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Panel 6a: Political Mobilization and Ethnicity

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**It’s Not the Economy Stupid!
Structural Factors as Determinates of Ethnic Parties**

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Abstract

The major aim of the paper is to arrive at a tentative explanation why in some African countries ethnic parties prevail, while in others non-ethnic parties dominate the political arena. The search for the causes of ethnic parties has for long been hindered by a lack of agreement of what constitutes an ethnic party. Drawing on a simplified typology the paper classifies all effective (Sartori 2001) and significant (Taagepera 1999) parties in Kenya, Ghana and Namibia between 1989 and 2008. The classification of parties will be conducted with the help of a database composed by the author. In a second step the paper will examine potential explanatory variables that can account for the rise of ethnic parties in some and non-ethnic parties in other African countries.

The paper argues that contrary to the conventional literature economic differences between groups cannot explain the formation of ethnically based parties. Variables such as the electoral system, ethnic party bans or the type of party system in place equally are not linked to the spread of any particular party type. Instead the paper finds that the salience of ethnicity at the aggregate level of political parties remains low in countries in which ethnic fragmentation of politically significant groups is low and in which a core ethnic groups exists. In countries in which core ethnic groups are absent and in which the ethnic fragmentation of groups is high the salience of ethnicity remains high. These phenomena endure over time as a historical analysis of pre-and post-independence politics in the three countries under scrutiny demonstrates.

Introduction

For long the study of African politics has assumed ethnic parties to be paramount in African multi-party democracies (Horowitz 2000). As a result the post-Third Wave political science literature has produced a plethora of studies examining the extent to which African voting behavior corresponds to communal boundaries (Throup and Hornsby 1998, Fridy 2007, Berman et al 2004, Daniel 1999, Nugent 1999 and 2001). However no framework of comparison exists by which African parties are analyzed beyond voting behavior. Party typologies that are most commonly used in the literature either inhibit a strong Western bias (Erdmann 2007) or were designed in the immediate post-independence period and no longer yield analytical validity (Hodgekin 1956 and 1961, Morgenthau 1961, Coleman and Rosberg 1964).

Given the absence of party typologies germane to African politics, the first part of this paper will outline several indicators by which the nature of African parties can be examined. The paper distinguishes between ethnic (i.e. mono-ethnic and multi-ethnic) and non-ethnic parties. This falls short of acknowledging the full diversity of African political contest: Diamond and Gunther (2001 and 2003) for example devised a vast array of party types that one might expect to find in post-Third Wave democracies. For reasons of space these could not be incorporated.¹ Instead the purpose of this section is confined to the design of a simple and empirically grounded framework by which African parties can be compared and by which ethnic parties can be distinguished from non-ethnic ones. Drawing on a database compiled by the author the paper finds ethnic parties to dominate in Kenya and non-ethnic parties to be prevalent in Ghana or Namibia. The application of our party indicators is restricted to parties that are effective (Sartori 2001) and significant (Taagepera 1999).²

The second part will be dedicated to explaining diverging party types across countries. A variety of variables will be examined including economic factors, the electoral system, the type of party system in place, ethnic party bans, path-dependence and the ethnic set-up of a country. Contrary to the conventional literature this paper finds economic differences between countries or regions not to be a sufficient condition for the formation of ethnic parties. Instead structural factors – the existence of a core ethnic group and a low degree of ethnic fractionalization – are found to foster particular party types.

1. Identifying Ethnic and Non-Ethnic Parties

1.1 The identification of party types

The paper uses the following indicators in order to distinguish ethnic from non-ethnic parties:

Motive of Party Formation. What was the party's goal when it was founded and what were the conditions that led to its formation? The characteristics that gave birth to a party are essential in order to understand its goals and behavior. If the party was founded to represent the interests of specific communities, this indicates ethnic parties. Parties with the purpose of fostering national unity or with a neutral or catch-all purpose indicate non-

¹ The application of the Diamond and Gunther global party typology is part of the author's concluded PhD project.

² In the case of Namibia these criteria have been relaxed in order to analyze the nature of the country's official opposition.

ethnic parties. Neutral/ catch-all purposes include the promotion of democracy, promotion of programmatic ideas, fighting corruption or the unspecified claim of creating a vibrant economy.

Rhetoric. A party's rhetoric – both during election as well as during election free periods – reveals much about its ideas in particular during election-free periods when strategic constraints in terms of vote- and office-seeking are relaxed. An ethnic party will espouse ethnic claims either implicitly or explicitly. A non-ethnic party will rely on catch-all sound bites: The need for national unity, democratization or the fight against corruption.

National Coverage.

Conventional analyses of political parties make frequent use of membership figures and changes in membership figures over time as key indicator for the nature of the party (see in particular Duverger 1954 and Ware 2005). African parties rarely keep accurate records of their membership.³ While in the context of Western politics the internal life of parties has been examined extensively (see for example Katz 2002), hardly any reliable information about intra-party life in Africa is known. In the absence of reliable membership figures this study measures a party's ability to reach out nationally by comparing the number of parliamentary candidates it fields nationwide to the number of constituencies nationwide. A non-ethnic party can be expected to score highly on this indicator. The data for this indicator has been provided by the respective electoral commission. In countries with a PR system based on national lists this indicator can not be used as national lists do not tell us about the ability of parties to field candidates on a national scale.

Party Factions. The nature of party factions reveals the nature of the party (Sartori 2001, Köllner et al 2006). Party factions thus are central for an analysis of parties. In a mono-ethnic ethnic party factions are characterized by individuals who are from one major community. In a multi-ethnic party factions are modeled around ethnic lines headed by leaders from different communities. They have the potential to tare the party apart. Factions might defect, subsequently form new parties or merge with opposing ones. This danger of defection is particularly poignant if factional leaders represent communities that are located at the opposite end of a significant ethnic cleavage line. Factions around powerful individuals with a nationwide following indicate non-ethnic parties.

Leadership Composition. Leadership composition refers to the top positions in a political party including the chairman, the vice-chairman (or vice-chairmen depending on the party's constitution), the secretary-general and the national treasurer. Van Scott (2005) and Chandra (2004) have used the origins of leadership personality for their analyses of parties and this study will follow their lead. Where positions are named otherwise the empirical data is adjusted accordingly. Drawing on Horowitz's (1985 and 2000)

³ This is based on the findings of the author in the three countries analyzed. The author would also like to thank Matthias Basedau, Gero Erdmann and Alexander Stroh for sharing their experiences with membership figures in several Franco- and Anglophone countries.

distinction between ethnic and non-ethnic parties⁴, the leadership of the mono-ethnic and the multi-ethnic party fails to incorporate leaders from the opposing sides of the country's dominant ethnic cleavage lines. The mono-ethnic party only incorporates members of one ethnic group. By contrast non-ethnic parties manage to bridge a country's dominant ethnic cleavage over consecutive parliamentary cycles.

Cabinet Appointments. The heavily neo-patrimonial nature of African politics provides a strong political imperative for any group to be included at the major level of governance. Cabinets including all major communities whose numerical strength in the cabinet roughly reflects their numerical strength in society are representative of non-ethnic parties.⁵ Cabinets failing to bridge the country's dominant cleavage lines and those in which one or several major communities are clearly underrepresented indicate ethnic parties.

Party Nationalization Scores (PNS) and Party Divergence Score (PDS). Election results are often used as major analytical yardstick for the classification of African parties. This study uses two aggregate measurements in order to identify the spread of a party's electoral support:

Party Nationalization Scores (PNS) provide a useful means of comparing different parties' electoral support nationwide both within and across countries. So far they have not been used in the context of African politics.⁶ The PNS is measured by calculating the Gini coefficient of a party's electoral support and subtracting the coefficient from 1. The closer the PNS is to 1, the more the party's support can be seen as national. The closer it is to 0, the less its support is nationwide.⁷ Skeptical voices will counter that the unit of analysis for calculating the PNS is a country's region and that therefore results are contingent on the spread of communities across regions.⁸ In order to mitigate against this problem the calculation of respective PNS scores is supplemented by a descriptive analysis of voting behavior that takes the ethnic set-up of countries and their regions into consideration. In addition where data was available the spread of party support has been calculated with the help of Afrobarometer data. Due to the relative novelty of Afrobarometer survey data findings are limited. PNS values that are medium to high or high to very high indicate non-ethnic parties. Values that are medium to low are characteristic of multi-ethnic parties. PNS scores that exhibit low to very low values designate mono-ethnic parties. However if the mono-ethnic party comprises a numerically large group its value might fall into the medium to low category.

⁴ Horowitz distinguishes between ethnic and multi-ethnic parties. My type of non-ethnic party corresponds to his type of multi-ethnic party.

⁵ This indicator has to be interpreted against a background of other factors (such as personal merit or educational background) as even the most catch-all governing party will apply a variety of criteria before making government appointments.

⁶ For an exception see Elischer 2008.

⁷ For an application of both measures to the Americas see Jones and Mainwaring 2003.

⁸ For further details see Stroh 2009. The same problem occurs if constituencies are taken as units of analyses.

The *Party Divergence Score (PDS)* calculates the percentage share of votes a region or province contributes to the overall share of a party's performance. This figure is compared to the percentage share the region's population contributes to the overall population. The following example illustrates how the indicator works in practice: Party A received 55% of its overall vote share from region Z. However only 20% of the population lives in region Z. Accordingly there is a high discrepancy between these two figures: The electoral contribution of region Z to party A is 35% higher than would be the case if the spread of the vote corresponded to the spread of the population. The party divergence score is calculated by adding the discrepancies for each region. Compared to the PNS the party divergence index outlines the performance of parties across regions, which allows us to identify respective strongholds. Basing one's analysis on two indicators that are calculated differently yet measure the same phenomenon provides for greater confidence in our results. The party divergence indicator classifies parties as follows: (Very) Low to medium values herald non-ethnic parties. Medium to high values exhibit multi-ethnic parties. Those falling into the low to very low category indicate mono-ethnic parties. Again our analysis must be receptive to the size and the spread of respective communities. Annex A summarizes all our results and the numerical values by which the various categories (low to very low, low to medium etc.) are defined.

As already stated this operationalization represents a first attempt at devising a typology by which an intra-area comparison is provided and cross-area comparison facilitated. It represents a compromise between what previous classification schemes postulate as key indicators and which indicators are feasible in a non-European context.

1.2 Identifying Political Parties in Three African Countries: Kenya, Ghana and Namibia
Kenya, Ghana and Namibia have been chosen for a variety of reasons: Firstly, all three have undergone several elections and parliamentary cycles. This ensures that our cases can be observed over a period of time that is sufficiently long enough to interpret our findings. Secondly, all three countries have been classified as electoral democracies by Freedom House. This ensures that the electoral data can be interpreted as representing the will of the people – at least to an extent that does not render the data invalid. Finally, Kenya, Ghana and Namibia have been selected in order to ensure variance on the outcome variable (party types) based on existing knowledge in the literature. The literature on Kenya points to a high degree of ethnicity in party politics (Throup and Hornsby 1998, Widner 1992, Wandiba 1996, Ajulu 2002). The literature on Ghana is not clear cut: While some hold that Ghanaian politics is driven by a variety of factors including personality, regionalism and even programmatic ideas, other holds that ethnicity does exert influence – albeit at a visibly lower level than in Kenya (Whitfield 2009, Obeng-Odoom 2009, Lindberg and Morrison 2008, Fridy 2007, Cheeseman and Ford 2007, Nugent 1999 and 2001, Apter 1955). Namibia holds several distinct advantages for a subsequent explanation of potential divergence across countries: It is one of the very few African countries in which a PR system is operating. Much of the literature has focused on the role of electoral systems on the formation of political parties. As the second part of this paper will be dedicated to explaining the formation of different party types, the inclusion of Namibia ensures that one can test for the potential effects of electoral systems. Overall case selection follows the logic of a (proximate) most similar

research design ensuring a sufficient degree of similarity of cases while simultaneously providing variance on the outcome and independent variables (Przeworski and Teune 1982).

Table 1.1 below outlines results for our three cases. Data has been gathered through extensive field studies, expert interviews and analysis of the secondary literature. Annex A summarizes the results for the Party Nationalization Scores (PNS) based on electoral data and the results for the Party Divergence Score (PDS). Annex B summarizes the result for the PNS based on Afrobarometer findings.

Table 1.1: Classifying Political Parties in Kenya, Ghana and Namibia

Country	Significant and effective party	Party Indicators and Results								Overall Classification
		Motive of formation	Rhetoric	National Coverage	Factions	Leadership Composition	Cabinet	PNS	PDS	
Kenya (1992 to 2007)	FORD-K	→fight for democracy	→catch-all →ethnic	→low	→ethnic	→Luo-Luhya wing of FORD; increasingly Luo-Luhya party, then Luhya-only party →not bridging dominant ethnic cleavage lines	n/a	→low to very low	→high to very high	decline from multi-ethnic to mono-ethnic
	FORD-A	→fight for democracy	→catch-all → ethnic	→low	→personal	→Kikuyu-Luhya wing of FORD →not bridging dominant ethnic cleavage lines	n/a	→medium to low	→medium to high	multi-ethnic
	DP	→ fight for democracy	→catch-all → pro free-market	→medium to low	n/a	→GEMA →not bridging dominant ethnic cleavage lines	n/a	→medium to low	→medium to high	mono-ethnic
	KANU	→political representation of larger ethnic tribes →independence →socialism	→ethnic →catch-all	→high	→personal →ethnic after merger with NDP	→initial: bridging national cleavage lines; subsequently not bridging cleavage lines	→in favor of Kalenjin and smaller tribes	→medium to high	→medium to low	multi-ethnic
	SDP	→fight for social-democracy →provide the Kamba with a voice in party politics	→ethnic	→low	→personal	→not bridging dominant ethnic cleavage lines	n/a	→low to very low	→high to very high	mono-ethnic
	NDP	→platform for the Luo	→ethnic	→low	→none	→not bridging dominant ethnic cleavage lines	n/a	→low to very low	→high to very high	mono-ethnic

	NARC	→achieve political alteration and constitutional reform →constitutional reform	→catch-all	→high	→ethnic	→national, bridging national cleavage lines	→national but instable	→high to very high	→low to very low;	multi-ethnic
Ghana (1992-2008)	NPP	→fight for democracy →promote ideas of liberal economic order	→catch-all →in favor of programmatic ideas	→high	→personal	→initially multi-ethnic, then bridging dominant ethnic cleavage lines	→bridging dominant ethnic cleavage lines	→high to very high	→low to very low	non-ethnic
	NDC	→keep Rawlings in power →fight for social democratic principles	→pro-Rawlings →in favor of social justice	→high	→first none, since 2000 personal	→bridging dominant ethnic cleavage lines	→bridging dominant ethnic cleavage lines	→high	→low to very low	non-ethnic
Namibia (1989 to 2008)	SWAPO	→liberate Namibia from apartheid	→in favor of national unity →catch-all →increasingly anti-white	n/a	→first none, since 2002 personal	→bridging dominant ethnic cleavage lines	→bridging dominant ethnic cleavage lines	→high to very high	→low to very low;	non-ethnic
	DTA	→formed as political ally of apartheid South Africa	→in favor of national unity → at times anti-Ovambo	n/a	→ethnic	→multi-ethnic	n/a	→low to very low	→high to very high	multi-ethnic
	CoD	→formed in protests against lack of intra-party democracy in SWAPO	→in favor of good governance	n/a	→personal	→bridging dominant ethnic cleavage lines	n/a	→medium to low	→medium to high;	non-ethnic

Source: Own compilation based on field study and desk research that has been part of the author's concluded PhD project. All data is with the author. See also Elischer 2008 and 2008b.

1.3 Comparing Political Parties in Kenya, Namibia and Ghana

As displayed in table 1.1 all Kenyan parties constitute ethnic parties. With the exception of KANU and NARC this is visible in all indicators of all parties under scrutiny. The classification of KANU as ethnic party is contestable as four out of eight indicators display values characteristic of a non-ethnic party. Among the numerous parties that have proliferated since December 1991, it certainly represents the most national party. However KANU's PNS and PDS values are skewed: In the 1992 and 1997 election electoral rigging in favor of the party in government took place (Throup and Hornsby 1998, Peter 1998, Rutten et al 2001). In many constituencies in the Rift Valley and in North Eastern province KANU candidates were elected unopposed. If elections had taken place KANU would have taken these constituencies in a landslide, which would have resulted in a less equal spread of its vote nationwide. In addition one should note that while in 1992 and 1997 both PDS and PNS values were comparatively high, in the 2002 elections this was no longer the case. Its high national coverage between 1992 and 2002 also derives from the infrastructural heritage of the one party state. Most important however there is extensive evidence that KANU politicians throughout the 1990s were actively engaged in fostering ethnic killings in anticipation and following general elections targeted at those communities that supported opposition parties (Human Rights Watch 1993, 2007, 2008).

NARC is another case where the majority of indicators display values indicative of a non-ethnic party. Yet NARC was a coalition of various multi- and mono-ethnic parties, which came together immediately before the 2002 elections with the explicit purpose of achieving an alteration of power. Immediately after it claimed power it was beset by ethnic tensions structured around the country's dominant division into Kikuyu and Luo. In 2005 NARC fell apart into NARC-Kenya (which recently became the Party of National Unity) and the Orange-Democratic Movement-Kenya (which recently became the Orange Democratic Movement Kenya and the Orange Democratic Movement). It therefore must be seen as temporary multi-ethnic alliance.

Out of our three cases results for Ghana are straightforward as both parties have over time managed to overcome the centrifugal tendencies of ethnicity. Though NDC and NPP have regional and ethnic strongholds all major communities (Akan, Ewe and the numerous Northern Muslim communities) are represented in both parties. Electoral indicators display some of the highest values measured in this study.

Results for Namibia are striking as out of our three party systems it constitutes the only country where ethnic and non-ethnic parties co-exist. The governing SWAPO party is the proto-type of a non-ethnic party. The long-term official opposition, the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA), was internally torn by ethnic factions, which proved a major factor in its downfall. The DTA has been replaced by the Congress of Democrats (CoD), a non-ethnic party. Thus over time non-ethnic parties have become the norm in Namibia; the fact that the DTA can be seen as the historical legacy of the apartheid state is further evidence for this. One must also note that both the DTA and the CoD cannot be regarded as politically significant (Sartori 2001). Neither do the DTA and the CoD qualify as effective parties (Taagepera 1999). They have been added to our selection of cases in order to demonstrate the dynamics of the Namibian party system.

Overall results show that ethnicity exercises political salience at the aggregate level of political parties in Kenya, yet not in Ghana or Namibia where the impact of ethnicity

is either very limited or non-existent. This has various implications for the contemporary scholarly debate about African democracy: Firstly, it shows that the introduction – or re-introduction – of multi-party democracy in the early 1990s does not lead to ethnic census as argued by some (Horowitz 2000). Secondly we note variance across countries with regard to the impact of ethnicity. No theory exists that can explain the rise of ethnic parties in some and non-ethnic parties in other non-industrialized countries. The subsequent part will examine the role of several variables the literature allocates great importance for the process of political party formation. Its goal is to arrive at tentative conclusion – the small amount of cases covered in this study does not permit the formulation of robust hypothesis – which can serve as starting point for further research that aims at a theory of ethnic party formation.

2. Explaining the Formation of (Non-) Ethnic Parties

2.1 Economic Variables

2.1.1 Economic Growth and Human Development at the National Level

In a first step we want to compare and analyze economic development at the systemic level. We can expect political grievances to sharpen in countries in which growth remains stagnant and in which human development deteriorates. Ethnicity might be one channel through which such grievances are raised. In this study we measure economic growth and human development with the following indicators: The GDP per capita (expressed in US \$), real GDP percentage growth and human development trends.⁹

⁹ For the philosophy behind the HDI and how it is composed see: <http://hdr.undp.org/en/humandev> (accessed on July 28, 2009, 2:58pm).

Table 2.1: GDP per capita (in US\$ in current prices)

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Ghana	463	500	449	387	343	398	416	404	427	430	270
Kenya	517	474	453	307	358	444	437	472	479	438	409
Namibia	2,068	1,966	2,005	1,863	2,032	2,121	2,051	2,071	1,881	1,826	1,803
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008			
Ghana	281	318	384	436	513	594	690	786			
Kenya	423	419	467	490	561	661	780	891			
Namibia	1,668	1,596	2,253	2,816	3,193	3,474	3,672	3,805			

Source: IMF World Economic Surveys

Table 2.2 Human Development Index (HDI) Trends

	1990	1995	2000	2005
Ghana	0.52	0.54	0.57	0.55
Kenya	0.56	0.54	0.53	0.52
Namibia	n/a	0.70	0.66	0.66

Source: Based on UNDP Human Development Reports

With regard to the GDP per capita we see roughly the same level of economic development in Ghana and Kenya yet a higher level of economic development in Namibia. The average income per capita over the whole period of time is US \$413 in Ghana, US \$498 in Kenya and US \$2,191 in Namibia. Though over the whole period Ghana and Kenya show similar performances both have produced very different types of parties and party systems. Ghana illustrates that non-ethnic parties are not contingent on economic growth rates as the example of Namibia might one lead to assume. In recent years Kenya and Ghana have experienced sustainable increases in GDP per capita, which have not led to any changes in party types in either of the two countries.

A more appropriate mean for the assessment of individual human development is the human development index trend which is outlined in table 2.2 above for our three countries. The closer the HDI trends towards one the higher the degree of human development. Again one can note similar values between Ghana and Kenya, which excludes the possibility that diverging degrees of human development lead to the rise of ethnic party types. Namibia again produces figures higher than those of Ghana and Kenya yet the same type of (non-ethnic) parties as Ghana. We also know from our extended analysis of the Namibian party system that ethnic parties feature in the Namibian political system, which illustrates that comparative high levels of economic development in Africa can produce ethnic parties. In conjunction with our comparison of Kenya and Ghana this falsifies the notion that there is a link between party types and economic development.

The discussion on economic conditions so far has not illustrated the economic conditions within countries, which is more significant for our research purposes. If we find stark regional differences in terms of economic or human development in Kenya yet not in Ghana or Namibia this could explain the rise of ethnic parties.

2.1.2 Economic Growth and Human Development at the Regional Level

Examining the economic regional differences within countries with regard to their potential impact on the rise of (non-)ethnic parties necessitates an important caveat: Regions or districts serve as weak proxy for ethnic groups; in Africa as elsewhere ethnically homogenous regions rarely exist. Unfortunately in almost all countries data is collected at the level of regions and not at the level of communities. In order to measure development we use regional human development indexes (HDI) and regional rates of human poverty incidence (HPI).¹⁰ In the case of Ghana data regarding regional human development indexes has not been conducted. Therefore we analyze regional economic outputs with the help of poverty incidence rate and the Social Exclusion Index.¹¹ In Namibia data on regional human development is again not available. Instead differences in the regional developmental outputs are examined only with the help of poverty rate incidences. Data collection in Namibia however has the advantage that it has recently

¹⁰ Rather than using income the HPI uses various indicators to measure the basic dimensions of deprivation. For a technical overview of how the HPI is calculated and applied see United Nations 2006, Appendix II, Technical Note 2.

¹¹ The poverty incidence line measures the percentage of the population whose daily income is below 1 US\$. The Social Exclusion Index goes back to Grusky and Kanbur (2006). For an interpretation and calculation for the Ghanaian case see United Nations 2007:54.

also been conducted at the level of language groups, which serves as better proxy for ethnic communities.

In the case of Kenya we find significant developmental differences between regions as table 2.4 and 2.5 below illustrate.

Table 2.4: Human Development Index across Kenya's Regions

Province	HDI Index 2001	HDI Index 2006
Kenya	0.54	0.53
Nairobi	0.78	0.77
Central	0.60	0.64
Coast	0.47	0.52
Eastern	0.54	0.51
Rift Valley	0.51	0.53
Nyanza	0.44	0.47
Western	0.45	0.52
North Eastern	0.41	0.29

Source: UNDP 2001 and 2006

Table 2.5: Poverty Incidence Rate in % across Kenya's Regions

Province	HPI 2001	HPI 2006
Kenya	34.5	n/a
Nairobi	32.4	29.9
Central	30.7	32.3
Coast	37.5	42.5
Eastern	39.8	40.0
Rift Valley	36.8	40.5
Nyanza	44.3	37.4
Western	41.1	36.1
North Eastern	44.8	50.5

Source: UNDP 2001 and 2006

In 2001 human development is most advanced in Nairobi, which is not surprising given its urban and cosmopolitan setting. The only other region which is above the national average human development index is Kikuyu-dominated Central province. Poorly performing regions include North Eastern, Coast, Nyanza and Western; these display HDI values, which fall into the category of low developed countries, while the rest fall into the category of medium developed countries (UNDP 2001). The same applies to the situation in 2006. Though Central province and Nairobi still contain a large share of people that live in poverty, poverty incidence rates are significantly lower than in other provinces. The data provides evidence for the often raised argument in Kenya's domestic discourse that several parts of the nation are economically disadvantaged compared to the Kikuyu-dominated Central Province. In the case of Ghana economic data measuring economic inequalities between regions occur with the help of Poverty Incidences and the Social Exclusion Index. Table 2.6 outlines poverty incidences by region. Table 2.7 outlines the degree of social exclusion measured by the Social Exclusion Index (SEI).

Table 2.6: Incidences of Poverty in % in Ghana Across Regions

Region	HPI 1991/92	HPI 1998/99	HPI 2005/06
Ghana	51.7	39.5	28.5
Western	59.6	27.3	18.4
Central	44.3	48.4	19.9
Greater Accra	25.8	5.2	11.8
Volta	57.0	37.7	31.4
Eastern	48.0	43.7	15.1
Ashanti	41.2	27.7	20.3
Brong Ahafo	65.0	35.8	29.5
Northern	63.4	69.2	52.3
Upper East	66.9	88.2	70.4
Upper West	88.4	83.9	87.9

Source: Ghana Statistical Service 2007

Table 2.7: Degree of Social Exclusion in % in Ghana Across Regions

Region	SEI 1992	SEI 1999	SEI 2006
Ghana	52	40	29
Western	42	21	11
Central	26	29	12
Greater Accra	16	3	7
Volta	34	23	19
Eastern	29	26	9
Ashanti	35	12	12
Brong Ahafo	40	18	18
Northern	37	32	32
Upper East	40	43	43
Upper West	53	51	54

Source: UNDP 2007

As in Kenya there are striking differences between regions. Across time this applies particularly to the Muslim-dominated North (Northern, Upper East and Upper West), which is lagging far behind national average figures. The division between the Muslim-North and the Christian-South further constitutes a dominant cleavage line in Ghanaian politics. Yet despite the economic division between Ghana's North and South, our analysis of parties has demonstrated that both major Ghanaian parties have consistently incorporated politicians of all major communities in their respective leadership structures.

The case of Namibia confirms that economic differences alone are not sufficient enough to cause the formation of ethnic parties. Table 2.9 outlines the incidence rate of poverty in Namibia across regions. Table 2.9 outlines the incidence of poverty by language group.

Table 2.8: Incidences of Poverty in % in Namibia Across Regions

Region	HPI 1993/94	HPI 2008
Namibia	52.8	27.6
Khomas	16.8	6.3
Erongo	29.1	10.3
Oshana	68.8	19.6
Karas	32.1	21.9
Kunene	63.2	23.0
Otjozondjupa	35.3	27.8

Caprivi	73.0	28.6
Omaheke	52.0	30.1
Omusati	70.5	31.0
Hardap	34.1	32.1
Oshikoto	69.9	40.8
Ohangwena	82.7	44.7
Kavango	62.6	56.5

Source: Namibia Household Income and Expenditure Survey 1993/94 cited in van Rooy et al (2006):7 and Republic of Namibia 2008.

Table 2.9: Incidence of Poverty in % by Language Group

Language Group	HPI
Oshiwambo	50.6
Rukavango	18.4
Nama/Damara	14.2
Otjiherero	5.4
Caprivian	4.7
Afrikaans	3.0
Setswana	0.2
German	0.0
English	0.0

Source: Republic of Namibia 2008.

Within Namibia poverty affects Ovambo-dominated regions (Ohangwena, Oshikoto, Omusati and Omaheke) and the Ovambo community as a whole. To some large extent this is a long-term effect of the war between the apartheid South African state and SWAPO in the 1970s and 1980s, which affected mainly the Northern regions. Yet so far no political party has occurred that focuses exclusively on the well-being of the Ovambo.

On the basis of our results economic inequalities between groups cannot be seen as sufficient condition for the formation of ethnic parties. This is not to deny that these differences matter politically. The allegedly privileged position of the Kikuyu for example continues to resurface in Kenya and undoubtedly has contributed to the ethnization of Kenyan politics. Yet across countries economic differences at the regional level cannot account for the rise of ethnic parties.

2.2 Electoral Systems and Political Parties

Political scientists have long recognized the importance of electoral systems for shaping the nature of political competition (Barkan 1995 Blais 2006, Kuenzi and Lambright 2007, Lijphart 1994, Grofman and Lijphart 1986, Sartori 2001, Reily and Reynolds 1999). In the case of Africa much of the debate has been shaped by South Africa's (and to a lesser extent Namibia's) transition from apartheid to multi-racial democracy (Lijphart 1991, Reynolds 1995, Barkan 1995, Horowitz 2000, Davis 2004, Horowitz 1992).

Following Reynolds and Lijphart we could expect to find a greater degree of accommodation in Namibia (PR system) than in Kenya and Ghana (majoritarian/FPTP systems). Comparing Kenya and Namibia initially confirms the assumption that PR systems contribute to the formation of all-inclusive parties while FPTP does not. While the only significant and effective party in Namibia – SWAPO – corresponds to our non-

ethnic party type, all parties in Kenya represent ethnic party types. Yet lowering our threshold of significant and effective parties our examination of the Namibian party systems reveals the existence of ethnic parties as the classification of the DTA has shown (for other opposition parties see also Le Beau 2005). In addition SWAPO was formed long before parliamentary democracy and its electoral rules appeared to be a realistic option for Namibia (see Ansprenger 1984, Harneit-Sievers 1984). The implementation of PR can thus be seen as irrelevant. Results from our classification exercise for Ghana provides additional evidence for excluding proportional representation as the key explanatory variable.

2.3 Party System and Political Party Types

The literature distinguishes between dominant and non-dominant parties. The former refers to countries in which democratic change has occurred – such as for example Kenya and Ghana – the later to countries in which one party has dominated the political scenery – such as for example Namibia. Across the continent dominant party systems have been the norm (van de Walle 2003, Bogaards 2004, Melber 2003).

Over the whole observation period (1989 to 2008) our results show no correlation between the type of party system in place and the salience of ethnicity impacting on party politics. In both Ghana and Kenya changes in government have occurred yet both have produced different types of parties and party systems. In Namibia SWAPO never had to face serious political competition and no changes in government have occurred. A mixed system has transformed into a non-ethnic one. Overall we can discard party system as explanatory variable in accounting for (non-) ethnic party types. The same applies if we look at the effect of party systems across individual observations: The change from a dominant to a non-dominant system has not altered the dynamics of Ghanaian or Kenyan party politics.

2.4 The Legal Dimension: Party Laws and Political Parties

Although the literature on African politics mentions the existence of party laws that legally proscribe the formation of ethnic parties, until recently these bans not been analysed systematically. A variety of continental European scholars have tried to fill that gap (Basedau et al 2007). These authors have focused on the question of whether or not party bans are conducive to conflict resolution and democratic stabilization applying a combination of research methods (Becher and Basedau 2008). Unfortunately they have not addressed the more proximate question of whether or not party bans impact on the type of party in place. This has probably been caused by a lack of agreement in the literature of how to classify African parties. Our study has not only put forward a framework to remedy this situation, it has also applied this framework to three countries and is thus better posited to analyse the effect of party regulations on parties.¹²

The current Ghanaian constitution does not permit parties to be based on ethnicity, religion, gender, professional groups and a variety of other divisions.¹³ This condition is fulfilled when one member from each region is part of the party's national executive,

¹² The author wishes to thank Matthias Basedau and Anika Becher for allowing him to use their data base on ethnic party regulation in Africa and for sharing their knowledge with him.

¹³ These additional conditions are not specified in this chapter for reason of space.

each district has at least one party member at the moment of its foundation, the party has branches in all regions and has offices in at least two third of the districts in each region. By contrast Kenya until very recently had no constitutional mechanism in place prescribing ethnic parties. Namibia since independence has prescribed parties that discriminate on the basis of colour, ethnicity and race; yet no criteria are formulated by which this regulation is enforced.

Can we explain the variance of our outcome by this variable? It seems tempting to do so as for the first time we find a variable whose value (“existence of ethnic party bans”) correlates with the variance found on our dependent variable. However in Namibia the official opposition could be identified as ethnic party. The secondary literature on the various politically insignificant Namibian parties, which nevertheless manages to secure representation in Namibia’s National Assembly further shows these to be mono-ethnic (Le Beau 2005). On various occasions the Ghanaian Electoral Commission has stated on various occasions that if the country was to apply its strict party laws, Ghana would become a no-party democracy.¹⁴ This indicates ethnic party bans to have a very limited effect on party systems overall. The differences between party types therefore cannot be linked to legal prescriptions.

2.5 Path-Dependence: Political Parties and the Type of Independence Movement

In analyzing the nature of independence movements across countries we want to examine to what extent the ethnicity shaped party competition in the immediate pre-and post-independence period. This enables us to check for path dependence and further helps identifying variables that are unique to specific countries in accounting for their respective salience of ethnicity. The long-term effect of foundational moments has in recent years been increasingly recognized by scholars associated with historical institutionalism. Accordingly a particular path taken at a “critical juncture” can have long-term impact of countries’ historical pathways. Historical institutionalists have been particularly successful in accounting for continuities in politics and in focusing attention on the mechanisms that produce continuity. The latter is often described as path-dependence or positive feedback (Mahoney and Rueschemeyer 2008, Pierson 2004, Collier and Collier 1991).

Many studies have been written about immediate pre-and post-independence politics yet these are often confined to an analysis of the conflict of interests between traditional leadership and a rapidly emerging educated middle class (Rotberg 1966, Hodgkin 1956, Morgenthau 1961). African historians have not yet filled that gap in research. Methodologically using a historical variable exposes our findings to accusations of subjective bias (Lustick 1996: 605). The longer and the richer the historiographical tradition covering a particular topic the lower the likelihood that bias can occur (Lustick 1996). Unfortunately African historiography is anything but long and rich. Despite these substantial shortcomings a provisional comparison of the nationalist movements of our three countries is feasible.

Our analysis of Namibia’s independence movements is already complete as the parties that fought for independence (SWAPO and to a much lesser extent the DTA) are still the

¹⁴ Based on newspaper archive research of the Daily Graphic, Ghana’s largest daily.

same parties that operate today. Our historical analysis will therefore focus on Ghana and Kenya and then compare the nature of the independence movements in all three countries. By “independence” or “nationalist movement” this paper includes the major political parties, which explicitly called for an end of colonialism/ apartheid. The emphasis is less with historical detail but with whether or not African independent movements at the time aimed the inclusion of all major groups involved.

2.5.1 Ghana: The United Front

The first political movement in Ghana calling for an end to colonialism was the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC). Its formation has been facilitated by the increasing radicalization of the young and aspiring intelligentsia, the moderately educated and the indigenous trading community. Their increasing political alienation was particularly poignant in Ashanti (today Ashanti province and Brong Ahafo) and the Colony (today Central, Western and Eastern province). The UGCC formed on 4th April 1947. Rights from its inception the party understood itself as nationwide movement and a bridge between the chiefs and the people. Its founding organizations were occupational interest groups such as the Colony’s Farmer Union or the Ex-Servicemen Union. Its leading members were A.G. Grant (chairman), R.S. Blay (vice-president), J.B. Danquah (vice-president and the unofficial leader), R.A. Williams (treasurer), W.E. Ofori Atta, E.A. Akufo Addo, J.W. de Graft Johnson and Obesibi Lamptey. With the exception of Lamptey (Ga) all of its members were of Akan origin. The North at the time was still beset by traditional lifestyle and non-participation in national political life. The Ewe community was not excluded from involvement in the party; Komla Gbedemah (Ewe) was initially selected as UGCC general secretary, however he declined to serve in that position.¹⁵ The UGCC soon fell apart because of its fateful decision to call upon Kwame Nkrumah to return from London and UGCC general secretary.¹⁶ Nkrumah’s formation of the Convention’s People’s Party (CPP) was based on the belief that a more radical force fighting British colonialism would better capture the mood of the colony. Austin, who had unique access to internal UGCC memos dating from that period concluded:

“The broad nationalist front started under the UGCC leadership fractured quickly along moderate versus radical lines – it is probably fair to add along the lines of economic and social interest” (Austin 1961: 296).

Nkrumah’s CPP soundly defeated the UGCC in the 1952 elections and managed to create a nationwide movement with party branches covering the whole of the Gold Coast. Nkrumah’s deputy was Gbedemah (Ewe), his secretary general Kojo Botsio (Apter 1955, Austin 1961, Austin 1970, Hettne 1980). The transformation of Ghana’s nationalist movement from the UGCC to the CPP as prevailing political actor was thus driven by increasing radicalism and potentially different ideological conceptions about the future independent Ghanaian state. Ethnicity was not the divisive issue between UCCP and CPP as both were building nationwide political machines.

¹⁵ Gbedemah was offered the position as general secretary after the UGCC had fallen out with Nkrumah.

¹⁶ The information is taken from Austin 1961. Austin had exclusive access to the UGCC’s minute book on which his historical account is based.

However the second split that occurred between the pre-independence African government of 1954 and the National Liberation Movement (NLM) had strong ethnic undercurrents. Opposition to the CPP emerged in the late summer of 1954 in the Ashanti region over the fixed price of cocoa. Under the leadership of Kusi Ampofo, Osei Mensah and E.Y. Baffoe (all Ashanti) demands for farmer interests soon were extended to demands calling for a federal state structure. In speeches and rallies the notion of the “Ashanti nation” featured extensively. This found support among the Ashanti chiefs and most significantly the support of the Ashantehene, who supported the new political party with considerable financial resources. The party was officially founded on 19th September 1954 in Kumasi, the capital of Ashanti. According to both Austin and Apter this occurred among large crowds singing ancient war songs of the Ashanti. Bafour Osei Akoto – a senior linguist of the Ashantehene – was sworn in as chairman of the party whereby he had to swear the Great Oath of the Ashanti. In its alternative constitution the NLM had the Ashantehene written as head of the Ashanti nation (Howe 1958, Apter 1972, Austin 1970, Goldworthy 1973). Interestingly the farmer of the Colony –largely Fante or Ga – did not join the NLM even though their political interests were identical to those of their Ashanti contemporaries. According to Austin “*the NLM was a Kumasi-centered, Ashanti movement, which appealed for support in the name of the Ashantehene, the Golden Stool, Ashanti interest, Ashanti history and Ashanti rights*” (Austin 1970: 265).

None of the authors involved in the early historiography of Ghana has doubted the very ethnic nature of Nkrumah’s opposition. However for the purpose of this paper it is important to stress the reaction of the CPP to the political onslaught of the mono-ethnic ethnic NLM: Throughout the period of ethnic agitation inside Ashanti, the CPP retained a visible presence in the region. Ashanti whose family origins did not allow for social progression continued to support the CPP. Traders who depended on government contracts and who could expect financial benefits from a strong central government also remained within CPP ranks. The CPP’s most prominent politician in Ashanti, Krobo Edusai, who had close family ties to some chiefs stayed inside the party. In order to maintain a sizable segment of support the CPP further fostered its standing among the chiefdoms located further away from Kumasi who had traditionally been skeptical of the domineering role of the Ashantehene. The government rewarded their loyalty with the creation of the Brong-Ahafo region, where it managed to claim the majority of seats in the 1956 elections (Apter 1972, Austin 1970, Hettne 1980). In the 1956 elections the CPP won 44% of the popular vote in Ashanti though its seat share declined from 18 (out of 21) to 8 (out of 21), while the NLM managed to win 54%.¹⁷ Even though it must be noted that the high vote share is contingent on the support among non-Ashanti minorities in particular in the urban areas of Kumasi, these figures illustrate that the CPP remained a serious political contender among the Ashanti. The fact that the CPP managed to field candidates in all Ashanti constituencies underlines this (Davidson 2007). Nationally the CPP could triumph once more taking 71 seats over the 33 seats of the overall opposition. Only in Ashanti and in the North did the CPP not emerge as strongest political force. As in Ashanti the CPP could claim a visible political presence in the North too: In the 1956 elections it carried 44.6% of the popular vote and took 11 out of 26 seats.¹⁸ Finally both

¹⁷ *Legon Observer*, February 16, 1979.

¹⁸ *Legon Observer*, February 16, 1979.

the CPP as well as the various pre-independent Nkrumah governments contained representatives from all over the country (Asante and Gyimah-Boadi 2004). Therefore the Ghanaian independence movement – initially represented by the UGCC and later by the CPP –remained national in character: The break-up of the UGCC was not motivated by ethnic undercurrents, the exclusion of the North in high-ranking party position an outcome of the socio-political realities of the North at the time and the formation of an ethnic opposition in Ashanti not succeeded by ethnic fragmentation of the political scene overall.

2.5.2 Kenya: *Ethnic Disunity from the Start*

In Kenya the process of party formation followed a distinctly different pattern. The alienation of fertile land by the British from the Kikuyu¹⁹ led to a stratification of Kenyan society. Due to their loss of land yet their simultaneous proximity to Nairobi and missionary education the Kikuyu developed a political consciousness earlier than any other community (Holmquist and Ford 1994, Throup 1987; Kala 1979). The early 1950s saw the radicalization of Kikuyu protest, which took a dramatic and violent turn in the form of the Mau Mau uprising.²⁰

From 1955 onwards political parties were permitted yet only at the district level. This did not apply to (Kikuyu dominated) Central province given the ethnic nature of Mau Mau (Berman and Lonsdale 1992, Throup 1987, Wrong 2008). The year 1959 saw the formation of two parties trying to reach out nationally: Firstly, the Kenya National Party (KNP) led by Masinde Muliro (Luhya), Daniel arap Moi (Kalenjin), J.K. ole Tipis (Masai) and Ronald Ngala (Mijikenda/Coastal). Shortly after its formation it was dissolved as its activities were disrupted. In Nairobi the KNP was unable to hold meetings as Odinga's Luo-based Nairobi's People's Convention Party (NPCP) frequently disturbed its rallies. These were early examples of the high frequency and salience of political conflict. In June 1960 the founding members of the KNP and several other smaller parties came together under the umbrella of the Kenya African Democratic Union (KADU). All of KADU's founding elements were ethnic-based parties or associations including old Tipsis' Masai United Front, Moi's Kalenjin Political Alliance, Osman Araru's Somali National Association, the North Nyanza District Congress, the Coast African Political Union and the Kilifi African People's Union. KADU's formation was largely a direct response to the formation of the Kenya African National Union (KANU) a few weeks earlier in May 1960 and the fear of Kenya's smaller communities of a political party in which the two largest tribes had come together (Anderson 2005).

Ethnicity was also the major point of contention within parties. Inside KANU the election of Mboya as general secretary was very contested and caused disappointment among the Kikuyu delegates. In the run-up to the 1961 elections the Kikuyu wing of KANU (in cooperation with Odinga Oginga) successfully fielded an alternative candidate, Wayaki, against Mboya (Kyle 1999, Goldworthy1982). Inside KADU the so-called "Kitale issue"

¹⁹ It must be noted that the alienation of land also affected a variety of other communities, yet not to the same extent as the Kikuyu.

²⁰ This section provides a simplified account of Kenyan political history. For a detailed overview of the rise of the Mau Mau see Throup 1987.

showed the dilemma of a party that was built on ethnic interest groups. Several communities claimed to have the right to settle in the areas around Kitale and all of them were members of KANU (Sanger and Nottingham 1964, Anderson 2005). Outside the two political parties ethnic political unions formed that tried to unite communities under the roof of one party such as the Luo Political Movement, the Kikuyu Political Movement and the Baluhya Union (Teubert-Seiwert 1987). Although both parties contested the 1961 election with almost identical platforms, in 1963 the ethnic cleavage between KANU and KADU – smaller nomadic groups versus larger agricultural communities – was clearly visible in their diverging attitudes towards federalism (“majimboism”) and the federal constitution drawn up at various Lancaster House talks (Sanger and Nottingham 1964; Teubert-Seiwert 1987). The electoral contest and the result were also telling: Out of 177 constituencies, KADU nominated 59. The number of nominated candidates by KANU is not mentioned in the secondary literature, yet is indicated to be far below 177. Election results confirm this: While KADU took the Rift-Valley, Western and Coastal Province, KANU took Central, Nyanza and Eastern province (Wandiba 1996, Kyle 1999, Geerzel 1979). Table 2.10 summarizes our results for all three countries.

Overall one notes communalities between Ghana and Namibia, yet differences between the two and Kenya. While independence movements with a strong ethnic character were present in Ghana and Namibia, both countries simultaneously produced one ethnically united movement – SWAPO and the CPP. Alternative nationalist movements that did have an ethnic character – the DTA and the NLM – never were strong enough to challenge their competitors in earnest and never were able to cause ethnic fragmentation of their opponents. The same did not occur in Kenya, where the independence movement was from the start divided into two ethnic alliances and where politics was driven by the fear of the Kikuyu. Even though these results correspond with the results that we are getting for our analysis of contemporary party systems – high salience of ethnicity in Kenya in general, low salience of ethnicity in Ghana and Namibia – doubts remain about the extent to which the type of independence movement can explain the political dynamics of party politics in the contemporary period. With regard to Kenya one will have to note that the immediate pre- and post-independence period can account for the cleavage into Kikuyu and Kalenjin, yet not into the division between the Kikuyu and the Luo, which occurred later. Whatever the causes behind this – genuine policy considerations or ethnic-strategic maneuvering (or both) – it shows the limited explanatory power of independent movements as variable on its own. Equally in Ghana the division between Ewe and Ashanti cannot be traced back to the pre-independence period. In addition as with all historical explanations problems remain as to why a certain phenomenon appeared in the first place.

Table 2.10: Overview over Independent Movements

Independence Movement		Participating Communities	Founding Elements	Background of Formation and Goals	Classification
Ghana	UGGC	largely Akan yet not exclusionary	Intellectuals Professional Groups	Protest against privileged role of traditional leaders; Protest against injustices of colonial system	national
	CPP	all	radical elements of UGGC	Break-away from CPP; Call for faster independence;	national
	NLM	Ashanti	Ashanti farmers	Ashanti break-away from CPP; Call for federalism;	ethnic
Kenya	KANU	large tribes	ethnic district parties	Protest against injustices of colonial system; Strong centralized state	ethnic
	KADU	small tribes	ethnic district parties	Protest against injustices of colonial system; Federal state structure	ethnic
Namibia	SWAPO	all	workers	Protest against labor conditions and apartheid; Independence	national
	DTA	smaller communities	ethnic parties	Supported and financed by South Africa; Protest against petty apartheid;	ethnic

Source: Author's Compilation Based on Secondary Sources

2.6. Ethnic Fractionalization and Political Parties

In the scholarly debate ethnic diversity is seen as detrimental to economic growth and conducive to political tension (Easterly and Levine 1997, Collier at al 2001, Collier and Hoeffler 1998 and 2004). Conflict resolution scholars have been particularly concerned about the negative impact the existence of a core ethnic group can have on political stability as they make ethnic secession less likely (Hale 2004 and 2000, see also Hewitt 1977). Political scientists interested in the interplay between democratic quality and ethnicity have argued that the more diverse a country the better for democratic quality: A high degree of ethnic fractionalization makes a scenario in which one group dominates all other groups unlikely (Temelli 1999). Overall there is agreement in the literature that the existence of a core ethnic group and a generally low degree of ethnic fractionalization has

the potential to impact negatively on democratic stability. The following will examine the impact of ethnic fractionalization on political parties. The paper distinguishes between two scenarios:

Scenario 1: Balancing

Scenario 1 is derived from commonly held assumptions in the literature. In states in which core ethnic groups – defined as groups that contain either an outright majority of the population or a group that makes up at least 20 percent more of the country’s population than the second largest group (Hale 2004, Temelli 1999) – exist, ethnicity exercises high salience in party politics. The same reasoning as in the debate about ethno-federalism applies: Core ethnic groups have a powerful incentive to play on group solidarity as their numerical superiority in conjunction with ethnic unity would allow them to grasp power easily. This condition is particularly prevalent in cases where core ethnic groups suffer from economic grievances. Their numerical superiority further allows them to avoid coordination problems. The closer a core ethnic group is to an outright majority the smaller the amount of groups it will co-opt into its alliance. Numerically large groups will therefore organize in ethnic parties. Due to the numerical superiority of the core ethnic group, both trust and the potential of cooperation between communities are undermined. The several smaller communities – or at least those that are not part of the multi-ethnic alliance – will fear political dominance and form alliances with peer groups. By contrast in societies which contain many small groups of similar sizes, group leaders will aim at the formation of parties including a maximum amount of groups as one’s own community will never be sufficient to secure access to political power. In short: In ethnically fractionalized societies the structural conditions are more conducive to the rise of non-ethnic parties. Or: In countries with a core ethnic group, communities form mono-ethnic parties or multi-ethnic alliance in order to outbalance each other.

Scenario 2: Bandwagoning

This scenario is unlikely to occur according to the literature. Due to their numerical superiority core groups are aware that they can yield significant political power. Groups that are close to an outright majority are further aware that ethnic unity is difficult to achieve for practical reasons such as logistics or political apathy. Given their significant size the group will produce several leaders aspiring for the highest political office the country has to offer, which makes ethnic unity on election day improbable. This will have two consequences: The dominant group will probably be represented in all major parties or at least in more than one. Consequently its respective leaders will reach out to as many other communities as possible as they are aware of the potential strength of their intra-ethnic competitors. Thus leaders from the dominant group have a strong political incentive to seek inter-group cooperation. In addition their dominant status generally facilitates easier cooperation with other groups as their inclusion in top leadership positions is ensured. Simultaneously small communities will choose bandwagoning over balancing as dominant strategy and seek cooperation with the core ethnic group. This might occur out of ulterior motives – if you cannot beat them join them – or out of the fact that the core group has produced more than one leader. If the latter is the case it appears likely that peripheral groups will also divide themselves among several parties.

Such a scenario appears most conducive to the formation of non-ethnic parties. In short: In countries with a core group, smaller communities engage in a strategy of bandwagoning, which fosters the formation of non-ethnic parties.

In order to assess the ethnic set up of countries the literature uses the Ethnic-Linguistic Fractionalization (ELF) index calculated on the basis of Scarritt and Mozaffar's database (Posner 2004, Scarritt and Mozaffar 1999). For our three countries we receive the following results:

Table 2.11: Ethnic Fractionalization Index Based on Scarritt and Mozaffar

Country	Fractionalization of National Cleavage Lines
Kenya	.85
Namibia	.62
Ghana	.63

Source: Author's Compilation on the basis of Scarritt and Mozaffar 1999.

Results display roughly the same degree of fractionalization in Ghana and Namibia. In comparison Kenya maintains a higher degree of ethnic fractionalization.²¹ According to prevalent thinking in the literature we could have expected the salience of ethnicity to be more prevalent in Ghana and Namibia. Temelli (1999) for example states explicitly that Ghana and Namibia have a higher potential for ethnic politics as both have low degrees of ethnic fractionalization. Our party classification exercise however proves the opposite: In countries in which ethnic fragmentation is low and which contain a core ethnic group, ethnicity feature less at the aggregate level of political parties than in countries that display a high ethnic fractionalization index. In the case of our three countries scenario two has been confirmed. Contrary to commonly held assumptions balancing against the largest group does not take place in Ghana or Namibia. Neither does the respective largest group exclude others politically even though in the Namibian case the largest group is disadvantaged in terms of economic well-being. Instead both the Akan and the Ovambo community have forged sustainable cross-ethnic alliances. As predicted in scenario two all significant and effective parties are either led by or include representatives of the core ethnic group. This confirms that ethnic unity among the core group is not sustainable. As a result in more homogeneous societies²² the threshold of forming non-ethnic parties is lowered significantly. By contrast in countries, which lack an ethnic core and which are less homogeneous there is generally a higher sense of uncertainty of who might claim power. This uncertainty combined with the smaller size of groups pose an imperative for groups to unite. This increases the threshold of the formation of non-ethnic parties. In the context of our study it might explain the constant appeals of Kenyan politicians to their group members to provide a strong ethnic front. The political history of our three countries also shows that historically in Ghana ethnic parties were only of a temporary nature as ethnicity has never proven to be a winning

²¹ To avoid confusion it should be mentioned that the values derived in Table 2.11 are based on all ethnic cleavage lines at the national level and not merely on the existing dominant ethnic cleavage lines. Our values therefore account for all ethnic cleavages that have the potential to become dominant national cleavage lines.

²² Homogeneous as understood within the African context.

strategy. The same is true in Namibia even though the ethnically based opposition endured much longer. Yet its formation and maintenance was facilitated by the apartheid state, an external actor. In Kenya by contrast from its inception post-independence politics had strong ethnic undercurrents. After the return of multi-party politics it was the ability of politicians to provide a sizeable ethnic vote share that made them attractive for political mergers: Raila Odinga's ability to bring in his Luo vote share made him attractive to New KANU and NARC alike. The same is true of Ngilu's Kamba support and Wamalwa's Luhya backing in 2002. Musyoka's support of the Kamba in 2007 and Uhuru Kenyatta's potential to become the next Kikuyu leader have recently made them the most promising contenders for the next Kenyan presidency together with William Ruto (Kalenjin) and Raila Odina (Luo).

Social structure is the only variable whose values correlate with our findings on the dependent variable. The degree of ethnic fragmentation further helps to explain why we find united nationalist movements in Namibia and Ghana and ethnically divided movements in Kenya.

Conclusion

This paper has tried to formulate a tentative explanation for the diverging salience of ethnicity at the aggregate level of political parties in Africa. In the scholarly debate ethnic parties are frequently blamed on the lack of an industrial revolution and the ethnic diversity of nations. This study has found ethnic parties to be paramount in Kenya and non-ethnic parties to prevail in Ghana and Kenya. In order to explain this difference the paper has examined a variety of potential explanatory variables. Its findings contradict commonly held assumptions. Firstly and maybe most surprising of all, economic differences between groups and regions are not a sufficient condition for the formation of ethnic parties. Equally the electoral system and the existence of ethnic party bans have no impact on the political salience of ethnicity at the aggregate level of political parties.

Instead the study finds that the existence of a core ethnic group correlates with the existence of non-ethnic parties, while the lack of a core ethnic group facilitates the formation of ethnic parties. In countries with a core ethnic group and a low ethnic fragmentation index, communities bandwagon with the core group. This is conducive to the formation of non-ethnic parties. In countries without a core ethnic group, communities balance against each other. This is conducive to the formation of ethnic parties. The paper has further shown that this phenomenon persists over time as the salience of ethnicity in contemporary multi-party politics corresponds to the salience of ethnicity in the period of the immediate pre-and post-independence era.

Given its novel approach to the study of African politics this study has chosen a small-n comparison with a proximate most similar research design. The extent to which they allow for generalizations of whole areas is limited. The study focused exclusively on Anglophone Africa. It further focused exclusively on countries that democratized early and which at least temporarily qualified as electoral democracy according to Freedom House methodology. Its findings therefore are not representative for the African continent. Widening the scope of the study will produce additional results and supplement its explanatory part with additional variables.

Annex A
Summary of Results for PNS and PDS

Overview over PNS across Time and Space

Country	Party	PNS	Observation Period
Kenya	FORD-K	.56	1
	FORD-A	.60	
	DP	.61	
	KANU	.68	
	FORD-K	.45	2
	DP	.57	
	SDP	.42	
	NDP	.48	
	KANU	.76	3
	NARC	.84	
	KANU	.73	4
	PNU	.66	
	ODM	.70	
	ODM-K	.49	
National Average		.61	
Ghana	NPP	[.65]	1
	NDC	.88	
	NPP	.65	2
	NDC	.89	
	NPP	.73	3
	NDC	.74	
	NPP	.80	4
	NDC	.68	
National Average		.77	
Namibia	SWAPO	.74	1
	DTA	.81	
	SWAPO	.77	2
	DTA	.60	
	SWAPO	.79	3
	DTA	.51	
	SWAPO	.84	4
	CoD	.58	
National Average		.71	
Total Average		.67	

Overview over PDS Across Time and Space

Country	Party	Diverging points	Observation Period
Kenya	FORD-K	83	1
	FORD-A	62	
	DP	58	
	KANU	52	
	FORD-K	80	2
	DP	58	
	SDP	84	
	NDP	110	
	KANU	40	
	NARC	24	3
	KANU	42	
	PNU	46	4
	ODM	62	
	ODM-K	86	
National Average		63	
Ghana	NPP	48	1
	NDC	26	
	NPP	42	2
	NDC	20	
	NPP	34	3
	NDC	20	
	NPP	26	4
	NDC	22	
National Average		30	
Namibia	SWAPO	47	1
	DTA	65	
	SWAPO	30	2
	DTA	90	
	SWAPO	28	3
	DTA	96	
	SWAPO	24	4
	CoD	71	
National Average		56/27 (SWAPO only)	
Total Average		52	

Average Total across time and space (still missing CoD in T4 and excluding Kenyan parties in T4 and Ghanaian parties in T5):

Kenya	63
Ghana	30
Namibia	56/ 27 (SWAPO only)
Total	52

Criteria and Classification:

PDS

High to very high: 82-110 (mono-ethnic)

Medium to High: 52-81 (multi-ethnic)

Medium/ Average: 52

Medium to low: 52-36 (non-ethnic)

Low to very low: 36-20 (non-ethnic)

PNS

High to very high: .78-.89 (non-ethnic)

Medium to High: .67-.78 (non-ethnic)

Medium/ Average: .67

Medium to low: .67-.55 (multi-ethnic)

Low to very low: .55-.42 (mono-ethnic)

Annex B
Overview over PNS calculated on the basis of Afrobarometer Data

Overview over PNS of parties across dominant cleavage lines

Country	Party	PNS	Afrobarometer Round
Kenya	NARC	.93	2003
	KANU	.66	
	NARC	.69	2005
	KANU	.52	
National Average		.70	
Ghana	NPP	.63	1999
	NDC	.86	
	NPP	.79	2002
	NDC	.76	
	NPP	.84	2005
	NDC	.75	
	NPP	.76	2008
	NDC	.72	
National Average		.76	
Namibia	SWAPO	.80	1999
	DTA	.50	
	SWAPO	.80	2001
	DTA	.50	
	SWAPO	.76	2006
	CoD	.90	
National Average		.73 (.79 SWAPO alone)	
Total Average		.72 (.75 SWAPO alone)	

Notes on Afrobarometer data:

Due to the small amount of respondents at the level of individual communities PNS values derived from Afrobarometer data are taken from communities that are part of a dominant cleavage line.

In Namibia these include the Ovambo, the white and the Herero community. The number of white survey respondents however could not be identified as surveys in Namibia as surveys do not ask respondents about their ethnicity but their home language. As both Afrikaans and English are spoken by a variety of other communities, the responses of white Namibians could not be isolated. Therefore data from Namibia PNS Afrobarometer scores from Namibia only refer to political preferences of Ovambo and Herero speakers. The author however has also calculated PNS results for all Southern Namibian communities (Herero, Nama, Damara) and results are almost identical.

In Ghana PNS values derived from Afrobarometer data include the Akan, the Ewe and the various Northern communities.

In Kenya PNS values include responses by those who identified themselves as Kikuyu, Luo or Kalenjin speakers. Data in Kenya has been collected in 2003 and 2005. This was shortly after the formation of NARC and shortly before it collapsed. Unfortunately it is therefore not representative of Kenya as a whole as it was only in these two years that Kenya was in possession of a non-ethnic party. When asked about their political preferences Kenyan respondents were given the option of choosing between NARC,

KANU as well as the various individual parties that make up NARC (for example the DP, FORD-K, the SDP and the LDP). This further limits then amount of respondents and makes Kenyan data even less representative.

Any interpretation should also take into consideration that the amount of those, who stated a lack of political loyalty to any one party, constitutes a significant part of those surveyed. This in turn limits the amount of respondents that can be used to calculate the PNS further. In the three countries covered these figures were as follows:

Percentage of Community who feel not close to any one party

Country	Community	Round 1/ 1999	Round 2/ 2002	Round 3/ 2005	Round 4/ 2008
Kenya	Kikuyu	n/a			n/a
	Kalenjin	n/a			n/a
	Luo	n/a			n/a
Ghana	Akan	35%	31%	35%	41%
	Ewe	34%	43%	32%	36%
	“Northern”	28%	32%	20%	25%
Namibia	Ovambo	28%	21%	n/a	11%
	Herero	38%	38%	n/a	27%
	“Southern”	42%	42%	n/a	27%

Source: Based on Afrobarometer data