



# Open Access Repository

[www.ssoar.info](http://www.ssoar.info)

## Do African parties contribute to democracy? Some findings from Kenya, Ghana and Nigeria

Elischer, Sebastian

Veröffentlichungsversion / Published Version

Zeitschriftenartikel / journal article

Zur Verfügung gestellt in Kooperation mit / provided in cooperation with:

GIGA German Institute of Global and Area Studies

### Empfohlene Zitierung / Suggested Citation:

Elischer, S. (2008). Do African parties contribute to democracy? Some findings from Kenya, Ghana and Nigeria. *Afrika Spectrum*, 43(2), 175-201. <https://nbn-resolving.org/urn:nbn:de:0168-ssoar-352977>

### Nutzungsbedingungen:

Dieser Text wird unter einer CC BY-NC-ND Lizenz (Namensnennung-Nicht-kommerziell-Keine Bearbeitung) zur Verfügung gestellt. Nähere Auskünfte zu den CC-Lizenzen finden Sie hier:

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/deed.de>

### Terms of use:

This document is made available under a CC BY-NC-ND Licence (Attribution-Non Commercial-NoDerivatives). For more information see:

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0>

Sebastian Elischer

## Do African parties contribute to democracy? Some findings from Kenya, Ghana and Nigeria<sup>1</sup>

### *Abstract*

It is often said that ethnic and clientelistic parties are bad for democracy. Empirical testing of this claim has been hindered by lack of agreement on what constitutes an ethnic or clientelistic party. This paper proposes a conceptualization and operationalisation of different party types as part of a succinct typology of parties. The usefulness of the empirical typology of political parties is then verified for three African countries: Ghana, Kenya, and Nigeria. In addition, 'democratic' party behaviour, both within parties and among them is investigated. Subsequently, the claim about the systemic consequences of party types is tentatively tested with a comparative design covering three African cases that display variation on both causes and outcomes. The findings indicate that programmatic parties behave most democratically and that, moreover, there seems to be a relationship between a party's internal democracy and the way it interacts with other parties.

### *Keywords*

*political party, ethnicity, democratization, Kenya, Ghana, Nigeria*

In the extant literature on the subject of democratisation there is widespread agreement on the crucial role of political parties for democratisation. Being the link between society and political decision-makers their role is of particular importance in the still emerging post-Third Wave democracies (Schattenschneider 1942, Bratton and van de Walle 1997, Lindberg 2007). African parties operate in an especially challenging environment given the socio-economic conditions and the multi-ethnic makeup of their respective countries. As a result they are seen as devoid of ideological coherence, heavily personality-driven and relying on an ethnic support base (Carothers 2006:

---

<sup>1</sup> The author wishes to thank Matthijs Bogaards, the editor and the anonymous reviewers for their help and advice.

34-38). The recent trend towards the emergence of the dominant party system identified by Bogaards (2000 and 2004) further raises doubts about the ability of African political parties to constructively contribute to the process of democratisation. This study starts with the hypothesis that if parties are ethnic or clientelistic they do not adhere to democratic procedures. In doing so it examines the following questions: Which types of parties are prevalent in Africa's multi-party democracies? And what is their respective relationship with democratic procedures? As it is interested in both differences across parties and countries it treats both countries and parties as units of analysis.

Initially it will outline a framework of comparison, which analyses African parties using two dimensions: Firstly, their generic type; in this regard the study distinguishes between ethnic, clientelistic and programmatic parties. As the subsequent discussion will outline, these are not mutually exclusive categories as their defining properties are matters of degree. Secondly, their relationship to democratic procedures; here the study scrutinises the relationship between parties and democratic norms with regard to inter- and intra-party competition. Subsequently this framework will be applied to a variety of politically significant parties in Kenya, Ghana and Nigeria. These countries have been chosen as all three exhibit different party types with diverse relationships to democratic norms. Therefore these cases illustrate not only differences across countries but help to assess the empirical value of the framework employed. In order to identify significant parties the study uses the criteria outlined by Sartori (2005:108). The conclusion will summarise the results and examine whether or not there is a potential link between a generic party type and its respective acceptance level of democratic rules.

### Framework for Comparison

African parties have rarely been compared in a systematic manner, as most research consists of case-studies. The study of voting behaviour highlights the role of ethnicity in party politics (Morrison 2004, Nugent 1999 and 2001, Fridy 2007 and Kandeh 1998). Accordingly ethnicity is seen as a major analytical yardstick in classifying African parties. Another large body of the literature analyses the particular nature of the African state, especially its clientelistic or neo-patrimonial nature (Bayard 1993, Chabal and Daloz 1999). In general political scientists regard clientelism in conjunction with ethnicity as decisive factors in determining elite behaviour and simultaneously as severe impediments to democratic consolidation. While clientelism and ethnicity are seen as joint pillars on which African political life rests, important conceptual differences between the two are often neglected. Lemarchand (1972) argued that although clientelism and ethnicity rarely operate independently,

ethnicity refers to a group phenomenon while clientelism refers to a personalized relationship.<sup>2</sup> Thus political networks of power based on ethnicity are restricted to include supporters whose mutual interest is dependent on a mutually shared perception of cultural affinities.

[C]lientelism, on the other hand, extends these perceptions beyond the realm of primordial loyalties and establishes vertical links of reciprocity between ethnically or socially discrete entities' (Lemarchand 1972:70).

Accordingly clientelism at the societal and the political level might lead to a higher identification with members of different communities and thus lead to a more inclusive political system, which manages to accommodate 'ethnic discontinuities' (Lemarchand 1972: 70).

Drawing on the initial considerations offered by Lemarchand, Joseph established several types of party structures based on different relationships between clientelism and ethnicity. Acknowledging the enduring influence of clientelism in African politics, Joseph defines an 'ethnic party' as one in which clientelistic clusters correspond to ethnic-linguistic groups. In this scenario ethnicity is the stronger of the two forces in shaping the structure of a party. His alternative party structure, the 'clientelistic party' transcends ethnic boundaries; it is kept together by clientelistic exchanges, which cut across ethnic lines. Joseph further does not exclude the possibility that a third type, the 'ideological party' might emerge in the long-run. Being driven by certain programmatic ideas the programmatic party type still maintains clientelistic networks and can be ethnic as well as trans-ethnic in nature (Joseph 1987: 58-63).

Unfortunately Joseph did not elaborate any further on how to identify these different types but stopped at the level of general considerations. The following indicators appear reasonably suited to distinguish all three types in greater detail:

*Leadership composition:* Leadership composition is a good indicator for examining the set-up of political parties, especially since membership figures in African parties are rarely kept and even if so, rarely updated.<sup>3</sup> It tells us if parties are able to recruit their leaders nationwide or if their leaders are confined to specific areas.

*Intra-party factions:* The nature of party factions indicates the nature of a party. Opposing factions modelled solely around ethnic lines indicate ethnic

---

2 Lemarchand is associated with a primordial view of ethnicity. While taking his general considerations between the interaction of ethnicity and clientelism as starting point, this study adheres to a constructivist concept of ethnicity as outlined by Kasfir (1976).

3 In this study party leadership 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.

parties. Factions modelled around individuals drawing support from all over the country indicate clientelistic parties. Factions modelled around ideological groupings are a sign of programmatic parties.

*Party goals:* How do parties appeal to voters? An ethnic party will generally appeal to ethnic unity, a programmatic party to abstract ideas and a clientelistic party is likely to stress national unity or other generally uncontested ideas.

*Election results, party nationalisation scores (PNS) and party system nationalisation scores (PSNS):* Election results indicate a party's strongholds. Party nationalisation scores (PNS) provide a useful means of comparing different parties' electoral support nationwide both within and across countries.<sup>4</sup> 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. The party system nationalisation score builds on the former and is an equally useful tool to compare party systems.<sup>5</sup> Clientelistic parties can be assumed to have a higher PNS and PSNS than ethnic parties. Just as the ethnic parties they might have strongholds yet they are not reduced to particular regions. Programmatic parties can be expected to display a high PNS and PSNS.

It is worth repeating at this point that all of the party types outlined by Joseph are mixed-types. Ethnic as well as programmatic parties still might have a clientelistic character. Yet ethnic parties show a preference in terms of who the recipient of resources is, while the clientelistic type transcends ethnic boundaries. Given that most African parties are assumed to be multi-ethnic in composition (Erdmann 2007) it might be very difficult to empirically distinguish between a clientelistic and a multi-ethnic party. When exactly does a multi-ethnic party qualify as 'trans-ethnic' and thus 'clientelistic'? One way of determining is to use Donald Horowitz's distinction between ethnic and non-ethnic parties: While the non-ethnic party is able to bridge its country's dominant ethnic cleavage lines which previously divided society, the ethnic party fails to do so (Horowitz 2000: 295-305). In order to qualify as non-ethnic (in our case clientelistic) the party further must be able to ensure internal cohesion over a period of several electoral cycles without falling apart into ethnic parties<sup>6</sup> (Horowitz 2000:367). One consequence of this dis-

---

4 As parties are the units of analysis, parliamentary election results have been used to calculate these various indicators. They further have the advantage of being less subjected to electoral rigging as the recent examples of Kenya and Zimbabwe indicate.

5 For an application of both measures to the Americas and further elaboration on their calculation see Jones and Mainwaring (2003).

6 The above represents only a very condensed discussion of Horowitz's party types. Horowitz actually referred to this as permanent coalition of ethnic parties.

tion is that our type of the 'ethnic party' includes mono- and multi-ethnic parties. This is an abstraction, yet it serves our purpose of examining the relationship of ethnic parties with democracy in general.

Having elucidated the distinction between the ethnic and the clientelistic party we now require a further clarification of the relationships between the programmatic and the ethnic as well as between the programmatic and the clientelistic party. The framework employed assumes the programmatic type to be trans-ethnic in composition. This does not deny the possibility that a party whose outreach is reduced to specific communities cannot be grounded on programmatic ideas. Cases such as the KPU in Kenya of the late 1960s (Geertzel 1970) or the Action Group in Nigeria of the early 1960s (Sklar 1963) are cases in point. However, the present framework is based on the assumption that the programmatic orientation of such a party is derived from its ethnic base. In other words: It supports programmatic ideas because they are conducive to the well-being of its comparatively narrow membership. Again the KPU and the Action Group are examples of this. Thus (multi-) ethnic parties with a programmatic content – should they have any – will be regarded as ethnic in character. In order to be classified as truly programmatic a party is required to have a nationwide following.

This sets out the relationship between the clientelistic and the programmatic party: Like the clientelistic party, the programmatic party manages to bridge the country's dominant cleavage lines yet in addition is motivated by programmatic ideas. While in the context of Western politics it has been ascertained what constitutes 'programmatic ideas' (Lipset and Rokkan 1967, Klingemann et al. 1994 and Klingemann et al. 2006) no agreement exists on what could be seen as a genuine programmatic statement by an African party. Statements in favour of 'good governance' or 'law and order' could be seen as programmatic in an African context. Yet using these criteria as a means of differentiating parties has in practice proven unsatisfactory as too much similarity exists across parties and countries.<sup>7</sup> The discussion of the various cases – in particular the Ghanaian one – will prove the traditional right-left cleavage model to be a useful starting point for an examination of African parties; all the more so in the absence of alternative frameworks.<sup>8</sup>

Finally one should note that this study does not presuppose our party typology to be complete. Other party types such as, for example, a 'personalistic party' modelled around a strong leader wanting to achieve specific goals appear a priori a possibility. Yet this study starts from the well-established assumption (see discussion above) that the two dominant forces of African

---

7 This is the result of party manifesto analysis as well as newspaper archive research conducted by the author in the three countries under discussion.

8 This article has grown out of the author's dissertation project. One of its aims is to arrive at a new framework for examining party ideology in Africa.

politics are ethnicity and clientelism. It is first and foremost interested in the interaction between either of these two phenomena and democracy at the aggregate level of political parties. The programmatic party has been offered as the one alternative, again based on already existing literature. A succinct typology such as ours further has the advantage that it provides for a manageable analysis. *Table 1* summarises the main characteristic of each party type in detail.

*Table 1: Party Types and Their Indicators*

<b>Indicators</b>				
<b>Party Type</b>	<b>Leadership &amp; Cabinet Composition</b>	<b>Factions &amp; Internal Cohesion</b>	<b>Goals</b>	<b>Election Results, PNS and PSNS</b>
<b>Ethnic</b>	→reflect ethnic cleavage lines	→ethnic and opposed leading to break-ups	→in favour of group interests	→identifiable strongholds →low to medium PNS and PSNS
<b>Clientelistic</b>	→bridging dominant cleavage lines	→non-ethnic; internally stable	→‘catch-all’ rhetoric	→strongholds but medium to high PNS and PSNS
<b>Programmatic</b>	→bridging dominant cleavage lines	→non-ethnic or programmatic internally stable	→programmatic	→strongholds but medium to high PNS and PSNS

*Source:* Author’s Compilation

Of great significance for the debate on democratic consolidation in post-Third Wave democracies is the question of how these party types relate to democratic procedures. Although parties per se are not included in any definition of democracy, they are posited at the interface between citizens and political competition. Given the multi-facet functions parties fulfil (representation, societal integration, issue aggregation, political recruitment and training etc.) they have the potential to successfully contribute to democratic consolidation. It is just as possible, however, that they might fail to act in line with democratic rules and perpetuate despotic rule (Bratton and van de Walle 1997, Randall and Svasand 2002, Lai and Melkonian-Hoover 2005, Creevy, Ngomo and Vengroff 2005). Ethnic and clientelistic parties are often assumed to impact negatively on democratisation. The politicisation of ethnic divisions is frequently associated with the subsequent destabilisation of parties and party systems due to their lack of interest in governing society as a whole and because of their so-called ‘out-bidding effect’. Accordingly, the emergence of one ethnic party in an ethnically segmented society ‘infects’

hitherto non-ethnic parties. As a result, subsequent elections turn into an 'ethnic census', which is detrimental to democratic stability (Chandra 2005: 236-239, Mitchell 1995: 774-780, Horowitz 2000). Clientelistic parties are also seen as destabilising factors for democracy. They foster the 'big man' rule which is conducive to power concentration within parties and countries (van de Walle 2003). In elections fought by clientelistic parties the stakes are as high as in elections contested by ethnic ones because continuous access to government is a requirement to ensure the survival of the party (Warner 1997: 535-541).

In order to distinguish generally between parties which are contributing to democratisation and those which are not, this study uses Diamond and Gunther's distinction between pluralistic and proto-hegemonic parties. The proto-hegemonic type strives towards the replacement of the existing pluralist society with one that is suited to its goals. The pluralistic type accepts the winning of free and fair elections as the only legitimate way of achieving their objectives. Proto-hegemonic parties further try to prevail over opposition groups inside the party by excluding them from access to leadership positions. By contrast pluralistic elites aim at internal hegemony by democratic means and by refraining from excluding alternative groups from running the party (Diamond and Gunther 2001: 16-17). Accepting these two types as the general starting point raises the question of how to differentiate between them. Lindberg (2004: 66-70) proposes a variety of indicators, which can be used to judge the democratic quality of elections. Some of these have been taken and modified to examine the democratic quality of parties both at the level of intra-and inter-party democracy. *Table 2* below summarises these.

*Table 2: Assessing Parties' Acceptance of Democratic Norms*

	<b>democratic/pluralistic</b>	<b>undemocratic/hegemonic</b>
<b>intra-party level</b>		
Alteration of leadership	democratic alteration	none/ undemocratic
leadership election	elections by delegates	appointments by leader
peacefulness	internally stable	threatened by splits/non-accepting of election outcome
<b>inter-party level</b>		
Accepting of defeat	yes	no
Electoral conduct	fair/tolerant	use of intimidation and threats
Rhetoric	issue-based/ accepting of other views	aggressive

*Source:* Author's Compilation

At the level of intra-party democracy a clear indication of the quality of democracy or the lack thereof is whether or not leadership alterations take



place (Scarrow 2005). Connected to this is the way these come about: Are leaders elected democratically or merely appointed by a strongman? Also, partly related to this is the extent to which party factions relate to one another. If they accept the outcome of leadership elections and do not work against the common good of the party, the democratic quality of a party can be seen as more advanced than if that is not the case. The degree of internal party stability is an outcome of this. The literature on intra-party democracy has at times stressed candidate selection procedures as an important indicator. Öhman (2004) has provided an elaborate framework for examining these and further provided its application to Ghana. Unfortunately there is no such data available on Nigeria as most of the relevant party congresses were closed to public scrutiny or not reported on by newspapers. In the case of Kenya data is also missing due to the high fluctuation of parties. As the discussion will show, this might be indicative of their respective generic type yet it does not allow for the inclusion of this variable.

At the level of inter-party democracy a party's (non)acceptance of electoral defeat clearly is the most important indicator. Party rhetoric and electoral conduct further illustrate its nature. If a party for example bans opponents from certain regions it clearly lacks basic democratic credentials. On the other hand a party which stresses issues – be they programmatic in nature or highlighting the fact that certain groups are under-represented in the nation at large – can more safely be assumed to accept democracy as the 'only game in town'.

The subsequent section will apply the framework to Kenya, Ghana and Nigeria in turn. It will examine both the particular party type in place and the relationship of that type with democratic procedures to see if there is any link between the two as assumed in the literature.

## Political Parties in Kenya, Ghana and Nigeria

### *Kenya: The enduring logic of ethnic politics*

Party competition was legalised in Kenya in late December 1991 after several decades of one-party rule under the Kenya African National Union (KANU). Immediately afterwards the opposition formed the Forum for the Restoration of Democracy (FORD), whose leadership set-up incorporated representatives of all major communities. A few months into its formation the FORD split into the FORD-Asili and the FORD-Kenya as its two main leaders, Oginga Odinga (Luo) and Kenneth Matiba (Kikuyu) failed to overcome their respective ambitions to become the FORD's presidential candidate. Subsequently both the FORD-A and the FORD-K rapidly developed into parties representing Kikuyu (FORD-A) and Luo/Luhya (FORD-K) interests, which was evi-

dent in terms of their leadership set-up as well as their electoral support (Throup and Hornsby 1998: 150-172).<sup>9</sup> The FORD-K further disintegrated as its Luo and the Luhya wing fought viciously over its leadership. The Luo wing under the leadership of Raila Odinga eventually defected to form the National Development Party (NDP), whose support was confined to the Luo dominated eras of Nyanza Province;<sup>10</sup> simultaneously the FORD-K declined to a party whose outreach was reduced to Luhya leaders and followers.

In addition to the FORD, the Democratic Party (DP) emerged also in late 1991 as a breakaway faction from the KANU under the leadership of Mwai Kibaki and John Keen. At its formation the DP included Kikuyu elites but also smaller communities such as the Kamba, the Meru or the Masai. As the FORD and later the FORD-K, the DP was equally unable to stay united. Feeling marginalised by the dominance of Kibaki's personality and his wealthy Kikuyu entourage, John Keen from the Masai as well as Charity Ngilu and Agnes Ndeti from the Kamba left the party;<sup>11</sup> while Keen and Ndeti defected back to the KANU, Charity Ngilu took over the Social Democratic Party (SDP), which had hitherto been unknown to the wider Kenyan populace and transformed it into a party which openly advocated Kamba interest.<sup>12</sup> In accordance with their respective leadership composition the DP and the SDP could claim Kikuyu areas in Central province and Kamba regions in Eastern province as their respective strongholds. Thus, due to ethnic factionalism and ethnic rivalry, the Kenyan democratic opposition had reached a situation of almost complete fragmentation into several (mono-) ethnic parties by early 1998.

On the governing benches at the time, the KANU showed ethnic bias in favour of the Kalenjin community of President Moi as well as in favour of the many smaller communities such as the Masai, the Turkana and the Samburu. The KANU's ethnic bias manifested itself in terms of Cabinet appointments, which show a clear marginalisation of the Kikuyu and Luo.<sup>13</sup> Just as the opposition parties the KANU had clearly identifiable strongholds, in particular the Kalenjin and minority-tribe dominated Rift Valley, the Luhya areas in Western and the Kissi areas in Nyanza province.

The ethnic nature of political parties was further evident in the parties' rhetoric. Both the original FORD as well as the FORD-K splits were accompanied by heavy ethnic undertones. The defection of the Luo wing from the

---

9 All references to election outcomes in this paper are derived from official election data provided by the respective Electoral Commission.

10 Daily Nation, November 13, 1997.

11 Daily Nation, August 31, 1997.

12 For an example of Ngilu's ethnic rhetoric, see Daily Nation, June 9, 1995.

13 For an overview of Cabinet appointments see Daily Nation, January 14, 1993 and Daily Nation, January 10, 1998.

FORD-K for example was pursued after extensive consultation with Luo elders by Raila Odinga (Badejo 2006). Charity Ngilu's pro-Kamba stance has already been mentioned. the KANU in particular played on ethnic divisions when it came to ensure electoral superiority. This was largely pursued by cabinet ministers appealing to their communities to understand that their welfare was intrinsically linked to the welfare of the KANU. In May 1994 for example, Cabinet Minister Joshua Angatia (Luhya) announced that the Luhya community would strengthen its political bargaining power if Western Province became united in the Kanu.<sup>14</sup> Kenya's Minister for Co-operative Development, Munyi, called on the Meru people to vote for the KANU if they wanted to receive further governmental assistance.<sup>15</sup> Moi himself repeatedly warned against a revival of GEMA and told his Kalenjin community to be on guard against a looming Kikuyu attack on the Presidency.<sup>16</sup>

Following two consecutive defeats at the hands of the KANU and President Moi the opposition changed strategy. This was further necessitated by the KANU's merger with the NDP into the New KANU, which the governing party pursued in order to cement its majority hold over parliament. The NDP highlighted the fact that the New KANU represented first and foremost a unique opportunity for the Luo people to regain power.<sup>17</sup> Partly in response to the New KANU, partly in response to two consecutive electoral defeats the DP, the FORD-K and the SDP in conjunction with 14 smaller parties formed the National Alliance Kenya (NAK). Yet both alliances proved short-lived. In the run-up to the 2002 elections the New KANU disintegrated over Moi's 'appointment' of Uhuru Kenyatta (Kikuyu) as his preferred successor and the KANU presidential candidate. Faced with a re-united opposition Moi intended to secure a Kikuyu bloc vote by appointing a prominent yet inexperienced Kikuyu politician. To lure the Kikuyu back into the KANU fold had indeed been a long-term strategy by the top KANU leadership throughout the later part of the 1990s (Peters 1997). The consequences of this strategy highlight the fragile nature of the KANU-LDP merger: A significant number of New KANU leaders under the leadership of Raila Odinga (Luo) decided to break away from the KANU over the issue of a Kikuyu presidential candidate and defected to the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), which also included leading Kamba and Luhya politicians. The LDP then merged with the NAK in order to form the National Alliance Rainbow Coalition (NARC). The NARC proved to be the first and so far only nationwide alliance, which managed to include all of Kenya's major ethnic

---

14 Daily Nation, 23 May 1994.

15 Daily Nation, 22 February 1994.

16 Daily Nation, 3 May 1996.

17 Daily Nation, 11 May 1998.

groups without falling apart before election day (Ndegwa 2003). However as early as two weeks into the Kibaki Presidency initial tensions became visible between the different ethnic wings which made up the NARC (Kadima and Owuor 2006). The NARC Kikuyu MPs for example voted for fellow Kikuyu from opposition parties when it came to the selection of prestigious chairmanship positions of parliamentary committees.<sup>18</sup> Kibaki himself appointed several ministers closely associated with Kenyatta's former hawkish Kikuyu elite including Njenga Karume, John Michuki or Kiraitu Murungi.<sup>19</sup> The deteriorating relationship between them and the rest of the NARC came to a final end over Kibaki's refusal to initiate constitutional reforms, which would have seen the creation of a strong executive prime minister, a position promised to Raila Odinga as part of the agreement which had brought the NAK and the LDP together. This in return led to the formation of the Orange Democratic Movement (ODM) led by Odinga and eventually also Kibaki's Party of National Unity (PNU). Again the split had a clear ethnic dimension to it: while the former was driven by Luo and Kalenjin politicians, the latter became a Kikuyu-led party. While both included representatives of all other communities, both equally failed to bridge the division between Luo and Kikuyu as well as Kikuyu and Kalenjin. A similar fate befell the KANU, the new opposition party. Its new chairman Uhuru Kenyatta (Kikuyu) soon faced stiff opposition by William Ruto (Kalenjin), Moi's former right-hand and the party's Kalenjin stalwart. Just as the NARC, the KANU split in two with the Kalenjin wing breaking away and forming a new party.<sup>20</sup>

In retrospect it seems clear that the Kenyan political society has been consistently divided along ethnic lines. At least at the aggregate level of political parties two of the country's dominant ethnic cleavage lines, namely the division into Luo and Kikuyu as well as into Kalenjin and Kikuyu, (Widner 1992, Geertzel 1970) were at no point in time overcome. Accordingly, all significant political parties in Kenya between 1992 and 2007 represent ethnic parties. Though the country's dominant ethnic cleavages were at times overcome, these periods proved to be short-lived and tactically motivated. The case of the NARC is especially illuminating for this study: even though it was the party in government and thus had access to resources of patronage, the centrifugal forces of ethnicity proved stronger. *Table 3 and 4* illustrate the various processes of political reconstruction in Kenya.

---

18 Daily Nation, March 20, 2003.

19 Karume was the chairman of the Gikuyu, Embu and Merus welfare association in the 1970s, which aimed at ensuring the continuation of a Kikuyu presidency after Kenyatta's death, while Michuki was his assistant Secretary-General. All three are said to have had unlimited access to Kibaki, while high-ranking members of NARC such as Odinga or Ngilu did not.

20 The East African Standard, January 22, 2006.

Table 3: Parties and their Constituents, 1993-1998

<b>FORD (1991)</b> All major communities	<b>FORD-A (1992)</b> Kikuyu <b>FORD-K (1992)</b> Luo, Luhya	<b>FORD-A</b> Kikuyu <b>FORD-K</b> Luhya <b>LDP (1997)</b> Luo
<b>DP (1991)</b> Kikuyu, Kamba, Masai	<b>DP</b> Kikuyu <b>SDP (1996)</b> Kamba	<b>DP</b> Kikuyu <b>SDP</b> Kamba
<b>KANU</b> Kalenjin, Luhya, Kamba, Masai	<b>KANU</b> Kalenjin, Luhya, Kamba, Masai	<b>KANU</b> Kalenjin, Luhya, Kamba, Masai

Table 4: Parties and their Constituents, 1998-2007

<b>NAK (2002)</b> DP, FORD-K, NKP (=SDP)	<b>NARC (2002)</b> NAK, LDP	<b>PNU (2007)</b> DP, FORD-K, KANU (Kenyatta wing) <b>ODM (2005)</b> LDP, KANU (Ruto wing), NPK
<b>New KANU (1999)</b> KANU+LDP	<b>KANU (2002)</b>	-

Source: Authors Compilation

Having established the ethnic nature of Kenyan political society leaves the question of their acceptance of democratic procedures. All of Kenya's parties have demonstrated their unwillingness to accept and/or compromise over the outcome of party leadership elections. The disintegration of the FORD, the defection of the Luo wing from the FORD-K to the NDP, the defection of the Kamba wing from the DP to the SDP and in more recent months the disintegration of the KANU as well as the split of the NARC into the PNU and the ODM are cases in point. In all instances leadership election outcomes were challenged legally in court and - having been fought unsuccessfully - resulted in party splits. Indeed the high salience of ethnicity has proven to be incompatible with intra-party democracy. Externally the reality is the same. Throughout various election campaigns party leaders advised political opponents not to enter their respective strongholds. Similarly during election-free

periods parties regularly 'forbade' opposition parties to recruit members in their strongholds (Rutten et al. 2007). Parties further frequently referred to ethnic militias to intimidate and harass opposite-minded voters (Human Rights Watch 1993 and 2008). The 2007 elections have been deeply fraught with electoral rigging by both government and opposition and their respective inability to concede even the possibility of defeat. Skeptical voices inside Kenya have argued for a long time that the only reason why the KANU in 2002 did accept its loss of the grip of power was the sheer dimension of the NARC's victory, which simply left no room for political manipulation.<sup>21</sup> The examples above indeed indicate the peaceful hand-over of power in 2002 as constituting an exception rather than a new period in Kenyan political history.

*Ghana: Towards the consolidation of political society*

In Ghana the political struggle of the democratic opposition against J.J. Rawlings' military regime followed a distinctly different pattern. Their political society has been structured around two main political parties, which so far have shown a high degree of stability. Shortly after the inauguration of the Fourth Republic in January 1992, the opposition formed the New Patriotic Party under the leadership of Adu Boahen (Akyem/Akan). The leadership composition of the NPP has always been dominated by personalities from Ashanti or other Akan communities, yet it has consistently managed to bridge the country's dominant cleavage lines between Akan and Ewe as well as North and South (Danso-Boafo 1996: 70-95). While initially the NPP incorporated only a few leading figures from the Ewe dominated Volta region such as Major Courage Quarshigah, a representative of the Ghanaian military and outspoken opponent (and cousin) of Rawlings, in more recent years the Ewe faction in the NPP leadership has seen a growth in numbers as has the party's share of the vote in Ewe populated areas.<sup>22</sup> Since the first multi-party elections in 1992 it has become the norm in the NPP to award the slot of the vice-presidential candidate to a Northerner. Although the NPP is at times often perceived as an Ashanti/Akan-only party, being Ashanti has at times been a disadvantage for prospective candidates contesting for the leadership of the party as party strategists believed an Ashanti party leader would foster that perception.<sup>23</sup> After winning the 2000 elections, NPP cabinets have

---

21 Dr. Tom Wolf, paper presented at a non-public workshop of the British Institute for East Africa, Nairobi, January 10, 2008.

22 This is the result of my own analysis of the NPP leadership over a certain time conducted with the help of various media resources, including Daily Graphic, Daily Guide and Statesman.

23 Daily Dispatch, November 28, 2005

shown a similar ethnic balance as the NPP as a whole (Ayensu and Darkwa 1999: 101-105). It was also under an NPP government that for the first time in history a Muslim was appointed vice-president.

Internal party factions are largely modelled around powerful individuals. From the early to the mid-1990s the party was divided into two camps one led by Adu Boahen (Akyem/Akan) and one led by John Kufour (Ashanti/Akan), who eventually prevailed to win the party's 1996 and 2000 presidential candidature (Agyeman-Duah 2006:50-63). Since the mid-1990s Nana-Akufo Addo (Akyem/Akan) has emerged as the alternative power centre within the NPP and is now set to take over Kufour's role as presidential candidate in the upcoming 2008 elections. While all three are from Akan communities, all three have nationwide followings within the party. John Kufour secured the leadership of the party – as well as later the Presidency – by riding on the wave of support given by party delegates from areas the party traditionally underperforms in.<sup>24</sup> The example of Kufour illustrates that ethnicity clearly matters less than individual leadership while in Kenya individual leadership and ethnicity coincide. This is not to deny the existence of ethnic factions inside the party: the Nasara Club for example has at times been a powerful lobby group for the party's Muslim members and candidates for top party positions. Yet in great contrast to Kenya these factions have refrained from excluding others from party leadership positions. It does not come as a surprise that the political rhetoric of the NPP has been one of continuous reassurance towards those communities, who voted for alternative parties.

On the opposite side of the political divide the National Democratic Congress (NDC) was formed simultaneously in 1992 as a follow-up to the previous military administration the People's National Democratic Congress (PNDC). Just as the PNDC, the NDC was led by J.J. Rawlings, who between 1992 and 2000 determined all party appointments.<sup>25</sup> If the NPP has at times been alleged to be an Ashanti party, the NDC has been equally suspected of being the party of the Ewe and the North. Rawlings himself hails from the Ewe community and once famously referred to the Ewe populated Volta region as his World Bank on election day (Nugent 2001). Yet, despite this and despite a bias in favour of the Volta and the Northern regions in terms of Cabinet appointments, the NDC leadership has been cross-cutting along ethnic lines before and after being in power. John Atta Mills, an Akan from the Fante tribe, who became Rawlings' handpicked successor as the NDC presidential candidate is a case in point. The NDC's defeat in 2000 has led to the rise of two major factions, a pro- and an anti-Rawlings wing. The former

---

<sup>24</sup> The Statesman, February 13, 2000.

<sup>25</sup> Between 1992 and 2001 the NDC constitution explicitly recognised Rawlings as party founder and leader.

comprises fervent supporters of Rawlings' military coup of December 1981, which they regard as crucial in ridding the nation of what they perceive to be corrupt elitist big men politicians. In addition they view the former military dictator's populism as essential in securing future electoral success. Their opponents have long been calling for greater inner-party reform and the emancipation of the party from its founder. Prominent representatives of the reformist wing include Obed Asamoah (Ewe), who was narrowly elected NDC chairman in 2002 and Kwesi Botchwey (Akan), who lost out against Atta Mills in the race to become the party's 2004 presidential candidate.<sup>26</sup> The reformist wing has further insisted on refocusing the party's propaganda machinery on social democratic ideological lines and less on the charisma of Rawlings.<sup>27</sup> Therefore inner-party rivalry is driven by different conceptions about the future direction of the party, a debate, which is linked to different party leaders. As in the NPP ethnicity neither divides the NDC nor do the major party factions coincide with ethnicity. *Table 5 and 6* below display the PNS and PSNS for Kenya and Ghana. They confirm quantitatively what has already been established in the discussion so far. In general party nationalisation cores are consistently higher in Ghana than in Kenya with the historical exception of the NARC.

*Table 5: PNS for Ghana and Kenya*

*Ghana*

NPP	1992	n/a <sup>28</sup>
	1996	.65
	2000	.73
	2004	.80
NDC	1992	.88
	1996	.89
	2000	.74
	2004	.86
National Average		.79

---

26 Daily Graphic, December 23, 2002.

27 Daily Graphic, April 4, 2003.

28 The NPP boycotted the 1992 parliamentary elections. For details see discussion on inter-party democracy in Ghana below.



*Kenya*

DP	1992	.61
	1997	.57
FORD-K	1992	.56
	1997	.45
FORD-A	1992	.60
	1997	.42
NDP	1997	.42
SDP	1997	.48
KANU	1992	.68
	1997	.76
	2002	.73
NARC	2002	.84
ODM	2007	.70
PNU	2007	.66
National Average		.61

*Source:* Author's compilation from official elections results provided by the respective Electoral Commissions.

One must note that the figures for the KANU are biased in favour of a higher PNS: In several KANU strongholds the KANU MPs were returned unopposed due to a lack of alternative candidates. If elections had taken place, the number of votes for the KANU would have been drastically higher, which would have reduced the PNS to the disadvantage of the KANU, as the party's votes would have been spread less equally nationwide. Party system nationalisation scores prove even more clearly that overall Ghanaian political parties consistently had a more nationwide following than their Kenyan counterparts.

*Table 6: PSNS for Ghana and Kenya*

	1992	1996/97	2000/02	2004/07
Ghana	n/a	.70	.70	.74
Kenya	.59	.54	.62	.42

*Source:* Author's compilation from official elections results provided by the respective Electoral Commissions.

In addition, all major Ghanaian political actors have displayed allegiance to distinct political ideologies. The NPP has, from its inception, regarded itself as a follower of the Danquah-Busia tradition, a Ghanaian political strand of thinking favouring the free market and individual enterprise. Its election

campaigns of the early 1990s referred to the failure of communism and state-owned enterprise in Eastern Europe by which the NPP saw its own ideals to be vindicated.<sup>29</sup> While in opposition NPP leaders have shown great verbal support for tax reform benefiting the middle and entrepreneur classes.<sup>30</sup> Since taking over the reins of power the NPP's express aim has been the creation of a 'property owning democracy' a goal it reiterates at almost every public occasion. As already mentioned there are growing tendencies within the NDC to incorporate the principles of social democracy.<sup>31</sup> On various occasions NDC leaders have condemned the NPP's concept of 'property-owning democracy' as creating social exclusion.<sup>32</sup>

But though it would be short-sighted to ignore both parties' ideological credentials, it would be equally naïve to classify both as purely programmatic. Within Ghana the political debate is dominated by issues largely devoid of ideology such as infrastructure development or corruption. Therefore while ideological foundations do impact on the Fourth Republic the political discourse is more often than not overshadowed by non-ideological matters. In addition to this, any discussion about the outcome of leadership competition in the NPP and the NDC must note that at any party congress potential candidates have provided extensive amounts of money to delegates in order to secure their nomination. This is more indicative of clientelism than programmatic ideals.

There remain differences within Ghanaian political society with regard to intra-party democracy. Within the NPP leadership positions have been contested by a variety of individuals and, in great contrast to Kenya, all party contests concluded on conciliatory notes between losers and winners. This is especially true of the position of the presidential candidate, which throughout the 1990s was heavily contested between Adu Boahen and John Kufour and later between Kufour and Akufo-Addo. The aftermath of Kufuor's victory over Nana Akufo-Addo is illuminating for this study: being a member of the so-called G-15, a group of extremely wealthy party financiers, Akufo-Addo did not withdraw his support from Kufour instead he chose to serve in two consecutive Kufour cabinets. In addition NPP congress delegates have consistently resisted orders from the leadership when it comes to choosing the party's top executive. At the 2005 congress Kufour openly supported Stephen Ntim over Peter Mac Manu for the position of NPP chair-

---

29 The Statesman, August 23, 1992.

30 The Statesman, August 23, 1992.

31 Interview with Ht. John Mahama MP, vice-presidential candidate of the NDC Accra, April 8, 2008.

32 For examples see Daily Graphic, December 6, 2004 and Daily Graphic, October 25, 2004.

man. In the end Mac Manu succeeded narrowly.<sup>33</sup> Thus NPP congresses have proven to be closely contested, defiant of orders from above and thus somewhat unpredictable. The NDC on the other hand experienced democratic contests only after 2000. Before Rawlings' departure from the Presidency individuals were pre-selected for specific positions. While most observers saw in the chairmanship of Obed Asamoah a turn towards greater acceptance of democratic norms, the party's 2005 congress reversed that trend. Asamoah's landslide defeat against Kwabena Adjei, a former minister of agriculture and Rawlings close confidante, saw the defection of leading personalities of the NDC's reformist wing to the newly formed Democratic Freedom Party. Their exit was accompanied by widespread complaints about the pro-Rawlings personality cult, violent threats and harassment of anti-Rawlings party activists.<sup>34</sup> However, the emergence of John Mahama as Mills vice-presidential candidate, against the wish of Rawlings and many others, was a clear sign that the democratisers within the NDC were still a strong force to be reckoned with and, given the age-structure of all individuals involved, they will possibly claim the party's future.

At the level of inter-party competition both parties have increasingly accepted democratic rules. While the 1992 presidential elections were marred by allegations of massive fraud by the NPP, which later boycotted the parliamentary elections, since 1996 all elections have taken place in a comparatively peaceful and calm manner. Having followed the constitutional requirement to step down after two terms in office and having accepted his party's defeat in the closely fought 2000 elections, J.J. Rawlings has at times been associated with attempts to overthrow the NPP government with the help of the military. Yet it is not possible for outsiders to determine whether or not these accusations were ever warranted. Both parties respected the outcomes of the 1996, 2000 and 2004 elections overall even though the respective loser referred to several cases of administrative shortcomings, alleged vote buying or abuses of incumbency (Center for Democracy and Development Ghana 2005a and Center for Democracy and Development Ghana 2005b). These however can be safely discarded as non-decisive in terms of the electoral outcome. In general then it seems reasonable to classify both parties as pluralistic even though internally the NDC still incorporates non-democratic tendencies.

*Nigeria: Towards the autocratic one-party state*

In contrast to Kenya and Ghana multi-party democracy returned to Nigeria as late as 1999. The transition from military rule to multi-party democracy

---

<sup>33</sup> The Statesman, 18 December, 2005.

<sup>34</sup> Daily Graphic, April 8, 2006 and Daily Graphic, December 29, 2005.

was facilitated by the sudden death of Sani Abacha and thereafter witnessed the rise of a variety of political entities preparing to re-enter the political scene. Most of these eventually came together under the roof of the People's Democratic Party (PDP). Its official founders became known as the so-called G-34, a conglomerate of personalities from all corners of the Nigerian federation, who had openly opposed Abacha's continuous stay in power. It was led by Alex Ekwueme, an Igbo, who had been the initiator of the idea of a rotating Presidency at the Nigerian constitutional conference in 1995.<sup>35</sup> Other powerful groups within the newly formed party included the Northern-dominated People's Democratic Movement (PDM) led by Atiku Abubakar, who presided over the political network of the late Shehu Musa Yar'Adua, who together with Olesegun Obasanjo had returned the country to civilian rule in the late 1970s. The PDP further incorporated equally powerful Northern generals such as former long-term military despot Ibrahim Babangida, who became one of the party's large-scale financiers and initially the driving force behind the Obasanjo Presidency.<sup>36</sup> The successful transformation of such diverse groups into one political party constituted a novelty: For the first time in Nigerian history a powerful political party whose outreach was not narrowed to one of the country's three main ethnic communities, Yoruba, Hausa or Igbo, emerged and remained in existence. Indeed by deciding to silently subscribe to the idea of rotating the Presidency between North and South as well as prescribing an ethnically balanced party leadership structure,<sup>37</sup> the PDP explicitly learned from the lessons of Nigeria's failed First and Second Republic. To provide access to power for all three major groups within the party has indeed been a constant imperative that the PDP has successfully implemented over the years.<sup>38</sup> Furthermore, the party has been keen on creating ethnically balanced cabinets as well as other high-ranking government positions such as that of the Senate President or the Speaker of the National Assembly.<sup>39</sup>

Ever since its foundation the PDP has witnessed intense struggles between the different groups, which make up the party. The early years of Obasanjo's Presidency saw heavy infighting between the PDM and the G-34 over party leadership positions as well as the presidential nomination in 1999 and 2003. On both occasions the PDM secured landslide victories. These led to an ever growing influx of military personal into the leadership structure of a party originally founded by civilian dissidents. Victor Gemade for example, the

---

35 The News, November 16, 1998.

36 Africa Confidential, February 19, 1999.

37 These are prescribed in article 7.2 (c) of the PDP's Constitution as amended in 2001.

38 Tempo, November 4, 1998.

39 Vanguard, December 12, 2003.

PDM's (and Obasanjo's) candidate for the position of PDP chairman in 2000, is known to have been an influential supporter of the Abacha regime and previously acted as the chairman of one of Abacha's fake parties.<sup>40</sup> While during his first term Obasanjo had been heavily dependent on the goodwill of the PDM, his vice-president Atiku and initially also on the support of Ibrahim Babangida, he increasingly cut ties with his former support groups once he had secured a second term. His re-election saw the immediate appointment of Ahmadu Ali, a retired colonel and former member of his military administration as the new PDP chairman. By 2005 the complete top level of the party consisted of former generals and police officers loyal to Obasanjo.<sup>41</sup> By that time, most members of the G-34 had left the party or were faced with disciplinary actions for allegedly working against the party.<sup>42</sup> The recently concluded 2007 elections were anteceded by the final fall-out of Obasanjo and his former mentor and vice-president Atiku over the presidential nomination of the PDP. With Obasanjo trying to seek constitutional amendments to allow him a third term in office, Atiku mobilised his supporters to bring down the affected bill in the Senate. The latter's success led to his temporary expulsion from the vice-presidency and his subsequent defection to the Action Congress (International Crisis Group 2007a: 5-7). Factionalism in Nigeria's political society is clearly driven by strong power-brokers relying on a nationwide following. Neither the G-34, nor the PDM nor the Obasanjo camp showed any ethnic bias in terms of their allocation of positions. The G-34 was national in terms of its composition and its conviction to keep the country united; the PDM, even though Northern-dominated, was essential in ensuring a Yoruba Presidency and could count on the loyalty of state governors across the country; Obasanjo himself drew his support less from his Yoruba home base but from close political cooperation with Northern generals as well as financial support from godfathers, who originated from all over the Federation.<sup>43</sup>

While the party has taken the lessons of history with regard to dealing with the divisive issue of ethnicity, it has failed to live up to its democratic aspirations. Leadership struggles within the PDP have been exceptionally ruthless. In order to get the PDP aligned state governors to support his renewed candidacy in 2003, Obasanjo and his then-ally Atiku promised all

---

40 Vanguard, November 11, 2002. Amongst other things Gemade planned Abacha's transitional programme to multi-party democracy, which was abandoned due to Abacha's death.

41 Daily Trust, March 6, 2005.

42 Vanguard, November 18, 2005.

43 For an overview of godfatherism and its impact on Nigerian politics and the Obasanjo administration see: Human Rights Watch (2007): *Criminal Politics*. USA: Human Rights Watch.

PDP governors to free them of intra-party opposition to their renewed bid for power irrespective of the various legal suits levelled against them.<sup>44</sup> Eventually Obasanjo secured his second nomination and all governors were returned as PDP candidates.<sup>45</sup> Politically motivated (attempted) assassinations have also returned to Nigeria<sup>46</sup> with former PDP chairman Gemade being one of the most well-known victims. Originally allied to Obasanjo and Atiku, Gemade attracted the wrath of Obasanjo after he pursued the expulsion of Chris Uba, Obasanjo's nephew-in-law, brother of one of Obasanjo's close political advisors and a widely feared political godfather of Anambra state. Throughout the period of Obasanjo's reign Uba had been involved not only in financing the PDP's various campaigns in the Eastern region but also in kidnapping a state governor after the latter refused to allocate state contracts to him. In an open letter Ogbah accused Obasanjo of complicity in this affair, which led to his immediate political downfall. In January 2005 Ogbah was pressured into resigning his post.<sup>47</sup> In late August that year his house was raided by armed bandits, for which Ogbah blamed the PDP.

In the month leading up to his failed third term bid, Obasanjo again tried to bring the governors on his side, this time by using Nigeria's Economic and Financial Crimes Commission to either intimidate them or bring them in line (International Crisis Group 2007a). The relationship between the Obasanjo dominated executive and the legislative was equally turbulent. Various Senate Presidents were pushed out of office by the party in order to ensure trouble-free pro-government legislation.<sup>48</sup> In mid-2003 for example Obasanjo threw his weight behind Senator Adolph Wabara to become the new Senate President at a time when Wabara had actually lost his Senate constituency to an opposition candidate. An electoral appeal panel reinstated Wabara, who subsequently did indeed become Senate President.<sup>49</sup> In recent years, leadership elections have been increasingly less contentious with the Obasanjo wing taking full control over candidate selection and their prospects of success.<sup>50</sup> The nomination of Alhaji Yar'Adua as Obasanjo's successor fits that pattern: after the breakaway of Atiku's Action Congress, no alternative but an Obasanjo-friendly candidate was feasible.

---

44 This Day, January 7, 2003.

45 This Day, December 31, 2002.

46 Vanguard, March 19, 2004.

47 This Day, January 11, 2005.

48 For a summary of Senate Presidents and their rocky relationship with Obasanjo see This Day, October 22, 2003.

49 This Day, May 23, 2003.

50 Daily Trust, December 12, 2005 and Africa Confidential, November 17, 2006.

Open rigging and massive abuse of incumbency have characterised the most recent 2007 elections, which national and international observers have condemned as an attempt by the Nigerian government to implement a one-party state (International Crisis Group 2007b, European Union 2007). Already the 1999 and 2003 elections witnessed large-scale irregularities, which clearly biased the governing party; the most frequently quoted incidents were the announcements of results in areas where no election had taken place or where the count had not been concluded.<sup>51</sup> This scope of electoral rigging in conjunction with the very violent nature of Nigerian elections greatly questions their basic validity, which is why election results are not taken as indicators for Nigerian political society. Overall, the PDP clearly reflects the key characteristics of a clientelistic-hegemonic party<sup>52</sup>.

## Conclusion

This study has sought to contribute to the literature on African parties and democratic consolidation in several ways. Firstly, drawing on existing literature, it has devised an analytical framework for comparing parties across countries. Secondly it has applied this framework to Kenya, Ghana and Nigeria respectively. Thirdly, and most importantly, its results have revealed significant differences between parties across countries with regard to both their generic type as well as their willingness to conform to democratic rules.

In Kenya all significant parties have consistently failed to integrate all major groups of the Kenyan state into one political force. Consequently all are ethnic parties. The classification of Ghanaian parties is less clear-cut: Parties exhibit ideological agendas, while incorporating clientelistic elements. The PDP as the only significant Nigerian party is purely clientelistic. Their respective relationship with democratic procedures is equally diverse. In Kenya and Nigeria parties do not accept democratic rules. By contrast, in Ghana both the current governing party and increasingly also its opposition have engaged in closely fought competitions over party positions as well as national office. Both have accepted electoral outcomes without resorting to electoral fraud, as has been prevalent in Nigeria, or rejecting the possibility of electoral defeat, as in Kenya. It is interesting to note in this context that a party's relationship to intra-party democracy reflects its interaction with democratic procedures in general: Parties which are democratic internally also accept democracy as 'the only game in town'.

---

51 Weekly Trust, May 3, 2003. Also see: European Union Observation Mission 2003

52 The examination of Nigeria is reduced to the PDP for two reasons: Firstly, the opposition parties cannot be regarded as relevant political forces using Sartori's criteria. Secondly, an examination of these parties would not add substantially to the argument of the relationship between democracy and parties advanced here.

This study confirms the view that clientelistic and ethnic parties are unwilling to abide by democratic rules while parties with at least a minimal ideological content do. Given parties' intermediary role between state and society, democratic consolidation appears less likely in states in which parties fail to include programmatic ideas. However these conclusions are only of a tentative nature given this article's narrow scope as a small study. An increase of cases is needed to prove or disprove the robustness of a link between a party type and its democratic acceptance level. Such extended studies will also be better able to examine systemic factors which might be responsible for the appearance of different generic party types such as for example ethnic fragmentation, economic conditions or the type of party system in place.

### References

- Agyeman-Duah, Ivor (2006): *Between Faith and History. A Biography of John A. Kufuor*. United Kingdom: Chatham.
- Ayensu, K. B./Darkwa, S. N. (1999): *The Evolution of Parliament in Ghana*. Accra: Sub-Saharan Publishers.
- Badejo, Babafemi (2006): *Raila Odinga. An Enigma in Kenyan Politics*. Nairobi: Yintab Books.
- Bayard, Jean-Francois (1993): *The State in Africa: The Politics of the Belly*. United Kingdom: Longman Group.
- Bogaards, Matthijs (2000): Crafting Competitive Party Systems: Electoral Laws and the Opposition in Africa. *Democratization* 7 (4): 163-190.
- Bogaards, Matthijs (2004): Counting Parties and Identifying Dominant Party Systems in Africa. *European Journal of Political Research* 43 (2): 173-97.
- Bratton, Michael/van de Walle, Nicolas (1997): *Democratic Experiments in Africa. Regime Transitions in Comparative Perspective*. United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.
- Carothers, Thomas (2006): *Confronting the Weakest Link. Aiding Political Parties in New Democracies*. Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.
- Chabal, Patrick/Daloz, Jean Pascal (1999): *Africa Works. Disorder as Political Instrument*. London: The International African Institute.
- Chandra, Kanchan (2004): Ethnic Parties and Democratic Stability. *Perspectives on Politics* 3 (2): 235-252.
- Creevy, Lucy/Ngomo, Paul/Vengroff, Richard (2005): Party Politics and Different Paths to Democratic Transitions: A Comparison of Benin and Senegal. *Party Politics* 11 (4): 471-493.
- Danso-Boafo, Kwaku (1996): *The Political Biography of Dr. Kofi Abrefa Busia*. Accra: Ghana Universities Press.



- Diamond, Larry/Gunther, Richard (2001): Types and Functions of Parties. In: Diamond, Larry/ Gunther, Richard (eds.), *Political Parties and Democracy*. USA: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1-39.
- Erdmann, Gero (2007): Party Research: Western European Bias and the African Labyrinth. In: Basedau, Matthias/Erdmann, Gero/Mehler, Andreas (eds.), *Votes, Money and Violence. Political Parties and Elections in Sub-Saharan Africa*. Sweden: Elanders Gotab, 34-65.
- European Union (2003): European Union Election Observation Mission to Nigeria. Brussels: *European Union*, online: [http://ec.europa.eu/external\\_relations/human\\_rights/eu\\_election\\_ass\\_observ/nigeria/rep03.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/human_rights/eu_election_ass_observ/nigeria/rep03.pdf), accessed 28.04.2008.
- European Union (2007): *European Union Election Observation Mission to Nigeria*. Brussels: European Union.
- Fridy, Kevin (2007): The Elephant, Umbrella, and Quarrelling Cocks: Disaggregating Partisanship in Ghana's Fourth Republic. *African Affairs* 106 (423): 281-305.
- Geertzel, Cheery (1970): *The Politics of Independent Kenya*. Nairobi: East African Publishing House.
- Ghana Center for Democratic Development (2005a): *Ghana's Election 2004. What the Observers Say*. Accra: CDD Ghana.
- (2005b): *Abuse of Incumbency and Administrative Resources in Ghana's Election 2004*. Accra: CDD Ghana.
- Horowitz, Donald (2000): *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Human Rights Watch (1993): *Divide and Rule. State-Sponsored Ethnic Violence in Kenya*. USA: Human Rights Watch.
- (2007): *Criminal Politics. Violence, Godfathers and Corruption in Nigeria*. USA: Human Rights Watch.
- (2008): *Ballots to Bullets. Organized Political Violence and Kenya's Crisis of Governance*. USA: Human Rights Watch.
- International Crisis Group (2007a): Nigeria's Election: Avoiding a Political Crisis, online: <http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=4741&l=1>, accessed 14.04.2008.
- (2007b): Failed Elections, Failing States?, online: <http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=4876&l=1>, accessed 15.04.2008.
- Jones, Mark/Mainwaring, Scott (2003): *The Nationalization of Parties and Party Systems: An Empirical Measure and an Application to the Americas*. USA: Kellogg Institute for International Studies.
- Joseph, Richard (1987): *Democracy and Prebendal Politics in Nigeria. The Rise and Fall of the Second Republic*. UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Kadima, Denis/Owuor, Felix (2006): The National Rainbow Coalition. In: Kadima, Denis (ed.), *The Politics of Party Coalitions in Africa*. South Africa: Konrad Adenauer Foundation, 179-221.
- Kandeh, Jimmy (1992): The Politicization of Ethnic Identities in Sierra Leone. *African Studies Review* 35 (1): 81-99.
- Kasfir, Nelson. 1976: *The Shrinking Political Arena. Participation and Ethnicity in African Politics with a Case Study of Uganda*. USA: University of California Press.

- Klingemann, Hans-Dieter et. al. (1994): *Parties, Policies and Democracy*. USA: Westview Press.
- Klingemann, Hans-Dieter et. al. (2006): *Mapping Policy Preferences II*. UK: Oxford University Press.
- Lai, Brian/Melkonian-Hoover, Ruth (2005): Democratic Progress and Regress: The Effect of Parties on the Transitions of States to and Away from Democracy. *Political Research Quarterly* 58 (4): 551-564.
- Lemarchand, Rene (1972): Political Clientelism and Ethnicity in Tropical Africa: Competing Solidarities in Nation-Building. *American Political Science Review* 66 (1): 68-90.
- Lijphart, Arend (1999): *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries*. USA: Yale University Press.
- Lindberg, Staffan (2004): The Democratic Qualities of Competitive Elections: Participation, Competition and Legitimacy in Africa. *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics* 42 (1): 61-105.
- (2007): Institutionalization of Party Systems? Stability and Fluidity among Legislative Parties in Africa's Democracies. *Government and Opposition* 42 (2): 215-241.
- Lipset, Seymour/Rokkan, Stein (1967): *Party Systems and Voter Alignments: Cross National Perspectives*. New York: The Free Press.
- Mitchell, Paul (1995): Party Competition in an Ethnic Dual Party System. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 18 (4): 773-796.
- Morrison, Minion/Jaw, Hong (2006): Ghana's Political Parties. How Ethno-Regional Variations Sustain the National Two-Party System. *Journal of Modern African Studies* 44 (4): 623-647.
- National Democratic Congress (2001): *Constitution of the National Democratic Congress*. Accra: Printers.
- Ndegwa, Stephen (2003): Kenya: Third Time Lucky. *Journal of Democracy* 14 (3): 145-158.
- Nugent, Paul (1999): Living in the Past: Urban, Rural and Ethnic Themes in the 1992 and 1996 Elections in Ghana. *Journal of Modern African Studies* 37 (2): 287-319.
- (2001): Winners, Losers and also Rans: Money, Moral Authority and Voting Patterns in the Ghana 2000 Elections. *African Affairs* 100 (400): 405-28.
- Öhman, Magnus (2004): *The Heart and Soul of the Party. Candidate Selection in Ghana and Africa*. Sweden: Uppsala Universitet.
- Peters, Ralph-Michael (1998): Die Präsidentschafts- und Parlamentswahlen in Kenya 1997. *Focus Afrika* 10.
- Peoples Democratic Party (1999): *Constitution of the Peoples Democratic Party*. Abuja: A.J. Press.
- Randall, Vicky (2001): Party Systems and Voter Alignments in the New Democracies of the Third World. In: Karvonen, Lauri/Kuhle, Stein (eds.), *Party Systems and Voter Alignments Revisited*. London: Routledge.
- Randall, Vicky/Svasand, Lars (2002): The Contribution of Parties to Democracy and Democratic Consolidation. *Democratization* 9 (3): 1-10.
- Rutten, Marcel/Mazrui, Alamin/Grignon, Francois (eds., 2001): *Out for the Count. The 1997 General Elections and Prospects for Democracy in Kenya*. Kampala: Fountain Publishers.

- Sartori, Giovanni (2005): *Parties and Party Systems*. UK: ECPR Press.
- Scarrow, Susan (2005): *Political Parties and Democracy in Theoretical and Practical Perspectives*. Washington, DC: National Democratic Institute.
- Schattenschneider, Elmer (1942): *Party Government*. New York: American Government in Action.
- Sklar, Richard (1963): *Nigerian Political Parties: Power in an Emergent African Country*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Throup, David/Hornsby, Charles (1998): *Multi-Party Politics in Kenya*. USA: Ohio University Press.
- Van de Walle, Nicolas (2003): Presidentialism and Clientelism in Africa's Emerging Party Systems. *Journal of Modern African Studies* 41 (2): 297-321.
- Warner, Carolyn (1997): Political Parties and the Opportunity Costs of Patronage. *Party Politics* 3 (4): 533-548.
- Widner, Jennifer (1992): *The Rise of a Party-State in Kenya*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

### **Zusammenfassung**

Leisten afrikanische Parteien einen Beitrag zur Demokratie? Einige Befunde aus Kenia, Ghana und Nigeria

Ethnische und klientelistische Parteien werden häufig als Hindernis für Demokratisierung angesehen. Eine empirische Austestung dieser Behauptung ist bisweilen jedoch nicht möglich, da eine genauere Unterscheidung zwischen beiden Parteientypen in der Literatur fehlt. Die vorliegende Analyse versucht, diese Lücke zu schließen, indem sie verschiedene Typen von Parteien konzeptionalisiert und operationalisiert. Anschließend wird diese Typologie auf drei verschiedene afrikanische Länder angewendet: Ghana, Kenia und Nigeria. Zusätzlich wird das Verhältnis zwischen einzelnen Parteitypen und demokratischen Verhaltensweisen innerhalb und zwischen Parteien untersucht. Diese Verhaltensweisen werden mit Hilfe verschiedener Indikatoren gemessen. Die empirischen Ergebnisse zeigen, dass nur programmatische Parteien in einem positiven Verhältnis zu demokratischen Verhaltensweisen stehen. Des Weiteren existiert ein Zusammenhang zwischen dem internen und dem externen Verhalten von Parteien.

### **Schlüsselwörter**

*Politische Partei, Ethnie, Demokratisierung, Kenia, Ghana, Nigeria*

### **Résumé**

Est-ce que des parties politiques africaines contribuent à la démocratie? Quelques analyses de Kenia, Ghana et Nigeria

On considère souvent les partis politiques à base ethnique et clientéliste comme mauvais pour la démocratie. Une vérification empirique de cette affirmation s'est jusqu'à présent heurtée à la difficulté de définir exactement ce qu'est un parti ethnique ou clientéliste. Cette contribution propose une conceptualisation et une opérationnalisation des différents types de partis politiques. La typologie proposée est appliquée par la suite à trois pays africains: le Kenya, le Ghana et le Nigéria. Les affirmations sur les conséquences systémiques des différents types de partis politiques sont testées par une analyse comparative de trois cas africains, très différents les uns des autres. Les résultats montrent que les partis politiques programmatiques se comportent le plus démocratiquement. En outre, il semble qu'il y a un lien entre le fonctionnement démocratique interne d'un parti et la manière dont il interagit avec les autres partis politiques.

### **Mots clés**

*parties politiques, ethnie, démocratisation, Kenya, Ghana, Nigeria*

---

**Sebastian Elischer** is currently a PhD student at the Jacobs University Bremen and a doctoral fellow of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation. He has gained extensive field experience in a variety of African countries due to both field research and professional experience for local and international NGOs. He has observed the last Kenyan and Nigerian elections.