

# Bridging the Divide: Measuring Party System Change and Classifying Party Systems

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*Party systems research has proceeded along two parallel lines of inquiry, one predominantly “qualitative” and the other “quantitative.” This article attempts to bridge this divide in two ways. First, by showing that qualitative information can be valuable in the construction of quantitative measures. Second, by showing that the results from applying theoretically-sensitive measurement tools can be useful for qualitative classification. These analyses are performed using an original dataset of party system changes in Sub-Saharan Africa.*

**Keywords:** Political Parties, Political Institutions, Party System Change, Attributes, Classifying Party Systems, ~~Inter-Party~~ Competition, Party System Stability, Qualitative Information, Quantitative Measures, Qualitative-Quantitative Divide, Social Science Methods, Index of Fluidity, Sub-Saharan Africa, Classification.

**Related Articles:**

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1 CNN. Africa's Rocky Road to Democracy. <http://edition.cnn.com/2013/03/01/opinion/africa-democracy-mbaku/>

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3  
4 *La literatura en los sistemas de partidos se ha desarrollado sobre dos*  
5 *líneas de investigación, una predominantemente “cualitativa” y la*  
6 *otra “cuantitativa.” Este artículo tiene como meta combinar esta*  
7 *división en dos formas. Primero, al mostrar que la información cuali-*  
8 *tativa puede ser valiosa para la construcción de medidas cuantitati-*  
9 *vas. Segundo, mostrando que los resultados de la aplicación de*  
10 *herramientas de medición teóricamente sensibles puede ser útil*  
11 *para la clasificación cualitativa. Estos análisis son llevados a cabo*  
12 *usando bases de datos originales sobre el cambio de sistema de par-*  
13 *tido en África sub-sahariana.*

14  
15  
16 Scholarly interest in party systems is motivated in part by a desire to better  
17 understand the inherent characteristics of party systems, but even more so by  
18 awareness that these characteristics can significantly impact on the functioning  
19 of political systems. Research has shown that the characteristics of party sys-  
20 tems—or party system *attributes*—can affect government stability, political sta-  
21 bility, fiscal irresponsibility, and legislative outputs, as well as numerous other  
22 governance outcomes (see e.g., Chhibber and Nooruddin 2004; Mainwaring  
23 1993; Mainwaring and Scully 1995).

24 While party system specialists, and political scientists in general, tend to  
25 agree that party system attributes are an important determinant of the func-  
26 tioning and ultimately survival of political systems, they disagree about how  
27 these attributes should be described, compared and analyzed. Qualitatively-  
28 oriented scholars (see e.g., Bogaards 2004; Sartori 2005[1976]; Siaroff 2003;  
29 Ware 1996, 2009; Wolinetz 2004) tend to believe that party system taxonomies  
30 based on qualitative criteria provide the most appropriate approach for map-  
31 ping variation in party system attributes. Quantitative scholars are more scepti-  
32 cal of the utility of such classification schemes and the theories underpinning  
33 them, and prefer to analyze party system attributes using metrics devised to  
34 capture the fragmentation (Laakso and Taagepera 1979; Rae 1967), polariza-  
35 tion (Dalton 2008), and volatility (Bartolini and Mair 1990; Pedersen 1979) of  
36 party systems. This qualitative-quantitative divide is not an absolute one:  
37 researchers do draw from both traditions, and this was especially true in early  
38 party systems scholarship (see e.g., Blondel 1968; Duverger 1951). Nonetheless,  
39 it remains broadly accurate to describe the literature as having developed along  
40 two parallel lines of inquiry, separated by methods and fundamental beliefs  
41 about how party systems are best understood.

42 This study attempts to move beyond the traditional qualitative-  
43 quantitative divide by showing that when quantitative measures are conceived,  
44 devised and applied in ways that are sensitive to theoretical arguments in the  
45 qualitative scholarship, they can improve the basic taxonomic exercise of

1 classifying party systems as types. In other words, ~~theoretically informed~~ quan-  
2 tification can improve the rigor of qualitative empirical analysis. We develop  
3 this argument by using the recently developed index of party system fluidity  
4 (Nwokora and Pelizzo 2015) to measure the extent of stability of patterns of  
5 party competition across Sub-Saharan Africa. The fluidity index, we show,  
6 enables a more precise classification of party systems in this region as  
7 “structured” or “fluid” (Bogaards 2004, 2008; Erdmann and Basedau 2008;  
8 Sartori 2005[1976]).

9 The remainder of the article is organized in five sections. The first section  
10 traces the emergence of the qualitative-quantitative divide, highlighting two  
11 themes: the increasing reluctance of qualitative party system specialists to use  
12 quantitative metrics; and the often crude treatment that quantitative measure-  
13 ment tools give to qualitative insights. Building on this discussion, we make the  
14 case for deeper integration of qualitative and quantitative research, arguing that  
15 qualitative insights can enable quantitative scholars to construct better measures  
16 and that such measures can be usefully employed in qualitative analysis. Our  
17 demonstration of this argument centers on the classification of party systems,  
18 which has been an important agenda within the qualitative scholarship.

19 The second section shows that scholars who apply Sartori’s typology—still  
20 the most widely used schema (see e.g., Wolinetz 2004, 2006)—sometimes reach  
21 different conclusions about the classification of particular cases. In some cases,  
22 an apparent disagreement may be due to a basic misclassification, if a real-  
23 world system is classified as a type even though it clearly lacks the essential  
24 attributes of that type. In other cases, however, the disagreement may be more  
25 subtle and depend on judgments about the extent to which a type exhibits a  
26 property. In these more difficult situations, a properly crafted quantitative mea-  
27 sure, which is consistent with the logic of the qualitative theory, can be used to  
28 resolve disagreements. We use the recently developed index of party system flu-  
29 idity to demonstrate this argument. Given its newness to the literature, we dis-  
30 cuss the index and some of its properties in the article’s third section. Then, in  
31 the fourth section, we show how it can be used to harmonize three prominent  
32 classifications of African party systems (Bogaards 2004, 2008; Erdmann and  
33 Basedau 2008). The final section summarizes the preceding analyses.

34 **Emergence of the Qualitative-Quantitative Divide**

35 To explore the emergence of the qualitative-quantitative divide in party sys-  
36 tems research, it is useful to have in mind a clear definition of the terms  
37 “qualitative” and “quantitative.” These terms are widely used in social-science  
38 research, but not always consistently. For our purposes, we draw on the influen-  
39 tial scales-of-measurement theory, proposed initially by the psychologist ~~S.S.~~  
40 Stevens (see Jacoby 1999), to define these terms. This theory distinguishes four  
41 levels at which entities can be compared. At the nominal level, entities are  
42 divided into classes based on their observable properties or some underlying

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1 relevant party, two-party systems are characterized by the presence of two  
 2 relevant parties, moderate pluralist party systems have between three and five  
 3 relevant parties, while polarized pluralist party systems have more than five  
 4 parties because that is the level of fragmentation at which fragmentation  
 5 exacerbates ideological polarization. Numbers feature prominently in  
 6 Sartori's framework in a second respect: the determination of whether a sys-  
 7 tem has one, two, between three and five, or more than five relevant parties  
 8 largely depends on the parties' electoral returns which are expressed in  
 9 numerical form.

10 With the exception of a few recent studies (Mainwaring and Scully 1995;  
 11 Ware 1996), the development of qualitative typologies using quantitative infor-  
 12 mation has generally been abandoned by party system scholars. Party system  
 13 taxonomists (Wolinetz 2004, 9) explain this change by saying that with the devel-  
 14 opment of sophisticated measures of party system attributes, ~~quantitatively-~~  
 15 ~~inclined~~ scholars lost interest in "tiresome exercises in taxonomy." New tools to  
 16 measure attributes such as "fragmentation" and "polarization" were shown to  
 17 be associated with far-reaching political and economic consequences, including  
 18 government stability (Taylor and Herman 1971), legislative stability (Pelizzo and  
 19 Cooper 2002), the stability of presidential regimes (Mainwaring 1993), the quan-  
 20 tity and quality of legislation (Tsebelis 1999), and the prevalence of electoral  
 21 cycles in fiscal policy (Alt and Dreyer Lassen 2006). Moreover, analyses using  
 22 the new metrics could largely avoid the difficulties and uncertainties associated  
 23 with classification since they required the analyst to count (in various ways)  
 24 rather than identify differences of kind. A further criticism of the qualitative  
 25 approach applied specifically to the influential Sartori typology. Scholars  
 26 such as Peter Mair (1996) argued that due to party system changes since the  
 27 1970s—including the demise of authoritarianism, communism, and fascism  
 28 in Europe and the weakening of traditional cleavage structures—there had  
 29 been a convergence of party systems into the moderate pluralist category.  
 30 This crowding of moderate pluralism, and the emptying out of other types,  
 31 made classification on the basis of Sartori's typology less useful for under-  
 32 standing variation in the functioning of party systems. With quantitative met-  
 33 rics, however, it was possible to undertake finer-grained analyses of party  
 34 systems within the bloated moderate pluralist category. In short, quantitative  
 35 scholars believed that the new measures could make a greater contribution  
 36 than once popular typologies.

37 Meanwhile, ~~quantitatively-oriented~~ scholars, who were at first doubtful of  
 38 the merits of quantitative measures, became increasingly sceptical of them and  
 39 keen to expose their limitations (see e.g., Mair 1996; Ware 1996, 2009; Wolinetz  
 40 2004, 2006). This scepticism is echoed by Bogaards (2004, 174) who recently  
 41 argued that "attempts to make inferences about the type of party system on  
 42 the basis of indexes of party number are seriously flawed." Furthermore,  
 43 Bogaards remarked, "[t]he failure of mathematical indexes to identify party  
 44 systems illustrates the tension that exists between the assumption of a

1 continuum underlying mathematical measures of party number and ‘jumps’  
 2 that occur in real-life politics and are incorporated in discontinuous classi-  
 3 fication” (~~Bogaards 2004~~, 188). This critique of quantitative metrics has  
 4 not been matched by innovations from ~~qualitative~~ scholars to remedy these  
 5 problems. There have been only a few attempts to develop new typologies  
 6 that improve upon Sartori’s. Crucially, none of these efforts has become pop-  
 7 ular in the way that Sartori’s typology did, so this typology continues to dom-  
 8 inate in qualitative research even though scholars are quick to point out its  
 9 limitations.

10 Conversely, ~~qualitatively oriented~~ scholars have had little choice but to  
 11 rely on quantitative metrics. This point is apparent in qualitative studies that  
 12 aim to distinguish between “stable” and “unstable” party systems (see e.g.,  
 13 Bogaards 2004, 2008; Erdmann and Basedau 2008). This qualitative distinc-  
 14 tion is important when applying Sartori’s typology in emerging states, or  
 15 “fluid polities,” because Sartori developed separate, and slightly different,  
 16 classification schemes for systems that could be considered relatively stable  
 17 and those that were unstable. Sartori also proposed a ~~qualitative~~ indicator  
 18 to distinguish between these two classes: the existence or absence of mass  
 19 parties. But, as we discuss later, this can be a problematic indicator of stability.  
 20 Therefore, scholars have usually turned to quantitative metrics of  
 21 “volatility” to measure system stability. From a qualitative standpoint, this  
 22 approach is less than ideal. It leaves unsettled the question of how to deter-  
 23 mine a suitable cut-off point to separate stable and unstable party systems.  
 24 Moreover, these metrics do not capture the stability of a party system, when  
 25 this term is conceptualized in the Sartori sense to mean the pattern of com-  
 26 petition—they tend to capture change in the electoral standing of parties in  
 27 a party system, which can occur while a pattern of competition remains  
 28 stable.

29 To summarize, the early scholarship on party systems made a serious  
 30 effort to integrate quantitative and qualitative approaches. But since the  
 31 1970s, a division has arisen between (1) scholars who largely reject qualitative  
 32 classification and (2) those who defend its value and continue to apply the  
 33 Sartori typology, while noting its problems and despite having to use slightly  
 34 problematic metrics to conduct their analyses. The development of these two  
 35 perspectives—and, to some extent, the emergence of parallel literatures—  
 36 stands in contrast to the early scholarship which embraced and mixed quanti-  
 37 tative and qualitative perspectives. In our view, this qualitative-quantitative  
 38 divide seems likely to have obstructed potential gains from cross-fertilizing  
 39 quantitative rigor with qualitative insights. The remainder of this study  
 40 seeks to demonstrate the complementarity of these approaches. In particular,  
 41 we aim to show that qualitative insights can facilitate better, more  
 42 ~~theoretically rigorous~~ measurement tools (Collier, La Porte, and Seawright  
 43 2012), and these measures can then be deployed by qualitative scholars in  
 44 their classificatory efforts.

## 1 From a “System of Interactions” to a “Party System”

2 In an important passage in his book, Sartori noted that “parties make for a  
3 ‘system’, then, only when they are parts (in the plural); and a party system is  
4 precisely the *system of interactions* resulting from inter-party competition. That  
5 is the system in question bears on the relatedness of parties to each other, on  
6 how each party is a function (in the mathematical sense) of the other parties  
7 and reacts, competitively or otherwise, to other parties” (2005, 39). Thus, fol-  
8 lowing the Sartori perspective, there is no doubt that a party system results  
9 from the pattern of inter-party competition. However, the existence of a pattern  
10 of inter-party competition does not in itself imply the existence of a party sys-  
11 tem. A party system exists only if the pattern of inter-party competition is sta-  
12 ble over time. In other words, *stability* of the pattern of competition is  
13 necessary for “parties to make for a system.” While stable patterns of interpar-  
14 ty competition are party systems, unstable patterns of competition indicate a  
15 “fluid polity.” As Sartori explains, “viscosity, resilience, and immobilizing  
16 impact of structures” (Sartori 2005, 217) are what distinguish patterns of inter-  
17 party competition in fluid polities from party systems proper.

18 While stability or fluidity is a discriminating factor, the pattern of competi-  
19 tion—which is the basis of Sartori’s “types”—is not. This is why Sartori (2005  
20 [1976]), and later Bogaards (2004, 2008) and Erdmann and Basedau (2008),  
21 could say that the patterns of competition in structured party systems were  
22 also detectable in fluid polities, and vice versa. The pattern of competition that  
23 gives rise to one-party and hegemonic-party systems in structured polities is  
24 the functional analogue of the dominant authoritarian pattern in fluid polities.  
25 The pattern associated with the predominant-party system in a structured par-  
26 ty system finds its counterpart in the dominant non-authoritarian pattern in  
27 fluid polities. Two-party, moderate pluralist, and polarized pluralist systems  
28 are the structured analogue of the non-dominant pattern in fluid polities, while  
29 the atomized system is the stable mirror image of the pulverized pattern in fluid  
30 polities.

31 The widespread application of these categories testified to, and indeed  
32 was responsible for, the success of Sartori’s framework. These categories have  
33 been used to study party systems in all of the major geographical regions,  
34 though their best-known applications have been in studies of structured, and  
35 predominantly Western, party systems. In recent years, the framework has  
36 been used to classify party systems in Sub-Saharan Africa (Bogaards 2004,  
37 2008; Erdmann and Basedau 2008). The results of these three well-known  
38 classificatory efforts suggest there is some agreement but also some signifi-  
39 cant disagreement about how African party systems should be classified using  
40 Sartori’s categories. Given that the framework is meant to capture the funda-  
41 mental properties of party systems, such disagreement suggests uncertainty  
42 about the applicability of Sartori’s framework or the characteristics of the  
43 party systems in question.

**Table 1. Classifying Africa's Party Systems**

Country	Bogaards 2004	Bogaards 2008	Erdmann & Basedau 2008
Benin	Pulverized	Pulverized	Pulverised
Botswana	Dominant	Dominant	Predominant
Burkina Faso	Dominant authoritarian	Dominant authoritarian	Hegemonic
Cameroon	Dominant authoritarian		Hegemonic
Cape Verde	Non-dominant	Non-dominant	Two Party
Djibuti		Dominant authoritarian	Hegemonic
Equatorial Guinea		Dominant authoritarian	Hegemonic
Gabon	Dominant authoritarian		Hegemonic
Gambia, The		Dominant	Dominant authoritarian
Ghana	Non-dominant	Non-dominant	Two party
Kenya	Non-dominant		Non-dominant
Lesotho	Dominant	Dominant	Dominant
Malawi		Non-dominant	Non-dominant
Mali	Non-dominant		Non-dominant
Madagascar	Non-dominant		Non-dominant
Mauritania	Dominant authoritarian	Dominant authoritarian	Hegemonic
Mauritius	Non-dominant	Non-dominant	Moderate pluralism
Mozambique		Dominant	Predominant
Namibia	Dominant	Dominant	Predominant
Sao Tome and Principe	Non-dominant	Non-dominant	Moderate pluralism
Senegal	Non-dominant	Non-dominant	Non-dominant
Seychelles		Dominant	Predominant
South Africa		Dominant	Predominant
Zambia	Dominant authoritarian?	Dominant	Non-dominant authoritarian
Zimbabwe	Dominant authoritarian	Dominant authoritarian	Dominant authoritarian

T1 1 Table 1 presents data concerning the classification of 25 African party systems that were included either in Bogaards (2004) or in Bogaards (2008) and  
 2 also in Erdmann and Basedau (2008). In his 2008 article, Bogaards classified  
 3 13 of the 18 party systems he had classified in his 2004 analysis. In 12 of the 13  
 4 cases, the 2008 classification was identical to the 2004 classification. The only  
 5 exception is Zambia, which he classified as potentially dominant authoritarian  
 6 in 2004 but as dominant in 2008.  
 7

8 Erdmann and Basedau (2008) used a larger sample than Bogaards (2004,  
 9 2008), but the cases analyzed in Bogaards (2004) and in Bogaards (2008) are  
 10 also included in Erdmann and Basedau (2008). Comparison of these



1 classifications reveals a mix of agreement and disagreement on particular cases.  
 2 If we treat each country as an equivalent case, we can summarize by saying  
 3 there are more disagreements than agreements. In fact, the Bogaards (2004)  
 4 and Erdmann and Basedau (2008) taxonomies yield identical classifications for  
 5 only seven out of 18 countries (Benin, Kenya, Lesotho, Mali, Madagascar, Seneg-  
 6 gal, Zimbabwe). Comparing Bogaards (2008) and Erdmann and Basedau  
 7 (2008), only five of the 20 party systems classified by Bogaards (Benin, Leso-  
 8 tho, Malawi, Senegal, and Zimbabwe) are classified in the same way by Erd-  
 9 mann and Basedau.

10 Crucially, the differences between these taxonomies has very little to do  
 11 with how *systems of interaction* are classified. If one recalls that there is corre-  
 12 spondence between fluid patterns and structured patterns—for example, the  
 13 dominant-authoritarian pattern corresponds to the one-party/hegemonic-party  
 14 pattern—then it is clear that Erdmann and Basedau (2008) classify 17 out of  
 15 18 systems of interactions in a similar way to Bogaards (2004), and 19 out of  
 16 20 systems of interaction in a similar way to Bogaards (2008). The only dis-  
 17 agreements not of this kind concern Zambia, where there is not correspon-  
 18 dence on the observed pattern of competition: in Bogaards (2004), the pattern  
 19 is (probably) dominant authoritarian; in Bogaards 2008, the pattern is domi-  
 20 nant; and in Erdmann and Basedau (2008), the pattern is non-dominant  
 21 authoritarian. Hence, in nearly all cases, the disagreements among these classi-  
 22 fications depend entirely on whether patterns of competition should be  
 23 regarded as structured or fluid. These disagreements suggest, however, that  
 24 determining whether a party system is “structured” or “fluid” is far from  
 25 straightforward. In the section that follows, we review some alternative  
 26 approaches to resolving this issue.

27

### Structuration versus Fluidity

28 When Sartori conducted the analyses that were eventually presented in *Par-*  
 29 *ties and Party Systems* (1976), many African countries had just become indepen-  
 30 dent and the parties and party systems in the region had just been created. It  
 31 was too early to assess whether these emergent patterns of competition would  
 32 “consolidate” or “institutionalize,” and therefore Sartori chose to regard such  
 33 patterns as “fluid.” Party system scholars have adopted, over the years, various  
 34 indicators to assess the extent of such party system “institutionalization.”

35 A Sartorian line of inquiry assesses the institutionalization of African party  
 36 systems based on the presence/absence of mass parties (Bogaards 2008, 178),  
 37 building on Sartori’s (2005, 217) argument that “a party system becomes struc-  
 38 tured when it contains solidly entrenched mass parties.” This approach  
 39 assumes a strong connection between the existence of mass parties and the sta-  
 40 bility of the pattern of competition. In Africa, however, proper mass parties are  
 41 rare, but there is clearly significant variation in the stability of party systems.

1 Some studies (Bogaards 2008; Mozaffar, [SCARRITT](#), and [GALAICH](#) 2003;  
 2 ~~Mozaffar and Scarritt 2005~~; Weghorst and Bernhard 2014) employ Pedersen's  
 3 index of volatility (Pedersen 1979) to evaluate party system institutionalization  
 4 in Africa. Pedersen's index computes the net change in parties' vote or seat  
 5 totals between elections. This approach works on the assumption that high vol-  
 6 atility indicates absence of consolidation. However, other studies, such as Bar-  
 7 tolini and Mair (1990), challenge this claim. Disaggregating volatility into two  
 8 basic types, they argue that while between-bloc volatility—the volatility caused  
 9 by the vote-switching across cleavage lines—provides a proper indication of the  
 10 extent of consolidation, within-bloc volatility—vote-switching between parties  
 11 on the same side of a cleavage/issue—provides no such indication. More recent-  
 12 ly, Powell and Tucker (2014) decompose total volatility into “Type A” and  
 13 “Type B” volatility, which indicate, respectively, vote-switching to new parties  
 14 and vote-switching among existing parties. These measures are used by  
 15 Weghorst and Bernhard (2014, 1730) to argue that the steady decline in Type A  
 16 volatility and the corresponding increase in Type B volatility provide  
 17 “important evidence of the beginning of party system institutionalization,”  
 18 and suggest that “that party systems in sub-Saharan Africa are volatile but  
 19 institutionalizing over time” (~~Weghorst and Bernhard 2014~~, 1708).

20 Kuenzi and Lambright (2001) apply multiple criteria to assess institution-  
 21 alization. They treat institutionalization as a function of acceptance/legitima-  
 22 cy of the electoral process and results, the stability of party rootedness in  
 23 society, and the regularity of party competition. The legitimacy/acceptance of  
 24 the electoral process is assessed on the basis of whether a major party boy-  
 25 cotts elections, whether losers accept the electoral result, and whether elec-  
 26 tions are free and fair. The stability of party roots is measured on the basis of  
 27 parties' average age and the percentage of lower chamber seats held by parties  
 28 created by 1970. Finally, they estimate the regularity of party competition by  
 29 computing volatility in legislative elections, volatility of presidential [elections](#),  
 30 and the difference between levels of volatility recorded in these two types of  
 31 elections.

32 Erdmann and Basedau (2008) adopt a two-stage approach to categorize  
 33 African party system. In the first stage, they use Sartori's typology for fluid  
 34 polities to categorize patterns of competition in Africa as dominant, non-  
 35 dominant, and pulverized. In the second stage, they assess whether the pat-  
 36 terns of competition previously identified should be regarded as “fluid” or  
 37 “structured.” A party system qualifies as “institutionalized” when there have  
 38 been at least three consecutive elections, democracy has not been interrupted,  
 39 seat volatility is no higher than 40 (according to Pedersen's index), and aver-  
 40 age party age is at least 15 years (or nearly as old as the democratic regime  
 41 itself).

42 The approaches applied by Weghorst and Bernhard, Kuenzi and Lam-  
 43 bright, and Erdmann and Basedau each amend the basic volatility index as  
 44 developed by Pedersen. In the case of Weghorst and Bernhard, the

1 measurement of volatility is amended, while Kuenzi and Lambright and Erd-  
2 mann; and Basedau bolster the measurement of volatility by tapping other  
3 party system dimensions. In each approach, however, the measurement strate-  
4 gy is centered on the volatility of the parties in the system, rather than the sys-  
5 tem itself. Furthermore, due to this plurality of approaches, party system  
6 scholars have reached different conclusions about whether particular party  
7 systems should be regarded as structured or fluid, and whether “African party  
8 systems” in general should be regarded as structured or fluid. The absence  
9 of mass parties and high levels of total volatility have led some scholars  
10 (Bogaards 2008) to regard patterns of interparty competition in Africa as flu-  
11 id, while declining rates of Type A volatility and the regularity/legitimacy of  
12 interparty competition have led other scholars to consider at least some Afri-  
13 can party systems as increasingly if not properly institutionalized (Weghorst  
14 and Bernhard 2014).

15 We suggest a new approach for estimating the extent to which patterns  
16 of competition are fluid or structured in this region, which aims to measure  
17 directly the stability of a party *system*, rather than the volatility of the par-  
18 ties that make up that system. Like Erdmann and Basedau (2008), we apply  
19 a two-stage approach. Using Sartori’s counting rules and party system  
20 types, we collected electoral data for 49 African polities from their first elec-  
21 tions (or the first since WWII) until and including their 2012 elections to  
22 assess whether patterns of interaction corresponded to the properties of  
23 one-party, hegemonic-party, predominant-party, two-party, moderate plu-  
24 ralist, polarized pluralist, and atomized party systems (see Appendix). We  
25 believe this method is preferable to Erdmann and Basedau’s treatment of  
26 patterns of competition as dominant, nondominant, and pulverized, for two  
27 reasons.

28 First, our approach avoids the risk of putting together systems that differ  
29 in significant respects. The dominant category used by Erdmann and Basedau  
30 (2008) could apply to the fluid analogue of the predominant-party system if  
31 consistent with democratic practice, but also to the fluid analogue of the one-  
32 party and hegemonic-party systems when coupled with authoritarian tenden-  
33 cies. However, the distinction between *democratic* dominance and *autocratic*  
34 dominance is theoretically and practically important. Similarly, the fact that a  
35 system of interaction has two relevant parties makes it quite different from a  
36 system with a larger number of relevant parties, though both might be consid-  
37 ered “nondominant.” Our decision to use Sartori’s principal types prevents the  
38 conflation of such different patterns. Second, our approach enables a more  
39 empirically sensitive classification. Because Erdmann and Basedau (2008) use  
40 only three categories to classify patterns of competition, they can only detect  
41 changes among these categories. Using seven categories we can detect not only  
42 the changes that Erdmann and Basedau detect, but also changes that occur  
43 among those patterns of competition that are lumped together in Erdmann  
44 and Basedau’s (2008) classification.

1 Having categorized patterns of competition, we then proceed in the second  
2 stage to detect whether change in the pattern of interparty competition has  
3 occurred within a country. In doing so, we track not only whether a system  
4 change has occurred but also the magnitude of change. Any change in pattern  
5 of competition indicates some degree of instability in a country's party system,  
6 but some changes are more destabilizing than others. Change from a one-party  
7 system to a hegemonic-party system or from polarized pluralism to atomiza-  
8 tion—which are contiguous categories—is less transformative than change  
9 from a one-party system to an atomized system. Change from a one-party sys-  
10 tem to a hegemonic-party system implies change in the mechanism by which  
11 the relevant party secures its relevance, but the number of relevant parties in  
12 the system remains unchanged. Similarly, in a change from polarized pluralism  
13 to atomization, a system that already has a high number of relevant parties  
14 becomes a system with an even higher number of parties. But if a change  
15 occurs between the one-party and atomized systems we witness change from a  
16 system of maximum power concentration to a system where power is so dis-  
17 persed that it is almost no longer a system.

18 Once this information is collected, we follow Nwokora and Pelizzo (2015)  
19 by calculating the magnitude of party system change along three distinct  
20 dimensions. One pertains to the frequency of change; one pertains to the scope  
21 or extent of change; while the third concerns the variety of change, that is, the  
22 number of distinct patterns that a party system goes through in its historical  
23 development. Each dimension is relevant for understanding the dynamics of  
24 party systems. Furthermore, they do not necessarily correlate, which means  
25 that a party system can be stable in one sense while being unstable in another.  
26 An example would be a system that undergoes regular changes between the  
27 same two types. Such a party system would have a high frequency of change,  
28 but a low variety of change. If the changes occurred between two types with  
29 reasonably similar mechanical properties—for example, the predominant and  
30 two-party types—then the scope of change would also be low. We could con-  
31 clude, in a party system with this dynamic pattern, that the predominant party  
32 fails to consolidate its predominance over time or the two-party system is  
33 unable to ensure regular alternation of parties in office.

34 The frequency of party system change is measured by dividing the number  
35 of changes in the pattern of competition by the number of elections (since inde-  
36 pendence and up to and including 2012). The scope or extent of change is cal-  
37 culated on the basis of an ordinal scale with seven points spanning from “one-  
38 party system” to “atomized system.” To calculate the variety of change, we  
39 observe the number of different types that are observed in a country during a  
40 historical period. The scores for each sub-dimension are multiplied to produce  
41 an “index of fluidity” score. Let us consider an example to see how this score  
42 can be computed. The Seychelles experienced three party system changes in the  
43 period from 1970 until 2012: from a two-party system (1970-79) to a one-party  
44 system (1979-93); from a one-party system to a predominant-party system

1 (1993-2011); and from a predominant-party system to a two-party system  
 2 (2011 onward). These three transitions occurred over the course of 10 elections,  
 3 giving a frequency of 0.3. The scope of change, from a two-party system to a  
 4 one-party system, equals three. The variety of change also equals three. The  
 5 total fluidity score in this case is therefore 2.7, which is comparatively low for  
 6 the region (see Appendix).

### 7 From Measurement to Classification

8 The index yields a quantitative ~~asures~~, but it requires input of qualitative  
 9 data, which relies on knowledge of the relevant countries' elections, parties,  
 10 and party systems. Thus the index's computation necessitates some bridging of  
 11 the qualitative-quantitative divide. The qualitative-quantitative divide is also  
 12 overcome in a second way: the index can improve the precision of ~~qualitative~~  
 13 classification. Specifically, the index of fluidity provides analysts with the infor-  
 14 mation necessary to determine whether patterns of competition are fluid or  
 15 structured. As we discussed earlier, the disputed classifications in prominent  
 16 taxonomies of African party systems turn on the answer to this question.

17 Our computations reveal that African party systems display highly variable  
 T2 18 levels of fluidity (see Table 2 and Appendix). In countries such as Namibia,  
 19 South Africa, Botswana, Djibuti, The Gambia, and Zimbabwe, patterns of  
 20 interparty competition are highly stable. The party systems of these countries  
 21 can be properly regarded as "stable" or "structured." At the other extreme, the  
 22 data reveal that patterns of competition in Mali, Burkina Faso, Senegal, and  
 23 Mauritania have been rather unstable, which sustains the claim that these are  
 24 fluid party systems. As a preliminary test of the validity of the index (in the  
 25 African context), we correlate the 2012 estimates against countries' 2008 fluidi-  
 26 ty scores. This test reveals a very strong, positive and ~~statistically~~ correlation  
 27 between these estimates ( $r = .949$ ,  $\text{sig.} = .000$ ), which indicates that the measure  
 28 yields estimates that are stable over time. This suggests that the index is a reli-  
 29 able tool. Moreover, it suggests that the party systems identified by the index  
 30 as being relatively stable are likely to remain so (at least in the short run), while  
 31 unstable party systems will tend to continue to display unstable properties.

32 We also correlated these fluidity scores against several measures that might  
 33 be expected to be empirically associated with party system stability, namely  
 34 Kuenzi and Lambright's index of institutionalization, Basedau and Stroh's  
 35 ~~index of institutionalization (Basedau and Stroh, 2008)~~, and the World Gover-  
 36 nance Indicators' measure of political stability (Kaufmann, Kraay, and Mas-  
 37 truzzi 2014) in 2012. The correlation between fluidity in 2012 and the level of  
 38 institutionalization as measured by Kuenzi and Lambright in 2001 is negative,  
 39 but modest and not statistically significant ( $r = -.222$ ,  $\text{sig.} = .238$ ). The corre-  
 40 lation between fluidity and Basedau and Stroh's measure of institutionalization  
 41 yields a moderately strong, negative, but statistically insignificant coefficient  
 42 ( $r = -.351$ ,  $\text{sig.} = .355$ ). Unsurprisingly, correlating 2008 fluidity scores instead

**Table 2. Fluidity in Sub-Saharan Africa**

Country	Fluidity in 2012	Fluidity in 2008
Angola	3.60	4.50
Benin	3.00	2.25
Botswana	0.20	0.22
Burkina Faso	6.86	8.00
Cameroon	3.60	4.00
Cape Verde	6.00	6.86
Djibuti	4.29	4.00
Equatorial Guinea	12.00	14.40
Gabon	1.33	1.50
Gambia, The	0.66	0.73
Ghana	6.00	6.00
Kenya	2.40	2.40
Lesotho	4.50	1.71
Liberia	2.45	2.70
Madagascar	6.00	6.86
Malawi	6.67	5.82
Mali	8.88	8.88
Mauritania	12.00	8.89
Mauritius	2.25	2.45
Mozambique	0.67	0.80
Namibia	0.00	0.00
Sao Tome and Principe	8.00	6.86
Senegal	10.00	8.89
Seychelles	2.70	2.00
South Africa	0.00	0.00
Zambia	4.36	1.20
Zimbabwe	1.00	0.80

1 of 2012 scores yields similar findings.<sup>3</sup> Overall, these results suggest that higher  
 2 levels of party system institutionalization are associated with higher levels of  
 3 party system stability and lower levels of institutionalization are associated  
 4 with higher levels of fluidity, but these connections are not highly reliable. In  
 5 the case of the correlation between the fluidity index and Basedau and Stroh's  
 6 measure, estimates of the consistency of the relationship are also likely to be  
 7 undermined by the small number (9) of cases. Finally, the correlation between  
 8 the index of fluidity and the measure of political stability yields a moderately  
 9 strong, negative and statistically significant coefficient ( $r = -.315$ , sig. = .029),  
 10 which confirms the widespread suspicion that unstable party systems are  
 11 associated with politically motivated violence and unrest. Interestingly, the

<sup>3</sup>Correlating the 2008 fluidity scores to Basedau and Stroh's index produces a coefficient of  $r = -1.09$ , sig. = .780; correlating these fluidity scores to Kuenzi and Lambright's index produces a coefficient of  $r = -.236$ , sig. = .209.

AQ2

1 correlation between fluidity 2008 scores and the political stability index is  
2 also statistically significant, though the strength of this correlation is  
3 weaker than for the 2012 fluidity estimates ( $r = -.290$ ,  $\text{sig.} = .045$ ). This  
4 finding has an important practical implication: it suggests that fluidity  
5 might have potential as a prognostic tool for estimating political risk; its  
6 utility in this capacity diminishes the further into the future the projection  
7 is made.

8 In addition to being a valid and reliable measure of party system dynamics,  
9 the index of fluidity can also be employed to categorize party systems. As noted  
10 above, Erdmann and Basedau (2008) classified seven party systems (Benin,  
11 Kenya, Lesotho, Mali, Madagascar, Senegal, Zimbabwe) in exactly the same  
12 way as Bogaards (2004), with both studies agreeing these patterns of inter-  
13 party competition are unstable. The fluidity index scores for 2012, presented in  
14 Table 2, largely sustains this claim. In Madagascar, Mali, and Senegal, the pat-  
15 tern of interparty competition has been highly unstable and these systems  
16 should therefore be regarded as fluid. These countries post fluidity index scores  
17 that are among the highest in the sample. However, computing the fluidity  
18 index for Benin suggests a party system that may be more stable than has been  
19 conventionally recognized. It posts a fluidity score of 3, which is comparatively  
20 low for the region, but was regarded by Bogaards (2004) and Erdmann and  
21 Basedau (2008) as unstable. Table 2 also shows that if the stability of competi-  
22 tion is measured autonomously (on the basis of electoral returns alone), as the  
23 fluidity index aims to do, rather than heteronomously (on the basis of, for  
24 instance, political violence), both Kenya and Zimbabwe should be regarded as  
25 structured party systems. A similar observation might also be made of Lesotho,  
26 which posts a “borderline” fluidity index score.

27 Eleven out of the 18 cases that appear in Bogaards (2004) and Erdmann  
28 and Basedau (2008) are classified differently. In most cases—the exception is  
29 Zambia—disagreement consisted in the fact that while Bogaards (2004)  
30 regarded all the systems of interaction as fluid, Erdmann and Basedau (2008)  
31 considered them structured. Looking at the data presented in Table 2, we see  
32 that Erdmann and Basedau’s assessment is supported by the 2012 fluidity  
33 scores in half of the cases (5 out of 10). In Botswana, Cameroon, Gabon, Mau-  
34 ritius, and Namibia, patterns of competition display relatively little or no fluid-  
35 ity. Therefore, Erdmann and Basedau are quite correct to regard these systems  
36 as structured. Yet the patterns of competition observed in Burkina Faso, Cape  
37 Verde, Ghana, Mauritania, and Sao Tome and Principe accord more closely  
38 with Bogaards’s classification of them as highly fluid. In the case of the Zambi-  
39 an party system, the disagreement between these classifications depends on  
40 whether that system should be regarded as a dominant or a nondominant  
41 authoritarian system, but both studies agree on the fact that the pattern of  
42 competition should be treated as fluid. The fluidity index scores provide only  
43 weak support for this contention, with Zambia posting a fluidity score similar  
44 to the borderline score of Lesotho.

1 Comparing Bogaards (2008) to Erdmann and Basedau (2008), there are  
 2 five agreed on cases (Benin, Lesotho, Malawi, Senegal, and Zimbabwe). The  
 3 2012 fluidity index scores sustain the classification of two of these cases (Mala-  
 4 wi and Senegal), both of which post relatively high scores and are classified as  
 5 being highly unstable in Erdmann and Basedau (2008) and in Bogaards (2008).  
 6 However, the fluidity data casts some doubt on the classification of three cases.  
 7 As noted earlier—in the comparison of Erdmann and Basedau (2008) to  
 8 Bogaards (2004)—the index suggests that the classification of Benin, Lesotho,  
 9 and Zimbabwe as unstable systems is questionable. Of the 15 cases where these  
 10 classifications disagree, only one of these disagreements (Zambia) does not  
 11 turn on the question of whether the party system is fluid or not. Of the remain-  
 12 ing 14, the index scores again support the two classification schemes in a  
 13 roughly even number of cases. The index sustains the Erdmann and Basedau  
 14 categorization in seven cases (Botswana, the Gambia, Mauritius, Mozambique,  
 15 Namibia, Seychelles, and South Africa); but offers more support for  
 16 Bogaards’s classifications in six cases (Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Equatorial  
 17 Guinea, Ghana, Mauritania, Sao Tome and Principe). The party system of Dji-  
 18 buti posts an index score similar to that of Lesotho and Zambia, and therefore  
 19 might be reasonably described as “stable” or “unstable.”

20

## Conclusions

21 We have argued that our knowledge about party systems would improve  
 22 more rapidly if, ~~in~~ instead of reinforcing the qualitative-quantitative methodo-  
 23 logical divide, qualitative and quantitative party system scholars found ways to  
 24 influence each other’s analyses. ~~Quantitatively oriented~~ party system scholars  
 25 could benefit from the input of ~~qualitatively oriented~~ scholars especially when  
 26 refining quantitative tools. Conversely, ~~qualitatively oriented~~ party system  
 27 scholars could also benefit from using properly crafted and well-informed  
 28 quantitative measures and indexes for their taxonomic purposes.

29 In this article, we presented a theory-based, ~~qualitatively informed~~ measure  
 30 of party system change and have tried to show how it can improve party system  
 31 classification. This is because the index of fluidity can enable party system  
 32 scholars to establish whether a pattern of competition is largely structured or  
 33 fluid. It is not an alternative to classification, we argue, but an effective tool to  
 34 make classification more rigorous. The qualitative-quantitative methodological  
 35 divide is a relatively recent development. The originators of party system  
 36 research (Duverger, Sartori, Rokkan) applied qualitative and quantitative  
 37 information to analyze party systems. In this study, we have also argued that  
 38 such integration can produce better scholarship than either numbers-aversion  
 39 or numbers-obsession.

40



**Table A1. Fluidity in Sub-Saharan Africa**

Country (Electoral Regimes)	Year of Election	Type of Party System	Frequency			Scope		Fluidity Index Score
			Number of Elections	Number of Type Changes	Distance between Most Different Types	Variety Number of Different Types	Frequency* Scope*Variety	
Angola (1975-2012)	1980	One-Party	5	2	3	3	(2/5)*3*3	3.60
	1986	One-Party						
	1992	Two-Party						
	2008	Hegemonic						
	2012	Hegemonic						
	1960	Two-Party	9	3	3	3	(3/9)*3*3	
Benin (1960-61; 1964-65; 1968-69; 1970-72; 1991-2012)	1964	Hegemonic						3.00
	1968	Hegemonic						
	1970	Mod. Pluralism						
	1991	Mod. Pluralism						
	1996	Mod. Pluralism						
	2001	Mod. Pluralism						
	2006	Mod. Pluralism						
	2011	Two-Party						
	1965	Hegemonic	10	1	1	2	(1/10)*1*2	
	1969	Hegemonic						
	1974	Hegemonic						
Botswana (1965-2012)	1979	Hegemonic						0.20
	1984	Hegemonic						
	1989	Hegemonic						
	1994	Predominant						
	1999	Predominant						
	2004	Predominant						
	2009	Predominant						
	1959	Two-Party	7	3	4	4	(3/7)*4*4	

Continued

**Table A1. Continued**

Country (Electoral Regimes)	Year of Election	Type of Party System	Frequency		Scope		Variety		Fluidity Index Score
			Number of Elections	Number of Type Changes	Distance between Most Different Types	Number of Different Types	Frequency* Scope*Variety		
Burkina Faso (1959-66; 1970-74; 1977-80; 1991-2012)	1965	One-Party	5	4	3	4	(4/5)*3*4	9.60	
	1978	Mod. Pluralism							
	1991	Hegemonic							
	1998	Hegemonic							
	2005	Hegemonic							
	2010	Hegemonic							
	1961	Hegemonic							
	1965	Predominant							
	1984	One-Party							
	1993	Two-Party							
Burundi (1962-66; 1979-96; 2005-12)	2010	Hegemonic	10	3	4	3	(3/10)*4*3	3.60	
	1965	One-Party							
	1970	One-Party							
	1975	One-Party							
	1980	One-Party							
	1984	One-Party							
	1988	One-Party							
	1992	Mod. Pluralism							
	1997	Hegemonic							
	2004	Hegemonic							
Cape Verde (1975-2012)	2011	Hegemonic	8	3	4	4	(3/8)*4*4	6.00	
	1975	One-Party							
	1980	One-Party							
	1985	One-Party							
	1991	Two-Party							
	1996	Hegemonic							

Continued

**Table A1. Continued**

Country (Electoral Regimes)	Year of Election	Type of Party System	Frequency		Scope	Variety		Fluidity Index Score
			Number of Elections	Number of Type Changes		Distance between Most Different Types	Number of Different Types	
Central African Republic (1959-66; 1981-2003; 2005-12)	2001	Two-Party						
	2006	Two-Party						
	2011	Two-Party						
	1959	Hegemonic	8	6	4	5	(6/8)*4*5	15.00
	1964	One-Party						
Chad (1960-75; 1996-2012)	1981	Two-Party						
	1992	(Result annulled)						
	1993	Mod. Pluralism						
	1999	Predominant						
	2005	Mod. Pluralism						
	2011	Predominant						
	1962	One-Party	7	3	4	4	(3/7)*4*4	6.85
	1963	One-Party						
	1969	One-Party						
	1996	Mod. Pluralism						
Comoros (1978-99; 2002-12)	2001	Predominant						
	2006	Predominant						
	2011	Hegemonic						
	1978	Atomized	8	2	6	3	(2/8)*6*3	4.50
	1982	One-Party						
	1987	One-Party						
	1990	Mod. Pluralism						
	1996	Mod. Pluralism						
2002	Mod. Pluralism							
2006	Mod. Pluralism							
2010	Mod. Pluralism							

Continued

**Table A1. Continued**

Country (Electoral Regimes)	Year of Election	Type of Party System	Frequency		Scope		Variety		Fluidity Index Score
			Number of Elections	Number of Type Changes	Distance between Most Different Types	Number of Different Types	Frequency* Scope*Variety		
Congo Brazzaville (1960-63; 1992-97; 2002-12)	1961	One-Party	4	2	4	3	(2/4)*4*3	6.00	
	1992	Mod. Pluralism							
	2002	Hegemonic							
	2009	Hegemonic							
Congo Kinshasa (1960-97; 2006-12)	1960	Mod. Pluralism	7	3	4	3	(3/7)*4*3	5.14	
	1965	Hegemonic							
	1970	One-Party							
	1977	One-Party							
	1984	One-Party							
	2006	Mod. Pluralism							
	2011	Mod. Pluralism							
	1960	One-Party	10	3	4	4	(3/10)*4*4	4.80	
	1965	One-Party							
	1970	One-Party							
Cote d'Ivoire (1960-99; 2000-12)	1975	One-Party							
	1980	One-Party							
	1985	One-Party							
	1990	Hegemonic							
	1995	Hegemonic							
	2000	Two-Party							
	2010	Mod. Pluralism							
	1977	Hegemonic	7	5	2	3	(5/7)*2*3	4.29	
	1981	One-Party							
	1987	One-Party							

Continued

**Table A1. Continued**

Country (Electoral Regimes)	Year of Election	Type of Party System	Frequency		Scope		Variety		Fluidity Index Score
			Number of Elections	Number of Type Changes	Distance between Most Different Types	Number of Different Types	Frequency* Scope*Variety		
Equatorial Guinea (1968-69; 1982-91; 1991-2012)	1993	Predominant	6	3	6	4	(3/6)*6*4	12.00	
	1999	Hegemonic							
	2005	One-Party							
	2011	Hegemonic							
	1968	Mod. Pluralism							
	1983	Atomized							
	1989	One-Party							
	1996	Hegemonic							
	2002	Hegemonic							
	2009	Hegemonic							
Eritrea (no elections)			10	2	6	3	(2/10)*6*3	3.60	
Ethiopia (1955-74; 1987-2012)	1955	Atomized							
	1961	Atomized							
	1965	Atomized							
	1969	Atomized							
	1973	Atomized							
	1987	One-Party							
	1995	Hegemonic							
	2000	Hegemonic							
	2005	Hegemonic							
	2010	Hegemonic							
Gabon (1961-2012)	1961	Hegemonic	9	2	2	3	(2/9)*2*3	1.33	
	1967	Hegemonic							
	1973	One-Party							
	1979	One-Party							

Continued

**Table A1. Continued**

Country (Electoral Regimes)	Year of Election	Type of Party System	Frequency		Scope		Variety		Fluidity Index Score
			Number of Elections	Number of Type Changes	Distance between Most Different Types	Number of Different Types	Frequency* Scope*Variety		
Gambia (1960-94; 1996-2012)	1986	One-Party							
	1993	Predominant							
	1996	Predominant							
	2005	Predominant							
	2009	Predominant							
	1960	Atomized		1	4	2	(1/12)*4*2	0.66	
	1962	Predominant							
	1966	Predominant							
	1972	Predominant							
	1977	Predominant							
	1982	Predominant							
	1987	Predominant							
Ghana (1960-66; 1979-81; 1992-2012)	1992	Predominant							
	1996	Predominant							
	2001	Predominant							
	2006	Predominant							
	2011	Predominant							
	1960	Hegemonic	8	3	4	4	(3/8)*4*4	6.00	
	1965	One-Party							
	1979	Mod. Pluralism							
	1992	Two-Party							
	1996	Two-Party							
2000	Two-Party								
2004	Two-Party								
2008	Two-Party								

Continued

**Table A1. Continued**

Country (Electoral Regimes)	Year of Election	Type of Party System	Frequency		Scope		Variety		Fluidity Index Score
			Number of Elections	Number of Type Changes	Distance between Most Different Types	Number of Different Types	Frequency* Scope*Variety		
Guinea (1957-84; 1993-2008; 2010-12)	1957	Predominant	9	4	4	4	(4/9)*4*4	7.11	
	1961	One-Party							
	1968	One-Party							
	1974	One-Party							
	1982	One-Party							
	1993	Predominant							
	1998	Predominant							
	2003	Hegemonic							
	2010	Mod. Pluralism							
	1972	One-Party	9	1	4	2	(1/9)*4*2	0.89	
Guinea Bissau (1972-80; 1984-2003; 2005-12)	1976	One-Party							
	1984	One-Party							
	1989	One-Party							
	1994	Mod. Pluralism							
	1999	Mod. Pluralism							
	2005	Mod. Pluralism							
	2009	Mod. Pluralism							
	2012	Mod. Pluralism							
	1963	Predominant	10	2	4	3	(2/10)*4*3	2.40	
	1969	One-Party							
Kenya (1963-91; 1992-2012)	1974	One-Party							
	1979	One-Party							
	1983	One-Party							
	1988	One-Party							
	1992	Mod. Pluralism							
	1997	Mod. Pluralism							

Continued

**Table A1. Continued**

Country (Electoral Regimes)	Year of Election	Type of Party System	Frequency		Scope		Variety		Fluidity Index Score
			Number of Elections	Number of Type Changes	Distance between Most Different Types	Number of Different Types	Frequency* Scope*Variety		
Lesotho (1965-86; 1993-2012)	2002	Mod. Pluralism							
	2007	Mod. Pluralism	8	3	3	4	(3/8)*3*4	4.50	
	1965	Two-Party							
	1970	Two-Party							
	1985	Hegemonic							
	1993	Hegemonic							
	1998	Predominant							
	2002	Predominant							
Liberia (1951-80; 1984-90; 1997-2001; 2003-12)	2007	Predominant							
	2012	Mod. Pluralism	11	3	3	3	(3/11)*3*3	2.45	
	1951	Hegemonic							
	1955	Hegemonic							
	1959	Hegemonic							
	1963	Hegemonic							
	1967	Hegemonic							
	1971	Hegemonic							
	1975	Hegemonic							
	1985	Two-Part							
	1997	Hegemonic							
Madagascar (1965-2009)	2005	Mod. Pluralism							
	2011	Mod. Pluralism	8	3	4	4	(3/8)*4*4	6.00	
	1965	Hegemonic							
	1972	Hegemonic							
	1982	One-Party							
	1989	One-Party							

Continued



**Table A1. Continued**

Country (Electoral Regimes)	Year of Election	Type of Party System	Frequency		Scope		Variety	Fluidity Index Score
			Number of Elections	Number of Type Changes	Distance between Most Different Types	Number of Different Types		
Malawi (1961-93; 1994-2012)	1992	Mod. Pluralism	12	5	4	4	4	6.67
	1996	Mod. Pluralism						
	2001	Two-Party						
	2006	Two-Party						
	1961	Hegemonic						
	1964	One-Party						
	1971	One-Party						
	1976	One-Party						
	1978	One-Party						
	1983	One-Party						
1987	One-Party							
Mali (1957-76; 1979-2012)	1992	One-Party	9	5	4	4	4	8.88
	1994	Mod. Pluralism						
	1999	Two-Party						
	2004	Mod. Pluralism						
	2009	Two-Party						
	1957	Predominant						
	1959	Predominant						
	1964	One-Party						
	1979	One-Party						
	1985	One-Party						
1992	Mod. Pluralism							
1997	Hegemonic							
2002	Mod. Pluralism							
2007	Predominant							
1959	Hegemonic							
			10	6	4	4	5	12.00

Continued

**Table A1. Continued**

Country (Electoral Regimes)	Year of Election	Type of Party System	Frequency		Scope		Variety		Fluidity Index Score
			Number of Elections	Number of Type Changes	Distance between Most Different Types	Number of Different Types	Frequency* Scope*Variety		
Mauritania (1959-60; 1961-78; 1992-2005; 2007-08; 2009-12)	1961	Hegemonic							
	1966	One-Party							
	1971	One-Party							
	1976	One-Party							
	1992	Predominant							
	1997	Hegemonic							
	2003	Predominant							
	2007	Mod. Pluralism							
	2009	Two-Party							
	1959	Predominant		12	3	3	3	(3/12)*3*3	2.25
Mauritius (1959-2012)	1963	Mod. Pluralism							
	1967	Mod. Pluralism							
	1976	Mod. Pluralism							
	1982	Mod. Pluralism							
	1987	Mod. Pluralism							
	1991	Predominant							
	1995	Predominant							
	2000	Predominant							
	2005	Mod. Pluralism							
	2010	Mod. Pluralism							
Mozambique (1977-90; 1994-2012)	1977	One-Party	6	1	2	2	2	(1/6)*2*2	0.67
	1986	One-Party							
	1994	Predominant							
	1999	Predominant							
	2004	Predominant							
	2009	Predominant							

Continued

**Table A1. Continued**

Country (Electoral Regimes)	Year of Election	Type of Party System	Frequency		Scope		Fluidity Index Score	
			Number of Elections	Number of Type Changes	Distance between Most Different Types	Variety Number of Different Types		
Namibia (1994-2012)	1994	Predominant	4	0	0	1	0	
	1999	Predominant						
	2004	Predominant						
	2009	Predominant						
Niger (1965-74; 1989-91; 1993-96; 1999-2010; 2011-12)	1965	One-Party	8	1	4	2	1	
	1970	One-Party						
	1989	One-Party						
	1993	Mod. Pluralism						
	1996	Mod. Pluralism						
	1999	Mod. Pluralism						
	2004	Mod. Pluralism						
	2011	Mod. Pluralism						
	1959	Mod. Pluralism	9	2	2	3		1.33
	1964	Mod. Pluralism						
1979	Mod. Pluralism							
1983	Mod. Pluralism							
1993	Two-Party							
1999	Predominant							
2003	Predominant							
2007	Predominant							
2011	Predominant							
1965	One-Party	7	1	1	2	0.28		
1969	One-Party							
1978	One-Party							
1983	One-Party							

Continued

**Table A1. Continued**

Country (Electoral Regimes)	Year of Election	Type of Party System	Frequency		Scope		Variety		Fluidity Index Score
			Number of Elections	Number of Type Changes	Distance between Most Different Types	Number of Different Types	Frequency* Scope*Variety		
Sao Tomè (1975-90; 1991-2012)	1988	One-Party	8	4	4	4	4	(4/8)*4*4	8.00
	2003	Hegemonic							
	2010	Hegemonic							
	1975	One-Party							
	1980	One-Party							
	1985	One-Party							
	1991	Hegemonic							
	1996	Mod. Pluralism							
	2001	Two-Party							
	2006	Two-Party							
	2011	Mod. Pluralism							
	1963	Hegemonic	10	5	4	4	5	(5/10)*4*5	10.00
Senegal (1963-63; 1966-74; 1978-2012)	1968	One-Party							
	1973	One-Party							
	1978	Predominant							
	1983	Predominant							
	1988	Predominant							
	1993	Predominant							
	2000	Mod. Pluralism							
	2007	Two-Party							
	2012	Mod. Pluralism							
	1970	Two-Party	10	3	3	3	3	(3/10)*3*3	2.70
	1974	Two-Party							
	1979	One-Party							
1984	One-Party								
1989	One-Party								

Continued

**Table A1. Continued**

Country (Electoral Regimes)	Year of Election	Type of Party System	Frequency		Scope		Fluidity Index Score
			Number of Elections	Number of Type Changes	Distance between Most Different Types	Variety Number of Different Types	
	1993	Predominant	10	8	4	4	12.80
	1996	Predominant					
	2001	Predominant					
	2006	Predominant					
	2011	Two-Party					
Sierra Leone (1957-67; 1971-91; 1996-97; 1998-2012)	1957	Two				(8/10)*4*4	
	1962	Mod. Pluralism					
	1967	Mod. Pluralism					
	1973	Hegemonic					
	1977	Two-Party					
	1985	One-Party					
	1996	Mod. Pluralism					
	2002	Two-Party					
	2007	Mod. Pluralism					
	2012	Two-Party					
Somalia (1964-69; 1976-91)	1964	Two-Party	4	1	3	2	1.50
	1969	Two-Party				(1/4)*3*2	
	1979	One-Party					
	1984	One-Party					
Somaliland (1997-2012)	1997	Atomized	3	1	4	2	2.67
	2003	Mod. Pluralism					
	2010	Mod. Pluralism					
South Africa (1994-2012)	1994	Predominant	4	0	0	1	0.00
	1999	Predominant				(0/4)*0*1	
	2004	Predominant					
	2009	Predominant					

Continued

**Table A1. Continued**

Country (Electoral Regimes)	Year of Election	Type of Party System	Frequency		Scope		Variety		Fluidity Index Score
			Number of Elections	Number of Type Changes	Distance between Most Different Types	Number of Different Types	Frequency* Scope*Variety		
South Sudan (2010-12)	2010	Hegemonic	1	0	0	1	(0/1)*0*1	0.00	
Sudan (1953-58; 1965-85; 1993-2012)	1953	Two-Party	9	5	6	6	(5/9)*6*6	20.00	
	1958	Mod. Pluralism							
	1968	Mod. Pluralism							
	1971	One-Party							
	1978	One-Party							
	1983	One-Party							
	1996	Atomized							
	2000	Hegemonic							
	2010	Predominant							
Swaziland (1964-2012)	1964	Predominant	10	1	4	2	(1/10)*4*2	0.80	
	1967	Predominant							
	1972	Predominant							
	1978	Atomized							
	1983	Atomized							
	1987	Atomized							
	1993	Atomized							
	1998	Atomized							
	2003	Atomized							
	2008	Atomized							
Tanzania (1962-2012)	1962	Hegemonic	11	2	2	3	(2/11)*2*3	1.10	
	1965	One-Party							
	1970	One-Party							
	1975	One-Party							
	1980	One-Party							
		One-Party							

Continued

**Table A1. Continued**

Country (Electoral Regimes)	Year of Election	Type of Party System	Frequency		Scope		Variety		Fluidity Index Score
			Number of Elections	Number of Type Changes	Distance between Most Different Types	Number of Different Types	Frequency* Scope*Variety		
Togo (1961-61; 1963-67; 1979-91; 1993-2012)	1985	One-Party	9	3	2	3	(3/9)*2*3	2.00	
	1990	One-Party							
	1995	Predominant							
	2000	Predominant							
	2005	Predominant							
	2010	Predominant							
	1961	Hegemonic							
	1963	Hegemonic							
	1979	One-Party							
	1986	One-Party							
Uganda (1961-66; 1980-80; 1989-2012)	1993	Hegemonic							
	1998	Predominant							
	2003	Predominant							
	2005	Predominant							
	2010	Predominant							
	1961	Mod. Pluralism	8	3	4	4	(3/8)*4*4	6.00	
	1962	Two-Party							
	1980	Two-Party							
	1989	Atomized							
	1996	Predominant							
Zambia (1968-2012)	2001	Predominant							
	2006	Predominant							
	2011	Predominant							
	1968	Hegemonic	11	3	4	4	(3/11)*4*4	4.36	
	1973	One-Party							

Continued

**Table A1. Continued**

Country (Electoral Regimes)	Year of Election	Type of Party System	Frequency		Scope		Variety		Fluidity Index Score
			Number of Elections	Number of Type Changes	Distance between Most Different Types	Number of Different Types	Frequency* Scope*Variety		
Zimbabwe (1980-2012)	1978	One-Party	6	3	1	2	2	$(3/6)*1*2$	1.00
	1983	One-Party							
	1988	One-Party							
	1991	Predominant							
	1996	Predominant							
	2001	Predominant							
	2006	Predominant							
	2008	Predominant							
	2011	Mod. Pluralism							
	1980	Predominant							
	1985	Predominant							
1990	Hegemonic								
1996	Hegemonic								
2002	Predominant								
2008	Hegemonic								



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