Briefing Paper

The Importance of Parties and Party System Institutionalization in New Democracies

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This paper discusses the importance of parties and party systems in new democracies. Scholars have long touted the importance of political parties and stable party system for new democracies, which are in the process of consolidating their regimes. Robert Dix writes that "institutionalization of parties and party systems is crucial in the maintenance of the tenuous new democracies." (1992, p. 490). Recently, anti-system politicians have been on the rise, political parties have been heavily attacked and associated with "old politics" and party fragmentation has increased. Scholars have asked whether or not you can have democracy without political parties. This paper focuses on how important parties are to functioning democracies, and also highlights the importance of stable party systems to new democracies.

Introduction

This paper discusses the importance of parties and party systems in new democracies. Robert Dix writes that "institutionalization of parties and party systems is crucial in the maintenance of the tenuous new democracies." (1992, p. 490). This paper focuses on how important parties are to functioning democracies, and also highlights the importance of stable party systems to new democracies.

After first explaining the role of parties in democracy in general, the paper explores the importance of institutionalized parties to *new democracies.* Drawing from the works of Samuel Huntington and Scott Mainwaring, I examine the following aspects of party institutionalization -- autonomy, coherence, roots in society, level of organization and adaptability -- to develop a more complete understanding of the role of institutionalized political parties in new democracies. Finally, the paper explains the importance of stable party systems. Weaved throughout are examples of parties and party systems in new democracies.

Why are parties important to democracy?

Several prominent scholars have commented on the importance of parties. Seymour Martin Lipset (2000) remarked that political parties are indispensible for

democracy. John Aldrich claims that parties make democracy "workable." E.E. Schattschneider argued that "democracy is unthinkable save in terms of parties." [1] Giovanni Sartori (1976) claimed that representation takes place "through and by parties," (p. 24) representing the public by "expressing their demands," (Sartori 1976, p. 27). When functioning properly, parties *represent* society in the process of electoral competition and in the legislative arena. Parties draft platforms at national conventions and create coherent public policy.

Sartori (1976) claims that parties connect the governed with the government and *serve as an intermediary* between the government and civil society organizations (Randall and Svåsand, 2002). Sartori claims that parties are best "conceived as a means of communication" (1976, p. 28) between the government and civil society groups. Lipset (2000) further adds that political parties not only connect the government with civil society groups but they also stimulate other associational activities.

Why are parties important to new democracies?

New democracies[2] are usually fragile, and prone to reverting back to authoritarianism. Democratic institutions are weak and are often unable to keep pace with the demands of the public and with the mobilization of new social forces. For new democracies, parties are particularly important. According to Huntington, parties

are the main institutions that enable mass involvement in new democracies, particularly states that are undergoing modernization.

Importance of Parties to New Democracies

- Make government accountable for its actions
- Prevent the rise of anti-party politicians
- Habituate the public to democratic norms and practices
- Articulate and aggregate interests
- Recruit, nominate and socialize political leadership
- Form and sustain governments

Parties are important for new democracies for many reasons. First, they help make the *government accountable* for its actions. Parties make the government accountable in several ways such as through strengthening the opposition, helping voters identify past performances, providing checks and balances on the executive and diminishing the power of dominating personalities.

Parties help the opposition effectively challenge the incumbent government. Without political parties, the ability of the democratic opposition to maintain a united front is very difficult. Opposition movements without parties tend to be fragile, fragmented and incoherent, with limited capacity to mobilize, organize and coordinate collective action. Parties help politicians overcome coordination problems by *creating time horizons*. Politicians are self-interested and have very little motivation to think long term. Since parties have long term goals and have a broader spectrum of priorities, parties help politicians solve these coordination problems. Parties help politicians act in a collective manner by shaping their priorities and disciplining politicians for the goals of the parties (Levitsky and Cameron, 2003).

Parties also enable the opposition to stand firm against divide and rules tactics by the incumbent regime. In the case of Africa, opposition parties are weak and as a result, politicians are tempted to join the ruling party (Randall and Svåsand, Autumn 2002, p. 34). In Peru during the tenure of Alberto Fujimori (1992-2000), independent opposition politicians, and the weak parties they were attached to, worked against each other in confronting the regime. Instead of coalescing, parties

built around power-hungry politicians were proliferating, which all worked in Fujimori's favour. None of these politicians were able to check the abuses of the Fujimori government.

In contrast, in the case of Taiwan the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) served as an instrument to coordinate the actions of the opposition, simply known as Tangwai or "outside the party." The DPP helped the opposition maintain an organized platform against the dominant Nationalist Party (KMT) and was used to pressure for reform, eventually leading to fall of the KMT from power in 2000.[3]

Parties also help voters identify past performance and remove unpopular leadership. Parties provide critical information about what issues candidates support (Downs 1957). Parties provide information shortcuts which help voters evaluate the past performance of the incumbents. When parties are weak and fragmented, voters confront a wide array of choices which makes it much harder to distinguish between different candidates or vote retrospectively. Randall and Svåsand (2002) summarize "The argument to be made in favour of political parties is that they are tools, not only for representing the electorate, but also a way for the electorate to hold parties accountable for their actions and promises" (p. 6).

Parties can also be critical to preventing the emergence of "delegative democracies" by ensuring horizontal accountability (O'Donnell 1998), or accountability between branches of government. Parties can check the power of the executive through the legislature by defending against the tendency to blend the power of the executive with the legislature, and establishing a legislature that is more autonomous. Parties use the legislature to inquire and oversee the executive in order to prevent exploitation by the executive, such as stacking the courts with biased judges who might serve as pawns to the executive. By doing so this promotes the integrity of the courts, which can in turn ensure the fairness and transparency of the electoral process (Levitsky and Cameron, 2003, p. 5). Parties also make the government accountable by executing and overseeing the implementation of political policies.

In Latin America, many democracies have not had

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'checks and balances', and the executive branch has been especially powerful. This has been the case in Venezuela under Hugo Chávez, where the erosion of the two main parties led to the fragmentation of the party system—and consequently to the ossification of democratic institutions. When the parties fragmented, they were unable to prevent the expansion of the emergency powers, which enabled Chávez to rule by decree (Corrales, p. 102). Chávez has made his disdain of political parties well known, claiming, "I will not rule with political parties" (Tomás Tenorio Galindo, "La posibilidad del autoritarismo" [The possibility of authoritarianism], Crónica, December 10, 1998---Noriega, p. 6). To ensure that parties remain weak Chávez banned public financing of political parties, though there is no way to monitor how much he spends on his own campaigns (Corrales, p. 109).

Parties perform a number of functions, and in their absence, these functions are often taken up by the military or civil bureaucracy. More often, the functions of the party in new democracies are replaced by a powerful leader. When personalities are more important than party organizations the mechanisms of democratic accountability are weaker. When Fujimori won the election in 1992 as an anti-system candidate running with a non-party Cambio 90 (which lacked a platform, base and structure), his primary goal was staying in office. In order to prolong his rule, Fujimori dismantled all democratic institutions that stood in his way such as weakening the legislature and the courts.

The absence of a strong party system has also been a disservice to Pakistan's fledgling democracy as well. Its current party system is broken and parties are personality driven. Two of the main parties, the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and the Pakistan Muslim League- Nawaz Sharif (PML-N) are instruments of two families, the Bhuttos and the Sharifs -- both of whom have had a penchant for corruption. Both have made significant concessions to the military while simultaneously weakening the power of politicians within their own parties. As a result, parties have been unable to provide accountability (especially during periods of military rule) and have served as mere tools of powerful personalities.

Strong parties also *prevent the rise of anti-party candidates* (or politicians who prefer to subordinate political parties to their own personal needs). In consolidated democracies, anti-party candidates rarely succeed. In countries with weak parties, the voters are more likely to vote based on image, candidate characteristics and personal connections to a politician rather than based on ideology. Thus, anti-party candidates are more common and more successful. Anti-party politicians are often less interested in promoting democracy and more interested in repudiating the system (Levistsky and Cameron, 2003, p. 6; Mainwaring, 1998, p. 76). In Russia (which has weak parties), parties have little control over nominations, which allows candidates to run and win office as independents (Mainwaring, p. 78). In Peru in 1990, Fujimori created a makeshift party to help him win office. This success led to a slew of other anti-party politicians hoping to capitalize on the success of the anti-party movement.

These anti-party candidates are amateurs and are usually lacking the ability to effectively govern. In Latin America, "the election of political outsiders has frequently resulted in ineffective, irresponsible, and in some cases undemocratic governments" (Levitsky and Cameron, 2003, p. 6). Because anti-party politicians are unrestrained by a party, this leads to erratic and disjointed policies.

Parties are also important to *habituating the public to democratic norms and practices* (Randall and Svåsand, 2002). Conflict that takes place between the governing and opposition parties helps "to establish democratic norms and procedures" (Lipset, 2000, p. 48). The interactions that take place between political parties helps build up norms of tolerance (Lipset, 2000, p. 48).

Parties also help economic elites and disgruntled classes become more vested in democratic practices. When powerful elites cannot protect their interests through elections, they are more likely to support authoritarian measures of getting what they want or resorting to using the military to enforce policies elites support. Strong conservative parties can protect elite economic interests without the need to resort to using the military. Similarly parties can also represent the organized working class in ways that preclude disruption and violence (Levitsky and Cameron, 2003).

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Parties also accustom citizens to democratic procedures by helping mobilize and motivate the electorate to vote. Parties integrate citizens into the political process, structure political identities and enable citizens to participate and "have a vested interest in the system" (Diamond and Gunther, 2001, p. 7-8). Parties in the past played an important role in mobilizing the public, creating social networks and a loyal following of supporters (Mainwaring, 1998).

Parties also help *mediate* and *resolve conflicts* between groups (Randall and Svåsand, 2002). Parties frame policy alternatives and structure electoral choice in ways that promote peaceful political competition. Parties mediate by melding and broadening different interests. Parties mediate conflict when public policy has become too politicized and when demands have become irreconcilable. Parties can help shape political debate in ways that pacify highly charged issues. Lipset and Rokkan claim that in the past, parties have neutralized the "radicalizing effects of sudden industrialization" (1967, p. 46). Parties can also neutralize the polarizing effects of modernization for new democracies, particularly those beset by ethnic tensions by forcing compromise and conciliation.

Malaysia represents an important case of the role of parties in the easing of ethnic tensions. Ethnic tensions in Malaysia were high leading to riots in 1969. Since then the United Malays National Organization (UMNO) has worked with the Malaysian Chinese Association and the Malaysian Indian Congress to compromise on a number of issues and form the dominant coalition known as the National Front (BN). In countries that have had a history of conflict on issues such as ethnicity and religion, parties can help frame these issues differently so that differences are dealt with through electoral competition rather than conflict.

Tanzania provides another example of the role of parties in alleviating potential conflicts. Tanzania has more than 140 different ethnic groups, yet unlike other diverse countries in Africa that have devolved into conflict, power-sharing mechanisms within the ruling Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) party have been used to accommodate demands. In particular, religious diversity between Tanzania's powerful Christian and Muslim communities led to an alteration in power between Christian and Muslim leaders. Without the structure of the party to implement this informal power-sharing mechanism, tensions between the primary religious communities could have erupted into conflict.

Parties also *articulate and aggregate interests* (Randall and Svåsand, 2002). In doing so, they are able to promote compromise. Parties are often comprised of different groups or factions that have joined together and have compromised on policy (Levy, 2004). Parties enable compromise by increasing the commitment ability of politicians. Independent politicians may not be able to credibly commit to policies that do not coincide with their own preferences. Parties, however, allow politicians to convincingly commit to policies that they normally would not support in order to win a larger support base (Levy, 2004).

Parties also play a role in the *recruitment, nomination and socialization* of political leadership. Parties help find talented politicians to lead the country, by recruiting and nominating candidates.[4] Parties have established procedures for selecting leaders, which prevents the party from being subordinate to the leader. Parties can also provide channels for politicians of all different ethnic and economic backgrounds to rise to power, diversifying the process of recruitment. Parties socialize politicians about democratic practices and train them to value negotiation, compromise and coalition building. This training provides them with a stake in the preservation of democratic institutions.

In parliamentary systems, parties also help *form and sustain governments* through coalition negotiations and through the allocation of different ministries and offices. Parties also help organize the legislative rules and procedures, the legislative committees and the legislative agendas. In new democracies, where these norms and procedures have not been established, parties play a crucial role in establishing order and stability. Parties also discipline politicians within the legislature to prevent chaos and confusion. In Latin America, countries with weak parties are unable to legislate coherent policies and are prone to regime crisis (Levitsky and Cameron, 2003, p. 4). In contrast, countries like Chile, Costa Rica and Uruguay have strong party systems and have been less liable to crises of governability (Mainwaring and Scully, 1995).

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Parties can also prevent gridlock by serving as a bridge between the executive and the legislature to ensure democratic governability.

Thus, parties perform many functions that are critical to new democracies. Nevertheless, more often than not political parties in new democracies are poorly institutionalized in new democracies, providing little support. In the next section, I *define* the key concepts of the study used to measure the institutionalization of political parties: autonomy, coherence, 'roots in society', 'level of organization' and complexity, adaptability and legitimacy.

Political Party Institutionalization Defined:

Huntington claimed that "institutionalization is the process by which organizations and procedures acquire value and stability" (Huntington 1968: p. 12). His measure of institutionalization consisted of looking at four criteria: adaptability, complexity, autonomy, and coherence. Mainwaring argues that party institutionalization consists of rootedness in society, stability of patterns of party competition, party legitimacy and the organizational development of the party (1998; Mainwaring and Torcal 2005). Drawing from these definitions, this paper defines party institutionalization by the following criteria: (1) party autonomy, (2) coherence, (3) roots in society, (4) level of organization and complexity (5) adaptability and (6) legitimacy. The following will provide a more in depth explanation of each.

Autonomy

Autonomy refers to independence from external influence. Parties must be autonomous to be well institutionalized. In other words they need to be independent from external influence and independent from other organizations, individuals and societal groups that are outside the party.

Political parties in Lebanon have lacked autonomy from foreign interests and other organizations, most notably Syria. Parties in Lebanon have been induced to be loyal clients of Syria for political and economic rewards. Loyalists benefit while others "struggled to survive," (Knudson, p. 6). Syria is involved in Lebanese politics-

dominating the government (controlling who could be president and prime minister), dictating policy outcomes (by reducing the legislature to a rubber stamp), and orchestrating the results of elections (Salem 2006, p. 14).

Some important ways of measuring a party's autonomy include asking how much turnover there is in party leadership. Having no turnover in party leadership is an indication that power has been personalized in the hands of one individual to a degree where the party is a mere manifestation of a powerful person. Does the party disintegrate when the leader dies or leaves the party? (Mainwaring 2005). Brazil's former president Fernando Collor de Mello ran for president in 1989 heading a party that was formed for his own use only. As evidence of this, it dissolved immediately after his December 1992 resignation.

The party's interests should also not be subordinated to the personal preferences of the leader or even a small group of elites. Parties are independent, have their own values and are not be subordinate to the interests of a leader or small group of leaders (Huntington 1968, p. 12-24). Parties in Lebanon have been organized around powerful people and voters choose candidates based on personal characteristics. For example, Amal's leader Nabih Berri Berri has sought to consolidate personal power and has expelled members who pose a threat. He currently holds the position of speaker of the Parliament – now for four consecutive terms.

In countries with weakly institutionalized parties like Russia, Ecuador and Bolivia, parties are devoid of ideology and serve as tools for ambitious politicians. Many parties in Africa are also focused around a charismatic leader. Because parties are not autonomous to big personalities, ideological issues and policies takes a backseat to personalism, party loyalty is non-existent and politicians are solely focused on creating their own personal following.[5] Parties that are based on the personality of a particular politician are also not 'aggregating interests' in a coherent manner.

Coherence

Parties also need to maintain some semblance of internal coherence. The party needs to act as a unified organization, though able to tolerate a degree of intra-

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party dissidence. If there is too much party defection or 'floor crossing', the party will lack ideological coherence. This makes it difficult for voters to use party identification as a shortcut to better understand the various programmatic differences between parties. Being coherent enables voters to keep parties accountable when they are elected in office. When parties are fragmented and appear and disappear with ease, they will be unable to provide voters with coherent platforms.

Parties in more institutionalized systems tend to be consistent with their ideological profiles. A party that is markedly to the left of another party does not suddenly move to its rival's right simply to gain short-term electoral advantage, for parties are constrained by their need to maintain the support of activists. If major parties change their relative ideological position, "it usually signals weak ties between parties and society and a lack of regularity in the process of how parties compete and how they relate to social actors." (Mainwaring, 1998, pg. 69)

In Lebanon, parties are not coherent units. Many divisions exist between parties, but more importantly, within parties and party families. For example, there are divisive splits in the Christian parties and between different Christian parties. Christian parties have been divided and thus weakened by internal power struggles and personal vendettas between leading Christian families. The infighting between the National Liberal Party (NLP), the Phalange party, and the National Bloc have prevented these parties from gaining representation in the parliament in 1992, 1996 and 2000.

Politicians in parties that are weakly institutionalized will often not be committed to the party ideology. In weak party systems such as Brazil, party switching is common. In the Brazilian Congress of 1991-94, out of 503 legislators party switching took place 260 times (Mainwaring and Pérez-Liñán, 1997). Russian politicians are also disloyal to their political parties, from 1993-1995 128 out of 450 legislators in the Duma (Russian parliament) switched parties 450 times (Heller and Mershon, p. 82). The same is true of Senegal where after the Socialist Party lost the election in 2000, many politicians simply joined the winning Senegalese Democratic Party (PDS) (Randall and Svåsand, Autumn 2002, p. 34).

The African National Congress (ANC) constitutes one of the better well-institutionalized parties in Africa (though recently it has been quickly eroding its commitment to democratic practices). One reason for this is the discipline that it enforced among its party members in the parliament. Until recently, the ANC instituted strong sanctions against crossing the party line.

Roots in society

Parties also need to be well rooted. How well is the party linked to civil society? How strong are the programmatic linkages to society? How attached are voters to the parties? In party systems where parties are well institutionalized, voters have strong linkages to the parties and vote for the same party most of the time. In societies where most voters are attached to one particular party this eliminates the number of apathetic voters who are essentially floating. In new democracies, fewer citizens are likely to identify with a party, whereas party identification in the United Kingdom (a developed democracy) has been as high as 80%. [6] In Latin America one of the most consolidated democracies is Uruguay where 67% of the public strongly identifies with a party (Mainwaring, 1998, p. 72).

Parties with strong roots provide regular electoral competition and help diminish electoral volatility (Mainwaring 2005). It is typical that in less developed countries the linkages between parties and voters are less ideological and programmatic (2005, p. 17). Mainwaring writes that these weaker programmatic linkages between voters and parties "are a key part of weaker party roots in society." Because of this, developing countries also have higher levels of electoral volatility (Mainwaring 2005, p. 17). More institutionalized parties also have stronger links to organized interest groups (Mainwaring, 1998, p. 72). Parties in Lebanon are not well rooted in society. 'Ideological' linkages, i.e., policy linkages, are non-existent and links are based on personalism and patron-clientelism.

Level of organization and complexity

A final important aspect of party institutionalization is the level of organization. How well organized and financially strong is the party? How clearly defined are the internal structures and procedures? Is the organizational

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apparatus present at all administrative levels and at a nationwide level? Strong parties are not confined to the local level but are "territorially comprehensive" (Mainwaring, 1998, p. 70). Parties in Peru have lacked national appeal and simply have assumed names based on where they are from such as "Eternal Cuzco," "Ayacucho '95," "We are Huancayo," and "Union for Puno" (Levistsky, 1999, p. 87).

In contrast to many African parties, Tanzania's CCM has branches across all districts and most villages (Randall and Svåsand, Autumn 2002, p. 37). The same can also be said of Botswana's Botswana Democratic Party (BDP). However, most parties in Africa are associated with one single leader and lack a well-structured organization and political platform. Because these organizations helmed by one leader are weak, they tend to fall apart quickly (Randall and Svåsand, Autumn 2002, p. 35). Many parties in Latin America also have failed to penetrate outside the center. Because of this, power is being transferred from parties to local governments, elevating the status of local leaders, such has been the case in Bolivia (Sabatini, 2003, p. 138). The weakening of parties has allowed local politicians to rely less on party organizations for support, and more on patron-client relationships with voters (Sabatini, 2003, p. 141).

Parties should have multiple functions. Are the party's activities confined to only campaigning or is the party involved in a number of activities that help link itself with the voter? How strong is the membership? How often are party congresses held? These are all important criteria for measuring the level of organization of the party, which is an indication of how well the party is able to represent and provide other important functions for society.

Adaptability

Institutionalized parties are also adaptable. One way of measuring this is to ask how long the party has been established relative to when the country gained independence. Parties need to be durable in order to provide voters with a chance to evaluate them. If every election presents voters with new choices there is no opportunity for voters to punish past performances or reward past accomplishments (Randall and Svåsand, Autumn 2002, p. 35).

A second way of measuring adaptability is to examine whether or not the party has survived the demise of its leader. Adaptable parties can handle a shift in leadership and also handle the shift from serving as an opposition party to the governing party and vice versa without falling apart. Mexico's Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) is an example of an institutionalized party due to its adaptability in handling succession and in losing the presidency in 2000. Though the president is a powerful figure in the party, every six years (known as the *sexenio*) the president must step down allowing for only one term of office.

In Turkey though some parties have come and gone quickly from one election to the next, other parties have been long-lasting, enduring the uncertainty of military rule and being banned from participating. For example the Islamic Justice and Development Party (AKP) survived being banned in 1998 and since then it has adapted to changes in Turkish society. It has strengthened its grassroots organization and has appealed to a broad section of the electorate (Rubin and Heper, 2002). The strength of the AKP has played an important role in Turkey's transition to democracy.[7]

Legitimacy

Parties also need to be deemed legitimate by both the elites and the citizens in order for them to be well institutionalized. A belief in parties works to create stability in the system as parties are best able to maintain durable behavioural patterns in comparison to the chaos created by anti-system politicians. Countries where parties have low levels of legitimacy also struggle to promote democratic practices. Parties in Russia are some of the least trusted institutions according to public opinion surveys, with 60% of the public experiencing low levels of trust for political parties.[8] In Pakistan, the public has little faith in political parties and during the early years of the military regime of Pervez Musharraf a World Values survey found that the public had more trust in the military than political parties (Barracca, p. 141). The same is true of parties in Latin America in countries that have weakly institutionalized parties.[9] In contrast, in countries that have well institutionalized party systems such as Uruguay, 70% of the public believed that "parties are necessary for democracy" (Mainwaring, 1998, p. 77).

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Party Systems

What differentiates party systems?

Party systems constitute the system of interactions that take place as a result of inter-party competition (Mainwaring 1998). Party systems can be differentiated in several ways. Sartori (1976) differentiates party systems by the number of parties (two-party or multi-party systems) and the degree of polarization (extreme vs. moderate). Mainwaring argues that the level of institutionalization of political parties is also important to differentiating between party systems.

As explained in the previous section, this latter component of institutionalization is often "questionable" in new democracies and is therefore the most important component to examine.

Mainwaring highlights party systems with extreme volatility where the main parties appear and disappear from one election to the next as under-institutionalized. As stated before, stable party systems encourage representation based on issues and political programs so that candidates within parties can be more easily identified and thus accountable to voters (see Responsible Party Model, Russell Dalton). Moreover, volatile systems also are prone to erratic policies as politicians in power could change rapidly from one election to the next.

Party systems that have volatility are usually very fragmented. In Pakistan, though parties are growing in numbers, they are losing power. The Lebanese party system is particularly fragmented. As evidence of this, in the 2005 elections more than 702 candidates registered for only 128 seats. Parties in Africa are also typically small and highly fragmented.

Mainwaring also questions party systems with extreme cases of personalism. In these cases parties have little control over who has access to political office, and many of the most popular politicians are not associated with a political party. As previously stated, personalism can lead to the rise of politicians with little interest democracy and more concern with eroding democratic institutions such as was the case with Fujimori of Peru and has been the case with Hugo Chávez of Venezuela.

Finally in systems where there is only one single party, these systems should not be referred to as party systems, but rather one-party states or in Mainwaring's words, "party-state systems." Mainwaring claims that institutionalized party system are well established and the practices are well known. He writes that "actors develop expectations, orientations, and forms of behavior based on the premise that this practice or organization will prevail into the foreseeable future".

One-party systems are by some definitions not democratic. Well institutionalized parties in Africa such as Tanzania's CCM, Botswana's BDP and Malaysia's UMNO have yet to turnover power to an opposition party. Nevertheless, these one-party states do have democratic practices within the party such as *leadership turnover.* For this reason, one-party states are important to examine when studying new democracies.

Conclusion

One of the biggest "obstacles facing the new post-1974 democracies in their efforts at democratic consolidation is weakly institutionalized party systems" or in other words, democracies that have weak or non-existent parties (Mainwaring, 1998, p. 67). Countries with strong parties such as Portugal, Greece, and Spain faced less trouble making the transition to democracy (Mainwaring, 1998, p. 69). Due to its strong party system of the past, Uruguay also had a smooth transition to democracy after the fall of the military dictatorship in 1984. Chile's 1990 democratic transition to democracy was also more peaceful than most due to the strength of its past party system. Though there are democracies that have competitive elections with weakly institutionalized parties, in most cases regimes without strong parties tend to be characterized by more personalism, less accountability, more volatility and more insecurity (Mainwaring, 1998, p. 79). Building strong and well institutionalized political parties is very critical to the health and longevity of new democracies.

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Notes

[1] See Lipset 2000

[2] New democracies in this paper are defined as the regimes which have held elections and had turnover in power of the executive/leader since the 1974, or during and after the Third Wave (Huntington, 1991, p. 3).

[3] Though the KMT has since regained power, the electoral playing field (through the effort of the opposition) has been made more level.

[4] In Africa, most parties play a small role in the recruitment of politicians. There are exceptions. Tanzania's Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) one of Africa's longest lasting parties recruits its candidates as does the African National Congress (ANC) in South Africa.

[5] According to Randall and Svasand, parties that have tried to campaign based on policy have not done well. They give examples of the National Lima Party (NLP) in Zambia which was supported by farmers has failed to win seats. Likewise, Marxist parties in Africa have also failed to garner support (pg. 33).

[6] From Richard Rose; see Mainwaring, pg. 72

[7] The AKP has been the party most open to joining the European Union and adopting democratic practices in accord with the Copenhagen Criteria. Because the AKP has been durable, the party has been able to implement the democratic institutions required which necessitates a strong commitment over a prolonged period of time.

[8] Based on a survey from White, Rose and McAllister, from Mainwaring.

[9] In most countries in Latin America outside of Uruguay, Costa Rica and Argentina, parties are some of the least trusted institutions according to Mainwaring.

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