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Problems of Categorizing and Explaining Party Systems in Africa

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Abstract

Starting from controversial findings about the relationship between party systems and the prospects of democratic consolidation, this article argues that problems can only be properly addressed on the basis of a differentiated typology of party systems. Contradictory research results do not pose an 'African puzzle' but can be explained by different and inadequate approaches. We argue that a modified version of Sartori's typology of party systems provides an appropriate method for classifying African party systems. Based on Sartori's framework, a preponderance of predominant and dominant party systems is identified. This can partly be explained by the prevailing authoritarian nature of many multiparty regimes in Africa as well as by the ethnic plurality of African societies. High ethnic fragmentation is not transformed into highly fragmented party systems. This phenomenon can be attributed to the most frequent 'ethnic congress party' which is based on an ethnic elite coalition.

Key words: Africa, South of Sahara, party systems, conceptual analysis, democratisation, electoral system, social cleavage, ethnicity

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Zusammenfassung

Afrikanische Parteiensysteme: Kategorisierungs- und Erklärungsprobleme

Die Parteienforschung zu Afrika hat bisher widersprüchliche Befunde zum Zusammenhang von Parteiensystem und zu den Aussichten für eine demokratische Konsolidierung hervorgebracht. Die widersprüchlichen Ergebnisse lassen sich zunächst mit unterschiedlichen und unangemessenen Ansätzen erklären. Zur Lösung des Problems ist jedoch eine differenzierte Parteiensystemtypologie notwendig. Zu einer sinnvollen Klassifizierung afrikanischer Parteiensysteme kann auf die Typologie von Giovanni Sartori zurückgegriffen werden, die allerdings modifiziert werden muss. Auf dieser Grundlage kann dann das Vorherrschen dominanter und prädominanter Parteiensysteme in Afrika identifiziert werden. Diese können im Wesentlichen mit zwei Faktoren erklärt werden: 1. mit dem autoritären Charakter vieler Mehrparteienregime und 2. mit der ethnischen Pluralität afrikanischer Gesellschaften. Entgegen mancher Erwartungen äußert sich die hohe ethnische Fragmentierung nicht in hoch fragmentierten Parteiensystemen. Dieses Phänomen beruht wiederum darauf, dass es sich bei den weitaus meisten Parteien in Afrika um „ethnische Kongressparteien“ handelt, die auf einer Koalition verschiedener ethnischer Eliten fußen.

Problems of Categorising and Explaining Party Systems in Africa

Gero Erdmann and Matthias Basedau

Article Outline

1. Introduction
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4. Social Cleavage and (Pre-)dominant Party Systems
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1. Introduction

Research on political parties in Africa started surprisingly late following the introduction of multiparty politics in the early 1990s, and it is confronted with a number of conceptual problems (Erdmann 1999; 2004; Manning 2005). While systematic research on political parties as organisations is still lacking, increasing attention has been focused on the new emerging party systems and their relation to democratic consolidation. The transformation literature is more or less in agreement about the relevance of the party system as a 'partial regime' of democracy. Hence parties in young democracies have a particular function which their counterparts in established democracies no longer have: consolidating the democratic system and its 'partial regimes' (Merkel 1999: 145-6; Linz and Stepan 1996: 7; Randall and Svåsand 2002). A functionalist understanding suggests that the most favourable party system is characterised by moderate fragmentation, low polarisation, and high institutionalisation (Sartori 1976). Highly fragmented party systems are considered a danger for the stability of the political system as a whole (Sartori 1976: 119-216; Linz and Stepan 1978: 24-27), which applies to 'inchoate' party systems (Mainwaring and Scully 1995: 22-28), to the 'awkward embrace' of a dominant party (Pempel 1990; Giliomee and Simkins 1999; Rimanelli 1999; Walle 2003) and to a polarisation as well (Basedau 2005).

Yet, there is no clear indication of the type of party systems that have emerged in Africa. Early fears about the emergence of highly fragmented systems because of the multifaceted societies in Africa have proven to be unwarranted (Schmidt 1996: 53-54; Widner 1997: 66; Walle 2003: 302). This line of argument has a tradition in political party research as 'polyethnic' societies are believed to have highly fragmented party systems (Sartori 1967: 180). A different perception of one-party domination is, however, gaining ground (Erdmann 1999: 387; Walle and Butler 1999; Walle 2003; Randall and Svåsand 2002). Bogaards (2004: 192) identified a 'worrying trend to one-party dominance', while Mozaffar et al. (2003: 388; Mozaffar and Scarritt 2005) believe there to be 'low levels of fragmentation' only.

The research on party systems has a varied focus. Some studies try to categorise and explain party systems. Van de Walle and Butler (1999; Van de Walle 2003) use a dichotomous classification of 'fragmented' and 'dominant' party systems. They attempt an institutional approach to explain dominant party systems, but ignore social cleavages as a structuring force for party and party system formation. For Africa, this kind of ad hoc approach in party system typologies is frequent.¹

Mozaffar and Scarritt (2005; Mozaffar et al. 2003) do not care about categorising party systems. They describe a puzzle of 'low fragmentation and high volatility as the defining feature of African political party systems' regardless whether the regimes are democratic or authoritarian. They also try to explain this feature by strategic calculations which are structured by the institutional legacies of the previous authoritarian regimes. Finally, the 'African puzzle' is gauged to be conducive to democratic consolidation.

Kuenzi and Lambright take a different approach which generates a result that contradicts Mozaffar and Scarritt's findings. They focus on the institutionalisation of party systems without categorising or discussing different party systems (2001). Studying the relationship between party system characteristics and democracy, their statistical results show that party system stability and competitiveness are positively associated with democracy in Africa (2005). The implication is the number of parties, which means higher fragmentation, and the age of parties tend to be conducive to democracy (Kuenzi and Lambright 2005: 426f, 440). Unfortunately, they do not specify the number of parties required for democratic consolidation. In addition, and following a different reasoning, other authors (van de Walle 2001; Randall and Svasand 2002) are much more sceptical about the consolidation perspectives of present party systems in Africa than Mozaffar and Scarritt.

It seems that it is the research method including the question of a differentiated typology of party systems and not the African party system which provides a puzzle. The aim of this paper is to provide a comprehensive classification of Africa's party systems in order to explain why, contrary to the expectation based on the multi-ethnicity of African societies, is

there a dominance of one party in a majority of African political regimes. We finally discuss the different approaches for and the conflicting results of assessing the relationship between party systems and prospects of democratic consolidation.

2 Political Party Systems

As Bogaards has appropriately demonstrated, Sartori's (1976) definition of a 'dominant' and 'predominant' party, his 'counting rules', and typology of political party systems are still the most useful for arriving 'at an accurate classification of party systems and their dynamics in general, and of dominant party systems in particular' (Bogaards 2003: 5; Mair 2002). He compared Sartori's counting rules of parties with that of other scholars, especially with the most frequently applied 'effective number of parties' devised by Laakso and Taagpera (1979). The acknowledged problems with the latter's measure of numbers of parties and their conversion to types of party systems become very evident in the African context.ⁱⁱ

Bogaards points to five advantages of Sartori's framework (table 1). First, it provides one typology of party systems for fluid polities (or 'inchoate' party systems) such as we can expect in post-transition African countries, and one for structured polities and institutionalised party systems that can be found not only in established democracies of Europe but in a few African states as well. Second, both types of party systems provide a distinction between authoritarian and democratic domination that enables us to identify the nature of domination. This is crucial, since a particular party system can be brought about by authoritarian manipulation or by electoral decisions. Third, the concept of domination is absent in continuous party number measurements such as Laakso and Taagpera's. Fourth, the counting rules are not based on the numerical relative size of parties, but on the number of relevant actors in party competition and government formation. And fifth, Sartori's counting rules and definition of party systems provide an analytical framework sensitive to context and time.

Table 1: Sartori's typology of party systems

	Monopartism (authoritarian)	Polypartism (electoral / democratic)		
Initial stage (fluidity)	Dominant authoritarian	Dominant non-authoritarian	Non dominant	Pulverised
Structured stage (crystallisation)	One party / hegemonic	Predominant	Two-partism / multi-partism Limited / moderate pluralism Extreme / polarised pluralism	Atomised

Source: Sartori 1976: 125, 260.

In order to identify party systems in Africa, we applied a two level approach by using Sartori's counting rules and terminology for parties, and his typology for 'fluid' and 'structured' party systems where for the latter we slightly modified his concept. In the first stage, we tabulated the results of all elections since 1989 (regardless of their authoritarian or democratic context) according to a 'dominant', 'non dominant', or 'pulverised' constellation. We also included a few cases in which successive multiparty elections were held for a longer period (Botswana, Gambia, Mauritius, Senegal and Zimbabwe).

Dominance and Non-Dominance

At the fluid stage, a party is considered 'dominant' if it gained an absolute majority of seats in parliament (Sartori 1976: 199, 261). A constellation of parties without a dominant party but with up to five parties in parliament is 'non dominant'; where there is no dominant party and the number of parties is greater than five, the system is said to be 'pulverised' (ibid. 131-2, 260). The difference between 'non dominant' and 'pulverised', however, is not just one of numbers. Similar to Sartori, we included a qualitative criterion which refers to the problem of power relations (government, coalition or intimidation potential). We look at the number of relevant parties which is necessary to form a parliamentary majority in support of the government or a formal coalition government.ⁱⁱⁱ

Out of the 139 elections three quarters (107 = 76.9%) produced a 'dominant' party (for data details see appendix). At the same time, only eight elections resulted in a constellation that can be termed 'pulverised' (one 'pulverised authoritarian'); another 24 elections finished with a 'non dominant' party constellation. A provisional conclusion seems to be safe: the effect of multiparty elections in Africa is rarely that of a high fragmentation of parties, but rather the emergence of a dominant one party.

Considering the context of the regime and the extent to which the electoral competition could be considered free and fair, it becomes clear that more than half of the dominant party constellations is due to an authoritarian environment.^{iv} Of the 107 'dominant' party results, 57 have to be termed 'dominant authoritarian'. On the other side, of the 32 'non dominant' constellations, only six can be termed 'non dominant authoritarian' plus one 'pulverised authoritarian', while the remaining election results are born out of a democratic context with 18 'non-dominant' and seven 'pulverised' constellations. From this counting it appears that the party constellation is to some degree patterned by the regime. The statistical analysis brought out the same result but also indicated that the 'dominant party' outcome is only partly supported by the regime type.^v Still, almost two-thirds of the non-authoritarian elections resulted in a dominant party constellation (N = 75). And again, even under conditions of free and fair electoral competition, less than 10% resulted in 'pulverised' party constella-

tions; 'non dominant' constellations accounted for about one quarter of the free and fair elections. Interestingly, 4 out of 7 of these elections were in Benin. Highly fragmented or 'pulverised' party constellations seem to be a rather rare outcome of multiparty elections in Africa.

Institutionalised and Inchoate Party Systems

At the next stage of our analysis we exclude a number of countries from our analysis which we consider not to be proper 'systems' yet. Since a 'party system' describes the patterned interaction of the relevant parties over a certain period, we decided (also with view on the question of predominant or dominant party systems) to include only those countries in our analysis that held at least three consecutive elections.^{vi} This criterion might appear too strong because even after two elections a pattern of interaction may have emerged, although perhaps only in a 'fluid' or 'emerging' way, we decided to err on the side of caution.

For the final step of the classification of the party systems in Africa, and different from Bogaard's (2003) approach, we distinguished between unstructured, that is 'fluid' or 'inchoate', and structured or institutionalised party systems. Usually, party systems in new democracies are regarded as 'fluid', because the whole political regime is new. However, although most of the political party systems in Africa are fairly new, created only, at best, 15 years ago, there are a few that have experienced a much longer life. Generally, it is not sensible to fix a certain number of years or elections after which a fluid system becomes structured or institutionalised. Sartori's distinction between the two states is defined by the existence of the 'solidly entrenched mass party' (1976: 244). The appearance of the mass party 'coincides' with the structuring of the party systems and Sartori did not give any time frame (Sartori 1968: 280-1, 292-3). Since this fixation on the mass party tends to be misleading, we have applied the concept of institutionalisation (Mainwaring and Scully 1995; Bendel 1996). This concept comprises the following dimensions: a) stability in patterns of inter-party competition, b) party roots in society, c) legitimacy of parties and elections, and d) party organisation. Compared to Sartori's conception of the structured / unstructured party system, it allows to identify different degrees of institutionalisation. For our purposes, we settled on the following indicators for a minimum of institutionalisation:

- 1) There has been at least three consecutive elections.
- 2) There has been no period of undemocratic rule, coups (unless there are three subsequent elections), serious civil unrest, or civil war.
- 3) A minimum level of institutionalisation within the party system itself: the volatility (seats) according to Pedersen (1979) is not higher than a value of 40,^{vii} and the (aver-

age) party age must be at least 15 years or nearly as high as the years passed by since the founding elections when being held after 1990.

The results are given in table 2. We find that 16 party systems qualify as ‘institutionalised’, of which the seven hegemonic cases underwent ‘institutionalisation’ under non competitive conditions. Of the remaining nine cases, which are considered to be institutionalised in a democratic context, more than a half (55.6%) are predominant (Botswana, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa), two (22.2%) are characterised by moderate pluralism (Mauritius, São Tomé) and two are regarded as two-party systems (Ghana, Cape Verde).^{viii} The only pulverised system, Benin, does not qualify as institutionalised because of the high volatility (40.9) and the young party age (9.6, founding elections 1991).

The final result is obvious: contrary to many expectations, highly fragmented party systems are rare under democratic conditions in Africa. Instead, dominant and predominant party systems are prevalent, even in institutionalised party systems in a democratic environment. This calls for an explanation, especially when this phenomenon is compared to the western world and also to young democracies of the third wave in Eastern Europe where predominant and dominant party systems have been quite unusual. As indicated above, authoritarianism can only explain some cases, but not, for example, the predominant party systems of South Africa, Namibia, Mozambique, Seychelles, and Botswana. To explain the perhaps surprising lack of highly fragmented party systems we need to look at two other causes: firstly, the electoral system, and, secondly, the cleavage structure and its possible effects on the evolution of the party systems.

3 Electoral System and One-party Dominance

According to the classical institutional approach, party systems depend on the respective (legislative) electoral system.^{ix} A large body of literature has been devoted to the study of respective effects of electoral systems but little theoretical and empirical effort has been spent on the link between electoral systems and dominant party systems. Duverger’s laws (1951) have been demoted to hypotheses or a probabilistic connection (Duverger 1986: 71; Nohlen 2003: 396) and Duverger never tried to explain one-party dominance but different levels of fragmentation, namely two-party and multiparty systems. Likewise, Mozaffar et al. (2003) and Lindberg (2005) who have been working on contemporary African party systems focus on different levels of fragmentation, measured by the Laakso / Taagepera-Index of ‘effective parties’ discussed above, without addressing dominant party systems as such.

Table 2: Classification of party systems according to institutionalisation and regime type

Countries	Fluid / inchoate	Institutionalised
Benin (b)	Pulverised	
Comoros (a)	Non-dominant-authoritarian	
Congo-Brazzaville (a)	Non-dominant-authoritarian	
Côte d'Ivoire (a)	Non-dominant-authoritarian	
Gambia (a)	Dominant-authoritarian	
Guinea-Bissau (a)	Non-dominant	
Kenya (a)	Non-dominant	
Lesotho (a)	Dominant	
Madagascar (a)	Non-dominant	
Malawi (b)	Non-dominant	
Mali (a)	Non-dominant	
Niger (a)	Non-dominant	
Nigeria (a)	Dominant	
Senegal (b)	Non-dominant	
Zambia (b)	Non-dominant-authoritarian	
Zimbabwe (a)	Dominant-authoritarian	
Burkina Faso	<i>Dominant-authoritarian</i>	Hegemonic
Cameroon	<i>Dominant-authoritarian (near)</i>	Hegemonic (near)
Djibouti	<i>Dominant-authoritarian</i>	Hegemonic
Equatorial Guinea	<i>Dominant-authoritarian</i>	Hegemonic
Gabon	<i>Dominant-authoritarian</i>	Hegemonic
Mauritania	<i>Dominant-authoritarian</i>	Hegemonic
Togo	<i>Dominant-authoritarian (near)</i>	Hegemonic (near)
Botswana	Dominant	Predominant
Cape Verde	Non-dominant	Two-party
Ghana	Non-dominant	Two-party
Mauritius	Non-dominant	Moderate pluralism
Mozambique	Dominant	Predominant
Namibia	Dominant	Predominant
São Tomé	Non-dominant	Moderate pluralism
Seychelles	Dominant	Predominant
South Africa	Dominant	Predominant
N / N Dominant (%)	32 / 16 (50.0%)	16 / 13 (81.2%)
N / N Democratic Context (%)	32 / 19 (59.4%)	16 / 9 (56.2%)
N Democratic Context / N Dominant (%)	19 / 7 (36.8%)	9 / 5 (55.6%)

Notes: (a) Fluid or inchoate system because of either (1) violent regime change after last elections; or (2) civil unrest or coup before last or second last election (1 or 2 elections afterwards).

(b) Fluid or inchoate system because of low institutionalisation of party system: party age per seat lower than time span since founding elections and / or high volatility on Pedersen Index (40 and more) in last election.

Counting rules: 3 consecutive elections with an absolute majority of seats of the same party makes the system dominant; regime change requires new counting; the regime type of the last election determines the regime attribute (authoritarian) of the party system.

16 Countries are excluded because they held less than the required three multiparty elections since 1990 to end 2004.

Sources: Dominance and volatility: Nohlen et al. 1999, supplemented by African Elections Data Base. Regime Type: Freedom of the world (see footnote 6); Party age: Szajkowski 2005.

However, if we want to adapt the classical institutional knowledge to our research problem we can expect that less proportional (legislative) electoral systems favour one-party dominance. It is widely acknowledged that non-proportional electoral systems reduce the number of parties represented in parliament thus creating a higher probability for concentration and therefore one-party dominance. In particular, in highly disproportional electoral systems, political parties can accomplish absolute majorities in the seat share without commanding a respective majority in the votes share, maybe even as low as 35%.

In contrast, in his study of Italy, Israel, Japan, and Sweden, T.J. Pempel (1990: 336-9) has observed that one-party dominance is typically connected to several variants of proportional representation (PR). He reverses the hypothesis developed by arguing that PR systems favour multipartism in which 'one party typically needs far less than 50% percent of the seats in parliament to be dominant'. Although this definition of one-party dominance does not match with our criterion of subsequent absolute majorities and Pempel is clear about the limited effect of electoral systems, he concludes, 'that a system that fosters and encourages multipartism is certainly a precondition for the emergence of one-party dominance'.

In order to test our hypotheses of non-proportional or proportional electoral systems being the major cause or a precondition of one-party dominance, we will use a typology of electoral systems that takes into account their most pertinent technical elements as regards their (dis)proportional effects: the voting procedure and the size of the constituency. Some still use the threefold classification of Duverger (Walle 2003) and others (Lijphart 1994; Kuenzi and Lambright 2001: 451; Mozaffar et al. 2003: 387) prefer the (average) district magnitude, i.e. the number of mandates obtainable in a district or constituency, as the most valid indicator for disproportionality. However, only the combination of both elements – let alone other technical elements such as artificial thresholds of representation – captures effects of disproportionality adequately. Depending on the majoritarian or proportional principle, the effect of the district magnitude takes an opposite trajectory. In majoritarian systems, a higher district magnitude increases the (potential) disproportionality whereas, contrarily, a higher district magnitude in PR systems reduces disproportionality. Consequently, PR systems in small multi member constituencies (MMCs) – especially when combined with legal thresholds – have a more reductive effect than PR systems with a small number of large districts or just one in pure PR systems (Nohlen 2003: 82-88.; Nohlen et al. 1999: 22). On the other hand, plurality in MMC is more disproportional than plurality in single member constituencies (SMC).^x

We applied a typology of electoral systems that corresponds to Nohlen et al. (1999: 22) and is fairly comparable to Lindberg's (2005: 58) but has been updated and completed with regard to several cases (table 3). The six classes range from the most disproportional electoral

system (Plurality in MMCs) to the most proportional one (pure PR in a single national district). Segmented systems including elements of different types (Chad 2002; Guinea 1995-2002; Madagascar 1993-2003; Niger; Senegal) are coded according to the relative weight of their elements.^{xi} In the special case of Lesotho, the mixed member proportional system (MMPS), introduced in 2002, is effectively a segmented system.

Table 3: Electoral systems and party systems

	Dominant	Two-party	Moderate pluralism	Extreme pluralism	% one-party dominance
Plurality in MMC	Djibouti		<i>MAURITIUS</i>		50%
Plurality in SMC	<i>BOTSWANA</i> Gambia Ethiopia Lesotho (1993-98) Nigeria Tanzania <i>ZIMBABWE</i>	<i>GHANA</i> Kenya*	<i>Côte d'Ivoire*</i> Malawi Zambia		58%
Absolute majority in S / MMC	<i>CAMEROON</i> Chad (1997) <i>Gabon</i> <i>Mauritania</i> <i>Togo</i>		C. African Rep. Comoros Mali*	Congo-B.	56%
Segmented systems & MMPS	Chad (2002) Guinea Lesotho (2002) <i>SEYCHELLES</i>	Senegal*	Niger Madagascar		57%
PR in small MMC**	<i>Burkina Faso</i> (1992-97)	<i>Cape Verde*</i>	Guinea-Bissau <i>SAO TOME</i>	Benin (1995-2003)	25%
PR in medium & large MMC**	<i>Burkina Faso</i> (2002) <i>Equat. Guinea</i> <i>Mozambique</i> S. Leone (2002)			Benin (1991)	80%
Pure PR	<i>NAMIBIA</i> <i>South Africa</i>		S. Leone (1996)		67%

Notes: MMC = Multi-member Constituencies; MMPS = Mixed Member Proportional System; PR = Proportional Representation; SMC = Single-Member Constituencies.

* Before last election one-party dominance in two subsequent elections.

** Small MMC have a maximum average district magnitude of 5, medium of 6-9, large of at least 10.

'Structured / institutionalised party systems' in italics (table 2); cases with less than two multiparty elections between 1990 and mid 2004 are excluded; Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, Lesotho, and Sierra Leone are listed twice due to substantial changes in electoral systems.

Sources: Hartmann 2006; Nohlen et al. 1999, adjusted by the authors.

As shown in table 3, certain electoral systems are not systematically connected to dominant party systems. This can be easily illustrated by the fact that one-party dominance occurs in all kinds of electoral systems. No electoral system uniquely determines the respective party system. Although the most proportional systems have the highest ratio of one-party dominance, which favours Pempel's argument over the classical institutional approach, PR systems are clearly not a necessary condition for one-party dominance. A similar pattern emerges when we focus on 'structured party systems' or embark on a more quantitative approach. There are constantly weak and insignificant correlations regardless which measure for electoral system or dominance is applied.^{xii}

With Duverger's (1951) strict 'mechanical logic' it could even be argued that only artificial or 'manufactured majorities' (Douglas W. Rae) – a vote share of less than 50% of the public vote is turned into an absolute majority of seats – mean that the electoral system produces absolute majorities or one-party dominance. However, artificial majorities are rare in African party systems. Of 106 elections, only 17 absolute majorities were 'manufactured' by the electoral system. Only 8 out of 21 dominant party systems were partly favoured by an artificial majority.^{xiii}

Furthermore, the link between disproportional electoral institutions and dominance becomes more questionable when we keep in mind that the effects of electoral systems are not limited to fragmentation (Lindberg 2005; Nohlen 2003; Lijphart 1994). Given that relatively weak shifts in voting behaviour can make a crucial difference in the share of seats, it can be concluded that non-proportional systems favour (*ceteris paribus*) both concentration *and* change. Because electoral turnovers in parliamentary elections inevitably contradict the very notion of one-party dominance, which we have defined as an absolute majority of one and the same party in three subsequent elections, we should not necessarily expect non-proportional systems to produce dominance. In fact, if we exclude founding elections which often mean a turnover of power *per se* we find subsequent turnovers especially in various majoritarian systems. Simple plurality systems such as in Kenya and Ghana are cases in point. The only exception is São Tomé (PR in medium MMC, but two turnovers). This becomes more obvious when we observe that pure PR and PR in medium and large MMCs is rarely conducive to turnovers.

Given this evidence it appears that legislative electoral systems are not the major reason for one-party dominance in sub-Saharan Africa. There is no evidence that links particular electoral systems to one-party dominance in contemporary Africa. At best, there might be a tendency that non-proportional or proportional electoral systems helped establish dominant party systems in *some* countries. This is not to say that electoral systems do not affect party system fragmentation, it is only that it is a matter of debate of what these affects are

(Lindberg 2005; Mozaffar et al. 2003; Walle 2003; Basedau 2002). All this is less of a puzzle when we embark on a more contextually sensitive approach towards the effects of electoral systems (Sartori 1994; Nohlen 2003). In fact, the distinction between more or less proportional electoral systems loses much of its significance when parties have regional strongholds. According to Sartori (1994) electoral systems only produce specific types of party systems when party systems are structured and respective voters are not geographically concentrated. Given the ethno-regional constellation in many African countries, it is of no surprise that the electoral system does not play a very important role in determining one-party dominance.

4 Social Cleavage and (Pre-)dominant Party Systems

So far the authoritarian regime has some explanatory value for the preponderance of (pre-)dominant party systems while the electoral system has little, if any, such value. To apply the social cleavage concept as a useful explanation for the predominant or dominant party systems seems, at first sight at least, to be paradoxical, because ethnicity has been identified as the most crucial cleavage for party formation in Africa (Scarritt and Mozzafar 1999; Erdmann and Weiland 2001; Erdmann 2004).

As indicated above, the multiplicity of ethnic groups was thought to be the major reason for the emergence of highly fragmented party systems which, however, has not become a reality. The hypothesis will be reversed here: it is precisely the multiplicity of ethnic groups brings that about the predominant or dominant party systems and the fewer number of pulverised / atomised party systems.

With the exception of a few countries, most African societies are characterised by a high number of ethnic groups of different sizes. It is only in Botswana, Namibia, Burundi, and Rwanda that we find an ethnic group that counts for a large portion or even for a majority of the population, although even in these cases the main group can be broken down into smaller groups. In most African countries, none of the ethnic groups can claim to be a majority.

A few examples in table 4 give a clear indication that any equation of ethnic groups with political parties does not make sense. In fact, for the classification of African political parties we have used the term 'ethnic congress party' as the most common type of party in Africa. By definition this party is a multiethnic party based on an elite coalition of two or more ethnic groups.^{xiv} Yet, the ethnic congress party is to be distinguished from the 'ethnic party' which is based on one ethnic group only, and which is rather an exemption in Africa (Erdmann

2002: 270-8; 2004: 78-80). Although ethnicity based, the ethnic congress party is non-particularistic in appearance, which means these parties do not promote sectionalist programs but pose as national parties.

Table 4: Number of ethnic and ethnopolitical groups, parties and party systems per country

	Ethnic groups (language groups / groups / subgroups) ¹		Largest group of A in () out of group number in A	Ethno-politico groups / subgroups	Party system	Parties () or electoral alliances ³ in parliament
	A	B				
Benin	3 / 15 / 14	about 60	25% Fon (15)	4 / 5 [2]	Atom. / pulver.	12 (16)
Ghana	4 / 13 / 16	64 (7-9)	44% Akan (4) ⁴	4 / 6	Two-party	4
Kenya	6 / 32 / 25	36	21% Kikuyu (32)	11 / 11	Non-dom.	7 (13)
Malawi	5 / 16 / -	11	46% Chewa	3 / 8	Non-dom.	6 (9) ⁵
Namibia	7 / 9 / 16	10	46% Ovambo (7)	7 / 3 / -	Predom.	7
Senegal	6 / 9 / -	19	38% Wolof (6)	3 (+4) / 3	Non-dom.	10 (2)
Tanzania	9 / 45 / 41	130 (4)	19% Nyamwesi (9)	12 / - [2]	Dom.-auth.	6
Zambia	6 / 17 / 68	76 (7)	37% Bemba (6)	5 / 12	Non-dom.-auth.	7

- Notes: 1) A = Morrison 1989 (groups with more than 5% of population; B = BND 1998 (all groups).
 2) Scarritt / Mozzafar 1999; the second figure gives the number of sub-groups with a known political identity; the third figure is related to a politically articulated regional identity. In Benin it is Northerner and Southerner; in the case of Malawi the first figure 3 is a regional identity based on administrative units; however there are major doubts that this is really a political identity; although some authors maintain this, particularly for the Northern Region, the Afrobarometer could not detect this as a wide-spread identity.
 3) According to the last election results (elections around the world, www.electionworld.org; Political Parties 2005); in () number of parties which form an electoral alliance of one of the parties.
 4) Among the Akan group Ashanti account for about 28%; Akan do not operate as a political unit.
 5) There were 7 parties in the Mgwirizano Coalition of which 4 won seats; in addition there were 40 independent MPs.

Sources: Morrison 1989; BND 1998; Scarritt / Mozzafar 1999.

It is important to note here that we are using two problematic conceptions, ethnicity and social cleavages. Firstly, social cleavages do not in themselves automatically provide the basis for party formation. According to Lipset and Rokkan (1967) a social cleavage needs to be politicised and transformed by a political elite before it leads to party formation, but not all politicised social cleavages are necessarily transformed into party formation as the politicisation can, for instance, 'stop' at level of a social movement. As regards the ethnic cleavage, Mozzafar et al. (2003: 382) have captured this process in a three-step process: the 'construction' of an ethnic identity, its 'politicisation', and finally the 'participation', a term borrowed from Gary Cox (1997: 26).

Scarritt and Mozzafar (1999) have taken the ethnicity issue a step further. They use the concept of 'ethnopolitical groups' based on a constructivist concept of ethnicity. They consider only politicised ethnic cleavages. This reduces the number of groups which are of substantial relevance. Nevertheless, even in this case, the simple equation of ethnopolitical groups and political parties does not hold (they do not claim it would) as seen from the few cases in table 4.^{xv}

The table also indicates the problem of identifying and counting ethnic groups. Different approaches and definitions generate different results; one concept is largely based on 'language and culture' (table 4, A), the other on 'language' (table 4, B) only. Hence, the crucial problem is the concept of ethnicity, and how ethnicity translates into the evolution of party systems. While we cannot go into detail about this transformation here, we will try to describe the intricacies involved and the complexity of this process.

Ethnicity is understood here as a historically, socially, and politically constructed identity; it is multifaceted, changeable, and can have multiple meanings.^{xvi} It is based on the interaction of self-ascription and ascription by others. Ethnicity can, but most often does not, have fixed boundaries or orderly delineated entities. Ethnic identity can have different forms of expression or, to put it differently, covers different kinds of socio-political identities or societal self-consciousness which is moulded by social (including habitual or cultural), economic and political factors.

While ethnicity is variable and multifaceted, so are ethnic cleavages, and hence the articulation of ethnic cleavages in the political arena. There is no clear cut pattern of how ethnicity and ethnic politics affect and structure party formation and party politics. A plausible hypothesis is that the following factors might contribute to the political articulation of ethnic cleavages and its transformation into party formation:

- 4) The numbers and relative sizes of the ethnic groups.
- 5) The physical distribution of these groups whether concentrated or dispersed.
- 6) The quality (or intensities) of the various ethnic identities, i.e. the degree to which coexisting ethnicities are politically mobilised or not. This includes different levels (national, regional, local) of political articulation as well as intra ethnic group divisions.
- 7) Some degree of historical contingency matters, particularly under circumstances of fluidity of both ethnic identity and political institutions.^{xvii}

This leads to the observation that although the possible line of causation is from a politicised ethnic cleavage to party formation, party formation and party politics might also contribute to the development of an ethnic identity, its politicisation and finally to the formation of an-

other new party. The crucial point here is that no simple equation of ethnic cleavages and ethnopolitical groups with party formation is possible and, most importantly, the number of politically articulated ethnic groups is much smaller than the relevant parties in parliament. In fact, Mozzafar et al. (2003) found that there is an inverse relationship between the number of ethnopolitical groups and the number of (electoral and legislative) parties: the higher the number of ethnopolitical groups, the smaller the number of parties.

Despite the conceptual problems involved there are strong indicators that once an ethnic cleavage has been politicised and 'particisation' it can become more or less permanent. In a number of countries the ethnic cleavage constellation and party formations of the 1950s and 1960s correspond to the evolution of party formation and inter-party conflicts of the 1990s.^{xviii}

Given the stark incongruity of the number of ethnic (or ethnopolitical) groups and political parties it is evident that most of the bigger parties are based on a coalition of various ethnic groups as it is suggested by the concept of the ethnic congress party. The question remains, what makes these ethnic coalitions possible, which are sometimes comprised of several politicised ethnic groups, and even more that have not been visibly politicised? The answer is rather simple: political leaders realise that the ethnic group from which they come is too small for the party to make it into government.^{xix} A winning party here means obtaining sufficient votes for a majority in parliament and sufficient support to get the presidential candidate elected because most African states operate a presidential system. Hence, the party leadership can rarely appeal to a single ethnic group. In order to avoid being seen as a representative of that group they have to appear national or at least 'multi-ethnic'. To form a winning majority, party leaders have to forge a 'maximum coalition' of various ethnic groups. This maximum coalition depends, of course, on electoral rules for the presidency as well as for the members of parliament. If the president is elected by a relative majority, the 'maximum' coalition can be smaller than if an absolute majority is required. In order to avoid the cumbersome business of building the maximum coalition and to reduce the winning maximum coalition, constitutions have been changed from an absolute to a relative majority rule for the presidency since re-democratisation. The problem at the constituency level is usually less complicated. This is because, firstly, constituencies are frequently based on ethnically homogenous groups, except, of course, in major urban areas, and a number of rural constituencies have similar multi-ethnic characteristics. And secondly, parliamentary elections used to require a relative majority only. Particularly in these multi-ethnic areas political functionaries make very clear strategic ethnic calculation which person (with which ethnic identity) is to be placed in which constituency in order to win. Taken together, it is the strategic decision making of political elites of various ethnic groups that turns the high

number of groups into a small number of parties, and if the strategic coalition building was successful, it turns out to be a dominant or predominant party system.

5 Conclusion

As a precondition for the studying the effects of different party systems on the consolidation of democracy we maintain that a differentiated categorisation of party systems is required. By applying basic features of Sartori's counting rules and his fully fleshed party system typology, including the difference between institutionalised and non-institutionalised systems, we are able to show a differentiated picture of party systems in Africa that also distinguishes between party systems which are structured by authoritarian and democratic features. This distinction between authoritarian and democratic features is crucial because we can expect that even multi-party systems might change under democratisation. On this basis we can start analysing which particular type might be more conducive for consolidating democracy than others. The traditional academic wisdom, although inspired by a different societal context, mainly by the experience of western European party systems, suggests that of the eleven democratic and institutionalised party systems about five, the two-party as well as the moderate pluralism, should be seen as conducive to consolidation, while some of the five predominant party systems might be in a danger of losing its democratic direction. Yet, from experience in Europe and Asia we also know that a predominant party system need not to be a hindrance to consolidating democracy.

At the same time we are called for caution as regards the remaining party systems. It is difficult to pass judgement on the not yet institutionalised party systems that prevail in the majority of African countries. For example, the fate of the dominant party system of Zambia of the 1990s which collapsed into a fragmented or non-dominant authoritarian system reminds us of the fragility of many of the party systems. The fragmentation of Malawi's party system and especially of its major party before the last elections is another case. However, the differentiation of party systems can only be a start for the analysis of the impact of the various party systems, and further research is required because the African context might provide different outcomes from those expected by the conventional European biased wisdom.

Mozaffar and Scarritt's approach of identifying a kind of 'average' party system for more than thirty political systems in Africa does not allow such a differentiated analysis. Their findings suggest that the party systems in Africa are equally conducive for consolidation regardless of the number and constellation of parties in each party system. This, however, cannot be true, for we still observe a wide variety of political regimes in Africa which once

tried to democratise, succeeded for a period but returned to a hybrid or authoritarian regime. How can this difference in outcome be explained by an 'average' party system? One consequence could be that party systems just do not matter. This, however, is certainly not the intention of the authors of the African 'puzzle'. In any case, what would we gain for identifying an 'average' party system for Europe?

As indicated in the introduction, one problem is that different writers come to quite different assessments of the chances for consolidation. Again, the contradictions can partly be explained by different approaches. Mozaffar and Scarritt's research design is focusing on the explanation for the formation of political party systems; they treat the party system as a dependent variable. In the end assume, 'counter intuitively' as they write (Mozaffar and Scarritt 2005: 417), that the African party systems may be conducive to consolidation. Kuenzi and Lambright apply a different approach. They explicitly ask how the different characteristics of the party systems affect the democratic outcome. While Mozaffar and Scarritt rather suppose the positive effects of 'low fragmentation' on democratic consolidation, Kuenzi and Lambright can statistically identify a weak positive correlation between numbers of political parties (i.e. higher fragmentation) and democracy. Obviously, they address the question about the relationship between party system and democracy is directly, while Mozaffar and Scarritt essentially tackle a different question, what explains the evolution of party systems in Africa, hence, they can only speculate about the link between party system and democracy. One problem remains with Kuenzi and Lambright's findings in that they do not suggest how many parties are conducive for democracy. Is it five or eight or perhaps even 15 political parties? The latter number would seem to be not very plausible because it makes government formation and governing more difficult.

From a different angle, Van de Walle (2003) as well as Randall and Svåsand (2002a) disagree with Mozaffar and Scarritt's (2005; Mozaffar et al.). They are rather pessimistic about the prospects for consolidation, but also caution against passing judgment too soon by citing a few positive developments. Again, the contradicting assessment is related to a different research focus. Mozaffar, Scarritt, Kuenzi and Lambright focus on the *party system*, while van de Walle and Randall and Svåsand rather concentrate on *parties* or party structures, and by identifying serious weaknesses conclude that these parties will even undermine the process of democratic consolidation (van de Walle 2003: 316). It is interesting to note here that a similar confusion of concepts has been pointed out by Randall and Svåsand (2002) related to the question of institutionalisation of parties and party systems.

Hence, for future research on these problems, we need conceptual clarity about, firstly, what we want to explain (the evolution of party systems or the contribution of different party sys-

tems to the consolidation of democracy) and, secondly, what will be the focus of our research as the *explanans*: the party system, party structures or even both?

At the same time we also need to consider the problems of the particular type of party, the ethnic congress party, we most often find in Africa. These parties and party systems they constitute might display their own dynamics of which we have hardly any systematic research results. Two hypotheses are possible: The dynamics of ethnic congress party politics might entail a specific culture of 'compromise' and moderation as suggested by Mozaffar et al. (2003). Yet, it can also lead to pointed ethnic polarisation, which is different from the classic 'class-based' ideological right-left polarisation, but can unfold even more violent and disastrous effects on the polity. Finally, we should forget that there are other factors than parties and party systems that might be even more important to explain the consolidation of democracy.

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- ⁱ See for example: 'Dominant' and 'competitive' party systems (Rakner and Svåsand, 2004), or Sandbrook's (1996) 'stable two party system' and 'unstable factional system'. Only Cranenburg (1996) categorises the Tanzanian party system within Sartori's typology as a dominant party system, and Randall and Svåsand (2002a) discuss only Sartori's (non-authoritarian) dominant party system.
 - ⁱⁱ Generally, the number of effective parties can be very misleading: (a) identical values can hide very different party systems; (b) the value itself does not necessarily indicate the actual number of represented parties and their relative strength in parliament. One example will illustrate the case while many others are at hand: Ghana in 2000 showed 2,2 effective parties, thus reflecting the approximate two-party system with the two major parties having a seat share of 50% and 46% respectively. However, in Mali in 1992, 2,2 effective parties hide a dominant party with 65,5% seat share and 9 small parties (biggest: 7,8% seat share); see also Bogaards, 2004: 184-188.
 - ⁱⁱⁱ The criterion is a) number of parties starting with the strongest which are necessary to come up to more than 50% of seats in parliament and / or b) the number of parties which de facto form the government. In cases (e.g. Benin) where the winning party was already a coalition on a joint list and three or four other parties were necessary to obtain an absolute majority in parliament, we classified them as 'pulverised'.
 - ^{iv} We used the Freedom House index to qualify the resulting regime. Free and partly free cases below the mean value of the index (3.5) represents a non authoritarian context, all others an authoritarian context.
 - ^v In 133 sub-Saharan elections a dominant election outcome (dummy absolute majority seat share) is likelier in an authoritarian environment, measured by average Freedom House ratings (Pearson's $r = .76$, significant at the 0.01 level). Using exact seat share values of the winning party instead of the

- absolute majority dummy, however, produces a similarly significant but much lesser convincing result (Pearson's $r = 0.21$).
- vi This excludes – apart from those countries which did not have any multiparty elections at all: DR Congo, Eritrea, Somalia, Sudan, Swaziland and Uganda – the following countries (end of 2004): Angola, Burundi, Liberia, Rwanda (all one election only); CAR, Chad, Ethiopia, Sierra Leone, and Tanzania (two elections).
 - vii Pedersen's volatility index: Volatility (V_t) = $\frac{1}{2} \times \text{TNCT}$ (Total Net Change). We set a maximum volatility (TNC) of 40 for institutionalised party systems (Kuenzi and Lambright 2001: 445-6). TNC over 40 receives the lowest coding for institutionalisation and indicates an 'inchoate' party system in this indicator.
 - viii This number is clearly higher than that of Kuenzi and Lambright (2001) who have identified the following institutionalised systems: Botswana, Gambia, Namibia, Senegal and South Africa based on a different operationalisation and counting approach, but also based on fewer number of elections.
 - ix As regards the impact of the system of government, parliamentary or presidential, we could not find little explanatory power, therefore we refrain from a more detailed discussion. The literature (e.g. van de Walle 2003) suggestest a close association of presidential systems and one-party dominance. However, out of ten parliamentary systems four had a dominant party system, and out of 28 presidential systems twelve evolved a non-dominant party system (Basedau 2005).
 - x This can easily be illustrated by the vast disproportionality in Djibouti and Mauritius, in both cases favouring the winning parties (Thibaut and Krennerich in Nohlen et al. 1999).
 - xi The validity of operationalisation (the adjusted typology by Nohlen et al.) is supported by the high correlation between a respective coding (ranging from 1 to 6) and the bonus of the winning party of seat vis à vis the vote share (Pearson's $r^2 .492$, significant on the .01 level) which is higher than for district magnitude and the original typology of Nohlen et al.
 - xii Dominance was measured by an absolute majority (regardless of outcome of previous elections) and a dominant result (ruling party upholding absolute majority). Electoral systems were measured by district magnitude, the typology of Nohlen (1-6), the adjusted typology of Nohlen (in segmented systems the types were weighted according to the seat share of the respective system), the proximity of presidential elections and the type of presidential electoral system (absolute vs. plurality). None of the correlations proved to be significant (N 103 – 132), the highest being Pearson's $r .146$ (presidential electoral system). Moreover, a presidential system of government is not the main cause of one-party dominance: out of five (quasi) parliamentary systems (without presidential elections) four have dominant party systems (Botswana, Ethiopia, Lesotho and South Africa) the only exception being Mauritius.
 - xiii In the case of Mozambique, in 1994 and 1999 (but not in 2004), the artificial threshold of representation (5%) was mainly responsible for creating 'manufactured' absolute majorities for Frelimo (see Krennerich in Nohlen et al. 1999).
 - xiv Yet, this leaves the question open whether there are other types than ethnic based parties in Africa; see for the discussion of a typology of parties in Africa, Erdmann 1999; 2004: 76-80.
 - xv Table 4 has no systematic rational but an illustrative purpose only which should indicate possible variances of ethnic groups and political parties.
 - xvi For the sources and discussion of ethnicity see: Horowitz 1985, Lentz 1994; Lentz and Nugent 2000; Lonsdale 1992; Young 1976, 2002.
 - xvii For example, the controversy of the third-term issue for presidential candidates has split the ruling party and fragmented the party system in Zambia and Malawi, while in Namibia both remained intact without major internal tensions.
 - xviii Kenya, Zambia, Ghana, Tanzania are clearly such cases; Burnell 2001; Hornsby and Throup 1998; Throup 2003; Frempong 2001.
 - xix A similar point is made by Crook (1997: 241) and Mozzafar et al. (2003: 389).

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Appendix

Country	Election year	Vote share winner	Winning party	Seat share winner	Freedom House (election year, average)	Sartori I (absolute majority 50% +1)
Angola	1992	53.7	MPLA	58.6	6	Dom.
Benin	1991	18.9	UDFP-MDPS-ULD	18.8	2.5	Pulver
	1995	15.4	RB	25.3	2.5	Pulver
	1999	22.7	RB	32.5	2.5	Pulver
	2003	n.a.	UBF	37.4	2.5	Pulver
Botswana	1965	80.4	BDP	90.3	n.a.	Dom.
	1969	68.3	BDP	77.4	n.a.	Dom.
	1974	76.6	BDP	84.4	2	Dom.
	1979	75.2	BDP	90.6	2.5	Dom.
	1984	68.0	BDP	82.4	2	Dom.
	1989	64.8	BDP	91.2	1.5	Dom.
	1994	54.7	BDP	67.5	2.5	Dom.
	1999	57	BDP	82.5	2.0	Dom.
Burkina Faso	1992	48.5	ODP-MT	72.9	5	Dom.-auth.
	1997	68.6	CDP	91	4.5	Dom.-auth.
	2002	49.5	CDP	51.3	4	Dom.-auth.
Burundi	1993	72.6	FRODEBU	80.2	7	Dom.-auth.
Cameroon	1992	45.5	RDPC	48.9	5.5	Non-dom.-auth.
	1997	48	RDPC	60.6	6	Dom.-auth.
	2002	n.a.	RDPC	82.8	6	Dom.-auth.
Cape Verde	1991	66.4	MDP	70.9	2.5	Dom.
	1995	61.3	MDP	69.4	1.5	Dom.
	2001	49.9	PAICV	55.5	1.5	Dom.
CAR	1993	n.a.	MLPC	40	3.5	Non-dom.
	1998	n.a.	MLPC	43.1	3.5	Non-dom.
Chad	1997	34.4	MPS	50.4	5.5	Dom.-auth.
	2002	n.a.	MPS	70.6	5.5	Dom.-auth.
Comoros	1992	n.a.	UDD	16.7	3	Pulver
	1993	n.a.	RDR	66.7	4	Dom.-auth.
	1996	n.a.	RND	90.7	4	Dom.-auth.
Congo	1992	n.a.	UPADS	31.2	3	Pulver
	1993	n.a.	UPADS	37.6	4	Pulver-auth.
	2002	n.a.	PCT	34.2	5	Non-dom.-auth.
Côte d'ivoire	1990	71.7	PDCI	93.1	5	Dom.-auth.
	1995	64.9	PDCI	85.1	5.5	Dom.-auth.
	2000	n.a.	FPI	42.7	5	Non-dom.-auth.
Djibouti	1992	74.6	RPP	100	6	Dom.-auth.
	1997	78.6	RPP-FRUD	100	5.5	Dom.-auth.
	2003	62.7	UMP	100	4.5	Dom.-auth.
Equatorial Guinea	1993	69.8	PDGE	85	7	Dom.-auth.
	1999	85.5	PDGE	93.7	7	Dom.-auth.
	2004	n.a.	PDGE	98	6.5	Dom.-auth.
Ethiopia	1995	n.a.	EPRDF	86.1	4.5	Dom.-auth.
	2000	n.a.	EPRDF	85	5	Dom.-auth.
Gabun	1990	n.a.	PDG	52.5	4.5	Dom.-auth.
	1996	n.a.	PDG	70	4.5	Dom.-auth.
	2001	n.a.	PDG	70.8	4.5	Dom.-auth.

Country	Election year	Vote share winner	Winning party	Seat share winner	Freedom House (election year, average)	Sartori I (absolute majority 50% +1)
Gambia	1966	n.a.	PPP	75	n.a.	Dom.
	1972	n.a.	PPP	87.5	2	Dom.
	1977	n.a.	PPP	79.4	2	Dom.
	1982	n.a.	PPP	77.	2.5	Dom.-auth.
	1987	n.a.	PPP	86.1	3	Dom.-auth.
	1992	58.1	PPP	69.4	1.5	Dom.
	1996/7	52.2	APRC	77.3	6.5	Dom.-auth.
	2002	n.a.	APRC	84.9	4.5	Dom.-auth.
Ghana	1992	77.5	NDC	94.5	5	Dom.-auth.
	1996	53	NDC	66.5	3.5	Dom.
	2000	45	NPP	49.7	2.5	Non-dom.
Guinea	1995	53.5	PUP	62.2	5.5	Dom.-auth.
	2002	n.a.	PUP	74.6	5.5	Dom.-auth.
Guinea-Bissau	1995	46.4	PAIGC	62.0	3.5	Dom.
	1999	n.a.	PRS	37.3	4	Non-dom.
	2004	n.a.	PAIGC	40,9	4	Non-dom.
Kenya	1992	24.5	KANU	52.5	4.5	Dom.-auth.
	1997	n.a.	KANU	51.4	6	Dom.-auth.
	2002	n.a.	NARC	58.9	4	Non-dom.
Lesotho	1993	74.8	BCP	100	3.5	Dom.-auth.
	1998	60.6	LCD	97.5	4	Dom.-auth.
	2002	54.9	LCD	65.2	2.5	Dom.
Liberia	1997	n.a.	NPP	76,6	4.5	Dom.-auth.
Madagascar	1960	n.a.	PSD	59,8	n.a.	Dom.
	1965	n.a.	PSD	97,2	n.a.	Dom.-auth.
	1970	n.a.	PSD	97,2	n.a.	Dom.-auth.
	1977	n.a.	AREMA	81,8	5	Dom.-auth.
	1983	n.a.	AREMA	85,5	5.5	Dom.-auth.
	1989	n.a.	AREMA	86.8	4.5	Dom.-auth.
	1993	n.a.	CartelHVR	34.1	3	Pulver
	1998	n.a.	ARES	42	3	Non-dom.
2002	n.a.	TIM	64.4	3.5	Dom.	
Malawi	1994	46.4	UDF	48	4	Non-dom.
	1999	47.3	UDF	48.4	2.5	Non-dom.
	2004	n.a	MCP	30.5	3	Non-dom.
Mali	1992	48.4	ADEMA	65.5	2.5	Dom.
	1997	75.3	ADEMA	87.1	3	Dom.
	2002	n.a.	Espoir2002	41.25	4	Non-dom.
Mauritania	1992	67.7	PRDS	84.8	6.5	Dom.-auth.
	1996	67.6	PRDS	88.6	6	Dom.-auth.
	2001	51.5.	PRDS	79	5	Dom.-auth.
Mauritius	1976	40.9	MMM	48.6	2.5	Non-dom.
	1982	63	MMM/PSM	90.9	2	Dom.
	1983	45.6	MSM/PT/PMSD	65.7	2	Dom.
	1987	47.3	MSM/PT/PMSD	62.9	2	Dom.
	1991	55.4	MSM	45.5	1.5	Non-dom.
	1995	65.2	PT/MMM	90.9	1.5	Dom.
2000	51.7	MSM/MMM	81.4	1.5	Dom.	

Country	Election year	Vote share winner	Winning party	Seat share winner	Freedom House (election year, average)	Sartori I (absolute majority 50% +1)
Mozambique	1994	44.3	FRELIMO	51.6	4	Dom.
	1999	48.5	FRELIMO	53.2	3.5	Dom.
Namibia	1989	57.3	SWAPO	56.9	3.5	Dom.
	1994	73.9	SWAPO	73.6	2.5	Dom.
	1999	76.3	SWAPO	76.4	2.5	Dom.
Niger	1993	30.7	MNSD	34.9	3.5	Non-dom.
	1995	n.a.	MNSD	34.9	4	Non-dom.
	1996*	56.7	UNIRD	71.1	6	Dom.-auth.
	1999*	n.a.	MNSD	45.7	5	Non-dom.
Nigeria	1992	n.a.	SDP	53.3	4.5	Dom.-auth.
	1999	n.a.	PDP	60.1	3.5	Dom.
	2003	n.a.	PDP	75.5	4	Dom.
Rwanda	2003	n.a.	FPR	62.3	6	Dom.-auth.
Sao Tomé	1991	54.4	PCD-GR	60	2.5	Dom.
	1994	42.5	MLSTP	49	1.5	Non-dom.
	1998	50.8	MLSTP	56.4	1.5	Dom.
	2002	39.6	MLSTP	43.6	1.5	Non-dom.
Senegal	1978	81.7	PS	83	3.5	Dom.-auth.
	1983	75.9	PS	92.5	4	Dom.-auth.
	1988	71	PS	85.8	3.5	Dom.-auth.
	1993	56.6	PS	70	4.5	Dom.
	1998	50.2	PS	66.4	4	Dom.
	2001	49.6	SOPI	74.2	3.5	Dom.
Seychellen	1993	56.6	SPPF	81.8	3.5	Dom.
	1998	61.7	SPPF	88.2	3	Dom.
	2003	n.a.	SPPF	60.1	3	Dom.
Sierra Leone	1996	35.9	SLPP	39.7	4.5	Non-dom.-auth.
	2002	n.a.	SLPP	74.1	4	Dom.
South Africa	1994	62.6	ANC	63	3.5	Dom.
	1999	66.3	ANC	66.5	1.5	Dom.
	2004	69.7	ANC	69.8	1.5	Dom.
Tanzania	1995	59.2	CCM	79.6	5	Dom.-auth.
	2000	n.a.	CCM	91	4	Dom.-auth.
Togo	1994	n.a.	RPT	43.2	5.5	Non-dom.-auth.
	1999	n.a.	RPT	97.5	5	Dom.-auth.
	2002	n.a.	RPT	88.9	5.5	Dom.-auth.
Zambia	1991	74.3	MMD	83.3	2.5	Dom.
	1996	61	MMD	87.3	4.5	Dom.-auth.
	2001	28	MMD	46	4.5	Non-dom.-auth.
Zimbabwe	1980	63.0	ZANU-PF	57.0	4	Dom.
	1985	77.2	ZANU-PF	64	6	Dom.
	1990	80.5	ZANU-PF	97.5	5	Dom.-auth.
	1995	81.4	ZANU-PF	98.3	5	Dom.-auth.
	2000	48.8	ZANU-PF	51.7	5.5	Dom.-auth.

Note: n.a. = not available.

Sources: www.electionworld.org; <http://africanelections.tripod.com/>; Nohlen et al. 1999; Africa South of Sahara, Afrika Jahrbuch, and Africa Yearbook (various issues each).

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