

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-03346-7 - Political Parties in Africa: Ethnicity and Party Formation

Sebastian Elischer

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Political Parties in Africa

This book examines the effects of ethnicity on party politics in Sub-Saharan Africa. Sebastian Elischer analyzes political parties in Ghana, Kenya, and Namibia in detail and provides a preliminary analysis of parties in seven other countries, including Tanzania, Botswana, Senegal, Zambia, Malawi, Burkina Faso, and Benin. Elischer finds that five party types exist: the mono-ethnic, the ethnic alliance, the catch-all, the programmatic, and the personalistic party. He uses these party types to show that the African political landscape is considerably more diverse than conventionally assumed. Whereas ethnic parties dominate in some countries, nonethnic parties have become the norm in others. This study also finds a correlation between a country's ethnic makeup and the salience of political ethnicity: countries with a core ethnic group are prone to form nonethnic parties. In countries lacking a core ethnic group, ethnic parties constitute the norm.

Sebastian Elischer is assistant professor of comparative politics at the Leuphana University Lüneburg and the German Institute of Global and Area Studies Hamburg.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-03346-7 - Political Parties in Africa: Ethnicity and Party Formation

Sebastian Elischer

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-03346-7 - Political Parties in Africa: Ethnicity and Party Formation

Sebastian Elischer

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Political Parties in Africa

Ethnicity and Party Formation

SEBASTIAN ELISCHER

*Leuphana University Lüneburg and German Institute of
Global and Area Studies, Hamburg*



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press
 978-1-107-03346-7 - Political Parties in Africa: Ethnicity and Party Formation
 Sebastian Elischer
 Frontmatter
[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
 Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town,
 Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi, Mexico City
 Cambridge University Press
 32 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10013-2473, USA
www.cambridge.org
 Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781107620445

© Sebastian Elischer 2013

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2013

Printed in the United States of America

A catalog record for this publication is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Elischer, Sebastian, 1979–
 Political parties in Africa : ethnicity and party formation / Sebastian Elischer.
 p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-107-03346-7 (hardback) – ISBN 978-1-107-62044-5 (pbk.)

1. Political parties – Africa. 2. Ethnic relations – Political aspects. 3. Africa – Ethnic relations – Political aspects. I. Title.

JQ1879.A795E45 2013

324.2096-dc23 2012051703

ISBN 978-1-107-03346-7 Hardback

ISBN 978-1-107-62044-5 Paperback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party Internet Web sites referred to in this publication and does not guarantee that any content on such Web sites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-03346-7 - Political Parties in Africa: Ethnicity and Party Formation

Sebastian Elischer

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

To my grandfather

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-03346-7 - Political Parties in Africa: Ethnicity and Party Formation

Sebastian Elischer

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Contents

<i>Tables</i>	<i>page</i> xiii
<i>Abstract</i>	xvii
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	xix
1 Comparative Politics and Political Parties in Africa	1
Harbingers of Evil? Ethnic Parties and Democracy	2
International Party Assistance and Ethnic Parties	4
Fighting Ghosts? Political Science and African Parties	5
Filling in the Gaps	7
The Structure of the Book	8
2 A New Framework of Comparison for Political Parties	11
On the Study of Political Parties	12
Party Typologies in the Western World	12
Party Typologies Outside the Western World	18
Party Typologies in Eastern Europe, Latin America, and Asia	20
Party Typologies in Africa	22
Toward a New Framework of Comparison	26
The Operationalization of the Amended Diamond and Gunther Typology	30
Party Goals	31
Electoral Strategy	32
Organizational Structure	33
Social Base	34
Aggregation	37
Toward Empirical Research	38
Comparative Politics and the Diamond and Gunther Typology	41
3 Kenya: The Ubiquity of Ethnic Parties	43
One-Party Rule and the Rise of Ethnic Cleavage Lines	46

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-03346-7 - Political Parties in Africa: Ethnicity and Party Formation

Sebastian Elischer

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

viii

Contents

Observation Period 1	51
FORD-Kenya: The Enduring Logic of Ethnic Politics	51
FORD-Asili: The Prisoners of Dr. Kenneth Matiba	57
The Democratic Party: In the Shadows of GEMA	59
The Kenyan African National Union: Entering the Democratic Age	61
Observation Period 2	67
FORD-Kenya: From Alliance to Mono-Ethnic Party	67
The National Development Party: FORD-K's Former Luo Wing	70
The Democratic Party: The Beneficiaries of FORD-A's Collapse	72
The Social Democratic Party: Toward Kamba Unity	73
The Kenyan African National Union	75
Observation Period 3	79
The National Alliance Rainbow Coalition	79
KANU, the Orange Democratic Movement–Kenya, and the Orange Democratic Movement	88
Kenya After the 2007 Elections	93
Political Parties in Africa: Findings from Kenya	95
4 Namibia: The Dominance of Nonethnic Parties	100
Apartheid, Ethnic Cleavage Lines, and Political Parties	101
Observation Period 1	104
The Democratic Turnhalle Alliance and the Democratic Age	105
The South West African People's Organization	110
Observation Period 2	113
The Democratic Turnhalle Alliance Falls Apart	113
SWAPO Extending the SWAPO Kingdom	117
Observation Period 3	121
The Democratic Turnhalle Alliance and Its Disintegration	121
SWAPO: The Legacy of the Nujoma Succession	124
Observation Period 4	129
The Rise and Fall of the Congress of Democrats	130
SWAPO and Pohamba	133
Namibia After the 2009 Elections	135
Political Parties in Africa: Findings from Namibia	135
5 Ghana: The Ubiquity of Nonethnic Parties	140
The First Three Republics, Ethnic Cleavage Lines, and Political Parties	141
Observation Period 1	143
The New Patriotic Party: In the Footsteps of the PP	144
The National Democratic Congress: A Dictator Elected	150

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-03346-7 - Political Parties in Africa: Ethnicity and Party Formation

Sebastian Elischer

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*Contents*

ix

Observation Period 2	153
The New Patriotic Party: Generation Kufuor	153
The National Democratic Congress: A Dictator Reelected	157
Observation Period 3	159
The New Patriotic Party in Power	159
The National Democratic Congress Falling Apart	163
Observation Period 4	167
The New Patriotic Party in Its Second Term	167
The National Democratic Congress and Rawlings' Long Shadow	171
Ghana after the 2008 Elections	173
Political Parties in Africa: Findings from Ghana	175
6 The Diversity of African Party Politics	179
Political Parties in Kenya, Namibia, and Ghana	180
Variation Within Countries: Some Observations	183
African Parties and Political Ideology: Some Observations	186
Toward a New Framework of Comparison for African Parties	187
Motive of Formation	188
Rhetoric	188
Electoral Rhetoric	188
Ideology/Manifesto Content	189
National Coverage	189
Party Factions	189
Party Apparatus	190
Leadership Composition	190
Cabinet Composition	190
Party Divergence Scores and Party Nationalization Scores	191
Verification of Results: Preliminary Evidence from Additional Cases	192
Tanzania	193
The Chama Cha Mapinduzi	193
The Civic United Front	195
CHADEMA	196
Botswana	197
The Botswana Democratic Party	197
The Botswana National Front	198
Senegal	199
Parti Socialiste	200
The Parti Démocratique Sénégalais	201
Malawi	202
The Malawi Congress Party	203
The United Democratic Front	204

	The Alliance for Democracy	206
	The Democratic Progressive Party	207
	Burkina Faso	208
	The Congrès pour le Démocratie et le Progrès	208
	The Rassemblement Démocratique Africain – l'Alliance pour la Démocratie et la Fédération	209
	Zambia	210
	The Movement for Multiparty Democracy	210
	The United National Independence Party	212
	The Patriotic Front	213
	Benin	214
	The Parti Social-Démocrate	215
	The Parti du Renouveau Démocratique	215
	The Front d'Action pour le Renouveau et le Développement	217
	Alliance pour une Dynamique Démocratique, l'Union pour le Bénin du Future, and Forces Cauris pour un Bénin	
	Emergent	218
	Summary of the Preliminary Cases	218
	Political Party Types in Africa	221
7	Explaining the Formation of Nonethnic Parties	223
	Variance Between Countries	224
	Economic Variables	224
	Electoral Systems and Political Parties	234
	Electoral Systems and Parties in Kenya, Ghana, and Namibia	235
	Democracy and Political Parties	238
	The Legal Dimension: Party Laws and Political Parties	240
	Political Parties and the Type of Independence Movement	241
	Ghana: The United Front	243
	Kenya: Ethnic Disunity from the Start	246
	Comparing African Independence Movements	248
	Ethnic Fractionalization and Political Parties	250
	Scenario 1: Balancing	252
	Scenario 2: Bandwagoning	252
	Core Groups and Political Parties: Empirical Evidence	253
	Verification of Hypothesis with Preliminary Cases	255
	Toward a Theory of the Formation of Ethnic Parties	259
	Conclusion: Political Parties in Africa	261
	The Emergence of Nonethnic Politics	261
	African Political Parties: The Main Argument	262
	African Parties and Democratic Consolidation	264
	Future Research on (African) Parties	267
	Strange Bedfellows: Academic Research and International Party Assistance	269
	Comparative Politics and African Parties	272

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-03346-7 - Political Parties in Africa: Ethnicity and Party Formation

Sebastian Elischer

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

<i>Contents</i>	xi
<i>Annex A: Operationalization of Secondary Party Types</i>	275
<i>Annex B: The Standard MRG Coding Frame</i>	276
<i>Annex C: Number of Effective Programmatic Categories</i>	280
<i>Annex D: Summary of Party Nationalization Scores (PNS) and Party Divergence Scores (PDS)</i>	281
<i>Annex E: Result for MRG Coding Scheme</i>	284
<i>Annex F: PNS Calculated on the Basis of Afrobarometer Data</i>	285
<i>Annex G: Scope of Party Systems Covered</i>	287
<i>Annex H: Party Nationalization Scores (PNS) of the Preliminary Cases</i>	288
<i>Bibliography</i>	291
<i>Index</i>	317

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-03346-7 - Political Parties in Africa: Ethnicity and Party Formation

Sebastian Elischer

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-03346-7 - Political Parties in Africa: Ethnicity and Party Formation

Sebastian Elischer

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Tables

2.1 Party Types According to Duverger	<i>page</i> 13
2.2 Party Types According to Katz and Mair	16
2.3 Party Typology Derived from Spatial Theory	17
2.4 Party Types in Ethnically Segmented Societies According to Horowitz	19
2.5 Party Types Derived from Kitschelt	19
2.6 Party Types Derived from Ishiyama	20
2.7 African Parties According to Coleman and Rosberg	23
2.8 African Parties in the Literature	26
2.9 Diamond and Gunther's Party Typology	27
2.10 Overview of Key Characteristics and Indicators	36
2.11 Operationalization of the Amended Diamond and Gunther Party Typology	39
3.1 Ethnic Composition of Kenya Nationwide	44
3.2 Ethnic Composition of Kenya's Provinces	44
3.3 Overview of Kenyan Cases and Observations	45
3.4 Summary of Historical Cleavage Lines in Kenyan Politics	49
3.5 Selection of Bills Passed by the National Assembly Between 1991 and 1997	52
3.6 Percentage Shares of Programmatic Content of Kenyan Party Manifestos	53
3.7 Factionalism Inside FORD-K Between 1992 and 1997	55
3.8 Parties' Electoral Performance and Ability to Field Candidates in 1992	56
3.9 Ethnic Composition of Kenya's 1979, 1983, and 1992 Cabinets	66
3.10 Selection of Bills Passed by the National Assembly Between 1997 and 2002	68
3.11 Parties' Electoral Performance and Ability to Field Candidates in 1997	69

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-03346-7 - Political Parties in Africa: Ethnicity and Party Formation

Sebastian Elischer

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xiv

Tables

3.12	Ethnic Composition of Kenya's 1998 Cabinet	77
3.13	Selection of Bills Passed by the National Assembly Between 2002 and 2007	80
3.14	Parties' Electoral Performance in 2002	83
3.15	Ethnic Composition of Kenya's 2003 Cabinet	84
3.16	Constitutional Proposals Compared	86
3.17	Political Changes Immediately After the 2005 Referendum	87
3.18	Composition of Opposition After 2005 Referendum	91
3.19	Situation Inside the NARC Parliamentary Group	92
3.20	Ethnic Composition of Kenya's 2008 Cabinet	94
3.21	Parties' Electoral Performance in 2007	95
3.22	Summary of Disaggregated Results for All Political Parties in Kenya	97
4.1	Overview of Namibians Cases and Observations	101
4.2	Ethnic Composition of Namibia Nationwide	103
4.3	Ethnic Composition of Namibia's Provinces	104
4.4	Bills Passed by the National Assembly Between 1989 and 1994	105
4.5	Programmatic Content of Election Manifestos in Kenya and Namibia	106
4.6	Parties' Electoral Performance in 1989	108
4.7	Ethnic Composition of Namibia's 1989 Cabinet	111
4.8	Bills Passed by the National Assembly Between 1994 and 1999	114
4.9	Parties' Electoral Performance in 1994	118
4.10	Ethnic Composition of Namibia's 1994 Cabinet	118
4.11	Bills Passed by the National Assembly Between 1999 and 2004	122
4.12	Parties' Electoral Performance in 1999	123
4.13	Ethnic Composition of Namibia's 1999 Cabinet	125
4.14	Bills Passed by the National Assembly Between 2004 and 2005	129
4.15	Parties' Electoral Performance in 2004	132
4.16	Ethnic Composition of Namibia's 2004 Cabinet	133
4.17	Summary of Disaggregated Results for All Political Parties in Namibia	137
5.1	Overview of Ghanaian Cases and Observations	141
5.2	Ethnic Composition of Ghana Nationwide	144
5.3	Ethnic Composition of Ghana's Provinces	145
5.4	Selection of Bills Passed in Ghana Between 1992 and 1996	146
5.5	Programmatic Content of Election Manifestos Across Countries	148
5.6	Parties' Electoral Performance and Ability to Field Candidates in 1992	149
5.7	Ethnic Composition of Ghana's 1993 Cabinet	151

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-03346-7 - Political Parties in Africa: Ethnicity and Party Formation

Sebastian Elischer

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*Tables*

xv

5.8	Selection of Bills Passed in Ghana Between 1996 and 2000	153
5.9	Parties' Electoral Performance and Ability to Field Candidates in 1996	155
5.10	Ethnic Composition of Ghana's 1997 Cabinet	157
5.11	Selection of Bills Passed in Ghana Between 2000 and 2004	160
5.12	Parties' Electoral Performance and Ability to Field Candidates in 2000	161
5.13	Ethnic Composition of Ghana's 2001 Cabinet	162
5.14	Selection of Bills Passed in Ghana Between 2004 and 2008	168
5.15	Parties' Electoral Performance and Ability to Field Candidates in 2004	169
5.16	Ethnic Composition of Ghana's 2005 Cabinet	170
5.17	Parties' Electoral Performance in 2008	175
5.18	Summary of Disaggregated Results for Parties in Ghana	177
6.1	Results from the Application of the Amended Gunther and Diamond Typology	181
6.2	Party System Nationalization Scores (PSNS) for Ghana, Namibia, and Kenya	182
6.3	Political Positioning of Parties	187
6.4	Party Nationalization Scores – Tanzania	195
6.5	Party Nationalization Scores – Botswana	198
6.6	Party Nationalization Scores – Senegal	201
6.7	Party Nationalization Scores – Malawi	205
6.8	Party Nationalization Scores – Burkina Faso	206
6.9	Party Nationalization Scores – Zambia	212
6.10	Party Nationalization Scores – Benin	216
6.11	Results from the Application of Party Typology to Preliminary Cases	219
7.1	GDP Per Capita (in USD in Current Prices)	225
7.2	Real GDP Growth as a Percentage	226
7.3	Human Development Index (HDI) Trends	227
7.4	Gini Coefficient for Ghana, Kenya, and Namibia	228
7.5	HDI Across Kenya's Regions	228
7.6	HPI Rates as a Percentage Across Kenya's Regions	229
7.7	UN 2001 District Ranking by HDI	230
7.8	Kenya's 20 Richest and Poorest Constituencies Based on HPI Rates	231
7.9	HPI as a Percentage in Ghana Across Regions	232
7.10	Degree of Social Exclusion as a Percentage in Ghana Across Regions	232
7.11	HPI in Namibia Across Regions	233
7.12	HPI in Namibia Across Language Groups	233
7.13	PNS of Namibian Parties Not Considered Significant	237

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-03346-7 - Political Parties in Africa: Ethnicity and Party Formation

Sebastian Elischer

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xvi

Tables

7.14	The Quality of Democracy Across Three to Four Observation Periods	239
7.15	Overview of Independent Movements	249
7.16	Ethnic Fractionalization Index Based on Scarritt and Mozaffar	254
7.17	Party Types and Ethnic Structure in 10 African Countries	256
7.18	Summary of Dependent and Independent Variables	260

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-03346-7 - Political Parties in Africa: Ethnicity and Party Formation

Sebastian Elischer

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Abstract

Scholars of comparative politics have no framework by which African parties can be compared across countries or continents. In part, this omission owes to the dominance of individual case studies among area experts working on Africa. It also results from a distinct Western bias in the comparative politics literature. The present study eradicates this conceptual void. Drawing on the work of Richard Gunther and Larry Diamond (2001 and 2003), it designs a global party typology. The typology distinguishes between five primary party types, which are at the heart of this study: the mono-ethnic party, the multiethnic alliance party, the catch-all ethnic party, the personalistic party, and the programmatic party. Although the first two party types are defined as ethnic party types, the remaining three are regarded as nonethnic parties.

In a second step, this study applies this typology to all politically significant and effective parties in three African countries. The goal is to illustrate the political diversity of African party politics. The empirical analysis of parties shows that the African political landscape is considerably more diverse than conventionally assumed. Although ethnic parties feature in two of three countries, nonethnic parties dominate political party competition. Second, enduring multiparty competition decreases the political salience of ethnicity. These results are verified with the help of a greater number of additional cases from seven African countries.

In a third and final step, this study accounts for the variance of party types across countries. The study finds a correlation between a country's social structure and the party type in place: countries with a core ethnic group and a low ethnic fragmentation index are prone to the formation of nonethnic parties. Countries without a core ethnic group and a high ethnic fragmentation index are prone to the formation of ethnic parties. Given the limitations of small-*n* research, these findings constitute preliminary contributions to the formulation of a theory that can account for the formation of ethnic parties in some and nonethnic parties in other nonindustrialized countries.

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-03346-7 - Political Parties in Africa: Ethnicity and Party Formation

Sebastian Elischer

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-03346-7 - Political Parties in Africa: Ethnicity and Party Formation

Sebastian Elischer

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Acknowledgments

I have been working on this book for more than seven years. Writing it has been a pleasure due to a large number of people, to whom I owe special thanks. The genesis of this book was my PhD thesis on ethnic parties, which I conducted under the auspices of Matthijs Bogaards at the Jacobs University Bremen. Matthijs' intellectual guidance was preeminent, his academic guardianship professional and encouraging at all times. Not many young scholars can rely on such thorough academic support. It has been a privilege being his doctoral student.

I thank David Throup from the Centre for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, DC. His detailed knowledge of African affairs and his enthusiasm proved an inspiration without which I would not have embarked on this adventure. I would like to extend my thanks to my colleagues at the German Institute of Global and Areas Studies, and in particular my colleagues at the Institute of African Affairs. I owe many insights into the workings of African parties to Matthias Basedau, Gero Erdmann, Alexander Stroh, and Andreas Mehler. Without their work, my own research would have been impossible. I am especially thankful to those colleagues in our profession who supported my decision to publish my findings in the format of a book and who did not hide their support. I further thank Nicholas Cheeseman from Oxford University, Charles Hornsby, and Gabrielle Lynch from Warwick University for their help and insights.

At the institutional level, I extend my thanks to the Jacobs University Bremen for the excellent and internationally unparalleled research conditions it provides. I equally wish to thank IFES, and in particular Abigail Wilson, Elizabeth Reiter, Magnus Ohmann, and Rudi Eibling, for allowing me to work for them in various capacities in Washington, DC, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone. This greatly improved my own understanding of African institutions. I wish to thank the Friedrich Ebert Foundation for a generous stipend and travel funds between 2007 and 2009. I thank Kathrin Meissner, the former country director of the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung in Accra, and Klaus Lötzer,

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-03346-7 - Political Parties in Africa: Ethnicity and Party Formation

Sebastian Elischer

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xx

Acknowledgments

the former country director of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation in Accra, for providing me with office space and numerous contacts while I conducted research in Ghana. In Kenya, I wish to thank the staff at the National Institute of Statistics and the Centre for Multi Party Democracy for providing all the sources I needed at a moment in time when their country was on the verge of disintegration. In Namibia, I thank Johann Müller for his friendship and his detailed knowledge on Namibian history that he shared with me while he was conducting his own research. Many thanks also to Carolyn Halladay for proofreading and commenting on numerous chapters as well as for offering suggestions of how to make the material readable to her, the wider academic community, and her cats. I am particularly grateful for the moral support she provided.

Finally, I thank those who supported me throughout the years and far beyond this book, including David Schiefer, Anna Möllering, Akua Mercy, Timothy Cook, Regina Bernhard, Rutha Abraha, Frank Stadelmaier, Elisabeth Heid, and Rebecca Wilkins. May all of you find what you are looking for. Most of all, I thank Christine Le Jeune for her unconditional love, her wit, and her endless support.

North Germany, April 2013