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Ethnicity, Voter Alignment and Political Party Affiliation – an African Case: Zambia

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Abstract

Conventional wisdom holds that ethnicity provides the social cleavage for voting behaviour and party affiliation in Africa. Because this is usually inferred from aggregate data of national election results, it might prove to be an ecological fallacy. The evidence based on individual data from an opinion survey in Zambia suggests that ethnicity matters for voter alignment and even more so for party affiliation, but it is certainly not the only factor. The analysis also points to a number of qualifications which are partly methodology-related. One is that the degree of ethnic voting can differ from one ethno-political group to the other depending on various degrees of ethnic mobilisation. Another is that if smaller ethnic groups or subgroups do not identify with one particular party, it is difficult to find a significant statistical correlation between party affiliation and ethnicity – but that does not prove that they do not affiliate along ethnic lines.

Key words: Social cleavages, ethnicity, voting behaviour, political party identification, political party affiliation, Zambia

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Zusammenfassung

Ethnizität, Wahlverhalten und Parteienmitgliedschaft in Afrika: Sambia

Wahlverhalten und Mitgliedschaft in politischen Parteien Afrikas ist nur wenig untersucht worden. Gewöhnlich wird argumentiert, dass Ethnizität als soziale Konfliktlinie das Wahlverhalten und die Parteienmitgliedschaft strukturiert. Da dieses Argument auf hoch aggregierten Wahldaten beruht, kann hier ein ökologischer Fehlschluss vorliegen. Die vorliegende Analyse beruht deshalb auf individuellen Umfragedaten aus Sambia. Das Ergebnis ist, dass Ethnizität tatsächlich eine Rolle für das Wahlverhalten und die Parteienmitgliedschaft spielt, aber keineswegs den einzigen Erklärungsfaktor darstellt. Die Analyse offenbart zudem eine Reihe von Einschränkungen und Qualifizierungen, die teilweise methodischer Natur sind. Eine ist, dass ethnisches Wahlverhalten und Parteinmitgliedschaft von einer ethnischen Gruppe zur anderen unterschiedlich sind und dies von der Mobilisierung der Ethnizität abhängt. Eine andere ist, dass, wenn sich kleinere ethnische Gruppen oder Untergruppen mit keiner Partei identifizieren, es schwierig wird, statistisch signifikante Korrelationen zu finden – was indessen noch nicht beweist, dass Ethnizität keine Rolle spielt.

Ethnicity, Voter Alignment and Political Party Affiliation – an African Case: Zambia

Gero Erdmann

Article Outline

'… voters are not fools.'
(Valdimir O. Key, 1966)

1. Introduction[1]

Voting behaviour and political party alignment in Africa's young multi-party regimes – whether democratic or hybrid – is an almost completely ignored research topic, although this is a classical field of political science. Voting behaviour is usually explained by socio-structural, socio-psychological, or rational choice models, at least for industrialised societies. For African societies voting is explained predominantly by factors such as ethnicity, personal ties, and clientelism (Hyden and Leys 1972; Barkan 1979; Bratton and Van de Walle 1997; Van de Walle 2003; Mozzafar et al. 2003; 2005; Erdmann 2004; Posner 2005). Elsewhere we have modified the social structural model of Lipset and Rokkan (1967) to argue that that ethnicity provides the basic social cleavage for voting behaviour and the formation of parties

[1] A first draft of the paper was prepared for the 2006 Annual Meeting of the African Studies Association, San Francisco, CA, November 16-19, 2006, (Re) Thinking Africa and the World: Internal Reflections, External Responses'. The research was funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG, German Research Foundation) which sponsored the research project 'Political Parties and Party Systems in Anglophone Africa – Botswana, Ghana, Malawi, Tanzania and Zambia'. In addition, I would like to thank Joanna Münkner and Julia Scheller who helped to compile parts of the statistics, and Sven Buth for administering and computing our survey data. Neo Simutanyi organised the survey team in Zambia, and without his knowledge, support and advice this study would look differently. I owe him a great deal.

and party systems (Erdmann and Weiland 2000; Erdmann 2004). The all-inclusive relevance of ethnicity for an understanding of African politics, in general, has been emphasised in a recent collection on ethnicity and democracy in Africa (Berman et al. 2004).

The claim that ethnicity is a major factor for voting behaviour is usually inferred from election results. Citizens of specific districts or regions which are populated (predominantly) by a particular ethnic group vote for one party one election after the other. Often this is also related to a general local wisdom that claims a close relationship between a particular party and ethnic group, for example, being a 'Tonga-party' in Zambia or an 'Akan-party' in Ghana. No doubt this kind of inference might entail an ecological fallacy. While aggregate data of the national level strongly support this link, individual voters might not have been motivated by ethnicity but by a different rationale. Staffan Lindberg and Minion K.C. Morrison (2007) have recently pointed to this possibility and challenged the 'conventional wisdom' about the African voter. Based on interviews in Ghana, in which interviewees explained why they voted for a particular candidate, they conclude that 'clientelistic and ethnic predisposed voting are minor features of the Ghanaian electorate' (2007: 34). It should be noted that nobody is suggesting that ethnicity is the only factor that explains partisan alignment in Africa, but it is the predominant social cleavage (Erdmann 2004: 70-73) or one important factor structuring voting behaviour (Nugent 2004). It has been emphasised that there is no clear-cut pattern of how ethnicity affects party formation (Erdmann 2004: 71).

The second problem is that there is hardly any research on political party affiliation (membership) in Africa. Only Michael Bratton and his colleagues (Bratton et al. 2005) used the concept of party identification in the Afrobarometer. They use party identification as a measure for the linkage of political parties to the mass public. They used the question ('feeling close to a political party') primarily to find out about party affiliation as an independent variable to explain institutional influences on attitudes towards reform politics. However, they also claim on the basis of their survey results that new political parties are not 'forming primarily along ethnic lines'. Although they do not deny that 'ethnic identities and grievances constitute an important basis of party affiliation', they 'suspect' that 'parties are forming along more pluralistic lines' (Bratton et al. 2005: 257).

Based on an opinion survey in Zambia we want to find out what might explain partisan alignment and party affiliation in competitive African multi-party regimes. Our major focus will be on ethnicity as a socio-structural factor. Socio-structural factors are thought to explain long term determinants of partisan alignment. I will ignore the short-term factors that influence electoral decisions. Party affiliation identified through party identification and party membership is a better indicator of partisanship and should give more precise information about the basis of party formation.

In the first section we explain our theoretical approach in terms of various models of voting behaviour. This will also include a discussion of ethnicity as an evaluative or non-evaluative dimension of voting – or, put differently, as a non-rational vis á vis rational evaluative behaviour. In the second section we discuss the particularities of the Zambian party system in relation to ethnic groups and voting behaviour. In the third section we turn to a description of our survey material and the problems involved before we present the analysis of our data in the forth section. In the conclusion we discuss the wider implications of our findings for further research.

2. Voter Alignment and Ethnicity

Many political scientists believe that voting behaviour and partisanship is such a complex phenomenon that cannot be explained by a single model (Roth 1998: 23). There are three classical approaches to the problem, the sociological (Lipset and Rokkan 1967), party identification (Campbell et al. 1954; 1960) and the rational choice model (Downs 1957; Key 1966; Fiorina 1981).

According to the party identification model, voter alignment is shaped by the perception of three factors: candidates, issues, and links between parties and social groups. However, the latter factor, the social dimension is conceptually not well elaborated. Party identification is loosely understood as a socio-psychological product of family and social group ties, and the focus of the model is on the functions of party identification (Dalton 2001: 20-21). It is important to note here that party identification does not only have a direct impact on voting decisions but also on the perception of candidates and issues. Put differently, party identification shapes the evaluation of candidates, issues, and the expected capacity of parties to solve problems.

A pure rational choice approach ignores the fact that political perceptions and evaluations are structured by 'predisposed' partisan attitudes such as party identification. The pure model cannot explain why a substantial number of voters support the same party election after election despite changes in government and policy performance. The model is not interested in where the voters' values come from, which coordinate their decisions. No doubt, however, it is useful to explain the electoral behaviour of those voters with a weak or no party identification, whose numbers have increased in old democracies and in young democracies of Eastern and Southern Europe. It may also help to understand why people vote different from their party identification, and why they chose a candidate or how they decide on issues. The modified rational choice model takes the voter as 'an appraiser of past events'

(Key 1966; Fiorina 1981) who judges retrospectively on the past performance of government. This modified model takes for granted that voters identify with parties. The major difference to the party identification model is, however, that the identification is determined by rational calculation or reflection and not by affective ties which are crucial for the party identification model.

Finally, the cleavage model of Seymour M. Lipset and Stein Rokkan (1967) provides the backbone for the two other models. According to research on voter alignment in Europe, the socio-structural model is still the best for explaining party alignment for most of the electorate despite increasing voter de-alignment. This applies even to highly mobile societies such as post-war West Germany where socio-structural determinants such as capital/labour and religion/no-religion are still the most reliable *explanans* (Roth 1998: 32).

To sum up, the rational choice model helps to explain why *some* citizens change their vote. The party identification model provides an understanding why many citizens do not change their vote, and the sociological model explains why people identify with particular parties in a number of elections (often undisturbed by the government's performance).

The question, then, is what is the crucial cleavage for voter alignment in Africa? The cleavage model was constructed on the historical experience of party formation and voter alignment in Western Europe. It comprises an analytical framework which combines a structural with an actor oriented approach. The cleavage denotes an institutionalised political conflict that is anchored in a society's social structure. This conflict is comprised of at least four dimensions: socio-economic, an interest or value orientated dimension, a party political dimension, and a dimension of voter alignments. The traditional cleavages in Europe were centre vs. periphery (nation state), church (or religion) vs. state (secularisation), rural-agrarian vs. urban-trade (primary vs. secondary economy), and finally capital vs. labour as a consequence of the industrial revolution. All four cleavages were articulated in the politics of western European states, and they were held to occur in a historical sequence as indicated above.

As has been argued elsewhere, most of the traditional European social conflicts can be identified in Africa as well, but they are weakly developed and contribute little or in a few cases only to the formation of parties and party alignment (Erdmann and Weiland 2001: 253-257). However, the crucial and predominant cleavage in most African societies is ethnic and/or regional identity (Scarrit and Mozzafar 1999; Erdmann and Weiland 2001; Erdmann 2004).[2]

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[2] Although Lipset and Rokkan did not address problems of ethnic or regional politics explicitly, these can be subsumed under the centre-periphery cleavage. This cleavage is based on the concept of 'territorial opposition' which is characterised under conditions of universal suffrage as the

Ethnicity is here understood not as a primordial or essentialist attribute but as a historically and socially constructed identity and one that is multifaceted, changeable, and has multiple meanings. Ethnicity is constituted by the interaction of self-ascription and ascription by others (Young 1976; Lentz 1994: 25; Lentz and Nugent 2000: 2-6). Ethnicity is not a question of fixed boundaries or neatly delineated entities. Ethnic cleavages are variable, and ethnicity can, but need not, lead to voter alignment. This depends on the way ethnic identities are politically developed.

There is no clear-cut pattern of how ethnicity structures party formation and partisanship, and how it affects voter alignment. This can only be analysed in a historical perspective that takes the particular contingencies into account. These in turn depend on the geographical distribution of ethnic groups in each country: concentration and dispersion, their numbers and sizes, relations between the groups, and, very importantly, the sort of socio-economic differences that exist between groups and how these differences are perceived.[3] Most crucial is the degree to which ethnicity is politically mobilised. To some degree, party formation and party politics can contribute to the process of what has been called the 'imagination' of ethnic identities, the degree of their political mobilization and hence voter alignment.

With the exception of a few countries, most African societies are characterised by a high number of ethnic groups of different sizes. It is only in Botswana, Namibia, Burundi, and Rwanda that we find an ethnic group that counts for a large portion or even for a majority of the population. And even in these cases the main group can be broken down into smaller groups. In most African countries, none of the ethnic groups can claim majority status. A simple equation of ethnic groups, ethnic cleavage, political parties and voter alignment is not possible. A social cleavage needs to be politicised and transformed by the political elite before it leads to party formation (Lipset and Rokkan 1967). But not all politicised social cleavages are necessarily transformed into party formation as the politicization can, for instance, 'stop' at level of a social movement. As regards the development of an ethnic cleavage, Mozzafar et al. (2003: 382) describe this evolution in a three-step process: the 'construction' of an ethnic identity, its 'politicisation', and finally 'particization', a term borrowed from Gary Cox (1997: 26).

Pure ethnic parties – parties supported by the electorate of one ethnic group only – are the exception rather than the rule in Africa. The rule is the ethnic congress party which is also ethnicity based, but formed by an elite coalition of two or more ethnic groups (Erdmann

'commitment to the locality and its dominant culture: you vote with your community and its leaders irrespective of your economic position' (Lipset and Rokkan 1967: 13).

[3] Daniel N. Posner (2004) explains the problem excellently with the example of the alliance and conflict between Chewas and Tumbukas in Zambia and in Malawi.

2002: 270-8; 2004: 78-80) which provide the focus for voter alignments. Thus, for the purpose of our analysis, which will deal with a 'politicised' ethnicity for voter alignments, we do not need to consider all ethnic groups within a country, but only with 'ethnopolitical groups' (Scarrit and Mozzafar 1999) which, in fact, might be comprised of a number of ethnic groups. The general conceptual problems that have been indicated above for ethnic groups apply to ethno-political groups as well – although the polarisation is already included in the concept. There are a number of strong indicators that ethnic cleavages have been politicised into ethno-political groups and even particised, i.e. transformed into parties and party systems. In a number of countries the ethnic cleavage constellation and party formation together with voter alignment of the 1950s and 1960s correspond to the evolution of party formation and voter alignments of the 1990s (see for example Ghana and Zambia, and even Tanzania).

Ethnopolitical identities and ethnopolitical (or ethnic) voting is not a non-rational, merely affective or 'predisposed' behaviour as suggested by Lindberg and Morrison (2007).[4] Ethnopolitical voting has also a rational dimension. In a situation of uncertainty it is rational to rely on things one knows – first, on the smaller and then on the extended family, on personal friends, neighbours, villagers, people from the next village, from the district, from the same ethnic sub-group, the same ethnic group etc. Although family or village ties are not always friendly, in case of an unknown 'challenge' posed from outside, the alliance and reliance on the next comes down to a decision to 'rely on the devil we know' – as villagers often explain their voting in favour of a particular party. The electoral decision for a candidate from the same village or the same ethno-political group becomes even more rational if the prevailing perception is that members of the other group will vote for a member of their group. The implicit assumption is that the elected person will, in the first instance, take care of his own kin before of any other; the elected might do that from his own will, but as everybody knows, he or she will also come under direct pressure from his own kin to serve them at first. In this sense ethnic or ethno-political identities are the basis of strategic choices for partisanship and voting decisions. As Dan Posner (2005: 91) puts it: 'it is the information that ethnicity is assumed to convey about likely patterns of patronage distribution – not atavism or tradition – that explains why it plays such an important role.'

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[4] Lindberg and Morrison distinguish between 'evaluative' and 'non-evaluative' voting behaviour; the later is based on clientelism, on personal affective ties of patronage, family, or service, and on 'proxy voting' which implies the prevalence of family, clan and 'ethnically predisposed voting' (2007: 5, 9, 33). It is not at all clear why, for example, especially voting influenced by patronage or the provision of service is not considered to be evaluative.

While Lindberg and Morrison found that the voters evaluative behaviour is related to the actual or expected performance of the candidates, the 'conventional' ethnic proposition is that candidates do not bother very much about the candidate, all that is important is whether a party is 'identified with the voter's own ethnic group, no matter who the individual candidates happen to be' (Horowitz 1985: 319-20). At that time other scholar took a kind of middle way (Hyden and Leys 1972; Barkan 1979), and related to elections in single-party regimes where only candidates could compete: 'All the constituency reports without exception emphasised the priority accorded by voters to the candidates tribe (in urban areas) and clans (in rural areas). Ascriptive group membership was still seen by nearly all voters as the sine qua non of acceptability and trustworthiness. Subject to this criterion the next test to be applied to a candidate was his probable performance in securing government services for the constituency' (Hyden and Leys 1972: 401). Joel D. Barkan (1979: 84) argued similarly: the first criteria is ethnic belonging, the second expected performance of the candidates. Without discussing the rationale of ethnic voting they bring in an evaluative dimension when it comes to the second criterion for the voters' decision which is not directed by abstract universal issues but by a 'pork-barrel' orientation.

3. Ethnicity, Party System and Voter Alignment in Zambia

Numerous authors have identified ethnicity as one crucial dimension of Zambian politics (Molteno 1974; Sichone and Simutanyi 1996; Osei-Howedie 1998; Burnell 2001: 249-50; 2005: 113-115; Posner 2005). Others however, have discussed the evolution and development of the Zambian party system without any reference to ethnicity (Rakner and Svåsand 2004).
Usually more than 70 ethnic groups are accounted for in Zambia. According to *Africa South of Sahara* (2004: 1195) the number is 73 and according to Morrison (1989: 702) it is 72. Officially there are seven language groups: Bemba, Nyanja, Tonga, Lozi (Barotse), Kaonde, Lunda und Luvale; in the daily political discourse they are referred to as Bemba-, Nyanja-speakers etc. During the 1960s and 1970s at least the Bemba-, Tonga-, Lozi- and Nyanja-speakers were discerned as political identities – at least at the elite level (Molteno 1974). Daniel Posner (2005: 232-41) used, apart from tribal identities, these four language groups together with the 'Northwestern' (Lunda-Luvale speakers) as the major units in his analysis of ethnic voting. Nowadays all the seven language groups can be considered as important ethno-political identities, but there are probably even more. One example is the Mwambe-speakers whose politicians are striving for a separate North-Eastern Province, distinct from the Bemba-proper dominated Northern Province. This is complicated by the fact that

Mambwe-speakers are considered to be Bemba by those who live in the South, West and East.[5] As indicated above, each ethno-regional group is comprised of a number of single ethnic groups which again, if used by a politician, could become the basis for a distinct political group identity. For instance, the group of Bemba-speakers account for 20, Lozi-speakers for 17, and Mambwe-speakers for five ethnic groups. Hence Lozi-speakers might be Lozis, but can have a different ethnic (or tribal) identity such as Kwandi, Koma, Mwenyi or Simaa etc. The same applies to the other ethno-political groups. The point here is that ethnicity is differently politicised and mobilised among the different ethnic groups. While Lozi, Bemba, Nyanja and Tonga regularly feature in the public discourse, other ethnic groups, for example from North-Western Province, are mentioned less. This difference may be explained partly by the size of the groups and their political history in Zambia's body politics. Another implication is that very different and complicated alliances and coalitions between the various ethnic and ethno-regional groups are possible which can, to some degree, criss-cross each other in various ways.

A final comparison of the number of ethnic groups and the number of political parties illustrates the point about the relationship between ethnic groups and political parties. While more than 70 ethnic groups have been identified, there were only 26 parties registered in 2004, of which seven could be termed relevant parties being represented in parliament (and displaying some kind of national visibility – see table 5).

As suggested above, ethno-regional cleavages were constitutive for the dominant party system of the First Republic (table 1). The dominant United National Independence Party (UNIP), which in 1972 became the single state party, comprised a broad elite coalition of various ethnic groups. The dominant groupings were the Bemba-speakers of Northern-, Luapula- and Copperbelt Province, and Nyanja-speakers of Eastern Province, but comprised Tonga- and Lozi-speakers as well. UNIP was often identified as a Bemba-party, whose former leader Kenneth Kaunda was born in Northern Province (Chinsali) (although he originated from the Tonga in former Nyasaland, Malawi).

The smaller opposition parties had their electoral basis in the southern and western parts of the country, the African National Congress (ANC, 1951-1972) among the Tonga- speakers (Southern Province), the United Party (UP, 1966-68) among the Lozi of Western Province, which after the ban of UP were united in an alliance of Lozi- and Tonga-speakers for the elections of 1968. Table 2 identifies the provincial strongholds of the ANC and UNIP.

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[5] Another example are the Tumbuka and Nsenga of Eastern Province. From outside the province they are termed as Nyanja-speakers; however, inside the province they are considered to be different from the Nyanja-speakers constituting a group of their own.

Table 1: Parliamentary election results, distribution of seats 1964*, 1968

Party	Founding year	1964		1968	
		%	Seats	%	Seats
United National Independence Party (UNIP)	1959	69.1	55	73.2	53 (28)**
African National Congress (ANC)	(1948) 1951	30.5	10	25.4	23
National Progressive Party (NPP)	1963		(10)*		-
Independents		0.4		1.4	1
Number of parties in parliament			2 (3)		2

Notes: * Reserved seats for Europeans; 23,981 registered voters compared to 876,212 of the common (African) roll.
** In ( ) number of uncontested seats.

Sources: Nuscheler 1978: 1793-5; slightly different figures in Krennerich 1999.

However, the ethnic party alignment was not at all straightforward. As indicated above, Tonga- and Lozi-speakers were also among the membership of UNIP. During the party elections in 1967 the two major contending groupings were based on the following ethno-regional alliances or coalitions: Bemba-Tonga-speakers (North-South alliance) against Lozi-Nyanja-speakers (West-East alliance). The party elections resulted in members of the Lozi-grouping to leave UNIP and to join UP.

Table 2: Provincial strongholds (above the national average), in 1968 elections, no. of seats and %

Province	UNIP		ANC		Independents	
	%	Seats	%	Seats	%	Seats
Central[1]	72.6	13	24.8	3	2.5	-
Eastern	**95.0**	8 (6)*	5.0	-		-
Luapula	**98.8**	2 (8)	1.2	-		-
Northern	**99.4**	6 (10)	0.6	-		-
Northwestern	89.6	2 (4)	10.4	-		-
Southern	24.7	1	**70.8**	12	5.5	1
Western[2]	**92.3**	18	7.7	-		-
Barotse[3]	38.4	3	**61.6**	8		-
Total	**73.2**	**53 (28)**	**25.4**	**23**		

Notes: * In ( ) uncontested seats.
[1] Central comprised today's Lusaka and Central Province.
[2] Western is today's Copperbelt.
[3] Barotse is today's Western Province.

Sources: Nuscheler 1978: 1795; slightly different figures in Krennerich 1999.

During the party formation of the First Republic and before the establishment of the one-party system (1972), the United Progressive Party (UPP, 1971-72) emerged from a grouping

of Bemba-speakers of Northern Province which also gained support from party cadres in the Copperbelt (Tordoff and Molteno 1974; Molteno 1974; Tordoff and Scott 1974). All this indicates that at that time different sorts of alliance between ethnic and ethno-political elites were possible for party formation – and, as inferred from electoral results, for voter alignment accordingly.

After re-democratisation in 1991 the Zambian polity re-emerged as a dominant party system for two elections (table 3), but ended as a non-dominant party system after the third elections. Already in 1996 the political parties showed a substantial degree of volatility which increased during the 2001 elections and revealed how unstable and fragmented the party system is. The high degree of volatility especially in the 2001 elections indicated that a substantial number of voters had no or very little party attachment or identification. Within ten years the share of votes for MMD, the party that was formed in 1991 out of the democracy movement, declined tremendously by about 45%. The UNIP suffered a similar fate after almost 20 years of single-party rule, when the party fell apart and was reduced to a regional party in 1991.

Between the 2001 and 2006, MMD consolidated its position despite new split-offs. In 2006 PUDD was formed which was allegedly supported by former MMD-president Chiluba who later even openly supported PF during the elections campaign 2006 against his former party. At the same time, the major opposition parties formed electoral alliances in order to challenge the MMD more seriously than in 2001, when MMD won only because the opposition vote was divided among several parties; UPND, UNIP and FDD formed the United Democratic Alliance (UDA), and a number of smaller parties the National Democratic Focus (NDF). The fragmentation of the party system was a result of various factional tendencies within the parties, especially the ruling MMD, which had a personal as well as an ethnic distributive character.[6] As illustrated in table 4, all the parties had clear provincial strongholds of which some reflected the cleavages of the 1960s. The concentration on a few strongholds applies in particular to the two parties that came second and third in the national contest, namely UNDP and UNIP in 2001, and for the PF in 2001 and especially in 2006.

As a newcomer, the UNDP was able to mobilise voters especially in three provinces of the Southern and Western parts of the country where the party's voter share was above the national average of the party. The exceptional strength in the South as well as its Tonga-leader explains partly why the party became known as a 'Tonga-party'. The regional pattern also applies to UNIP which dominated the East. But the party was referred to with a provincial label (Eastern Province party) rather than an ethnic label, because the Nyanja-speakers of the

[6] For an analysis of factionalism in the Zambian party system and its effects see Erdmann and Simutanyi (2006, forthcoming).

East were not viewed as ethnically homogenous as the Tonga-speakers. The smaller parties were basically no different. Only the MMD maintained several strongholds in the country, Luapula, Northern and the Copperbelt, of which the first two were clearly rural Bemba territories while the Copperbelt is strongly mixed (multi-ethnic) but with a substantial Bemba community as well. PF, which in 2006 became the second strongest party, was identified as a Bemba party as well.

Table 3: Parliamentary Election Results and Distribution of seats in the Zambian parliament after the elections of 1991, 1996, 2001 and 2006*

Party	Registration	1991		1996		2001		2006	
		%	Seats	%	Seats	%	Seats	%[1]	Seats[2]
UNIP	1959	23.60	25	Boycott		10.39	13		[4]
MMD	1991	71.96	125	56.59	131	27.48	69	43.0	73
NP	1993			8.08	5				
ZDC	1995			13.41	2				
AZ	1996			1.51	2				[4]
UPND	1998					23.31	49		
ZRP	2000					5.43	1		[5]
PF	2001					2.76	1	21.0	43
FDD	2001					15.25	12		[4]
HP	2001					7.41	4		
NDF	2006								1
UDA	2006							21.7	26
ULP	2006								2
Independents				10.06	10	3.32	1		3
No. of relevant parties			2		4 (5)[3]		7		5

Notes: UNIP = United National Independence Party; MMD = Movement for Multi-party Democracy; NP = National Party; ZDC = Zambia Democratic Congress; AZ = Agenda for Zambia; UPND = United Party for National Development; ZRP = Zambia Republican Party; PF = Patriotic Front; FDD = Forum for Democratic Development; HP = Heritage Party; NDF = National Democratic Focus, Alliance of ZRP and 4 other parties; UDA = United Democratic Alliance of UPND, FDD and UNIP; ULP = United Liberal Party.

* Without by-elections.

[1] Others account for 14.3%, calculations provided by Neo Simutanyi.

[2] Two constituencies without result; death of a candidate.

[3] In ( ) five parties because of the boycott of UNIP which would have won a number of seats.

[4] Member of UDA.

[5] Member of NDF.

Sources: Electoral Commission of Zambia 1996; 2002; 2006; Erdmann & Simutanyi 2003: 31; Botterweck 2006.

As regards some features of basic cleavages and the ethno-political confrontation, the UPND strongholds in the South and West replicate the cleavages of the 1960s which provided the

basis for party formation and for voter alignment (see above, and table 2 and 4; Burnell 2001).

Table 4: Provincial strongholds (above the national average), in 2001 elections, % of votes (rounded) and number of seats

Province	MMD 96		MMD		UPND		UNIP		FDD		HP		ZRP		PF	
	%	Seats	%	Seats	%	Seats	%	Seats	%	Seats	%	Seats	%	Seats	%	Seats
Central	48			7	26	5					**12**	**2**				
Copperbelt	**68**		**35**	**20**				1			**17**	**1**	7		5	
Eastern	59			1			**35**	**12**	**26**	5		1				
Luapula[1]	**68**		**50**	**13**									14		3	
Lusaka	61			1		4			**29**	6	8			1		
Northern	**61**		**38**	**20**			**12**						9		**6**	**1**
N/Western	43			3	**39**	**9**										
Southern	54			1	**62**	**18**										
Western	48			3	**41**	**13**				1						
National	**57**		**28**	**69**	**23**	**49**	**10**	**13**	**15**	**12**	**7**		**5**	**1**	**3**	**1**

Note: [1] One seat won by an independent candidate.

Source: Electoral Commission of Zambia.

None of the parties mentioned was based on a single ethnic group or tried to find the support of only one ethno-political group by mobilising explicitly a particular ethnic sentiment. As can be seen in table 5, all major political parties represented in parliament made an effort to present candidates in almost all constituencies in the country for the 2001 parliamentary elections – at least for UPND, UNIP, FDD and even ZRP, given that particularly the latter two, as well as some others were formed only a few months before the election date.

Table 5: Number of party candidates for parliamentary elections 1991-2006

	MMD	UNIP	ZDC	NP	NLP	UPND	FDD	ZRP	HP	PF	NCC	Others
1991	**149**	**150**										*
1996	**150**	2**	**141**	91	83	-	-	-	-	-	-	595[1]
2001	**150**	**146**	-	1	23	**149**	**149**	**139**	**126**	102	78	1,198[2]
2006	**150**	[3]	nc			**142**[3]	[3]	nc	nc	122[4]		nc

Notes: * 21 independents and 9 other parties.
** boycott of the party; but 2 candidates run under the UNIP label.
[1] 5 other parties with less than 11 candidates each and 99 independents (AZ = 11).
[2] 9 other parties with 23 and less candidates each and 84 independents (AZ = 17).
[3] Member of the United Democratic Alliance (UDA), in 2 of the constituencies, only FDD and UNIP filed a candidate; 2 constitutencies missing (no results).
[4] In electoral alliance with United Liberal Party (ULP) an offspring of UPND.
nc = not counted.

Sources: FODEP 2002; Electoral Commission of Zambia 2002; Baylies/Szeftel 1997: 9; Botterweck 2006.

A closer inspection of the party strongholds reveals that only a few constituencies had clear majorities. In 2001, little more than a quarter of the 150 constituencies (39), had majorities of more than 50% for the winning candidate (table 6). The parties concerned were MMD and UPND. In fact, they won most of these constituencies in the heartland of the ethnic group they were identified with – the MMD, above all, in the Bemba-speaking districts of Luapula where the party won in 9 out of the 14 constituencies with more than 50%, and even in three with more than 60%. The UPND strongholds in the Tonga-speaking areas were even stronger; the party won three-quarter of the 19 seats in Southern Province with more than a 50% margin, and ten with more than 60%, topped by four with more than 70%.

Most of the constituencies were located not only in the Luapula and Southern Province, the Bemba- and Tonga-speakers heartland, but in rural areas as well. Even strongholds in Copperbelt and Central Province were rural constituencies. This strongly suggests that at least in those areas ethnic group voting took place.

Table 6: Party strongholds per province, number of seats won with more than 50%, 2001

Province	Seats	> 50%		> 60%		> 70%		Total > 50%	
		MMD	UPND	MMD	UPND	MMD	UPND	MMD	UPND
Central	14	1	2					1	2
Copperbelt	22	3						3	
Luapula	14	6		2		1		9	
Northern	21	3						3	
N-western	12	2					1	2	1
Southern	19		1		10		4		15
Western	17		3						3
Total								**18**	**21**
All seats won								**69**	**49**

Source: Electoral Commission of Zambia 2002 (own calculation).

In 2006 a very similar though slightly different pattern emerged (table 7). The number of MMD-strongholds increased, and they were partly concentrated in new areas, especially with 11 in Central Province where the MMD presidential candidate and party leader comes from. MMD also increased its strongholds in the Northern and Northwestern provinces, but lost some of the strongholds of Luapula to PF. All this illustrates a change of ethnic alliances in support of MMD away from some sections of the Bemba (Luapula), but also increased support by others (Northern), as well as to ethnic groups in Central and Northwestern Province. PF gained its strongholds mainly in the Copperbelt which except for the Bemba vote is

mainly a multi-ethnic urban vote, and it took over strongholds of MMD in the Bemba heartlands of Luapula where the former MMD-President Chiluba supported PF instead of MMD. In Luapule the switch from MMD to PF can be mainly attributed to a split within the political elite of the Bemba; they were not voting for a different 'ethnic' party.

Table 7: Party strongholds per province, number of seats won with more than 50%, 2006

Province	Seats	> 50%			> 60%			> 70%			Total > 50%		
		MMD	PF	UPND	MMD	PF	UPND	MMD	PF	UPND	MMD	PF	UPND
Central	14	5		1	3		1	3			**11**		2
Copperbelt	22		5		1	4		5[1]			6	**9**	
Eastern	19	2		2			1				4		3
Luapula	14	3	2		1	2					4	4	
Lusaka	12	2	3		1						3	3	
Northern	21	2	3		1	1		3[3]			6	4	
N-western	12	3			1			2[1]			6		
Southern	19			5			2			6[2]			**13**
Western	17	3			4			2			9		
Total		**20**	**13**	**8**	**12**	**7**	**4**	**15**		**6**	**39**	**20**	**18**
All seats won											**73**	**43**	**26**

Notes: [1] one constituency with > 80%.
[2] two constituencies with > 80%.
[3] three constituencies with > 80%.

Source: Electoral Commission of Zambia 2006 (own calculation).

On the opposition side, UPND in Alliance with UNIP and FDD lost some of its strongholds but seems to be clearly the only one of the three which maintained its strongholds in Southern Province, in Tonga areas. The number of strongholds decreased be only two in 2006.
Most interestingly, a comparison of the 2001 and 2006 strongholds reveals that some of them are actually lasting or even structural strongholds, and all of them are located in rural areas. In 2006 UPND retained eleven out of the 15 strongholds of 2001, and MMD retained six, but four others of the 2001 strongholds were simply passed on as strongholds to PF. On the basis of this we would conclude that at least eleven structural strongholds were among the Tonga and ten among the Bemba.
In fact it seems very difficult to explain the difference in voting patterns between 1996 and 2001 only by 'evaluative voting' without an ethnic or rational choice orientation. The performance of the government was certainly poor. So how can we explain that one ethno-political group, the Tonga-speakers, decided in very large numbers to align with a new party, while others, the core of Bemba-speakers, decided to continue its support for the ruling party? The same question applies to voting in 2006. Dissatisfied Tongas continued to

vote for UPND/UDA while other ethnic groups of Northwestern and Western Province shifted to the MMD. On the other hand, dissatisfied Bembas did not vote for UPND/UDA but for PF which was identified as a Bemba-party as well. Despite this fact there is no doubt that the PF also obtained a lot of 'non-ethnic' votes because its popular leader, Michael Sata played the populist cards including a xenophobic one rang well particularly in urban areas.

There is hardly any other explanation possible that some kind of group voting took place which is inspired by a different rational – but not government performance: Many Bembas stuck with the Bemba-led government because they believed that, at least, some of them would continue to benefit from the MMD-government dominated by their 'kin' (some did in fact) – while many Tongas could not see any further benefit from voting for a ruling party that does not improve their livelihood.

Up to here the argument is still based on inference from aggregated data and we still might be confronted with an ecological fallacy. However, the strongholds suggest that at least for some people, ethnic identity and ethnic rational is a factor that influences voting behaviour quite strongly. In addition, one should keep in mind that party formation and voter alignment of the Third Republic, particularly in the second half and in the 2001 elections, follows in some respects the cleavage lines of the 1960s.

One argument against ethnic voting might be that different people participated in the elections – people who abstained in 1996 voted in 2001 or 2006 and vice versa. An almost complete change of the electorate between the elections seems not very plausible, since we know that there is usually a core group of people who are interested in politics and participate in elections. In our 2004 survey, almost a third of the interviewees (321) participated in the 2001 and 1996 elections, and still more than quarter (279) in all three elections since 1991.

The strongholds of the two parties suggest, however, several things: 1. there is no clear cut feature of party alignment for all ethnic groups; 2. even within one ethnic group party alignment does not follow one line for all individuals – and non-ethnic voting is possible; 3. party alignment of particular ethnic groups might depend on different degrees of ethno-political identities or/and mobilisation; 4. party alignment could be directed by divergent coalition building of the elite which affiliates for various reasons (internal conflicts, different patronage expectation etc.) with different parties which all are basically ethnic coalitions.

It should be noted here that not only in urban areas, mainly in Lusaka and the Copperbelt, election results for the parties are much more volatile than in rural areas, but also in areas which are not that homogenous as the strongholds.

A clear indication of the different party alignment of the political elite are the electoral results in the Nyanja-speaking Eastern Province. In 2001 no party gained an absolute majority any constituency. During that election most constituencies saw a direct competition between

UNIP and FDD; only two seats out of 18 were captured by MMD and HP, and in four others the MMD candidate came in second. UNIP won seats in constituencies dominated by Chewa and Tumbuka constituencies, while FDD won in Chewa constitutencies as well, but also in Ngoni and Nsenga constituencies; HP and MMD won seats in the Nsenga-speaking area. In 2006, in most constituencies the contest was very close between MMD and UDA of which FDD and UNIP – in previous elections both Eastern Province-parties – were members; only MMD gained two strongholds with more than 50 per cent in Nsenga areas.

4. Partisanship: Survey Data

For the collection of individual data to find out why people align with a particular party, we conducted a survey among 1.001 Zambians aged 18 years and above in March 2004. Since we were not able to visit all provinces, the random sampling started at the provincial level (six out of nine), down to the district, the ward and finally to the official enumeration area of the Central Statistical Office (CSO), the Census Supervisory Area (CSA). The respondents were randomly selected within the CSA and randomly within a CSA.[7]

The provincial and ethnic coverage was therefore limited to seven provinces. Some basic characteristics of the sample are presented in the appendices, including voting intentions. To identify the ethnic background of the interviewees we asked the question: 'What is your tribe?'. Although this question is often viewed as controversial, the survey teams had no problems obtaining responses. Out of the more than 70 ethnic groups in Zambia 51 appeared in the survey at least with one person (for the coverage of the major ethnic groups see appendix C).

For the analysis we started with single ethnic groups as identified by interviewees. We then grouped them together step by step into five categories: Bemba, Tonga, Lozi, Nyanja, Lunda-Luvale (Northwestern). It should be noted that in our sample the Bembas are clearly under-represented while the Tongas are probably over-represented (see appendix C). We also considered only parties which were in parliament at the time of the survey. No other parties show up in the responses in any substantial numbers.

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[7] For each Province two to four districts were randomly selected and the number of interviews applied according to the relative size of the population. The same procedure was followed in the selection of the wards. If there were not sufficient CSAs in one ward to cover for only eight interviews in each CSA, additional wards were randomly selected. The number of CSA were established on the principle that no more than eight interviews should be conducted in one CSA; then the specific CSAs of the survey were selected. For the final selection of the household and the interviewee we applied procedures of the Afrobarometer.

4.1. Voter Alignment

According to the literature on voter alignment in Zambia the affiliation of a candidate is more important than his individual past or expected behaviour (Molteno and Scott 1974: 192; Posner 2005: 228-232). There are exceptions of course, but members of parliament are usually elected on a party ticket. The parliamentary seat 'belongs' to the party; if a MP switches parties, he or she looses the seat and has to stand for a by-election. In pre-survey focus group discussions, the proposition that people vote for a party rather than a certain candidate was never challenged.[8] While the idea that a parliamentary seat belongs to a party was publicly under debate, the responses to our related survey question whether floor-crossing should be allowed without by-elections were very straight forward: Almost 75 per cent of the replies supported the current rule, and only 16 per cent said floor-crossing should be allowed. This very strongly supports the literature on Zambia, but also puts into question an approach which presupposes that voting decisions are based, above all, on candidates' performance.

We also tried to get some information about the 'local' assessment of peoples' voting decision for one particular party. We, however, did not ask why someone voted for a party, but what they think why other people vote for a party. The idea was to avoid too personal a question which might come into conflict with the interviewees' perception of a socially 'unwanted' response.

In our focus group discussions almost all people in rural areas responded that other people voted in a 'tribal' way. In urban areas (Lusaka) the responses were different; urbanites said their peer's voting was program orientated, but in rural areas it was 'tribal'.[9]

The responses seem to confirm Lindberg and Morrison's (2007) finding that clientelist and ethnic voting (see table 8, e. and i.) is not a dominant feature, but evaluative voting which is directed by the parties' programme and the satisfaction with its policy (table 8, a. and b.) is the major reason why people vote for a political party. At least, programmes and policies appear to be more important than clientelism, patronage (c.) and ethnic affiliation.

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[8] Together with Neo Simutanyi and Matthias Basedau (GIGA Institute of African Affairs) we held a number of focus group discussions with 29 participants in Chibombo (High School), Chibombo District, Central Province, 15 March 2003; in Chinyunyu (Basic School), Chongwe District, Central Province, 17 March 2003; and Lusaka, Longacre, 18 March 2003.

[9] A number of focus group discussions with 29 participants were held in Chibombo (High School), Chibombo District, Central Province, 15 March 2003; in Chinyunyu (Basic School), Chongwe District, Central Province, 17 March 2003; and Lusaka, Longacre, 18 March 2003.

Table 8: What people think about voting motives

Question: ***What do you think is the major reason why people vote for one particular party?****

	Agree	Agree strongly	Together
a. Particular Programme	44.5	30.6	75.1
b. Satisfaction with the policy	42.1	32.9	75.0
c. Favoured when comes to/stays in power	41.5	25.4	66.9
d. Get money	36.1	24.7	60.8
e. Friends and family do so as well	35.6	18.9	54.5
f. Leader from the same tribe	32.2	19.9	52.1
g. Tribal affiliation of party	33.5	17.6	51.1
h. Fear of intimidation	28.1	13.7	41.8
i. Advice by traditional authority	24.4	14.6	39.0
j. N = varies between 997 and 984			

Note: * Responses were collected for each response separately.

However, looking from a different perspective, the rational of programme and policy voting seems to be questionable – at least the respondents seem to contradict themselves. When asked whether they can see any differences between the parties as regards their policies and programmes towards various issues, only a minority of about a third or even less, depending on the issue, responded positively (table 9). When asked further about the difference between the parties, less than a third maintained the difference was 'small' or 'very small'. Only less than a quarter of the respondents thought that the difference between the political parties was 'big' or 'very big' in the following policies: education and health 22.7 per cent, privatisation and free market 15.7 per cent, and human rights 15.5 per cent. Moreover, when the respondents were asked about which party cares more or is more in support of one of these policies, more than half pointed to the ruling MMD (education & health = 50.5%, n = 380, and 19.2% of total; privatization and free market economy = 68.0%, n = 306, and 20.8% of total; human rights = 52.5%, n = 295, and 15.5% of total).

The results from our focus group discussions might provide an additional clue what this could imply. As in the survey, most of the participants could not detect any programme or policy difference between the various parties. And the few who said they could detect differences were, when directly challenged, almost all unable to name any difference: Only a few teachers pointed out (correctly) that during the 2001 elections campaign free primary education was a controversial issue, but only as regards the number of years which should be free. Other issues were not mentioned.

Table 9: Programme and policy differences between political parties

	Differences 'yes'[1], n = 1,001	Big/very big differences, % of 'yes'	Big/very big differences, % of total n = 1,001
Health and education	37.1%	62.0 valid n = 366	22.7
Privatisation and free market economy	27.4%	57.7 valid n = 272	15.7
Human rights	27.8%	56.5 valid n = 274	15.5

Note: [1] 'No difference', 'Don't know', and 'No answer' are omitted here.

It is difficult to escape the conclusion that all this does not give us a clear idea as to why people vote for a particular party. It only highlights the methodological issue whether this kind of approach can provide meaningful answers.

To find out whether the individual's ethnic identity has an influence on voting behaviour, a cross tabulation is applied with ethno-political identity as the independent and voting intention as the dependent variable. This is presented in table 10. Overall, no clear picture emerges from the result. No ethno-political group has a clear preference for one party, that is to say, more than half of the respondents of one particular group would vote for one party. Ignoring marginal difference below or above an average as well as smaller groups and parties, it is only the Tonga for UPND, the Nyanja and Lunda-Luvale for MMD that suggests a broader support for one party.

Table 10: Ethno-political groups and voting intention

Question: If there were to be parliamentary elections today, for which political party would you vote?

	MMD		UPND		UNIP		FDD		PF		Others		Abstain		Do not know		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Bemba	49	24	28	14	16	8	7	3	33	**16**	11	5	39	**19**	18	9	201	100
Tonga	92	38	109	**45**	4	2	0	0	4	2	4	2	15	6	14	6	242	100
Lozi	42	38	32	29	7	6	3	3	1	1	2	2	10	9	14	13	111	100
Nyanja	112	**41**	35	13	34	13	19	7	11	4	11	4	34	13	15	6	271	100
Lunda-Luvale	26	**42**	15	24	2	3	0	0	5	8	0	0	6	10	8	13	62	100
Others	22	29	13	17	6	8	3	4	3	4	3	4	17	23	8	11	75	100
Total	343	36	232	24	69	7	32	3	57	6	31	3	121	13	77	8	962	100

Notes: Chi-square = 217,758; df = 35; p = 0,000 (significant at the 0.05 level).

While there is basically no surprise as regards the support UPND is getting from the Tonga, although it might have been expected to be stronger, a surprise might be the small number of Bembas in support of MMD, especially since MMD has been closely identified with this group. This result, however, will change if one considers the following points: First, at the time of the survey MMD was split in two tendencies or factions, the Mwanawasa tendency led by the President, and the 'true blue faction', supported by the former president Frederick Chiluba, who was prosecuted for corruption during his presidency. The later newly formed Party for Unity, Democracy and Development (PUDD), organised by 'true blue' Chiluba supporters was also in contact with Michael Sata's PF, and which for a short time became members of the National Democratic Front, the so-called 'Northern Alliance' of Luapula and Northern Province (Erdmann 2005: 472; Erdmann and Simutanyi 2003: 38-39, fn 43). This might explain the relatively high numbers of abstainers among the Bembas.

Second, PF must also be seen as a Bemba-party. In the 2001 elections, PF gained its support mainly from 'Bemba-provinces', Northern, Luapula and Copperbelt (table 4). Again in the 2006 elections sweeping PF-gains were in Luapula, Northern and Copperbelt Province (table 7). Out of the 66 seats of the three provinces PF won 36, MMD 18, and the remaining three were split among two independent candidates and one from National Democratic Focus (NDF): In many cases it was a close contest between PF and MMD which accounted for the overwhelming numbers of votes (Electoral Commission 2006).

Taking MMD and PF together would make a Bemba-vote of 40% which could end up at about 50% or more if a number of abstainers and 'don't knows', together 28% of Bembas, would vote in the expected way. The latter, however, is speculation.

Thus, the reason why the Bemba support for one particular party did not show up in the survey was simply a political split between two parties. To put it the other way, only 32% of the Bembas interviewed would vote for any other party such as UPND, UNIP, FDD or 'others'. As regards the problem of 'evaluative voting' as opposed to 'affective' voting the question remains as to why a substantial number of Bembas chose PF and not UPND as they were obviously dissatisfied with the performance of the MMD-government.

What seems to be much more surprising is that a substantial number of Tongas, about 38%, would have voted for MMD. Given the history of Southern Province as 'Tonga-land', its preferential voting for opposition parties, and since UPND was identified by its political adversaries as a 'Tonga-party' with numerous distinct strongholds in the province (table 4), one would have expected a different result: a higher percentage of Tongas voting for UPND and less for the adversary Bemba party MMD.

A slightly different pattern applies to the party alignment of Lozis and Nyanjas. They, too, are split across at least two parties. A majority of Lozi is in favour of MMD (38%) followed

by UPND (29%), and a majority of Nyanja favour MMD (41%) followed by the support for UNIP (13%) (table 10). Although the Lozis are considered to be close allies of the Tongas – examples are the elections results of the ANC in 1968 and of UPND in 2001 – a substantial number has aligned with MMD. This might partly be explained as a 'switched ethnic vote' in our survey, since a prominent Lozi politician, Aka Mbiskusita-Lewanika had joined the new MMD-government in 2002. An indication for the plausibility of this explanation is that when the same politician had left the party he was affiliated with during the 1990s, he and his party friends were re-elected twice – each time on a different party ticket.[10]

This result is remarkable in several ways because it concerns the two most prominent and most articulated ethno-political blocs in Zambia – apart from the Lozi – and which, viewed from the public debate, are to be considered as the most 'particised' ethnicities. The first observation is that no party has the undivided loyalty of one ethno-political group. The second is that 'disloyalty' can go two ways: It can remain with one party which is considered the right ethnic party as well, hence the vote remains 'ethnic loyal' or it can shift to an other party which is associated with a different ethnicity. The latter voting is 'ethnic disloyal'. But it might be even more complicated, because there is also the possibility that people vote 'disloyal' for the party, but ethnic loyal for the right candidate – if the 'wrong' party runs the ethnically 'correct' candidate. The latter is more likely to happen among small ethnic groups which are not so closely associated with a particular party and where the political elite has a choice to affiliate with different political parties or alliances.

What is, to some degree, no surprise at all is a general observation that despite the identification of a party with a particular ethnic group, all the major parties are multi-ethnic in the support they get – hence they can be considered as ethnic congress parties. The different ethnic groups, however, re-appear with in the various parties as ethnic based factions (Erdmann and Simutanyi, forthcoming).

4.2. Party Identification and Party Membership

As indicated above, in order to get a better understanding of party alignment and of how the parties are linked with Zambian society, we applied the concept of party identification in our survey. Although there are some doubts, particularly in Western Europe, whether the

[10] Aka Mbiskusita-Lewanika linked to the royal Barotse-clan, started as a founding member of MMD; after disagreeing with the non-reform policies of the first MMD government, he left MMD and was re-elected on a National Party ticket in his home area; again, when he fell-out with his NP-friends he became a founding member and leader of Agenda Zambia (AZ), and together with some other Lozi friends he was elected on this party ticket; AZ won substantial votes only in Western Province in Lozi areas. Later, he re-joined MMD. AZ was probably the only ethnic party in Zambia based on one ethnic group only.

concept can be applied to other democratic polities, because it might lack some of its analytical power, it has been widely applied in other democratic systems (Dalton 2000; Harrop and Miller 1987: 131-145; Roth 1999: 41-47) and in Africa as well (Bratton at al 2005: 256-261). The idea is that party identification is an organising 'tool' for the perception, evaluation, and behaviour of citizens. Party identification does influence voting: 'This cue-giving function of partisanship is strongest for voting behaviour' (Dalton 2000: 21).

The concept is also understood as a surrogate for party affiliation, since in the USA and elsewhere there has never been the kind of party membership that existed in Western Europe structuring voting behaviour. Particularly for this reason it seemed to be reasonable to apply the concept in an African context with many young and non-institutionalised parties which may not as yet have a strong membership base. However, it should be noted that there are serious doubts, based on experience in Western Europe, about the validity of the operationalisation of the concept and the universally applied question 'Do you feel close to any political party?'. It is not clear whether the question 'measures' the supposed longer-term affective partisanship.[11]

Our survey indicates that almost half of the Zambians respondents identify (49%) with one party. Whether this is a high or low and what this then implies is unclear. In various Afrobarometer country surveys party identification varies from as high as 81% in Malawi to 29% in Uganda. The 2002 Afrobarometer survey of Zambia detected a party identification of only 36%. The difference between the two surveys might be attributed to various causes, some of them methodological (sampling), conceptual (not measuring a long-term alignment) or even drastic political changes. In face of the high score of Malawi with basically no multi-party history until 1994, the conceptual fallacy or problem seems to be the most likely.[12] Compared with established democracies – Denmark 52% (1971-98), Netherlands 38% (1971-98), Germany 78% (1972-1998), United States 77% (1952-96) – both Zambian figures would not be completely unfavourable (Dalton 2000: 25).

Party identification among the different ethno-political groups is most widespread among the Lunda-Luvale (60%, n = 65) and the Tonga (55%, n = 240) and less among Bemba (45%, n = 188). Additionally more people in rural (53%) than in urban areas (40%) (Lusaka and Copperbelt) identify with a party. A comparison of the two most numerous groups of the sample the Tongas seem to be more 'particised' than the Bembas.

The cross tabulation of ethno-political group and political party identification reveals a pattern that is very similar to the voting intention (see table 11). Following the line of argument

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11 See for the general literature Roth 1999: 43.

12 Even in established democracies like Germany party identification can change within by 20% within a couple of months (Roth 1999: 43).

from above, Bembas identify largely with the two 'Bemba parties', MMD and PF, together about 65%. Surprisingly, the Tonga almost evenly split their identification in almost equal parts between UPND and MMD. Ignoring the groups which turn up in small numbers only, the 66 per cent of Lozi and 57 of Nyanjas who identify with MMD seems to be remarkable. In sum, apart from the Tonga, the concentration of a particular ethno-political group among party identifiers is clearly higher than among voters. This pattern of identification supports the assumption that most parties have at least a core ethno-political basis.

Table 11: Ethno-political group and party identification

Question: ***Which of the following parties do you feel close?***

	MMD		UPND		UNIP		FDD		PF		Others		Do not know		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Bemba	43	**47**	12	13	8	9	4	4	16	**18**	6	7	2	2	91	100
Tonga	59	45	63	**48**	1	1	2	2	1	1	3	2	3	2	132	100
Lozi	35	**66**	12	23	2	4	4	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	53	100
Nyanja	70	57	18	15	13	11	10	8	5	4	5	4	2	2	123	100
Lunda-Luvale	25	**68**	6	16	3	8	1	3	1	3	0	0	1	3	37	100
Others	15	54	5	18	2	7	1	4	2	7	3	11	0	0	28	100
Total	247	53	116	25	29	6	22	5	25	5	17	4	8	2	464	100

Notes: Chi-square = 110,406; df = 30; p = 0.000 (significant at the 0.05 level).

The next step in the analysis is based on the presumption that party identification can be different from actual party affiliation. The major Zambian parties were selling (and/or distributing) party cards in the hundreds of thousands. From focus group discussions we learned that the question about party membership was understood in different ways. Some people said that they were members of a political party but never bought a membership card nor did they hold any. Hence, the general question about party membership came close to 'party identification'. We therefore asked additional questions about holding a membership card and of which party. Another problem is that some people keep membership cards of more than one party.[13]

This problem also turned up in the survey when 344 respondents said they were members of a political party but only 287 held a membership card. This figure amounts to more than a

[13] The reason seems to be opportunistic, but also protective as well. They might benefit from showing their cards at rallies if campaigners distribute 'presents', but it might also be helpful in contacts with state officials, since the administration is partly politicised as it used to be, probably much more, during the one-party regime of the second republic.

quarter of party card holders among the interviewees. The cross tabulation revealed a somewhat clearer picture than before. Among the MMD and UPND card holding members there is a majority of people identifying themselves as Bemba (56%) and Tonga (53%) (table 12). The higher percentage especially for the Lozi and Lunda-Luvale (or Northwestern) is ignored here because of their small n (21 and 22, respectively). The conclusion seems to be obvious: there is a ethnically based core membership in MMD and UPND.

Table 12: Ethno-political group and party affiliation (membership card holding)

Question: ***Can you give us the name of this political party you hold a membership card?***

	MMD		UPND		UNIP		FDD		PF		Others		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Bemba	25	**56**	8	18	5	11	3	7	1	2	3	7	45	100
Tonga	37	38	52	**53**	1	1	4	4	2	2	2	2	98	100
Lozi	23	72	6	19	0	0	3	9	0	0	0	0	32	100
Nyanja	40	**59**	13	19	4	6	7	10	2	3	2	3	68	100
Lunda-Luvale	17	77	3	14	1	5	1	5	0	0	0	0	22	100
Others	10	48	5	24	2	10	0	0	1	5	3	14	21	100
Total	152	53	87	30	13	5	18	6	6	2	10	3	286	100

Notes: Chi-square = 62,109; df = 25; p = 0.000 (significant at the 0.05 level)

Finally, we wanted to know which other social structural and also attitudinal factors, which are often thought to explain voting behaviour, might be statistically related to voting decisions in Zambia. As we only have a nominal dependent variable we can only use a logistical regression to test the ethnic hypothesis (table 13). Voting for UPND is the dependent variable. The independent variables were the three ethnic identities (Bemba, Tonga and Lozi, reference group is 'all other'), the urban/rural divide, sex, employment (employed or unemployed/pensioner), age, education and religious affiliation (catholic, reference group is 'all other'. We also used an attitudinal variable, a democratic attitude index built from six items and scaled from 0 = 'no democratic/authoritarian attitude' to 6 = 'high democratic attitude'[14]. The result of the applied backward stepwise logistic regression shows that the likelihood to vote for UPND is 4.5 times higher if somebody is a Tonga or 2.7 times higher if somebody is a Lozi as compared to other ethno-political groups. This, at least, supports the assumption that. compared with other social factors, ethnicity provides a major variable for explaining

[14] The index's items: questions related to a) democracy as most preferable regime, b) parliamentary controlled government, c) press freedom, d) multi-party system, e) independence of judiciary, f) equal voting rights. The positive 'democratic' answers were attached a value '1', and '0' for the 'authoritarian' response, and finally added up into the index values from 0 to 6.

voting decisions for UPND. In addition, the stronger the democratic attitude and the higher the formal educational attainment of a person the more likely is a UPND vote.

Table 13: Social and attitudinal factors

Independent variables	Dependent variable: voting for UPND			
	OR	Sig.	The 95% confidence interval for estimate	
			bottom value	top value
Urban/rural				
Bemba				
Tonga	4.920	0.000	3.42	7.08
Lozi	2.796	0.000	1.70	4.59
Sex				
Employment				
Democratic attitude index (0-6)	1.2	0.005	1.05	1.36
Religion (catholic)				
Age				
Education (no schooling = 1 / college = 9)	1.11	0.007	1.03	1.2

5. Conclusion

The evidence presented in this paper suggests that ethnicity matters for voter alignment and even more so for party affiliation in Zambia. Our individual survey data also suggest a number of reservations and qualifications which are partly methodology related.

Firstly, ethnicity or ethno-political identity is certainly not the only, but one factor that accounts for election outcomes. Perhaps, other factors might be more relevant than expected. Ethnicity is clearly not a sufficient explicator for election outcomes but it plays its role. The survey data together with aggregate data of several election results suggest, particularly if we compare voting alignment, party identification and party affiliation (card holding membership), a core group of ethnic voters and ethnic party members.

Secondly, the degree of ethnic voting can differ from one ethno-political group to the other. For some ethnic and ethno-political groups ethnicity appears to be more important than for others as an explicator for voter alignment and party affiliation. Usually this can be attributed to different degrees of ethnic mobilisation, up to 'particisation' of ethnicity, but, again, this needs an additional qualification which implies a methodological issue.

Smaller ethnic groups and some ethno-political subgroups do not identify with a particular party. Hence the political elite as well as the particular electorate can choose among different parties. Obviously, the elites disagree among themselves and affiliate with different parties; and so does the electorate. These smaller groups seem to provide a substantial number of

shifting voters (apart from urban areas, they are in Eastern, Northwestern and Western Province). All this makes it difficult to trace and analyse them in the various data collections. But this does not imply automatically they *do not* vote and affiliate along ethnic lines.

Our survey did not cover the ethnicity of the local winning candidate and its party affiliation. So we could not control for voting in relation to the ethnicity of the candidate. As Posner's (2005: 224-228) analysis of aggregate data for a number of elections shows, the candidate's tribal affiliation matters as well, although the estimated difference between 'voters from dominant tribes' (0.63) and 'from non-dominant tribes' (0.52) voting for 'candidates from dominant tribes' is not very high. At least, this also suggests that ethnicity is not 'the only game in town', but still a crucial one.

In the end, taking the evidence of inferences from aggregate election data together with the survey data, one cannot escape the conclusion that certain reoccurring voting patterns cannot be explained by voters' decisions based on 'evaluative' assessment of individual candidates' performance. Taken together these findings imply that ethnicity can still be viewed as the major factor explaining party affiliation in Zambia, and to a lesser degree voter alignment. Ethnic affiliation and voting is not understood as 'traditional', non-rational or affective only but based on a strategically calculated choice.

A final methodological caveat remains to be stated, namely, that an approach based on self-evaluation of people – about the reason why they themselves or other people voted for a party or candidate – does yield questionable results. At least our survey yielded contradicting results. Moreover the assumption that voters relate their decision to candidates' performance does not hold true for Zambia; the party and its identification with a particular ethno-political group seems to be more important. As many other African countries have very similar electoral systems – single member plurality with party endorsement – it can safely be stated that this can be applied to other countries as well. This conclusion is also supported by John Carey and Matthew Shugart's (1995) finding that this particular electoral system is the most party-orientated type.

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Appendix A

Coverage of provinces	Survey districts	Population	% of national	Respondents	% of sample
Copperbelt	Kitwe, Ndola	1,581,221	22.4	92	9.2
Eastern	Chipata, Katete	1,306,173	18.6	212	21.2
Luapula	Mwense, Samfya	775,353	11.0	123	12.3
Lusaka	Lusaka	1,391,329	19.8	259	25.9
Southern	Choma, Sinazongwe	1,212,124	17.2	194	19.4
Western	Senanga, Lukulu	765,088	10.9	121	12.1
Central		*1,012,257*	*10*	-	-
Northern		*1,258,696*	*13*	-	-
Northwestern		*583,350*	*6*	-	-
Total (without Central, Northern, North-Western)		**7,031,288**	**100.0**	**1,001**	**100.0**

Source: Central Statistical Office of Zambia 2003.

Appendix B

Sex	Count	Valid percent	%
Male	525	52.8	52.4
Female	469	47.2	46.9
Valid N	994	100.0	99.3
No answer	7	0.0	0.7
Total	**1,001**	**100.0**	**100.0**

Appendix C

Ethnic groups	Count	Valid percent	%	Morrison et al. (1986: 702), in %	Language census 1990
Bemba	189	18.9	18.9	37	39.7
Tonga	227	22.7	22.7	19	14.8
Lozi	116	11.6	11.6	7	7.5
Nyanja	61	6.1	6.1	15	20.1
Luvale	26	2.6	2.6	9[1]	8.8[4]
Tumbuka	42	4.2	4.2	3	3.7
Ila	8	0.8	0.8	2[3]	
Nsenga	50	5.0	5.0	[2]	
Lenje	5	0.5	0.5	4[3]	
Luchazi	10	1.0	1.0	x	
Lunda	22	2.2	2.2	[1]	
Other tribes	243	24.3	24.3		
None	1	0.1	0.1		
Total	**1,001**	**100.0**	**100.0**		

Notes: [1] figure comprises Lunda.
[2] included in Nyanja.
[3] figure included in Tonga.
[4] Northwestern, comprises Lunda and others.

Source: Central Statistical Office 1995: 36.

Appendix D

Question: ***If there were to be parliamentary elections today, for which political party would you vote (March 2004)?***

	Count	**Valid percent**	**%**
MMD	344	35.7	34.4
UPND	232	24.1	23.2
UNIP	70	7.3	7.0
FDD	32	3.3	3.2
HP	22	2.3	2.2
ZRP	6	0.6	0.6
PF	57	5.9	5.7
Others	3	0.3	0.3
Abstain	121	12.6	12.1
Do not know	77	8.0	7.7
Valid N	964	100.0	96.3
No answer	37	0.0	3.7
Total	**1,001**	**100.0**	**100.0**

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