FRIEND OR FOE?

DOMINANT PARTY SYSTEMS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

Insights from the developing world

EDITED BY NICOLA DE JAGER &
PIERRE DU TOIT FOREWORD BY KAY LAWSON

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Contents

Foreword

Since I had had the privilege of seeing *Friend or Foe? Dominant Party Systems in Southern Africa* develop from its original proposal to this finished product, and having worked with one of its authors on an earlier publication,[1] the excellence of this volume comes to me as no surprise. I was convinced from the outset that this would be a very original and highly relevant work, and I confidently expected the editors' plans to be carried out competently and well. I have not been disappointed.

The presence of one-party dominant systems in nation after nation is a growing and some would say sinister phenomenon, a cavilling response to IMF demands for 'structural adjustments' that adjust the terms for foreign exploitation far better than they do the infrastructure of democracy. Get rid of single party rule and you shall have your share of the pie. Can we really say democracy exists in a nation where one party dominates year after year, just so long as others continue to compete? Fortunately, it is now much more rare to say so. We have begun to recognise that elections themselves are no guarantee of majority rule, minority rights, political equality, due process or judicial independence, and even less so of social and economic fairness, which some would say a democratic government must at least make possible.

On the other hand, if ostensibly competitive elections are not sufficient, is it really reasonable to expect nations whose independence, political or economic, is wallpaper thin, and whose domestic stability is constantly at risk, to allow a multitude of parties (or even two) the opportunity to wrest power away from its holders every two to five years, all in the name of a democracy in which very few in fact believe? What civic suffering do dominant parties in fact forestall? Are they not sometimes the (perhaps reluctant but essential) incubators of future democracies not yet come to term?

How we answer these questions is all too often dependent on ideology and wishful thinking, with far too little attention to historical background and contemporary context. What is true in one nation may not be true next door — or tomorrow. Nor is it enough to examine only the deterioration of the putative democracies of industrialised nations into de facto one-party dominant systems, as in postwar Italy and Japan, or deplore the multiparty façades of one party dominant authoritarian systems such as Russia or China.[2] Far too infrequent have been the carefully nuanced studies of such regimes in the developing nations of Africa, Latin America and Asia. Yet it is precisely in such nations that the dilemmas are now most pressingly posed[3].

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[1] Nicola de Jager, 'Democracy in South Africa's Dominant Party System', in Luc Sindjoun, Marian Simms and Kay Lawson, *Political Parties and Democracy, v. 4, Africa and Oceania*, Praeger, 2010.

[2] This is not to denigrate the ground-breaking work of T.J. Pempel, ed., *Uncommon Democracies: The One-Party Dominant Regimes*, Cornell, 1990, which focused only on industrialised nations. The ground *was* broken, a major service to the study of a problem destined to become ever more urgent.

[3] Nowhere more dramatically than in the populist one-party dominant system of Venezuela, where providing considerable assistance to the desperately poor (commonly estimated at 80% of the population) is said to justify the oppression of all opposition and the steady erosion of the standard attributes of a democracy.

The present study takes an extremely important step towards remedying that omission. It offers no fewer than eight case studies, one from Latin America, three from Asia and four from southern Africa. Each study stands on its own, receiving full attention to the circumstances that have shaped its own version of single party dominance. This in itself is invaluable, but the comparative efforts of editors De Jager and Du Toit are what raise the book to the level of a truly significant contribution to the study of political parties. Their excellent conclusion weaves its way carefully through the revelations of their contributors, and their assessments are as nuanced as they are informed.

And that is not all. The very structure of this book offers a major contribution to the comparative study of politics, and invites imitation. If you compare apples and oranges, you will learn a great deal about oranges. If you compare oranges to each other, you will learn more. What we have here is a very clever way of doing both, and increasing our knowledge manifold. The subject is the dominant one-party system in southern Africa. But the first half of the book examines such systems only in *other* parts of the world. The second half then examines dominant party regimes in southern Africa. In both halves of the book the cases stand out individually, and so do the intra-regional similarities and differences. Putting them together in order to assess what we have learned about the particularity *and* the universality of southern African cases, as the editors do so well in their conclusion, is a brilliant, multifaceted way of using the case study method to understand one of the most vexing problems in the comparative study of political parties today, the rise and longevity of dominant party systems.

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To the contributors — it has been a pleasure to work with each of you and a privilege to be able to deliberate over our respective chapters face-to-face during the authors' workshop. A big thanks to those who travelled far, overcame their jetlag, to join us. Thank you for keeping to the publication schedule to ensure that we met our publication deadline.

We would also like to extend our appreciation to Prof. Kay Lawson for her incisive inputs throughout and for willingly writing the foreword.

Nicola de Jager would like to extend her personal thanks to her family and friends for sharing in the journey. To my Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, thank you making our 'path straight' and for your awesome favour from start to completion.

Nicola de Jager and Pierre du Toit

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Acronyms

ACDP	African Christian Democratic Party
ANC	African National Congress
BCP	Botswana Congress Party
BDP	Botswana Democratic Party
BJP	Bharatiya Janata Party
BMD	Botswana Movement for Democracy
BNF	Botswana National Front
BPP	Botswana People's Party
CC	Central Committee
COPE	Congress of the People
DA	Democratic Alliance
DC	Christian Democrats
DCEC	Directorate of Corruption and Economic Crime
DIS	Directorate of Intelligence Services
DJP	Democratic Justice Party
DLP	Democratic Liberal Party
DP	Democratic Party
DPAR	dominant party authoritarian regimes
DPDR	dominant party democratic regimes
DPP	Democratic Progressive Party
DRP	Democratic Republican Party
EFW	Economic Freedom in the World
ELF	ethno-linguistic fractionalisation
EPB	Economic Planning Board
ESAP	Economic Structural Adjustment Programme
FF+	Freedom Front Plus
FPTP	first-past-the-post
FRELIMO	Liberation Front of Mozambique
GEE	generalised estimation equation
GLS	generalised least squares
GNI	gross national income
GNU	Government of National Unity
ID	Independent Democrats

IDASA	Institute for Democracy in South Africa
IEC	Independent Electoral Commission
IFP	Inkatha Freedom Party
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INC	Indian National Congress
KMT	Kuomintang Party
LDP	Liberal Democratic Party
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
MP	member of parliament
MPLA	People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola
NCA	National Constitutional Assembly
NDA	National Democratic Alliance
NDR	National Democratic Revolution
NDRP	New Democratic Republican Party
NEC	National Executive Committee
NKDP	New Korea Democratic Party
NNP	New National Party
NP	National Party (South Africa)
NP	New Party (Taiwan)
OBC	Other Backward Castes
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OLS	ordinary least square
PAC	Pan Africanist Congress
PAN	National Action Party
PFP	People First Party
PR	proportional representation
PRI	Institutional Revolutionary Party
RDP	Reunification Democratic Party (South Korea)
RDP	Rally for Democracy (Namibia)
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programme
SMD	single-member district
SNTV	single non-transferable vote
SOE	state-owned enterprise
SWANU	South West African National Union
SWAPO	South West Africa People's Organisation
TIPEEG	Targeted Intervention Programme for Employment and Economic Growth

TSCS	time-series cross-sectional
TSU	Taiwan Solidarity Union
UDF	United Democratic Front
UMNO	United Malays National Organisation
UMNO/BN	United Malays National Organisation/National Front
UN	United Nations
UPA	United Progressive Alliance
ZCTU	Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions
ZEC	Zimbabwe Electoral Commission
ZUM	Zimbabwe Unity Movement
ZANU	Zimbabwe African National Union
ZANU–PF	Zimbabwe African National Union–Patriotic Front
ZAPU	Zimbabwe African People's Union

PART ONE

Theoretical foundations

Chapter 1

Introduction

Nicola de Jager and Pierre du Toit

Within southern Africa, there has been a steady increase in the number of dominant party systems — systems where one party dominates over a prolonged period in an ostensibly democratic system with regular elections and multiple parties participating in elections. In Africa the dominant party system has largely replaced the one party system that predominated after Africa's initial wave of liberation in the 1950s and 1960s. Bogaards's (2004) study on *Counting parties and identifying dominant party systems in Africa* points out that there is 'an urgent need for systematic research into the nature, sources, conditions and consequences of dominant party systems'.

This call caught our attention not only because of our concern for conscientious scholarship, but also because we are citizens of South Africa, which is a clear example of a dominant party system, and because we border on Zimbabwe, another obvious, yet worrying example of a dominant party system in which opponents to the incumbent party have suffered brutal, even grisly violations of their human rights. As ordinary citizens we wonder, as do many other South Africans, if that is the way we can expect to go. This question was also asked in Giliomee and Simkins's book *The awkward embrace* in 1999. Now, almost 15 years later, it needs to be followed up.

This book seeks to begin the work of filling the gap that Bogaards identified, by focusing on how and why such dominant parties have developed in four nations in southern Africa (Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe) and exploring the effect they have had on the quality of democracy in that part of the world. In addition to in-depth studies of each of these nations, we offer comparable coverage of four non-African nations: India, Mexico, South Korea and Taiwan. By thus extending our coverage we are able to explore whether there are significant differences in dominant parties within and outside southern Africa, as well as to discover characteristics common to all.

The book is divided into three parts: the first presents the theoretical approach to the dominant party system, providing the basis for comparison of the case studies. An initial classification of dominant party systems is presented in the first chapter and is revisited in the final chapter.

Part Two provides four instances of successful transition from party dominance to multi-party democracy in the developing world, namely Mexico, India, South Korea and Taiwan.

It starts with Kenneth F. Greene's chapter, where he explains and tests his resource-based theory using Mexico as one of his case studies. His methodology is primarily quantitative and his goal is to understand why dominant parties rise and decline. His resource-based approach is useful, throughout the book, in helping us understand the impact of the dominant party system on the quality of democracy in the more qualitative studies that follow in succeeding chapters.

Part Three turns to southern African examples of dominant party systems, where party dominance is a key feature of the political landscape. Zimbabwe stands out as a worst-case example, having decayed into an oppressive, authoritarian regime. Part Three ends with a comparative analysis of the case studies, identifying the nature and sources of dominance and drawing conclusions for southern Africa.

Selection of cases

In taking up the challenge to fill the research gap identified by Bogaards, we decided to focus on southern Africa as a region within the continent. Apart from our personal concerns, presented above, our choice is based on the following considerations. For a start, our research design is primarily (but not exclusively) based on studies that use qualitative data analyses. This limits the number of cases we are able to compare within one book and we therefore restrict ourselves to countries from one region in the continent. We also prefer to limit our set of cases to states that are in spatial proximity to one another, rather than a set of cases from countries dispersed all over the continent, selected on the basis of some analytical criterion. Proximity allows us to consider the role of path dependence, to examine the extent to which certain policy choices in one country have affected the range of policy options that emerged later in adjacent countries. And by selecting cases which are from the same region, we can identify some shared characteristics, which from the outset helps in dealing with the problem of 'many variables, small N'.

Southern Africa provides an adequate group of countries from which to select a set of cases in which there is a range of variation in party systems. We roughly demarcate southern Africa as being south of the Zambezi River, and include both Angola and Mozambique. The first has a number of tributaries that feed into the Zambezi, and the latter is neatly intersected by the river. Our potential set of cases is thus Angola, Namibia, South Africa, Lesotho, Swaziland, Botswana, Zimbabwe and Mozambique, and excludes Zambia and Malawi, two otherwise interesting cases. From this list we select South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe and Botswana. The specific reasons for this selection are set out below.

Firstly, our research questions shape the selection. As stated above, Zimbabwe appears to be a dominant party system of a most malevolent kind: for more than a decade the ruling party has inflicted gross human rights abuses on some of its citizens, yet it still holds regular elections, opposition parties survive and power is contested. Our first question, therefore, is whether this is the likely trajectory that other such party systems in the region may follow. We exclude the Kingdom of Swaziland from this comparative frame, a monarchy in which democracy is non-existent, and the Kingdom of Lesotho, a constitutional monarchy characterised since 1993 by a highly fluid and unstable multi-party system. Angola held its

first democratic elections in 2008 (since the 1992 elections that dissolved into civil war), won by the ruling People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), but is still short of qualifying as a dominant party system. (We consider a winning streak of four consecutive elections as the benchmark for a dominant party system.) Mozambique held its first multi-party elections in 1994, which were won by the ruling Liberation Front of Mozambique (FRELIMO) party which also won every subsequent election. Mozambique thus meets the criterion of consecutive successes to qualify as a dominant party system. Nevertheless, we exclude Angola and Mozambique from our set of cases on the basis of the criterion of 'bounded variability' which we discuss below. The three remaining countries to add to Zimbabwe then are Botswana, Namibia and South Africa.

These three countries are relevant to the question for reasons more than just their geographic location of being south of the Zambezi. Botswana and South Africa (along with Mauritius) consistently rank (in the Freedom House ratings) as among Africa's most exemplary democracies. And this is notwithstanding their dominant party systems. Botswana is exceptional as an African state which has upheld the democratic Constitution with which it gained independence the longest. Namibia and South Africa are highly regarded as success stories in the Third Wave of democratisation. Namibia is recognised as one of the United Nations' most successful third party interventions in mediating the transition from de facto rule by South Africa to democracy. There was no such mediation in the South African transition, but the country is hailed for the way its leaders managed to negotiate for both peace and democracy against very strong centripetal forces. For any one of these countries to follow the Zimbabwean example would be a telling blow for the Third Wave of democratisation, not only in southern Africa, but for the continent as a whole.

The choice to eliminate Angola and Mozambique from the set of cases can be further justified on the basis of the criterion of 'bounded variability' (Rose, 1991), also described as the 'comparable cases' yardstick (Lijphart, 1971). This entails the cases selected being '… similar in a large number of important characteristics (variables) which one wants to treat as constants, but dissimilar as far as those variables are concerned which one wants to relate to each other', with the advantage that 'while the total number of variables cannot be reduced, by using the comparable cases in which the variables are constant, one can reduce the number of operative variables and study their relationships under controlled conditions without the problem of running out of cases' (Lijphart, 1971: 685).

Angola and Mozambique share some crucial characteristics which differ from those shared by Zimbabwe, South Africa, Botswana and Namibia. They form part of Lusophone Africa, colonised by Portugal, whereas the other four are part of Anglophone Africa, with Britain as its coloniser. The two sets of states were therefore the products of wholly different colonial experiences. The Portuguese and British colonial regimes were constructed on different legal systems, bureaucratic principles and citizenship criteria. The Portuguese imposed direct rule, whereas the British preferred indirect rule, allowing for a domestic clone of the British administrative state to develop. Thus we see a set of two different path-dependent trajectories of political conflict and, eventually, democratisation.

The different colonial regimes, among other factors, shaped the pattern of resistance, revolt and the eventual taking of power from the colonial masters in each set of cases.

The Portuguese held onto their colonies to the very end. The end came in the form of the collapse of the authoritarian Caetano regime in the metropolitan capital of Portugal itself, which left an enormous power vacuum not only within Portugal but even more so in the colonies where armed revolts were escalating. The end result was armed take-overs in Angola and Mozambique, where the victors stepped into a vacuum of, not only power, but also administration. One-party rule, inspired by Marxist thought, shaped the first post-colonial regimes in both countries. Mozambique was democratised in 1990, whereas Angola did so only after the end of a prolonged civil war between domestic adversaries (with the help of their respective Cold War sponsors).

Indirect rule brought different outcomes to the British colonies. British control was secured over South Africa only after the Anglo-Boer War of 1899–1902. The methods used to secure victory (conventional war as well as scorched-earth tactics and ethnic cleansing) cast the die for domestic white Afrikaner nationalism. Within the indirect rule of the Constitution of 1910, this led to Afrikaner ascendancy in 1948 and the subsequent policies of apartheid, which aimed to contain the rival black African nationalists. North of the Limpopo River the British presence was even more tenuous, resting on the 1890 occupation by Cecil John Rhodes' British South Africa Company. Indirect rule in the then Southern Rhodesia eventually opened the gap for a de facto *coup d'état* by the white settlers, who unilaterally declared the country independent. In South Africa and Rhodesia armed revolt against indigenous white minority rule took hold and in both cases a negotiated peace accord led to democratisation.

In Botswana, indirect rule produced a similar outcome, but, never having had a white minority of any critical mass, no armed resistance ensued. The transfer of power from the British to the indigenous African leadership within the framework of a Westminster-type Constitution was a largely amicable affair and assured legal, administrative and constitutional continuity.

Namibia appears at first sight to stand out from the other three. The 1884 Berlin Conference awarded the region to Germany. The most profound impact of this coloniser was the genocidal wars against the Nama and Herero ethnic communities, matched nowhere else in the sub-continent, which led to a demographic and eventual electoral shift in power to the north, which lasts to this day. South Africa became the de facto sovereign power after World War I. It imposed direct rule at first, and later, British-style indirect rule on the territory. This white minority rule elicited an armed insurrection which was concluded at the negotiating table, with the strong presence of the UN as third party mediator, who administered the inauguration of a democratic regime in 1990.

In all four countries the democratic regimes were built upon the foundations of the British model of an administrative state, with elements of Westminster constitutionalism, and a legal system with Roman-Dutch law and English common law as well as aspects of indigenous African customary law. Legal and administrative continuity was secured in the negotiated agreements, and democratically elected rulers took power within operating court systems and state bureaucracies, unlike the situations faced by the revolutionary MPLA and FRELIMO in Angola and Mozambique respectively. These formative experiences provided two qualitatively different templates that shaped the

subsequent political and civic cultures in the two sets of states as well as the incipient factional cleavages within their societies. By taking Angola and Mozambique out of the set of selected cases we are able to control for many of these formative factors and can compare the set of southern African states with the most similar colonial experiences.

As the title of the book indicates, we draw insights from other countries to illuminate our analyses of these dominant party systems. We again selected cases on the basis of bounded variability. If our cases to be examined are most similar in their trajectory into dominant party systems, then our cases for comparable insights are most different in the evolution of their dominant party systems, yet most similar in their trajectory out of dominant party systems and into multi-party systems. On this basis we selected Taiwan, South Korea, India and Mexico, each with a widely divergent cultural base and historical sequences of events that culminated in dominant party rule. These differences and similarities will be further described in the respective case studies. But the point to be made here is that should we find patterns of convergence in their respective moves to the similar outcome of a multi-party system despite their widely different contexts, we will have found factors that override such contextual differences. The significance of such findings, and their claims to possible explanatory power, will then also be enhanced.

Understanding and identifying the dominant party system

Broadly, dominant party systems refer to procedurally democratic regimes dominated by one party for prolonged periods. Five criteria can be used to identify party dominance: the political system; the threshold for dominance; the nature of the dominance; the inclusion of opposition features; and time span (De Jager, 2009). Theorists of party dominance acknowledge some or all of the above criteria, but there is much variance within each (Arian & Barnes, 1974; Blondel, 1968; Bogaards, 2004; Coleman, 1960; Giliomee & Simkins, 1999; Pempel, 1990; Van de Walle & Butler, 1999; Ware, 1996).

The political system

The dominant party system occurs within a regime that is democratic inasmuch as it is instituted and maintained through regular elections in which multiple parties participate and the dominant party enjoys popular support. It is thus distinguished from a one-party system, which is undemocratic and has only one party that has the legal right to participate in politics. What distinguishes the dominant party system from other multi-party democracies is the preponderance of power invested in one party. Thus, since this system permits more than one party to compete, and regular elections are held, it is democratic in the procedural sense, but whether civil and political liberties are fully protected is questionable. The issue needing further investigation is therefore the *quality* of the democracy in these party systems.

There is a plethora of terms used to describe the variations of democratic systems in which dominant party systems may occur: for example, 'pseudodemocracies' (Diamond, 1996); 'dominant-power politics' found within the 'Gray Zone' (Carothers, 2002);

'competitive authoritarian' (Levitsky & Way, 2002); 'electoral authoritarian' (Schedler, 2005) and 'dominant party authoritarian regimes' (Greene, 2007). In agreement with Carothers (2002:13) who argues that 'dominant-power systems vary in their degree of freedom and their political direction', we argue that the dominant party system is not necessarily authoritarian, but instead straddles authoritarian and non-authoritarian regimes and sits between the 'not free', 'partly free' and 'free' classifications of Freedom House. For example, Zimbabwe under the dominance of the Zimbabwe African National Union–Patriotic Front (ZANU–PF) was certainly authoritarian and very different from Botswana under the dominance of the Botswana Democratic Party (BDP), which is essentially non-authoritarian. We therefore use the liberal–illiberal divide to acknowledge the different manifestations of the dominant party system.

Classifications across the illiberal–liberal democracy divide can be helpful. Zakaria (1997:23–24) recognises a liberal democracy in which free and fair elections are accompanied by the rule of law, a separation of powers and the protection of civil and political liberties. This institutional context is underpinned by a democratic political culture. In an illiberal democracy, regular elections with multiple parties competing may occur, but the rule of law, the separation of powers and civil and political liberties are transgressed. An undemocratic political culture (intolerance and low trust) is also pervasive in such a context. Party dominance therefore occurs within both liberal and illiberal democracies.

The threshold for dominance

The threshold given for identifying dominance varies according to different authors. Pempel (1990:3) and Ware (1996) assert that dominance can be sufficiently acquired with less than half of the seats in Parliament, through attaining a plurality of the seats and not necessarily a majority. Blondel (1968) also recognises dominance when there is a plurality of support, as indicated in the vote. Thus a party can be considered to be dominant with less than half of the votes. In contrast, Sartori (1976:193) holds that dominance requires an absolute majority, in which the make-up of the opposition largely loses its relevance. Bogaards (2004) further argues that most dominant party system definitions were developed for parliamentary governments. However, as most of Africa leans towards presidentialism there needs to be a means of recognising dominance in these governments too. Thus, according to Bogaards, in a presidential form of government the party must control Parliament and the presidency through at least a plurality of the seats or vote.

Often the party dominant in the system wins the elections by a majority and the outcome of the elections is, to a large extent, a given. Some initial observations, which we will revisit in the concluding chapters, provide instructive examples. In South Africa the ruling party, the African National Congress (ANC), has won the last four national elections with over 60 per cent of the vote, which means that it holds the majority of the seats in the legislature. However, looking at the strength of parties in legislatures is a necessary, but not a sufficient, condition for dominance. Although dominance in number is a significant indicator of dominance, it is the power and influence it translates into that

is more important. For example, in Botswana the BDP has maintained its dominance despite receiving only between 51 and 54 per cent of the vote in the last three elections. A more extreme case is Zimbabwe, where ZANU–PF won approximately 47 per cent of the seats in the House of Assembly during the 2008 elections, less than the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), but still dominates Zimbabwe's political landscape. Therefore, what is more important in terms of establishing dominance is to ascertain whether a certain party dominates the political polity and policy-making. This leads to the third criterion — the nature of the dominance.

The nature of the dominance

Duverger (1954:308) emphasises that a party is dominant when its 'doctrines, ideas, methods and style coincide with those of the epoch […] Domination is a question of influence rather than specific strength'. Public opinion underpins this dominance as 'even the enemies of the dominant party and citizens who refuse to give it their vote acknowledge its superior status and influence'; they *believe* it to be dominant. This type of dominance goes deeper than mere numbers — at its core is a *symbolic* attachment to a particular party (Reddy, 2006:57). The dominant party system occurs within a democratic setting and thus enjoys the support of the majority, but this support continues despite non-delivery, mismanagement, corruption and other factors which would normally cost the political party its ruling seat. This symbolic attachment, which serves to maintain the party's dominance, is often due to a particular historic event. A common feature of most dominant party systems is a highly symbolic history and the ushering in of a new political order. To illustrate briefly: in Mexico, the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) was the post-revolutionary party; the ANC and the Indian National Congress (INC) are associated with post-authoritarian regimes; the Kuomintang (KMT) ruled in Taiwan after a counter-revolution and during continued struggles against the communist regime of Beijing; and Malaysia's United Malays National Organisation (UMNO) ruled after colonial rule, foreign occupation and a war of insurgency. In particular, the ANC's liberation credentials, and its association with the struggle against apartheid, results in an affinity to the party that goes beyond a mere instrumentalist relationship between it and its constituency. Seepe (2007) refers to this as a 'collective psyche', in which those who lived under apartheid associate the ANC party with a 'sense of freedom' and the notion of human dignity. Such parties have a far larger share of popular legitimacy at their disposal than any of their political contenders.

The inclusion of opposition features

Arian and Barnes (1974:613) call the dominant party system 'a competitive system in which electoral results are held constant'. They argue that the system is dependent on the performance of the dominant party: 'so long as the dominant party performs intelligently, the opposition can do little that is effective. Even bad decisions will not be disastrous unless the opposition is in a position to take advantage of them, and it

seldom is' (1974:600). In other words, other parties *may* compete but they are unlikely to win. As opposed to a one-party system, the electorate have a choice beyond one party, yet they mostly exercise that choice in favour of the dominant party. Nevertheless, the dominant party system places on the ruling party a number of constraints that are absent in a one-party system. Since they still have to win elections and ensure the long-term maintenance of their dominance, they must meet a measure of the expectations of their electorate or else they will lose their support. In addition, the opposition parties will attempt to keep the ruling party accountable as it is in their interests to highlight its shortcomings. Concomitantly, the ruling party is liberated from many of the constraints associated with a multi-party system. If they win elections by a significant margin, this gives them substantial room to move. In addition, the presence of opposition parties gives the political system legitimacy and legitimises the rule of the dominant party.

Time span

There are also divergent views regarding the duration of the dominance. Ware (1996) stipulates that the dominant party should win 'usually'. Pempel (1990:4) argues for dominance to occur over a 'substantial period'. Greene (see Chapter 2) employs a five-election or twenty-year threshold as a criterion for classification. And Sartori (1976) argues that for a system to be called dominant, the party must dominate over at least three consecutive elections. We take a position midway along the scale: dominance should be over a prolonged period of time of at least four consecutive national elections.

To summarise: in the discussions that follow, a dominant party system occurs in liberal and illiberal democracies; the dominant party's dominance is sufficient for it to dominate the polity and public policy; its dominance tends to emanate from a history expressed in symbolic terms; opposition parties compete in elections, but are unlikely to win, whether the elections are competitive or semi-competitive; and the ruling party dominates over four or more consecutive national elections (see Table 1.1).

Table 1.1: Summary of criteria for identifying party dominance

Criteria	Party dominance
Political system	Both liberal and illiberal democracies
Threshold for dominance	Sufficient to dominate the polity and public policy
Nature of dominance	Emanates from an heroic history expressed in symbolic terms
Opposition features	Opposition competes in elections, but is unlikely to win
Time span	Four or more consecutive national elections

Source: Compiled by the authors

Classifying dominant party systems

Ruling parties of dominant party systems may exercise their power in either an authoritarian manner, such as the PRI in Mexico and ZANU–PF in Zimbabwe, or a non-authoritarian manner, such as the BDP in Botswana, culminating in liberal or illiberal democracies. Sartori (1976:26) similarly identifies two types of dominant party systems: the predominant party system and the hegemonic party system. In the first case, there is limited political competition and one party outdistances its opponents, but a significant chance of an alternation in power nevertheless still exists. The second case refers to a non-competitive system, in which alternation cannot occur. Peripheral parties do exist but mechanisms that permanently exclude them from power are in place. In such a system open contestation and dissent are not allowed. It is characterised by fraudulent elections, internal repression and a gagged press. Nacif (2006:92–93) referred to Mexico's dominant party system as a single-hegemonic party system and recognised it to have been an authoritarian regime[1] since these hegemonic parties 'sustain their monopoly of power through barriers of entry to new competitors'. He nevertheless distinguishes the single-hegemonic party system from other authoritarian regimes in three aspects. First, this system is different from personal dictatorships due to the institutionalisation of succession of power. Second, dominant party systems tend to have a genuine base of social support. Third, they are able to co-opt emerging political movements and co-exist with some form of opposition. The PRI in Mexico maintained its legitimacy domestically and internationally through semi-competitive elections and a base of social support underpinned its rule. However, opposition parties faced serious official constraints, even harassment, and the ruling party heavily exploited the powers of office to maintain political support. Nacif thus distinguishes single-hegemonic party systems in authoritarian regimes, such as Mexico, from dominant party systems such as in South Africa.

Greene (see Chapter 2) uses the categories 'dominant party authoritarian regimes' (DPAR) and 'dominant party democratic regimes' (DPDR) to distinguish between the different types of dominance. Figure 1.1 illustrates how manifestations of party dominance straddle non-authoritarian and authoritarian political systems. The hegemonic party system occurs within an illiberal democratic political system and the dominant party system within a liberal democratic political system. Although we can place party systems on a continuum ranging from authoritarian to democratic, none is likely to be placed at the absolute polar points of either end. The differences between the two types of party dominance are illustrated in Table 1.2. The attainment of a liberal democracy, as characterised in the second column, is an ideal, not a description of an easily found reality. Rather, the characteristics of the different types of dominant party systems serve as tools to identify and distinguish between the party systems. Thus a dominant party democratic

1 Nacif uses Barbara Geddes's typology of authoritarian regimes, in which she distinguishes between three types of authoritarianism: personal dictatorships, military regimes and single-party regimes.

regime will have many, though not all, of the characteristics identified. Indeed, it is the very point of this book to investigate the influence of the dominant party system on the characteristics of a good quality democracy.

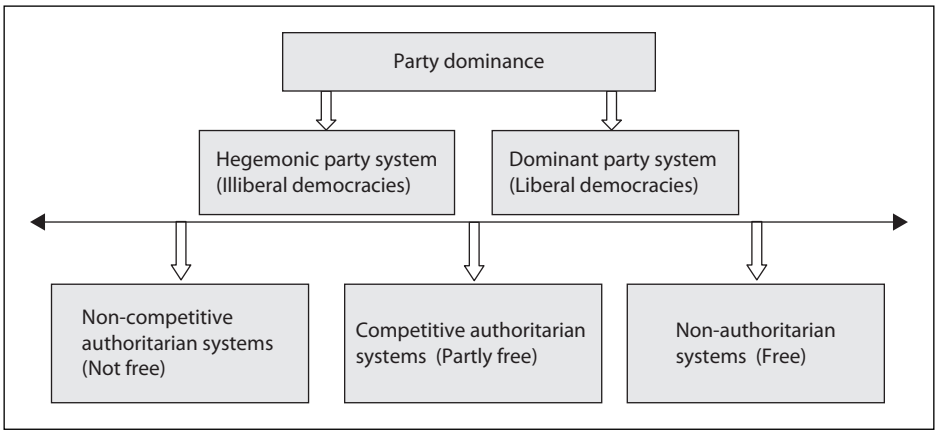

Figure 1.1: Typology of party dominance in political systems
Source: Compiled by the authors

The quality of democracy

Diamond and Morlino (2004) present an extensive conceptual description of the various dimensions of democracy. Democracy, for a start, is defined minimally in terms of four criteria: the extensive if not universal right to vote; elections (being free, fair and regular); the presence of 'more than one serious political party'; and the existence of and access to alternative sources of information (Diamond & Morlino, 2004:21). Our interest is, among others, in uncovering what is meant by a 'serious' political party.

Diamond and Morlino identify two dimensions of quality. The first is that of the quality of democratic governance, which can be described in terms of three distinct aspects. These are: firstly, there are aspects of governance that are found within the procedures of democratic regimes; secondly, governance can also be found within the substance of democratic action; and thirdly, within the results that democratic regimes produce.

The second dimension of quality comprises of the structural features of democracy, which entails freedom, equality, the rule of law, vertical accountability, responsiveness, participation, competition and horizontal accountability. These two dimensions can be combined to form a matrix within which aspects of quality can be described. As can be seen from Table 1.3 most of the structural features of democracy can also relate to the procedural aspect of governance. These include the rule of law, participation, competition, vertical accountability and horizontal accountability. Civil and political freedom as

Table 1.2: Categorisation of dominant party systems

	Hegemonic/Dominant party authoritarian regimes	Dominant/Dominant party democratic regimes
Political system	• Illiberal democracy • Freedom House categories: 'not free' and 'partly free'	• Liberal democracy • Freedom House categories: 'free'
Political authority	• Centralised • Monopoly of power	• Fairly centralised government • Limited scope of control
Elections	• Regular but not free (violence and intimidation) and fair (limitations on opposition) • Able to dominate with or without an electoral majority	• Regular and largely free and fair • Electoral majority important in terms of maintaining dominance
Institutions	• Institutional centralisation • Ruling party controls legislature, executive and judiciary; no de facto separation of powers • Controls or gags so-called independent statutory bodies	• Centralisation of power is evident • Judiciary is independent • Independent statutory bodies
Rule of law	• Disregarded, circumvented and deliberately violated by the ruling party	• Elites and the general citizenry recognise and abide by the rule of law
Civil and political society	• Dispositional centralisation • Limited and constrained civil and political society	• Act as a system of checks and balances on the ruling party • Right to organisation and contestation recognised and protected • Space for civil society organisations to play a multiplicity of roles • Political parties can freely contest elections
Media freedom	• Media mostly state-owned • State-regulated • Censorship imposed by the ruling party without restraint	• State and private ownership of media • State and self-regulation • Censorship is constitutionally limited

Source: Compiled by the authors

well as equality are considered by Diamond and Morlino to be a structural aspects of democracy that relate to the substance of democratic governance, and responsiveness bears on the results of democratic governance. Responsiveness, according to the authors, is also a structural feature that serves as a bridge to the procedural dimension of governance in the sense that it allows for the measurement of the extent to which public policies generated by the democratic regime, within the given set of rules and procedures meet the expectations, demands and preferences of citizens (see Table 1.3).

A number of short observations can be made about each of these dimensions. The rule of law, according to Diamond and Morlino, serves as the bedrock on which all the other dimensions of quality are constructed. It is also the crucial dimension that distinguishes liberal from illiberal democracies. Important conditions conducive to the emergence and maintenance of the rule of law include the presence of liberal values (such as trust and tolerance) among the citizenry and elites; bureaucratic cultures of merit, competence and impartiality; extensive institutionalisation and economic capacity; and finally, political will among leaders not only to establish rules applicable to all, but also to comply with them.

Diamond and Morlino consider extensive public participation, not only in elections but also in other forums, to be another dimension of quality. According to them, more is always better; they do not consider the possibility that too much participation may undermine quality. (A recent study of politics in the American state of California argues that persistent and widespread use of participatory initiatives has done precisely that [*Economist*, April 23–29 2011, special report].) High levels of participation should be conducted in such a way as not to undermine equality, and a liberal political culture is again considered as a vital condition for facilitating such an outcome.

Table 1.3: Quality of democracy

		Democratic governance		
		Procedure	**Substance**	**Results**
Structural features of democracy	Rule of law	X		
	Participation	X		
	Competition	X		
	Vertical accountability	X		
	Horizontal accountability	X		
	Civil & political freedom		X	
	Political equality		X	
	Responsiveness			X

Source: Compiled by the authors, derived from Diamond and Morlino (2004)

The degree of competition, as measured in the access to competitive arenas also contributes to quality. Not only do free, fair and regular elections count, but so do the rules of the electoral system. Party-list proportional representation (PR) is favourably considered by Diamond and Morlino in this regard, but even such systems can inhibit competition if very high thresholds of representation apply. Rules on access to public and private funding are of large potential significance for the contest between dominant parties and the other smaller parties. So, too, are limits to campaign spending, the gerrymandering of electoral districts, and the role of the media in election campaigns.

Vertical accountability refers to the extent to which elected officials answer for their actions to voters and receive either punishment or endorsement — the latter usually in the form of re-election. Again, Diamond and Morlino do not place an upper limit on quality of this form of accountability, and do not foresee that extensive use of the classic forms of direct democracy — the referendum, recall and initiative — may adversely impact on the quality of democracy.

Horizontal accountability, especially, but not only, in the form of the system of checks and balances within the state is recognised as another dimension. Here Diamond and Morlino do caution that excessive use of these mechanisms may undermine the entire institutional network within which it is embedded.

Freedom is conceptualised in terms of civil and political rights as well as economic rights, with the more or less standard set of first generation 'negative' rights. The decisive conditions for the maintenance of these freedoms are found in the rule of law in the widest sense, as well as an autonomous judiciary which is constitutionally protected and has adequate authority. A strongly held liberal political culture, at the level of citizenry as well as leadership, is another condition favourable to the exercise and maintenance of these rights.

Political equality is another substantive right relevant to the quality of democracy. This is not easy to achieve under conditions of persistent and extensive inequalities of wealth and status. One way of dealing with this tension is to declare certain public goods, such as health and education, as social rights with an obligation on the state to act 'positively' in order to realise them. Such rights are not only applicable at the individual level, but can also be extended to vulnerable minorities.

Responsiveness, the last dimension of quality, refers to the extent to which voters' preferences are actually implemented in the form of public policy. Here Diamond and Morlino again identify limits, but only as they apply to the actual ability of leaders to respond. Firstly, leaders may influence and even manipulate the preferences of their voters in a deliberate or inadvertent way through their very incumbency. Secondly, leaders may have limited resources at their disposal within the political regime in which the democratic system is embedded. Thirdly, globalisation constrains popular sovereignty in a variety of ways. They note that responsiveness is always limited in the sense that democracy is about preferring some objectives over others, and choosing between many desirable objectives, so that not all preferences can be realised all of the time.

Assessing the impact of dominant parties on the quality of democracy

Dominant parties tend to come into power on the wave of a significant historic event, whether it be a revolution, state-creation or liberation, and initially maintain this dominance by the continued referral to this event. With the passing of generations, in order to ensure their dominance, these parties must induce and maintain political loyalty using other mechanisms. Arian and Barnes (1974) note that 'the dominant party system is one in which politics is king, in which dominance results from strategic political decisions made by the party elite'. In T. J. Pempel's (1990:32) seminal study of party dominance, he concluded that 'one-party dominance is an art far more than it is an inevitability'. What accounts for the persistence of dominant party systems within regimes with democratic practices and institutions? More specifically, if it is an art, what are the 'brush techniques' that dominant parties use to consolidate their dominance? How do these techniques or strategies impact the quality of democracy? 'Democracy's resilience is in the stability of its institutionalised uncertainty, an uncertainty that even the most dominant of political parties has to confront' (Friedman & Wong, 2008:1). The issue is how do these parties confront this uncertainty? Why do dominant party systems endure? Or do they give way to other kinds of authoritarian systems or to multi-party systems, and why? In 2000, Mexico's PRI — the world's longest running dominant party — was defeated in democratic elections by the National Action Party (PAN), illustrating that even the expert in the artform of party dominance could be defeated. This is in sharp contrast to Zimbabwe under ZANU–PF, whose dominance led to an oppressive, authoritarian state. How can these different trajectories be accounted for?

To understand prolonged dominance, Kenneth F. Greene (2007) puts forward a resource-based theory (which is further elaborated on in Chapter 2), similar to Levitsky and Way's (2010:57) 'uneven playing field', where 'democratic competition is undermined less by electoral fraud or repression than by unequal access to state institutions, resources, and the media'. Even though Levitsky and Way (2010) focus on what they refer to as competitive authoritarian regimes, an uneven playing field is recognisable in dominant party systems, where the problem of unequal access to resources inhibits the development of opposition and fair competition, necessary requisites of a liberal democracy. The assumption that the electoral market is fair and no party has a systematic advantage is simply untrue in a dominant party system (Greene, 2007:3). Levitsky and Way (2010:58–60) highlight three ways in which the playing field may be uneven: disparities in resources; uneven access to the media; and uneven access to the law.

Using Greene's resource-based theory as a starting point, this book recognises two broad categories of resources, namely economic and political resources. To maintain and consolidate their dominance, incumbents will attempt to create monopolies of power and

control over these resources.[2] Economic resources[3] include public and private finances, state resources, and the ability to determine economic policies. Political resources include law-making, rule-making (through delegated functions), media access, leadership, the power of appointment, ideologies and social networks.

The role of resources can be illustrated further by drawing on the analytical framework used by Levite and Tarrow (1983) in accounting for the rise and decline of party dominance in Italy (1946–1981) and Israel (1948–1981). They identified a so-called cycle of dominance tied to processes of delegitimation and re-legitimation of excluded parties by the dominant parties — Mapai in Israel and the Christian Democrats (DC) in Italy.

In Israel and Italy, resources, as described above, came into play in changing contexts and historical conditions, and were put to use through a variety of strategies, countered with yet other strategies. In both instances the dominant party achieved its initial ascendancy through unique historical events (the founding of the state of Israel, and the re-inauguration of democracy in Italy after World War II, respectively). The dominant parties succeeded in achieving electoral dominance by capturing and monopolising the symbolism associated with these events. Heroic, charismatic leadership (in the case of Israel), and the tactically astute use of an ideology appealing to a distinct social base, helped them to capture the allegiance of a major historical bloc of voters which spanned decades. From this position of dominance the excluded political parties could effectively be depicted as irrelevant and illegitimate in the contest for power.

The re-legitimation of the excluded parties occurred with, first of all, a change in social context. In Italy and Israel the historical bloc of voters supporting the dominant party were whittled away by generational change and ageing and, in Israel, by large-scale immigration. New cohorts of voters entered the electoral arena, with different and receding memories of the historical founding roots of the party; they were less attuned to the dominant ideology, and in the case of Israel, didn't have the charismatic leadership of David Ben-Gurion. Along with attendant processes, such as the secularisation of Italian society, the sub-cultural unity of the original historical bloc of voters weakened and interest-based formations took hold within the electorate. Deft tactical use of these conditions amid new crises of mobilisation and changes in the international system accounts for the rise of Herut (and later Likud) to power within a multi-party system, and for the partial legitimation of the Communist Party in Italy.

In spite of their hyper-incumbency advantages (Greene, 2007:34), dominant party systems have been recognised by some as models of democratic stability (Arian & Barnes, 1974 and Pempel, 1990). Pempel points out that a dominant party can facilitate stability through the entrenchment of democratic institutions, marginalising political

2 Studies conducted by De Jager (2009), Greene (2007) and Magaloni (2006) illustrate how dominant parties consolidate their dominance through the creation of monopolies of power.

3 Magaloni's (2006:37) findings from her study of Mexico indicated that: 'the more fiscal resources, subsidies, and economic regulations are under the government's control, the more leeway the autocrat will have to buy off electoral support and deter voter exit'.

extremes and fusing ethnic differences, thus creating a forum for compromise. The argument follows that if the dominant party combines its rule with political competition and the protection of civil liberties, it can serve as a good foundation for a durable liberal democracy. This entails a restraint on the extent of their control of political and economic resources. We therefore postulate that the growth and decline of resources and the extent of control over these resources influences the trajectory of the dominant party system: either in the direction of a liberal democracy or an illiberal democracy, even to the point of oppressive authoritarianism. Similarly, Greene (2007:6) in his resource-based theory notes the political economy of dominance, in which the ruling party's resource advantages rise and fall in accordance with its level of control of the economy.

If we argue that a good-quality democracy includes the rule of law, separation of powers, and the protection of civil and political liberties, then how do the strategies — the so-called 'brush techniques' — that dominant parties use to centralise control over political and economic resources, affect these features of a good-quality democracy? For example, how does the use of state resources for the benefit of the incumbent impact on opposition parties? This uneven access to resources may impair the opposition's ability to organise and compete for public office. Thus the apparent weakness of opposition is perhaps less a result of their own inherent ineptitude than it is due to limitations arising from the context of a dominant party system.

Conclusion

In this book, our interest lies in the interplay between:

- the availability of resources to dominant and excluded parties
- the changing conditions that weaken the importance of some resources and make available new resources
- the strategic insight and tactical astuteness, agility and deftness in making use of available resources by dominant and excluded parties, and
- whether and how the ruling dominant parties foster a liberal democracy or not.

Thus to assess the impact of the dominant party system on the *quality* of democracy, the influence of an 'uneven playing field' — in terms of access to resources — on the rule of law, separation of powers, and political and civil liberties needs to be examined.

Using the set of conditions we have chosen we will try to establish which combination of resources, changing context and strategic interaction is likely to produce a period of sustained single party dominance, and which an authoritarian outcome.

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PART TWO

Insights from the developing world

Chapter 2

The political costs of privatisation: Why democratic and authoritarian dominant parties meet their doom[1]

Kenneth F. Greene

Why do dominant parties, once established, persist or fail? Employing time-series cross-sectional models and the analysis of three brief country case studies, I show that dominant parties endure despite poor economic performance, voter demand for new parties, and sufficiently permissive electoral institutions. Instead, I demonstrate that dominant parties continue to win when they can politicise public resources and they fail when privatisations put the state's fiscal power out of their reach. The argument has implications for the fate of dominant parties, transitions to fully competitive democracy, and the study of incumbency advantages and electoral fairness in comparative politics.

Dominant party systems are puzzling because they feature meaningful elections in which the incumbent wins re-election for exceptionally long periods of time. During the twentieth century, 16 dominant parties existed for two to seven decades in Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Americas. Yet by the century's end, opposition parties had triumphed in 12 countries, causing transitions to fully competitive democracy with turnover.[2]

Existing theories of party system competitiveness and transitions to democracy cannot explain this worldwide trend in dominant party decline. Analysts argue that more social cleavages (Lipset & Rokkan, 1967) and higher electoral district magnitude (Cox, 1997) increase the number of competitive parties; however, as relative constants within countries, these variables cannot explain dominant party decline over time. Other variables that might explain change over time do an exceedingly bad job. Poor economic performance is thought to doom incumbents at the polls (Powell & Whitten, 1993), yet dominant parties have been remarkably immune to economic downturns and some have lost during periods of economic boom (Geddes, 1999; Smith, 2005). Work on transitions

1 Portions of the present chapter appeared as 'The political economy of single-party dominance'. *Comparative Political Studies* 43 (9) September 2010: 1–27.

2 The one exception is The Gambia, where a military coup in 1994 ended dominant party rule.

to democracy argues that gains in GDP per capita (Boix & Stokes, 2003), trade openness (Lopez-Cordova & Meissner, 2005) and the proportion of democracies in a given region (Brinks & Coppedge, 2006; Gleditsch & Ward, 2006) force incumbents out, but these variables have virtually no effect on dominant parties.[3]

I argue that dominant parties persist or fail based primarily on their ability to politicise public resources. When incumbents can access and use these public resources for partisan purposes, they can outspend competitors at every turn and make otherwise open competition so unfair that they virtually win elections before election day. Resource advantages mean that even authoritarian dominant parties typically do not need to rely on outcome-changing fraud or bone-crushing repression to maintain their rule. Conversely, as the incumbent's access to public resources declines, opposition parties have more equal opportunities to compete and dominant party rule is threatened. The decline and fall of dominant parties is thus not due to social or institutional changes, nor is it due to socio-economic modernisation, globalisation, or the diffusion of democratic norms; rather, the worldwide wave of state retrenchment has diminished dominant parties' access to the resources they need to remain in power.

The idea that resource monopolies sustain political monopolies goes back generations (Schumpeter, 1947; Lipset, 1959; Dahl, 1992:82), but the critical role of the state has been sidetracked in neo-modernisation arguments that highlight economic growth (Boix & Stokes, 2003) and globalisation arguments that focus on trade openness (Lopez-Cordova & Meissner, 2005). I show that even rich countries that trade extensively with the West can live under political monopolies when the fiscal power of the state is used to distort partisan competition. One particular element of economic liberalisation — the privatisation of state-owned enterprises (SOEs) — breaks these monopolies and promotes transitions to fully competitive democracy.

This chapter uses a new cross-national time-series data set on the full universe of dominant party systems to test the association between resource advantages derived from the public budget and dominant party persistence in power. This census of dominant party systems is the appropriate data set because the question at hand is not what produces dominant parties, but what makes them persist or fail after they are established. Comparing dominant parties to other systems would only be helpful in answering this question if a selection effect linked dominant party origins to their staying power. However, neither the type of founding event — revolution, defeat in war, civil strife, and national independence (Duverger, 1954; Huntington & Moore, 1970; Arian & Barnes, 1974) — nor the initial strength of challengers (Smith, 2005)[4] is empirically associated with dominant party persistence and neither electoral institutions nor social cleavages is associated with their origins (see Greene, 2007:14–18). Thus, what remains unexplained is why dominant parties, once established, persist or fail.

3 Older work on dominant parties is essentially descriptive (Duverger, 1954; Huntington & Moore, 1970; Sartori, 1976; Pempel, 1990) and does not provide testable hypotheses about dominant party persistence or failure. I examine newer work on single-party dominance below.

4 Smith (2005) builds his theory from case studies that I label fully closed authoritarian regimes.

The first section of this chapter conceptualises single-party dominance and specifies the universe of cases. The second section describes the relationship between resources and biased party competition in more detail. The third section presents hypotheses and measures as well as the statistical analysis. The final section before the conclusion interprets the quantitative findings by embedding post-model simulations in three brief country case studies.

Dominant party systems defined

Dominant parties have attracted significant scholarly attention for more than half a century (Duverger, 1954; Blondel, 1972; Huntington & Moore, 1970; Coleman, 1960; Arian & Barnes, 1974; Sartori, 1976; Pempel, 1990; Cox, 1997; Smith, 2005; Scheiner, 2006; Magaloni, 2006; Greene, 2007). Although all authors agree that dominant parties are central power-holders for long periods of time, classifying cases has proven challenging (see Bogaards, 2004). We need rules to distinguish dominant party systems both from those with more regular turnover in government and from those where *electoral* dominance is epiphenomenal because fully closed authoritarian rule makes turnover through elections impossible. I define dominant party systems as polities with meaningful elections where one party maintains the ability to determine social choice through government policy for at least 20 consecutive years or five consecutive elections. This definition includes three elements.

First, single-party dominance implies a power threshold. Rather than adopt a cut-off associated with a particular percentage of seats or votes that inevitably causes difficulties in classifying parliamentary and presidentialist systems,[5] I argue that dominance means the ability to determine social choice through policy and legislation. In presidentialist systems, this means that the incumbent controls the executive, the absolute majority of legislative seats and, in federal systems, the majority of statehouses. In parliamentary and mixed systems, it means holding the premiership, at least a plurality of legislative seats, and it must be impossible to form a government without the putative dominant party.[6]

Second, single-party dominance implies a longevity threshold. I agree with Sartori (1976: 44) that such a threshold should capture the notion of a dominant party system as a stable pattern of inter-party competition, but one not so restrictive as to make the category disappear. Existing thresholds range from two elections (Przeworski et al, 2000:27) to '30 to 50 years' (Cox, 1997:238) and 'permanent or semi-permanent governance' (Pempel, 1990:15). A two-election threshold admits any number of countries where the incumbent benefited from transient luck or skill, while the 50-year threshold rules out all cases except Mexico. The five-election or 20-year threshold that I employ is, like all others, arbitrary,

5 Existing thresholds range from a low of 40% of votes (Blondel, 1972), making plurality losers in two-party systems indistinguishable from plurality winners in multi-party ones, to a high of 70% of seats (Coleman, 1960), which excludes all dominant parties in parliamentary systems.

6 Following Laver and Schofield (1990), I define a party as necessary to form a government if no connected coalition can form a government that does not include it.

but produces a more intuitive set of cases than existing definitions.[7] Taken together, the power and longevity thresholds imply a lack of turnover that distinguishes dominant party systems from fully competitive democracies.

Finally, to distinguish dominant party systems from cases where single-party dominance through elections is epiphenomenal because authoritarian controls make turnover impossible, I argue that electoral competition must be meaningful. Meaningfulness entails three procedural elements drawn, in part, from Przeworski et al (2000): 1) the chief executive and a legislature cannot be dismissed by the executive and are chosen through regular popular elections; 2) opposition forces are allowed to form independent parties and compete in elections; and 3) the incumbent does not engage in outcome-changing electoral fraud without which dominant party rule would have ended. Meaningful elections distinguish dominant party systems from fully closed authoritarian regimes that do not hold elections, ban opposition parties, or routinely disregard electoral results.

Applying these definitional rules yields 16 dominant party systems as of 2008. Seven are dominant party authoritarian regimes (DPARs) where, despite open and meaningful elections, incumbents supplemented resource advantages with targeted and episodic repression of opposition forces. These cases include Malaysia under UMNO/BN (1974–), Mexico under the PRI (1929–1997), Senegal under the Socialist Party (PS) (1977–2000), Singapore under the People's Action Party (PAP) (1981–), Taiwan under the KMT (1987– 2000), and The Gambia under the People's Progressive Party (PPP) (1963–1994). It may also include Botswana under the BDP (1965–) that Africanists routinely consider to be democratic. Classifying it as one or the other does not affect my findings, as shown below. DPARs are an important subset of 'competitive authoritarian' (Levitsky & Way, 2002) or 'electoral authoritarian' regimes (Schedler, 2002).[8] Nine cases are 'uncommon democracies' (Pempel, 1990) or dominant party democratic regimes (DPDRs) where challengers operated without threat of repression. In these cases, elections were not only meaningful, but fully free, since they included all the surrounding freedoms commensurate with democracy. DPDRs include Italy under the DC (1946–1992), Japan under the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) (1955–1993), India under Congress (1952–1977), Bahamas under the Progressive Liberal Party (PLP) (1967–1992), Trinidad and Tobago under the People's National Movement (PNM) (1956–1986), Luxembourg under the Christian Social Party (PCS) (1980–), Sweden under the Social Democratic Party (SAP) (1936–1976), and Israel under Mapai/Labor Alignment (1949–1977). The final case, South Africa under the NP (1948–1994) might be classified as a democracy for whites if one is only interested in why it dominated among citizens with the franchise, although the broader regime was obviously authoritarian.

The authoritarian and democratic cases clearly differ in fundamental ways; however, I show that they used similar mechanisms to maintain their rule (also see Greene, 2007). In both regime types, dominant parties use patronage to bias voters in their favour and

7 Increasing the threshold removes Taiwan under the KMT that is a clear case of single-party dominance. Decreasing it, adds Great Britain under the Tories that clearly was not.

8 Six of Diamond's (2002: 23) seven historical cases are DPARs. Also see Schedler (2002).

raise the cost of supporting the opposition, even though costs are clearly much higher in DPARs. While one might adopt a 'thick' definition of dominance that strictly separates these systems, I argue that we learn more by adopting a 'thin' definition and assessing the causal impact of regime characteristics on dominant party durability.[9]

Resource asymmetries and single-party dominance

I argue that dominant parties win consistently because they generate advantages derived from the public budget that fundamentally skew the partisan playing field in their favour. To be sure, dominant parties employ earmarks and pork-barrel projects like advantage-seeking politicians in all competitive systems. What sets dominant parties apart is that they also generate partisan resources from the public budget in five ways that are typically considered illicit. First, they can divert funds from the budgets of SOEs. These often massive companies are usually run by political appointees, their finances are hidden from public scrutiny, and they engage in difficult-to-track transfers with the government that yield manifold opportunities to divert public funds for partisan use. In a few countries (Taiwan, Malaysia, Israel), dominant parties are also permitted to own businesses, and these ventures typically operate in protected sectors. Second, money may also be funnelled from the public budget to party coffers through secret executive line items and hidden legislative slush funds. Third, a large public sector allows the incumbent to dole out huge numbers of patronage jobs to supporters and withhold them from opponents. Fourth, the economic importance of the state encourages domestic businesses to 'pay to play' by exchanging kickbacks and sometimes illicit campaign contributions for economic protection or state contracts. Finally, dominant parties virtually transform public agencies into campaign headquarters by using office supplies, phones, postage, vehicles, and public employees themselves to help inform and mobilise voters. The method of milking the public budget may vary across countries and over time, but the resources to sustain dominant party rule originate, directly or indirectly, from it.

When incumbents can access and use public resources for partisan gain, they benefit from a virtually bottomless campaign war chest and create quasi-permanent resource asymmetries between insiders and outsiders.[10] Incumbents can access public funds when the public bureaucracy is politically controlled through non-merit-based hiring, firing, and career advancement that make bureaucrats less likely to act as gatekeepers or whistleblowers (Shefter, 1994). They can use public funds for partisan advantage where campaign finance laws do not exist or cannot be enforced because the

9 Sartori argued that in 'predominant party systems' (DPDRs) all parties have 'equality of opportunities' while in 'hegemonic party systems' (DPARs), 'turnover is not envisaged' due to fraud (1976: 194). In discounting resource asymmetries, he overstates fairness in DPDRs. He also overstates fraud in DPARs since 1) fraud is attempted only when pre-election mechanisms fail and elections are close and 2) fraud affects actors' calculations probabilistically since no one knows *ex ante* how well the incumbent's machine will operate (Greene, 2007).

10 Unlike systems where rotation is expected or costs are low, private donors refrain from funding challenger parties in dominant party systems.

incumbent controls the electoral authority. Thus, the political economy of single-party dominance involves a large public sector and a politically quiescent public bureaucracy. This political economy functions in a fundamentally different way in dominant party systems than it does in non-dominant party systems where the incumbent expects to lose in the future and thus is deterred from the full-scale politicisation of public funds. This chapter therefore makes no claims about the effect of the political economy of single-party dominance in non-dominant party systems.

Dominant parties may also diminish the size of opposition parties by increasing the costs of voting for them. These costs may include the opportunity costs of not receiving patronage goods, the threat of losing one's job, loss of access to public services and the protection of the state, and outright intimidation and physical repression. Analytically, these costs function as a negative benefit (that is, the opposite of patronage goods), though substantively they are obviously quite different. Costs also vary by regime type. DPDRs deny patronage (Scheiner, 2006 on Japan; Warner, 1998 on Italy) and may threaten voters' livelihoods (LaPalombara, 1964 on Italy), but there is little evidence of physical repression. DPARs can impose higher costs when needed by deploying the repressive apparatus of the state, even though such repression falls far short of the purging or purifying of dissidents that occurs in fully closed authoritarian regimes. Rather, repression in DPARs is typically targeted, episodic, and used as a last resort when patronage fails.[11]

The net effect of asymmetric resources and costs of participation is to bias voters in favour of the dominant party and make even genuine elections substantially unfair. In dominant party systems, voter choice revolves not just around the parties' publicly announced policy appeals, but also around the costs and material benefits of supporting a given party (Scheiner, 2006; Magaloni, 2006; Greene, 2007). Clearly, dominant parties will use their advantages strategically to generate the most votes for the lowest overall cost. However, rather than modelling this complicated process, here I am interested in the prediction that dominant party power increases with its access to and use of politicised public resources. As developed above, this argument implies that dominant party power rises with the size of the public sector, conditional on its control of the public bureaucracy.

Resource asymmetries between dominant parties and their challengers are sometimes included in recent studies of single-party dominance, but their role is either under-theorised, measured inconsistently, or their effects are tested on just one or a handful of country cases. A few studies take resource advantages as a given and include them in a laundry list of potential contributors to dominant party durability (Pempel, 1990; Magaloni, 2006:20). Other work carves out a more central role for resource asymmetries but pays less attention to their origins and why they change over time (Scheiner, 2006; Levitsky & Way, 2006). Work that focuses specifically on resource asymmetries (Greene, 2007) does not test their effects on the full universe of dominant

11 Freedom House civil liberties country-year means for DPDRs and DPARs are 2.5 and 3.7, respectively. Fully competitive democracies with turnover are better at 2.0 and fully closed authoritarian regimes worse at 5.4. All comparisons are statistically significant at the .001 level.

party systems. Although these prior small N and case studies benefit from their authors' in-depth country knowledge, they offer a weaker basis for making causal inferences since their findings potentially suffer from selection bias and do not permit a strong test of alternative explanations. As a result, the effects of resource advantages on dominant party longevity remain uncertain.

In the next section, I seek to overcome this key shortcoming in the existing literature by providing explicit cross-national measures and statistical tests of the association between resource advantages derived from the public budget and dominant party power. On the basis of this broader test, I reach stronger conclusions about the role of the public sector and the worldwide trend of privatisation on dominant party persistence or failure.

A cross-national test

To test my argument and alternative arguments cross-nationally, I assembled a time-series cross-sectional (TSCS) data set for the entire universe of dominant party systems where legislative elections are the unit of analysis. The data set contains 15 countries with a minimum of five and an average of over seven elections each, for a total 107 observations ranging from 1955 to 2001.[12] The data allow me to examine the dynamics of dominant party persistence across and within countries over time. To underscore, this census of dominant party systems is the most appropriate data set since the argument is about what allows dominant parties to *persist* once they are established, not about why dominant parties arise. Thus, a comparison between dominant and non-dominant party systems would not help answer the question at hand.

Conceptually, the dependent variable under study is the dominant party's power relative to losing control of the legislature to the opposition. The most straightforward measure is the dominant party's margin of victory over the first loser, expressed as a per cent with a theoretical range of -100 to 100. Negative values may occur in the final election under single-party dominance if the incumbent loses. An alternative analytic approach would test dominant party longevity with a duration model, but such a model would be less nuanced and less interesting than predicting variation in dominant party power across and within countries over time.

After supplying measures of key variables and specifying a series of hypotheses, this section shows that existing arguments account for significantly less variation in the dominant party's margin of victory than do models that include the dominant party's advantages. Then I test alternative specifications of the full model by employing several alternative measures of resource advantages and professionalisation of the public bureaucracy.

12 Observations missing electoral data or all three measures of resource asymmetries were deleted. Missing data on explanatory variables were imputed using Amelia II, creating five multiply imputed data sets. Scheve's multiple imputation programme was used to combine results.

Variables and hypotheses

Measuring resource and cost asymmetries between the dominant party and the opposition presents a challenge. Since dominant parties typically use illicit public funds for partisan advantage and resist campaign finance oversight, direct measures of their resources are unavailable. I argue that access to such illicit resources rises and falls with the relative size of the public sector, conditional on the incumbent's control over the public bureaucracy. The argument is not that all public resources are transformed into patronage goods but that when corrupt bureaucrats do not block the illicit appropriation of public funds, the opportunities for generating patronage goods rise with the size of the public sector.

No single measure taps the size of the public economy perfectly, so I use three alternative indicators. First, I use Economic Freedom in the World's (EFW) ratings for government enterprises and investment.[13] EFW data have been used in numerous publications in economics and political science (Rodrik, 1999; Kiewiet, 2000); however, the rules for combining the number and size of SOEs are not entirely clear and rely on interpretation by the rater. Second, I show results below from models with SOEs as a per cent of GDP culled from a large number of data sets and country-specific sources.[14] Unfortunately, these various sources may have used different criteria for identifying SOEs, particularly regarding the minimum proportion of government ownership needed to qualify as an SOE. Finally, I examine models with government investment in fixed capital formation as a proportion of total investment.[15]

Time-series data on civil service corruption were not available. Thus, I use cross-sectional measures from the Heritage Foundation for 1995[16] and from Transparency International for the earliest available country year, ranging from 1992 to 1995.[17] Using cross-sectional data to model a time-series process obviously eliminates within-country variation. At the same time, since the data are from the mid-1990s, they are from the tail end or after dominant parties lost power and thus probably show less corruption than existed under dominant party rule. As a result, they substantially bias tests against my hypothesis. In the analyses below, I interact these measures with indicators of resource asymmetries and in the case study section I provide a more nuanced view of civil service professionalisation from country specialists.

The costs of supporting the opposition concern both the opportunity costs of forgoing patronage goods that one might receive by choosing the dominant party and the costs associated with physical coercion. Opportunity costs are likely to rise and fall with the incumbent's access to resources and are thus captured with the variables described

13 Data are in five-year intervals from 1970 to 2000. I estimated other election-year values on the line connecting the two most proximate measures. Since the series is slow moving, this method was preferable to using Amelia that would have treated observations as if they were missing at random. Data are available at http://www.freetheworld.com.

14 Data come from the World Bank's Bureaucrats in Business for 1979–1991 and from individual country economic reports and monographs for other years.

15 These data were also collected by EFW available at http://www.freetheworld.com/.

16 Data are available at http://www.heritage.org/research/features/index/.

17 Data are available at http://www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/cpi.

on page 30. I measure the cost of coercion with Freedom House civil liberties scores, which are designed to tap the society-wide degree of civil rights violations.[18]

I also test the explanatory power of variables associated with alternative hypotheses culled from the literatures on party system competitiveness and transitions to democracy, and the specific literature on single-party dominance. Theories of party system competitiveness should help account for the number of competitive parties and, by extension, the margin of victory for the dominant party. I test retrospective economic voting theory with GDP change[19] and inflation[20] in the year preceding each election (Powell & Whitten, 1993).[21] As the economy deteriorates, voters should turn against the incumbent, causing a smaller margin of victory.

I examine the effect of institutional arrangements with mean district magnitude for lower house elections (Duverger, 1954; Cox, 1997).[22] I logged this variable since most scholars agree that systems with M=1 create distinct dynamics from systems where M>1. Analysts typically predict the number of competitive parties declines with district magnitude because increases in the threshold of representation encourage opposition political elites and voters to coordinate (Cox, 1997). However, this notion implicitly rests on the substantial possibility of winning. In dominant party systems we should instead observe less coordination among challengers where M=1 since a rising threshold of representation makes opposition parties less likely to win and gives voters incentives to choose their preferred party rather than vote strategically. In addition, since all dominant party systems with M=1 are also 'winner-take-all' presidential systems, the incumbent has no need for coalition partners and thus gives no incentive for elites representing small opposition groups to enter competition under a new label. Thus, where M=1, we should observe a smaller number of uncoordinated challenger parties and the first loser should lose by a large margin. In dominant party systems where M>1, the lower threshold of representation gives opposition voters and elites some incentives to coordinate on the largest challenger. At the same time, since M>1 occurs in dominant party systems with parliamentary formats, the dominant party may need coalition partners in parliament, thus yielding incentives for opposition elites to form alternative parties (Weiner, 2003). Thus, where M>1, we should see more parties but more coordination on the largest challenger. As initial evidence for this new interpretation of electoral system effects in dominant party systems, the

18 Other repression data cover too few dominant party elections for use.

19 I use Penn World Tables RGDPCH (real GDP per capita, Chain Index, 1996) calculated as $GDP\Delta = (RGDPCH_t - RGDPCH_{t-1})/RGDPCH_{t-1} * 100$ where t is the election year.

20 Annual inflation data come from the World Bank's World Development Indicators.

21 I follow the standard retrospective voting work that measures economic change in the year preceding the election (Bartels and Zaller, 2001). Magaloni's (2006) novel retrospective measure of voters' accumulated life experiences under dominant party rule requires individual-level survey data and is thus impractical for large-n cross-national analysis.

22 Institutional arguments do not hypothesise about deviations below an upper bound. Data come from the World Bank's DPI. Whereas the DPI codes Botswana at 0.9 to take account of five appointed legislative seats, I code it at 1 since all seats are elected in single-member districts.

mean number of competitive parties is 1.55 in systems with M=1 and 2.95 in systems with M>1. At the same time, the mean vote share of first losers where M=1 is lower, at 22 per cent compared to nearly 25 per cent where M>1.[23]

To examine the effects of social cleavages (Lipset & Rokkan, 1967), I include ethno-linguistic fractionalisation (ELF) data from Roeder (2001). Although this cross-sectional measure does not permit a test of over-time variation, ELF changes so slowly that inclusion of inter-election changes would not be likely to affect results. Analysts have theorised (Cox, 1997:15) and shown empirically (Hug, 2001) that the number of social groups is positively associated with the number of effective parties. One might expect that the resulting lack of coordination would increase the winner's vote share; however, in dominant party systems, the largest ethnic group is typically associated with the incumbent, implying that higher ELF should diminish the dominant party's share of the vote.

I included a dummy variable to examine the effects of concurrent presidential and legislative elections on the dominant party's margin. I make the standard prediction that concurrency increases opposition party coordination (Cox, 1997) and therefore reduces the dominant party's winning margin.[24] It should be noted that none of the presidentialist systems in the data set feature run-offs.

I also test arguments associated with transitions to fully competitive democracy with turnover. First, to test the endogenous effect of socio-economic modernisation on party system competitiveness, I included GDP per capita Chain Rule Series from Penn World Tables (Boix & Stokes, 2003). I logged this variable to take account of the possibility that economic gains at higher levels of development affect party system competitiveness less than at lower levels. Second, I test the argument that trade openness promotes democratisation (see Lopez-Cordova & Meissner, 2005). Levitsky and Way incorporate trade openness into their broader argument that 'Western linkage', defined as 'the density of economic, political, organizational, social, and communication ties between particular countries and the West' forces democratisation among competitive authoritarian regimes 'even in the absence of favorable domestic conditions' (2006:Ch 1). I test a centrepiece of their argument by examining the impact of trade with Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries on dominant party power. Third, drawing on arguments about the diffusion of democracy (Brinks & Coppedge, 2006; Gleditsch & Ward, 2006), I test the effects of the proportion of democracies in each country's region using data from Przeworski et al (2000). Finally, I include a dummy variable for regime type to capture the effects of authoritarianism that are not measured by the civil liberties ratings. This variable helps deal with the average effect of electoral fraud on the margins that may have increased the dominant party's vote share. To be clear, countries do not qualify as dominant party systems where experts agree that systematic fraud overturned opposition victories that would have ended dominant party rule.

23 The difference in means is statistically significant at the .01 level for the effective number of parties and at the .1 level for the first loser's vote share.

24 I coded Japan's 1980, 1983, and 1986 double elections for the lower and upper houses as presidential elections since concurrency should create similar incentives for coordination.

Model estimation and results

I estimate the models using the generalised estimation equation (GEE) approach, which fits a population-averaged panel-data model.[25] GEE overcomes three general problems that arise in TSCS data and violate the assumption of spherical errors in ordinary least square (OLS) models. First, the dominant party's margin of victory may vary more in some countries than in others, causing panel (that is, cross-country) heteroskedasticity. Second, unobservable influences may affect multiple countries at the same time, leading to contemporaneous autocorrelation. In contrast to OLS, GEE relaxes the assumptions of homoskedastic variances and the independence of election outcomes across countries by clustering observations into country groups and permitting country-specific error structures. Third, the dominant party's margin of victory within a given country is likely to correlate from election to election, resulting in temporal autocorrelation. Rather than assuming that electoral outcomes within a country are uncorrelated over time as in OLS, GEE permits correlation within countries in the specification of the country-specific error structures.[26] Furthermore, GEE is appropriate for dealing with another TSCS data feature that is specific to electoral data. The unequal number of election cycles under single-party dominance means that some countries in the data set have more observations than others. Unlike OLS, GEE makes efficient use of this data feature by weighting each country's contribution to the estimated coefficients by its number of elections in the data set.[27] Importantly, unlike fixed effects models, GEE models do not contain panel-specific parameters. Thus, predicting both cross-country and within-country variation is interesting.

I first demonstrate that the best models include a measure of the dominant party's resource advantages. Table 2.1 shows goodness-of-fit statistics for eight models with different specifications. Several of the models associated with existing arguments do an exceptionally poor job of fitting the data. A simple retrospective voting model predicts the dominant party's margin of victory no better than the average margin itself. Models associated with the social cleavages, electoral institutions, and diffusion arguments predict only about 6 per cent of the variance. A modernisation model does a little better at 21 per cent, but still falls significantly short of models that include resource asymmetries. Including variables from all alternative hypotheses accounts for 25 per cent of the variance, and this is less than a model just with variables that tap resource and cost asymmetries at 36 per cent. By far the best model is one that includes variables associated with resource asymmetries and controls for alternative arguments. This 'full' model accounts for over 52 per cent of the variance in the dominant party's vote margin. I now investigate alternative specifications of this model, using different measures of the key variables.

25 Random effects and population-averaged TSCS OLS regression models produce virtually identical results to those reported below. For a comparison of these models, see Zorn (2001).

26 I use exchangeable country-specific error structures and White's heteroskedastic semi-robust standard errors. A lagged dependent variable could account for temporal autocorrelation but risks arbitrarily suppressing substantively interesting variables (Achen, 2000) and means shelving GEE.

27 This particular data feature makes OLS with panel-corrected standard errors (PCSE), the approach favoured by Beck and Katz (1995), infeasible.

Table 2.1: Comparison of models with and without dominant party advantages

Retrospective voting	Social cleavages	Electoral institutions	Diffusion	Modernisation	Resource and cost asymmetries	Adjusted pseudo-r^2
•						0
	•					.062
		•				.066
			•			.102
				•		.212
•	•	•	•	•		.250
					•	.364
•	•	•	•	•	•	.522

Notes: Goodness-of-fit statistics were calculated using the adjusted r^2 derived from regressing observed values on predicted values for all observations in the data set. The retrospective voting model includes GDP growth and inflation. The social cleavages model includes ethno-linguistic fractionalisation. The electoral institutions model includes logged mean district magnitude and a dummy for presidential elections. The modernisation model includes logged GDP per capita and trade with OECD countries. The diffusion model includes the proportion of democracies in a country's region. This model was estimated with a random effects generalised least squares (GLS) model. The full model contains all of these variables plus a measure of public resources, bureaucratic professionalisation, foreign aid as a percentage of gross national income (GNI), and the costs of supporting the opposition as measured by Freedom House civil liberties scores and a dummy for authoritarian regimes. See text for details.

Source: Compiled by the author

The results of six fully specified models using three alternative measures for resource advantages and two alternative measures for civil service professionalisation appear in Table 2.2. The main finding is that no matter what combination of indicators is employed, the degree of public ownership in interaction with the degree of civil service corruption and the costs of supporting the opposition have large and statistically significant effects on the margin of dominant party victory, even controlling for variables associated with competing arguments.

Regression coefficients from population-averaged panel data models can be interpreted straightforwardly like OLS coefficients. In what follows, I purposefully undervalue my own favoured explanation by generating predictions using the smallest coefficients from among the six models, and overvalue alternative explanations by using the largest coefficients. I first focus on cross-country variation and then turn to within-country variation over time.

Table 2.2: GEE models of dominant party margin of victory

Variable	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3			Model 4			Model 5			Model 6		
	Coeff	SE	Sig	Coeff	SE	Sig	Coeff	SE	Sig	Coeff	SE	Sig	Coeff	SE	Sig	Coeff	SE	Sig
EFW score	−14.63	4.18	***	−10.89	3.67	***												
SOE							2.43	1.37	*	3.95	1.82	**						
Public investment													2.35	1.09	**	1.85	0.77	**
Resources*BurProf	0.19	0.06	***	1.54	0.66	**	−0.02	0.01	*	−0.55	0.28	**	−0.03	0.01	**	−0.27	0.12	**
BurProf1 (Heritage)	−0.43	0.32					0.18	0.19					1.21	0.53	**			
BurProf2 (TI)				−4.89	4.36					6.99	2.94	**				10.80	3.12	***
FH civil liberties	3.53	1.69	**	2.52	2.23		4.92	2.43	*	5.06	2.32	**	2.90	2.18		4.99	1.91	***
Pres election	2.17	4.33		2.32	4.42		−0.04	5.74		4.01	7.34		−0.40	4.14		0.36	4.43	
OECD trade	−0.01	0.02		−0.03	0.03		−0.06	0.03	**	−0.07	0.03	**	−0.02	0.03		−0.02	0.02	
GDP growth	0.50	0.31	*	0.61	0.32	*	0.88	0.37	**	0.81	0.37	**	0.60	0.33	*	0.02	0.34	
Inflation	−0.10	0.07		−0.11	0.08		−0.16	0.10		−0.18	0.12		−0.07	0.08		−0.04	0.07	
Aid as a % of GNI	0.24	0.41		0.16	0.45		0.45	0.28		0.30	0.37		−0.12	0.36		−0.16	0.37	
Log GDP per capita	−8.13	5.26		−8.20	6.12		−1.50	4.73		−5.62	5.06		−9.77	5.32	*	−10.07	5.67	*
Log MDMH	−5.65	2.52	**	−5.60	2.02	***	−6.18	2.41	**	−5.86	2.19	**	−4.98	2.96	*	−5.12	2.18	**
ELF 1961	−39.21	18.52	**	−44.49	17.24	**	−39.05	21.50	**	−33.06	18.76	*	−39.09	19.82	**	−63.19	15.14	***
Authoritarian	21.48	9.15	**	17.84	6.27	***	13.51	5.44	**	11.32	4.69	**	20.89	8.24	**	18.27	5.96	***
Dems in region	−21.70	22.27		−18.13	21.30		−18.90	22.07		−10.89	20.40		−11.20	21.14		−22.95	21.02	
Constant	146.31	44.16	***	151.77	47.20	***	31.37	41.27		36.18	35.62		25.55	48.71		64.25	41.97	

Notes: On the EFW score scale, higher values are associated with a larger public sector. MDMH refers to mean district magnitude for lower house elections. FH refers to Freedom House. ELF refers to ethno-linguistic fractionalisation. Preselection refers to concurrent presidential elections. Resources*BurProf variable refers to EFW score, SOE, or Public investment multiplied by the level of bureaucratic professionalisation, as measured by Heritage Foundation scores or Transparency International scores, as noted. Dems in region refers to the proportion of democracies in each country's region in a given year. Huber-White semi-robust standard errors were used for all models. N = 107 (15 countries with a mean of 7.13 elections each). * p<.1, ** p<.05, *** p<.01

Source: Compiled by the author

The effect of changing the EFW score from the 95th percentile (large state) to the 5th percentile (small state) decreases the dominant party's vote margin over the first loser by a minimum of 18.7 percentage points when all other variables are held at their mean or mode, regardless of regime type. The same procedure using SOEs as a per cent of GDP or public investment as a per cent of GDP generates at least an 18.3 and 15.9 percentage point margin for the dominant party, respectively. At the same time, the nett effect of changing just the degree of bureaucratic professionalisation from the 5th to the 95th percentile is virtually nil across all models. It is only in interaction with resource asymmetries that bureaucratic gatekeepers affect the dominant party's ability to win elections. Thus, using any combination of the relevant measures for key variables, dominant party resource advantages have a large and positive effect on their margin of victory, regardless of the social, institutional, and demand-side variables that we normally associate with an incumbent's staying power.

The costs of supporting the opposition also had the predicted effects. In regimes that raised costs by repressing civil liberties at the 95th percentile, the dominant party won by at least 10 percentage points more than when respect for civil liberties elevated regimes to the 5th percentile. The further independent effect of being in an authoritarian regime raises the dominant party's margin by another 11 percentage points.

The models also found some support for existing explanations, even though that support is mixed. First, economic growth helps dominant parties win whereas slumps present a threat, presumably because voters evaluate the incumbent's performance negatively. Nevertheless, the effect of such evaluations appears muted: a one per cent rise in GDP in the year preceding an election increases the dominant party's vote share by less than one percentage point, *ceteris paribus*. All else being equal, using the largest coefficient from among the six models shows that falling from a growth rate in the 95th to the 5th percentile sets dominant parties back by a maximum of 16 percentage points. These effects are certainly meaningful, but they are surprisingly small, since dominant parties beat out the competition by an average of over 30 percentage points even when we include results from elections in which they lose. In that context the fact that the worst economic performance in times of severe financial crisis, such as Mexico's debt crisis and the Asian financial crisis that affected Taiwan and Malaysia, would cause the best economic performer to lose just half of its winning margin and an average performer to lose just one-quarter of its margin, indicates that economic performance is far from the key determinant of dominant party power. Just as surprising is the finding that inflation in consumer prices had no discernible effect on dominant party power. We might expect pocketbook concerns like inflation to affect an incumbent's vote share even more than changes in sociotropic concerns captured with GDP change. The fact that it does not raises the further question of whether macro-economic performance in these data are related to retrospective voting *per se* or whether they simply capture another aspect of the size of the public budget that the dominant party may use to buy votes and out-spend the opposition in campaigns.

Second, I test the modernisation theory hypothesis that gains in GDP per capita cause democratisation and, by extension, decrease the dominant party's margin over its challengers. Strikingly, modernisation had a statistically significant effect in only two

of the six models and then only at the 0.1 level. In these two models, modernisation gains operated as expected. All else being equal, shifting GDP per capita from the 5th to 95th percentile — an increase of $2 750 — leads to a 34.4 percentage point drop in the dominant party's margin. Despite this effect, it is not entirely clear how modernisation produces dominant party losses at the polls. Modernisation may help the opposition simply because it raises the cost of vote buying and renders patronage less effective. Thus, increases in society-wide wealth may be equivalent to decreases in the dominant party's resource advantages. Yet even when controlling for modernisation indicators, asymmetric resources remain important predictors of the dominant party's vote margin. I argue that it is not just overall societal wealth that helps oust entrenched dominant parties but the balance between public and private ownership. As a result, dominant parties may persist in rich economies when wealth is publicly controlled and can be used illicitly for partisan purposes.

A related explanation associates democratisation with increased trade with the West. I test this argument by using election year trade with OECD countries and find that it has no effect on dominant party power in four of the six model specifications. In the remaining two, the effects were in the expected direction but comparatively small. In election years when trade sat at the 95th percentile, dominant parties were predicted to give up 20 percentage points to their challengers when compared to countries in the 5th percentile, all else being equal. If such a massive explosion in trade were to occur, it would rob dominant parties of about two-thirds of their average advantage over the opposition; however, since such large changes did not occur in countries in the data, the effect is hypothetical. By far the largest real change occurred in Malaysia between 1974 and 1999. Using this shift, UMNO is predicted to have lost 10 percentage points to the opposition. The second largest change occurred in Mexico between 1961 and 1997, leading to a predicted loss for the PRI of a scant 3.4 percentage points. Thus, enhancing trade relations may help level the partisan playing field in dominant party systems, but its effects are uncertain, slow to create, and unlikely to be decisive.

Third, explanations associated with electoral district magnitude and social cleavages operated as expected; however, since social cleavages were constant across countries and district magnitude changed in just Mexico, Taiwan, and The Gambia, these variables do not account for change over time in dominant party power. Nevertheless, they do help account for cross-country differences that made dominant parties more or less vulnerable to opposition challenges.

Increases in district magnitude across countries diminish the dominant party's margin of victory. Since higher district magnitude is associated with more effective parties in the data, this finding indicates that as more opposition parties emerge, they diminish the dominant party's share of the vote. If opposition parties robbed each other of votes, making coordination failure a plausible explanation for dominant party power, then we would probably observe two features, both of which are absent. First, we would see the number of effective parties bumping up against the upper bound set by electoral institutions; however, tests indicate that the number of parties falls well below the upper

bound, on average.[28] Second, if opposition coordination failure were at play, then the second and first losers would be closely matched; however, in all but seven of the 107 elections examined, the ratio between the second and first loser's vote share was under 0.8.[29] Thus, among dominant party systems, more permissive electoral systems allow more parties to enter and diminish the dominant party's margin of victory. As a result, we might expect dominant parties in systems with higher district magnitude — typical of parliamentary systems that are prevalent in dominant party democratic regimes — to be more vulnerable to opposition challenges than their authoritarian counterparts, even when controlling repression. Indeed, dominant parties in countries with single-member district systems are predicted to win 29.5 percentage points more over the opposition than those with the highest district magnitude, and 4.8 percentage points more than those with the mean district magnitude, all else being equal. Yet since district magnitude rarely changes within countries, these predictions tell us only that dominant parties in countries with higher district magnitude are more vulnerable to opposition challenges, conditional on changes in other variables that affect their rule.

Like electoral system effects, higher ELF makes dominant parties more vulnerable to opposition victory. Existing research finds that more social cleavages translate into more competitive parties. While strategic coordination among ethnic groups could theoretically increase the opposition's share of the vote by creating a smaller number of larger parties, the findings here suggest that more ethnically divided societies produce more parties that hive off portions of the dominant party's electorate. The magnitude of these effects is very large, such that the dominant parties in the most ethnically divided societies are predicted to give up as much as 55 percentage points to their challengers, all else being equal. This finding implies that although incumbents may effectively play ethnic groups off against one another as in the Solid South in the United States (Key, 1964), systems with sufficiently permissive institutions generally make dominant parties more vulnerable as the number of ethnic groups increases.

Finally, I examined the possibility that dominant parties in authoritarian and democratic regimes win votes in fundamentally different ways, albeit with the same general tools. I first tested models where all explanatory variables were interacted with regime type. In these models (not shown), the main effects remain statistically significant, in the same direction, and with coefficients that are close to the original models. Furthermore, none of the interacted variables reach statistical significance, suggesting that, insofar as the model can discern, authoritarian and democratic dominant parties win votes in substantially similar ways. Second, I split the sample and tested the models on authoritarian and democratic dominant party systems separately. In these models (not shown), specifications that use EFW scores produce virtually the

28 Whereas there is no statistically significant difference in mean district magnitude between dominant party systems and fully competitive democracies with turnover, the former have an average of one fewer effective parties (significant at the .001 level). I classified fully competitive democracies using Przeworski et al (2000).

29 As expected, the SF ratio rises moderately but by just 0.37 over time, showing a slight rise in intra-opposition competition as dominant party rule persists. See Cox (1997: 85–88) for details.

same results as the pooled models.[30] The only relevant difference between the two split-sample models is that increases in bureaucratic professionalisation hurt authoritarian incumbents more than democratic ones. These results lend credibility to my argument that dominant party systems share important qualities across regime type.

Discussion and country case studies

The mean predicted margin of dominant party victory by country generated with an average of all six models accounts for a striking 82 per cent more of the variance in the dominant party's observed margin of victory than our best guess without the model. The model also accounts well for the dramatic variation in dominant party margin across countries, ranging from the 45 per cent vote gap in Botswana to the just 10 per cent vote gap in Italy, and it misses by a maximum of just 11 percentage points in any country.

In the remainder of this section, I add analytic narratives for three country cases to show how the dynamics uncovered in the cross-national data operate over time within countries. I purposively selected Mexico, Italy and Botswana for three reasons. First, these cases lie at the extremes in the dominant party's mean margin of victory. Second, on a host of variables including culture, region, level of development, and political institutions, they are 'most different' systems. In addition, Italy exhibited single-party dominance in a democratic regime context whereas Mexico under the PRI was authoritarian and, as noted above, scholars have debated the appropriate regime type for Botswana under the BDP. Finally, whereas Mexico's PRI and Italy's DC lost after 67 and 39 years respectively, Botswana's BDP remains in power today. I show that the persistence and decline of these dominant parties was primarily due to their access to politicised public resources.

Mexico: Authoritarian dominance defeated

Mexico's Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) dominated electoral politics from 1929 to 1997 when it lost its majority in the lower house of Congress.[31] In 2000, it lost the presidency to Vicente Fox of the National Action Party (PAN). Under PRI dominance, elections were meaningful and opposition forces were allowed to form parties and compete for elected posts.[32] Despite strong evidence that the PRI engaged in electoral fraud by falsifying ballots and undercounting opposition votes, there is insufficient evidence to conclude that it *overturned* opposition victories that would have ended dominant party rule, even in the contested 1988 presidential election (Castañeda, 2000). The open electoral arena notwithstanding, the PRI's main challengers were unable to turn it out of power for nearly seven decades.

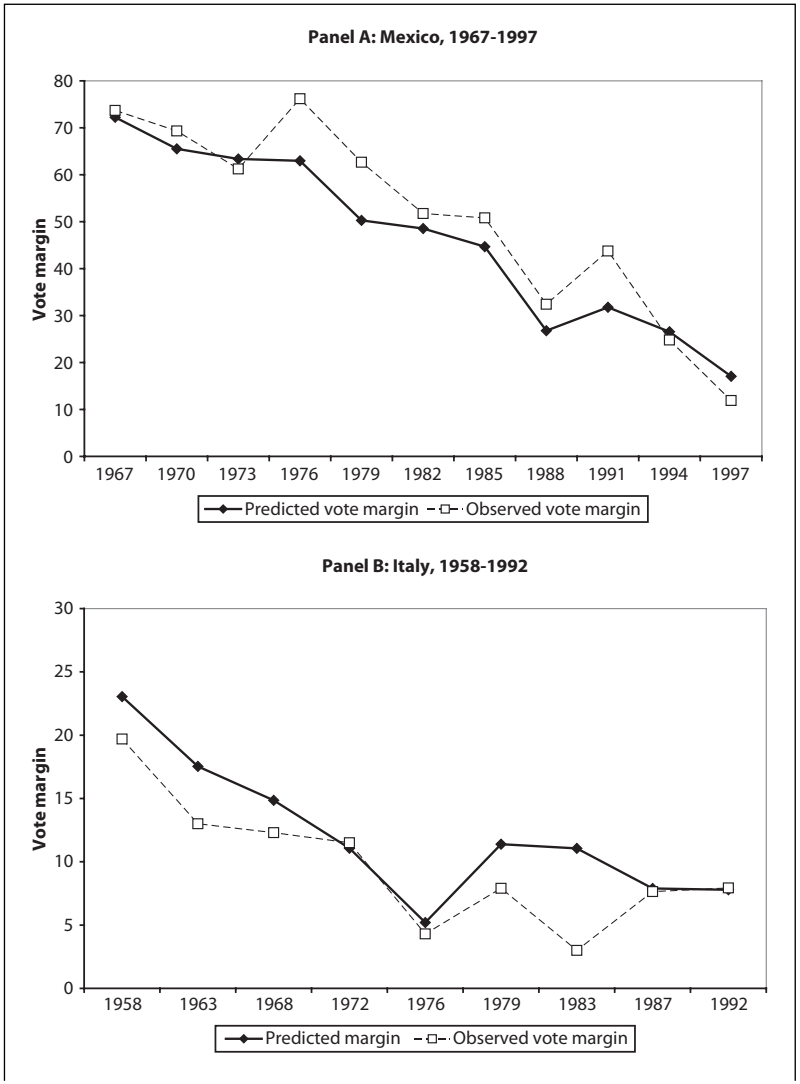
30 I use random effects OLS models for the split-sample tests since, as often occurs with small samples, the GEE models failed to converge (see Zorn, 2001). For democracies alone, models using SOEs or public investment did not replicate the pooled model's findings.

31 To be precise, the party adopted its present name—the PRI—in 1946 even though its predecessors ruled from 1929.

32 The Mexican Communist Party (PCM) did not compete from 1946 to 1979. Evidence shows that it did not meet registration requirements rather than being banned (Schmitt 1970).

As shown in Figure 2.1 (Panel A), the PRI's electoral fortunes declined over time; however, there is a notable inflection around 1982. The incumbent party's margin over the first loser fell by an average of 3.3 percentage points per election before 1982, but accelerated to a loss of 8.5 percentage points per election after 1982.

Before 1982, PRI dominance was underwritten by its virtually unchallenged access to the resources generated by massive public holdings that reached as high as 22.4 per cent of GDP (Aspe, 1993). The PRI routinely appropriated these public funds for partisan campaigning, distributed massive amounts of patronage goods through its allied sectoral organisations (Cornelius & Craig, 1991), forced public servants to contribute to the party's



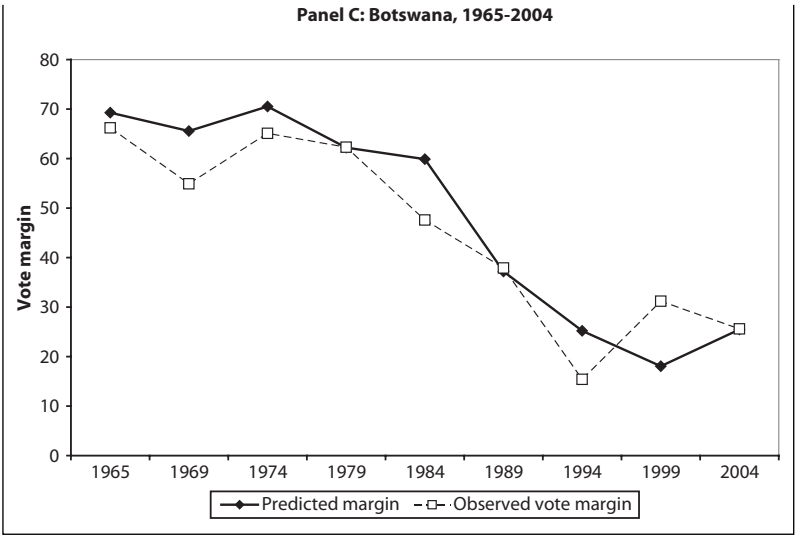


Figure 2.1: Observed vs predicted dominant party vote margin

Source: Compiled by author

coffers, and turned public offices into virtual campaign headquarters during elections. Mexico's state-run oil monopoly, Pemex, was the crown jewel of what Dresser (2002) called 'the party's piggy bank, its own personal checkbook'. The federal public bureaucracy was so tightly controlled that Arrellano and Guerrero (2000) refer to it as a spoils system that discouraged whistleblowers and rewarded obedience to political patrons. Concurrently, opposition parties were so poor that they relied on the underground press to advertise, candidates funded their own campaigns, and they literally had trouble keeping the lights on in cramped party headquarters (see Greene, 2007).

Although the PRI-run government typically preferred to co-opt opponents, it was not beyond deploying the strong arm of the state against dissenters, and did so to repress protesting students in 1968 and 1971 as well as radical opposition groups until the mid-1970s. The combination of broad clientelism and narrowly targeted repression against specific regime outsiders kept the PRI's margins high until the late 1970s, and they conferred such advantages on the incumbent party that challengers failed to nominate presidential candidates in 1976.

After 1982, PRI dominance began to fade more quickly for two reasons. First, the 1977 electoral reform lowered the threshold of representation and encouraged opposition parties to re-enter competition. Nevertheless, this reform cut both in favour of, and against the opposition parties by rewarding seats for fewer votes but simultaneously providing voters fewer incentives to coordinate on the largest challenger.

Second, and more decisively, the PRI's patronage empire began to unravel following the 1982 debt crisis. By 1984, the government had adopted an orthodox reform package

that included dropping tariff barriers and import licenses, and progressively privatising SOEs. By the 1994 presidential election, SOEs had fallen from a high of 22.4 per cent down to 9 per cent of GDP, public investment fell from 44 per cent to 20 per cent of GDP, and the number of federal public employees was reduced by 43 per cent. As a result, the flow of patronage goods fell sharply, and this decrease turned the PRI's once robust sectoral organisations and local party sections into withered and sclerotic shells (Greene, 2007).

As the flow of politicised public funds through party coffers decreased, so did the PRI's vote share. The data in Figure 2.1 predict that the PRI should have won the 1994 presidential election by a 26.5 percentage point margin. This comes remarkably close to the actual margin of 24.8 percentage points. By the 1997 midterm elections, SOEs had dropped even lower and accounted for just 6.6 per cent of GDP, public investment was down to 15.9 per cent of GDP, and the federal public bureaucracy shrunk by another 33 per cent. Along with this decrease, the PRI lost its historic majority in the legislature by winning with just a 12 point margin, some 5 points below model predictions. By the century's end, the PRI's ability to generate resource advantages from the public budget had declined to the point that the market for votes approached fairness and the opposition parties were able to turn the PRI out of power.

Alternative explanations for the PRI's decline do not fit the data as well. Trade increased over time but bounced around in ways that are inconsistent with electoral fortunes; GDP per capita decreased in the 1980s and increased in the 1990s; and pre-election year inflation followed almost the opposite curvilinear pattern.

The most appealing alternative explanation concerns the PRI's economic performance. After all, the PRI-led government presided over one of the country's most devastating economic crises, beginning in 1982. Mexico's debt crisis began when international lending rates spiked to 20 per cent, pushing the country's external debt burden through the roof. But the roots of the crisis lay deeper in the longer term exhaustion of Mexico's import-substitution industrialisation model. Unable to borrow more on the international market, the government decided to seek International Monetary Fund (IMF) help to restructure its debt burden and simultaneously reorganise its development model along free market lines. These factors together conspired to create a 'lost decade' in terms of economic growth, plunging millions of ordinary Mexicans into poverty — especially in rural areas that were particularly unprepared for the transition to a market-based economy — and sparking dissident movements in some urban areas.

Given these conditions, one would expect voters to become what V. O. Key (1964) referred to as retrospective gods of punishment by voting against the incumbent PRI. However, it was not these traditionally studied economic variables that doomed the PRI, but its decreasing access to state spoils, put out of reach by privatisations. Indeed, pre-election year GDP growth increased rather than decreased each year after 1982. Work on the United States suggests that voters typically consider economic performance during only the quarter before an election when forming their retrospective assessments (Bartels & Zaller, 2001). Government officials, keenly aware of the impact of political business cycles, worked hard to create economic upswings before elections (Schlefer, 2008). Voters in Mexico may base their decisions on longer term assessments of the

economy (Magaloni, 2006) and it seems inescapable that poor performance in office will sour voters; however, other evidence shows that most of the voters who did take umbrage with the PRI after 1982 became independents rather than opposition supporters. In other words, economic conditions may have made voters sceptical of the PRI, but they did not actually turn against it, as the data show, until its resource advantages declined sufficiently to empty the piggy bank it used in order to buy votes and consequentially level the playing field between it and the opposition parties.

Italy: Democratic dominance defeated

Italy's Christian Democrats (DC) dominated from 1945 to 1982, but many argue that it lasted until 1992 (Golden, 2004). DC dominance persisted under democratic rules without repression in part because it benefited from a 'massive system of political patronage' that was used for 'enlarging the party's aggregate vote share while protecting the incumbency advantage of individual legislators' (Golden, 2000: 10). Funding for this patronage system came from the politicisation of 1) public works projects such as the *Cassa per il Mezzogiorno* that was 'a gigantic patronage organisation which employs people and awards development contracts strictly on the basis of political considerations' (LaPalombara, 1964: 344); 2) the budgets of the nearly 60 000 SOEs, including the Institute for Industrial Reconstruction (IRI) which was Europe's largest corporation in the mid-1980s; and 3) the massive public bureaucracy that expanded from 7.8 per cent of the total labour force before World War II to 22.3 per cent by 1981 (Pignatelli, 1985:166, 170). Since access to public sector jobs required DC membership, the DC was 'in a very strong position to corrupt the bureaucracy because those bureaucrats who do not cooperate with the party … have little hope in general of making a career' (LaPalombara, 1964:326). The large state and a politically quiescent bureaucracy allowed the DC to divert massive resources from the public budget to its campaign war chest.

Predictions shown in Figure 2.1 (Panel B) track the DC's observed margin of victory over its largest challenger reasonably closely. Since Italy used a proportional representation electoral system with relatively high district magnitude before 1992, the DC's margin was never as high as was the PRI's in Mexico. In addition, the parliamentary format meant that the DC could lose the ability to form a government even when its margin of victory was positive, as it did in 1992. The figure also shows two phases in the DC's decline. Until 1976, the DC's margin slipped considerably. After 1976, it failed to recover its historic margin and it was eventually eclipsed as voters parsed their non-DC vote into parties that could form a government not led by the DC.

The great bulk of privatisations that hit the DC came in the 1980s; however, in the 18 years between 1958 and 1976, SOEs as a per cent of GDP dropped by 10 per cent and public investment fell by 13 percentage points. There is no doubt that a spike in inflation and a large dip in GDP growth contributed to the DC's poor performance in the 1976 elections. Yet before 1976, pre-election year inflation actually declined and trade and socio-economic development did not move in ways that would cause such a decline in DC power.

After 1976, the DC failed to recover its previous winning margins. It continued to use public resources to buy votes, but these resources progressively dried up with market-oriented reforms. Beginning in the late 1970s, increasing international economic integration resulted in downsizing the state, including a more than 80 per cent decrease in investment in the *Cassa per il Mezzogiorno* (Kostoris, 1993: 92), a more than 25 per cent reduction in SOEs as a percent of GDP (World Bank, 1995), the disappearance of 150 000 public sector jobs, and the end of domestic business's 'long-term contract for protection' with the DC (Della Porta & Vannucci, 2000:3).

The DC lost definitively and the post-war political system virtually collapsed in the 1992 elections. The most proximate cause was the 'clean hands' investigations that exposed a web of illicit public funding and criminality involving high-level politicians; however, these investigations were only possible because the DC's vote dipped in relation to its competitors, thus permitting legislation that lifted politicians' immunity (Golden, 2000:25).

Botswana: Persistent single-party dominance

The Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) has won every election in that country since independence in 1966 and it remains in power today. Elections have been much freer than in other African countries and, according to Osei-Hwedie, 'There are no restrictions on the formation, numbers or functioning of opposition parties' (2001:59). Despite open competition, the main opposition parties remain small, niche-oriented parties with regional support (Osei-Hwedie, 2001:64, 71) as against the BDP's catchall pan-ethnic coalition (Holm, 1987:138).

BDP rule has been supported by resource advantages. According to Holm, 'The opposition parties have no patronage to counteract the patronage of the BDP or reward their members because they are resource-poor' (1987:139-40). Osei-Hwedie agrees in arguing that 'material benefits distributed by a party, like the BDP, account for affiliation to a party by voters … This helps to explain why the BDP has been returned to power in all elections while the BNF has failed to win' (2001:65).

The BDP's advantages derive from its control over public resources. Osei-Hwedie argues that 'the BDP has been able to use both its own and state resources for patronage which helps the party to secure wide support and deprive the opposition of support' (2001:61, 67). In addition to parastatal corporations involved in construction, transportation, and services, the government is heavily involved in mining copper, nickel, coal, and most importantly, diamonds. Beginning in 1975, Debswana, its joint venture with De Beers, has yielded a 50 per cent share of diamond profits. Although Debswana's budget is secret, Botswana now accounts for about one-third of all diamonds sold by the De Beers cartel and diamonds account for 40 per cent of Botswana's GDP, implying that government-controlled profits are immense. Diamond revenues are the linchpin of BDP dominance. Taylor writes that 'Cushioned by the huge flow of income from diamonds, the BDP-controlled state enjoys a "comfort zone" which very few other African administrations can claim. This allows the BDP to effectively buy support' (2003:76).

The BDP can politicise these public resources and use them for partisan advantage because it controls the public bureaucracy. Although Botswana's civil service is typically regarded as much less corrupt and more meritocratic than others in Africa, Taylor argues that 'the various parastatals and statutory bodies in Botswana are largely controlled by a small group of politically trusted senior technocrats closely connected to the BDP leadership … [that have] the capacity to influence business opportunities, award contracts and, importantly, operate in a largely non-transparent fashion' (2003:76).

Results from the statistical model shown in Figure 2.1 (Panel C) do a very good job of predicting the BDP's margin of victory over its closest rival from 1965 to 2004. Beginning in 1984, the BDP's mammoth winning margins dropped significantly. The lion's share of this decline is due to a temporary slump in international diamond prices in the early 1980s and subsequent economic reforms that progressively deprived the government of access to politicised public resources. By 2004, SOEs excluding mining activities had fallen to just 6.9 per cent of GDP, and this represented a 15 per cent decline from their height in the 1970s. During that same period, public investment fell by about 10 percentage points. Similarly, the composite EFW score moved 20 per cent closer to a fully privatised economy.

Other hypotheses do not track as cleanly with changes in BDP support. Electoral district magnitude, ethno-linguistic fractionalisation, and trade with OECD countries were virtual constants, and thus cannot account for change. Pre-election year inflation actually decreased as the BDP lost ground in elections after the 1990s and GDP per capita rose until the 1990s as BDP power fell and then decreased by 2004 to its 1984 level. The one competing hypothesis that cannot be discounted on the basis of the Botswana case alone concerns GDP growth. Election year GDP gains averaged a striking 7.4 per cent from 1965 to 2004 and only once fell into negative territory. However, even acknowledging this good performance, resource asymmetries derived from the public budget remain a powerful predictor of the BDP's staying power.

Extrapolations, as inherently uncertain as they may be, beyond the existing data for Botswana suggest that the BDP's dominance may be threatened in the coming years. In 2004, the BDP won 25.6 percentage points more than its closest rival; however, government plans to transfer major public assets to the private sector at a far greater pace than in the past suggests that, unless diamond revenues expand to take up the slack, the BDP could find itself with significantly fewer patronage resources and thus be less able to stave off electoral challenges.

Conclusion

The political economy of single-party dominance consists of a large state and a politically quiescent public bureaucracy. Under these conditions, dominant parties can transform public resources into patronage goods and illicit funds for partisan campaigning that allow them to buy votes, outspend the opposition at every turn, and make otherwise meaningful elections unfair. Uncovering the link between the macro-economic role of the state and the degree of party competition has three main implications.

First, dominant parties cannot long survive without access to a steady stream of resources, and the most reliable stream is derived by transforming the state from a neutral actor into the party's piggy bank. The recent wave of privatisations in much of the developing world suggests that unless remaining dominant parties in Malaysia, Botswana, and Singapore can resist the pressure to privatise or find alternative revenue streams, they will need to compete on a more level playing field. As a result, dominant party systems may soon go the way of the dinosaurs.

Second, given that incumbents will no doubt try to use the state's fiscal power for partisan advantage, domestic and international actors interested in creating fair elections should focus on transparent accounting and third party audits of the public sector, and professionalising public bureaucracies to make them into neutral defenders of the public trough.

Finally, this chapter suggests two avenues for future research. Studying dominant party systems shows the effect of politicised public resources on partisan competition in extreme instances of the incumbency advantage. Thus, one avenue would identify how incumbents use the state's fiscal power in a range of party systems to shed light on aspects of party system competitiveness, including the number of parties and the difficulties for new parties to establish a foothold. In doing so, students of comparative politics would begin to focus not just on what makes elections free, but also on what makes them fair. In a second avenue of research, future work might take a step back and ask why dominant parties would privatise if their future incumbency rests on access to politicised public resources. Do they make strategic errors? Do pressures from international financial institutions and internationalised domestic capital force privatisations when crises hit? Whatever the answer, the consequences are clear — privatisation dooms dominant parties.

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Chapter 3

The dominant party system and democracy: The Congress Party in India

Thiven Reddy

South Africa can be logically compared to the dominant party systems in the southern African region with which it shares important historical and political similarities. In southern Africa dominant party rule takes two forms — the ZANU–PF, MPLA, FRELIMO and SWAPO examples signify a tendency towards undemocratic authoritarianism, and the other is the benign authoritarianism of Botswana. By comparison, for the moment at least, South Africa as the youngest of the new democracies in the region can be considered the slightly odd case in this group. It is still too early to arrive at any definite conclusions about an inevitable path towards party dominance in its benign or state violence forms; inconclusive signs can be brought to bear on both sides of this coin. As yet, however, a democracy with a thriving civic and deliberative tradition has not been achieved in any southern African polity.

South Africa can also usefully be compared with the older democracies of Latin America and the democratic polities of Asia — regions with different histories, regional cultures, and political systems. This chapter identifies the Indian case, and in particular the period of dominant party rule between 1952 and 1967, as the key focus of comparison. It seeks to examine the emergence, features, and decline of Congress Party dominance as a crucial case to compare with South Africa, in order to examine whether there are tendencies suggesting that South Africa will follow the Indian case. In India, recent developments in its democracy take the form of a diverse, fragmented party system where two coalitions based largely on state-level coalitions of parties compete for central power at the national level. State-level parties represent local-level social cleavages and historically marginalised groups. What can we learn from the Indian case, where democracy unfolds amidst a large population with massive inequality, caste, religious and urban-rural divisions, and an elite easily cut off from large sections of ordinary people — all important indicators in the South African case, but expressed to a lesser degree?

This chapter proposes that the restricted nature of South African social cleavages, grounded primarily in 'race identity' and its prominence in political discourse, makes it unlikely that South Africa will follow outcomes witnessed in India. In the Indian case, in what Yadav describes as the third electoral system period, increasing participation of

culturally diverse subaltern masses in electoral politics has brought changes in elite politics, expressed through political parties. This bottom-up driven politics has produced a fragmented party system, with two large parties competing to form governments of coalition — the Congress with its United Progressive Alliance (UPA) and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), with its National Democratic Alliance (NDA). The period of Indian National Congress (INC) dominance was characterised by low levels of subaltern participation and party competition, thus Congress elites dominated politics (Yadav, 1999:2394). In South Africa the two main competing parties, the ANC and the Democratic Alliance (DA), both strive to remain 'catch-all' parties, each attracting multiple groups and interests within South Africa's historical 'racial divide', and for historical and political reasons, national (for the moment at least) holds sway over regional politics.

The chapter discusses three phases of party politics in India: the stability of dominant party rule in the first few decades of independence, the crisis of governability from 1967 into the 1980s, and the most recent period of coalition stability — BJP- or INC-led coalitions — in the context of the importance of regional politics. The first part of the chapter presents a broad background of India's political system. The second part focuses on the dominant party system offering explanations for the stability and successes of the INC. The third part discusses the rise and decline of the dominant party system in India and the present 'coalition politics' that has replaced it. In the concluding section we compare the specificities of the Indian case with prominent tendencies internal to the ANC and the broader South African polity. These differences indicate why, in the short term, the competing coalition scenario is less likely in South Africa, and perhaps closer to the fragile, plural majority governments of the 1970s and 1980s in India.

India's political background and differences from southern Africa

For scholars interested in dominant party systems in South and southern Africa, a brief historical background of the emergence and key features of the political system of India makes sense. It would help to appreciate the major differences from the southern African regional context, despite similar political systems influenced by colonial Westminster traditions. Two important differences stand out: the first is the particularities of a settler form of colonialism and the specificity of its grounding in violence, in contrast to the 'overseas colony' type of India. The second difference relates to the type of colonialism indicated in the previous point. It refers to the nature of the transition (the role of armed struggle in southern Africa) and the nationalist elite's favourable approach to the legacies of the colonial order in the Indian case. These differences together with the complex degree of diversity at local level make the Indian case in comparison to southern Africa somewhat unique.

Like many other countries that experienced a substantial colonial period, the impact of colonial rule cannot be underestimated. Osterhammel (1997) classifies different types of colonial expansion. For our purposes, the small-scale migration of mainly administrators to control a large indigenous population, the 'overseas colony' type, can be contrasted

with large settlements of people who migrate to make the new habitat their home, the 'settler colony' type. India is a case of the former, whereas most of southern Africa, and in particular South Africa, are examples of the latter. The numbers do make a difference in the discourses dealing with the interaction between the dominant and the oppressed. Osterhammel recognises that racism is often present in all types of colonialism. The distinction of modern forms of colonialism is that the colonial rulers not only despised the culture of the indigenous and were unwilling to make 'cultural concessions', but the colonial order made it its very project to 'civilise' the dominated population; a phenomenon more evident in Africa than in Asia. These ideas were certainly present in both regions, but the differences in numbers and the close contact of the dominant and the dominated, as well as their interdependence on an everyday level where the former was dependent on the labour of the latter, produces different discourses relating to intercultural relations and identity.

Another important, and possibly direct consequence of the above difference is the role of violence in the process of regime transition. In India, even though there was some violence, in comparison to 'armed struggle' in southern Africa, the transition was relatively peaceful and gradual. The departing colonial power thus asserted a significant influence on the post-independence regime. Moreover, unlike the southern African cases, the new political elite were not unwilling to appreciate nuances in the dominant discourse of the old order and avoided a blanket derogatory ideology, a complete counter-discourse. The reaction to the colonial period may be bitter in the Indian case, as in most post-colonial societies, but the continuities with British rule through the transition is overwhelmingly acknowledged. Saberwal (1997:135) identifies the following important legacies left by British rule: a state bureaucracy, the establishment of courts to adjudicate conflict and entrench codified law, new ways of looking at Indian heritage produced by the British search for legal codes in Indian literature, the use of the English language, and the creation of the civil service where language was an important criterion of admission. Besides, the influence of Western education, models of civil society (for example the public meeting, petitions, press campaigns), and the constitutional framework for the new society, had a lasting impact on India's politics.

Brass (1990) interprets it differently. In despair, he points to the differences between India's British originated institutions and actual political practices. While the institutions are there, the practices are different to those intended because the norms and values required to make them work properly are not available in Indian history and culture; there is hardly any tradition of impersonal rules or public accountability. For Brass, four key historical legacies have important consequences for post-independence Indian politics. These are the political system influenced by British colonialism, the nationalist struggle and movement, the social order and social structure and lastly, the traditions and culture of the people (Brass, 1990). Nevertheless, the British initiated reforms mark a key moment in Indian history, increasing the participation of Indians in the political system and preparing the ground for transition and independence. These included the Indian Councils Act of 1861, the Morley-Minto Reforms of 1909, the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms of 1919 and the Government of India Act of 1935.

The Indian Constitution is one of the longest in the world, containing 395 articles by 1998; it has been amended 80 times. The designers preserved the basic elements contained in the British designed Government of India Act of 1935, adopting 250 articles from this document (Hardgrave & Kochanek, 1999). The Constitution adopted a Westminster form of parliamentary government. The Constituent Assembly met between 1947 and 1950, a period when the new state faced a series of crises: violence leading to partition, Gandhi's assassination, integrating the princely states, and a likely war with Pakistan. The political elite committed themselves to a democratic political system, parliamentary democracy, state centralisation and federalism. They concluded a strong centre was necessary, recognising also that federal features best met the requirements of a diverse polity. Besides, the provincial politicians had already tasted power, and they wanted to secure their regional interests, promoting federal provisions. The federal system embraced a notion of 'concurrent powers' with powers to be exercised exclusively by the Union, the states, and provinces. A strong central government assumed the ultimate power of control. It could take over the 'direct administration of states under certain conditions', similar to the constitutional provisions allowed for in the South African Constitution. The dominance of the Congress Party enhanced these centralist tendencies. Once the party began to lose voter support from the 1970s onwards, the centralist tendencies waned in favour of the states.

The rights and directives of the Constitution specify those services the state will provide to effect citizens' rights, and are disputed continuously between the executive/Parliament and the judiciary. The Fundamental Rights, intended to address the social development issues facing the new nation, guarantee citizens seven categories of rights against the state. It includes rights of equality; freedom against exploitation; freedom of religion; culture and education; property; and constitutional remedies (Hardgrave & Kochanek, 1999:64–65). The Directive Principles of State Policy also identify obligations of the state towards citizens, but these principles are not justiciable, meaning that citizens cannot take the State to court over them. It can better be viewed as a 'platform' of the Congress Party at the time, and a guide to Parliament in its policy formulation. It is noteworthy that from the start, private property was protected constitutionally, while at the same time there was also a good dosage of state ownership, in order to benefit the more vulnerable. The former was defined as a fundamental right, the latter a 'directive'. The poor, and especially marginalised castes, were guaranteed affirmative action policies aimed to enhance their representivity in the political system. Austin doubts 'if in any other constitution the expression of positive and negative rights has provided so much impetus towards changing and re-building society for the common good' (in Hardgrave & Kochanek, 1999:65).

A crucial continuity at independence was the civil service. Considered an elite group under British colonialism (with only a change of name from British India Civil Service to Indian Administrative Service), civil service employees enjoyed much prestige. Following the British Westminster tradition the executive is comprised of the 'ceremonial' president and parliamentary Cabinet. While formal power lies with the president, real power resides with the office of the prime minister. However, a significant feature of the 1990s, according to Rudolph and Rudolph (2002), has been the increasing role of the presidency in a context in which the government relies on 'fragile coalitions'. The president serves a

five-year term and can be re-elected. An Electoral College combining all the assemblies of the states and Parliament elects the president. It is a complex procedure: 'Each elected member of a state assembly is given as many votes as there are multiples of one thousand in the quotient obtained by dividing the population of the state by the total number of elected members of the assembly' (Hardgrave & Kochanek, 1999:50). If any candidate does not receive an absolute majority, the second preference (voters make two choices) of the candidate with the lowest vote is distributed to the remaining candidates and this is repeated until an absolute majority is obtained (Hardgrave & Kochanek, 1999:86).

An issue is whether the president's role is purely ceremonial, a notion prominent when Congress was the dominant party. Rajendra Prasad, Congress leader and president, believed that the Constitution did not bind the president to simply follow the advice of the Cabinet, although the office could not act entirely independently from Cabinet. A 1976 amendment bound the president to act in terms of the advice of the Cabinet. In situations of governing instability as witnessed in the 1980s and after, and where the president may need to call for parliamentary elections, the president has significant influential scope. He or she can call on opposition parties to form a government, or call for new elections, or delay this call. In 1997, K. R. Narayanan became the first untouchable to be elected president. He was also considered the most activist president India has ever seen: for example, he sent back a recommendation from Cabinet and criticised the judiciary for not appointing enough judges belonging to scheduled castes.

The personality of the prime minister may influence the form of rule, with Nehru or Indira Gandhi, for example, preferring centralisation while Shastri (1964–1966) sought consensus. The style of the prime minister determines the degree of influence distributed to the cabinet ministers, the bureaucracy, and the inner secretariat. Rajiv Gandhi's prime ministership (1984–1989) provides an example of the personalisation of power and the eroding of institutional power. During his tenure Cabinet positions were changed every seven weeks. His idea to replace old bureaucrats with young, managerial talent began a process that undermined institutions (Hardgrave & Kochanek, 1999:87). The role of prime minister has undergone changes with the ending of Congress Party dominance and the advent of coalition governments, making consensus the more strategic operative mode. In addition, since the existence of government depends on regional state leaders, the prime minister's office is further weakened. The central government as the main regulator of relations between the state and polity has not changed. However, the 'regulatory institutions such as the Supreme Court, the presidency, and the Electoral Commission' have become more prominent while the prime minister's office, Cabinet and Parliament have had to cede significant influence (Rudolph & Rudolph, 2002).

The senior members of the party controlling the majority of parliamentary seats make up Cabinet. India has a bicameral parliament divided into the lower and upper houses. The Lok Sabha, or House of the People, has 545 members, 543 directly elected by adult voters and 2 nominated by the President to represent the Anglo-Indian community. Of the 543, 530 come from the 25 states and 17 from the seven Union Territories (Hardgrave & Kochanek, 1999:78). The seats are allocated to states on the basis of population, and divided into equal constituencies. For a party to be considered 'official,'

it must have at least 50 members. In the first few years after independence there was no party that could be considered the official opposition. This changed following the Congress Party split in 1969, and Congress Organisation (Congress O)[1] became the official opposition party having sufficient seats.

The government introduces Bills to the Lok Sabha, although there is an allowance for private members' Bills. During the Nehru years Parliament rarely opposed his government's positions even though the opposition was widely respected by the dominant party. During the emergency of 1975–1977, Parliament was a mere rubber stamp for executive proposals. The Indira Gandhi years, characterised by increased disrespect of Parliament and executive dominance, contributed to the erosion of parliamentary influence (Hardgrave & Kochanek, 1999:83). In recent years, the role of Parliament in the legislative process has become reduced to 'exposing administrative lapses, prodding the Executive and shaping public opinion' (Hardgrave & Kochanek, 1999:84). The Rajya Sabha (upper house), or Council of States, has a maximum of 250 members. The President nominates 12 members 'for their special knowledge or practical experience' (Hardgrave & Kochanek, 1999:57). The remaining seats are allocated according to the distribution of the population of the states. The members are elected for six-year terms with the terms staggered, as in the US Senate; one-third stands for election every two years. Although it plays a role in influencing legislation, the lower house, or Lok Sabha, is where power lies.

The composition of the Lok Sabha members over the decades is indicative, and perhaps instructive, of the constitution of the political class. Most members in the legislatures of the 1950s and 1960s had played a role in the anti-colonial struggle. In later decades few members had any legislative experience; even in the 1952 Lok Sabha only half had such experience. Surprisingly, the number of women participating has shown little change. In the first Lok Sabha, 22 women members constituted 4.4 per cent of the total. From 1950 to 1996, the average number of women has been around 30 members or 6 per cent of the total. In the 1990s the average number of women increased from 27 in 1989 to 39 in 1991 and 1996, and to 43 in 1998. The present Lok Sabha has 59 women, or less than 10 per cent, although a Bill has been moved to reserve a third of all seats in legislatures for women (Burke, 2010). The average education of members increased from 58 per cent with college degrees in 1952, to 75 per cent in the 1990s. However, the proportion of urban professionals (lawyers, teachers and so on) declined; 35.6 per cent were lawyers in the first Lok Sabha, in the 11th Lok Sabha, only 12.9 per cent were lawyers. The general trend is towards representatives from the rural areas, with a 22.5 per cent representation in 1952 almost doubling to 40.4 per cent in 1989 (Hardgrave & Kochanek, 1999:85).

The end of dominant party rule and the advent of coalition politics strengthened the role of the Electoral Commission. The Electoral Commission was established in 1950 to regulate elections. In total it has run almost 300 elections with 15 national elections. Until 1989 it

1 Congress (O) started off as the main section (Indira Gandhi split with a section), representing the original party. However, the Congress (O) later joined other opposition parties, and the section led by Indira Gandhi remained as holding the Congress banner and retains the name to this day.

was composed of just one commissioner appointed by the President, and since 1991, a new law has provided for two commissioners. The new institutional dynamic and the reconfiguration of institutions at the centre, in a context of party fragmentation and coalition governments, is illustrated by an example concerning the Electoral Commission (and the judiciary) in attempting electoral reforms. The reforms aimed to prevent candidates with criminal records from electoral participation and to prevent political parties from abusing money. The Supreme Court ruled that the Electoral Commission apply the new rules to candidates standing for elections. This required that candidates provide an affidavit indicating whether they had been convicted, discharged or acquitted of any serious criminal acts in the six months running up to the election; specify all assets including those of their spouse and dependents, and verify educational qualifications. The Supreme Court justified the ruling as allowing the citizens more information concerning candidates. When the Electoral Commission applied the new ruling, the political parties complained, insisting that only Parliament had jurisdiction over legislation. Parliament eventually passed a watered down version of the original ruling, increasing the profile of the judiciary and undermining that of Parliament and political parties in the eyes of the citizenry (Kumar, 2002).

The state, the INC and politics: India's bumbling democracy

India faced many formidable challenges at independence. It was the INC — its dominance of the political system — that contributed towards overcoming the more severe obstacles to political stability and establishing democratic system features. This section will present an overview of politics under the dominance of the INC and its role in keeping the polity from disintegrating, and consolidating state control.

In the immediate post-independence period, typical of most post-colonial societies, the party system in India was dominated by the party of the nationalist struggle. Two parties on the Left included the Communist Party (Marxist) and the Communist Party (I) of India. Support for the Left came mainly from West Bengal and Kerela; explained by Congress weakness in those areas during the nationalist struggle (Brass, 1990:75). The split among communist forces occurred in 1964. They fought over the relationship that the Communist Party ought to have with the Congress Party. It also related to ideological divisions of communist parties at the international level, between affiliations to Russia or China. In the formative years after independence three key formations on the Right of Congress competed with it. The ideologies prevail today though these parties themselves have undergone various name changes over the years: the Swatantra representing the established land-owning classes; the Lok Dal which came mainly from the Utta Pradesh region; and the Bharatiya Jan Sangh, the prime Hindu chauvinist party, which received support mainly from the north; it developed close ties with the activist Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and his following, a key constituency, and later grew into the BJP.

India was described as having a 'one party dominant system' because of the centrality of Congress and the divided and weak opposition when the Congress dominated elections

between 1950 and 1967. Between 1947 and 1967 the Congress Party comfortably won the first four elections and controlled the national and most state governments. It received between 40 and 50 per cent of the national vote. The Congress failed to win a majority of votes (this occurred at the national level in 1984 following the assassination of Indira Gandhi). In this period the opposition parties were many, weak, and disunited, although the 1969 Congress split activated new strategies among opposition parties. The table below indicates the percentage vote of national elections, indicating Congress vote decline.

Table 3.1: Election results showing Congress dominance and decline (%)

Date	Outcome	Congress	Opposition
1952	Congress wins in national and state elections	45.0	Jan Sangh / BJP 3.1
1957	Congress wins in national and state elections	47.8	5.9
1962	Congress wins in national and state elections	44.7	6.4
1967	Congress loses state election in 8 of 16 bigger states. It forms central government with support from Communist Party and independents.	40.8	9.4
1971	Congress wins in national election	43.7	7.4
1972	Congress wins in separate national and state elections		
1977	Congress loses in national election	34.5	Janata 43.1
1980	Congress wins in national election	42.7	Janata 18.9
1984	Congress wins largest majority in national election	49.1	7.7
1989	Janata Dal-led coalition wins national election	39.5	BJP 11.5
Beginning of Coalition Government			
1991	Congress largest party in national election. Forms government with Communist Party support.	36.6	BJP 20.0
1996	Janata Dal coalition forms national government	28.8	BJP 20.3
1998	BJP-led NDA coalition forms national government	25.9	BJP 25.5
1999	BJP-led NDA coalition forms national government	28.3	BJP 23.8
2004	Congress-led UPA coalition forms national government	26.5	BJP 22.2
2009	Congress-led UPA coalition forms national government	37.2	BJP 24.6

Source: Compiled by the author, derived from Rudolph & Rudolph(2005); Kondo(2007); and Yadav(1999)

When the Congress was dominant it was accorded much praise for bringing about a successful transition in India and for maintaining the democratic rules of the game. Joshi and Hebsur (1987:1) summarise the elements contributing towards Congress effectiveness as both nationalist movement and political party:

> Almost since its establishment, it began to dominate the Indian political scene. Dramatic and far-reaching changes in leadership, ideology, character of the support base, and techniques of mass mobilisation have been the hallmarks of the Congress Party both before independence and after … in fact the Congress Party has been one of the most successful of the nationalist movements in the Third World.

It was viewed as a rare example of a nationalist movement able to effectively transform itself into a political party, run effective governments, and win elections regularly in a competitive environment. To quote Weiner (1967:2), 'Its success in recruiting political workers, in resolving internal conflict, and above all, in winning four successive national elections has made it possible for India to sustain stable and relatively effective government at the local, state and national levels since independence …'. Kochanek (1968:xix) refers to it as the 'most successful of the nationalist movements of Asia and Africa … it is clear, however, that the stable, effective, and democratic government which India has enjoyed during the past two decades can to a very large extent be traced to the success of the Congress in adapting itself to the task of governing'.

Kothari (1964) and Morris-Jones (1966) offer a conceptual model to understand the dominant party system. They argue that Congress dominance did not undermine democracy, but really enhanced it. Only a superficial analysis will rely narrowly on the Westminster two-party model of regular alternation to explain India's party system; this model cannot describe the empirical features of the Indian system and is an unconvincing normative move. The Indian party system was not a competitive multi-party system where ruling party alternation was conceivable. The Indian political party system displayed the 'monopolistic dominance of one party' (Joshi & Hebsur, 1987: 59) and at the same time retained the value of party competition characteristic of multi-party systems. According to Morris-Jones (1966:453) 'a dominant party was not at all necessarily a majority party, though it would be larger than any other; it was a party whose influence dominated the political atmosphere'. The key features were the existence of one dominant party, the presence of party competition, and the absence of 'alternation', or the likelihood that the opposition would control government. By competition, was meant 'indicating a measure of the presence in a political system of opportunities for open effective dissent' (Morris-Jones, 1966:454).

Kothari analytically divides the Indian dominant party system into two parts: a dominant party called the 'party of consensus', and sites of opposition external to the dominant party, which he refers to as the 'parties of pressure'. The latter represents the diverse interests of opposition parties, associations, and charismatic political actors. The party's dominant electoral position is explained by its structure, composition and the role of the parties of pressure. He describes the dominant party as composed of various factions; themselves composed of diversely organised interests. The faction shares a unifying identity. Although often this identity overlaps with different class, religion and caste identities, factional identities are relational to other factions. Faction

membership is fluid. The number of factions increased as the Congress absorbed groups it could not defeat in elections, demanding that in exchange for membership the rival organisation disbands (Brass, 1990:9). The Congress tolerated factions but prohibited independent organisations within its fold. Factionalism contributed to its electoral dominance. It enhanced the party's capacity to recruit new leadership, and it opened the party to internal diversity (Joshi & Hebsur, 1987). A tight, centrally organised structure failed to take shape, a condition that would have encouraged intolerance towards opposition parties.

This relatively open internal structure with competing factions did not necessarily mean that the Congress took internal vigilance and discipline lightly. Morris-Jones recognises this tension. The Congress is controlled by 'party stalwarts' who may be

> … less aware of other parties than was Nehru, but they are not the stuff of which totalitarians are made. They are bargainers and trimmers, but since they are also men of the organization they are prepared to be ruthless on its behalf; they will be willing to discipline some people out of the party if that leaves the party stronger … but they cannot make the party narrow or monolithic (Morris-Jones, 1966:466).

In Kothari's model, the party of consensus and parties of pressure assume similar functions to those found in typical multi-party systems: to rule and to oppose respectively, although the roles are performed differently (Kothari, 1964:1162). The relationship is not openly adversarial but more collaborationist. The dominant party is the arena that really counts; all the policy action takes place within it. Because the opposition parties do not constitute realistic alternatives to the dominant party, they apply pressure on and within the dominant party. This is accomplished by effectively aligning themselves to one or more of the factions within the dominant party. The parties of pressure influence debates and/or the agenda of the dominant party. They are also always waiting in the wings. They can, by forming a coalition of interests, threaten to take over when the dominant party fails to rule effectively and/or loses electoral support. Kothari calls this the 'latency factor'. Despite the electoral weakness of the parties of pressure, the Congress remains '… sensitive enough to public pressures and demands' which serves to further constrain the abuse of power by the dominant party (1964:1162).

The opposition parties for their part avoid addressing themselves directly to the electorate. They discover that it is more effective to influence like-minded politicians within the ruling party. The opposition parties find that the distance between themselves is greater than the distance between themselves and sections within the ruling party. The tendency for the ruling party to assume 'the centre' of the ideological and policy spectrum, despite containing diverse viewpoints (by adopting opposition agendas and previous absorption), has the negative effect of pushing opposition parties to the margins. According to Kaviraj (1997)'[t]he one-party dominant system had, from the start, made ideological opposition unnecessary to some extent, as interests of both leftist and rightist politics could be articulated through groups inside the Congress itself'. Pushed to the margins they tend to become more ideological, increasingly advocate rigidly tightly knit organisation and discipline. The consequence is further marginalisation making cooperation of opposition parties on

either side of the party spectrum highly unlikely. The scope of opposition politics is undoubtedly narrowed and limited to relating to the dominant party.

The Congress system has long ended. This was partly due to poor internal party management and changes in the broader polity. Mrs Gandhi's authoritarian practices of centralising power around a few core insiders, the widespread de-institutionalisation of the party by the mid-1980s, high levels of corruption, and factional disputes, made the party organisationally weak, a shadow of its former self (Manor, 1988). India never had a 'national party system', according to Brass. Even under Congress's national dominance, it had to strike differing relationships with the opposition and with social forces in each state (Brass, 1990:69). Each state has its own party system with its own characteristics, a point more pertinent to the 1990s. This accurately describes the party politics in the current period, what Yadav (1999) labels India's third electoral system. Now coalitional politics dominate. India has witnessed this in the last three Lok Sabhas — in the elections of 1999 with a coalition formed with the BJP as the largest party (the NDA), and again in 2004, this time with a Congress-led coalition, the United Progressive Alliance (UPA), and repeated in the Congress victory of 2009.

The rise and decline of the dominant party in India

Three interrelated elements — the legitimacy that comes from an anti-colonial struggle, the adaptive capacities of Congress in the face of a changing political terrain, and the ability to keep the organisation internally coherent by effectively managing internal party conflict — help us grasp how and why Congress became the central expression of post-colonial social transformation.

The key ingredient in Congress's assuming centre stage, in having appeal and widespread credibility, is its role in resisting colonialism and doing so through effective popular mobilisation (Low, 1989). Gandhi contributed significantly to transforming Congress into a mass organisation. He moulded a complex of ideas, practices and symbols into a mobilising force. The Congress was re-organised on linguistic provincial lines, attracting the support of the rural masses, untouchables, lower castes and women into the struggle, without losing its traditional support. Gandhi's politics underplayed the class contradictions within Congress. This cultivated a diverse support base under the Congress umbrella, something that eventually developed into a Congress tradition. This historical role cannot be undervalued, even though this history is intensely contested and ambiguous. For example, the Subaltern Studies Collective critiques, devastatingly, the elite bias of nationalist historiography. This, however, does not detract from the party simply being present for a long time as a part of the political space constituting Indian politics. Morris-Jones (1966) reminds us that the fact that this organisation had been in existence for 62 years at the time of independence is significant. The ANC functioned as an opposition party for 82 years. Time provides skills in how to survive and adapt to changing contexts. It provides a strong enough institutional base to constitute the identity of its members.

The struggle waged against colonialism, significantly, left the Congress as a strong organisation with well-established practices of party management. As an organisation it had to become more formidable than the structures of the colonial state; it mirrored the state and established branches throughout the polity, aiming to mobilise supporters from the village level upwards. If the Congress had been organisationally weak, unable to manage the inevitable internal conflict, it would not have qualified as a viable expression to bring about societal change. It had to develop the capacity to mobilise large numbers of supporters and organise them in protest action. This required a broad and pragmatic party ideology to unify a diverse population against colonialism. As an instrument of popular mobilisation of protest, it created grassroots structures, developed sophisticated techniques of mobilisation, and became part of the everyday culture of resistance. It had to manage a vast network of structures during this struggle; recruit and prepare leadership, and manage internal conflict. In the post-independence period these structures of popular mobilisation for protest transformed themselves into structures of popular mobilisation for votes.

The success of the Congress in transforming itself from a nationalist resistance movement into the governing political party indicates its degree of institutionalisation (developed during the struggle period) and consequently, its capacity to adapt to a changing political environment. Kothari interprets its participation in colonial structures as an important learning experience in governance; something the organisation would have lacked had it chosen to boycott these structures (Kothari, 1964). As a nationalist movement it was organised for mass mobilisation and protest. Once in power it had to adapt to the different political terrain of a liberal democracy. The party underwent significant change. It readily accepted the electoral system and prepared for regular elections, gradually transforming its party structures into powerful electoral campaign tools. Ideologically, the party upheld its belief in democratic norms and respect for the rule of law, and made every effort to promote itself as a torchbearer of the new nation and political system. The sensitivity of partition made it acutely aware of civil strife and it often responded with repression to put down communal conflict. Lastly, its factional composition prompted it to develop internal structures, such as the National Working Committee, to hold the various elements together in a carefully worked out balance, thus perpetuating its organisational coherence.

The Congress elites are given credit for developing strong organisation, managing the relationship between the political party and its environment, and the party and the state. Even though the Congress tolerated different factions within it, it did not allow new emerging organisations to take form; a 'high command' comprised of the top leaders would take a final decision on any matter that might prove to be divisive. Kothari emphasises the role of Nehru. Nehru traced a nuanced path amidst all the sides pulling in different directions that would otherwise have torn the country apart. He developed effective and balanced relations between the party and government, made the transition from nationalist movement to ruling party easier, and in the end left the Congress all the stronger. What was crucial was the ability and desire of Congress leaders to do 'whatever is necessary to adapt the party to its environment' (Weiner, 1967:14). Others, such as

Brass (1990), shift the focus away from Congress to emphasise the weak opposition and the first-past-the-post electoral system. According to Brass, even though India has followed the single voter constituency and plurality majority system of the British, elections express themselves differently. The voting displays some common patterns such as caste voting or a phenomenon of waves, where a single issue dominates the elections as in 1971 and 1977, or regional and historical affiliations. What is unique about India is the role of factions and middlemen, those who participate between citizens and the political system (Brass calls them 'brokers').

The party's decline can be attributed to factors internal to the organisation, as well as to changes in the broader polity, particularly the politicisation of previously marginalised groups, through caste organisations, at the state level. This had the effect of making the party system more participatory and more competitive. The death of Nehru helped this change along. In the 1967 elections, the Congress lost eight of 16 large states and only managed with smaller party support to cobble together a national government. The old guard of the nationalist struggle died and groupings reflective of different ideologies on both sides of the political spectrum led to a new type of politics — a split in the Communist Party reduced its effectiveness and it appealed to moderate voters; right wing politics as in the Swatantra Party declined and neither the Right nor the Left could claim expression within the Congress Party. 'The one-party-dominant system had, from the start, made ideological opposition unnecessary to some extent, as interests of both leftist and rightist politics could be articulated through groups inside the Congress itself' (Kaviraj, 1997:15). Finally, the advent of authoritarianism with Indira Gandhi around 1974 raised two questions. The first is related to the 'civic culture' proposal that once people have participated in democratic institutions, authoritarianism becomes less feasible as people are trained in democratic behaviour. The second relates to the claim that democracy is usually threatened by the uneducated masses, and not by the 'ambition and lust for power of the political elites' (Kaviraj, 1997:16).

The 1970s was a period of internal fragmentation and growing crisis between state and society. Brass observes with cynicism 'how a great national movement became converted into a Nehru family patrimony' (Brass, 1990:68). The Congress Party might seem to be a mass party formally, but in reality, during the formative years of independence it was a cadre party, with a prominent popular leader. The inability of the Congress Party to hold its dominance electorally in the 1960s indicated, according to Kaviraj, that the post-independence political system was entering into some kind of 'unexpected and unprecedented change'. Some refer to this phase as a 'structural crisis ... One major feature of this crisis was the increasing strain on the secular form of the state and its formal constitution' (Kaviraj, 1997:21). The discrimination against minorities was the crucial issue that put pressure on the Congress majority and that eventually produced strong state parties with significant bargaining power at the national and state levels. In the formal Constitution, minorities had certain rights, but in practice they were discriminated against. Hindus, in turn, claimed that minorities were advantaged and that they suffered disadvantage. All of this led to an important and divisive debate about the merits of secularism and democracy.

The third electoral period: Coalition politics and the South African dominant party system

It is necessary to contrast the features of the dominant party system with the characteristics of the political system that have emerged as a consequence of the diverse and unpredictable electoral outcomes since the 1990s. Under Congress dominance, Yadav (1999) concludes there was no serious party competition to Congress and electoral participation was low. The choice facing voters was to vote either for Congress or a regional party. In the first few decades, post-independence politics was oriented towards the Centre. Normally, opposition came from within the Congress. The Congress was dominated and supported by those caste groups associated with the nationalist struggle and those who had received a modern education. From the 1970s onwards this pattern changed. In the late 1960s there was a 'democratic surge' from the middle castes and the Other Backward Castes (OBCs). They demanded greater recognition and state affirmative action benefits, as pronounced in the Constitution. To illustrate, in the 1952 elections the turnout was just 45.7 per cent, and in the 1998 elections the turnout grew to 62.1 per cent; it has remained above 60 per cent ever since. Even though the dominance ended when Congress registered significant losses in the 1967 election, its muted victories in the 1970s (it lost to an opposition coalition in 1977) and the 1980s suggested that the old politics and the old mobilised groups had to give in to new groups demanding recognition (Yadav, 1999).

In the 1970s and 1980s the competition facing the Congress increased. The difference in electoral outcomes was largely determined by whether the opposition could put together an effective united front. The formation, role and influence of regional political parties made it impossible to win a state without national parties cooperating with regional parties. Three further key changes facilitated the new politics (Yadav, 1999:2394). The first was the Mandal Commission in 1989, recommending increased affirmative action quotas (in some cases from 25 to 49 per cent) of seats in state elections, access to jobs in the public sector and places at public universities. The second was the rise of the BJP and its mobilisation around the Babari Masjid dispute, which increased its vote share in certain states and in every election from 1984 to 1999 and made inroads into OBCs. The last was the move from a developmental state socialist ideology towards an IMF-supported economic liberalisation of the economy, bringing significant changes to state–society relations. All of these created new alignments in electoral politics.

Susanne and Lloyd Rudolph (Rudoloph & Rudolph, 2002) have identified seven key changes that characterise the post dominant party system polity of India. The role of the regional states has become increasingly important in determining national outcomes. The party system has diversified, with major parties like Congress and the BJP competing with many regional parties, with the result that the larger parties are unable to rule central government without being bolstered by coalitions with regional parties. The economic liberalisation has reduced the role of the Federal Planning Commission, thus allowing an expanded role for and influence of private sector investment in the economy and in politics. The central government has not abandoned its pre-eminent position, but

its role has changed to that of 'regulator' of diverse, competing interests. The prominence of the established regulatory institutions such as the Supreme Court, the Presidency and the Electoral Commission has expanded, and by contrast, that of the core state institutions, the Office of the Prime Minister, Cabinet and Parliament, has declined. Finally, ideologies that once seemed to threaten the political system, such as Hindu fundamentalism, have become more moderate, in part a consequence of India's plural society but also a result of the advent of coalition politics. Much of this change is related to changes in the social composition of the active electorate, which reflects the increasing power of the lower castes in relation to the upper castes.

Let us return to the aim of this discussion of Indian politics, which was not to present an exhaustive account in all its rich detail, but to draw attention to questions about dominant party rule and democracy in South Africa. The key question is whether the ANC will gravitate towards the open, fragmented, coalition kind of government represented by the Indian case. Comparison with the Indian case suggests more differences than commonalities, but a conclusive answer would turn on the weighted values of the different factors. The factors that produced the de-institutionalisation of the Congress Party in the late 1960s are certainly evident in the ANC of today. But throughout the 1970s and 1980s — the period of populism — the Congress continued to lose its domineering momentum without losing its dominant influence on the political system; it was able to put together coalitions to win sizeable votes at the national level.

The key factor that led to a competing opposition was the entry into the political system of hitherto marginalised and passive, lower castes. While the shift towards populism is discernible in Zuma's South Africa, the key factor of the politicisation of marginalised groups, *at least in the electoral sense*, is absent in the South African case. Since 1994, the ANC has drawn its biggest support base from the rural poor and the urban subalterns; its average voter share has been between 60 and 70 per cent in every election. Although electoral turnout demonstrates a declining trend (Schulz-Herzenberg, 2009), it has not been anywhere as low as during Congress dominance. An expected 'democratic surge' to change the playing field, as occurred in India, is unlikely unless the 'democratic surge' that South Africa has been experiencing in the post-apartheid years takes the party system in a different direction.

For the period of the 'second electoral system' in India, the possibility of Congress producing governments depended on the capacity or not of the opposition parties to produce effective counter coalitions; given their differences most of the time, this was not possible. The BJP's emphasis on a rigid ideology was unable to win it support beyond a core base of Hindu adherents; this changed when the BJP decided on a more pragmatic, open stance towards other parties, becoming less rigidly ideological in the process. In South Africa, the main opposition party, the Democratic Alliance, seems similarly to be striving to become a 'catchall' party within a liberal, minimalist government paradigm. Having started from a small electoral base of privileged support, its aim is to capture a larger vote among black South Africans. It refuses to give up its (conservative) liberal identity, which, in the context of South African politics where ideology is still hotly contested, matters. However, more important is

its capacity to bridge the historical, economic, cultural and political divide in order to attract more black subaltern votes, a formidable challenge for an opposition party of this kind.

Lastly, the race question brings to the forefront a unique paradigm of politics that centrally turns on identity politics. The politics of 'caste' in the Indian context and the instrumentalist manner in which it relates to electoral politics is, I suggest, different to the politics of 'race' in South Africa. The key theme (and a feeling) of historical bitterness plays itself out differently. And the inability of the electoral process to dissipate attachments to 'racial identities', is important, as it would seem that elections become often, in the South African context, flashback moments of a violent historical past that is ever present. In short, electoral instrumentalism and the politics of meaning and identity antagonise each other. The underlying development in the India case is the move away from ideological and issue-based differences between the parties, towards pragmatic electioneering that allows for winning coalitions. Given the entrenchment of ideological, issue-based, and racial discourse determinations of *the political* in South Africa, the features of recent Indian politics are less likely to arise.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the issue turns on the following question: can settler-colonialist histories produce liberal democracies? Noticeably, Lipset (1959), in his widely respected article indicating the 'pre-requisites for democracy', actually praises the colonial experience for contributing to the development of democracy. According to this view British colonialism played a positive role. It established the rudiments of representative councils and in this experience, at least for those belonging to an emerging elite with some level of education, the colonised 'learnt' about democratic politics. In contrast to Lipset's optimism about the British colonial experience, Giliomee & Simkins (1999) and Ottaway (1991) are less confident about the prospects of democracy in settler-colonial societies. An unqualified democracy will produce a majoritarian democracy in which minorities will be excluded, Giliomee and Simkins argue, creating ongoing tensions between the majority and minorities. Ottaway argues that it is not the type of colonial society that really matters. What matters is the type of nationalist struggle, and that liberation movements (of the southern African kind) find it more difficult to transform into ordinary political parties that respect the 'rules of party competition'. In addition, Rustow (1970) argues that the key assumption for liberal democracies to work is the prevalence of a common national community. Taking Fanon's description of systematic violence embedded in this type of colonialism, the difficulty for a settler-society to transform into the model of liberal democracy seems evident. This is even more elusive in a society like South Africa. Here the very nature of the polity, its identity, and those of its citizens, not to mention the present hierarchy and distribution of material wealth, are continuously questioned largely along 'racial lines', the legacy of a type of colonialism not experienced in India.

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Chapter 4

Transitioning from a dominant party system to a multi-party system: The case of South Korea

Joseph Wong

The summer of 1987 was a pivotal moment in the evolution of South Korean[1] politics. Sparked by waves of government repression during the spring of that year, combined with then President Chun Doo-Hwan's manoeuvres to undemocratically hand power to his chosen successor, Roh Tae-Woo, Koreans mobilised against the authoritarian regime. Students and intellectuals, workers, middle-class liberal activists and the church coalesced to strengthen the *minjung* or democracy movement. The outcome was uncertain. Sceptics, with good reason, expected the government to brutally crack down, particularly as it seemed the hard-line faction within the ruling Democratic Justice Party (DJP) was in firm control. Many worried that this potential democratic opening was to be ephemeral, as it had been so many times during the early 1960s and 1970s. However, Roh Tae-Woo did the unexpected. On 29 June 1987, Roh announced that direct presidential elections would be held later that year, followed by fully contested National Assembly elections in the following spring of 1988. With this momentous declaration, South Korea embarked on a new pathway towards democratic deepening, and has since that time stayed the democratic course.

South Korea today is a thriving, if imperfect, multi-party democracy. Since the late 1980s and early 1990s, civil–military relations have been restructured to ensure against military interventions in politics. Election rules have been refashioned, thus breaking the monopoly on electoral power held by the incumbent ruling party. Freedom of the press, and various other democratic rights and freedoms, have become codified and enforced. The rule of law, rather than 'strongman' or military might, has been institutionalised. Greater transparency, particularly regarding the wealth assets of powerbrokers and politicians, has become the norm in Korean politics. Civic groups, and civil society more generally, remain autonomous of political forces in the formal political arena. Voter turnout rates have been very high and continue to be so. Citizen mobilisation is robust, especially when it comes to key political debates about national security, economy and welfare, as well as South Korea's foreign relations with the North. The rotation of power among contending political parties

1 The country names South Korea and Korea will be used interchangeably.

has proceeded smoothly. And all the while, Korea's young democracy has continued to grow its economy at enviable rates, so that today it ranks as among the richest in the world.

Looking back through rose-tinted glasses at the moment of democratic breakthrough in 1987, one might conclude that Korea's political reform trajectory was relatively predictable, as though, for some reason, the time was 'just right' for Korea's democratic transition, for the move away from a dominant party system to a functioning multi-party system. But those who know Korean political history also know the fallacy of this sanguine retrospective viewpoint; the process was not nearly as pre-determined as we might think today. After all, Koreans had experienced a potential democratic opening during the early 1960s, but one which quickly collapsed under the weight of Syngman Rhee's corruption and Myon Chang's incompetence. Between 1967 and 1971, dictator Park Chung-Hee's electoral dominance in presidential elections waned, with Park beating Kim Dae-Jung in 1971 by less than 8 per cent of the vote. Electoral support for Park's party, the Democratic Republican Party (DRP), declined as well, with control of nearly 74 per cent of the National Assembly's seats in 1967 decreasing to just over 55 per cent in 1971. The party's share of Assembly seats declined again in 1973 to less than 39 per cent[2] (Kim, 2011:141–142). And yet, as we know, mounting political threats to the Park regime strengthened (rather than lessened) his resolve to rule undemocratically, which resulted in the imposition of the highly repressive Yushin Constitution in 1972 and continued single-party dominance. When Park was assassinated in 1979 by one of his inner circle, many assumed yet another potential democratic opening in Korea, though again, this optimism was short-lived. General Chun Doo-Hwan became president in 1980, and with the support of the military he continued to govern Korea in much the same authoritarian manner as those who had ruled before him; the dominant party system persisted.

The point is that throughout Korea's modern political history there have been many instances of *potential* democratic breakthrough moments, all of which failed, and all of which in fact invited heavier single-party dominance than had existed before — until the events that occurred in 1987, and the reforms which proceeded. So what made 1987 different, and how did the events of that year reflect Korea's dominant party system at the time? And why did that particular democratic opening succeed in fomenting what is today a multi-party democratic system? These are the empirical puzzles that this chapter seeks to explain.

Authoritarian modernisation

Prior to Korea's democratic 'miracle' of the late 1980s and early 1990s, Korea was most well known for its post-war economic miracle. Japan's colonial annexation of Korea from 1910 to 1945 was economically extractive and in human terms, brutal. Emerging from the Korean War and Rhee's corrupt regime of the late 1950s, Korea's was a basket-case economy when Park Chung-Hee assumed the presidency in the early 1960s. Beginning

2 The ruling Democratic Republican Party won 73 of 219 National Assembly seats in 1973, though the President indirectly appointed an additional 73 legislators, giving the ruling party effective control of 146 of 219 seats (see Croissant, 2002:268).

at that time, as is well documented in the developmental state literature, Korea's economy grew at a very rapid rate, nearing 10 per cent annual growth for several decades. Moreover, its economy diversified, with continual industrial upgrading, initially in labour-intensive manufacturing sectors and then followed by the 1970s Heavy and Chemical Industries (HCI) drive, which eventually saw Korea become a major exporter of finished products, a world-class steel producer, shipbuilder, electronics manufacturer and automobile maker. By the 1980s, Korean firms were on the cutting edge of advanced electronics and information and communication technologies, challenging Japan, the US and Europe for global market share. The workforce likewise continually up-skilled, as the government invested in basic and higher education. Wages, in the aggregate, rose rapidly and living standards improved. By the late 1980s, when Korea transited to a multi-party democracy, its economy was among the most advanced in the world, measured in terms of productivity, per capita income, employment and trade. Indeed, South Korea was made a member of the OECD club of advanced industrial nations in the mid 1990s; this is all the more remarkable considering that Koreans had been, on average, poorer than most in colonial Africa just two generations earlier, during the immediate post-war period.

There is a politico-economic explanation for Korea's post-war economic miracle. Unlike its other late-developing counterparts in Latin America, Korea's economic policy-makers steered high-performing Korean firms towards export-oriented industrialisation during the late 1960s, rather than continuing to rely on protectionist import-substitution policies that had been implemented earlier in the decade (Amsden, 1989; Gereffi, 1989; Haggard & Moon, 1993). This plugged already domestically successful Korean firms into the global economy, with notably American consumers looking for cheap and relatively high-quality products. To do this, the Korean developmental state centralised the allocation of industrial financing, thus giving the state extraordinary discretion in industrial investment. Control over finance capital, including domestic savings, foreign loans and foreign direct investment, afforded the state tremendous leverage to reward and punish firms that performed according to the government's strategic industrial plans (Woo, 1991). Centralised industrial financing also contributed to the formation of conglomerate chaebol firms, which ably took advantage of their economies of scale, internal diversification and market branding capability to transform Korean enterprises into global market leaders relatively quickly (Kim, 1997). Fiscal power and the allocation of finance capital incentives allowed the mercantilist state to, as Alice Amsden (1989) famously put it, 'get the prices wrong', by strategically imposing protectionist tariffs on key sectors and blatantly subsidising targeted industries, technologies and even firms. The Korean government also invested in human capital development, notably in health, education and scientific R&D. As the World Bank asserts, a significant portion of East Asia's economic productivity during the post-war period can be attributed to primary and secondary education policy as well as other social policies aimed at alleviating poverty (World Bank, 1993).

The strong developmental state in Korea was afforded, in part, by the dominant party system that was institutionalised in the post-war period. From the early 1970s on, the ruling party (Park Chung-Hee's DRP, and Chun Doo-Hwan's DJP) maintained a dominant and unassailable presence in the national legislature (see Table 4.1). Party dominance reflected, in many ways, the state's ability to deliver rapid economic growth to Koreans,

strengthening the state–society pact in which political liberties were traded off for economic development. Park's dictatorial regime, especially after the introduction of the highly repressive Yushin Constitution in 1972, was both feared and appreciated by many Koreans. The dominant party system was also maintained by skewed electoral rules which provided the ruling party a disproportionate seat bonus in the National Assembly, or in the case of the 1973 and 1978 elections, provisions that allowed the president to appoint 73 of the Assembly's members (Croissant, 2002). And despite the 1965 Political Funds Law, which notionally provided parties with public funds, the reality was that the absence of a free press and political transparency allowed the ruling party to benefit enormously from under-the-table political contributions from the business sector, which in turn benefited from the preferential policies of Korea's developmental state (Ferdinand, 2003).

Table 4.1: National assembly election results, 1963 to 1988

Year	Winning party	Number of seats	Percentage of seats	Percentage of popular vote
1963	DRP	110 / 175	63	34
1967	DRP	129 / 175	74	51
1971	DRP	113 / 204	55	49
1973	DRP	146 / 219 *	67	39
1978	DRP	141 / 231 *	61	32
1981	DJP	151 / 276	55	36
1985	DJP	148 / 276	54	35
1988**	DJP	125 / 299	42	34

Notes: * 73 additional seats indirectly appointed by President Park. The DRP won just 73 and 68 seats in 1973 and 1978 respectively. ** First fully contested National Assembly elections.

Source: Compiled by author, derived from Croissant (2002)

The dominant party in Korea's developmental state was politically legitimated — or minimally, politically tolerated — because of the association of the ruling party with Korean nationalism. The Park Chung-Hee regime, for instance, constantly drew on peoples' sense of national pride, and in particular the imperatives of rebuilding and economically catching up to the West and specifically to its former colonisers, the Japanese. During every New Year's address, Park would reinforce a national narrative of Korea's self-reliance. The Cold War context strengthened the symbolic value of the developmental state, and thus the ruling party and the dominant party system. As a bulwark against communist expansion in Asia, South Korea required political stability, which Park and his followers argued was achieved through single-party dominance. In many ways, the US legitimated this nationalist-authoritarian narrative in South Korea,

as evidenced by the massive amounts of American military and non-military economic aid to Korea between 1946 and 1976, which according to some figures (US$12.6 billion) equalled all of the aid given to Africa over the same time period, and half of the aid that went to Latin America (Stubbs, 2005:105–106). In this respect, American complicity, due to its geo-strategic interests in the region, reinforced Korea's dominant party system during the Cold War.

At the core of the Korean developmental state, however, was a unique institutional configuration that facilitated effective state leadership. In this respect, Korea's economic miracle was also a product of internal politics within the state apparatus, and a politics that was buttressed by Korea's dominant party system. Reflecting Chalmers Johnson's and Robert Wade's notion of a strong or hard state, Korea's economic modernisation process was directed by a relatively autonomous state apparatus, one that was unencumbered by social forces from below, including both industry and labour (Johnson, 1981; Wade, 1990). Decision-making within the developmental state was hierarchical and politically insulated. At the apex of bureaucratic power was the Economic Planning Board (EPB), an economic pilot agency similar to the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) in Japan and the Council for Economic Planning and Development in Taiwan. According to Peter Evans, the Korean bureaucracy was the epitome of the Weberian archetype: rational, meritocratic and staffed with only the best and brightest (Evans, 1995). In many ways, extraordinary bureaucratic capacity endowed the state with tremendous bureaucratic autonomy.

Political forces, particularly the political leadership of Park Chung-Hee, were at work as well, and indeed politics played a much more central role than previously thought. Park was not only the EPB's political patron who skilfully used the presidential Blue House to shield the bureaucracy from outside political interference or excessive interventions from opposition voices in the National Assembly. In fact, Park controlled the bureaucracy, and thus afforded it its autonomy, from within the Presidential Office. New evidence about the Park era reveals, for instance, how he used the Korean CIA and a shadow cabinet within the Blue House to effectively control the EPB and the rest of the line ministries. Driven by a sense of paranoia and the perpetual need to aggrandise his personal power, as well as by an innate Korean nationalism, Park 'intended to let the state bring about modernization in a top-down fashion' (Moon & Jun, 2011:131). He routinely dismissed opposition within his own inner circle speedily, and often brutally. He set the stage for the repressive Yushin Constitution, never having considered, as we now know, a more sincere democratic turn during the early 1970s when his political legitimacy was waning (Im, 2011). He believed democracy to be a Western import and imposition, incompatible with Korean society. In reference to Park's ideational beliefs, Chung-In Moon and Byung-Joon Jun (2011:138) remark that,

> whereas the illiberal [pre-war] Japanese ethos of control and mobilization nurtured the foundations of his modernization strategy and framed it around the concepts of a commanding state, revolution from above and 'rich nation, strong army,' Park's nationalist zeal shaped the direction of his political action, driving him to seize power through a military coup, construct an organic state corporatism, pursue mercantilistic economic policy, and mobilize civil society through indoctrination and top-down organization.

Simply put, the prospects for meaningful democratic transition in authoritarian Korea were bleak, especially as Park's successor, General Chun Doo-Hwan, held to the same nationalist authoritarian principles. The dominant party's political formula of delivering rapid economic growth, fostering nationalist and anti-communist sentiments, and maintaining electoral dominance through unfair means seemed to be working right up through the early 1980s. Indeed, Chun imposed martial law upon taking the presidency in 1980. Chun consolidated his authoritarian power in the wake of the 'Kwangju massacre' of early 1980, despite the mobilisation of nascent pro-democratic forces (Clark, 1988).

Transitioning in good times

By the 1980s, Korea's authoritarian modernisation project appeared to be hostile to democracy. Korea was a modern, rich and industrialised nation, and it had become so despite — and Park Chung-Hee would contend, because of — the absence of democratic reform and the maintenance of a dominant party system. Chun stayed Park's course, and his party, the DJP, continued to govern a growing economy within a harshly repressive regime. And yet, one of the reasons for democracy's endurance in South Korea after the 1980s, I argue, was precisely because democratic transition in 1987 – the introduction of a meaningful multi-party system – occurred in what were *relatively good times*.

The *minjung* movement of the mid-1980s is remembered as being a progressive movement, underpinned by leftist ideologies. For instance, workers, whose voices were increasingly marginalised from political debate, were a core group within the *minjung* movement. Socio-economic inequality was on the rise. Societal divisions were increasingly conspicuous. Many thus understood the *minjung* to be tantamount to a call for social democracy. But the *minjung* movement was not solely a leftist workers movement, as is often depicted, nor was it coherently social democratic in its political economic vision. As Bronwen Dalton and James Cotton recount (1996:279), the *minjung* coalition expanded during the 1980s to include middle-class activists and the church, a strategic move hastened when President Chun refused to negotiate on constitutional reform after the 1985 National Assembly elections and when the ruling party suffered considerable losses in the popular vote. The *minjung* coalition was thus, first and foremost, a staunchly anti-authoritarian movement 'framed exclusively in the context of state repression and heroic resistance', for which socio-economic grievances, among many others, were rooted in South Korea's authoritarian state (Lee, 2007). *Minjung* activists were nationalists who hoped to reconstitute what they saw to be an increasingly unjust state — society pact — where economic growth at all costs, especially political costs, was no longer tolerated — and it was the *minjung's* across-class appeal which compelled Roh to initiate democratic reform in the summer of 1987 (Choi, 1993).

Still, despite the popular political appeal of the *minjung* movement and its portrayal of the unjust authoritarian state, Korea's transition occurred during relatively good times for both the incumbent regime and the Korean economy more generally. Though the ruling party, the DJP, had been challenged by the recently unified opposition New Korea Democratic Party (NKDP) led by Kim Young-Sam and Kim Dae-Jung during the 1985

National Assembly elections, the DJP nonetheless continued to control over three-quarters of the Assembly's seats (as well as the Presidency). The ruling party's hold on power, even into the summer of 1987, was virtually unassailable, and it reflected Korea's relatively strong economy. Korea's economy had grown at an average rate of 10.6 per cent between 1983 and 1988, with growth rates of around 12 per cent in 1986 and 1987 specifically (the years before and during Korea's democratic opening). Moreover, unlike many Latin American economies, which also grew quite rapidly at this time, the inflation rate in South Korea hovered around 2.8 per cent between 1983 and 1987, compared to nearly 20 per cent during the time of Chile's democratic transition (Haggard & Kaufman, 1995:92). And with respect to income inequality, the Gini coefficient in Korea increased (that is, indicating more inequality) during the 1970s, but remained relatively stable at around 0.4 throughout the 1980s, which by globally comparative standards ranked Korea as among those economies with a more egalitarian distribution of household incomes, and especially so among late developing economies (Kwon & Choi, 1997).

Transitioning in good times was critical in the case of Korea. The fact that Roh initiated political reform during relatively good times helps explain Korea's successful deepening of the democratic process. Most important, the Roh's decision to essentially lead democratic reform by calling presidential elections for late 1987 basically allowed the incumbent ruling party to stay in the democratic game. For instance, the DJP, under Roh, was able to portray itself as the party of reform, thus distancing itself from the party's non-democratic past. The ruling party, as it turns out, had not been completely de-legitimated in the eyes of many Koreans, unlike authoritarian parties in other countries, where they were forced to concede reforms after their stock of legitimacy had run out. The ruling party could claim to have steered the rapid development of Korea's post-war economy, and it pointed to positive indicators of Korea's continued economic growth. Simply put, the DJP, at the time of democratic opening, though challenged, was not a spent political force at all. In fact, as Byung-Kook Kim contends, by initiating and then carrying out further democratic reform, the conservative base of the DJP was able to square its own internal ideological contradictions of having been, notionally, a liberal party and Cold War ally of the democratic US, on the one hand, with the fact of its authoritarian record, on the other (Kim, 2008). The conservative base of the party was rejuvenated, and running on a platform of economic development and the promise of political reform, Roh Tae-Woo was elected president in late 1987, with a slim edge over his two competitors, Kim Young-Sam and Kim Dae-Jung.

In many ways, then, by transitioning in good times, Korea's young democracy experienced a fair degree of political and economic continuity. Notwithstanding the mass mobilisation in the summer of 1987, Korea's democratic opening entailed a relatively stable and peaceful process, which bolstered the chances for a more enduring transition into the late 1980s and 1990s. As I have pointed out, Korea's economy continued to grow rapidly, meaning jobs, wages and higher living standards for citizens, despite political reform. Industrial capital did not flee the country for fear of political and economic instability. The middle-class allies of the *minjung* movement, for whom the prospects of democratic reform were always more about liberal politics than a social democratic

or left-leaning economic agenda, quickly broke away, distancing themselves from what they considered to be radical workers and students.[3] The more confrontational style of oppositional politics from within the grassroots was thus quelled, as civil society coalitions became more fragmented, breaking into radical and moderate factions (Kim, 1997). Transitioning in good times, combined with Roh's 1987 presidential election victory, allowed for the continuation of strong leadership within the state apparatus, which in turn mitigated the fears of political upheaval.

Fairly confident about its electoral prospects despite its not-so-distant authoritarian past, the ruling DJP also conceded key political reforms after the 1987 presidential elections. The most important of these reforms were the National Assembly electoral rules, implemented just before the founding 1988 legislative elections (Choi et al, 1999). In the past, the mixed two-member district and PR system was one that had heavily favoured the ruling party, basically guaranteeing the DJP (and before that, the DRP) a disproportionately massive seat bonus.[4] Prior to the 1988 elections, however, the ruling and opposition parties bargained over new electoral rules intended to even the electoral playing field. The DJP under Roh made significant concessions, most notably by adopting a single-member district system, thus blunting the rural advantage the ruling party had consistently enjoyed in the past, and by mitigating the winner-take-all effect of the available at-large PR seats.[5] The DJP levelled, somewhat, the electoral playing field that it had benefited from in the past.

The DJP made these concessions for three interrelated reasons, all of which stemmed from the unique dynamics of having initiated transition in good times. First, as alluded to above, the ruling party was confident about its electoral prospects going into the 1988 contest, particularly as economic voters would probably support the party both for its economic policy record and the fact that Korea's economy, at the time, was performing very well (Haggard & Kaufman, 1995). Moreover, despite efforts to strengthen the 1965 Political Fund Act, the ruling party continued to enjoy close patronage ties with industry, thus giving it an unfair advantage vis-à-vis its opposition (Ferdinand, 2003:65); it was not until the early 1990s when media was liberalised and a series of anti-corruption legislations were put into effect, that party funding became a more even playing field. Second, Tun-Jen Cheng and Mihae Lim Tallian argue that Roh's decision to reform was swayed by public opinion. Conceding electoral reform allowed Roh to further distance himself and the party from the legacies of Korea's non-democratic era; Roh was thus portrayed as a political reformer, unlike his authoritarian predecessors (Cheng & Tallian, 1994). And third, others reason that Roh's bargaining position in the run-up to the 1988 National Assembly elections was one of strength, despite the concessions he made, because Roh anticipated the opposition

3 As Haggard and Kaufman (1995: 96) note, 'there was broad support from the middle class for the underlying development strategy that the government had pursued in the past, and scepticism toward the economic and social — as opposed to political — claims of the opposition'.

4 The ruling party suffered a major setback in the 1985 National Assembly elections, when it polled only 35 per cent of the popular vote. However, given the electoral rules at the time, the DJP was still able to gain 87 of 184 district seats, given the rural seat bonus won by the ruling party, as well as 61 of 92 at-large PR seats. The rules stipulated that the winning party (by plurality) automatically took two-thirds of the 92 available PR seats.

5 In the 1988 electoral system, half of the at-large PR seats (38 of 75) were automatically given to the winning party.

would fragment into contending parties, as it had during the 1987 presidential elections, when Kim Dae-Jung and Kim Young-Sam ran on separate tickets and split the opposition vote, which allowed Roh to win the presidency with a plurality, rather than majority, of voter support (Brady & Mo, 1992). Moreover, the social movement coalition which had erupted during the spring and summer of 1987 fragmented as well, as ideological and tactical fissures began to form among formerly allied middle-class activists, labour unions and students (Kim, 1997).

Roh's strategic calculation proved correct in the end, with the DJP taking the largest share of seats for a single party in the 1988 National Assembly elections (125 of 299), with 34 per cent of the popular vote. Meanwhile, the two main opposition parties, headed by Kim Dae-Jung and Kim Young-Sam, did well but once again split the opposition vote, their parties winning 70 and 59 seats respectively. Combined, the two Kims' parties won 43 per cent of the popular vote, 9 per cent more than the DJP, along with 129 seats, four more than the ruling party. Separately however, they were unable to unseat the DJP. Though the DJP was challenged in 1988, the fragmented opposition, both in the party system and within civil society, allowed the incumbent party to not only stay in the political game, but also remain the ruling, if less dominant, party.

Forming a viable opposition

Shelley Rigger (1999), in her classic study of democratic politics in Taiwan, argues that the long history of limited elections there fomented the political base for eventual successful democratic reform. According to Rigger, even though early elections in Taiwan consistently and unfairly favoured the ruling Kuomintang (KMT) party, they nonetheless institutionalised the *practice* of electoral competition, especially among *Tangwai* opposition activists, before the moment of democratic breakthrough during the late 1980s. A similar historical argument can be made with respect to the Korean case. Prior to the watershed presidential and National Assembly elections of 1987 and 1988, Korea's political system similarly featured limited electoral competition (the only exception being the Yushin regime under Park Chung-Hee during the 1970s). As I discussed above, before 1988 the electoral rules were skewed to virtually guarantee victory for the ruling party. Still, elections in 1963, 1971 and again in 1985, and even the distant memory of the short-lived democratic experiment of the early 1960s, were instrumental in forming the basis of what would eventually become a viable opposition and electoral option for anti-DJP voters. And as Tun-Jen Cheng and Eun Mee Kim point out (1994:135), limited and sporadic measures at political liberalisation throughout the pre-democratic era also 'allowed for at least partial freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, and freedom to form political parties, thus enabling the general public to learn of opposition forces and demands'.

Practical experience cannot be discounted. The early practice of elections meant that opposition forces understood the electoral game. For instance, they gained important election experience. Opposition forces formed political parties, even if they were periodically repressed. Parties learned how to campaign and mobilise. They strategically navigated complex electoral rules, which they learned from and adapted to, all of which

prepared opposition leaders for their eventual negotiations about new electoral rules for the 1988 National Assembly elections. Korea's history of limited elections prior to the late 1980s also provided the time and experience to allow opposition leaders such as Kim Dae-Jung and Kim Young-Sam to become seasoned politicians and to hone their skills in mobilising votes. By the time of the 1985 National Assembly elections, and those which soon followed, the two Kims were anything but political neophytes. They effectively built their party infrastructures, mobilised regional sympathies and connected with Korea's nascent civil society. Despite the continued rule of the DJP after 1988, the opposition parties demonstrated that they were potentially capable of challenging the ruling party's dominance, especially once the rules of the game had somewhat levelled the electoral playing field. They had become viable challengers.

Contingent politics

Democratic transformation in Korea, I have argued, required some political continuity within the *ancien régime* as well as the political base out of which a viable opposition party (or parties) could emerge. The iterated cycle of electoral competition and alternation that is inherent in a multi-party democratic system, rather than a dominant party system (even in a democracy) means, however, that the opposition must also prove viable enough to *successfully* challenge the ruling party (Pempel, 1990). The DJP continued to govern after the breakthrough elections of 1987 and 1988; its popularity had waned, for sure, but it and its leader were still appealing enough to out-poll what was then a split opposition. By 1997, however, perennial opposition leader, Kim Dae-Jung, was elected president, and his party gained control of the National Assembly.[6] The once merely viable opposition became the ruling party, having overcome the electoral dominance of the DJP. Two key events, I argue, triggered the transition from continued party dominance in the early stages of Korea's democracy during the late 1980s to its becoming a robust multi-party system less than a decade later. Ironically, both events — the 1990 formation of the conservative Democratic Liberal Party and the 1997 financial crisis — seemed at the time to be potentially devastating to the opposition party. However, because of the contingent and unpredictable nature of politics, the two turned out to be quite politically fortuitous events for Kim Dae-Jung, his grassroots supporters, and ultimately for the prospects of democratic deepening in Korea.

The 1990 ruling party merger

South Korea's founding elections in 1988 resulted in legislative deadlock. The parties led by Kim Young-Sam and Kim Dae-Jung, as I have described, split the opposition vote. Meanwhile, the ruling party's share of legislative seats, while still formidable,

6 Kim gained the support of only a slim majority in the National Assembly in 1998, after he had formed a legislative coalition with the opposition United Liberal Democrats and other independent legislators. The Grand National Party — the conservative successor to what was the DJP — held a plurality (46.5 per cent) of seats after the 1996 Assembly elections.

had decreased significantly. The fourth party, headed by Kim Jong-Pil (a former ally of Park Chung-Hee), held just over 10 per cent of the National Assembly's seats. To break the logjam, three of the four parties — Roh's DJP, Kim Young-Sam's Reunification Democratic Party (RDP) and Kim Jong-Pil's New Democratic Republican Party (NDRP) — joined to form a conservative coalition party, which was renamed the Democratic Liberal Party (DLP). The founders of the DLP envisaged a catch-all party similar to Japan's Liberal Democratic Party (LDP); it certainly sought to emulate the LDP's record of electoral dominance. The new ruling party controlled nearly three-quarters of the legislative seats. It consolidated the state bureaucracy and relaunched a centrist-conservative economic policy agenda. To those in the DLP, the formation of the coalition was basically a political 'marriage of convenience' (Han, 1991: 98). For the DJP specifically, the formation of the DLP allowed the notional ruling party to reconfigure its political alliances while ensuring it a veto voice as the preponderant party within the coalition (Kim, 1997). Meanwhile, for the sole remaining opposition party and for opposition leader Kim Dae-Jung, the formation of the DLP was experienced as a 'coup d'état against democracy' (cited in Lee, 1990:132).

The DLP under Roh marginalised social forces, including labour and the student movement. Union rules were revised, and often in non-transparent ways. Social policy plans were scaled back and the powerful influence of the chaebol forms continued to persist, institutionalised through patron — client ties (Mo, 1996; Wong, 2004a). Former pro-democracy activist Kim Young-Sam became party leader and president in 1992, and he continued the DLP's conservative agenda. Kim Dae-Jung, the lone opposition, was politically marginalised, despite his party having won the second largest number of legislative seats in the 1988 election. Chung-In Moon asserts that the 'formation of the Democratic Liberal Party as a mega-conservative grouping … halted the advances of the progressive camp and the advantage swung back to the conservatives and their pro-big business policies' (Moon, 1992:156).

Ironically, the 1990 party merger ultimately aided the opposition. An unintended consequence of the formation of the DLP was that it consolidated and unified what had become a severely fragmented opposition. The party merger essentially eliminated the split among opposition voters by narrowing their choice to a single opposition party; it integrated former pro-democracy activist Kim Young-Sam into the conservative coalition and thus rid Kim Dae-Jung of his main rival in the opposition camp; it strengthened the regional bias in Korean voting, with Kim Dae-Jung mobilising his support in the Cholla region and Kim Young-Sam's base in Yongnam; and it portrayed Kim Dae-Jung as a progressive alternative to the DLP. Kim Dae-Jung was only narrowly defeated by Kim Young-Sam in the 1992 presidential elections, in what was basically a two-ticket contest (as opposed to the three-way split in 1987). Therefore, contrary to the conventional wisdom which views the 1990 coalition as a step backwards in Korea's democratic transformation, the longer-term evidence strongly suggests that in fact the formation of the DLP helped resolve the problem of what had become a fragmented opposition, which in turn paved the way for the consolidation of a much more viable opposition challenger to the ruling party.

The 1997 Asian financial crisis

The opposition challenge translated into electoral victory soon after, coinciding with the second key event that, I contend, helped form Korea's multi-party democracy. Opposition leader Kim Dae-Jung won the late 1997 presidential elections by narrowly defeating the candidate from the incumbent ruling party, now called the Grand National Party (formerly the New Korea Party and before that the DLP). He won with just over 40 per cent of the popular vote. Kim Dae-Jung benefited from the Asian financial crisis which had hit Korea hard, earlier that same year. Before the 1997 financial crisis and during the run-up to the year-end presidential elections, it appeared that neither candidate, Kim Dae-Jung or Lee Hoi-Chang of the Grand National Party (GNP), had a distinct edge. It looked as though regional voting and personalist politics were again to be the principal variables deciding the 1997 election outcome. The Asian financial crisis, however, reconstituted the political, and hence electoral, landscape. For instance, in the wake of the crisis and massive unemployment, labour was remobilised. Middle-class activists joined the fray as consumer organisations and civic watchdog movements re-emerged on the political scene. Progressive civic groups protested against the government.

Kim Dae-Jung took advantage of this. In his campaign, Kim distanced himself from the incumbent regime and thus the legacies of the ruling party's developmental state policies, positioning himself and his policies as attractive alternatives. Kim portrayed himself as an advocate of corporate reform, targeting especially the chaebol firms that were seen to be at the heart of state–business collusion. As Meredith Woo-Cumings puts it, the 'economic crisis gave him [Kim Dae-Jung] the leverage he needed to pursue real reform of the Korean system for the first time since it got going in the 1960s' (Woo-Cumings, 1998:132). To that end, Kim proposed — and then implemented in 1998 — the unprecedented tripartite commission which, among many things, re-cast the state-business-labour social compact, instigated thorough banking and corporate reform, and also initiated new rounds of social policy reform. Kim thus exploited the 1997 financial crisis to form a new electoral coalition against the incumbent ruling party. Neither of these events — the 1990 formation of the DLP or the 1997 financial crisis — were predictable, just as their effects on the electoral fortunes of the opposition party were unintended. Nonetheless, both were moments of contingent and unpredictable politics that, in retrospect, were instrumental in transforming the opposition party into an electable alternative. Simply put, they were events that inadvertently helped set Korea's course away from dominant party rule to a meaningful multi-party democracy.

Weak party institutionalisation

The principal criticism of Korea's young democracy is the limited extent to which the party system and political parties more generally have become institutionalised, stable and predictable. Students of democratisation teach us that more rather than less institutionalised party systems — in which cleavages are predictable, voter preferences and party identification are relatively stable, and parties-qua-organisations are robust — are a critical indicator of democratic quality (Mainwaring & Scully, 1995). Korea, unfortunately, scores

comparatively low in all of these measures. Survey data tell us that party identification among voters is weak and unstable (Tan et al, 2000). Voting patterns are 'volatile', and parties are characterised as 'unstable' (Steinberg, 1998). Party organisations and labels are transitory and ephemeral. Parties change names and leaders, it seems, for every election. Factional splits are endemic. Party bossism is the norm. In fact, the political legitimacy of parties has waned in recent years in Korea. Instead, civic groups, social movements and civil society organisations have 'come to acquire moral, social and political hegemony' in Korea's representational politics (Seong, 2000:92).

Most problematic, however, is the observation that Korean parties are non-programmatic in their popular appeal, and instead draw on personalist and regional sentiments to mobilise voters. Electoral cleavages, such as those on the left and right of the ideological spectrum, are not well entrenched and institutionalised in Korea's political party system (Wong, 2004a). Rather, political party platforms in Korea are contradictory, instrumental and unstable, suggesting, therefore, that Korea's multi-party democracy is weak and potentially prone to democratic reversal (even if there is not any indication that such a reversal is on the short- or long-term horizon). If, however, we treat democratic transition as a dynamic and evolutionary *process*, rather than a particular moment and an institutional *fait accompli*, then one could argue that a relatively weakly institutionalised party system may actually be a positive factor in driving successful democratic transformation over the longer term. Contrary to the conventional wisdom, then, one can reason that the presence of fluid and dynamic political cleavages in Korea did not weaken, but rather deepened, institutionalised and strengthened Korea's democracy.

Competing parties in a multi-party democracy actively search for winning platforms and assemble winning coalitions, a process that is dynamic and continually evolving, particularly in new democracies. In Korea's case, the absence of entrenched political cleavages permitted an ideological flexibility among parties that, for instance, allowed the ruling party under Roh to initiate universal health care reform during the late 1980s; that it was a nominally conservative party which initiated social policy reform was in fact viewed as entirely legitimate and not at all ideologically inconsistent. This sort of fluidity and 'un-institutionalised' party competition provided the ideological space for the nominally progressive leadership of Roh Moo-Hyun to seek a free trade agreement with the US during the 2000s at the same time as his party mobilised anti-American sentiments among voters; or, likewise, for Kim Dae-Jung to legislate corporate lay-off policies in 1998 when he and his party were supposedly backed by labour. This ideological flexibility, and the un-institutionalised party system more generally, also afforded the nominally progressive governments of the early 2000s, under Kim and Roh, the ideological space within which to implement social care policies for the elderly and children by portraying them as neoliberal active labour market policies (Peng & Wong, 2008).

The 'search for winning platforms' means that entrepreneurial political parties in Korea, free from prevailing ideological constraints, have been incentivised to carve out new political space, to exploit new electoral issues and cleavages, and to therefore constantly reinvent themselves in ways that appeal to voters. To be sure, over time we ought to anticipate that ideological lines will become clearer and more distinct among parties.

However, it seems that during the initial stages of democratic consolidation in Korea, it was the absence rather than presence of strong party identification and institutionalised ideological lines which allowed both incumbent and opposition parties to strategically compete for votes and to shape voters' preferences (Wong, 2004b). In other words, it was precisely the flexibility and party system fluidity, which many consider to be a source of institutional weakness in Korea, that in fact prevented the sort of ideological rigidity and inflexibility that we worry about in other young democracies, where cleavage lines were (and are) so deeply entrenched that losing parties, in what are supposed to be multi-party systems, have had in reality few prospects of ever formulating a successful coalition and electoral platform. The Korean example, which has already witnessed several alternations of power among parties since the late 1980s, makes a strong (if counter-intuitive) case that a weakly institutionalised party system that continually produces new winners and losers might arguably be a more stable and better functioning multi-party democracy than those that produce perpetual losers in what might otherwise appear to be well-institutionalised party systems.

Conclusion

Democratisation is a process in which the transition from authoritarianism to dominant parties to functioning and enduring multi-party systems is evolutionary. Punctuated and animated by political contingencies and unpredictable moments, political actors adapt, re-invent themselves, craft winning coalitions and strategically manoeuvre within the rules of the game to form viable oppositions and ruling parties. To have a multi-party democracy, in which parties holding power alternate, viable oppositions and assailable ruling parties are essential. And the social, political and economic bases of single-party dominance must sufficiently erode, or be challenged from the bottom up, to compel democratic reformers to make such a transition. The Korean case is exemplary in all of these respects. The South Korean example offers many insights to share with other more recent democratic experiments in other parts of the world.

The early institutionalisation of limited and unfair elections, for instance, provided opposition activists valuable experience in the practice of electoral competition, such that when Korea democratised during the late 1980s, the opposition was already a viable political force and challenger to the incumbent regime. The opposition held the incumbent ruling party in check early on. Contingencies, such as the 1990 formation of the DLP and the 1997 financial crisis, provided opportunities for the opposition to consolidate internally, to develop alternative platforms and to craft new winning electoral coalitions. And perhaps most critically, the Korean case demonstrates the importance of transitioning in relatively good times. Doing so meant that Korea's economy was not adversely affected, thus mitigating the sort of social, political and economic instability we see in other crisis-induced democracies. Moreover, transitioning in good times ensured the former ruling party had the opportunity, if it chose to, to transform itself from an authoritarian party into a democratic party. The DJP, for all its earlier brutal non-democratic sins, ultimately

submitted to the democratic rules of the game, initiated Korea's democratic transition under Roh Tae-Woo, and accommodated (and was defeated by) the opposition. That the DJP was able to politically survive into the era of democracy, and even retain power for a short while thereafter (and again), contributed to a relatively stable, if occasionally raucous, transition from a dominant party system to multi-party democracy in Korea.

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Chapter 5

From authoritarianism to nascent democracy in Taiwan: Electoral elements of the Kuomintang-dominant regime

Yun-han Chu and Chung-li Wu

Since the mid-1970s, the transition of developing countries from totalitarian and authoritarian regimes toward democracy — or in Samuel P. Huntington's (1991) usage, the third wave of democratisation — has become a trend that has swept across the globe from Eastern Europe to Latin America to East Asia. One common characteristic of this movement has been the breakdown of the incumbent political parties and the formation of opposition parties caused by democratic reforms initiated by the governing regimes (Dickson, 1996; Huntington, 1991, 1992; O'Donnell, Schmitter & Whitehead, 1986). Political development in Taiwan (the Republic of China, or ROC), in contrast, was not the consequence of regime collapse but of a continuous process in which the Kuomintang (KMT, or the Nationalist Party) has remained as the ruling party, even though it temporarily lost its governing power from 2000 through 2008, as shown in Table 5.1. The KMT, an intrinsic part of the old regime, managed to engineer a transition from a one-party authoritarian regime to what T. J. Pempel (1990) termed 'a one-party dominant regime', a democracy characterised by a ruling party with a large and seemingly permanent majority. For decades, the KMT organised the society that it governed, structured the political arena in which it operated, and articulated a worldview grounded in historically specific socio-political conditions, which lent substance and coherence to its political domination.

From a comparative perspective, the Taiwan case exemplifies a possible evolutionary trajectory by which a former Leninist party transformed itself into a mass-based party with a pluralistic and pragmatic orientation (Cheng, 1989; Chu & Lin, 2001). The KMT conformed to the organisational characteristics of dominant parties as defined by De Jager and Du Toit in Chapter 1 of this book. The competitive logic of local elections over time compelled the KMT to open its closed structure, relax the selection criteria for party membership and actively recruit members from the native elite stratum less on the basis of their ideological commitment but more on their demonstrated capacity to mobilise votes (Tien, 1989; Tien & Chu, 1996). In particular, the KMT inherited from its one-party authoritarian rule not only an established pattern of electoral dominance but also a development strategy with extensive social support.

Table 5.1: Results of the legislative Yuan and presidential elections, 1986–2012

		KMT	DPP	NP	PFP	TSU	Others
1986	**Legislative Yuan election**						
	Popular vote (%)	69.20	22.17	NA	NA	NA	8.63
	Seats	59	12	NA	NA	NA	2
	Seat share (%)	80.82	16.44	NA	NA	NA	2.74
1989	**Legislative Yuan election**						
	Popular vote (%)	60.22	28.26	NA	NA	NA	11.52
	Seats	72	21	NA	NA	NA	8
	Seat share (%)	71.29	20.79	NA	NA	NA	7.92
1992	**Legislative Yuan election**						
	Popular vote (%)	53.02	31.03	NA	NA	NA	15.95
	Seats	95	51	NA	NA	NA	15
	Seat share (%)	59.01	31.68	NA	NA	NA	9.32
1995	**Legislative Yuan election**						
	Popular vote (%)	46.06	33.17	12.95	NA	NA	7.82
	Seats	85	54	21	NA	NA	4
	Seat share (%)	51.83	32.93	12.80	NA	NA	2.44
1996	**Presidential election**						
	Popular vote (%)	54.00	21.13	14.90	NA	NA	9.98
1998	**Legislative Yuan election**						
	Popular vote (%)	46.43	29.56	7.06	NA	NA	16.95
	Seats	123	70	11	NA	NA	21
	Seat share (%)	54.66	31.11	4.89	NA	NA	9.33
2000	**Presidential election**						
	Popular vote (%)	23.10	39.30	0.13	NA	NA	37.46

Table 5.1: Results of the legislative Yuan and presidential elections, 1986–2012 (continued)

		KMT	DPP	NP	PFP	TSU	Others
2001	**Legislative Yuan election**						
	Popular vote (%)	28.63	33.46	2.62	18.61	7.78	9.12
	Seats	68	87	1	46	13	10
	Seat share (%)	30.22	38.67	0.44	20.44	5.78	4.44
2004	**Presidential election**						
	Popular vote (%)	49.89	50.11	NA	NA	NA	NA
2004	**Legislative Yuan election**						
	Popular vote (%)	32.83	35.72	0.12	13.90	7.79	9.64
	Seats	79	89	1	34	12	10
	Seat share (%)	35.11	39.56	0.44	15.11	5.33	4.44
2008	**Legislative Yuan election**						
	Popular vote (%)	55.77	39.79	NA	0.3	0.99	3.15
	Seats	81	13	0	1	0	4
	Seat share (%)	77.22	16.46	0	0.89	0	3.54
2008	**Presidential election**						
	Popular vote (%)	58.45	41.55	NA	NA	NA	NA
2012	**Legislative Yuan election**						
	Popular vote (%)	48.18	43.80	0.08	1.33	NA	6.61
	Seats	64	40	0	3	3	3
	Seat share (%)	56.64	35.40	0	2.65	2.65	2.65
2012	**Presidential election**						
	Popular vote (%)	51.60	45.63	NA	2.77	NA	NA

Note: * KMT means the Kuomintang, DPP the Democratic Progressive Party, PFP the People First Party, NP the New Party, and TSU the Taiwan Solidarity Union.

Source: Compiled by the authors based on data derived from the Central Election Commission, various years

The case of Taiwan raises the question: How could an authoritarian revolutionary political party retain its political dominance? The answers to this question are varied and two critical factors will be discussed in this chapter: local factions and the electoral system of congressional elections.[1] The former comprises informal organisations, while the latter belongs to the institutional factor. With respect to the analyses of variables which bring about political dominance in electoral politics, one point should be kept in mind. While an attempt is made to identify some of the elements that have caused the KMT to win with such overwhelming support, a comprehensive and complete explanation is not possible. One variable or some combination of variables (for instance, aid from the US, socio-economic transition, civic culture, changing party nature, electoral crisis, elite conflict, party funding, and ideology of the party leadership — especially during the time of Chiang Kai-shek and his use of symbolism during the initiation of dominance) could exert greater influence than others at a given time. At some points in the process, moreover, the transformation of the dominant party system in Taiwan could be regarded as the result of a complex reciprocation of a set of factors.

The mode and outcomes of the KMT's transition provides us with an opportunity to examine the various ways in which a hegemonic party can determine the characteristics of its emerging competitors, the parameters of electoral competition, the institutionalisation of the party system, the quality of the new representative democracy, and the prospect for the consolidation of the new democratic regime (Chu, 1999, 2001). Toward that end, this research explores three interrelated issues. First, it addresses the general character of factions and factionalism and describes the relationship between the KMT and local factions as patron–client politics. Attention is paid to the role of factions in electoral contests, particularly the candidate selection process and election outcomes, and it also examines the development of factionalism from the 1990s and through the 2000s. Next, it provides a brief description of Taiwan's electoral system, including the electoral formula and the political consequences of its electoral reform. Last, it concludes by assessing the implications of the transformation of the KMT from an authoritarian to a democratic political party and the prospects for its role in a democratic Taiwan.

Characteristics of Taiwan's local factions

Faction, in a generally accepted academic definition, means a 'dyadic non-corporate group' based on a patron–client relationship (Landé, 1977:xiii). Typically, a patron–client relationship is a vertical dyadic alliance, referring to 'two persons of unequal status, power or resources, each of whom finds it useful to have as an ally someone superior or inferior to himself' (Landé, 1977:xx). The superior individual of such an alliance is termed a patron. The inferior is called a client. The literature has shown that factional ties enable leaders to mobilise their followers in traditional communities (Belloni & Beller,

1 The chapter focuses mainly on the relationship between Taiwan's local factions and the KMT. For more information about the origins of factionalism, and the interaction between local factions and national factions, see the work of Bosco (1994), Chen (1995), Chen & Chu (1992), Hood (1996), Huang (1990), Tan, Yu & Chen (1996), Wachman (1994), and Wu (2003).

1978; Huntington & Dominiquez, 1975; Nicholson, 1972; Powell, 1970; Scott, 1969, 1972). Politically, the patron either controls resources or has access to their allocation, such as largesse, public revenue, employment, power, or official connections. The patron distributes the largesse to the client in exchange for loyalty, support, votes, delivery of votes, or campaign contributions. In the electoral process, the patron gives the client benefits and looks forward to receiving an important resource from the client, for instance, the vote. Viewed in this way, patronage is always the base of patron power.

Under this system of clientelism, as two or more factions begin to compete for any given benefits, the phenomenon of factional politics, or 'factionalism', appears (Landé, 1977:xxxii; Nicholson, 1978:162–163). Factionalism is a part of political life in many developing countries (Huntington, 1968:44), and it has even played an important role in American politics, especially in the South (Price, 1970; Sindler, 1955). 'In states with powerful factional machines, the line between party organization and faction is sometimes thin', according to VO Key (1949:389), 'but in reality the faction has independent foundations and takes over party posts as an incident to its general dominance.' Even in a highly developed democracy like Japan, party factions (*habatsu*) play a key role in its two major parties: the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and the Japan Socialist Party (JSP) (McNelly, 1982; Shiratori, 1988). Japanese politics is made up of coalitions of factions; '[f]or both parties [the LDP and JSP], factionalism serves as the major mechanism for the allocation of important party positions and government jobs' (Fukui, 1978:56). A party leader is the leader of both a faction and an *ad hoc* alliance of factions. Each faction has its vehicles to get votes in elections and political resources to obtain benefits.

Although Taiwan and Japan share some aspects of factionalism, Taiwan's factional politics displays different but related implications. When it comes to Taiwan's factions and factionalism, factions can be classified into several types: 1) mainlander factions within the KMT that survived the Chinese civil war and retreated to Taiwan; 2) the ethnic cleavage — mainlander versus Taiwanese factions — in the KMT leadership circle in the 1970s and 1980s; 3) the Mainstream and the Non-mainstream factions among the KMT inner circle during the late 1980s and 1990s; 4) the factions within the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), the KMT's major political competitor;[2] and 5) local factions comprised mostly of Taiwanese politicians and local elites. Among these, the conservative mainlander factions are not of much significance on Taiwan's political stage; in contrast, local factions play a relatively important role in the electoral politics, and are therefore the focus of this chapter.

Geographically speaking, Taiwan's local factions are limited to the regional administrative units at the county, township, and village levels, a phenomenon closely related to two electoral features. Electoral districts for public office at the city and county levels were apportioned by fixed geographic units. When electoral districts for the 1969 National Assembly elections started to depart from county boundaries, factions were already well entrenched at the local level. By the 1994 gubernatorial and the 1996

2 For the political factions and factionalism within the DPP (including the *Meilidao*, the New Tide, the Justice Alliance, and the New Nation Alliance), given the disputes over Taiwanese independence scenarios and ideologies, please refer to Arrigo (1994); see also Cheng & Hsu (1996).

presidential elections, national executive posts were attained either by appointment or by indirect election, rather than direct popular suffrage (Tien, 1989:165). Accordingly, Taiwan's factions construct social alliances in the local administrative hierarchy.

Beyond the territorial basis, local factions share certain characteristics. For one, strong affective social ties provide effective components to foster and maintain factions. Some terms are frequently used to describe individual social bonds, including connections (*kuan-hsi*), interactions (*chiao-wang*), affections (*kan-ch'ing*), face-saving (*mian-zu*), and human sentiments (*jen-ch'ing*). In all, affective social ties are defined as 'a perceptive mixture of personal affiliations, feelings, *kimogi* [sentiments], geographic and kindred appreciations, and political beliefs' [original in Chinese] (Chen, 1994:5). The influence of personal ties depends on the affective content of mutual sentiment in a dyadic relationship. Mutual commitment requires reciprocal favouritism that provides an attitudinal basis for the patron–client exchange in politics (Bosco, 1994:126–127; Jacobs, 1979:239; Lerman, 1978:108–109; Pye, 1981:6).

Social and individual bonds are conducive to political clientelism, but they are not the only reason for the prevalence of factionalism. Additional factors, such as the need for security, power consolidations, ideological identifications, traditional elitist structures, and corporate institutions, promote the establishment of clientelism. For example, the formation of factions could be motivated by the need for security, which stresses the threat of insecurity and hence 'the need for protection against these dangers' (Lerman, 1978:195). From the viewpoints given above, the motivations and bases for local factions could be dynamic rather than static. Viewed in this light, urbanisation and the concomitant social changes transform local factions from patterns of personal affective ties to utilitarian associations; the structures could change from social-cultural alliances to political-economic associations; for that reason, the leadership forms could replace closed oligarchic structures with open pluralistic leadership arrangements.

It is widely accepted that Taiwan's local factions often play important roles in candidate selection, in campaign activities, and in vote-getting. Over time, since a great number of local politicians had joined the KMT, factions sometimes acted as intraparty political groups competing for patronage and/or political power. As noted, factions are always circumscribed within counties or cities with respect to size and influence. Of Taiwan's 21 counties and cities, 16 have factional networks. Six areas — Taipei County (New Taipei City), Nantou County, Yunlin County, Tainan City (Greater Tainan), Penghu County, and Taitung County — have no countywide factional networks, but they do have numerous factions in their subordinate townships and rural districts. Taipei City is the only case without factionalism because of its high degree of economic modernisation and urbanisation. Over the years, more than one hundred local factions have existed in Taiwan. In all, Taiwan's local factions are limited to specific geographic areas and have no uniform labels.

Local factions are often found to intervene in elections. Their access to the economic resources necessary for effectively waging electoral activities comes from economic privileges granted to them by the KMT. These include: 1) monopolies of local commercial activities such as banks, credit unions, and transportation companies; 2) special loan privileges from provincial and national banks; 3) procurement and construction contracts from provincial and local government agencies; 4) other economic benefits,

such as favourable zoning laws or public construction schemes for land speculation, bestowed by KMT-controlled governments; and 5) the use of official KMT power to protect illegal business such as underground dance halls, erotic barber shops, and casinos (Chen & Chu, 1992:81–82). KMT-factional alliances, then, are considered 'an investment in power and prestige that offers many money-earning opportunities' (Bosco, 1994:131). Beyond economic advantages, factions also have personal networks. The county- and city-level factions always forge alliances with township-level factions. Faction members in any locale are arrayed in hierarchical structures that include leaders, loyal followers, grass-roots supporters, and reliable voters. The alliances, in general, are stable because the loyalty of factions is critical for both their leaders and members.

Local factions and the KMT in electoral politics

Historically, Taiwan was a peripheral part of China. Occupied by Japan in 1895, Taiwan was returned to the KMT regime, which controlled the government of mainland China, at the end of World War II. In 1949 the KMT government retreated from China to Taiwan after the communists had defeated it in the Chinese civil war. The KMT regime, under the leadership of Chiang Kai-shek, exercised authoritarian rule over the island state from that time until the mid-1970s when rapid socio-political change began. Over the past several decades, local factions have become integral to the continuation of KMT rule. The critical factor linking the KMT and local factions is their role in popular elections.

Local factions arose from personal social networks that had existed before the KMT regime retreated to Taiwan in 1949. After moving to Taiwan, the KMT regime searched for grass-roots support, with the help of local elites. The KMT had to rely on the support of local factions to win the electoral majorities necessary to rule Taiwan legitimately. To reward local factions for support in the electoral process, the KMT granted them specific monopolistic economic privileges, as mentioned previously. Through this patronage system, the KMT and local factions institutionalised a ruling entity of mutual state–society dependency.

This clientele relationship, however, was far from permanent. In fact, the KMT leadership always held a negative view of factions because local factions were widely blamed for ruining KMT party prestige and for retarding democratisation of the political system. For one, local factions supported KMT-favoured candidates and mobilised voters to help the KMT win elections, after which they distributed political and economic benefits to themselves. The KMT continued its monopoly over the political and social resources that were used to establish strong alliances with local factions; hence nomination by the KMT virtually assured the election of a candidate until the mid-1980s. Without the KMT's blessing, candidates had little chance of election (Winckler, 1984:496–497). Furthermore, although ordinary citizens were eligible to vote, their only choice was between competing KMT candidates. Local candidates organised citizens into factions consolidated by the distribution of patronage and favours. In the end, widespread illegal practices and corrupt behaviour (vote-buying, bribery, violence, and so on) caused intraparty competition in the electoral process.

Being aware of the impact of factionalism, the KMT could use various strategies to keep factions from capturing too much power (Wu, 2001:111–113). For instance, where

the KMT and faction strength was reasonably even, the KMT supported electable faction candidates or likely winners in an attempt to increase its influence through the success of its nominees. Likewise, if no one faction was influential or predominant, the KMT nominated fewer candidates than the number of available seats and it allowed KMT members without party nominations to run. The strategy of divide and rule was also common. When one faction was clearly dominant, the KMT supported candidates offered by the weaker faction in order to prevent any one faction from gaining too much power and control over local politics. Where factions were roughly even in political strength or when factional conflicts became intensive, the KMT nominated non-faction candidates under the guise of pacifying factional strife while, in reality, it was attempting to strengthen its influence in local politics.

The KMT employed many practices to select candidates for various national and local elections. While the KMT national party organisations centralised power in the candidate selection process for the national elections, at the same time it gave local factions control over the candidate selection process for local elections. However, the KMT national leadership played a decisive role in the selection of candidates to run for national-level offices, regardless of any influence of local factions.

At times, local factions were also in conflict with the KMT. The maintenance of local factions was based mostly on the patron–client relationship of patronage and interest. Thus ideological consensus was not the primary motivation behind the formation of a faction (Nathan, 1978:395–396; Nicholas, 1977:58). Ties between the KMT and factions, then, were far from permanent. Local factions adopted tactics to preserve their power against KMT moves to control the nomination process. First, a common strategy was to boycott the KMT party nominees. When factional candidates did not get KMT party approval, they decided not to run if their careers were at risk. Hence, factional candidates sometimes claimed to support KMT party nominees without waging any substantial campaign activities. In some cases, factions even switched to support opposition party candidates. Second, factions dedicated themselves to the support of the party nominees on the condition that the KMT granted factions more economic privileges. Third, factional leaders made informal compromises with one another. In a multi-member district with the single non-transferable vote (SNTV) system of election to legislative bodies, candidate quotas were distributed according to the ability of factions to mobilise votes. In the single-member-at-large district system contests, factions took turns in nominating candidates for administrative offices. Finally, factions sometimes campaigned against KMT party nominees because of the enormous human and material resources necessary to keep their organisation alive through fielding candidates. As Edwin A. Winckler (1984: 496) put it, 'the party's [KMT's] main problem is preventing those party politicians denied nominations from sabotaging the nominee or running as mavericks'.

Nonetheless, the strategy of forming alliances with local factions enabled the KMT to maintain its electoral dominance for decades. An examination of its nominations and election outcomes sheds light on the faction-based strategy. For example, in the Provincial Assembly elections between 1954 and 1994, approximately two-thirds of candidates nominated by the KMT were affiliated with local factions, as shown in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2: KMT Nomination and election results of the Taiwan Provincial Assembly, 1954–1994

	Nominated								Elected				
	Seats	Candidates		Faction		Non-faction			Seats		Faction		Non-faction
Year	N[a]	N[b]	%[c]	N[d]	%[e]	N[f]	%[g]	N[h]	%[i]	N[j]	%[k]	N[l]	%[m]
1954	57	44	77.19	33	75.00	11	25.00	39	88.64	30	90.01	9	81.82
1957	66	55	83.33	33	60.00	33	40.00	45	81.82	31	93.94	14	63.64
1960	73	58	79.45	37	63.79	21	36.21	53	91.38	37	100.0	16	76.19
1963	74	74	100.00	48	64.86	26	35.14	61	82.43	42	87.50	19	73.08
1968	71	60	84.51	38	63.33	22	36.67	56	93.33	36	94.74	20	90.91
1972	73	60	82.19	30	50.00	30	50.00	54	90.00	29	96.67	25	83.33
1977	77	69	89.61	42	60.87	27	39.13	55	79.71	39	92.86	16	59.26
1981	77	38	49.35	27	71.05	11	28.95	34	89.47	25	92.49	9	81.82
1985	77	60	77.92	41	68.33	19	31.67	52	86.67	37	90.24	15	78.95
1989	77	62	80.52	36	58.06	26	41.94	49	79.03	32	88.89	17	65.38
1994	79	55	69.62	28	50.91	27	49.09	43	78.18	26	92.86	17	62.96
Total	801	635	79.28	393	61.89	242	38.11	541	85.19	364	92.62	177	73.14

Notes: N denotes number of cases and the figures in percentage are calculated as c=b/a, e=d/b, g=f/b, i=h/b, k=j/d, and m=l/f.

Sources: Compiled by the authors, based on data derived from Chen (1995: 224); see also Chen (1996: 178) and the Central Election Commission, various years

The share of faction nominees was highest (75 per cent) in 1954, during the early years of the KMT regime in Taiwan, a phenomenon that gradually declined as authoritarian power increased from the late 1950s onward. The share of faction nominees peaked again during the first half of the 1980s, in the face of increased challenges to the KMT from the opposition. Over the past five decades, the average election rate of factional candidates has been 92.63 per cent higher than that of non-factional candidates (73.14 per cent).

The KMT used many practices to select candidates for various national and local elections. The KMT national party organisations centralised power in the candidate selection process for national elections, but, at the same time, granted local factions control over the candidate selection process for local elections. The KMT national leadership played a decisive role in the selection of candidates running for the national-level offices, even if local factions still had some influence. As shown in Table 5.3, an average of 49.46 per cent of the KMT nominees for the Legislative Yuan races from 1980 to 1992 were faction-backed candidates, a phenomenon even lower (41.13 per cent) for the National Assembly elections from 1980 to 1991. Except for the 1986 election, the percentage of faction-based KMT candidates elected exceeded those of non faction-based KMT candidates. In the 1989 and 1992 elections in the Legislative Yuan, the election rates of the KMT candidates gradually dwindled while those of the opposition increased, especially in the 1992 election, during which the KMT had an unprecedented setback. Reliance on faction mobilisation of votes seemingly no longer guaranteed electoral success.

In brief, the statistics show that KMT-endorsed candidates had relatively high election rates over the years. Further, faction-tied candidates generally did better than those not affiliated with factions, but faced strong opposition challenges after the late 1980s, when KMT sanction of faction candidates could no longer guarantee victory. Under such circumstances, the electoral interests of factions and the KMT were not closely interrelated.

The transformation of factionalism since the 1990s

After the mid-1980s, Taiwan's society experienced a series of dramatic political changes: the establishment of the DPP in September 1986, the lifting of martial law in July 1987, the outbreak of social protest movements beginning in 1987, and an unprecedented intraparty power struggle for the leadership of the KMT after the death of Chiang Ching-kuo in January 1988. These events signalled a decline in KMT authoritarian rule and the development of competitive politics. In light of the electoral challenge, some KMT officials considered the time ripe for party reform, including a change in the top-down nomination system to a more democratic one.

In 1989, the KMT approved the plan for closed primary elections, although some expressed reservations. One common concern was that aspirants were subjected to two campaigns — primary and general election — during each election cycle. Primaries increased both election costs and the risk of rejection. Other critics openly raised fears of the possibilities of vote-buying, factionalism, and the under-representation of KMT party members among the total eligible electorate. The primary elections were expected to improve the KMT's ability to win more seats and public offices (Wu & Fell, 2001).

Table 5.3: KMT nomination and election results of the Legislative Yuan and National Assembly, 1980–1992

The Legislative Yuan Elections													
	Nominated								Elected				
	Seats*	Candidates		Faction		Non-faction			Seats		Faction		Non-faction
Year	N[a]	N[b]	%[c]	N[d]	%[e]	N[f]	%[g]	N[h]	%[i]	N[j]	%[k]	N[l]	%[m]
1980	70	30	42.86	11	36.66	19	63.33	29	96.66	11	100.00	18	94.74
1983	71	45	63.38	20	44.44	25	55.56	43	95.55	20	100.00	23	92.00
1986	73	46	63.01	19	41.30	27	58.70	40	86.95	16	84.21	24	88.89
1989	101	58	57.43	29	50.00	29	50.00	46	79.31	26	89.66	20	68.97
1992	125	98	78.40	58	59.18	40	40.82	62	63.26	38	65.52	24	60.00
Total	440	277	62.95	137	49.18	140	50.54	220	79.42	111	81.02	109	77.85
The National Assembly Elections													
1980	76	27	35.53	8	29.62	19	70.38	25	92.59	8	100.00	17	89.47
1986	84	38	45.24	15	39.47	23	60.53	34	89.47	13	86.67	21	91.30
1991	225	183	81.33	79	43.16	104	56.84	161	87.97	77	97.47	84	80.77
Total	385	248	64.42	102	41.13	146	58.87	220	88.71	98	96.07	122	83.56

Notes: N denotes number of cases and the figures in percentage are calculated as c=b/a, e=d/b, g=f/b, i=h/b, k=j/d, and m=l/f.

*Excludes the number of seats of the overseas Chinese communities for the years before 1989, and the number of seats of the national and overseas Chinese representatives distributed to the political parties based on the proportion of votes won by these parties since 1991.

Sources: Compiled by the authors, based on data derived from Chen (1995: 226–227); see also Chen (1996: 187–189) and the Central Election Commission, various years

However, quite unexpectedly, the KMT vote share dropped from its normal level of 70 per cent to below 60 per cent. The KMT leadership considered the election its worst electoral setback ever, placing most of the blame on the primary election system.

Following the disappointing election performance in 1989, the KMT experienced internal strife that culminated in the party split of 1990. The intraparty elite conflict can be traced to the time of Chiang's death and Vice President Lee Teng-hui's assumption of the presidency. Compared to the charismatic Chiang, Lee, a native Taiwanese, was considered a figurehead by some important mainlander players in post-Chiang transition politics. The setback at the polls caused KMT officials to ponder the party's leadership and the distribution of power within the party. The KMT's relationship with local factions was also hotly disputed. The party's official pronouncements were hostile to local factions, although the KMT continued constructing electoral alliances with them.

In February 1990, President Lee faced an unexpected challenge to his re-election bid from within his party, even though he had a highly favourable image and his approval ratings typically ranged between 80 and 90 per cent. Lee's hesitation in deciding on a running mate for the pending presidential election created tension among KMT leaders who hoped to be nominated. Open confrontation finally erupted when Lee announced his of choice of Li Yuan-ze, secretary-general of the presidency. Lee's major opponents then formed their own presidential ticket for approval by the KMT Central Committee. Lin Yang-kang, president of the Judicial Yuan, headed the counter-ticket with Chiang Wei-kuo, head of the National Security Council, as his vice-presidential nominee. The Lin-Chiang candidacy was viable because the president was not popularly elected, but chosen by the National Assembly, which, in turn, was mainly controlled by elderly mainlander parliamentarians elected in 1947 and not subject to popular election.

The power struggle ended when Lin and Chiang decided to withdraw from the race in March 1990. By this time, the KMT inner circle was split into two opposing camps, the Mainstream and the Non-mainstream. Lee led the Mainstream, known as the 'Taiwan KMT', and composed primarily of Taiwanese politicians. Lee's conservative adversaries led its counterpart, the Non-mainstream, nicknamed the 'China KMT', and composed predominantly of mainlander elites.

In the midst of this party power struggle, the local factions played an increasingly important role in national politics, due to the Mainstream's reliance on them to defeat its rivals. To reinforce their political power, both the Mainstream and Non-mainstream sought allies in their struggle for control of the KMT. For one, in the Legislative Yuan, the Wisdom Club, a group of faction-backed native Taiwanese KMT legislators, embraced a 'Taiwan First' agenda, placing priority on Taiwan's immediate development and needs over China's reunification, and became the strongest supporters of the Mainstream and harsh critics of the Non-mainstream. In contrast, 11 young (second-generation) mainlander members of the New KMT Alliance advocated that the government adopt further strategies to promote reunification; they were Non-mainstream associates and the most outspoken challengers of President Lee. In the National Assembly, KMT deputies also split over the practice of selecting the president. The Mainstream defenders, mostly factional members, argued that the president should be subject to direct election, shaping

the government structure as a presidential system. On the other hand, although the Non-mainstream adherents endorsed some reform, they opposed fundamental changes to the structure of government outlined in the Constitution, including indirect election of the president. The political cleavages and bickering between the two intraparty camps were often fiercer than those between the KMT and other political parties.

As a competitive party system began to take shape, the KMT leadership found itself challenged by both an assertive opposition outside the party and cleavage among the ruling elite within the party. The 1991 and 1992 elections to the National Assembly and Legislative Yuan were considered milestones because all senior parliamentarians were forced to retire. Therefore, the elections brought Taiwan two 'new' parliamentary bodies with delegates directly accountable to the voters. The elections also were a critical public arena for the contest between the Mainstream and Non-mainstream members. The Non-mainstream associates publicly advocated the holding of the primary elections, for the primaries benefited them. It was easy to see why. The solid cohesion and identified conservative ideology encouraged mainlander sympathisers, the *Huang Fu Hsing* (a special party branch of the KMT whose members are military veterans or their family members), to go to the polls, thus giving the Non-mainstream an advantage. However, the coalition strategy of the Mainstream, under President Lee's leadership, was quite straightforward, and that was to nominate more faction-supported aspirants (as shown in Tables 5.2 and 5.3), and to scratch the Non-mainstream members from the nomination list. As expected, some Non-mainstream cohorts decided to run without party approval as independents, and most of them were elected. They finally split from the KMT and announced the establishment of the New Party (NP) in August 1993.

With the departure of the Non-mainstream major figures, internal KMT disunity eased. With the full support of local factions, the KMT continued its electoral success and retained its political dominance, and local factions in turn steadily shared in the privileges of access to political power and economic benefits through their alliances with the KMT regime. The 1995 election of the Legislative Yuan was considered the prelude to the 1996 presidential and National Assembly elections. In the face of growing election competition from the DPP and the NP, the KMT endorsed a large number of faction-supported candidates running under the party banner. The electoral results revealed that the governing party continued to hold onto a relative majority of the popular vote, although the percentages of votes (46.1 per cent) and seats (52.3 per cent) won by the KMT decreased modestly.

Among the four viable tickets competing in the 1996 presidential race, KMT incumbent Lee garnered a respectable majority (54 per cent) of the total vote and became the first popularly elected president. With respect to elections for the National Assembly, the KMT received 49.7 per cent of the votes to win 54.8 per cent of the total seats. The reasons Lee won a victory are numerous. However, the collective support of local factions was a crucial contributing factor. Again, the KMT distributed patronage, favours, and party nominations to co-opt local factions, and factions that helped the KMT win elections. Once the KMT leadership had consolidated its ruling base, it used strategies to diminish the importance of factionalism.

In the 1997 election for county magistrates and city mayors, the KMT nominated some non-factional candidates and in some districts allowed members without party nominations to run — its justification being the settlement of factional bickering. However, the manoeuvring backfired. A number of factional aspirants who did not get the party's blessing claimed to support party nominees without waging any substantial campaign mobilisation, and in some instances, even decided to boycott the nominated candidates completely. As a result, the KMT suffered a crushing electoral loss. For the first time, DPP candidates won more seats than KMT candidates, capturing 12 of a total of 23 executive posts, while the KMT won eight, and independents, three. In view of the unprecedented setback, the KMT reverted to its faction-coalition policy.

In the 1998 year-end elections, the KMT gained majorities in the Legislative Yuan and Kaohsiung City Council and regained the Taipei mayoral post. Yet it lost the Kaohsiung mayoral election to the DPP and won less than half the seats in the Taipei City Council. An examination of its nominations for the 1998 election to the Legislative Yuan shed light on the faction-based strategy. According to the authors' calculation, the share of faction nominees had peaked; of the 115 KMT-recommended candidates for 168 district seats, 68 nominees (59.13 per cent) were affiliated with local factions, among whom 56 (82.35 per cent) were elected. In a sense, faction-backed candidates seemed to be assured of electoral success.

The 2000 presidential election obviously was a critical event that changed Taiwan's political landscape drastically. In August 1999, Lee Teng-hui's intraparty opponent, James Soong, argued in favour of a closed primary to nominate the KMT presidential candidate. His effort failed because Lee and the KMT hardliners felt that the primary system would render the nomination process totally unmanageable. Lee subsequently appointed Vice President Lien Chan as the nominee, although the official candidate had only lukewarm grass-roots support. Following his failure to get the party's blessing, James Soong, who enjoyed high popularity, decided to run for the presidency for the presidency as an independent. This departure of a leading figure left the party on the verge of a split. In the DPP camp, Chen Shui-bian, the former mayor of Taipei City, beat his foes, winning the candidacy effortlessly.

When the election was in high gear, a large number of KMT supporters and factional leaders were wondering whether Lien or Soong had a better chance of winning. To a certain degree, both Lien and Soong sought to convince local factions to support them in order to prevent Chen's election. The electoral results showed that most of the KMT electorate and faction leaders chose Soong, who garnered 36.8 per cent of the vote. Surprisingly, Lien received merely 23.1 per cent of the ballot. Chen, who won 39.3 per cent of the vote, defeated the other candidates. No sooner had Chen declared his victory, than some furious KMT supporters placed the blame on Lee Teng-hui, encircling the party headquarters and demanding Lee's resignation as chairman for the election debacle (Y. Wu, 2001:40–43). Subsequently, Lee and several of his associates were relieved of their KMT posts, and Lien took over Lee's position as the acting chairman. Meanwhile, Soong and his core supporters who had split from the KMT announced the establishment of the People First Party (PFP).

Chen's presidential victories in 2000 and 2004 ended half a century of KMT control of the central government, but left it with a majority in the Legislative Yuan. From late 2000 through to early 2008, the government experienced such critical challenges as the shaky economy (a high unemployment rate and slow economic growth rate), fragile across-Strait relations, the controversies over the Fourth Nuclear Power Plant, the threat of impeachment of the president, and fierce antagonism between the DPP and KMT-PFP-NP alliance in the Legislative Yuan. Chen and other DPP leaders placed most of the blame on a divided government. They firmly believed that the solution to political deadlock and stalemate was for the DPP to win the legislative elections in 2001, 2004, or 2008.

To that end, Chen invited Lee Teng-hui and the Taiwan Solidarity Union (TSU) to form a strategic alliance in June 2001. Lee was thought to feel the need to consolidate the DPP governing base. The DPP and TSU bloc is generally called the Pan-Green Camp. (Note that the relationship between Chen and Lee has soured, since around 2005.) As for the opposition, the KMT's, PFP's, and NP's party leaders, with a convergence of interests, decided to work together to continue their domination in Parliament. This alliance is commonly termed the Pan-Blue Camp. Since the formation of these alliances, the conflicts and tensions between the Pan-Blue and Pan-Green Camps have become a common feature of Taiwan's national and local political landscapes.

The 2008 Legislative Yuan elections were held under a new electoral system which will be discussed in the following section. The electoral results revealed that the Pan-Blue Camp scored a landslide victory over the DPP in the races, winning 86 seats, including 60 single-member district (SMD) seats, 20 PR seats, and six seats from aboriginal districts, to secure a three-fourths majority. The results were a fiasco for the DPP, which garnered merely 13 SMDs and 14 PR seats, and wound up controlling 23.89 per cent of the available seats. The other parties fared poorly, with none of them reaching the 5 per cent threshold required to win at-large seats.

The legislative elections were also commonly considered to be a prelude to the presidential election, which was scheduled for 22 March 2008. Not surprisingly, the KMT's candidate Ma Ying-jeou scored an overwhelming victory, garnering nearly 60 per cent of the vote to defeat the DPP candidate Frank Hsieh. The outcome saw the KMT return to power after eight years as the opposition. In addition, the government structure has been transformed from a divided government into a unified government, with the KMT controlling both the executive and legislative branches. Even so, both the Pan-Green and Pan-Blue Camps will try to ally themselves with local factions in an attempt to dominate the electoral process. Simply put, factional clouts will probably still play an important role in Taiwan's electoral politics.

Taiwan's electoral system in perspective

The quasi-Leninist KMT regime, unlike other authoritarian political systems, regularly held local elections on Taiwan, starting in the early 1950s. In the beginning, only lower-level offices such as county magistrates, city mayors, city and county councilmen, and provincial assemblymen were subject to election. In the early years, the competitiveness

of these elections was limited because of emergency decrees to prohibit the formation of new political parties and, consequently, the chances of non-KMT candidates' winning were diminished. Even so, electoral competition was quite intense between the KMT and opposition candidates (Huntington, 1991:20, 23; Hsieh, 1996:195).

National elections did not take place for about two decades, although members of the parliamentary bodies were elected during the Mainland Era in 1947–1948. After arriving in Taiwan, the KMT-controlled government suspended elections, the justification being that most of these legislators were unable to run in their mainland China constituencies. Consequently, parliamentarians elected on the mainland remained in office without facing popular election. In the late 1960s, as the membership of the national legislature shrank and the public called for more popular participation, 'supplementary' elections for the parliamentary bodies were held on a regular basis, although the KMT controlled the elections. As Rein Taagepera and Matthew Soberg Shugart (1989:10–11) wrote:

> [p]erhaps one of the most creative ways in which an authoritarian regime remains in control while still allowing elections with choice is found in Taiwan. A 314-seat legislature with only 72 elected seats is justified by the ruling party's claim to be the government of all China. These 72 representatives are elected in constituencies in the areas under Taiwanese sovereignty. The remaining 242 seats are said to represent those areas 'temporarily' under the control of the Communist party in Beijing. Since no elections can be held there, the government must appoint those legislators. Thus the ruling party is assured a huge majority, by the same justification which legitimizes its very existence in Taipei.

The election system changed in the 1990s when an interpretation by the Council of Grand Justice, equivalent to the US Supreme Court, forced all the senior parliamentarians to retire by the end of 1991. By December 1992, the legislative chambers, the Legislative Yuan and the National Assembly were subject to election. Direct elections for the governor of Taiwan and the mayors of Taipei and Kaohsiung cities took place two years later. By the spring of 1996, with the first popular election of the president, all of Taiwan's legislative and executive officials — except the premier who is appointed by the president and approved by the Legislative Yuan — were subject to popular election.

Three types of electoral system are used in Taiwanese elections from the local to the national level.[3] First, the SMD at-large plurality system is used for the election of administrative leaders, such as village heads, city mayors, county magistrates, and the president. In this system each voter casts only one vote for a preferred candidate and the candidate with the largest number of votes is elected. Second, the SNTV system is used for local legislative elections, such as for village boards as well as city and county

3 The term 'electoral system' has broad implications. Douglas Rae (1971: 16–17, 21–39) analysed elections of national parliaments, characterising electoral systems by means of three elements: ballot structure, district magnitudes, and electoral formula. With Rae's classification as a basis, students of electoral studies have developed more refined typologies. Two additional dimensions that are generally employed in the classification of electoral systems are provisions for supplementary seats and electoral thresholds (Lijphart, 1999: Chapter 8; Taagepera & Shugart, 1989: 36–37). Electoral practices vary greatly but four types commonly used in democratic regimes are: SMD plurality or majority, PR, semi-PR, and mixed systems (see Cox, 1997; Duverger, 1962; Grofman & Lijphart, 1986; Norris, 2004; Shugart & Wattenberg, 2001). There are considerable variations within each system.

councils. Third, since the early 1990s, a mixed system has been used for the Legislative Yuan elections, which is a combination of the SNTV and a non-preferential list PR system, with greater weight given to the former. In this hybrid system, the voter is given only *one* vote for an individual candidate. The overall ratio of votes each political party receives in the election then determines the number of PR seats allotted to the party. Any given political party must collect at least 5 per cent of the votes cast in the general election in order to get a share of the PR seats. The votes won by independent, or party-affiliated candidates whose participation is not approved by their party, are not taken into account in the distribution of these seats.

The SNTV system was originally employed for elections to the Japanese Diet (House of Representatives), and is used in Taiwan only for local legislative elections.[4] In an SNTV election, each voter casts only one vote for a preferred candidate, and the votes received by one candidate cannot be transferred to another. Seats in a constituency are allocated by plurality rule, and the district magnitude is usually larger than one.[5] In a way, the SNTV and plurality SMD voting systems are similar electoral arrangements. Under the SNTV, in the districts with only one seat, the candidate who wins a plurality wins the seat, similar to what would happen in a SMD system. In multi-member constituencies, each voter in a district has one non-transferable vote to cast for a preferred candidate. The winners are the top M vote-getters, where M is the district magnitude (usually lying between two and six, or the so-called 'medium-sized districts') (Cox, 1996:740). In districts with only one seat, the SNTV and SMD with plurality rule are similar in electoral arrangement.

The electoral rules for the provincial assembly and national parliaments were far from simple. For one, there were two at-large districts reserved for the 'mountain' and 'out-of-mountain' aborigines. In the supplementary 1969–1989 elections to the Legislative Yuan and National Assembly, except for members elected by universal suffrage, the president appointed small numbers of parliamentarians, the so-called overseas Chinese representatives. Also, in the supplementary elections, about five per cent of seats were allocated to at-large constituencies elected by the members of the following 'professional' groups: agriculture, fishery, labour, industry, business, and education. Since the 1991 election, the overseas Chinese representatives and the representatives of the professional groups have been abolished and replaced by the PR system with a nationwide constituency.

Probably the most unique electoral arrangement is the 'female protective seats'. To promote political participation of women and the representation of women in the local

4 In 1994, the Japanese electoral system underwent a historic reform with the introduction of the *heiritsu-sei* (parallel system). The boundaries of the 130 multi-member districts were redrawn to form 300 new SMDs and an additional 200 seats (reduced to 180 seats in 2000) were allocated by PR in 11 PR districts, ranging in magnitude from seven to 33 seats. The voter has two votes, one for an individual candidate and one for the party list. Although the *heiritsu-sei* combines SMD and PR, it is not like the German system of 'personalised PR,' which completely determines the number of seats allocated to each party; the SMD election only determines which candidates are elected (Lin, 2006; Reed, 1995; Wolfe, 1995).

5 In Japan, there was only one single-member electoral district (out of 130): Amami Gunto. In the 2004 Legislative Yuan elections in Taiwan, there were four such districts (out of 27): Jinmen County (Quemoy), Lianjiang County (Mazu), Penghu County, and Taitung County. In both countries, these districts were in less-developed areas where constituency sizes are relatively small.

and provincial assemblies and national legislatures, women are granted a minimum number of seats (approximately 5 per cent), entitling them to be proclaimed winners even if they had a lower number of votes than one or more male candidates. On some occasions, the female protective seats are not necessary, given that a sizable number of women aspirants would be elected without them.

Even taking these uncommon electoral arrangements into account, the election system for legislative bodies in Taiwan remained basically one of SNTV. By excluding the available seats allocated for the aboriginal and professional groups, the non-preferential list PR system, and single-member districts, more than 80 per cent of seats were subject to selection from multi-member constituencies with the SNTV system.

The SNTV and its electoral effects

Across the world, electoral practices vary greatly. Between the two extremes of the plurality and PR systems are semi-proportional and mixed systems. Two main types of semi-proportional systems are the limited vote (of which SNTV is one variation) and the cumulative vote (Lijphart, Lopez Pintor & Sone, 1986:154–155; Taagepera & Shugart, 1989:26, 28).

Concerning electoral proportionality, there are two common contending viewpoints with respect to SNTV — superproportionality and subproportionality (Cox, 1996). One view of the SNTV system is that it is superproportional — producing larger seat bonuses for small parties than for large parties — because of the fact that small parties face easier nomination and intraparty vote division problems than do large parties (Hsieh, 1996:199–200; Taagepera & Shugart, 1989:28, 170). The alternative view of the SNTV system as subproportional, holds that SNTV benefits governing parties by giving them disproportionately more benefits which are useful in stabilising both nominations and vote divisions within the parties (Cox, 1996). In this controversy, the major concern is the notion of the maximum number of seats a party could win in a given district. Two electoral strategies are always at the heart of the issue: the number of nominees and vote divisions.

With respect to electoral proportionality between vote shares and seat shares, a comparison of the electoral strategies for the SMD and SNTV systems may provide a clearer picture. As noted previously, the SMD plurality system and the SNTV system resemble two versions of the same type of electoral system because the SNTV system essentially becomes the SMD plurality system when the district magnitude is one. Under candidate-centred systems (such as SMD and SNTV), the major work of political parties is to nominate one or a 'correct' number of candidates for election consideration. Under SMD, the selection of the most 'qualified' candidate becomes the essential task of the political party. Under SNTV, the nomination of an 'optimum' or 'correct' number of candidates becomes necessary. If a party endorses too few candidates, it may not win as many seats as its popular support could justify. If the party endorses an excessive number of candidates who must compete with one another, it may end up with more losers than the popular support would indicate (Lijphart, Lopez Pintor & Sone, 1986). However, an

'optimum' endorsement is still not enough because the political party may encounter the problem of vote division among its candidates in the same district (Cox, 1994, 1996; Lin, 2006; Wang, 1996). Therefore, a political party has to instruct its members to distribute their votes as equally as possible among its candidates.

In theory, under SNTV, if all parties in an election field nominate 'optimum' numbers of candidates and allocate their votes efficiently, the allocation of seats among them should be very nearly proportional. With certain assumptions, the SNTV system is equivalent to the d'Hondt formula of the PR system.[6] In general, the d'Hondt formula tends to increase the seat bonus of large parties. The larger the district magnitude, however, the smaller the seat bonus for the large parties and the results resemble a pure PR seat distribution. Likewise, under the SNTV system, if party supporters allocate their votes efficiently, the number of votes needed to win a seat should be roughly the same among the various parties, resulting in a proportional seat allocation.

In reality, things do not always work the way they are expected to. First, not all of the parties are able to estimate accurately the number of votes their own party may capture as well as those by others, resulting in over-nomination or under-nomination. In fact, over-nomination is more common. It is always found that political parties face great pressure to field an excessive number of candidates because unsuccessful aspirants could run as independents in competition with endorsed candidates (Hsieh, 1996:200). To make matters worse, because of its high degree of electoral proportionality, the use of SNTV has been highly controversial (see Cox, 1996; Hsieh, 1996, 1999; Liu, 1999; Wang, 1996). Critics charge it with such flaws as stimulating the development of extreme ideologies, encouraging factional politics, weakening borders in the competition between political parties, facilitating candidate-centred electoral politics, and fostering vote-buying and 'black gold' problems.

Political consequences of the electoral reforms

In tune with the mounting dissatisfaction with and challenges to SNTV, some political leaders in both of Taiwan's major parties, the KMT and the DPP, have been in favour of electoral reform since the late 1990s. After a series of intertwined negotiations among political forces, the Legislative Yuan passed a resolution for a constitutional amendment on electoral reform in August 2004 and the ad hoc National Assembly ratified the amendment in June 2005.

Under this amendment, the reform of the Legislative Yuan electoral system can be summarised as follows: 1) a reduction of the number of seats from 225 to 113; 2) an extension of the term of office from three to four years; 3) the adoption of the 'SMD with two-ballot system' in which voters cast one vote for a political party to elect legislators for the national at-large district (34 seats) and one vote to elect a legislator for an SMD

6 The d'Hondt formula is one of a number of mathematical formulas for seat allocation to political parties in the list PR system (Taagepera & Shugart, 1989: 29–35; Cox, 1991).

(73 seats); 4) two at-large districts with an SNTV system reserved for the 'mountain' aborigines (three seats) and 'out-of-mountain' aborigines (three seats); and 5) a 50 per cent quota of female candidates to be elected in the at-large district representing each party that has obtained no less than 5 per cent of the total votes. These new electoral rules are far from simple. However, even taking these unusual electoral arrangements into account, the system basically remains a parallel system, similar to the one employed in Japan since 1994.

The 2008 elections to the Legislative Yuan were the first to be held under a parallel system. Although the electoral effects of the new system may vary, one thing is almost certain: according to Duverger's law, the SMD plurality system tends toward a stable two-party system because of its mechanical and psychological effects (Duverger, 1962:217, 224–226; Rae, 1971:95; Riker, 1982, 1986). The mechanical effect denotes how votes are translated into seats and how a minor party can win a certain proportion of votes in a district but still fail to win a seat. This inherent electoral disproportionality leads to a party winning a certain share of the votes but a disproportionately small number of seats in the legislature. The psychological effect concerns how electoral rules influence the voting behaviour of the general public, in that voters tend to abandon their preferred parties in favour of less preferred parties that have a better chance of winning. Over time, the party system is therefore expected to move toward some sort of equilibrium, where two major political parties get all or almost all the votes.

The results of the 2008 legislative elections are presented in Table 5.4. Under the new electoral system, the KMT and the Pan-Blue Camp enjoyed a landslide victory over the DPP and secured a three-fourths majority. As expected, a given political party with the largest share of the popular vote profits most from the new system and it may help the second largest party in the at-large district, but it discriminates strongly against third, fourth, and even smaller parties. In the SMDs, the KMT obtained 55.75 per cent of the total votes, 79.93 per cent of the seats, with the 24.18 per cent seat bonus at the expense of other political parties. The DPP experienced a debacle, garnering merely 13 SMDs and 14 PR seats, winning only 23.89 per cent of the available seats. The other parties performed unsatisfactorily and none of them reached the electoral threshold required to win any national at-large seat.

In addition to the analyses of the legislative elections, these election outcomes yield at least three political implications. First, the elections could turn out to be a critical watershed as the DPP suffered a serious setback, winning only about one quarter of the available seats, while the Pan-Blue Camp controls approximately 75 per cent of the legislature. In a sense, the DPP's crushing defeat was due to public dissatisfaction with the Chen Shui-bian administration's lacklustre performance over the previous few years. To some extent, it may also imply that emphasising national identity and ethnic issues is no longer a recipe for winning elections.

Second, the results revealed that the DPP still had an electoral advantage, although not a monopoly, in the south, but was only sporadically successful in other regions. On the flip side, the Pan-Blue Camp tends to control most of the legislative seats in the north, centre, and east. These geographical differences are consistent with the common

Table 5.4: Results of the 2008 Legislative Yuan elections

	KMT (Pan-Blue)*				DPP			NP			TSU			Others	
	Vote %	Seat number (%)	Bonus %	Vote %	Seat number (%)	Bonus %	Vote %	Seat number (%)	Bonus %	Vote %	Seat number (%)	Bonus %	Vote %	Seat number (%)	Bonus %
Single-member districts	55.75	59	24.18	38.65	13	–21.65	NA	0	NA	0.96	0	–0.96	4.64	1	–3.27
		(79.93)			(17.81)			(.00)			(.00)			(1.37)	
National at-large district	51.93	20	6.89	36.91	14	4.27	3.59	0	–3.59	3.53	0	–3.53	4.04	0	–4.04
		(58.82)			(41.18)			(.00)			(.00)			(.00)	
Aboriginal districts	85.72	6	14.28	6.76	0	–6.76	NA	0	NA	NA	0	NA	7.52	0	–7.52
		(100.00)			(.00)			(.00)			(.00)			(.00)	
Total		85			27			0			0			1	
		(75.22)			(23.89)			(.00)			(.00)			(0.89)	

Note: * The Pan-Blue Camp includes the KMT, the PFP, the NP, and the National Democratic Non-Partisan Union.

Source: Compiled by the authors, based on data derived from the Central Election Commission, various years

assumption of 'north Blue, south Green'. In view of Taiwan's historical background and socio-political environment, such a geopolitical gap might be regarded as a serious social cleavage. Last but not least, for the minor political parties, the effect of the election was very simple. Just as Duverger's law predicts, under the parallel system it is not surprising to find that the TSU, the NP, and even the PFP were reduced to political insignificance after the elections, although they appealed to their supporters to use split-ticket voting.

Conclusion

With respect to the elements of the dominant party system, De Jager and Du Toit raised two significant questions at the beginning of this volume: How was dominance initially achieved? Why did the ruling party win with such overwhelming support? The answer lies in where the electoral strength of the dominant party comes from. Beyond the two factors discussed previously, there is at least one variable which could have influenced the dominant party system in Taiwan: the KMT's party enterprises. The KMT is generally considered to be one of the wealthiest political parties in the world. Although the KMT has never published accounts of its assets and businesses, estimates suggest that the KMT's finances are worth approximately US$1.5–2.5 billion. This wealth consists of numerous and diverse party-owned enterprises, including construction companies, real estates, financial institutions, computer companies, appliance companies, and broadcast and television stations (see Ferdinand, 2003:59–60; Manikas & Thornton, 2003:346–347; Xu, 1997). The types of resource available to opposition parties are relatively few and scarce, with the result that they have no choice but to engage in traditional fundraising activities.

The success of a former quasi-Leninist party in maintaining a streak of electoral triumphs long after the transition to democracy is far from effortless. During the KMT's reigning years, although a partisan grip on the state apparatus was an important ingredient of its electoral fortune, it was no longer the most decisive element. Beginning in the late 1980s, the KMT reinvigorated its electoral strength in much the same way as other dominant parties in advanced industrial democracies. More importantly, the response of the KMT to the changing socio-economic milieu and growing organised opposition was to adjust itself and begin functioning more like a competitor than a dominator in electoral politics.

The KMT, having been a hegemonic party for a long time, shaped the emerging party system through its power of institution-making. In particular, the electoral system for representative bodies reinforced a decentralised and spatially segmented power structure that its rival parties inherited from their democratic struggle. The electoral system also obstructed its competitors from developing strong organisational ties with the emerging social groups in civil society. As a hegemonic party, the KMT also shaped the party system with its power of 'political caging', in Michael Mann's (1993:39–40) terminology, that is, the power to contain political actors within clear, fixed, confined social and ideological boundaries. Meanwhile the organisational expansion of its rival had been constrained by the fact that the hegemonic party had already filled up most of the organisational space in society and locked in the support of key constituencies.

At the grass-roots level, the KMT incorporated existing patron–client networks into the party structure. Within each administrative district below the provincial level, the KMT nurtured and kept at least two competing local factions striving for public offices and for a share of region-based economic rents (Bosco, 1994; Chu, 2001). On top of this, the central leadership could claim the overall electoral victory delivered by disparate local factions. All factions were geographically bound. The party effectively blocked any attempts to form an island-wide political alliance among local factions. Thus, the party effectively turned the competitive logic and screening mechanism of local elections into an instrument of legitimacy, political control, and selective incorporation. On the eve of the democratic opening, the KMT, as a political organisation, had already undergone significant transformation, moving further away from the Leninist model and closer to a mass-based party supplemented by a clientelistic structure in the rural areas.

Factionalism nowadays is different from the patron–client relations of the authoritarian era. This transition is also reflected in the realm of Taiwan's across-Strait economic policy. A large number of Taiwanese enterprises, including faction-controlled ones, have rushed into the booming Chinese market since the late 1980s. In light of the flourishing economic relationship with mainland China over the past decade, the Taiwan government has come under pressure to adopt more liberal trade policies toward China. Since the KMT has formed solid alliances with local factions, the influence of factional interests on the ruling authority is increasing. Also, faction-controlled enterprises could be an effective vehicle to pressurise the government to make decisions in their favour. Currently, with Taiwan's economy facing stagnation and entrepreneurs demanding that the government loosen its controls over the business investments in China, factional leaders are pushing even more vehemently to remove restrictions on across-Strait economic activities. To sum up, the influence of local factions and their business groups on Taiwan's across-Strait economic policy-making has been on the rise since the mid-1990s. Viewed in this light, factionalism will remain an important component of Taiwan's politics for the foreseeable future.

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PART THREE

Dominant party systems in southern Africa

Chapter 6

Interrogating the dominant party system in Botswana

David Sebudubudu and Mokganedi Zara Botlhomilwe

It is only recently that the phenomenon of a dominant party system has been subjected to rigorous scholarly attention. This is especially true since the publication in 1990 of Pempel's influential work on *Uncommon democracies: The one party dominant regimes*. Following the publication of this path-breaking work, several papers have been produced addressing the issue of one party dominance and its implications for democracy. However, with regard to the dominant party system in Botswana, the longest enduring in Africa, no sustained or serious scholarly effort has been devoted to analysing this phenomenon. The purpose of this chapter therefore, is to fill this void by attempting to explain the origins and endurance of the system of party dominance in Botswana. An attempt will also be made to address the advantages and disadvantages of this system and its implications for the country's much acclaimed democratic system.

Historical and socio-economic context

Botswana attained independence from Britain in 1966. At the time, Botswana was a place of desolation that presented no hope of standing as a viable country to the departing colonial masters. In fact, it was among the poorest countries in the world (Manatsha & Maharjan, 2009; Sebudubudu & Malema, 2011). To be more specific, Botswana 'was the second poorest country in the world, next to Bangladesh. Its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was a paltry US$80' (Manatsha & Maharjan, 2009:19). Similarly, Sebudubudu and Malema (2011:201) note that 'Botswana was a poor agrarian economy with agriculture contributing around 40% to Gross Domestic Product (GDP)'. This demonstrates that Botswana's poverty at the time was dire. That was then.

However, with the discovery of minerals, particularly diamonds, a few years after independence, the story of Botswana is different some 45 years later. Botswana's economic and political situation is one of exceptional performance, which offers lessons to its sometimes envious peers. So successful is Botswana that some scholars describe

it as the 'Switzerland of Africa' (Manatsha & Maharjan, 2009), or even 'an African miracle' (Samatar, 1999). Manatsha and Maharjan (2009:19) summarise this success as follows:

> Today, Botswana is classified as an Upper Middle-Income country, with a GDP per capita (PPP) of US$17,779, and FOREX reserves of over US$10 billion. It remains the only country in the world which sustained an uninterrupted and rapid annual economic growth rate of 9.2 per cent for three decades (between 1966 and 1996) ... It is the largest producer of diamonds by value in the whole world. It is also ranked among the top least corrupt countries and investor friendly by the World Bank.

To this extent, and based on these achievements, which are rare in Africa, Botswana is indisputably a success story. Nonetheless, the challenges of poverty, inequalities, unemployment, and more recently HIV/AIDS, haunt Botswana (Sebudubudu, 2006; Manatsha & Maharjan, 2009). Manatsha and Maharjan (2009:19) are authoritative on this, when they state that 'Botswana's poverty incidence is 30 per cent, while the Gini-coefficient is 0.63, and unemployment is 17.6 per cent. It has the second highest HIV/AIDS prevalence in the world at 37.3 per cent'. HIV/AIDS threatens to reverse the gains the country has realised since independence. Even so, the country has put in place measures to mitigate its effects.

Politically, since the pre-independence elections of 1965, Botswana has consistently held regular and competitive elections at five year intervals. In terms of the Constitution of Botswana, national elections shall be held every five years and this constitutional provision has always been followed without fail, except for the pre-independence elections, which were held a year early. Unlike many African states, Botswana has never experienced a dictatorship, a military coup or been subjected to a one party state. Botswana is also the longest enduring democracy in Africa. While these are certainly welcome developments, especially in a continent notorious for its failures in economic and governance terms, Botswana remains a dominant party state with the ruling Botswana Democratic Party (BDP) having won all the elections since independence, from the pre-independence elections in 1965 to the most recent elections in 2009, with significant majorities (see Table 6.1 for the performance of political parties since 1965). However, its popular vote, as shown in the table, has been declining.

The continued dominance of the BDP in Botswana's political landscape is explained, among other things, in terms of its origins, its delivery, the politics of patronage and the political culture of the country. It is further argued that Botswana's opposition parties lack coherence and are therefore their own enemy. The chapter concludes by observing that there is a trend in the current political leadership toward increasing intolerance of dissenting views, and that if this culture persists, it may result in the reversal of the dominant party system.

Table 6.1: Percentage of seats and votes won by parties in Botswana elections, 1965–2009

Party	1965		1969		1974		1979		1984		1989		1994		1999		2004		2009	
	Seats	Votes	Seats	Votes	Seats	Votes	Seats	Votes	Seats	Votes	Seats	Votes	Seats	Votes	Seats	Votes	Seats	Votes	Seats	Votes
BDP	99	80	77	68	84	77	91	75	82	68	91	65	67	55	83	54	77	51	79	54
BNF			10	14	7	12	6	13	15	20	9	27	33	37	15	25	21	26	11	21
BPP	0	14	10	12	7	6	3	8	3	7	0	4	0	4				2	0	1.4
BIP	0	5	3	6	2	4	0	4	0	3	0	2	0	4						0
BAM															0	5	0	3		
BCP/ BAM															2	11	2	16	9	22*
NDF																	0	1		
OTHER	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	5	0	1	1	1.4
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Note: *In 2009 the BCP and BAM contested the elections as a pact/alliance and obtained a combined popular vote of 22%. The names of the political parties in the order listed above are: Botswana Democratic Party; Botswana National Front; Botswana People's Party; Botswana Independence Party; Botswana Alliance Movement; Botswana Congress Party/Botswana Alliance Movement, and National Democratic Front.

Source: Reproduced from Sebudubudu & Osei-Hwedie (2010: 92)

Constitutional framework

The Constitution of Botswana provides for 61 members of parliament (MPs); 57 directly elected and four specially elected, with executive power vested in the president. The president is also an *ex officio* member of parliament who has the power to contribute and vote in parliamentary proceedings. He appoints the vice president, cabinet ministers and the Attorney General. In terms of the Constitution, in the exercise of the powers conferred on him, the president, unless otherwise provided, acts on his own deliberate judgement and is not obliged to follow advice provided by anybody. The president thus wields immense powers ranging from control of the main apparatus of the state such as the army, police, information and broadcasting, to control over the Directorate of Intelligence Services (DIS), and the Directorate of Corruption and Economic Crime (DCEC). He appoints the commander of the army, and the heads of police, the DIS and the DCEC. He also appoints ambassadors, the Chief Justice and judges of the High Court. As if these powers are not enough, he also has legislative powers in that all bills that are passed by Parliament need his assent if they are to become law. More importantly, he enjoys immunity against prosecution whilst in office. The protection of the president in respect of legal proceedings is covered in Chapter 4, section 41 of the Constitution which states that 'whilst any person holds or performs the functions of the office of President no criminal proceedings shall be instituted or continued against him in respect of anything done or omitted to be done in his private capacity'.

The importance of Parliament in a democracy cannot be overemphasised. As Osei-Hwedie and Sebudubudu (2004:14) note: 'Parliament (in a democracy) is the core institution and the foundation of participatory democracy, as it alone is the true representative of society at large'. The Botswana Parliament is weak not only because it is dominated by one political party (BDP), but also because it is surrounded by a very powerful executive (Osei-Hwedie & Sebudubudu, 2004). The Constitution of Botswana actually sanctions the weakness of Parliament by stating, in unambiguous terms, that all executive power is vested with the president. The president has too many powers, including, amongst others, the power to appoint and dismiss cabinet ministers and heads of the army, the prerogative of mercy in judicial cases, and the power to declare a state of emergency. The DCEC Act also authorises the president to deny the directorate access to certain premises or documents if he is of the view that access to such premises or documents may endanger national security. The Constitution also gives the president power to dissolve Parliament at any time. As Molomo (2000:97) puts it, 'The powers of the President are wide-ranging; they straddle all the arms of government [;] the executive, judiciary and legislature.' This is despite the fact that the president is not popularly elected. In Botswana, the leader of the party that wins a simple majority in Parliament becomes the president.

Although the Constitution of Botswana gives Parliament the power to pass a motion of no confidence in the government, the provision is very difficult to invoke. Osei-Hwedie and Sebudubudu (2004:193) sum up the difficulty of adopting this route in the following terms:

> A motion of no confidence is one of the ways of holding the government accountable. However, such a motion is not that useful in policing the president or the executive in

> Botswana because Parliament would be dissolved as well should it be passed; thus Parliament has itself to, as it were, 'commit suicide', in order to get rid of a president, which is hardly likely to encourage MPs to take this step.

Poteete (2010:5) also makes reference to the unattractiveness of passing a vote of no confidence by speculating that it is likely that 'the early dissolution of the parliament and the relatively short period of campaigning make a vote of no confidence too costly, especially given the absence of public funding for political parties, the difficulty of reaching voters in Botswana's sparsely settled rural areas, and the disproportionate share of private campaign financing that typically accrues to the BDP'. In addition, the BDP disciplinary code does not allow MPs to go against a decision taken by the party parliamentary caucus. Any deviation from the decision of the parliamentary caucus attracts a disciplinary sanction. This makes it unthinkable for MPs to entertain any idea of such a vote in government.

The Botswana Parliament is therefore weak vis-à-vis the executive. This explains why some scholars such as Sebudubudu (2006) recommend the provision of impeachment proceedings in the Constitution as a way of holding the executive in check. To make matters worse, Parliament is technically a department under the Office of the President and it is the said Office that determines the budget for Parliament. Thus, Parliament lacks independence to the extent that it is even staffed with civil servants whom the Speaker of Parliament has no control over. Having said this, we now turn to the factors that contribute to party dominance in Botswana.

Factors contributing to party dominance in Botswana

The influence of Seretse Khama

Seretse Khama, one of the founding members of the BDP, became the first president of Botswana at independence in 1966, and ruled the country until he died in office in 1980. Prior to assuming the presidency, he was a member of the African Advisory Council which, among other things, drafted the independence constitution. He was born into the Bamangwato royal family and was to take over the tribe's chieftaincy from his uncle, Tshekedi Khama, upon his return from further studies in Britain. However, as a result of his marriage to a white British woman, Ruth Williams, he was denied the opportunity to assume his rightful position as Chief and was banished by the British colonial administration with the support of his uncle, Tshekedi Khama. Both the British colonial administration and Tshekedi Khama were opposed to Seretse's marriage to a white woman. Following his banishment, riots broke out in the Bamangwato area with his people demanding that he be allowed to take over his rightful position in the tribe (Henderson, 1990). The Central District, where the Bamangwato reside, is the largest district in Botswana, containing about 37 per cent of the country's population. This, according to Henderson (1990), meant that Seretse was assured (from the very beginning) of significant electoral support in his area.

Another advantage for Seretse, but that is surprisingly ignored by the literature on his influence in the continued electoral support of the BDP, is the fact that he married a

white woman (Botlhomilwe & Sebudubudu, 2011). The marriage occurred at a time when apartheid was very pronounced in neighbouring South Africa. According to Botlhomilwe and Sebudubudu (2011), it was virtually unheard of at the time, and a sort of 'offence', for a black man (in particular, an African) to marry a white woman. When Seretse married Ruth, he must have won the sympathy of his fellow tribesmen who regarded him as a 'hero'. Seretse was the first Motswana to marry a white woman, at least in Botswana's documented history.[1] Seretse's marriage to Ruth was therefore a deviation from the norm, hence the excitement among the people of Botswana about Seretse's marriage to a white woman.

Seretse successfully used his influence as chief of the numerically superior Tswana nation to cement electoral support for the BDP. According to Taylor (2002:8): 'Crucially, at independence the first president, Seretse Khama, enjoyed a legitimacy, drawn from his position as (former) chief of the dominant Tswana tribe (the Bangwato) that was unrivalled' and that his charismatic leadership style and integrity contributed to the success of the BDP at the polls, as well as the system of governance introduced at independence. He continues to argue that:

> This, coupled with the legacy of neglect left by the British meant that there was no real organized opposition to Khama's agenda. Indeed, negotiations for the transfer of power by London were conducted almost exclusively between local elites and the colonial administration, and did not encompass the ordinary rank and file. This led to a situation where, during Seretse's tenure at least, the electorate of Botswana was steeped in a traditional culture of respect for authority which hindered any disputing of the post-colonial dispensation and overlooked questions of class. This granted space to Khama and his BDP to begin the task of establishing a hegemonic position within post-colonial Botswana, something that his royal status had importantly prepared the ground for (Taylor, 2002:8).

Taylor's argument is consistent with the teachings of the famous Italian neo-Marxist, Antonio Gramsci (1971:57–58), who, when addressing the issue of state power, said that 'the supremacy of a social group manifests itself in two ways, as "domination" and as "intellectual and moral leadership"… A social group can and indeed must already exercise "leadership" before winning governmental power (this indeed is one of the principal conditions for the winning of such power)'. The literature on party dominance alludes to the fact that in most cases dominant parties such as the African National Congress are associated with a historical epoch such as liberation. While Botswana has not been subjected to a liberation struggle it seems plausible that the BDP and Seretse Khama are associated with bringing independence and the developments that followed to the country. It should be noted, however, that the continued win of the BDP has also been largely aided by the absence of a functioning and viable opposition.

1 A Motswana who worked in South Africa during the apartheid era and at the time of Seretse's marriage to Ruth, says that the Boers hated and used to beat up people from Bechuanaland (Botswana's name before independence) because 'Seretse had married a white woman'. Tshekedi also got into trouble with the British colonial authorities after he publicly lashed a white man, Phineus Macintosh, in the *kgotla* (Tswana traditional assembly) for allegedly assaulting a Mongwato man (Gabatshwane, 1961). Macintosh also incensed Tshekedi by impregnating Bangwato women. Both Tshekedi and Macintosh were exiled over the incident, with the former guilty of flogging a white man and the latter guilty of sleeping with black women. The incidents cited above demonstrate the extent to which racism was pronounced at the time.

Absence of a viable opposition

It is widely acknowledged that the existence of a strong opposition is important for a viable democratic political system. Representative democracy is basically about the ability of opposition parties to challenge ruling regimes. A strong opposition also acts as an important counteracting force on those holding political power. Scheiner (2006:7) observes that:

> In competing with each other for votes, parties are in fact vying to better represent the general public. Where one party is dominant, there is little competition, and, as a result, the dominant party need not be very responsive. Party competition forces political elites and voters alike to consider alternations to the existing political agendas; examine alternative ideological, cultural, or policy ideas; and re-evaluate which societal groups should be represented by the government and how.

Scheiner (2006:7–8) further argues that the presence of a strong opposition 'and party competition provides the ultimate check against unrestrained power'. A governing party is ordinarily expected to be responsive and accountable when there is a threat to its grip on power. In the absence of a viable opposition, there is not much incentive for the ruling party to be responsive and accountable to the electorate. Thus, it is important that in a democracy there be a strong and vibrant opposition. With reference to Botswana, this is not the case: the opposition in the country is weak. In part, it is this weakness that has perpetuated the current system of party dominance. According to Sebudubudu and Osei-Hwedie (2010:85), the 'existence of political opposition is a good indicator of the degree of political tolerance in a country and paves the way for peaceful competition among political parties for the people's vote and government power'. Opposition parties in Botswana have, however, largely failed to play the role ascribed to them above. Mtimkulu (2009) underscores this. Botswana's opposition parties are highly disorganised and prone to fragmentation. Only orderly and well-organised organisations are more likely to succeed in their endeavours (Mtimkulu, 2009).

Lack of adequate financial resources is a major problem facing opposition parties in Botswana. With adequate financial resources parties are able to woo the electorate and hence resources are an essential part of successful competition for political office. Bowler, Carter and Farrel (2003:111) argue, for example, that 'electoral success of political parties is more dependent on money than on access to the ballot or the media'. On the other hand, the BDP as a party in power commands huge resources due to its ability to source funds from the private sector and individuals. The result is that opposition parties are organisationally weak. Polhemus (1983:419) reminds us that in the early 1980s in the capital city, Gaborone, the sole visible sign of opposition parties 'was a table set up occasionally by the BNF [Botswana National Front] in the central shopping mall selling Koma's pamphlets, back copies of the *African Communist*, and raffle tickets'. While this statement may sound sarcastic, it points to the importance of organisational efficiency in political campaigns. Opposition parties in Botswana rely almost exclusively on the contributions of individual members and sympathisers to finance their political campaigns. The fact that the BDP has consistently refused to embrace the opposition

proposal for state funding of political parties does not help this unsustainable situation. However, it has emerged that the BDP has over the years received funding from De Beers Diamond Mining Company. This revelation has not been denied and has in fact been confirmed by De Beers management including the fact that the company extended several loan facilities to the former president, Ketumile Masire, whilst he was still in office (Good, 2010a). De Beers and the government of Botswana have a 50–50 per cent shareholding in De Beers–Botswana Mining Company (DEBSWANA); a company that manages mining in Botswana's main four diamond mines.

Addressing the issue of the funding of political parties in Botswana, Molomo and Sebudubudu (2005) argue that the uneven political playing field that has seen the BDP continuously winning elections can be explained, in part, by the disparities relating to financial resources. Good (2010a:92) concurs with this view: 'The BDP gains from the absence of public funding for parties in a double sense: private funding considerably advantages only the ruling party, while the lack of state support weakens the opposition'. As a party in power, the BDP has managed to attract considerable private funding. Since there is no law in Botswana that regulates private funding of political parties, the BDP has never found it necessary to disclose the sources of its funding save to say its funding comes from 'friends and business people' (Good, 2010a). On the other hand, opposition parties, for the simple reason that they are not governing, are unable to attract private party funding of the BDP's magnitude. The net result is that their ability to mount a robust challenge against the BDP is seriously compromised. Public funding of political parties is therefore something the Botswana state should introduce in order to level the political playing field and, by extension, help in consolidating the country's democracy.

The introduction of public funding for political parties without the simultaneous regulation of private party-funding, however, would not be sufficient to ensure equity in electoral competition. Private party-funding needs to be regulated lest it results in undesirable consequences. Strict disclosures of all political party financial donations are therefore an imperative. Molomo and Sebudubudu (2005:159) succinctly capture this point when they issue the following warning:

> Private financiers often represent special interests, with a particular vision of the world. The dangers of private funding of political campaigns are that it often compromises the integrity and accountability of government. When elections are won, donors may expect special favours as a result of their donations, and the interests of the ordinary voters may be compromised.

The opposition has also not been favoured by the electoral system. Since independence, Botswana has been using the first-past-the-post (FPTP) electoral system. Although this electoral system makes for responsibility and accountability by linking people's representatives to the constituency or ward (Sebudubudu & Osei-Hwedie, 2010), and therefore produces stable governments, it advantages the BDP which has always won the majority of parliamentary and local government seats. It tends to disadvantage smaller parties as it distorts the relationship between seats and votes polled by each party in an election. As Molomo (2000:112) reminds us, the 'system does not only produce

predominant party systems and two party systems but also lends politics into a zero-sum game where governance takes the form of government-versus-opposition'. It is therefore not surprising that opposition parties in Botswana have been calling for the introduction of the system of proportional representation (PR) though of late they seem to be advocating for a hybrid of both FPTP and PR.

The advantages of incumbency have allowed the BDP to use its powers of appointment and co-optation to silence its critics and potential critics. These acts of manipulation weaken opposition parties but, as Good (1992) maintains, they are not a typical of liberalism. The weakness of the opposition in Botswana can also be explained in part by their tendency to factionalism and fragmentation, especially on the eve of elections (Sebudubudu & Osei-Hwedie, 2010). In 1999, the main opposition party at the time, the Botswana National Front (BNF), was widely expected to mount a formidable challenge to the BDP hegemony after doing extremely well in the 1994 elections when it obtained thirteen (13) parliamentary seats. Unfortunately, in 1998, a year before the general elections of 1999, it experienced a major split that saw 11 of its 13 members of parliament leaving the party to form the Botswana Congress Party (BCP). Wiseman (1998:260) was probably correct when he argued, in relation to opposition parties in Botswana, that '[w]hilst the prospect of actually winning power could induce instrumental unity within the party it could also provoke a set of squabbles over the fruits of victory before that victory had been obtained'.

As a party in government, the BDP has long monopolised the public media. Opposition party activities are given very little coverage by the state-owned *Daily News* (which is distributed for free and enjoys wide circulation), Radio Botswana and Botswana Television, except when they are embroiled in disputes. This denies the general public the opportunity to understand what Botswana's opposition parties stand for. Since the taxpayer funds the state media, it is only fair that all political parties be accorded some time slots in the public media. This could be one way of levelling the political playing field. Sebudubudu and Osei-Hwedie (2010) argue that although historically, the state media has been biased in favour of the ruling party, opposition parties have been allowed access to the public media in the last two elections, though the coverage is still not equal. Whilst this assertion is certainly correct, opposition parties' access to the state media has greatly diminished since the 2011 public sector strike. Details of this strike will be given later in the chapter. It remains to be seen whether this trend will continue in the run-up to the 2014 general election.

Tswana political culture

There are also some elements of Tswana culture that contribute to the continued BDP hegemony and thus the weakness of opposition parties. The people of Botswana do not have a culture of challenging authority. Traditionally, Batswana are fairly conservative and their culture involves a 'slow, patient and consensual approach to change' (Healey, 1995:14). Roe (1988:349) also maintains that the conservative aspect of Tswana culture results in part from a strong adherence to 'risk aversion' whose origins can be traced to

the traditional pastoral society which necessitated 'avoiding the perceived risks of living in a semi-arid environment'. Wiseman (1998:254) has this to say:

> Within this cultural context continuing support for a political party which was perceived as performing at least adequately in government avoided the risk involved in voting for a party or parties, whose ability to govern remained conjectural at best. Unlike many African states Botswana never experienced the radicalizing (at least on a temporary basis) experience of a 'struggle for independence'.

The Tswana have a culture that largely places emphasis on consensus and dislikes radicalism — including radical organisations. It seems reasonable to argue that the culture of not challenging authority, combined with 'risk aversion' partly explains the apparent reluctance of the Botswana electorate to vote the BDP out of power. According to Holm (1988:196) Tswana culture places high value on peaceful social relations and 'these traditional values of public discussion, community consensus, non-violence, and moderation are critical elements of a democratic political culture'. If this analysis is correct, it follows that Batswana are unlikely to easily abandon the BDP for the 'unknown'.

Moreover, Holm (1996:107) argues that most Batswana, including the educated, 'have a narrow view of "politics"'. Their conception of politics is narrow in the sense that it is restricted to political parties and representation in Parliament and local councils. To most Batswana, the activities of civil society organisations and policy issues, among others, are outside the domain of politics. Holm (1996:107) summarises this political culture thus:

> This view of politics is most evident at the local level where the chief and his *kgotla* play an important role in decision-making. The government has made the chief a part of the civil service and insists that he and his headmen be 'non-political'. When the civil service uses the *kgotla* to consult with a community, the chief's duty is to ensure that the talk is non-partisan. Since political parties were not involved historically in the kgotla, most older villagers see little problem with this barrier to partisanship. However, the net effect is to drive partisanship underground on local issues, thus giving the idea that civil society and politics are separate entities. *For the BDP this is not a problem since the party supports most policies generated by the civil service anyway. On the other hand, the opposition is precluded from linking partisanship at the national level with concerns that have immediate meaning at the grass roots* (emphasis added).

The BDP's performance

It is indisputable that the BDP government has been reasonably successful in governing the country, having presided over a healthy economy for decades. Achievements have been made in a number of important areas, such as the provision of physical infrastructure, health care and education from a situation where virtually nothing existed at independence. Even the economic recession of 2008 did not erode the BDP's electoral support in the 2009 general election. Sebudubudu and Osei-Hwedie (2010:99) argue that:

> More importantly, the problems in the economy have not reached crisis proportions so as to attract massive vote losses for the BDP, even in the face of the 2008 economic recession. The government has launched an aggressive drive to attract investment in order to create jobs and improve the chances of development, and has increasingly shown willingness to

> respond to the needs of the masses through service delivery and schemes targeted at the youth and unemployed graduates.

The BDP is associated with government development programmes and this makes it difficult for opposition parties to sell themselves to the electorate, especially the illiterate rural population. The BDP draws support from both urban and rural areas but it is in the latter that its support is concentrated (Sebudubudu & Osei-Hwedie, 2010). Molutsi (2004) states that problems such as unemployment, high poverty levels and unequal distribution of income have the potential to pose a threat to Botswana's democratic society but acknowledges that even though the BDP's popular vote has dropped, it still enjoys a lot of support especially amongst the rural population. He maintains that the BDP has demonstrated 'visionary leadership' over the years. Molutsi (2004:179) has this to say:

> Leaders have shown a high degree of sensitivity combined with sound principles … policy sensitivity to the plight of the poor was certainly helpful to the implementation of growth promoting policies … and civil society organizations … have found more accommodations with the government with the implementation of programmes delegated to them.

Tsie (1996), writing from a historical materialist perspective, argues that rural development programmes have been important in cementing the BDP's support. Such programmes include the Accelerated Rural Development Programme, the Arable Lands Development Programme and the Accelerated Rainfed Agricultural Programme. Tsie (1996:605) concludes that:

> Taken together, these programmes not only cushioned the poorer sections of the peasantry from proletarianisation and the effects of drought but also went a long way toward 'demonstrating' the concern of the government with 'people's welfare'. They also served to mystify and hide the crisis of social reproduction in that drought could be used as a scapegoat for growing inequalities and poverty in Botswana.

The government has also introduced universal free education and access to public health facilities is virtually free. Molutsi (2004) argues that government has been successful in the area of social development especially in the area of education and health. He asserts that '[o]ver the past twenty years the government has spent close to 40 percent of its annual budget on social development' (2004:174). In the circumstances, it is difficult to deny that the BDP has been relatively successful in the provision of important services to the population. With this record, it is not surprising that the BDP continues to win elections. This is aided by the persistent fragmentation of opposition parties and their failure to propose credible alternative policies.

Current developments under the BDP's rule

The 2011 public sector strike

Civil servants in Botswana embarked on a strike that lasted for almost two months (from 18 April to 10 June 2011). Five public-sector unions, under the auspices of the Botswana Federation of Public Service Unions (BOFEPUSU), were demanding a 16 per cent salary increase while the government offered a conditional 5 per cent increase. Following a

deadlock, the unions went on a legal strike in an attempt to force the government to accede to their demands. The unions maintained that they were entitled to such an increase since their salaries had not been adjusted for three consecutive years. The government, on the other hand, claimed that it could not afford such an increase given the effects of the 2008 global economic recession.

Throughout the strike, President Ian Khama consistently turned down the unions' requests for a meeting to discuss the issue. Instead, he and his cabinet embarked on countrywide tours telling the nation about the unreasonableness of the workers' demands. The President also repeatedly told the nation that opposition parties were using the strike to effect a regime change. The state media widely covered these tours. Ndlovu (2011) writes that, during the strike, only the President and members of his executive as well as some senior civil servants addressed the nation through the state radio and television. During the strike, the workers were frustrated by the police, who refused them permission to march in order to present their petitions to the relevant authorities. According to Ndlovu (2011), in Botswana before the police can grant permission to present a petition, the recipient of the petition must agree to receive it. It is only after this has been agreed that the police can provide escort to protesters. This procedure has, in most cases, succeeded in frustrating protesters into submission.

Thus, the government was able to frustrate the workers' attempts to march by claiming that the police could not provide an escort because they were overstretched. However, what is most interesting are the post-strike events. Immediately after the suspension of the strike, the Minister of Labour and Home Affairs, purporting to be acting pursuant to the powers vested in him by the Trade Disputes Act, amended the Second Schedule of the Trade Disputes Act by including veterinary services; teaching services; diamond sorting, cutting and selling services, and all support services among cadres already classified as essential services. A statement on this action by the Law Society of Botswana (*Mmegi*, 24 June 2011) was instructive when it said, among other things, that:

> The amendment follows the recent suspension of the debilitating strike action undertaken by public sector workers. To any discerning observer, the timing of the amendment indicates that government intended that should the strike action recommence, all teachers, veterinary services employees and support staff should be precluded from embarking on industrial action.

This action could be understood as an attempt by the government of Botswana to take away strike action as a resource for the opposition. Thus it is difficult to agree with any suggestion that the timing of the amendment was purely coincidental.

The Ian Khama presidency

Ian Khama ascended to the presidency in 2008 after serving ten years as Vice President under Festus Mogae, thanks to Botswana's system of automatic succession in which the sitting president (himself unelected) appoints his successor. The leadership style of Khama, since he assumed the highest office, is fairly well documented (see for example, Good, 2010b; Botlhomiwe, Sebudubudu & Maripe, 2011; Poteete, 2010; Botlhomilwe & Sebudubudu, 2011). The picture that emerges is that of an 'authoritarian' head of state

with the tendency to make unilateral decisions. Whilst there have always been complaints against the BDP, '[t]he volume of complaints has increased markedly after Ian Khama entered the political arena' (Poteete, 2010:17). A few incidents illustrative of Khama's leadership style should suffice.

The BDP has always had a history of factions but Khama's predecessors never publicly associated themselves with any of the factions. However, Khama broke with this tradition by publicly campaigning for one of the factions during the campaign for the 2009 BDP Central Committee (CC) elections. However, eventually members of his preferred faction lost all the contested party executive leadership positions. What followed the election of the new CC was an act of vengeance with Khama unilaterally appointing members of the sub-committees of the CC, without consulting the Central Committee as has been the tradition in the party. Following these appointments, Gomolemo Motswaledi, who was elected as the Secretary General of the BDP at the July 2009 Congress, sought legal opinion on the legitimacy of Khama's decision to appoint members of the sub-committees without consulting the CC. Motswaledi was suspended from the party and banished from standing for the 2009 elections under the BDP ticket for undermining the authority of the leader of the party. Motswaledi decided to challenge Khama's decisions in court. The High Court and the Court of Appeal ruled that a sitting president, in terms of the Constitution of Botswana, enjoys immunity from prosecution even for non-official matters for the period he is in office (Botlhomiwe, Sebudubudu & Maripe, 2011). This resulted in Motswaledi and some members elected to the CC in 2009 resigning from their party executive positions and the party, and later forming a breakaway party, the Botswana Movement for Democracy (BMD), in 2010. Khama's lack of consultation has also forced the new party Secretary General, Kentse Rammidi, to resign from both his position as Secretary General and the party. Rammidi was elected into the CC in July 2011.

As Poteete (2010:17) correctly says, 'Khama has attracted attention for his reliance on directives and propensity to make decisions on the spur of the moment, even in the middle of a *kgotla* meeting (non-partisan public meeting)'. For example, he once stated, to the surprise of his colleagues and senior civil servants, in a *kgotla* meeting in one of the villages, that he will increase the alcohol levy by 70 per cent to curb excessive drinking. What was initially regarded as a joke was to become law, though government finally reduced the levy to 30 per cent. During the 2011 strikes, when unions were in the middle of negotiations with government over civil servants' demand for a salary increase, he told people in *kgotla* meetings that government would not increase salaries, thus making the whole negotiation process a mockery. A further worrisome aspect of Khama's leadership is the 'militarisation' of the civil service (Good, 2010b; Botlhomilwe, Sebudubudu & Maripe, 2011). Strategic positions in the civil service are given to former army officers without those positions having been advertised. Ian Khama is a former Commander of the Botswana Defence Force (BDF).

One party dominance and democracy

Theorists of dominant party systems are divided on the question of whether or not party dominance is democratic. Arian and Barnes (1974), among the foremost admirers of the dominant party system, argue persuasively that the dominant party system brings about

democratic stability. Although their study addressed the dominant party systems of Israel and Italy it certainly has application to the Botswana situation. Like the Mapai in Israel, the BDP has presided over the creation of independent Botswana. Arian and Barnes (1974) further argue that for dominant parties to survive, they must be flexible. That is, they must be able to adapt to the changing environment. A dominant party can adapt more easily than its opponents 'because it starts from a broader base and with great resources' (1974:596). At its formation, the BDP, compared to the Botswana People's Party (BPP), was well resourced in that its founding leaders were wealthy by the standards of the time. For example, Seretse Khama was a wealthy cattle rancher as was his deputy, Ketumile Masire, who was also a former headmaster of a secondary school. Their financial status must have been important in financing the BDP political campaigns. Although there is evidence that the BPP obtained financial assistance from countries proclaiming to be communist (at the time) such as Ghana, these resources could not match those of the BDP. It is also documented that BPP leaders fought over these resources (Mokopakgosi & Molomo, 2000). Effectively, this means that the meagre resources obtained from outside were not put to proper use.

Opponents of dominant party systems argue that the system is not good because it may lead to complacency on the part of the rulers. That is, it is capable of resulting in a situation where the ruling party (because of the assurance of further rule) becomes unresponsive and unaccountable (Giliomee & Simkins, 1999). The system therefore compromises responsiveness and accountability. This argument may sound attractive but in reality it is not sufficiently persuasive. Incumbents, especially in the African context, look to politics for a profession and are therefore conscious of the need to address the needs of the electorate if they are to continue to hold political office. The mere thought of losing an election should be sufficient incentive for the governing party to be responsive and accountable. This explains why dominant parties such as the BDP do not take elections for granted. They deploy a lot of resources in their electoral campaigns. This is a clear indication that they are aware of the fact that complacency can result in the loss of state power.

Dominant party systems are perfectly democratic in the sense that they allow open electoral competition. In this sense it is procedurally democratic (Arian & Barnes, 1974). Arian and Barnes (1974:600) summarise the advantages of party dominance in the following terms:

> In fact, the system seems poorly designed only when it is compared with the idealized view of a two-party system. All else being equal few would question the dominant party system's superiority over the fragmented multiparty systems with which it is sometimes confused. If the dominant party system is viewed not as an imperfect two-party system but rather as *sui generis*, its superiority as a means of stability in fragmented polities becomes apparent. A two party system requires a level of consensus that is rare; most multiparty systems exist because such consensus is absent. The dominant party system combines stability with political competition and a large measure of civil liberties. This is quite an achievement.

The argument raised by Arian and Barnes on the superiority of the dominant party system is indeed compelling. The system does not in any way take away the ingredients of a democratic polity. Alternation of government is not even a prerequisite for democratic

consolidation, as Samuel P. Huntington (1996) would like us to believe. There is nothing inherently undemocratic with people voting for the same political party continuously. Where such voting takes place in a free environment is what democracy is all about.

The future of party dominance in Botswana

Whether or not the BDP will continue to be the dominant party in Botswana's political landscape can only be a matter of speculation. As we have already argued in this chapter, the BDP has succeeded in terms of delivery. The party is also well resourced and organisationally superior to opposition parties. With these advantages, it is tempting to conclude that it may continue to win elections in the foreseeable future. As Adrian and Barnes (1974:600) argue:

> Wrong interpretations of public opinion, inadequate attention to the demands of major groups, misperceptions about the importance of marginal groups, poor organizational work – all these can lead to disaster. So long as the dominant party performs intelligently the opposition can do little that is effective. Even bad decisions will not be disastrous unless the opposition is in a position to take advantage of them, and it seldom is.

The BDP is sufficiently experienced to appreciate the need to attend to societal needs and interests. This is an advantage that goes hand in hand with experience in governance. Having said this, it is important to note that circumstances may change at any time with implications for the continued dominance of the BDP. For example, for the first time in the history of the politics of Botswana, opposition parties appear to be at an advanced stage of talks aimed at establishing an opposition umbrella party that will see opposition parties entering elections as a single entity. If this project materialises, it is capable of having a major impact on BDP dominance. In short, it may signal the end of BDP rule. Moreover, Botlhomilwe, Sebudubudu and Maripe (2011), and Botlhomilwe and Sebudubudu (2011) have argued that President Ian Khama is displaying dictatorial tendencies. He is intolerant of dissenting views. If this tendency persists, it has the potential to swing votes, provided the opposition takes advantage of it. And as Arian and Barnes (1974:600) observed: '[e]*ven bad decisions will not be disastrous unless the opposition is in a position to take advantage of them, and it seldom is*' (emphasis added). Thus the dominance of the BDP cannot be guaranteed.

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Chapter 7

The politics and resource endowment of party dominance in Namibia: The past as the present and the future?

Andre du Pisani

Party dominance has become a feature of the political and social topography of a growing number of democratic states in southern Africa. In the cases of Angola, Mozambique and Tanzania, while embedded in different social topographies, their dominant party systems provide a historic link with erstwhile one party systems; in these and other cases, in a substantive sense, the past is the present, and perhaps, the future.

This chapter harnesses a dash of theory in an attempt to answer the following research questions. How was dominance initially achieved, and linked to this question, why does the dominant party remain formative in the politics of an independent Namibia? Does the dominant party system provide a robust foundation for democratic stability and economic growth? How does the hegemonic party maintain its dominance? What is the impact of such dominance on the quality of democracy in the polity — on civil and political society, the independence of the judiciary and the separation of powers? What counter-balances exist at different levels of state and within civil society? On reflection, what are the principal advantages and disadvantages of party dominance? What factors could conceivably contribute to the unravelling and demise of party dominance? And, finally, what does the future trajectory, particularly over the next five years, hold for Namibia?

Theory

In broad outline, a dominant party system refers to a democratic regime of different ideological bents dominated by one party for prolonged periods. The latter, prolonged periods, is the subject of dissenting theoretical argument. A growing body of literature on the topic suggests several criteria for identifying and analysing party dominance. Five such criteria are particularly useful, namely: the nature of the political system; the threshold for dominance; the nature of the dominance; the inclusion of opposition

features and the temporal dimension. The admirable and distilled contribution by De Jager and Du Toit (see Chapter 1) that informs this chapter tells the reader that theorists of party dominance accentuate some or all of the above criteria, but they equally acknowledge that there is much variance within each (Arian & Barnes, 1974; Blondel, 1968; Bogaards, 2004; Giliomee & Simkins, 1999; Meyns & Nabudere, 1989; Melber, 2011; Pempel, 1990; Ware, 1996).

The political system

Dominant party systems are embedded in democratic regimes that take different forms and are sustained through regular elections without any credible challengers in sight. In the case of Namibia, for example, SWAPO Party of Namibia has dominated every election over the past two decades, progressively increasing the party's electoral majority. The electoral dominance of SWAPO Party of Namibia has become, to a large extent, a near-permanent feature of the post-apartheid political landscape.

In common with other cases of dominant party systems in southern Africa, since the democracy tolerates more than one party to compete for electoral support, elections are by and large democratic in the procedural sense, even if civil and political liberties are not protected, particularly in the run-up to elections, to the same degree. The present party system in Namibia combines two characteristics that are usually seen as undesirable by democratic theorists. First, although ethnic voting for the dominant party is pronounced in the Oshiwambo-speaking regions, the case of the dominant party is, nonetheless, mediated by the nationalist mantra of unity, as well as by the presence of most of the smaller opposition parties, such as the United Democratic Front (UDF), the National Unity Democratic Organisation (NUDO), the All Peoples Party (APP) and the South West African National Union (SWANU), the country's oldest political party. The ethnic import of electoral politics and of many political parties means that elections so far have largely resembled censuses rather than a contest of ideologies, issues or socio-economic interests. Moreover, in terms of their support base and popular appeal, some parties, amount to little more than 'ethnoscapes': narrow ethnic theatres that provide a stage, often to recycled and discredited elites. In contrast, the dominant party enjoys significant levels of trans-ethnic support, while the Party also registers meaningful levels of trans-ethnic trust, notably among some ethnic minorities (Lindeke, 2011b:20).

Secondly, one party — SWAPO Party of Namibia — dominates electoral politics without any credible prospective challengers in sight. This combination of ethnic voting in respect of the Oshiwambo-speaking population, and one dominant party, where the former reinforces the latter, poses a real challenge to democracy in the country. At the level of democratic theory, one is tempted to ask: To what extent can a constitutional regime with free and fair elections be regarded as a consolidated social democracy if one party is guaranteed a comfortable majority in apparent perpetuity?

From a procedural reading of democracy, Namibia meets the requirements of an electoral democracy, in the sense that government must be legitimised by appealing to

the electorate for their support, through reasonably free and competitive elections. Based on the outcome of every election to date, Namibia would not qualify as a democracy in terms of Karl Popper's more demanding definition where 'the social institutions provide means by which the rulers may be dismissed by the ruled, and the social traditions ensure that these institutions will not be easily destroyed by those who are in power' (Popper, 1992:124). Equally important, however, is that the actions of a dominant party must be restrained so that it is barred from infringement on individual liberties. A dominant party system government, used by the majority in a struggle against minorities, is at best a caricature of democracy, at worst a recipe for conflict. Namibia, however, to its credit, has not yet regressed that far.

In independent Namibia, democracy is often at the mercy of party interests — both political and economic — and the political elites (and a growing number of economic elites) in the young democracy support it as long as they find it expedient. For Namibia to retain the veneer of a democracy, opposition parties, however ineffective and narrow, must be part of the décor.

The threshold for dominance

The threshold suggested in the literature for determining dominance varies greatly. Given the political consequences of electoral systems, as discussed later in this chapter, these play an important part in determining such a threshold. It is possible to achieve a threshold of dominance, provided the dominant party holds a plurality of seats in Parliament and not necessarily a majority (Pempel, 1990:3; Blondel, 1968). Governing coalitions elsewhere in the world adequately illustrate this phenomenon.

In contradistinction, Sartori (1976:193) insists on an absolute majority, where the composition of the opposition is of no real political consequence. Given the prevalence of presidential systems and the accompanying ideology of presidentialism, also much in evidence in Namibia, governing parties must control both the legislature and the presidency through at least a plurality of votes or seats. Clearly, numerical dominance matters, but the relations of power and influence (as an expression of legitimised power) count for more.

In the case of Namibia, SWAPO Party of Namibia not only has an absolute majority in both houses of Parliament, but the proclivity of executive dominance in the 72-member National Assembly means that the dominant party sets the socio-economic and political agenda for the country. Under the Constitution, the Executive and the Legislature are fused, with the former dominating the rule-making function of the Legislature (The Constitution of Namibia: Chapters 6 and 7). The role of the bicameral Legislature, comprising the National Assembly and the National Council — the latter, supposedly serving as a 'house of review', is embedded in weak bicameralism — has been reduced to that of acting as a symbolic representative space for the Namibian electorate and the 13 politico-administrative regions.

Intrinsically, of course, all forms of government imply that the preferences and interests of some are heeded while those of others are not. Democracy implies that

the people whose preferences do not win through are as few as possible — a minority. In theory, democracy thus minimises the number of opponents to government policy by choosing the policy with which the lowest number disagrees. In any event, no democratic polity consisting of diverse individuals and groups can respond favourably to the demands of everybody. Due to the diversity of policy domains and interests, there will always be winners and losers.

A more troubling situation is found when winners and losers tend to often solidify into binary opposites, where the legitimate role of opposition is widely questioned by the dominant party, where most of the popular representatives agree with the governing party in most cases, or where the opposition mostly disagrees with the dominant party. In such a scenario, which often plays itself out in the arena of parliamentary politics in Namibia, the dominant party has come to dictate terms of engagement to the near-permanent detriment of the largely impotent opposition. As John Stuart Mill (1861/1991:229) wrote:

> One of the greatest dangers, therefore, of democracy, as of all other forms of government, lies in the sinister interests of the holders of power. It is the danger of class legislation; of government intended for (whether really effecting it or not) the immediate benefit of the dominant class, to the lasting detriment of the whole. And one of the most important questions demanding consideration, in determining the best constitution of a representative government, is how to provide efficacious securities against this evil.

'Class legislation', as Mill puts it, is surely not limited to the nineteenth century, or to nascent democracies. This problem is particularly pressing when the opportunities for social mobility are weak. If clearly defined social formations exist, and this is coupled with weak opposition that represents minority ethnic interests as in Namibia, the danger of a 'tyranny of the majority' is especially pronounced. This is the case in Namibia, where socio-economic cleavages have traditionally reinforced ethnic ones — one of the legacies of the former colonial state.

The nature of dominance

SWAPO Party of Namibia enjoys dominance at more than one register in the body politic of the country. On the ideological super-structural plane, the Party is by far the most successful in articulating the ideology of anti-colonial nationalism, even if this ideology will over time lose much of its symbolic and integrative traction (Du Pisani, 2010a). While the ideological mantra of anti-colonial nationalism has its discursive limits, such as being a non-sovereign discourse that determines the range of subject positions in relation to colonialism, it nonetheless enables SWAPO to claim legitimacy as the only effective national and nationalist movement with a meaningful liberation history behind it. This history has been validated both within and without the country, and serves as a valuable symbolic 'memory-scape' that can be actualised when necessary.

Historically, as the SWANU declined in the late 1960s, largely as a consequence of internal fractures and international developments, SWAPO Party of Namibia was able to mobilise trans-ethnic support in the country, under a political agenda that

premised independence for Namibia under the guidance, leadership and inspiration of the Party. Thus SWAPO can legitimately lay claim to the title of 'liberation movement' — a thread that runs through the history of the Party, and subsequently of the country (Du Pisani & Lindeke, 2010:60; Kaapama et al, 2007). In this sense, the Party became a 'catchall party' within a sea of weaker and significantly more narrowly supported parties. SWAPO Party of Namibia has the unique ability to invoke the lash of colonialism and imperialism, whenever the Party is in need of a real or imagined enemy, and it has done so with regularity over the past two decades (Saunders, 2003; Du Pisani, 2007:97–106). Its ideological platform reflected the epoch of the time as most African states gained their independence much earlier than Namibia, who was historically, a latecomer to the ball.

Public opinion research underpins this dominance as evidenced in four rounds of AfroBarometer data over the period 1999–2008. In common with other former liberation movements, such as the African National Congress (ANC) in South Africa, dominance is embedded in a symbolic attachment to SWAPO. While history conspired to elevate SWAPO to a position of first among equals, with both the Liberation Committee of the former Organisation of African Unity (OAU) — now the African Union (AU) — and the General Assembly of the United Nations (UN), according the Party 'sole and authentic representative status of the people of Namibia' in the late 1960s (Du Pisani & Lindeke, 2010:58), the ideological mantra of the Party also allows it to blur the political and the social boundary between the Party, Government and the State when it is convenient to do so. The maxims of 'One Namibia, One Nation' and 'SWAPO is the Nation', are deeply embedded in the narrative of the Party, while at the same time, these are grist to the mill of the politics of nation- and state-building (Du Pisani, 1986:145). In both of these projects, the Party was able to blur the distinction between itself and the State.

Given the symbolic overlay of SWAPO Party of Namibia's dominance, and the size of its electoral victories, the Party has been able to retain its grip on the politics of the country despite uneven delivery in respect of public health, housing, land redistribution, employment creation and corruption. The 2008 National Labour Force Survey, for example, showed an unemployment rate of over 50 per cent. The symbolic narrative continues to supersede considerations of uneven delivery in a number of policy domains, and as such resembles a 'founding myth' in terms of which the Party and the post-apartheid State share a moral and historic assignation. The dominant party not only enjoys a discursive hegemony over the recent political history of the country, but its narrative connects powerfully to the ushering in of a new political order; the democratic regime of independent Namibia.

Not surprisingly, SWAPO Party of Namibia sees itself as the repository and custodian of democracy and its supportive virtues such as equality, liberty, human dignity, and other fundamental rights and freedoms. Therefore, the Party claims the largest share of popular legitimacy.

Table 7.1: Namibia's national elections results, 1994–2009

Party	1994		1999		2004		2009	
	%votes	seats	%votes	seats	%votes	seats	%votes	seats
SWAPO Party of Namibia	73.89	53	76.15	55	76.11	55	75.27	54
Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA)	20.78	15	9.48	7	5.11	4	3.17	2
Rally for Democratic Change and Progress (RDP)	-	-	-	-	-	-	11.31	8
Congress of Democrats (COD)	-	-	9.94	7	7.29	5	0.67	1
National Unity Democratic Organisation (NUDO)	-	-	-	-	4.15	3	3.05	2
United Democratic Front (UDF)	2.72	2	2.93	2	3.60	3	2.43	2
Republican Party (RP)	-	-	-	-	1.96	1	0.82	1
All People's Party (APP)	-1	-	-	-	-	-	1.35	1
Democratic Coalition of Namibia (DCN)	0.83	1	0.34	0	-	-	-	-
Monitor Action Group (MAG)	0.82	1	0.67	1	0.85	1	0.59	0
South West African National Union (SWANU)	0.53	0	0.35	0	0.42	0	0.62	1
Total		72		72		72		72

Source: Results derived from EISA (Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa), 2012

The inclusion of opposition features

As argued above, Namibia displays the characteristics of a reasonably competitive electoral system in which electoral results are relatively constant. This pattern has established itself particularly in the last two rounds of parliamentary elections, in 2004 and 2009 respectively. The system derives its primary dynamic from the electoral performance of the dominant party, leaving limited space to opposition parties to exploit ill-informed decisions by the hegemonic party. In post-colonial Namibia, opposition parties remain 'stuck in the sand', to invoke a metaphor from a recent analysis of opposition politics in the country (Du Pisani & Lindeke, 2011).

In as much as the democratic regime makes it possible for opposition parties to compete in elections, they are unlikely to emerge victorious, for some of the reasons suggested earlier in this chapter. Electoral choice is pre-eminently limited to the dominant party, and for as long as it enjoys majority support and a semblance of performance legitimacy, SWAPO Party of Namibia is likely to remain dominant in the political life of the country.

Arguably, the only limited space that opposition parties enjoy — apart from their respective 'ethnospaces' — is in parliamentary committees. Here, SWANU chairs the reasonably effective Standing Committee on Public Accounts, and is able to give the practice of legislative oversight some import. Of the eleven standing committees of the National Assembly, the opposition chairs this sole committee. All other standing committees of the National Assembly, and the National Council, are chaired by the dominant party, and despite provisions for joint committees, including across the two houses of Parliament, in the Committee Rules of the National Assembly and the National Council, no such joint committee hearings have taken place over the past 21 years. It is also a feature of parliamentary democracy that members of the Executive play dominant roles in most of the Standing Committees.

A further indication of the impotence of opposition parties in Parliament is the fact that over the past 21 years, only one private member's bill was prepared for submission to the National Assembly. Given the ideological bent of former MP, Kosie Pretorius of the Monitor Action Group (MAG), who held one seat at the time, the bill was not deemed worthy of consideration by the National Assembly.

The nature of Namibia's electoral democracy and of its representative public institutions, such as parliament, make it possible for the dominant party to be free from many of the political and accountability constraints associated with the multi-party system. The large margin with which SWAPO has been winning elections gives it considerable space to manoeuvre, while at the same time, the presence of opposition parties legitimises both the political system and the dominant party (Melber, 2005).

Temporal considerations

There are divergent views regarding the temporal dimensions of the dominance. Ware (1996) posits that the dominant party should win 'usually'. Others, such as Pempel (1990:4), argue for dominance to occur over a 'substantial period'. Sartori (1976) argues

that, for a party to be dominant, there must be three consecutive elections with a clear majority in Parliament. As Table 7.1 indicates, SWAPO Party of Namibia has never lost an election over the past two decades, nor has it had its majority reduced. Thus, in terms of temporal considerations, the Party is clearly dominant at all levels of State: central, regional and local.

In brief summation, SWAPO Party of Namibia is embedded in the architecture of a liberal democracy, at the very least within the provisions of the Constitution. The Party's electoral threshold for dominance is secure (at least for the following 5–10 years, and possibly beyond that), while its symbolic history, often rendered as heroic, with strong patriotic undercurrents to it, adds to the Party's popular legitimacy. The fragmented nature of the opposition and the temporal dimensions of dominance, further ensure that the Party bolsters its political pre-eminence.

Additional factors

The above contextual features, however, compelling, do not tell the whole story. SWAPO Party of Namibia not only has an in-built majority in terms of ethnic support and loyalty, but is also the most trans-ethnic party in the polity. Even if the subaltern does not speak much, the liberation narrative and the 'independence template' enable the Party to be the 'voice of the voiceless', and given the fact that the embers of the liberation struggle still burn in the hearts of many Namibians, the Party commands an unrivalled symbolic appeal for the vast majority of the electorate (Du Pisani & Lindeke, 2009).

It is also important to emphasise the fraternal relations between the Party and organised labour in the country. The latter, as represented by the National Union of Namibian Workers (NUNW) — a labour federation comprising eleven unions — has entered into a formal alliance with the ruling Party. This relationship pre-dates independence, and while it is not without its tensions, has served the Party rather well. The power of co-option vests in the Party, so does that of resource allocation, and as such, it is often the primary partner in the relationship.

The matter of party finances also plays a role. In Namibia all parties represented in the National Assembly are allocated resources proportional to the number of seats they hold. SWAPO Party of Namibia currently receives an allocation of more than N$15 million in the 2011/12 fiscal year. The official opposition, the Rally for Democracy (RDP) — an offshoot from SWAPO — receives just more than N$1.6 million.

Moreover, since independence in 1990, youth participation in politics has lost much of its activism and energy as a potentially important informal opposition to the dominant party, and with a small and largely urban-based civil society, SWAPO Party of Namibia faces no real electoral challenge.

The topography of dominance

Over the past two decades, the Party has, however, lost ground as the exclusive organisational locus of power. Power has been systematically displaced from the wider political society and from organised labour to executive agencies within the state apparatus,

a process greatly facilitated by the hegemonic position of SWAPO in the electoral arena and in Parliament. This process has also been paralleled by another, that of an ever more predatory executive that has all but disempowered the non-executive members of the legislature. Both processes were justified by pointing to the developmental and security needs of the state, stressing the overriding importance of national unity and nation-building, harnessing the non-transformative 'politics of national reconciliation' as foundational for the twin projects of state- and nation-building, and stressing a technocratic concern for the management of public resources in support of Vision 2030 — the country's long-term development frame — and the need for 'balanced restructuring' of the civil service.

This was accompanied by the cultivation of new constituencies in regions where the smaller opposition parties previously enjoyed meaningful support, such as in the Caprivi, Kavango, Kunene, and Hardap Regions. In the case of the Kunene Region, for example, the UDF lost control for the first time in the 2010 Regional Council elections. SWAPO Party of Namibia now controls all 13 regions in the country. The 2010 Regional Council and Local Authority Elections confirmed that the official opposition, the RDP, enjoys marginally more than 20 per cent support in only two of the 13 regions, namely Khomas and Karas. In the predominantly Oshiwambo-speaking regions of the north — Ohangwena, Omaheke, Omusati, Oshana and Oshikoto — the RDP managed only 11 per cent share of the vote in Omaheke, the region where most of its leaders come from (Du Pisani, 2010b:106–118).

The Special Advisors and Regional Governors Appointment Amendment Act, No. 20 of 2010, provided for the Head of State to appoint all 13 Regional Governors and their special advisors. This ensures close reciprocity between elites at the centre and those at the level of the regional state, and provides the possibility for their mutual assimilation. The rationale for this Act was that it would ensure the more effective implementation of the 2009 SWAPO Party Election Manifesto, particularly in respect of rural development. In practice, the Act devalued the importance of democratic politics at regional level and strengthened the centre at the expense of regional actors, and also in terms of what Kenneth Greene terms 'resource-based' dominance (Greene, 2007). A more radical reading of the Act and its implications, would be that the Regional Governors have become little more than the former 'Bantu Commissioners' in a system of neo-patrimonial and indirect rule (Du Pisani, 2010b:106-118).

How local and regional elites position themselves in relation to the centre is a topic of considerable importance to the overall theme of this chapter. In her important book titled *Political topographies of the African state*, Catherine Boone (2003), for example, shows that central rulers' power, ambitions, and strategies of control have always varied across sub-regions of the national political space, even in states reputed to be highly centralised. She argues compellingly, that this unevenness reflects a state-building logic that is shaped by differences in the political economy of the sub-regions — that is, by relations of property, production, and the authority to determine the political clout and economic needs of local and regional or sub-regional elites. Centre-regional or sub-regional bargaining, rather than the unilateral choices of the centre, is what drives the politics of state- and nation-building and determines how institutions distribute power.

For example, when devolution occurs, will we get local democracy, decentralised despotism, or disintegration of authority and corruption? *Political topographies of the African state* shows why and how the answer can vary across space and time within a single national unit (Boone, 2003).

Arguably, there are even more important strings to the bow of the SWAPO Party of Namibia's hegemony, including its ability to spend large amounts of public money on targeted social investment programmes such as job creation. The current three-year Medium Term Expenditure Review (MTEF) 2011–2013, was not only under-girded by an expansionary budget that would increase public debt to an unprecedented level of over 30 per cent over the MTEF period, but shortly after, Government announced an ambitious Targeted Intervention Programme for Employment and Economic Growth (TIPEEG) of almost N$19 billion over the next three years (Republic of Namibia, 2011). Given the staggering unemployment rate of over 50 per cent (based on the 2008 National Labour Force Survey [Republic of Namibia, 2008]), TIPEEG has won wide support among unemployed Namibians and unemployed youth in particular. More controversially, however, TIPEEG will bypass standard Tender Board procedures and vest power over the allocation of billions of taxpayers' dollars in the hands of a select and politically connected few (*Insight*, 2011).

The composition of the TIPEEG Implementation Committee (TIC) testifies to the considerable power that has gravitated to senior state officials. In the case of the TIC, under the chairpersonship of the Permanent Secretary of the National Planning Commission (NPC) — a prominent 'tenderpreneur' who benefited greatly from the controversial Liquid Fuel Contract — the four other members are the Permanent Secretary in the Office of the Prime Minister, the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Labour, the Under Secretary of State Accounts in the Ministry of Finance, and a senior official from the Office of the Attorney General.

At this confluence in the history and politics of Namibia, it seems as if the ageing ruling political elites and the younger and increasingly influential economic elites have entered into a coalition to ensure cohesion at the centre. The voice of the SWAPO Youth League has become more vociferous, since many of its executive committee members are economically networked through Black Economic Empowerment (BEE) companies, with others serving as members of the 'SWAPO Think Tank' — albeit the latter amounts to little more than symbolic gesturing in the form of a few additions to the 2009 Election Manifesto of the Party. The logic is clear: economic influence and political power have become mutually constitutive. The 'politics of the belly', to use the rather inelegant phrase of Jean-François Bayart, has come to sustain the network of political patronage and personal aggrandisement.

The dominance has many faces. One of its most recent faces is the proposed Conferment of National Honours Bill. The Bill, if passed by Parliament, will favour the granting of hero status to those who distinguished themselves militarily in the liberation struggle, while creating a new social cachet at the level of the regional state. In its current iteration, the Bill proposes naming regional heroes and constructing 'Heroes Acres' in all 13 Namibian Regions. Unlike the National Honours Advisory Committee, the proposed

Regional Honours Advisory Committees will have eight members and will receive nominations from the Council of Traditional Leaders, amongst others. The purpose of the proposed law, once enacted, is to serve as a guideline to the president when exercising his or her discretion in the conferment of national honours on individuals, as provided for by Article 32(3) (h) of the Namibian Constitution.

Once enacted, the provisions contained in the Bill, will give an even more symbolic overlay to the political topography of the State, in the sense that it will regionalise the heroic iconography of the State and provide glue to strengthen relations between the centre and the regions. It will also deepen the considerable and often corrosive system of neo-patrimonialism that has come to characterise political life in the country (Du Pisani, 2010b:106–118).

Namibia: an initial categorisation

To return to theory: Namibia has a dominant party system, in terms of which SWAPO Party of Namibia is embedded within the provisions of a liberal democracy and the practice of regular and semi-competitive elections. The doctrine of the separation of powers holds most meaningfully in respect of the independence of the judiciary, while SWAPO firmly controls both the bicameral legislature and the executive. The rule of law as legal doctrine is generally supported by both the elites and the wider populace (Nakuta & Chipepera, 2011; Ruppel & Ambuda, 2011). Chapter 3 of the Constitution, for example, provides and guarantees space for civil and political society to operate. Civil society agencies do engage with public policy and planning processes, such as in the case of the various National Development Plans, the National Gender Policy, Education Policy and even in the domain of Defence and Security Policy (albeit more selectively). All of the above contribute towards legitimising the dominant party system and the regime itself.

Thus, in important respects, Namibia meets most of the criteria present in the relevant theoretical literature on the subject, with one important caveat — political authority is fairly centralised, but government has a reasonably effective reach in its scope of control. For a relatively new democratic regime, government is by and large, spatially enabled — at least for now. Clearly, this is contingent upon other variables such as the quality of democracy and the nature of horizontal and vertical accountability. It is to these aspects that the chapter turns next.

The quality of democracy

From the above brief impressionistic portrait, it is clear, I hope, that Namibia meets at the very least, Diamond and Morlino's (2004:21) four minimal criteria for democracy, namely: the universal right to vote, relatively free, fair and regular elections (in a procedural sense), 'more than one serious political party' (a less certain reality), and the existence of and access to alternative sources of information. With respect to the latter, the existence of and access to pluralistic media, Namibia was categorised in 2010 to have had the 'freest' media on the African continent.

In retrospect, democratic life in Namibia may now, two decades after independence, not be quite as healthy as in 1997, when Kenneth Good (1997:75) summarised it as follows:

> Namibia thus possesses a number of outstanding political characteristics. There is a directly elected, limited and accountable executive. Mechanisms exist for the achievement of ethical government, especially in the prohibitions on the outside earnings of and conflicts of interest by Ministers, and in an independent Ombudsman working in co-operation with Parliament. And there is a burgeoning citizen-based democracy, founded upon broadly defined and constitutionally enforced socio-economic rights, where individuals and groups are capable of challenging the silence and secretiveness of the governing elite.

The construct of the 'quality of democracy' is often defined in terms of two different dimensions. The first entails governance-related aspects, such as the consistent application of democratic procedures (for example in terms of the conduct of elections, the issuing of public tenders, and the appointment of senior state officials such as judges and permanent secretaries), the nature of democracy itself, (do democratic *politics* co-exist with democratic institutions) and the political and social results or dimensions of democratic practice (for example, the social inclusiveness of the democracy).

The second dimension, which is often described as 'structural' and/or 'substantive', encompasses freedom, the rule of law, vertical and horizontal accountability, social responsiveness, equality as a normative and substantive principle, the nature and extent of popular participation, and the competitiveness of the regime.

In line with the philosophy of democracy and its praxis, liberty and equality (as normative principles and as social praxis) constitute substantive dimensions of the quality of a democracy. Responsiveness is a further content principle and links the normative grounding of democracy to its procedural and rule-based features, in the sense of actualising the expectations, demands and preferences of citizens and ensuring that public policies meet their stated objectives.

An incomplete framing of Namibia, within these procedural and more substantive criteria, indicates that the democratic regime performs better in terms of some of the above criteria, and less so in respect of others. The overall performance, however, remains healthy, when compared with other dominant party systems in southern Africa, such as Angola, Botswana, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

The notion of the rule of law, while not immaculate in every respect, is nonetheless substantively operative in Namibia. Many (or most) of the enabling conditions for its emergence and maintenance, are in place. Chief among these are the presence of liberal values such as freedom of speech, freedom of association, freedom of assembly, and a free media; trust in the Constitution, and trust in democracy as the preferred way of organising the state among both the citizenry and elites (Kaufman et al, 2008:6).

In respect of more demanding dimensions of the rule of law, Namibia has a mixed record. For example, appointments and promotions in the rather bloated public service of nearly 90 000, are not universally based on merit, competence and impartiality. In important respects, the public service displays patrimonial characteristics, the latter

often based on corrosive forms of rent-seeking behaviour at the trough, amidst pockets of excellence and meritocracy. Institutionalisation and efficiency in the criminal justice system, a key agency to ensure the integrity of the rule of law, can undoubtedly be improved upon (Nakuta & Cloete, 2011).

The economic capacity of the State and its ability to deliver outcomes in respect of key social sectors such as education, public health and social grants and security (for instance to retired formerly employed Namibians and to erstwhile veterans of the liberation struggle), is by and large effective. Also, political leaders have, largely, shown respect for democratic rules, even if they have on occasion behaved with a flash of self-importance and arrogance.

Employment creation is the social sector where the regime has been least successful, and in this respect, Namibia has been experiencing 'jobless growth' in common with other middle-income countries, including Botswana and Mauritius, for the past two decades (Du Pisani, 2011). The recently announced TIPEEG programme finds its primary rationale in the phenomenon of 'jobless growth' and is premised on the view that the 'resource cycle' can either legitimise or de-legitimise governing parties.

On the primacy of toleration of difference — one of the most important principles in the pantheon of a liberal democracy — Namibia shows a mixed picture. Measured against IDASA's *Democracy Index* 2011, Namibians expressed less trust (and also lower levels of toleration) in their country's citizens than respondents have done in other countries where the same Index was used. In the 2008 Afrobarometer round, for example, Namibians were significantly more likely not to trust other Namibians than the twenty-country average, and significantly less likely to trust them 'somewhat or a lot'. As one analyst opines: 'Trust in government institutions is high in Namibia, while trust in other people is not' (Lindeke, 2011a:15). In other respects (such as freedom of association and freedom of the press), Namibians show more tolerance towards others in terms of support for political freedoms (MISA, 2009:6–13).

The 2009 parliamentary and presidential elections had their outcome contested in law by nine opposition parties, and did show erosion of some democratic values on the part of political elites from both the governing party and the RDP. The official opposition, the RDP, in particular, came in for tongue-lashing by some senior party functionaries and members of the executive. This form of illiberal behaviour may be indicative of 'passive' and not of 'active' toleration; toleration that is 'lightly worn' and may, if not contained, result in serious electoral violence in future.

Public engagement (as opposed to participation) is reasonably healthy when it comes to parliamentary and presidential elections, and less so in respect of elections for the regional and the local state. Engagement in and through other democratic spaces such as civil society, could arguably be improved upon. A constant torrent of SMSs to the local print media and regular participation in phone-in programmes on various local language radio services of the Namibian Broadcasting Corporation, however, bear testimony to the existence of a relatively healthy (if on occasion derogatory) participatory political culture.

The 2009 presidential and parliamentary elections brought another aspect of democratic life in the country to the fore: the difficulty of the opposition parties in general, and the RDP in particular, to campaign freely in every region. Local 'strong

persons' reduced the electoral space of the RDP in the Omusati and Ohangwena Regions. Such acts of 'illiberal politics and politic-king' undermined the equality of the RDP and violated its integrity as a legitimate political contender.

As stated earlier in this chapter, the degree of competition, as measured in the access to competitive arenas such as the print and electronic media, and elections, also contributes to the quality of a democracy. The electoral system itself and the management of elections, have important political consequences. Namibia uses the Party-list Proportional Representation system at the national level, with low thresholds of representation. On the whole, this system favours smaller parties, even if their competitive space gets reduced by other factors such as limits to campaign spending, the delimitation of electoral districts, and the role of the media in election campaigns (Du Pisani, 2009:25).

The notions of 'vertical' and 'horizontal accountability' both apply in the case of Namibia. Arguably, the former, 'vertical accountability', counts for more, and is principally rooted in a materialist (as opposed to a normative) conception of democracy — in the sense of performance legitimacy and the ability of the State to respond to the basic needs of citizens. For a number of reasons, some constitutional, others structural and resource-related, the system of checks-and-balances within the State seems less potent.

Conclusion

In coming to a tentative conclusion, this chapter has attempted to show that the anatomy and maintenance of dominance in the case of Namibia, is a complex interplay among a raft of factors. Chief among these are:

- a recent liberation history that harks back to earlier periods of resistance
- high levels of popular legitimacy, supported by reasonable performance legitimacy
- the politics of resource allocation, over which the dominant party has near-exclusive say
- the existence of democratic features that provide considerable space to the dominant party, for example enjoying the advantages of multi-party politics, with precious few of its constraints
- the system of neo-patrimonialism that privileges the centre at the expense of the regional and the local State
- the fact that the democracy has performed relatively well in respect of some normative, procedural and substantive features, compared to other democratic regimes within middle-income countries
- the ability of state elites to mobilise external resources in support of key national development projects
- the fact that the dominant party has ensured stability in the country, and
- the fragility of opposition parties.

This chapter leaves the question of where all of this might take the country in future open for reflective and meaningful, democratic and scholarly deliberation.

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Chapter 8

South Africa: A democracy in the balance

Nicola de Jager[1]

In 2012 Africa's oldest liberation movement, the African National Congress (ANC), celebrated its centenary. It is a movement that was born out of Christian values of equality and mutual respect, led by an African middle class of lawyers, teachers, church ministers and doctors — the heritage of South Africa's early missionary schools. Following its founding it has been influenced by the ideologies of communism and Africanism, and the different approaches of those who were in exile, of trade union movements and of those incarcerated during apartheid. Currently it is torn between the values of its founders and the very different values of those who seek political power to serve personal interests. Since the 1990s the ANC has needed to make the transition from liberation movement to political party to ruling party, whilst keeping these varying ideologies, traditions and interests content and unified. This is possibly the ANC's greatest challenge and is well articulated in its new slogan 'unity in diversity', released at its centenary celebrations (Progressive Business Forum, 2012). The unity the ANC calls for is perhaps intended less for South Africa than it is for those within its own ranks, as factions vying for access to power threaten to unravel the fabric of the party. A key resource of the ANC's dominance — its broad-based support and multifarious character — may become the source of its undoing; it certainly presents an opening on the playing field for the opposition to seize.

Since its first democratic elections in 1994, South Africa's ruling party, the ANC, has won every consecutive national election by a margin of not less than 62 per cent and seems entrenched for the foreseeable future. Its electoral dominance has further translated into its dominance of the polity and the policy-making process, nationally and provincially, with policy currently emanating from Luthuli House (the headquarters of the ANC) rather than from the legislature. This makes South Africa a clear example of a dominant party system.

Despite the fact that South Africa has not experienced an alternation in power since the end of the apartheid era in 1994 and is not likely to do so in the near future, it still fulfils other liberal democratic requirements: regular free and fair elections, universal adult suffrage, rule of law and an independent judiciary, a vibrant civil society, a vocal and engaging

1 The author conveys her gratitude to Professor Willie Breytenbach, University of Stellenbosch, for his insights and comments on this chapter.

press, and the participation of multiple parties in elections. The international watchdog for democracy and civil liberties, Freedom House, gave South Africa a rating of 1 for political rights and 2 for civil rights in 2006[2] and defined it as 'free' meaning that it is deemed to protect a wide range of civil and political liberties. However, in 2007 this rating declined to a 2 for political rights and 2 for civil rights, a rating which was still valid in 2012. Freedom House (2007) explained: 'South Africa's political rights rating declined from 1 to 2 due to the ruling ANC's growing monopoly on policy-making and its increasingly technocratic nature.' Being a dominant party system does not necessarily render South Africa's political system undemocratic but it may have potential implications for the *quality* of its democracy.

In South Africa the quest for a liberal democracy is thus being made within the context of a dominant party system, and this quest is perhaps best understood in terms of a power balance determined by who has access to resources and power, and how these resources are tactically used. Conteh-Morgan (1997:4) similarly stated: 'It is power relations that most importantly determine whether democratisation can emerge … or whether coercive rule will emerge as the dominant mode of politics.' Of keen importance is the balance of power held between, and within state structures; in particular, the dominant party's relations with Parliament, with the executive and the judiciary; as well as power relations between other power centres such as opposition parties and civil society.

In this chapter a brief contextual overview of South Africa will provide the introduction to the discussion of South Africa's political playing field in relation to these questions: Is there an even playing field, and is there a healthy balance of power? What strategies and resources does the ANC use to consolidate its dominance? And, how do opposition parties remain relevant in a dominant party system context? To investigate these questions, the ANC's policy documents have been analysed and interviews with leaders of political parties conducted.

Contextual factors

Political history and social cleavages

As Diamond et al (1987:6) recognise, the durability of a democratic regime is to a certain extent influenced by the legacies of the past — South Africa's apartheid past is a significant factor in assessing its future. With the Act of Union in 1910, racially restricted franchise was instituted until 1994, when full enfranchisement was granted. During the apartheid years, 1948 to 1994, South Africa's previous hegemonic party, the National Party (NP), came to power on a platform of institutionalised racial separation. The 'armed struggle' (1961–1993) against the apartheid government was led by two largely race-based liberation movements,[3] the ANC and the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC). South Africa thus has two significant legacies: a liberation history and apartheid — a racialised history.

2 Freedom House uses a scale of 1 to 7, with 1 indicating free and 7 not free.

3 There were other liberation movements, for example Inkatha yeNkululeko yeSizwe — the National Cultural Liberation Movement, now known as Inkatha Freedom Party. Inkatha, however, never endorsed an 'armed struggle' against the apartheid regime (Buthelezi, 2011a).

Struggles for liberation tend to leave indelible marks on the post-liberation politics of the states involved. A growing body of research (Dorman, 2006; Melber, 2009; Southall, 2003) highlights that armed struggles and the tense conditions under which liberation movements engage spawn a highly centralised and authoritarian political culture within these movements. This political culture, in turn, impacts on the movements' transformation into ruling political parties and their governance styles in the post-liberation eras (Britz, 2011). In South Africa this liberation history has translated into a centralised political system (institutional centralisation) and a belief that the ANC is the voice of South Africa (dispositional centralisation), as well as a silencing of critical voices, by, for example, delegitimising them as 'anti-transformation' or 'anti-revolutionary' (De Jager, 2006). The ANC flexes muscle against the constraints to its exercise of power. This has most recently become evident in the tension between the executive and the judiciary, when ANC Secretary-General Gwede Mantashe stated that: '… the judiciary is actually consolidating opposition to government', and that judges were 'reversing the gains of transformation through precedents' (Seanego & SAPA, 2011). Nevertheless, since the ANC is a broad church of worldviews and ideologies, its internal pluralism has, thus far, acted as a constraint on these centralising tendencies.

Amongst the negative legacies of South Africa's racialised history are inequality, high levels of poverty and a polarised electorate. The current regime has not been able to sufficiently redress the history of inequality. According to Stats SA's Income and Expenditure Survey (The Presidency, 2009:25), South Africa's Gini coefficient rose from 0.64 in 1995 to 0.69 in 2005, decreasing slightly to 0.679 in 2008, where 0 refers to most equal and 1 refers to most unequal. South Africa is therefore ranked as one of the most unequal societies in the world (Bhorat & Van der Westhuizen, 2010:55). Poverty levels are also a concern, with 49 per cent of South Africans living below the poverty line of R524 per month in 2008 (The Presidency, 2009:26). These figures nevertheless do not account for the fact that South Africa spends about 3.5 per cent of its GDP on social grants and assistance (Bisseker, 2010). In the 2011/12 budget, R147 billion was allocated to social grants, which represented 15 per cent of the budget. Furthermore, these figures exclude the impact of government policies such as free housing, and the provision of free basic services such as the monthly free 6 kl of water and 50 kW of electricity that each poor household is entitled to (Bisseker, 2010). Conclusions drawn from research conducted by Bosch et al (2010) indicate that the Gini coefficient should be modified and that the inequalities, though concerning, are perhaps not as extreme as the 2008 rating of 0.679 would suggest. It is nevertheless, undeniable that South Africa suffers from high levels of poverty and inequality which do not bode well for its democracy, as the research of Diamond et al (1987:11) highlights: 'deep, cumulative social inequalities represent a poor foundation for democracy'. Likewise, Przeworski et al (1996:43) found that although distributional pressures do not necessarily threaten the survival of democracy, people expect democracy to reduce income inequality and democracies are more likely to survive when they do. Kapstein and Converse (2008) confirmed this in their study of democracies, which found that economic growth is not sufficient for the consolidation of democracy; rather, it is the extent to which such growth benefits all citizens, that matters.

As a result of its legacy of racial, cultural and linguistic divides accentuated during the apartheid years, South Africa also carries the burden of cultural and political cleavages based on ethnicity (primarily race and language). South Africa's population of 49.99 million is comprised of approximately 79.4 per cent black African, 9.2 per cent white, 8.7 per cent coloured[4] and 2.7 per cent Indian/Asian people (StatsSA, 2010:3–4). Within the ambit of South Africa's 'rainbow nation' academics have sought to understand the nature of South Africa's electorate and the influence of race and ethnicity. It has previously been argued that party political alignment is a reflection of past racial/ethnic cleavages (Schrire, 2001:137). But recent research by Schulz-Herzenberg (2009) has shown that there has been a reduction in levels of partisanship among all racial groups. Although partisanship is still highest amongst black Africans, with their support predominantly being for the ANC, over time the ANC's support from this group has been declining, albeit minimally. With an increase in the number of independents in the recent elections, black African voters are 'not an unquestionably loyal electorate' (Schulz-Herzenberg, 2009:30). As Schulz-Herzenberg (2009:31) recognises, given South Africa's demographics, increases in non-partisanship among black Africans is the 'key to future electoral realignments' and a significant potential resource for opposition parties.

Institutional context

The 1993 interim Constitution and the final 1996 Constitution were the culmination of more than three years of multi-party and interest-group negotiations. The 1996 Constitution provides the foundation for a liberal democratic government — constitutionalism, rule of law, separation of the three branches of government, and the provision of checks and balances through the recognition of independent statutory bodies. South Africa's constitutional framework is nevertheless not without its flaws, nor is it free from political pressures exerted by the dominant party.

Governmental system: A unitary state with federal features

Although the ANC agreed to a weak form of federalism as a political compromise in the pre-1994 negotiations, they were in fact, 'opposed to any form of federalism' (Feinstein, 2007:47) as evidenced in the ANC's *Constitutional guidelines for a democratic South Africa* (1989). Since the endorsement of the 1996 Constitution the ANC has gradually established a state based on 'democratic centralism', which translates into 'the leadership of the ruling party control[ing] the party, Cabinet, Parliament and all other levels of government' (Van Zyl Slabbert, 2006:163). Democratic centralism emanates from the centre out, thus the role of the executive, the president, and the executive of the ruling party become paramount. In practice, therefore, the South African state is essentially unitary despite elements of a federal system.

Federal features include sub-national institutions and nine provincial legislatures; however, the Constitution sanctions a highly integrated system of government where the national government prevails over 'the provincial in both shared "concurrent"

4 'Coloured' is a South African term, which denotes a person of racially mixed parentage or descent.

responsibilities and supposedly exclusive provincial competencies' (Butler, 2009:117). According to Venter and Landsberg (2007:117), South Africa's 'intergovernmental fiscal model is one in which the centre retains the dominant power to levy taxes and to reallocate this regionally and locally'. Although the Constitution (section 228(1) and (2)) makes provision for a limited scope within which provinces may raise their own revenue, financial authority is firmly situated with national government (section 213(1) and (3)). Approximately 97 per cent of provincial revenue is allocated from central government, whereas 3 per cent is raised by the provinces (from vehicle licences, hospital fees and so on). Financially, this renders the provincial governments heavily dependent on the national government. Local governments (including the eight metropolitan governments), however, have a much broader source of funding and are not as dependent on the national government.[5] Thus South Africa's Constitution speaks the language of federalism 'but it embodies the reality of executive dominance in a unitary state' (Butler, 2009:117).

Electoral system: Closed party-list, proportional representation

Since 1994 party politics in South Africa has been marked by the emergence of a dominant party together with the withering away and eventual demise of the previously dominant NP. Elections are held every five years at national, provincial and local levels. Table 8.1 indicates the outcomes of the last four national elections. The most noteworthy changes over these elections have been the entrenchment of ANC party dominance, the disbanding of the New National Party (NNP),[6] the expansion of the Democratic Alliance's (DA's) support base, declining support for the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), and the rise and demise of the Congress of the People (COPE) (the latter since the 2009 elections).

The fact that the ANC dominates the electoral field nationally, provincially and locally is indisputable. What is worth watching is the incremental decline in its support base and the increase in public protests. For example, at the local level, the ANC's electoral support in the metros during municipal elections decreased from 65.7 per cent in 2006 to 62.8 per cent in 2011 (Subramany, 2011). Although some have 'punished' the ANC for its deficits in governance through not voting, most 'refrain from substantially punishing the ANC' (Booysen, 2011:xiv) yet resort to using public protests, which have increased in frequency.

The NNP saw a continuous decline in support until its eventual disbandment in 2004. It lost much support after it withdrew from the Government of National Unity in 1996 and after the resignation of F. W. de Klerk from party leadership. Its subsequent leader, Marthinus van Schalkwyk, disbanded the NNP in 2005 and went on to join the ANC. The DA, previously the Democratic Party (DP), has steadily risen to take the position of official opposition. The DA currently governs one of the nine provinces, namely the Western Cape. It also won one of the eight metros — the City of Cape Town — for a second term in the 2011

5 Many of South Africa's local governments, have, however been rife with mismanagement, service delivery problems, corruption and other serious failures.

6 Previously the NP, the hegemonic party during the apartheid era.

local elections. The DA's increasing support base has certainly been supplemented by its merging with the Independent Democrats (ID) just prior to the 2011 municipal elections, when it increased its share of the metro vote from 16.3 per cent in 2006 to 24.3 per cent (Subramany, 2011).

The IFP initially joined the ANC in a coalition government at national and provincial levels with its leader, Prince Mangosuthu Buthelezi, holding the office of Minister of Home Affairs from 1994 to 2004. A combination of factors, including a vilification campaign by the ANC against the IFP and Buthelezi (Buthelezi, 2011a), succession issues, party splits, and the ability of the ANC's President, Jacob Zuma (who is a Zulu), to draw much of the IFP's Zulu ethnic support base to the ANC, has led to a significant decline in the party's electoral support. In 2008 COPE was born out of factional differences within the ANC. Despite its limited time and funds to campaign for the 2009 national elections, it still received a modest 7.4 per cent of the national vote. COPE initially breathed new life into South Africa's electoral contest, but it has been wracked by internal leadership wrangling and large financial constraints, resulting in fairly poor results during the 2011 municipal elections.

Table 8.1: South African national election results, 1994–2009

	1994		1999		2004		2009	
	Votes	**Seats**	**Votes**	**Seats**	**Votes**	**Seats**	**Votes**	**Seats**
ACDP	88 104	2	228 975	6	250 272	7	142 658	3
ANC	12 237 655	252	10 601 330	266	10 878 251	279	11 650 748	264
COPE	-	-	-	-	-	-	1 311 027	30
DP/ DA	338 426	7	1 527 337	38	1 931 201	50	2 945 829	67
FF+	424 555	9	127 217	3	139 465	4	127 217	3
ID	-	-	-	-	269 765	7	162 915	3
IFP	2 058 294	43	1 371 477	34	1 088 664	28	804 260	9
NP/ NNP	3 983 690	82	1 098 215	28	257 824	7	-	-
UDM	-	-	546 790	14	355 717	9	149 680	4
Total valid votes:		19 533 498	15 977 142		15 612 671		17 680 729	

Note: Party names in the order listed in the table are: African Christian Democratic Party, African National Congress, Congress of the People, Democratic Party/ Democratic Alliance, Freedom Front Plus, Independent Democrats, Inkatha Freedom Party, National Party/ New National Party, United Democratic Movement. Figures do not tally as all parties are not listed.

Source: Compiled by the author, derived from www.elections.org.za

Election results have generally been accepted by the parties involved and the electorate. Thus no group has seriously contested the outcomes of the national elections and objections to municipal elections have been rare (Lodge & Scheidegger, 2006:5). The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) has also grown in its capabilities, stature and legitimacy with each election, and is largely considered to be a fair umpire. Furthermore, the Bill of Rights in the 1996 Constitution protects the right to form a political party.

South Africa's system of representative democracy premised on proportional representation (PR) using the Droop Quota to appoint seats on the national and provincial levels, has been widely assumed to have been positive for nation-building as it has allowed smaller ethnic, regional and minority parties to gain representation in Parliament. Because the threshold of support required for representation is low, it is a very inclusive system, without, however, preventing majoritarian rule. This inclusivity stands in stark contrast to the exclusivity of the previous system of white minority rule and has made the composition of the legislature one of the most representative in the world. Smaller parties such as the African Christian Democratic Party (ACDP), the Freedom Front Plus (FF+) and the PAC are dependent for their survival on the PR system, and they argue that it is necessary for 'such a diverse country' (Mulder, 2011).

Although the national and provincial electoral system appears to be fairly strong in terms of representativeness, the system is not constituency based, which weakens the accountability of representatives to voters. The system, as Mattes (2002:24) points out, 'has created no direct link between legislators and voters'. In addition, the closed party list system means that voters have no choice over candidates and simply vote for a party. This has two significant consequences: firstly, party officials have enormous control over political recruitment and the system allows 'the party leadership to place loyalists in key positions' (Giliomee et al, 2001:170). This system reinforces strict party discipline as it enables easy 'redeployment' of disloyal members. For example, ANC MPs are subordinate to the ANC's National Executive Committee (NEC)[7] and are bound by a code of conduct that prohibits them from any 'attempt to make use of parliamentary structures to undermine organisational decisions and policies' (Lodge & Scheidegger, 2006:21). The ruling party's parliamentary caucus therefore maintains a predominantly deferential demeanour towards the executive. Secondly, since MPs are primarily dependent on their political party for their position and secondarily to the electorate, they are less likely to represent public opinions which are contra the party line. Thus Parliament has largely become an institution representing and acceding to the interests of the ruling party. Nevertheless, it is debatable whether a majoritarian electoral system, as found in Botswana and Zimbabwe, would be better suited to the South African context. Rather, it is argued that a first-past-the-post system would merely serve to further entrench the dominant party system and alienate minorities. It has been argued that the ideal would be a mixed system, but since the current electoral system serves the interests of the dominant party, it is unlikely to be changed in the short term (see the Van Zyl Slabbert Commission of Electoral Reform, 2003).

7 Only members of the ANC's NEC can draft discussion documents that will be put forward to a policy conference as draft resolutions, before being put forward at national conferences.

In summary, South Africa's historical, socio-economic and institutional context is a mixed bag. Nearly two decades since its transition to democracy, South Africa is still plagued by the legacies of a racialised past and a liberation history. The socio-economic context — high levels of inequality and poverty, though attenuated by social policies of the current government — are not conducive to democratic consolidation. The unmet expectations of the masses provide fertile ground for populist, ignoble politicians. This growing discontent is especially evident in the pervasive 'service delivery' protests, which have become a key feature in the ANC's second decade of rule. Institutionally, there is broad consensus on the legitimacy of the 1996 Constitution and its institutions. For example, the IEC in South Africa, as in India, has grown in its independence and capability, providing a key foundation of a liberal democracy: a respected referee over regular free and fair elections. The PR electoral system though is an object of dissensus and has served to entrench the dominant party system, an electoral system the ANC is unwilling to revise.

With this context in mind, we turn to a further investigation of the resources that are available to the ANC and how it uses them, as well as a discussion of the resources accessible (or not) to the main opposition parties.

An uneven playing field? Winners, losers, strategies and resources

The ANC's association with the struggle against apartheid resulted in a deep affinity to the party and attaches great symbolic value to it. It was thus a given that, with its wide support base, the ANC would initially be the dominant party in the South African government system. Thomas Pempel (1990) argues that a dominant party can facilitate stability through the entrenching of democratic institutions, marginalising political extremes and fusing ethnic differences. In South Africa party dominance by the ANC certainly contributed to stability, and with Nelson Mandela's policy of reconciliation, a sense of unity was created during a volatile transition period. The 1990s were among the most violent times in South Africa's history, and a fragmented party system would, in all likelihood, have resulted in accentuating ethnic differences and the derailment of the democratising process.

In a system where the dominant party has won within democratic rules, the dominant party is expected to function within the boundaries of the democratic system. Within this system there are rules and institutions that check the abuses of power. In South Africa the ANC itself negotiated many of these institutions and rules during the constitution-making period. The effectiveness of South Africa's democratic mechanisms and institutions is, however, dependent upon how advanced such a system is, their level of autonomy, and how free from party influence they are. Certainly the ANC's goals of centralisation are often frustrated when independent statutory bodies such as the Public Protector and the Auditor-General fulfil their mandate. The courts, civil society and the media also play such roles.

In line with democratic processes, the ANC has also instilled a culture of leadership change; between 1994 and 2011 South Africa has had four presidents, thus differentiating itself from many of its African counterparts, Zimbabwe in particular. As Mazibuko (2011) points out: 'South Africans are then able to … slowly become accustomed to [leadership change] … which I believe when the time comes for the ANC to relinquish power, might result in it being more amenable to switching power at the ballot box than its counterparts have been on the continent.' Nevertheless, the question with party dominance is, what happens as dominance persists?

Political resources and strategies of the ANC: Capture of the state and society

Iconic leadership and symbolic history

The ANC's liberation credentials, coupled with the iconic leadership of Nelson Mandela, provided key resources to the party in the initiation of dominance. These credentials have provided the foundation for its overwhelming and continuous electoral support, and are still used as a tool to legitimise its claims that it is the only political party that can be trusted to build a national democratic society as typified in its national project, the National Democratic Revolution (NDR). As the dominant party becomes bolder in its claim to represent the nation and democracy, so it can depict the opposition as antagonistic towards the NDR and the goals of transformation. Thus the dominant party comes to be identified with the regime, while opposition parties are seen as carping and sniping at the sidelines.

The national project of transformation

The ANC's national project of transformation is essentially a project of capturing the state. The ANC considers the current *status quo* to be the heritage of eighty years of white rule, and on this basis justifies the necessity of greater state intervention to redress the consequences of these past injustices. The following features characterise their strategy of transformation: increased state intervention, the deployment of cadres, decision-making centred around a core elite, in particular the ANC's NEC, and a national project — the NDR. Figure 8.1 illustrates the ANC's NDR and cadre deployment strategy which, it purports, will transform society into a 'national democratic society' (Zuma, 2011). The ANC calls itself the 'vanguard' of this revolution (Turok, 2009). These strategies are informed by the ANC's liberation history, which produces a political culture where a small core group of people make decisions, and the ideological influence of communism, which tends towards a highly centralised system of government. Giliomee et al (2001:173) caution that the ANC's policies of democratic centralism and cadre deployment have created what Hannah Arendt terms a dual authority, where *de jure* authority resides in the Constitution, Parliament and Cabinet, but de facto authority resides in the dominant party. Therefore real decision-making occurs, not in the constitutional public forums, but behind the closed doors of party forums.

Apprehensions about the NDR call into question, not its noble goal of transforming South Africa and redressing past injustices, but how it is implemented (as discussed above) and what it is used for, or rather against. The NDR, the ANC and government are placing themselves beyond scrutiny, and those that dare criticise them or hold them to account are labelled as being 'anti-transformation'. The most recent 'victims' of this accusation are the judiciary and the Constitution. Where 60 per cent of South Africa's judges, including the Chief Justice, the Deputy Chief Justice and eight of the 11 Constitutional Court judges are black, and where the ANC was one of the key drafters of the Constitution (Chaskalson, 2012:1), such an accusation rings hollow. Instead it appears to be a 'campaign to politicise the judiciary and then turn it into a tool of the ruling party via the executive' (*Sunday Times Review*, 2012:4).

The power of appointment: Cadre deployment strategy

The initial victory of liberation parties with mass support gives them sudden access to the power to appoint people into jobs in the public service. This power of appointment often becomes a means of patronage and an inducement for loyalty. In the ANC's 'Cadre

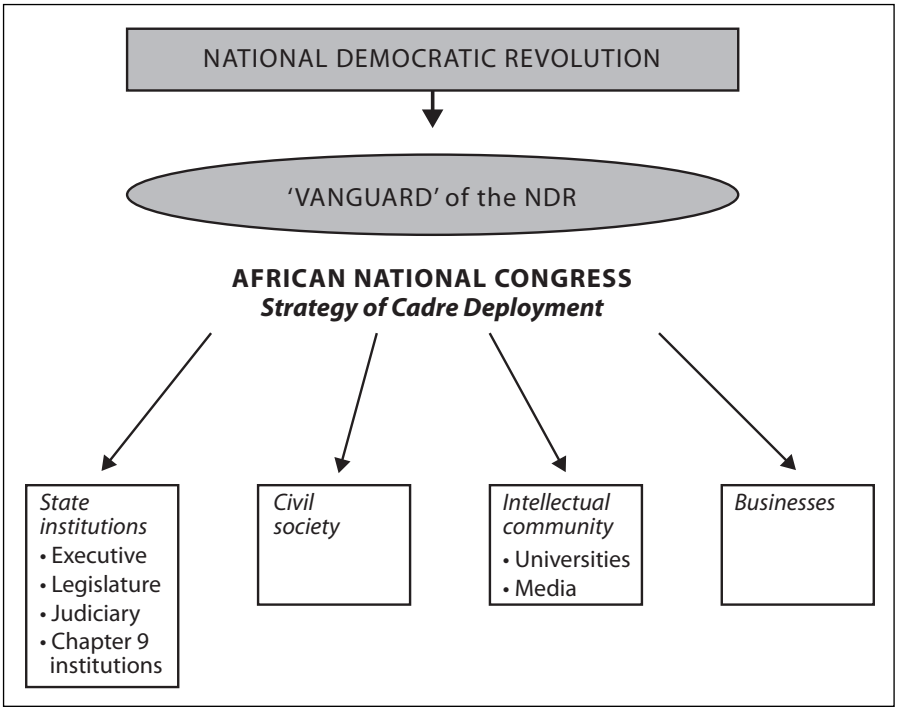

Figure 8.1: ANC's National Democratic Revolution and cadre deployment strategy
Source: De Jager (2009: 283)

policy and deployment strategy' (ANC, 1999), it calls for the 'deployment of cadres for effective intervention on all fronts, including the governmental, parliamentary and extra-parliamentary, with proper co-ordination amongst all these levels, to ensure that we act as one movement, united around a common policy and bound by a common programme of action'. Party leadership attempts to maintain strict discipline by controlling party, public service, parastatal and statutory body appointments.

During the ANC's 99th anniversary celebrations in Polokwane, President Jacob Zuma (2011) repeated the ANC's commitment to cadre deployment:

> We reiterate what we said in our 2007 Strategy and Tactics document that we place a high premium on the involvement of our cadres in all centres of power. ANC cadres have a responsibility to promote progressive traditions within the intellectual community, which includes our universities and the media. We also need their presence and involvement in key strategic positions in the State as well as the private sector, and will continue strategic deployments in this regard.

Cadre deployment is understandable for political positions, such as cabinet ministers and political advisors, but not for the state, academia or the private sector. This has a number of implications. Firstly, it results in a conflict of interests. Deployed cadres are effectively asked to 'serve two masters: the party that deployed them and the institution that employs them' (Hoffman, 2011). The public administration is required to serve the public, not the party, thus those most capable of fulfilling responsibilities that come with public service positions, should do so.[8] Similarly, private institutions are for their shareholders' benefit, not that of the party or its cadre deployment committee. And the intellectual community is not the bastion of a political party or its political ideology, but the arena of independent thought and critical debate.

Secondly, it blurs the line between party and state; it effectively means that the ANC is not just a political party that competes for government at election time. Instead, as Lindiwe Mazibuko (2011), parliamentary leader of the Democratic Alliance, states, 'the ANC *is* South Africa and the ANC must be every part of South Africa from the salary you draw at the end of the month, to the food you eat, to the music you listen to, to the newspapers you read, to the lectures you receive on university campuses. Everything must be permeated by the ANC'.

Thirdly, it is a vehicle for corruption as it engenders tenderpreneurship and patronage. Mazibuko (2011) laments that state-owned enterprises, 'which are supposed to offer some form of public service, are now becoming vehicles to help enrich the ANC'. For example, Eskom, whose chairman was former ANC Cabinet Minister Valli Moosa, awarded Hitachi Power Africa a R38.5 billion tender to supply boiler sets for two power stations (Sole, 2010:195). Chancellor House, an ANC investment arm, is a 25 per cent stakeholder in Hitachi. According to Helen Zille, leader of the DA, this deal would result in the ANC's receiving a profit of an estimated R1 billion, the 'result of a corrupt deal in terms of which the ANC in the state [through Eskom] has given a contract corruptly

8 Athol Trollip, from the DA, cites examples of payouts following failed cadre deployment in the public sector: Khaya Ngqula of South African Airways: R8m; Dali Mpofu of the SABC: R11m; Victor Moche of Denel: R3m; and Alan Mukoki of the Land Bank: R4,5m (Hoffman, 2010).

to the ANC in business, to Chancellor House, to enrich the ANC as a political party' (quoted in Jolobe, 2010:202).

Fourth, it results in service delivery failures, where according to Hoffman (2009): '28 per cent of the people who are employed in local government are there as a consequence of cadre deployment and not because they are deployed into a job that fits into and is described in the structures of the municipalities for which they work'. This was further confirmed by the 2011-2012 Auditor-General's Report on local government, where the report showed that only 13 (5%) out of 343 municipalities received clean audits. Terence Nombembe, the Auditor-General, cited the lack of minimum competencies for officials in key positions, as one of the main reasons for the poor performance (Nombembe, 2012). Local government is mandated to be the delivery arm of government, yet an increasing number of service delivery protests have testified to the dissatisfaction of many South Africans in this regard.

And fifth, cadre deployment knows no independence and thus undermines the Constitution and its institutions. The loyalty and accountability of cadres deployed within state institutions lies first and most importantly with the ruling party, removing power from constitutional institutions and ultimately transferring it to the ANC's NEC. The strategy undermines the Constitution's endorsement of the separation of powers[9] and it circumvents its so-called independent Chapter 9 institutions as it commits the party to controlling all levers of power. According to Chief Whip of the DA, Ian Davidson (2009), 'The ANC has always said they do not need to change the Constitution; they can merely deploy their cadres.'

Media access

South Africa has a vibrant and largely independent media sector, with coverage beyond just the urban areas, thus affording political parties other than just the ruling party access to media resources. The media and other civil society groupings, together with the judiciary (in particular the Constitutional Court), provide essential checks and balances in South Africa's society and 'may indeed have become substitutes for small opposition parties' (Breytenbach, 2006:183). Thus the continued independence of the media is of significant importance in maintaining an even playing field.

Of concern is the ANC's view of the media. In its resolutions document from the 52nd National Conference in 2007 (ANC, 2007), it affirmed its commitment to media freedom, but then lamented that the media had become 'anti-transformation' and 'anti-ANC'. At this policy conference, under the rubric 'the battle of ideas', the ANC adopted the resolution to investigate the necessity for a media tribunal. The party considers the current system of self-regulation through the media ombudsman to be inadequate. The need for better regulation of the media is acknowledged, but the calls for increased state

9 Professor Ben Turok (2009), ANC MP and member of the South African Communist Party, acknowledged that there is a disjuncture between the ANC's strategy of control over all levers of power and the Constitution's separation of powers. He went further to exclaim that 'the balances of power, the liberal forces, the values of democracy and the checks and balances, have actually, to a degree, stalled the revolution'.

regulation of the media hark back to the apartheid era of state regulation and censorship of the media. The investigation of the possible establishment of a media tribunal is still in its infancy, but it is a development requiring scrutiny.

The media is clearly also a target area for cadre deployment, most evidently within the biggest media house, the state-owned South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), where there is a silent culture of self-censorship, according to Pieter Mulder (2011), leader of FF+. Reporters, analysts and others within the public broadcaster who fall foul of the party line (for example, Eusebius McKaiser and John Perlman) are gradually moved out (Mbete, 2011b).[10]

A further concern for the proper functioning of a robust and independent media has been the Protection of Information Bill, otherwise known as the Secrecy Bill. The drafting of the Bill was necessary as a substitute for the 1982 Protection of Information Act, a draconian law from the apartheid era. However, Sithembile Mbete (2011a), a political researcher at the Institute for Democracy in South Africa (IDASA), cautions that the Bill goes 'too far' as it is a threat to the public's right to know and threatens the freedom of the country's press. Ronnie Kasrils, member of the ANC and previously the Minister of Intelligence, stated that he suspects that the Bill is 'not about the real secrets that must be defended but it's to prevent those silly leaders who have egg on their face, who have been exposed by the media for doing foolish and embarrassing things' such as 'misusing and abusing' tenders and contracts as well as taxpayers' money (Davies, 2011). The Bill allows heavy penalties for those who disclose or possess material classified as secret, even if such disclosure can be deemed as being in the public interest. If the Bill is passed into legislation in its current form, it may create an environment which promotes secrecy (Mbete, 2011a), and secrecy is the breeding ground for corruption.

Media access is a key resource in any democracy, and with the Freedom House having rated freedom of the press in South Africa as only 'partly free' in 2010 (South Africa's worst score since 1995), it is an area of concern for the quality of South Africa's democracy.

Economic resources: Controlling the purse strings?

Magaloni (2006:37), in her study of Mexico under the hegemonic rule of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) found that 'the more fiscal resources, subsidies, and economic regulations are under the government's control, the more leeway the autocrat will have to buy off electoral support and deter voter exit'. The consequences of centrally controlled state finances are threefold: first, it enables the ruling party to build a massive patronage system, thus ensuring the acquiescence of political officials, civil society, businesses, and society in general. Second, practically unhindered access to state resources makes it possible for the ruling party to spend large amounts of unaccounted funds on its own

10 McKaiser was a political analyst and presenter on SABC 3's *Interface*, a talk show. Apparently, for being too forthright in his interviews, he was pressured to resign in 2011, when he was offered a shameful R4 000 a month salary. Perlman, a seasoned journalist and news anchor, resigned from the SABC in 2007, when he blew the whistle on political censorship within the SABC.

electoral campaigns, thus blurring state–party lines. Third, the state's fiscal monopoly means that the bulk of provincial and local government budgets are allocated by national government, thereby guaranteeing loyalty to the centre and the ruling party.

As a growing economy, South Africa in the 1990s had little choice but to engage with the global economy. Since 1994, its economic policy has been a constant struggle between the necessity of attaining material and social justice on the one hand, and gaining the approval of the global economy on the other (Feinstein, 2007:66). The government's adoption of the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) policy was premised on the mainstream assumption of the early 1990s import substitution within a closed economy and expansive state spending would not achieve economic growth, whereas policies that encouraged foreign direct investment, low inflation, and free international trade would do so. South Africa's adoption of market-led economic policies meant that the state did not have unfettered access to financial resources.

Despite this external pressure for a more pragmatic economic policy, the ANC's scepticism of the role of the free market is still evident in its policy documents. It argues that the economic changes they seek 'will not emerge spontaneously from the "invisible hand" of the market', but rather that the 'state must play a central and strategic role, by directly investing in underdeveloped areas and directing private sector investment' (ANC, 2007:17). The *52nd National Conference* (ANC, 2007:17) again affirmed the need for a *developmental state* that is 'located at the centre of a mixed economy … a state which leads and guides that economy and intervenes in the interest of the people as a whole'. Although the ANC sees South Africa as a developmental state, the state lacks the efficiency of such states in South East Asia. It might be more accurate to observe a trend towards South Africa's becoming a welfare state, as in Scandinavia. However, in welfare states, all citizens benefit from social grants, whereas in South Africa only about 15 million people (mainly, but not exclusively, poor black South Africans) out of a population of 50 million benefit from old age, child and disability grants. In South Africa, taxpayers are excluded from such grants; in welfare states, all taxpayers are also receivers of state benefits such as health insurance. The total disbursement for the 2010/2011 fiscal year was approximately R89 billion (SA Government Information, 2012) which translates into over R6 000 per annum per beneficiary. Clearly, social grants do help to alleviate poverty in a country where millions cannot work, or sustain themselves. This could, perhaps, explain why the rural poor still overwhelmingly vote for the ANC.

Despite sentiments that the state should be granted more economic control and despite calls from the ANC Youth League for nationalisation and redistribution of land without compensation, pragmatism has tended to govern economic policy. In so doing, it has enabled alternative centres of power.

Party funding

South Africa's political parties have three sources of funding: membership fees, public funding through the state, and private funding. Membership fees are often small in comparison to the other sources of funding. The ANC's current annual membership fee

is only R12. The spending of public funds is carefully regulated and monitored, whereas private funding is almost completely unregulated.

Although the spending of public funds is regulated by the Public Funding of Represented Political Parties Act 103 (1997), which stipulates that public funds should be allocated on the basis of the 'principle of proportionality' and the 'principle of equity' (South Africa, 1997), the application of this Act is cause for concern. The Act empowers the president, acting on recommendations from Parliament, to determine how funds are allocated. Parliament, essentially controlled by the ANC, has given extensively more weight to the principle of proportionality (90 per cent) than that of equality (10 per cent). For example, during the financial year 2009/2010, R92 914 924 was made available to nineteen represented political parties, R83 623 431 on the basis of proportionality, and R9 291 492 on the basis of equality (Electoral Commission, 2010:9). The lion's share of R58 056 247 thus went to the ANC.

The lack of monitoring and transparency with regard to private funding is cause for even greater concern. Secret donations can negatively affect political rights and participatory democracy, as the undue influence wielded by wealthy donors eclipses the average citizen's voice. Despite its commitment to regulate private funding since 1997 when the Public Funding of Represented Political Parties Bill was enacted, the ANC has made no progress in implementing the legislation. As a signatory of Article 10 of the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption of 2003, South Africa is obliged to adopt measures to 'incorporate the principle of transparency into funding of political parties', yet South Africa's unregulated, unmonitored private funding is leading to increased examples of corruption and a blurring of the state–party line. A key example is the so-called 'oilgate scandal' where 'R11 million of taxpayers' money had flowed from PetroSA, the state oil company, to the ANC's 2004 election campaign, through empowerment oil trader Imvume Management' (Bauer, 2011). Unfortunately the Public Protector during that period, an ANC deployee, decided not to investigate the matter properly and his decision appeared to whitewash the situation. There have, however, been positive developments, including the new Public Protector, Thuli Madonsela's decision to scrutinise the situation properly, in consultation with the *Mail & Guardian*. The *Mail & Guardian* is an independent newspaper which was responsible for initially exposing the funding transaction. A further important development has been the establishment of 'Who Funds Who?', a joint project of two think-tanks — the Institute for Security Studies (ISS) and IDASA. The aim of the project is to promote transparency with respect to the private funding of political parties. However, this is a double-edged sword, as exposing the funders of opposition parties such as the DA may result in the flight of such funders. Businesses seen to be in 'alliance' with the opposition may face reprisal from the ultimate holder of state tenders — the ANC.

In summary, the ANC, riding on the crest of its liberation credentials, positions itself as the only true vanguard of the transformation project and appears set on a path of institutional and dispositional centralisation. The pursuit of its policies of cadre deployment and the NDR are indicative of the ANC's goal to capture the state. As previously pointed out, this inevitably leads to a blurring of the state–party line, a

common pathology of the dominant party system. Nonetheless, the ANC does not have full control of the purse strings, as its economic policy is restrained by the realities of the global economic context and economic pragmatists within its ranks. Thus, as Butler (2009) highlights there has been, under the Zuma administration, a continuation of economic orthodoxy accompanied by increasing social authoritarianism.

Evaluation of the opposition's strategies and access to resources

Opposition parties in dominant party systems are often accused of being weak, implying that by their very weakness they are perpetuating a dominant party system. I disagree. Although there are instances of party weakness, I argue that opposition parties are inherently weakened within a dominant party context. As this chapter has illustrated, it becomes clear that within South Africa, the ANC has far greater access to political, symbolic, economic and public broadcasting resources than the other political parties. In addition, if the dominant party stands on a centrist platform and becomes a catch-all party — the ANC is considered a centre-left party — it encourages the smaller parties to pursue the support of the remaining niches (taking on ethnic, racial and other marginal and limiting identities) thereby entrenching a limited support base. Seepe (2007) aptly describes this as 'opposition parties fish[ing] in a pool of minorities'. The key question for this section is: how do opposition parties remain relevant within a dominant party system?

Small political parties

It is interesting to observe the strategies of smaller, niche parties such as the FF+, which continues to participate in South Africa's political system despite the fact that the party will never conceivably have the opportunity to rule. FF+ was established in 1994 with the aim of protecting Afrikaner interests. Their intention is therefore not to win government, but to influence it in the interests of the Afrikaner community. Dr Pieter Mulder (2011), leader of the FF+, motivates their role through having observed other smaller parties in Europe:[11] 'knowing that we will never be the majority … we are interested in coalitions or alliances with other parties. And that gives us the leverage to play a role'. Thus in 2006 they formed a coalition government, with the DA and other parties, to govern the City of Cape Town. In return they negotiated that the speaker was to be from the FF+ (Mulder, 2011). Thus even though they had only one seat on the Cape Town City Council, they effectively used that seat as a bargaining tool.

A further strategy, which the party has used, was to accept a Cabinet position within national government. The party put forward five conditions before they would agree to the

11 The FF+ has to choose between being right-wing (which will not work in a country with millions of poor blacks) or economically conservative, as centre-right parties in Europe are.

position, one of which was their refusal to be part of the ANC's land reform programme. The Department of Agriculture and Land Reform was subsequently split and Mulder became the Deputy Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries following Jacob Zuma's epithet that 'you can be inside and outside' (Mulder, 2011). The party has astutely realised that key decisions for South Africa happen not within the walls of Parliament but at Luthuli House, and thus they seek to influence the ANC through meetings with the NEC, and through holding a ministerial post which gives them access to Cabinet's *lekgotlas* and to the president's ear. For example, through a meeting with President Zuma, Mulder was able to have the name change of Pretoria to Tshwane retracted from the *Government Gazette* (Mulder, 2011). Thus although this niche party has a fairly small support base and therefore minimal access to funds, it has established for itself a key resource — access to decision-makers.

The official opposition — the Democratic Alliance

The DA, formerly the Democratic Party (DP) was formed in 1989, and served as the official opposition to the NP. It supported a 'programme of non-racial democracy, a limited state, constitutional supremacy and a market economy' (Butler, 2009:148). Its aim, very different to that of the FF+, is to win elections and to govern, as they are currently doing in Cape Town and in the Western Cape. The party has been labelled a 'white party', in part due to its history as a party opposed to apartheid from inside rather than outside the system, which meant that up to 1994 none of the black members of the party could become public representatives (Mazibuko, 2011). The primary challenge for its growth has therefore been the need to chip away at racial and ethnic boundaries. Tony Leon, previous leader of the DP, did this as he garnered the Afrikaans vote, with the result that what started out as an 'English' party became a 'white' party. Helen Zille then wooed the coloured vote through her work in Mitchell's Plain and the Cape Flats, and through alliance with the ID, traditionally a political party with a coloured voter-base. The DA also won wards in Chatsworth and Phoenix, traditionally Indian areas, in the 2011 local government elections. It is currently attempting to break through the black racial ceiling. Therefore, the key challenge for the DA is to shed its white/ minority/ elitist image, and 'occupy the space of non-racialism' (Mazibuko, 2011). It is striving to break the mould of what happens to opposition parties in dominant party systems, by positioning itself as a centrist party, and by attempting to wrangle the moral high ground of a 'non-racial, non-sexist' party from the ANC, who it accuses of having abandoned non-racialism for 'racial nationalism', 'populism' and 'easy wins' (Mazibuko, 2011).

In terms of access to resources, the DA fares better than the other opposition parties. According to Ian Davidson (2009), DA Chief Whip, the DA gets 'fair coverage' in the media. For the 2009/2010 financial year, the DA received R15 337 771 in public funding (Electoral Commission, 2010), and it has a number of private funders whose identities it is not required to disclose.

The formation of COPE has also been advantageous to the DA, as it has opened up the political playing field. As previously mentioned, in South Africa identity-based politics is

still significant, with party affiliation (to the ANC) strongest amongst black Africans. As Davidson explains, COPE has 'opened up choice' thus 'I can still exercise choice without sacrificing my identity' and 'once you've exercised choice — choice in and of itself is a liberating exercise — then you can say to yourself, if I've voted for COPE, then what is the difference between COPE and the DA?'

However, the key resource for the DA has been access to government. Through a coalition government, the DA governed the City of Cape Town from 2006 and then won the City again in the 2011 local elections, this time on its own. During its time in office it has managed to ring up a number of accolades, for example in 2007 Cape Town was rated the most productive metropolitan area to work, live and invest in, according to a municipal productivity index (MPI) released by MunicipalIQ, and has largely been considered to have been successful in its service delivery. The DA has effectively campaigned on its successes, promoting itself as a 'government that delivers' (DA, 2011). This certainly contributed to its winning the Western Cape Province in the 2009 provincial elections. A clear strategy of the DA appears to be to win local, govern well and aim for national. Winning the multiracial Gauteng province with Pretoria and Johannesburg within its boundaries, or even the Eastern Cape where COPE was strong in 2009, could be its next challenge.

Conclusion

The ANC dominates South Africa's political playing field as it enjoys access to the lion's share of state, media, funding and symbolic resources. With its liberation credentials in the historical struggle against apartheid, the ANC's initial win was deserved and its mass support base understandable. This dominant party facilitated a largely peaceful transition to democracy and established the constitutional foundations of South Africa's democracy. The test now lies in whether it will operate within this framework; within the rules of the game. If South Africa's democracy is to mature and deepen, the ANC will have to relinquish its policy of cadre deployment and its aim of controlling all levers of power, and come to accept itself as one political player, albeit the strongest player, within the game of politics. The ANC has conceded losses on the local and provincial levels, but its litmus test remains for when politics becomes truly competitive at the national level.

The ANC's aims of political and economic centralisation through policies such as cadre deployment, compounded with its broad-church character has led to internal factions and wrangling for power. This may mean that the ANC will drop the ball — quite possible when access to power becomes more important than service delivery and good governance. If opposition is strategic and adequately prepared, it will be ready to pick up the ball.

Opposition parties are largely becoming more adept at the game and more strategic in their moves and in utilising the resources at their disposal. Coupled with this, some of the umpires, for example the IEC, the Constitutional Court and the Public Protector, are beginning to fulfil their mandate towards ensuring that the game is played fairly. In conclusion, despite the dominant party system, there are a number of power centres which serve to keep South Africa's democracy in balance.

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Chapter 9

Heroes fall, oppressors rise: Democratic decay and authoritarianism in Zimbabwe

Annemie Britz and Josephat Tshuma

For the last three decades, Robert Mugabe's ZANU–PF[1] has managed to cling to power and entrench itself as Zimbabwe's increasingly authoritarian ruling party, in the process establishing a dominant party system. ZANU–PF's reputation as one of the leading liberation movements in the struggle against the white-minority Rhodesian regime, initially afforded it the overwhelming support of the Zimbabwean electorate. However, the ambitions of ZANU–PF went beyond the confines of democratic conduct and competition as it became clear early on that the ruling party was intent on staying in power, no matter what the cost, even if that cost included the gains of the liberation struggle and the democratic rights of the Zimbabwean citizenry. The case of Zimbabwe has become a warning sign for the rest of the region, a barometer by which to determine whether other southern African states are following a similar path to democratic decay.

In this chapter, we will examine ZANU–PF's dominance by looking at the historical, socio-economic and international contexts in which the party's dominance was established, maintained and gradually eroded and examining Zimbabwe's political system in the post-liberation era. Furthermore, we will analyse the consequences of ZANU–PF's dominance and explore the future of the dominant party system in Zimbabwe, specifically taking into account recent developments in relation to the unity government of Robert Mugabe's ZANU–PF, Morgan Tsvangirai's Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) and Welshman Ncube's MDC faction.

1 Zimbabwe African National Union–Patriotic Front (ZANU–PF). The Patriotic Front (PF) initially referred to the alliance between Joshua Nkomo's Zimbabwe African Peoples Union (ZAPU) and Robert Mugabe's ZANU in the late 1970s and specifically during the Lancaster House Conference (Campbell, 2003: 22). Even though ZANU and ZAPU's alliance broke down and they did not contest the elections together, ZANU retained its title as ZANU–PF in the post-liberation era.

The context of Zimbabwe's hegemonic party system

In terms of the categorisation in Chapter 1, Zimbabwe can be classified as a hegemonic party system. A hegemonic party system refers to an illiberal democracy in which a ruling party exercises its power in an authoritarian manner, as in the case of ZANU–PF in Zimbabwe. In order to understand the development of a hegemonic party system, we must investigate the setting in which that dominance was established, maintained and even eroded. Therefore, in this section, we look at the historical, socio-economic and international aspects of the context that contributed to the formation of a hegemonic party system in Zimbabwe.

Historical context

A party tends to become dominant in the aftermath of great political, social and economic change, for example the attainment of political independence. The case of Zimbabwe and ZANU–PF is no different.

The legacy of the armed liberation struggle has been an important contributor to the development of Zimbabwe's dominant party system, which would later degenerate into a hegemonic party system. ZANU–PF's reputation as a one of the leading liberation movements during the struggle initially afforded it the overwhelming support of the Zimbabwean electorate. Cliffe, Mpofu and Munslow (1980:48–49) point out that ZANU–PF, as a nationalist liberation movement, reflected and represented the aspirations of ordinary Zimbabweans and could articulate the grievances of the large majority of voters, resulting in landslide electoral victories (see Tables 9.1 and 9.2). The combination of electoral dominance and liberation struggle history may have convinced ZANU–PF that it was the *only* legitimate representative of 'the people' or the nation as a whole. Despite Robert Mugabe's reconciliatory rhetoric at independence, any competing political parties or dissenting voices that have since opposed the ruling party have been portrayed as enemies of the nation and have subsequently been silenced (Blair, 2002:14; Southall, 2003:40). Sithole and Makumbe (1997:134) state the following:

> It can be said, therefore, that the fate of the opposition was decided during the war of liberation in the 1970s. With a philosophy of annihilation, complimented with the monopoly of state power, it became impossible for the opposition to function as a viable political entity.

The post-colonial Zimbabwean state can be described as the product of two major legacies: the authoritarian settler colonial state and the protracted armed struggle aimed at removing the white-minority regime (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2002:110). The post-colonial state inherited by ZANU–PF after the 1980 elections was not weak, unlike many African states that gained independence in the 1950s and 1960s (Herbst, 1990:30). In reality, the new government inherited a powerful and well developed state apparatus, in particular its security apparatus. ZANU–PF's adoption of the resilient colonial and military-orientated state structures, as a result, had serious implications for human rights and democratic rule in Zimbabwe (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2002:111). The retention and use of colonial legislation afforded ZANU–PF the opportunity to entrench itself as Zimbabwe's dominant ruling

party and strengthen its hold on power. The legacy of the colonial settler state has thus been important in the establishment of a dominant party system in post-independence Zimbabwe. The historical context of the liberation struggle, the negotiated settlement between the political elites as well as the nature of the post-colonial state, all played an important role in creating ZANU–PF's dominance.

Socio-economic context

The socio-economic context is also vital to our understanding of the political developments in Zimbabwe over the last three decades: how a hegemonic system has been established and how ZANU–PF's political ascendancy has gradually begun to wane.

The Zimbabwean population can be divided into two main ethno-linguistic groups, namely the Shona and the Ndebele (Booysen & Toulou, 2009:636). Ethnicity has been an important factor in Zimbabwean politics and became a major political divide amongst the black population in the early years after independence. From 1980 to 1995, ethnic demographics played a major role in Zimbabwean electoral politics (Breytenbach, 2000:47). ZANU–PF's early electoral dominance can be ascribed to the fact that the Mashona form the power base of the original ZANU; they make up about 77 per cent of the population and this led to the dominance of Mashona-based parties (the largest being ZANU–PF) during elections in the 1980s (see Table 9.1). The same correlations also apply to the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU) and their support base, namely the Ndebeles, who make up around 19 per cent of the population. In 1980 and 1985, ZAPU drew 24 per cent and 19 per cent of the vote respectively (Breytenbach, 2000:47). However, after the merger of ZANU and ZAPU in 1987, the situation changed. In fact, it can be argued that ethnicity is becoming less important in Zimbabwean politics while the urban-rural divide is playing an increasingly significant role (Booysen & Toulou, 2009:637). For example, Zimbabwe's two largest cities, Harare (with a largely Shona population) and Bulawayo (with a largely Ndebele population) predominantly vote for the MDC while ZANU–PF draws its support mainly from the rural areas. In addition to ethnic demographics, economic developments throughout the 1980s and in particular in the 1990s have had major implications for ZANU–PF's grip on power.

The ZANU–PF government assumed power in 1980 with the pledge to redress the colonial legacies of injustice and (economic) inequality (Dansereau, 2003:26). At independence, Zimbabwe inherited a well-developed, diversified but highly unequal economy based on the ideology of 'white supremacy' (Kanyenze, 2004:107). It was estimated that at this time roughly 3 per cent of the population — mostly white Zimbabweans — controlled two-thirds of the gross national income while the World Bank found that black incomes were one-tenth of those of whites (Kanyenze, 2004:110). Initially, the government took impressive steps to address this inequality between the economically marginalised black majority and the economically privileged white minority (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2002:112). This included heavy government investment — assisted by foreign aid — in health, education and other social services. Furthermore, in the first few years of independence the Zimbabwean economy experienced a major boom as it opened up after the end of the war, with renewed access to international aid and borrowing, and favourable weather conditions. The GDP grew by

11 per cent in 1980 and 10 per cent in 1981 (Kanyenze, 2004:111). Nonetheless, addressing the problems left by the colonial legacy was a difficult task for the ruling party. By 1990, Zimbabwean society was still characterised by high levels of income inequality with a Gini co-efficient of 56.83 (Raftopolous, Hawkins & Amanor-Wilks, 1998: 49). The adoption of the IMF and the World Bank's market-driven Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP) in the 1990s exacerbated the situation and Zimbabwe's economic problems became more pronounced.

By the beginning of the 1990s, it became clear that not enough jobs were being created and the government subsequently adopted a more market-driven reform programme in 1991: the IMF's Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) (Kanyenze, 2004:123). The adoption and design of this programme, however, did not include the input of civil society. This had important repercussions for ZANU–PF and Zimbabwean politics as a whole. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2002:122) argues that the implementation of ESAP signalled ZANU–PF's shift away from the needs of the peasants and workers and the abandonment of the goal of economic equity. The government purposefully moved away from the redistributive policies of the early 1980s focusing instead on economic liberalisation in an effort to stimulate economic growth (Dansereau, 2003:32). However, the ESAP failed miserably, in part due to the half-hearted manner in which it was implemented and the government's inept management of the process (Breytenbach, 2000:47). The Zimbabwean economy grew by only 1.8 per cent per year between 1990 and 1996, while unemployment and poverty increased and inflation accelerated (Raftopolous, Hawkins & Amanor-Wilks, 1998:52). The programme thus led to increased social and economic inequality (Bracking, 2005:343). The adoption of ESAP can be described as a turning point for ZANU–PF because its failure severely truncated the ruling party's power base while sprouting fierce opposition from civil society actors in particular. In fact, it was civil society actors such as the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) and human rights groups such as ZimRights that filled the political vacuum in the place of opposition parties (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2002:122). In this climate of economic decline and growing opposition to the government, Zimbabwe descended into authoritarianism with ZANU–PF desperately clinging to power. Bracking (2005:343) states the following:

> Zimbabwe now exhibits a form of authoritarianism that can be traced from the social transformation catalysed by the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) of 1991–95, the economic crisis after 1997, and the more general economic and moral bankruptcy of the post-colonial nebula of hybrid liberal democracy.

It is in this context of economic decline in the late 1990s that Zimbabwe slipped from being a dominant system with ZANU–PF firmly in control, into a hegemonic party system and ultimately to an illegitimate authoritarian regime, facing renewed resistance from opposition in the form of the MDC.

International context

The Cold War security context of the 1980s and the 'third wave' of democracy (Huntington, 1991) in the early 1990s have had a particularly significant impact on ZANU–PF's position at the helm of the Zimbabwean state.

During the 1980s, Cold War politics still prevailed in states' interactions with one another. The situation was no different in southern Africa, where the superpower rivalry of the time continued to shape the internal dynamics of individual southern African states. Zimbabwe, like the rest of the region, was also greatly affected by this power play. With the attainment of independence, Zimbabwe was met by international goodwill and received a vast amount of support in the wake of a peaceful transition to majority rule (Matshazi, 2007:53; Meredith, 2002:46). This negotiated and smooth transition to black rule was seen to be an indication to other countries in the region — most notably South Africa — that negotiated settlements could take place and that multiracial reconciliation was possible. As a result, Zimbabwe quickly became a key strategic player in the region. Western states — most notably Britain and the United States — considered Zimbabwe to be a significant regional partner in a Cold War context that was compounded by the regional destabilisation[2] of apartheid South Africa (Phimister, 2008:202). Due to this, Western governments were generous with the provision of aid; the United States, for instance, provided Zimbabwe with a three-year package worth US$225 million, describing the relationship between the two countries as a 'warm embrace' (Meredith, 2002:47). This goodwill and assistance in turn bolstered ZANU–PF's position and hold on power.

However, due to Zimbabwe's newly afforded star status, very few countries voiced criticism against Robert Mugabe's regime during the brutal Matabeleland massacres of the mid-1980s (Phimister, 2008:202). In fact, 'in Africa as in the West, Mugabe was showered with praise even as the Fifth Brigade went about its bloody business' (Phimister, 2008:203). It can be speculated that ZANU–PF's role as a counterpoint to the Soviet-supported African National Congress (ANC) in South Africa and its unwillingness to allow a USSR embassy in Zimbabwe, may have prompted the West to overlook the Matabeleland massacres (Moore, 2006:134). It was in this context of Cold War politics and the concomitant importance of a successful Zimbabwe in southern Africa that the world turned a blind eye to ZANU–PF's increasingly authoritarian (and violent) behaviour. Apart from this, a turbulent and destabilising South Africa in the 1980s drew more of the world's attention (and condemnation) than the comparatively stable, albeit increasingly authoritarian Zimbabwe.

From the outset, it was Robert Mugabe and ZANU–PF's intention to establish a one party state. In fact, the 'institutionalization of a one party state has always been the basic tenet of ZANU–PF, beginning with ZANU's party conference in Mozambique in 1977' (Knight, 1991:27). However, changes on the international stage greatly affected ZANU–PF's ambitions in this regard. International and regional developments such as the end of the Cold War, the collapse of the Soviet Union, the disintegration of the communist regimes of Eastern Europe, the retreat of apartheid South Africa and the collapse of dictatorial regimes in Zambia and Malawi, ushered in Zimbabwe's own ambiguous and contradictory era of

2 From the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s, the South African government adopted a programme of destabilisation against the new independent and black regimes. The post-1980 Mugabe regime in Zimbabwe — as with many other southern African states — was also a target of this destabilisation by means of 'direct military action including sabotage, clandestine support for banditry, assassination, espionage, economic sabotage, propaganda and disinformation' (Johnson & Martin, 1988: 57).

(political and economic) *glasnost* (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2002:121). These events, coupled with internal opposition, essentially forced ZANU–PF to abandon its plans for establishing a one party state. The international emphasis on good governance, democracy and human rights in the wake of the Soviet Union's collapse and the third wave of democracy in the early 1990s, had a dampening effect on ZANU–PF's attempts to create a one party state and their increasingly authoritarian practices. In other words, this renewed focus on democracy and human rights, redirected the world's scrutiny (and disapproval) to states — including Zimbabwe — where these practices were not being upheld.

The impact of party dominance on Zimbabwe's political system

This section discusses the impact of ZANU–PF's dominance on some of the main features of democracy and Zimbabwe's political system. Particular attention will be paid to the Zimbabwean Constitution and amendments that have been made to it; opposition parties in Zimbabwe from 1980 onwards and the Zimbabwean electoral system and elections.

Constitutional engineering & the facilitation of ZANU–PF's dominance

In addition to bringing an end to the conflict between the Rhodesian state and the nationalist liberation movements, the Lancaster House Conference[3] also led to the crafting of Zimbabwe's independence Constitution. It resembled most independence constitutions where there were negotiations between a colonial power and representatives of the colonised people (Sachikonye, 2002:175). The Lancaster House Constitution was based on the recognition of liberal notions of constitutionalism, including concepts such as the independence of the judiciary, the separation of powers, the accountability of the executive to the legislature, bureaucratic neutrality and governmental accountability. In other words, it strongly emphasised limitations on powers of government in relation to individual rights and checks on the executive sphere of the state. It also had a Declaration of Rights which included various civil liberties, political rights and also property rights (Norman, 2008:69). In addition to this, it also contained a clause that guaranteed white people 20 seats in Parliament for five years while, black Zimbabweans would be allocated the remaining 80 seats (Stiff, 2000:20).

It has to be kept in mind, however, that political elites crafted the new Constitution, which was essentially a by-product of the political settlement. It reflected the compromise between the liberation leaders and the economically privileged whites and international capital (Kagoro, 2004:237). Lloyd Sachikonye (2002:175) states the following in this regard:

3 The Lancaster House Conference was held in London from 10 September to 21 December 1979 (Stiff, 2000: 19).

> In retrospect, the Lancaster House Constitution , like most Constitutions, was no more than a compromise between competing interests. The absence of wider participation in its making robbed it of broader legitimacy amongst the generality of Zimbabwe.

Furthermore, it had various important flaws in relation to clauses on political and economic relations. For instance, it did little to help alleviate the severe economic, social and cultural dislocations, but rather facilitated the continuation of these cleavages (Kagoro, 2004:236). The Lancaster House Constitution also neglected to create the democratic institutions that are necessary to make a government accountable to the electorate. It did not provide the fragile Zimbabwean democracy with independent institutions such as a human rights commission or an electoral commission. In addition to this, the Mugabe regime was not devoted to a strict observation of the democratic values of tolerance and the rule of law (Sachikonye, 2002:175). Instead, the aim of ZANU–PF was to consolidate its hegemony and power over every section of society. ZANU–PF thus set out to expand its hold on power through a vast array of amendments to the Constitution, amendments that were detrimental to democracy.

For the first decade of independence, there was a moratorium on certain important clauses in the Lancaster House Constitution, such as those guaranteeing fundamental rights and freedoms (most notably property rights) (Knight, 1991:27). However, by the end of the 1980s ZANU–PF had started making various crucial amendments to the Constitution. These changes not only curtailed the democratic rights of citizens, but also facilitated the ruling party's political dominance. In 1987, a series of decisive amendments were pushed through Parliament, one being the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment Act (Amendment no 7) (Kagoro, 2004:240). This led to the abolition of the office of the Prime Minister and the creation of a very powerful executive presidency 'with sweeping powers' including the power to offer pardons to perpetrators of human rights violations (Blair, 2002:36). Furthermore, this amendment also allowed the president to have an unlimited term of office — this has made it possible for Mugabe to remain in power for the last three decades. The provisions of this amendment essentially placed the president above the judiciary and Parliament (and therefore above parliamentary accountability) while it granted the president rule-making power equalling that of the rest of the legislature (Booysen, 2003). In other words, through this significant shift in power, the legislature and judiciary were marginalised considerably (Kagoro, 2004:241). It can be argued that the Constitution had become a tool in the hands of the ruling party and that ZANU–PF had manipulated the constitutional process in order to perpetuate its stay in power.

Following this constitutional manipulation and the expansion of ZANU–PF's power, opposition against the government became pronounced in the 1990s. Civil society and opposition parties demanded constitutional reform because the existing one was seen as serving the interests of the ZANU–PF government (Sachikonye, 2002:178). The establishment of the National Constitutional Assembly (NCA) signalled the beginning of the end of ZANU–PF's firm grip on power and also Zimbabwe's slide into authoritarianism, as the ruling party became more ruthless and violent in its conduct.

Facing the never-ending *chimurenga*[4]: Opposition parties in Zimbabwe

History has shown that ZANU–PF's response towards any opposition has always been one of intolerance and hostility — it regards opposition parties as political *enemies*, rather than political *opponents* (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2002:119). Consequently, opposition politics since 1980 has been severely undermined by the ruling party's authoritarian conduct. According to Eldred Masunungure (2004:153), opposition politics in Zimbabwe can be divided into three phases: 1) the 1980s that were dominated by ZAPU; 2) the post-ZAPU period up until the formation of the MDC in 1999 when the opposition was fragmented; and 3) the phase of opposition led by the MDC.

In the 1980s, ZANU–PF's strongest political opposition came in the form of its nemesis, the ZAPU. During the liberation struggle, a fierce rivalry developed between the two liberation movements and often led to violent clashes. This acrimonious relationship continued throughout the liberation struggle and extended into the post-liberation era. In the first decade after independence, ZAPU provided the only noticeable opposition to ZANU–PF's dominance; it gained the second largest amount of the overall vote in both the 1980 and 1985 elections (see Table 9.1) (Breytenbach, 2000:47). Initially, though, its role as an opposition party was compromised by its position in the government of national unity that Robert Mugabe had set up in 1980 to facilitate reconciliation (Masunungure, 2004:155). However, soon after independence, the reconciliatory rhetoric of the Mugabe-regime became decidedly more aggressive and scathing of its opposition; in particular ZAPU. For instance, Mugabe (quoted in Blair, 2002:29) made the following comment about Joshua Nkomo and ZAPU in 1983: 'ZAPU and its leader Dr Joshua Nkomo are like a cobra in the house. The only way to deal effectively with a snake is to strike and destroy its head'.

The ruling party launched a campaign, referred to as *Gukuruhundi*[5], against ZAPU and Joshua Nkomo, in which they were suppressed, persecuted and silenced. Soon after 1980, the supporters of ZAPU were portrayed as 'dissidents' in the official media and their so-called rebellion was crushed through the ethnic massacre in Matabeleland between 1982 and 1987 (Bratton & Masunungure, 2008:44). People were tortured, raped, displaced or killed simply because they supported ZAPU (Blair, 2002:32). According to Blair (2002:32) the Fifth Brigade[6] 'sought to crush ZAPU and impose the dominance of ZANU–PF'. It was clear from its rhetoric and actions that ZANU–PF sought to destroy any form of opposition. However, when it became clear that the use of force was failing to get rid of its opposition, ZANU–PF resorted to a political 'solution' (Masunungure, 2004:159). In 1987, the violent suppression coupled with the

4 *Chimurenga* is a Shona term for 'war' or 'uprising' (Phimister, 2008:211).

5 *Gukuruhundi* in Shona means the 'storm that destroys everything' (Sithole, 1993: 37). It was a policy of annihilation, a policy of destroying any opposition (black and white) that stood in ZANU's way. This approach to opposition forces was carried over into the post-liberation period.

6 The Fifth Brigade refers to the North Korean-trained military unit responsible for carrying out the attacks in Matabeleland in the 1980s (Blair, 2002: 30). It was a unit placed directly under Mugabe's personal control and outside of the normal army command structure.

Matabeleland massacres eventually led to the Unity Accord, signed in December 1987, the dissolution of ZAPU and the merging of the two rival parties. In essence, ZAPU was effectively 'swallowed' by the ruling party (Sithole, 1993:37; Blair, 2002:34).

In the aftermath of the Unity Accord, parliamentary opposition was effectively obliterated — only one seat out of 100 belonged to an opposition party (Norman, 2008:80). As briefly mentioned in the previous section, Mugabe went on in 1987 to unilaterally make a series of drastic constitutional reforms that changed the way Zimbabwe would be governed, afforded him greater power and essentially destroyed parliamentary opposition (Blair, 2002:36). However, in 1989 new opposition did arise briefly in the form of Edgar Tekere's Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM), which drew immediate support from the electorate, especially in urban areas (Norman, 2008:80; Masunungure, 2004:160). Opposition parties that competed in the 1990 parliamentary election, however, did so 'more in hope than in expectation' while ZANU–PF seemed to be at the height of its power (see Table 9.2) (Norman, 2008: 81; Blair, 2002: 38). By the beginning of the 1990s, Zimbabwe was effectively a de facto one party state. According to David Blair (2002:36):

> Mugabe did not go as far as to proscribe opposition parties and the one party state was never enshrined in law. He did not need to. Instead, he just heaped unbearable pressure on his opponents and waited for them to surrender.

Throughout the 1990s, the ruling party continued to sabotage any opposition groups (such as the Forum Party, formed in 1993) through violent suppression and the use of increasingly authoritarian legislation. But with the controversial adoption of ESAP and the steady decline of the Zimbabwean economy, a new form of opposition started to emerge in the shape of civil society.

After several unsuccessful attempts in the wake of the Unity Accord of 1987, feasible opposition finally emerged in the form of the MDC during the late 1990s (Kössler, 2010:35). The MDC was essentially a product of the NCA and other civil society actors such as the umbrella trade union, ZCTU. The MDC thus comprises a broad coalition of interests:

> The movement [MDC] is not a workerist party, but a common front for various political and economic interests, coming together in a social democratic platform that emphasises popular participation to reclaim 'people's power' and economic justice (Dansereau, 2003:38).

It is important to keep in mind that the MDC was a new party in almost every sense — it was not a breakaway party, like Edgar Tekere's ZUM, nor was it established by rebels from existing parties (Masunungure, 2004:178). Its establishment struck a serious blow against ZANU–PF's overwhelming dominance (Booysen & Toulou, 2009:633). It was the first opposition party since 1980 to truly threaten ZANU–PF's grip on power and attract widespread popular support.

The biggest turning point for opposition politics in Zimbabwe came with the MDC's defeat of the government in their 'No'-vote campaign during the 2000 constitutional referendum (Booysen & Toulou, 2009:633). The failure of the government in the 2000 referendum was ZANU–PF's first electoral loss since 1980 and it signalled the beginning of things to come (Dansereau, 2008:39). The ruling party's response to the new opposition

was predictable — violent intimidation and suppression. Each election since the 2002 presidential election has been, in contrast to previous elections, a closely contested affair. In fact, if it were not for the ruling party's intimidation and obvious electoral trickery, Zimbabwe could have had a new ruling party. However, with the power-sharing agreement between the two parties signed in September 2008, the MDC's role as Zimbabwe's main opposition party has been severely compromised (Lloyd, 2010:4). Its position as a partner in the unity government has placed the MDC in a delicate position where it has been forced to find the middle ground between its role as the torch bearer for democracy and its role as the authoritarian ZANU–PF's 'colleague'.

Over the years, lack of access to government resources and agencies has greatly hampered opposition parties in Zimbabwe (Sithole, 1993:36). ZANU–PF, on the other hand, has a tremendous advantage in terms of the access it has to state resources, including state funding. It has, however, greatly abused this access to state-run resources, including the state-run media (Freedom House, 2010). The government, for instance, has direct control over print and broadcast media. The state-owned Zimbabwean Broadcasting Commission (ZBC) controls all domestic television and radio stations while the state-owned daily newspaper, the *Herald*, is ostensibly pro-Mugabe in its reporting (Lloyd, 2010:5). In contrast, the opposition has very little access to the mass media and when there are publications that are viewed as opposing the government they are often intimidated and shut down (Sithole, 1993:36; Lloyd, 2010:5). This situation has only fostered ZANU–PF's dominance and democratic decline in Zimbabwe.

Not so free and not so fair: Zimbabwe's electoral system

Violence, intimidation and fraudulent practices have marred elections in Zimbabwe since 1980. Bratton and Masunungure (2008:42) state that the current Zimbabwean regime is a 'militarized form of electoral authoritarianism'. In fact, it can be argued that Robert Mugabe and ZANU–PF have merely tolerated the electoral process because it provides the Zimbabwean regime with a (thin) veil of popular legitimacy and support.

In the 1980 elections, the proportional representation (PR) system was implemented and a five per cent threshold was used to allocate seats in Parliament (Sachikonye, 2002:174). The PR system was decided on because it was deemed conducive to the security situation at the time and beneficial for democratic representation (Sithole & Makumbe, 1997:124). It has been argued that the PR system is not only more democratic than the FPTP/winner-takes-all electoral system, but that it is also successful in accommodating and managing ethnic, social and other cleavages in heterogeneous societies. In the case of Zimbabwe, the PR system was strongly advocated by white Rhodesian politicians at the 1979 Lancaster House Conference; the nationalists, in contrast, preferred the FPTP system (Sithole & Makumbe, 1997:125). Since the 1980 elections, however, following an amendment to the Electoral Act, the FPTP system has been used (Sachikonye, 2002:174). The system has provided ZANU–PF with a clear advantage while it has proved detrimental to the opposition. For instance, in the 1990 parliamentary elections, Edgar Tekere's ZUM won 20 per cent of the vote, but managed to gain only two seats in the 150-member Parliament (Sachikonye, 2005:19).

While elections have been held regularly, Mugabe's ZANU–PF has dominated (Lloyd, 2010:3). It has to be kept in mind, though, that with the 1980 and 1985 elections two voter's roles were created: one for the white minority (for which 20 of the 100 seats in Parliament were 'reserved') and one for the black majority (the remaining 80 seats) (Booysen & Toulou, 2009:632). The outcome of the 1980 independence elections stunned most observers and participants with ZANU–PF winning a resounding majority, while ZAPU won 20 seats[7] and Abel Muzorewa's United African National Congress won only three seats (see Table 9.1) (Cliffe, Mpofu & Munslow, 1980:44). In the 1985 elections, with the adoption of the FPTP system, ZANU–PF expanded its power whereas the ruling party's main opposition, ZAPU, lost support (see Table 9.1) (Sithole & Makumbe, 1997:127).

Table 9.1: Results of the 1980 and 1985 general elections

	1980		1985	
Party	**Valid votes %**	**Seats won**	**Valid votes %**	**Seats won**
ZANU–PF	63	57	77	64
ZAPU	24	20	19	15
UANC	8	3	2	0
ZANU	2	0	1	1
ZDP	1	0	-	-
NFZ	1	0	0	0
NDU	1	0	0	0
UNFP	0	0	-	-
UPAM	0	0	-	-

Note: UANC (United African National Council); ZDP (Zimbabwe Democratic Party); NFZ (National Front of Zimbabwe); NDU (National Democratic Union); UNFP (United National Federal Party); UPAM (United People's Association of Matabeleland).

Source: Compiled by the authors, derived from Sithole & Makumbe (1997); Booysen & Toulou (2009)

7 ZANU won 70 per cent of the vote in Mashonaland whilst ZAPU won all their votes in the Ndebele base, Matabeleland (Fogel, 1982: 360), which reconfirms the ethnic dividing lines between the two parties.

By the time the 1990 elections arrived, Zimbabwe had undergone drastic changes: there had been a merger between ZAPU and ZANU–PF in 1987 and drastic amendments had been made to the Constitution. Furthermore, the 'reserved seats' clause that guaranteed whites 20 seats in Parliament had been abolished (Booysen & Toulou, 2009:632). In 1989, the mandate of the Senate was terminated and the House of Assembly was expanded from 100 to 150 seats; only 120 members were to be elected. The president appointed the remaining members, effectively ensuring that ZANU–PF already had 30 seats in the bag (Blair, 2002:36).

Table 9.2: Results of the 1990 and 1995 general elections

	1990		1995	
Party	**Valid votes %**	**Seats won**	**Valid votes %**	**Seats won**
ZANU–PF	81	117	76	118
ZUM	18	2	-	-
ZANU-Ndonga	1	1	6	2
UANC	1	-	-	-
NDU	0	-	-	-
FPZ	-	-	6	0
Zimbabwean Aristocrats (ZA)	-	-	0	0
Independents	5	0	5	0

Source: Compiled by the authors, derived from Sithole & Makumbe (1997); Booysen & Toulou (2009)

The ruling party won 81 per cent of the vote and captured 117 seats while its main opposition at the time, ZUM, only managed to gain two seats despite winning 18 per cent of the vote (see Table 9.2). This was largely due to the FPTP system. What is interesting to note about the 1990 elections is the drop in voter turnout: it had declined from 84 per cent in the 1985 elections to 54 per cent in 1990 — a drastic 30 per cent drop. Various opposition parties, objecting to what they regarded as an unfair electoral process, boycotted the 1995 elections (Booysen & Toulou, 2009:633). The ruling party, however, continued to be completely dominant, as Table 9.2 shows. However, opposition to the government and ruling party grew throughout the late 1990s and by the time of the 2000 parliamentary elections, it was confronted by a new and threatening political opponent in the MDC. As support for the ZANU–PF decreased, the MDC emerged in powerful opposition to the Mugabe regime (Booysen & Toulou, 2009:633). For the first time in two decades,

ZANU–PF faced true electoral competition. During its first election in 2000, the MDC won 57 of the 120 elected seats in Parliament (see Table 9.3). However, every (closely contested) election since 2000, including the controversial 2008 presidential election, has widely been considered to be fraudulent (Booysen & Toulou, 2009:633).

Table 9.3: Results of the 2000 house of assembly elections

Party	Valid votes %	Seats won
ZANU–PF	48	62
MDC	47	57
ZANU-Ndonga	0.6	1
Others	4	0

Source: Compiled by the authors, derived from Booysen & Toulou (2009)

Zimbabwean elections since 1980 have never truly been free or fair; they have always entailed forms of intimidation, violence and fraud. Booysen and Toulou (2009:634) argue that ZANU–PF has emerged as 'both the architect and the main beneficiary of two decades of electoral authoritarianism'. Since 1980, ZANU–PF has employed all the methods of election management, including the combined use of violence and intimidation, the control of food aid, the gerrymandering[8] of urban seats to rural, providing voters with false information and far-reaching amendments to the Electoral Act (Moore, 2006:134). The conditions for party funding also seem to have favoured ZANU–PF over the years. In 1992, the Political Parties (Finance) Act was adopted and this Act provided state funding to those parties who held at least 15 seats in Parliament (Booysen & Toulou, 2009:642). However, only ZANU–PF qualified for this provision at the time, with 117 out of 120 seats in the House of Assembly. In 1997, the Act was amended to provide state funding for parties who captured at least five per cent of the vote. However, the Act does not provide funding for independent candidates or allow foreign funding or donations (Booysen & Toulou, 2009:642). Parties who qualify for funding, have to make an application to the minister responsible for implementing the Act and he or she may reject the application if it seems that the party does not qualify for funding. Even though state funding is given to opposition parties, campaigning opportunities are not equal for all parties (Lloyd, 2010:4).

8 This refers to the altering of electoral boundaries (Norman, 2880: 81). In Zimbabwe's case, this has been done to benefit ZANU–PF.

The electoral system has also been manipulated by ZANU–PF so that the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) is subjugated to the ruling party (Lloyd, 2010: 3). The ZEC's chairperson and commissioners are appointed by the president and are therefore accountable to the president and the Commission has a partisan composition, reflecting its strong ties to ZANU–PF. The ruling party has therefore been able to control and manipulate the electoral process and, consequently, to maintain power for three decades.

ZANU–PF: From freedom fighters to authoritarian elite

Over the last thirty years, Robert Mugabe's ZANU–PF has moved from being a popular liberation movement fighting Ian Smith's minority regime, to being Zimbabwe's increasingly authoritarian ruling party, displaying a disregard for democratic procedures and institutions. William Gumede (2007:12) states that ZANU–PF 'has become the symbol of the descent of African liberation movements into brutal dictatorship'.

The art of staying in power – the ZANU–PF way

For liberation movements such as ZANU the capture of state power marks — in their understanding — something similar to Francis Fukuyama's (1992) 'the end of history' and following from this the belief that a liberation movement 'should stay in power forever after succeeding in its anti-colonial struggle' (Melber, 2011:89). This conviction is closely related to the ideology of national liberation in which the ruling party's credentials as the 'moving force behind anti-colonial liberation' has earned them the right to rule indefinitely (Bratton & Masunungure, 2008:43).

The party — as it was during the liberation struggle — is still structured along the lines of Soviet and Chinese communist parties with a Politburo and Central Committee, highlighting the important influence of communist-socialist ideologies (Stiff, 2000:30). Power also seems to be centralised around a core leadership that comprises the members of the Politburo, Central Committee and (after the 1980 elections) its parliamentary caucus (Sithole & Makumbe, 1997:123). Furthermore, this core leadership is relatively small, mainly due to the overlap of members in the top three structures of the party, leaving decision-making in the hands of an elect few. In addition to this, the circumstances of prolonged warfare necessitated the emergence of 'a strong leader who could combine both military and political attributes' (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2002:107). ZANU found this leader in the form of Robert Mugabe who came to power in 1977 (Fogel, 1982:349). Throughout his tenure as ZANU–PF's leader, Mugabe has tightened his grip on power, creating a situation within the party whereby he is nearly irreplaceable (Moore, 2006:132). In accordance with this, Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2002:109) makes the following observation: '… the glorification of nationalist leaders engineered a feeling of indispensability as well as irreplaceability'. Therefore, it can be said that the liberation struggle and ZANU–PF's history as a liberation movement, led to the development of a particular and distinctly anti-democratic political culture within the organisation. Due to this heritage 'the post-colonial state under ZANU–PF failed dismally to make a break with the tradition of

nationalist authoritarianism and guerrilla violence as well as colonial settler repression' (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2002:111). In other words, the violent, anti-democratic and distinctly authoritarian culture that characterised the liberation struggle was carried over into the post-independence period and has played an important role in cementing ZANU–PF's hegemony.

ZANU–PF, driven by this anti-democratic political culture, has done everything in its power to remain at the helm of the Zimbabwean state. One of the ruling party's most eloquent ideologists, Eddison Zvobgo (quoted in Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2002:118), puts it this way: 'A party's eyes are focused on one thing if it is a political party: conquest of power, and retention of power. Conquering power and keeping it — that is the primary function of ZANU–PF'.

The use of force has been one of the most frequently used tools of the ruling party in maintaining its grip on dominance over the last three decades. The violence that was a characteristic of the liberation struggle did not cease with the attainment of independence in 1980 (Kössler, 2010:35). In fact, just as violence was a prominent feature of the minority regime before 1980, it became the defining feature of the ZANU–PF regime (Sachikonye, 2002:173). Bratton and Masunungure (2008:50) argue that power in Zimbabwe has been reinforced through coercion and that the political elite 'takes as articles of faith the assumptions that violence was effective in delivering independence and that repression is the party's most effective weapon for countering real and imagined threats'. In recent years, for instance, ZANU–PF militias have enforced government policies and in the process, have committed 'assault, torture, rape, extralegal evictions, and extralegal executions without the fear of punishment' (Freedom House, 2010). ZANU–PF is infused with a culture of intimidation, intolerance and violence derived from the liberation struggle (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2002:103). As a result, various instances of state-sponsored violence accompanied by major human rights violations have marked the post-independence period (Bratton & Masunungure, 2008:50).

The constitutional amendments discussed in the previous section have been another of ZANU–PF's methods — especially during the 1990s — of retaining power. Due to the sweeping 1987 amendments, Robert Mugabe was elevated from being a constrained Prime Minister accountable to the legislature, to being an Executive President with a very broad range of discretionary and arbitrary powers (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2002:119). In addition to this, the ruling party has also created various pieces of draconian legislation[9] that severely restrict the actions of opposition parties and civil society actors such as the media, non-governmental organisations and labour groups. However, it can be argued that the most important method ZANU–PF had used to maintain its power and dominance has been the manipulation of state institutions, in particular the fusion of party and state structures.

9 This includes legislation such as the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA), the Official Secrets Act, the Public Order and Security Act (POSA), the Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Act, the Non-Governmental Organisations Act, the Labour Relations Act, and so on (Freedom House, 2010).

The attainment of authority over state apparatus, including its military machinery and economic resources was the greatest prize of the liberation struggle for ZANU–PF (Bratton & Masunungure, 2008:44). Due to the influence of communist-socialist ideology, ZANU–PF has sought a vanguard role in society as well as control over the state. Therefore, 'the ruling party and public administration are fused, and organisational structures are conflated at all levels — the party is married to the state' (Bratton & Masunungure, 2008:45). Furthermore, in this consolidation of party—state, ZANU–PF has also taken control of the public sector. After the transformation of the civil service, politicisation of state agencies intensified. This system of control is essentially exercised by a system of patronage — those loyal to Mugabe and ZANU–PF are 'rewarded', whilst those deemed disloyal are punished or eliminated. In fact, employment in the civil service is dependent on political criteria or, to put it more bluntly, support for ZANU–PF (Sachikonye, 2009:2). Furthermore, law-enforcement agencies such as the police and the army as well as the judiciary have become instruments of the ruling party (Bratton & Masunungure, 2008:46). The judiciary has been marginalised; in fact, within the ruling party the conviction is that the judiciary should be accountable to the government (Goredema, 2004:101). It has retained some form of independence, but its autonomy has steadily been eroded by the Mugabe regime so that it is unable to fulfil its role as a check on the executive's power (Lloyd, 2010:4). Over the years the power of the judiciary has been curtailed, judges have been 'bought' and the bench has been intimidated. This has been one of ZANU–PF's power-retention strategies.

In addition to 'transforming' state structures, the ZANU–PF government has introduced various policies in order to remain in power. For instance, over the last decade, the ZANU–PF-led government has embarked on a land reform policy and an indigenisation policy, apparently aimed at empowering ordinary Zimbabweans. In reality, however, these policies have become tools in the hands of ZANU–PF in order to undermine any form of opposition. In the aftermath of the 2000 referendum and just before the June 2000 parliamentary elections, ZANU–PF embarked on a campaign of terror, largely aimed at white commercial farmers and MDC supporters (Sithole, 2001:166). The ZANU–PF-government employed their party militants (dubbed the 'war veterans'), under the leadership of Chenjerai Hunzvi, to occupy white-owned farms under the guise of land reform (Matshazi, 2007:127). The land invasions were aimed at seizing 'land from the white owners to give to the landless blacks' (Matshazi, 2007:128) and this intent was echoed by Robert Mugabe at a ZANU–PF Congress in December 2000:

> This country is our country and this land is our land … They think that because they are white they have a divine right to our resources. Not here. The white man is not indigenous to Africa. Africa is for Africans. Zimbabwe is for Zimbabweans (Robert Mugabe quoted in Norman, 2008:110).

However, this policy in reality formed part of ZANU–PF's election campaign and effort to hang onto power after the referendum defeat in February 2000 (Sithole, 2001:166). According to Michael Auret (2009:156):

> It must have been obvious to Mugabe and his party that they no longer commanded enough popular support to ensure their continued domination of power and the people. It was necessary, therefore, to introduce a new element into the political scenario — the reclamation of the land from the colonisers.

The confiscated farms were, in fact, used as bribes in order to guarantee continued support of high-ranking government and military officials. Of the 4 500 commercial farms that were productive in Zimbabwe before the controversial land reform policy began, approximately 300 farms are left (Gonda, 2010). Even though the Government of National Unity (GNU) was formed in 2009, farm attacks still occur and there has been a renewed effort to get rid of the remaining white commercial farmers.

Similarly, the indigenisation policy — aimed at the racial transformation of the economy — serves as a resource for ZANU–PF to keep political control. In February 2010 (after the establishment of the GNU), ZANU–PF announced that the Indigenisation Act passed in 2007 was to be brought into operation (Solidarity Peace Trust, 2010:6). The Act called for the indigenisation of every business with an asset value of US$500 000 or more:

> … within the next five years from the date of operation of these regulations, or within five years from the commencement of the business concerned, as the case may be, cede a controlling interest of not less than fifty one percent centum of the shares or interest therein to indigenous Zimbabweans; unless in order to achieve other socially desirable objectives, a lesser share of indigenisation or a longer period within which to achieve it is justified (Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment [General] Regulations quoted in Solidarity Peace Trust, 2010:6).

According to ZANU–PF, the transfer of 51 per cent of foreign firms' shares to local investors is the final phase of 'economic emancipation' following the land invasions (Mashavave, 2011). However, this indigenisation policy can be seen as the Mugabe regime's reluctance to submit itself to political accountability as well as a response to the targeted sanctions levelled against members of ZANU–PF's elite (Solidarity Peace Trust, 2010:6). The indigenisation policy, therefore, has very little to do with black economic empowerment, but rather seems to be a ZANU–PF ploy in order to garner the support of those benefiting from the policy. According to the Solidarity Peace Trust (2010:6):

> … this indigenisation discourse draws on both the politics of indigenisation that emerged in the 1990s and the politics of the Third Chimurenga around the land question. It is part of the process of extending ZANU–PF's patronage and generating new constituencies around economic empowerment, even if at present there is not much foreign investment to indigenise in Zimbabwe.

The security structure of the state and the military have been vital in upholding the Mugabe regime since 2000 and an intense militarisation of politics and state institutions has taken place (Sachikonye, 2009:3). The Joint Operations Command, made up of the commanders of the air force, the police, prisons, intelligence and the army, who have come to play a crucial role in Zimbabwean politics since 2000, are loyal to the ruling party. For example, in May 2001 an army commander stated that no soldier would ever take orders from Morgan Tsvangarai or any other candidate who did not fight in the

liberation war (Bratton & Masunungure, 2008:48). More recently, an army general stated that Mugabe should rule for life and that the army could not be separated from ZANU–PF (Moyo, 2011:25). The security forces are also responsible for a great number of human rights abuses against citizens with the government doing very little to halt this (Freedom House, 2010). It can be argued that as long as ZANU–PF enjoys the support of this security structure, it is likely to remain in power.

Analysis of ZANU–PF's dominance: The bad, the worse and the ugly

It has been argued — as pointed out in the first chapter of this book — that party dominance can be both conducive and detrimental to democracy. In Zimbabwe's case, ZANU–PF's dominance has only been detrimental — it has led to both democratic decay and the country's descent into authoritarianism. In particular, the way in which ZANU–PF has established its dominance has proven to be damaging to democracy. Even though ZANU–PF initially enjoyed a vast amount of popular support, its hegemony has been established not only via overwhelming electoral victories, but also through the 'barrel of a gun'. Throughout the last three decades, brutal repression has guaranteed ZANU–PF and Mugabe ascendancy over political rivals (Blair, 2002:38). With the emergence of strong opposition in the form of the MDC in the late 1990s, the use of violence and intimidation has become even more pronounced. The result of this has been the destruction of democratic institutions and processes over the last decade and Zimbabwe's slip into an abyss of economic chaos and a political wilderness.

However, it is important to point out here that ZANU–PF was never truly committed to the establishment and development of a liberal democracy. Rather, the adoption of a liberal democratic constitution seemed to be the result of the compromise made by the political elite at Lancaster House. In fact, from the outset, ZANU–PF was intent on establishing a one party state. Throughout the 1980s, ZANU–PF sought to establish a one party state; indeed, Mugabe (quoted in Norman, 2008:79) made this intention clear in 1984:

> The one party state is more in keeping with the African traditions. It makes for greater unity for the people. It puts all opinions under one umbrella, whether these opinions are radical or reactionary.

This was the main objective all along — the creation of a one party state where ZANU–PF would have total power and Mugabe would be on top (Norman, 2008:79). Furthermore, this desire is closely related to the conviction that ZANU–PF has earned the right to rule permanently. Therefore when we try to understand Zimbabwe's democratic decay, it is vital to take this inclination into account. It was with this motivation that ZANU–PF went on to obliterate its rival, ZAPU, in the 1980s and make sweeping constitutional amendments that have had serious consequences for democracy. Even though a one party state was never legally established, the repercussions of this desire have been the destruction of political competition and any hope for the successful establishment of democratic rule under ZANU–PF. However, at the time of writing, Zimbabwe finds itself in a somewhat paradoxical situation.

Even though the Mugabe-regime has effectively prevented democracy from taking root, its suppression thereof has in turn sprouted a considerable amount of pro-democracy resistance. This, coupled with the economic collapse of the late 1990s and early 2000s, has severely truncated ZANU–PF's popular support and legitimacy. Since the government's defeat in the 2000 referendum, ZANU–PF's dominance and hold on power have been upheld by the security apparatus of the state, rather than overwhelming popular support. ZANU–PF, it can be argued, is no longer a dominant ruling party in power after receiving a clear mandate from the electorate, but rather, a desperate organisation clinging to power through the use of undemocratic strategies. Whether ZANU–PF will be able to sustain this grip on power remains to be seen. What is abundantly clear, though, is the fact that a hegemonic party system — reinforced by authoritarian practices — has only had a destructive effect on democracy in Zimbabwe.

Future prospects: A life after ZANU–PF?

After almost a decade of economic collapse, social disintegration and political chaos, ZANU–PF has been forced into a compromise with the two wings of its main opposition rival, the MDC. The 2008 power-sharing settlement — in the aftermath of the controversial 2008 presidential elections — and the formation of GNU in 2009 have propelled Zimbabwe in a new direction. Whether the developments since then have signalled the end of ZANU–PF's hegemony and placed Zimbabwe on a path of democratisation, however, remains to be seen.

The March 2008 election saw ZANU–PF, for the first time since 1980, lose control of Parliament in favour of Morgan Tsvangirai and Arthur Mutambara's[10] factions of the MDC (Sachikonye, 2009:4). This, coupled with Tsvangirai's first round win in the presidential elections, resulted in a major turning point in Zimbabwean politics. However, due to the violence that erupted after the elections, ZANU–PF and the two factions of the MDC — under great international pressure — have entered into a power-sharing agreement. The settlement was both a crucial breakthrough and a flawed compromise. It provided an opening for political reform and cooperation, but was agreed upon reluctantly by the leaders after months of negotiation (Bratton & Masunungure, 2011:42). Furthermore, the parties to the agreement had very different views regarding the purposes of the settlement: 'one side saw the GPA (Global Political Agreement) as a step towards completing a democratic transition and restoring a developmental agenda, whereas the other saw it as an opportunity to shore up the incumbent party's fading power and protect the privileges of its leaders' (Bratton & Masunungure, 2011:43). Since the fragile and disputed political settlement of 2008, a regime transition has been underway in Zimbabwe. According to Bratton and Masunungure (2011:52):

> … the agreement between rival leaders to share power signals a break in the hegemony of the ZANU-PF party-state and the onset of some sort of regime transition … the trajectory of the transition is positive for both democratization and development.

10 At the beginning of 2011, Arthur Mutambara was replaced by Welshman Ncube as the leader of the other, smaller MDC faction.

However, despite the promise these developments hold, the question remains whether these events eventually will lead to a *successful* transition from an authoritarian system to a democratic system and by extension, whether this will lead to the end of ZANU–PF's reign.

The chances of a peaceful, democratic transition taking place seem bleak, particularly in the light of renewed tensions between the GNU partners and a (strategic) resurgence in political violence in 2011 just before the next elections (Shaw, 2011a). Furthermore, as it has shown in the past, ZANU–PF will almost certainly not be prepared to relinquish power — especially not through the ballot box. The ruling party still has a militaristic conception of political power, mirroring this statement by Mugabe in 1976 (quoted in Bratton & Masunungure, 2008:50): '… our votes must go together with our guns; after all any vote … shall have been the product of the gun. The gun, which provides the votes, should remain its security officer, its guarantor'.

As long as Mugabe or a handpicked ZANU–PF successor retains power — backed by the Joint Operations Command (JOC), the state's security apparatus — positive political change will be hindered (Bratton & Masunungure, 2008:53). In fact, as long as ZANU–PF's current generation remains in charge, democratisation will be obstructed. However, the recent developments within ZANU–PF, with the death of Solomon Mujuru,[11] have exposed the deep fractures that exist within the party. This has prompted commentators to suggest that his death may lead to a power struggle within ZANU–PF, between different factions seeking to succeed an aging Mugabe (Shaw, 2011b). According to John Mkumbe (quoted in Shaw, 2011b): 'His death leaves the party in shambles. He was holding it together and we will now see more infighting'. Robert Mugabe has acknowledged the divisions in his party and the race to succeed him as ZANU–PF's leader may cause a split in the party. If this does happen, it might both prove advantageous to democratisation and detrimental to political stability within Zimbabwe.

Conclusion

ZANU–PF's long-term dominance was fostered under specific historical, socio-economic and international conditions that have played an important role in the entrenchment and then gradual erosion of ZANU–PF's position of power. Zimbabwe's political system has also been greatly affected by ZANU–PF's dominance — the ruling party has manipulated the Constitution, suppressed opposition and deliberately directed the electoral process in its favour in order to remain in power.

ZANU–PF's history as a liberation movement is important in explaining the reasons for its performance. Historically, the party was never democratically inclined or structured; rather, it was intent on capturing the state and then staying in power indefinitely. In fact, ZANU–PF's objective was the establishment of a one party state. This objective was never achieved, but the effect of its attempts to do so has been the entrenchment

11 Mujuru, husband of Vice President Joice Mujuru, died in a fire on his farm in August 2011 (Bauer, 2011).

of a hegemonic party system. The party has used a multitude of methods — such as constitutional amendments, the manipulation of state institutions, violence, repression and the creation of disorder to maintain its powerful grip on hegemony.

Despite its loss of popular support, the weakening of its position of power and divisions within its structures, it seems unlikely that Robert Mugabe's ZANU–PF will relinquish power willingly. Even ZANU–PF's agreement to GNU was a strategy to retain its hegemony. The intention is plain: 'As clear as day follows night … ZANU–PF will rule Zimbabwe forever' (Robert Mugabe quoted in Shaw, 1986:376).

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Chapter 10

Conclusion: Resources and the politics of dominant party systems

Pierre du Toit and Nicola de Jager

We are now in a position to revisit our initial propositions about dominant party systems. Our first question concerns the types of resource that achieved the dominance in our set of cases. Following from that, we ask how the types of dominance achieved impacted on the quality of democracy. Using the empirical cases presented in this book, we are able to construct a list of the resources used, and to construct a typology of political dominance. Our questions went further than those posed by Greene in Chapter 2, since he does not ask what produces dominant parties, but rather what makes them persist. Nor does he ask how dominance has influenced democracy. Nevertheless, this book rests heavily upon Greene's resource-based theory, and thus his explanation of his approach is instructive. In addition, his chapter complements the overall book as he employs quantitative research methods to analyse the case studies, whereas we largely use a qualitative approach. Interestingly, many of the conclusions are similar, as will be discussed in this concluding chapter.

Types of resource

Resources which can be used to effect party dominance can be classified in terms of durability. Durable resources are those that tend to last over time, or, if they are spent, are renewable. Non-durable resources tend to be temporary in the sense that once they are exhausted, they are difficult to replenish. In the cases examined in this book a number of resources feature prominently in facilitating the emergence and endurance of dominant parties. As the following list illustrates, we expand the concept beyond material and financial goods and we will go on to describe them in terms of their durability.

- *historic event(s)* of national significance that deliver(s) a 'historic block' of voters, who are united through an ideology that conveys this historic legitimacy, which is expressed in political symbols
- *culture*, when it forms the basis of collective identity, and is characterised by through ethnicity

- *charismatic leaders*
- *constitutional rules*, both in terms of substance (limitations on the centralisation of power, or not) and status (social contract or not), with electoral rules being especially significant to the extent that they allow for votes won to be converted into seats allocated in such a way that party dominance is either facilitated or inhibited
- *power of appointment and patronage networks*, which may or may not be constitutionally codified
- *material goods in the form of public and private funds* (Greene characterises the power of appointment and material goods collectively as public resources)
- *material goods derived from loot, spoil, and plunder*.

Historic moments

One of the most prominent and recurring resources that launched dominant parties is the occurrence of a particular historic event of major national significance, which resulted in major regime changes and yielded a ' historic block' of voters who carried the party into a sustained period of dominance. This was present in the new dominant party systems of South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe. It was also present in India, also a former British possession. In all four cases the historic role of the pre-eminent liberation movement in its resistance against formal colonial rule, or indigenous white minority rule (a direct legacy of colonialism) launched the movement into an unassailable position with the advent of electoral politics.

While the historic moment itself, such as the achievement of independence or the termination of white minority rule, is a unique, non-recurring event, its durability can be stretched with the deft use of symbols and by weaving these events and the historic role of the liberators into the ideology of the dominant ruling party. The ANC in South Africa is putting a concerted effort into this project with its stated aim of achieving the 'hegemony of ideas', and attempts to monopolise the symbols of the liberation struggle. The party also tried to prevent COPE, the 2007 splinter party, from using the name Congress of the People which it claimed as an exclusive part of their history, referring to the 1955 event in Kliptown where the Freedom Charter was drawn up. In the case of India, the Congress Party also used its anti-colonial resistance history as a resource but its value dissipated fairly quickly.

In Zimbabwe, ZANU–PF has effectively achieved a monopoly in ownership of the liberation struggle, having eliminated ZAPU in the early 1980s. SWAPO, too, has no competition in Namibia for symbolic ownership of the historic resistance to rule by foreigners. Botswana is the notable exception in our set of cases in southern Africa. Its history is hardly one of colonial subjugation, resistance and revolt, the substance of compelling symbolic politics. The area was considered to be of little value to the regional colonisers, Britain, Germany and Portugal, through most of the nineteenth century. Britain extended an informal protectorate over the region in 1880, only after being approached by Khama III of the Bamangwato, who feared hostile action from its immediate neighbour, the Transvaal Republic. Independence was gained in 1965 in a

similarly amicable process, without a violent liberation campaign. Instead, in a country where traditional values carry much credence, symbolic value was rather to be found not only in Seretse Khama's chieftainship, but also in his personal life and career.

In the other cases historic events were also present, but used in a variety of ways. In Taiwan, the KMT very effectively used its historic relocation from the mainland, without relinquishing its claims to mainland China, to justify the entrenchment of no less than 242 of the 314 seats in the legislature — a benefit which it continued to enjoy right up to 1991. Although the PRI was not born directly from the Mexican Revolution, this post-revolutionary party closely associated itself and its symbols with the revolution to garner legitimacy for the party. South Korea, initially at least, under General Park, made use of the memory of the brutal occupation by the Japanese from 1910 to the end of the World War II, to spur an indigenous nationalism, and a drive to 'catch up' with other modernising countries.

Where these singular historic events deliver a 'historic block' of voters who support the dominating party consistently over at least four elections, the dividend is significant. The durability of this block of voters is a major factor in the sustenance of dominance, as such a block is prone to generational attrition. Factors that can affect the capacity of the party to carry the 'founding loyalty' of the first generation of voters to the second and later ones are first of all, ideological sophistication. Other common denominators that are socially and politically salient and usable as bonding agents, can also be important. For example, the ruling party and its leadership could perpetuate or create an 'enemy' to unite against, as ZANU-PF has done in associating the opposition with 'imperialists'.

Culture

Cultural attributes from which ethnic identities are constructed feature in some of the cases we analyse in this book. Comparative evidence from many conflict zones across the world show that these affiliations tend to be tenacious, once they have been politicised. These identities are durable, especially if they are constructed from ascriptive properties, in other words the attributes people are born with (such as race), or born into (such as membership of a religious or linguistic community). These affiliations are also renewable, should ethnic political entrepreneurs succeed in generating demands for public goods on an ethnic basis.

Ethnic affiliations, in the form of Shona-speakers, were at the core of ZANU–PF's support base, while race is still the definitive factor in shaping voting preference in South Africa. Likewise, Namibia has a very solid Owambo ethnic base in support of SWAPO. Botswana is so ethnically homogenous (more than 80 per cent Tswana) that internal tribal loyalties are the only potentially relevant factional divisions, and have yet to rise in political salience, although they may be doing so at present. The Presidency in Botswana has been lauded until very recently for being scrupulously fair in the disbursement of public goods, avoiding bias on a tribal or regional basis. However, as the chapter on Botswana shows, current President Ian Khama has broken the mould in openly siding with one faction in the internal BDP elections during 2009. This may signal the rise of factionalism, which may take on an ethnic form.

In the previously dominant party systems, these conditions do not apply. In India, social standing, as expressed in caste prescription, has been significant. Factions, but of a non-ethnic nature were present in India, Taiwan and Korea, where the dominant parties dealt with them through agile tactical incorporation. Similarly, Mexico enjoyed a high degree of ethnic homogeneity due to the common bonds of the Catholic faith and the Spanish language. We find this to be a prominent difference between the two sub-sets of cases, which may be of significance not only for the endurance of party dominance in southern Africa, but also for the quality of democracy under such dominance, and the eventual emergence of a multi-party system. We will return to this question at the end of the chapter.

Charismatic leaders

Charismatic leaders present an obvious political resource, which may fortuitously present itself to either the dominant party, or to its opponents. This resource looms large in a number of cases presented here. Robert Mugabe and Sam Nujoma without doubt dominated their respective political spheres, but were, equally without doubt, less than charismatic. By contrast, in India Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Nehru were charismatic figures with global historic significance, as was Chiang Kai-shek in Taiwan. Under the strong leadership of Plutarco Elias Calles a large, centralised party structure was established in the aftermath of the Mexican Revolution, thereby dissipating the power of local political leaders (warlords). In southern Africa, Botswana's Seretse Khama also ranks in this category, where his name still evokes awe and respect. Coupled with his charismatic leadership, his chieftainship secured the BDP overwhelming support. Looming above all of them is Nelson Mandela, a matchless leader who has become a globally revered icon in his own life time. Leadership of this calibre is essentially non-renewable, a factor of great good fortune, and beyond any form of constitutional engineering. Such leaders can impact on later generations, but only if their legacy is kept alive through astute ideological creativity and tactical ingenuity.

Constitutional rules

In every southern African case (except Botswana) democratic constitutions emerged from formal negotiations between former adversaries who had confronted one another in violent conflicts. These constitutions were thus both new rules for democratic regimes and formal peace accords. What remained open was the status that the various parties accorded to these constitutional rules. They were either considered to be temporary devices with which to inaugurate a new era of contestation, and thus subject to change by whoever emerged dominant, or they were the basis on which to construct a social contract: a binding and enduring mechanism with which to negotiate both present and future conflicts in an amicable way. If the latter interpretation applied, a different meaning would be assigned to constitutional rules, and to what is at stake in the changing of these rules. In Zimbabwe, Mugabe and his ZANU–PF party clearly did not take the Lancaster House Constitution as a social contract and changed it at will, so as to attain hegemonic

dominance. In South Africa, the ANC has declared its objective of hegemonic control, but to date the pillars of the constitutional order remain intact. Thus the question remains, is a social contract a political resource, and if so, for whom? In the case of Zimbabwe, and possibly Namibia and South Africa, the constitutional process was used more as a mechanism for the transfer of power, than as an enduring social contract.

The other cases do not illuminate the significance of the presence or absence of a social contract in either establishing or outgrowing party dominance. But the cases of India, Taiwan, Mexico and Korea do show how significant changes in constitutional rules and enabling acts have been for the various parties. One of the key sources of the KMT's dominance was its electoral system of congressional elections: initially suspending elections and then opening only 72 of the 314 seats to competitive elections, essentially ensured its continued rulership. Mexico's president operated with few limits and was able to dominate all branches of government. Its electoral systems were revised and changed when and however needed to maintain the PRI's dominant position. Eventually, though, these electoral reforms became instrumental in the PRI's decline and a more level playing field was ensured with the creation of an independent electoral monitoring organisation. In India, the gradual but steady rise of the Electoral Commission, the Presidency, and the Supreme Court was significant in ending dominance. In Botswana constitutional rules favoured the winning party from the outset, assigning huge powers to the president in an otherwise parliamentary system. The constituency-based FPTP electoral system makes the ruling BDP more dominant than it deserves to be (in 2009 the BDP won 54 per cent of the cast votes, but 79 per cent of the seats), and is possibly the key explanation for the BDP's persistent dominance. In accordance with Namibia's Constitution, the executive and the legislature are fused, with the former dominating the rule-making function of the legislature.

The South African case is murky. Despite references to federal features the Constitution provides for an essentially unitary, executive-led system, and there have been calls from within the ANC to remove the provincial governments altogether, which would further increase the power of the ruling party. Nevertheless, the negotiated Constitution is still basically intact, but it has not prevented dominance by the ANC. Whether hegemony can be achieved without breaching some of the basic tenets of the constitutional order, is still an open question. Of concern is the spate of criticisms emanating from the ANC's top leadership, levelled at the judiciary and the Constitution. On a more positive note, South Africa's Independent Electoral Commission has progressively proven itself to be a fair umpire and the proportional representation electoral system has enabled a highly inclusive system allowing smaller ethnic, regional and minority parties representation in Parliament.

Power of appointment and patronage networks

Access to public resources provided by initial wide-margin electoral wins endows the party in power with great leverage to appoint and distribute. In a small, controlled or growing economy this is a significant resource.

In the case of the PRI in Mexico, until the mid-1990s the majority of decision-making positions were filled through sponsored selection, where unquestioning loyalty was the means of access to political upward mobility. This power of appointment was also one of the mainstays of its corporatist arrangements with labour, civil society and the peasantry. In return for demonstrations of their loyalty through turning out their members to vote for the PRI, they could expect to gain access to political appointments. However, the mid-1980s and the 1990s ushered in the beginning of the PRI's decline, when its SOEs were privatised and the number of state employees was reduced by 43 per cent.

In South Africa, party leadership maintains strict discipline by controlling party, public services, parastatal and statutory body appointments in line with its 'Cadre policy and deployment strategy'. This method of leadership appointment gives pre-eminence to the ANC's authority over constitutional arrangements for government selection. The consequences are similar to those in the case of Mexico: firstly, the line of accountability and loyalty runs to the party and not to the public or constitutional institutions. Secondly, in order to protect their current positions and future appointments, appointees will be unlikely to oppose the ruling party — resulting in an acquiescent bureaucracy.

Patronage networks and mutually dependent relations between the political elite and domestic businesses served to bolster the dominant parties in South Korea and Taiwan, and continues to do so in Namibia. Without a free press or political transparency, the dominant party of South Korea benefited enormously from the business sector's under-the-table political contributions. In particular, during the rule of General Park Chung-Hee, the economic sector was dominated by chaebols — the large family-owned conglomerates with strong ties to state agencies. Two factors integral to the continuation of KMT rule in Taiwan were patron–client networks based on social alliances in the local administrative hierarchy, and the KMT's diverse party-owned enterprises — the KMT was one of the wealthiest political parties in the world. Patron–client networks continue to sustain SWAPO's dominance, as evidenced in the coalition of ruling political elites and the younger, influential economic elites.

Material goods

Material goods, having value that can be expressed in monetary terms, represent the most tangible resources for use in establishing and maintaining dominance. Greene convincingly demonstrates in Chapter 2 that largely unencumbered access to state resources (funds, positions and SOEs) plus a quiescent bureaucracy is the ultimate explanation for the endurance of dominance. Although he acknowledges some of the other resources, he asserts that the dominant party's access to and use of public resources for partisan purposes is key. Dominant parties continually win because they generate advantages from the public budget, and this skews the partisan playing field. Thus dominant parties persist when they politicise public resources and their power diminishes when privatisations put the state's fiscal power out of their reach. Essentially, resource monopolies sustain political monopolies. Greene highlights five ways in which political incumbents generate partisan resources. First, they divert funds from the budgets of

SOEs, which tend to be run by political appointees. Second, they funnel money from the public budget to political coffers. Third, they create a large public sector to allow for patronage networks. Fourth, they encourage domestic businesses to 'pay to play'. And finally, they use public institutions as campaign headquarters.

The use of public funds in a partisan way served as the basis for the decades-long dominance of the PRI in Mexico. Without a robust system of checks and balances, the PRI was able to funnel public funds into its party coffers, thus far outspending its competitors during election campaigns. In addition, underpinning its dominance was the funding generated from the state-run oil company, Pemex, which functioned as the 'party's piggy bank'.

Interestingly, fair distribution of public funds can also impact on the achievement of dominance, and on the end to dominant party systems. Fairness was one of the hallmarks of public fund disbursement in Botswana, which made it possible for the BDP to gain dominance, and to hold onto it. Not only equity in the allocation of such goods count, but also the levels of service delivery. The BDP excelled in their prudent management of the economy. They avoided being stricken by the resource curse – no mean feat. After the discovery of diamonds, their management of the exploitation process was so astute that the country rose from being the third poorest in the world at independence in 1965, to that of an upper-middle-income country by the end of the century. They were thus able to provide rising levels of service to the voters, allowing them to secure one electoral victory after the other. Nevertheless, much of the BDP's strength lies in its 50 per cent share of the diamond profits from Debswana. Thus it was no coincidence that the BDP's winning margin decreased significantly in the 1980s after the international slump in diamond prices.

Korea achieved a similarly spectacular economic growth trajectory; once again, a function of making economically sound policy choices at the right time. After 35 years of occupation by Japan, followed by World War II, followed by the Korean War, Korea had a shattered, poverty-stricken economy. In 1961, when General Park Chung-Hee seized power, per capita income was still only 78 per cent of per capita income in Mozambique. By 2001, however, Korea was ranked as a high-income country by the World Bank, along with former colonial ruler Japan, and the democracies of North America and Western Europe. Economic affluence and prosperity then, set the 'good times' context for the democratic opening of the party system in 1988, as described in the chapter.

Incumbency enables the ruling party preferential access to public resources and funds, an advantage opposition parties find difficult to compete with, especially if there is little or no access to public funds for them. In Botswana there is no state funding for political parties, and the BDP has little incentive to introduce party funding. Instead, the BDP obtains most of its funds from private sponsors. Given the government's spending power, it is a major customer of private companies, who are eager to win its favour. Unlike Botswana, in South Africa there is public funding, but it is allocated predominantly (90 per cent) on the basis of proportionality, meaning that the lion's share of the funds go to the ANC. In addition, access to private funding through party-owned businesses, in the absence of any law to prohibit public servants from conducting business with government, is a further resource for the ANC.

The abundance of material resources derived from economic growth is prone to fluctuate, as domestic economic mismanagement or external crises in the inherently fragile global system of capitalism can stall the wealth-generating capacities of national economies in a very short space of time. Nevertheless, resources generated by the licit economy are highly renewable, being the outcomes of a dynamic system of capitalist enterprise, capital accumulation and investment, and of technological innovation. However, as Greene argues, where there has been privatisation and a reduction in state control of economic resources, as occurred in Mexico and Taiwan and is occurring in Botswana, there has also been a levelling of the political playing field.

Material goods through loot and plunder

Dominant parties can also acquire resources through loot and plunder, even if it is conducted through a formally legal process. At the top end of the scale measuring abuse of public resources is Zimbabwe, where the state has become little more than a husk after ZANU–PF has devoured it from within and portioned it out for its own gain.

The crisis in the Zimbabwean economy started after ZANU–PF initiated a policy of repression following its defeat in the 2000 referendum on constitutional reform. With spiralling unemployment, hyperinflation, food shortages, imploding welfare services, declining life expectancy and a shrinking tax base, President Mugabe had few material resources to dispense as patronage with which to maintain his power base. He did, however, succeed in capturing another resource: that of commercial agricultural land, high in both symbolic and material value. He did this after the 2000 referendum by expropriating the properties of white farmers in a process of what can be described as economic ethnic cleansing. By 2010 all but 300 of the approximately 4 500 white-owned farms were distributed to his immediate allies in ZANU–PF. This has enabled him to retain support amongst the ruling elites since 2000, and may see him through the envisaged 2012/2013 elections. But this is an entirely non-renewable resource. After the last white farm has been dispossessed and the benefits have been completely wrung from foreign-owned businesses through the Indigenisation Act, further redistribution from these sources as a means for holding onto elite support will have to be from either the new but possibly non-compliant black ZANU–PF owners, or from new black owners who are not members of ZANU–PF, a distributional process that would need to be cast in a completely different ideological mould.

The above resources were, however, only sufficient to satisfy a small core elite, thus Mugabe could not rely on them solely to buy him 'legitimacy'. He therefore resorted to coercive measures in the form of violence and intimidation. In addition, there has been widespread contention that the 2008 presidential elections were marred by fraud. We thus agree with Greene that in cases where experts concur that systematic fraud overturned opposition victories, these countries no longer qualify as dominant party systems. Instead, they should rather be seen as having regressed towards more 'pure' forms of authoritarianism.

The nature and levels of dominance

In our introduction we described the nature of dominance in terms of one type, but we are now able revisit the concept as we find that our analysis of cases display three levels of dominance, which appear to be cumulative. *Electoral dominance* is the first level of dominance, and serves as a pre-condition for the second level, that of *constitutional dominance*, which in turn provides the platform for accruing *state dominance*.

Conceptually, *electoral dominance* can be described as the most fleeting and superficial type of dominance. At this level dominant parties are at risk of losing elections, even if neither they nor the electorate generally anticipate such an outcome. Symbolic dominance is also tenuous and contested. The weakest form of dominance is to rule with a small majority in an electoral system that amplifies any marginal shift in voter preference. This type of dominance would be constrained by constitutional rules, both formal and informal. These rules set a playing field in which opposition parties are in with a winning chance in any election. In our set of cases, India under Congress Party rule comes closest to this type. India's Congress Party dominance ended as soon as opposition parties used the playing field effectively. And they did so as soon as they succeeded in mobilising voters from the lower castes.

We suggest that the time span of dominance affects the nature of such dominant party systems. The longer the party stays in power, the more likely it is to submit to the temptation of trying to rewrite formal constitutional rules to its own benefit. Electoral dominance can become *constitutional dominance* when the dominant party succeeds in rewriting some constitutional rules with the intention of strengthening its own position, or succeeds in maintaining constitutional and electoral rules that are clearly unfair to opposition parties. Three of our cases show that this does not always play out as intended. In Mexico, the PRI used electoral reforms less for the purposes of democratisation than to ensure domestic and international legitimacy for itself and to control opposition parties. Electoral reforms nevertheless enabled opposition parties 'to stay in the game', and eventually win at the polls. In Korea, the DJP under President Roh, giving in to pressure from opposition parties, conceded to electoral reforms in 1987, but from a position of perceived strength, and with the calculation that the DJP would benefit most from it. This duly materialised in the 1988 elections, but only because the opposition vote was split. The unintended long-term effect was that, along with other contingent factors, it contributed to the demise of the dominant party system. In Taiwan electoral reform also produced unexpected results. The KMT lost its long-time dominance during the 2000 and 2004 presidential elections. Electoral reform (a result of multi-party negotiations) was enacted in 2005, and under the new electoral system the KMT promptly returned to power.

Our southern African cases show few such outcomes. ZANU–PF used its electoral majorities to enact many fundamental constitutional changes, including a shift from an electoral system of PR to FPTP, in order to benefit itself. In Namibia, a 1999 constitutional amendment gave President Nujoma a third term in office. Botswana's BDP clearly has no intention of amending its FPTP electoral system, despite numerous requests from the opposition to review the system, since the status quo enables it to dominate despite

receiving little more than 50 per cent of the vote. The only significant exception to this pattern is in South Africa, where the practice of floor-crossing, in effect since 2001, was ruled illegal after the 2011 elections. The ANC had been the biggest beneficiary of this practice, so this appears to be an example of a possible benign act. However, it can be speculated that the ANC anticipated that the floor-crossing mechanism would enable COPE, the breakaway party, to draw many new members from the ANC into their ranks.

Just how secure constitutional rules are from such subversion by dominant parties, we suggest, is a function of their origin (a historic, multi-party process of negotiation, or not), their significance (historically or contextually significant, or trivial), and their status (whether these rules are seen to embody a social contract or not). In addition, the presence of alternative centres of power (for example a viable and independent media, and an independent economic class) are important as guardians of the constitution.

State dominance becomes achievable once electoral and constitutional dominance have been secured. In the realm of ideas, this kind of dominance entails that the symbols of state are controlled by the dominant party, who express their ideology through these symbols in an almost uncontested way. The same applies to their interpretation of history, and especially of the historic event from which their own dominance derives. The hegemonic party not only sets the policy agenda, but also the wider public agenda in dictating the rules of what is acceptable in public discourse and what is not. Institutionally, state dominance is achieved once the dominant party gains control of the state bureaucracy, which it does through ensuring that its personnel are loyal party members who consider it their task to promote the party. If the public good and the interests of the party become indistinguishable in the minds of public servants, then the conditions are ripe for the dominant party to effect a de facto merger of party, regime and state.

Namibia and Zimbabwe come closest to this level of dominance. In Namibia formal opposition is so fragmented and small that SWAPO is able to dominate almost every electoral site of power in an untrammelled way. In Zimbabwe ZANU–PF expressed its ambitions to achieve such dominance from early on. The defeat and destruction of ZAPU was the first step in this project. The many constitutional changes also contributed; the cleansing of white farmers from their land took away another site of opposition, and by the 1990s the ruling party had already gained full control over the media. In the decade 2001–2011 it also reeled in the judiciary. The remaining site of contestation was the electoral arena, where the Movement for Democratic Change stood its ground as a resilient oppositional force in the face of ZANU–PF's intimidation and violence. In the 2008 election it even took away ZANU–PF's majority in Parliament, creating the conditions for a third party brokered power-sharing accord. Despite this the hegemonic grip of ZANU–PF remained, making the new arrangement a power-sharing government in name only. This is contrary to our expectations: a party that loses its electoral dominance but retains its hegemony. The key to this is the fact that ZANU–PF has succeed in converting almost the entire public service into party loyalists, who are able to continue ruling almost irrespective of who controls Parliament.

Is this the way South Africa is going? The ANC has made it clear that it aims for hegemonic dominance, in particular through its strategy of cadre deployment, which allows the party to steadily extend its power over state bureaucracies. However, sites of

opposition remain. First and foremost, the Constitution itself limits power in a variety of ways, with the Bill of Rights arguably being the most important. Opposition parties have won some elections at the provincial and local government level, and govern there. Civil society groups mobilise continually, and oppose the ANC in a variety of ways within the public domain. But probably the most crucial sites of power that constrain the ANC are the mass media and the judiciary.

Botswana is again the exception within the southern African sub-set of cases. The constitutional rule that makes Parliament a department within the Office of the President gives that officeholder unusual and extensive powers, coupled to the BDP's electoral dominance. Some branches of the state, such as the police and the army, are closely allied to the BDP, but others, where the public services unions are strong, are less so. Sites of contestation do persist however, and the state has recently moved to curtail these using its constitutional dominance to extend limits on the right to strike to more state bureaucracies.

No such dominance was achieved in any of the other formerly dominant party systems. The KMT can be rightfully described as a hegemonic party, but that did not dissuade them from abiding by electoral reforms spelt out by a ruling of their highest court of law in 1991. And they took part in a multi-party initiative to rewrite electoral rules in 2004/2005. The other most likely case to achieve state dominance would have been Korea, being an almost classic instance of an authoritarian developmental state, but it did not happen. As Chapter 4 shows, when Kim Dae-Jung won the presidential elections in 1997 he was able to unravel and reconstruct the state-business-labour social compact, which was at the heart of the Korean developmental state, with relative ease and in a short time. Mexico under the PRI can be described as a hegemonic party system, where during the heyday of its dominance, the PRI functioned as a hub around which all other political, social and economic life revolved. Nevertheless, the PRI accepted its defeat to PAN in the 2000 presidential elections.

The difference between the above three countries and Zimbabwe lies in the extent to which coercion was used and the longevity of leadership. Where coercion was sparingly used and only as a last resort in Mexico and Taiwan, in Zimbabwe coercion (with the security apparatus still controlled by ZANU–PF) is, at the time of writing, still used robustly and pre-emptively. In Taiwan, Korea and Mexico, when the ruling party's access to public resources diminished and they could no longer rely on clientelistic sources of legitimacy, they tended instead to accede to the opening up of the playing field. This is where the case of Zimbabwe differs: under the persistent grip of ZANU-PF, as the country became more impoverished and the resources used to maintain dominance diminished, Mugabe chose rather, the route of coercion. Violence and intimidation have become synonymous with election time. In the case of Zimbabwe two mutually reinforcing factors promoted hegemony. The first was the time span of ZANU–PF electoral dominance, and the second was the time span of Robert Mugabe's rule, first as Prime Minister, and then as President. The two factors combined to produce a special type of state dominance, that of personal rule. The impact of this type of dominance effectively moves Zimbabwe from our framework for classifying dominant party systems. Even with elections, Zimbabwe cannot be classified as a democracy any more.

Table 10.1: Revised categorisation of dominant party systems

Levels of dominance	Type of dominance	
	Dominant party system/ Dominant party democratic regimes (DPDR)*	**Hegemonic party system/ Dominant party authoritarian regimes (DPAR)***
Electoral dominance	India under INC (1947–1977)	
Constitutional dominance	Botswana under BDP (1965–present) Namibia under SWAPO (1990–present) South Africa under ANC (1994–present)	South Korea under the DRP/DJP (1963–1988)
State dominance		Mexico under PRI (1929–1997) Taiwan under KMT (1987–2000) Zimbabwe under ZANU–PF (1980–2008)

*DPDR and DPAR are derived from Greene's chapter in this book.

Source: Compilation by the authors

Democratic quality

How did the era of party domination affect the quality of democracy in our set of cases? The first dimension of quality to consider in the Diamond and Morlino framework (discussed in Chapter 1) is that of the procedural aspects of democracy, which can be subsumed broadly under the heading 'rule of law'. The second dimension is that of content-based quality, or the substantive dimension of quality. This relates specifically to the extension of first-, second- and third-generation rights, and to augmenting formal political quality with that of socio-economic equality and opportunity. The third dimension, that of results, bears on the capacity of the state to respond to the preferences of voters.

As can be expected, parties with electoral dominance (dominance in its most superficial form) appear to enhance democratic quality in keeping the rule of law intact, since dominance is established within a democratic constitution, rather than emerging from an authoritarian regime. The Indian case is an almost perfect example. The Congress Party dominated the centre, but opposition parties could capture power in the federal states, in each of which evolved a distinct party system. From their autonomous, constitutionally protected power base, these parties could and did bargain effectively with the Congress Party. This distribution of power remained intact throughout, despite the constitutional amendment curtailing the power of the President. So while the Congress Party held the centre, opposition parties used their space to gain skills and search for strategic gaps to extend their power base. This they found in their mobilisation of voters from the lower castes, hitherto not within the Congress Party mould. As they converted the votes of

these new recruits into seats won, the party system evolved into a multi-party system where coalition politics prevail.

In Korea, with the ruling party closer to constitutional than electoral dominance, a similar but not identical evolution took place. Party politics emerged from successive authoritarian regimes, without the constitutionalism within which India's parties operated from the very start, at independence. And such constitutional dominance created an unfavourably tilted electoral playing field for contesters. But parties used even this limited space in a similar fashion to those of India. They gained experience and tactical skills which was put to good effect when the moment of 'democratic opening' arrived. From this template the democratic regime evolved, and so did the multi-party system. It is important to note, however, that the crucial electoral reform of 1987, initiated by the dominant party because they thought they would stand to gain from it (they did, initially), contributed to their eventual electoral defeat.

In Mexico, when no party was able to nominate presidential candidates for the 1976 elections due to the heavily skewed playing field, the PRI decided on electoral reforms enabling opposition parties to re-enter the political game. The PRI's motivations were less altruistic than they were to legitimise their rule both domestically and regionally (especially in the eyes of the US). Although it took opposition parties close to 70 years to become viable contenders, when conditions had become more favourable through a diminishing of the PRI's control of state resources, they were ready and able to compete.

Taiwan presents an even more improbable case, of a hegemonic party that acquiesced with a 1991 court ruling that changed the electoral system to its own disadvantage. They probably quite shrewdly anticipated that the new parallel electoral system under which the 2008 legislative elections were held, would gravitate towards a two-party system, of which they would be a beneficiary.

In all four of the countries with previously dominant party systems therefore, dominant parties played a positive role in extending the procedural dimension of democratic quality. They did so for different reasons, and the result of higher quality democracy was at times even an inadvertent, unforeseen consequence.

The picture looks a lot different in our set of southern African dominant party regimes. In Zimbabwe the crucial turning point was when ZANU–PF lost the constitutional referendum in 2000, which, if passed, would have added to the power of the president. Having lost at the ballot box, President Mugabe started a process of brutal, often violent intimidation and repression, using the police to harass voters and the opposition MDC. He also gained effective control over the courts, and with that removed the last obstacle to dismantling almost all procedural protection citizens had against an abusive state. Every election after 2000 was challenged from within and outside the country for being procedurally flawed, and the opposition in 2011 were still at risk from the security forces. There are also concerns with setting the next election date, as elections have come to be associated with an increase in violence and intimidation. Land redistribution, ostensibly to empower the landless and dispossessed peasantry, was conducted in such a way as to effectively demolish the rule of law in Zimbabwe.

In Namibia the ruling SWAPO has not yet been rejected by the electorate, and no campaign similar to that of ZANU–PF has been launched against the citizenry. The party is so deeply secure in its electoral dominance that no such turn of events is anticipated. In Botswana the BDP is similarly entrenched, but the situation is more volatile, with opposition forces within both civil society and the party system being present, but not yet able to convert voter unease into electoral success. The procedural elements of democracy have not been enhanced significantly through legislative action in either of these countries.

South Africa, the youngest of these four democracies, presents an interesting mix of forces. After close to 20 years of democracy, it is still a very deeply troubled society. The ruling ANC regularly declares itself a custodian of the Constitution, but in practice it sometimes blatantly undermines it (as does its cadre policy). Elections also produce uneven outcomes. Elections in South Africa are conducted scrupulously, with meticulous consideration of the electoral law, but such compliance with procedure is not matched with substance. It is persuasively argued in the chapter on India, that South Africa is unlikely to follow the path of Indian democratic development. Firstly, in South Africa there is no large cohort of unmobilised voters that opposition parties can tap into in order to unseat the dominant party, as was the case with the lower castes in India. At best there is a slowly growing set of floating voters, and another set of registered voters who abstain from voting at all, rather than voting for any opposition party. Secondly, despite the very best efforts at national reconciliation in South Africa, which included a Truth and Reconciliation Commission, deep historical divisions remain. The dynamic of elections in South Africa is memorably described in the chapter on India as 'flashback moments', where political entrepreneurs resurrect old antagonisms with ease, thus trying to stem the growth in floating voters, and trying to re-cement voting blocks into the mould of the conflicted pre-democratic apartheid society every time. The key factor here is the different nature of factional politics in the two countries, a topic we will return to.

In the framework of Diamond and Morlino presented at the start of this book, the quality of democracy can also be gauged in terms of content. More freedom, as made possible through the broadening of civil, economic and political rights, is one content-related element, and more widely distributed socio-economic opportunities with which to accompany political equality, the other.

India once again serves as a good example. With effective political mobilisation, opposition parties succeeded in crossing the chasm in social standing between the upper and lower castes by asserting their shared status as citizens, and as voters. This served both dimensions of a content-driven extension of the quality of democracy. Firstly, voting rights, formally available to all, were converted into actual political freedom and power. And secondly, this power was used to enhance equality (following from the Mandal Commission in 1989) with more redistributive rights being legislated for the lower castes. Nonetheless, India still suffers from high levels of poverty and socio-economic inequality.

In Korea and Taiwan the classic developmental state sequence was followed. The industrial base of the modern economy was established under conditions of low public participation (at the behest of the dominant parties), limited power for labour unions and low consumption, with deferred gratification for at least one generation by the citizenry.

Subsequent generations benefited with extended political participation as the party system opened up, and with that, greater consumption and affluence.

In the southern African countries, the broadening of equality requires extensive redistributive policies to de-racialise inequality in post-white minority regimes, and then to lower overall socio-economic inequality, while at the same time growing the economy so as to ensure a positive-sum re-distributive outcome. But all of this has to be done without compromising the procedural quality of the democratic regimes. None of this has been achieved in Zimbabwe. By expropriating white farms without compensation, a zero-sum re-distributive outcome was effected. Formal ownership of these commercial farms reverted to the state, and these spoils were awarded to Mugabe's fellow party elites without their acquiring title deeds, thus deepening political inequality as well as economic inequality, instead of offering relief to the rural poor. By destroying the rule of law Mugabe initiated an economic collapse, with the Zimbabwean state eventually even abandoning its own currency. The remaining spoils for redistribution to elites are the few remaining large commercial firms, mostly mining enterprises. The recent Indigenisation Law requires the state to acquire 51 per cent of designated firms, once again discouraging foreign investment into one of the last remaining pockets of the economy. Namibia also instituted a controversial land reform policy in 1999, requiring all white farmers to present their farms for sale to the state as first buyer. Whether these farms will be transferred at market value or not, whether the new owners will be party-loyal elites or ordinary poor citizens, and whether transfer will be with title deeds or not, has yet to be seen. In addition, SWAPO's delivery in terms of housing, health and employment creation has been uneven which is a matter for concern given its unemployment rate of over 50 per cent.

Where the content-based quality of democracy has been extended in South Africa, it has in some ways been achieved through the action of the courts, and especially that of the Constitutional Court. These include benchmark rulings such as forcing the government to provide free antiretroviral medication for people with HIV/AIDS, and in doing so, turning the written Constitution into a living document. The government is regularly challenged in the lower courts, as well as in the Constitutional Court, and it often loses. Significant legislative initiatives by the ruling party have been aimed at de-racialising economic inequality. Affirmative action legislation applicable to the formal employment sector is a notable intervention, with measurable results. More controversial has been the black economic empowerment legislation, aimed at redistributing ownership of economic and financial resources. This has been criticised widely as an intervention which de-racialises at the elite level only. At the bottom level of the income pyramid the ruling party has implemented an extensive set of social grants, which at the time of writing reaches about 15 million (out of a total population of approximately 50 million) of the poorest, saving them from absolute destitution. Major policy successes have also been achieved in rolling out social services, ranging from housing to water and electricity.

The last dimension of quality highlighted by Diamond and Morlino relates to the capacity of the democratic regime to deliver outcomes that meet the preferences of the voters. Three considerations shape the match between preferences and capacity. The first is the extent to which leaders themselves can affect the preferences of citizens. The second

refers to the constraining effect of limited resources and the third is the constraints of the global economy, where national economies contest with the best in the world.

Botswana, Korea and Taiwan are our outstanding performers in this global contest. They all produced phenomenal economic growth, sustained over a number of decades. All three economies have succeeded to the point where basic services for all are taken care of, and where world-class firms hold their own in global competition. All three of them also experienced great good fortune. Korea and Taiwan were the fortuitous beneficiaries of very large amounts of American economic aid, the result of Cold War politics. Mexico's growth may not have been so phenomenal, but it did progress from being an agrarian society in the 1920s to a middle-income country under the PRI's rule. Botswana, poverty-stricken at independence, discovered rich diamond deposits shortly thereafter. The country did well to elude the resource curse, and succeeded, where many other countries have failed, in using this windfall to benefit the public good. Zimbabwe went the other way. President Mugabe could have responded to the loss in the 2000 referendum by opening up the electoral arena, with the calculation that ZANU–PF could yet do well against its opposition, as happened in Korea and Taiwan. Instead he turned to repression, and the deliberate dismantling of the procedural pillars of democracy. With that the modern economy collapsed, and the downward spiral of economic social and political decay set in. The other three southern African dominant party regimes have yet to confront such a watershed moment. Botswana's 2014 elections may be such a watershed moment for that country, especially with the recent split and the formation of the Botswana Movement for Democracy, combined with decreasing support for the BDP as a result of the economic crisis and the unpopular authoritarian tendencies of President Ian Khama.

Conclusion

The remaining question is to account for political choices in such watershed moments. In the cases of India, Korea, Taiwan and Mexico,we propose that the answer can be found in the nature of factional politics, combined with the strategic and tactical guile of politicians. All experienced factional divisions within their electorates and in each case both dominant and opposition parties have used factional divisions to good effect in elections. Thus in all these former dominant party systems, factions were at one time or another salient in shaping election results. But the factional formations within these electorates retained the loose and malleable formations of interest groups, and have not become exclusive stable voting blocks. These electorates can then be described as having floating factions of voters rather than numbers of individual floating voters. Taiwan could be emerging as a possible exception, if the North–South divide solidifies into a fixed, stable social cleavage.

The situation in southern Africa is vastly different. Every one of the four cases emerged as independent states from colonial occupation by the British, and by Germany in the case of Namibia. In every case except Botswana colonisation was accompanied by war. And in every case except Botswana democracy was thwarted by white minority rule of various formations, with the final effort in reaching either independence or democracy accompanied by violent resistance to violent repression. In each of the three cases (again,

except Botswana) the potential deep, durable and salient factional cleavage was therefore between indigenous Africans and descendants of the original European settlers.

As can be expected, the white/black divide was at its weakest in Botswana, both in terms of depth of the hostility between them, and in terms of the demographic, political and economic presence of the white community. The economic power of the white community dissipated quickly as well, especially when the diamond mining giant DEBSWANA was established, with the Botswana government and the De Beers firm as equal partners. In addition, astute politics by the dominant party prevented cleavages along the lineage lines internal to the Botswana population, thus avoiding the kind of unstable politics nearby Lesotho has long experienced. Now, however, under the rule of President Ian Khama this stability may begin to crumble.

In Namibia the white/black cleavage during the independence struggle was in the form of South Africa's presence as a de facto coloniser. With independence this hostile force withdrew, but the resident white voters were a factor present in the first and maybe even the second election; however, they have since faded from electoral politics. The resident white community is still a large presence within the modern economy, but not one that has a direct political dimension. The potentially relevant factions are to be found within the large Owambo block that votes for SWAPO, but this is as yet dormant.

In Zimbabwe independence, democracy and peace was delivered through the framework negotiated at Lancaster House. ZANU came to power at the ballot box and proceeded to eliminate its two immediate potential factional opponents, each still perceived as a lethal enemy. The first to be destroyed was ZAPU, but the resilient white community, primarily located on the country's roughly 4000 commercial farms, remained until they were forcibly (albeit within the law as it stood) removed, and emigrated. The remaining opposition is from within the ranks of the black electorate, and no politician has yet succeeded in de-politicising this factional divide.

South Africa is the last case, and the only one in which the pre-democratic racial divide is still the salient factor in elections. The white community, although a numerical minority, holds some electoral power, and a significant economic presence. No political process, not even the historic role of Mandela as peacemaker, and the acclaimed Truth and Reconciliation Commission, has yet succeeded in muting this racial divide. While this historic antagonism is still present, new factions have also emerged within the ANC and its alliance. With so many political forces in play, short-term trends are difficult to detect, and policy-making also becomes more difficult.

Nonetheless, the need for sound policy-making is becoming more urgent, not less so. In Mexico, the economic crisis of 1982, the inability of the leadership to confront it, and subsequent economic liberalisation led to the demise of the PRI. Likewise, the 1997 Asian financial crisis set the favourable context for Kim Dae-Jung to win against the incumbent dominant party. All the southern African dominant party systems are confronting the global economic crisis that started in late 2008, with the US financial and banking crisis. Crises of a global magnitude can reshape the global context, and with it, alter the playing field of domestic party politics and potentially also the fortunes of dominant parties. South Africa is not immune to this.

To return to the broader discussion of resources, we highlighted that resource monopolies create political monopolies, similar to Greene's findings. The question that helps us to distinguish between the trajectories of Zimbabwe, which moved from a dominant party system towards 'pure' authoritarianism, and the other four cases, which moved towards multiparty democracy, is: What happens when these resources are non-durable or when they have simply dwindled, and the incumbent faces electoral defeat?

Unlike the four cases of India, Mexico, Taiwan and South Korea, where dominant parties accepted defeat at the ballot box and handed over power, in Zimbabwe, the one southern African case where electoral defeat did occur, the response was to dismantle the democratic regime altogether, despite the deep social and economic hardship the citizenry had to endure as a result. This response may be due to the unique form of personal rule Robert Mugabe has succeeded in constructing. In the other three southern African cases, leaders have been replaced, if not parties, and these parties remain open to influences from the domestic, regional and global context, and we can therefore expect that they will not necessarily follow the example of Zimbabwe. Multi-party democracy may still be considered a viable prospect for them.

If we compare Zimbabwe to India, Mexico, Taiwan and South Korea, it appears that the quality of democracy is most negatively impacted by a prolonged combined incumbency of both party and leader, together with the use of coercion, when resources used to maintain legitimacy have dwindled. Unlike Zimbabwe, Botswana, Namibia and South Africa have experienced leadership turnover in a democratic setting, thus better preparing them for a more competitive system in the future.

Index

Note: references in *italics* refer to tables and figures