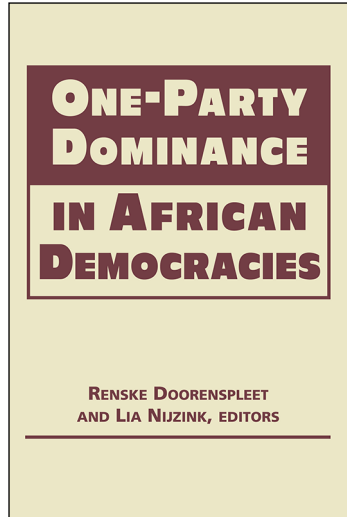


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One-Party Dominance in African Democracies

Renske Doorenspleet
and Lia Nijzink

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ISBN: 978-1-58826-869-3 hc



1800 30th Street, Ste. 314
Boulder, CO 80301
USA
telephone 303.444.6684
fax 303.444.0824

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1

One-Party Dominance in African Democracies: A Framework for Analysis

Renske Doorenspleet and Lia Nijzink

THIS BOOK IS ONE OF THE FIRST STUDIES OF ONE-PARTY DOMINANCE in African democracies. We use a comparative research design and rich case material to enhance our understanding of one of the key issues confronting democracies on the African continent. Although we focus on African democracies, we present a framework for comparative analysis that can be used to study one-party dominance in all regions of the world. Our analysis transcends the traditional case study bias of contemporary studies on one-party dominance by analyzing party system trajectories and their underlying mechanisms in six African countries: Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, Mali, and Senegal.

Since the beginning of the 1990s, waves of democratization have reached large parts of Africa. Because of deep ethnic divisions on the continent, experts worried that the adoption of multiparty democracy would lead to highly fragmented party systems (Widner 1997; Van de Walle 2003). However, this fracturing did not happen. To the contrary, systems with one dominant party emerged, and in some African democracies such systems have since prevailed. Compared to established democracies, where one-party-dominant systems are rare, the relatively high number in Africa is remarkable, and scholars have now started to identify a “worrying trend of one-party dominance” on the continent (Bogaards 2004: 192; see also Van de Walle and Butler 1999; Doorenspleet 2003).

Surprisingly, research on this trend has been scarce. Only a few studies have been devoted to the concepts, measurements, and expla-

nations of party systems with one dominant party, and none of them was based on systematic comparative research of one-party dominance in the African context.¹ We aim to fill this gap with this book by bringing together the work of leading experts who have studied the phenomenon of one-party dominance in the context of Africa's young democracies.

One-party-dominant systems do not follow the "normal" or "expected" pattern of party competition in a democracy. In the few existing studies on one-party dominance, the phenomenon is essentially regarded as anomalous in democratic systems. As T. J. Pempel (1990: 1) puts it:

In these countries, despite free electoral competition, relatively open information systems, respect for civil liberties, and the right of free political association, a single party has managed to govern alone or as the primary and on-going partner in coalitions, without interruption, for substantial periods of time.

Pempel (1990: 334) also states that one-party dominance is "exceptionally rare, involving a serendipitous congruence of effort and luck." This rarity makes the high number of one-party-dominant systems among Africa's young democracies all the more remarkable. The high concentration of such systems also means that the African continent is a particularly interesting area in which we can study one-party dominance in democracies from a comparative perspective.

Rather than emphasizing the exceptionality of one-party dominance in democratic systems, we systematically compare a number of African democracies with one dominant party. Comparison allows us to address the question of the stability of one-party-dominant systems and to investigate why some one-party-dominant systems have endured while others have not. After an overview of current party systems on the continent, which is presented in the next chapter, country case studies follow, focusing on the party system trajectories in six African democracies. The authors of these chapters will seek to identify the underlying mechanisms of enduring one-party dominance as well as those mechanisms that move a party system away from one-party dominance.

The aim of this introductory chapter is not only to discuss the concept of one-party dominance but also to explain the methodology and selection of cases in our study. In addition, the chapter presents the main research questions and a road map of the chapters that follow.

What Is One-Party Dominance?

Our starting point is the definition of one-party dominance as presented by G. Sartori (1976) in his seminal work on parties and party systems: one-party-dominant systems are those party systems in which the same party wins an absolute majority in at least three consecutive elections. One must note that this conceptualization of one-party dominance is not static. By definition, a one-party-dominant system includes a time dimension because it extends over at least three elections. In order to capture this important element, we often use the term *party system trajectory* in our analysis. This term denotes party systems that meet the criteria of Sartori's definition as well as those in which the governing party showed initial signs of dominance but failed to win three consecutive elections or lost its dominant position.

In Chapter 2, Gero Erdmann and Matthias Basedau present a classification of African party systems, which gives us an interesting overview of party system variation on the continent. It also assists us by identifying those party systems in Africa that are dominated by one political party. The authors start their contribution by comparing seven definitions of one-party dominance using three criteria: the threshold for dominance, the time span taken into account, and the area of application. They observe that little consensus can be found about the concept of one-party dominance. Proposed thresholds for dominance vary from 70 percent to 40 percent of parliamentary seats or, in the case of Pempel's (1990) work, a simple plurality of seats and votes. Some definitions are limited to a single election outcome, while others suggest that dominance requires a particular party to be in power for a certain period of time.

Only Sartori's definition of dominance includes a precise period of three consecutive elections in which the same party has to win at least 50 percent of parliamentary seats. Consequently, Erdmann and Basedau propose to use a definition of one-party dominance that is based on Sartori's work. They state that Sartori's party system typology is still "the most useful for arriving at an accurate classification of party systems and their dynamics in general and of dominant party systems in particular" (p. 30 in this volume). In other words, because Sartori's definition of one-party dominance is part of a comprehensive typology of party systems, it is the best starting point for a study of this phenomenon.

Another important reason to favor Sartori's definition is that it enables comparisons between party systems in Africa and elsewhere. Erdmann and Basedau convincingly argue that one needs to refrain from

using definitions and criteria that can only be applied to party systems on the continent. They also emphasize the importance of using a definition of one-party dominance that allows for comparisons of one-party-dominant systems with other types of party systems. They proceed by using Sartori's typology as a whole—not just his concept of one-party dominance—to classify current party systems on the African continent.

Sartori's typology makes two distinctions that are important for our study of one-party dominance. One is the distinction between *dominant party systems* on the one hand and *dominant-authoritarian party systems* on the other. When party system developments in Africa are analyzed, this distinction between one-party dominance in an authoritarian context and one-party dominance in a democratic context is crucial. As discussed in the next section, some of the existing comparative work on one-party dominance includes analyses of one-party-dominant systems in both democracies and authoritarian regimes. We believe comparing one-party dominance in these different contexts is not very useful. Especially if we want to understand why some one-party-dominant systems endure and others do not, we need to adhere to a rigorous comparative design and analyze democracies separately from authoritarian regimes. Thus, Sartori's distinction between dominant and dominant-authoritarian party systems is an important one. As M. Bogaards (2004: 179) explains, the distinction “encourages the identification of the nature of dominance and a distinction between different kinds of one-party dominance.”

The second important distinction is the one made by Sartori between party systems in *stable political regimes* versus those in *fluid political systems*. In fluid political systems, party systems are unstructured and can, according to Sartori, be divided into four types: dominant-authoritarian, pulverized, nondominant, and dominant. The first operates in a an authoritarian setting, and the other three operate in a multiparty setting. In stable political regimes, party systems are more established, structured, and institutionalized² and can be divided into four similar types (see Table 2.2 in this volume). For our study, a party system with one dominant party in a stable system (called a “predominant” party system in Sartori's terminology) must be distinguished from a party system with one dominant party in a fluid political system (called a “dominant” party system in Sartori's terminology) (Sartori 1976). This distinction between fluid and stable party systems allows us to distinguish between one-party dominance that is of a provisional nature, on the one hand, and one-party-dominant systems that are more entrenched, on the other hand. In this book, we make a similar but slightly different³ distinction by comparing stable one-party-dominant

systems with cases in which one-party dominance did not endure. Our cases of enduring one-party dominance are those in which the dominant party is firmly entrenched in its position during a period that spans more than three consecutive elections. In contrast, we also investigate cases in which one party initially showed signs of dominance but failed to win three consecutive elections or lost its dominant position.

As you will see, Erdmann and Basedau's classification of party systems in Africa (presented in Chapter 2) includes only those countries that, by the end of 2010, had held at least three consecutive multiparty elections. They come up with the following results: eighteen party systems in Africa are considered fluid; one of these fluid systems is a dominant party system; and four are dominant-authoritarian party systems.⁴ Twenty party systems in Africa can be considered stable party systems. Of these, eleven operate in a nondemocratic context and therefore need to be classified as hegemonic party systems (i.e., Sartori's terminology for dominant-authoritarian systems in structured circumstances). Of the remaining nine, five systems are considered predominant party systems: Botswana, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, and Tanzania.⁵ As the authors point out, while not everyone may agree with how individual countries are classified, this tally does indicate both the variety of party system types on the continent and a continuing prevalence of one-party dominance in Africa.

We have taken the universe of cases as presented by Erdmann and Basedau as a starting point to select the countries that are included in this study. Our methodology and case selection will be further discussed below.

Our Methodology and Case Selection

In much of the political science literature, one-party-dominant systems in democracies are implicitly or explicitly regarded as "uncommon," or "deviant" or as "outliers" (e.g., Pempel 1990; Giliomee and Simkins 1999). As a consequence, the goal of many existing studies is to explain the exceptionality of one-party-dominant systems. Various case studies of dominant parties in specific countries do exactly that. They discuss the specific circumstances under which one party dominates a particular party system (see, for example, Aronoff 1990; Esping-Andersen 1990; Cheng and Haggard 1990; Mattes, Gouws, and Kotze 1995; Horgan 2000; Diaw and Diouf 1998; Greene 2007). Although these studies give insightful information about the specific situation in a given country,

they provide little information about general patterns of one-party dominance. In order to identify such patterns and contribute to theory development, systematic cross-national comparisons are needed. However, in political science, only a few comparative studies are devoted to the phenomenon of one-party dominance (e.g., Arian and Barnes 1974; Pempel 1990; Giliomee and Simkins 1999; Wong and Friedman 2008; Spiess 2009; Bogaards and Boucek 2010).⁶

These comparative studies make important contributions to our theoretical and empirical knowledge of one-party dominance. Many of them discuss the stability of one-party-dominant regimes in one way or another. However, they fail to answer the question of why one-party-dominant systems endure in some countries but not in others. Many possible explanations are mentioned, but they are not investigated in a comparative and systematic way. The case selection is either unclear or not convincingly justified.⁷ In order to investigate the question of endurance, one needs to include not only the cases in which one-party dominance lasted but also cases in which one-party dominance has not persisted over time. Not all previous studies have done so. Moreover, most of them have not clearly distinguished one-party dominance in democracies on the one hand from one-party dominance in authoritarian regimes on the other hand. Wong and Friedman (2008), for example, not only include democratic states such as India and South Africa but also include authoritarian countries such as Singapore and China in their analysis. In our view, recognizing that the very nature of dominance is different in authoritarian regimes, due to their oppressive aspects, is crucial to improving our understanding of the phenomenon of one-party dominance. Thus, in our analysis, we try to overcome the shortcomings of the previous studies by focusing only on democracies and only on African countries, in other words truly comparable cases. This approach results in a more systematic exploration of the different trajectories of and mechanisms behind one-party dominance.

In order to adhere to Sartori's important distinction between dominance in an authoritarian versus democratic context, our next task is to exclude African authoritarian regimes from the analysis.⁸ To distinguish between different regime types, Freedom House collects data on both political rights and civil liberties across the world and classifies countries as free, partly free, or not free. In 2011, seventeen African countries, according to Freedom House, were not free; political rights in these countries were not guaranteed and civil liberties not safeguarded. Thus, these countries are excluded from our analysis. The remainder of the countries on the continent can be divided into two groups: one group of nine coun-

tries that has been classified as free, with high levels of political rights and civil liberties, and another group of twenty-two countries that has been classified as partly free with generally lower levels of political rights and civil liberties (see Table 1.1). Because we do not want to equate the Freedom House classification of “free” with democracy and because we do not want to limit our analysis to the top performers in Africa, countries from each group are included in our analysis: Namibia, South Africa, and Mali (from the group of countries classified as “free” in 2011) and Senegal, Zambia, and Tanzania (from the top half of the group listed as “partly free,” meaning that these countries still have relatively high levels of political rights and civil liberties).⁹

We selected these six countries because they display or have displayed characteristics of one-party dominance.¹⁰ Because we wished to investigate the various mechanisms behind one-party dominance and seek to understand why some one-party-dominant systems endure and others do not, we needed to compare case studies of countries in which a one-party-dominant system is firmly entrenched—South Africa, Namibia, and

Table 1.1 Freedom House Status of Sub-Saharan African Countries, Showing Political Rights Scores and Civil Liberties Scores, 2011

Free	Partly Free	Not Free
Cape Verde 1,1	Lesotho 3,3	Angola 6,5
Ghana 1,2	Senegal 3,3	Congo-Brazzaville 6,5
Mauritius 1,2	Seychelles 3,3	Djibouti 6,5
Benin 2,2	Sierra Leone 3,3	Gabon 6,5
Namibia 2,2	Tanzania 3,3	Mauritania 6,5
São Tomé and Príncipe 2,2	Comoros 3,4	Rwanda 6,5
South Africa 2,2	Liberia 3,4	Cameroon 6,6
Mali 2,3	Malawi 3,4	Democratic Republic of Congo 6,6
Botswana 3,2	Zambia 3,4	Ethiopia 6,6
	Mozambique 4,3	Zimbabwe 6,6
	Kenya 4,3	Swaziland 7,5
	Guinea-Bissau 4,4	Côte d’Ivoire 7,6
	Nigeria 4,4	Chad 7,6
	Burkina Faso 5,3	Equatorial Guinea 7,7
	Niger 5,4	Eritrea 7,7
	Togo 5,4	Somalia 7,7
	Uganda 5,4	Sudan 7,7
	Burundi 5,5	
	Central African Republic 5,5	
	The Gambia 5,5	
	Guinea 5,5	
	Madagascar 6,4	

Source: Freedom House (2012).

Note: **Bold** indicates the six countries used as case studies in this book.

Tanzania—with those in which an initial pattern of one-party dominance did not persist—Mali, Senegal, and Zambia. Only by comparing enduring with nonenduring one-party dominance can we discover what lies behind the endurance of some one-party-dominant systems.

Table 1.2 shows that Namibia, Tanzania, and South Africa fall squarely in the category of one-party-dominant systems as defined by Sartori. Interestingly, the dominant parties in these three countries not only

Table 1.2 Results of Parliamentary and Presidential Elections in Six Selected Countries Since a Transition to Democracy

Country	Year	Winning Party	Vote Share Winner, Presidential Elections	Seat Share Winner, Parliamentary Elections	Seat Share Runner-Up, Parliamentary Elections
Namibia	1989	SWAPO	—	56.9	29.2
	1994	SWAPO	76.3	73.6	20.8
	1999	SWAPO	76.8	76.4	9.7
	2004	SWAPO	76.4	76.4	6.9
	2009	SWAPO	76.4	75.0	11.1
Tanzania	1995	CCM	61.8	79.6	10.4
	2000	CCM	71.7	87.5	7.5
	2005	CCM	80.3	85.1	9.6
	2010	CCM	62.8	74.0	13.7
South Africa	1994	ANC	—	63.0	20.5
	1999	ANC	—	66.5	9.5
	2004	ANC	—	69.8	12.5
	2009	ANC	—	66.0	16.8
Senegal	1978	PS	82.0	83.0	17.0
	1983	PS	83.5	92.5	6.7
	1988	PS	73.2	85.8	14.2
	1993	PS	58.4	70.0	22.5
	1998	PS	—	66.4	16.4
	2000/2001	Sopi Coalition	31.0 ^a	74.2	9.2
	2007	Sopi Coalition	55.9	87.3	2.0
Zambia	2012	BBY	26.6 ^a	79.3	8.0
	1991	MMD	75.8	83.3	16.7
	1996	MMD	72.6	87.3	3.3
	2001	MMD	29.2	46.0	32.7
	2006	MMD	43.0	48.0	29.3
Mali	2008	MMD	40.6	—	—
	2011	PF	42.9	40.0	36.7
	1992	ADEMA	44.9 ^a	65.5	7.8
	1997	ADEMA	95.9	87.1	5.4
	2002	Espoir 2002	28.7 ^a	44.9	34.7
	2007	ADP	71.2	76.9	20.2

Sources: African Elections Database; Electoral Institute for Sustainable Democracy in Africa (EISA) Election Archive.

Notes: a. Vote share winner second round: Senegal 2000/2001 presidential elections, 58.5 percent; Senegal 2012, 65.8 percent; Mali 1992 presidential elections, 69 percent; Mali 2002 presidential elections, 64.4 percent.

— indicates countries in which only parliamentary elections or only presidential elections were held in that year.

meet the criteria of Sartori's definition but far exceed them. Since their transitions to democracy, our three country cases with enduring one-party-dominant systems have all held four or, in the case of Namibia, five multi-party elections in which the same political party gained more than 50 percent of the parliamentary seats. In Namibia, the seat share of the SWAPO party (formerly the South West Africa People's Organisation) has consistently been around 75 percent with only the transitional elections in 1989, when SWAPO gained 56.9 percent of the seats, being an exception. In Tanzania, Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) shows repeated seat shares above 75 percent, winning a high of 87.5 percent of parliamentary seats in 2000. In South Africa, the African National Congress (ANC) has an equally consistent but slightly lower seat share of around two-thirds of the seats in the National Assembly. Thus, the dominant parties that have emerged in these three African democracies seem to outperform dominant parties in other parts of the world. With seat shares consistently reaching a two-thirds threshold, they seem well entrenched. In this book we seek to understand the mechanisms behind this trajectory of endurance.

In order to strengthen our comparative framework, we have included three other cases in our analysis in which initial patterns of one-party dominance did not persist: Senegal, Zambia, and Mali.

Senegal is an interesting case in which the party system trajectory shows not only the end of the Socialist Party (Parti Socialiste [PS]), as a dominant party, but also the end of Senegal's one-party-dominant system. After consistently winning more than two-thirds of the parliamentary seats for twenty years (from 1978 to 1998) the PS eventually lost power to the Sopi Coalition (*sopi* meaning "change" in Wolof). Initially, elements of the one-party-dominant system were still in place when Abdoulaye Wade's Sopi Coalition took over power from the PS in 2000. However, Wade's defeat in the 2012 presidential race not only was a triumph for leadership turnover but also signified Senegal's final move away from one-party dominance.

Zambia shows a different party system trajectory. The move to multi-party politics in 1991 was the basis for the dominant position that the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) enjoyed during its time in office from 1991 to 2011. Interestingly, during half of this period the MMD, while controlling government and the presidency, did not have a majority of the seats in parliament, forcing the party to somehow manufacture its continued dominance. In the 2011 elections, Michael Sata won the presidential race, and his party, the Patriotic Front (PF), replaced MMD as the largest party in parliament, thus bringing Zambia's period of manufactured one-party dominance to an end.

Finally, in Mali, the Alliance for Democracy in Mali (Alliance pour la Démocratie en Mali [ADEMA]) convincingly won the first multi-party elections in 1992 and 1997 and looked set to entrench this initial position of dominance in 2002. Instead, its seat share plunged from 87.1 percent to 30.6 percent. However, this move away from one-party dominance did not signify a move toward more competitive, pluralistic politics. On the contrary, all major political actors including ADEMA rallied around President Amadou Toumani Touré, thus creating a platform of unity in which consensus rather than competition was highly valued.

By comparing three countries with a trajectory of enduring one-party dominance and three countries in which an initial pattern of one-party dominance did not persist, we are applying a so-called most similar systems design. This research design is based on John Stuart Mill's (1843) method of difference, which seeks to identify the key features that are *different* among *similar* countries in an effort to account for a *different* outcome (see also Przeworski and Teune 1970; Lijphart 1971; Landman 2008). Analyses using this design compare similar cases (in this book, African democracies) that differ with regard to the outcome (in this book, the difference between trajectories of enduring and nonenduring dominance). This approach is, in our opinion, the best way to investigate the stability of one-party-dominant systems, detect crucial similarities and differences, and answer the question of why some one-party-dominant systems have endured while others have not.

Party System Trajectories and Their Underlying Mechanisms

Several possible mechanisms that could lie behind the endurance of one-party-dominant systems have already been identified in the political science literature on party systems and the few comparative studies on one-party dominance.

First, the endurance of one-party-dominant systems seems to be related to the history of the dominant parties and party systems in question (see, for example, Huntington 1968; Giliomee and Simkins 1999; Salih 2003: 13–18; 2007). Many African countries that are currently enjoying democracy suffered a traumatic past characterized by colonization, civil war, or severe repression during authoritarian and military regimes or some combination of the three. Many of the current ruling parties evolved either from nationalist movements that mobilized citizens to fight for independence or from prodemocracy movements

that gained momentum in the early 1990s (Rakner 2010; cf. Giliomee 1998). The question we seek to investigate in our book is how this relates to their subsequent trajectories as dominant parties in a democratic context.

Almost six decades ago, M. Duverger (1954: 308) argued that “a dominant party is dominant because people believe it is so. . . . The party is associated with an epoch.” S. P. Huntington (1968: 426) similarly found the historical background of party systems to be of great importance and observed that the strength of a party “derives from its struggle for power.” He also noted that “the longer a nationalist party fought for independence, the longer it was able to enjoy the power that came with independence” (426), while in contrast, “many of the nationalist parties which came into power only a few years before independence and which won independence easily had a less secure grasp on power after independence” (426).

In other words, “the stability of the system thus depends upon its inheritance from the past. The more intense and prolonged the struggle for power and the deeper its ideological commitment, the greater the political stability of the one-party system which is subsequently created” (Huntington 1968: 424–425). Although Huntington made these observations in the 1960s in relation to the stability of the single-party regimes that emerged in many African countries soon after independence, they are equally relevant in relation to the dominant parties we are studying in this book. Thus, a political party’s achievements during the struggle for independence or democracy are likely to influence the party’s strength as a dominant party under multiparty democracy.

Some of the current dominant parties were the first parties to politically mobilize major population groups prior to independence. The principal nationalist or liberation movements usually had a broad membership, often cutting across class and ethnic lines, with majority rule as the common goal. As such, they could monopolize the political loyalties of the citizens in the newly independent state. In some instances, this early appeal seems to have had a lasting effect and, at least partly, determines their strength as dominant parties in the current democratic context (Salih 2003). In these cases, the “person of the president and the liberation struggle are constant reminders for voters to stay the course” (Salih 2003: 18). In other words, the liberation movement has successfully transformed itself into a political party that continues to be the embodiment of nationalist politics. As H. Giliomee and C. Simkins (1999: 350) point out, even in the context of multiparty elections, “loyalty to the party is equated with loyalty to the nation or with patriotism, and criti-

cism of especially the party leader is associated with disloyalty towards nation and state.”¹¹

In contrast to the older liberation movements, the prodemocracy movements that gained power in the early 1990s did not have a distinct nation-building agenda. They explicitly campaigned for multiparty democracy. Thus, these movements faced a far more competitive context in which to establish themselves as ruling parties and gain a position of dominance. As L. Rakner (2010: 3–4) argues, the prodemocracy movements were “broad coalitions of representative forces from civil society such as churches, trade unions, academia, law associations and business associations” but “could not build party institutions in a monopoly situation” and “faced exceptionally strong challenges of institutionalizing.”

M. Bratton and N. Van de Walle (1997) convincingly show that successful transitions to democracy depend critically on the way power was exercised by the rulers of previous regimes. A similar logic seems to apply to the effect of a party’s history on its later strength as a party in power. Therefore, whether dominant parties have their roots in the struggle for independence or in the more recent prodemocracy movements seems to be highly relevant to the question of the endurance of one-party-dominant systems.

A second mechanism that potentially lies behind the different trajectories of one-party dominance in African democracies is the ability of a party to transcend social cleavages (i.e., economic, ethnic, religious, and linguistic divisions in society). Various scholars have shown that cleavages in society influence political parties and party systems. S. M. Lipset and S. Rokkan (1967) famously argued that most modern party families and party systems originate from socioeconomic and cultural cleavages. Where different cleavages—economic, linguistic, ethnic, territorial, or religious—overlap or cut across each other, multiparty systems are likely to occur, especially in heterogeneous countries with proportional electoral systems. The reverse relationship has also been demonstrated: political parties have an effect on social cleavages. Huntington (1968: 425–426), for example, observed that in a competitive party system, “strong incentives exist for each party to appeal to a particular group, ethnic and religious animosities are fanned by the mobilization of the masses, and the competition of the parties deepens and reinforces pre-existing social cleavages.”¹²

The relation between social cleavages and one-party-dominant systems in democracies seems fundamentally different (see also Van de Walle 2003; Erdmann 2004). In order to gain a dominant position in a democratic context, a party’s ability to mobilize different societal groups, transcend multiple cleavages, and integrate various groups into the party

is of crucial importance. For example, Giliomee and Simkins (1999) have already shown that the dominant parties in South Africa, Mexico, Taiwan, and Malaysia have all successfully transcended class divisions.

Indices for ethnic, linguistic, and religious fractionalization show that, despite small variations, most countries in Africa are heterogeneous (e.g., Alesina et al. 2003; Fearon 2003; Posner 2004). Thus, a political party needs to successfully transcend multiple social cleavages and attract voters from different social groups in order to win elections, stay in power, and establish a dominant position. Parties subsequently need to exercise a high degree of control over the mobilization of different societal groups and continue to appeal to those groups in order to sustain their dominant position.

Once a ruling party has established its dominant position, the party seems to benefit from that position and in turn reinforce it by strengthening its links with society. As noted above, the African nationalist parties and liberation movements of the 1960s were usually broad multiethnic or multiclass coalitions, or both, and often included labor unions, student unions, and women and religious organizations.¹³ Most of the current dominant parties (whether rooted in a nationalist movement or with a different historical legacy) also have a broad multiethnic and multiclass character. Once entrenched in their dominant position, they seem to have closer relations with social groups than the opposition or any new political parties.

Moreover, smaller political parties are often co-opted, thus reinforcing the dominant party's image as a broad umbrella body. As S. Friedman (1999) shows in his work on the ANC in South Africa, social groups seeking to articulate their interests only succeed if they manage to link up with factions within the dominant party. The broad multiclass and multiethnic character of the dominant party also has an effect on opposition parties, as "the opposition, almost against its will, is compelled to exaggerate exclusive cultural characteristics, which play into the hands of the dominant party's attempt to delegitimise it" (Giliomee and Simkins 1999: 12–13).

In sum, based on the studies discussed above, we expect dominant parties in enduring one-party-dominant systems to be more successful in transcending cleavages, attracting broad support, and co-opting different groups than the formerly dominant parties in cases in which one-party dominance did not persist.

A third potential mechanism behind the difference between enduring and nonenduring one-party dominance is the specific institutional architecture in the countries in question. The electoral system and the

institutional arrangements for executive-legislative relations make up the institutional architecture for a system's political competition.

Traditional theories of parties and party systems emphasize the important influence of electoral institutions.¹⁴ They show that electoral systems have mechanical as well as psychological effects (Duverger 1954; Lijphart 1994). Electoral systems based on proportional representation allow small parties to win parliamentary seats and therefore lead to party system fragmentation, while majoritarian first-past-the-post systems tend to exclude small parties from parliament, resulting in lower levels of party system fragmentation. Particularly in electoral systems in which only the larger parties have a chance to win parliamentary seats, voters tend to vote strategically, and do not necessarily follow their first party preference. In electoral systems with proportional representation (PR), voters can freely vote for the party of their first choice because no votes are "wasted."

Similarly, political parties make strategic choices based on the mechanical effects of a particular electoral system. In majoritarian systems small parties have an incentive to merge with other parties in order to increase their chances of passing the threshold and getting seats in parliament. In PR systems, parties can more easily get seats in parliament and thus survive on their own. In sum, we know that electoral systems shape party systems. An important question that remains unresolved is whether party systems "choose" the electoral systems that suit them (Gallagher 2011).

We already know that in the African context the relationship between electoral systems and types of party systems is less straightforward than traditional theories suggest (see, for example, Mozaffar, Scarritt, and Galaich 2003; however see also Lindberg 2007: 219–221). In addition, knowledge is lacking about the impact of political institutions such as electoral systems on one-party dominance, and, confusingly, the scarce studies on this topic contradict each other.

Some scholars have argued that electoral systems based on PR are more conducive to one-party dominance. G. Cox (1997: 249), for example, states that "differences in the ability of political forces to coordinate often contribute to the maintenance of dominant-party systems." The rules of PR are a problem for opposition parties, which tend to be fragmented and "must rely on their own innate organizational wherewithal" (Cox 1997: 249), while dominant parties have more experience and resources to solve coordination problems. In other words, the dominant party can better deal with intra- and interparty competition (e.g., by nominating the optimal number of candidates for each constituency and

by mobilizing voters and convincing them to follow the party's voting instructions). In sum, the coordination in one-party-dominant systems tends to be asymmetric, and this asymmetry is exacerbated by an electoral system based on PR.

Other scholars take the opposite view and argue that PR makes the dominant party's position more difficult to maintain.

Defection from the dominant party and a strong role for top-down opposition party building is more likely in parliamentary systems with proportional representation electoral systems. . . . These rules allow small parties to win more easily and produce dominant parties with a lower percentage of the vote. (Greene 2007: 62)

These contradictory conclusions suggest that the influence of electoral systems on one-party dominance requires further investigation. At first glance, however, the institutional architecture seems to have little influence on the trajectory of one-party dominance in African democracies. As the case studies of the six countries show, one-party-dominant systems exist not only in countries that run elections according to a first-past-the-post constituency system but also in those using a system of proportional representation based on party lists. Similarly, one-party dominance occurs in parliamentary, presidential, and semipresidential systems. The institutional arrangements of parliamentary versus presidential or semipresidential systems seem to have as little influence as the type of electoral system.

However, the power of the head of government does seem to matter for one-party dominance. The political science literature suggests that powerful presidents are an obstacle to democratization because power concentrated in the hands of one person is difficult to hold in check. Powerful presidents easily become dominant executives and render legislatures weak and toothless (see, for example, Van Cranenburgh 2003: 193; Nijzink, Azevedo, and Mozaffar 2006; Nijzink 2009). Writing about African party systems, Van de Walle (2003: 310–311) has called the concentration of powers in the hands of the president highly problematic because he or she “is literally above the law, controls in many cases a large proportion of state finance with little accountability, and delegates remarkably little of his authority on important matters. . . . Legislative elections and party competition have to be understood in the context of this broader drama.”

We need to understand the trajectories of one-party dominance in Africa in the same way: in the context of the existence of powerful pres-

idents. Regardless of the type of system in which they operate (parliamentary, presidential, or semipresidential), powerful presidents who are secure in their positions seem to be an important feature of one-party dominance, at least in Africa (Svåsand and Randall 2002b). Where presidents have reached their term limits or have managed their succession badly, dominant parties seem to be under pressure and party splits occur. In contrast, the dominant position of the party is anchored and augmented when the president is secure in his or her position, or when leadership changes are successfully managed within the party.

Political culture is a fourth mechanism that potentially lies behind the different trajectories of party systems in African democracies (see, for example, Schaffer 1998; Cruise O'Brien 1999; Schlemmer 2006). The term *political culture* has been used widely yet inconsistently in the academic literature. For example, G. A. Almond and S. Verba (1965: 13) define political culture "as the particular distribution of patterns of orientation toward political objects among the members of a nation," while R. Inglehart (1990; see also Inglehart and Welzel 2005; Welzel and Inglehart 2011) includes specific individual attitudes and values such as life satisfaction, interpersonal trust, and disdain for revolutionary change. L. Diamond (1999: 163) believes political culture should be understood as "people's predominant beliefs, attitudes, values, ideals, sentiments, and evaluations about the political system of their country and the role of the self in that system." S. Ersson and J.-E. Lane (2008: 421) argue that political culture is more encompassing and includes not only free associations of civic virtues, but also "the politics of all kinds of communities, ethnic, religious, and sex-based ones."

In our view, political culture consists of widely shared, fundamental beliefs that have political consequences. Thus, we use a definition of culture that focuses on the way people define their own role and understand each other in the context of organized groups such as political parties (see, for example, Diamond 1999; Hyden 2010). Understood in this way, political culture is not separate from institutions like political parties. Rather institutions like dominant political parties are infused with cultural norms that are constantly being reinvented and redefined. In other words, cultural patterns could reinforce the position of dominant parties through the lived experiences of their leaders, members, and voters.

Although a democratic political culture is not easy to define, its main characteristic is that it sets ethical norms and standards of behavior for governments, organizations, and individuals. In this context, the insightful and innovative study of F. C. Schaffer (1998) deserves atten-

tion. Schaffer investigates what *democracy* means in different contexts, including the meaning of *demokaraasi* among Wolof speakers in Senegal. Schaffer finds that while *democracy* refers to competition and choice, *demokaraasi* refers to mutuality that requires consensus (agreement),¹⁵ solidarity (reciprocity and shared responsibility),¹⁶ and evenhandedness (fair treatment of people “under the care” of leaders).¹⁷ Schaffer’s study shows that many Senegalese see voting as an act that reinforces community ties and social harmony instead of simply a matter of choosing leaders. Thus, the Senegalese understanding of democracy has an important influence on voting behavior. Senegalese political culture seems to encourage people to vote for the dominant party (Schaffer 1998).

We must note that this effect of political culture on voting behavior is not limited to Senegal but can be seen in other African countries as well (for relevant examples of different studies, see Cruise O’Brien 1999). Moreover, neopatrimonialism and big-man politics have characterized the political regimes on the African continent prior to the democratization wave of the 1990s (Bratton and Van de Walle 1997) and have had a lingering influence on the political culture of many African countries. Despite the existence of written constitutions and formal institutions, political leaders dominate the political landscape, in the sense that the person often seems more important than the policies. Relationships of loyalty between so-called patrons (political leaders) and clients (specific groups of followers) create dependency and a focus on personal wealth and status. This culture of personalized politics and patronage networks seems not only to limit the state’s capacity to enhance development but also to place loyalty and unity above tolerance toward opposition and dissenting views. These cultural patterns seem to manifest themselves in African society at large and in political parties and to play an important role in the endurance of one-party dominance.

A fifth potential mechanism is government performance. The dominance of the ruling party in democracies with one-party-dominant systems clearly has its origin at the ballot box. Voters continue to vote for the party in power. Therefore, the question of how government performance relates to one-party dominance is essentially a question about why voters vote. Voting for the dominant party could be a matter of emotional ties (I want to belong to the majority) or beliefs (I don’t believe in the value of competitive politics) or a lack of information (I don’t know any better because my information is incomplete or manipulated). However, M. Bratton, R. Mattes, and E. Gyimah-Boadi (2005) show that in many African countries voters are rational actors who

make informed choices based on self-interest. In other words, voters do evaluate government performance and act accordingly.

Nevertheless, these actions might not be reflected in the election results. In South Africa, for example, dissatisfaction with government performance is more likely to lead to protest and social unrest than to a change in electoral results that could threaten the dominant ANC, at least not in national elections. Deteriorating government performance might have more direct electoral consequences at regional or local levels but at the national level, voters who are dissatisfied prefer to stay away or continue to vote for the ruling party because the opposition fails to present itself as a viable alternative to the ANC (Piombo and Nijzink 2005).

Moreover, the relationship between government performance (e.g., the ruling party's achievements in relation to economic development, poverty alleviation, health care, or education) and voting behavior might be more complex. Huntington (1968: 324) convincingly argues that some political parties encourage "a politics of aspiration," meaning that the delivery of current benefits is less important than the hope of future gains. In other words, political parties can buy time to deliver on their promises. Thus, not only current performance but also past and expected performance could be important for the endurance of dominant parties. A related question is how to define performance and how to identify what type of performance is most relevant to the issue of the endurance of one-party dominance. Is economic growth as such (see, for example, Magoloni 2006) crucial to the persistence of one-party-dominant systems, or could the increasing size of the public sector and state bureaucracy (see, for example, Greene 2006, 2007) play the main role in consolidating one-party dominance?

State-party relations form a sixth potential mechanism that lies behind the different trajectories of enduring and nonenduring one-party dominance (cf. Greene 2006, 2007; Magoloni 2006; Gyimah-Boadi 2007). Ruling parties typically have better access to state resources than the opposition, and they tend to use this advantage to entrench their position. Thus, at first glance, state-party relations are strongly related to the endurance of one-party dominance. A so-called cycle of dominance seems to be taking place: long-term victory allows a dominant party better access to state resources, thus increasing the opportunity for further electoral successes. In the words of E. Gyimah-Boadi (2007: 29),

Elections in Africa continue to significantly reflect the overwhelming advantage incumbent parties enjoy over patronage resources—which then enable them to manipulate electoral institutions, electoral rules and

procedures; to siphon off state resources and deploy them into partisan use in elections; to commission development projects, many of them off-budget, especially in an election year; to extort donations from private business people and rentseekers; and to invest in businessmen who can be counted upon to decant resources back into the party coffers. It also allows the ruling party to use subtle and crude means to disorganize and destroy opposition parties; to deny the opposition the oxygen of media coverage; to deploy state security agencies and sometimes the courts to harass the opposition; and to block private sector sources of funding for the opposition by destroying businesses of those not aligned with the ruling party or suspected to be sympathetic to the opposition.

K. F. Greene (2006, 2007) has developed a detailed and insightful theory on incumbency advantages based on an analysis of the rise and downfall of the dominant party, the Institutional Revolutionary Party (Partido Revolucionario Institucional [PRI]), in Mexico. Greene shows how a party's exploitation of state resources leads to one-party dominance. He argues that the competitiveness of a challenger party is primarily determined by two types of advantages: the incumbent's resources and the dominant party's ability to raise the costs of political participation for the opposition. "Resource advantages in dominant party systems are so much larger that they should be thought of as hyper-incumbency advantages" (Greene 2006: 8).

These dramatic resource advantages allow the dominant party to outspend on campaigns, deploy legions of canvassers, and, most importantly, supplement policy appeals with patronage goods that bias voters in their favor. The resource advantages are greater when the state's involvement in the economy is large and when the public bureaucracy is politically controlled. According to Greene (2007: 27), the dominant party must "create a large public sector and politicize the public bureaucracy" to sustain the "dominant party equilibrium." If the state shrinks, dominance ends.

B. Magoloni (2006), who also studied the "hegemonic-party survival" of the PRI in Mexico, thinks along the same lines. One-party dominance can be maintained by using the party's patronage machine to buy voters and buy off potential opposition and by exacerbating the coordination failure among the opposition. Magoloni argues that most voters will not risk supporting an unknown challenger when times are good and when they have access to an incumbent's patronage. If times are bad, the "punishment regime" of the dominant party is less effective, and hence supporting an opposition party is less risky. Thus, Magoloni emphasizes economic growth as the main basis for the ruling party to strengthen its patronage-based dominance.

The final mechanism that could potentially influence the endurance of one-party-dominant systems is the impact of international actors. The literature examining the endurance of one-party dominance in democracies is still in its infancy, and the impact of the international context on one-party-dominant systems has not featured prominently in previous studies. Research has focused mainly on the influence of international actors on democracy and democratization, and shows that international influences can take many different forms: the actions of different international actors (e.g., foreign states, international governmental organizations, nongovernmental organizations), the effects of international structural conditions (such as power asymmetries or global economic conditions), the role of international norms, and the influences of diffusion and globalization (see, for example, L. Whitehead 1996; Elkins and Simmons 2005).

Convincing evidence exists that these international influences matter for the process of democratization, but whether they also influence the endurance of one-party dominance is less clear. At first glance, the influence of individual donor countries or international financial organizations on party system trajectories seems fairly limited. International development cooperation is still overwhelmingly interested in promoting political stability rather than political competition. In the field of democracy assistance, political parties have long been neglected and are only recently receiving more attention. Scholarly literature on party assistance is growing (Carothers 2006; Burnell and Gerrits 2011), and some international donor organizations have argued that political party support must become a higher priority (see, for example, Power and Coleman 2011). However, little evidence has been found of increased donor activity perhaps because assistance to political parties is not only complicated but also politically sensitive.

Similarly, little indication has surfaced that international cooperation between dominant parties affects their trajectories of dominance. We know that strong ties exist between some of the former liberation movements—cum—dominant parties (see, for example, Salih 2003) but these relations are not likely to have a strong influence on the party system trajectories in question. Whether international diffusion effects can explain why one-party dominance endures in some countries but not in others is an open question as well, which deserves to be explored.

Outline of the Book

In this introductory chapter, we have identified seven mechanisms that potentially influence a party system's trajectory of one-party domi-

nance. We have already mentioned that the authors of Chapter 2, Gero Erdmann and Matthias Basedau, give an overview of party systems in Africa. The authors of the six subsequent chapters describe the party system trajectories in six African democracies and try to identify the mechanisms behind them.

In Part 1, the authors address enduring party dominance. In Chapter 3, Henning Melber describes how Namibia's enduring one-party-dominant system is characterized by increased intolerance toward opposition and dissent. Melber also shows how the narrative of the liberation struggle remains an effective way to legitimize the position of the dominant party. In Chapter 4, Thiven Reddy paints a similar picture of persisting one-party dominance in South Africa, where the dominant ANC increasingly relies on a racialized discourse to defend its deteriorating performance as a ruling party. Chapter 5 is focused on the entrenched position of Tanzania's dominant party, which is, according to Mohammed Bakari and Richard Whitehead, the product of its historical legacy as well as its ability to adapt to changing circumstances.

In Part 2, the authors look at one-party dominance that did not last. In Chapter 6, Neo Simutanyi shows how the dominant party in Zambia lost its majority, and one-party dominance was subsequently manufactured. Simutanyi also describes how this manufactured one-party-dominant system came to an end. In Chapter 7, Martin van Vliet discusses the party system trajectory of Mali, which showed initial signs of one-party dominance, that did not persist mainly because Malian political culture values unity above competition. In Chapter 8, Christof Hartmann describes how Senegal's one-party-dominant system came to an end. Hartmann also highlights the way in which presidential elections were crucial in moving the party system trajectory away from one-party dominance.

In the final chapter, the editors compare the case studies of the six selected countries in order to test and refine the theoretical ideas about one-party dominance in African democracies presented in this introduction. Looking at the mechanisms that lie behind the six party-system trajectories, we address the question of why some one-party dominant systems endure and others do not.

Notes

1. Examples of existing comparative research on one-party dominance are A. Arian and S. Barnes (1974), T. J. Pempel (1990), H. Giliomee and C. Simkins (1999), J. Wong and E. Friedman (2008), C. Spiess (2009), and M. Bogaards and

F. Boucek (2010). While making important contributions, the authors of most of these works did not adhere to a rigorous comparative research design and none of them explicitly focused on the phenomenon of one-party dominance in Africa.

2. For an insightful discussion on the difference between party institutionalization and party system institutionalization, see L. Svåsand and V. Randall (2002a). Interestingly, in this article, they specifically investigate the relationship between institutionalization of individual parties and that of competitive party systems.

3. While Sartori makes a distinction between one-party dominance in a stable versus fluid context, we make a distinction between stable one-party-dominant systems on the one hand and systems in which one-party dominance did not endure on the other.

4. As will be explained in the next section of this chapter, the case selection excludes one-party dominance in authoritarian regimes. It also excludes the fluid dominant system of Lesotho because the aim is not to compare stable one-party-dominant systems with fluid one-party dominance. We want to investigate why some one-party-dominant systems endure while others do not. Therefore, we compare cases of stable (i.e., enduring) one-party dominance with party system trajectories that have moved away from one-party dominance.

5. These predominant party systems—to use Sartori’s terminology—are the cases we would describe as enduring one-party-dominant systems. Of the five identified by Erdmann and Basedau we have selected Namibia, South Africa, and Tanzania for inclusion in our study. We have excluded the Seychelles because of its particular nature as an island state, and we excluded Botswana because it has a much longer history as a multiparty democracy, thus making it less comparable. Botswana would be an interesting case to include in a work on the consequences of one-party dominance particularly to get insights into the long-term effects on democracy (see, for example, R. Doorenspleet and L. Nijzink, forthcoming).

6. We do not mention the book edited by M. Rimaneli (2000) here, as this book is focused mainly on democratic transitions rather than dominant parties.

7. The study by C. Spiess (2009) gives a clear justification of its case selection and is therefore an important exception in this regard.

8. Many researchers have focused on the concepts and measurements of minimal, electoral, and liberal democracy and discussed them in depth. For more information, see for example R. A. Dahl (1971), F. Zakaria (1997), A. Przeworski and colleagues (2000), R. Doorenspleet (2000, 2005), and J. Møller (2007).

9. This means that we have selected only countries that have been classified by Freedom House as electoral democracies.

10. As the chapter by Erdmann and Basedau shows, Botswana, Seychelles, and Lesotho also fall in the free and (top end of the) partly free categories and are also displaying characteristics of one-party dominance. As mentioned earlier, we have decided not to include these because they are either small states (Lesotho and Seychelles) or have a much longer history of democracy (Botswana) and are therefore less comparable.

11. This conflation of party loyalty with patriotism may have a negative effect on the future of democracy in a country (see also Doorenspleet and

Nijzink, forthcoming). M. A. M. Salih (2003: 13), for example, has cautioned that the privileged place some liberation movements have in people's loyalty may cause "complacency on the part of revolutionary leaders who may find it difficult to adjust their political ambitions to the accountability and transparency democratic rule entails."

12. Cleavages in society can similarly be reinforced by the process of democratization. In this way democratization may even lead to civil war (see, for example, Mansfield and Snyder 1995, 2005; Ward and Gleditsch 1998).

13. Salih (2003: 18) puts his finger on the negative consequences of the broad multiethnic character of the former liberation movements: "The denial of ethnicity as a common principle of political organisation took away from African ethnic groups the possibility of developing local accountable and democratic governance." Again, in this way, one-party-dominant systems may have a negative impact on a country's democratic system (see Doorenspleet and Nijzink, forthcoming).

14. For studies on the impact of electoral systems on types of party systems, see M. Duverger (1954), S. Lindberg (2006), T. J. Pempel (1990), A. Lijphart (1994), and M. Bogaards (2000). For studies on the impact of parliamentary and presidential systems, see A. Lijphart (1994), A. Siaroff (2003), and R. Elgie and S. Moestrup (2007).

15. Consensus is seen as essential, as is reflected in the words of a teenager in Dakar: "Demokaraasi is to agree, to form 'one'. Even if you are many, to be able to form a bloc and work together. Even if agreement is difficult, you need to do all you can to reach a consensus" (Schaffer 1998: 58).

16. Solidarity is another core element of a Senegalese understanding of democracy. According to one farmer, "our demokaraasi is everyone being unified. We do our work together" (Schaffer 1998: 60).

17. Evenhandedness is similarly understood as an important element of democracy in the Senegalese culture: "If you have two bowls for two people, if you intend to put food in one, you need to divide it up equally. One should not get more than the other. That shows that demokaraasi prevails" (Schaffer 1998: 63).