a history of elections in sub-Saharan Africa. This account situates those elections studied in this thesis (*de jure* multiparty, national-level elections held in sub-Saharan Africa between 1989 and 2008) within the broader history of electoral practice in the region. It also seeks to trace legacies from earlier elections that provide insight into the conduct of multiparty elections in sub-Saharan Africa post-1989. The elections studied in

this thesis are then described in terms of: legislative electoral system type, the extent of societal diversity, and levels of political freedoms in each state in the year in which the elections studied were held. Chapter 3 concludes with a descriptive account of the values of the dependent variables that are studied in chapters 4-6. The extent of fragmentation observed in Africa's party systems is compared to both 'old' and 'new' democracies outside of sub-Saharan Africa.

Chapters 4-6 comprise the analytic core of the thesis. Chapters 4 and 5 focus on the conventional dependent variables of interest in comparative accounts of party system fragmentation: levels of vote and seat fragmentation. The first of these chapters deals with a topic that has received remarkably little comparative attention in previous comparative work: the direct election of Africa's presidents. Both the 'politics as usual' and the 'exceptionalism' approaches point to the importance of presidential elections in the region. As we outlined above, the power and prestige of Africa's presidencies would lead us to anticipate that presidential elections in the region are of profound political import, while several scholars have found evidence that presidential elections influence legislative elections elsewhere (see especially, Golder, 2006). Chapter 4 begins the inferential analysis of the determinants of vote and seat fragmentation in sub-Saharan Africa by focusing on the region's crucial presidential elections. Chapter 4 begins by looking at the roles of presidential electoral systems and cleavage structures when fragmentation of the *presidential* race is the dependent variable. Given the significance of presidential office in Africa's emerging democracies (van de Walle, 2003), the lack of comparative empirical research on this topic in the literature is surprising. Chapter 4 examines whether presidential elections in Africa conform to the expectations of 'politics as usual', presenting a test of whether the expectations of existing theoretical and empirical accounts of the societal and institutional sources of presidential vote fragmentation (Amorim Neto and Cox, 1997; Golder, 2006; Hicken and Stoll, 2008; Jones, 1999; 2004) are borne out in Africa's presidential elections. The chapter goes on to analyse the relationship between presidential elections and levels of vote fragmentation in African legislative

elections, highlighting the importance of the relative timing of presidential and legislative elections in conditioning this linkage.

Chapter 5 focuses on the roles of factors that have previously received rather more attention than presidential elections in explanations of party system fragmentation in sub-Saharan Africa: legislative electoral systems and societal cleavage structures. This chapter seeks to apply an in-depth understanding of the roles of these factors derived from the existing literature - separating the 'mechanical' effects of legislative electoral systems in converting votes to seats, from the 'psychological' influence of electoral systems on the extent of vote fragmentation across Africa's multiparty elections. This approach allows a sustained focus on the relationships between societal diversity, legislative electoral systems, and vote fragmentation that are at the core of mainstream accounts of party system fragmentation. The theoretical discussion in chapter 5 includes 'exceptionalist' perspectives that generate alternatives to the empirical predictions based on our understanding of 'politics as usual'. These perspectives allow me to propose alternative hypotheses with regard to the relationships between societal diversity, legislative electoral systems, and vote fragmentation for Africa's multiparty elections. These competing accounts are then subjected to empirical hypothesis testing over the multiparty elections considered in this thesis.

The analysis presented in chapter 5 also seeks to isolate the effects of ethnopolitical groups' geographic concentration as an intervening variable in the translation of societal diversity into party system fragmentation, and the theoretical discussion of this factor explores why this should be the case. Finally, chapter 5 examines how variations in levels of political freedoms affect observed levels of party system fragmentation across sub-Saharan Africa.

Chapter 6 builds on the theoretical and empirical discussions of chapters 4 and 5, discussing the influence of both presidential and legislative electoral structures as co-determinants of an alternative dependent variable – largest

party seat share. In so doing, it seeks to take cognisance of the above-discussed shape of many African party systems; where a large and electorally-dominant party is faced with a small and highly fragmented opposition (van de Walle, 2003). This chapter questions whether the Laasko-Taagepera (1979) index of party system fragmentation can adequately represent political realities in such systems. The analysis provided in chapter 6 seeks to uncover the institutional, political, and societal factors that best explain the extent of single party dominance in Africa's multiparty elections, which is operationalised using the proportion of seats won in the lower house by the largest party. Chapter 6 also broadens the range of contextual factors considered – looking at previous regime type, economic performance indicators, and the number of consecutive multiparty elections that have taken place as potential explanations for variation in largest party seat share.

Chapter 7 reviews the findings presented in chapters 3, 4, 5, and 6 in the light of the research questions that the thesis seeks to address. The discussion in chapter 7 outlines how this thesis has demonstrated the importance of the traits of African polities laid out above for understanding the process of party system fragmentation in modern Africa. Chapter 7 also contains an assessment of the insights generated by this thesis on the applicability of accounts from mainstream political science for understanding the degree of fragmentation of party systems in Africa's multiparty elections. Chapter 7 concludes with some considerations on how the findings of the thesis may contribute to scholarly understanding of the causes of party system fragmentation and on useful topics and approaches for future comparative research on Africa's party systems. The final part of this chapter anticipates the discussion in chapter 7; outlining the specific contributions that the research presented in this thesis makes to scholarly understanding of both the causes of party system fragmentation in sub-Saharan Africa, and to the broader study of party systems.

1.5 Academic contribution of this research

Shugart (2005) claims that 'it is probably not a stretch to claim credit for our field (electoral studies) as one of the portions of comparative politics that has been most consumed by real world practitioners' (p. 27). Norris (2004) notes that international electoral assistance was fairly unusual until the 1980s but that, 'from the early 1990s onward, international observers, technical aid experts, and constitutional advisors have played leading roles in dozens of transitional elections' (p. 4); providing advice on the basic design of electoral systems, as well as electoral administration, voter education, electoral observation, and party capacity building. Simply put, the extent of academic understanding of the influence exerted by political institutions influences the quality of advice that political scientists can offer to practitioners. It is therefore vital that our understanding of these relationships is tested against, and developed in the light of, empirical observations of multiparty elections that have taken place in Africa¹⁸.

Furthermore, several of the early debates on electoral systems and electoral reform that took place as multiparty competition re-emerged in the sub-Saharan region in the early 1990s centred on proportionality of votes to seats and party system fragmentation¹⁹, and featured contributions from

¹⁸ Nohlen *et al.* (1999) make this point explicitly in the introduction to their data compendium on African elections, arguing that 'a solid comparative evaluation of specific electoral systems in Africa with regard to their political effects as well as with regard to the conditions under which they operate (...) will (...) eventually, enable political scientists to consult in a sensible and effective way in national debates on institutional reform that may emerge in one or another country of the region' (p. 25).

¹⁹ Although Horowitz's (1991) contribution to the debate eschewed the notion of party system fragmentation in favour of focusing on the potential of preference-transfer systems to encourage partisan moderation and consensus-building as opposed to ethnic polarisation, as his preferred system, the Alternative Vote, rewards parties/candidates who achieve high transfers of preferences from their opponents.

political scientists²⁰. I discuss patterns of electoral reform in the region in some detail in chapter 3; however the key point here is that academic projections regarding the distribution of votes and seats among parties are a core component of the debate on the appropriate institutional design for Africa's multiparty political systems. This thesis offers several meaningful contributions to the current state of scholarly understanding of the interplay of political institutions, societal structures, and political context as determinants of party system fragmentation

Africa's multiparty elections also offer new empirical ground for the re-evaluation of some of the core 'politics as usual' propositions of the electoral studies literature (Nohlen *et al.*, 1999; van de Walle, 2002). This is most notably the case for those nomothetic studies where propositions that have been couched as generalisations, or in the case of the literature that bears most closely on this thesis, as socio-political 'laws'. Riker (1982a) describes the history of the formulation and ongoing attempts at reformulation of 'Duverger's Law' (p. 754) as an example that illustrates the potential of political science to engage in the scientific accumulation of knowledge through a 'chronicle of marginal revisions of propositions leading up to currently accepted ones' (p. 753). An essential element in this process is the extension of the currently accepted theoretical characterisation of a given relationship to new empirical territory where it can be tested and, if necessary, further revised. King *et al.* (1994) point out that this is not just the case for studies of the relationship between electoral systems and party systems, arguing that 'with comparative studies in general, we always do better (or, in the extreme, no worse) with more observations as the basis of our generalization' (p. 212).

²⁰ For instance, Barkan (1995) argued that voting patterns in Africa's agrarian societies would not generate the typical relationship between electoral system type and electoral disproportionality; weakening the case for the adoption of PR in Africa's emerging democracies. Reynolds (1995) countered that 'proportional representation has undoubtedly been an integral part of efforts at power-sharing and ethnic accommodation in both South Africa and Namibia' (p. 88), precisely because it facilitates the parliamentary representation of minority ethnic groups (although ease of administration and voter comprehension were also significant factors in the decision to adopt PR in these countries).

The contributions that this thesis represents to the existing scholarship can be divided into three categories: 1) analyses of novel dependent and independent variables of interest in the study of party systems in sub-Saharan Africa, 2) methodological improvements and, 3) theoretical consideration and empirical testing of alternative accounts of the processes leading to party system fragmentation in sub-Saharan Africa.

Looking at the first category, this thesis goes considerably beyond previous comparative studies of electoral results in sub-Saharan Africa (which are detailed in the second half of chapter 2) in terms of the variety of dependent and independent variables considered. With regards to dependent variables, while several previous comparative enquiries have analysed the determinants of the 'effective number' of electoral and legislative parties in sub-Saharan Africa's multiparty elections (Brambor *et al.*, 2007; Mozaffar *et al.*, 2003; Lindberg, 2005; Mylonas and Roussias, 2008), these studies have typically failed to make any meaningful distinction between vote and seat fragmentation; simply employing both as mutually substitutable dependent variables in their analyses.

The first part of the analysis in chapter 4 considers the fragmentation of the vote in *presidential* elections as a dependent variable. To the author's knowledge chapter 4 represents the first systematic comparative attempt to study presidential vote fragmentation in sub-Saharan Africa. Chapter 5 points out that the vote fragmentation is the dependent variable of interest for the study of electoral systems' 'psychological' effects, while the relationship between the vote and seat fragmentation provides information about the 'mechanical' effects of electoral systems. The dependent variable in chapter 6, the seat share of the largest party, has received remarkably little in-depth comparative attention, given the overwhelming preponderance of 'dominant' largest parties across the region. Existing comparative studies of single-party performance/dominance in sub-Saharan Africa have either tended towards description and categorisation (Bogaards, 2004; Southall, 2005) or have focused on the implications of single-party dominance for democratisation (Giliomee and Simkins, 1999; Lindberg,

2006; van de Walle and Butler 1999; van de Walle, 2003). While a few comparative studies have attempted to explain variation in levels of 'dominance' across Africa's party systems (Erdmann and Basedau, 2008; Ishiyama and Quinn, 2006; Young, 2004) their analyses have either been focused on a slightly different issue (for instance Ishiyama and Quinn examine the seat shares of former ruling parties, rather than largest parties) or have been incomplete in terms of execution (see chapter 5 for a discussion on this point).

In terms of independent variables, the analyses in chapters 3, 4, 5, and 6 seek to provide controls for the variable levels of political freedoms and the novelty of multiparty electoral competition discussed above. In this sense, the thesis departs from previous studies that have either ignored this variation altogether in their analysis (Brambor *et al*, 2007; Mozaffar *et al.*, 2003) or sought to divide elections into mutually exclusive categories for analysis (Lindberg, 2005; Mylonas and Roussias, 2008). The other major novelty with regard to independent variables is the extensive focus devoted to the role of presidential electoral results and the relative timing of presidential and legislative elections in chapter 4. Given the strong theoretical incentives to focus on presidential elections as having significant explanatory value for understanding legislative elections in sub-Saharan African politics, the absence of any sustained analysis on the relationship between presidential and legislative elections in previous studies is surprising (indeed, existing accounts are highly unclear, and apparently contradictory, as I outline in chapter 4).

In terms of methodological improvements, this thesis contains several innovations in the study of both African party systems and of party system fragmentation generally. Firstly, the analyses in chapters 3, 4, 5, and 6 embody Stoll's (2004; 2008) advice that conclusions about the role of 'societal diversity' in party system fragmentation should not be based solely on an arbitrarily selected measure of societal fragmentation. The discussion of measurement of societal diversity in chapter 3 makes the points that (1) there exist multiple competing and imperfectly overlapping measures of societal diversity in sub-

Saharan Africa and (2) the measure that has been most widely used in analyses of African party system fragmentation (Scarritt and Mozaffar, 1999) captures a substantively different type of diversity ('politicised' diversity) than the measures that have been used in studies of party system fragmentation outside of Africa (which have employed measures of 'latent' societal diversity). Therefore, the methodological approach adopted in this thesis facilitates a more direct comparison of patterns of party system fragmentation in sub-Saharan Africa with findings from studies that have focused on party system fragmentation in established democracies in chapter 5. More generally, testing the research hypotheses over multiple measures of societal diversity gives greater robustness to the findings presented.

Secondly, throughout the analyses in chapters 4-6, I employ a novel measure on the national-level of electoral system permissiveness, based on the work of Gallagher and Mitchell (2005b), that seeks to capture not only average district magnitude but also electoral formula, the number of constituencies over which seats are contested, and the presence of vote thresholds (see chapter 5 and Appendix A for a detailed account of the construction of this measure). The use of this measure represents an addition to the field generally, and is especially useful in the case of African party systems – as it allows one both to distinguish among the numerous single-seat based electoral systems that operate in the region and to deal with the presence of several multi-seat majoritarian electoral systems in the region. Finally, in its analysis interactive hypotheses, the thesis implements the methodological advice of Brambor *et al.* (2006) on the specification and interpretation of interaction terms. Incorrect specification and flawed interpretation have called several previous empirical analyses of party system fragmentation into question (see Clark and Golder, 2006 for a detailed discussion).

The third type of contribution made by this thesis is theoretical. The core relationship of interest in the thesis is the manner in which political institutions (*e.g.* electoral systems) influence the relationship between features of a given

society (typically the ethnic, religious, class or other cleavage structure of that society) and the fragmentation of that society's national party system. The specific intersection of these variables that has received by far the largest volume of scholarly attention, both in the comparative party systems scholarship as a whole and comparative studies of Africa's party systems, is the manner in which legislative electoral systems are held to condition the translation of societal diversity into party system fragmentation. The empirical evidence underlying the bulk of academic understanding regarding these relationships has been taken from stable democracies in developed countries. Erdmann (2004) notes that 'perhaps more than most sub-fields of political science, political party research has a very pronounced Western European bias' (p. 63).

It has been suggested that models of party system fragmentation in established democracies may not provide as much leverage over party system fragmentation in 'new' or 'third wave' (Huntington, 1991) democracies (Birch, 2005; Clark and Golder, 2006; Moser, 1999) or that, at least, greater attention needs to be paid to controlling for regime-specific factors in analysing electoral system effects in these systems (Clark and Wittrock, 2005). Furthermore, studies of the politicisation of ethnic markers in sub-Saharan Africa also have interesting implications for the relationships between legislative electoral systems, societal diversity, and party system fragmentation. These competing theoretical accounts are detailed in chapter 5, and their empirical implications are expressed as specific hypotheses that are tested against data on Africa's multiparty elections. The findings presented in chapter 5 suggest that theoretical accounts of the interaction between electoral systems and societal diversity based on observations of 'new' democracies (Birch, 2005; Moser, 1999) appear to be far better empirically-supported by data on African elections than the mainstream account of these relationships.

The role of the level of geographic concentration of ethnopolitical groups in sub-Saharan Africa has been discussed and analysed in detail by Mozaffar *et al.* (2003). However, as Brambor *et al.* (2007) have convincingly demonstrated,

Mozaffar *et al.*'s analysis is unreliable due to model misspecification and erroneous interpretation of results. While subsequent studies of African party system fragmentation have tended to include a control for ethnopolitical groups' geographic concentration, little effort has been put into examining the manner in which this variable influences party system development. This thesis does so in chapters 4, 5, and 6 where the analysis seeks to isolate the specific role played by geographic concentration in the processes leading to party system fragmentation, focusing on how it conditions the relationship between societal diversity and party system fragmentation.

Chapters 4 and 6, which address less well-studied dependent variables, are slightly more exploratory in terms of theory than chapter 5. Chapter 4, in addressing presidential vote fragmentation as a dependent variable, outlines several plausible accounts and focusing on two principal institutional variables of interest: the presidential electoral system and the degree of centralisation of power in the office of the executive. The theoretical account of the relationship between presidential and legislative elections provided in chapter 4 reprises Golder's (2006) distinction between two slightly different accounts of the presidential 'coat-tails' effect, which lead to diverse expectations regarding the temporal durability of such an effect. While not a novel theoretical contribution *per se*, this approach in chapter 4 represents the first thorough discussion and testing of established theories of the influence of presidential elections over legislative elections in sub-Saharan Africa.

Chapter 6 presents an array of factors that could feasibly contribute to an explanation of single-party dominance in sub-Saharan Africa. The approach taken in chapter 6 is not to seek a single 'silver-bullet' explanation of single-party dominance but instead to argue that single-party dominance in the region is a result of multiple factors and processes. While the chapter controls for several regime-related factors, the theoretical focus of the chapter is again the interplay between institutional rules (in this case, the restrictiveness of the legislative electoral system and the timing of presidential and legislative elections) and

societal characteristics (levels of societal diversity and the extent to which ethnopolitical groups are geographically concentrated) as determinants of a largest party seat share.

The concluding chapter of the thesis will pull together the preceding chapters and discuss the respective usefulness of the 'politics as usual' and 'exceptionalism' paradigms for understanding patterns of vote and seat distributions in sub-Saharan Africa's multiparty elections. I contend in section 7.3 that Africa's multiparty elections appear to present evidence of the operation of 'politics as usual' in some aspects, while being 'exceptional' in others. Overall then, I propose that the research presented in this thesis represents a significant contribution to the existing literatures on party system fragmentation in sub-Saharan Africa in particular and on party system fragmentation generally. In the next chapter these literatures will be outlined in detail with a view to situating the research presented in this thesis in the cannon of prior work on the topic of party system fragmentation, and to clarifying gaps and points of contestation in our current understanding this topic.

Chapter 2 - Literature Review

Explaining Party Systems: Theory and Observation in Established and New Democracies

Abstract

This chapter seeks to situate the research carried out in this thesis within existing comparative research on party systems generally, and on African party systems in particular. The first part of the chapter elaborates generalised theories of the relationships between societal cleavage structures, political institutions, and party system fragmentation that have emerged over several generations of political science research, as well as the empirical research against which these theories have been tested. The chapter then moves on to elections and party systems in sub-Saharan Africa; focusing on comparative efforts to explain levels of party system fragmentation in multiparty elections since the 'wave' of transitions from one-party systems that took place across the region in the early 1990s.

2.1 Introduction

The study of the number of parties competing across political systems, and the distribution of vote and seat shares among these parties, has given rise to a theoretical and empirical literature that is among the richest in comparative politics. Accordingly, any new research in this area benefits from the work of previous generations of scholars who have developed an advanced theoretical understanding of the processes underlying party system fragmentation, as well a useful set of methods and measures against which these theories may be tested. That this is the case is perhaps unsurprising; the extent of fragmentation of the party system is a key feature of any representative democracy, providing an overview of the distribution of power and the complexity of interaction and decision-making in a given political system (Sartori, 1976). Indeed, Lijphart (1994) goes so far as to argue that 'the most important difference in democratic systems is that between two party and multiparty systems' (p.67).

Party system fragmentation is also an attractive subject to comparativists for more mundane technical reasons. Any political trait that can be compared across a significant number of political systems without undue fear of conceptual 'stretching' (Sartori, 1984; 1991) is bound to be of interest to comparatively-oriented scholars. This is particularly the case with regard to party system fragmentation because it is a concept that 'lends itself extraordinarily well to quantitative analysis' (Shugart, 2005: 27) with 'hard data' (*ibid.*) being increasingly available for a range of countries, on both electoral system type and electoral returns. The existence of this data provides a relatively undisputed set of empirical observations against which researchers may test theoretical hypotheses accounting for variations in vote and seat distributions.

This chapter begins by elaborating the generalised accounts of the relationships between societal cleavage structures, political institutions, and party system fragmentation that characterise the current state of the art in political science. Areas of ongoing contestation and weaknesses in this field are

identified. I then discuss scholarly accounts of electoral experience in sub-Saharan Africa; focusing on those analyses that have investigated party system fragmentation in Africa's multiparty systems in the 1990s and early 21st century. The comparative literature on the determinants of party system fragmentation in Africa is far less developed than the broader literature, which has been characterised by a substantial bias towards Western European party systems (Barkan *et al.*, 2006; Erdmann, 2004). The second part of the chapter seeks to demonstrate that there is still considerable room for further comparative analysis of the roles of political, institutional, and sociological factors in accounting for African party system fragmentation.

2.2 Theoretical and empirical research seeking to establish generalizable propositions

Amorim-Neto and Cox (1997) characterise early attempts to identify the sources of party system fragmentation as being broadly divisible into two schools of thought, 'one that emphasises the role of electoral laws structuring coalitional incentives, and another that emphasises pre-existing social cleavages' (p. 149). For the purposes of this discussion I follow Cox (1997) and label the former the 'institutionalist' approach, and the latter the 'sociological' approach. This categorisation arguably represents something of a false dichotomy; even early institutionalists acknowledged the significance of societal factors in mitigating electoral system effects (Rae, 1971; Riker, 1982a) and *vice versa* (Meisel, 1974; Jaensch, 1983, cited in Cox, 1997). Nevertheless, there is a considerable institutionally-oriented literature that focuses intensively on the role of electoral system type in party system fragmentation. Furthermore, many of the propositions of the sociological school have been made 'in opposition to, or at least in tension with, the institutionalist literature' (Cox, 1997: 19). The rationales underlying these approaches are therefore outlined separately in this review of the literature, which also seeks to acknowledge research that investigates alternative institutional sources of nationalisation of party competition, such as competition for national executive office, and the centralisation of political

power in federal institutions (Chhibber and Kollman, 2006; Cox, 1997; Filippov *et al.* 1999; Golder, 2006).

The contention that both institutional and sociological factors have a significant role to play in party system fragmentation, and should not, therefore, be viewed as mutually exclusive explanations, represents a point of relative consensus in the contemporary literature (Amorim-Neto and Cox, 1997; Benoit, 2006; Clark and Golder, 2006). This section concludes with an examination of work which explicitly models societal fragmentation and electoral system type as operating interactively to influence party system fragmentation. The theoretical underpinnings, methodological applications, and substantive findings of empirical research that has adopted this approach are outlined, and points of ongoing uncertainty in the literature are discussed.

2.2.1 The role of political institutions

The relationships between electoral system type, proportionality and the number of parties competing in a given system have been described as ‘the “core of the core” of electoral studies’ (Shugart, 2005: 31). Duverger’s (1963) study was the precursor for hundreds of books and articles examining and modifying his propositions. Benoit (2006) explains that: ‘among students of electoral systems, there is no better known, more investigated, nor widely cited proposition than the relationship between plurality electoral laws and two-party systems known as Duverger’s Law’ (2006: 69). This discussion of the institutionalist approach to explaining party system fragmentation therefore begins by summarizing Duverger’s (1963) analysis of the relationship between electoral systems and party systems.

The appellations ‘Law’ and ‘Hypothesis’ were attached by Riker (1982a) to Duverger’s (1963) statements concerning the impact of electoral system type upon the number of parties which compete in a given political system. The first of these statements claimed that ‘*the simple majority single-ballot system*

favours the two party system' (Duverger, 1963: 217, emphasis in original) while the second stated: 'both the simple-majority system with second ballot and proportional representation favour multi-partism' (*ibid.* p. 239). Duverger's description of the former pattern as one that 'approaches (...) perhaps to a true sociological law' (*ibid.* 217) elevated it in terms of universality compared to the statement that two-round majority and proportional representation (PR)-based systems tend to favour multiparty systems. Riker (1982a) therefore distinguishes between Duverger's 'Law' concerning the effects of single-member plurality (SMP) systems and Duverger's 'Hypothesis' concerning the effects of PR systems.

Duverger was not the first scholar to observe these relationships; Cox (1997) notes that the effects of electoral systems on the formation and survival of political parties were objects of study 'since mass elections first became common in the nineteenth and early twentieth century' (p. 15) and Riker's (1982a) account gives a sense of the longevity of scholarly interest in this subject. The earliest incarnations of what were to become Duverger's Law and Hypothesis can be traced to an earlier generation of electoral studies that 'unabashedly took sides' in decrying or advocating electoral systems with 'almost missionary-like zeal' (Taagepera and Shugart, 1989: 48). It is to Henry Droop, an advocate of PR and inventor of the 'Droop quota' used in the single transferable vote form of PR, that Riker attributes the earliest explicit elaboration of Duverger's Law in the following passage, which dates from 1869:

'Each elector has practically only a choice between two candidates or sets of candidates. As success depends on obtaining a majority of the aggregated votes of all the electors, an election is usually reduced to a competition between the two most popular candidates or sets of candidates. Even if other candidates go to the poll, the electors usually find that their votes will be thrown away, unless given in favour of one or other of the parties between whom the election really lies' (Droop, cited in Riker, 1982a; 756).

Benoit (2006) has noted that some of the attention generated by Duverger's analysis was due to his rhetorical elevation of an observed empirical pattern to the status of a sociological 'law'. However, Duverger's contribution went well beyond his phraseology; he collected and comparatively analysed a greater amount of empirical evidence than previous studies of the effects of electoral systems. Even critical treatments of his work acknowledged that, at the time, 'when it comes to the empirical testing of theories of electoral systems, Duverger has made the most extensive examination' (Grumm, 1958: 360). In adopting this approach, Duverger was part of a scholarly trend that moved the study of electoral system effects away from one-sided advocacy and towards systematic comparative enquiry. Another contribution identified by Benoit (2006) is Duverger's detailed elaboration of the process by which electoral institutions influenced party system fragmentation. Duverger divides these processes into 'mechanical' and 'psychological' effects.

The mechanical effect 'pertains to votes and seats; it is observed by comparing shares of votes and shares of seats' (Blais and Carty, 1991: 80). Specifically, the mechanical effect refers to discrepancies between seat and vote shares of parties arising from the process of converting votes obtained by parties/candidates to seats in the legislature. Under plurality electoral rules, the largest party typically receives a considerable 'bonus'¹ of seat share relative to its vote share. The extent of this bonus varies depending on the interaction between geographic voting patterns and constituency boundary delineations (Johnston, 2002).

¹ There is some scholarly disagreement as to the best-fitting specification to describe the extent of the of the seat bonus enjoyed by the largest party (Laasko, 1979; Taagepera, 1986), however the best-known attempt to do so pertains to two-party systems under SMP and is known as the 'cube-law', the earliest descriptions of which date back to the early 20th century (Kendall and Stuart, 1950). The cube law states that the cubed ratio of votes between the first and second parties (V_{P1}/V_{P2}) will tend to equal the ratio of seats that they win (S_{P1}/S_{P2}). Or, formally that:

$$(S_{P1}/S_{P2}) = (V_{P1}/V_{P2})^3 \text{ (Taagepera, 1989).}$$

The important intuition to be derived from this process is that, while large parties, and especially first-placed parties, tend to gain a substantial seat bonus; the zero-sum nature of seat attribution means that third (and lower) placed parties tend to be significantly under-represented in SMP systems when their seat share is compared to the proportion of votes that they obtain. Mechanical reduction in SMP systems tends to particularly punish third and subsequent parties whose support is geographically dispersed². Benoit's (2002) analysis demonstrates that the operation of the mechanical effect in a given election is conditioned by the extent to which voters and parties have adapted to the operation of the electoral system, so that their votes are 'pre-filtered' (p. 29) to reduce the number of wasted votes, in anticipation of the effects of the electoral system on seat distributions.

The psychological effect is the mechanism that underlies the pre-filtering of vote distributions discussed by Benoit. Specifically, it refers to the influence of electoral systems on the distribution of vote shares across parties. It is based on a conception of voters as utility-maximizers, who do not want to waste their votes on losing candidates and are therefore willing to abandon their most-preferred party for parties that they perceive as having a higher chance of winning. Rational voters, observing the consistent mechanical under-representation of third (and subsequent) parties in SMP systems, should abandon the third party in order to concentrate their votes on the two strongest parties/candidates in each constituency.

The psychological effect is also influenced by elite-level strategic decisions on entry into politics and party formation. Blais and Carty (1991) explain that 'political elites and party leaders will anticipate the mechanical and therefore the psychological effects of electoral systems as much as voters will' so

² Early conditions attached to Duverger's Law, introduced to explain exceptions such as Canada and India, tended to focus upon the existence of concentrated minorities (that is, groups which were in the minority nationally but constituted a majority/plurality within an individual constituency or set of constituencies) where such minorities existed, it was argued, the mechanical reductive effect of SMP on party systems was not anticipated (Rae, 1971).

that the overall effect of the electoral system on the distribution of votes cast is a function of 'the interaction between voters and parties (...) (in which) the latter's strategy is as crucial as the former's' (p. 80). Duverger (1963) argues that such incentives for strategic voting by voters and strategic coalescence among the political elite are absent in PR systems, which, by their design, militate against the high levels of disproportionality between party vote and seat shares that drive party systems towards bi-partism under SMP.

Subsequent studies of exceptions to Duverger's Law and Hypothesis have led to them both being viewed as probabilistic, rather than deterministic assertions. The two most-discussed exceptions to the 'Law' of bi-partism in SMP systems are Canada and India; both cases where district heterogeneity has led to more than two parties consistently achieving national representation in SMP systems (Riker, 1982a). Attempts to amend Duverger's Law have typically offered 'qualifications and conditions (...) weakening the categorical language suggesting universal applicability' (Benoit, 2006: 10). Such qualifications tend to suggest that the 'law' is most likely to apply where electoral districts are nationally-homogenous with regards to the distribution of partisan preferences of citizens (Rae, 1971; Riker, 1982a; Sartori, 1976). Thus, sociological factors were acknowledged as highly significant even among early studies of electoral system effects; this topic is dealt with more fully in the next two sub-sections.

It is also now generally acknowledged that incentives for strategic voting are potentially present in *all* electoral systems and not solely in SMP systems (see especially: Gibbard 1973; Sattertwhaite, 1975 cited in Cox, 1997). For example, Sartori (1976) advances the notion that electoral systems can be arranged along a continuum according to the extent to which they encourage strategic convergence. This notion of electoral systems being either *stronger* (exerting significant reductive pressure) or *weaker* (exerting relatively low levels of reductive pressure) is now standard in the literature (Cox, 1997). Empirical electoral systems research has sought to measure electoral system disproportionality in line with this characterisation, creating continuous indices

over which systems can be compared (Gallagher, 1991; Gallagher and Mitchell, 2005b; Lijphart, 1994; Rae, 1971; Taagepera and Shugart, 1989). In this thesis I employ the term 'restrictiveness' to denote the extent to which electoral systems make it difficult for small parties to achieve representation in the legislature, and 'permissiveness' to denote the extent to which electoral systems facilitate the representation of very small parties in the legislature.

Large N comparative empirical investigations have consistently found that increases in district magnitude (*i.e.* the number of legislative seats contested in the typical constituency) tend to correspond to increases in the proportionality of PR³ systems and higher levels of party system fragmentation (Anckar, 1997; Gallagher, 1991; Lijphart, 1994; Rae, 1971; Taagepera and Shugart, 1989; 1993). The relationship between district magnitude and proportionality is not linear, however, and measures of district magnitude are typically transformed using the natural log function in empirical studies in order to reflect the marginally diminishing effects of increases in magnitude on proportionality. Other studies of electoral system proportionality have demonstrated that the type of electoral formula (Benoit, 2000; Lijphart, 1994) and the size of the legislative assembly (Taagepera, 2002) also have a role to play. Attempts have also been made to deduce national-level 'effective thresholds' of minimum vote requirements for parties to achieve legislative representation generated by various electoral systems; incorporating such factors as the presence of formal national vote thresholds for representation (a common feature in PR systems), the impact of adjustment seats in multi-tier systems⁴, and the role of assembly size; as well as more conventional measures such as district magnitude and seat allocation

³ Though it is important to note that the effect of increasing the district magnitude is reversed when the electoral formula used is plurality or majority (Lijphart, 1999) a problem which informs the approach adopted in this thesis to the measurement electoral system permissiveness (see chapter 3 and Appendix A).

⁴ Indeed, some studies have deployed separate measures for typical district magnitude and for the proportion of seats accounted for by upper tiers in their analyses (Amorim Neto and Cox, 1997; Clark and Golder, 2006).

formula, into a single continuous measure (Taagepera, 2002; Gallaher and Mitchell, 2005b).

Shugart (2005) distinguishes between the above-discussed studies, which have investigated 'macro-level' influences of electoral system type, and a smaller field which seeks to create abstract models of the processes that allow voters and other political actors (party leaders, activists, campaign contributors etc.) to co-ordinate on an optimal number of candidates or party lists in response to the strategic constraints and incentives generated by electoral systems. Such models are typically logically derived from explicitly stated assumptions about the motivations of, and information available to these actors. Cox's (1997) study is the outstanding example of this approach. He formally deduces that, given certain conditions, the equilibrium relationship between district magnitude and the number of parties that follows an 'M +1' rule; where the maximum number of viable candidates/party lists in a given district under equilibrium will be equal to the district magnitude plus 1.

Cox's modelling approach serves to explicate the empirical preconditions necessary for SMP systems to restrict the fragmentation of party systems (at the district-level) to two viable candidates. These preconditions include: (1) that there is consistent, reliable, and widely available information about the levels of support enjoyed by candidates/parties, (2) that a large number of voters cannot 'have a clear first choice but be essentially indifferent between the rest of the field' (p. 97), (3) that candidates are seeking to win each election contest specifically (rather than to affect a medium or long-term change on the party system over several elections), (4) that there is no candidate who is a sure winner in the district, and (5) that there is enough distance between the second and third (and lower) placed candidates for voters and candidates to be able to determine which candidates are out of the running. These pre-conditions reflect the informational and motivational assumptions about candidates and voters that underlie the Duvergerian 'psychological effect' of electoral systems. Reed's (2003) simulation-based approach sought to further explicate the mechanism

underlying the M+1 equilibrium and found that candidates' actions, specifically their proclivity to cease to continue to run for election after successive defeats, are vital for arriving at the M+1 outcome.

A further point discussed by Cox (1997) is that the incentives generated by electoral systems for strategic co-ordination among candidates and voters operate at the electoral district level, rather than at the national level (for earlier discussions on this point see: Leys, 1959; Wildavsky, 1959). In analysing the empirical validity of this contention, Cox (1997) investigates it at the district-level by measuring the ratio of first versus second loser (the 'SF ratio') in single-member electoral districts in the UK, where he finds some evidence of strategic abandonment of the second losers in 'very close' districts. He concludes that 'the overall aggregate evidence shows a distinct minority of districts with substantial levels of strategic voting' (1997: 88-89). Survey-derived estimates also find a relatively low incidence of strategic voting, with estimates of only 3%-10% of voters acting strategically across SMP systems (Alvarex and Nagler, 2000; Blais and Nadeau, 1996; Blais *et al.*, 2001; Curtice and Steed, 1997; Evans *et al.*, 1998). However, while Evans *et al.* (1998) acknowledge that 'the number of voters engaged in tactical voting is (...) small' they argue that 'they matter not because of their numbers but because of their impact' (p. 71) as tactical voting can influence the results in key 'swing' seats and have a strong bearing on the composition of the government in the UK.

Some studies have focused on district-level co-ordination in single-member districts (Chhibber and Kollman, 2004; Gaines, 1999) while others have looked at variations in fragmentation of vote shares in district level across electoral districts of varying sizes either within single countries or across pairs of countries (Bohrer and Krutz, 2004; Lago Penas, 2004; Reed, 1990; 2001; Singer and Stephenson, 2009; Taagpera and Shugart, 1993). Chhibber and Kollman's (2004) study of party system fragmentation in the UK, Canada, and India emphasizes the importance of another aspect of political institutional structure in transitioning from district to national bi-partism, namely, the central

executive's authority over regional units. They argue that 'federalism and the degree of fiscal and political centralisation play a large role in party aggregation' (p. 26) and that local bi-partism is unlikely to translate into a two-party system at the national level in federal systems where regional authorities exert high levels of political power and control significant budgets. It has also been suggested that results in local elections can influence strategic motivations in federal systems (Jones *et al.*, 2002).

Cox (1997) argues that attempts to understand national-level coordination must also take account of competition for the national executive office; as such competition effectively serves to unite parties at the national level. This effect is strongest when the powerful national executive is directly elected, with Golder (2006) demonstrating that the 'coat-tails' of presidential candidates can influence the performance of parties in legislative elections, especially when legislative and executive elections are concurrent. The extent of this coat-tails effect has been found to diminish as the amount of time that separates legislative and presidential votes increases (Golder, 2006). Filippov *et al.* (1999) show that presidential elections exerted a significant influence on the extent of partisan fragmentation in elections in former Communist democracies in East and Central Europe and the European part of the former Soviet Union. The contention that executive formation creates incentives for party coalescence at the national level is also applicable in parliamentary systems, especially in those Westminster-style systems where executive domination over the legislature has been observed (Lijphart, 1999).

2.2.2 Sociological approaches

According to the early proponents of the 'sociological' school of thought on party system fragmentation, institutionalists focused too much attention on electoral systems, which, they argued, play 'an inconsequential, or at least secondary and variable' (Cox, 1997: 15) role in shaping party systems. Rather than all societal configurations being a result of a process of institutional

moulding that follows a measurable pattern, the sociological school argued that manner in which the enfranchised population of a given country is divided into politicised cleavages is the main determinant of the type of party system which emerges. Such an approach is typified by Lipset and Rokkan (1968), who present a socio-historical analysis of partisan cleavages as occurring due to the emergence of objective societal divisions among the enfranchised population arising from several 'critical junctures' (p. 47) in the historical development of Western European states.

Their model sets out 'four decisive dimensions of opposition in Western politics' arising from two 'fundamental processes of change' (p. 34). The first process of change was a series of 'National Revolutions' (*ibid.*: 34) that led to the establishment of sovereign nation-states in Western Europe. During these national revolutions, the extent to which administratively dominant cultures at the centre of the state were countered by minority cultures in outlying regions created the Centre-Periphery cleavage, and the struggle for power between the church and the emergent state authorities generated a Church-State cleavage. The second fundamental process of change was a series of Industrial Revolutions, where developments in manufacturing, agriculture, transport, and communications technologies generated conflicts between agriculture and manufacturing interests (the Land-Industry cleavage) as well as between employers and employees in labour markets (the Owner-Worker cleavage).

Lipset and Rokkan (1968) argue that the timing of the emergence of these cleavages, and manner of in which they interacted differed across countries, depending on a variety of social and historical factors; most notably the degree to which their memberships were cross-cutting or overlapping. The persistence of these cleavages and their ongoing centrality in explaining the party systems which they underlie is said to demonstrate a 'freezing' of European party systems (*ibid.*). This is due to the fact that further mobilisation of the electorate is unlikely, given the advent of universal suffrage, as well as the capacity of existing political parties to manipulate electoral laws, and the ability of mass

parties to encapsulate their supporters and 'corner the electoral market' (Gallagher *et al.*, 2001: 243). Conversely, volatility in this approach is explained as a result of societal modernization, the declining relevance of existing cleavages (Pederson, 1983), the advent of new cleavages (Inglehart, 1990), or the diminution of the capacity of political parties to encapsulate a loyal mass following (Franklin *et al.*, 1992).

A particularly pertinent line of criticism of the institutionalist approach from the sociological school relates to the direction of the causal relationship between electoral systems and party systems. The finding that, in Western European history, electoral reforms from majoritarian to PR systems were typically *preceded* by an increase in the number of political parties (Boix, 1999; Colomer, 2004; Eckstein, 1963; Grumm, 1958; Lipset and Rokkan, 1968; Rokkan, 1970) poses awkward questions for theorists who would model electoral systems as exerting an exogenous influence on party systems. While empirical analysis of this question is arguably underdeveloped (Benoit, 2004; Shugart, 2005), large-*N* studies (Boix, 1999; Colomer, 2004) have given credence to the view that electoral systems can be viewed as a consequence of 'already existing parties in assemblies and governments, each of which tends to prefer those institutional formulas and procedures that can consolidate, reinforce or increase their relative strength' (Colomer, 2004: 3).

For example, Boix (1999) argues that the adoption of PR across several Western European states in the early 20th century was a response to the threat imposed by universal suffrage to the established political parties, and that PR was adopted where 'the socialist party was strong and non-socialist parties controlled roughly similar shares of the electorate', but not when there was one dominant non-socialist party or where the emerging socialist party was weak and 'itself a victim of strategic voting' (p. 609.) Even where overtly strategic calculation is not the principal contributing factor to electoral system change, majoritarian electoral systems tend to produce increasingly inequitable results as the number of parties competing for votes increases (Grumm, 1958), so strategic

instrumentalism by ruling parties is not a necessary condition for electoral systems to be viewed as results, rather than causes, of changes in party support patterns.

However, there are several reasons to question whether the diminution of importance attributed to electoral systems in influencing party system fragmentation on this basis is justified. Firstly, in established democracies at least⁵, electoral rules tend to be rather sticky institutions, which are resistant to change once established (Katz, 2005; Lijphart, 1994; Nohlen, 1984). As such, electoral rules tend to stay in place even when the balance of popular support for party groups that prevailed when they were adopted changes dramatically. A straightforward explanation for this tendency is that parties who have the power to change electoral rules at any given time owe their power to the operation of those rules, and one can assume that 'parties will not want to change the rules of a game that they are winning' (Katz, 2005: 73). For parties in power who nonetheless wish to alter the current system, there is still the matter of the decision-rules for changing electoral systems, which can make electoral system reform more difficult to pass than ordinary legislation⁶. Furthermore, Katz (*ibid.*) points out that there may be some reputational costs to parties in power modifying electoral systems to boost their seat share, given that 'other actors in the political process – including many voters – react badly to excessive partisanship' (p. 73) meaning that it may be electorally costly for parties to tamper with the electoral system for a chance of short-term seat gains.

⁵ Recent experience, especially in post-Communist states, has indicated that electoral rules are not inherently stable; for example Poland's system underwent several changes in successive elections the early post-democratisation period (Benoit and Hayden, 2004). Cox (1997) has argued that the extent to which electoral systems may be seen to act as determinants of party/voter incentive structures may be a function of their perceived changeability.

⁶ Electoral rules are often constitutionally entrenched, requiring either a super-majority vote or a referendum in order to be reformed. For example this is how the Irish PR-STV electoral system survived two attempts to change it to the first-past-the-post model, failing at the referendum stage despite majority support in the Irish parliament (Benoit, 2007).

Where political actors do manage to amend electoral systems, whether for strategic or normative (Bawn, 1993) ends; it is important to bear in mind that it is actors' *expectations* of the effects of the newly adopted electoral system that inform the decision-making process, and these expectations are frequently not met in reality. Andrews and Jackman (2005) contend that, in Western European states where electoral system change took place in the early 20th century, and in Soviet-successor states that experimented with several electoral reforms in the post-Cold War period, 'uncertainty'⁷ was a major factor in both periods of electoral rule design, so that political elites often made serious miscalculations of the effect of particular electoral rules on their own future success' (p. 65) to the point of some parties picking or supporting rule changes that eventually saw them eliminated from politics altogether (Shvetsova, 2003). Shvetsova (*ibid.*) argues that this informational uncertainty of actors in the electoral system choice process, manifested by constant fluctuations in parties' stated preferred system in electoral law design processes in Eastern Europe, means that '*ex-post* institutional effects do not need to be endogenous, since at the time of designing the rules the designers were not in position to control the selection of these effects' (p. 191).

As the above discussion demonstrates, either purely sociological or purely institutional explanations of party system fragmentation leave out an important piece of the empirical and theoretical puzzle. However, the two approaches are not mutually exclusive. Proponents of an alternative, mixed approach have criticised studies which exclusively focus on either institutional or sociological factors in accounting for the fragmentation of party systems as embodying an

⁷ Andrews and Jackman (2005) argue that the sources of uncertainty regarded 1) the number of parties competing in future elections 2) voter preferences - either due to lack of available information (as in inter-war Europe) or due to high volatility of public opinion (as was the case in many Soviet successor states) and 3) the likely effects of electoral rules. Uncertainty with regards to each of these factors, which interact with each other to produce further uncertainty (the introduction of new parties can change the distribution of voter preferences, which can modify the effect of electoral rules, which influences the numbers of parties competing etc.) lead to a situation described by Kaminski where: 'a surprising "move of Nature" may turn a smart decision into a bad outcome or a stupid decision into a glorious victory' (2002: 334, cited in Andrews and Jackman, 2006).

'extreme mono-causalist perspective' (Amorim Neto and Cox, 1997: 151). Indeed, Clark and Golder (2006) go further, arguing that 'attempts to pit "institutional" and "sociological" approaches against each other are theoretically regressive' (p. 682). In the following section, an approach that has become predominant in studies of party system fragmentation is outlined; one that characterises party systems as being influenced by an interactive combination of sociological and institutional factors.

2.2.3 Bi-directional approaches

It has been acknowledged (if sometimes only implicitly) from an early stage, in both 'institutionalist' and 'sociological' contributions to the study of party system fragmentation, that electoral systems could condition the impact of sociological cleavage structures and *vice versa*. Early amendments to adapt Duverger's Law to the exceptional cases of Canada and India, for example, considered heterogeneity of ethnic structure and partisan preferences across districts as an explanatory factor (Rae, 1971; Riker, 1982a; Sartori, 1976). Lipset and Rokkan (1968), while sceptical about the extent to which electoral systems could be considered as exogenous 'causes' of party systems, did acknowledge that 'electoral arrangements may delay or prevent the formation of a party' (p. 30) with other political sociologists making similar concessions (Meisel, 1974; Jaensch, 1983 cited in Cox, 1997).

Clark and Golder (2006) discuss the significance of societal cleavage structure in the work of the author who is perhaps most strongly associated with the institutionalist school of thought, Maurice Duverger. They argue that Cox's (1997) characterisation of Duverger's approach, which Cox describes as treating cross-country differences in social/cleavage structure as 'more or less a residual error, something that might perturb a party system from its central tendency defined by electoral system' (p. 23) grossly underestimated the significance attributed to societal cleavages by Duverger's theory. Clark and Golder (2006) contend that Duverger actually held cleavage structures to be the drivers of

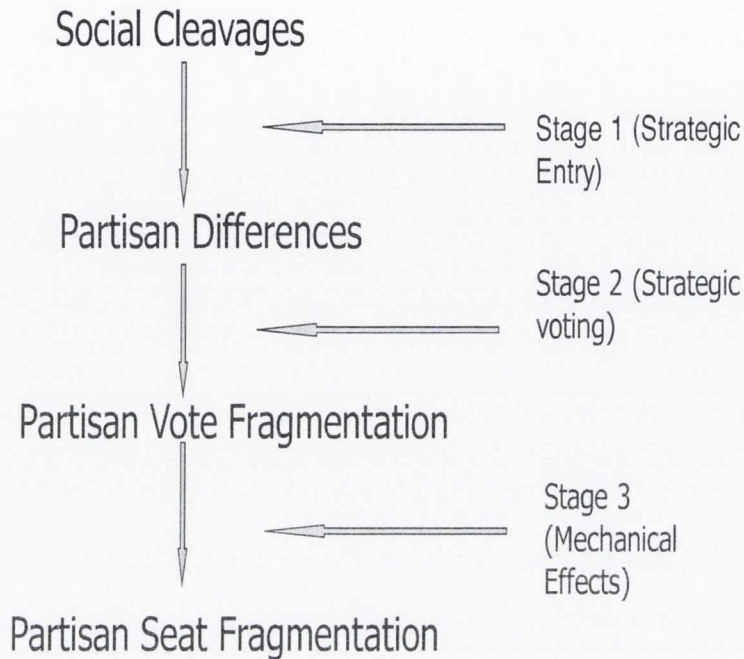
party system fragmentation, stating that 'Duverger clearly indicates that social heterogeneity is the *primary determinant* of party system size and that electoral rules play the modifying role' (p. 684, emphasis added). They adduce the following citation from Duverger's (1963) *Political Parties: Their Organisation and Activity in the Modern State* as evidence of this:

'the influence of ballot systems could be compared to that of a brake or an accelerator. The multiplication of parties, which arises as a result of other factors, is facilitated by one type of electoral system and hindered by another. Ballot procedure, however, has no real driving power. The most decisive influences in this respect are aspects of the life of the nation such as ideologies and particularly the socio-economic structure' (p. 205 cited in Clark and Golder, 2006: 681).

This statement by Duverger is highly similar to later theoretical discussions accompanying those studies which argue that electoral systems and societal cleavage structures operate interactively to influence the extent of party system fragmentation. For example, Cox (1997: 26), explaining the reasoning behind this approach, lays out three key stages for consideration in seeking to explain the level of vote and seat fragmentation in a given polity. These stages are: (1) the translation of social cleavages (ethnic, religious, ideological, or other) in the population into partisan preferences, (2) the translation of partisan preferences into votes, and (3) the translation of votes into seats. Figure 2.1⁸ illustrates this characterisation of the process leading to party system fragmentation.

⁸ Figures 2.1 and 2.2 are adapted from an earlier version of Clark and Golder (2006), presented at the 2003 Midwest Political Science Association Conference.

Figure 2.1 Path diagram Cox's (1997) 3 stages of party system development



The first stage involves a process whereby ‘a multiplicity of possible or imagined parties is reduced to an actual number of *launched* parties, then to a smaller number of *known* parties⁹’ (*ibid* p. 27). The diversity of possible parties is treated by Cox as an exogenous factor, although he acknowledges that ethnic and linguistic identities can be manipulated by political actors¹⁰. The choice of actors to launch and support parties on the basis of a given identity is influenced by the perceived electoral viability of that identity, thus entry into competition

⁹ For Cox (1997) the extent to which a given possible source of partisan preference is likely to be translated into a political party is influenced by a number of factors not related to the electoral system including: the extent of its non-political organisational apparatus and finance, access to the media, and ability to attract funding.

¹⁰ This point is made explicitly by Posner (2005) for ethnic and linguistic identification in Zambia, and discussed at length by Mozaffar *et al.* (2003) in their justification of a ‘constructivist’ rather than ‘primordial’ definition of societal diversity in their study of African party system fragmentation.

for election can be seen as being influenced by strategic considerations. The second stage is driven by strategic voting, with voters acting on perceptions as to the electoral viability of the various launched parties. Stages 1 and 2 thus follow the logic of the 'psychological effect' outlined in earlier sections. The third stage captures the mechanical effect of electoral systems – it describes the translation of vote distributions into seat distributions.

The crucial theoretical intuition that Cox derives from this process is that 'only an upper bound is imposed in Duvergerian equilibria' (Cox, 1997: 139); as outlined above, this upper bound corresponds to the $M + 1$ rule in equilibrium. This means that, for electoral systems to exert a reductive effect on vote and seat fragmentation at stages 1, 2, and 3, the initial diversity of social and partisan preferences among the population must generate more parties than are accommodated by the electoral system's upper bound, which he labels the 'carrying capacity' (*ibid.* p. 140) of the system.

Cox argues, therefore, that a party system may be characterised by low fragmentation either because there is no demand for many parties generated by societal pressures, or because the electoral system imposes a sufficiently restrictive 'upper bound' on the number of viable parties/candidates that small parties are eliminated from the system at stages 1 and 2; being under-represented in terms of seat distribution at the third stage so that they are systematically abandoned by strategic voters at the second stage or not launched at all at the first stage. Figure 2.2 illustrates the empirical implications of this account for levels of party system fragmentation. To generalise this argument; the impact of increasing diversity of societal preferences on the party system is seen as conditional on the restrictiveness/strength of the electoral system.

Figure 2.2 Illustration the conditional nature of the influences of electoral systems and cleavage structure on party system fragmentation

		Social heterogeneity	
		low	high
legislative electoral system	restrictive	Few parties	Few parties
	permissive	Few parties	Many parties

The findings of studies that have adopted this approach (Amorim Neto and Cox, 1997; Brambor *et al.*, 2007; Clark and Golder, 2006; Filippov *et al.*, 1999; Mozaffar *et al.*, 2003; Jones, 2004; Ordeshook and Shvetsova, 1994; Powell, 1982; Stoll, 2004; 2008) have generally favoured the theoretical contention that party system fragmentation is driven by an interaction of sociological and institutional factors. Methodologically, this contention has been tested by specifying a multiple regression equation that includes an ‘interaction term’, a product of the values of electoral system permissiveness and societal diversity for each country/election measured. The interaction terms for electoral system restrictiveness/societal diversity have typically been found to be positive and statistically significant in multiple regression analyses, and models including the term generating higher (adjusted) r-squared statistics than models excluding it (see Stoll, 2004: 60-61 for a detailed summary of models and results).

Clark and Golder's (2006) research proposes a somewhat more refined methodology for testing what they argue is a 'rehabilitated' version of Duverger's theory, which gives causal primacy to societal diversity. According to Clark and Golder's (*ibid.*) reading of his work, 'Duverger clearly believes that social forces were the driving forces behind the multiplication of parties' (p. 681). In this account of party system fragmentation, the influence of electoral laws on party systems is due to their capacity to inhibit the expression of underlying societal diversity in the party system by creating a strategic environment that makes small parties less feasible for elites to launch and for voters to support. As electoral systems become more restrictive, they exert higher constraints on party formation, with single member plurality voting laws favouring equilibrium of 2 viable candidates/parties in each district. As electoral systems become more permissive, however, parties face a lower vote threshold to achieve legislative representation and, hence, underlying societal diversity is more readily expressed in the party system. This line of reasoning leads Clark and Golder to put forward the hypothesis that:

'social heterogeneity increases the number of electoral parties only when the district magnitude is sufficiently large' (*ibid.* p.693).

An interactive relationship implies that the *effect* of one factor on another is influenced by the value of a third factor. Electoral systems in this approach are treated as an intervening 'third factor', which influences the relationship between societal diversity and party system fragmentation. In this characterisation, electoral systems play an indirect role in shaping party systems: they affect the relationship between the causally prior societal 'driving forces' that can be activated to create new parties and the observable party system that emerges. Restrictive electoral systems, through their mechanical and psychological effects, impose a powerful set of strategic incentives for voters and elites to consolidate votes around two viable candidates in each district (Cox, 1997). These incentives are sufficiently powerful that under majoritarian electoral systems there is little or no relationship between levels of societal

diversity and levels of vote fragmentation. As systems become more proportional, however, the strategic incentives for voters and parties to cohere their votes to achieve representation become less pressing. Proportional systems allow parties with small shares of the national vote to achieve legislative representation more easily than they could under majoritarian rules. Therefore, under proportional electoral rules, high levels of societal diversity should translate more easily to high levels of vote fragmentation.

In order to test this hypothesis, Clark and Golder collected data from a range of national legislative elections on levels of vote fragmentation, societal diversity, and electoral system permissiveness (controlling for several other variables) and ran a multiple regression analysis with vote fragmentation as its dependent variable and societal diversity, electoral system permissiveness, and their product (known as an 'interaction term') as independent variables. Clark and Golder's major methodological claim is that previous empirical tests of this version of Duverger's Theory fail to properly deal with interactive variables in their regression-based analyses. They argue that the theory can only be tested by looking at the effects of societal diversity on vote fragmentation under different types of electoral system. Clark and Golder's 'rehabilitated' version of Duverger's theory contends that these effects should be non-significant under restrictive electoral systems, and positive and significant under permissive systems. However, conventional regression output only tells us the value of the 'societal diversity' coefficient when the value of electoral system permissiveness is set to 0. The interactive model specification used by Clark and Golder allows them to estimate the values and standard errors of this coefficient under values of electoral system permissiveness other than 0. Extrapolating from the coefficients and standard errors arising from their regression analysis (using a method described in detail by Brambor *et al*, 2006), Clark and Golder map out the marginal effects of a measure of societal diversity ('ethnic heterogeneity' as measured by Fearon, 2003) on vote fragmentation over various levels of electoral system permissiveness.

For illustrative purposes, Figure 2.3 reproduces their analysis, using data and replication material from Clark and Golder (2006) made available at Matt Golder's homepage¹¹. In this figure, the estimated marginal effect of societal diversity on vote fragmentation is plotted on the Y axis. This means that the Y axis maps the coefficient that the 'ethnic heterogeneity' variable would have in a regression where vote fragmentation is the dependent variable. The graph allows us to map the results of several regressions, setting 'electoral system permissiveness' at values between 0 and 5 (the minimum and maximum values that were observed in the data). The solid line in the graph captures the societal diversity coefficient value at a given level of the electoral system permissiveness variable, which is plotted on the X axis. The dashed lines represent the confidence interval for each coefficient value.

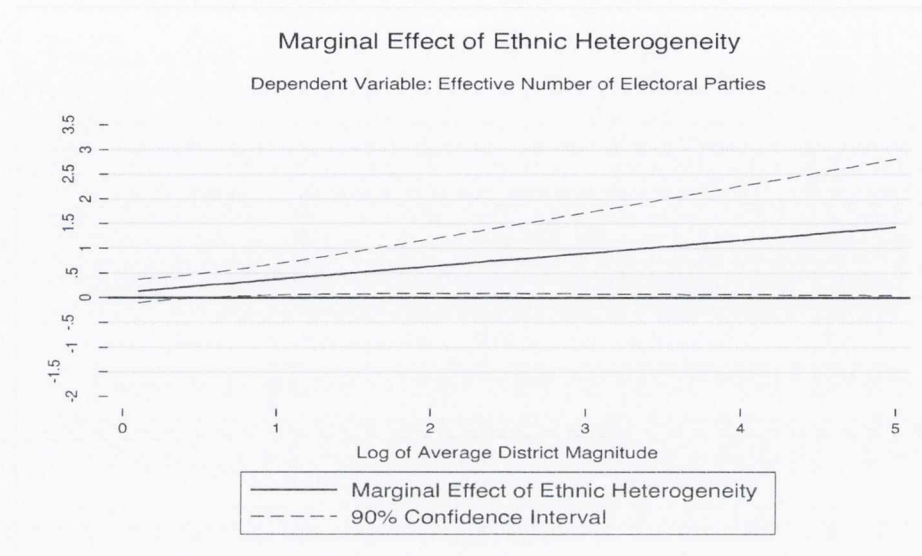
The effect of societal diversity is positive and statistically significant¹² when the upper and lower bounds of the dashed line are above the 0 line in the graph (and negative when they are below it). Clark and Golder contend that this figure (along with two other similar figures that they produce with alternative data from established democracies) 'clearly illustrate that in established democracies, ethnic heterogeneity significantly increases the number of parties once the electoral system is sufficiently permissive' (p. 700). This is because the marginal effects of societal diversity are positive and statistically significant when the score on their index of electoral system permissiveness (the log of the average district magnitude) is greater than 1, with a score of 0 on their index

¹¹ The hyperlink for these replication materials is: <http://dvn.iq.harvard.edu/dvn/dv/mgolder>. Figure 2.3 reproduces Clark and Golder's 'pooled analysis' of elections in established democracies between 1946 and 2000, in their paper this is listed as Figure 1 (a) (p. 701). Clark and Golder obtained similar results employing Amorim-Neto and Cox's (1997) data, and using data from established democracies in the 1990s. As we discuss, these results were not replicated in 'new' democracies in Clark and Golder's study.

¹² At Clark and Golder's (2006) specified 90% level of confidence – in the analyses in chapters 4, 5, and 6 of this thesis, the 95% level of confidence is specified to test interactive hypotheses using similar graphs of marginal effects over multiple values of 'conditioning' variables. Also, it is worth noting here that the interaction term in Clark and Golder's analysis is not statistically significant.

corresponding to a single-member constituency system (*i.e.* a system with an average district magnitude of 1).

Figure 2.3 Analysis from Clark and Golder (2006: 701)



Singer and Stevenson (2009) found that these results hold at the electoral district-level in established democracies. The extent to which the bi-directional approaches have become common in recent applications allows us to conclude that a degree of academic consensus has emerged regarding the interactive nature of the influences of societal diversity and electoral system restrictiveness in the party system fragmentation field. However, Shugart's claim that 'the agenda of proportionality and the number of parties is largely closed' (2005: 51) is arguably somewhat premature in the light of methodological issues in the field exposed by Clark and Golder (2006) and Stoll (2004; 2008), as well as the contention among certain scholars that these relationships may not be observable in party systems in recently-transitioned democracies (Birch, 2005; Clark and Golder, 2006; Moser, 1999; Moser and Scheiner, 2009; Singer and Stephenson, 2009).

A first problem is that many studies which have modelled party system fragmentation as resulting from an interaction of electoral system restrictiveness

and societal diversity have employed flawed statistical specifications that leave their results open to question. The problems here derive from failures to properly specify and interpret interaction terms in regression-based analyses, which can lead to both biased results and erroneous interpretation (Brambor *et al.*, 2006). Clark and Golder (2006) note: 'the preferred interaction models of Ordeshook and Shvetsova (1994, p. 114) and Amorim Neto and Cox (1997, p. 165) both omit the constitutive terms *Social* and *Institution*. We are certainly not suggesting that all of the results presented in these analyses are necessarily wrong. However, we do believe that there is a potential for bias and that as a result, incorrect inferences may have been drawn' (pp. 685-686).

Another serious issue, which until Stoll's (2004; 2008) research remained somewhat underexplored in the field, concerns the operationalization of societal diversity. The core theoretical contention of both the sociological and the interactive approaches is that, as the number of social cleavages present in a polity increases, the number of parties should also increase, in order to accommodate those dimensions of conflict (Lijphart, 1999), with the barrier to entry to legislative representation for new parties formed on the basis of such cleavages determined by the restrictiveness of the electoral system in operation. The empirical measurement of societal cleavage structure is, however, fraught with ambiguity. Stoll (2004) argues that, of the variables of interest in the comparative literature on party system fragmentation, societal preference diversity/cleavage structure is 'the most under-theorised and poorly operationalised' (p. 48). Stoll's (2008) analysis demonstrates that the choice of measurement instrument significantly impacts upon the substantive findings in a comparative analysis. This point, and its implications for this thesis, is discussed in greater detail in chapter 3.

Finally, there are emerging indications that the effects of electoral systems, societal diversity, and their interaction on party system fragmentation may not be constant for across either world regions or political environments. Empirical studies at both the national-level (Birch; 2005; Clark and Golder, 2006)

and the district-level (Moser, 1999; Moser and Scheiner, 2009; Singer and Stephenson, 2009) have found that there is far less evidence of strategic adaption to electoral system constraints in recently transitioned than in established democracies. These findings are discussed in greater detail in chapter 5. Overall, there is considerable doubt about the applicability of the interactive approach for recently transitioned democracies. It is to the literature on elections in Africa, a continent characterised by a very high proportion of recently transitioned states, and the empirical focus of this thesis, that we now turn our attention.

2.3 African elections and party systems

The volume and nature of studies of elections and party systems in Africa have tended to mirror variance over time in the volume and nature of elections across the continent. In chapter 3, I examine the nature of African elections over a longer time period in order to situate the elections that are studied in this thesis historically. However, in this review of the literature, the focus falls on those studies that have examined African party systems and elections since the re-emergence of multipartism in the majority of African states post-1989. Due to the relative novelty of multiparty electoral competition in most countries in the region, comparative studies of African multiparty systems are far rarer than analyses of Western European systems (Erdmann, 2004). Part of this disjuncture can also be traced back to the lack of reliable electoral data in Africa (Lindberg, 2006). However, following the dramatic growth of multipartism across the continent from the early 1990s onwards and, with increasing data availability (Brambor *et al.*, 2007; Mozaffar *et al.*, 2003; Nohlen *et al.*, 1999), scholarly interest in Africa's multiparty elections has grown considerably. While outlining several themes that have emerged in analyses of elections and party systems during this period, I focus specifically on those comparative studies that have sought to analyse the determinants of party system fragmentation in Africa's post-1989 multiparty elections, as it is to this nascent literature that the research undertaken in this thesis most directly contributes.

Single-country or single-election studies (or collections of such studies) have outnumbered comparative studies of African elections post-1989. These in-depth studies have typically analysed electoral returns in light of the prevailing political situation in the run-up to and aftermath of the election, and have identified geographic and regional patterns in concentrations of political support for the parties competing. In perhaps the most detailed collection of such studies to date, Lodge *et al.* (2002) cover these topics across 15 Southern African countries, as well as providing comprehensive accounts of the electoral administrative structures in operation in each country. However, as one reviewer noted, these accounts are more likely to be of use to country specialists than to comparativists (Southall, 2005: 273).

Similarly, Cowen and Laasko's (2002) edited book includes extensive chapters on multiparty elections across a range of countries, and Nohlen *et al.*'s (1999) edited data compendium contains detailed descriptions of electoral and party systems for every state in Africa; however neither engages in systematic cross-national comparative investigation of patterns of party system fragmentation across these systems¹³. Rule's (2000) study of electoral geography and 'territoriality' of voting patterns across Southern Africa similarly provides considerable detail on individual countries, but little in the way of comparative analysis.

Numerous country-specific accounts of party systems, investigations of various aspects of individual elections, and research concerned with general processes and relationships of interest, with generalised contentions being empirically tested in one election/country, (including, *inter alia*, the role of ethno-linguistic cleavages in voting strategy, the influence of legislative electoral systems on party strategy, the prevalence of vote-buying, the impact of electoral system reform on voter behaviour, and the emergence and strategic selection of

¹³ Although the Nohlen *et al.* (1999) do advocate the importance of comparative analysis for understanding African elections in their introduction.

ethnic identities by elites and voters) are to be found in the literature (for something of a representative sample here see: Aghrout, 2008; Booyesen, 2006; Bratton, 2008; Cho and Bratton, 2006; Kriger, 2008; Lemon, 2007; McLaughlin, 2007; Posner, 2005; Santiso and Loada, 2003; Smith, 2002; Takougang, 2003; Wiseman and Charlton, 1995).

Comparative studies of Africa's multiparty elections have been considerably rarer than the election/country-specific studies discussed above. Many are characterised by a concern for democratisation-related issues; with the principal issue at stake being the relationship between the incidence of multiparty elections and the achievement of what van de Walle (2003) describes as 'reasonably genuine democratic governance' (p. 68) (Bratton and van de Walle, 1997; Kuenzi and Lambright, 2005; Lindberg, 2006; Reynolds, 1999). The most relevant comparative work on African elections for the topic addressed in this thesis has focused on various aspects of the party systems that have emerged there. Topics investigated comparatively have included: the institutionalization of party systems (Bogaards, 2008; Kuenzi and Lambright, 2001; 2005; Lindberg, 2007; Mozaffar and Scarritt, 2005); tendencies towards party dominance, illiberal practices, and implications for party system categorization (Bogaards, 2000; 2004; Giliomee and Simkins, 1999; Ishiyama and Quinn, 2006; van de Walle, 2002; van de Walle and Butler, 1999) the significance of ethnicity in voter behaviour (Basedau and Stroh, 2009; Mattes and Norris, 2003; McLaughlin, 2007); the nature of representation and political contestation across and within parties, most notably the 'neo-patrimonial' character of political authority (Posner and Young, 2007; Salih and Nordlund, 2007; van de Walle, 2003), as well as the sources of party system fragmentation (Brambor *et al.*, 2006; Erdmann and Basedau, 2008; Lindberg, 2005; Mozaffar *et al.*, 2003; Mylonas and Roussias, 2008).

The characteristic single party dominance and ethno-regional cleavage structures of African elections, as well as their varying levels of democratic credentials inform the research approach adopted in this study of African party

system fragmentation. Research in these specific areas is elaborated more fully throughout the thesis; however, those studies that have specifically sought to comparatively explain variations in levels of party system fragmentation bear most closely on the thesis as a whole and are, therefore, the focus of the remainder of this literature review.

In existing comparative studies of African party system fragmentation, there has arguably been a disproportionate focus on the role of legislative electoral systems at the expense of analyses of the importance of societal cleavage structure, presidential elections and institutions, and levels of political freedoms. This is understandable, as legislative electoral system permissiveness is the most easily measurable and rigorously theorised variable arising from the generalised studies of the determinants of party system fragmentation outlined in section 2.2 above. Several authors have investigated whether average levels of disproportionality, and of electoral and legislative party system fragmentation, vary across legislative electoral system types (typically characterised in terms of electoral formula and/or district magnitude) without controlling for executive institutions or levels of societal diversity (Golder and Wantchekon, 2004; Lindberg, 2005; Mozaffar, 1998; Reynolds, 1995) with somewhat contradictory results.

Some of the analyses that have focused solely on variation in electoral law as an independent or dependent (Mozaffar, 1998; 2004) variable are traceable to a desire to specify the most appropriate type of electoral systems to aid democratic consolidation in divided societies (Barkan, 1995; Reynolds, 1995; 1999). Barkan (1995) discussed the electoral system design implications of what he argued was an observable tendency for votes to be concentrated regionally in Africa's agrarian societies. For Barkan: 'the more agrarian the society (...) the higher the geographic concentration of the vote and the more closely the distribution of seats under an SMD system will mirror the distribution of the total vote, as well as the distribution of seats, that would be obtained under PR' (p. 117), an assertion which he argues is borne out by relatively low ID (index of

disproportionality) scores in SMP elections in Malawi and Zimbabwe. Barkan posits that this empirical tendency means that the case for the adoption of a PR electoral system for legislative elections was significantly weaker in Africa's agrarian democracies than elsewhere, as the sacrifice of constituency service implied in using some form of list system would not be balanced by an increase in proportionality of seat shares to vote shares.

Reynolds (1995) countered that the elections cited by Barkan were 'atypical' and that 'the five countries using SMD plurality for democratic elections in southern Africa since 1965 have, on average, experienced IDs in line with plurality elections in the rest of the world' (p. 118). As such, Reynolds (1995; 1999) argued that proportional representation systems were highly appropriate for African democracies, as they would ensure that minority groups would not be eliminated by disproportionate vote-seat translations, and would subsequently be more amenable to embracing competitive multiparty elections as a means for attributing political power. Mozaffar (1998), in his comparison of electoral returns across 28 African states, finds that majoritarian and plurality electoral systems generate greater disproportionality than PR systems, and that there is less party system fragmentation in elections that take place under majoritarian and plurality formulas than under PR; leading him to conclude that 'the data displayed (...) lend broad support to the contention thesis that PR electoral formulas, combined with lower effective thresholds, tend to encourage more parties to compete in elections and to enable them to win seats' (p. 93). Van de Walle (2003) also finds that the average party system elected under plurality rules is less fragmented than the average party system elected via PR.

However, the extent to which electoral systems influence party systems in a manner consistent with the expectations of the general literature is not agreed on by all analysts. Golder and Wantcheckon (2004) find little evidence for such an influence in their analysis of elections in the region, arguing that 'it is fairly clear that there is no monotonic increase in the number of electoral and legislative parties as district magnitude increases. Similarly, the number of

parties does not increase as the electoral formula becomes more permissive' (p. 412). They argue that, therefore, electoral systems cannot be said to exercise the same effect on party systems as has been observed elsewhere, and discuss the novelty of electoral competition and the regional concentration of electoral support in many African states as possible explanations for this finding. Lindberg's (2005) analysis of electoral system effects in African elections between 1989 and 2001 supports the contention that party system fragmentation does not increase monotonically as electoral system permissiveness increases. He notes that in several countries there is a coincidence of highly proportional electoral systems and low levels of party system fragmentation – a violation of the conventional account of the relationship between electoral system type and party system fragmentation.

The pioneering work of Mozaffar *et al.* (2003) on this topic is more explicitly based on the insights and methods of empirical studies of the interactive conception of electoral systems and societal diversity outlined in section 2.2.3. Their analysis is founded on an Africa-specific measure of societal diversity, the national level of 'ethnopolitical' group fragmentation. They eschew the notion of attribute-based or, in their terms, 'primordialist' (p. 379) measures of ethnicity for a 'constructivist' (p.379) specification, developed by Scarritt and Mozaffar (1999). Their approach also places considerable emphasis on the role of group concentration levels in African cleavage and party system formation. While Mozaffar *et al.*'s (2003) analysis has since been convincingly called into question due to statistical misspecification (Brambor *et al.*, 2007), their acknowledgement of the importance of ethnic group concentration represents a valuable contribution to the literature on African party systems, and their measure of societal diversity has been adopted by several subsequent comparative treatments of African party system fragmentation (Brambor *et al.*, 2007; Erdmann and Basedau, 2008; Mylonas and Roussias, 2008).

In terms of their analysis, Mozaffar *et al.* (2003) investigated party system fragmentation in 34 countries that had transitioned to multiparty elections

during the early 1990s. Their analysis led them to assert that an increase in social diversity *reduces* party system fragmentation; a finding that they argue 'suggests that increased numbers of group cleavages encourage candidates to forge intergroup alliances to improve on their electoral gains. Such alliances, while improving the prospect of group cooperation, also tend to reduce the number of electoral and legislative parties' (*ibid.* p. 387). In terms of electoral system permissiveness, they find that average district magnitude can be either positively or negatively related to party system fragmentation, depending on levels of ethnopolitical group fragmentation and concentration. Most notably, they argue that district magnitude is negatively related to party system fragmentation in African elections when levels of fragmentation and concentration of ethnopolitical groups are high. Mozaffar *et al.* (*ibid.*) also claim that their measure of societal diversity offers a better account of the number of electoral and legislative parties than two alternative measures¹⁴ that are not based on their measurement criteria, which they found to be statistically non-significant predictors of party system fragmentation.

Brambor *et al.* (2007) challenge the conclusions arrived at by Mozaffar *et al.* with regards to the roles of ethnic fragmentation and district magnitude (though not on the superiority of their measure of societal diversity); arguing that improper specification and interpretation of the statistical models employed lead to incorrect findings. Specifically, they contend that the failure of Mozaffar *et al.* to include all constitutive terms in interactive specifications for their multiple regression analysis led them to arrive at erroneous substantive conclusions. Having corrected these errors, they re-analyse Mozaffar *et al.*'s dataset and find that 'African party systems respond to specific institutional and social factors (...) in the same way as party systems in more established democracies' (Brambor *et al.*, 2007: 1), with societal diversity being positively related to partisan fragmentation in the legislature when electoral systems are permissive, and ethnopolitical group concentration is high. Similarly, district

¹⁴ They use the ethno-linguistic fragmentation data from *Atlas Narodov Mira* (1964), and Posner's (2004a) Politically Relevant Ethnic Group (PREG) indices for comparison.

magnitude is found to be positively related to party system fragmentation when ethnopolitical diversity and group concentration scores are high.

Van de Walle (2003) points to several alternative factors that are of interest in explaining the shape of Africa's multiparty systems. He argues that the illiberal character of many regimes dramatically limits oppositional capacity to organize and cohere. Lindberg (2005) acknowledges the importance of this distinction, separating elections according to whether they were 'free and fair' or not, and noting that party system fragmentation is higher generally for free and fair elections, a finding that he argues 'makes perfect sense' (p.55). In spite of the substantive importance of election fairness for party system fragmentation, both Mozaffar *et al.* (2003) and Brambor *et al.* (2007) fail to control for or analyse this variable. Lindberg (2006) is highly critical of this approach, arguing that 'Mozaffar, Scarritt, and Galaich's (2003) analysis of ethnicity, electoral rules, and voting (...) is invalidated by their mixing of free and fair elections with an almost equal number of flawed ones' (p. 61). Mylonas and Roussias (2008) make a contribution in this regard; explicitly focusing on the role of free and fair competition in electoral campaigns and counts – their analysis is highly similar to that of Brambor *et al.* (2007), the major difference being that they include more cases, and that they split their sample between elections that conform to their criteria to be considered democratic, one the one hand, and those that do not, on the other. Their analysis indicates that: 'electoral system effects appear to be context-specific (...) the interaction of electoral rules and ethnopolitical cleavages predicts the number of parties only in democratic settings, failing to produce substantive effects in nondemocratic ones' (Mylonas and Roussias, 2008: 1466).

The other key factors influencing African party systems identified by van de Walle (2003) are: the centralisation of political power around the presidency and corollary emasculation of legislative parties and the 'pervasive clientelism that structures the relationship between the state and the citizenry' (p. 297). The relationship between presidential and legislative elections has received less attention generally than institutional and sociological factors in the literature,

and has typically included as a control variable, rather than as an object of interest in its own right (see, however: Golder, 2006). In terms of Africa's party systems, this topic has yet to receive sustained comparative attention. Mozaffar *et al.* (2003) refer to the coefficients attached to their 'presidential' variables only very briefly, and suggest there is a reductive effect for more proximate presidential races, but that this effect is conditioned by the level of fragmentation of the vote in the presidential race. Mylonas and Roussias (2008) find a positive effect for the effective number of candidates, but argue that this effect is *smaller* as electoral proximity increases – contrary to standard accounts (Cox, 1997; Golder, 2006).

Finally, very few comparative studies have investigated African party systems at the constituency-level. However, Reynolds (1999) is an exception here and his work indicates that there are some differences compared to established democracies: he finds that constituency-level races in Africa's SMP systems are considerably less competitive than in the UK, with candidates often running completely unopposed. Ferree *et al.* (2008) also analyse the effects of political institutions and societal diversity on district-level party system fragmentation within a single country (South Africa) for local elections. Their analysis points to little discernible evidence that district magnitude variations exert any significant influence on the fragmentation of electoral support at the district-level, while they find that 'racial diversity influences the number of parties regardless of electoral rules' (p.1). However, Ferree *et al.* (*ibid.*) do not extend their analysis across multiple countries.

The studies outlined here have contributed greatly to our understanding of party system development in Africa's multiparty elections. However there is significant room for further research on several substantively and theoretically important points. Comparative studies have treated vote fragmentation and seat fragmentation in a rather undifferentiated manner, however the theory that explains the influence of electoral systems on party systems separates these traits, with the former being influenced by electoral systems' 'psychological

effects' and the latter by electoral systems' 'mechanical effects' (Blais and Carty, 1991). This distinction has not been adequately made in the existing comparative literature on African party systems.

The measurement of societal diversity has been somewhat over-looked by many comparative studies of party system fragmentation, and those comparative studies cited here of African party system fragmentation that include a variable to capture societal diversity have all employed Mozaffar *et al.*'s (2003) measure, which captures 'politicised' ethnic cleavages rather than the 'latent' number of cleavage groups. There exist numerous national-level measures of societal diversity across Africa (Posner, 2004a); however, apart from Mozaffar *et al.* (2003) these measures have rarely been compared explicitly as predictors of levels of party system fragmentation.

Several independent variables that could help to account for party system fragmentation in sub-Saharan Africa have received inadequate attention in the current literature. The lack of research on the causes and consequences of vote fragmentation in presidential elections is particularly surprising given the near ubiquity of highly powerful presidencies in the region. The role of political contexts and extent of variation in political freedoms, as well as the numbers of elections that have been held consecutively also remain to be fully explored, though Lindberg (2005) and Mylonas and Roussias (2008) indicate that variations in levels of freedom and fairness of elections are significant in explaining African party system fragmentation.

The use of alternative measures of party system fragmentation to the Laasko-Taagepera (1979) index could also be beneficial in the African context given the concerns that have been raised about the applicability of that measure to African elections (Bogaards, 2000). Another striking gap in the existing literature is the lack of research into the role of executive elections in party system fragmentation. This thesis seeks to begin to fill in these lacunae in the existing literature on multiparty elections post-1989 in sub-Saharan Africa.

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed research on the institutional and sociological factors that are held to influence party system fragmentation. It has outlined the interdependencies between these factors elaborated in theoretical accounts, and examined empirical research that has investigated the veracity of those accounts. It was argued that, while the literature in this area represents a well-developed field, there are some methodological (Clark and Golder, 2006; Stoll, 2009) and empirical (Birch, 2005; Clark and Golder, 2006; Moser, 1999; Moser and Scheiner, 2009; Singer and Stephenson, 2009) discrepancies that are yet to be resolved. This discussion points to the need for any comparative research on party system fragmentation to keep the difficulty of measuring societal diversity in mind, as well as to be attentive to methodological advances in the deployment and interpretation of interaction terms in multiple regression-based analyses. Furthermore, the review indicated that there is an ongoing debate concerning the extent to which theories of the relationships between societal diversity, electoral system restrictiveness, and party system fragmentation developed and (broadly) supported with reference to elections in established democracies are well-supported in more recently transitioned democracies. This thesis is well-positioned to contribute to this empirical debate.

This chapter also reviewed comparative work on elections and party systems in sub-Saharan Africa, focusing on those studies that have sought to improve our understanding of the party systems that have emerged in the region since the dramatic increase in the number of states with *de jure* multiparty regimes that took place there in the early 1990s. While this field has made several promising findings, it was argued that it is still somewhat underdeveloped in several respects. Again, this discussion presents several lessons for scholars interested in undertaking a comparative study of Africa's party systems. It points to the need for an analytical strategy that both separates 'psychological' from 'mechanical' electoral system effects and acknowledges the existence of multiple competing national-level measures of societal diversity in sub-Saharan

Africa. The summary of research on sub-Saharan Africa's party systems provided in this chapter also demonstrates the need to bring a broader range of independent and dependent variables into consideration, especially relating to presidential elections and political freedoms.

The academic contributions outlined in the final section of chapter 1 are specifically addressed at the points of contention and research lacunae identified in this chapter. The overall contribution that this thesis seeks to make to the literature is, therefore, to build upon the work reviewed in this chapter in order to enhance scholarly understanding of party system fragmentation as a general phenomenon, and to better understand its nature and determinants in Africa's multiparty systems.

Chapter 3 – Mapping the Empirical Terrain

Abstract

This chapter seeks to situate the elections studied in this thesis within the broader history of elections in sub-Saharan Africa. It also describes in detail several of the aspects of these elections that are examined inferentially in subsequent chapters. The chapter begins by outlining the historical role of elections for public office in sub-Saharan Africa; from leadership selection procedures in pre-colonial societies, through the experience of elections under various colonial regimes, up to elections in the post-colonial period. In the second half of the chapter, several characteristics of African multiparty elections post-1989 are described; including the types of legislative electoral systems employed, the diversity of national populations, levels of political freedoms, levels of partisan vote/seat fragmentation, and largest party vote and seat shares.

3.1 Introduction

This chapter seeks to historically situate and empirically describe the elections examined in this thesis, which comprise the *de jure* multiparty national-level elections that took place in sub-Saharan Africa between 1989 and 2008. The first half of the chapter provides an account of the wider history of elections in sub-Saharan Africa. While the transition to multipartism in the early 1990s across the region marked a significant step away from the prevalence of single-party and military rule that characterised the preceding decades (Bratton and van de Walle, 1997) it did not represent a totally novel departure, as elections have a rich history in the region. Indeed, the history of formalised elections in sub-Saharan Africa extends back to reports of elections in Freetown in 1787 (Hayward, 1987), and to the extension of voting rights to the French National Assembly to the *communes* of Senegal in 1848 (Ellis, 2000). The account provided here goes somewhat further back in time than the advent of formalised elections, taking the decision-making and leadership selection procedures of the pre-colonial era as a starting point.

The chapter will proceed to examine the characteristics of the elections studied in this thesis in detail. I begin by describing the legislative electoral systems that are to be found in Africa's post-1989 multiparty elections, as well as elaborating the negotiating dynamics that help to explain why certain systems were favoured by certain actors in the transition process. The extent of societal diversity in the region is then assessed in terms of the fragmentation of the population into multiple ethnic (and 'ethnopolitical'), linguistic, religious, and cultural groups. I discuss the difficulty of measuring this property of a state, and elaborate the most influential approaches in the existing literature.

A further notable 'exceptional' characteristic of the multiparty elections studied in this thesis is the variable levels of political freedoms that they operate under. With some exceptions (Lindberg 2005; Mylonas and Roussias, 2008), this characteristic of African elections has not received sufficient attention in

comparative investigations of the sources of party system fragmentation in the region. While this thesis does not attempt to provide an overall evaluation of the extent to which each election can be considered 'democratic', I seek in this chapter to justify the proxy measure capturing this variation that is deployed in chapters 4-6 (Freedom Houses' 'Political Rights' score in the year in which each election is held) as well as providing descriptive details on how this variable is distributed over the cases studied here. Finally, I describe the major dependent variables that are analysed in chapters 4-6: the extent of vote and seat fragmentation, and single-party dominance in legislative and presidential elections.

3.2 African Elections over time

3.2.1 The pre-colonial era

The question of whether a cultural attachment to electoral democracy can be traced back to practices of leadership selection in the pre-colonial period has been raised frequently in scholarly discussions of elections in sub-Saharan Africa (Cowen and Laakso, 1997; Nohlen *et al.*, 1999; 2002; Hayward, 1987; Young, 1993). A first difficulty here is the enormous diversity of political entities; in terms of scale, selection and consultation procedures, and authority structures, that existed across the continent in the pre-colonial period. These range from the small-scale and relatively egalitarian communities of the type examined by Vansina (1990) where 'some form of public order was maintained without any form of centralised institutions of the type which Western observers were able to classify as a state' (Ellis, 2000: 39) to large-scale and relatively centralised kingdoms and empires, such as those that emerged in Ghana, Mali, and Songhay¹ (Tignor, 2003). There are nonetheless arguably some common

¹ Even within the same organisational subsets, dramatic differences are observable; for example Gluckman (1965: 116 – 120) argues the designation 'chief' has been applied to holders of an extremely wide variety of formal and informal powers. Furthermore, in-depth accounts, focusing on the political anthropology of specific groups such as the Ashanti (Rattray, 1929) or the Kono (Parsons, 1964), show a considerable degree of within-group

institutional characteristics that can be observed across several pre-colonial societies in sub-Saharan Africa.

Discussions of the antecedents for democratic practice in pre-colonial African societies tend to focus on the political practices of the small-scale communities of approximately 500 to 2,000 inhabitants which were widespread across pre-colonial Africa, and which often operated relatively autonomously within larger kingdoms and state structures (Tignor, 2003). Within these communities, extended families (or Houses), villages, and regions were the most important political units (Vasina, 1990). Full-time civil and military bureaucracies were not present in many of these communities². Decision-making as described by Vasina (1990) and Tignor (2003) on many judicial and political points involved conciliar discussions, where speaking ability, martial skills, wisdom, and entrepreneurship were sources of authority. In this context, individuals possessing such qualities in abundance tended to attract retinues of supporters, who benefitted materially from the capacity of these 'big men' (Tignor, 2003: 188) to win resources for their houses and villages. The size of leaders' retinues typically grew in line with the extent of their military, economic, and administrative achievements (Vasina, 1990).

diversity over time. For instance, Rattray's (1954) *Ashanti Law and Constitution* details how a series of internecine wars, as well as the military actions of colonial powers, lead to radical re-shaping of Ashanti political structures. Similarly, Vasina's (1990) account of community life and institutional power structures among the Bantu-speakers of the rain-forests of equatorial and central Africa prior to the advent of colonialism illustrates that *de facto* changes in power structures were often quickly institutionalised. For example, Vasina (1990) notes that, as a result of a series of conquests which allowed a certain House-chieftain to subjugate local rivals, 'in a mere generation a House-chieftain had given rise to a Kingdom' (p. 176). According to Vasina's analysis, change in institutional structure appears to have diffused across certain territories, with a greater centralisation of power in one area forcing other regions to adopt similar structures to avoid being dominated militarily, so that a single centralisation of power in a given grouping could 'act as a catalyst which transformed the basic institutions over a vast area' (p. 148).

² Indeed, Bayart (1989) argues that such societies represented a mode of collective existence free of the trappings of the state-authority structure and that this method of societal organisation represents 'the most distinctive contribution of Africa to the history of humanity' (p. 34).

In terms of leadership selection procedures, Nohlen *et al.* (1999) note that 'the idea of voting was not completely foreign to pre-colonial Africa' (p. 1); citing instances of traditional societies choosing courses of action through a consultation process among members of the community. Tignor (2003) argues that pre-colonial societies idealized the principle of unfettered competition (among adult males at least) for leadership positions. Hayward (1987) particularly emphasizes the prevalence of such processes, arguing that 'there was an extensive tradition of election of leaders in many African societies prior to colonialism' (p. 5) in the sense that the occupier of a given leadership position was not pre-ordained in many pre-colonial African societies, rather such choices emerged after a process of discussion, debate, and consultation. Hayward does note, however, that such 'elections' often had severely circumscribed levels of participation, but nonetheless argues that the process of competition for leadership positions was a familiar one to pre-colonial societies. Even in monarchical systems, there were typically numerous potential heirs to the throne, who were selected via procedures that focused on popular trust and perceived administrative ability (Tignor, 2003).

Furthermore, there were instances, for example as described in Abraham's (1962) discussion of the political history of the Akan, where holders of political office were circumscribed in their actions by the threat of removal, or 'destooling' (Hayward, 1987: 6). Tignor (2003) argues that even under systems that were formally monarchical, and where leaders enjoyed sacred legitimacy, 'kings and emirs retained power only as long as they were productive and successful (...) they stepped aside, even committed suicide, if they lost the confidence of the community' (p. 190). However, there are some causes for equivocation when it comes to the question of whether these practices can be said to be the basis for a cultural attachment to democratic values of leadership contestation and legitimation in pre-colonial African societies.

While some practices and traditions appear to point towards an embrace of competition and accountability, others appear to lay the foundation for

practices of the selective attribution of common resources to office-holders' support networks. The identification of the office-holder with the office that is a classic characteristic of what Bratton and van de Walle (1997) describe as the 'neo-patrimonial' (p. 61) political systems that prevailed in the non-democratic regimes of postcolonial Africa. Among the most notable continuities from pre-colonial to post-colonial regimes in sub-Saharan Africa is the value attached to the persons of leaders, in the tradition of 'big man rule' (Hyden, 2006: 94), rather than the formal positions that those leaders hold.

A further theme which may represent something of a divergence from an idealised democratic culture is the significance attached to the influence of supernatural/religious considerations, which Ellis (2000) describes as 'the forces of the invisible world' (p. 39). Priests, clerics, and diviners were given central roles in selecting among potential rulers in the monarchical regimes of the Ashanti, Dahomey, and Imerina³ (*ibid.*). Divine provenance does have an interesting role in the history of elections generally, especially in decision-making within the Christian church (see Colomer, 2004: pp. 16-19), and it has certainly been a source of either implicit or explicit electoral appeal in many countries; however the notion of leadership selection as representing an uncovering of supernatural processes does not sit particularly easily with most interpretations of the role and meaning of elections (Katz, 1997).

Overall, while there is evidence that participationist and egalitarian practices conducive to the emergence of a democratic culture are detectable in some pre-colonial African societies (Hayward, 1987) there are also elements in pre-colonial political organisation that are less favourable to the argument that there existed a strong pan-African democratic culture in the pre-colonial period. Tignor (2003) argues that pre-colonial political organisation points to an 'uneasy

³ Vasina (1990) discusses the importance attributed to supernatural powers of leaders in pre-colonial societies, where leaders' followers 'attributed their success to supposed links with occult powers (...) especially to charms (...) or to a pact with nature spirits (...) big men were seen as a special type of wizard' (p. 146).

blend of egalitarianism and authoritarianism' (p.190). From the point of view of the focus of this thesis, namely national-level formalised elections with multiple competing parties, there is little in Africa's pre-colonial history that could be said to have directly foreshadowed the advent of national-level elections for public office. Even in the few cases where the entire adult population were allowed to participate in decision-making and leadership selection, this process took place through local face-to-face meetings, an approach that is impossible to replicate at the national-level (Nohlen *et al.*, 1999: 1). Experiences of leadership contestation in the pre-colonial period are therefore perhaps better viewed as informing our understanding of political culture in the region than as representing historical pre-cursors for formalised national-level elections. It is to the colonial period, and particularly to the experiences of British and French-administered colonies that we must turn for more concrete early instances of large-scale elections.

3.2.2 Elections in the colonial period

A first point to note in discussing the role of elections in the colonial era is that authoritarian rule, with the co-option (and, at times, creation) of traditional rulers by colonial authorities was the overwhelming norm during this period (Tignor, 2003). Ellis (2000) argues that 'colonial governments were notable for their authoritarianism (...) they governed according to a mixture of alleged racial superiority and supposedly greater skill in public administration' (p. 40). Simply put, for the vast majority of Africans, the greater part of the colonial era was characterised by an absence of meaningful electoral experience (Wiseman, 1992; Golder and Wantchekon, 2004).

There were, nonetheless, several instances of formalised elections in the colonial period. While early elections restricted access to candidacy and voting on racial grounds and were for offices of highly circumscribed powers, such elections generally became far more expansive in terms of enfranchisement and more meaningful in terms of the offices that they elected after the end of World

War II⁴. The first wave of African elections with universal or near-universal suffrage and no restrictions on party formation were held in the 1950s, only slightly before the formal dates of independence in most countries, and are therefore described by Cowen and Laakso as 'interregnum elections' (1997: 728). These elections were typically supervised and designed by colonial powers, ostensibly in an attempt to establish 'tutelary democracies' to facilitate the transition to independence⁵ (Collier, 1982: 22; Lindberg, 2006).

In British-administered colonies, the introduction of elections took place in the context of an evolving system of legislative councils in each colony. These councils were populated by a mixture of *ex-officio* 'official' members, who tended to be senior colonial administrators, and 'unofficial' members, who were charged with representing local interests. In early incarnations of these councils, official members significantly outnumbered unofficial members, and unofficial members were typically appointed rather than elected directly (Tignor, 2003). Cowen and Laakso (1997) argue that early legislative councils are best understood as representing 'a forum for arguments with colonial administrations

⁴ South Africa diverged from this trend, with franchise requirements being made steadily *more* restrictive along racial grounds over time under apartheid policy. Where elections in the 1920s in the Cape Colony had applied a common (property) qualification to all males without reference to colour, the Cape Africans were removed from the electoral roll in 1936, and the Cape Coloureds were removed in 1956 (Collier, 1982). Another alternative pattern was observable in Rhodesia where early elections served as a means of establishing an alternative source of political authority to the colonial metropole, in the aftermath of elections to the first legislative council in 1899 Rhodesia became a fiefdom of the British South African Company and, following a 1922 referendum, became a white-dominated self-governing colony (Cowen and Laasko, 1997).

⁵ The move towards greater enfranchisement and more meaningful offices under colonial administration between World War II and independence has been conceived variously as: (1) 'a hastily conceived process in which departing European powers hoped that their efforts to write foolproof constitutions (...) would make up for decades of colonial neglect' (Tignor 2003: 196) (2) an exit strategy that 'helped the European powers maintain their self-respect as they withdrew from imperial greatness' (Collier, 1982: 33) (3) a strategic compromise that sought to balance ideological pressures from leftist parties in both France and UK with the demands of nationalist movements and (4) as 'an arrangement between colonial and African establishments that recognized each other and proposed no radical alteration of previous arrangements' (Collier 1982: 31) or as some combination of the above.

over policy' (p. 720)⁶. As the legislative councils evolved, three processes took place: firstly the proportion of unofficial members was gradually increased, so that new constitutions after World War II instituted 'unofficial' majorities (with some exceptions). Secondly, direct elections with widening franchises gradually came to replace nominations. Thirdly, the geographic areas to which legislative councils referred became more encompassing.

Collier (1982) argues that distinct patterns of legislative council evolution are visible for British colonies in East and Central Africa (Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia), where there were significant numbers of European settlers, as compared to British colonies in West Africa (Gambia, Ghana, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone) where European settlers were less numerous. In Kenya and Zambia, where the largest nodes of European settlers were located, the first elections to legislative councils took place in the 1920s, however access to candidacy and franchise was restricted to Europeans, and the first Africans were not elected until the late 1950s. In Uganda, Tanzania, and Malawi, the first elections to legislative councils did allow (restricted) participation for Africans; however they did not take place until the mid-1950s. In West Africa, however, a more gradual development is discernible; with (apart from Gambia) first elections taking place in the mid-1920s and these elections featuring limited African franchises (mostly to coastal towns with relatively high levels of development) with a pattern of incremental expansion of the franchise and a movement towards direct election across the national territory observable throughout the 1950s.

France's colonies exhibited less diversity with regard to their electoral history than Britain's, as their administration was typically managed either as a single group or on the basis of two groups corresponding to the federation of

⁶ There were also instances of elections to Local Native Councils (LNCs) with far less restricted franchises in some British-administered colonies such as Kenya. Elections to LNCs were typically 'keenly contested' (Cowen and Laasko, 1997: 718) and did provide a measure of experience for Africans in electoral politics where they took place. However, the restrictions placed by colonial authorities on the LNCs' decision-making powers meant that they 'were in themselves a cause of early nationalist resentment' (*ibid.* 719.).

French West Africa (AOF)⁷ or the federation of French Equatorial Africa (AEF)⁸. Senegal represented an exception to this pattern, with a unique territorial administration and one of the longest histories of elections sub-Saharan Africa⁹. Outside of Senegal, however, a somewhat similar situation to the British-administered systems prevailed in the 1920s and 1930s; elections were held in several colonies as a way of nominating unofficial members to advisory administrative councils, which tended to be dominated by colonial administrators. Elections to these posts for non-citizens were introduced in 1925 in Dahomey, Ivory Coast, Guinea, and Mali (Collier, 1982). However, the franchise in these elections was limited only to the most developed regions and, even within these regions; access to the ballot was highly circumscribed. For example, it was estimated that elections to advisory administrative councils in 1936 in the AOF were conducted on the basis of a franchise that represented only .1% of the population of these areas (Suret-Canale, 1971: 330).

World War II decisively reshaped the meaning of elections in French colonial administration. The 1944 Brazzaville conference resulted in a series of steps designed to accelerate the political integration of the colonies into the institutional structures of the French state. Separate voting rolls were created for those with the status of 'citizen' and a larger group of 'subjects' for the election of delegates to the French constituent Assembly in 1945 (Collier, 1982). Elections to territorial assemblies in each colony and indirect elections to the Conseil Général of the AOF and the AEF were also held using the two-college system. These systems were progressively moved towards a single roll, and the extent of the franchise expanded rapidly throughout the 1950s, with the decisive

⁷ Covering: Dahomey, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, and Upper Volta.

⁸ Covering: CAR, Chad, Congo, and Gabon. While not formally incorporated, policies in Togo and Cameroun closely followed those of the AOF and AEF respectively

⁹ 'Assimilated' African inhabitants of the *Communes de Plein Exercice* of Dakar, Gorée, Rufisque, and Saint Louis were able to vote for a *député* in the French legislature from 1848 (although the first African *député* was not elected until Blaise Diagne was successful in 1914) (Hayward and Grovogui, 1987). Elections were also held to a *Conseil Général* of Senegal from 1879 onwards.

legislation coming in the form of the 1956 *Loi Cadre*, which abolished the two-college system and extended voting rights to citizens over 21 (Morgenthau, 1964). However, elections in French-administered colonies saw widespread manipulation of the results by colonial authorities, leading Hayward (1987) to conclude that 'the French colonial electoral experiences created a legacy of abuse that lived on after independence' (p. 8).

Belgian colonies were considerably slower to respond to pressures to introduce electoral competition; three Belgian colonies became independent in 1960 and 1962, with the first legislative elections with mass enfranchisement occurring only immediately before formal independence (Hayward, 1987; Nohlen *et al.*, 1999). Elections were not held in Portuguese colonies until much later, indeed no national-level elections at all were held in Lusophone colonies before independence, which followed the Portuguese revolution of April 1974. Post-independence, the electoral record of Portuguese colonies was only marginally better: apart from Guinea-Bissau, which held elections in 1976 and 1984, no elections took place in former Portuguese colonies until the early 1990s (Nohlen *et al.*, 1999).

Elections held under the auspices of colonial powers and in the early independence period were mostly conducted under majoritarian electoral systems – with British-administered elections operating under SMP systems. Swaziland and Mauritius both deviated somewhat from this norm among former British colonies – operating multi-member plurality based systems. Mauritius adopted an unusual system for its first post-independence elections in 1967¹⁰ – with a plurality-based system applied for 62 representatives in mostly 3-member constituencies on the basis of candidate-based voting, and 8 'best loser seats' set aside to ensure proportional representation for the 3 major 'communities' in the

¹⁰ Mauritius is also notable for the exceptional achievement in the region of maintaining a system of *competitive* multiparty elections throughout the post-independence period, with elections resulting in a change of government in 1982.

population¹¹ (Krennerich, 1997). French-administered elections employed plurality rule in multi-member constituencies with closed party lists and bloc voting (Collier, 1982). These systems 'were retained largely intact for both competitive elections in short-lived democracies and for restricted elections in single-party regimes in the 1970s and 1980s' (Mozaffar, 2004: 420). Looking at former Belgian colonies; Rwanda and Burundi adopted PR-based systems with preferential lists, similar to the system in use in Belgium, while the Republic of Congo employed a multi-seat plurality-based system (*ibid.*).

The elections that took place in the post-World War II period were typically 'hotly fought and full of political interest' (Cowen and Laasko, 1997: 721) especially as momentum towards full political independence built across the region. With huge swathes of the populations newly enfranchised, and in a context of growing momentum towards full independence across the continent, the future configuration of political authority in Africa's states appeared to be the stakes that were being contested. Often, elections in this period were transformed into plebiscites on the capacities of nationalist parties; allowing them to demonstrate their levels of popular support to colonial authorities and to underline their demands for full independence (Hayward, 1987). Cowen and Laasko (1997) state that these elections broadly tended to benefit 'radical' parties, who favoured a more comprehensive rupture with the colonial regime, over 'conservative' parties, who were 'perceived to be more favourable to a

¹¹ This system was agreed in the context of a highly politicized decolonization process; the British colonial authorities charged a commission headed by Sir Harold Banwell with deciding on an electoral system before granting independence (Krennerich, 1997). After intense lobbying by anti-independence parties, who were dependent on ethnically-based support (and favoured PR) and pro-independence parties, who vehemently opposed PR, a compromise of sorts was reached with the 'best loser' system. The system recognizes four 'communities': with Hindu, Muslim, Sino Muslim communities and a fourth 'General Population' group for those who don't belong to any of these three groups. The best loser seats are attributed to members of least represented communities (according to the proportion of the population that each represents) in the direct elections for the 62 seats. The first 4 'best loser' seats are allocated 'on a purely community basis to the most under-represented community' to the non-elected candidates from the most under-represented community (*ibid.*: 607). The remaining four are allocated so as to ensure that the largest party in the direct elections is not overly punished by this process – if the first four seats go to candidates who are not from the largest party in the direct elections than the remaining four are allocated to the 'best losing' candidates within the largest party.

perpetuation of colonial authority' (p. 721)¹². These elections appear to have adhered to reasonable standards of freedom and fairness; McKenzie and Young's (1960) edited collection *Five Elections in Africa* exported analytical tools developed in the study of elections in established democracies to these elections.

In some cases, most notably in Nigeria, patterns of intensive and mutually antagonistic ethnicized electoral conflict were established (Tignor, 2003). In other elections, such as those held in the Gold Coast (now Ghana) and Tanzania, a pattern of single party dominance emerged. Furthermore, elections with expanded franchises provided emerging elites with a novel resource to challenge established competitors – a process that was visible in the electoral successes of Léopold Senghor in Senegal and Kwame Nkrumah in the Gold Coast (Hayward and Grovogui, 1987).

There was significant diversity across the region in terms of levels of mobilisation and the fragmentation of political support during the rapid expansion of the electoral process that occurred after World War II. Collier's (1982) analysis attributes the higher levels of fragmentation observed in British than French colonies to the use of single-member constituencies in British colonies (as opposed to the majoritarian multi-member closed list systems that were employed in French colonies). She also notes the emphasis on uniformity and centralisation of power that characterised French colonial authority, compared to the more pluralistic approach of the British which, she argues, encouraged higher levels of locally-based ethnicized fragmentation in some British colonies. Whether these patterns would have endured over time is largely a speculative question however, as open electoral competition would prove to be fleeting in the majority of states in the region. After these 'interregnum elections' (Cowen and Laasko, 1997: 720) a brief period of multipartism was

¹² For instance, Meredith, (2005) notes that 'it was to become a familiar experience for British governors in Africa to have to come to terms with nationalist politicians whom they had previously regarded as extremist agitators' (22-23).

followed by a far longer period of single party or military regimes across the continent (with the exceptions of Botswana, Gambia, Mauritius and, to some extent, Senegal and Zimbabwe). It is to the post-independence period that we now turn our attention.

3.2.3 Elections in Independent African states up to 1989

Early post-independence elections in sub-Saharan Africa are generally regarded as having been relatively free and fair in many countries, and as having facilitated at least a degree of multiparty competition (Lindberg, 2006). Indeed, some electoral campaigns were characterised by extremely high numbers of parties, with, for example, up to 130 parties competing in Somalia's elections following its democratisation in 1960 (Wiseman, 1992). Much of the literature on African parties and elections in the early independence period focuses on issues of regime transition and democratic development, seeking to characterise those systems that emerged 'in the shadow of decolonization'¹³ (Ishiyama and Quinn, 2006: 319).

However, this period of multipartism was short-lived, and, across sub-Saharan Africa *de jure* single party systems, *de facto* single-party systems, or non-party military dictatorships emerged in all but a few states soon after independence. Collier (1982) describes this process as one whereby 'the emerging political elite (...) moved quite rapidly and deliberately to dismantle (...) democratic institutions' (p. 2) via overwhelming electoral and resource

¹³ Treatments of emerging party systems centred on the emergence of either ethnically-oriented parties or nationalist parties seeking political autonomy (Collier, 1982; Liebenow, 1986; Ottoway, 1999; Young, 1965; Zolberg, 1966). Further sub-divisions were made according to parties' organisational structures and stated policy orientations (see, for example, Hodgkin, 1961; Liebenow, 1986). Many of these treat each individual election descriptively as 'a major political event in itself' (Cowen and Laakso, 1997: 723). As such, typical studies of these elections took the form of in depth single-country/election case studies, single-party case-studies, or collections of such studies (see, for example: Bennet and Rosenberg, 1961; Cliffe, 1967; Coleman and Rosenberg, 1964; McKenzie and Robinson, 1960; Sklar, 1963; Young, 1965) though there are also some instances of explicit cross-national comparisons of parties and elections in this period (Collier, 1982; Hodgkin, 1961).

dominance, mergers, coercion, and/or military coups. Nohlen *et al.* (1999) argue that, while elections had been a powerful tool for demanding political emancipation during the colonial period, after independence elections were seen by elites as, at best, as a means of securing the hegemonic claims of new rulers and, at worst, as dangerous and divisive threats to national unity. In certain instances, experiments with somewhat competitive elections were interrupted by military interventions, for example this pattern prevailed in Ghana, Sierra Leone, Burkina Faso, and Nigeria¹⁴ between the late 1950s and late 1980s (Beckett, 1987; Chazan, 1987; Mozaffar, 2004).

By the mid 1980s, non-competitive regimes were so prevalent in sub-Saharan Africa that Bratton and van de Walle (1997) cite only 9 states (out of 48) in the region where elections resulted in opposition parties winning any presence whatsoever in the national legislature in the period 1985 to 1989. Of these nine, only five (Botswana, Gambia, Mauritius, Senegal, and Zimbabwe) could credibly claim to facilitate some sort of multipartism, even according to the most minimalist of criteria. Bratton and van de Walle (*ibid.*) conclude that 'competitive party systems were absent at that point in time' (p. 19) over the rest of sub-Saharan Africa

Several justifications were employed to support the suppression of political opposition across the region; including the notion that single-party rule was necessary for the exigencies of nation-building, and the argument that multipartism was an artificial imposition of the modes of competition and legitimization of colonial powers, which were not suitable to African political traditions and culture (Golder and Wantchekon, 2004).

¹⁴ Such military coups did not always lack an element of public support. For example, Beckett's (1987) account of electoral experiences in the first and second Nigerian Republics notes that, in spite of the extensive consultation and constitutional engineering that went into the establishment of the institutions of the Nigerian second Republic in the late 1970s, and despite the fact that participation had been widespread in its second set of elections in 1983, the military overthrow of the regime was greeted with 'every evidence of public rejoicing' (p.107), with particular support coming from the country's highly educated elite.

From an academic point of view, this dearth of multipartism across the region meant that 'the study of parties in Africa became the study of one-party states' (Ishiyama and Quinn, 2006: 320). For examples of such studies see, *inter alia* (Bates, 1981; Ghandi and Lust-Okar, 2009; Hayward, 1987; Hermet, 1973; Joseph, 1987; Medard, 1982; Posner, 2005; Zolberg, 1966). Some scholars did identify promising elements in the elections held under the auspices of single-party regimes in this period. Lindberg (2006) notes that, despite the general trend towards autocracy across the region, 'Uganda was the only post-independence civilian regime to suspend elections altogether' (p. 10). Several of these elections were surprisingly competitive, at least in the sense of ousting incumbents, in countries such as Zambia, Tanzania, Kenya, and Sierra Leone (Hayward, 1987; Hayward and Kandeh, 1987; Posner, 2005; Samoff, 1987). Hayward's (1987) edited collection concludes that 'an examination of more than two decades of post-independence electoral activity (...) demonstrates the rich diversity of forms, experiences, and meanings of elections in Africa' (p. 271). Hayward argues that, even under single party regimes, voters managed to exercise at least a degree of choice. Authors such as Chazan (1979) and Sklar (1983; 1987) similarly espoused an optimistic take on these elections as signs of a gradual movement towards more open competition and greater governmental accountability (Lindberg, 2006).

Others argue, however, that single party elections in the post-independence period are best understood as instruments by which elites controlled the citizenry, rather than the other way around. For instance, Golder and Wantchekon (*ibid.*) state that 'single-party elections are meaningless as measures of popularity and legitimacy. Instead, it is more useful to see elections in African dictatorships as a means for recruiting the political elite or as ceremonial performances that help enforce citizen obedience, induce complicity, and socialize the electorate' (p. 406). Indeed, Ghandi and Lust-Okar's (2009) found that holding periodic single-party elections and having a legislature have both been found to contribute to dictatorial regime longevity.

While there is evidence that single-party elections in the region were somewhat competitive, to the extent that they frequently turned incumbent local representatives out of office (Cowen and Laakso, 1997; Hayward, 1987; Posner, 2005), they provided little variation of interest for students of party system fragmentation. It is to the swathe of multiparty elections that took place across the continent from 1989 onwards that we must turn to find interesting variation in this regard.

3.2.4 Regime transition and multiparty elections in the 1990s

Following the collapse of the USSR in 1989, ruling elites in a 'wave' of African countries – fatally undermined by deepening economic malaise, facing growing popular dissent among their citizenry, and wrong-footed by the collapse of European state socialism – undertook a transition to various forms of multiparty democracy (Bratton and van de Walle, 1997; Ellis, 2000; Lindberg 2006; Tignor 2003). The diffusion of these reforms across sub-Saharan Africa was such that the region saw multiparty elections in 38 countries in the five years from 1990-1994, with opposition parties winning seats in 35 of these elections (Bratton and van de Walle, 1997: 8).

Optimism naturally surrounded the elections that took place in the immediate post-Cold War era in Africa, with Lindberg (2006) noting that 'most scholarly accounts from the early 1990s triumphantly proclaimed a new era of democracy in Africa' (p. 52). However, early strains of Afro-optimism became muted by the mid-1990s; due to the evident difficulty of bedding down democratic institutions across the continent. Election results were hotly disputed in Kenya and Ghana in 1992, reforms stalled in Togo and Cameroon, broke down completely in Angola in 1992, Nigeria in 1993, and Gambia in 1994, and struggled to get off the ground at all in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Chad (*ibid.*). Elsewhere in the region, electoral competition has failed to provide a panacea for ongoing problems of poverty, corruption, and abuses of power. Indeed, van de Walle (2002) notes that 'over much of Africa (...) *fin-de-siècle* optimism has

given way to early-twenty-first-century gloom' (p. 66). Adejumobi (2000) went so far as to describe elections at the end of the 1990s as representing little more than 'a fading shadow of the democratic process in Africa' (2000: 60).

While some scholars argued that these developments signalled a closure of African politics (Joesph, 1998) or even a return to destructive and semi-authoritarian politics that characterised the continent for much of the period since between the early 1970s and the late 1980s (Akinrindae, 1998; Carothers, 1997; Chabal and Daloz, 1999), Lindberg (2006) argues that there is little evidence of an overall decrease in the frequency of *de jure* multiparty elections in sub-Saharan Africa post-1993, and demonstrates that there is a positive relationship between the holding of multiparty elections and levels of civil liberties in the region. Posner and Young (2007) point to a growing importance of formal political institutions in constraining the capacities of executives.

The substantive significance of Africa's *de jure* multiparty elections was discussed at length in Chapter 1 and I do not seek to revisit that debate here. What the above discussion does illustrate is that there exists great richness and longevity of electoral experience in the region. However, the extension of the franchise occurred far more rapidly in colonial Africa than in Western European states (Collier, 1982) and there was a considerable period post-independence in which meaningful inter-party electoral competition was completely suspended across the continent, with only a few exceptions. Overall, one cannot dispute Golder and Wantchekon's (2004) claim that Africa's post-war history has seen considerably more country-years of dictatorship than country-years of democracy.

While many of the 'founding' elections in the 1990s served to remove parties and rulers who had secured power soon after early independence elections in the 1960s (Bratton and van de Walle, 1997), several did not, and former single parties continue to dominate in multiparty elections in the post-1989 period across the region (Baker, 1998; Ishiyama and Quinn, 2006; Nohlen *et*

al., 1999). The success of former single parties is not altogether surprising – as opposition groups were often weak and fragmented following decades of suppression and intimidation under single-party rule. Furthermore, opposition groups could not access the extensive patronage networks that ruling parties developed; while in other cases potential nodes of opposition were co-opted into ruling parties during the single-party rule (Golder and Wantchekon, 2004).

Another consequence of colonial and authoritarian elections has to do with the type of institutions that have operated in the *de jure* multiparty elections studied in this thesis. It has been argued that experience of elections under colonial auspices and under authoritarian regimes post-independence conditioned the preferences of actors with regards to the types of legislative electoral systems adopted in the transition to multipartism in the early 1990s (Mozzaffar, 1998; 2004; Nohlen *et al.*, 1999). A further notable tendency across the region is the overwhelming institutional preference for presidential or semi-presidential systems of government (van de Walle, 2002). Colonial history had a strong bearing on the choice of system at independence, with former British colonies tending to favour parliamentary systems; only one country that was not a former British colony (Cape Verde) adopted a parliamentary system on independence (Golder and Wantchekon, 2004). States under French and other colonial rule tended to adopt presidential or mixed systems. However, there was a widespread presidentialisation of former British colonial states during post-independence authoritarian rule, meaning that parliamentary systems were very rare in sub-Saharan Africa as the third wave of democracy arrived in the region. Furthermore, the authoritarian period saw high degree of centralisation of power in the office of the president across most countries in the region, a pattern that continued into the multiparty era (Prempeh, 2008). Multiparty legislative elections in the majority of states in sub-Saharan Africa in the 1989-2008 period have been overshadowed by competition for presidential offices with substantial formal and informal powers.

A grounding in the history of elections in sub-Saharan Africa is important for understanding patterns that have emerged in *de jure* multiparty elections in the region post-1989. Having discussed the historical context of elections in sub-Saharan Africa, the next section moves on to a description of the characteristics of the elections that are studied in this thesis.

3.3 Characteristics of interest of multiparty elections in sub-Saharan Africa 1989-2008.

As discussed in Chapter 2, the literature in the field of party system size has moved from mutually antagonistic approaches that placed explanatory emphasis on either institutional or sociological explanations, towards an approach that views electoral systems and societal diversity as operating interactively to influence party systems, as well as controlling for the influence of presidential elections (Amorim Neto and Cox, 1997; Brambor *et al.*, 2007; Clark and Golder, 2006; Filippov *et al.*, 1999; Mozaffar *et al.*, 2003; Jones, 2004; Ordeshook and Shvetsova, 1994; Powell, 1982; Stoll, 2004; 2008). In the analysis that follows in Chapters 4-6, this approach is replicated – analysing the interaction between societal and institutional sources of party system fragmentation, and holding relevant variables constant. In this section, the major dependent and independent variables examined in chapters 4-6 are described.

3.3.1 Legislative electoral systems in Africa's multiparty elections (1989-2008)

Table 3.1 details the electoral systems employed in legislative elections between 1989 and 2008 in the 45¹⁵ states whose legislative elections are studied

¹⁵ Somalia, Eritrea, and Swaziland were not included in the analysis – Somalia and Eritrea on the basis that no national-level legislative elections took place during the period considered in this thesis, and Swaziland on the basis that elections held there in the post-1989 period have been officially non-partisan in nature, and therefore not amenable to the type of analysis performed here. Elections held in Somaliland and Puntland are not included as it is unclear as to whether they can be said to constitute 'national' elections, given the disputed status of these regions at the time of writing. While Uganda (1996) and Sudan (1996) both held

in this thesis. The data in table 3.1 were derived from several sources, most notably Nohlen *et al.* (1999: 22) for data on elections up to 1998, with the country-specific chapters in Nohlen *et al.* (1999) providing more detailed information on the precise operation of each electoral system, as well as Mozaffar (1998; 2004). For more recent elections, I relied on available national election reports in *Electoral Studies*, as well as national Electoral Commission websites, which typically provide descriptions of the electoral systems in operation. The dataset from Brambor *et al.* (2007) also provided information on average district magnitudes. A trend of continuity with colonial institutions is observable for most former British colonies, where systems based on single-member constituencies and plurality rules have proved remarkably durable to changing political circumstances. Exceptions here include Sierra Leone and Zimbabwe, in both countries PR electoral systems were initially chosen in the light of wider negotiations to end violent civil conflicts; however both reverted to SMP systems for subsequent elections¹⁶ (Baumhögger, 1999).

Mozaffar (1998; 2004) contends that perseverance with SMP rules in former British colonies is driven by the convergence of incumbent and opposition preferences on SMP systems. Collier (1982) contends that British colonial administration and early electoral rules encouraged the development of personalised and localised power bases, which lead to a greater degree of fragmentation (on average) in colonial and early post-independence elections in British-administered colonies than in French-administered colonies. Mozaffar (1998; 2004) argues that post-independence single-party elections in former British colonies reinforced this mode of political contestation among incumbents, while opponents of the regime also sought to develop autonomous and localised grassroots support networks. In this context, both incumbents and opponents had little to gain from a move away from SMP when choosing new democratic

officially non-partisan elections in this period, they also held elections where more than one party competed, and it is to these elections that I refer in Table 3.1.

¹⁶ Zimbabwe did so in 1987, so that all Zimbabwean elections considered in this project took place under SMP rules.

institutions post-1989. Another consideration for incumbents and opponents alike during the transition to multipartism was that SMP could help to accommodate regional and sub-regional ethnic factions – especially where votes for various groups tended to be highly regionally-concentrated.

Former French colonies display considerably greater diversity of electoral systems in the multiparty era. Majoritarian electoral rules proved durable in some states: Djibouti maintained the colonial system of multi-seat plurality rules with closed party lists, and Ivory Coast adopted an SMP system. A more common approach in former French colonies was to employ double-ballot majority systems in single-seat (in Central African Republic, Comoros, Republic of Congo, Gabon, Mauritania, and Togo) and/or small multi-seat constituencies (in Mali and Chad). For Mozaffar (2004), the adoption of such systems for multiparty elections post-1989 was a result of the ability of more united pro-incumbent groups to impose their preferred system, which tended to disproportionately favour the largest party in terms of legislative seat share, facilitating the maintenance of largest party hegemony under multiparty competition.

Table 3.1 – Colonial backgrounds and legislative electoral systems of the 45 states considered in this thesis

Electoral System	Colonial Background				
	British	French	Belgian	Portuguese	Other
Single-member constituencies: Plurality	Botswana Gambia Ghana Kenya Lesotho (1993, 1998) Malawi Nigeria Sierra Leone (2007) Tanzania Uganda Zambia Zimbabwe	Ivory Coast			Ethiopia Liberia (2005)
Single-member constituencies: Double ballot majority	Sudan	Central African Rep. Comoros Rep.of Congo Gabon Mauritania Togo			
Multi-Member Constituencies: Plurality	Mauritius ¹⁷	Djibouti			
Multi-Member Constituencies: Double ballot majority		Mali Chad			

¹⁷ With the 'best loser' seats system discussed in footnote 10.

Electoral System	Colonial Background				
	British	French	Belgian	Portuguese	Other
Multi-Member Constituencies: PR small districts		Benin (1995, 1999, 2003, 2007) Burkina Faso (1992, 1997, 2007) Equatorial Guinea Madagascar (1993)		Cape Verde Guinea- Bissau	
Multi-Member Constituencies: PR medium districts	Sierra Leone (2002)	Burkina Faso (2002) Niger	Burundi	São Tomé and Príncipe	
Multi-Member Constituencies: PR large/nationwide districts	Sierra Leone (1996)	Benin (1991)	Rwanda	Angola Mozambique	Liberia (1997) Namibia South Africa
Mixed Systems: Parallel	Seychelles	Cameroon ¹⁸ Madagascar ¹⁹ (1998, 2002, 2007) Guinea Senegal	Democra tic Rep. of Congo		
Mixed Systems: Compensatory	Lesotho (2002, 2007)				

¹⁸ Cameroon's electoral system poses some classificatory problems here, as attribution of seats in its upper tier is rather majoritarian in nature – if a list wins an absolute majority in the multi-seat constituencies it wins all of the seats, if no list wins a majority the list with a plurality gets at least half of the seats with the rest of the seats being distributed proportionally using the Hare quota, subject to a 5% vote threshold (Mehler, 1997). Given the majoritarian elements of upper tier seat attribution, Nohlen *et al.* (1999) categorize it as an absolute majority in multi-member constituencies system, while Mozaffar (2004) considers it a 'mixed parallel' system. I opt for the latter classification here.

¹⁹ As with Cameroon, this system is difficult to classify due to the majoritarian nature of its 'upper tier' seats. Under the electoral system introduced for the May 1998 election 82 members are elected to SMP seats and 68 to PR seats in 34 two-member districts using the Hare quota.

Several former French, Belgian, and Portuguese colonies adopted PR-based systems for multiparty elections. As was discussed in chapter 2, while the electoral formula for achieving proportionality has an important role (Benoit, 2001), studies on the proportionality of PR electoral systems have found the number of seats at stake in the typical district to be the primary determinant of the proportionality of seat shares to vote shares (Shugart and Taagepera, 1989). Among former French colonies, Benin (from 1995 onwards), Burkina-Faso (apart from the 2002 elections), Equatorial Guinea, and Madagascar (before the 1998 elections) operated PR systems with average constituency sizes of less than 5²⁰. Former Portuguese colonies have all employed variants of PR electoral systems; with small-sized constituencies in the former island states of Cape Verde and Guinea Bissau, medium-size constituencies in São Tomé and Príncipe, and large constituencies in Angola and Mozambique, with a 5% national vote threshold applying in Mozambique. Former Belgian colonies Burundi and Rwanda both adopted PR systems with 5% thresholds.

Burkina Faso (in a 2002 reformed system, which was subsequently dropped for the 2007 elections), Benin (in its 1991 founding election), and Niger employ medium-to-large constituencies. In three systems with alternative colonial histories – Liberia, Namibia, and South Africa, ‘pure’ (Nohlen *et al.*, 1999: 19) variants of PR, with nationwide districts and no formal thresholds were selected at the advent of multipartism in the 1990s (though Liberia adopted a SMP system for its 2005 legislative elections).

²⁰ In this discussion and in the presentation of legislative electoral systems in Table 3.1, PR systems with an average district magnitude of 5 or less are counted as ‘small districts’, those with average district magnitudes of 6-9 are counted as ‘medium’ and those with average district magnitudes of 10 or greater are counted as ‘large’. This distinction is evidently somewhat arbitrary, and is based on Cox’s (1997) contention that ‘strategic voting in multimember districts fads out when the district magnitude gets above five’ (p.122). However, the measure used in the inferential chapters is continuous and the distinction made here is principally to facilitate presentation.

According to Mozaffar (2004) two broad patterns explain the choice of elites to adopt PR for multiparty elections. The first pattern was a dynamic of relatively even balance between displaced incumbents and pro-democracy coalitions during the negotiation of the institutional arrangements under which multiparty competition would take place. In this scenario, two factors worked in favour of the adoption of PR – firstly, no single group could impose its most-preferred system on the others, so that majoritarian systems were vetoed, and, secondly, both incumbents and challengers were highly uncertain about their prospects in competitive election. PR systems protected risk-averse elites from potential electoral annihilation to some extent. According to Mozaffar (2004), this pattern was observable in Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cape Verde, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar, Niger, and São Tomé and Príncipe.

The second pattern identified by Mozaffar (1998; 2004) in explaining the adoption of PR rules in African states was one where broader political considerations arising from intrastate conflict or civil war meant that electoral system design could not exclude certain groups from legislative representation. This overriding consideration favoured PR in negotiations even where, as in the South African case, there were strong electoral incentives for the largest group to adopt a majoritarian system. Mozaffar (2004) argues that this dynamic was observable in Angola, Liberia, Mozambique, Namibia, Sierra Leone, South Africa, and Zimbabwe. However, it is worth noting that Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Zimbabwe all adopted SMP systems for later elections.

A number of states adopted ‘mixed’ systems, where SMP/majority and PR components co-exist in the same electoral system. Gallagher and Mitchell (2005a) distinguish between ‘compensatory’ and ‘parallel’ variants of mixed systems – in compensatory systems, allocation of the PR seats is designed to ensure that parties’ seat shares are proportional to parties’ share of the list vote, seeking to compensate parties for disproportionality in the single seat

component²¹. Parallel systems, on the other hand, separate the majoritarian and PR tiers, so that the allocation of the PR seats operates independently of the results in the SMP seats. Therefore, in parallel mixed systems, ‘the over-representation of the large parties in the single member seats is only partially “corrected” by the list seats and proportionality is not particularly high’ (Gallagher and Mitchell, 2005a: 13).

Parallel mixed systems are more prevalent than compensatory mixed systems in legislative elections in sub-Saharan Africa. Lesotho (since 2002) was the first African country to apply a compensatory mixed system for national elections, though South Africa, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, and Mauritius all employ this compensatory mixed systems in local elections (Elklit, 2002) and there have been calls for the adoption of this system for national elections in South Africa (Krennerich and de Ville, 1997).

The parallel systems observed in Cameroon, Madagascar (from 1998 onwards), Guinea, the Seychelles, and Senegal vary considerably in terms of proportionality profile. Indeed, it is debatable whether the systems in Cameroon and Madagascar can be properly classed as ‘mixed’ systems at all, as their ‘PR’ segments achieve minimal proportionality – due to a majority surplus in the case of Cameroon, and extremely small constituency sizes in the case of Madagascar (see footnotes 18 and 19 for details of both systems). The electoral system in the Seychelles is also highly majoritarian, with 25 out of 34 seats elected by SMP and the remaining 9 elected under PR, subject to a 10% formal vote threshold (Thibaut, 1999).

In both Guinea and Senegal, national lists account for a more substantial portion of the seats. For Mozaffar (2004), the parallel systems adopted in

²¹ For example, if a party were to win 30 seats in the constituency elections, but were entitled to 60 seats on the basis of the list vote, they would receive 30 extra seats on the list-PR allocation. If another party were due 20 seats on the basis of the list vote, but didn’t win a single constituency, they would receive all 20 seats from the list-PR allocation under ‘compensatory’ allocation rules.

Cameroon and the Seychelles are best explained by of the ongoing hegemony of formerly single parties into the multiparty era, with these parties able to impose highly majoritarian systems on weak opposition groups. In Senegal and Guinea, Mozaffar (1998; 2004) argues that the systems chosen represent more of a balancing act, where new authoritarian incumbents had replaced long-time authoritarian rulers. These actors had control over the selection of the electoral rules, however they were under pressure to establish their democratic credentials and provide participatory opportunities for opposition groups. For Mozaffar, the parallel mixed systems adopted in Senegal and Guinea facilitated these goals to some extent, while simultaneously allowing hegemonic parties to consolidate in their traditional localised strongholds, and to maintain numerical superiority in the legislatures.

While it has long been observed that electoral systems are rarely changed in established democracies (Katz, 2005; Lijphart, 1997), they have proved far less resistant to change in Central and Eastern Europe's 'third wave' democracies, which have engaged in what Juberias (2004) describes as 'seemingly endless processes of electoral system change' (p. 323). Nohlen *et al.* (1999) note, however, that institutional development in the sub-Saharan region is 'marked much more by continuity than change' (p. 17). The general direction of those reforms that have taken place²² has been towards more majoritarian systems – from PR to SMP in Zimbabwe (1987), Liberia (2005), and Sierra Leone (2007), to smaller district magnitudes in Benin (1995), and from a PR system to a highly majoritarian 'mixed' system in Madagascar(1998).

Burkina Faso moved in the opposite direction, significantly increasing the average district magnitude of its PR elections from 2.5 in 1997 to nearly 8 in 2002, resulting in both greater proportionality and a larger share of seats for

²² Not including changes in the size of parliaments, which have tended to grow larger where they have been revised, potentially providing more opportunities to small parties to achieve legislative representation, though Senegal's 1998 reduction of its Assembly size went against this trend.

opposition groups (Santiso and Loada, 2003). However, these reforms were reversed for the 2007 elections. Lesotho provides the only example of a significant and sustained increase in the proportionality of a reformed system in the 1989-2008 period; moving from an SMP system to a compensatory mixed system following the governance crisis arising from the highly disproportional outcome of the 1998 legislative elections²³.

For Mozaffar (2004), reforms in Benin and Madagascar represent attempts (or at least were couched in terms of attempts) to ensure that members of the legislature were made more responsive to their constituents. Similar arguments have been deployed in an ongoing debate in South Africa regarding whether a compensatory list system should replace the closed list system currently in operation there (Krennerich and de Ville, 1997). Another consideration in these reforms was that they would serve to reduce levels of party system fragmentation in both countries. Bogaards (2000) notes that most electoral system crafting in the region 'concentrates on a reduction in the number of parties' (p.177) citing the reforms in Benin and Madagascar, as well as the use of thresholds in Burundi, Sierra Leone, Mozambique, São Tomé and Príncipe, and the Seychelles as instances of this trend.

Arguably, given the high levels of single party dominance observed in this thesis; one might have expected a greater concern in electoral reform for ensuring access to legislative representation for small parties. Mozaffar (2004) identifies Lesotho's and Burkina Faso's electoral reforms as representing such concerns – however the reforms in Lesotho only took place following considerable civil unrest, and the Burkina Faso reforms, which lead to what Santiso and Loada (2003) describe as 'unexpected' (p. 395) results (in the sense that opposition groups achieved a reasonable degree of parliamentary representation in a semi-authoritarian context) were subsequently reversed.

²³ These elections were held under SMP and saw the Lesotho Congress for Democracy (LCD) taking 79 out of 80 seats with 60.7% of the national vote (Elklit, 2002).

Overall, the above description demonstrates that there is considerable diversity with regard to legislative electoral systems across the elections studied in this region. This is an ideal position from the point of view of comparative investigation. While electoral systems have generally been stable in the period studied here, there is some within-country variation. In this project, the characteristic of electoral systems that I seek to measure is the extent to which they facilitate the legislative representation of small parties at the national level; or the level of 'permissiveness' of each electoral system.

While average district magnitude is typically a useful proxy for this characteristic, its effects are not constant across electoral formulas – indeed, they run in the opposite direction for PR and majoritarian systems. Other factors to be taken into consideration include thresholds for representation (which automatically exclude parties falling below a certain threshold), whether mixed systems are segmented or compensatory, and the size of the assembly. I explain how these considerations are factored into the measure of electoral system permissiveness employed throughout this thesis in chapter 4, and, in greater detail, in Appendix A.

3.3.2 Societal Diversity

The most typically used data on societal diversity in prior comparative investigations of the sources of party system fragmentation have measured the extent of fragmentation of each society along a given dimension of political differentiation (most typically ethnic, but religious and linguistic dimensions have also been considered) (Amorim Neto and Cox, 1997; Clark and Golder, 2006; Cox, 1997; Ordeshook and Shvetsova, 1994; Powell, 1982; Jones 1999; Filippov *et al.*, 1999; Jones 1999; 2004; Stoll, 2004; 2008). Such measures seek to uncover levels of 'latent' (Stoll, 2008: 1441) social diversity present in each population being studied. The principal advantage of this approach is the purported exogenous nature of 'latent' societal diversity; populations are measured in terms of ascriptive traits regardless of the extent to which these traits have been

politicised. However, a major drawback is that this approach risks either measuring insignificant variation or not including significant sources of cleavage division (Stoll, 2004).

An alternative characterisation of societal preference structure employs Lijphart's (1984) data on the number of 'issue dimensions' observed across 22 democratic post World War II polities. Taagepera and Shugart (1989) report that 'the effective number of parties in the assembly tends to equal the number of issue dimensions plus 1' (p. 94) and Taagepera (1999a) finds an observed general relationship of the form:

$$N = I^{0.6} M^{0.15} + 1$$

Where 'N' is the effective number of parties in the legislature, 'I' is the number of issue dimensions measured in the polity and 'M' is the effective district magnitude of the system as a whole²⁴.

While there are no measures (to the author's knowledge) that seek to capture the dimensionality of African political contestation in the same way as Lijphart's (1984) data for Western European polities, there are two well-established datasets explicitly measuring the extent of 'constructed' societal fragmentation along ethnic lines across Africa. 'Constructivist' approaches eschew the claim that ethnic or other socially meaningful markers are exogenous to political contestation, arguing that identity is a socially-constructed phenomenon and that measures based on ascriptive traits – an approach described (somewhat derisively) as 'primordialist' by Mozaffar *et al.* (2003: 379) - fail to capture this.

²⁴ However, concerns have been raised that this approach relies on a measure of societal preference structure that is driven by observed partisan divisions in society. Stoll (2004) contends that: 'we might ask how independent the two are' with correlations between the measure of issue dimensions and effective number of legislative parties reported by Lijphart (1999), Taagepera and Shugart (1989), and Taagepera (1999a) 'suspiciously high' (p. 58).

The most commonly used measure of societal diversity in existing comparative studies of African party system fragmentation is developed by Mozaffar *et al.* (2003) from Scarritt and Mozaffar's (1999) dataset, and is based on the contention that 'ethnic groups are not primordially fixed, but are constructed in the course of social, economic and political interactions' (Mozaffar *et al.*, 2003: 379). This measure estimates the fragmentation of the population in states in sub-Saharan Africa across *politicised* ethnic groups (Brambor *et al.*, 2007; Mozaffar *et al.* 2003; Mylonas and Roussias, 2009), employing Scarritt and Mozaffar's (1999) measure of 'ethnopolitical groups' (p. 82)²⁵. Mozaffar *et al.* (2003) seek to counteract endogeneity in their measure by specifying that groups 'must have been politicized at least 10 years prior to the first election analyzed in each country' (p. 383). This approach to measuring societal diversity is somewhat subjective to the author's assessment of the criteria which an issue has to meet to be considered 'politicised' and may be difficult to reliably extend to new cases. Scarritt and Mozaffar (1999) also provide an estimate of the extent to which ethnopolitical grouping is geographically concentrated (see chapter 4 for a discussion of this measure). Posner (2004a) also adopts a constructivist approach to measuring societal diversity in sub-Saharan Africa. Posner generates an index of Politically Relevant Ethnic Groups (PREG), following a similar logic to Scarritt and Mozaffar (1999), but with an orientation towards economic and policy-based competition among ethnic groups (rather than competition for political power *per se*).

²⁵ Scarritt and Mozaffar (1999) take any one of the following traits as a necessary and sufficient indicator for an ethnic group identity to be considered 'politicised':

- a) Organised group mobilisation unrelated to party formation (ethnic associations or cliques of leaders within the same party, the bureaucracy, or the military).
- b) Articulation of grievances by leaders claiming to speak for a group rather than a party.
- c) Participation in collective action, conflict (violent or non-violent) with other groups or the state, being subjected to state violence.
- d) Encapsulation within or domination of an officially designated administrative unit.
- e) Occupation of a disproportionate number of high positions within the bureaucracy or the military.
- f) Controlling disproportionate socio-economic resources.

There are also several measures of societal diversity in sub-Saharan Africa that Mozaffar *et al.* (2003) characterize as 'primordialist' in orientation. These measures seek to capture levels of ethnic, linguistic, or religious diversity in each state – regardless of the extent to which these traits have been salient in the politics of the state. The 'primordialist' label may be somewhat misleading here; Fearon (2003) argues that supposedly ascriptive traits of ethnic groups have a 'contingent, fuzzy and situational character' (p. 197). The most concrete point of differentiation between these measures and those developed by Mozaffar *et al.* (2003) and Posner (2004a) is that they do not systematically weight politicised over non-politicised traits. The most commonly used source of data in previous comparative analyses of established democracies comes from the work of Soviet geographers who compiled comprehensive cross-national data on 'ethnolinguistic' groups in the early 1960s in the *Atlas Narodov Mira* (Stoll, 2004). Fearon (2003) provides a more up-to-date index, developing a list of the ethnic groups comprising at least 1% of each country's population using a variety of sources. Fearon (*ibid.*) also generates a cross-national measure of 'cultural diversity' (p.211) which seeks to take into account the mitigating effect that cultural similarity can have on ethnic fragmentation. In constructing this index, Fearon uses the structural similarity of languages across groups as a measure of cultural dissimilarity and weights his measure so that the extent of fractionalisation is kept the same when each group speaks a structurally different language and reduced for every pair of groups that speak either the same, or structurally similar languages.

Alesina *et al.*'s (2003) dataset is another highly useful source, as it measures diversity along ethnic, linguistic, and religious cleavages separately. Their 'ethnic' data is constructed employing the 2001 *Encyclopaedia Britannia* and the (2000) *CIA World Fact Book* as principal sources. Their measures do not seek to filter out ethnic groups on the basis of whether they are politically or economically relevant; rather their measures 'reflect the judgement of ethnologists and anthropologists on the definition of ethnicity' (p. 160). They

also include ethnic groups that comprise less than 1% of the population, providing a more disaggregated measure than Fearon (2003)²⁶.

Country breakdowns of the 'effective number' of groups per country according to each of these sources are listed in Appendix B. One ready observation is that, of the measures included here that extend to other world regions (Atlas, 1964; Alesina *et al.* 2003; Fearon, 2003), all find that sub-Saharan Africa is, by a considerable distance, the most ethnically and linguistically diverse world region (in terms of average diversity per state). Alesina *et al.* (2003), for example, find that sub-Saharan Africa comfortably ranks the highest of the world regions that they consider in terms of average ethnic and linguistic diversity per state. The difference with other world regions is considerably less marked in terms of religious diversity (where Central and Eastern Europe and Latin America have near identical levels of diversity to sub-Saharan Africa) although sub-Saharan Africa still tops Alesina *et al.*'s regional table.

Table 3.2 displays pairwise correlations of the measures of societal diversity employed in this thesis. Nearly all were positively (and significantly) correlated, which is to be expected, given that they seek to capture the same underlying concept of societal diversity. There is a very high correlation between 'ethnic' and 'linguistic' measures of diversity – which is not an overly surprising finding, given that the two are often extremely difficult to separate, indeed they are combined in the *Atlas Narodov Mira* (1964) measure of 'ethnolinguistic' diversity. Alesina *et al.*'s (2003) measure of religious diversity is the most readily distinguishable from the others, and several of the pairwise correlations between this variable and the other measures are not statistically significant at the 95% level. Overall, while there is significant correspondence between most of the

²⁶ Posner (2004) identifies two further sources of data on societal diversity in sub-Saharan Africa: Roder (2001) and Morrison *et al.* (1989) however both used older data and were less complete in coverage than the data sources used in this thesis. This critique arguably also extends to the *Atlas Narodov Mira* (1964) data – however it is included here on the grounds of comparability with previous studies in established democracies, for a summary see of data sources used in previous comparative studies see: Stoll (2008).

measures – there is not perfect correspondence and none can be said to be the authoritative source on societal diversity in sub-Saharan Africa. The solution adopted in this thesis is to deploy a range of measures in chapters 4, 5, and 6 – in order to minimize the potential that substantive findings are a consequence of measurement choice.

Table 3.2 - Pairwise correlations of measures of societal diversity employed in this thesis²⁷

	Scarritt and Mozaffar (1999)	Alesina <i>et al.</i> (2003) Ethnic	Fearon (2003) Ethnic	Posner (2004)	Atlas (1964)	Fearon (2003) Cultural	Alesina <i>et al.</i> (2003) Linguistic
Scarritt and Mozaffar (1999)							
Alesina <i>et al.</i> (2003) Ethnic	.51						
Fearon (2003) Ethnic	.26	.56					
Posner (2004)	.51	.45	.43				
Atlas (1964)	.40	.54	.76	.66			
Fearon (2003) Cultural	.20	.54	.37	.49	.57		
Alesina <i>et al.</i> (2003) Linguistic	.47	.70	.67	.58	.79	.62	
Alesina <i>et al.</i> (2003) Religious	.49	.17	.12	.26	.33	.10	.31

²⁷ To avoid a superabundance of stars in this table, boldface type denotes pairwise correlations that are statistically significant at the 95% level.

3.3.3 Ethnic Groups' Geographic Concentration

While, as discussed above, there exist several measures of societal diversity across states in sub-Saharan Africa, there is only one source of data, of which the author is aware, on the extent to which ethnic groups are geographically concentrated or dispersed: Scarritt and Mozaffar's (1999) paper. Scarritt and Mozaffar attributed each politically relevant subgroup that their analysis uncovered (see footnote 25) a geographic concentration score on a 0 – 3 scale. They describe the substantive meaning attributed to each score as follows: '0 = widely dispersed, 1 = primarily urban or minority in one region, 2 = majority in one region, others dispersed, and 3 = concentrated in one region' (p. 91). The definition of a 'region' that Scarritt and Mozaffar employ for their purposes is 'a contiguous and relatively compact geographical area that comprises less than two-thirds of a country and may or may not correspond to administrative boundaries' (p. 91). The authors provide justifications or explanations for their coding in the table where they are listed. Evidently this is a somewhat unsatisfactory source, the measure is rather crude and one is forced to rely on the authors' judgment calls. Ideally, one would use census data or data built on the basis of representative sampling methods. Unfortunately, such data are not available for the majority of the countries studied in this thesis. In the absence of alternative data sources, this measure at least gives some insight into the geographic distribution of ethnic groups across the states studied in this thesis.

Mozaffar *et al.* (2003) emphasize the importance of considering the territorial concentration as a factor that can condition the relationship between societal diversity and party system fragmentation. They argue high levels of territorial concentration among members of an ethnopolitical group facilitate the politicisation of that ethnic identity, 'furnishing a critical mass of individuals with similar interests based on common location, thus reducing the start-up cost of group formation and the maintenance cost of group solidarity' (p. 383). In order to evaluate this contention, Mozaffar *et al.* generate a national-level concentration score for each country. The concentration score for a country is

created when the concentration code of each ethnopolitical group within that country, as measured by Scarritt and Mozaffar (1999), is multiplied by its share of the population, with the results for all groups summed to obtain the ethnopolitical group concentration score for the country. Effectively, this measure represents the weighted average level of geographic concentration of ethnopolitical groups identified by Scarritt and Mozaffar in each country studied here. Both Brambor *et al.* (2007) and Mylonas and Roussias (2008) followed Mozaffar *et al.* (2003) in employing this measure to capture the effect of ethnic group concentration levels on vote and seat fragmentation in their analyses. In the analyses in chapters 4, 5, and 6 I employ this measure as a proxy for the extent to which a typical group in each country is geographically concentrated or dispersed.

3.3.4 Levels of Political Freedoms

Previous quantitative cross-national comparative analyses of party systems have tended to elide difficulties posed by variation in levels of political freedoms across states by specifying minimum thresholds of democratic practice for a case to be considered. For example, Amorim-Neto and Cox (1997) include only countries that were classified by Freedom House as 'free' while Ordeshook and Shvetsova (1994: 101-102) only include countries from developed industrialised nations. Indeed, their conclusions contain an explicit caveat that they 'rest on data from one source – stable, economically prosperous Western democracies' (p. 102). Clark and Golder (2006) also have a minimal criterion that elections be democratic. However, such an approach in sub-Saharan Africa's multiparty elections 1989-2008 would lead to an analysis that excludes the greater part of these elections.

In this sub-section I discuss the variable levels of political freedoms that obtain across the continent, and the proxy variable (Freedom Houses' measure of 'Political Rights') that is employed in chapters 4-6 to control for this variation.

A first point to note is that, regardless of the manner in which the degree of 'freedom' or 'democracy' in states is measured, sub-Saharan Africa is characterised by a considerable diversity across states. As van de Walle (2002) notes, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of states in sub-Saharan Africa conducting multiparty elections from the early 1990s onwards, to the extent that 'the vast majority of electoral states are now multiparty electoral regimes' (p. 67), however he goes on to caution that 'a closer look (...) reveals polities that vary from relatively liberal democracies to thinly veiled personal dictatorships' (p.68).

The extent of this variance in sub-Saharan Africa is such that failing to account for it in a comparative analysis of African party system fragmentation risks ignoring a major part of the analytical picture. Nonetheless, two of the most influential comparative accounts of African party system fragmentation in the multiparty era to date (Mozaffar *et al.*, 2003; Brambor *et al.*, 2007) totally ignore variation in regime type. According to Mylonas and Roussias (2008), these analyses of multiparty elections in the sub-Saharan region simply 'lump these elections together under the category of "emerging democracies"' (p. 22).

There is widespread debate in various fields of political science on the empirical measurement of democracy, to say nothing of the literature on normative conceptualisations of democracy, where it has been asserted that the concept of 'democracy' itself is 'essentially contested' (Gallie, 1956). The emergence of a highly diverse array of post-authoritarian regimes following the 'third wave' (Huntington, 1991) of democratisation has posed profound difficulties for scholars seeking to categorize regimes (Collier and Levitsky, 1999). Multiple strategies have been advocated, with debates on whether operationalizations should be dichotomous or graded (Alvarez *et al.*, 1996), on whether one (or more) electorally provided alternation of power is a necessary condition for a system to be considered 'democratic' (Huntington, 1991; Przeworski *et al.*, 2000), and on whether regimes should be treated as amenable to placement on a single scale of 'democracy' or whether they should be

grouped into analytically discrete 'diminished sub-types' (Collier and Levitsky, 1997).

Collier and Adcock (1999) argue in favour of a research-centred, pragmatic approach, where the definition or operationalization adopted should 'rest on more specific arguments linked to the goals of research (...) how scholars understand and operationalize a concept can and should depend in part on what they are going to do with it'. (p. 537). Lindberg (2006) similarly argues that 'the real test of the usefulness of a conceptual construction is its ability to be operational in empirical analysis' (p. 25). As this thesis is primarily concerned with the shape of party systems across sub-Saharan Africa, rather than the achievement of democracy *per se*, I adopt the perspective that the considerable variation in regime type across the continent represents a potential explanatory factor in its own right, as well as a factor that must be held constant in order to assess the impact of other factors (such as societal diversity and electoral system type) with confidence.

Having taken this stance, one is faced with a choice between graded and dichotomous measures of regime type. The approach to dealing with the variations in levels of 'democracy' across the sub-Saharan region for studies of electoral system effects advocated by Mylonas and Roussias (2008) is based on a dichotomous conceptualisation of democracy; they separate elections into discrete categories of 'democratic' versus 'non-democratic' elections and analyse these categories separately. A similar methodology is deployed in Lindberg's (2005) analysis of the effects of electoral systems on African party systems. However, the major difficulty with this approach is that, as van de Walle (2002) points out, 'most of Africa's multiparty systems – some two dozen states – do not fit easily into either the "full-fledged democracy" or the "electoral autocracy" category' (p. 69). He argues that this ambiguity with regards to the larger part of Africa's multiparty regimes extends over issues of horizontal democratic

accountability, corruption and clientelism, as well as the possibility/likelihood of electoral turnover²⁸.

Even among those regimes in which ruling parties have actively distorted the electoral process, this has not always guaranteed their success. For example, Lindberg (2006) outlines instances (presidential and legislative elections in Ivory Coast in 2000, executive elections in Madagascar in 2001, legislative elections in Malawi in 1999, and the assembly election in Namibia in 1989) where alternations of power occurred in spite of irregularities in the ballot counting process, pointing out that 'trying to cheat is one thing (...) doing it successfully is sometimes quite another' (p. 36). Also, in cases such as the Zimbabwean executive elections in 2008, where the ruling party resorted to the use of force against opposition groups, this has often been as a result of unexpectedly high levels of support emerging for opposition groups during electoral campaigns.

The data in Table 3.3 below, which summarises Freedom Houses' Political Rights country/year categorisations for legislative and executive elections, provide support for van de Walle's (2002) assertion that the majority of elections in Africa take place in regimes that are difficult to unambiguously categorise as being either 'fully democratic' or 'electoral authoritarian'. The largest category for election years considered in this research was 'partly free' (132 election years), with 69 'free' election years and 70 'not free' years according to the Freedom House (2009) 'political rights' data.

A dichotomous measure of 'democracy' or 'fairness' therefore fails to adequately capture the prevalence of 'hybrid' (van de Walle, 2002: 67) regimes

²⁸ For instance, with regard to turnover, van de Walle argues that – while a few systems have proven capable of generating executive turnover via the ballot box (for instance in Benin, Ghana, Madagascar, Mauritius, and Senegal) and others had resorted to force and fraud to make sure that elections did not result in turnovers (e.g. Cameroon, Guinea, Kenya, and Zimbabwe) – the largest group of countries are those where 'electoral contests are tilted against the opposition, but where democratic procedures seem deeply rooted enough to make it unlikely that an incumbent could withstand a landslide vote for the opposition' (2002: 69).

(which combine elements of democratic practice with elements of autocratic rule) in the region. From a practical point of view, dividing the elections studied here into a more fine-grained set of discrete categories would limit the extent of variance that can be analysed comparatively. Instead, the approach that is adopted in this thesis is to control for variations in levels of political freedoms using a graded measurement index, and to include all *de jure* multiparty elections in the analyses in chapters 4, 5, and 6.

Table 3.3 – Distribution of Freedom House ‘Political Rights’ categories²⁹ for election years studied in this thesis

	Free and Fair	Partly Free	Not Free	Total
Legislative	43	72	35	150
Executive	26	60	35	121
All	69	132	70	271

The achievement of certain civil liberties, the extent of horizontal accountability of the government to other organisations, and whether or not elections have resulted in an alteration of leaders are all of considerable importance in understanding the distribution of power within a given state. However, in selecting among the various competing gradated indices of ‘democracy’ (see Munck and Verkuilen, 2002 for a rigorous review of several measures) I seek to capture only variations in the extent to which regime types inhibit the capacities of individuals and groups to organise politically (and which, therefore, can help to explain the partisan distribution of seats).

²⁹ Free and fair = 1-2, Partly Free = 3-5, Not Free = 6-7)

There are two major competing datasets that capture this property across the countries studied in this thesis, as well as measuring variation within each country annually for the time period covered by the thesis (1989-2008). These are Freedom Houses' 'Political Rights' index, which describes electoral competition, political pluralism, and the functioning of government (Freedom House, 2009) and Polity IV's data on political participation, which capture the regulation and competitiveness of political contestation (Marshall and Jagers, 2009).

The Polity IV dataset has advantages over the Freedom House data in terms of the transparency of the coding procedures, and, more importantly, with regard to the dissemination of disaggregated data³⁰ (Munck and Verkuilen, 2002). The major disadvantage of the Polity IV data from the point of view of this project however, is that it is explicitly categorical in nature (Marshall and Jagers, 2009; Munck and Verkuilen, 2002) – rendering it less amenable to the theoretical and methodological approach that is developed in chapters 4-6. The Freedom House data, on the other hand, is ordinal in nature with each increase in the ranking corresponding to a decrease in measured levels of political freedoms, on a 7-point scale (see Appendix C for details on the construction and interpretation of this index).

Certainly, it cannot be said that the Freedom House data is a perfect source for this project. The most important drawback to the data is the unavailability of disaggregated data across the country years studied here. Ideally, one would employ disaggregated data capturing only the fairness of electoral procedure and openness of the system with regard to political pluralism and participation. However, absent such data, the 'Political Rights' variable represents the closest available approximation to the empirical variation that I

³⁰ Though Rydland *et al.* (2008) note that disaggregated Freedom House data has become available since the 2006 edition of *Freedom in the World*.

seek to control for and analyse in subsequent chapters. Arguably, any measure of 'democracy' or 'openness' that one could select for this sort of analysis would include elements that are somewhat tangential to the core variation that I am attempting to control for.

With regard to its coding procedures, the Freedom House data is problematic with regards to both transparency and replicability. Munck and Verkuilien (2002) are particularly trenchant in their critique of Freedom House's practices in this regard. The situation is most egregious for data on the years 1977-1989 when the coding was performed by a single coder, Gastill (1991) and where the coding appears to have been at the level of the attributes 'Political Rights' and 'Civil Rights' rather than at the level of the checklist questions on which these scores are based. Post-1989 (*i.e.* during the period covered in this thesis) the situation is somewhat improved, as coding was undertaken by a team rather than a single coder, and data coded at the checklist rather than the attribute level (Munck and Verkuilien, 2002). The authors of the dataset acknowledge that 'there is an element of subjectivity inherent in the findings' however they emphasize that 'the ratings process emphasizes intellectual rigor and balanced and unbiased judgments' (Freedom House, 2009: 352). A final problem is the practice of changing the checklist of questions according to which the data were constructed from year to year, which Munck and Verkuilien argue leaves the internal comparability of the dataset 'open to question' (p. 21).

Clearly then, the Freedom House data is imperfect in several regards. Nonetheless, it is selected in this thesis because it presents several significant advantages over its competitors from the point of view studying the fragmentation of party systems in sub-Saharan Africa. Firstly, the dataset provides excellent coverage across countries and years studied. Secondly, it provides a graded measure that doesn't shoehorn intermediate cases into either 'democratic' or 'authoritarian' categories. This trait of the Freedom House data is particularly important, given the ambiguity that surrounds the extent to which the majority of Africa's multiparty regimes may be said to be 'democratic' (van

de Walle, 2002). Thirdly, it captures the extent to which regimes vary in the restriction of freedoms of groups to organise into political parties to contest power – it is the variance in this attribute of regimes that are both investigated and controlled for in chapters 4-6. Finally, it provides an ordinal measure of this phenomenon, making it more amenable than the categorical Polity IV data to the theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of party systems in the sub-Saharan region that I develop in chapters 4-6.

3.3.5 Vote and Seat Fragmentation/Largest Party vote and seat share in Africa's multiparty elections 1989-2008.

Bogaards (2000) notes that, while academic and practical discussions of the design of electoral institutions in sub-Saharan Africa have focused on the issue of over-fragmentation, the overwhelming tendency across these elections is for an unusually high *concentration* of votes and seats in the hands of a small number of parties compared to elections elsewhere, with a majority of votes and seats typically being held by a single party. Bogaards' assertion is investigated in this section, which describes observed levels of vote and seat fragmentation, as well as single-party dominance, for the legislative and executive elections studied in this thesis.

The concept of fragmentation that I seek to measure here is not just how many parties competed in each election, but also how votes and seats were distributed among them. I do so in chapters 4 and 5 by employing the Laakso-Taagepera (1979) index³¹. This index has the property that, for any number of n

³¹ The formula according to which the Laakso-Taagepera index is calculated for the effective number of legislative/electoral parties (n) is: $1/\sum p_i^2$

Where p = the i^{th} party's proportion of seats/votes.

In straightforward terms, calculating this quantity for a given set of vote/seat distributions involves calculating each party's proportion of the vote/seat total, squaring each value, summing these squared values, and taking the reciprocal of this sum (Gallagher and Mitchell, 2005b: 599).

parties having an equal share of the vote, it will yield a score of n . As such, the larger the effective number of parties, the higher the extent of party system fragmentation. The lowest value possible is unity, which indicates that a single party has won 100% of the votes in an election or seats in a legislature. While it has received criticisms from some quarters (Dunleavy and Boucek, 2003; Golosov, 2010) and there do exist alternative indexes (Golosov, 2010; Molinar, 1991) the Laasko-Taagepera index is well-established as the most widely used measure of party system fragmentation in the comparative party systems literature (Gallagher and Mitchell, 2005a; Lijhpart, 1994). The Laasko-Taagepera index is employed as a proxy for legislative and electoral fragmentation in chapters 4 (for executive elections) and 5 (for legislative elections) of this thesis. A major area of criticism of the index, however, is that it produces 'unrealistically high scores for party constellations in which the shares of the largest parties exceed 50 percent' (Golosov, 2010: 171). As most of the party systems studied here exhibit this property, I focus exclusively (in chapter 6) on largest party seat share as a dependent variable. Appendix D provides full details of vote and seat fragmentation scores, as well as largest party seat and vote share for each country/year considered in this thesis.

Table 3.4 compares values of N for party vote and seat scores in legislative elections studied in this thesis (first row) to a larger dataset capturing the results of all democratic elections carried out worldwide between 1946 and 2000³², collected by Golder (2005) and analysed by Clark and Golder (2006). What is immediately striking is that both vote and seat distributions are considerably less fragmented in African elections than in the Golder (2005) dataset.

Another interesting point of comparison is between elections in sub-Saharan Africa and elections in 'new' democracies elsewhere (defined as states that transitioned to democracy after 1989), as measured in Golder's data. Golder

³² African cases are removed from the Golder (2005) data for the purposes of this comparison.

and Wantchekon (2004) suggest that the absence of an observable monotonic positive relationship between district magnitude and party system fragmentation in Africa's democratic elections may be a result of the high proportion of 'new' democracies there. As discussed in chapter 2, electoral system effects have been less easily discernible in elections in 'new' democracies generally (Birch, 2005; Clark and Golder, 2006; Moser, 1999; Moser and Scheiner, 2009; Singer and Stephenson, 2009). Golder's (2005) data indicates that 'new' democracies (which they class as countries that democratised in the year 1989 or later) tend to have more fragmented party systems than 'old' ones. The data in Table 3.4 indicates, however, that there is considerably greater fragmentation in 'new' democracies outside of Africa than in 'new' African democracies.

We can see that, in those countries which were classed by Bratton and van de Walle (1997) as 'multiparty systems' prior to 1989 (*i.e.* 'old' African democracies), vote and seat shares are less fragmented than elections in African countries that democratised after 1989. Nonetheless, elections in 'new' African democracies result in considerably less fragmented party systems than in either 'new' or 'old' democracies elsewhere. This is a striking pattern when one considers that the comparative studies of societal diversity discussed in section 3.3.2 ranked sub-Saharan Africa as the most diverse region in the world in terms of ethnic, linguistic, religious, and cultural fragmentation of state populations (Alesina *et al.* 2003; Fearon, 2003).

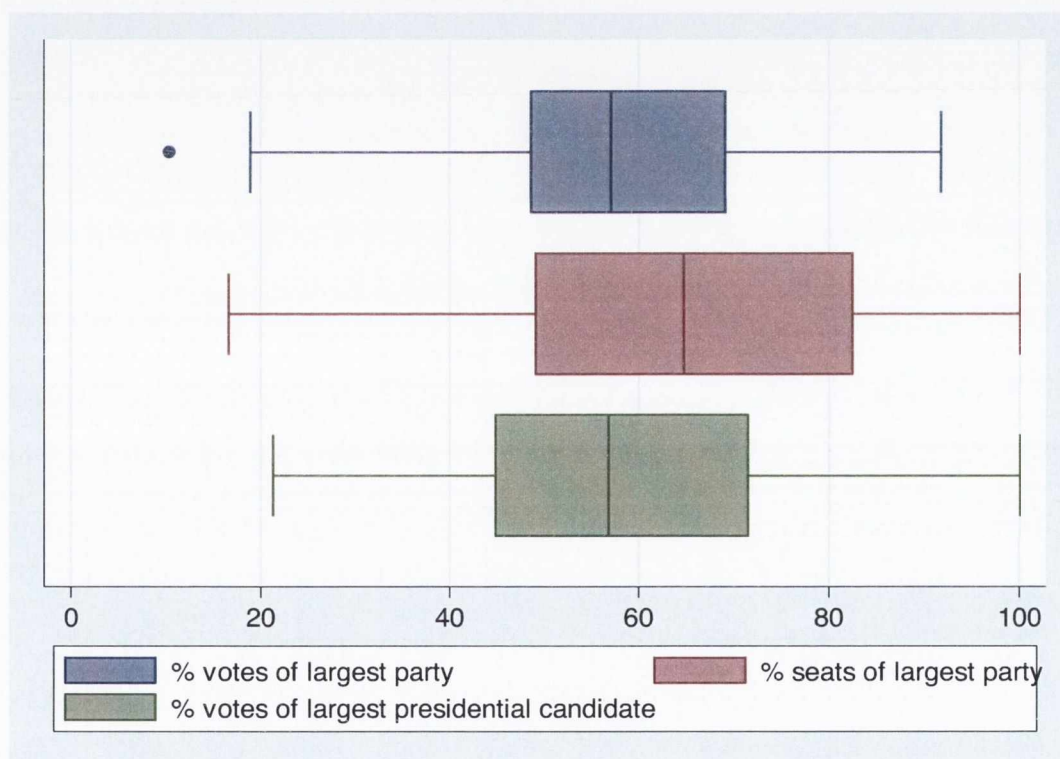
Table 3.4 - Average effective number of electoral and legislative parties in this study and in other studies of the effects of electoral systems (number of elections in parentheses)

	Electoral parties	Legislative parties	Presidential candidates
Sub-Saharan Africa: all	2.9 (99)	2.6 (149)	2.6 (121)
Sub-Saharan Africa: 'old'³³	2.3 (17)	1.7 (20)	2.2 (10)
Sub-Saharan Africa: 'new'	3.1 (82)	2.8 (129)	2.7 (111)
Golder (2005) all democracies.	4.3 (747)	3.3 (755)	2.8 (322)
Golder (2005) 'old' democracies	4.0 (673)	3.2 (678)	2.8 (278)
Golder (2005) 'new' democracies	5.0 (94)	3.5 (98)	3.0 (44)

³³ 'Old' democracies were those designated by Bratton and van de Walle (1997) as 'multiparty democracies' prior to 1989, these were: Botswana, Gambia, Mauritius, Senegal, and Zimbabwe.

Arguably, the observed low level of fragmentation in African elections is driven by the tendency of the largest party to win unusually large portions of votes and seats across African party systems. Looking at the legislative and executive elections studied in this thesis, it is clear from figure 3.1 that the largest parties in African party systems are often command either majorities or super-majorities in terms of vote and seat shares. The figures with regard to seat shares are particularly striking, with nearly half of all of the legislative elections studied in this thesis (bearing in mind that these elections all formally allow multiple parties to compete) resulting in a legislative seat share of more than 66% for the largest party.

Figure 3.1 Boxplot of vote and seat shares of largest legislative parties, and vote shares of largest presidential candidates across all elections studied³⁴



³⁴ The n's on which the respective plots are based are: 86 for largest party vote %, 150 for largest party seat %, and 120 for largest presidential candidate vote %.

3.4 Conclusions

This chapter has attempted to situate and describe the elections that are investigated comparatively in chapters 4–6. The discussion of the history of elections in sub-Saharan Africa looked at the historical antecedents to the multiparty elections studied in this thesis. This discussion highlighted the fact that elections were certainly not new to Africa during the ‘wave’ of multiparty elections that took place across the continent in the early to mid 1990s, although elections in this period were markedly more competitive than those that took place in the previous two decades. The account presented sought to highlight continuities from prior experiences of elections that may help to explain patterns in the elections studied in this thesis. Principal among these was the centralisation of power in the hands of a single party, and within the office of the executive, that came to characterise African politics during the post-independence era. It is this property of presidential elections in the region that justifies the devotion of an analytical chapter to them alone (chapter 4). It was also observed that there exists a degree of institutional overlap from the colonial period, especially in former British colonies, where single-member plurality electoral systems have proven to be highly resistant to change.

The difficulties for comparative analysis posed by variable regime types across the continent were outlined, most notably the problem that the larger part of Africa’s regimes/elections are difficult to unambiguously categorise as either ‘democracies’ or ‘autocracies’. I discussed the approach adopted in this thesis to dealing with this feature of the cases studied, and explained the reasoning behind the selection the Freedom Houses’ ‘Political Rights’ index as a proxy for levels of extra-constitutional restrictions on party system fragmentation.

Looking at other characteristics of the elections studied in this thesis, it was noted that they have featured a wide variety of electoral systems, providing considerable scope for cross-country comparisons of electoral system effects. In

terms of societal structure, the problem of multiple competing measurements for levels of fragmentation of state populations across the region was identified, and it was pointed out that states in the sub-Saharan region exhibit higher average levels of societal diversity than those in other world regions. Chapter 5 investigates the interaction of electoral system and societal structure as determinants of vote fragmentation in Africa's multiparty legislative elections. However, in spite of the highly fragmented societal structures of many states in sub-Saharan Africa, it was shown that multiparty elections in the region post-1989 have resulted in lower levels of fragmentation than elections in other world regions, and especially when compared with elections in 'new' democracies elsewhere. This is partially explained by the exceptional performance of single parties across the region, with majorities and, indeed, super-majorities enjoyed by single parties being the rule rather than the exception in Africa's legislatures. In chapter 6, I seek to address this tendency by examining the determinants of largest party seat share in Africa's legislative elections.

Having laid out the major dependent and independent variables studied in this thesis, we can now proceed to examine the relationships between these variables in chapters 4, 5, and 6 before reflecting on how these examinations collectively offer a response to the research questions pursued by the thesis in chapter 7.

Chapter 4 - Causes and Effects of Vote Fragmentation in sub-Saharan Africa's Presidential Elections

Abstract

This chapter focuses on multiparty presidential elections in sub-Saharan Africa between 1989 and 2008. Although the prevalence of powerful, directly elected presidents in the region has been widely noted, elections to these crucial political offices have received little comparative attention as objects of study in their own right. I attempt to examine the determinants of vote fragmentation in presidential elections in the region. Political, societal, and institutional factors that may explain presidential vote fragmentation are examined. In terms of institutional variation – the role of the presidential electoral system, as well as the formal and informal concentration of power in the office of the president are considered. The chapter also investigates another highly important and understudied question, asking whether the results and timing of presidential elections help to explain party system fragmentation in legislative elections.

4.1 Introduction.

The inferential analysis section of this thesis (chapters 4-6) begins with a subject that arguably represents the most egregious omission in the current comparative literature on African party systems: presidential elections. This lacuna in the literature is particularly surprising because both the 'politics as usual' and 'exceptionalism' approaches to the study of Africa's party systems would lead us to place considerable emphasis on the region's presidential elections. The 'politics as usual' explanatory approach applies here because several comparative studies in other world regions have found presidential vote distributions to provide insight into political systems both as objects of study in their own right and/or as determinants of vote fragmentation in legislative races (Amorim Neto and Cox, 1997; Filippov *et al.* 1999; Golder, 2006; Hicken and Stoll, 2008; Jones, 1999; 2004 Shugart, 1995; Shugart and Carey, 1992). The 'exceptionalism' approach applies because of the prevalence of powerful, directly elected presidents in the regions (van de Walle, 2003). Furthermore presidential elections may help to explain the seemingly exceptional tendency of Africa's ethnically fragmented societies to produce relatively concentrated party systems, as described in the previous chapter.

In contemporary Africa, presidential systems of government are the norm: of the countries studied in this thesis, only Botswana, Lesotho, Mauritius, Ethiopia, and South Africa do not directly elect a fixed-term president. Not only are directly elected presidents very common, they are also typically very powerful; indeed they are often dominant actors in African political systems (van de Walle, 2003). As was outlined in the previous chapter, centralisation of political authority in presidential offices was one of the most notable institutional continuities between the authoritarian and multiparty eras in sub-Saharan Africa. As Prempeh (2008) notes, 'despite (...) precedent-setting changes to Africa's political and constitutional landscape, a notable feature of the *ancien régime* survives. This is the phenomenon of the imperial presidency' (p. 110). If,

as van de Walle (2003) asserts, the legislative elections are often mere 'sideshows' (p. 310) compared to presidential contests, it behoves comparative students of African party systems to dedicate substantial analytical attention to the sources and influence of presidential vote distributions. Indeed, in many of the cases studied here, legislative elections are *de facto* 'second order' (Reif and Schmitt, 1980) electoral contests – in the sense that of the offices that they elect are of secondary political importance to voters and elites (relative to presidential elections).

Given the extent to which presidents dominate Africa's political landscape, it is highly surprising that the comparative literature on Africa's multiparty systems has paid scant attention to presidential elections as objects of study. Looking at existing comparative studies of the determinants of party system fragmentation in sub-Saharan Africa; only three of these, of which the author is aware, have included controls for the effects of presidential elections (Brambor *et al.*, 2007; Mozaffar *et al.*, 2003; Mylonas and Roussias, 2008), and none, to the best of the author's knowledge, have examined the causes of fragmentation of the presidential vote in the region.

Levels of fragmentation in presidential elections are generally of interest in their own right, as they may influence the efficiency of the democratic process. Hicken and Stoll (2008) argue that political novices and outsiders stand a better chance of being elected as the degree of fragmentation of the presidential vote increases. Jones (2004) contends that, because it is more difficult for voters to identify and choose among likely governance options in fragmented presidential contests: 'the more fragmented presidential competition is, the more problems are likely in presidential democracies' (p. 75). However, too little fragmentation can also be problematic; when one candidate absolutely dominates in a given election (or over a series of elections) to the presidency, this can have negative effects on the quality of competition in a democracy –

dominance of presidential elections by a single candidate can often be a symptom of anti-democratic practices, which have inhibited the opposition from running an effective campaign, or even from running at all¹. Where dominance of a single candidate is achieved without recourse to extra-constitutional methods, it can still minimize the incentives of other candidates to propose responsible alternative policy agendas, as they operate in the knowledge that they are highly unlikely to occupy executive office (Bogaards, 2000). In many African political systems, the distribution of votes in presidential elections arguably gives at least as much insight into the structuring of political power and preferences in as the distribution of votes in legislative elections.

The first part of the analysis presented in this chapter therefore investigates the extent to which theories that have been developed and (primarily) tested in established democracies concerning the institutional and sociological determinants of the fragmentation of the vote in presidential elections (Cox, 1997; Hicken and Stoll, 2008; Jones 1999; 2004; Golder, 2006) provide useful insights into Africa's presidential elections. Variation in levels of political freedoms in the presidential election year and for the occurrence of opposition boycotts of presidential contests are also controlled for.

Several comparative studies have demonstrated that levels of vote fragmentation in presidential elections can impact on fragmentation of subsequent (or simultaneous) legislative races (Amorim Neto and Cox, 1997; Filippov *et al.* 1999; Golder, 2006; Shugart, 1995; Shugart and Carey, 1992). In previous comparative studies of vote fragmentation in Africa's legislative elections, variables related to presidential elections were treated as being analytically secondary to legislative electoral systems and socio-demographic factors, and received minimal discussion (Brambor *et al.*, 2007; Mozaffar *et al.*,

¹ The range of strategies by which incumbents may achieve this outcome is worthy of study in its own right – Monga (1997) discusses these at length.

2003; Mylonas and Roussias, 2008). Also, while none of these studies focused explicitly on presidential elections as sources of legislative party system fragmentation, they are notable for arriving at starkly different conclusions on the impact of presidential elections on legislative party systems.

Mozaffar *et al.* (2003) find a strong negative effect for the proximity of presidential and legislative elections, with a positive and significant interaction between the effective number of presidential candidates and temporal proximity. They interpret the finding regarding the effect of proximity as demonstrating 'the substantial effect of the Proximity of Presidential and Legislative Elections in reducing the number of electoral and legislative parties, reproducing in Africa the almost-universal tendency of presidential regimes to constrict the structure of party systems' (p. 387). They argue, however, that the positive interaction term demonstrates that this effect is 'countered' (p. 387) by the effective number of presidential candidates. Brambor *et al.* (2007) argue, however, that 'none of Mozaffar *et al.*'s (2003)² claims regarding presidential elections are supported by their data once we correctly specify and interpret their model' (p. 316) although they do not specify what aspects of these claims are invalidated.

Mylonas and Roussias (2008) come to a radically different conclusion to Mozaffar *et al.* (2003) and, indeed, to other studies of the relationship between presidential and legislative elections (Amorim Neto and Cox, 1997; Filippov *et al.*, 1999; Golder, 2006; Shugart, 1995; Shugart and Carey, 1992). According to Mylonas and Roussias (2008), in Africa's elections, the effective number of presidential candidates is positively related to the effective number of parties in legislative elections for all values of temporal proximity (*i.e.* even when legislative elections are held in the middle of the presidential term). This is not a

² I amended the original citation here for continuity, in the original text the Mozaffar *et al.* (2003) paper is referred to as 'MSG'.

totally unexpected finding, it concurs with Golder's (2006) 'Long-Coattails' hypothesis discussed below. However, they also find that 'when legislative and presidential elections are closer in time, the effect *decreases*' (Mylonas and Roussias, 2008: 1481, emphasis added). That is, that there is a stronger relationship between presidential and legislative party systems when legislative elections are held at presidential mid-term than when the two elections are held concurrently. Although this finding runs contrary to the expectations of the existing literature, it receives relatively little consideration. The authors proffer only the following explanation for their finding: 'concurrent elections lead to the creation of almost as many electoral parties as presidential candidates, whereas presidential elections preceding legislative ones generate multiple parties' (p. 1481). It is not entirely clear to me what Mylonas and Roussias are proposing here, but their implication is that the passage of time between presidential and legislative elections serves to amplify, rather than diminish, the effects of the former on the latter. I find no evidence to support their contention in the analysis below.

Overall, while the influence of presidential elections on the outcomes of legislative elections has already been considered in some of the comparative literature on party system fragmentation in sub-Saharan Africa, it has not received sustained analytical focus in the existing literature. I seek to address this shortcoming in the second part of the analysis presented in this chapter – by providing a sustained and detailed analysis of the relationship between presidential and legislative vote fragmentation in sub-Saharan Africa's elections.

In the following section, several theoretical arguments seeking to explain the institutional and sociological determinants of vote fragmentation in presidential elections are laid out, as are as accounts concerning the linkages between presidential and legislative elections. I specify the various hypotheses that these theoretical accounts generate; which are then tested against empirical

data on multiparty presidential elections held in sub-Saharan Africa between 1989 and 2008. In the analysis section, the statistical models used to test the research hypotheses are outlined and the results of these models for African elections are presented. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the insights that established theories of 'politics as usual' provide for the study of Africa's presidential elections, and of the importance of considering presidential elections in the region as a key independent variable when seeking to explain legislative party system fragmentation.

4.2 Theory and hypotheses

In this section, several factors that may influence the degree of fragmentation of the vote in multiparty presidential elections are listed (in part 4.2.1), as are accounts of the manner in which presidential elections may influence the degree of fragmentation in legislative elections (in part 4.2.2). I specify several testable hypotheses arising from these theoretical discussions.

4.2.1 – Determinants of fragmentation in presidential elections: theory and hypotheses

While the literature on the determinants of the fragmentation of votes in presidential elections is far less developed than the literature on the determinants of legislative party system fragmentation³ (Golder, 2006), it

³ The comparative literature on party systems and political institutions in general has far less to say about presidential elections, and the influence of presidential electoral systems, than it does about legislative elections and legislative electoral systems. Golder (2006) notes that (with the exception of his own study): 'I know of only three studies that have systematically analysed the determinants of the number of presidential candidates (Amorim Neto and Cox, 1997; Jones, 1999; Jones, 2004)' (p. 35) with Hicken and Stoll's (2008) research representing a further contribution in this area. All of these studies used sufficiently restrictive criteria for

nonetheless proposes several factors that may help to explain this phenomenon, which we outline in this section. In addition to the institutional and sociological factors examined by previous analyses (Amorim Neto and Cox, 1997; Golder, 2006; Jones, 1999; 2004), I argue here that levels of political freedoms and the occurrence of opposition boycotts should also be considered when seeking to explain presidential vote fragmentation in sub-Saharan Africa. Finally, the role of ethnopolitical groups' geographic concentration as a potential explanatory variable is discussed.

In terms of institutions, the most commonly discussed source of variance in comparative studies of presidential vote fragmentation has been the presidential electoral system. Several analyses (Amorim Neto and Cox, 1997; Cox, 1997; Golder, 2006; Jones, 1999; 2004; Shugart and Carey, 1992) have focused on the strategic incentives generated in presidential elections using plurality rules, as opposed to incentives under majority-runoff based formulae⁴. Jones (2004) argues that a large body of theoretical and comparative work supports the contention that runoff electoral rules should be associated with higher levels of presidential vote fragmentation than plurality rules. Golder (2006) points out that 'the claim that runoff elections are more permissive than plurality rule elections is (...) supported by the vast majority of the formal literature' (p. 42).

The reasoning behind the association of runoff rules with higher levels of fragmentation in presidential votes than plurality rules derives partially from an extension of Duvergerian logic to presidential elections⁵. While only one

case selection to exclude the majority of presidential elections that have taken place between 1989 and 2008 in sub-Saharan Africa.

⁴ The most commonly used of these formulae in presidential elections stipulates that if no candidate wins 50% +1 votes in the first round of voting, the top two candidates from the first round then meet in a second round runoff vote.

⁵ Indeed, Jones (2004) points out that national-level comparative analyses of the influence of electoral systems on the results of presidential elections make less assumptions about the

candidate can 'win' a plurality election, two (or, under some rules, more than two) can 'win' the first round under a runoff system. Cox's extension of Duverger's law predicts a strategic equilibrium of $M + 1$ viable candidates at the district-level, where M is the number of seats to be won in a given district. As such, the predicted equilibrium is two viable candidates for plurality electoral rules (as stated in Duverger's Law). For runoff systems, according to Cox (1997): 'as a general rule, top- M runoff elections can have at most $M + 1$ viable candidates, at least in the "Duvergerian equilibria" of the pure model' (p. 137). The predicted equilibrium outcome is therefore three viable candidates for the most common presidential runoff rules (where two candidates can 'win' through in the first round). As such, when strategic coordination is successfully achieved, we would expect runoff electoral rules to result in an extra viable candidate, compared to plurality rules.

Cox (*ibid.*) acknowledges, however, that the informational requirements necessary for strategic coordination are far higher under runoff than plurality rules, and Golder (2006) argues that, under runoff rules 'the incentives for strategic voting and strategic entry/withdrawal are likely to be weaker than in plurality rule elections' (p. 42). As such, runoff rules may result in higher level of fragmentation than plurality rules either because they allow for a higher number of viable candidates, given strategic voting, or because they effectively impose no upper limit on the number of viable candidates, given the practical difficulties associated with effective coordination in the first round of voting, under runoff rules (relative to plurality rules).

extent to which electoral competition is nationalised than national-level comparative studies of the fragmentation of votes in legislative elections. A major problem afflicting comparative studies of the effects of electoral systems is the mismatch between district-level theories, and national-level data. However, this is not a cause for such concern with presidential elections; as such elections essentially reduce the entire state to a single electoral district.

A further theoretical argument linking runoff rules to greater levels of fragmentation in presidential races is that, even when candidates realise that they have no realistic chance of winning through to the second round, there are few incentives for them to coalesce before the first round in a runoff system. Candidates may run in the first round in the hope that a strong showing will leave them in an advantageous position to obtain concessions and benefits, for themselves or their supporters, from candidates who require their endorsement for the second round. Mozaffar *et al.* (2003) argue that the prevalence of patronage delivery in African politics enhances this dynamic: 'African presidents possess substantial resources for patronage. Presidential contenders with weak winning potential often expect to demonstrate sufficient electoral support to bargain entry into postelection coalitions and secure state resources for their constituencies in return for political support of the winners' (p. 381). This can prove a dangerous strategy, however; coordination failure can result in rather unpalatable choices for voters in the second round⁶. Nonetheless, runoff elections do provide incentives for minority candidates to run in order to demonstrate their bargaining power in a second round, and these incentives are absent when elections are conducted under plurality rules. The above arguments concerning the impact of presidential electoral systems lead us to hypothesize that:

H1: Presidential elections conducted under plurality rules should result in lower vote fragmentation than presidential elections conducted under runoff rules, *ceteris paribus*.

⁶ The most famous example of such a coordination failure in recent years is probably the 2002 French presidential elections, where a fragmentation of votes among several left-wing candidates saw Socialist candidate Lionel Jospin eliminated in the first round, and left wing voters were faced with a choice between centre-right candidate Jacques Chirac and far-right candidate Jean-Marie Le Pen in the second round.

Golder (2006) argues, however, that H1 does not adequately account for the nature of the relationship between electoral rules and presidential vote fragmentation. He argues that this type of hypothesis, which seeks to capture the effects of presidential electorate systems, but does not take account of the social demand for the multiplication of presidential candidates, will be 'necessarily indeterminate' (p. 43) when applied to empirical data. This is because, even under permissive electoral rules, vote fragmentation may be low in certain countries due to the population being relatively homogenous.

Golder argues that the same logic that underlies the 'interactive approach' to explaining legislative party system fragmentation elaborated in chapter 2 (Amorim Neto and Cox, 1997; Clark and Golder, 2006; Cox, 1997; Filippov *et al.*, 1999; Jones, 1999; 2004; Mozaffar *et al.*, 2003; Ordeshook and Shvetsova, 1994; Powell, 1982; Stoll, 2004; 2008) should be applicable to fragmentation of votes in presidential elections. This approach contends that the role of electoral systems in influencing the fragmentation of votes is to modify the translation of societal diversity into vote fragmentation by imposing an 'upper bound' (Cox, 1997: 139) on the number of viable parties/candidates. While plurality electoral rules impose an upper bound of two viable candidates, runoff systems impose either a higher upper bound or no upper bound at all, depending on one's theoretical approach; hence they allow societal diversity to translate more readily into fragmentation of the presidential vote. As such, Golder's (2006) proposed hypothesis is as follows:

H2: 'Social heterogeneity only increases the effective number of candidates in runoff systems. It has no effect in plurality rule elections' (p. 42).

I add a further hypothesis that runs in tandem with this argument:

H3: The marginal effect of an increase in societal diversity on vote fragmentation in presidential elections is smaller under plurality rules than under runoff rules.

As such, H1 specifies that plurality rules are generally associated with lower levels of vote fragmentation than runoff rules, all other factors being held constant. H2 specifies that societal diversity should be positively related to vote fragmentation under runoff rules, but not under plurality rules, and H3 specifies that runoff electoral rules are associated with an increase in the effect of societal diversity on vote fragmentation.

Of course, the application of Duvergerian logic to presidential elections also requires us to bear in mind the logical preconditions for the emergence of a Duvergerian equilibrium as laid out in Cox's (1997) work (as laid out in detail in chapter 2). Some of these requirements are informational: it is necessary that voters have reliable projections of likely support levels for the various candidates, and that these projections demonstrate a sufficient gap between the second and third (and lower) placed candidates for voters and candidates to be able to determine which candidates viable and which are out of the running. Others are to do with political motivations: voters must not be indifferent among options other than their first choice, and there must be at least two candidates who have a realistic chance of winning the election. Finally, in cases of extreme repression, such considerations may never come into play, as any viable candidates may be prevented from running via extra constitutional means. As such, the thesis tests here whether hypotheses derived from our expectations of the role of presidential electoral systems under certain circumstances (i.e. when the pre-conditions for a 'Duvergerian equilibrium' are in place) are useful for understanding variation in Africa's presidential elections.

A second caveat that should be considered is that, just as legislative electoral systems are endogenously selected, so are presidential systems. It is possible that observed presidential electoral system 'effects' may in fact be the result of endogenous system selection. The same points that were made for treating legislative electoral systems as at least somewhat exogenous in chapter 2 also hold for presidential electoral systems. Firstly, they tend to be highly 'sticky', that is they endure over time and are rarely altered. Secondly, their effects are difficult to forecast when they are selected, especially when this selection takes place in the context of a regime transition. As such, even though presidential electoral systems are endogenously selected, they can have quasi-exogenous effects on subsequent party system development.

Jones (2004) outlines two further 'institutional' (p. 75) factors that, he argues, bear consideration in explaining the fragmentation of votes in presidential elections. The first is the presence or absence of an incumbent in the presidential race⁷, and the second is whether an election is the first democratic presidential election to have operated under plurality electoral system. With regards to the incumbents' participation, Jones' (*ibid.*) major argument in favour of the inclusion of this variable is that incumbent participation facilitates coordination among elites, establishing a clear front-runner at the start of an election campaign and giving the opposition greater incentives to cohere, as they can unite against a known opponent who has followed identifiable policies during their tenure. Furthermore, incumbents are 'in a uniquely strong position to dissuade potential opponents from entering the race' (p. 81) as they can use a combination of inducements and threats to co-opt potentially threatening opponents. Overall, Jones (*ibid.*) argues that having an incumbent candidate competing in a presidential contest should reduce the level of vote fragmentation, as they tend to receive large chunks of votes, provide incentives

⁷ This factor is 'institutional' in the sense that the capacity of incumbents to run in a presidential race is typically delimited by rules pertaining to term-limits (Jones, 2004).

for opposition cohesion, and are able to stifle the emergence of alternative candidates.

With regards to the 'first plurality election' consideration, Jones (*ibid.*) argues that these elections may be characterised by greater vote fragmentation than subsequent elections. The principal reason outlined by Jones for this supposition is that the first elections held under plurality rules are characterised by low levels of information regarding the extent of electoral support enjoyed by the candidates competing. Theoretical accounts of strategic coordination emphasise that voters and elites need to be able to distinguish front running candidates in order to desert trailing candidates under plurality electoral rules (Cox, 1997). In the absence of reliable information on which to base their decisions, voters and elites may find it difficult to coordinate their efforts, leading to higher levels of vote fragmentation than would be the case once at least one set of elections had taken place under plurality. Furthermore, Jones (2004) argues that the first elections under democratic rules generally may be treated as a 'proving ground where every party matches its electoral strength' (p. 82) so that potential alliances and mergers, while strategically wise, may be eschewed in 'first' elections. As such, we need to control for these tendencies in 'first' plurality elections to isolate the general effects of plurality presidential electoral systems.

As I argue throughout this thesis, any comparative account of African elections post-1989 that seeks to gauge the usefulness of theories of 'politics of usual' must deal with aspects of African multiparty elections that potentially render them 'exceptional' relative to elections in established democracies. Among the most pressing of these considerations is the considerable variance that exists in terms of the levels of political freedoms under which such elections take place. As outlined in chapter 3, many formally multiparty regimes in the region provide few genuine opportunities for opposition parties to compete (van

de Walle, 2002) while most cases fall into an indeterminate 'partly free' category according to Freedom House's (2009) scheme. If entry to political life and voters' freedom of choice are restricted by the regime in operation, it may be the case that more esoteric factors such as electoral systems and societal diversity are of little use in explaining party system fragmentation. Therefore, levels of freedom and fairness are held constant in the analyses presented below and in the remaining analyses in chapters 5 and 6.

In terms of the effect of levels of freedom and fairness on levels of presidential and legislative vote fragmentation, political repression in formally multiparty regimes is typically aimed at maximizing the share of votes won by the governing party and minimizing the share of the vote won by opposition groups, via a variety of unpleasant measures. These measures make that the costs of running as an opposition candidate and the costs of voting for such candidates prohibitive. As such, one would anticipate that, in general, vote fragmentation should be higher as systems move towards greater political freedom and fairness. Furthermore, 25% of the presidential elections examined in this chapter were boycotted by at least one prominent candidate. As I discuss in chapter 6, while such boycotts are usually an indication that elections are not free and fair, there are observable instances of boycotts where no overwhelming electoral malfeasance has been reported (Bogaards, 2000; Lindberg, 2006). The logical anticipation here is that, when opposition candidates boycott presidential elections, this logically leads to votes being concentrated in the hands of the fewer candidates, and, therefore, boycotts should be associated with lower levels of vote fragmentation in presidential elections.

In chapter 5, I discuss the role played by territorial concentration of groups in sub-Saharan Africa's legislative elections. While presidential electoral systems do not privilege geographically-concentrated groups over dispersed groups in the same way that single constituency-based legislative electoral

systems do, geographically-concentrated groups still enjoy considerable logistical advantages for political activation over geographically-dispersed groups. Both theoretical and empirical treatments of the political activation of ethnic identities in African politics point to the importance of considering this factor (Brambor *et al.* 2007; Mozaffar *et al.*, 2003; Mylonas and Roussias, 2008; Scarritt and Mozaffar, 1999). As discussed in chapter 1, the theoretical argument behind including a variable for group concentration indicates that high levels of societal diversity are more likely to translate into high levels of party system fragmentation when groups are regionally concentrated than when they are regionally dispersed. I therefore test for whether levels of ethnic group geographic concentration condition the impact of societal diversity on presidential vote fragmentation in this chapter. Formally, I test the hypothesis that:

H4: The marginal effect of societal diversity on vote fragmentation in sub-Saharan Africa's presidential elections increases as levels of group concentration increase, *ceteris paribus*.

Finally in this section, it is interesting to consider what Hicken and Stoll (2008) describe as 'the size of the prize' (p. 1109) at stake in presidential elections. Hicken and Stoll (2008) argue that the previous comparative literature (Amorim Neto and Cox, 1997; Golder, 2006; Jones, 1999; 2004) has devoted too much attention to presidential electoral systems and not enough to other institutional aspects of presidencies. The focus of Hicken and Stoll's (2008) research is on the degree to which political authority is concentrated in the office of the presidency - which they label 'horizontal centralisation' (p. 1109). Hicken and Stoll (*ibid.*) find that this feature of presidential systems exerts a larger effect on presidential vote fragmentation than the presidential electoral formula. They also examine the impact of the degree of fiscal autonomy of regional government 'vertical centralisation' (*ibid.*). In this research I choose to focus on

the impact of horizontal centralisation due to both data restrictions⁸ and the weakness of local governments across nearly all of the cases considered here (van de Walle, 2003).

With regards to horizontal centralisation, Hicken and Stoll (2008) find that there is a positive relationship between centralisation and fragmentation for very weak/symbolic presidencies, a negative relationship for moderately strong presidencies, and no relationship for very strong presidents. The theoretical account underlying this finding is that, for weak/symbolic presidents, an increase in presidential powers may incentivize more candidates to run, without making the stakes sufficiently high for elites and voters to coordinate effectively. For moderately powerful presidencies, however, increases in centralisation provide sufficient incentives for such co-ordination to take place. For very powerful presidencies, increases in centralisation have no impact; as such systems already provide very strong incentives for candidates/voters to coordinate.

In this chapter, however, I theorize a negative *linear* relationship between horizontal centralisation and presidential vote fragmentation in Africa's presidential elections. With regards to very weak/symbolic presidents – these simply do not exist in the systems studied here (Elgie, 2007; Prempeh, 2008; van Cranenburgh, 2008; 2009). As the stakes of the presidential race increase, it is therefore would anticipated that the incentives to coordinate also increase. Even with regards to extremely strong presidencies, I would argue that in such cases increases in the importance of presidential office could theoretically reduce fragmentation below 2 'effective' candidates – where incumbents may seek to disqualify serious opponents from competing if the stakes are sufficiently high.

⁸ Using the same source as Hicken and Stoll (2009) – the World Bank's (2010) 'fiscal decentralisation indicators' dramatically reduces the number of cases that can be studied, also many of the most recent data points date back to the 1980s. However, I can report here that 'vertical centralisation' was not a significant predictor of presidential vote fragmentation when tested against the data collected for this thesis.

For instance, a common strategy which has emerged in African executive elections has been the employment of a 'nationality clause' in order to disqualify opposition candidates – this tactic was deployed with varying levels of success against Alassane Ouattara in Ivory Coast, Kenneth Kuanda in Zambia, and Richard Leakey in Kenya (Monga, 1997). As such, I hypothesize that:

H5: Increases in the centralisation of powers in the presidential office at stake correspond to decreases in presidential vote fragmentation, *ceteris paribus*.

4.2.2 – *The relationship between presidential and legislative elections.*

Several studies have investigated the influence of presidential elections on legislative party system fragmentation, though findings from these studies have tended to contradict each other. In his review of the literature on this topic, Golder (2006: 34-35) notes that some authors have found that presidential elections serve to increase levels of legislative party system fragmentation (Filippov *et al.*, 1999), while another strand of research suggests that presidential elections exert a reductive effect on legislative party systems (Cox, 1997; Jones, 1994; Mainwaring and Shugart, 1997; Mozaffar *et al.*, 2003; Shugart and Carey, 1992). Yet another view identified by Golder (2006) indicates that presidential elections do not exert any consistent effect on legislative party systems (Samuels, 2000). More recently, however, it has been hypothesised that the effects of presidential elections on legislative elections are not constant, but instead depend on the extent to which support for presidential candidates is fragmented, and the temporal proximity between presidential and legislative elections (Golder, 2006).

The causal story that links levels of fragmentation in presidential elections to levels of fragmentation in corresponding legislative races centres on the substantial powers associated with presidential office, and the high levels of resources that are consequently dedicated to national-level presidential campaigns, in nearly all presidential systems. There is an observable tendency for candidates in legislative elections to piggyback on the organisational resources dedicated to and media attention generated by presidential campaigns (Samuels, 2000). Voters, too, may pay greater attention to the presidential election campaign and, when deciding who to vote for in the legislative race, may simply take the cognitive short-cut of choosing a candidate from the party of their preferred presidential candidate. Tavits' (2009) comparative analysis found that 'on average, parties of the president increase their vote share from one legislative election to the next by about 6 percentage points' (p. 153) with this effect being somewhat stronger in elections in recently transitioned democracies. It is therefore expected these processes should allow parties to gain (or lose) seats as a result of the performance of their presidential candidates in the preceding/simultaneous presidential election.

According to this approach, the impact of a presidential election on levels of legislative fragmentation is not fixed in any given direction: it may increase party system fragmentation (when the presidential race is highly fragmented); decrease party system fragmentation (when support is highly concentrated in the presidential race); or have no effect on party system fragmentation (when fragmentation in the presidential race mirrors that in the existing legislative system) (Golder, 2006). These considerations lead us to think in terms of the impact of the fragmentation of the presidential race, rather than the effect of the presidency *per se*.

It is unlikely; however, that the effects of presidential elections on legislative elections are constant across all political systems, as there is

considerable variation with regard to the timing of these elections (Amorim Neto and Cox, 1997: 164; Golder, 2006: 39-41; Shugart, 1995: 327; Shugart and Carey, 1992). Presidential and legislative elections can be conducted simultaneously, at presidential mid-term, or somewhere in-between these two extremes. According to Shugart's (1995) research, 'the president's party's share of seats tends to increase in early-term elections but decline in later elections' (p. 327). Amorim Neto and Cox (1997) provide a generalised version of this argument, contending that, if direct presidential elections exercise a consolidating influence on the party system, then the effects of such consolidation should be greater when elections are concurrent, and grow progressively weaker as the time between presidential and legislative elections increases.

Golder (2006) points out that there are 'two slightly different variants of the coattails story' (p. 36) in the literature. These are distinguished from one another on the basis of the temporal durability that they attribute to presidential coattails effect. The 'Short-Coattails Hypothesis' (p. 36) states that the effect of presidential elections on legislative elections is highly conditional on the temporal proximity between the two, with the effect of presidential elections increasing as temporal proximity increases (Amorim Neto and Cox, 1997). The 'Long-Coattails Hypothesis' (p. 36) states, to the contrary, that the effects of presidential elections on legislative elections are observable even when legislative elections are held at the presidential mid-term. The Long Coat-Tails Hypothesis is based on the supposition that the benefits (or disadvantages) of a legislative party being associated with a presidential candidate may not relate exclusively to the campaign for presidential office (Golder, 2006). The exaggerated significance of the presidential office in African political systems leads us to expect that effects of presidential coat-tails should extend far beyond the campaign period and thus should be relatively robust to the passage of time. These theoretical considerations lead to the following hypotheses:

H6: Levels of fragmentation of votes across candidates in presidential elections are positively related to levels of fragmentation of votes⁹ across parties in legislative elections, if these elections are sufficiently temporally proximate to each other, *ceteris paribus*.

H7: The marginal effect of the fragmentation of votes across candidates in presidential elections on the fragmentation of votes across parties in legislative elections increases as the temporal proximity between the two elections increases.

H8: Levels of fragmentation in presidential elections are positively related to levels of fragmentation in legislative elections, even when legislative elections are held in the middle of the presidential term, *ceteris paribus*.

H6 and H7 test the implications associated with the 'Short-Coattails' approach to the influence of presidential elections on legislative elections. That is, they test whether and how the effects of the former on the latter are influenced by the passage of time between the two elections. H8, on the other hand, contends that the results of presidential elections should have a bearing on the subsequent legislative elections, even when these are held in the middle of the presidential term. I examine hypotheses 6-8 using the data on vote fragmentation in multiparty elections between 1989 and 2008 held in sub-Saharan Africa.

⁹ As the research hypotheses here relate principally to the effects of presidential elections on vote distributions, rather than seat distributions.

4.3 Data and Measures

In the analysis of the determinants of vote fragmentation in sub-Saharan Africa's direct presidential elections (in section 4.4.1), I employ a dataset covering 120 elections in which more than 1 candidate competed and where sufficiently detailed data were available on vote returns to calculate an index of fragmentation. In the analysis of the influence of presidential elections on vote fragmentation in legislative elections (in section 4.4.2), I employ the data on vote fragmentation in 99 legislative elections. The data on presidential vote fragmentation in the latter analysis refers to the presidential election that preceded each legislative election¹⁰.

The issue of how many elections from each country should be included in analyses of the effects of electoral institutions has divided scholars. Some practitioners advocate that only one set of figures should be included from each system (Amorim Neto and Cox, 1997; Lijphart, 1990), with others including several elections from each system (Clark and Golder, 2006; Ordeshook and Shvetsova, 1994; Rae, 1971). The former approach is subject to criticism on methodological grounds, given that 'averaging values of variables within a regime and taking and taking these averages as the observations poses a number of econometric problems, including artificially increasing R^2 and t -statistics' (Ordeshook and Shvetsova, 1994: 102). This approach also poses a more practical problem in terms of the number of cases that can be studied presenting an n that does not facilitate the type of analysis undertaken in this thesis. In the analyses in this chapter, and chapters 5 and 6, I therefore include all *de jure* multiparty legislative elections in the sub-Saharan region between 1989 and 2008.

¹⁰ However, if presidential elections were held up to 6 months after a legislative election, I considered these as concurrent presidential and legislative elections. The reasoning here is that the campaigns for legislative and presidential elections occur within 6 months the forthcoming presidential elections may overshadow the legislative campaign.

However, the trade off involved in including each election as a separate case that, as Lijphart (1990) points out, consecutive elections held under the same system are not completely independent events, and that including all elections in the analysis involves a greater weighting for those countries that have held several elections in the total sample. It is because of this concern that, for all of the multiple regression analyses in chapters 4-6, models with a lagged dependent variable were also examined in order to control for the possible intra-country clustering of observations of vote fragmentation. Golder (2006) has criticised the inclusion of a lagged dependent variable in analyses of vote fragmentation, mostly on practical grounds, but also on the grounds that is theoretically unclear what such a variable would be capturing in a study of party system fragmentation. I therefore report models without a lagged dependent variable. In chapter 6, there are clear theoretical expectations with regard to the role of largest party performance in previous elections on current elections, and I therefore report models in chapter 6 that include a lagged dependent variable.

In this chapter, I re-ran the regressions reported in Tables 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4 using a lagged dependent variable as a check that the standard errors are not being underestimated (and the t-values over-estimated) due to serial autocorrelation of residuals. This approach had the effect of reducing the number of cases for which we have data, as most of the states studied here did not hold multiparty elections in the 1980s (and, therefore have no observable lagged dependent variable for their 'founding' elections). The substantive results, in terms of the direction and statistical significance of the variables presented are near-identical¹¹ for models that included a lagged dependent variable using the

¹¹ The only notable difference is that, with the lagged dependent variable, the 'triple interaction' between societal diversity, electoral system permissiveness, and ethnopolitical concentration, as predictors of legislative vote fragmentation discussed in chapter 5 is not statistically significant, even at the 90% level – however graphical analysis revealed the same intuitions hold regarding the relationships between societal diversity, ethnic groups' geographic concentration and legislative electoral system permissiveness and vote fragmentation.

dataset presented in this thesis, and as such the results presented here do not stand or fall on the decision to include a lagged dependent variable.

To construct the universe of cases for this study, I relied predominantly on Lindberg's (2006) dataset of all *de jure* multiparty elections that took place in sub-Saharan Africa between 1989 and 2003. I employ data on vote and seat fragmentation kindly supplied by Matt Golder from Brambor et al. (2007) as well as Nohlen *et al.*'s (1999) data handbook on African elections, while data for the more recent elections were sourced online, from national electoral commission websites, from Adam Carr's online election archive (<http://psephos.adam-carr.net/>) and from the African Elections Database (<http://africanelections.tripod.com>).

Data on seat distributions were typically more reliable and easier to procure than data on vote distributions, with vote distribution data available for 99 cases, and data for seat distributions available for 149 cases. In all multiple regression models used in the analysis presented here, I deploy robust regressions¹², using the STATA 10 statistical software package. In this section, the

¹² In analyses of presidential and legislative vote fragmentation regression diagnostics including residual analysis, leverage plots, DF Beta statistics and Cook's (1977) distance statistics indicated that the data on presidential vote fragmentation contained several influential outliers. Neter *et al.* (1996) discuss the problematic nature of such outliers for multiple regression analysis, noting that when such cases are present in the data, the method of least squares can sometimes result in 'a seriously distorted fitted model for the remaining cases' (p. 416).

In regressions where legislative vote fragmentation was the dependent variable, the observations that were identified as exceeding the conventional $4/N$ cutoff point for Cook's (1977) statistic were: the 1991 election in Benin, the 1992 election in Comoros, the 1997 election in Djibouti, the 1995 election in Niger and the 1998 election in Sao Tome and Principe. Similar results were obtained when analyzing Brambor *et al.*'s (2007) replication materials, indicating that the outlier problem is not unique to the data collection and analysis methodologies employed in this thesis. In regressions on presidential vote fragmentation, Comoros (1996), Kenya (1997), Liberia (2005), and Zambia (2001) all exceeded the standard cut off point for Cook's (1977) measure of $4/n$ (.033 in this case).

As these are not examples of influential outliers arising due to measurement error, I do not delete them from the analysis; rather I employ the 'rreg' estimation in STATA 10, which weights the cases in the calculation of the regression coefficients iteratively in order to correct for the influential nature of extreme outliers on the data. The weights using this approach are based on the residual for each case, with the weights being revised iteratively until a robust fit has been obtained (Neter *et al.*, 1996).

measurement of the variables employed in the analysis are detailed. In order to avoid unnecessary repetition, I focus here on those variables that were not outlined in chapters 3, 4, and 5.

4.3.1 Fragmentation of votes in presidential and legislative elections.

The fragmentation of votes in presidential elections is measured using the Laasko-Taagepera (1979) index, to generate a measure that captures the 'effective number of candidates' in each presidential election. For two-round presidential systems, I considered levels of fragmentation in the first round of voting. In order to calculate the effective number of candidates in a given election, the votes won by all candidates in each presidential election are entered into the formula:

$$(4.1) \quad N = \frac{1}{\sum_{i=1}^n p_i^2}$$

Where p = the i^{th} candidate's proportion of the vote.

Higher values on this index indicate higher levels of vote fragmentation. The scores on this index for all of the presidential elections studied in this chapter are available in Appendix E to this thesis.

I use the 'effective number of electoral parties' measure to capture vote fragmentation in legislative elections. Again, it applies formula 4.1 to partisan vote distributions, in this case p = the i^{th} party's proportion of votes. This is the most commonly used measure of the dependent variable in comparative studies of party system fragmentation (Gallagher and Mitchell, 2005b; Lijphart, 1999). I employed Taagepera's (1997) method of bounds for dealing with parties/candidates grouped together into 'others' in the data, and followed Clark

and Golder (2006) in excluding cases where 15% or more of votes or seats are placed in the 'other' category.

4.3.2 Presidential electoral systems in sub-Saharan Africa

The theoretical discussion of the role of presidential electoral systems in section 4.2.1 indicates that the principal difference of interest in terms of presidential electoral systems separates plurality systems, in which the candidate winning the most votes in an election is declared the winner, from runoff systems, in which, if no candidate achieves an outright majority¹³ in the first round, then a restricted number of candidates (usually the two candidates with the largest portion of the vote in the first round) compete in a second round where the candidate with the most votes is declared elected.

Runoff presidential electoral systems are far more common than plurality systems across sub-Saharan Africa: apart from Cameroon, Malawi, and Zambia (post 1996) all of which employ plurality rules, and Kenya¹⁴, all directly elected African presidents are elected under a runoff system. I therefore employ a

¹³ This value is typically 50% + 1 votes, in the case of Sierra Leone's presidential elections, a candidate must secure 55% of votes to avoid a second round (Nohlen *et al.*, 1999).

¹⁴ Kenya's presidential elections pose something of a problem in terms of coding. Gibson and Long (2009) explain that: 'Kenya's electoral rules set three requirements to be elected president. A candidate must win the most votes in a nation-wide count, and secure at least 25% of the vote in five of any eight provinces. The presidential victor must also win the parliamentary seat in their own constituency' (p. 498). The first requirement represents the typical plurality stipulation that the candidate with a national-level relative majority of votes wins the election. However, if either of the other two requirements are not fulfilled, a second round is triggered. I code Kenya's system as a 'plurality' system, on the basis that it offers similar (if not greater) incentives for strategic co-ordination around two 'viable' candidates.

Nigeria's electoral system also imposes a territorial vote % requirement (25% in at least 2/3 of states) (Groffman, 2008), however the first round requirement in this case is an absolute, rather than a relative majority of votes, so I code this system as 'runoff'.

dichotomous variable, *plurality* to capture this distinction on the analysis; with plurality systems (including Kenya) coded '1', and runoff systems coded '0'.

4.3.3 *Incumbent running*

In order to test whether the presence of an incumbent candidate significantly reduces fragmentation in Africa's presidential elections, a dichotomous variable *incumbent running* is employed. This variable is coded '1' when the incumbent participates and '0' when there is no incumbent in the election. For elections that were the first multiparty contests after a period of single party rule or military dictatorship, the 'incumbent' was the autocratic president in the previous regime.

4.3.4 *First presidential elections held under plurality rules*

In order to test whether the first set of elections held under plurality rules were significantly more fragmented than other elections, I employ a *first plurality* variable. This is a dichotomous variable, coded '1' when an election was the first multiparty presidential election to be held under plurality rules, and '0' otherwise. Apart from Zambia (which held its transitional presidential election in 1991 using a two-round system and changed to plurality rules from 1996 onwards) all 'first plurality' elections in the dataset that is examined below were the first multiparty elections following a period of single-party rule (in 1992 in Cameroon, in 1994 in Malawi, and in 1992 in Kenya).

4.3.5 Boycott

This variable is coded dichotomously; coding elections '1' where a boycott of a major candidate occurred and '0' when it did not. This variable was constructed relying predominantly on Lindberg's (2006) dataset for elections up to 2003, and on the basis of *Electoral Studies* country/election reports and (where no academic accounts were available) news reporting for elections after 2003.

4.3.6 Temporal proximity of presidential and legislative elections

The temporal proximity of presidential and parliamentary elections is measured using Amorim Neto and Cox's (1997) interval measure. This measure ranges from 1, representing maximal proximity (*i.e.* concurrent elections) to 0, when legislative elections are held at the presidential midterm. The formula for measuring this variable is as follows:

$$(4.2) \text{ Proximity} = 2 * |(L_t - P_{t-1} / P_{t+1} - P_{t-1}) - 1/2|$$

Where: L_t is the year of the legislative election, P_{t-1} is the year of the previous presidential election, and P_{t+1} is the year of the next presidential election.

4.3.7 Centralisation of Power in Presidential Office.

In her comparative analysis, van Cranenburgh (2008) applies Siaroff's (2003) scheme that seeks to capture institutionally-determined presidential power, to 30 presidential systems (including systems such as Botswana and South Africa, where the president is not directly elected) in sub-Saharan Africa.

The scheme captures presidential mandate (in terms of election procedures), the president's agenda setting, appointments, and veto powers, the president's role in the sphere of foreign policy, as well as the role of the president in appointing the government and dissolving the legislature. On the basis of her application of this scheme to sub-Saharan Africa's political systems, van Cranenburgh (2008) concluded: 'the political institutional basis of presidential power in (...) sub-Saharan African countries is very high' (p. 961)¹⁵. Van Cranenburgh's index ranges from 0 to 8, it is constructed by summing 8 dichotomous variables each scoring '1' if a president possesses a certain power. As such, a score of '0' is the least powerful and '8' is the most powerful presidency on this index.

In addition to formal powers, however, a significant aspect of the institutional power of the president is informal, based on what North (1990) describes as 'conventions and codes of behaviour' (p. 4). Control over the presidency guarantees the office-holder considerable individual discretion over the distribution of state-based resources which, in turn, are used to solidify clientelistic support networks (Bratton and van de Walle, 1997, Chabal and Daloz, 1999; Hyden, 2006; Jackson and Rosberg, 1982; van de Walle, 2003). The office of the president, as van de Walle (2003) points out, often acts as a kind of 'parallel government' that 'controls in many cases a large proportion of state finance with little accountability, and delegates remarkably little of his authority on important matters' (p. 310). This tendency of elected officials to develop a patron-client relationship with supporters has been described by Bratton as 'so ingrained in African life as to constitute veritable political institutions' (2007: 98).

Indeed, as we discussed in chapter 3, such patterns can arguably be traced back to the political institutions of pre-colonial societies in sub-Saharan

¹⁵ Even in 'semi-presidential' systems, where a prime minister and cabinet who are responsible to parliament exist, as is found in quite a few of our cases, the office of the president typically predominates (Elgie, 2007).

Africa, where the role of 'big men' was paramount (Vasina, 1990). In order to account for the informal aspect of African presidential power, I also consider Polity IV's (Marshall and Jaggers, 2009) data on 'executive constraints'. This data seeks to capture both formal and informal dimensions of presidential powers, including the capacity of presidents to ignore formal/constitutional limitations on their power, as well as the role of military and judiciary groups (on top of the legislature) in counter-balancing executive power. The Polity IV index ranges from 1 to 7 – with '1' indicating unlimited presidential authority and '7' indicating executive parity or subordination to another agency.

4.3.8 Political rights

I use Freedom Houses' (2009) 'Political Rights' index to measure levels of political freedoms. This index ranges from 1 (the highest level of political freedoms) to 7 (the lowest). The score for each case is the Freedom House rating for political rights in the year following the legislative election¹⁶.

4.3.9 Societal diversity, ethno-political groups' geographic concentration, and legislative electoral system restrictiveness.

Throughout chapter 4-6, societal diversity is measured using several indices in order to avoid staking substantive findings on one particular measure of societal diversity. As discussed in chapter 3, there are several competing approaches to the measurement of societal diversity in sub-Saharan Africa. In the analysis presented here measures of societal diversity in each state are generated based on the following data sources: Scarritt and Mozaffar's (1999) data on politicised ethnic groupings¹⁷, Fearon's (2003) data on ethnic diversity

¹⁶ As Freedom House reports refer to events of the previous year in their evaluations.

¹⁷ While the Scarritt and Mozaffar (1999) dataset measures ethno-political groups at three levels of inclusiveness (i.e. specifying groups, sub-groups, and sub-groups of sub-groups) Mozaffar *et al.*'s (2003) national-level measure of ethno-political fragmentation counts groups at all levels of aggregation in order to measure 'all groups that are potentially politically

and on culturally-weighted ethnic diversity, data on ethno-linguistic groupings from the *Atlas Narodov Mira* (1964), Alesina *et al.*'s (2003) data on ethnic, linguistic, and religious diversity, and Posner's (2004a) PREG index.

For all data sources employed, an 'effective number of groups' index is generated, by entering the proportion of the population belonging to each ethnic, religious, linguistic or cultural group into the formula employed in constructing the Laasko-Taagepera index¹⁸. As with the effective number of parties measure, higher scores on this index indicate greater societal diversity and lower scores indicate less societal diversity. Ethnopolitical groups' geographic concentration is measured using Mozaffar *et al.*'s (2003) national-level index of concentration, which is compiled using Scarritt and Mozaffar's (1999) data as described in chapter 3.

Finally, electoral system permissiveness is measured using the natural log of the 'effective nationwide magnitude'. This measure is included only as a control variable in the analysis presented in this chapter. It is the one of the principal factors analysed in chapter 5, where its construction and interpretation are laid out in detail.

relevant' (p. 384). We extend this approach to countries not covered in Mozaffar *et al.*'s (*ibid.*) analysis.

¹⁸ Formally, the effective number of ethnopolitical groups is calculated as legislative parties is: $1/\sum e_i^2$ where e_i = the i th ethnopolitical group's share of a country's population.

4.4 Analysis

4.4.1 Causes of vote fragmentation in Africa's presidential elections

In order to investigate the sources of vote fragmentation in Africa's presidential elections, the following regression equations are specified and tested over data on African presidential elections:

$$(4.3) \text{ Presidential Vote Fragmentation} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Societal Diversity} + \beta_2 \text{Plurality} + \beta_3 \text{Boycott} + \beta_4 \text{Political Rights} + \beta_5 \text{Incumbent Running} + \beta_6 \text{First Plurality} + \varepsilon$$

$$(4.4) \text{ Presidential Vote Fragmentation} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Societal Diversity} + \beta_2 \text{Plurality} + \beta_3 \text{Societal Diversity} * \text{Plurality} + \beta_4 \text{Boycott} + \beta_5 \text{Political Rights} + \beta_6 \text{Incumbent Running} + \beta_7 \text{First Plurality} + \varepsilon$$

Equation 4.3 is an additive specification; it allows us to test H1, which contended that presidential elections held under plurality rules would result in less fragmented votes than presidential elections held under runoff rules. The coefficient β_2 in equation 4.3 seeks to capture the overall effect of plurality rules on presidential vote fragmentation. H1 predicts that this coefficient should be negative and statistically significant (*i.e.* that plurality presidential elections should result in less vote fragmentation than the first round of two-round votes).

Equation 4.4 contains an interaction term¹⁹ (Societal Diversity*Plurality), which allows us to test H2 and H3. The coefficient β_1 in equation 6.4 is the predicted marginal effect of societal diversity on presidential vote fragmentation under runoff rules (*i.e.* when 'plurality' is set to 0). H2 predicts that this coefficient should be positive and statistically significant. The coefficient β_3 in equation 4.4 measures the change in the marginal effect of societal diversity on presidential vote fragmentation caused by a one unit increase in the 'plurality' variable. H3 predicts that the value of the coefficient β_3 should be negative and statistically significant (*i.e.* that societal diversity has less of an impact on presidential vote fragmentation under plurality rules than it does under runoff rules). Table 4.1 details the results of equation 6.3 over 8 measures of societal diversity and Table 4.2 details the results of equation 4.4 over these measures. I employ robust regression specifications, using the STATA 10 statistical software package.

¹⁹ In multiple regression analysis with additive specifications, for example a regression of the form: $\hat{Y} = + \beta_1 X + \beta_2 Z + \beta_0 + \epsilon$, the coefficient attached to each independent variable represents the effect of a one unit increase in that variable on the dependent variable, when other independent variables specified in the regression equation are held constant (Neter *et al.*, 1996: 219). As such, for multiple regressions that do not specify interaction terms, the effects of each independent variable do not change over the values of the other independent variables.

In regressions which specify interactive variables, however, the coefficient attached to the interaction term represents the extent to which the effect of one independent variable changes as the value of another independent variable increases (*ibid.*). For example, in the interactive regression equation $\hat{Y} = + \beta_1 X + \beta_2 Z + \beta_3 XZ + \beta_0 + \epsilon$, the X variable does not have a constant effect on Y across all values of the other variables specified in the regression; rather, its effect changes depending on the value of Z: there is a different line for the regression of Y on X at each value of Z.

The coefficient attached to the interaction term 'XZ' measures the amount and direction of change in the slope of the X variable for each one unit increase in the Z variable. Interactions are symmetrical, so the XZ coefficient also measures the change in the slope of the Z variable for each one unit increase in the X variable (Kam and Franzese, 2007). The p-value attached to the XZ coefficient tests whether the conditioning effect of the Z variable on the X variable (and *vice versa*) is statistically significant. The coefficients attached to the variables that are combined to make up interaction terms also have a very specific meaning; they represent the effect of each independent variable when the moderating variable is set to 0 (Brambor *et al.*, 2006).

Table 4.1 Coefficients and standard errors (in parentheses) for robust regressions for equation 4.3. Dependent variable – effective number of presidential candidates

Variable	Data Source							
	Mozaffar and Scarritt (1999)	Fearon Ethnic (2003)	Alesina et al. Ethnic (2003)	Atlas (1964)	Posner (2004)	Fearon Cultural (2003)	Alesina et al. Linguistic (2003)	Alesina et al. Religious (2003)
Societal Diversity	.06 (.04)	-.05* (.03)	.07* (.04)	-.02 (.04)	-.04 (.14)	.09 (.16)	.01 (.03)	.02 (.08)
Plurality	.15 (.31)	.56* (.32)	.25 (.30)	.33 (.30)	.28 (.31)	.37 (.33)	.24 (.32)	.23 (.31)
Boycott	-.91*** (.24)	-.86*** (.27)	-.92*** (.34)	-.83*** (.26)	-.90*** (.27)	-.89*** (.27)	-.95*** (.26)	-.90*** (.24)
Political Rights	-.02 (.06)	-.08 (.07)	-.04 (.06)	-.08 (.07)	-.06 (.07)	-.08 (.07)	-.03 (.07)	-.01 (.06)
Incumbent Running	-.09 (.19)	-.09 (.21)	-.18 (.20)	-.14 (.21)	-.18 (.22)	-.16 (.22)	-.18 (.21)	-.03 (.19)
First Plurality	.16 (.65)	-.18 (.66)	.23 (.66)	.11 (.65)	.20 (.66)	.03 (.68)	.23 (.68)	.27 (.66)
Constant	2.43*** (.29)	3.28*** (.34)	2.56*** (.31)	3.09*** (.34)	3.05*** (.38)	2.92*** (.44)	2.82*** (.32)	2.49*** (.32)
R-Squared	.15	.20	.16	.18	.19	.19	.14	.13
N	120	102	116	108	102	101	115	120

*p < .10, ** p < .05, *** p < .01.

Table 4.2 Coefficients and standard errors (in parentheses) for robust regressions for equation 4.4. Dependent variable – effective number of presidential candidates

Variable	Data Source							
	Mozaffar and Scarritt (1999)	Fearon Ethnic (2003)	Alesina et al. Ethnic (2003)	Atlas (1964)	Posner (2004)	Fearon Cultural (2003)	Alesina et al. Linguistic (2003)	Alesina et al. Religious (2003)
Societal Diversity	.05 (.04)	-.04 (.03)	.06 (.04)	-.02 (.04)	-.18 (.16)	.21 (.18)	-.01 (.04)	-.01 (.08)
Plurality	-.10 (.70)	1.14* (.62)	.07 (.70)	.26 (.56)	-1.15 (.98)	-1.69* (.91)	-.03 (.64)	-.39 (.82)
Societal Diversity* Plurality	.04 (.11)	-.08 (.07)	.04 (.13)	.01 (.09)	.62 (.39)	-.56 (.38)	.04 (.09)	.17 (.21)
Boycott	-.91*** (.24)	-.86*** (.27)	-.91*** (.25)	-.82*** (.26)	-.93*** (.27)	-.89*** (.27)	-.93*** (.27)	-.87*** (.24)
Political Rights	-.01 (.06)	-.07 (.07)	-.04 (.06)	-.08 (.07)	-.04 (.07)	-.07 (.07)	-.03 (.07)	.00 (.06)
Incumbent Running	-.11 (.19)	-.12 (.21)	-.16 (.20)	-.13 (.21)	-.23 (.22)	-.07 (.22)	-.15 (.21)	-.02 (.19)
First Plurality	.10 (.67)	-.34 (.68)	.23 (.66)	.13 (.66)	.10 (.66)	-.30 (.69)	.23 (.68)	.17 (.68)
Constant	2.47** (.31)	3.2*** (.35)	2.56*** (.31)	3.08*** (.35)	3.26*** (.39)	2.55*** (.48)	.282*** (.32)	2.50*** (.32)
R-Squared	.15	.21	.16	.17	.21	.20	.14	.13
N	120	102	116	108	102	101	115	120

*p < .10, ** p < .05, *** p < .01.

Apart from the prediction that boycotted elections would feature lower vote fragmentation than elections in which all candidates participated, Tables 4.1 and 4.2 indicate that none of the suppositions and hypotheses in the theoretical discussion of the potential causes of presidential vote fragmentation in section 4.2.1 are empirically supported.

There is no evidence from Table 4.1 to support the contention that plurality presidential elections result in less fragmented vote distributions than runoff elections. If anything, the opposite appears to be the case; with positive coefficients for 'plurality' across all 8 measures of societal diversity (though none of these were statistically significant at the 95% level and only one was significant at the 90% level). Looking at a more simplistic comparison based on averages, we can see that there is little overall difference across electoral system types: the average presidential election held under runoff rules resulted in 2.61 'effective' candidates, while the average plurality presidential election featured 2.67 'effective' candidates.

H2, which predicts that societal diversity would exercise a positive and significant impact on vote fragmentation under runoff rules, also receives no support from the above analysis. The coefficients for 'societal diversity' in Table 4.2 tested this assertion, none of these coefficients were positive and statistically significant at conventional levels – indeed 5 out of 8 were negatively signed (though none were statistically significant at the 95% level). H3 is also unsupported; the coefficient of the interaction term capturing the product of societal diversity and plurality in Table 4.2 was not significant under any of the 8 measures of societal diversity that we employed. As such, none of the hypotheses pertaining to the most widely discussed sources of presidential vote fragmentation in the comparative literature (Amorim Neto and Cox, 1997; Golder, 2006; Jones, 1999; 2004) were empirically validated. Indeed, it should be noted that the f-test statistics for regressions on presidential vote fragmentation

that only specified societal diversity, plurality, and their interaction as independent variables did not meet the .05 threshold for significance.

None of 'incumbent running', 'first plurality' nor 'political rights'²⁰ proved to be statistically significant predictors of presidential vote fragmentation. Overall, the 'boycott' variable is the only one that is consistently statistically significant in Tables 4.1 and 4.2 (as well as Table 4.3). The coefficient of the boycott variable is always negatively signed, indicating that presidential elections that were boycotted by at least one prominent candidate featured less fragmented vote distributions than those in which all candidates participated. Looking at coefficient estimates across the various models, boycotted elections appear to result in between .82 and .95 fewer 'effective' candidates than elections where no boycotts occurred. The scale of this effect is therefore relatively substantial, bearing in mind that the average election produces 2.62 'effective' presidential candidates. However, it should be borne in mind that the 'boycott' variable is a rather crude indicator, as it is difficult to gauge the support that would have been enjoyed by candidates who did not compete.

H4 contended that levels of geographic concentration condition the effects of societal diversity on presidential vote fragmentation. I test this hypothesis in Table 4.3, using Scarritt and Mozaffar's (1999) data on ethnopolitical group fragmentation and geographic concentration in each county studied. Model 1 is an additive model, which seeks to capture the independent effect of 'concentration' on presidential vote fragmentation. Models 2 and 3 directly test H4, examining whether there is a positive and statistically significant interaction between 'concentration' and 'societal diversity'. Model 2 features a

²⁰ We note here, however, that 'political rights' is negatively signed and statistically significant when 'boycott' is not included. Arguably, there is something of a multicollinearity problem in this case, as the two variables co-vary substantially. The average value of 'political rights' for elections where a candidate boycotted the race was 5.5, it was 3.6 for elections in which all candidates participated.

simple interaction between the two variables, while Model 3 seeks to control for other potentially relevant interactions between 'societal diversity' and 'plurality', and between 'plurality' and 'concentration'. Finally, I also test H5 – which contends that increases in the centralisation of power in the office of the presidency correspond to less fragmented presidential votes, *ceteris paribus*. To do so, I add variables capturing two measures of the centralisation of presidential power for each election year (Marhsall and Jagers, 2009; van Cranenburgh, 2008) to Model 3.

The results elaborated in Table 4.3 are interesting; there is no support for H4, as none of terms capturing the interaction between 'societal diversity' and 'concentration' are statistically significant at conventional levels. However, Model 1 indicates that 'concentration' is exerting a statistically significant independent effect on presidential vote fragmentation. It appears that, as the average degree of ethnopolitical group concentration increases, the average fragmentation of the vote in presidential elections also increases. Again the scale of the effect is striking, as the concentration index ranges from 0-3, the .44 coefficient indicates that countries with the highest levels of 'concentration' elect approximately 1.32 more 'effective' presidential candidates than those with the lowest levels of 'concentration'. Theoretically, this is a somewhat puzzling finding, as the expectation was that the role of geographic concentration was to facilitate or impede the political activation of groups, rather than exerting an independent influence on vote fragmentation. Thus it appears that, while there is evidence of a positive relationship between levels of ethnopolitical group concentration and presidential vote fragmentation, the *nature* of this relationship is different from what existing theory predicts. 'Concentration' appears to play a role that is independent of levels of ethnic diversity – rather than serving to amplify its effects. Thus it may be some feature of concentration, in and of itself, serves to increase presidential vote fragmentation. One speculative explanation is that territorially concentrated groups by their very nature impede the construction of the nationalised support bases around a

single candidate that can inhibit presidential fragmentation – especially given the ‘cost free’ nature of supporting a small regional candidate in two-round voting systems. This explanation remains speculative and *post hoc* at this point, however, and the unanticipated role played by geographic concentration in presidential vote fragmentation could be a starting point for future research.

With regards to H5, the findings elucidated in Table 4.3 demonstrate that while van Cranenburgh’s (2008) data capturing the formal powers of presidents across the region are not statistically significant predictors of presidential vote fragmentation, the Polity IV data, which seek to capture both formal and informal aspects of presidential power, are meaningfully related to presidential vote fragmentation. As a score of 1 represents the most powerful presidency on the Polity IV data, the positive coefficient indicates that an increase in presidential power centralisation corresponds to a decrease in the degree of presidential vote fragmentation, *ceteris paribus*. The scale of this finding is substantial; each 1 point increase on the 7-point Polity IV scale corresponds to an estimated .26 extra ‘effective’ presidential candidates. This finding supports Hicken and Stoll’s (2008) assertion that the centralisation of powers in the presidency provides greater leverage over presidential vote fragmentation than the presidential electoral system.

Table 4.3 Coefficients and standard errors (in parentheses) for robust regressions testing H4 and H5.

Dependent variable – effective number of presidential candidates

Variable	Models				
	(1) Additive	(2) Two way interaction	(3) Three-way interaction	(3) + van Cranenburgh data	(3) + Polity IV data
Societal Diversity	-.04 (.04)	-.01 (.15)	-.15 (.11)	-.38** (.16)	-.31* (.16)
Ethnic group concentration	.44*** (.12)	.47*** (.17)	.55*** (.17)	.44** (.21)	.29 (.26)
Plurality	.09 (.29)	.09 (.30)	-1.28 (2.79)	7.7 (10.5)	-1.5 (2.9)
Concentration* Diversity		-.01 (.04)	.02 (.05)	.09 (.06)	.07 (.06)
Plurality* Diversity			.84 (.62)	-.25 (.17)	.96 (.63)
Concentration* Plurality			.11 (1.18)	-3.2 (4.7)	.24 (1.2)
Plurality* Diversity*			-.28 (.26)	.13 (.76)	-.35 (.27)
Concentration					
Boycott	-.93*** (.23)	-.93*** (.23)	-.91*** (.23)	-.84*** (.26)	-.80*** (.24)
Political Rights Score	-.05 (.06)	-.06 (.06)	-.06 (.06)	-.04 (.06)	.03 (.08)
Incumbent Running	-.21 (.18)	-.22 (.19)	-.21 (.18)	-.33 (.21)	-.09 (.21)
First Plurality	.26 (.62)	.24 (.36)	.06 (.62)	.28 (.55)	.49 (.56)
Centralisation of Power				.05 (.17)	.26*** (.07)
Constant	2.39*** (.29)	2.36*** (.36)	2.52 *** (.35)	2.65** (1.3)	1.72** (.78)
R-Squared	.21	.22	.25	.31	.32
N	120	120	120	91	108

*p < .10, ** p < .05, *** p < .01.

4.4.2 *The influence of presidential elections on Africa's legislative elections*

I test hypotheses 6-8 empirically by investigating the effects of presidential elections on levels of party vote fragmentation in the legislative elections studied in this thesis. In order to do so, I employ the best-performing of several models (in terms of adjusted r-squared statistics) for predicting vote fragmentation. The precise model specification with regards to societal diversity, ethnopolitical group concentration and legislative electoral systems is elaborated in chapter 5 as the 'chained' interaction model in table 5.3. Here, I analyse the results pertaining only to 'presidential' variables; focusing on: the effective number of presidential candidates in the preceding election, the temporal proximity between presidential and legislative races, and their interaction. The other variables are treated extensively in the next chapter, however they are included here only as controls. Formally, the model that I deploy specifies the following regression equation:

$$(4.5) \text{ Vote Fragmentation} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Effective number of presidential candidates} + \beta_2 \text{Temporal Proximity of Presidential and Legislative elections} + \beta_3 \text{Effective number of presidential candidates} * \text{Temporal Proximity of Presidential and Legislative elections} + \beta_4 \text{Societal Diversity} + \beta_5 \text{Electoral System permissiveness} + \beta_6 \text{Concentration} + \beta_7 \text{Societal Diversity} * \text{Electoral System Permissiveness} + \beta_8 \text{Societal Diversity} * \text{Concentration} + \beta_9 \text{Political Rights} + \epsilon$$

Table 4.4 details the results of a robust regression specifying equation 4.5 over all legislative elections and over only those legislative elections that were preceded by the direct election of a president. Hypotheses 6-8 focused on the marginal impact of an increase in the fragmentation of the vote among presidential candidates. I therefore test these hypotheses only for states where

there was a directly elected president. I do so by mapping the marginal effect of an increase in the effective number of presidential candidates on legislative vote fragmentation as the proximity of presidential and legislative elections increases in Figure 4.1. H6 anticipates that this effect should be positive and significant, once the presidential and legislative elections are held sufficiently closely together; H7 predicts that this effect should be significantly greater where presidential elections are held simultaneously with legislative elections than when legislative elections are held at the presidential mid-term. As such, H7 predicts that the coefficient of β_3 in equation 4.5 should be both positive and statistically significant. H8, predicts that the 'Long-Coattails' (Golder, 2006: 36) of presidential candidates mean that the effect of presidential vote fragmentation on legislative vote fragmentation will be positive and statistically significant even when legislative elections are held at the presidential mid-term. As such, H8 predicts that the coefficient β_1 in equation 4.5 will be positive and statistically significant (as β_1 represents the marginal effect of the effective number of presidential candidates when the 'proximity' variable is set to 0).

I also examine the overall effects of holding temporally proximate presidential elections on vote fragmentation in legislative elections (as opposed to holding midterm elections or not directly electing a president). This involves seeking to estimate the impact of holding simultaneous presidential and legislative elections on legislative vote fragmentation across all 99 legislative elections in the dataset; systems where there is no directly elected president are coded as '0' (*i.e.* as having the same effect as a Presidency where legislative elections are held mid-term) in this analysis. Figure 4.2 allows us to map the marginal impact of holding a simultaneous presidential and legislative election on legislative vote fragmentation, as the fragmentation of the presidential vote increases.

Table 4.4 Coefficients and standard errors (in parentheses) for robust regressions for equation 4.5.

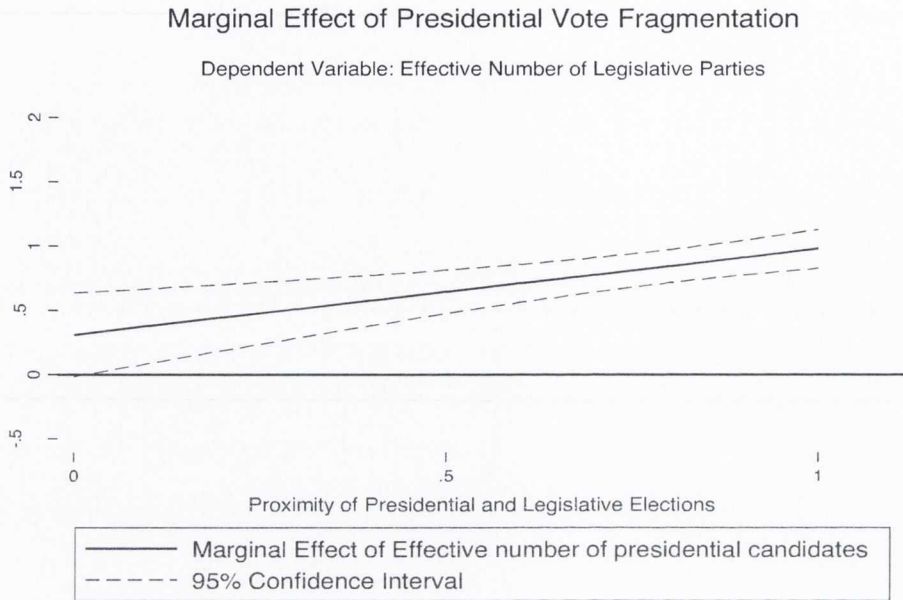
Dependent variable – effective number of electoral parties

Variable	Cases included	
	All legislative elections	Systems with direct presidential elections only
Effective number: Presidential Candidates	.26*** (.08)	.31* (.16)
Proximity	-2.02*** (.21)	-1.83*** (.44)
Proximity*Effective number: Presidential Candidates	.70*** (.11)	.67*** (.19)
Societal Diversity	.03 (.06)	.22** (.09)
Ethnic group concentration	-.20** (.08)	-.14 (.09)
Log (ENM)	.24** (.10)	.55** (.15)
Concentration*Diversity	.06** (.02)	.03 (.02)
Log(ENM)*Diversity	-.05*** (.02)	-.15*** (.04)
Political Rights Score	-.05* (.03)	-.04 (.03)
Constant	2.19*** (.26)	1.45** (.55)
R-Squared	.49	.52
N	98	83

*p < .10, ** p < .05, *** p < .01.

Looking at the results in Table 4.4, we can see that there is strong support for H7 – the coefficient for the variable specifying the interaction between ‘effective number of presidential candidates’ and ‘proximity’ is positive and significant at the 99% level. The analysis also provides support for H6; Figure 4.1 demonstrates that, for nearly all values of ‘proximity’ above ‘0’, the effective number of presidential candidates has a positive and statistically significant effect on the effective number of electoral parties in subsequent legislative elections. Indeed, the point estimate of this relationship in Figure 4.1 indicates that there is a near 1:1 correspondence between presidential and legislative fragmentation when the two elections are held simultaneously. It is important to note here that, especially in the case of simultaneous elections, it is difficult to specify the causal direction of the relationship between presidential and legislative vote fragmentation – some of the correspondence observed may be due to the influence of the legislative campaign on the presidential campaign, rather than *vice versa*. With regards to H8, the results are a little more circumspect, Table 4.4 shows us that, when equation 4.5 was specified for states where direct presidential elections were held, the coefficient β_1 was positively signed, but was only significant at the 90% (rather than the 95%) level of confidence. As such, one cannot be definitive about the existence of presidential coattails when legislative elections are held at the presidential mid-term on the basis of the analysis presented here.

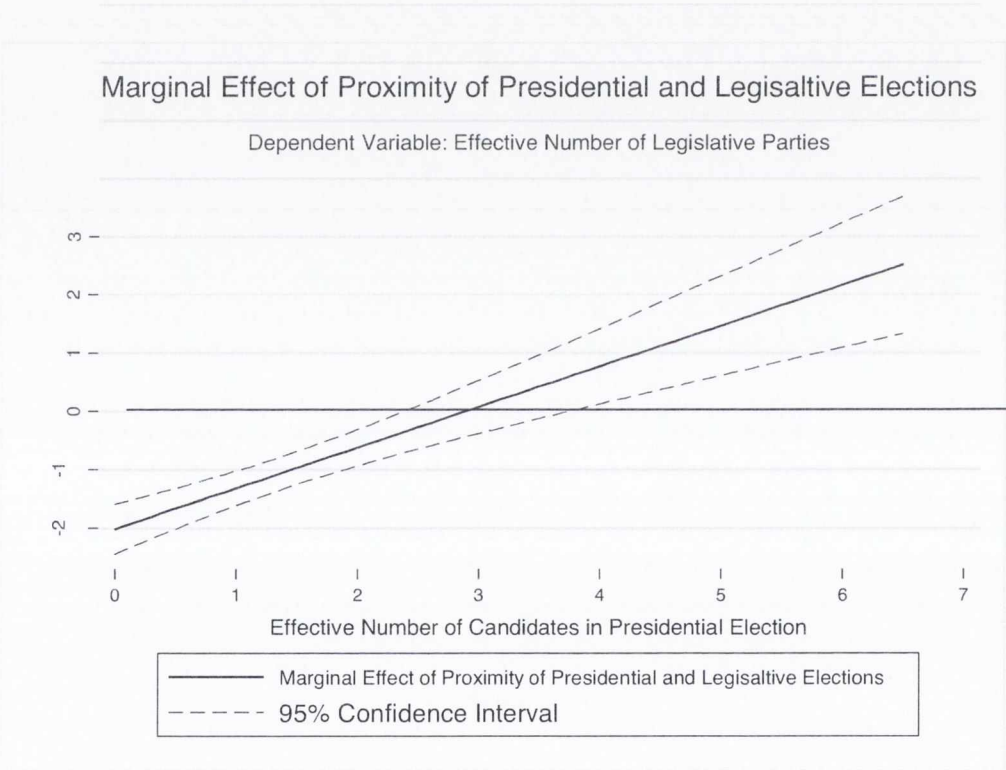
Figure 4.1 Marginal effect of effective number of presidential candidates on vote fragmentation in subsequent legislative election as temporal proximity of elections increases



Looking at Figure 4.2, which maps the marginal effect of ‘proximity’ on the fragmentation of votes in legislative elections as presidential vote fragmentation increases over all 99 sets of vote returns on legislative elections considered in this thesis, it can be seen that, when presidential elections result in less than 2.5 ‘effective’ candidates, the effects of holding a simultaneous election are negative and statistically significant. However, where presidential elections are highly fragmented, with more than 4 ‘effective candidates’, the effect of holding a simultaneous election is positive and statistically significant at the 95% level. This analysis supports Golder’s (2006) contention that the effect of holding direct presidential elections on the fragmentation of votes in legislative elections is not fixed in one direction; rather it depends on the manner in which votes are distributed among presidential candidates. Looking at the observed distribution of presidential vote fragmentation in sub-Saharan Africa, however, it appears that the effect is more likely to increase concentration of votes than to increase

fragmentation. The average level of vote fragmentation in the presidential elections considered in this thesis was 2.62 'effective' candidates – out of 120 elections, 75 (62.5%) resulted in fewer than 2.5 effective candidates. However, only 18 (15%) resulted in more than 4 effective candidates. As such, it appears that the region's presidential elections are part of the explanation of the puzzling combination of high levels of ethnic fragmentation and low levels of party system fragmentation that have been observed in sub-Saharan Africa.

Figure 4.2 Marginal effect of temporal proximity of legislative and executive elections on vote fragmentation in legislative elections as the effective number of presidential candidates increases



4.5 Conclusions

This chapter has looked at an aspect of multiparty competition in sub-Saharan Africa that has received surprisingly little attention in the comparative

literature: direct presidential elections. The results of these elections were considered as dependent variables in their own right as well as being examined as independent variables that can help to explain partisan vote fragmentation in sub-Saharan Africa's legislative elections.

The results of the analysis of the causes of vote fragmentation in presidential elections necessarily lead to the conclusion that existing theories from the comparative literature (Amorim Neto and Cox, 1997; Golder, 2006; Jones 1999; 2004) explain very little of the variance in levels of vote fragmentation in the multi-candidate presidential elections that took place in sub-Saharan Africa between 1989 and 2008. Indeed, none of the hypotheses with regard to presidential electoral systems derived from this literature were borne out in the above analysis. As such, the 'politics as usual' approach was not found to be of much use in explaining vote fragmentation in Africa's presidential elections. However, it was found that the extent to which power is centralised in the presidency exerts a significant reductive role on presidential vote fragmentation, as anticipated by a recent comparative study (Hicken and Stoll, 2009). This relationship was found to exist when levels of political freedoms and occurrence of opposition boycotts were controlled for, indicating that the effect is not purely attributable to strong presidents making life difficult for oppositions. The theoretical contention that lead Hicken and Stoll (2009) to focus on presidential powers was that, as the size of the prize represented by presidential office increase, so do the incentives for groups to cohere into potentially winning blocs. While the evidence presented here cannot explain the micro processes that lead to the observed relationship between presidential powers and presidential vote fragmentation, the relationship was found to be statistically significant, and is in the direction that Hicken and Stoll (*ibid.*) predicted. However, it should be borne in mind that this relationship was only captured using data that measures both formal and informal aspects of presidential power (Marshall and Jagers, 2009) and not by a measure that focuses solely on formal powers (van Cranenburgh, 2008).

Two 'exceptionalist' factors were found to exert a demonstrable effect over the degree of vote fragmentation in Africa's presidential races: the occurrence of a boycott by a candidate and the extent to which ethnopolitical groups were geographically concentrated. It was found that boycotted elections exhibited considerably less vote fragmentation than elections where all major candidates participated. This is hardly a surprising finding, as races which feature fewer candidates should, by definition, result in less fragmented votes. It does point, however, to a theme which has run through this thesis, namely: the importance of taking into account the dramatic variations that exist with regard to political contexts across the region in comparative studies of African party systems.

The findings with regard to ethnopolitical groups' geographic concentration were somewhat puzzling. While it was anticipated that this factor could help to explain the fragmentation of votes in presidential elections, it was theorised that it would do so by conditioning the probability that ethnopolitical cleavages become politically relevant – as geographically concentrated groups face fewer logistical hurdles for political activation than geographically dispersed groupings. However, the results presented in Table 4.3 indicate that 'concentration' is exerting an independent effect (with higher average levels of concentration in a given state corresponding to more fragmented presidential votes) but that it does not interact with societal diversity.

Theories from the existing comparative literature were more useful in the analysis of the relationship between presidential and legislative elections, however. It was found that the temporal proximity between presidential and legislative elections plays a significant role in conditioning the correspondence between them. Contrary to the findings elaborated by Mylonas and Roussias

(2008) the analysis presented here indicates that, in line with the expectations of previous studies (Amorim Neto and Cox, 1997; Filippov *et al.*, 1999; Golder, 2006; Shugart and Carey, 1992; Shugart, 1995), there is a significantly higher correspondence between presidential and legislative vote fragmentation when the two are held simultaneously than when legislative elections take place at the presidential mid-term. The importance of the relative timing of the two elections was such that it could not be confirmed that there is a statistically significant positive relationship between presidential and legislative vote fragmentation when legislative elections take place at the presidential midterm, whereas a near 1:1 correspondence between presidential and legislative vote fragmentation was found when the two elections are held simultaneously. Overall, it was argued that presidential elections tend to be associated with reduced party system fragmentation in the region, although when presidential races are highly fragmented they are associated with increases in legislative party system fragmentation. This pattern implies that presidential elections can provide part of an explanation as to why Africa's fragmented societies consistently produce concentrated party systems.

As such, the analysis presented in this chapter points to the importance of presidential elections as explanatory factors to scholars seeking to understand the causes of fragmentation in Africa's legislative elections. Given the tendency for presidential elections to be far more consequential for the allocation of *de jure* and *de facto* political power in many of the countries in the region, this is unsurprising. However, the analysis also revealed that we know rather less about the sources of presidential vote fragmentation in sub-Saharan Africa than we do about the sources of legislative vote fragmentation. Of course, the analysis here is designed in such a manner that historical patterns of allegiance and competition between elites in each country, as well as specific deals by which certain elite leaders were co-opted by the party group in power, are not explicitly accounted for. Arguably, these patterns would be of considerable use in explaining presidential vote fragmentation in sub-Saharan Africa; however, no

comparative data that the author is aware of describes these patterns and occurrences in a systematized manner.

With regard to the role of presidential electoral systems, it may be argued that more conventional effects should emerge over time. However, the most recent plurality rule presidential elections considered in this dataset offer, at best, mixed support for this contention. The 2007 Kenyan elections, apart from allegations of rigging and post-electoral violence, did appear to exhibit more signs of rational adaption of the major parties to the constraints of plurality rules than previous elections. In Malawi, on the other hand, Jones (2004) had identified the 1999 elections as an instance of rational adaption to the constraints of plurality rule where the Malawi Congress Party (MCP) and the Alliance for Democracy (AFORD) 'realized that alone they had no chance of defeating the incumbent (...). They therefore formed an alliance under which the MCP provided the presidential candidate (Gwanda Chakuamba) while AFORD provided the vice-presidential candidate (Chakufwa Chihana)'. However this alliance collapsed before the 2004 presidential elections, which exhibited even higher fragmentation than the first set of multiparty presidential elections in 1992, with votes being fragmented among 3.62 'effective' candidates, and Bingu wa Mutharika winning with 35.9% of the popular vote.

In Cameroon, the first multiparty elections in 1992 represented something of a coordination failure, as opposition fragmentation allowed incumbent Paul Biya to win the presidency with only 39.98% of the popular vote (Takougang, 2003). In subsequent elections, the effective number of candidates has fallen in Cameroon, however looking at electoral returns, this pattern is entirely attributable to the extent to which Paul Biya's dominance has grown since the first set of elections (*ibid.*) – there are no signs that this fall is attributable to growing opposition cohesion in Cameroon's presidential elections over time. Finally, Zambia's 2001 and 2006 presidential elections were both

marked by high levels of fragmentation, with 5.07 and 3.86 'effective' candidates, respectively. Overall, there is little evidence that the latest plurality elections considered in this dataset offer more support than the earliest plurality elections considered for the argument that the strategic incentives of plurality rules are constraining vote fragmentation in Africa's presidential elections.

This chapter has treated a set of elections that have been rather neglected in the existing literature – Africa's presidential elections. The next chapter focuses exclusively on the legislative elections that have been at the heart of previous scholarly analyses of Africa's post 1989 multiparty systems. It analyses a topic where the 'politics as usual' approach has a finely developed set of expectations: the roles of electoral systems and societal structure on legislative vote and seat fragmentation. It explores a more appropriate version than previous analyses of the 'politics as usual' account of the role of electoral systems as determinants of party system fragmentation: separating 'mechanical' from 'psychological' electoral system effects. Chapter 5 also discusses and investigates alternative accounts of the roles that Africa's legislative electoral systems may play, based on some of the region's 'exceptionalist' characteristics.

Chapter 5 - Sources of vote and seat fragmentation in African legislative elections:

Examining the roles of legislative electoral systems, societal diversity, ethnopolitical group concentration, and political freedoms

Abstract

This chapter seeks to examine the influences of legislative electoral systems, societal diversity, ethnopolitical group concentration, and levels of political freedoms on African party system fragmentation. It offers an analysis that directly tests the propositions of the broader comparative literature with regard to relationships between societal diversity, electoral systems and party system fragmentation for elections in sub-Saharan Africa.

I find evidence that electoral systems influence the degree of proportionality of seats to votes as anticipated in the literature. However, there is no evidence to suggest that societal diversity more readily translates into partisan vote fragmentation under proportional electoral systems than under majoritarian systems. This assertion is tested over several measures of societal diversity. The analysis also indicates that societal diversity translates more readily into vote fragmentation when ethnic groups are regionally concentrated than when they are dispersed, and that observed levels of vote fragmentation increase as levels of political freedoms increase.

5.1 Introduction

The most frequently considered and best-theorised elements in comparative accounts seeking to explain patterns of party system fragmentation have been the type of legislative electoral system in operation and the extent of societal diversity in a given state. This chapter provides an in-depth examination of the significance of these factors in explaining African party system fragmentation. It also presents an investigation of the role of ethnic groups' geographic concentration, as well the dramatic variations in political freedoms that are discernible across Africa's elections. As outlined in chapters 1 and 2, there are several reasons to question the applicability of 'politics as usual' models of party system fragmentation derived from elections in established democracies to elections in Africa post-1989.

Empirically, one can observe a number of national-level violations of Duverger's Law and Hypothesis across the continent. The centrality of ethno-territorial cleavages to electoral competition in several states has seen numerous small parties (and, indeed, independent candidates) surviving under single member-based electoral systems, due to the regional concentration of their support bases (Golder and Wantchekon, 2004). This has been the case in several African states with single-member plurality systems including Zambia, Malawi, Kenya, and Liberia¹ (Cowen and Kanyinga, 2002; Gibson and Long, 2007; Mozaffar, 1998; Reynolds, 1999; Sawyer, 2008). In several countries where electoral systems are highly proportional; including Namibia, Mozambique, South Africa, and Angola, party systems have not been particularly fragmented. Lindberg (2005) describes this situation as an 'apparent paradox' (p.54) which he explains as being a result of historical patterns of violent conflict among two main contenders for power in many of these countries, leading to the concentration of votes and seats in the hands of large parties occurring 'despite,

¹ Though Liberia first adopted SMP for legislative elections in 2005, and had previously employed a PR-based system.

and not thanks to, relatively pure PR systems' (p.55). Salih and Nordlund (2007) observe that 'in Africa (...) proportional electoral systems defy the conventional wisdom that PR makes dominant-party rule less likely, and that PR systems are often associated with multiparty systems and coalition governments' (p. 42).

The question of how legislative electoral systems and societal diversity relate to party system fragmentation in Africa has engaged the attention of several political scientists, and has been the focus of multiple comparative analyses of Africa's multiparty systems (Brambor *et al.*, 2007; Erdmann and Basedau, 2008; Lindberg, 2005; Mozaffar 1997; Mozaffar *et al.*, 2003; Mylonas and Roussias, 2008). As such, in this chapter, I am revisiting the two best-investigated sources of African party system fragmentation in the contemporary field. However, as was argued in chapter 2, there remain several flaws in our existing understanding the roles played by these variables in African party system fragmentation. This chapter seeks to fill in several of the gaps in the existing research. Below, alternative theoretical accounts linking societal cleavage structures and electoral systems to vote and seat fragmentations are elucidated, and the hypotheses that these theories generate are specified.

5.2 Theory and Hypotheses

5.2.1 'Mechanical' effects of electoral systems

Electoral systems' most easily demonstrable influence on party system fragmentation occurs in the process of translating party vote shares into party seat shares (Blais and Carty, 1991). The process of vote-to-seat translation was described by Duverger as the 'mechanical' factor underlying the relationship between single-member plurality systems and bi-partism. This process is mechanical in that it comes into operation once the votes have been cast so that 'no human manipulation or strategy is involved' (Taagepera and Shugart, 1989: 65).

The electoral system in operation serves to set the threshold of vote share that parties must receive in order to win legislative representation. In some cases this is explicit, many PR-based electoral systems specify a minimum threshold of votes that a party must receive in order to be attributed any seats in the legislature (for a detailed discussion see: Gallagher and Mitchell, 2005b: 617-620). More generally, however, implicit thresholds of representation can be derived on the basis of the formula for allocation of seats, the number of seats being contested in each district, and the overall number of districts that are contested (Benoit, 2001; Gallagher and Mitchell, 2005b; Taagepera, 2002). Electoral systems that set a high threshold for legislative representation tend to favour large parties and disadvantage smaller parties in terms of the translation of votes to seats (Amorim Neto and Cox, 1997; Clark and Golder, 2006; Cox, 1997; Lijphart, 1994; Ordeshook and Shvetsova, 1994; Rae, 1967; Taagepera and Shugart, 1989; 1993).

As discussed in chapter 2, an early debate on the effects of electoral systems in African multiparty elections concerned their mechanical effects, with Reynolds (1995) and Barkan (1995) arguing for and against the adoption of PR in Southern Africa respectively in a pair of *Journal of Democracy* articles. Barkan (1995) argued that PR and single-member based systems would produce similar levels of disproportionality in African elections, given the tendency for vote shares to be highly geographically-concentrated². He cited the example of the 1994 election in Malawi, in which an SMP resulted in a highly proportional vote-seat distribution. Reynolds (1995) countered this assertion, considering a wider range of African elections, and demonstrating that PR systems had consistently lower levels of disproportionality than SMP systems.

² As Johnson (2002) demonstrates for elections in the UK, the extent to which small parties are punished and large parties are rewarded under single-member plurality systems depends crucially on the geographic distribution of their votes, specifically, on how votes are concentrated within constituency boundaries. Moser (1999) discusses the single-seat component of elections that took place in Russia and Ukraine in the 1990s, where the ability of very small parties to concentrate (practically) the entirety of their support in single constituencies meant that plurality voting rules resulted in a relatively proportional outcome.

In this chapter, the mechanical effects of electoral system in Africa's multiparty elections are examined using a continuous measure of electoral system permissiveness across a wider range of countries than either Reynolds (1995) or Barkan (1995) considered in their evaluations. Formally, the most basic statement of the 'mechanical effects' hypothesis is as follows:

H1: Electoral system permissiveness is positively related to the proportionality of seat shares to vote shares.

However, there are also somewhat more specific hypotheses that can be derived from our theoretical understanding of the nature of the mechanical effect of electoral systems. Clark and Golder's (2006) conceptualisation of mechanical effects considers the extent to which electoral system permissiveness influences the translation of vote fragmentation to into seat fragmentation. The expectation here is that increases in vote fragmentation will be more accurately translated to increases in seat fragmentation when electoral systems are more permissive. This conceptualisation of electoral systems' mechanical effect leads to the hypothesis that:

H2: Vote fragmentation has a greater effect on seat fragmentation under permissive electoral systems than under restrictive electoral systems.

Finally, it is important to bear in mind the possibility that the extent of the mechanical effect may be conditioned by the adaptation of voters and parties to the known properties of electoral systems. As Taagepera and Shugart's (1989) 'Law of Conservation of Disproportionality' indicates; voters and elites can mitigate the mechanical effects of electoral systems by coordinating to 'pre-filter' (Benoit, 2002: 39) vote distributions so as to minimize the proportion of wasted votes. As such, the electoral system is significant firstly in influencing the distribution of votes (psychological effect), and secondly in determining the relationship between vote and seat distributions (mechanical effect). Simple linear regression models do not take account of this two step process – and can

lead to a confusion of the 'total effect' (both psychological and mechanical) of electoral systems with their mechanical effect. Benoit's (2002) research, which addresses this issue by replacing linear regression models with a two-stage-least squares model, indicates that previous analyses have over-estimated the extent of electoral system mechanical effects by 45-100% by failing to control for this pre-filtering process. This line of discussion leads to a third hypothesis to be tested with regards to electoral systems' mechanical effects:

H3: Estimates of the mechanical effect of electoral systems are significantly smaller when a regression model that accounts for the proclivity of voters and parties to 'pre-filter' the constellation of votes is employed.

5.2.2 'Psychological' effects of electoral systems

While the mechanical effects of electoral systems are more readily visible for analysts, electoral systems' 'psychological' effects on political elites and voters have arguably been of greater interest to academics in national-level comparative analyses (Amorim Neto and Cox, 1997; Blais and Carty 1991; Clark and Golder, 2006; Cox, 1997; Filippov *et al.*, 1999; Jones, 2004; Ordeshook and Shvetsova, 1994; Stoll, 2004; 2008). Blais and Carty (1991) provide a reasonably clear definition of this effect under plurality electoral rules:

'the psychological effect refers to the tendency of voters, realizing that votes for minor parties are not effectively translated into seats, to rally to what they consider to be the least unacceptable of the two major parties' (p.79).

When electoral systems set high thresholds of representation, smaller parties are therefore likely to be abandoned by voters interested in 'making votes count' (Cox, 1997) and, as such, are also less likely to prove attractive labels for ambitious politicians, who will also gravitate to the 'least unacceptable' of the parties that have a realistic chance of seeing their votes converted into seats. These strategic responses to the operation of the legislative electoral

system can be observed by analysing the effect of electoral system permissiveness on the fragmentation of *vote* shares across parties (Benoit, 2002; Blais and Carty, 1991; Clark and Golder, 2006).

As discussed in chapter 2, recent comparative studies of the determinants of party system fragmentation have typically eschewed the notion that one should advocate for the primacy of institutional over sociological factors or *vice versa*. Rather than seeing party system fragmentation as an inevitable response to societal diversity, regardless of institutional constraints; these studies have contended that the translation of societal diversity into party system fragmentation is conditioned by the electoral thresholds that parties must pass to gain access to representative office. Under highly restrictive electoral systems, the adjustments of voters and elites to electoral system constraints may mean that high levels of societal diversity do not translate easily into high levels vote fragmentation. However, as electoral systems become more permissive, the pressure on voters and elites to abandon small parties becomes less acute; leading us to anticipate that societal diversity should translate more easily into party system fragmentation under permissive electoral systems.

Two testable hypotheses can be derived from this approach with regard to the relationships between societal diversity, electoral system permissiveness, and vote fragmentation.

H4: An increase in societal diversity will correspond to an increase in the fragmentation of electoral support among parties, when legislative electoral systems are moderately or very permissive *ceteris paribus*.

H5: The positive effect of societal diversity on vote fragmentation increases as levels of electoral system permissiveness increase *ceteris paribus*.

Hypothesis 4 indicates the expected direction of the relationship between societal diversity and party system fragmentation, under certain types of

electoral system. Hypothesis 5 indicates the manner in which electoral system permissiveness is expected to condition the relationship between societal diversity and vote fragmentation.

Numerous scholars have investigated the empirical veracity of this theoretical account of party system fragmentation. Overall, findings based on this approach have tended to support the contention that there is a positive interaction between societal diversity and electoral system permissiveness; with multivariate regressions containing these factors generating positive and statistically significant interaction terms and with specifications with interaction terms included resulting in larger r-squared statistics than additive specifications (Amorim Neto and Cox, 1997; Clark and Golder, 2006; Cox, 1997; Filippov *et al.*, 1999; Ordeshook and Shvestova, 1994). Clark and Golder's (2006) research indicates that societal diversity is positively related to vote fragmentation when electoral systems are sufficiently permissive, in established democracies. This chapter tests whether these findings are replicable for Africa's legislative elections, using a range of measures of societal diversity.

5.2.3 'Psychological' effects of electoral systems in recently transitioned democracies

Studies which have sought to extend the type of analysis discussed in the previous sub-section to recently transitioned democracies have had rather varied results. Clark and Golder (2006) find that electoral systems do not appear to influence the translation of societal diversity into vote fragmentation in 'new' democracies. They explain this anomaly as a consequence of the still-evolving nature of party systems in these states – arguing that voters and elites in new democracies often do not have sufficiently stable information to be able to calculate which parties/candidates are electorally viable and which should be abandoned.

Singer and Stephenson (2009) arrive at similar conclusions in their investigation of district-level evidence for Duverger's theory; they state that: 'our results provide no evidence that small district magnitudes constrain electoral competition in new democracies' (p.487). Moser (1999) finds that returns from several post-communist states at the district level indicate that 'electoral systems in post-communist states have not led to a significant level of strategic behaviour by voters and elites' (p.380). Clark and Wittrock (2005) note that efforts to empirically test Duverger's propositions in Central and Eastern Europe have lead to 'ambiguous results' (p. 172) thus far, but argue that the theoretically anticipated electoral system effects are detectable when executive dominance is controlled for.

Moser and Scheiner (2009) find, in their study of evidence of strategic desertion of trailing candidates at the constituency-level in the plurality component of mixed electoral systems, that there is 'substantial evidence of strategic voting in established democracies, particularly in districts with closer races, but little evidence of strategic voting in new democracies with poorly institutionalized party systems' (p. 51). Feree *et al.*'s (2008) analysis of local elections in South Africa came to a similar conclusion, finding no evidence of district-level strategic adjustments to electoral system constraints. These findings would imply that electoral systems may have no discernible psychological effect in recently transitioned democracies, a category into which the majority of African polities fall (Bratton and van de Walle, 1997). This line of argumentation leads us to hypothesize that, in sub-Saharan Africa's mostly nascent democracies:

H6: Electoral systems exercise no influence over the relationship between societal diversity and vote fragmentation.

However, an alternative approach contends that, in recently transitioned democracies, single-seat electoral districts can lead to *greater* fragmentation of the party system at the national level than PR systems. Birch (2005) argues that

Duverger's law/hypothesis provides a reasonable description of patterns in 'first wave' democracies, but that such patterns are unlikely to hold under the conditions that characterize most 'third wave' political systems.

Birch (*ibid.*) argues that the observed relationship between single-member plurality systems and two-party systems in established democracies is a result of the relatively drawn-out expansion of the franchise in these states over time, so that 'in the Western European and North American cases, more than one large party was already firmly in place when full-scale electoral competition under universal suffrage was introduced' (p.253). Also, these states were typically well-consolidated and reasonably integrated geopolitically at the time of suffrage expansion, so that the major parties could claim support across most areas of the state. In many 'third wave' democracies, on the other hand, mass enfranchisement came before both party system formation and state integration. As discussed in chapter 3, in the typical African transitioning state in the early 1990s, experience of multiparty electoral competition was limited to a rather brief period in the run up to and aftermath of political independence in the 1950s and 1960s. In the 1970s and 1980s, single party or military rule was the norm across the continent (Bratton and van de Walle, 1997). Also, while borders have been relatively well-consolidated across the continent (Lindberg, 2006), numerous scholars have noted that many African states have struggled to fully integrate, especially in rural hinterlands (Herbst, 1990; 2000; Jackson and Rosberg, 1982; Joseph and Herbst, 1997).

Birch (2005) contends that, because party systems are often under-developed/localised and state integration incomplete at the time of mass enfranchisement in third wave democracies, localised political organisations and identities are far more prevalent, so that:

'greater territorial diversity in new democracies often results in parties that are geographically concentrated to begin with. Without an electoral system that encourages nationalisation, but with one that, on the contrary, promotes

the localisation of political organisation, party system heterogeneity may be magnified' (p. 285).

Birch's contention is that, under SMP in new democracies, political elites who only have to organize in one district, rather than present a national or regional list, are provided with powerful incentives to activate localised cleavages, allowing independent candidates and tiny parties to run with reasonable prospects of success. Moser (1999) makes a similar argument; discussing the potential of party labels to exert pressure on candidates to coalesce under PR-based systems, he argues that 'under conditions of extreme party underdevelopment, the electoral system that promotes the use of party labels – proportional representation – may be more effective in constraining the party system than the plurality system, provided that a legal threshold is used' (p. 384). These discussions imply that electoral systems where votes are aggregated within small areas such as SMP, two-round majority, and small district PR, may serve to encourage the activation of local/regional cleavages by those seeking political office. Systems where territorial electoral units are larger, PR electoral systems with medium to large district magnitude may not encourage local cleavage activation to the same extent. While the measure of electoral system permissiveness employed in this analysis does not capture this variation perfectly, in general more permissive systems aggregate votes in larger geographical areas, while restrictive systems tend to divide the country into smaller electoral units. Empirically, therefore, if these processes are in place, we would expect to find that:

H7: The positive effect of societal diversity on vote fragmentation increases as electoral system permissiveness decreases *ceteris paribus*.

5.2.4 Insights from the literature on the mobilization of ethnic identities in sub-Saharan Africa

The literature on the political activation of ethnic identities in sub-Saharan Africa provides further theoretical insight. Posner's (2004b) investigation of the politicisation of ethnic identities in Zambia and Malawi is particularly illustrative. He notes that, while the division between Chewa and Tumbuka peoples has been a persistent source of antagonistic and adversarial competition in Malawian politics, in Zambia the same two groups 'view each other as ethnic brethren and political allies' (p. 531). The objective cultural differences between the two groups are identical on either side of the border between the countries, the crucial difference, Posner argues, is their size as a proportion of the national population.

According to Posner's account, politics in both Malawi and Zambia is characterised by intense competition for control over scarce resources controlled by a highly centralised government structure. Given this political dynamic, Posner (*ibid.*) argues that 'because (...) resources are controlled by the national government, the key to gaining access to them is to build a political coalition that can either capture political power outright (which in the highly centralised systems of these countries means capturing or retaining the presidency) or become a strong enough political force to exert pressure on the person who holds that office' (p. 538). In Malawi, the Chewa and the Tumbuka each form a sufficiently large proportion of the population (28% and 12% respectively) to be useful in constructing such a coalition, whereas in Zambia they are too small (7% and 4%) to be politically useful mobilization vehicles, and therefore remain marginal to political competition.

Looking at national-level political competition in South Africa, McLaughlin (2007) makes a similar argument, contending that the lack of mobilisation around ethnolinguistic identity in South African politics can be explained by 'the inhibitive geometry of ethnic cleavages at the national level'

(p.440). Mc Laughlin extends Posner's (2004b; 2005) arguments about the geometry of cleavage activation to develop a general prediction of 'low levels of ethnic mobilization in a highly fractionalized polity in which all groups are relatively small as proportions of the total population' (p.440). This assertion runs counter to the expectation outlined in hypothesis 4, that increases in societal diversity will lead to increases in vote fragmentation when the legislative electoral system is sufficiently permissive.

Erdmann (2004) distinguishes 'ethnic' from 'ethnic congress' parties (p. 78), arguing that African parties are predominantly multi-ethnic coalitions and that "ethnic parties" – parties dominated by one ethnic group with a particularistic agenda – are rather an exception in Africa' (p. 71). Mozaffar *et al.* (2003) make a similar argument, suggesting that, due to the nested structure of ethnic cleavages across African societies, where 'ethnopolitical demography features politically salient differences within as well as among groups' (p. 381), many ethnic groupings will be so small that they will fail to generate the necessary critical mass of support and resources to create a political party. Crook (1997), in his discussion of electoral competition in 1990 and 1995 in Côte D'Ivoire, focuses on the 'winner-takes-all (...) zero sum game' (p.218) logic of political contestation in patronage-based states. His argument is that, under this logic of competition, parties must have the potential to be part of the winning coalition at the national level, or, at the very least, the potential to extract concessions from the ruling power for their supporters, to be viable vehicles for the election of candidates.

Apart from Mozaffar *et al.* (2003), this literature does not engage in any great detail with comparative accounts of party system fragmentation. Rather, the focus with regards to institutional variation is nearly exclusively on competition for executive power³. With regard to the influences of societal

³ Posner's (2005) study of ethnic identity in Zambia, for example, concludes that institutional design with regards to the exercise of executive authority sets the boundaries within which political competition takes place - determining the coalition strategies optimal to groups.

diversity and electoral systems on party system fragmentation, one could arguably draw support for any of hypotheses 5, 6, or 7 from this literature on the strategic activation of ethnic cleavages in African politics.

A straightforward argument is that, if elites and voters use ethnic identities contingently, then one would anticipate that they should be highly responsive to the strategic incentives generated by electoral system design and, as such, the permissiveness of electoral systems should condition the manner in which ethnic diversity translates into vote fragmentation. The conventional account of party system fragmentation in the political science literature would lead us to expect that societal diversity translates more readily into vote fragmentation as electoral systems become more permissive (hypothesis 5).

Another plausible argument is that competition for control of the executive 'pre-concentrates' competition regardless of the legislative electoral system. As chapter 6 outlines, patterns of competition for executive office provide highly useful insights into African legislative party system fragmentation. The effect of executive competition may mean that electoral systems should not have any discernible influence over vote fragmentation. In a competition for the presidency, the entire country is reduced to a single district, and even the most restrictive legislative electoral systems provide greater scope for multi-partism than an election in which only one candidate wins. This argument would support hypothesis 6, which contends that electoral systems do not exert any significant psychological effect on vote fragmentation in Africa's legislative elections.

Posner (*ibid.*) argues that under single party rule (the '2nd republic' period in Zambian history) there was effectively no national-level leadership competition, but the voters were able to influence the constituency-level make-up of the elite. In this case the highly fragmented tribal system of identities (with over 70 tribal identities to appeal to) provided the optimal opportunity for the formation of minimal winning coalitions. However, this calculus changed under the constraints of nationalised multiparty competition in the 1990s - with the national-level leadership at stake among competing groups. In this period a smaller set of language groups, each of which comprise a significant proportion of the population, provided the optimal minimum-winning option and therefore formed the basis of politicised competition.

The literature on the activation of ethnic cleavages also points to the significance of localised or regionally-based identities (Reynolds, 1999; Rule, 2000). Birch's (2005) line of argumentation indicates that electoral systems that divide states into single-seat constituencies may provide a boundary of political competition within which localised ethnic identities become a viable platform for political mobilisation for very small parties or independent politicians. Also, the individualised nature of the ballot under single-seat systems may militate against party consolidation (Moser, 1999). PR systems, which aggregate votes at regional and national levels, may make such localised identities less valid as political vehicles, as well as providing greater incentives for elites to cohere regionally or nationally under a common party label to exceed formal thresholds (which operate in several of Africa's PR systems). This argument would support hypothesis 7, which contends that single-seat based systems are *more* conducive to the translation of societal diversity into vote fragmentation than PR systems in African legislative elections.

Finally, Mozaffar's (1998; 2004) accounts of the negotiation of electoral systems during the transitions to multipartism that occurred across the sub-Saharan region post-1989 may lend further support to hypothesis 7. The pattern that he identifies with regards to the selection of SMP rules in several former British colonies is particularly significant. According to Mozaffar (2004), British colonial policy allowed greater regionalised autonomy in the organisation of interest and power bases than French and Belgian colonial policy – which both sought to centralise interest articulation. This policy, combined with the use of plurality rules in elections held under British colonial auspices, lead to greater fragmentation of political identity and support bases along ethno-regional lines in British than in other colonies (see also, Collier, 1982).

During single-party rule post-independence, many former British colonies continued to hold elections among candidates from the ruling party in single member constituencies. Mozaffar (2004) argues that 'these opportunities generally encouraged the development of strong constituency linkages based on

pork barrel servicing' (p. 422). Under this system, authoritarian incumbents were able to build localised loyalties based on clientelistic behaviours. At the same time, opposition groups were more also likely to seek to build political support in localised and autonomous grassroots networks (in the absence of centralised interest group networks). Opposition groups in these regimes tended to be somewhat fragmented nationally, but to enjoy regionally-concentrated support, leading them to prefer SMP over a PR system with a formal threshold or small districts. In negotiating the electoral system under which multiparty elections, both authoritarian incumbents and opposition challengers were therefore able to agree on SMP systems (*ibid.*).

As such, there is an argument to be made that one may find evidence supporting hypothesis 7 because the states with fragmented polities in sub-Saharan Africa were the most inclined to choose restrictive SMP systems for multiparty elections.

5.2.5 *The role of group concentration*

Another factor to be considered under the rubric of the translation of societal diversity to party system fragmentation is the extent to which various social groups are geographically-concentrated. There is evidence from across the social sciences that geographically-concentrated groups are better placed to organize in the pursuit of common interests than geographically-dispersed groups⁴. Indeed, Rousseau, writing in the late 18th century, argued that 'the force of the people (...) operates only when concentrated; it evaporates and

⁴ Students of economics seeking to explain government decisions to erect import barriers (Busch and Reinhardt, 1999), or the willingness of firms to cooperate to make party campaign contributions (Mizurchi and Koenig, 1991), have underlined the importance of the geographic concentration of industry. Political scientists have emphasized the value of geographic concentration as an explanatory variable over a range of outcomes. Toft discovered that the physical distribution of ethnic groups had an important bearing on their capacity to wage a successful war for independence (2003: 23), Herbst (2000) points to the difficulty of consolidating state structures in sparsely populated territories, and Raleigh and Hegre (2009) find that Civil War events are most likely in areas with geographically concentrated populations than areas with dispersed populations.

disappears with extension' (Rousseau, quoted in Toft, 2003: 34). In terms of party system fragmentation, several scholars have investigated the contention that ethnic group concentration plays a role in legislative vote fragmentation in sub-Saharan Africa (Brambor *et al.*, 2007; Mozaffar *et al.*, 2003; Mozaffar 2004; 2006; Mylonas and Roussias, 2008). Mozaffar *et al.* (2003: 386-387) explain their reasoning for treating ethnic group concentration as a variable that conditions the effects of societal diversity on vote fragmentation in Africa's multiparty elections in the following passage:

'the combinations of cleavages among and within groups that typically characterize African ethnopolitical groups diminish the effectiveness of strategic face-to-face interaction in forging groups that are sufficiently large and cohesive to sustain political parties of their own. Group concentration, however, helps to overcome this constraint. The physical proximity engendered by group concentration facilitates the strategic face-to-face interaction of small groups, which helps to solidify the otherwise loose links among the subgroups. The associated affinity of place, moreover, helps to define the common interests of the emergent, spatially anchored larger group in electoral competition with similarly constructed groups. This process is the key to the interactive effect of ethnopolitical group fragmentation and concentration on increasing the number of electoral and legislative parties in Africa's emerging democracies. And this effect obtains with or without the effect of electoral institutions'.

Thus, in Africa's highly fragmented societies, in areas with concentrated numbers of ethnic followers, resource-poor political entrepreneurs are able to avoid the demands associated with building stable nationwide party structures by falling back on the dense social networks, ties of kinship, and ready-made common identity of an ethnic stronghold (Mozaffar and Scarritt 1999; Mozaffar *et al.*, 2003). In the absence of developed party organizational structures, individuals in close physical proximity to each other may find it easier to organize campaigns and maintain linkages between leaders and activists than physically dispersed groupings. Also, in a continent characterized by low population

density, partisans appealing to geographically concentrated populations are faced with lower information costs. Finally, groups that are regionally concentrated can be appealed to on the basis of region-specific 'pork barrel' spending, which helps voters and elites to define and measure common interests. As such, ethnic identities should be more amenable to political activation and conversion into partisan identities when those who subscribe to those identities are geographically concentrated.

As well as their analytical results, Mozaffar *et al.* (2003) adduce several examples from multiparty elections across the region to support their contention that ethnic group geographic concentration plays a mediating role between societal diversity and levels of party system fragmentation. The case of South Africa is a particularly egregious violation of our 'politics as usual' expectations regarding party system fragmentation. The country employs an exceptionally permissive legislative electoral system, based on proportional representation (using the Droop quota and largest remainders for surplus seats) effectively employing a single nationwide constituency, with no threshold for representation imposed (Reynolds, 1999: 182). The country is highly diverse in terms of ethnic and linguistic groups: the 'effective number of groups' score for South Africa, according to Mozaffar *et al.*'s (2003) index is 7.8. Also, while there were some troubling logistical failures in the 1994 elections (Reynolds, 1999), South Africa's post apartheid multiparty elections have been deemed 'free and fair' according to the country's Freedom House scores, indicating that opposition parties are relatively free from extra-constitutional suppression. All of these factors would lead us to anticipate that sub-Saharan Africa should have a highly fragmented party system. However, the three elections considered here (1994, 1999, 2004) have generated an average of 2.2 'effective' electoral parties. Mozaffar *et al.* (2003) argue that this is due to the relatively low spatial concentration of racial sub groups in South Africa (which scores 1.64 on their concentration index) making it difficult to construct viable sub racial political groups.

In Benin, on the other hand, similar levels of ethnic fragmentation (a score of 7.3 'effective groups' according to Mozaffar *et al.*'s measure) combined with higher levels of group geographic concentration than South Africa (scoring 3 on the concentration index) lead to an exceptionally fragmented party system. While Benin's fragmented party system emerged under proportional electoral rules, Mozaffar *et al.* point to Kenya and Malawi as examples of states where relatively high levels of societal diversity (9.5 and 5.8 'effective groups', respectively) and concentration (scores of 2.3 and 2.8, respectively) combined to produce fragmented vote distributions under plurality electoral rules in both countries.

Thus, the role of group concentration bears consideration firstly because prior theoretical and empirical accounts of party system fragmentation in the sub-Saharan region have emphasized it as being of particular importance, given the difficulties of forming stable group identities in societies where groups are very small and usually internally sub-divided (Mozaffar *et al.*, 2003; Scarritt and Mozaffar, 1999). Secondly, group concentration has been adduced as an explanation for several violations of conventional expectations regarding the fragmentation of party systems – including systems that seem under-fragmented such as South Africa and systems, like Kenya and Malawi, where restrictive electoral systems have produced relatively fragmented party systems. This line of reasoning leads us to hypothesize that:

H8: The positive effect of societal diversity on vote fragmentation increases as levels of group concentration increase *ceteris paribus*.

5.2.6 *The role of political rights*

As I discussed in the previous chapter on presidential vote fragmentation, common sense would dictate that, where there are greater levels of freedom, we should witness higher levels of electoral fragmentation *ceteris paribus*, as small

parties are easier for elites to launch and voters to support when electoral pluralism and participation are permitted by the regime in power.

5.3 Data and Measurement

As was the case in the previous chapter, in the analysis I deploy robust regressions⁵, using the STATA 10 statistical software package. The variables of interest in this chapter were measured as follows:

5.3.1 Party system fragmentation

Party system fragmentation is the dependent variable in this chapter. The specific measure of vote and seat fragmentation employed here is the 'effective

⁵ In regressions where vote fragmentation was the dependent variable, the observations that were identified as exceeding the conventional $4/N$ cutoff point for Cook's (1977) statistic were: the 1991 election in Benin, the 1992 election in Comoros, the 1997 election in Djibouti, the 1995 election in Niger and the 1998 election in Sao Tome and Principe. Similar results were obtained when analyzing Brambor *et al.*'s (2007) replication materials, indicating that the outlier problem is not unique to the data collection and analysis methodologies employed in this thesis.

In terms of the data in this chapter, the 'rreg' regression model, when deployed for this dataset, attributes very small weights to the Benin, Djibouti, Niger and Sao Tome and Principe elections, and drops the Comoros (1992) case from the analysis, resulting in an n of 98 for analyses using Scarritt and Mozaffar's (1999) data in tables 5.2 and 5.3.

In this chapter, I re-ran the regressions reported in Tables 5.1, 5.2, and 5.3 using a lagged dependent variable as a check that the standard errors are not being underestimated (and the t-values over-estimated) due to serial autocorrelation of residuals. This approach had the effect of reducing the number of cases for which we have data, as most of the states studied here did not hold multiparty elections in the 1980s (and, therefore have no observable lagged dependent variable for their 'founding' elections). The substantive results, in terms of the direction and statistical significance of the variables presented in Tables 5.1, 5.2, and 5.3 are near-identical for models that included a lagged dependent variable using the dataset presented in this thesis, and as such the results presented here do not stand or fall on the decision to include a lagged dependent variable.

The only notable difference is that, with the lagged dependent variable, the 'triple interaction' between societal diversity, electoral system permissiveness, and ethnopolitical concentration, from Model 3 in table 4.3 is not statistically significant, even at the 90% level – however graphical analysis revealed the same intuitions hold regarding the relationships between societal diversity, ethnic groups' geographic concentration and legislative electoral system permissiveness and vote fragmentation.

number' of electoral and legislative parties that arise from each election, according to the Laasko-Taagepera (1979) index, as outlined in chapters 3 and 4.

5.3.2 Disproportionality

The measure of disproportionality employed here is Gallagher's (1991) least squares index⁶. Additive indexes of the differences between votes and seats such as the Loosemore-Hanby (1971) index cannot differentiate between 'a few large and serious deviations and a lot of small and relatively insignificant deviations' (Lijphart, 1999: 158). The Gallagher index alleviates this problem by giving greater weights to larger deviations, meaning that smaller discrepancies are given less significance than large ones in the aggregate measure (Gallagher, 1991).

5.3.3 Societal Diversity

As discussed in chapter 3, there are several competing approaches to the measurement of societal diversity in sub-Saharan Africa. In the analysis presented here measures of societal diversity in each state are generated based on the following data sources: Scarritt and Mozaffar's (1999) data on politicised ethnic groupings⁷, Fearon's (2003) data on ethnic diversity and on culturally-weighted ethnic diversity, data on ethno-linguistic groupings from the *Atlas Narodov Mira* (1964), Alesina *et al.*'s (2003) data on ethnic, linguistic, and religious diversity, and Posner's (2004a) PREG index.

⁶ The formula according to which the Gallagher index is calculated is:

$$LSq = \sqrt{\frac{1}{2} \sum_{i=1}^n (V_i - S_i)^2}$$

where V is the vote share and S is the seat share of each party.

⁷ While the Scarritt and Mozaffar (1999) dataset measures ethnopolitical groups at three levels of inclusiveness (i.e. specifying groups, sub-groups, and sub-groups of sub-groups) Mozaffar *et al.*'s (2003) national-level measure of ethnopolitical fragmentation counts groups at all levels of aggregation in order to measure 'all groups that are potentially politically relevant' (p. 384). We extend this approach to countries not covered in Mozaffar *et al.*'s (*ibid.*) analysis.

For all data sources employed, an 'effective number of groups' index is generated, by entering the proportion of the population belonging to each ethnic, religious, linguistic or cultural group into the formula employed in constructing the Laasko-Taagepera index⁸. As with the effective number of parties measure, higher scores on this index indicate greater societal diversity and lower scores indicate less societal diversity.

5.3.4 *Ethnopolitical Group Concentration*

I employ Mozaffar *et al.*'s (2003) national-level measure of ethnopolitical group concentration, which was described in detail in chapter 3. To reiterate, this variable ranges from 0 to 3, with 0 representing the lowest level of group geographic concentration, and 3 the highest level.

5.3.5 *Legislative electoral system permissiveness*

In this thesis I slightly adapt⁹ a measure recently elaborated by Gallagher and Mitchell, which calculates the 'effective nationwide magnitude' (2005b: 618) of an electoral system for Africa's legislative electoral systems. This is calculated according to the formula:

⁸ Formally, the effective number of ethnopolitical groups is calculated as legislative parties is: $1/\sum e_i^2$ where e_i = the i th ethnopolitical group's share of a country's population.

⁹ The amendment to Gallagher and Mitchell's (2005b) methodology involves differentiating between majoritarian and PR seat attribution formulae in deploying the measure for systems where the average constituency size is greater than one.

As discussed in chapter 3, an unusual feature of electoral systems in modern sub-Saharan Africa is the existence of a number of multi-seat majoritarian systems operating with closed party lists under either plurality (Djibouti) or double-ballot majority (Mali, Mauritius, and Chad) rules. In this case greater district magnitudes usually equate to higher levels of disproportionality – the inverse of the relationship in PR systems. To combat this, each multi-member constituency operating under plurality rules is treated as having the same effects as a large single-member constituency. For example, in Djibouti elections for 65 seats take place in 5 multi-member constituencies – giving an average district magnitude of 13. However, as the party list that wins a plurality of votes in each constituency takes all of the seats at stake, the system is comprised of 5 'winner takes all' constituencies and, as such, is highly restrictive. To capture this I treat Djibouti as comprising 5 single-member constituencies. Mali, Mauritius and Chad are also categorised using this approach.

(5.2) Effective Nationwide Magnitude = Average District Magnitude*(1 + log (number of constituencies))¹⁰

The intuition behind this measure is that, while the district magnitude may set the threshold for representation in any given district, the threshold for obtaining representation is generally far smaller when viewed as proportion of the national vote total than as a proportion of votes in a given district. The extent to which the nationwide threshold is smaller than the district-level threshold is determined by the number of constituencies over which national-level elections are contested¹¹. As such, the effective nationwide magnitude measure attempts to extrapolate the national-level effects of an electoral system, and allows us to anticipate 'at the national level, approximately the same levels of fragmentation and disproportionality as we would encounter in a single district of that magnitude' (*ibid.*: 617).

The natural log of this figure, rather than its absolute value, is employed in the analysis in order to represent the marginally decreasing consequences of district magnitude on the number of parties, a common practice in investigations of electoral system effects (Amorim Neto and Cox, 1997; Benoit, 2002; Blais and Carty, 1991; Clark and Golder, 2006; Cox, 1997; Filippov *et al.*, 1999; Ordeshook and Shvetsova, 1994; Stoll, 2008). As this measure of electoral system permissiveness increases, the threshold for representation generated by the electoral system decreases (*i.e.* the electoral system becomes more permissive).

This measure is especially useful in the African context due to the high number of single member-based electoral systems in operation in the region.

¹⁰ See Appendix A to the thesis for detailed calculations regarding national and constituency level quotas, mixed systems, and multi-member plurality and majoritarian systems.

¹¹ The consequences of increases in the number of constituencies on the national level threshold decrease marginally, and this is represented in the nationwide effective magnitude formula, where the 'number of constituencies' multiplier is logged.

Unlike measures based upon the average district magnitude, or the percentage of upper-tier seats, the effective nationwide magnitude index has the advantage of differentiating between SMP systems with few constituencies and those with many constituencies (Gallagher and Mitchell, 2005b). In SMP systems, the national-level threshold for gaining parliamentary representation decreases as the number of constituencies increases. This is because parties' national vote shares tend not to be distributed completely evenly across all districts; and the threshold for gaining access to parliament is typically much smaller when viewed as a share of the national vote than when viewed as the share of votes required in a given district. In SMP systems with many constituencies, parties can gain legislative representation with a far smaller share of the national vote than in SMP systems with few constituencies, and the measure of electoral system permissiveness employed here seeks to capture this intuition.

5.3.6 Political rights

In order to measure variations in the political rights afforded to opposition groups across elections, I again employ Freedom House's Political Rights score, described in chapters 3 and 4.

5.3.7 Controls for executive elections

The analysis controls for the relationship between executive elections and legislative elections by measuring the temporal proximity of legislative and parliamentary elections, the extent of fragmentation of the vote in the presidential election immediately preceding each legislative election, and the interaction of these two variables. While I focused on these variables in chapter 4; they are included here as simply controls to avoid omitted variable bias influencing the analysis.

5.4 Analysis.

5.4.1 Mechanical Effects of Electoral Systems

Hypotheses 1-3 outlined several theoretical expectations with regard to electoral systems' mechanical effects. H1 specified the existence of a positive relationship between electoral system permissiveness and the proportionality of vote to seat shares.

A straightforward test of this hypothesis is to examine the correlation between electoral system permissiveness and the Gallagher (1991) least squares index of disproportionality in each election. Over the 73 elections for which sufficiently detailed vote and seat share breakdowns were available to calculate the least squares index, the correlation coefficient is -.68. The negative sign of the coefficient indicates that more permissive electoral systems are associated with lower levels of disproportionality of vote-to-seat shares. This coefficient is statistically significant at the 99% level of confidence, lending strong support to H1.

In order to test H2, which contended that vote fragmentation would exert a greater effect on seat fragmentation as electoral systems become more permissive, I employ a robust multiple regression model that seeks to capture the manner in which electoral systems intervene in the translation of vote fragmentation to seat fragmentation (Clark and Golder, 2006).

$$(5.3) \text{ Legislative Fragmentation} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Vote Fragmentation} + \beta_2 \text{Electoral System Permissiveness} + \beta_3 \text{Vote Fragmentation} * \text{Electoral System Permissiveness} + \epsilon$$

Analysing the sign and statistical significance of the coefficient ' β_3 ' in equation 5.3 allows us to test the hypothesis that the impact of vote fragmentation on seat fragmentation is modified by the level of electoral system

permissiveness. H2 specified that this coefficient should be positive and statistically significant, that is, the impact of vote fragmentation on seat fragmentation should be greater under permissive electoral systems than under restrictive systems. The regression results displayed in Table 5.1 indicate that this was the case, as the interaction between vote fragmentation and electoral system permissiveness is positive and significant at the 95% level.

H3 contended that the observed mechanical effect of electoral systems would be lower when a model that accounts for the 'pre-filtering' of votes due to electoral system constraints is used to measure it. I follow Benoit's (2002) approach in testing this assertion, and deploy a two-stage least squared regression model that captures allows one to measure the mechanical impact separately from the psychological effect. The 'first stage' of the model takes vote fragmentation as the dependent variable, and seeks to capture the psychological effect of electoral systems in shaping levels of vote fragmentation¹². Vote fragmentation is then instrumented and entered into the regression formula 5.3 above. While Benoit (2002) found that several comparative studies yielded significantly smaller estimates of the mechanical effect when subjected to two-stage least squares analysis, the results of 'model 2' displayed in Table 5.1 indicate that there is no statistically significant difference between the interaction term coefficients across the two models. This finding is not entirely surprising; given that the finding later in this chapter that there is little evidence that voters and elites are pre-filtering vote constellations to minimize wasted votes.

¹² I deploy the regression model '2' from Table 4.3 (which provided the best fit for that variable of the models that we employed) to obtain predicted values for the effective number of electoral parties, and then enter these values into equation 4.3. As such, the variable 'Vote Fragmentation' in model 2 of Table1, is in fact the predicted value of vote fragmentation derived from model 2 in Table3.

Table 5.1. The mechanical effects of electoral systems in African elections, robust regression results. Dependent variable – effective number of legislative parties

Variable	Models	
	(1) Eq. 5.3	(2) Two-Stage Least Squared
Vote Fragmentation	.35*** (.12)	.38*** (.11)
Log(ENM)	-.11 (.12)	-.16 (.14)
Vote Fragmentation*	.12** (.05)	.15** (.06)
R-Squared ¹³	.60	.32
N	96	142

*p < .10, ** p < .05, *** p < .01.

Log (ENM) = Log of Effective Nationwide Magnitude Measure (*i.e.* electoral system permissiveness).

¹³ The the r-squared statistics for the robust regressions deployed in this thesis are calculated using the 'rregfit' post-estimation programme developed by the UCLA Academic Technology Services, Statistical Consulting Group. This programme is made available online at: <http://www.ats.ucla.edu/stat/Stata/faq/rregr2.htm>

5.4.2 Psychological Effects of Electoral Systems

In this section, hypotheses 4-7 are tested, using several measures of societal diversity. In taking this approach, one can examine whether substantive conclusions with regard to the roles of societal diversity, electoral system permissiveness, and their interaction are robust across measures of societal diversity. Following previous cross-national comparative analyses that have sought to capture the interaction of political and institutional determinants of party system fragmentation (Amorim Neto and Cox, 1997; Clark and Golder, 2006; Cox, 1997; Filippov *et al.*, 1999; Jones, 1997; Ordeshook and Shvetsova, 1994; Powell, 1982; Stoll, 2004; 2008); the following regression equation is specified to test hypotheses 4-7:

$$(5.4) \text{ Vote Fragmentation} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Societal Diversity} + \beta_2 \text{Electoral System permissiveness} + \beta_3 \text{ Societal Diversity} * \text{Electoral System Permissiveness} + \beta_4 \text{Political Rights} + \beta_5 \text{Presidential Vote Fragmentation} + \beta_6 \text{Temporal Proximity of Presidential and Legislative elections} + \beta_7 \text{Presidential Vote Fragmentation} * \text{Temporal Proximity of Presidential and Legislative elections} + \epsilon^{14}$$

An addition to previous comparative analyses is the inclusion of a control for levels of 'political rights' in each country in the election year.

The β_3 coefficient in equation 5.4 captures the interaction between societal diversity and electoral system permissiveness. H5 specified that this term should be positive and statistically significant; H6 stated that this term should not be distinguishable from 0, and H7 stated that this term should be negative and statistically significant.

¹⁴ I note here that many of the models deployed by analysts include interaction terms but omit constituent terms – for example Amorim-Neto and Cox's (1997) best-fitting model includes the interaction term 'electoral system restrictiveness*ethnic diversity', but neither of the constituent terms 'electoral system restrictiveness' and 'ethnic diversity'. The difficulty with this approach is that, except in very specific circumstances, excluding constituent terms can bias estimates (Brambor *et al.*, 2006) a problem that Brambor *et al.* (2007) analyze with regard to Mozaffar *et al.*'s (2003) analysis of African party system fragmentation.

The coefficients and standard errors attached to societal diversity, electoral system permissiveness, and their interaction¹⁵ across eight measures of societal diversity are reported in Table 5.2. Overall, there is *no* empirical support for H5, which contended that societal diversity should translate more readily into party system fragmentation as electoral systems become more permissive. Contrary to H5, across all measures of societal diversity, the coefficients of interaction terms between societal diversity and electoral system permissiveness are *negative*. Furthermore, these coefficients are negative and statistically significant at the 95% level of confidence for seven out of the eight measures of societal diversity that are employed. These findings would suggest that the evidence collected for this thesis points towards a favourable evaluation of H7, which stated that, for Africa's multiparty elections, the effects of societal fragmentation on party system fragmentation increase as electoral system permissiveness *decreases*. Or, to put it more simply, that societal diversity has a stronger positive effect on vote fragmentation under majoritarian electoral systems than under proportional electoral systems. However, hypothesis 6 (no interaction) cannot be rejected using Fearon's (2003) ethnic group data¹⁶.

¹⁵ There is considerable debate in the methodological literature on dropping non-significant interaction terms from regression equations. Aiken and West (1992) recommend that, 'in cases where there are strong theoretical grounds for expecting an interaction, the interaction, even if non-significant, should be retained in the final regression equation' (p. 105). Brambor *et al.* (2006) make a similar point, arguing that, even where interaction terms are non-significant, constituent terms may be statistically significant at certain values of moderating variables captured in interaction terms.

¹⁶ While the signs of the coefficients are steady across measures, analyses using Posner's (2004a) PREG index and Fearon's (2003) 'cultural' diversity index generated considerably larger coefficients than other measures. A potential explanation of this is that both estimate significantly smaller numbers of 'effective ethnic groups' than the other measures. Posner's does this by excluding ethnic groups that are not relevant for economic competition, while Fearon does so by down weighting his score due to linguistic similarity across groups. For example, while Fearon's ethnic diversity measure ranges from 1 to 20 'effective ethnic groups' his cultural measure only ranges between 1 and 3.74. Similarly, Posner's cultural measure generates a largest fragmentation score of 5, while the others all generate largest scores of above 10. As such, the Fearon (cultural) and Posner (PREG) measures operate on a slightly more constricted scale, which may explain the larger coefficients generated by these variables.

Table 5.2 - Selected coefficient values and standard errors (in parentheses) for robust regressions specifying equation 5.4.

Dependent variable – effective number of electoral parties

Variable	Data Source for societal diversity measurement							
	Mozaffar and Scarritt (1999)	Fearon Ethnic (2003)	Alesina et al. Ethnic (2003)	Atlas (1964)	Posner (2004)	Fearon Cultural (2003)	Alesina et al. Linguistic (2003)	Alesina et al. Religious (2003)
Societal Diversity	.12*** (.04)	.07* (.04)	.16*** (.06)	.12*** (.03)	.51*** (.14)	.45** (.19)	.15*** (.04)	.14** (.06)
Log (ENM)	.27*** (.09)	.12 (.10)	.15* (.09)	.20** (.08)	.52*** (.15)	.38** (.18)	.24*** (.08)	.17* (.09)
Societal Diversity* Log(ENM)	-.05*** (.02)	-.03 (.02)	-.05** (.02)	-.05*** (.02)	-.28*** (.07)	-.21** (.09)	-.05*** (.02)	-.05** (.02)
Political Rights	-.07** (.03)	-.05* (.03)	-.06** (.03)	-.06** (.03)	-.04* (.02)	-.06** (.03)	-.08*** (.03)	-.06** (.02)
Constant	1.9*** (.23)	2.2*** (2.3)	2.0*** (.22)	2.1*** (.28)	1.43*** (.31)	1.7*** (.36)	2.0*** (.21)	2.0*** (.25)
R-Squared	.47	.40	.43	.49	.53	.50	.49	.44
N	98	82	93	89	83	81	93	98

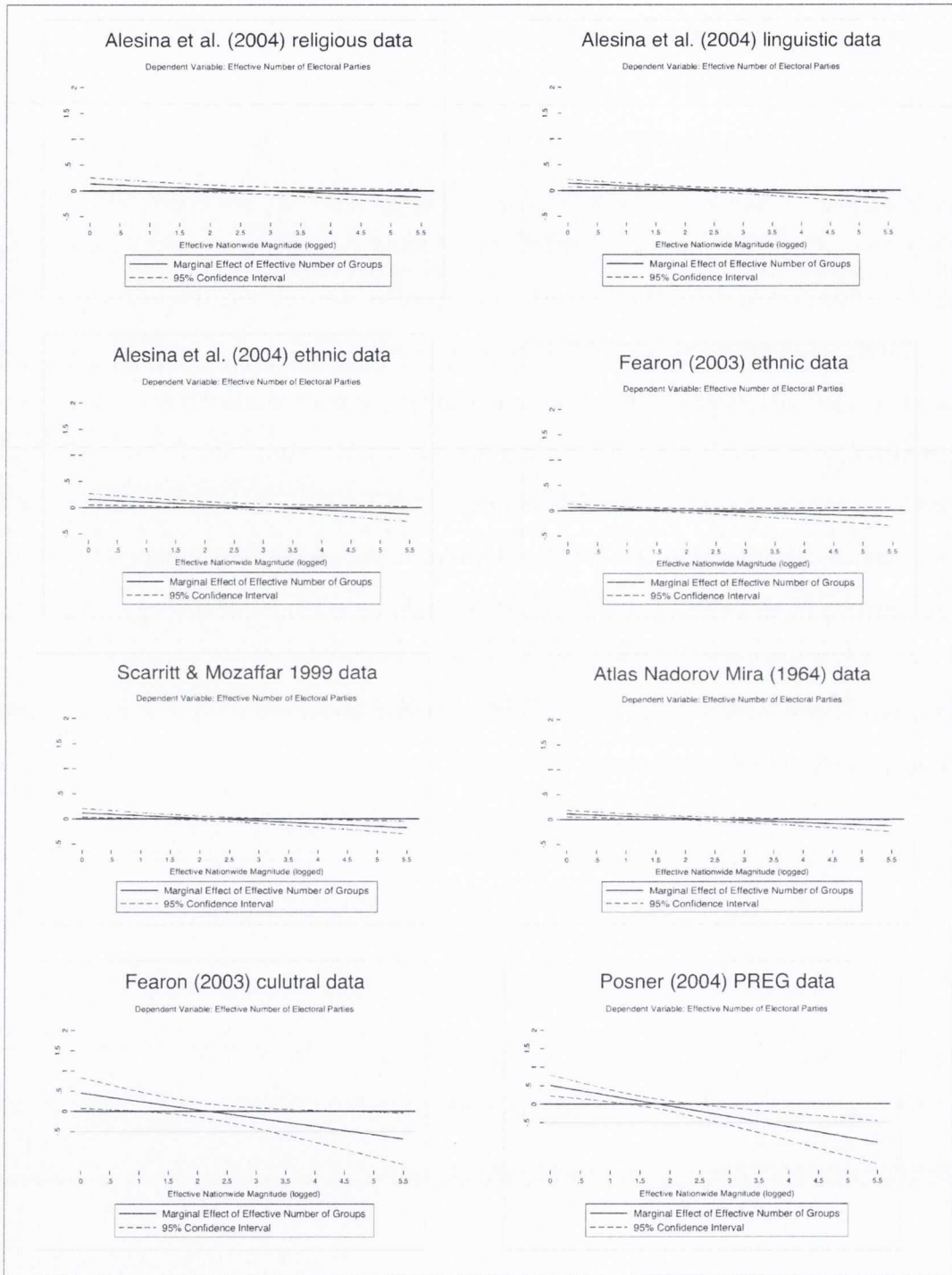
*p < .10, ** p < .05, *** p < .01.

Note: Controls for executive competition are not reported here, see chapter 4 for an analysis of executive election variables.

H4 may be tested by mapping the effects of societal diversity over a range of values of electoral system permissiveness¹⁷. These effects are mapped in Figure 5.1. Hypothesis 4 stated that societal diversity is positively related to vote fragmentation at moderate and high levels of electoral system permissiveness. As one can see looking at Figure 5.1, this hypothesis is not empirically supported, regardless of the measure of societal diversity that is employed. Rather, for all measures employed, the impact societal diversity on vote fragmentation is either negative with 95% confidence (according to the Alesina *et al.* (2004) linguistic data, Atlas (1964) data, the Scarritt and Mozaffar data, 1999, the Fearon (2003) cultural fragmentation data and the Posner (2004a) PREG data) or not statistically significant (all other measures) under moderately and highly permissive electoral systems. Apart from the model employing Fearon's (2003) data on ethnic groups, all models indicate that societal diversity is positive and statistically significant at the 95% level under highly restrictive electoral systems, supporting Birch's (2005) contention that single-constituency based systems may lead to the activation of localised cleavages and, hence, higher levels of party system fragmentation compared to PR systems in emerging democracies with unconsolidated party systems.

¹⁷ In order to perform this analysis, I employed a set of commands for STATA 10 made available by Brambor *et al.* (2006).

Figure 5.1. Estimated Marginal Effects of Societal Diversity on Vote Fragmentation as Electoral System Permissiveness Increases (Results from Table 5.2.)



5.4.3 *The role of ethnopolitical groups' geographic concentration.*

In order to test H8, three regression equations are specified, employing Scarritt and Mozaffar's (1999) measures of ethnopolitical group fragmentation and concentration in all three. To test for whether societal diversity translates more readily into party system fragmentation when ethnopolitical groups are geographically concentrated (H8), a regression model specifying the interaction of ethnopolitical group fragmentation and concentration is deployed; controlling for electoral system permissiveness, opposition political rights, and executive electoral competition. The coefficients generated by this regression are outlined in Table 5.3 under the heading 'Model 1'.

'Model 2' examines whether the relationship between societal diversity and vote fragmentation is conditioned by *both* electoral system permissiveness and ethnopolitical group concentration. This is an example of what Kam and Franzese (2007) call a 'chained' interaction model, where 'one variable (...) has its effect modified by several others (...) but in which the others do not condition each other's effects'¹⁸ (p. 40). Therefore, model 2 in Table 5.3 deploys all the variables in model 1 and also includes an interaction between societal diversity and electoral system permissiveness.

Finally, I include a model that specifies a three-way interaction between societal diversity, ethnic group concentration, and electoral system permissiveness, and includes all constituent cross-multiplicative and individual terms, as well as controlling for opposition political rights and executive electoral competition; the coefficients for this regression are laid out under 'model 3' in Table 5.3. This type of three-way interaction model represents the preferred approach of the previous comparative investigations of the roles of these factors

¹⁸ While there are plausible arguments that the effects of electoral systems on vote fragmentation are conditioned by group concentration levels, the data collected here do not indicate that there is a discernible interaction between electoral system permissiveness and ethnopolitical group concentration.

in explaining party system fragmentation in sub-Saharan Africa that were discussed in chapter 2¹⁹ (Brambor *et al.*, 2007; Mozaffar *et al.*, 2003; Mylonas and Roussias, 2008).

Looking at the results of model 1, there is reasonable evidence to support H8, which states that the effect of societal diversity on vote fragmentation increases as levels of group concentration increase. The interaction term is positive and significant at the 95% level. Mapping this relationship in Figure 5.2, we can see that societal diversity is a positive and significant predictor of vote fragmentation when groups are highly geographically concentrated (scores of 2 or higher) but not when groups are moderately or very dispersed.

Looking at the results of model 2, we can see that the effect of societal diversity on vote fragmentation appear to be conditional on both electoral system permissiveness and ethnic groups' geographic concentration: the regression coefficients for the variables measuring the interaction of societal diversity and electoral system permissiveness, and societal diversity and ethnic groups' geographic concentration are both positive and statistically significant at the 95% level of confidence²⁰.

¹⁹ This type of specification has quite distinctive theoretical implications. Kam and Franzese Jr. (2007) explain that models which specify 'triple interactions' test the assumption that 'the effect of each of the three factors depend on each of the others in all pairwise interactions' and that 'the effect of each (...) depends on the combination of the others as well' (pp. 40-41). While the coefficients indicate that the 'triple interaction' is statistically significant at the 90% level, this finding is not replicated using a model with a lagged dependent variable. Nonetheless, this model is useful for examining how societal diversity translates to vote fragmentation as both electoral system permissiveness and group concentration levels vary in Figure 4.3.

²⁰ These variables were positive and significant at the 90% (but not the 95%) level using a specification that included a lagged dependent variable.

Table 5.3 - Results of robust regressions testing for the interaction of societal diversity and ethnic groups' geographic concentration. Dependent variable – effective number of electoral parties

Variable	Models		
	(1) Two-way interaction	(2) 'Chained' Interaction	(3) Three-way interaction
Societal Diversity	-.09* (.05)	.03 (.06)	.17 (.12)
Ethnic group concentration	-.23*** (.09)	-.20** (.08)	-.05 (.21)
Log (ENM)	-.01 (.04)	.24** (.10)	.41** (.16)
Concentration*Diversity	.07*** (.02)	06** (.02)	-.02(.06)
Log(ENM)*Diversity		-.05*** (.02)	-.13** (.05)
Concentration*Log(ENM)			-.09 (.11)
Log(ENM)*Diversity*			.05* (.03)
Concentration			
Effective number: Presidential Candidates	.27*** (.09)	.26*** (.08)	.25*** (.08)
Proximity	- 1.95*** (.22)	-2.02*** (.21)	-1.97*** (.22)
Proximity*Effective number: Presidential Candidates	.71 ***(.12)	.70***(.11)	.69*** (.11)
Political Rights Score	-.05*(.03)	-.05* (.03)	-.05* (.03)
Constant	2.65*** (.22)	2.19 (.26)	1.86*** (.38)
R-Squared	.46	.49	.48
N	98	98	98

*p < .10, ** p < .05, *** p < .01.

Figure 5.2 - Results of 'two-way' interaction between societal diversity and ethnic groups' geographic concentration from model 1, Table 5.3.

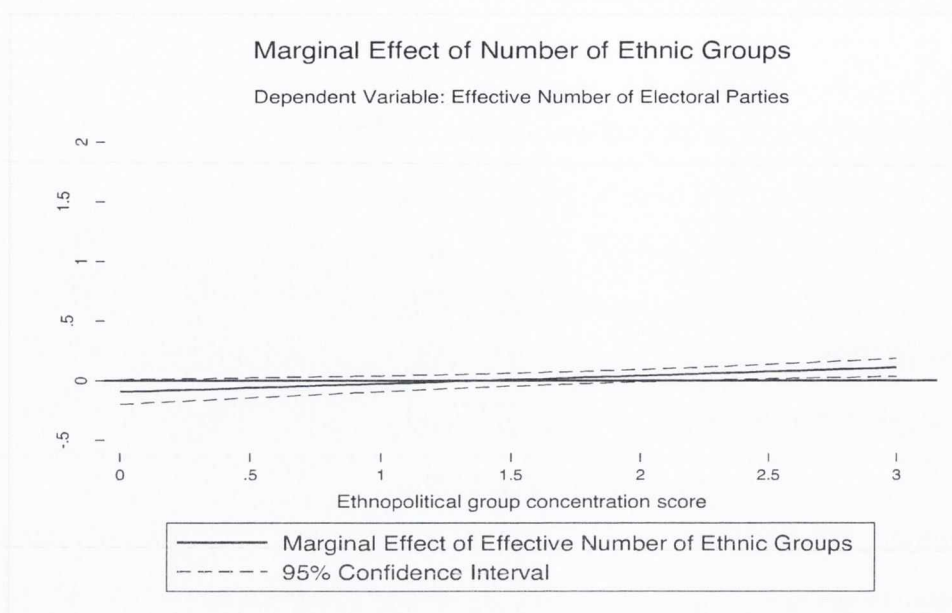
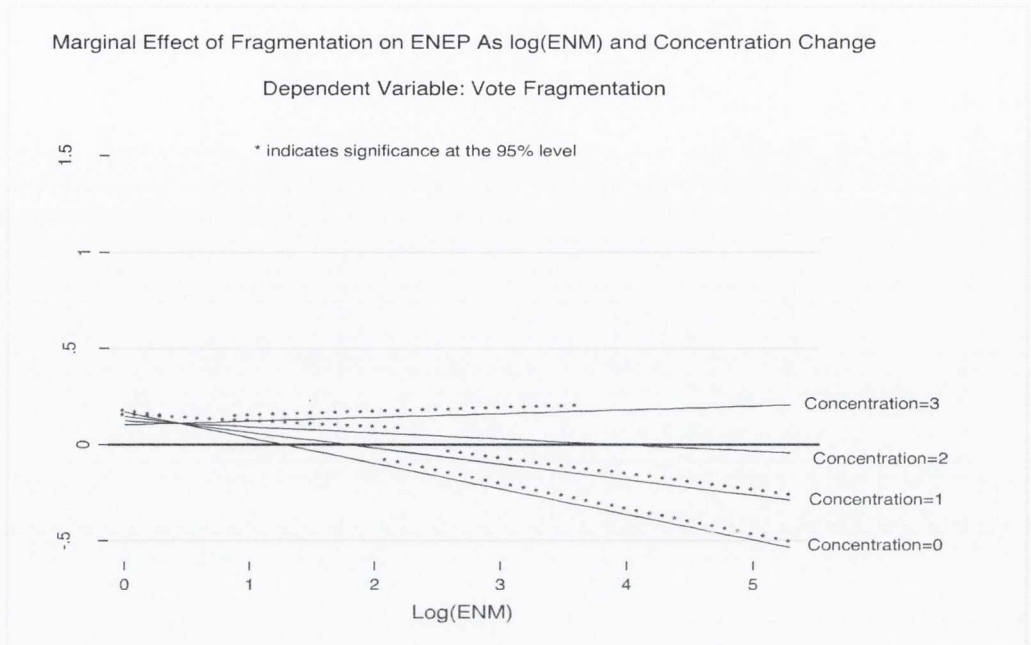


Figure 5.3 maps the marginal effects of societal diversity on vote fragmentation (with * indicating statistical significance at the 95% level) as electoral system permissiveness increases, over four values of ethnic groups' geographic concentration. It is derived from the results of model 3 in Table 5.3. Looking at Figure 5.3, we can derive some interesting intuitions. When group concentration is relatively high (set at values of 2 and 3) and electoral systems are restrictive, societal diversity is positively related to vote fragmentation. This makes intuitive sense as ethnic identities may be more useful vehicles for political competition under restrictive electoral systems when they can concentrate votes 'in above-plurality proportions in particular constituencies and in geographical pockets' (Sartori, 1994: 40). However, when ethnic groups are dispersed (concentration is set at values of 1 and 0) societal diversity is not positively related to vote fragmentation at any level of electoral system permissiveness, and is negatively related to vote fragmentation when electoral systems are moderately or highly permissive.

Figure 5.3 Results of ‘three way’ interaction between societal diversity, electoral system permissiveness, and ethnic groups’ geographic from model3 in Table 5.3.



5.4.4 The role of political rights

Finally, the results relating to the political rights variable provide moderate support for the contention that increases in levels of political freedoms in the year in which an election is held correspond to higher levels of observed fragmentation of votes. Looking at the coefficients attached to the ‘Political Rights’ variable in Table 5.2, in all cases the coefficient was negative and significant at either the 90% or the 95% level of confidence. Coefficients for this variable are all both negatively signed and statistically significant at least at the 90% level in all three models in Table 5.3. The negative coefficients are in line with the expectation that higher levels of freedom and fairness should make forming and campaigning with minor parties more straightforward and, therefore, lead to higher levels of party system fragmentation, *ceteris paribus*.

5.5 Conclusions

This chapter has sought to examine the roles of the two most widely analysed causes of party system fragmentation from mainstream political science: societal diversity and electoral system permissiveness, with mixed results. The expectations of the comparative literature were largely borne out in the analysis of the mechanical effects of electoral systems, which confirmed Mozaffar's (2004) contention that electoral systems in Africa's democracies 'in the aggregate, produce their expected mechanical effect on the disproportionality between votes and seats' (419). Thus conventional understanding of how electoral systems translate votes to seats proved useful for understanding this dimension of seat fragmentation in Africa's multiparty systems.

When analysing the psychological effects of electoral systems, however, there was no evidence in support of the 'politics as usual' hypotheses 4 and 5, which were based on the findings of several influential large-*n* comparative studies (Amorim Neto and Cox, 1997; Clark and Golder, 2006; Filippov *et al.*, 1999; Ordeshook and Shvetsova, 1994; Powell, 1982) as well as highly plausible theoretical accounts (Cox, 1997; Duverger, 1957). Rather than restrictive electoral systems reducing the impact of societal diversity on party system fragmentation, it was found that societal diversity was a positive predictor of vote fragmentation under restrictive electoral systems but that it was either a non-significant or a negative predictor under more permissive systems.

A key weakness of the approach used in this chapter (and, in this thesis generally) to the study of electoral system effects is that most of the theory points towards strategic incentives at the district level while our analysis operates at the national-level. It is possible that the processes of strategic adaptation to electoral system constraints, as elaborated by Duverger, operating at the district level, may lead to the party systems that are fragmented at the national-level when party competition is not nationalised (Chhibber and Kollman,

2006; Cox, 1997; Riker, 1982a). Certainly, more in-depth district-level analysis of African elections is required in order to ascertain whether Duvergerian theory is borne out at that level. Existing studies at the district-level however, have found little or no evidence of strategic coordination in new democracies (Moser, 1999; Moser and Scheiner, 2009; Singer and Stephenson, 2009) and in the limited number of elections that have been studied in sub-Saharan Africa (Ferree *et al.*, 2008).

At the national level however, these findings would appear to lend support to accounts of party system fragmentation in emerging democracies which have suggested that single-member based systems may encourage the activation of localised cleavages and the presence of small parties and/or independent candidates, whereas systems that aggregate votes under party labels at the regional or national level may mitigate this tendency (Birch, 2005; Moser, 1999). There is also an argument to be made for endogenous selection of electoral systems as an explanation for this finding. As discussed in chapter 3, localised and fragmented elites tended to converge on restrictive electoral systems in negotiating the electoral rules for multiparty competition in many African states (Mozaffar, 1998; 2004); it is perhaps unsurprising therefore that restrictive systems should be found to best facilitate the translation of societal diversity into party system diversity. This finding was repeated across seven out of eight measures of societal diversity, giving reasonable confidence in its robustness. It remains to be seen whether this pattern will hold for future elections in the region, where some authors (Golder and Wantchekon, 2004) have predicted that more typical patterns may emerge over time.

It was also found that the extent to which ethnic groups are concentrated geographically appears to play an important role in determining the influence of societal diversity on the fragmentation of votes across parties in African legislative elections. Specifically, it was demonstrated that ethnic diversity is a positive and significant predictor of vote fragmentation when ethnic groups are, on average, highly concentrated, but that it is not significant when they are

dispersed. These results are difficult to classify in the 'politics as usual' versus 'exceptionalism' discussion that informs the approach of this thesis to the study of Africa's party systems, because the measure specifying ethnic group concentration only covers countries in sub-Saharan Africa (Scarritt and Mozaffar, 1999). The manner in which concentration was found to condition the effects of societal diversity on vote fragmentation was in line with Mozaffar *et al.*'s (2003) theoretical account – which focused on Africa-specific factors such as high overall levels of fragmentation, with considerable internal differentiation in many groups, as well as practical logistical constraints due to low population density and poor communications infrastructures in many states.

There was also evidence that both electoral system permissiveness and ethnic groups' concentration condition the activation of ethnic identities in African political competition. It would appear that ethnic diversity is most likely to be translated into party system fragmentation in sub-Saharan Africa's multiparty elections when groups are regionally clustered into winning coalitions in single-seat electoral districts. Many of the apparent exceptions to our 'politics as usual' expectations of the determinants of party system fragmentation discussed at the beginning of this chapter such as Zambia, Malawi, and Kenya fit this pattern. The major exception to the expectations of the 'politics as usual' model, South Africa points to the weak relationship between societal diversity and vote fragmentation under permissive electoral systems in the region.

This chapter contributes to existing studies of party system fragmentation in sub-Saharan Africa in several regards. A first contribution comes from the separation of the modifying effects that electoral systems can exercise over party systems into 'mechanical' and 'psychological' effects. While the theoretical separation between these effects is long-established in the literature (see chapter 2), empirical applications haven't always made this distinction as clearly as possible (Blais and Carthy, 1991; Benoit, 2002; Clark and Golder, 2006). Previous comparative studies of party system fragmentation in African elections in particular have specified both vote and seat fragmentation as their dependent

variables in a somewhat undifferentiated manner (Brambor *et al.*, 2007²¹; Mozaffar *et al.*, 2003; Mylonas and Roussias, 2008). However, the analysis presented here has found that mechanical and strategic effects actually run contrary to each other in Africa's multiparty elections.

A second contribution is provided by directly examining the extent to which the findings of previous large-*n* studies that have characterised electoral systems and societal diversity as operating interactively to influence the extent of party system fragmentation (Amorim Neto and Cox, 1997; Clark and Golder, 2006; Cox, 1997; Filippov *et al.*, 1999; Ordeshook and Shvetsova, 1994; Powell, 1982; Stoll, 2004; 2008) are replicable for elections in Sub-Saharan Africa. The studies that have most closely followed a comparative approach and deployed multiple regression models in their analyses of post-1989 African elections (Brambor *et al.*, 2007; Mozaffar *et al.*, 2003; Mylonas and Roussias, 2008) have all used a somewhat convoluted statistical model, which specifies a three-way interaction between electoral system type, societal diversity, and ethnic group geographic concentration. In this chapter the individual interactions are teased out to a greater extent than previous studies of African party systems, allowing for a more direct comparison with the broader literature (Amorim Neto and Cox, 1997; Clark and Golder, 2006; Cox, 1997; Filippov *et al.*, 1999; Jones, 1999; 2004; Ordeshook and Shvetsova, 1994; Stoll, 2008), and a more intuitively understandable analysis of the relationships between the variables of interest than the current Africa-specific literature provides. This direct comparison unearthed no empirical support for mainstream, 'politics as usual' accounts of electoral systems' psychological effects on party systems.

The theoretical discussion provided in this chapter, which was grounded in the findings of studies of elections in new democracies (Birch, 2005; Clark and Golder, 2006; Moser 1999; Moser and Scheiner, 2009; Singer and Stephenson,

²¹ Although this is a somewhat unfair criticism of the Brambor *et al.* (2007) article, which is a replication of Mozaffar *et al.* (2003).

2009), in studies of the strategic activation of ethnic identities by voters and elites in African multiparty politics (Basedau and Stroh, 2009; Cook, 1997; Erdmann, 2004; Erdmann and Basedau, 2008; Ferree, 2006; Ferree *et al.*, 2008; Mc Laughlin, 2007; Mozaffar *et al.* 2003; Piombo, 2005; Posner, 2004b; 2005), and in our understanding of the processes by which electoral systems were agreed upon in sub-Saharan Africa (Mozaffar, 1997; 2004) represents a further contribution to the existing literature. This discussion allowed for alternative hypotheses to be developed with regard to how societal diversity and electoral system type interact to influence party systems in Africa's emerging democracies.

In the analysis of the relationships between electoral systems, societal diversity, and vote fragmentation, I investigated whether the observable effects of societal diversity on vote fragmentation are conditional on measurement choices with regard to societal diversity, examining the robustness of findings over a range of measures. Stoll (2008) demonstrates that 'the measures you choose affect the answers you get' (p. 1439) when it comes to evidence for the relationship between societal diversity and party system fragmentation in established democracies; we extend this insight to Africa's party systems. While Mozaffar *et al.* (2003) perform a somewhat similar analysis, comparing their preferred measure of societal diversity to two others; their statistical specifications and interpretation of model results have since been convincingly called into question (Brambor *et al.*, 2007). This chapter goes beyond Mozaffar *et al.* (2003) in terms of the diversity of operationalizations considered – including several alternative measures of ethnic diversity, as well as measures that capture fragmentation along linguistic, religious, and cultural dimensions. Again, none of the measures employed provided any support for the mainstream account of party system fragmentation detailed in chapter 2, and most provided support for H7, which was derived from Birch's (2005) account of the relationship between electoral systems and vote fragmentation in third wave democracies.

A further contribution comes from investigating the role of ethnic groups' geographic concentration as a variable which may intervene in the conversion of

ethnic cleavages into political parties. Again, a more straightforward analysis of this relationship is developed than was the case previous studies, and the findings presented in Table 5.3 and Figures 5.2 and 5.3 indicate that this variable merits further consideration in accounting for African party systems.

Finally, this chapter builds on the work of Mylonas and Roussias (2007) and Lindberg (2005) with regard to the role of political freedoms. As was discussed in chapter 3, the largest category of election years measured in the elections studied in this thesis is 'partly free' and there are numerous instances of 'unfree' elections. The approach adopted by Lindberg (2005) and by Mylonas and Roussias (2007) to such variation in levels of political freedoms involves classifying elections into analytically distinct categories, and analysing the roles of societal diversity and electoral systems separately for each category other studies simply ignored this variation (Brambor *et al.*, 2007; Mozaffar *et al.*, 2003). In this chapter, the fairness of electoral competition is operationalized as a continuous variable, an approach that reflects the various shades of grey that one encounters when analysing multiparty competition across African political systems (van de Walle, 2003).

A significant source of criticism of the approach adopted in this chapter, however, is that it fails to deal with the preponderance of dominant single parties in Africa's multiparty elections (Bogaards, 2004). I seek to deal with the difficulties that this tendency implies for studies of the partisan distribution of seats in the next chapter, which focuses on the determinants of largest party seat share in Africa's multiparty elections.

Chapter 6: Exploring the Determinants of Largest Party Size in Africa's Multiparty Systems

Abstract

This chapter examines the political, institutional, and societal factors explaining variation in the size of the largest parties in Africa's multiparty elections. The chapter discusses the substantive and technical significance of this subject for students of African party systems. In order to analyse largest party size, I employ a dataset that captures largest party seat share in 150 legislative elections across 45 countries held in sub-Saharan Africa in the period 1989-2008. The analysis presented seeks to bring together the insights of the previous two analytical chapters, examining the influence of both presidential elections and legislative electoral systems on largest party size. This chapter also controls for pertinent political and historical variables in accounting for variation in largest party seat share over the elections studied.

6.1 Introduction

Given the high levels of ethnic, linguistic, and religious fragmentation that characterize African populations, relative to state populations in other world regions (Alesina *et al.*, 2003), it is unsurprising that in the majority of cases where elites have sought to engage in institutional ‘crafting’ of African multiparty systems, one of the most prominent stated goals has been the prevention of excessive fragmentation of party support along ethnic lines (Bogaards, 2000: 177). However, high levels of party system fragmentation have been the exception rather than the rule for Africa’s multiparty elections post-1989. Indeed, arguably the most striking feature of these elections is the extent to which they have been dominated by a single-party (Bogaards, 2000; 2004; Bratton, 1998; Giliomee and Simkins, 1999; van de Walle and Butler, 1999; van Cranenburgh, 1996; van de Walle, 2003; Young, 2004). This chapter focuses on one of the more striking areas of ‘exceptionalism’ in Africa’s multiparty elections – single party dominance in terms of legislative seat share. In so doing, I combine the insights and approaches elaborated in the previous two chapters, analysing the effects of presidential elections, societal diversity, and legislative electoral systems. Again, I seek to control for aspects of ‘political context’ that also impact on this property.

Young (2004) demonstrates that the average proportion of seats won by the largest party in other regions which feature large numbers of ‘third wave’ democracies was considerably lower than in Sub-Saharan Africa: with averages of 40.5% in 18 Latin American elections and 42.2% in 24 Eastern European elections between 1995 and 2003 (p. 26). For the elections covered in this thesis, the average seat share of the largest party was over 64%, and the average vote share was over 57%. For van de Walle (2003), ‘in Africa, what is striking is the combination of big parties with comfortable majorities, surrounded by multiple tiny parties’ (p. 303). As such, the modal African party system presents us with an unusual combination of high raw numbers of parties but low levels of real competition at election time.

Young (2004) points out that the preponderance of single-party dominance across Africa represents a significant challenge for existing theories of party system fragmentation. Most notably, there is a stark incongruity between the emergence of single parties which command majority/super-majority electoral-support and the ethno-linguistic structure of African societies, which typically lack a single ethnic, linguistic, or religious group large enough to command majority support. This is all the more puzzling when we consider that the overwhelming consensus among scholars interested in African parties is that ethnicity plays a central structuring role in party competition (Hyden, 2006).

Alternative explanations also appear, at first glance, to offer little traction: looking across the continent, examples of single-party dominated systems can be found in presidential and non-presidential states (Erdmann and Basedau, 2008), under majoritarian and proportional electoral rules (Bogaards, 2000; 2004; Erdmann and Basedau, 2008), in states that restrict opposition freedoms and in states that allow relatively free electoral competition. Incumbent performance doesn't appear to represent a credible source of single-party dominance, as states across the region have performed poorly in terms of economic growth and human development (Easterly and Levine, 1997; van de Walle, 2001).

It would seem then, that there is no 'silver bullet', single-variable-based explanation that can comprehensively account for the prevalence of single-party dominance across sub-Saharan Africa's multiparty elections. Rather than seeking to identify any single characteristic of states that completely accounts for a dichotomous delineation of 'dominant' versus 'non-dominant' systems, in this chapter largest-party vote share is treated as a structural characteristic of party systems, and the analysis provided seeks to examine whether certain institutional, sociological, and political factors can account for some of the variance in this characteristic that is observable across multiparty legislative elections in sub-Saharan Africa.

From the point of view of understanding African party systems, the empirical tendency of large parties to dominate elections also poses technical problems for studies that take the fragmentation of vote and seat shares as their sole dependent variable. Bogaards (2000; 2004) points out that the 'effective number' of electoral and legislative parties measures (Laasko and Taagepera, 1979) that have been employed in previous comparative assessments of the impact of institutional and sociological factors on African party systems (Brambor *et al.* 2007; Lindberg, 2005; Mozaffar *et al.*, 2003; Mylonas and Roussias, 2008), and which are employed in chapters 4 and 6 of this thesis, can provide misleading intuitions when a large single-party is confronted by a highly fragmented set of opposition groups. For instance, the fact that the average 'effective number' of legislative parties for the elections studied in this thesis is 2.6 would lead one to expect that the typical party system in Africa's legislatures is characterised by two parties of more or less equal strength with a third 'half' party. However, as discussed above, this is not the case. In his research, Bogaards (2004) illustrates that effective number of legislative party scores of between 1 and 3.3 are generated in systems of *de facto* single-party dominance in sub-Saharan Africa¹.

The major advantage of the Laasko-Taagepera index is that it 'usually tends to agree with our average intuition about the number of *serious* parties' (Taagepera, 1999b: 498, emphasis added) in a given system. However, as acknowledged by one of its creators, the index struggles to deal with distributions of seats of precisely the type that are most commonly observed in Africa's legislatures, where 'one component (*i.e.* party) is larger than 50% and hence dominates absolutely a crowd of smaller parties' (*ibid.* p. 497). In this case, Taagepera argues, it is necessary to supplement the 'effective number of parties'

¹ Bogaards' (2000) discussion illustrates this point with the example of the Mali's 1992 transition election, where the effective number of parties score was 2.2, and the ruling party obtained 73 out of 113 seats, with the second largest party winning only 9 seats. Similarly South Africa's elections have tended to result in effective number of party scores of slightly more than 2, even though the African National Congress (ANC) party has won approximately 2/3 of the seats available in each election and is faced with a highly fragmented opposition.

measure with one which pays greater attention to the proportion of seats occupied by the largest party². The analysis presented in this chapter seeks to follow Taagepera's advice, focusing on the % of seats won by the largest party in each legislature as a dependent variable.

6.2 Previous studies of single-party dominance in sub-Saharan Africa

To date, comparative studies focusing on single-party performance/dominance in sub-Saharan Africa have either tended towards description and categorisation³ (Bogaards, 2004; Southall, 2005) or have focused on the implications of single-party dominance for democratisation (Giliomee and Simkins, 1999; Lindberg, 2006; van de Walle and Butler 1999; van de Walle, 2003). Those comparative enquiries that have looked at the sources of single-party dominance/success have helped to identify some of the factors that may be significant but have, thus far, tended to leave out important parts of the picture.

Ishiyama and Quinn's (2006) research focused on the performance former ruling parties in multiparty elections in sub-Saharan Africa. Their work highlights several potentially important factors contributing to single-party seat share, including: the legacies of pre-transition regimes, the economic performance of the government party, levels of ethno-linguistic fragmentation, levels of political freedoms afforded to opposition groups, and the proportionality profile of the legislative electoral system in operation. However, their study does not include parties that ousted incumbents in transition

² I note here that Taagepera's (1999b) preferred index is the inverse of the seat share of the largest party – in the analysis presented here we use the % seat share of the largest party as our dependent variable, preferring it on the grounds of ease of interpretation – however with regard to the principal results, these are reproducible using the inverse of the largest party seat share (apart from the coefficient of the 'settler oligarchy' variable regime in Model 1 in Table 5.4, which is not statically significant using this measure).

³ For example, Bogaards' (2004) article, which is concerned with identifying and investigating the analytical and categorical tools required for addressing the issue of single-party dominance in sub-Saharan Africa, is explicit in stating that 'this contribution (...) does not concern itself with (...) the sources of one-party dominance' (p. 173).

elections and themselves became dominant subsequently, a pattern that is widespread across sub-Saharan Africa (van de Walle, 2003). Furthermore, they fail to account for the role of presidential elections which, as is demonstrated later in this chapter, are highly influential determinants the largest parties' seat share in the legislative elections.

While Young (2004) did test for the impact of presidential elections, and focused explicitly on largest party seat share as a dependent variable, he failed to consider the roles of government performance and previous political regime identified by Ishiyama and Quinn (2006) as well the impact of opposition boycotts (Lindberg, 2006). While he identifies interesting patterns across several elections, Young's sample includes data from a considerably smaller number of elections/countries (44 elections in 25 countries) than are analysed here.

Finally, Erdmann and Basedau (2008) address institutional and sociological factors that may relate to single-party dominance in a comparative piece on sub-Saharan Africa, and they develop interesting arguments with regards to the roles of legislative electoral systems and ethnopolitical fragmentation. However, their approach to testing the various hypotheses that they lay out is somewhat lacking in methodological rigour. The idea that presidential elections may play a role in explaining single-party dominance, for example, is dismissed on the grounds that four out of five non-presidential systems (Botswana, Ethiopia, South Africa, and Lesotho) have dominant party systems without direct presidential elections (Mauritius being an exception in this regard). No tests of the hypotheses relating ethnopolitical fragmentation to single-party dominance are reported. The influence of legislative electoral systems is discounted on the basis of (unreported) weak or insignificant bivariate correlations with dichotomous measures of dominance.

6.3 Consequences of Single-party Dominance

As the title of Pempel's (1990) study, *Uncommon Democracies* suggests; single-party dominance is not a typical feature of liberal democracies. Several authors have suggested that the extent of single-party dominance in sub-Saharan Africa's political systems in the multiparty era may be problematic with regards to the democratic credentials of states in the region. Bogaards (2000) observes that the prevalence of dominant parties in African party systems post-1989 'bears an uncanny resemblance to the situation after independence'⁴ (173). While the largest parties in multiparty competition in sub-Saharan Africa from the early 1990s onwards have, by and large, not cemented their dominance by banning any and all opposition activity, patterns of dominance established in early multiparty elections have nonetheless proven to be quite stable over time (van de Walle, 2003).

Single-party dominance in the region has been a cause for concern among analysts concerned with the quality of governance; Brooks' (2004) discussion of the South African party system, for example, warns that 'in a context where one party dominates the political landscape and faces little prospect of electoral defeat (...) concerns arise surrounding the possibility of declining government responsiveness to public opinion; loss of accountability; and the overall erosion of democratic principles and development of authoritarian methods of rule' (p. 1). Single-party dominance may serve to allow for what Young (2004) describes as 'governance without consensus' (p. 7) as opposition groups can be safely ignored when making legislative decisions. Furthermore, super-majorities may enable ruling parties to amend the constitution without engaging with

⁴ As outlined in chapter 3; early post-independence multiparty elections gave rise to dominant parties across the region, many of which subsequently institutionalised their power through either *de jure* or *de facto* bans on opposition party activity (Collier, 1983; Golder and Wantchekon, 2004). Bogaards goes on to argue, however, that the transformed international environment faced by African regimes post-1989 means that 'dominant parties today have to maintain themselves in a competitive structure, if not a competitive environment, while the post-independence national liberation parties could develop into the one-party state' (2000: 184).

opposition groups⁵. While Posner and Young (2007) note an increasing tendency to adhere to institutional rules in African politics, this distinction becomes less meaningful when the governing party can unilaterally amend those rules.

The presence of a dominant party may also have negative effects on the capacities and behaviour of opposition parties. Bogaards (2000) argues that the extent of single-party dominance in several African party systems is so great that opposition groups often fail to act as 'responsible' oppositions; which are tasked with holding the government to account and proposing alternative policies to the electorate. He notes that, due to their small numbers and/or internal divisions, opposition groups in many African party systems stand no genuine chance of actually assuming power via elections in the short or medium term, a situation which can lead them to engage in 'the self-defeating strategy of opposition boycotts' (p. 185) and generally provides few incentives to play by the rules of the democratic game⁶. Lindberg (2006) points out that opposition groups tend to be unwilling to accept the legitimacy of election outcomes, even when elections were not fraudulent, arguing that 'the behaviour of losing parties in Africa's elections is far from satisfactory' (p.61) with regard to their capacity to accept defeat.

Van de Walle and Butler (1999) argue, however, that there are tradeoffs between competitive systems and single-party dominant systems in terms of democratic consolidation. For them, 'fragmented' party systems (that is, systems where no single-party occupies more than 60% of the seats in the legislature) 'may lead to either a high quality democracy or to a return of authoritarian rule' (p.24). Several state regimes such as Niger, Nigeria, the Republic of Congo, and the Central African Republic, where no dominant party emerged after the re-

⁵ Coverage of the 2009 election in South Africa, for example centered more around whether the ANC would garner the 2/3 majority necessary to amend the constitution unilaterally, than around any notion that opposition groups could actually win the election.

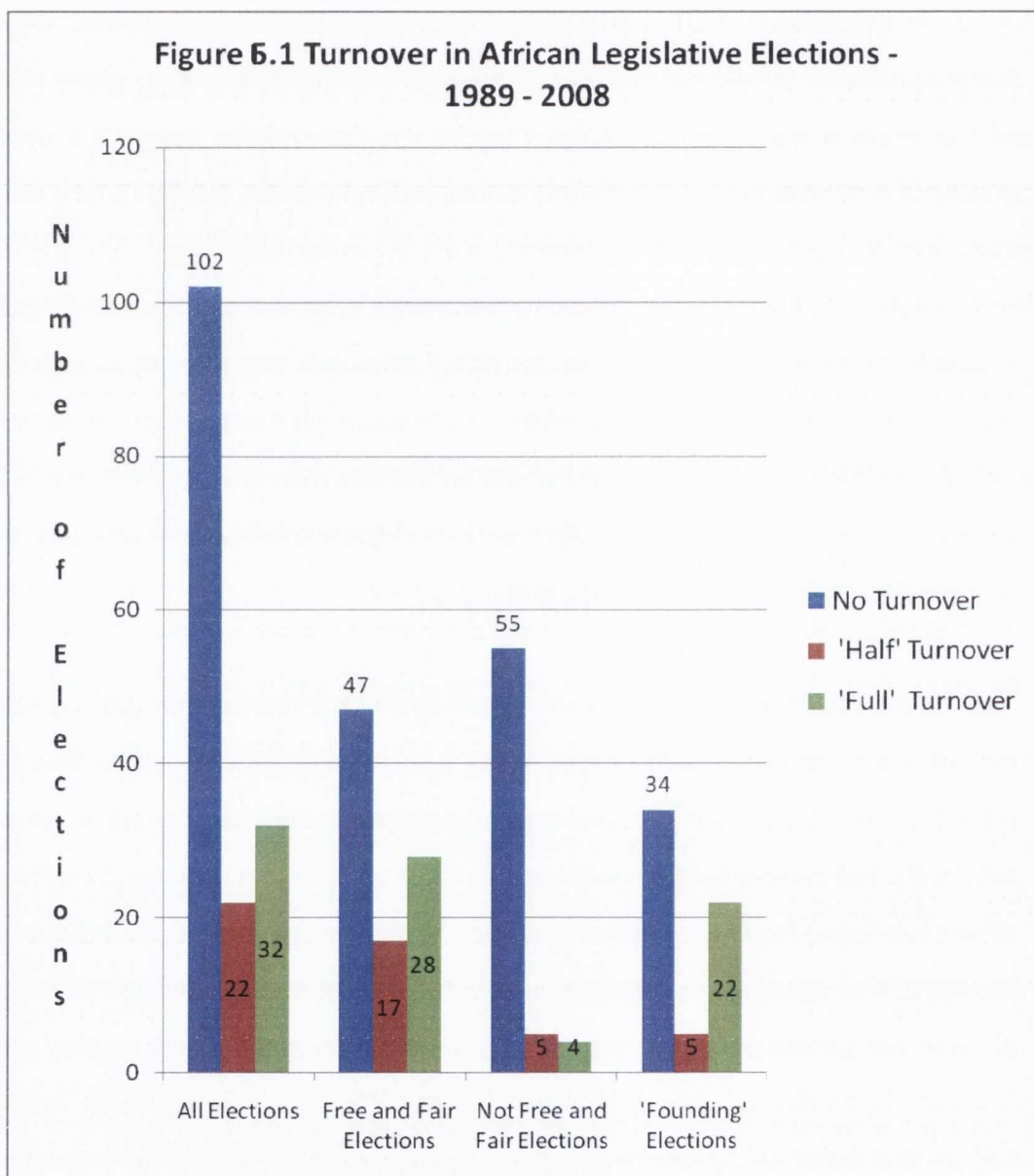
⁶ Bogaards (2000) advocates consideration of electoral systems featuring minority premiums and majority ceilings in order to combat the imbalance between government and opposition parties in the region.

introduction of multiparty competition in the 1990s, either fell into civil war or were overthrown by military *coups d'état* (van de Walle, 2003; Ishiyama and Quinn, 2006). This relationship was also observed in earlier work; Collier's (1978) analysis of patterns of 'parties, coups and authoritarian rule' (p. 62) in the early post-independence period concluded that states where no clear winning party emerged in early post-independence elections were more prone to military intervention than states with dominant single parties.

In instances of single-party dominance, on the other hand, which van de Walle and Butler (1999) define as systems where a single-party wins more than 60% of seats in the legislature, there may be 'greater stability but also a lower quality of democracy' (p. 24). Similarly, Giliomee and Simkins (1999) note that 'a dominant party brings with it mixed blessings' (p. 15) in consolidating democracies. Single-party dominated systems can provide a degree of predictability in terms of government policy as well as the promise of political stability in emerging democracies. Also, when dominant parties are relatively inclusive in their membership, representative of a broad segment of society, and pluralist in their operation, they can confer a degree of popular legitimacy on new regimes (Giliomee and Simkins, *ibid.*).

As such, the implications of single-party dominance for government performance and democratic consolidation are not straightforward. As Pempel (1999) points out, 'single-party rule in developing countries covers a broad spectrum. Some are indeed merely facades for predatory rent-seekers, but many others are ruled by single parties that allow for a host of individual and group freedoms and provide meaningful contests for power among office holders' (p. 3). One consequence of the prevalence of dominant single-party in the sub-Saharan region that is evident, however, is that turnover is comparatively rare in African elections. Using Lindberg's (2006) tripartite classification of legislative electoral turnover, this tendency is rather evident.

In Figure 6.1 elections that are coded 'no turnover' returned the incumbent party/parties to government, 'half' turnovers occurred when legislative elections resulted in a partly new coalition in government, where some parties from the previous government remained, and 'full' turnovers occurred when elections resulted in a new party or coalition of new parties with a legislative majority.



Overall, Figure 6.1 indicates that turnover does occasionally occur across legislative elections in sub-Saharan Africa, with just over a fifth of all elections resulting in 'full' turnover. Looking at rates of turnover by category of election; however, two trends are clear. The first is that, as Lindberg (2006) points out, 'so far fraud has tended to re-install incumbents' (p. 61) with 30.4% of 'free and fair'⁷ elections resulting in full turnovers, and this figure at only 6.25% in elections that are not 'free and fair'.

The second trend is that 'founding' elections are more likely to result in turnover than subsequent elections. 22 of the 32 elections that resulted in 'full' turnover in the dataset collected for this thesis were 'founding elections' that is, elections that marked the end of a period of single-party/military rule or civil war. This pattern echoes van de Walle's (2003) contention that founding elections typically decided whether the 'new' parties, which emerged in the liberalisation of the system (and often were formed around the movements that had campaigned for the introduction of multiparty competition), or 'old', previously authoritarian, parties would dominate in the multiparty era (*ibid.*).

6.4 Dependent variable: % Seat share of largest party.

In this chapter, the % seat share of the largest party in the legislature, the simplest definition of dominance according to Bogaards' 2004 classification⁸, is used as the dependent variable. Above and beyond detecting the presence or

⁷ For Figure 6.1 I use the qualification that elections are not characterised by major fraud, employing Freedom Houses' (2009) 'electoral democracy' classification as a minimum level to qualify as 'free and fair'.

⁸ Bogaards (2004) identifies four criteria employed to distinguish dominant from non-dominant party systems; these are: 1) the presence/absence of a party passing a fixed threshold for dominance (in terms of proportion of votes and seats won by the largest party), 2) the inclusion or exclusion of opposition in government 3) the presence or absence of divided government (in presidential systems) and 4) the time-span over which a single-party has been in power. While the most complex definitions incorporate all four elements, 'the simplest definition of party dominance relies only on vote or seat share; it is not interested in the make-up of the opposition, does not take into account presidential systems of government and is limited to a single legislature' (p. 178).

absence of a dominant party in a given party system, the seat share of the largest party is a characteristic of considerable significance for comparative scholars. Largest party seat share crucially influences the dynamics of government formation and survival (Taagepera, 2007; Taagepera and Enschede, 2006). It is important, however, to recognize that there are dimensions of dominance that this measure fails to capture; including informal and/or extra-constitutional power relationships in a given state. These lacunae are significant for African political systems, given that informal institutions are arguably more prevalent in African politics than in established democracies elsewhere (Hyden, 2006). Most notable among those dimensions of dominance not measured by largest party seat share is the extent to which political power is maintained by extra-democratic means, a concept that is probably best captured by Sartori's (1976) dominant-authoritarian sub-type; Bogaards (2004) argues this point in detail.

A second significant element that the legislative seat share of the largest party fails to capture is the extent of dominance that accrues from occupation of executive office. As discussed in chapters 1 and 3, the office of the presidency the most highly-prized asset in nearly all of Africa's political systems and executives frequently subordinate legislatures in the politics of government (Bratton and van de Walle, 1997; van de Walle, 2003). Nonetheless, there is significant evidence that dominant political actors frequently find themselves constrained by formal institutionalised limits on the exercise of executive power. Posner and Young (2007) cite the Nigerian Senates' blocking of President Olusegun Obasanjo's attempt to amend the constitution in 2006, as well as a growing proportion of African leaders who are leaving power via constitutionally mandated mechanisms, as evidence of institutional constraints on executive powers across sub-Saharan Africa. Evidently, such restrictions become more meaningful when opposition parties exert some degree of institutionally formalised influence (in the form of holding seats) in the legislature.

Thirdly, the measure does not address the temporal element of single-party dominance. Bogaards (2004) points out that measures based on party seat

share 'indicate whether one party has a majority, but will not tell us whether it is consistently the same party or whether there is alternation in government' (p. 187).

Any measured characteristic over which party systems may be compared will capture only limited information and will leave out certain details. However, as a means of understanding the extent to which a single party is electorally and politically dominant across party systems, I argue here that employing legislative seat share as a dependent variable presents several advantages over alternative, categorical approaches. Firstly, it is a straightforward and objective measurement, allowing for the production of replicable research. It is also amenable to multiple regression analysis – allowing one to observe the effects of a given variable while holding the effects of others constant. Secondly, it is available for a very wide range of countries, allowing one to examine the phenomenon of party dominance across Africa's range of political systems, and it is more reliable and more easily verifiable over multiple sources than data on voting returns. Thirdly, and most importantly in terms of the wider relevance of this research, there are strong substantive reasons to consider that largest party seat share captures a *continuous* dimension of largest party power in a given political system.

An alternative continuous approach would be to focus on the ratio of largest to second largest party seat share as a measure of largest party dominance. However, this ratio, while providing interesting additional information about the relationship between the two largest parties in a given system, would leave out a vital part of the overall picture: the ability of the largest party to ignore opposition groups in their entirety. It is possible that a party could be considerably larger than its nearest rival, but still not command an overall majority in the legislature, and hence be vulnerable to a united opposition vote. On the other hand, it is possible that a party could win an overall majority of seats with a comparatively large party in second place. The

extent to which parties can afford to ignore a united opposition is observable from examining largest party size.

Measures that focus solely on dichotomies or categories would also fail to capture important additional information provided by this approach. Certainly, there are several significant thresholds in terms of largest party seat share, the most obvious one being the 50% mark, whereby a legislative majority can be achieved without having to engage in coalition activity. This is a threshold of key importance for understanding power dynamics in any party system, however – focusing solely on the distinction between systems where a single party wins a majority versus systems where no single party wins a majority would lead one to ignore substantial differences within each category. It would conflate those elections where one party wins a near majority and can feasibly form a minority government, or can be the dominant partner in a coalition involving very small parties with those elections (as was the case for Paul Biya's CPDM after Cameroon's 1992 election) with elections where no single party dominates, and any majority coalition would necessarily involve a broader distribution of authority (as was the case after Benin's transitional elections in 1991).

More generally, when largest parties are short of the 50% mark in terms of seats, a larger proportion indicates greater power in terms of their choice of potential coalition partners, and influences the capacity of the largest party to block legislation if it finds itself in opposition. When largest party seat share is above 50%, 'the extent of the excess still makes a difference by enhancing the largest party's clout, yet also by encouraging factions within it' (Taagepera and Enschede, 2006: 760). Increases beyond the 50% mark make parties less vulnerable to defection by individuals or factions from the party whip, this is a particularly important point given the prevalent weakness of party organisations across African political systems (Bratton and van de Walle, 1997). Even in cases where seat share is above 66%; further increases in seat share correspond to decreases in opposition resources to perform oversight and questioning functions as well as undermining opposition parties' legitimacy. Of course, the 100% mark also has

special significance, indicating a level of dominance whereby which the opposition has absolutely no voice in parliament whatsoever. Such a result is typically associated with non-democratic or 'pseudo democratic' (Diamond, 1999) systems, however there are instances of such a result occurring in contexts where elections were relatively free and fair in nature, such as Lesotho's 1993 transitional elections, for instance (Bogaards, 2004).

Therefore, while not offering a comprehensive picture of party dominance/performance in all regards, the approach presented here is preferred to either studying the ratio of first to second place seat shares or specifying a dichotomous majority/no majority dependent variable. The subsequent sections lay out the theories of single party dominance considered in this chapter, and elaborate the research hypotheses that are investigated. I also elaborate how the dependent and independent variables are measured. The analysis section examines how the data collected for this thesis inform our evaluation of these hypotheses.

6.5 Explanations for largest party seat share

6.5.1 Political Context

Greene (2007) argues that an important characteristic of many single-party dominated systems is incumbents' 'ability to raise the costs of participation in the opposition' (p.5). One aspect of these costs are 'opportunity costs' which capture the difficulties faced by candidates/activists outside of the dominant party in seeking to access resources and networks, when these are concentrated in the hands of the dominant party. Dominant parties also dispose of considerable 'resource advantages' (Greene *ibid.* p.7) in terms of patronage relative to opposition groups, exclusion from such resources can also be a cost of opposition membership or support. For Greene, the carrot of patronage combined with the stick of repression represent the best explanations for the capacity of single parties to maintain dominant status in formally multiparty

settings. For example, Baudais and Sborgi (2006), in their report on the 2004 elections in Niger, describe the rationale underlying a slew of declarations of support for ruling party presidential candidate Mamadou Tandja by opposition groups: 'in Nigerien politics, it pays to be on the winning side. A favourable relationship with the governing party can result in jobs in the administration or other dividends from power, whilst an unfavourable relationship means exclusion from all kinds of resources and even prosecution' (p. 166).

This dynamic can lead to highly stable systems of single-party dominance occurring over time. In order to account for this tendency, and to control for intra-country clustering on the dependent variable, the analysis includes a lagged dependent variable, that is, a variable that captures the % of largest party seat share in the previous election.

Incumbents can also impose costs that directly affect the well-being of potential opposition candidates and activists, through programmes of 'targeted physical intimidation, beatings or even killings of opposition activists' (Greene, 2007: 6). Unfortunately, this type of activity is observable in several of the elections considered here. For example, Equatorial Guinea's 1999 legislative election was characterised by severe extra-constitutional restraints of opposition groups; during the election campaign opposition candidates were arrested and detained without trial, opposition meetings were broken up, and there was evidence of police brutality and torture, with one political leader allegedly having had the soles of his feet flogged with electrical cables when in police custody (Lindberg, 2006). Nonetheless, single parties have also dominated in states where physical intimidation and coercion is not a notable feature of everyday political life; the electoral dominance of the ANC in South Africa is a notable example.

Overall, we can observe variation over time within countries and considerable variation across countries in the extent to which political freedoms were granted to opposition groups in elections in sub-Saharan Africa. Measures

such as those employed by Young (2004), which focus solely on the administration of the election, can fail to observe the ongoing suppression of opposition groups that can distort election results prior to the actual vote itself. As such, the Freedom House (2009) 'political rights' score in each country for the election year (see chapter 3 and Appendix for a discussion of the measurement procedures for this index) is employed to test the contention that largest party seat share increases as regimes become more politically oppressive.

Any account of largest party performance/dominance in Africa must also take note of the significant number of elections in which parts of the opposition or, in some cases, the entire opposition, refuse to participate on various grounds. According to data collected for this project, and building on Lindberg's (2006) data, 23.4% of the elections considered here featured either partial or complete boycotts by opposition groups. Lindberg (2006), points out that boycotts are far more likely to occur when elections are not substantially free and fair, though he does cite instances of 'unfair boycotts' (p. 58) where opposition groups refused to participate in elections that were free of rigging, such as the refusal of the opposition to participate in Ghana's 1992 legislative elections. The expectation with regard to seat share of the largest party is evident here: one would expect that largest party seat share will be higher in elections where there is a boycott by opposition parties than in elections where all parties participated.

In order to measure the occurrence of a boycott, a dichotomous variable that is scored 1 where such a boycott occurs and 0 where it does not is employed. This is admittedly a somewhat crude measure, in that it fails to distinguish between major party boycotts and minor party boycotts. However, it has the advantage of being unambiguous, and avoiding estimating the proportion of votes/seats that parties would have won, had they participated.

A further contextual factor for consideration is the novelty of multiparty electoral competition in many African states – van de Walle and Butler (1999), for example, speculated that the proliferation of small parties in African party

systems may be viewed as ‘an inevitable transitional phenomenon of small democracies’ (p.22)⁹. Arguably, transitional elections may be exceptional and more prone to produce super-majorities for temporary alliances that unite against an undemocratic regime. It may be the case that such alliances will not stand the test of time and the competitive dynamics of multi-partism. On the other hand, single-parties may establish the sort of resource advantages described by Greene (2007) over successive elections and become increasingly dominant – subsuming smaller parties and increasing seat share.

I examine both of these propositions; by including a measure whether an election was ‘founding’ in the sense of marking the beginning of a new regime and ending a period of one-party or military rule, or a period of civil war, and by testing for whether single-party vote share increases as the number of successive elections without such an interruption increases.

Finally, Ishiyama and Quinn (2006) indicate that ‘regime legacies’ (p. 325) may have a role in shaping contemporary patterns of single-party dominance in sub-Saharan Africa. They cite Bratton and van de Walle’s (1997) argument that ‘contemporary political changes are conditioned by mechanisms embedded in the ancient regime’ (p. 202 cited in Ishiyama and Quinn, 2006: 325). Most notably, several previously ‘single’ parties have continued to compete in *de jure* multiparty settings, often with considerable success (Baker, 1998; Ishiyama and Quinn, 2006). Even in party systems where former ruling parties were ejected from office in multiparty elections, echoes of the former regime are still noticeable, with many parties being synonymous with opposition to that regime, or having being formed in the context of the particular structures of participation and competition facilitated by that regime (Bratton and van de Walle, 1997).

⁹ However, they did acknowledge that large numbers of small parties persisted even in countries like Senegal which has a relatively long tradition of (admittedly imperfect) multiparty competition. Van de Walle’s (2002) analysis further undermined the thesis that the raw number of parties competing (that is, the number of formally separate parties, not accounting for their vote or seat weights) would decrease over successive elections – and demonstrated that the opposite was in fact occurring, with more parties competing in each successive round of elections measured in his dataset.

I therefore investigate whether any of the various pre-1989 regime types were more or less conducive to high levels of largest party vote share. In order to do so, I follow Ishiyama and Quinn (2006) in employing Bratton and van de Walle's (1997) classificatory system. This classification separates pre-1989 regimes into: plebiscitary one-party systems, military oligarchies, competitive one-party systems, settler oligarchies, and multiparty systems. The plebiscitary one-party system is taken as the category against which others are compared on the basis that it was, by 1989, 'the most common type of neo-patrimonial regime in Africa' (Bratton and van de Walle, 1997: 79).

6.5.2 Legislative Electoral Systems

Legislative electoral systems vary across the sub-Saharan region, and a significant proportion of states employ majoritarian legislative electoral systems (see chapter 3). As such, legislative electoral system type is a natural point of departure for investigations of the sources of largest party seat share (Bogaards, 2000; 2004; Erdmann and Basedau, 2008; Young, 2004). Majoritarian systems have been found to disproportionately benefit larger parties in terms of seat attribution at the expense of smaller parties (see chapter 2 for a detailed discussion). In several cases, majoritarian electoral systems have been found to generate legislative majorities from pluralities (and have occasionally generated majorities for parties that did not win national-level pluralities) in their operation in the UK, the USA and (pre-1993) New Zealand. As such, an obvious expectation may be that majoritarian electoral systems should encourage single-party dominance.

Taagepera and Enschedé's (2006) research on the institutional determinants of single-party seat share focuses on district magnitude and assembly size as limiting factors. According to their findings, smaller district magnitudes and smaller assembly sizes increase the institutionally determined share of seats accruing to the largest party. Importantly, however, they do acknowledge that:

'institutional factors cannot be expected to be the main ones in determining the seat share of the largest party in any particular election. A moment's politics can obviously determine an outcome, with only mild institutional constraints' (p. 765). Nonetheless, their investigation did find that legislative electoral system factors provide a statistically significant prediction of largest party seat share across a huge sample of elections (753 national assembly elections in 25 stable democracies) albeit with a standard error of 21%. The measure of electoral system restrictiveness employed in this thesis (see Appendix A) captures both district magnitude and assembly size, though greater weight is given to the district magnitude element.

Looking at the proportion of seats and votes won by electoral system type in Table 6.1, we can see that largest parties performed similarly in terms of vote share under both types of electoral system, suggesting that the slightly higher number of seats accruing to largest parties under single-seat based systems may be a function of 'mechanical' rather than 'strategic' electoral system effects. Overall though, 'manufactured majorities' are comparatively rare in sub-Saharan Africa, even when legislative electoral systems are very majoritarian, hence Bogaards' (2000) assertion that 'even under a pure proportional system, most African countries would still have dominant party systems' (p. 170).

Table 6.1 - % of votes and seats won by largest party by electoral system type¹⁰

Electoral system type	Average % of votes won by largest party	Average % of seats won by largest party
All legislative elections	57.2 (86)	64.1 (150)
Majoritarian systems	56.9 (37)	66.7 (78)
PR systems (including 'mixed' systems)	57.3 (49)	61.2 (72)

As such, legislative electoral systems cannot be the sole determining factor in explaining largest party size in sub-Saharan Africa, but it does appear that majoritarian systems are associated with slightly higher seat shares accruing to the largest party. However, it is difficult to estimate the extent of 'seat bonuses' using the figures in Table 6.1, because data were available for a considerably greater number of seat distributions than vote distributions. Therefore, I calculated the average difference between largest party vote and seat share across those 86 elections for which both vote and seat data on largest party share were available. Over these 86 elections, the average difference between largest party vote and seat share is +11.6% (that is, largest party seat share is, on average, 11.6% larger than largest party vote share). There is an observable difference in the size of the average seat bonus between majoritarian systems, which generate a +17.2% average seat bonus for largest party, and PR-based systems (including 'mixed' systems), which generate a +7.5% average seat bonus. Taking the two extremes in each case, under Djibouti's highly majoritarian system, the winning party or winning coalition in the 1992, 1997, and 2003

¹⁰ Number of elections on which figures are based in parentheses.

elections won *all* legislative seats, benefiting from seat bonuses of 21.5% to 37.6%. On the other hand, the seat bonus accruing to the ANC in the three South African elections considered here (1994, 1999, and 2004), which operate under a highly permissive PR system, was less than 1% in each case.

The fact that largest parties received an average 7.5% seat bonus under PR-based systems reflects the fact that several of Sub Saharan Africa's PR electoral systems are relatively disproportional, due to small districts (for example in Cape-Verde, Guinea-Bissau, and Benin post-1995), to the presence of several 'parallel' mixed systems, and due to the provision of national and constituency thresholds for representation in some PR systems (for example in Burundi, Mozambique, Sao Tome and Principe and Sierra Leone's 1996 election). The measure of legislative electoral system permissiveness deployed here, the natural log of the 'effective nationwide threshold' (see chapter 5 and Appendix A for a detailed breakdown of the calculation of this measure) accounts for these variations in the proportionality of PR-systems as well as for variations across single-seat based systems, which provide, on a national-level, more opportunities for smaller parties as the number of constituencies increases.

Following on from the findings in chapter 5 on electoral systems' 'mechanical' effects on the translation of votes to seats, there is a strong negative correlation between the permissiveness of the electoral system and the extent of the seat bonus enjoyed by the largest party in the system. A pairwise correlation of -.66 between electoral system permissiveness and largest party bonus is statistically significant at the 99% level across 86 legislative elections in sub-Saharan Africa, indicating that largest party seat bonuses decrease as electoral system permissiveness increases. However, electoral systems also have a role to play in conditioning the effects of societal diversity on largest party size, which is discussed in the next sub-section.

6.5.3 Societal Structures

For Basedau and Stroh (2009) ‘the assumption that party systems were a mere function of ethnic demography (...) could hardly be reconciled with the mushrooming of dominant parties in many highly ethnically heterogeneous countries’ (p. 7) in sub-Saharan Africa. Erdmann and Basedau (2008) point out that ‘it is only in Botswana, Namibia, Burundi, Lesotho, Rwanda and Zimbabwe that we find an ethnic group that counts for a majority or even a large portion of the population’ (pp.249-250). Furthermore, as Scarritt and Mozaffar (1999) and Rule (2000) demonstrate, even these groups are typically containers for internal, potentially salient ethnic, linguistic and cultural sub-cleavages. Erdmann (2004) argues, ‘ethnic parties’ *i.e.* political parties built on a single ethnic identity, are ‘rather an exception in Africa’ (p. 71), as it is not possible in most African states to build a dominant party on the basis of identification with a single ethnopolitical group. Rather, dominant parties tend to be ‘a coalition of several ethnic groups of different sizes that has been negotiated by their respective elites: they are “multiethnic parties¹¹” (Erdmann, 2004: 71).

However, ethnopolitical fragmentation may nonetheless have a role to play in influencing largest party seat share. A straightforward intuition is that, as the size of the largest group increases, so too should the seat share of the largest party. Parties built on the basis of majority ethnic groups should be easier to create and maintain than those built on alliances of several ethnic groups. This argument leads to the hypothesis that:

H1: The proportion of the population taken up by the largest ethnic, linguistic, or religious grouping is positively related to the size of largest party’s seat share, *ceteris paribus*.

¹¹ An interesting distinction in this regard is made (for Francophone Africa) by Fomunyoh (2001) between government parties, which mobilise relatively broad-based support throughout society on one hand and smaller opposition parties which tend to rely on regionally or ethnically-concentrated nodes of support.

A corollary of this argument is that, where societies are highly fragmented, building super-majority ethnic coalitions may become more costly, as such coalitions may require engaging in an ongoing balancing act across numerous groups. Furthermore, as societies become more fragmented, it may be easier for elites to negotiate minimal winning majorities which command vote/seat shares of closer to 50%, rather than negotiating super-majority coalitions, as there are large numbers of smaller groups around which potential ethnic coalitions can be constructed. As such, one would anticipate that increases in ethnopolitical fragmentation should correspond to decreases in largest party seat share. This intuition can be stated formally as a testable hypothesis:

H2: Levels of societal diversity are negatively related to the size of largest party's seat share, *ceteris paribus*.

As was the case with the investigation of party system fragmentation in chapter 5, it is anticipated that the effects of ethnopolitical fragmentation may be conditioned by both the permissiveness of the legislative electoral system and the extent to which ethnopolitical groups are geographically concentrated. Both of these factors influence the extent to which minority ethnic identities constitute viable bases for the formation of political parties. The proportionality profile of legislative electoral systems may influence the organisational strategies of opposition groups; majoritarian systems offer strong incentives for opposition groups to cohere in order to translate vote shares into seat shares. The extent of geographic concentration of societal groups should also condition the extent to which they are viable vehicles for political organisation.

Given the novelty of this mode of analysis, I opt for an exploratory approach to examining how these three factors: societal diversity, electoral system permissiveness, and geographic concentration of groups, interact to influence largest party seat share.

In order to capture levels of societal diversity in each state, I employ the measures elaborated in chapters 3 and 4, *i.e.* the 'effective number' of societal groups according to: *Atlas Narodov Mira* (1964); Alesina *et al.* (2003); Fearon (2003); Posner (2004), and Scarritt and Mozaffar (1999). I also deploy multiplicative terms that capture the interaction between these measures of societal diversity and levels of electoral system permissiveness for each case. Mozaffar and Scarritt's (1999) data are used to measure average ethnopolitical group geographic concentration in each state. For the Scarritt and Mozaffar (1999) data and I include a 'triple' interaction term, which captures the product of ethnopolitical fragmentation, ethnopolitical groups' geographic concentration, and electoral system permissiveness as well as all pairwise cross-products.

6.5.4 Presidential Elections

Presidential and legislative elections are intimately linked in African politics, with van de Walle (2003) going so far as to argue that 'relative to the executive branch, party competition in the legislative branch is a sideshow' (p. 315). Young (2004) discusses the mechanisms by which the dynamics of competition among candidates in presidential elections may influence the seat share enjoyed by the largest party in legislative elections in sub-Saharan Africa. A first mechanism is derived from the occurrence of 'political business cycles'¹². Such patterns of behaviour are far more likely to be pursued in executive than legislative elections, given the centralisation of power in executive office that is characteristic of politics in the region. Aubynn (2002) for example, argues that Jerry Rawlings engaged in precisely such a spending spree in the run-up to the 1996 elections in Ghana – inflating civil servants' salaries and initiating several large scale public construction projects.

¹² Political business cycles have been most commonly analysed in electoral competition in established democracies. As Block (1999) demonstrates, however, political business cycles are 'alive and well' (p.16) in sub-Saharan Africa's nascent democracies. Block argues that state structures in the region, which have 'weak institutions, impose few restrictions on government action and accountability, and rarely have independent central banks' (p. 19) are particularly conducive to politicians 'indulging in spending sprees and monetary expansions in an effort to retain office' (p. 20).

Secondly, Young (2004) argues that incumbent presidential candidates benefit from significant advantages outside of economic considerations – most importantly from being able to present themselves as being insurers of democracy and as brokers of political stability. Wantchekon (1999) argues that the latter consideration is of key importance in explaining voter choice in contexts where post-election violence is a possibility – he argues that, in these circumstances, voters may ‘prefer the party most capable of controlling violence’ (p. 245)¹³.

These factors lean in the favour of large parties emerging on the coattails of the executive; however the capacity of parties to do so is intimately linked to the temporal proximity of executive and legislative elections. The extent to which the president’s party can claim credit for these actions in legislative elections will naturally vary in line with the temporal proximity of legislative and parliamentary elections, and credit claiming will become progressively more difficult as the time between presidential and legislative elections increases. Similarly, considerations of political stability may weigh less heavily in the presidential midterm than when legislative and presidential elections are held simultaneously. One would therefore anticipate that single candidate/party dominance in executive elections more readily translates in single-party dominance in legislative elections when the two are held simultaneously and less readily as the time between these elections increases.

However, when no single candidate/party dominates executive competition, it is unlikely that presidential elections will be linked to higher levels of largest party seat share in the legislature. An implication of this assertion is

¹³ One of the most striking examples of this sort of dynamic is Charles Taylor’s presidential campaign in 1997, as described in the following passage by Meredith:

‘Taylor (...) made it clear that if he did not win, he would resume the war, emphasizing his warlord credentials with the slogan: “He killed my ma, he killed my pa, but I will vote for him”. Many Liberians voted for him just for the sake of peace’ (2006: 568).

that the impact of the temporal proximity of executive and legislative elections on largest party seat share in the legislature will be conditional on the extent to which a single-party dominated in the executive elections. As such, I am theorising the existence of an interactive effect, namely that the % of votes won by the most successful presidential candidate (in the first round for two round systems) and the temporal proximity of the presidential and legislative elections interact to influence the % of seats won by the largest party in the subsequent legislative election. This conceptualisation of the relationship between presidential elections and largest party seat share in the legislature allow one to specify the following hypotheses:

H3: The level of temporal proximity of presidential and legislative elections is positively related to the seat share of the largest party, when a single presidential candidate commands a relatively large portion of electoral support, *ceteris paribus*.

H4: The vote share of the most successful candidate in the presidential election is positively related to the seat share of the largest party in the subsequent legislative election, when presidential and legislative elections are held closely together, *ceteris paribus*.

H5: There is a positive interactive effect between the level of temporal proximity of presidential and legislative elections and the vote share of the largest presidential candidate.

In order to empirically test these hypotheses, I measure the largest % vote share won by any candidate in the previous executive elections, the level of temporal proximity of presidential and legislative elections is measured using Amorim Neto and Cox's (1997) interval measure as outlined in chapter 4, and a multiplicative term (the product of the values of both variables for each case) captures their interaction.

6.5.5 Incumbent Performance

Finally, Ishiyama and Quinn (2006) argue that incumbent economic performance should be considered in seeking to explain largest party seat share comparatively. While it is not the purpose of this thesis to evaluate African government policies – incumbent performance across the region would, arguably, not lead us to expect that incumbents should frequently be returned to office by large majorities of voters. That the region as a whole represents a ‘growth tragedy’ (Easterly and Levine, 1997) is something of a consensus among analysts. Furthermore, this ‘tragedy’ is ongoing more than 20 years after of the advent of multiparty competition in most countries in the region. In his assessment of economic policy in sub-Saharan Africa, van de Walle (2001) notes that African economies continue to lag behind all other world regions, and that efforts to improve economic performance have largely met with mostly abject failure, to the extent that, ‘many if not most Africans are poorer today than they were twenty years ago’ (p. 4).

In a context where turnover is rare and majorities/super majorities are the norm, it would appear that incumbents frequently receive overwhelming electoral support in spite of low levels of growth and development being achieved. Nonetheless, it is worth measuring whether government performance in terms of per capita GDP growth in the year in which the election is held (based on 2009 IMF figures) influences largest party seat share.

6.6 Analysis

This section investigates whether the factors outlined above are related to largest party vote share using robust¹⁴ multiple regression analysis. I deploy 3

¹⁴ As was the case in chapter 4, regression diagnostics for non-robust regressions indicated that there were influential outlier points in the dataset. These were not as egregious for models of largest party seat share as they were for party system fragmentation in chapter 4 where Comoros had a Cook’s (1977) distance score of over 1. Nonetheless, the suggested cut-off point at which an observation is deemed to be problematically influential for regression analysis in most of the literature is $4/N$, or, in some cases $4/(n-k-1)$ where n is the number of

robust regression models in Table 6.2, all of which employ Scarritt and Mozaffar's (1999) data on the number of ethnopolitical groups in each country, the population belonging to each group, and the extent to which each group is geographically concentrated. The first model includes all of the independent variables outlined in the previous section, apart from the interaction terms, in order to gain an intuitive feel for the relationships between these variables and % of largest party seat share (as coefficients attached to constituent terms in interactive hypotheses have a very specific meaning, see chapter 4, footnote 19 for a discussion).

The second model in Table 6.2 includes a three-way interaction between the 'effective number' of ethnopolitical groups, ethnopolitical group concentration, and legislative electoral system permissiveness (as well as constituent pairwise interactions between these variables) and an interaction between the % of votes won by the most successful candidate in the executive election and the proximity of presidential and legislative elections. The third model in Table 6.4 deploys the same variables, though only for systems which have a directly elected president, and is used in the analysis of the impact of executive elections on largest party seat share. Using a lagged dependent variable implied dropping several cases where the previous election had taken place under a single-party regime or where elections marked a transition from a military regime¹⁵. The findings with regard to 'founding' and 'consecutive'

cases and k is the number of independent variables in the regression equation (Neter et al., 1996).

The former rule gives a cut-off of .38 for models 1 and 2 in table 3, the latter gives a cut-off of .47. Taking the latter (least restrictive) cut-off point, four cases exceed this point: Comoros (1992), Djibouti (1992), Lesotho (2002) and Togo (2007). As such, I adopt the same approach as in chapter 4, specifying a robust regression. In this case, I report models that include a lagged dependent variable to control for intra-country clustering of residuals on the dependent variable.

¹⁵ There were several cases where a 'first' election followed a breakdown after a multiparty election post-1989 – examples include Angola, Nigeria, Gambia, Burundi, and Comoros – in this case the 'lagged' variable refers to the results of the multiparty election that took place prior to regime breakdown.

elections are identical, however, for a specification that does not include a lagged dependent variable.

Table 6.2 – Coefficients and standard errors (in parentheses) for robust regressions over models 1 – 3. Dependent Variable – % Largest party seat share

Variable	Models		
	(1) Additive Model	(2) Interactive Model – all elections	(3) Interactive Model – Direct Presidential Elections Only
Electoral System Permissiveness	-3.8 (2.4)	-14.5** (4.6)	-25.8** (6.7)
Societal Fragmentation	-1.5 (.85)	-13.1** (3.9)	-19.3** (4.8)
Concentration	1.4 (2.2)	-10.0 (6.6)	-7.8 (6.8)
Size of largest ethnopolitical group	-.03 (.06)	.05 (.05)	-.05 (.05)
Societal Fragmentation*Electoral System Permissiveness		5.7** (2.1)	10.9** (2.9)
Concentration*Societal Fragmentation		5.2** (2.1)	5.8** (2.1)
Concentration*Electoral System Permissiveness		6.1 (3.2)	5.3 (3.4)
Triple interaction term		-2.6** (1.1)	-3.4** (1.2)
Largest % vote secured by a presidential candidate	.17* (.07)	-.05 (.08)	.17 (.16)
Proximity of Presidential and Legislative Elections	-8.2	-50.8** (6.7)	-30.4* (11.9)
Largest % vote secured by a presidential candidate* Proximity of Presidential and Legislative Elections		.68** (.13)	.59** (.13)
Political Rights Score	1.5* (.8)	2.2* (1.1)	2.7* (1.2)
Opposition boycott?	16.6** (3.9)	12.6** (3.2)	13.1** (2.9)
% Growth GDP in election year	.64* (.24)	.24 (.21)	.28 (.2)
Founding election	-2.8 (5.3)	-.33 (4.1)	-6.7 (3.9)
Consecutive elections under same regime	.59 (1.4)	1.4 (1.2)	1.6 (1.1)
Regime Type – military oligarchy	1.9 (4.7)	.19 (3.8)	-3.8 (3.6)
Regime Type – one party competitive	-2.5 (4.2)	-2.1 (3.4)	-4.9 (3.1)

Variable	Models		
	(1) Additive Model	(2) Interactive Model – all elections	(3) Interactive Model – Direct Presidential Elections Only
Regime Type – settler oligarchy	29.5* (10.8)	-5.3 (12.8)	-17.9 (13.8)
Regime Type – multiparty competitive	6.7 (6.2)	5.4 (4.9)	2.8 (4.6)
Lagged % of largest party vote share	.31** (.08)	.31** (.06)	.25** (.07)
Constant	36.8** (11.3)	66.4** (13.0)	69.5** (15.1)
R-Squared	.53	.63	.67
N	106	106	90

* p < .05, ** p < .01.

Notes: 'Triple interaction term' = Societal Fragmentation*Electoral System Permissiveness*Concentration

The reference category for regime types here is 'plebiscitary democracy' which was the most common pre-1989 regime type (Bratton & van de Walle, 1997).

6.6.1 Political Context

Across all models, the lagged dependent variable is positive and statistically significant; demonstrating that the seat share of the largest party in the previous election is a very strong predictor of largest party seat share. The output in Table 6.2 indicates that this relationship is positive with 99% confidence. This finding underlines the tendency towards stability and low turnover rates in African elections that van de Walle (2003) observed. However, the previous seat share of the largest party is not a perfect predictor of largest party seat share, and we can see that, even when it is controlled for, other factors exercise a significant impact. This indicates that, while early patterns do appear to be extremely important in the medium-term, largest party seat share is not set in stone after the founding election.

All three models in Table 6.2 point to the importance of the political rights and opposition boycott variables. The 'political rights' indicator (Freedom House, 2010) increases as levels of regime oppressiveness increase, ranging from a score of 1 to 2 for 'free' competition, 3 to 5 for 'partly free' competition, and 6 to 7 for countries where competition is 'not free'. The coefficients presented in Table 6.2 represent the effect of an increase in 1 on this variable. Across all models, such an increase is positively related to largest party seat share with 95% confidence. In terms of the scale of this effect, across the three models in Table 6.2, an increase of 1 in the political rights variable corresponds to a 1.5%-2.7% increase in the seat share of the largest party *ceteris paribus*, corresponding to a 9%-16.2% change when we move from a score of 1 to a score of 7. This finding confirms the intuition that illiberal political regimes tend to benefit the largest party in the system.

Looking at opposition boycotts, this dichotomous variable captured the effect of the occurrence of a boycott by any opposition groups/coalitions. The output in Table 6.2 demonstrates that there is a positive relationship between the occurrence of an opposition boycott and the seat share of the largest party, with 99% confidence. The scale of the effect of such boycotts is between a 12.6%-16.6% increase in the seat share of the largest party, *ceteris paribus*. This figure arguably conceals considerable internal variation, depending on the support that the boycotting parties may have garnered had they participated.

Other aspects of political context appear, however, to be less important in influencing largest party seat shares. Founding elections do not appear to be associated with higher seat shares accruing to the largest party than subsequent elections. Furthermore, there is no clear relationship between the number of successive elections and largest party seat share. Perhaps repeated elections do not always exert the same influence on largest party vote share – on the one hand large umbrella organisations created at independence may tend to disintegrate over time (as was the case with Zambia's Movement for Multiparty

Democracy during the 1990s), on the other hand, large parties may be able to subsume opposition groups over time (as was the case with Paul Biya's Cameroon People's Democratic Movement, which managed to co-opt numerous regional opposition parties following the introduction of multiparty elections in 1992). In the aggregate, these divergent effects may lead us to observe no discernible linear relationship. Finally, there was no consistent evidence that any particular pre-1989 regime encouraged greater single-party seat share than others.

Overall, the analysis indicates that political context is of vital importance for understanding levels of largest party seat share in sub-Saharan Africa. The approach adopted in this chapter, as throughout the analyses presented in chapters 4-6 was to consider all formally multiparty elections and to control for variations in levels of political freedoms. The analysis has demonstrated that, controlling for a range of societal and institutional factors, elections that are free and fair, with full opposition participation result in considerably smaller seat shares being accrued by winning parties. Those 43 legislative elections that were classed as 'free and fair' in Table 3.3 resulted in average largest party seat share of 57.4%, with the remaining 107 'partly free' and 'not free' elections on average returning a largest party of 67.4%. Furthermore, we cannot rule out that other aspects of political context that were not measured for this analysis, such as levels of corruption access of ruling parties to foreign capital and arms due to natural resources, or geopolitical alliances, could explain further variance in largest party size.

However, while political context evidently has a considerable role to play, there are several instances of free and fair elections returning largest parties of over 70%, for instance Botswana and Namibia consistently elect dominant largest parties. On the other hand, even under political regimes that Freedom House (2010) classes as 'not free', largest parties occasionally win only narrowly, or fail to secure a majority of seats – as was the case in Togo's 1994 elections, Kenya's 1997 elections, the 2000 elections in Côte d'Ivoire and Zimbabwe's 2000

elections. Finally the 'partly free' category, where the majority of our cases reside, features a wide range of outcomes. As such, largest party size is not simply a direct proxy for regime type. I therefore investigate the roles played by institutional and societal factors in the following sections.

6.6.2 Legislative Electoral Systems

With regards to the role of legislative electoral systems, model 1 in Table 6.2 seeks to capture the impact of majoritarian legislative electoral systems outside of their role in influencing the translation of ethnopolitical fragmentation in largest party support/opposition. On the basis of the evidence presented here, one cannot reject the null hypothesis of no relationship at conventional confidence levels. While the coefficient is negative, the 95% confidence interval attached to the coefficient runs from -8.7 to 1.2 ¹⁶.

The measurement of electoral system effects is difficult in this case because the dependent variable is influenced by both 'mechanical' and 'psychological' effects (Benoit, 2002); especially as the relationship between electoral systems and the activation of cleavages in sub-Saharan Africa appears to run contrary to conventional expectations from the literature (see chapter 5). While the 'mechanical' effects of electoral systems mean that restrictive systems tend to disproportionately reward larger parties, it appears that restrictive systems are also more conducive to the activation of ethnic cleavages which take vote and seat shares away from the largest party in a given system, a point which is developed in the next sub-section.

¹⁶ I note here that a model which did not include a lagged dependent variable also reported a negative coefficient of -5.6 , which was statistically significant at conventional (95%) levels. Even if we took this finding, however, it would not lead us to conclude that legislative electoral systems are the sole determinants of the scale of largest party seat share, as the range of our electoral systems is between $.5$ and 5.5 , so that the most permissive system (South Africa) would award approximately 25% fewer seats to the largest party than the least permissive system (Djibouti).

6.6.3 Societal Structures

Model 1 suggests that neither levels of societal fragmentation nor largest group size are, independently, statistically significant predictors (at the 95% confidence level) of largest party seat share in African elections. The size of the largest group was not significant in any of the three models presented in Table 6.4 (nor was it found to interact with electoral system permissiveness or group concentration variables when analysed). As such, there is no evidence to support H1.

With regards to H2, there is no evidence that societal diversity is independently related to largest party seat share; however, the results of models 2 and 3 indicate that the effects of societal diversity on largest party seat share are conditioned by both legislative electoral system permissiveness and levels of ethnopolitical group geographic concentration. In models 2 and 3, the 'triple interaction' coefficients, capturing the interaction between ethnopolitical fragmentation, legislative electoral system permissiveness and ethnopolitical group concentration are statistically significant, supporting the contention that the effects of fragmentation of the seat share of the largest party are conditional on these factors.

I employ the same approach to the investigation of interactive relationships here as in chapters 4 and 5, amending the codes provided by Brambor *et al.* (2006) to graph marginal effects of variables over a range of values of conditioning variables. Figure 6.2 (which is derived from model 2 in Table 6.2) graphs the marginal effect of ethnopolitical fragmentation on largest party seat share as electoral system permissiveness and ethnopolitical group concentration levels vary. We can see that, according to these results, ethnopolitical fragmentation is negatively related to largest party seat share under restrictive electoral systems, but is either non-related or positively related in permissive systems. This would appear to reinforce the finding in chapter 5 that PR-based systems have not been conducive to the activation of parties on

the basis of individual ethnic cleavages in sub-Saharan Africa's multiparty elections. Indeed, where ethnopolitical groups are geographically dispersed, ethnopolitical fragmentation is *positively* related to largest party seat share under permissive electoral systems, supporting Mozaffar *et al.*'s (2003) claim that, in certain circumstances, increases in fragmentation may lead groups to prefer attachment to a single ethnic coalition party over single-identity based parties.

Figure 6.2 - Estimated marginal effects of ethnopolitical group fragmentation on % largest party seat share, as electoral system permissiveness and ethnopolitical group concentration vary

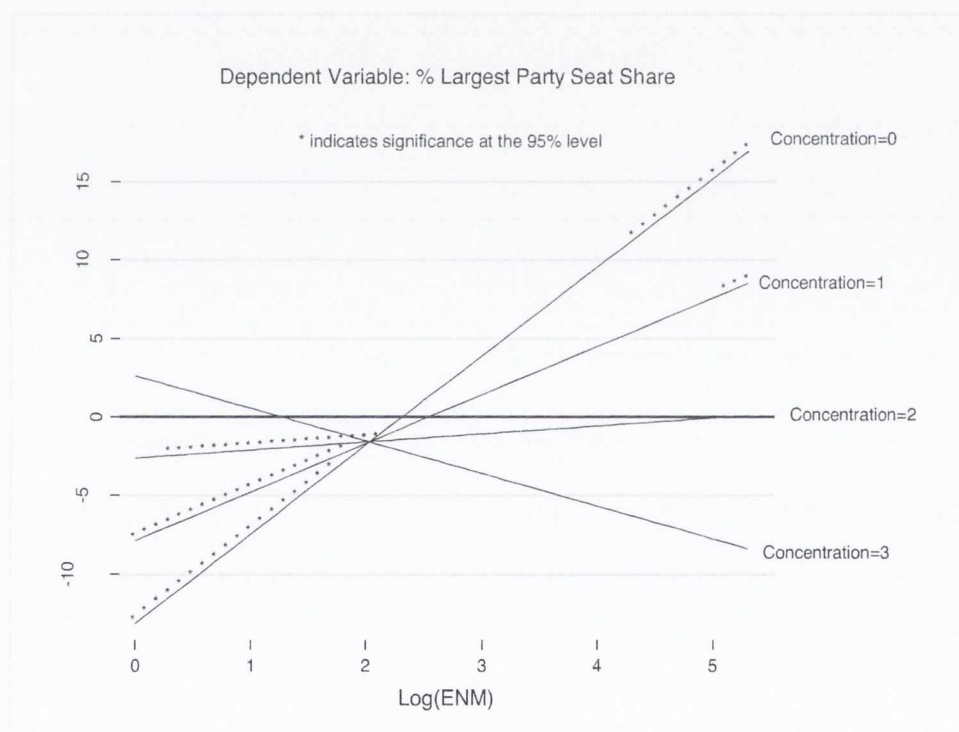


Table 6.3 presents an analysis of whether the above finding with regard to the interaction between legislative electoral system permissiveness and societal diversity is robust to alternative approaches to the measurement of societal diversity. The regressions in Table 6.5 control for the same variables as in Table 6.2, apart from groups' geographic concentration, which is only available for the Scarritt and Mozaffar (1999) data. However, for presentational purposes I

report only the coefficients and standard errors of: 'societal diversity', 'electoral system permissiveness' and their interaction, in each regression. Looking at the coefficients for the interaction terms in these regressions, we can see that they are all positive, and that, apart from Fearon's (2003) 'ethnic' and 'cultural' measures of diversity; they are all positive and statistically significant. This finding provides further support to our assertion that increases in societal diversity are more likely to correspond to decreases in largest party seat share under majoritarian than under PR systems in sub-Saharan Africa.

Table 6.3 - Selected coefficient values and standard errors (in parentheses) for robust regressions modelling interaction between societal diversity and electoral system permissiveness over several measures of societal diversity.

Variable	Data Source for societal diversity measurement							
	Mozaffar & Scarritt (1999)	Fearon Ethnic (2003)	Alesina et al. Ethnic (2003)	Atlas (1964)	Posner (2004)	Fearon Cultural (2003)	Alesina et al. Linguistic (2003)	Alesina et al. Religious (2003)
SD	-3.9** (1.2)	-.6 (1.6)	-3.6** (1.8)	-1.2 (1.1)	-15.8** (5.1)	-6.9 (6.8)	-2.1 (1.1)	-3.4** (1.5)
EP	-7.2** (.13)	-.6 (4.5)	-7.2 (4.2)	-1.8 (2.7)	-14.3** (5.4)	-8.3 (6.9)	-6.0 (3.2)	-5.5** (2.8)
SD*EP	1.5* (.6)	1.4 (1.2)	2.2* (1.1)	1.0* (.5)	10.0** (3.1)	5.3 (3.9)	1.2* (.6)	1.5* (.6)
Constant	48.8** (9.3)	24.9** (12.7)	44.1** (11.3)	28.8** (9.7)	52.1** (12.5)	44.5** (17.9)	43.4*** (10.5)	40.3** (9.5)
R-Squared	.61	.61	.57	.59	.63	.59	.60	.58
N	106	91	102	96	91	91	103	106

* p < .05, ** p < .01.

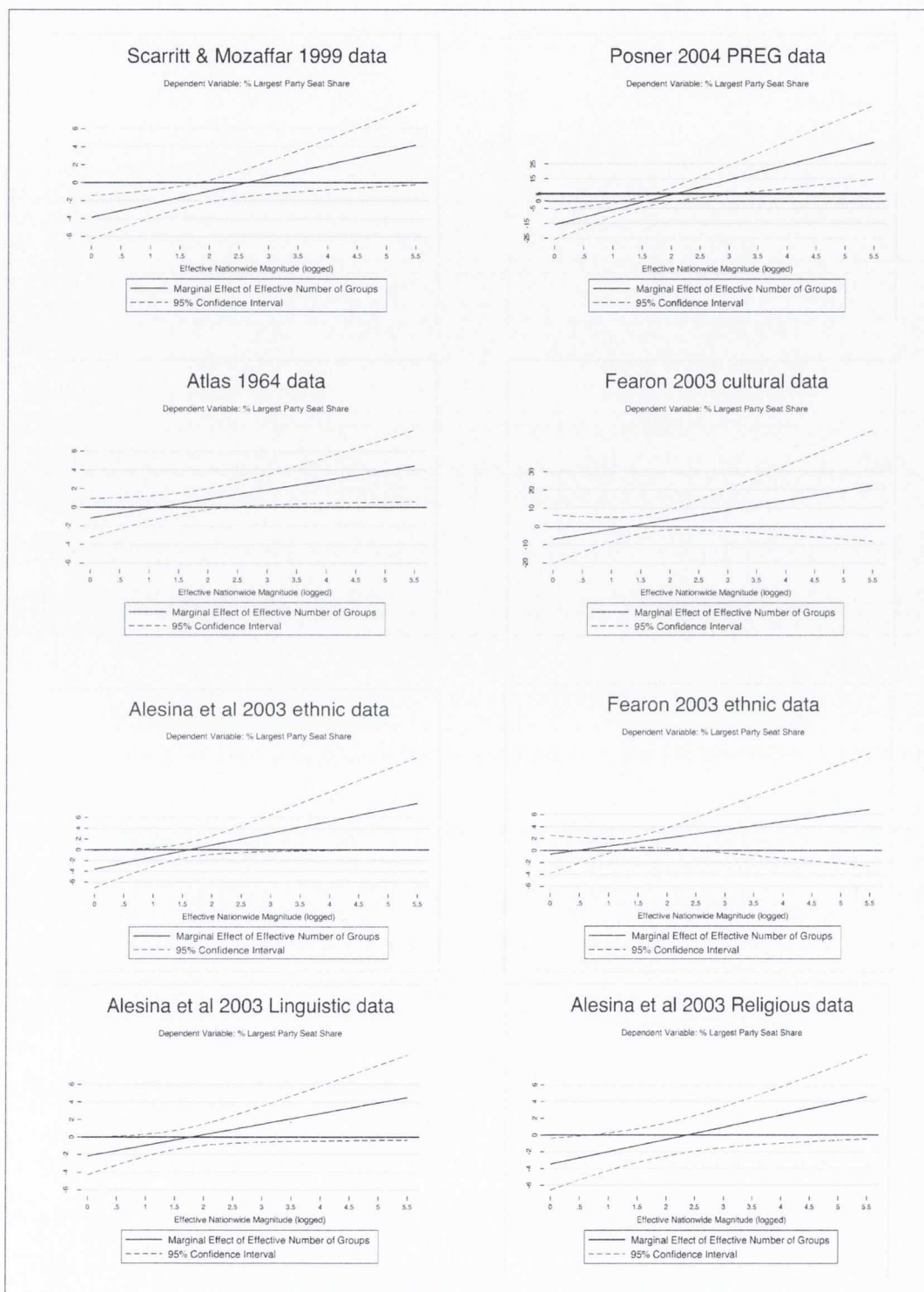
SD = Societal Diversity measured as the effective number of ethnic/linguistic/linguistic/politicized groups in each state. EP = Electoral System Permissiveness. SD*EP = Interaction term

Variables for political rights, opposition boycott, % GDP growth, founding elections, number of elections, pre-1989 regime type, % of population in largest ethnopolitical group, executive competition, and lagged dependent variable are not reported. We note here that the findings with regards to these variables do not vary according to the measure of societal diversity employed.

Figure 6.3 graphs the marginal impact of societal diversity on largest party seat share as electoral system permissiveness varies, using the 8 measures of societal diversity from Table 6.3. This figure is derived from the coefficients and standard errors reported in Table 6.3. We can observe that Figure 6.3 provides considerable support for the contention that increases in societal diversity are most likely to lead to decreases in largest party seat share under restrictive or majoritarian electoral systems and less likely under permissive or PR-based systems.

Figure 6.3 demonstrates that effects of an increase in societal diversity on largest party seat share tend to be negative under majoritarian systems. Societal diversity has a negative and statistically significant (at the 95% level) effect on largest party seat share in restrictive electoral systems using Scarritt and Mozaffar's (1999) data, Alesina *et al.*'s (2003) ethnic, linguistic, and religious measures, and Posner's (2004) PREG measure and a negative, but not statistically significant marginal effect under restrictive systems for the other measures. Under proportional systems, on the other hand, increases in societal diversity either have no significant impact on the seat share of the largest party or correspond to an increase in largest party seat share, with the marginal effect being positive and significant at the 95% level of confidence under PR systems for the *Atlas Narodov Mira* (1964) data and the Posner (2004) data, and positive, but not statistically significant for the other measures.

Figure 6.3 - Marginal effects of societal diversity on % largest party seat share as electoral system permissiveness increases.



Looking at specific examples – there are several instances in the data of elections where the largest party wins 55% or less of the seats (referred to hereafter as ‘small winning parties’) under restrictive electoral rules in highly ethnically fragmented societies. These include: Malawi (1994, 1999, 2004), Kenya (1992, 1997, 2002, 2007), Mali (2002, 2007), Madagascar (1998), Zambia (2001, 2006), Ghana (2000), Cameroon (1992), and Nigeria (1992). On the other hand, Benin is the only country to return small winning parties that features both highly fragmented societal structures (according to the data employed in this study) and a highly permissive electoral system. Arguably Guinea Bissau (1999, 2004) and Madagascar (1993) also fall into this category, though both are only slightly more socially-fragmented than average, and both feature PR electoral systems that are only moderately permissive, with average district magnitudes of less than 4. In other instances of PR systems with small winning parties, societal fragmentation was either average or below average: Niger (1993, 1995, 1999, 2004), Mozambique (1994, 1999), Lesotho (2002), and São Tomé and Príncipe (1994, 2002, 2006). Furthermore, several countries with very permissive PR systems have returned large winning parties (over 65%) with examples being: Angola (2008), Namibia (1994, 1999, 2004), Liberia (1997), and Rwanda (2003).

6.6.4 Presidential Elections

Presidential elections appear to play a highly significant role in influencing largest party seat share, and H 3, H4, and H5 are all empirically supported in the above analysis.

Looking at model 1 in Table 6.2, we can see that the vote share of the most successful presidential candidate is a positive and significant predictor of largest party seat share. Models 2 and 3 in Table 6.2 also show that there is a positive and significant interaction between the vote share of the largest presidential candidate and the temporal proximity of legislative and executive elections.

While the 'proximity' variable is not found to be a statistically significant predictor of largest party vote share in model 1, we can see from Figure 6.4 (which is derived from model 3 in Table 6.2, including only those states where the executive is directly elected) that temporal proximity may be either negatively or positively related to largest party vote share, depending on the extent to which the presidential vote was dominated by a single candidate. When no candidate wins more than 30% of the vote, an increase in the proximity of legislative elections is associated with fewer seats for the largest party, when the largest candidate wins 30%-60% of the vote, there is no statistically significant effect of increasing proximity, and when a candidate wins 60% or more of the vote, an increase in temporal proximity of presidential and legislative elections is associated with an increase in largest party seat share. As such, while the holding of presidential elections exerts a considerable influence on the largest party seat share in the legislature, the competitive character of those elections appears to be a crucial determinant of the nature of that influence.

Figure 6.5 graphs the effect of largest candidate vote share on largest party seat share as the temporal proximity of presidential and legislative elections increases. Figure 6.5 demonstrates that this effect is considerably greater when elections are held simultaneously (*i.e.* a score of '1' on the proximity variable) than when legislative elections are held in the middle of presidential terms (a score of '0'). Indeed, the effect of the performance of the largest presidential candidate is not a statistically significant predictor of largest legislative party seat share when legislative elections are held mid-term.

Figure 6.4 Marginal effect of temporal proximity of legislative and executive elections on largest party seat share in legislative elections as the largest % vote won by a presidential candidate increases.

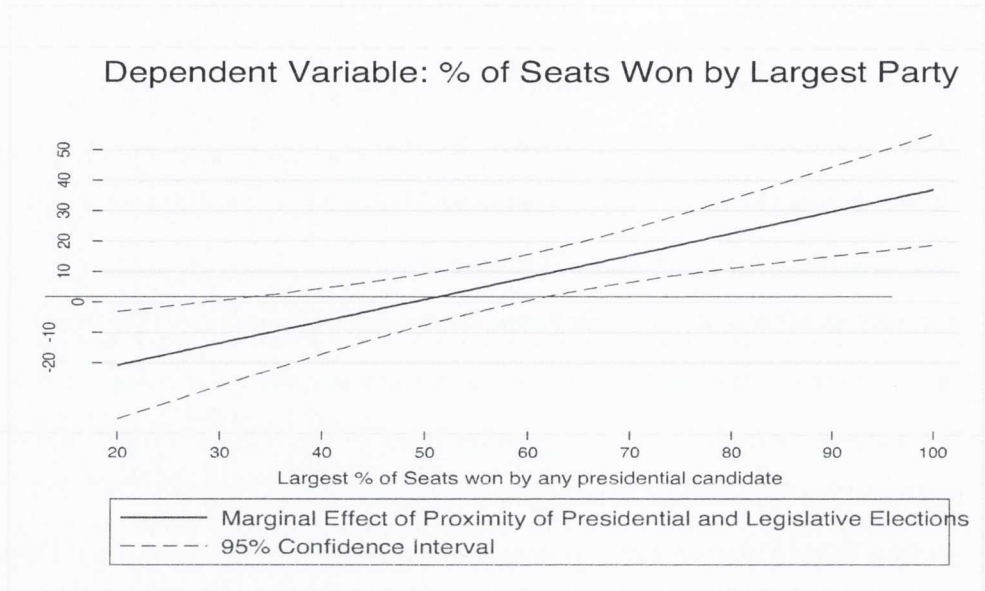
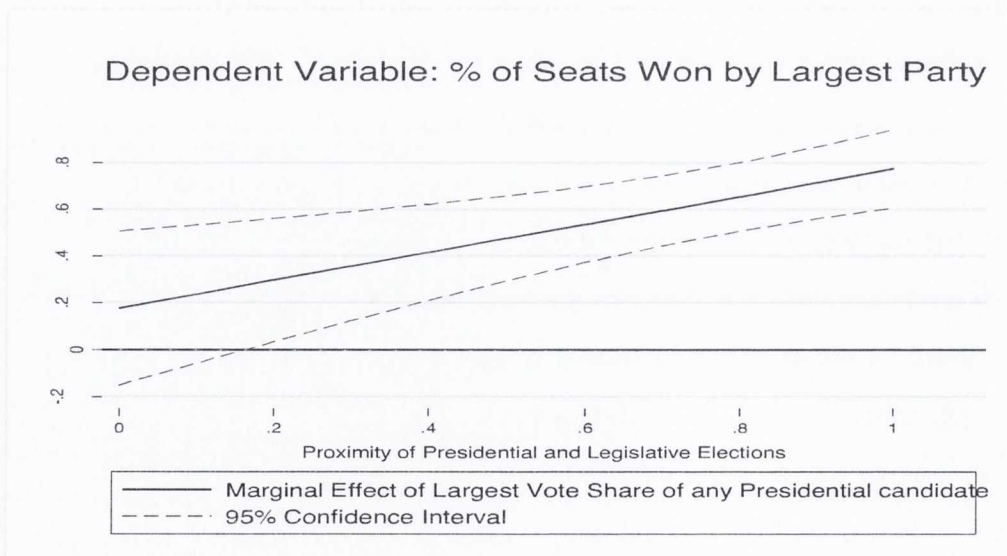


Figure 6.5 Marginal effect of largest % vote share of any presidential candidate on largest party seat share in subsequent legislative election as temporal proximity of elections increases



6.6.5 Incumbent Performance

Finally, with regard to the impact of % per capita GDP growth; there is marginal evidence that growing economies elect slightly larger winning parties, though this finding is not robust to changes in model specification: the % GDP growth variable is positive and significant in model 1, and positive but non-significant in models 2 and 3. As such, the findings with regard incumbent are somewhat inconclusive, leaning towards positive association, but this assertion cannot be confirmed with any reasonable degree of confidence using the data and analysis presented in Table 6.2. One also cannot rule out the contention that other less easily measurable performance metrics such as the association of the largest party with democracy, stability *etc.* in the minds of voters may help to explain largest party seat share.

6.7 Conclusions

This chapter has sought to examine an aspect of African party systems that has heretofore received little rigorous comparative attention: the proportion of seats won by the largest party. I argued that the seat share of the largest party merits study as a topic of interest in its own right, as it provides insight into the dynamics of government formation and survival, as well as the capacity of a single-party to amend constitutional rules in some cases. Furthermore, it was demonstrated that elections in sub-Saharan Africa provide a particularly apposite subject for such an enquiry, as the preponderance of single-party dominated systems across the region are one of the most interesting 'exceptionalist' patterns in the region's multiparty elections. I further argued that this pattern of single-party dominance undermines conclusions based on studies which rely solely on fragmentation indices. The principal index currently employed to measure party system fragmentation, which captures the 'effective number of parties' (Laasko and Taagepera, 1979), can give misleading intuitions with regard to competitiveness for this type of system.

The approach presented in this chapter can be criticised on the grounds that it offers only broad comparisons; it fails to adequately capture the unique historical and political trajectories of each state and, indeed, of each party. In the analysis I sought to control as much as possible for the effect of what Taagepera and Enschede describe as 'path-dependent, and otherwise individual country characteristics' (2006: 773) but these variables give only a fleeting impression of the complex web of allegiances, identities, and history of political strategising that underlies any political/party system. Nonetheless, the approach deployed here, in tandem with work which gives richer detail on single parties or party systems, can improve our understanding of African political dynamics and party systems. The analysis provided in this chapter supports the assertion that there is no single factor that can explain why some African systems are 'dominant' and others are 'competitive'. Rather than seeking to find one variable that explains all variation, or to come up with an authoritative classification scheme for Africa's party systems, I sought to examine whether certain political, societal, institutional arrangements were associated with variations in the proportion of largest party seat share in multiparty legislative elections.

Overall, this chapter marries many of the themes discussed in previous chapters. It firstly emphasizes the importance of bearing 'political context' in mind when studying Africa's party systems – this is one area of African 'exceptionalism' that cannot be ignored by comparative party systems scholars. Levels of political freedoms afforded to oppositions, as well as the occurrence of boycotts of elections by political parties were both shown to be related to the size of the largest party across all elections. Furthermore, there appears to be a considerable degree of stability over time in this property of party systems, the seat share of the largest party in the previous election is a strong predictor. The scale of the effects of these variables lead to the conclusion that any future study of single-party dominance in sub-Saharan Africa cannot easily ignore them. However, not all contextual factors were found to be significant: there was no consistent evidence that pre-1989 regime type influences largest party seat share, nor for the contentions that the holding of 'founding' elections, or the

number of successive elections held without a constitutional breakdown influence the seat share won by the largest party. The evidence with regards to government performance was also somewhat mixed; however, all other things being equal, growing economies appear to result in slightly bigger largest parties than shrinking economies.

Presidential elections were again found to be highly useful for explaining Africa's party systems: it was also found that the proximity of presidential and legislative elections exercises an influence over the seat shares enjoyed by the larger parties, but that these effects are conditional on the extent of single candidate/party dominance in the presidential vote. Similarly, the impact of the performance of the largest party in the presidential race is conditioned by the temporal proximity of executive and legislative contests, and is most pronounced when legislative and presidential elections are held simultaneously.

Majoritarian electoral systems were demonstrated to result in a higher 'seat bonus' accruing to the largest party than proportional systems. This is in line with the finding in chapter 5 that electoral systems are exerting the expected 'mechanical effect' on Africa's party systems, however, legislative electoral system type was not a statistically significant predictor of largest party seat share overall. The population share of the largest ethnopolitical group was not found to be a significant predictor of largest party seat share.

In the analysis presented here, an exploratory approach was adopted with regard to the manner in which electoral system permissiveness may condition the effects of societal diversity on largest party seat share. As this is a question that has received less attention in the mainstream comparative party systems literature, expectations of 'politics as usual' were less well-developed than was the case when I studied vote fragmentation in chapters 4 and 5. Rather than having a fixed expectation of how these factors interact, this chapter has worked somewhat inductively – examining the empirical patterns presented by the data. A consistent finding from the analysis was that societal diversity

appears to to be more likely to translate into small winning parties under majoritarian electoral systems than under PR. This finding may help to explain why the overall effect of legislative electoral systems on the proportion of seats won by the largest party is indeterminate. It may be the case that the effects of legislative electoral systems on the participation of ethnopolitical cleavages in sub-Saharan Africa run somewhat contrary to their 'mechanical' effects, leading to overall indeterminacy.

This finding is also in line with the analysis of the 'psychological effects' of electoral systems on vote fragmentation presented in chapter 5. It would appear that restrictive electoral systems provide more support for the activation of political parties on the basis localised cleavages than do PR systems. Indeed, Figure 6.2 indicates that; under very permissive PR systems and when ethnopolitical groups are very geographically dispersed, increases in societal diversity lead to bigger, rather than smaller largest parties. This aggregate finding cannot in itself elucidate the causal mechanism that leads to this relationship; it remains for individual-level, and/or elite-based studies to investigate the causal processes underlying this finding. One plausible explanation is Mozaffar *et al.*'s (2003) assertion that geographically dispersed ethnic groups (and political elites representing such groups) are more likely to subscribe to a single ethnic congress party as the fractionalisation of the population increases, especially when they do not represent a winning coalition in the relevant electoral district. In the next chapter, I evaluate these findings and the findings from chapters 4 and 5 against the goals of this thesis as elaborated in chapter 1.

Chapter 7 - Conclusions

Abstract

This chapter recaps the findings presented in the thesis. The extent to which theories and approaches from the broader comparative literature have been borne out in this study is discussed. I compare the findings of the analyses presented in chapters 3-6 in the light of the discussion on 'politics as usual' and 'exceptionalism' as analytical approaches, as discussed in chapter 1. I argue that one must balance both approaches in studying Africa's multiparty elections comparatively and examine how this study contributes to the literature with regards both to party systems generally and to multiparty competition in sub-Saharan Africa. Finally, I outline how future research could build on the research presented in this thesis to further improve our understanding of how Africa's party systems are shaped by societal, institutional, and contextual factors.

7.1 Introduction

In the opening paragraph of chapter 1, I stated that the goal of this thesis was to study the determinants of party vote and seat distributions in those national-level multiparty elections that have taken place in sub-Saharan Africa in the period 1989-2008. In order to address this research goal, this thesis has sought to provide a highly rigorous comparative analysis of Africa's multiparty elections in the 1989-2008 period. The advantage of a thesis-length study in this regard is that it facilitates a sustained focus on issues of comparability and measurement, as well as affording one the opportunity to analyse several dependent variables within a single theoretical and analytical framework. Doing a thesis-length study also allowed for a detailed grounding of the analysis both within the existing literature (in chapter 2) and in the light of the broader history of elections in sub-Saharan Africa (in chapter 3). In section 7.2 of this chapter, the findings from chapters 3, 4, 5, and 6 are detailed and the insights that they have provided into the determinants of vote and seat distribution patterns in sub-Saharan Africa's multiparty elections are discussed.

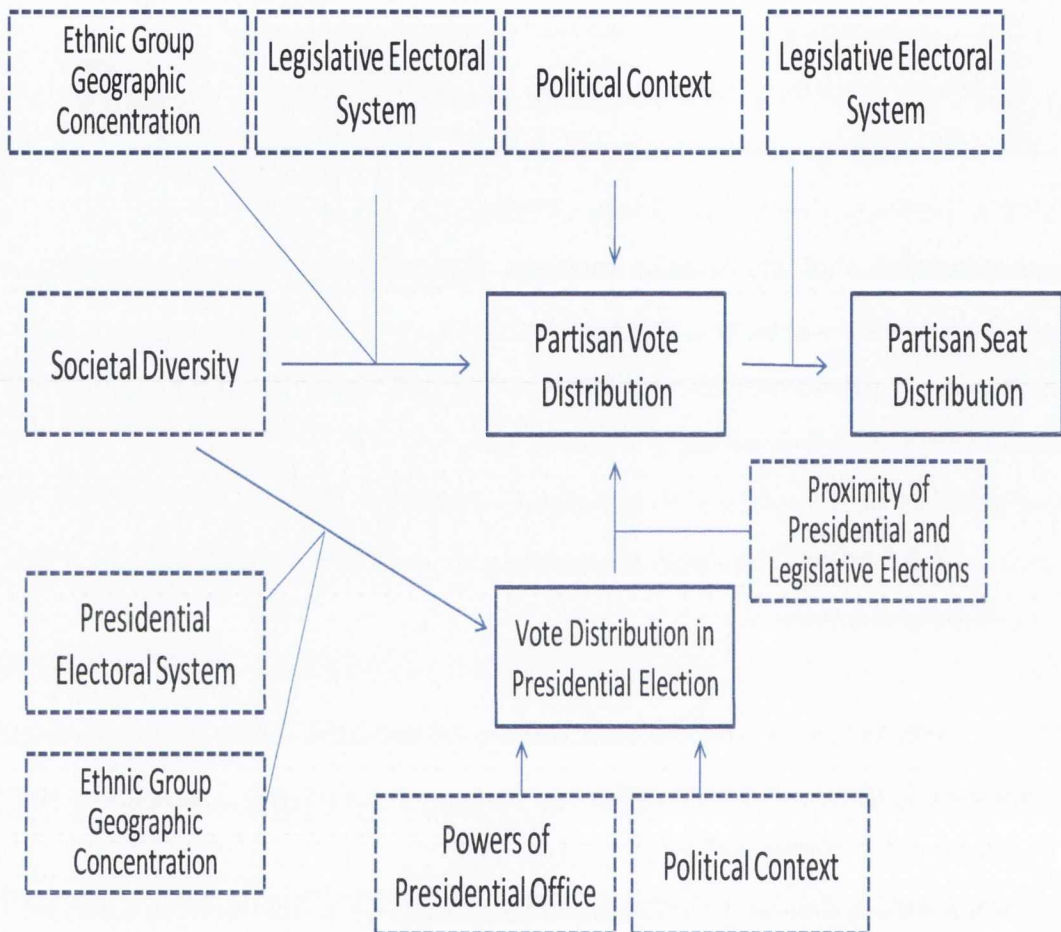
I also argued in chapter 1 that improving our understanding of Africa's multiparty system required an approach that balanced two explanatory emphases: 'exceptionalism' and 'politics as usual'. The thesis has attempted to examine the extent to which existing accounts of party system fragmentation from established democracies provided both a theoretical and an empirical fit with Africa's multiparty systems. Chapter 1 outlined several areas of 'African exceptionalism', describing features of multiparty competition in the region that pose difficulties for the applicability of mainstream, 'politics as usual' political science theories of party system fragmentation. In chapter 2, the major theoretical and empirical findings from the comparative literature on party system fragmentation were outlined, and the extent to which comparative studies of Africa's multiparty elections had heretofore replicated the major findings from this literature was discussed.

In section 7.3 of this chapter, I examine how the findings elaborated in chapters 3, 4, 5, and 6 inform our understanding of the extent to which ‘politics as usual’ theoretical and empirical predictions about the determinants of party system fragmentation, developed principally with reference to experience in established democracies, prove useful in explaining vote and seat distributions in Africa’s multiparty elections. I also outline where ‘exceptionalist’, Africa-specific variables and theories have proven to be empirically useful for understanding the party systems studied here. I then discuss the academic contribution that these findings represent. Finally, throughout the thesis I have sought to acknowledge that there exist multiple alternative avenues for research on Africa’s elections that are not explored here. In the final section (7.4) of this chapter, I outline approaches that may shed further light on Africa’s multiparty elections in future research.

7.2 Findings that help to explain vote and seat distributions in Africa’s multiparty elections

This thesis has investigated sources of variation in the patterns of vote and seat distributions across Africa’s party systems? Chapters 3 to 6 of the thesis presented descriptive and inferential analyses of several aspects of Africa’s party systems with a view to providing a rounded response to that question. Chapter 1 featured a Figure 1.1 which outlined the variables and relationships of interest studied in this thesis. This Figure is reproduced below as Figure 7.1 in order to illustrate the summary of findings presented in this sub-section.

Figure 7.1 Theorized relationships between the main variables explored in this thesis.



Chapter 3 sought to set the scene for the empirical analyses that followed in chapters 4, 5, and 6. It began by outlining the history of elections in sub-Saharan Africa including: pre-colonial leadership selection practices in small communities, elections under colonial rule, multiparty national-level elections in the periods immediately before and after independence, single-party elections during independence, and the multiparty elections that took place following a 'wave' of democratisations across the region post-1989. This account sought to

trace the historical antecedents of several patterns in modern African multiparty competition.

Pre-colonial leadership elections arguably don't provide much of an approximation of national-level, multiparty elections, however the one notable continuity from pre-colonial to post-colonial regimes in sub-Saharan Africa is the value attached to the persons of leaders, in the tradition of 'big man rule' (Hyden, 2006: 94), rather than the formal positions that those leaders hold. Political institutions and patterns of political competition in the colonial period had repercussions for future elections. According to Collier (1982) and Mozaffar (1997; 2004) the use of single-member plurality systems in British colonial elections, as well as a decentralised colonial administrative system employed in British colonies, encouraged the fragmentation of the population and elites along localised ethnic lines, which help to explain why incumbents and elites in former British colonies were able to agree on maintaining SMP for multiparty legislative elections in the 1990s. In chapter 5, I discuss the possibility that this Africa-specific pattern of endogenous institution selection may help to account for the relationship between electoral system permissiveness and vote distribution that the analysis uncovers.

After a brief period of multiparty competition across the region post-independence, single-party or military rule became widespread (Golder and Wantchekon, 2004). It is this period of African elections that arguably has the strongest bearing on the elections and party systems studied in this thesis, as it immediately preceded them. The ongoing success of former ruling parties, the tendency of single parties to dominate vote and seat shares in legislative elections across the region, the centrality of patronage attribution to political contestation, and perhaps most importantly, the difficulty in bedding down democratic institutions are all to some extent related to patterns of political organisation under single party regimes. A presidentialization of regimes across the region occurred in the single-party period, with massive formal and informal powers being concentrated in the presidential offices (Prempeh, 2008).

Chapter 3 also laid out the measurement approach of the thesis to some of the key variables in the analyses in chapters 4, 5, and 6. Throughout these chapters, several measures of societal diversity were employed, in an effort to investigate whether substantive findings with regard to the relationship between societal diversity and vote/seat distributions in Africa's multiparty elections are influenced by measurement choices with regard to the operationalization of societal diversity (Stoll, 2004; 2008). Chapter 3 also outlined the approach to the measurement of ethnic group concentration levels and levels of political freedoms in each election year adopted in this thesis. Finally, chapter 3 provided a descriptive analysis of the distribution of votes and seats in the legislative and presidential elections that this thesis investigates. A notable conclusion from this analysis was that Africa's legislative elections were 'exceptional' in having resulted in considerably less vote and seat fragmentation than multiparty elections elsewhere. I argued that this is a somewhat puzzling tendency, even given the high number of majoritarian electoral systems in the region, because African states are among the most diverse in the world in terms of ethnic, linguistic and religious fragmentation (Alesina *et al.*, 2003).

Chapters 4-6 performed inferential analyses of the determinants of several aspects of vote and seat distributions in sub-Saharan Africa's multiparty elections. As such, these chapters directly tested the empirical validity of theoretical accounts of the relationships between variables illustrated in Figure 7.1.

Chapter 4 dealt in greater depth than previous comparative enquiries with direct elections to presidential office in sub-Saharan Africa. As such, it focused on the 'bottom half' of the path diagram illustrated in Figure 7.1. The first part of the analysis in chapter 4 considered vote fragmentation in presidential elections post-1989 in the region as a dependent variable. The analysis indicated that neither presidential electoral systems, nor levels of societal diversity exhibit statistically discernible effects on levels of presidential vote fragmentation in sub-Saharan Africa. Indeed, only three variables provided

leverage over this phenomenon – the occurrence of an opposition boycott of the presidential election, the *de facto* centralisation of powers in the presidential office, and levels of ethnic groups' geographic concentration. While the finding that increases in the *de facto* dominance of the president and the occurrence of electoral boycotts result in more concentrated vote distributions were expected – the findings with regard to the role of groups' geographic concentration were not. It was hypothesized that geographic concentration should exert an influence of vote fragmentation by conditioning the effects of societal diversity, as was found to be the case in chapters 5 and 6. However, it appears from the analysis presented in chapter 4 that the effect of geographic concentration is an independent one, as it does not interact with societal diversity or presidential electoral system type.

The second part of chapter 4 explored the relationship between presidential and legislative elections in sub-Saharan Africa's multiparty political systems. The analysis presented concurred with Golder's (2006) assertion that presidential elections do not exert a fixed effect on legislative party systems; rather the effects of presidential elections depend on the extent to which vote distributions in the presidential race are fragmented, as well as the relative timing of the presidential and legislative elections. It was found that the temporal proximity between legislative and presidential elections exerts a powerful conditioning influence on the effects of the latter on the former. The extent of the conditioning effect of the passage of time between the two elections was such that, while the relationship between presidential vote fragmentation and legislative vote fragmentation is not statistically significant at the 95% level when legislative elections are held at the presidential mid-term, it is statistically significant (at the 99% level) and positive when the two elections occur simultaneously. Indeed, when the two elections are held simultaneously, the point estimate indicates a near 1:1 correspondence between presidential vote fragmentation and legislative vote fragmentation.

Correspondingly, the effect on legislative vote fragmentation of holding a simultaneous presidential election varies depending on the fragmentation of the presidential race. It is negative and statistically significant when the presidential race generates less than 2.5 effective candidates, has no significant effect when the presidential race generates between 2.5 and 4 effective candidates and is positive and significant when the presidential race generates more than 4 effective candidates. I argued that the distribution of the effective number of candidates across the elections studied here suggests that presidential elections in sub-Saharan Africa typically reduce legislative vote fragmentation.

Chapter 5 focused on the 'top half' of the path diagram in Figure 7.1, analysing the role of the two variables that have received the most consideration in previous comparative efforts to explain party system fragmentation in Africa's multiparty elections: legislative electoral systems and levels of societal diversity. In the analysis presented in chapter 5, I sought to separate the 'mechanical' effects of legislative electoral systems, which are to do with the translation of votes into seats, from the 'psychological' effects of legislative electoral systems, which relate to voting patterns arising from the strategic adjustments of voters and elites to the constraints set by electoral systems. The analysis presented in chapter 4 indicated that legislative electoral systems are exerting a 'mechanical' effect in the translation of votes to seats: disproportionality is negatively related to electoral system permissiveness, and vote fragmentation translates more readily into seat fragmentation as electoral systems become more permissive. With regards to the 'psychological' effects of electoral systems, however, the analysis indicated that societal diversity translates *less* readily into vote fragmentation as electoral systems become more permissive. This finding was relatively robust across measures of societal diversity.

Chapter 5 also investigated the role of ethnopolitical groups' geographic concentration. The analysis indicated that societal diversity translates more easily into party system fragmentation when groups are geographically concentrated than when they are dispersed. The analysis also considered the

interaction between all three factors: societal diversity, legislative electoral systems, and ethnopolitical group concentration. The results of this analysis are mapped out in Figure 4.3, which indicated that societal diversity is positively related to party system fragmentation when ethnic groups are highly concentrated, and electoral systems are restrictive. This is an intuitively plausible finding, as single-seat electoral systems privilege geographically-concentrated groupings over dispersed groupings. However, there were no indications that societal diversity is positively related to vote fragmentation under permissive electoral systems, indeed, when levels of geographic concentration are low, societal diversity appears to be *negatively* related to vote fragmentation under permissive systems. This finding runs contrary to the expectations of the mainstream comparative literature on party system fragmentation, a point that is elaborated in the next section. Finally, chapter 5 looked at the relationship between levels of political freedoms and party system fragmentation. The analysis presented consistent, but not overwhelming support for the contention that vote fragmentation increases as levels of political freedom increase.

Chapter 6 examined a facet of Africa's party systems that has received surprisingly little comparative attention, the prevalence of legislatively dominant single parties, which was operationalised using the % seat share won by the largest party in each election. As such, it sought to investigate an alternative characterisation of the 'partisan seat distribution' variable in Figure 7.1.

It was argued that there is no evidence across the region of a single, 'silver bullet' variable that can explain why some systems have 'dominant' parties and others do not. Instead, the seat share of the largest party was treated as a structural feature of Africa's party systems, and the analysis presented in chapter 6 sought to investigate whether certain institutional, societal, and political factors were related to this characteristic. It was found that political context is of central importance in explaining the largest party's seat share in sub-Saharan Africa's party systems. Specifically, the level of 'political freedoms' and the occurrence of opposition boycotts both exert considerable influence over largest party seat size. Furthermore, there was consistent evidence that the

size of the largest party in the previous election is a strong predictor of largest party seat size in subsequent elections. However, other aspects of political context were found to be less important – the type of regime in place prior to the advent of multiparty competition did not appear to affect largest party seat share, ‘founding’ elections did not differ significantly from subsequent elections in terms of largest party seat share, nor did the number of consecutive multiparty elections that were held appear to systematically influence the size of the largest party.

The role of legislative electoral systems in influencing largest party seat share was difficult to discern – it was demonstrated that majoritarian systems tend to give a larger seat bonus to the largest party than PR or mixed systems; a negative relationship was found to exist between electoral system permissiveness and the size of the largest party’s ‘seat bonus’. However, following on from the conclusions in chapter 5, it was found that societal diversity translates most readily into a decreased seat share for the largest party when ethnic groups are highly geographically-concentrated and electoral systems are highly restrictive. As such, it appears that the ‘mechanical’ effects of electoral systems on largest party seat share operate in the opposite direction to their ‘psychological’ effects – leading to the finding that the overall effects of legislative electoral systems on largest party seat share are indeterminate.

Finally, echoing the conclusions of chapter 4, it was found that direct presidential elections exercise an important influence over largest party seat share. Holding simultaneous presidential and legislative elections increases the seat share of the largest party when a presidential candidate had received more than 60% of the vote, has no statistically significant effect when a the most successful presidential candidate received between 30%-60% of votes, and leads to a decrease in largest party seat share when no candidate wins more than 30% of the vote in the presidential race. There is a statistically significant positive relationship between the vote share of the largest presidential candidate and the seat share of the largest party when the two elections are held simultaneously.

The strength of this relationship diminishes as the amount of time between the two elections increases, and is not statistically significant when legislative elections are held at the presidential mid-term.

7.3 Exceptional elections or politics as usual? Situating the research findings in the literature

Throughout the thesis I sought to include both considerations of 'exceptional' aspects of Africa's elections, in terms of context and outcomes, and our conception of the 'politics as usual' of party system fragmentation, based on the previous literature on the determinants of vote and seat distributions in multiparty elections. Sources of African 'exceptionalism' were detailed in chapter 1, and both novel variables of interest and alternative theoretical approaches derived from a focus on 'exceptional' aspects of African multiparty were considered throughout the analyses provided in chapters 3, 4, 5, and 6. The major findings and trends in the extensive comparative literature on partisan vote and seat distributions were outlined in chapter 2. In the analyses in chapters 3, 4, 5, and 6, the empirical expectations of the 'politics as usual' of party system development derived from this literature were tested against data on Africa's multiparty elections. This section considers the extent to which both 'exceptionalism' and 'politics as usual' were found to be at play when data from elections in sub-Saharan Africa were analysed, and the contribution that the thesis has made to the literature on party systems generally and to our understanding of African party systems in particular is outlined.

Chapter 2 examined the existing scholarly literature on vote and seat distributions, focusing on the two factors that have received the greatest scholarly attention in comparative accounts: legislative electoral systems and societal structures. This review of the literature began by looking at the development of 'institutionalist' accounts of party systems, which had elaborated the role of legislative electoral systems and, to a lesser extent, the powers vested in executive office, and the manner in which executives are

selected. 'Sociological' approaches to the comparative study of party systems were then examined; these studies laid explanatory emphasis on the manner in which societies are divided into politicised cleavages as the primary determinants of party system fragmentation. It was acknowledged that there is currently a degree of academic consensus around the contention that, in established democracies at least, party system fragmentation arises from an interaction of societal diversity and electoral system permissiveness – with executive elections also playing an important role. Several comparative studies (Amorim Neto and Cox, 1997; Clark and Golder, 2006; Filippov *et al.*, 1999; Mozaffar *et al.*, 2003; Ordeshook and Shvetsova, 1994; Powell, 1982; Singer and Stephenson, 2009; Stoll, 2004; 2008) have adduced evidence to demonstrate that there is a positive interaction between societal diversity and electoral system permissiveness, with Clark and Golder (2006) specifying that, in established democracies, societal diversity typically translates more readily into vote fragmentation as electoral systems become more permissive.

However, I argued that while there appears to be a broad academic agreement on this point, there still remain several open questions in the literature. Clark and Golder (2006) put forward the critique that several influential studies that had tested electoral returns for evidence of an interaction between societal diversity and electoral system permissiveness have employed flawed statistical specifications in their analyses. Stoll's (2004; 2008) research indicates that the findings of previous studies are not stable across alternative measures of societal diversity. Finally, and most importantly for this thesis, it was pointed out that findings with regards to the roles of societal diversity and electoral system permissiveness are far less robust when applied to 'new' democracies, which had transitioned to multiparty competition post-1989 (Birch; 2005; Clark and Golder, 2006; Moser, 1999; Moser and Scheiner, 2009; Singer and Stephenson, 2009).

Overall, the performance of 'politics as usual' models of the determinants of vote and seat distributions derived from established democracies has been, at

best, mixed when applied to multiparty elections in sub-Saharan Africa in this thesis. An interesting finding was that the relationships between presidential and legislative elections broadly conformed to the expectations of such models. As discussed above, the analysis performed in chapter 4 suggests that the relative timing of presidential and legislative elections is highly important for understanding the relationship between these elections. More generally, it would appear that Africa's presidential elections offer a potentially fruitful avenue for understanding patterns of vote and seat fragmentation in the region's legislative elections. As I discussed at the beginning of Chapter 4, both generalised theory and Africa-specific accounts would lead one to anticipate such an outcome – which makes the relative lack of emphasis placed by analysts on the role of presidential elections heretofore rather puzzling.

With regards to legislative electoral systems, chapter 5 presented evidence that electoral systems have been exercising conventional 'mechanical' effects on the translation of votes into seats in legislative elections. Moreover, the analytical separation of 'mechanical' and 'psychological' electoral system effects is itself a result of the theoretical and empirical work of party system scholars outlined in chapter 2. In these regards, the 'politics as usual' approach to the study of Africa's party systems bore empirical fruit. More generally the thesis has benefitted considerably from the development of the study of party system fragmentation, which provided vital theoretical and methodological tools for the analysis of Africa's elections. Furthermore, this approach has allowed for the findings presented here to be situated in a broader literature on party systems – and below i discuss how the thesis has contributed to that broader literature.

Nonetheless, in several instances, 'exceptionalist' theoretical accounts, and the use of dependent and independent variables based on observed instances of African electoral 'exceptionalism' have proven essential to better understand Africa's multiparty elections. A major finding of this thesis is that no empirical support was adduced for models of the 'psychological' effects of

legislative electoral systems derived from observation of elections in established democracies for the elections studied here. Instead, 'exceptionalist' theories addressing how electoral system effects may differ in new democracies (Birch, 2005; Moser, 1999) and accounts of the negotiation of electoral systems during the transition to democracy in sub-Saharan Africa (Mozaffar, 1998; 2004) appear to provide the most useful insights into the roles played by electoral systems and societal diversity in influencing Africa's party systems. It was also found that conventional, 'politics as usual' accounts give little leverage over the sources of vote fragmentation in Africa's presidential elections – a subject that would greatly benefit from further research. The analyses have also consistently pointed to the importance of groups' geographic concentration levels, as measured by Scarritt and Mozaffar (1999)¹. The analyses in chapters 4-6 have also indicated that, unsurprisingly, levels of political freedoms are strongly related to vote and seat distributions in African elections. Repressive regimes are associated with lower levels of vote fragmentation, and higher proportions of seats being won by the largest party in the election. The analysis provided here indicates that this aspect of Africa's 'exceptionalism' in comparison to other world regions cannot afford to ignore this variation.

With regards to the wider literature, this thesis has sought to develop scholarly understanding of the influence exercised by legislative electoral systems, societal diversity, and presidential elections on the distribution of votes and seats by analysing the relationships between these factors in a relatively under-explored empirical terrain: multiparty elections in sub-Saharan Africa. Political systems in sub-Saharan Africa provide a useful opportunity to pay attention to presidential elections; both as objects of study in their own right and as determinants of vote distributions in legislative elections. This is because presidential regimes are so prevalent across sub-Saharan Africa. However, it was found that we were able to explain far less of the variance in Africa's presidential

¹ Although it is difficult to comment on whether these patterns can be said to be 'exceptional', given the absence group geographic concentration as an independent variable in non-African studies of party system fragmentation.

elections by looking at electoral systems and societal diversity than we were for legislative elections. This finding suggests that the field generally would benefit from more comparative studies seeking to explain vote fragmentation in presidential votes. The findings with regard to the centralisation of presidential powers point to the importance of considering of such factors in future studies, echoing Hicken and Stoll's (2008) assertion that the size of the presidential prize may provide greater leverage over presidential vote fragmentation than the type of electoral system used to elect them.

It has been demonstrated that, in terms of their effects on vote distributions, electoral systems appear to have a radically different (or 'exceptional') influence in sub-Saharan Africa compared to established democracies. This finding suggests that even Clark and Golder's (2006) 'rehabilitated' version of Duverger's theory is not universally applicable, or at least that the implications of their account are not borne out in terms of the national-level results of sub-Saharan Africa's multiparty elections. Furthermore, it was demonstrated that the non-applicability of mainstream theory is robust over several datasets, which generate alternative measures of 'societal diversity'. In this manner, this thesis has sought to demonstrate that its conclusions are not dependent on measurement choice with regards to societal diversity. This approach would be advisable in all future studies of the relationship between societal diversity and party systems (see also, Stoll, 2004; 2008).

The analysis also suggested that the role of localised cleavages and the geographic concentration of groups should be considered in greater detail in future studies of electoral system effects both inside and outside of sub-Saharan Africa. The findings laid out in the previous section indicate that national-level average geographic concentration of ethnic groups appears to exert a considerable influence on the relationship between societal diversity and party system fragmentation in sub-Saharan Africa. This appears to be especially the case in restrictive systems that divide the state into several small, winner-takes-all constituencies. The combination of such electoral systems with

geographically-concentrated societal groups appears to have been especially favourable to the translation of societal diversity into party system fragmentation in the elections studied here. The implication for the broader comparative literature is that analyses of electoral system effects in both established democracies and in non-African new democracies would greatly benefit from an index of group geographic concentration similar to that constructed by Mozaffar *et al.* (2003).

Chapter 6 deployed an approach that should, arguably, be more widespread in the comparative study of party systems; focusing on the seat share accrued by the largest party as a complimentary index to the (1979) Laasko-Taagepera index that was employed in chapters 4 and 5. The Laasko-Taagepera index has the advantage of being intuitively interpretable and of hewing relatively closely to the concept of 'fragmentation' that is most often discussed in comparisons of party systems. However, the index can generate misleading intuitions when one party wins more than 50% of votes and/or seats, a situation that is extremely common in African elections. Even where relatively few elections result in one party winning more than 50% of votes and/or seats, this feature of party systems is highly relevant to the distribution of power in a political system, as well as issues of government composition and stability (Taagepera and Enschede, 2006). Therefore, this thesis has contributed to the study of an aspect of party systems that generally merits greater attention from comparativists.

Throughout the thesis I employed a relatively novel measure of electoral system permissiveness, which is based on some minor adjustments to Gallagher and Mitchell's (2005b) 'effective nationwide magnitude' measure. It was argued that this measure provides a better approximation of the national-level proportionality profile of electoral systems than the average/median district magnitude measure that has been applied in previous studies of electoral system's effects on party systems. It is especially useful in differentiating among single-member constituency based systems, which become more permissive to

small party representation as the number of constituencies at stake increases. Furthermore, the adaption of this index for systems which employ plurality or majority voting rules in multimember constituencies (see Appendix A for details) allows one to capture the very high thresholds for representation that such systems set. As such, I would suggest that the measure of electoral system permissiveness deployed here represents an improvement on measures used in previous comparative studies, and is especially useful for the study of regions that feature a large number of majoritarian electoral systems.

In terms of the contributions of this thesis to the study of Africa's party systems in the multiparty era; chapter 2 examined the existing state of scholarly understanding of the determinants of vote and seat distributions in Africa's multiparty elections. There exist a far greater number of single-country or single-election studies (or collections of such studies) than comparative accounts of Africa's multiparty systems post-1989. In terms of existing comparative studies, I contended that these have focused a disproportionate amount of attention on the role of legislative electoral systems particularly at the expense of the role of presidential elections, as well as under-emphasising societal diversity, and the extent to which groups in society are free to actively contest power. Presidential elections have been included in several analyses of party system fragmentation in sub-Saharan Africa, but have not yet been the subject of sustained comparative analysis. The relationship that is identified between legislative and presidential elections in chapter 4 indicates that this represents a serious omission. Chapter 4 provided both a sustained analysis of the causes of presidential vote fragmentation and of the scale of the effect of presidential vote fragmentation on legislative vote fragmentation. The findings outlined in chapter 4 indicated that the relative timing of presidential and legislative elections is a key institutional feature of Africa's political systems, although it has received far less comparative attention than legislative electoral systems.

The findings of previous studies of the role that legislative electoral systems play in determining patterns of vote and seat fragmentation in sub-

Saharan Africa have lead to contradictory conclusions. These have included the contention that legislative electoral systems exert an effect that is near-identical to the effect that they exert in established democracies (Brambor *et al.*, 2007; Reynolds, 1995; 1999) the contention that electoral systems are exerting a radically different effect on African party system than they do in established democracies (Barkan, 1995; Mozaffar *et al.*, 2003) or that they are exerting no consistent effect on vote fragmentation (Golder and Wantcheckon, 2004). The contribution that this thesis has sought to make with regard to these disputes is to present a direct replication of models of party system fragmentation that have been applied in established democracies (Clark and Golder, 2006) over a range of measures of societal diversity in sub-Saharan Africa. Furthermore, the analysis separates electoral systems' mechanical effects from their psychological effects, while controlling for other relevant conditioning factors, most notably the variations in political freedoms that are observable across the continent.

With regards to political context, surprisingly little attention has been paid to this factor in comparative studies of Africa's multiparty systems. Notable comparative treatments of African party system fragmentation have completely ignored the substantial variation that is observable across the region in terms of the openness of political competition (Brambor *et al.*, 2007; Golder and Wantchekon, 2004; Mozaffar *et al.*, 2003). Mylonas and Roussias (2008) contended that electoral systems exerted the same effects as established democracies only in 'democratic' African multiparty elections and exerted no discernible influence in 'non-democratic' elections. Lindberg (2005) noted that 'free and fair' elections were characterised by higher level of party system fragmentation than elections that were not 'free and fair'. In this thesis I have adopted an alternative approach to that advocated by Mylonas and Roussias (2008). Rather than dividing elections in sub-Saharan Africa into separate 'democratic' and 'non-democratic' categories and analysing each category separately, I sought to control for variation in the levels of political freedoms across the elections studied. This approach was driven principally by the observation that the majority of election years that we considered are neither

completely 'democratic' nor completely 'autocratic' in nature. Rather, most fall somewhere between these two poles and tend to defy straightforward classification. The approach of controlling for variation in political freedoms allowed for the inclusion of all of the *de jure* multiparty elections that took place in sub-Saharan Africa post-1989 in the analysis. Future investigations of party systems in the region should benefit from this type of approach to dealing with variable levels of political freedoms. Overall, I would argue that the approach of this thesis – which sought to balance a concern with generalisability with an acknowledgement of areas where the sub-Saharan region may be seen as 'exceptional' has generated significant new insights into Africa's multiparty systems.

7.4 Avenues for further research

Finally, it is valuable to look at how future research may profitably further contribute to scholarly understanding of Africa's multiparty systems in the light of the findings and shortcomings of this thesis.

In terms of the specific questions investigated in this thesis, the analysis that is provided would be greatly improved were it augmented with research that examined the implications of theories explaining the distributions of votes and seats among parties at alternative levels of analysis. Firstly, it has long been noted that Duverger's accounts of the role of legislative electoral systems on party systems are most directly applicable at the electoral-district level (Leys, 1959; Wildavsky, 1959). Cox (1997) and Golder (2006), argue that competition to occupy executive office can serve to nationalise political competition, and Chhibber and Kollman (2004) have argued that local bi-partism only translates into national-level bi-partism when there is a sufficient concentration of political power in the national legislature. Thus far, investigations of voting patterns at the district-level have provided support for Duverger's theory in established democracies, but less support in new democracies (Singer and Stephenson, 2009).

The two comparative district-level studies in sub-Saharan Africa of which the author is aware have found that competitive districts are rather less common in first-past-the-post elections in Southern Africa than in established democracies (Reynolds, 1999) and that there is no evidence of strategic adaption to electoral system constraints at the district level in South Africa's local elections (Feree *et al.*, 2008). However, with a growing number of national electoral commissions publishing district-level results online, comparative analyses of district-level returns should become more widespread in future research on Africa's party systems.

Ultimately, the questions that are explored in this research are to do with the behaviour of voters and political elites. The methodological strategy employed in this thesis involved examining whether the observed aggregate patterns of vote and seat distributions in sub-Saharan Africa conform to the predictions of theoretical accounts of the behaviour of these actors, given certain institutional constraints and controlling for contextual sources of 'exceptionalism'. However, the research provided here does not uncover the micro-level processes underlying observed empirical patterns. As such, future comparative research on sub-Saharan Africa's party systems should seek to take advantage of the growing availability of individual-level data on voter opinions and behaviours in the region. The Afrobarometer project is a highly promising source of data for comparatively-oriented scholars interested in voters' decision-making mechanisms in African elections. An emergent comparative literature is using this data to address questions of the factors that inform citizens' political loyalties. At the time of writing, the Afrobarometer website lists 117 'working papers' that have sought to investigate various aspect of African politics using individual level data. This data is very amenable to comparative analysis of levels of strategic voting in African elections.

Another research avenue that would greatly improve our understanding of the processes and outcomes studied in this thesis pertains to elite's decision-

making and strategic entry and coalition-building by political elites (Cox, 1997). Indeed, Reed's (2003) formal modelling application emphasized that elite decision-making is a crucial component underlying the relationship between district magnitude and the effective number of candidates. Data on elite decision-making in this regard, however, is far less easily available than data on vote and seat returns or citizen's opinions. Nonetheless, future research on factors influencing vote and seat distributions in multiparty elections should see this as a challenge to be addressed, rather than a reason not to build on scholarly knowledge with regards to elite decision-making.

In chapter 1, when outlining the substantive significance of the research contained in this thesis, I noted that there are several tangential aspects of multiparty competition that could shed further light on Africa's party systems. While maintaining that vote and seat distributions are both substantively important and analytically useful, nonetheless one must acknowledge that they capture only one of many dimensions of party competition. One extremely promising tangent is the comparative study of politics *within* Africa's political parties. Given the seemingly incongruous mixture of highly diverse populations and electorally dominant single parties across the region that this thesis has illustrated, it may be the case that much of the accommodation of societal diversity in African politics may take place within rather than across parties. For instance, Erdmann (2004) noted that, while the literature indicates that ethnoregional cleavages are the predominant source of political differentiation, multiethnic parties are far more common than parties representing a single ethnic group. This would suggest that sub-Saharan African party organisational infrastructures, candidate selection procedures, policy making procedures, levels of legislative discipline, and patterns of party desertion by MPs should all provide interesting insights into politics in the region.

Of course, some of these topics provide severe challenges to comparatively-oriented research; for instance, Gallagher and Marsh (1988) refer to candidate selection procedures as 'the secret garden of politics' precisely

because they tend to be somewhat opaque and difficult to measure. Nonetheless, even on this topic, comparative research over several countries in sub-Saharan Africa is becoming available (Mac Giollabhui, 2008; Ohman, 2004; Salih and Nordlund, 2007). Such investigations should, over time, generate comparative insights as to patterns of behaviour with regard to the inner life of parties in sub-Saharan Africa.

Another aspect of party systems that is not covered in this thesis is the type of policy competition that takes place among parties in the region. While there is some theoretical (Cox, 1990) and empirical (Dow, 2002) evidence that the diversity of policy positions adopted by parties increases as the fragmentation of the party system increases – it is nonetheless possible for a two-party system to pit diametrically opposed parties against each other or, on the other hand, a party system could be highly fragmented but be dominated by centrist parties. Sartori (1967) therefore suggested that the policy positions of parties in a given system represent a crucial dimension that should be considered in comparative accounts of party systems. This topic has proven highly useful in studying politics in established democracies, using data constructed from a variety of sources including *inter alia*: analyses of party manifestoes, surveys of experts of parties' policy positions, surveys of voters on parties' policy positions, surveys of politicians' attitudes and analyses of the voting behaviour of party members (see Benoit and Laver, 2006: 117 for a summary of the pros and cons of each approach). However, this type of analysis has not been a notable feature of comparative analyses of African politics. While it has been argued that conventional dimensions of political competition provide little insight into Africa's party systems (Erdmann, 2006; Manning, 2005; van de Walle, 2003) systematic research on the dimensions of competition that characterise party systems in the region, and the positions occupied by political actors on these dimensions, would add a valuable insights to studies of Africa's party systems.

Thirdly, future research should acknowledge the growth of multiple levels of political competition in states in the sub-Saharan region. Further research in

this area should look at whether there is evidence of contagion from local to national-level politics, as well as at whether electoral systems influence party systems in local elections in the region. Park (2003) demonstrated this type of mechanism operates in South Korean politics, concluding that 'we need to consider sub-national and sub-provincial local elections if we are to obtain a systematic understanding of electoral multipartism in legislative elections' (p. 503). The importance of sub-national political competition has long been noted in accounts of Nigerian politics (Beckett, 1987; Diamond, 1987; Olukoshi, 2002). Some comparative research has also addressed voting patterns in local elections in South Africa (Ferree *et al.*, 2008; Lodge, 2001; Pottie, 2001). However, there remains considerable scope for further research along these lines in sub-Saharan Africa.

To conclude, I have argued in this chapter that this thesis represents a substantial contribution to our understanding of multiparty electoral competition in sub-Saharan Africa, post-1989. The thesis seeks to examine the insights that can be gleaned from analysing African elections as instances of 'politics as usual' applying theories and methodologies from generalised studies of party system fragmentation to explore Africa's elections. However, the analysis has been adapted to cater for instances of African 'exceptionalism' with regard to the conduct and observed results of elections in the region. In balancing these two approaches, this thesis has shed new light on the roles of factors that have already received considerable attention in the study of Africa, such as legislative electoral systems, and levels of societal diversity. The thesis has also provided in-depth examinations of factors that have heretofore received relatively scant attention in the previous comparative literature on party systems; including the role of presidential elections, ethnic groups' geographic concentration, and levels of political freedoms in states within which elections take place. I examined novel dependent variables in the study of Africa's party systems: the seat share won by the largest party in each system and the fragmentation of votes in presidential elections. The thesis identifies aspects of Africa's elections where theories and results from the existing literature were

broadly replicated, and the many areas where they were not. However, I also acknowledge that there are both alternative levels of analysis to further explore the research questions posed in this thesis, and tangential research questions that can shed more light on Africa's party systems.

Ultimately, any academic or scientific endeavour is collaborative, representing a unique contribution to a broader effort to understand and explain the world in which we find ourselves. The motivation underlying this thesis project has been that the findings detailed herein will usefully inform debates concerning multiparty elections in sub-Saharan Africa, as well as further refining our understanding of competitive elections generally. I hope that future research on these topics will build on the work presented in this thesis.

APPENDIX A: Calculating 'Effective Nationwide Magnitude' Scores for Africa's legislative elections

In this Appendix, the methodology for calculating the 'effective nationwide magnitude' (Gallagher and Mitchell, 2005b) score for each legislative election studied in this thesis is provided. As the method varies according to properties of the electoral systems being measured, I detail here how the score was arrived at by electoral system type. The proxy employed in chapters 4-6 for electoral system permissiveness was the natural log of each system's effective nationwide magnitude score.

SMP systems and double-ballot majority systems (with single-member constituencies).

For SMP systems, and for single-member double-ballot majority systems, we deploy the following formula to calculate the effective nationwide magnitude score.

$$(1) \text{ ENM} = M * (1 + \log (E))$$

Where ENM is effective nationwide magnitude, M is the average district magnitude and E is the nationwide number of electoral districts.

The intuition behind this measure is that, while the district magnitude may set the threshold in any given district, the threshold for obtaining representation is generally far smaller when viewed as proportion of the national vote total than as a proportion of votes in a given district. This is simply because parties' national vote shares tend not to be distributed completely evenly across all districts, and as such, the thresholds to achieve national-level representation tend to be somewhat smaller (as a portion of the national vote) than if we simply use the average district magnitude to work out a national-level effective threshold. The extent to which the nationwide threshold is smaller

than the district-level threshold is determined by the number of constituencies (E). The log of E is employed in the effective nationwide magnitude formula to take account of the impact of increasing values of E without giving it undue weight.

Two examples of SMP systems:

- Botswana (1994). As an SMP system, M is equal to one. In its 1994 elections, seats were contested in 40 constituencies. Entering these values into equation 1 gives us:

$$\text{ENM (Botswana 1994)} = 1 * (1 + \log(40))$$

This generates an effective nationwide magnitude value of 2.6.

- Ghana (1992, 1996, 2000). Ghana also has an average district magnitude of one, but has a considerably larger number of constituencies (200). Entering these values into equation 1 gives us:

$$\text{ENM (Ghana 1992, 1996, 2000)} = 1 * (1 + \log(200))$$

This generates an effective nationwide magnitude value of 3.3 for Ghana.

The larger value obtained for the Ghanaian system approximates the intuition that it is more conducive to party system fragmentation than the system in operation in Botswana, as the greater number of constituencies implies that a party needs a lower proportion of the national vote to obtain representation.

This approach was used for:

Botswana
Central African Rep.

Comoros
Ethiopia
Gabon
Gambia
Ghana
Ivory Coast
Kenya
Lesotho (1993, 1998)
Liberia (2005)
Malawi
Mauritania
Nigeria
Rep. of Congo
Sierra Leone (2007)
Sudan
Tanzania
Togo
Uganda
Zambia
Zimbabwe

PR systems without thresholds or multiple tiers.

Precisely the same method as for scoring SMP systems obtains for PR systems, except that, in PR systems, the score for M is, by definition, greater than 1.

- Angola (1992). In the Angolan case, 220 seats were distributed over 19 constituencies (E), leaving us with an average district magnitude (M) of approximately 11.6. Entering these values into equation 1 gives us:

$$\text{ENM (Angola 1992)} = 11.6 (1 + \log(19)) = 26.38$$

Used for:

Angola
Benin (1991)
Benin (1995, 1999, 2003, 2007)
Burkina Faso (1992, 1997, 2007)
Burkina Faso (2002)
Equatorial Guinea
Liberia (1997)

Madagascar (1993)
Namibia
Niger

PR systems with national-level thresholds.

District magnitude and formal thresholds can both serve to 'deprive small parties of accurate or any representation' (Gallagher & Mitchell, 2005: 607) however, the two are not identical in their effects because, while the effect of district magnitude is contingent on the geographic distribution of votes, the effect of a formal threshold is more predictable. However, as the two are linked, efforts have been made to formalise the relationship with a given district magnitude equating to an 'effective threshold' and vice versa, there is a consensus in the field that (with some exceptions):

(2) $T = 75\% / (m + 1)$ for calculating the effective threshold 'T' with an electoral system average district magnitude of m.

(3) $M = (75/t) - 1$ for calculating the effective magnitude M with a given formal % threshold t (*ibid.*).

The derivation of the formula for effective threshold is that it captures the midway point between the threshold of representation and the threshold of exclusion (the former being the smallest possible vote share with which one may win representation and the latter being the largest possible vote share at which one may be excluded from representation).

I calculated the effective magnitude of systems with national-level vote thresholds by entering this threshold into equation 3, described above: this is illustrated by the example of Mozambique's system.

- Mozambique (1994, 1999, 2004). With an average district magnitude of 22.7 and 11 constituencies, Mozambique's 'effective nationwide

magnitude' score would have been 46.3, absent a national level threshold. However, a formal threshold of 5% of votes nationwide was required for parties to achieve representation in the legislature. Therefore, this value was entered into equation 3:

$$\text{ENM (Mozambique)} = (75/5) - 1 = 14$$

This results in an effective nationwide magnitude value of 14. The intuition behind this approach is that the imposition of a formal nationwide threshold which is *higher* than the threshold imposed by the electoral system, resulting in the operation of the system at the national level being similar to a single constituency where the number of seats available would impose a 'natural' threshold of the same size. However, where the formal threshold did not impose a higher barrier than the 'natural threshold', I did not use it in measuring of electoral system restrictiveness.

Used for:
Burundi
Mozambique
Sierra Leone (1996)
Rwanda

PR systems with constituency-level thresholds.

- Sierra Leone (2002). In Sierra Leone's 2002 election a constituency-level threshold of 12.5% was imposed. Applying formula 3, that this generates an 'effective magnitude' of 5.

$$M (\text{Sierra Leone, 2002}) = (75\%/12.5\%) - 1 = 5$$

Therefore, the formal threshold means that, even in districts with a magnitude of more than 5, we expect the same levels of fragmentation and disproportionality as we would anticipate in a 5-seat district. However, the

formal threshold would not significantly alter our expectations for districts in which less than 5 seats were contested. In this example 112 seats were distributed in 14 districts, each with 8 seats. Having taken the constituency-level threshold into account, we treat the system as one with an M of 5 and 14 constituencies. Plugging these values into formula 1 gives us:

$$\text{ENM (Sierra Leone 2002)} = 5 * (1 + \log(14)) = 10.7$$

Used for:
Sierra Leone (2002)

Multi-seat majoritarian systems

Gallagher and Mitchell (2005) don't, to the author's knowledge, give provisions for calculating the effective nationwide magnitude for majoritarian systems with multiple seats being awarded using closed lists. Under such systems, increasing the number of seats per constituency serves to make the system *less* proportional, which runs counter to the intuition that the ENM formula seeks to capture.

Therefore, I treat each multi-member constituency operating under plurality or majority rules as having the same effects as a single-member constituency. The scoring of Djibouti's (1992, 1997, 2003) system illustrates this approach.

- Djibouti (1992, 1997, 2003). In this system 65 seats are distributed in 5 multi-member constituencies each using the party-block voting system. Any party contesting a constituency has to submit a list containing as many candidates as seats are to be filled in the respective constituency¹. The list which wins a plurality of valid votes in each constituency wins all seats at stake in the constituency. Given

¹ Each list must be proportionally composed of members of different ethnic groups (parties are constitutionally prohibited from identifying themselves by race, ethnic group, sex, religion, sect, language or region) (Nohlen, 1999).

the latter stipulation, we have treated this system as effectively being composed of 5 winner-takes-all constituencies (that is, five constituencies with a magnitude of 1). Entering these values into equation 1 gives us:

$$\text{ENM (Djibouti 1992, 1997, 2003)} = 1 * (1 + \log(5)) = 1.69$$

The low value for this case captures the fact that the party block system is one of the least proportional systems of seat distribution.

Used for:
Djibouti
Mauritius
Mali
Chad

Multiple-tier systems

In calculating the effective nationwide magnitude for countries with multiple tiers of seat attribution, one must distinguish between systems where the upper tier is compensatory and those where the systems are parallel.

Parallel Systems

In parallel systems, the average district magnitude is calculated by dividing the number of seats by the number of constituencies. If there are formal thresholds for the upper tier of seat allocation, a further distinction must be made between those which are greater or less than the effective nationwide threshold.

- Seychelles (1998, 2002). In this system; 25 members of the National Assembly are elected in single-member districts by plurality. 9 additional seats are distributed in a PR national-level constituency between the parties that have passed a legal threshold of 10% of the

national vote. Seat distribution is parallel (that is, one tier does not compensate for another). As such, this system has 34 seats distributed in 26 constituencies. Dividing the former into the latter gives us an average district magnitude of 1.3.

$$\text{Effective nationwide threshold} = 75\% / ((1.3+1) * \sqrt{26}) = 10.13\%$$

As the effective nationwide threshold is higher than the formal threshold for the upper tier, we can use the average district magnitude and number of constituencies to find the effective nationwide magnitude employing formula 1:

$$\text{ENM (Seychelles 1998, 2002)} = 1.3 * (1 + \log(26)) = 3.15$$

For parallel systems without a formal threshold in the PR tier, we employ the average district magnitude across both tiers. The higher the proportion of single-seat constituencies, therefore, the lower the average district magnitude, and the lower the ENM score.

Used for:
Cameroon
DRC
Madagascar (1998, 2002, 2007)
Guinea
Senegal
Seychelles

Compensatory Systems

For compensatory systems, I treat these as though all of the seats are distributed in one PR-based, nationwide constituency.

- Lesotho (2002, 2007). Lesotho's mixed compensatory system uses a corrective upper tier of 40 seats (with 80 single seat constituencies). I treated this as a system with a single nationwide district of 40 seats (ignoring the system's single-seat tier).

ENM (Lesotho 2002,2007) = $40 * (1 + \log(1)) = 40$

Used for:

Lesotho (2002, 2007)

South Africa

APPENDIX B – Country scores for ‘effective number of groups’ across data sources employed in this thesis

Country	Scarritt & Mozaffar (1999)	Alesina et al. 2003 (ethnic)	Alesina et al. 2003 (linguistic)	Alesina et al. 2003 (religious)	Posner (2004) PREG	Fearon (2003) ethnic	Fearon (2003) cultural	Atlas Narodov Mira (1964)
Angola	3.7	4.7	4.7	2.7	2.9	4.2	1.3	4.5
Benin	6.1	4.7	4.8	2.2	1.4	2.6	1.7	2.6
Botswana	3.8	1.7	1.7	2.5	1.0	1.5	1.2	2.0
Burkina Faso	1.0	3.8	3.6	2.4	1.0	3.3	1.5	3.1
Burundi	1.4	1.4	1.4	2.1	1.4	1.5	1.0	1.0
Cameroon	7.5	7.3	9.1	3.8	3.4	9.1	3.7	9.1
Cape Verde	0.0	1.7		1.1				
CAR	2.8	5.9	6.0	4.8	1.3	4.8	2.0	3.2
DRC	7.3	7.7	7.7	3.4	5.0	14.3	2.7	10.0
RoC	4.7	8.0	3.2	3.0	1.2	8.3	2.3	2.9
Chad	2.7	7.2	7.3	2.8	2.9	4.3	3.7	5.9
Chad	2.7	7.2	7.3	2.8	2.9	4.3	3.7	5.9
Comoros	1.2	1.0	1.0	1.0				
Djibouti	2.0	4.9	2.9	1.0		2.5	1.7	1.0
Eq. Guinea	1.7	1.5	1.5	1.1	1.2			1.4
Ethiopia	4.4	3.6	5.2	2.7	2.3	4.2	2.3	3.2
Gabon	5.5	4.3	4.6	3.0	1.3	7.1	1.6	3.2
Gambia	3.1	4.7	5.2	1.1	1.6	4.2	2.2	3.7
Ghana	5.2	3.1	3.1	5.0	1.8	6.7	1.6	3.4
Guinea	2.8	3.8	4.4	1.4	1.9	3.0	2.0	4.0
Guinea-Bissau	4.2	5.2	5.4	2.6	1.1	5.6	2.3	5.0
Ivory Coast	3.8	5.6	4.6	4.1	2.0	4.5	2.3	7.1
Kenya	9.6	7.1	8.8	4.5	2.3	6.7	2.5	5.9
Lesotho	0.0	1.3	1.3	3.6	1.0	1.3	1.1	1.3
Liberia	4.1	10.9	10.4	2.0	2.6	10.0	2.8	5.9
Madagascar	5.4	8.3	1.0	2.1	1.0	7.1	1.2	1.1
Malawi	5.7	3.1	2.5	5.5	2.2	5.9	1.4	2.6
Mali	5.3	3.2	6.2	1.2	1.1	4.0	2.4	4.5
Mauritiana	3.6	2.6	1.5	1.0		2.6	1.4	1.5
Mauritius	4.2	1.9	1.8	2.8	2.5	2.7	1.8	2.4
Mozambique	2.8	3.3	5.3	3.1	1.6	4.3	1.4	2.9
Namibia	3.5	2.7	3.3	3.0	2.2	3.6	2.4	3.1
Niger	2.2	2.9	2.9	1.3	2.0	2.8	2.5	3.7
Nigeria	6.2	6.7	6.7	3.9	2.9	5.0	2.9	7.7
Rwanda	1.2	1.5		2.0	1.4	5.0		1.2

Sao Tome	0.0		1.3	1.2				
Senegal	3.2	3.3	3.3	1.2	1.2	3.7	1.7	3.6
Seychelles	0.0	1.3	1.2	1.3	1.0			1.5
Sierra Leone	3.2	5.5	4.2	2.2	2.3	4.2	2.1	4.3
South Africa	5.2	4.0	7.4	7.2	2.0	4.0	2.1	8.3
Sudan	4.8	3.5	3.6	1.8	1.7	3.4	3.3	3.7
Tanzania	2.1	3.8	9.8	2.7	2.4	20.0	2.3	14.3
Togo	1.8	3.4	9.8	2.9	2.0	8.3	2.5	3.4
Uganda	6.0	14.3	12.9	2.7	2.7	14.3	2.8	10.0
Zambia	9.0	4.6	7.9	3.8	3.4	3.7	1.2	5.6
Zimbabwe	3.3	1.6	1.8	3.8	1.7	1.6	1.2	2.2

APPENDIX C: Calculation of Freedom House's 'Political Rights' score for each country/year.

The 'political rights' (PR) score employed in this thesis to capture variation in levels of political freedoms across our cases is compiled by Freedom House. In this Appendix we detail the manner in which the PR score is arrived at for each country/year. Essentially, the score is compiled according to how each country performs according to their aggregate score over a number of 'checklist' questions each year. Table C.1 below details how these scores are translated into the 7-point scale of political rights scores by Freedom House. Unfortunately, fully disaggregated data are not available for the period and countries studied here, so we employ the PR Rating of the country in the report covering the year in which the election was held as our proxy for levels of political freedoms throughout the thesis.

In the 'methodology' section accompanying their cross-country data set, Freedom House (2009) state that: 'each numbered checklist question is assigned a score of 0-4 (except for discretionary question A, for which a score of 1-4 may be added, and discretionary question B, for which a score of 1-4 may be subtracted)' (p. 351). Each checklist question represents the sum of a series of sub-questions. The checklist and discretionary questions for the 2009 Freedom House release are listed below in Appendix C1.

Table C.1 – Conversion of scores into PR Ratings

Political Rights (PR)	
Total Scores	PR Rating
36-40	1
30-35	2
24-29	3
18-23	4
12-17	5
6-11	6
0-5 *	7

APPENDIX C 1: Questions and checklist used to compile 'Political Rights' total scores from:

A. ELECTORAL PROCESS

1. Is the head of government or other chief national authority elected through free and fair elections?

- Did established and reputable national and/or international election monitoring organizations judge the most recent elections for head of government to be free and fair? (*Note: Heads of government chosen through various electoral frameworks, including direct elections for president, indirect elections for prime minister by parliament, and the electoral college system for electing presidents, are covered under this and the following sub-questions. In cases of indirect elections for the head of government, the elections for the legislature that chose the head of government, as well as the selection process of the head of government himself, should be taken into consideration.*)
- Have there been undue, politically motivated delays in holding the most recent election for head of government?
- Is the registration of voters and candidates conducted in an accurate, timely, transparent, and non-discriminatory manner?
- Can candidates make speeches, hold public meetings, and enjoy media access throughout the campaign free of intimidation?
- Does voting take place by secret ballot or by equivalent free voting procedure?
- Are voters able to vote for the candidate or party of their choice without undue pressure or intimidation?
- Is the vote count transparent, and is it reported honestly with the official results made public? Can election monitors from independent groups and representing parties/candidates watch the counting of votes to ensure their honesty?
- Is each person's vote given equivalent weight to those of other voters in order to ensure equal representation?
- Has a democratically elected head of government who was chosen in the most recent election subsequently been overthrown in a violent

coup? (*Note:* Although a peaceful, “velvet coup” may ultimately lead to a positive outcome—particularly if it replaces a head of government who was not freely and fairly elected—the new leader has not been freely and fairly elected and cannot be treated as such.)

- In cases where elections for regional, provincial, or state governors and/or other subnational officials differ significantly in conduct from national elections, does the conduct of the subnational elections reflect an opening toward improved political rights in the country, or, alternatively, a worsening of political rights?

2. Are the national legislative representatives elected through free and fair elections?

- Did established and reputable domestic and/or international election monitoring organizations judge the most recent national legislative elections to be free and fair?
- Have there been undue, politically motivated delays in holding the most recent national legislative election?
- Is the registration of voters and candidates conducted in an accurate, timely, transparent, and nondiscriminatory manner?
- Can candidates make speeches, hold public meetings, and enjoy media access throughout the campaign free of intimidation?
- Does voting take place by secret ballot or by equivalent free voting procedure?
- Are voters able to vote for the candidate or party of their choice without undue pressure or intimidation?
- Is the vote count transparent, and is it reported honestly with the official results made public? Can election monitors from independent groups and representing parties/candidates watch the counting of votes to ensure their honesty?
- Is each person’s vote given equivalent weight to those of other voters in order to ensure equal representation?
- Have the representatives of a democratically elected national legislature who were chosen in the most recent election subsequently been overthrown in a violent coup? (*Note:* Although a peaceful, “velvet coup” may ultimately lead to a positive outcome—particularly if it replaces a national legislature whose representatives were not

freely and fairly elected—members of the new legislature have not been freely and fairly elected and cannot be treated as such.)

- In cases where elections for subnational councils/parliaments differ significantly in conduct from national elections, does the conduct of the subnational elections reflect an opening toward improved political rights in the country, or, alternatively, a worsening of political rights?

3. Are the electoral laws and framework fair?

- Is there a clear, detailed, and fair legislative framework for conducting elections? (*Note:* Changes to electoral laws should not be made immediately preceding an election if the ability of voters, candidates, or parties to fulfill their roles in the election is infringed.)
- Are election commissions or other election authorities independent and free from government or other pressure and interference?
- Is the composition of election commissions fair and balanced?
- Do election commissions or other election authorities conduct their work in an effective and competent manner?
- Do adult citizens enjoy universal and equal suffrage? (*Note:* Suffrage can be suspended or withdrawn for reasons of legal incapacity, such as mental incapacity or conviction of a serious criminal offense.)
- Is the drawing of election districts conducted in a fair and nonpartisan manner, as opposed to gerrymandering for personal or partisan advantage?
- Has the selection of a system for choosing legislative representatives (such as proportional versus majoritarian) been manipulated to advance certain political interests or to influence the electoral results?

B. POLITICAL PLURALISM AND PARTICIPATION

1. Do the people have the right to organize in different political parties or other competitive political groupings of their choice, and is the system open to the rise and fall of these competing parties or groupings?

- Do political parties encounter undue legal or practical obstacles in their efforts to be formed and to operate, including onerous

registration requirements, excessively large membership requirements, etc.?

- Do parties face discriminatory or onerous restrictions in holding meetings, rallies, or other peaceful activities?
- Are party members or leaders intimidated, harassed, arrested, imprisoned, or subjected to violent attacks as a result of their peaceful political activities?

2. Is there a significant opposition vote and a realistic possibility for the opposition to increase its support or gain power through elections?

- Are various legal/administrative restrictions selectively applied to opposition parties to prevent them from increasing their support base or successfully competing in elections?
- Are there legitimate opposition forces in positions of authority, such as in the national legislature or in subnational governments?
- Are opposition party members or leaders intimidated, harassed, arrested, imprisoned, or subjected to violent attacks as a result of their peaceful political activities?

3. Are the people's political choices free from domination by the military, foreign powers, totalitarian parties, religious hierarchies, economic oligarchies, or any other powerful group?

- Do such groups offer bribes to voters and/or political figures in order to influence their political choices?
- Do such groups intimidate, harass, or attack voters and/or political figures in order to influence their political choices?
- Does the military control or enjoy a preponderant influence over government policy and activities, including in countries that nominally are under civilian control?
- Do foreign governments control or enjoy a preponderant influence over government policy and activities by means including the presence of foreign military troops, the use of significant economic threats or sanctions, etc.?

4. Do cultural, ethnic, religious, or other minority groups have full political rights and electoral opportunities?

- Do political parties of various ideological persuasions address issues of specific concern to minority groups?
- Does the government inhibit the participation of minority groups in national or subnational political life through laws and/or practical obstacles?
- Are political parties based on ethnicity, culture, or religion that espouse peaceful, democratic values legally permitted and de facto allowed to operate?

C. FUNCTIONING OF GOVERNMENT

1. Do the freely elected head of government and national legislative representatives determine the policies of the government?

- Are the candidates who were elected freely and fairly duly installed in office?
- Do other appointed or non-freely elected state actors interfere with or prevent freely elected representatives from adopting and implementing legislation and making meaningful policy decisions?
- Do nonstate actors, including criminal gangs, the military, and foreign governments, interfere with or prevent elected representatives from adopting and implementing legislation and making meaningful policy decisions?

2. Is the government free from pervasive corruption?

- Has the government implemented effective anticorruption laws or programs to prevent, detect, and punish corruption among public officials, including conflict of interest?
- Is the government free from excessive bureaucratic regulations, registration requirements, or other controls that increase opportunities for corruption?
- Are there independent and effective auditing and investigative bodies that function without impediment or political pressure or influence?
- Are allegations of corruption by government officials thoroughly investigated and prosecuted without prejudice, particularly against political opponents?

- Are allegations of corruption given wide and extensive airing in the media?
- Do whistleblowers, anticorruption activists, investigators, and journalists enjoy legal protections that make them feel secure about reporting cases of bribery and corruption?
- What was the latest Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index score for this country?

3. Is the government accountable to the electorate between elections, and does it operate with openness and transparency?

- Are civil society groups, interest groups, journalists, and other citizens able to comment on and influence pending policies of legislation?
- Do citizens have the legal right and practical ability to obtain information about government operations and the means to petition government agencies for it?
- Is the budget-making process subject to meaningful legislative review and public scrutiny?
- Does the government publish detailed accounting expenditures in a timely fashion?
- Does the state ensure transparency and effective competition in the awarding of government contracts?
- Are the asset declarations of government officials open to public and media scrutiny and verification?

ADDITIONAL DISCRETIONARY POLITICAL RIGHTS QUESTIONS:

A. For traditional monarchies that have no parties or electoral process, does the system provide for genuine, meaningful consultation with the people, encourage public discussion of policy choices, and allow the right to petition the ruler?

- Is there a non-elected legislature that advises the monarch on policy issues?
- Are there formal mechanisms for individuals or civic groups to speak with or petition the monarch?
- Does the monarch take petitions from the public under serious consideration?

B. Is the government or occupying power deliberately changing the ethnic composition of a country or territory so as to destroy a culture or tip the political balance in favor of another group?

- Is the government providing economic or other incentives to certain people in order to change the ethnic composition of a region or regions?
- Is the government forcibly moving people in or out of certain areas in order to change the ethnic composition of those regions?
- Is the government arresting, imprisoning, or killing members of certain ethnic groups in order to change the ethnic composition of a region or regions?

APPENDIX D – ‘effective numbers’ of electoral and legislative parties in legislative elections, % largest party vote and seat shares.

Year	country	Electoral Parties	Legislative Parties	% Largest Party Votes	% Largest Party Seats
1992	Angola	2.46	2.24	53.7	58.6
2008	Angola	1.47	1.31	81.5	86.8
1991	Benin	9.35	8.79	18.9	18.8
1995	Benin	12.91	6.69		32.5
1999	Benin	10.38	6.28		32.5
2003	Benin		4.79		37.3
2007	Benin		3.89		42.1
1989	Botswana	2.02	1.19	64.8	91.2
1994	Botswana	2.34	1.78	53.1	67.5
1999	Botswana	2.44	1.42	57.1	82.5
2004	Botswana	2.74	1.56	51.7	77.2
1992	Burkina Faso	3.66	1.89		78.5
1997	Burkina Faso	2.02	1.2	68.6	90.9
2002	Burkina Faso	3.02	3.3	49.5	51.3
2007	Burkina Faso	2.74	2.2	58.9	65.7
1993	Burundi	1.74	1.47	71.4	80.2
2005	Burundi	2.5	2.37	58.6	59
1992	Cameroon	2.92	2.55		48.9
1997	Cameroon		2.32		60.5
2002	Cameroon		1.43		82.8
2007	Cameroon		1.37		85
1991	Cape Verde	1.81	1.7		70.8
1995	Cape Verde	2.13	1.76	61.3	69.4
2001	Cape Verde	2.41	2.07	49.5	55.6
2006	Cape Verde	2.14	2.05	56.9	52.3
1993	CAR		4.75		40
1998	CAR		4.2		49
2005	CAR		5.49		40
2006	DRC				22.2
1992	RoC		5.36		31.2
1993	RoC		4.63		52
2002	RoC		2.69		60.5
2007	RoC		6.79		34.3
1997	Chad		2.93		52
2002	Chad		1.92		70.9
1992	Comoros	17.37	11.7	10.4	16.6
1993	Comoros		2.16		66.6

1996	Comoros		1.41		83.7
2004	Comoros		1.8		66.6
1992	Djibouti	1.6	1	76.1	100
1997	Djibouti	1.55	1.39	78.5	100
2003	Djibouti	1.88	1	62.4	100
1993	Eq. Guinea	1.97	1.37	69.8	85
1999	Eq. Guinea	1.35	1.33	85.7	88.7
2004	Eq. Guinea	2.34	1.88	91.8	98
1995	Ethiopia		1.33		86.1
2005	Ethiopia		2.43		60
1990	Gabon		2.95		52.5
1996	Gabon		1.95		70.8
2001	Gabon		1.89		71.7
2006	Gabon		2.09		82.5
1992	Gambia		1.94		69.4
1997	Gambia	2.53	1.77	52.1	73.3
2002	Gambia		1.13		93.7
2007	Gambia	2.41	1.29	59.7	87.5
1992	Ghana	1.57	1.12	77.5	94.5
1996	Ghana	2.5	1.87	53	66.5
2000	Ghana	2.67	2.17	44.8	49.5
2004	Ghana	2.11	2.1		64
2008	Ghana		2.13		55.5
1995	Guinea	2.92	2.34	53.5	62.3
2002	Guinea	2.21	1.7	61.6	74.6
1994	Guinea-Bissau	3.51	2.28	46.4	62
1999	Guinea-Bissau		3.6		32
2004	Guinea- Bissau	4.5	2.82	33.9	45
1990	Ivory Coast	1.8	1.15	71.7	93.1
1996	Ivory Coast	2.01	1.38	64.9	84.6
2000	Ivory Coast		2.74		42.6
1992	Kenya	4.32	2.67	24.5	53.2
1997	Kenya	4.1	3.17		50.9
2002	Kenya		4.59		56.8
2007	Kenya		3.51		47.8
1993	Lesotho	1.64	1	74.8	100
1998	Lesotho	2.27	1.03	60.7	98.7
2002	Lesotho	2.77	2.16	54.9	64.2
2007	Lesotho		3.09		50.8
1997	Liberia	1.72	1.66	75.3	76.4
2005	Liberia		8.47		23.4
1993	Madagascar		5.98		35.1
1998	Madagascar		4.86		42
2002	Madagascar		2.29		64.3
2007	Madagascar		1.46		82.7

1994	Malawi	2.74	2.69	46.4	48.3
1999	Malawi	2.84	2.66	47.3	48.4
2004	Malawi		5.18		31.5
1992	Mali	3.58	2.24	48.4	65.5
1997	Mali	1.68	1.31		90.1
2002	Mali		4.22		33.3
2007	Mali		5.26		35.2
1992	Mauritiana	2.15	1.39	67.7	84.8
1996	Mauritiana	1.91	1.27	67.6	88.6
2001	Mauritiana	2.26	1.58		79
2006	Mauritiana		17.76		17.1
1991	Mauritius	2.16	2.77		43.9
1995	Mauritius	2.13	2.07		53.8
2000	Mauritius		1.3		82.8
2005	Mauritius	2.38	2.09	48.8	60
1994	Mozambique	2.91	2.14	44.3	51.6
1999	Mozambique	2.58	2.25	48.5	53.2
2004	Mozambique	2.11	1.85	62	64
1989	Namibia	2.41	2.41	57.3	56.9
1994	Namibia	1.69	1.71	73.9	73.6
1999	Namibia	1.67	1.66	76.15	76.4
2004	Namibia	1.7	1.68	75.8	76.4
1993	Niger	4.62	4.23	30.7	34.9
1995	Niger	4.3	4.15		34.9
1996	Niger	2.39	2.12		70
1999	Niger		3.33		45.8
2004	Niger	4.39	3.72	37.2	41.6
1992	Nigeria		1.99		52.9
1999	Nigeria	2.32	2.34	57.1	59.2
2003	Nigeria	2.61	2.14	54.5	62.1
2007	Nigeria		1.75		73.1
2003	Rwanda	1.75	1.67	73.8	75.5
1991	Sao Tome	1.92	1.98	54.4	60
1994	Sao Tome	3.2	2.7	42.5	49.1
1998	Sao Tome	2.76	2.36	50.8	56.4
2002	Sao Tome	2.94	2.59	39.6	43.6
2006	Sao Tome	3.76	2.88	36.8	41.2
1993	Senegal	2.4	1.84	56.6	70
1998	Senegal	3.07	2.1	50.2	66.4
2001	Senegal	3.27	1.76	49.6	74.2
2007	Senegal	2.04	1.31	69.2	87.3
1993	Seychelles	2.24	1.44	56.6	81.8
1998	Seychelles	2.16	1.27	61.7	88.2
2002	Seychelles	2.1	1.78	54.3	67.6
2007	Seychelles	1.97	1.78	56.2	67.6

1996	Sierra Leone	4.73	3.82	36.1	39.7
2002	Sierra Leone	1.89	1.65	69.9	74.1
2007	Sierra Leone	3.04	2.54	40.8	52.7
1994	South Africa	2.2	2.2	62.6	63
1999	South Africa	2.2	2.2	66.3	66.5
2004	South Africa	1.97	1.97	69.7	69.7
2000	Sudan		1.03		98.6
1995	Tanzania	2.46	2.04	59.2	69.1
2000	Tanzania		1.3		87.4
2005	Tanzania	1.93	1.33	70	88.8
1994	Togo		2.55		44.4
1999	Togo		1.05		97.5
2002	Togo		1.23		88.9
2007	Togo	3.33	2.02	39.4	61.7
2006	Uganda		2.11		67.5
1991	Zambia	1.63	1.38	74.3	83.3
1996	Zambia	2.48	1.29	60.1	87.9
2001	Zambia	5.5	3	28	46
2006	Zambia	3.86	2.86	38.4	48.7
1990	Zimbabwe	1.5	1.1	80.5	97.5
1995	Zimbabwe	1.49	1.03	81.4	98.3
2000	Zimbabwe	2.18	2.03	48.6	51.7
2005	Zimbabwe	1.96	1.85	59.6	65

APPENDIX E – ‘Effective numbers of candidates’ in Africa’s presidential elections 1989-2008.

Year	Country	Effective number of candidates
1992	Angola	2.45
1991	Benin	4.28
1996	Benin	3.48
2001	Benin	3.29
2006	Benin	4.49
1998	Burkina Faso	1.29
2005	Burkina Faso	1.54
1993	Burundi	1.85
1997	Cameroon	1.16
2004	Cameroon	1.86
1991	Cape Verde	1.64
1996	Cape Verde	1.17
2001	Cape Verde	2.33
2006	Cape Verde	2.00
1993	CAR	4.12
1999	CAR	3.09
2005	CAR	3.69
1996	Chad	4.34
2001	Chad	2.29
2006	Chad	2.2
1990	Comoros	5.61
1996	Comoros	9.07
2002	Comoros	4.64

2006	Comoros	7.12
1993	Djibouti	2.31
1999	Djibouti	1.62
2002	DRC	3.81
1996	Equatorial Guinea	1.05
2002	Equatorial Guinea	1.05
1993	Gabon	2.96
1998	Gabon	2.03
2005	Gabon	1.54
1992	Gambia	1.97
1996	Gambia	2.26
2001	Gambia	2.54
2006	Gambia	1.89
1992	Ghana	2.28
1996	Ghana	2.05
2000	Ghana	2.29
2004	Ghana	2.11
2008	Ghana	2.12
1993	Guinea	2.96
1998	Guinea	2.48
2003	Guinea	1.10
1994	Guinea- Bissau	3.37
1999	Guinea- Bissau	4.42
2005	Guinea-	3.66

	Bissau	
1990	Ivory Coast	1.43
1995	Ivory Coast	1.07
2000	Ivory Coast	2.16
1992	Kenya	3.68
1997	Kenya	3.54
2002	Kenya	2.05
2007	Kenya	2.4
1997	Liberia	1.72
2005	Liberia	6.35
1992	Madagascar	3.28
1996	Madagascar	4.43
2001	Madagascar	2.51
2006	Madagascar	2.97
1994	Malawi	2.7
1999	Malawi	2.09
2004	Malawi	3.62
1992	Mali	3.76
1997	Mali	1.38
2002	Mali	5.6
2007	Mali	1.83
1992	Mauritania	1.98
1997	Mauritania	1.2
2003	Mauritania	2.01
2007	Mauritania	6.55
1994	Mozambique	2.5

1999	Mozambique	2.00
2004	Mozambique	1.97
1994	Namibia	1.57
1999	Namibia	1.64
2004	Namibia	1.68
1993	Niger	4.21
1996	Niger	2.9
1999	Niger	4.43
2004	Niger	3.75
1993	Nigeria	1.95
1999	Nigeria	1.88
2003	Nigeria	2.05
2007	Nigeria	1.9
2003	Rwanda	1.11
1991	Sao Tome	1.00
1996	Sao Tome	2.9
2001	Sao Tome	2.15
2006	Sao Tome	1.93
1992	Republic of Congo	4.01
2002	Republic of Congo	1.25
1993	Senegal	2.24
2000	Senegal	3.3
2007	Senegal	2.79
1993	Seychelles	2.04
1998	Seychelles	1.99

2001	Seychelles	2.02
2006	Seychelles	2.01
1996	Sierra Leone	4.65
2002	Sierra Leone	1.84
2007	Sierra Leone	2.76
2000	Sudan	1.31
1995	Tanzania	2.15
2000	Tanzania	1.82
2005	Tanzania	1.51
1993	Togo	1.07
1998	Togo	2.51
2003	Togo	2.22
2005	Togo	1.97
1996	Uganda	1.61
2001	Uanda	1.79
2006	Uganda	2.04
1991	Zambia	1.58
1996	Zambia	1.81
2001	Zambia	5.07
2006	Zambia	3.86
1990	Zimbabwe	1.39
1996	Zimbabwe	1.16
2002	Zimbabwe	2.03

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