

"WE ONLY VOTE BUT DO NOT KNOW":  
THE SOCIAL FOUNDATIONS OF PARTISANSHIP IN GHANA

By

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To Sarah

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Though the process of writing a dissertation can feel like a solitary affair at three o'clock in the morning with a deadline fast approaching and several pages still to be written before dawn, the process of retrospection that accompanies the writing of an "acknowledgments" section brings with it valuable perspective. In hindsight I can see that the actual writing of my dissertation only seemed so tedious and mind-numbing at times because it kept me away from the people who brought so much joy to the practice of discovery which surrounded all those solitary hours behind the computer. These individuals bear no responsibility for the mistakes I have made in cobbling together a social story of Ghanaian party politics, but they deserve much of the credit for whatever the dissertation's redeeming qualities.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACP	Action Congress Party
AFRC	Armed Forces Revolutionary Council
APRP	All People's Republican Party
AYO	Anlo Youth Organization
CDD-G	Center for Democratic Development - Ghana
CPP	Convention People's Party
CYO	Committee on Youth Organization
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EGLE	Every Ghanaian Living Everywhere
FYO	Federation of Youth Organizations
GCP	Ghana Congress Party
KVIP	Kumasi Ventilated Improved Pit Latrine
MAP	Moslem Association Party
NAL	National Alliance of Liberals
NDC	National Democratic Congress
NIP	National Independence Party
NLC	National Liberation Council
NLM	National Liberation Movement
NOPP	Northern People's Party
NPP	New Patriotic Party
NRC	National Redemption Council
PAP	People's Action Party
PCP	People's Convention Party

PPF	Popular Front Party
PHP	People's Heritage Party
PNC	People's National Convention
PNDC	Provisional National Defense Council
PNP	People's National Party
PP	Progress Party
SDF	Social Democratic Front
SMC	Supreme Military Council
TC	Togoland Congress
UGCC	United Gold Coast Convention
UNC	United National Convention
UNIGOV	Union Government
UNP	United National Party
UP	United Party

Abstract of Dissertation Presented to the Graduate School  
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“‘We Only Vote but Do Not Know:’ The Social Foundations of Partisanship in Ghana” focuses on the relationship between social cleavages and political parties in Ghana. In the decade following independence Africanist scholars, influenced by modernization theories, were keen to characterize the fledgling party systems they found as prone to sectional political cleavages given electorates comprised primarily of illiterate peasants. The popular prescription of the day was urban-dominated nationalizing parties at the cost of competition. When the “third wave” washed over African shores more than a quarter century later scholars began to look at the role political parties’ play in politics but have done so without much recognition of the past debate. Instead there is a tendency to focus on party organizations as merely players within formal electoral institutions. My study tries to capture the nuanced social analysis that marks the earlier Africanist discourse in political science while simultaneously acknowledging and learning from contemporary scholarship.

Rather than assuming that parties organized along *Gemeinschaft* social cleavage lines are bad and those organized along *Gesellschaft* lines are good or that politically-mobilized identities are fixed social realities as did so many of the early Africanist scholars, my study allows for flexible hypothesis generation. Two research questions guide this exercise. First, what types of

social cleavages undergird the Ghanaian party system? To answer this question election results are mapped and several regressions are run using district-level socioeconomic and sectional indicators from the 2000 census to predict electoral outcomes. The results of this analysis suggest that ethnicity is the driving force behind Ghanaian partisanship, but not in the zero-sum way that the early Africanist scholars studying parties predicted. The New Patriotic Party (NPP) tends to dominate in Asante regions and the National Democratic Congress (NDC) in Ewe areas regardless of socio-economic characteristics but these two ethnic groups make up slightly less than 30% of the total Ghanaian population. In order to determine how the more than 70% of Ghana's population not self-identified as Asante or Ewe view the two dominant political parties, a complementary "cognitive shortcut" survey was administered in three disparate constituencies. Results from this survey suggest that voters not self-identifying as either Asante or Ewe still view Ghana's party system as cleaved along the described ethnic lines, but vote for either the "Asante" party or the "Ewe" party based largely on specific localized political disputes.

As a follow-up question, my study asks what actors, events, and/or social structures led to these particular cleavages being mobilized in lieu of other potential cleavage structures? Unlike the generators of party systems in Europe described by Lipset and Rokkan as "revolutions," the Asante/Ewe political cleavage was created through a number of fits and starts. These identities became politically salient independently as reactions to Nkrumah's "nationalizing" government. The Asante identity, presented by the National Liberation Movement (NLM), drew upon symbols of Asante defiance from their drawn-out war with the British. The Ewe identity, presented by the Togoland Congress (TC), was fomented by Ewe-speakers' peculiar position in a UN-mandated territory ceded to the British after Germany's defeat in World War I, and more importantly the colonial and Nkrumah governments' reactions to their claims. When Nkrumah

was deposed, these two formerly aligned political groups had the cultural and organizational tools to fill the political void and present voters with oppositional forces across the subsequent three republics.

## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Over the course of the field work that would eventually lead to this dissertation I did a lot of sitting. In the cities it would usually be in a molded plastic chair, most often at a drinking spot. In the countryside an exposed tree root or precarious wooden bench outside of someone's compound would substitute. Though this sitting could be categorized as "participant observation" along the lines of Fenno (1990) had I been pressed to document the use of my time in Ghana, connotatively "participant observation" seems to describe something far more grand and systematic than I was up to. My research design called for a modest survey (N=600) to be conducted in three disparate electoral constituencies.<sup>1</sup> To administer these surveys I hired two assistants for each constituency. These assistants not only possessed the language skills in local dialects that I lacked, but I felt it would be less intimidating for respondents to receive a visit from someone local than from someone purporting to be from an American university. Despite this help I gave myself a month in each constituency which I used to train and retrain my assistants in the art of randomization, survey administration, and Institutional Review Board forms.

Once in the field to collect data, I saw the demands on my time dwindle dramatically. I had to be on the ground in the constituency to do occasional quality control checks, the reason I hired so few assistants and gave myself so much time on location in the first place, but for the most part I found myself wandering through neighborhoods and villages left out of the travel guides, looking for a nice place to sit. Sitting, at least in this oburoni's experience, tended to attract conversation.<sup>2</sup> My favorite icebreaker was the Ghanaian football league. As an avid follower of

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<sup>1</sup> A copy of the English version of this survey is provided in Appendix A.

<sup>2</sup> Oburoni is the Twi word for foreigner. Connotatively the word is used to describe non-Africans.

Accra Hearts of Oak I would relive the past week's glories, and occasional calamities, with fellow admirers and exchange friendly barbs with supporters of other teams. When I was not the conversation initiator, the tendency was for questions about my nationality, followed by questions about how wonderful America *really* is, followed by questions about the visa process. Though I never forced the issue, partly because I was looking for distraction and partly because politics can be a sensitive topic of conversation, if a lull entered into these conversations I would often turn to my dissertation research. The recent election facilitated this process. "What do you think about Ghanaian politics?" I would ask. After hearing a litany of complaints about Ghanaian politics in general, and how all politicians are scoundrels in particular, I would query about the party affiliation of my conversation partner. An answer would almost always come quickly to which I would challenge – "Why do you like your party?" With very few exceptions the answer received after a considerable moment of pause resembled the words uttered by an anonymous respondent from Kumasi who suggested – "We only vote but do not know."

This response, which provides the title of this dissertation, was neither wholly unexpected nor bereft of data. Campaigns in Ghana, not unlike campaigns around much of the world, offer citizens very few tools with which to understand the impact of their vote through thoughtful rational calculations. All parties promise some ill-defined, but no doubt covetable, "development" and express their utter disdain for the debilitating condition of corruption. Candidates describe their opponents as those who will stand in the way of this amorphous "development" by engaging in the "politics of the belly." They will chop plenty of state resources, the narrative goes, and lavish both themselves and friends with gifts while watching the poor man and woman on the street and in the bush suffer (Bayart 1993; Lindberg 2003). Individuals I conversed with frequently expressed embarrassment or shame at their inability to

explain the rationale undergirding their partisan identification or provide a cultivated description of the substantive difference between cherished and despised parties. An individual in Jamestown gave a typical response when he noted that – “We in Ghana are new with our democratic dispensation. Our politics are not like in the US.”

Embedded in this statement of supposed inferiority there is an assumption being made that the researcher expected some rote answer any *true* democrat would know. I read these honest admissions of ignorance not as a sign of Ghana’s democratic failings, however, but as an indicator of the unchallenged areas of cognition where many important political decisions, including that of which party to champion, take place. Many voters in Ghana feel passionately about one party or another but do not know on a conscious-level why they vote the way they do because these decisions are made in an environment of imperfect information where rhetoric and policy are disassociated and the cues voters receive from parties and their candidates are heavily veiled and fit uncomfortably into a discussion of formal policy positions.

### **Entering a Conversation on the “Stuff” of Democratic Politics**

These impromptu conversations, as anecdotal as they may be, suggested a way of situating this modest survey of Ghanaian political parties into a grander conversation in political science on the “stuff” of democratic politics. Americanist scholars took an early role in defining the parameters of the exchange by dividing the study of partisan identification into two camps. One camp understands partisan attachments as derived from the conscious *rational choices* voters make based on party platforms (Downs 1957) or perception of party performance in office (Fiorina 1981). Voters, though they may not always be well-informed, are cognizant of the rationale, as imperfectly constructed as it may be, behind the choices they make. They can either identify which party agrees with them more often than not on the important social and/or economic issues or evaluate the various costs and benefits of a particular government’s rule in

hindsight and forecast forward. One would anticipate, when asked why they support one party or another, voters of this ilk have a thoughtful answer.

Yet my conversations with the chance Ghanaian voter, as well as the more systematic collection of evidence presented in later chapters, suggests this is not the case at all. It is my experience that most voters feel a strong attachment to one party or another but are not quite sure how to verbalize the causal mechanism behind this attachment. In their analysis of the American electorate, another group of scholars (Campbell et al. 1960; Green et al. 2002) has noted a similar phenomenon. Finding rational choices unsatisfying explanatory variables for partisan identification, these scholars turn instead to *social-psychological* attachments. Green, Palmquist, and Schickler (2002, 23) explain this relationship as follows:

People know who they are and where they fit in the matrix of prominent social groups. Citizens' group attachments shape the way they evaluate political candidates and the policies they espouse. These evaluations change as new information becomes available, but seldom does the political environment change in ways that alter how people think of themselves or their relationship to significant social groups. For this reason, voters' attachments may remain firm even as their voting preferences shift. Thus, the basic structure of electoral competition remains intact even as the personae and policies that dominate politics change.

This understanding of politics turns the basic assumptions of rational choice partisan identification on its head. Political preferences go from being something arrived at largely through individual contemplation to something largely determined by how ones' social group fits into the larger national society.

A rejection of *Homo economicus*' utility is not new to those working with African politics. The uneven and incomplete progress of modernity on the continent prompted Hyden (1980) to call for a reevaluation of this parsimonious concept reliant on individualistic and well-informed rationality even in the realm of microeconomics where *Homo economicus* was born. Though this embrace of alternative conceptualizations of "human nature" is not consensual amongst scholars

working on the continent, Bates (1981; 1988) in particular has been an influential champion of rational choice explanations of African political phenomena, an acceptance of group politics has been well within the mainstream of Africanist political science since its early days. As a major threat to nationalist integration in the fledgling African republics of the early 1960s Coleman and Rosberg (1964, 687) list as a major problem “territorial integration” which they propose “stems from the persistence-indeed, the paramountcy-of ‘primordial’ attachments or ties; that is, individuals identify themselves much more strongly with historic groups defined in terms of kinship, religion, language, or culture than with the civil order of the new states.”

To answer the question – “Why do you like your party?” – for all of those Ghanaians who could not, this dissertation utilizes analysis of the archival record, census data, survey results, and mass and elite interviews. It does so with an open assumption that for voters abstract ideologies and interpretations of government performance more often than not do not lead directly to partisan identifications. Rather policy preferences and performance evaluations are given as something akin to talking points from the top-down by the political party, or perhaps more precisely the party’s leadership aided by the party’s historical legacy, deemed most credible because of its known association with a valued ethnic, religious, gender, class, or other politically salient group. Voters in essence have a Rolodex of identities which are shaped and given political salience through social interaction. The process of politics ties some of these social identity categories to specific political parties and this process of tying identity to party occurs prior to the adoption of evaluations for policy and/or ideology. Given this understanding of partisan politics, the question – “Why do you like your party?” – can be broken down into its many layers. What identity markers cognitively paint the party you support? What identity

markers cognitively paint their opposition? How do you see your identity in relation to the party you support and their opposition?

The adoption of this social-psychological approach not only explains the inability of most Ghanaians to elucidate their partisan preferences and does so in a way that is not completely foreign to preceding Africanist scholarship, but it accomplishes this task in a manner that is not so incompatible with competing conceptualizations of multi-partisanship in Africa. For scholars who concentrate on the very rational-materialistic way in which patron-client networks influence voter preferences, analysis of social cleavage/political party interactions helps explain the patterning effects of patronage networks. No matter how wide a leader casts the spoils of state resources, there are indefinitely locales where these resources are easily translated into votes and locales where this translation fails to register, often despite the cooptation of leaders from the region and expensive outlays of government assistance (Kasara 2007).

For those wedded to an understanding of partisan politics that follows the aforementioned “rational choice” model, while this approach does down-play the individual’s role in creating macro-partisan patterns it does not foreclose on the possibility of class groups, even class groups wedded to regional economic interests, as viable poles around which a party system can form. Though finding that a class identity is the best predictor of partisan identity would not *ipso facto* refute social-psychological explanations of partisanship since a sense of class conscience could override a desire for personal material gain, such a finding would make it difficult to disentangle rational choice and social-psychological explanations in ways other identities would not. In other words, class could be understood as the expression of individual rational calculations or a sense of common culture (Inglehart 1997).

## Structure of the Argument

In its exploration of the social-psychological foundations of partisanship in Ghana, this dissertation begins with a review of the literature (Chapter Two) on the interaction between groups and political parties in the comparativist and Africanist contexts. As its point of embarkation Lipset and Rokkan's (1967) classic text on party systems and social cleavage patterns is adopted. While subsequent scholarship has challenged and updated much of what is written in *Party Systems and Voter Alignments*, Lipset and Rokkan frame the big questions – namely “what groups are important in a given party system?” and “how did these groups gain their political salience?” – to which this dissertation ventures an answer. Having fleshed out the types of groups that have in various multi-party contexts gained political salience the dissertation moves on to an exploration of the key social groups in Ghanaian society, both past and present, that could, under the right circumstances, be mobilized to form the support bases for competing national party coalitions (Chapter Three). These social identities represent the potential building blocks Ghanaian parties over the four republics could use to cobble together the necessary votes to take over the statehouse.

It is with this background that the subsequent three chapters present descriptions of how these building blocks have been organized and explanations for why partisanship took the form it did over all other possibilities. Chapter Four does this on the macro-level in Ghana's Fourth Republic. It first asks what social cleavages the dominant parties in the Fourth Republic, namely the NDC and NPP, rely upon to differentiate themselves from their opponents. This exploration relies upon census data and election results. The chapter then presses further with survey data to comb the minds of Ghanaian voters in search of the particular pieces of information regarding party identities they use to differentiate between competing parties when presented with an election. Evidence presented in Chapter Four indicates that the NPP does significantly better than

the NDC in Asante-speaking areas and the NDC does significantly better than the NPP in Ewe-speaking areas. Voters associate the parties above all other potential identities with these two ethnic groups and this association holds true whether or not said voters identify with the Asante ethnic group, Ewe ethnic group, or one of Ghana's many other ethnic groups.

Chapter Five explores the roots of this Asante/Ewe political cleavage. In the colonial and post-colonial period Ghana held four national elections prior to the Fourth Republic's first election in 1992. The historical record does not support any claims of Asante or Ewe primordial political attachments. Election results indicate that the competition between Asante-dominant areas and Ewe-dominant areas dates back only to the election of 1969 and the politicization of these two areas as identifiable electoral blocs dates back to the colonial era. This chapter culls through the various arguments purporting to explain the Asante/Ewe political rivalry to see which of these arguments makes the most sense given the timing of bloc-voting onset and commencement of an antagonistic electoral relationship. The chapter also explores competing identities that expressed themselves as potential challengers to the Asante and Ewe ethnic identities on the national political scene to understand why their salience ultimately ebbs.

The final substantive chapter (Chapter Six) is a very close exploration of partisan cleavages in three disparate constituencies. This chapter has two primary functions. First it illuminates at a relatively micro-level what is going on with politico-social conflicts in specific localities. At this level the analysis should be of interest to scholars whose work focuses on the Jamestown and Usshertown sections of Old Accra, the Bantama neighborhood of Kumasi, and Nabit-speaking communities in the Upper East Region, as these are the three areas given meticulous attention. For a broader audience, this chapter presents some insights into how social cleavages might be mobilized in the vast areas of Ghana that are neither Asante- nor Ewe-

dominant with the cases of Odododiodio and Nabdam. These areas tend to be far more contested than their counterparts and in fact serve as home to more than half of the Ghanaian voting population. Bantama, in contrast, offers insights into the interworkings of a constituency where the dominance of one ethnic group (Asantes) goes unquestioned and one party (the NPP) considers it a bad day when they register less than nine out of ten votes.

The dissertation's conclusion (Chapter Seven) summarizes the findings of previous chapters and revisits the theories that guided this research. It accomplishes this task at three levels: countrywide, comparative, and theoretical. For students of Ghanaian politics this dissertation offers both confirmations of conventional wisdom (e.g., the popularity of the NPP in Asante areas and the popularity of the NDC in Ewe areas) and refutations of conventional wisdom (e.g., the NPP is more popular amongst the upper classes and the NDC more popular amongst the poor). In pushing beyond mere descriptions of voter tendencies and into the "cognitive shortcuts" used to make electoral decisions, the dissertation charts a new course in the study of Ghanaian politics. For students of comparative politics these findings suggest some new interpretations of party systems defined in large part by ethnic politics. In the case of Ghana ethnicity matters a lot for political parties trying to cobble together winning social coalitions. Ghanaian elections do not, however, take the form of zero-sum ethnic censuses. Rather ethnicity is used to provide context to political choices but most voters must use a socially ill-defined evaluation of the dominant parties' ethnic identities to identify themselves with a party or candidate. Theoretically Ghana provides a novel case for an exploration of social-psychological partisan attachments and the role of group heuristics in partisan identification. Most of the work done with these concepts has been conducted in the United States and Western democracies. These theoretical constructs, however, appear to have traveled quite well and the Ghanaian case

offers something that democracies longer in the tooth do not. It offers the opportunity to evaluate the process of “cognitive shortcut” creation at a relatively early point which will be very useful in studying the evolution of “cognitive shortcuts.”

## CHAPTER 2 CLEAVAGE STRUCTURES, PARTY SYSTEMS, AND VOTER ALIGNMENTS - A REDUX

The seminal work on political cleavages appears as an essay titled “Cleavage Structures, Party Systems, and Voter Alignments” written by Seymour M. Lipset and Stein Rokkan (1967) to serve as the introduction to their edited volume on *Party Systems and Voter Alignments*. In the tripartite arrangement of the political parties’ body of literature introduced into the discipline by Key (1964, 163-165) and reified a few years later by Sorauf (1968), this work falls squarely into the *party-in-the-electorate* category. When mentioned at all, *parties as organizations* and *parties in government* are tangential components of the story Lipset and Rokkan convey about the interactions between political parties and society-writ-large. By the time parties as organizations and in government begin to matter in their analysis, society has already cleaved and presented purveyors of party politics with a fairly well-defined path, or paths as the case may be, of least resistance.

Within society, Lipset and Rokkan note a Janus-faced role for political parties (p.3). On the one hand parties serve as agents of social conflict. “Parties make for institutionalized rivalry” Lipset (2001, 4) points out in a later work, and “[s]uch competition for Schumpeter is the essence of democracy in macro politics.” On the other hand, parties can serve as instruments of social integration. Sartori (1988) describes this party function as the “part-of-a-whole.” “Although a party only represents a part,” he explains with regard to pluralistic societies, “this part must take a non-partial approach to the whole” (p. 252).

In their focus on the sociological aspects of political parties – the way they can simultaneously dissect society into groups and construct a sense of the whole – Lipset and Rokkan follow in the footsteps of political sociologists the likes of André Siegfried, Herbert Tingsten, and Rudolf Heberle whose works led the way in bringing the social background of

politics into the foreground (Allardt 2001, 15). Where Lipset and Rokkan break new ground is in their systematic comparative application of political sociology. While Lipset and Rokkan provide a framework for studying the interaction between political parties and social cleavages based on their reading primarily of Western European political history, their volume contains eleven case studies: eight from the Western World (America, New Zealand, England, Italy, Spain, Germany, Finland, and Norway) and three from “emerging nations” (Japan, Brazil, and “West Africa”). To bridge the geographic, historical, cultural, and institutional gaps inherent to any project with such a broad scope, Lipset and Rokkan offer three sets of centralizing questions. These questions loosely structure not only their introductory analysis, but the case studies provided by the volume’s contributors.

The first set of questions Lipset and Rokkan put forward concern “*the genesis of the system of contrasts and cleavages within the national community.*” Questions of this variety include: “Which conflicts came first and which later? Which ones proved temporary and secondary? Which proved obdurate and pervasive? Which cut across each other and produced overlaps between allies and enemies, and which reinforced each other and tended to polarize the national citizenry?” (1967, 1). The second set focuses on “*the conditions for the development of a stable system of cleavage and oppositions in national political life.*” Questions addressing this issue include:

Why did some early conflicts establish party oppositions and others not? Which of the many conflicting interests and outlooks in the national community produced direct opposition between competing parties, and which of them could be aggregated *within* the broad party fronts? Which conditions favored extensive aggregations of oppositional groups, and which offered greater incentive to fragmented articulation of single interests or narrowly defined causes? To what extent were these developments affected by changes in the legal and the administrative conditions of political activity, though the extension of the rights of participation, through the introduction of secret voting and the development of strict controls of electoral corruption, and through the retention of plurality decisions or the introduction of some variety of Proportional Representation? (p. 1-2).

A third and final set of questions addresses “*the behavior of the mass of rank-and-file citizens within the resultant party systems.*” Included in this set are:

How quickly were the parties able to recruit support among the new masses of enfranchised citizens and what were the core characteristics of the groups of voters mobilized by each party? Which conditions helped and which conditions hindered the mobilization efforts of each party within the different groups of the mass citizenry? How quickly did the changes in economic, social, and cultural conditions brought about through economic growth or stagnation translate themselves into changes in the strengths and the strategies of the parties? How did political success affect the rates of mobilization and the inflow of new support to each party? Did the parties tend to recruit new clienteles and change their followings as they established their viability as useful channels of influence in the decision-making processes? (p. 2).

Having outlined these research questions, Lipset and Rokkan begin the process of providing some possible answers through the merger of a detailed historical understanding of Western European politics and a conceptual tool developed by Talcott Parsons (1953) known as the A-G-I-L paradigm.<sup>1</sup> Cleavages, they argue, can be mapped out across a four quadrant matrix. Along one axis of this matrix are *territorial* cleavage structures. These range from (L) localized oppositions seeking some form of autonomy from the central government to (G) competing territorial units each seeking control of the whole. The other axis of Lipset and Rokkan’s rendition of the A-G-I-L matrix represents *functional* cleavage structures. Cleavages that occur on this axis cut across regions and range from (A) conflicts over the short and long-term distribution of economic benefits to (I) conflicts over moral rights and wrongs as represented often by religious, ideological, and ethnic societies (p. 10-11).

Though a complete recounting of Lipset and Rokkan’s application of this taxonomic matrix is beyond the scope of this chapter, the breadth of their explanation is worth noting. When combined with a time dimension and the notion of frozen cleavage structures (the idea that over time cleavage structures cease to appear afresh at each new conflict and rather reappear more or

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<sup>1</sup> For a further exploration of this framework see Gerhardt (2002).

less intact even for dissimilar conflicts), Lipset and Rokkan use their matrix to document party systems across Europe whose politically mobilized cleavages were generated in the Reformation/Counter-Reformation of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries (Center-Periphery), National Revolutions in the mold of the French Revolution (State-Church), the Industrial Revolution (Land-Industry), and the Russian Revolution (Owner-Worker) (p. 47).

### **Studying Political Parties in Africa: An Overview**

At the dawn of African independence, scholars interested in studying African politics turned in large-part to the study of political parties along the lines suggested by Lipset and Rokkan (Apter 1965; Coleman and Rosberg 1964; Hodgkin 1961; Morgenthau 1964; Wallerstein 1967; Zolberg 1966). Perhaps this selection of topic and approach is a sign of scholarly trends. Lipset's (1960) *Political Man* is a milestone in the history of political sociology. The work did not, however, represent an intellectual island. *Political Man* was published during the disciplinary apex of modernization theory and with its reliance on Parsonian theory and structural-functionalism fits well into the then prevailing trend (Kohli and Shue 1994, 298). While much of the aforementioned early work on African political parties does not cite Lipset and Rokkan's work directly, it consistently pays homage to political sociology and modernization theory.

There is a practical explanation for this tendency as well. "In the new states of Tropical Africa with which we are concerned," write Coleman and Rosberg (1964, 1-2), "there is an almost complete institutional vacuum at the central, national level." Given a context devoid of valued national structures, a focus on societal "political groups" has natural appeal. Scholars translated this focus into a near universal recommendation, or perhaps more accurately justification, for single-party states. "Fear that opposition will produce factionalism, corruption, and separatism," explains Apter (1965, 193), "is pervasive in modernizing nations." To unite the

multitude of ethnic groups and get both the rural masses and urban elites onboard the modernization bandwagon, a “party of solidarity” was thought to be, if not sufficient, at least necessary. This highly-centralized power, the theory goes, has the best chance of dragging the unwashed masses kicking and screaming towards development.

As a rule, Africa’s one-party states, and de facto one-party states, took very little time to prove themselves fundamentally ineffectual, corrupt, and anti-democratic (Pinkney 1988, 51-53). One response to these unappealing manifestations of single-party politics was empirical. Across the continent supposedly “apolitical” militaries inserted themselves into politics on a grand scale. Though a few soldiers changed their stance as the “third wave” of democracy approached, the initial preference of generals, and men of a lower rank alike, was the junta as a mechanism for creating coherent government policy over the political party (Bienen 1978, 122-145; Decalo 1990, 1-32; 1976, 231-254). A second response to the unmet expectations of Africa’s single party governments was scholarly in nature. Over the course of the 1970s, Africanist political scientists oversaw a massive shift in the substance of their discourse. Those parties not overthrown by coup d’état began to fade into the background as personalistic rulers and their support networks filled the intellectual void. Whereas Carl Rosberg co-edited a volume on political parties to catalog African regimes in the 1960s (Coleman and Rosberg 1964), scholarly trends dictated a similar categorization focus on personalities of African leaders in the 1980s (Jackson and Rosberg 1982).

The personal rule and related clientelism literature that flourished during this period did not all sever its ties completely with the preceding parties literature’s substantive roots. Formal institutions of governance were still considered too weak to merit a great deal of scholarly attention, but instead of focusing on social groups and their prevailing cleavage equilibrium,

these scholars were interested primarily in pragmatic political attachments. The extent to which this altered focus took scholars away from their predecessors' concerns varies greatly from those like Jackson and Rosberg (1982, 19) who note a fundamental difference between "social politics" and "palace politics" to those who see "social politics" as a fundamental and necessary lubricant for patronage (Lemarchand 1972; Joseph 1983).

With the "third wave's" arrival on African shores, legalization of a political opposition brought parties back on the scholarly agenda (Huntington 1991). In many countries the provincial literature on decades-long autocracies and recurring juntas was no longer convenient and a burgeoning body of literature on comparative democratization beckoned (Diamond et al. 1988; Diamond and Plattner 1999). Despite no longer being ignored completely in discussions of African politics, coverage of African parties during the early democratic transition period is uneven and largely superficial. Many texts focusing specifically on democratic transitions mention constitutional provisions allowing for the legalization of parties only as a portion of grander political liberalization projects (Bratton and van de Walle 1997, 143-147; Joseph 1991, 20; Widner 1997). These works treat parties essentially as a residual effect of democratization or as potential indicators of democratic development and not as key independent variables contributing to democracy's character as well as the democratic process's eventual consolidation, stagnation, or decay.

Of the select few works focusing directly on African parties most do little more than recognize parties as competitors in national elections. What once was a sure bet is now conceptualized as a two, three, and even four horse race (e.g., Olukoshi 1998; Salih 2003). A few texts (Clapham 1997; Lumumba-Kasongo 1998; Kuenzi and Lambright 2001) instead of looking at a single country look theoretically at party systems across the continent but do so largely with

an institutional focus asking why multiple parties thrive in some instances and pale in comparison to a single dominant party in others. While many of these works offer excellent electoral play-by-plays and party system analyses, virtually no effort is directed at empirically testing theoretical assumptions about the ties between political parties and the societies within which they interact. There have been a few single-case studies that venture onto this territory,<sup>2</sup> essentially under the guise of analysis of partisan identification, but even these works largely ignore the processes that were so important to earlier scholars. Social cleavages and their interactions with political parties are examined for the most part ahistorically as if they are natural occurrences whose alternatives are either unimportant or unfathomable.

### **Sankofa’s Siren Call: A “New” Look at an “Old” Literature**

There is a saying in the Akan language of Twi - *Sñ wo werñ fi na wosan kōfa a yenkyi*. Loosely translated, this saying known popularly in its anglicized form as “sankofa,” warns one not to neglect the past while moving forward into the future. In many ways this work represents a sankofa-like return to the past with regards to the study of political parties in the African context. The mass wave of democratizations that swept across the continent in the early 1990s did little to fundamentally strengthen the institutions of governance (Hyden 1992). Civil society too failed to experience a massive and sustainable invigoration accompanying the inauguration of formal democratic institutions (Lewis 1992). Given these structural deficits, a focus on the nexus between social groups and political parties, along the lines proposed by Lipset and Rokkan and the early scholars of African political parties, makes a great deal of sense. Sankofa is not, however, a call for credulous traditionalism. The concept treats the past as a mechanism for educating the present and future. When scholars first applied the constructs of political sociology

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<sup>2</sup> Nugent (1999) and Lindberg and Morrison (2005) are two examples of such works that focus on Ghana.

in their analysis of African political parties the nearly consensual prediction was that multi-party democracy was unsustainable in circumstances where there is a feeble sense of nationhood and relatively cohesive essentialized sectional groups. Modernization and nation-building at the hands of a single charismatic leader or unified elite party was the near universal prescription. Though many a state indicated movement down this path, the outcomes overwhelmingly underwhelmed.

In an interim balance sheet on the successes and failures of African “third wave” democracies, Crawford Young (1996) remarks that “slow, halting, uneven, yet continuing movement toward polyarchy is possible.” Despite this mixed bag of results, he continues, “[t]here is no plausible and preferable alternative on the horizon” (p. 67).<sup>3</sup> Young’s cautious endorsement of democracy is driven by a number of factors including the poor track-record of one-party and military regimes in Africa, an international environment that is more insistent on multi-party democracy than it was in the 1960s, and a great deal of comparative scholarly literature suggesting that democracies are at least as well equipped for the trek towards modernization as their undemocratic counterparts (Helliwell 1994; Burkhart and Lewis-Beck 1994). To salvage Lipset and Rokkan’s ability to address foundational questions about political conflicts in situations bereft of credible national institutions, yet operate in a context where single parties have tried to consolidate the legitimate use of force and failed to win the masses over or even maintain control of the state apparatus, two problematic aspects of Lipset and Rokkan’s analysis – the *substance* and the *sequencing* of social cleavage and party interaction – must be reevaluated.

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<sup>3</sup> A few works have argued for a return to the no-party models of government prescribed by earlier scholars (Wiredu 1996, 182-190; Osei-Hwedie 1998) though these are outliers.

As any reevaluation of analytical constructs perpetrates at least a modicum of conceptual violence against the object being considered, it is best to document potential biases up front. This work attempts to stay true to the comparative endeavor that serves as the impetus for Lipset and Rokkan's core questions but in order to do so in a context far removed spatially, culturally, and temporally from those explicitly addressed in their work relaxes the debilitating hold modernization theory, or perhaps more accurately some of the unspoken pre(mis)conceptions of modernization theory, imposes on their analysis of Western Europe. Modernization theory, as Mazrui (1968, 82) points out, is riddled with the "self-confidence of ethno-centric achievement" and the assumption that contemporary African states are struggling with the same issues and circumstances of their European counterparts of yore has very little foundation in empirical world (Tipps 1973).

### **Reevaluating the Substance of Social Cleavage/Political Party Interaction**

At a conference reviewing Lipset and Rokkan's work thirty years after its original publication Allardt (2001) argues that the scholars use Parsonian formulations mainly as "a classificatory and taxonomic device fitting in particular Western societies during the post-World War II period." Allardt continues his evaluation noting that "the Lipset-Rokkan application of Parsons never led to a substantial following among political sociologists" (p. 18). The strictures of their A-G-I-L paradigm are largely ignored even by contributors to Lipset and Rokkan's own edited volume; Wallerstein (1967) makes nary a mention of the taxonomy. What early Africanist scholars were interested in instead of placing party systems within the A-G-I-L matrix was distinguishing between parties organized along *Gemeinschaft* (Community) social cleavage lines and those organized along *Gesellschaft* (Society) social cleavage lines (Duverger 1954, 124-

125).<sup>4</sup> Describing the nexus of community-based social cleavages and political parties as “a general politization of primordial ties,” Zolberg (1966, 22) lists ethnicity and region as the primary concern for Africanist scholars and political practitioners alike. In anticipation of Biafran-like consequences resulting from these *Gemeinschaft* parties, scholars accepted as the lesser of two evils the fact that “most political roads carried the polity to an authoritarian destination” (Young 1976, 520). *Gesellschaft* parties, Sklar (1963, 474) differentiates, “instead of being based on neighborhood, geographical proximity, or blood relationship...[are] based on interest.” The assumption many of the early scholars of African parties work under is that competition along the lines of class interests, especially when institutionalized into a party system, represents valued modernity (Apter 19, 124). To justify their preferences for nationalist-oriented single party states, scholars conceptualized the colonial metropole and the colony as two sides of a centre-periphery cleavage structure and viewed the lack of competition in post-independence Africa as a residual effect of this earlier conflict (Randall 2001, 247).<sup>5</sup>

Though the aforementioned distinctions between *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* political parties has not disappeared completely from the discourse on African politics<sup>6</sup>—hence the proliferation of constitutional provisions resembling Ghana’s Article 55 that proscribes political parties “based on ethnic, religious, regional or other sectional divisions”—conceptual variables

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<sup>4</sup> The *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* distinction resembles Lipset and Rokkan’s *functional* axis in that disputes along the former lines are conceptualized as negotiable and those along the latter lines as zero-sum.

<sup>5</sup> One could imagine an alternative conceptualization being one of Africans versus Europeans but this would not fit into the optimistic model of modernization.

<sup>6</sup> Some have added charisma as a third type of party appeal (Weber 1968, 241-248) and much has been written on the topic with regard to African politics. The problem with placing “charisma” alongside *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* as a political party type is that the appeal of a particular candidate’s charisma is almost never distributed evenly throughout a given society. If multiple parties are allowed and elections are credible, the draw of charisma undoubtedly falls short for a number of constituencies. The characteristics that make these constituencies different from those that find a given candidate’s charisma compelling are the markers of underlying cleavage structures.

like ethnicity and class are increasingly unmoored by scholars and studied not as independent variables that can be used to pigeonhole a party, social organization, or individual, but rather as dependent variables that are socially constructed and can be studied as such. For those essentializing ethnicity, elections can be viewed as an “ethnic census” with voters receiving psychological (Horowitz 1985) and/or policy (Rabushka and Shepsle 1972) benefits, the existence of which are based almost exclusively on whether or not their particular ethnic group’s party wins or loses. Class-based cleavages can be defined objectively by one’s relationship to “high-status occupation, high income, superior education, and the ownership or control of business enterprise” (Sklar 1979, 543) or one’s position within a system “rooted in custom and sustained by its mediation with and sometimes control of the supernatural” (Rathbone 2000, 4; Mamdani 1996, 41; Rey 1973). But what happens when, as Posner (2005, 1) challenges, ethnicity is a complex concoction comprised of religion, region, language, and tribe? Politics, he answers, can and does revolve around some of these ingredients rather than others depending on the political agents and context. And what happens when, as Ekeh (1975, 111) describes, civic class identities and primordial class identities exist side-by-side in a single individual? Contestation happens continually, he explains, with cost-benefit analysis determining the winner sometimes on a case-by-case basis.

When Lipset and Rokkan’s A-G-I-L schematic did not seem to explain African “realities” in the 1960s Africanist scholars turned to other conceptual categories in the modernization lexicon, namely the *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* dichotomy that had been used to differentiate between traditional modes of organization and modern modes of organization. With subsequent scholarship demonstrating the vagaries of these vestiges of modernization theory, this work moves a little further still from Lipset and Rokkan’s original nomenclature. This movement is

not without its difficulties. “In reality,” Nugent (2001, 2) explains, “the landscape of identity is characterized by overlap and considerable fluidity, which makes the entire subject very difficult to discuss without committing verbal atrocities.” Identities like ethnicity and class matter in politics in Africa as elsewhere and it would be impossible to discuss important social cleavages underlying political party disputes without resorting to the use of these conceptual placeholders.

To diminish the effects of these inherent “verbal atrocities,” the present work aims at the lofty goal of definitional precision. With regard to ethnicity for instance, when those who speak a particular language are being discussed as opposed to those who identify with a particular ethnic group this choice of topic is made explicit. In addition, the relationship between identifiers like language and ethnic group are frequently explored. Though there is often significant overlap between these two identities in particular, these categories are not coextensive and if one is amplified as opposed to the other with regards to a specific political debate something worth investigating further has happened.<sup>7</sup> Pushing beyond essentialized identities and towards a more nuanced instrumental interpretation of the effects of cleavage structures on political party systems requires, in addition to acknowledging greater variance within the *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* party typologies, an acknowledgment that the border separating these two long-reified categories is permeable and flexible. One can no longer assume that just because a cleavage is recognized as ethnic that primordial communities are at the root of political disputes or just because a cleavage is recognized as class-based that rationally self-selected societies are facing off at the ballot box. Most often the motives behind the patterning of votes are more complex.

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<sup>7</sup> One cannot hope to capture the interactions of every possible personal identity in a country, politicized or not, in a single lifetime let alone a single monograph so undoubtedly some will be given short shrift and others completely ignored. The goal is to spend time addressing those identities which have been politicized on a grand scale in Ghana as well as those identities which have received a great deal of scholarly attention in other contexts but appear to be largely unutilized by social mobilizers or political parties throughout Ghanaian electoral history.

## **Reevaluating the Sequencing of Social Cleavage/Political Party Interaction**

There is a quite lively debate revolving around the conceptual construct that has come to be known as Lipset and Rokkan's "freezing hypothesis." On the topic, the scholars themselves suggest that decisive events in a nation's history push "*constellations* of conflict lines" to the fore (1967, 14). Having demonstrated their effectiveness as tools of political mobilization, these constellations become frozen and reveal themselves as recurring themes that are worked into political disputes far removed from their origins. "Parties," Lipset and Rokkan suggest the primary way in which these conflict lines are preserved, "do not simply present themselves *de novo* to the citizen at each election; they each have a history and so have the constellations of alternatives they present to the electorate" (p. 2).

Though this notion of freezing has a revered place in the comparative politics discourse, Lipset and Rokkan themselves are quite nebulous in their usage of the concept leaving their successors to make fundamental assumptions without significant guidance. Those making these assumptions can be placed into two general camps (Mair 2001). One camp sets as the unit of analysis social cleavages (Rose 1974; Franklin et al. 1992). The freezing moment is interpreted as that point when society divides itself into fairly reliable sides for the purposes of political contestation. Over time, those in this camp contend, when parties are laid over these bases they will gradually become more catch-all and less reliant on their original social foundations. The other camp is more concerned with electoral stability (Rose and Urwin 1970). Freezing implies for this camp the same types of voters aligning with the same parties over relatively long periods of time. When realignment occurs, they view it as a dramatic reconfiguring of the frozen status quo.

In the case of Western European states, one's position in the freezing hypothesis debate can greatly impact the chronology of a "freezing point." Especially in the case of Center-

Periphery disputes, the proposed freezing moment for social cleavages occurs centuries before anything resembling a national multi-party democratic system can be considered. While there were certainly social cleavages and a heterogeneous bunch of state-like structures in Africa during the period of time Lipset and Rokkan observe the dramatic cleavage freezing revolutions in Europe, in Africa colonialism profoundly disrupted the potential path from these cleavage structures to some variant of multi-party democracy. “In addition to creating the immediate predecessors to today’s states,” Herbst (2000, 58) explains this socio-political rupture, “the Europeans brought about a host of other changes in Africa that have reverberated to our own time: they created a system of boundaries and frontiers new to Africa; they established novel economic systems based on mines and cash crops; they built infrastructure systems that still determine patterns of trade; and they left their religions, languages, and cultural practices.” This dramatic sea-change threw pre-existing cleavage structures and the colonial incentives for new cleavage structures into a tumultuous flux. In addition to the colonial authorities’ “civilizing mission” and its multiple applications there was an active reimagining of the “traditional” (Mamdani 1996, 286). Given this background social cleavages and party systems must have been forming, or at least significantly reformulating, at approximately the same time. This simultaneity not only makes the “freezing hypothesis” debate largely a moot point in these circumstances, but it highlights the potential for interaction between political parties and their agents and the social cleavages they hope to mobilize.

Discussion of instrumentalized identities both in terms of the substance and sequencing of social cleavage and political party interactions would seem on the surface antithetical to an investigation that aims to pinpoint the events that led to certain social identities becoming politically mobilized in a predictable fashion over the course of time. Such would be the case if

one were talking about an absolute freezing that makes either election results a foregone conclusion or the social group blocs necessary for a winning coalition obvious. Yet Lipset and Rokkan mention no such party system in Western Europe and it is unfair to assume, even given their ambiguity on the topic, such an exacting forecast. Voters, Lipset and Rokkan stake out a much more modest position, “are typically faced with choices among historically given ‘packages’ of programs, commitments, outlooks, and, sometimes, *Weltanschauungen*, and their current behavior cannot be understood without some knowledge of the sequences of events and the combinations of forces that produced these ‘packages’” (p. 2-3).

Instead of being conceptualized as solid immutable political blocs, the effects of freezing are far more accurately described as partisan stickiness or “path dependence” (North 1990). Once voters and parties are effectively painted with social characteristics, an outcome Downs (1957) and Popkin (1991) have labeled “cognitive shortcuts,” default positions are formed. In an environment of free and fair multi-party competition individual voters can, and most certainly do, buck the trends. There are also voters pulled in multiple directions resulting from their multiple identities and whole groups that are most notable for being politically uncaptured and unpredictable. These anomalies should be acknowledged as important aspects of a party system and can be studied both in their own right and as potential components of a larger realignment or dealignment (Manza 1995). They do not, however, make the study of persistent patterns in the relationship between political parties and social groups within the electorate uninteresting or trivial.

### **Conclusions**

Discussion of Africa’s “third wave” political parties has been largely ahistorical. Those works that touch on the nexus between society and parties by-and-large operate within a snapshot; the winning party gathered these segments of society and the losing party gathered

those. But how did society come to be segmented in such a manner and not another? What does this segmentation mean for party politics in relation to other potential segmentations? How much of this relationship was initiated by society and how much was initiated by party agents?

Answers to these questions are not forthcoming without a historical approach. Africanist scholars studying political parties in the immediate aftermath of independence had ambitions to answer such questions. They used concepts and theoretical formulations from existing literature, much fitting into the political sociology subcategory, to guide their studies and produced texts rich not only in their documentation of what were at the time Africa's fledgling party systems but also in historical analysis of the social cleavages that underlaid these party systems. There is a problem, however, with applying these past approaches whole-cloth in the study of contemporary party systems. "The tools of comparative politics," explains Ekeh (1975, 111), "inhere in the traditional conception of politics in the West. That by itself seems appropriate. But the tools sometimes appear dull from overuse and cry out for sharpening."

Updating these tools by recognizing that the identities comprising social cleavages are far more nuanced and malleable than previously acknowledged comes at a price. One loses the clean typologies that allow for relatively easy comparisons between countries and the ability to readily distinguish desirable party system configurations from undesirable party system configurations. Trading in parsimonious analytical constructs that yield conclusions rife with the biases of modernization theory, however, for analyses that recognizes complex identity constructions and feedback loops running between political parties and the societies they represent seems imminently fair; far better to study something complex with little hope of definitive "theoretical" conclusions than to construct an economical but thin argument just for the sake of doing so. Justifying the study of "sticky" identities and political associations in a context populated by

instrumentalized identities is a much tougher prospect. Yet in most, if not all, political systems with free and fair elections patterns of support appear in the electorate that linger from election to election. Though one may hope to explain why one party wins a particular election over another without exploring the genesis of these patterns, it would be impossible to explain why the competing parties define their opposition to each other in a particular way given the infinite choices without giving the historical relationship between social cleavages and political parties a very close look. The argument put forth here is that one can venture answers to Lipset and Rokkan's three sets of questions without accepting the flawed assumptions that either cleavage structures or party systems are completely static.

### CHAPTER 3 THE SOCIO-POLITICAL BACKGROUNDS TO GHANAIAN PARTISANSHIP

Though the February 1951 Gold Coast elections were far from an exercise in unadulterated universal adult suffrage, the contest won handily by the Convention People's Party (CPP) marks the first multi-party election in what would slightly more than six years later become the independent state of Ghana.<sup>1</sup> Election exercises conducted under the watchful eye of the British in 1954 and 1956 not only reconfirmed the CPP's popularity, but extended the voting franchise to the masses, rural and urban alike, through the popular ballot. Independence on 6 March 1957 brought quickly on its heels what then Prime Minister Kwame Nkrumah described euphemistically as "emergency measures of a totalitarian kind" (1957, xvi). The independent CPP government was quick to clamp down on opposition through such measures as the Deportation Act (August 1957), Emergency Powers Act (December 1957) and Preventive Detention Act (July 1958) so that there would be no remotely credible multi-party elections in independent Ghana until 1969, three years after a military coup overthrew Nkrumah and the First Republic (Austin 1976, 90-101).<sup>2</sup> This Second Republic, and the Third Republic which would be inaugurated ten years later, can claim only their founding elections. Neither ephemeral republic made it past its initial term before the military returned to power (Baynham 1985). When

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<sup>1</sup> This Legislative Assembly election was multi-formatted. Four municipal districts (Accra, Cape Coast, Sekondi-Takoradi, and Kumasi) elected their representatives through popular vote. Thirty-one rural constituencies in the Colony and Ashanti elected their representatives through a two-tiered process. First electoral college participants were selected through universal adult suffrage and then the elected electoral college voted for partisan representatives to the Legislative Assembly. CPP candidates won every municipal seat and 28 out of the 33 contestable rural seats. The Northern Territories only representation was selected on a non-partisan basis by an unelected electoral college selected by the region's various district councils. In addition to these representatives of the people, the 1951 Legislative Assembly awarded a set number of seats to mining and commercial interests (2) and traditional leaders in the Colony (11), Ashanti (6), and Southern Togoland (1) (Legislative Council of the Gold Coast 1950).

<sup>2</sup> There was a presidential contest held in 1960 that pitted Nkrumah (CPP) against J.B. Danquah (UP) but the result of this election, which Nkrumah won by a margin of seven to one, was a foregone conclusion influenced greatly by the government's application of public resources, harassment of opposition, and control of the polling process. In only two constituencies, South Anlo and Ho West, both in the Volta Region, did Danquah secure a majority of the vote ("Seven to One for Nkrumah" 1960).

President Limann and the Third Republic were overthrown on New Year's Eve 1980 by Flt.-Lt. Jerry Rawlings and his Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC), it would be nearly a dozen years before another multi-party experiment would be attempted. Then in late 1992 Ghana joined a growing number of African nations in what became known as the "third wave" to again test democratic waters. Though this first election was of dubious quality (Jeffries and Thomas 1993; Oquaye 1995), three competitive national elections later – 1996, 2000, and 2004 – and a peaceful turnover of power in 2000 mark Ghana's Fourth Republic as a genuine continental success story (Gyimah-Boadi 2001).

This concise history of multi-party Ghanaian elections (see also Table 3-1) serves as a backdrop to the subsequent discussion because it is at these elections that very explicit political censuses occur. Though politics happens with or without elections (Goodwin and Jasper 2004), the act of entering a secret booth with the unambiguous purpose of registering one's political preferences alongside those of fellow citizens gives the researcher an unusually parsimonious and well-documented glimpse at the underlying politically mobilized divisions within a given society. Where free and fair election results and aggregated political choices exist the study of political cleavages is more straightforward than in contexts where these sources of data are absent.<sup>3</sup> Optimal conditions for research do not, however, lead to easily decipherable conclusions. Politics, even politics with elections, is a complicated subject of study. When election results display discernable patterns, scholars interested in explaining these patterns must disaggregate the impact of multiple and often overlapping variables, many of which are socially constructed and as remarkable for their areas of conceptual ambiguity as they are for their

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<sup>3</sup> This notion of aggregation is illustrative of the role political institutions can play in social cleavage formation. Duverger's law (1972, 23-32) suggests that certain electoral systems are much more likely than others to yield two dominant parties. Forcing society's varied interests into two, three, or more categories has an impact on how these interests perceive their position within the democratic political system in relation to other interests.

hermetically-sealed categories. When one moves beyond a static view of political cleavages and takes into account the history of social cleavage formation and party/society interactions, the situation becomes even more complex as the meaning of variable categories can, and often are, transformed over time.

This chapter looks at the variables that populate the mainstream discourse on Ghanaian political/electoral cleavages and the nuanced social categories undergirding these cleavages. It takes as a point of demarcation the *Gemeinschaft* (Community) and *Gesellschaft* (Society) distinction discussed at some length in Chapter Two. From the time of the first Gold Coast multi-party elections in 1951 through the most recent election in Ghana's Fourth Republic, the "stuff" of politics and elections has variously been described as ideological (*Gesellschaft*) or sectional (*Gemeinschaft*).<sup>4</sup> The chronicles of Ghanaian politics are full of manifestos and speeches packed with the high-minded vocabulary of ideology describing this party as socialist or that party as neoliberal. Yet before and after elections, regardless of the republic, politicians and other notables are seen stepping over each other to give reporters a quote about how certain voters, usually those supporting an opposition, cannot seem to disregard primordial affinities and vote for the "best" candidate. Over the course of the remainder of this chapter the various formulations of ideological and sectional cleavages in the Ghanaian political discourse are explored and problematized. For those readers not enmeshed in Ghanaian politics, terms like Nkrumahist and Asante that pepper remaining chapters are explicated. For those readers with a fairly comprehensive understanding of Ghanaian society and politics, this chapter serves as both a review and as a challenge to deconstruct some of the variables that history has made appear fixed. Though these well-worn cleavage categories come with much conceptual baggage, this

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<sup>4</sup> Chazan (1983, 24-38) has used the terms Horizontal and Vertical almost synonymously with *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*.

investigation avoids the assumption that ideological cleavages are *ipso facto* negotiable and sectional cleavages are *ipso facto* zero-sum. The project at hand is one of understanding the various conceptualizations of these variables in Ghana and not one of determining when and where they are politicized. This latter project is taken up in some detail in the following three chapters where the interaction between these cleavage variants and multi-party democratic elections are queried.

## **Ideological Cleavages**

### **Nkrumahism v. Danquah-Busiaism**

Even a cursory knowledge of Ghanaian politics requires a perfunctory familiarity with the uniquely Ghanaian ideological categories of Nkrumahism and Danquah-Busiaism.<sup>5</sup> Founded in 1947 as a response to traditional leaders' stranglehold on the Colony Legislative Council and in anticipation of independence in India, Burma, and Ceylon, the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC) served as the incubator for both "ideological" camps (Austin 1964, 51-52). There had been prior to the UGCC ethnic factions (e.g., Fanti Confederacy), pressure groups (e.g., Aborigines' Rights Protection Society), and even proto-political parties (e.g., Dr. Nanka-Bruce's National Democratic Party) that petitioned the colonial government on behalf of indigenous populations. By 1947, however, these groups had either dissolved, taken a back-seat on the national political scene, or, as was often the case, had their agendas and best and brightest advocates absorbed into the UGCC (Apter 1966, 265-272).

The leading members of the UGCC at its founding were George "Paa" Grant (timber merchant and UGCC chairman/benefactor), R.S. Blay (lawyer), J.B. Danquah (lawyer), Francis Awoonor-Williams (lawyer), William Ofori-Atta (graduate teacher), Edward Akuffo-Addo

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<sup>5</sup> The moniker Danquah-Busiaism is sometimes shortened to Danquahism. For the purposes of this work the labels should be understood as synonymous.

(lawyer), Joseph W.S. de Graft Johnson (lawyer), and Emmanuel Obetsebi-Lampitey (lawyer) (Martinson 2001, 25). Burdened with their day-to-day work, this founding cohort looked first to Ebenezer Ako Adjei, a young lawyer recently returned from England, and then based largely on Ako Adjei's recommendation to one Francis Kwame Nkrumah to run the Convention's routine affairs (Austin 1964, 53). Nkrumah had distinguished himself as a skilled organizer while working with the African Students' Association of America in Canada and the West African National Secretariat in London during his student days and was hired as the first full-time UGCC General Secretary (Nkrumah 1957).

The origin of the Danquah-Busiaist/Nkrumahist ideological cleavage is Nkrumah's eventual break from the UGCC in June 1949. Nkrumah took with him activists from the UGCC's Committee on Youth Organization (CYO) and many of the local party representatives Nkrumah was instrumental in recruiting for the UGCC to form a new party he called the CPP. The founding members of the UGCC, including Danquah, who constituted the Convention's "Working Committee" were left to stew, in the words of Paa Grant, over the young man who "filched our name, our 'S.G. [Self Government]' policy, our branches, and even our colours—to establish a separatist group—the Convention People's Party—which, as he falsely claimed at the time, was formed 'within the Convention in the name of George Grant, of Ghana and of God'" (Austin 1961, 296). The story of this dramatic split, though it explains how the monikers Nkrumahism and Danquah-Busiaism came to represent oppositional forces in Ghanaian politics, does little to illuminate the ideological constructs undergirding these categories. Applying the labels "moderate, liberal, [and] western-oriented" to the UGCC and "left-wing," "socialist," and "populist" to the CPP, as is the common practice in most concise analyses, is a step in the right direction but even these descriptions suffer from conceptual haziness and are most often

overworked (Morrison 2004, 423). In addition to their bluntness, these labels imply an ideological fixity which is inconsistent with the historical record. What it meant to be a Nkrumahist and what it meant to be a Danquah-Busiaist was not immediately apparent in 1949. It took years of coexisting and contestation for these terms to develop the connotations they carry in contemporary Ghanaian politics.

### **The formative years (1949-1966)**

Nkrumah's break with the UGCC unfolded over the course of nearly a year and was precipitated by disputes concerning both style and substance. Stylistically the UGCC represented the old guard *intelligentsia*. Paa Grant, the Convention's founding father and president, was approaching seventy years of age when the UGCC was launched. He was a wealthy timber merchant nominated by the colonial government to take a seat as member of the 1926 Legislative Council for the town of Sekondi (Kimble 1963, 448).<sup>6</sup> Danquah, who would come to serve as Nkrumah's political counterbalance for the UGCC, was in his early fifties when the Convention was inaugurated. Though Danquah produced several texts on Akan cultural practices and dabbled in the publishing business, his training at the University of London was in law and it is the practice of law and the pursuit of politics that consumed the majority of his professional life (Danquah 1968, vii). Nkrumah on the other hand was a mere thirty-seven years old when the UGCC was formed and still younger than forty when the CPP broke away. He was formally educated in the United States, first at Lincoln University (BA) and then at the University of Pennsylvania (MS, Education; MA, Philosophy), and informally educated in London through his interactions with the Pan-African Congress and employment at the West African National Secretariat (Nkrumah 1957). His CPP colleagues, who were often described by the media as

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<sup>6</sup> Grant served against the wishes of the Aborigines' Rights Protection Society and despite the fact that many of the Chiefs and people of Sekondi did not know of him.

“tramps in N.T. [Northern Territory] Smocks,” tended to share Nkrumah’s relative youth and inexperience with the formal institutions of colonial politics (Austin 1964, 212).<sup>7</sup>

These biographical differences at the top, Danquah-Busiaists having captured the patrician elites who would become the next generation of middle-class urban professionals and Nkrumahists casting wider net, had significant trickle down effects (Apter 1966, 272). Stalwarts in the UGCC had a historical record of negotiating with the colonial government. Though these negotiations did not always follow formal political channels the UGCC leadership’s first reaction to a perceived injustice was always debate and often reliant on learned legal interpretations. The Accra riots of February 1948 and their aftermath are a dramatic example of this tendency. Upon hearing of violence in the capital, the UGCC leadership who were meeting in Saltpond rushed to Accra to observe the fallout. By all accounts the UGCC leadership was not in the business of fomenting riots (Danquah 1970b; Nkrumah 1957, 74-78), though the “Big Six” were briefly jailed for such an offense.<sup>8</sup>

Danquah was keen “to take advantage of that day’s tragic events and use that advantage as a fulcrum or lever for the liberation of Ghana” (Austin 1964, 75). He and his fellow travelers in “the Convention” accepted the colonial government’s Watson Commission and its corollary, the Coussey Committee on constitutional reform, as the proper arenas in which to apply this newfound leverage. In both forums Danquah took a leading role in proposing constitutional changes that would indigenize and democratize political decision making in the colony and lead

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<sup>7</sup> Terms like “tramps” and “verandah boys” were often used pejoratively by opponents but ultimately were embraced by the CPP as signifiers of the party’s grassroots. For a brief biography of Nkrumah’s first batch of ministers see Ministry of Defence and External Affairs (1951)

<sup>8</sup> The “Big Six” consists of Kwame Nkrumah, E. Obetsebi Lamptey, Ebenezer Ako Adjei, William Ofori Atta (a.k.a. Paa Willie), J.B. Danquah, and Edward Akuffo-Addo. It was these six UGCC leaders that the colonial administration rounded up and sent to prison following the Accra riots. A famous picture in the discourse of Ghanaian patriotism was taken of the six men at Saltpond prior to Nkrumah’s defection. An artist’s rendition of this picture adorns the front of the 10,000 cedi bank note.

towards dominion status and eventual independence (see Danquah 1970a, 1970c). Nkrumah, whose position within the UGCC deteriorated quickly following the Accra riots,<sup>9</sup> set a very different tack for the soon-to-be supporters of the CPP. Not a lawyer himself and lacking the experience and gravitas of his UGCC competitors, Nkrumah relied on his skills as an organizer to develop a mass following. Unlike his UGCC colleagues who had made a living bargaining with the British, he was happy to confront the British through extra-legal populist means. Nkrumah's use of the *Accra Evening News* and *CYO* to criticize not only the Colonial government but also the act of negotiating for anything short of immediate independence in a very public manner drew sharp criticism from Danquah and his supporters (Nkrumah 1957, 93-101). "[Y]ou have published your ultimatum without first having yourself sought to make cogent representations to the Government in person" Danquah complained, advising that "[d]istant speeches and cold print do not make a statesman" (Akyeampong and Danquah 1956, 12).

The "ideological" substance of Nkrumah's dispute with the UGCC was far less explicit initially and took several years to come to the fore. In the CPP's first pre-election manifesto the party program reads as follows:

As stated elsewhere in this Manifesto, our entry into the Assembly in full strength will open up better opportunities to struggle for immediate Self-Government. Whilst that struggle is proceeding the C.P.P. will do all in its power to better the condition of the people of this country; it must be pointed out however that the implementation of this development programme can only be possible when S.G. has been attained, and we are in full control of our own affairs (National Executive of the C.P.P. 1951, x)

The CPP's 1954 Manifesto maintained this dominant theme but the confidence gained during its three years as the majority party in the Legislative Assembly had an effect (Convention People's

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<sup>9</sup> According to both Nkrumah and the UGCC Working Committee the split was precipitated by the discovery of Nkrumah's past dealings with the Communist Party of Britain and with Nkrumah's involvement in the *CYO* and other mass mobilization campaigns. Nkrumah claims that this latter point of contention was a function of UGCC's elitist history. The UGCC working committee claims that it was Nkrumah's secrecy and cult of personality that ruffled their feathers with regard to the *CYO* (Austin 1961; Nkrumah 1957).

Party 1954). Nkrumah's name, likeness, and words are all over the 1954 document whereas in 1951 only a passport size photo of Nkrumah in a suit is on the cover and the only mention of his name in the entire manifesto is in small type below the photo. The 1954 document also, in addition to trumpeting Nkrumah's personal role in nudging the Gold Coast towards independence and urging voters to give the CPP a complete mandate of 104 out of 104 seats in the Legislative Assembly, offers an early clue into the ideology "Nkrumahism" would eventually come to describe. When self-government is attained, the manifesto promises a state-led developmental panacea for the Gold Coast's economic and social ills and lays the seeds for Nkrumah's pan-Africanist agenda by proposing "West African Unity and Freedom for Africans and peoples of African Descent everywhere" (p. 10). Over the next decade Nkrumah would develop these ancillary themes in his writings (Nkrumah 1962, 1963, 1964a) to the point where Nkrumahism came to represent not the struggle for political independence in the past tense but an eternal "revolt against colonialism, imperialism and capitalism" that requires "a people's parliamentary democracy with a one-party system...to express and satisfy the common aspirations of a nation as a whole, [rather] than a multi-party parliamentary system, which is in fact only a ruse for perpetuating, and covers up, the inherent struggle between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots'" (Nkrumah 1964b, 51, 54).

In many ways Danquah-Busiaism was playing catch-up to Nkrumahism from its very beginning. "Is it not a well known part of the history of Ghana that the older politicians had to wait till 1949 for Dr. Nkrumah and Mr. Creech Jones (Secretary of State, in *Colonial*, No.250)," Danquah (1957) chastised both the British and his domestic opposition on the pages of *The Times* in the immediate wake of independence, "to teach them how good and pleasant it was for brethren to dwell together apart?" Both Nkrumah and those who remained in the UGCC after the

break-up were in the business of portraying themselves as would-be national liberators who were above the petty fray of party politics. Nkrumah's aforementioned ability to excite the masses in ways the UGCC was both unwilling and unable put him in a position to win the 1951 polls after which time he successfully used the pulpit granted him by this victory to position himself and the CPP as the "Self Government Now" candidates to the UGCC's "Self Government in the Shortest Possible Time." From this disadvantageous position Danquah, and to a significant but lesser extent Busia,<sup>10</sup> cobbled together a loose coalition of groups that had little more in common than an extreme dislike of Nkrumah.

Under the umbrella of the NLM, and later the United Party (UP), a number of provincial groups including the Asanteman Council, Northern People's Party (NOPP), Akim Abuakwa State, Moslem Association Party (MAP), TC, Northern Territories Council, and Aborigines' Rights Protection Society came together with Danquah's Ghana Congress Party (GCP) to petition the colonial government for a federal system with greater regional autonomy and less power vested in the Legislative Assembly controlled by Nkrumah and the CPP (Busia 1956, 3).<sup>11</sup> When this plea was met by silence from the British and pigeonholed as mere tribalism by Nkrumah, Danquah and Busia had little recourse but to position themselves as the vocal opposition. This is not to suggest that the pair and their followers did not believe wholeheartedly in the principles of liberalism and constitutionalism that they preached, sometimes in the case of Danquah under the awkward label of Ghanaism, but rather that they were largely unable to

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<sup>10</sup> Busia came into the UGCC-fold after the UGCC/CPP split. In the elections of 1951 Busia, who was a university lecturer at the time, ran for the Wenchi seat under the flag of the Asante Kotoko Society. He lost the election but was later recruited by the Asanteman Council to serve as their representative in the Legislative Assembly. When the UGCC old guard was preparing to unseat Nkrumah in 1954, Busia's oppositional stance and youth made him an attractive candidate for the newly formed GCP (Bing 1968, 155).

<sup>11</sup> These demands for federalism as they came from Ashanti, the Northern Territories, and Trans-Volta Togoland are documented in Allman (1990), Ladouceur (1979), and Amenumey (1989) respectively.

define themselves without reference to Nkrumah (Danquah 1997, 167-176). The CPP had failed to deliver the economic welfare it promised, Danquah and Busia were willing to tell anyone who would listen, but more importantly they are “a dangerous and dictatorial party” (Danso-Boafo 1996, 49).

### **The UGCC and CPP progeny (1966-present)**

As a participant in the formal political discourse the line connecting the UGCC, GCP, NLM, and UP,<sup>12</sup> namely J.B. Danquah’s active involvement, was severed years before Danquah’s death in 1965 or the official ban on opposition parties put in place in 1964. By the time the First Republic’s constitution was enacted into law on 29 June 1960, Nkrumah and the CPP had turned Ghana into a *de facto* single party state (Cohen 1970). The era of Nkrumah’s rule met its end far more abruptly than either Danquah or Busia were pushed out of national politics. On 24 February 1966, as Nkrumah was on a state visit to China, the National Liberation Council (NLC) took to the airwaves to announce that Nkrumah and his CPP regime had been overthrown by the military because of their ostensibly draconian treatment of opposition and general bungling of the economy (National Liberation Council 1966). The categories Danquah-Busiaism and Nkrumahism did not, however, disappear with the trampling of opposition under Nkrumah or the overthrow of the CPP regime. Over the succeeding decades these shorthand ideological labels have characterized each and every Ghanaian election (for a brief genealogy of these two groups see Table 3-2).

Busia, who had fled Ghana during Nkrumah’s tenure to avoid political harassment and take up the cause of Ghana’s opposition in Europe, returned to Ghana in 1966 to serve on the NLC’s “Political Committee” (Busia 1967). He would eventually be elected Prime Minister and

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<sup>12</sup> The tendency in the literature is to treat the regional parties that aligned with the UGCC, GCP, NLM, and UP as allies to the Danquah-Busia tradition but not full-fledged members.

leader of the Progress Party (PP) in the NLC-administered 1969 elections. Historians have labeled the National Alliance of Liberals (NAL), led by Komla Gbedemah, the PP's Nkrumahist challenger in this election, though Gbedemah himself did not embrace this label. He had served as Nkrumah's Finance Minister but was nudged out of government and into exile by the younger and more radical wing of the CPP in 1961 (Gbedemah 1962) and the NLC expressly proscribed Nkrumahist parties from contesting elections in the Second Republic (National Alliance of Liberals 1969; Gbedemah 1969). In 1979 identifying the Nkrumahists was not so much of a problem. "I do not think that I shall be far from the truth if I say that all those of use here who belong to the People's National Party," the PNP's General Secretary explained to a gathering celebrating the party's second anniversary, "are bound together by just one single unifying-bond – our unalloyed dedication to Osagyefo Dr. Kwame Nkrumah and all the good things he did for Ghana and Africa" (Addae-Mensah 1981, 1). Identifying the Danquah-Busiaists of 1979 is not as easy. Both William Ofori-Atta, who led the United National Convention (UNC), and Victor Owusu, who led the Popular Front Party (PFP), had served as ministers in Busia's PP cabinet. The PFP is clear in its desire to anoint itself successor to Busia's "liberalism" (Chazan 1983, 288). The UNC's lineage is more nuanced. To begin with Ofori-Atta was very much a colleague of Danquah's and not so much a follower. The fact that the UNC did not label itself Danquah-Busiaist and aligned with the Limann's PNP in the post-election administration instead of joining Owusu's PFP in the opposition is another distinguishing factor (United National Convention 1980). In the Fourth Republic the NPP has from the beginning embraced the Danquah-Busia tradition. Its immediate origin is in the "Danquah-Busia Club" that existed prior to the legalization of political parties, its top ranks are filled with Danquah-Busiaists from past regimes, or in some cases their children, and each of their manifestos begins with a quote from J.B.

Danquah (Jonah 1998, 92; New Patriotic Party 2000, 2004). The Nkrumahist tradition in the Fourth Republic has been a jumble of unpopular and disorganized parties. With the exception of the CPP, which draws directly on the teachings of Nkrumah for its inspiration, and the People's National Convention (PNC), which draws on the teachings of Nkrumah through Limann, no explicitly Nkrumahist party has managed to capture a single seat in Parliament and even the CPP and PNC can claim only a handful of seats combined in each election, which were eventually pooled with the NPP's in parliament, and have had virtually no impact on the presidential races (Nugent 1999, 291-293).

Commenting on these latter-day Nkrumahists and Danquah-Busiaists, Pinkney (1988, 48) notes that "in the vague sense of folk memories of the early nationalist movement, ['ideology'] appears to have been important in welding the party together as a vote-winning and activist-winning machine, but as a guide to policy it had little to offer." In evaluating the aforementioned parties' manifestos and legislative performance it appears that Pinkney is on to something. Harkening back to the original political discourse between Nkrumah and Danquah, Nkrumahist parties in the Second, Third, and Fourth Republics have adopted as their own issues of economic independence and distribution. Though they have a penchant for labeling their Danquah-Busiaist challengers tools of the wealthy and prone to sectionalism, hence the PNP advert describing the PFP as the "Popular Fronts for Plunder and Tribalism" (Kane 1979), the recommendations for a single-party state have yet to reappear. For their part Danquah-Busiaists have held themselves up as the "democratic" and pro-West alternative to Nkrumahism. An open letter Victor Owusu ran in the *Daily Graphic* purportedly penned by the seven year old granddaughter of Obetsebi-Lamprey, a member of the opposition in the First Republic who died in one of Nkrumah's political prisons, hints at the tone of these appeals. "I never knew my grandfather because he

died in detention under the C.P.P.,” the young child explains adding “[w]hat I want is to grow up in a country where there is real freedom – where friends can visit each other and talk to each other freely” (“Please Give Me a Chance...” 1979). The NPP has added a wrinkle in the Fourth Republic by highlighting in addition to its pro-democratic credentials the power of a free market and wealth accumulation.<sup>13</sup> Pinkney’s assertion does not negate the impact these campaign discourses may hold for would-be voters, but it does highlight the limited scope the ideological constructs of Nkrumahism and Danquah-Busiaism hold. Despite the often heated rhetoric revolving around what it means to be a Nkrumahist and what it means to be a Danquah-Busiaist, Limann did not try to transform Ghana into a socialist state anymore than Busia or Kufuor tried to transform Ghana’s centralized state apparatus into a federation.

### **The Advent of a “Third Way:” Rawlingsism?**

When a charismatic young Flight-Lieutenant by the name of Jerry Rawlings overthrew the civilian Third Republic and embarked upon what would be tagged the “31 December Revolution” the seeds were sewn for what would be the Ghanaian political discourses first new ideological tinged –ism since the pre-independence split within the UGCC. At first this construction that would come to be known as Rawlingsism bore a striking similarity to Nkrumahism. Like Nkrumah in his early days, Rawlings commingled personal charisma with populist appeals. During his first tour as head of state after the 4 June 1979 coup, Rawlings was rather fond of having his picture taken digging a ditch or planting crops with the peasants (Rothchild and Gyimah-Boadi 1989). When he took over the government radio stations on New Year’s Eve 1981 to inaugurate his second coup d’état in less than three years he implied more of the same. “[T]he people, the farmers, the police, the soldiers, the workers,” Rawlings

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<sup>13</sup> Danquah (1961) had trotted out this position in the past but it was more to signal to the West that Danquah-Busiaists were their friends in Ghana than to imply that trickle-down economics would float all boats domestically.

rationalized, “you, the guardians – rich and poor, should be a part of the decision-making process of this country” (Shillington 1992, 80). In practice this populism often manifested itself in *ad hoc* policies aimed at rooting out the ever-present “corruption;” goods were seized from anyone labeled a hoarder in the market, prices were set well below market values on foodstuffs, and towns and villages alike were ordered here and there to tidy up or else face the wrath of the government.<sup>14</sup>

Events of 1983 caused a significant shift in both the make-up of Rawlings’ PNDC government and its policy positions. On top of an already struggling economy, in January 1983 more than a million Ghanaians were expelled from Nigeria to be absorbed into the Ghanaian economy and the country experienced its worst drought since independence (Boahen 1989, 45). During this period the role of the PNDC’s radical left, represented most notably by Chris Atim and Alolga Akata-Pore, was diminished and the more moderate wing of the organization gained ascendancy (Shillington 1992, 104-106).<sup>15</sup> Though the “technocrats” that Rawlings relied on to run the government post-1983 were of diverse occupational and ideological backgrounds – P.V. Obeng was an engineer and businessman; Ato Ahwoi was working with the Aluminum Commission; Kwamena Ahwoi, Tsatsu Tsikata, and Kwesi Botchwey were left-leaning faculty of law at Legon; and Obed Asamoah was a parliamentary candidate for both the NAL and UNC – they were all at least pragmatically on board the Bretton Woods’ sponsored structural adjustment program (Nugent 1995, 127). Rawlings justified this change in course with the following words: “Idleness and parasitism have become more rewarded in this economy than productive work... This is the time to reverse this process” (Herbst 1993, 30). Between 1983 and

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<sup>14</sup> Whether or not these *ad hoc* policies were effective depends, not surprisingly, on one’s political leanings. For two sides of the story see Oquaye (2004, 122-125) and Awoonor (1984, 14-20).

<sup>15</sup> Atim and Akata-Pore did not leave without a fight. They purportedly planned a coup in October 1983. By the end of the year Atim had fled the country and Akata-Pore was in jail for his role in the failed coup.

1992 Ghana entered into six IMF-sponsored Structural Adjustment Programs and after being applauded for the “political will” shown in their implementation of neoliberal reforms were showered with more than \$200 million in Bretton Woods’ loans (Martin 1993).

When it came time for Flt.-Lt. Rawlings and the PNDC to transition into President Rawlings and the NDC, the exact position of Rawlingsism on the line drawn between Nkrumahism on the left and Danquah-Busiaism on the right became no more clear. As a presidential candidate and later as president, Rawlings, like Nkrumah before him, demonstrated a penchant for dressing in the Northern smock. This look is so pervasive amongst NDC candidates running for office that it is almost as synonymous with the party as its official umbrella symbol. The populist rhetoric that seems to naturally accompany the austere Northern smocks is also ever-present. Though the post-Rawlings’ generation of NDC politicians have not demonstrated similar talents, Rawlings remains a charismatic speaker prone to launching into tirades about the plight of the little man and the sins of the rich and powerful.<sup>16</sup> Yet despite these airs, the NDC remained remarkably conservative in its fiscal policy, relaxing a bit only in the run-up to the 2000 elections causing the value of the cedi to erode by approximately 300% between 1998 and 2000. Under NDC rule there would be no dramatic reduction in the fees associated with schools or hospitals, but the party managed to implement in 1998, albeit after a failed attempt in 1995, a very controversial Value Added Tax (Osei 2000; Coulombe and McKay 2003). In 2002 these somewhat inconsistent ideological tendencies that made Rawlingsism more economically conservative than Nkrumahist socialism and more populist in tone than the Danquah-Busiaism was given the formal title “Social Democracy” (National Democratic Congress 2002).

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<sup>16</sup> In a page directly out of Nkrumah’s book, in its 2004 manifesto the NDC accused the NPP of being the party that sought to “frustrate the people’s aspiration for early liberation from colonial domination” and believes that Ghana should “seek ye first the macro-economic kingdom and all other things shall be added unto thee” (National Democratic Congress 2004, ix, 3).

## Sectional Cleavages

Article 55 in Ghana's 1992 Constitution proscribes in general any political party based on sectional divisions but gives explicit attention to three types of sectional parties, specifically those built upon ethnic, religious, and regional identities. These proscriptions are not unique to Ghana's contemporary constitution. They have roots in the pre-independence era and have been included in every republican constitution since.<sup>17</sup> By now the reason given for the inclusion of this prohibition is to guarantee parties of a "national character" though the initial impetus behind the ban was less conjectural and more pragmatic. Nkrumah's early challengers in the NLM claimed as its allies organizations and parties with monikers suggesting an ethnic (Asanteman Council, Akim Abuakwa State, and Ga Shifimo Kpee), religious (MAP), or regional character (NOPP, Northern Territories Council, and TC).

While these groups rejected the implication that they did not have the best interests of "Ghana" in mind, hence MAP's (1954, 1) assertion that they are a party "made up of Muslims [*sic*] and non Muslims [*sic*]" or the NOPP's (1954, 1) declaration that "the Northern Peoples Party does not seek the interests of the North alone," Nkrumah and the CPP managed quite successfully to categorize them and their federalist ambitions as sectional detractors from the *common* cause of self government (Legislative Council of the Gold Coast 1950). Though Nkrumah is a notable example, he is certainly not the first or the last Ghanaian politician to suggest his opposition speaks for parts of the country while he speaks for the whole. Following is an exploration of what some of these "parts" are and how they are socially constructed in Ghana. More concise than comprehensive, this exploration touches upon the sectional cleavages that

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<sup>17</sup> As the NLM begin to cause problems for the government in 1954, the CPP proposed a bill "restricting the titles and membership of religious, regional and tribal organizations represented in the Legislative Assembly" (Rathbone 2000, 67).

most often arise in the Ghanaian political discourse and gives readers a sense of how the various sectional variables relate to one another.

### **Ethnicity**

“[T]he idea of ‘tribe,’” Crawford Young (1976, 35) tongue-and-cheekily describes ethnic essentialism as it is commonly practiced, “conveyed the image of a world neatly dissected into a series of tribal compartments; a tribal map could be drawn, with firm black lines demarcating boundaries.” As a tool for understanding where people live in contemporary Ghana, the map Young derides is fatally flawed. Urban centers and trading markets are melting pots for Ghana’s diverse array of ethnic and language groups (Dakubu 1997). Modern transportation and the government’s national service requirements dating back more than half a century have sent “strangers” throughout the Ghanaian hinterlands, most for short stints but many of whom relocate permanently (Hodge 1964, 116). These points, while they complicate the cartographer’s task, do little to dissuade the essentialism against which Young rails. They also fail to address ambiguous or contested identities and allow for an imaginary past when ethnic groups were homogenous and had well-defined territories. To study ethnicity in particular, and social cleavages in general, in an honest manner one must acknowledge that some categorization goes on in one’s own work and do one’s best to concede the point up front and go as far as possible to minimize the conceptual violence done to social realities.

It is with this sensitivity that Figure 3-1 is presented depicting, in the words of the 1960 census, the “Tribes” of Ghana (Survey of Ghana 1966). This map should not be interpreted as a completely accurate depiction of ethnicity in Ghana but rather a good faith effort by scholars to illustrate a general process-sanitized understanding of what ethnicity looks like to many Ghanaians. A complete description of each and every ethnic group that calls Ghana home, or every ethnic group depicted in Figure 3-1 for that matter, is beyond the scope of this

dissertation.<sup>18</sup> To begin to understand the way politics works in Ghana on a national scale, however, it is necessary to have at least a passing understanding of what and whom the Asante and Ewe are and why they hold such a central position in the Ghanaian political discourse.

### **Asante**

According to Fage (1969, 108), the origins of the Asante nation lie in the dramatic summoning of the Golden Stool from the heavens by ĩkõmfo Anõkye in the last decade of the seventeenth century. This event marked the confederation of eight kinship-related clans under the leadership of the *Kumasihene*, now known as the *Asantehene*, with the express purpose of escaping their collective tributary relationship with the neighboring state of Denkyira. This “united” Asante front managed to defeat Denkyira, but they did not stop there. By the end of the eighteenth century the Asante kingdom conquered the majority of modern-day Ghana and their area of tribute, either in goods or services, stretched from Wasa in the Southwest to Dagomba in the Northeast. For distant areas, both spatially and culturally, this relationship was generally considered mutually beneficial with small tributes going to the Asante but large amounts of trade going in both directions. On areas closer to Kumasi (Akan, Kwahu, Akyem, Akuapem, Asen, Denkyira, Akwamu, Fante Wasa, Bron and Ahafo in Figure 3-1) harsher demands were put in place both in terms of military service and the introduction of Asante political institutions. As a result of these more strenuous demands, it was these latter areas that were most prone to unrest and revolt (Arhin 1967).

After nearly a century of intermittent fighting with the British, the Asante Empire was attached to Britain’s Gold Coast Colony as a protectorate in 1900. The area allowed the protectorate consisted of Asante populated territories and those of the Bron and Ahafo ethnic

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<sup>18</sup> For a good recent discussion of ethnicity in Ghana see Lentz and Nugent (2000). For older colonial-era ethnographies see Rattray (1923; 1932), Ellis (1965), Field (1940), and Hayford (1903) as oft-cited examples.

groups who paid tribute directly to the Asante. In 1959, after much cajoling from Bron and Ahafo political groups, these latter two areas were excised from what is known today as the Ashanti Region (Bening 1999). In Ghana in general, but in the Ashanti Region in particular, the Asantehene and his subordinates remain to this day revered figures with a great deal of informal political sway. During the build up to independence the NLM campaign for regional autonomy and formal governmental recognition of the Asante's unique place in Ghanaian history was for a time run out of the Asantehene's Palace at Manhyia (Allman 1990, 267-277). More recently for his personal Otumfuo Educational Fund, in 2004 Asantehene Osei Tutu II secured an unprecedented five million dollar loan from the World Bank prompting many non-Asante politicians and pundits to question the government as to whether or not the Republic of Ghana had been assigned a king without their knowledge (Nugent 2005, 138).

## **Ewe**

To the east of the Volta River, in an area that presently straddles the Ghana-Togo border lies a region occupied primarily by Ewe-speaking people. Unlike the Asante, historical records indicate that there has never been any centralized Ewe state, but rather a loose association of groups sharing a similar language who occasionally and in an improvised fashion would ally for purposes of war (Manoukian 1952, 4). These groups would just as often, however, war amongst themselves and it was not unusual for some Ewe-speaking states to ally with non-Ewe-speaking states against a common Ewe-speaking enemy (Amenumey 1989, 3). Nugent (2002, 147) surmises that during this pre-colonial period "it was not immediately obvious to all 'Ewes' that this [ethnic] identification should override other relationships of affinity." When Europeans arrived in Ewe-speaking territories in large numbers they saw little incentive to keep the area whole given the lack of centralized authority. The British took the states of Anlo, Some, Likor, Peki and Tongu along the coast by 1884 while the Germans captured the territory further inland

and to the east. After World War I the German territories were divided by the British and French and to this day Ewe-speakers predominate in Southeastern Ghana and Southern Togo (Amenumey 1989, 3-8).

Over the decades separating colonization and the present there have been a number of movements agitating for Ewe nationalism and unification of Ewe-speakers across this artificial colonial border. None of these movements was successful in achieving its ultimate goals and neither were they particularly popular amongst the masses of Ewe-speakers (Nugent 1992). Despite this disunity, throughout independent Ghana's political history Ewe-speakers have been time and again labeled "tribalistic" and "subversive to national unity" by national leaders. In an interesting analysis of this phenomenon, Brown (1982) comes to the conclusion that these labels are mere scapegoating done by politicians unable to deliver on development promises and keen to place the blame for these failures elsewhere. Because of the lively and public debate that played out during the decade immediately preceding independence in both the national legislature and the halls of the United Nations over whether the *status quo* regarding the partition of German Togoland should be maintained or whether "a United Eweland, a United Togoland excluding the Gold Coast Ewes, [or] a United Togoland including the latter" would be preferable, Ewe-speakers were easy targets ("The Ewe Question (1)" 1951).

### **The rest**

Ethnicity being perceived as both a politically volatile subject and notoriously difficult to categorize has not often been measured in Ghana. The first attempt in the post-independence period was part of the 1960 population census. So controversial were the findings documented in a report identified as "Special Report 'E': Tribes in Ghana" (Gil et al. 1964) that census respondents were not asked their "tribe" or "ethnicity" again, despite a census conducted in both 1970 and 1984, until the 2000 national population and housing census (Ghana Statistical Service

2002). In both 1960 and 2000 self-identified Asante ranked first in percentage of total population in Ghana (13.3% in 1960 and 14.8% in 2000) and self-identified Ewe ranked second (13.0% in 1960 and 12.7% in 2000). These results indicate that a likely 70 to 75% of the Ghanaian population identifies, and has at least since independence, with one of Ghana's less populous ethnic categories. Some of these groups – Ga, Fanti, and Dagomba for example – have significant populations, ranging from approximately 3 to 9%. Most, however, comprise less than 1% of Ghana's population. These linguistically, culturally, and institutionally diverse ethnic groups, many of which have extremely fluid borders, can play an essential role in local politics but have failed to capture the political spotlight individually on the national scene as have the Asante and Ewe.

“The real innovation of the census-takers of the 1870s,” notes Anderson (1991, 168), “was...not in the *construction* of ethnic-racial classifications, but rather in their systematic *quantification*.” In answering the question – “How many Ghanaian languages are there?” – Dakubu (1988, 10) estimates somewhere between 45 and 50. To quantify and depict such a large number of groups in what is today a country with a population of less than 20 million, census-takers have often resorted to identity categories above the ethnic group. In Ghana this alternative categorization often takes the form of language groups which in the 2000 census included Akan, Ga-Dangme, Ewe, Guan, Gurma, Mole-Dagbon, Grusi, Mande-Busanga, and the ubiquitous “all others”.<sup>19</sup> Figure 3-1 is color-coded to depict Ghana Statistical Service's classification of ethnic groups under the grander language categories.

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<sup>19</sup> These categories, depicted in Figure 3-1, are not unanimously held. In her influential text on Ghanaian languages, Dakubu (1988) uses a different set of language categories. Though her categories overlap considerably with that of Ghana Statistical Services, there are important distinctions. She, for instance, classifies the Ahanta, Nzema, Aowin, and Sehwi groups in Southwestern Ghana as related but non-Akan languages and does not include the Central Togo languages in the Guan group.

For the time being a discussion of Guan, Gurma, Mole-Dagbon, Grusi, and Mande-Busanga categories is tabled. In the mainstream political discourse these labels have little saliency and tend to be subsumed into the regional category “Northern” as discussed in the following subsection. The language category “Ewe” is more or less synonymous with the ethnic identity “Ewe” given the lack of historical political institutions. Language categories that are regularly understood and used by the general public as shorthand to describe certain unique group identities are Ga-Dangme and Akan. Individuals speaking languages that fit into the Ga-Dangme group make up roughly 8% of contemporary Ghana’s population and tend to congregate around the Accra plains.<sup>20</sup> The Akan language group is by far the largest in Ghana population-wise with nearly 50% of Ghanaians identifying an Akan language as their mother tongue. There is no reliable historical record suggesting that there was ever a coherent political unit in pre-colonial West Africa known as the “Akan” (Kiyaga-Mulindwa 1980) though there is a plethora of evidence in the more recent record to suggest a complex relationship marked as much by war and turmoil as by any sense of cultural similarities. When the British arrived to colonize the Gold Coast they met an Asante empire that had subjugated most of the Akan-world through violence and coercion and were demanding tribute and soldiers from leaders and populations often expressively unhappy with the arrangement. They were engaged in battle with the second largest group of speakers of an Akan language, the Fante, who were fighting for their independent survival (Sanders 1979).

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<sup>20</sup> Languages fitting into this group include Ga and Dangme with its six dialects Ada, Ningo, Prampram, Shai, Krobo, and Osudoku (Dakubu 1988, 105-106). Ga-Dangme languages are generally mutually intelligible but the groups within the Ga-Dangme language family were never a coherent political unit. It may be surmised that Ga-Dangme, sometimes shortened to simply Ga, holds a salient place in the Ghanaian political discourse because it is the traditional language of the capital city and it does not fit into either the Akan or Ewe group and unlike the various languages of Northern Ghana cannot be lumped into a larger regional grouping.

## **Region**

There are 10 regional administrative units in contemporary Ghana (see Figure 3-2). Each of these regions has a Regional Minister and Deputy Regional Minister and their staffs whose purpose it is to handle government business in the given region. The system is not federal in that the Ministers are appointed by the President and have as their sole responsibility the execution of the national government's agenda. Below the regional level, Ghana is divided into 138 districts, 110 before 2004 and 100 before 2000, each with a partially elected and partially appointed "nonpartisan" District Assembly ostensibly responsible for local development projects (Ayee 1997). As social cleavages, these existing formal boundaries have been left largely immobilized. There are identities both above (e.g., ethnicity) and below (e.g., village) these levels that social movements and political entrepreneurs have found riper, and as a result have avoided agitation along these lines. The same cannot be said for the pre-independence regional divisions. In addition to depicting contemporary Ghanaian regional boundaries, Figure 3-2 depicts the regional boundaries as they demarcated the Gold Coast Colony, Ashanti Protectorate, Northern Territories, and Trans-Volta Togoland during the colonial period.<sup>21</sup> These units have played a role in defining Ghanaian social groups since their inception through the present.

The Gold Coast Colony contained present-day Western, Central, Eastern and Greater Accra Regions and represents the area the British were able to capture, principally through treaty, prior to reaching an agreement with the Asante and issuing them protectorate status. European education and religion were well established in these areas prior to the dawn of the twentieth century (Kimble 1963, 61-124) and traditional authorities used the British influence to remove themselves from their inferior and tributary relationship with Asante (Bening 1999, 65-

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<sup>21</sup> For a thorough history of the regional boundaries in Ghana see Bening (1999).

76). The Ashanti Protectorate was treated as conquered territory early in its existence. In 1896 the Asantehene along with “his mother, father, brother, two other close relatives, two linguistics, the Chiefs of Bantama and Asafu, and the Kings of Mampong, Offinsu, and Ejisu” were taken prisoner by the British and “their peoples” were denied easy access to colonial education. The differences in treatment between the Protectorate and the Colony dissolved over time such that barristers began to be allowed in Ashanti courts in 1933 and in 1946 the Ashanti Protectorate was deemed worthy of representation on the Legislative Council; both rights gained in the Colony decades earlier (Kimble 1963, 532-533). Trans-Volta Togoland is interesting in that it is not, as has often been assumed, a strictly Ewe-speaking entity. The land inherited by the British in the wake of World War I was soon thereafter divided administratively into a Northern sector and a Southern sector. It was only the Southern sector plus the Anlo areas that were part of the Colony that would eventually become the Volta Region and it is only the southern half of the Southern sector plus Anlo and its environs that were, and are, inhabited primarily by Ewe-speakers (Nugent 2002, 189).

Of all the pre-independence regional divisions that have had carry over effects, the cleavage separating the Northern Territories, and the Northern sector of British Togoland, from Southern Ghana is likely the most dramatic. During the colonial period the Northern Territories were described by Crook (1981, 565) as a “culturally ‘protected’ backwater and labour reservoir for the south.” Residents of the region were purposively kept uneducated. By 1935 the vast area comprising the Northern Territories could claim only five government and three mission primary schools and not a single post-primary institution (Bening 1999, 235). Despite the fact that the territory formerly known as the Northern Territories covers over a third of Ghana’s land and is home to nearly a fifth of Ghana’s present-day population, the region continues to be viewed by

many Southerners as a distant and exotic hinterland. When violence broke out in the city of Bawku during the 2000 elections even well-meaning and generally well-respected reporters from the South mislabeled the region Upper West, when it is in fact in Upper East, and could not fathom a cause other than primordial tribal violence (Smith 2001).

## **Religion**

Ghana, especially when compared to Nigeria where religion has oft been characterized as *the* major politically-mobilized social cleavage (Hunwick 1992), has not experienced religion as a reoccurring theme in national politics. There are regional differences in religious make-up (see Table 3-3) with residents in the Southern regions identifying themselves overwhelmingly as Christian, Islam having a more pronounced foothold in the North especially in the Northern Region, and Traditionalists in greater percentages in the Volta Region and three Northern regions. No region, however, is religiously monolithic.<sup>22</sup> In Southern cities and market centers the phenomenon of the *zongo* is widespread. Zongos are distinguished from neighboring areas by “the use of Hausa as a *lingua franca*, by the adherence of most immigrants to Islam, by residential clustering in neighborhoods predominately inhabited by Northerners, by the similar Muslim dress and behavior of many migrants, and by their common involvement in trading activities and unskilled jobs” (Shildkroun 1978, 86). Christian churches, though they were discouraged from setting up missions in the Northern Territories by the colonial government, have also established themselves in predominantly Muslim areas. The “White Fathers” of the Catholic Church have a history in the North going back nearly a century and Pentecostal churches, so popular as of late in the South, have made their mark in the North and are not shy about proselytizing to Muslims (Der 1974; Gifford 1994, 249-252). Traditional religions, and

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<sup>22</sup> Even the use of Christian, Muslim, and Traditionalist is problematic in that each of these categories has multiple sub-categories some of which have major theological conflicts.

their syncretic forms, which are certainly underrepresented in the Ghanaian census, are highly varied and ubiquitous across the country (Meyer 2005).

The sundry nature of religion in Ghana has not prevented certain groups from claiming to speak for one religious group or another on the national political scene. MAP made “Islam” its rallying cry but failed to win even a Muslim audience outside of Southern Zongos. Those Muslims in the North identified much more strongly with the NOPP in 1954 (Ahmed-Rufai 2002, 108-109). More recently many of the charismatic communities in Southern Ghana have gone to great lengths to describe Ghana as a “Christian country” (Owusu 1996, 322). None of these groups, however, have yet been able to concretize a political cleavage based on religious variable categories. Regional Minister for Greater Accra Sheikh I.C. Quaye’s (2003) description of inter-religious relationships in Ghana as characterized by “a relationship of mutuality, understanding, tolerance and coexistence between Muslims, Christians and other religions” seems to have won the day. This inability to mobilize on a national scale is partly due to the dispersed nature of the various religions in Ghana described above but it also likely has something to do with the fluidity with which religions have traditionally been practiced in this environment. There are Ghanaian Muslims who turn to the east five times a day, Ghanaian Christians who refuse to work on Sunday, and Ghanaian practitioners of traditional religions who have never entered either a church or a mosque. But there are many Ghanaians, likely a majority, who have a far more complex relationship with the country’s plethora of religions.

Table 3-1. Elections in Ghana - a historical overview

Year	P.M./President (Party)	Majority Party (Seats/Total)	Minority Parties (Seats)
1951	Kwame Nkrumah (CPP)	CPP (33/38)	UGCC (3), Tongu Confederacy (1), independents (1)
1954	Kwame Nkrumah (CPP)	CPP (71/104)	NPP (12), TC (2), GCP (1), MAP (1), AYO (1), independents (16)
1956	Kwame Nkrumah (CPP)	CPP (71/104)	NPP (15), NLM (12), TC (2), MAP (1), FYO (1), independents (2)
1969	Kofi Busia (PP)	PP (105/140)	NAL (29), UNP (2), PAP (2), APRP (1), independents (1)
1979	Hilla Limann (PNP)	PNP (71/140)	PFP (42), UNC (13), ACP (10), SDF (3), independents (1)
1992	Jerry Rawlings (NDC)	NDC (189/200)	NCP (8), EGGLE (1), independents (2)
1996	Jerry Rawlings (NDC)	NDC (133/200)	NPP (61), PCP (5), PNC (1)
2000	John Kufuor (NPP)	NPP (100/200)	NDC (92), PNC (3), CPP (1), independents (4)
2004	John Kufuor (NPP)	NPP (128/230)	NDC (94), PNC (4), CPP (3), independents (1)

Note: Election results obtained from Larvie and Badu (1996), Ephson (2003), and Electoral Commission of Ghana (2004).

Table 3-2. Genealogy of the Nkrumahist and Danquah-Busiaist traditions

Year	Nkrumahist Parties	Danquah-Busiaist Parties
1951	CPP	UGCC
1954	CPP	GCP
1956	CPP	NLM
1969	NAL	PP
1979	PNP	PFP, UNC
1992	NIP, PHP, PNC	NPP
1996	PCP, PNC	NPP
2000	CPP, PNC	NPP
2004	CPP, PNC	NPP

Note: Guidance in categorizing the parties as either Nkrumahist or Danquah-Busiaist was provided by Austin (1964), Chazan (1983), Ephson (1992; 2003), and Pinkney (1988) as well as various party manifestos. This categorization is not an exact science. The parties listed above were categorized based on two criteria: 1) They either self-identify in their manifestos as a Nkrumahist party or a Danquah-Busiaist party or explicitly trace their ideological heritages through the CPP or UGCC and 2) they were significant enough to win seats in the legislature. Criteria two is relaxed in 1992 to include parties that participated in the presidential contest since all self-identified Nkrumahist parties boycotted the parliamentary elections.

Table 3-3. Religious breakdown by region of Ghana

	Christian	Muslim	Traditional	Other	None
Western	81.0%	8.5%	1.5%	0.8%	8.2%
Central	81.4%	9.2%	1.2%	0.8%	7.4%
Gt. Accra	83.0%	10.2%	1.4%	0.9%	4.6%
Volta	67.2%	5.1%	21.8%	0.7%	5.3%
Eastern	82.8%	6.1%	2.4%	0.7%	8.1%
Ashanti	77.5%	13.2%	1.2%	0.7%	5.3%
Brong-Ahafo	70.8%	16.1%	4.6%	0.6%	7.8%
Northern	19.3%	56.1%	21.3%	0.5%	2.8%
Upper East	28.3%	22.5%	46.4%	0.8%	1.9%
Upper West	35.5%	32.2%	29.3%	0.6%	2.3%
Total Country	68.8%	15.9%	8.5%	0.7%	6.1%

Note: Data obtained from Ghana Statistical Services (2002)

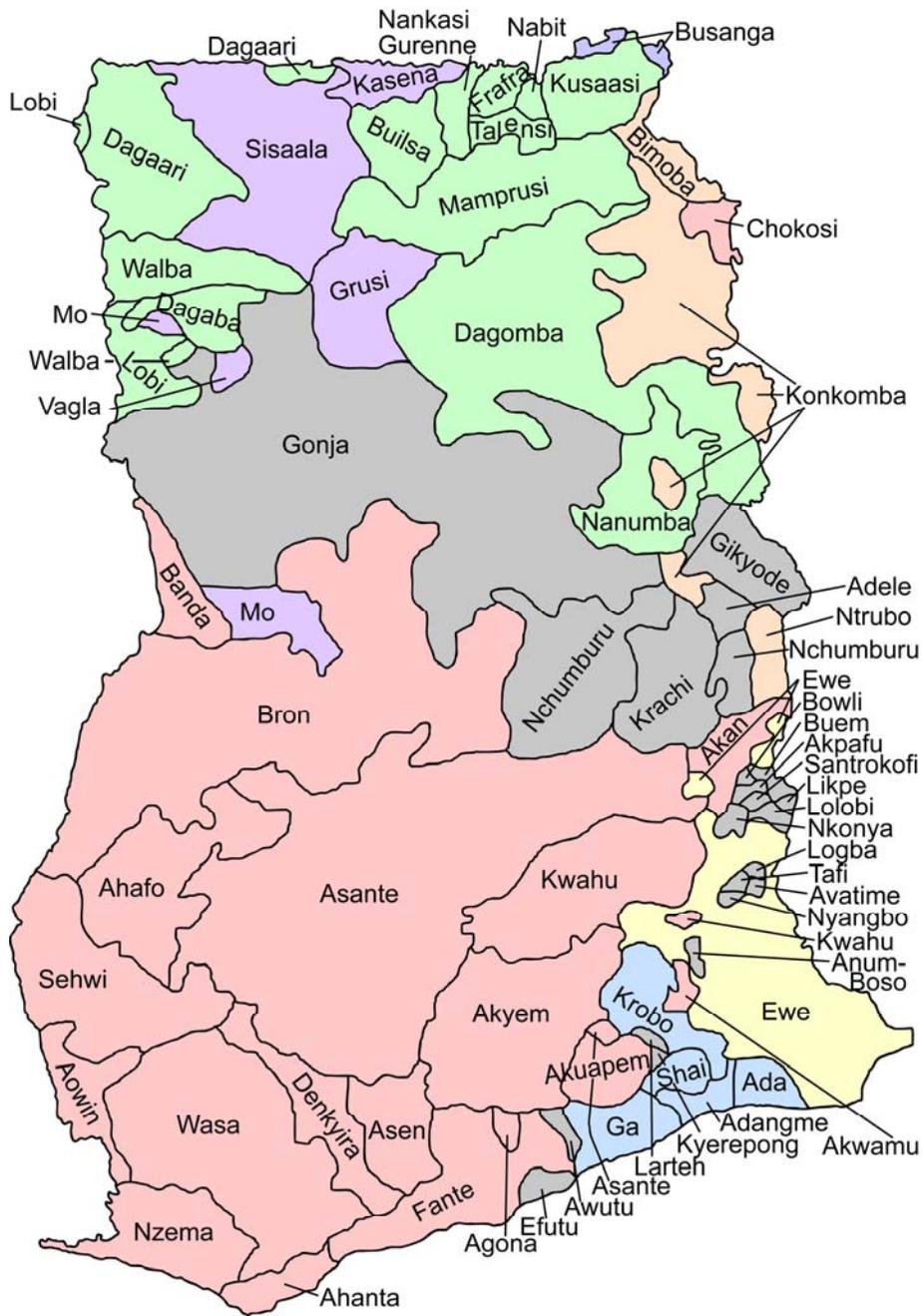


Figure 3-1. Ethno-linguistic map of Ghana [Source: Author created map with approximate borders of ethnic groups adapted from Survey of Ghana (1966) and language groupings and spellings from Ghana Statistical Service (2002).]

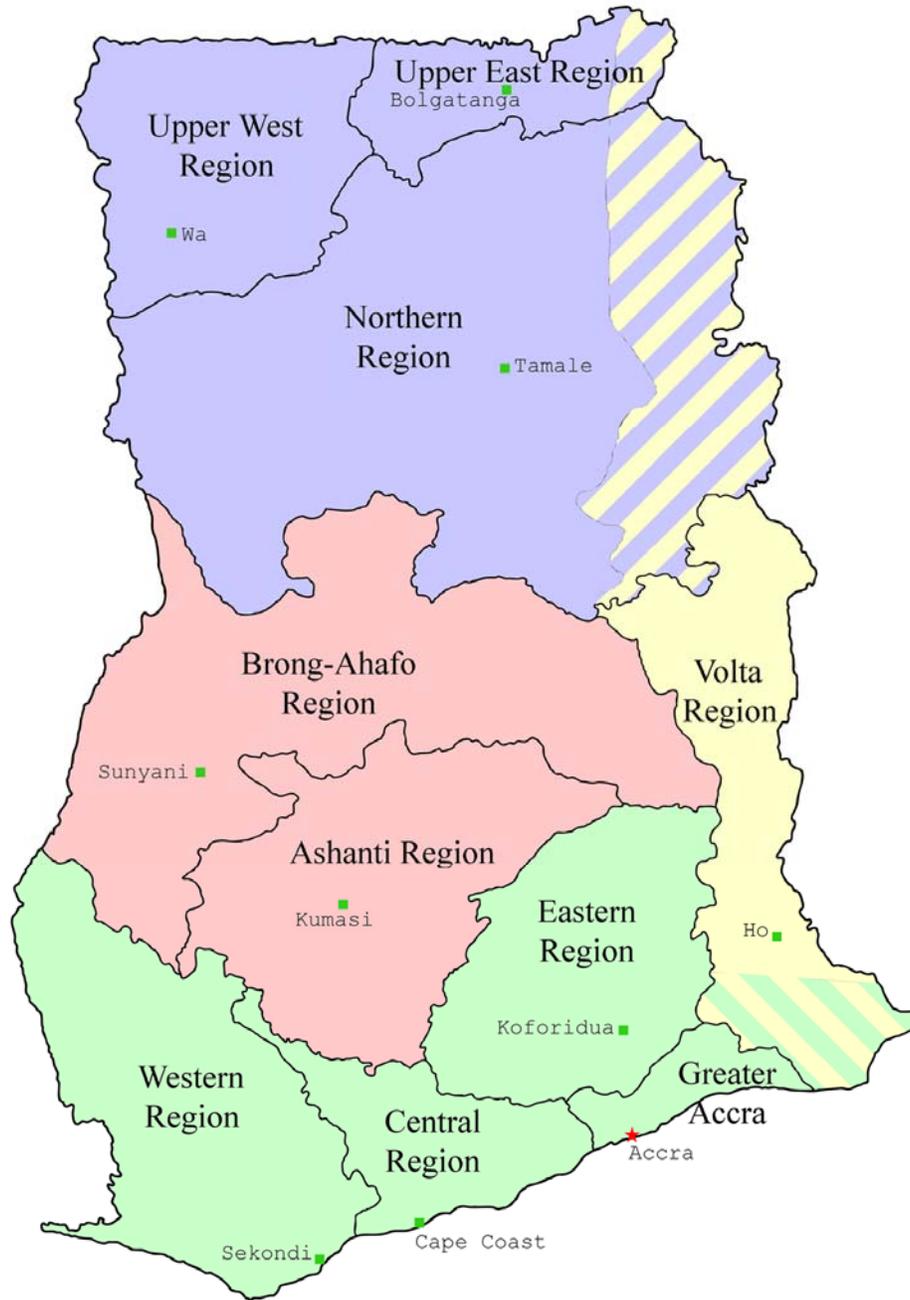


Figure 3-2. Contemporary regions of Ghana (color-coded by colonial regions) [Source: Author created composite map from information provided in Bening (1999).]

CHAPTER 4  
THE ELEPHANT, UMBRELLA, AND QUARRELLING COCKS: DISAGGREGATING  
PARTISANSHIP IN THE FOURTH REPUBLIC

That there was a pattern to Ghana's 2004 presidential and parliamentary elections surprised no one. As expected the ruling NPP picked up the majority of votes in the Ashanti Region and the NDC won in the Volta, Northern, Upper East, and Upper West regions. The "swing" regions (Eastern, Greater Accra, Central, Western, and Brong-Ahafo) went to the election's eventual winner (Ephson 2003, 14). The familiar rural/urban divide was also palpable. If one isolates the 20 largest urban centers in Ghana from the rest of the country, one finds that the NPP polled on average around 7% higher in these large urban constituencies than they did in less urban constituencies.<sup>1</sup> The relationship is reversed for the NDC. Nkrumahist parties won a few parliamentary seats in the Southwest and far North but did predictably little to dispel the notion of Ghana being a *de facto* two-party state. Despite a different party in the Castle<sup>2</sup> and controlling parliament, Nugent's (1999) "urban, rural and ethnic themes in the 1992 and 1996 elections in Ghana" continue virtually untouched. Recognizing the practical importance of recurring electoral cleavages, when asked about strategic campaigning a member of the NPP executive committee commented "some [constituencies] we just ignore completely because whatever we do we'll lose."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ghana's 20 most populous urban centers are described by the 2000 Census as Accra Metropolis, Kumasi Metropolis, Tamale, Takoradi Sub-Metro, Ashaiman, Tema, Obuasi, Sekondi Sub-Metro, Koforidua, Cape Coast, Madina, Wa, Sunyani, Ho, Tema Newtown, Techiman, Bawku, Bolgatanga, Agona Swedru, and Nkawkaw. The constituency and/or district election results of these areas was compared with the constituency and/or district election results of the areas outside of these 20 most populous urban centers to derive these percentages (Ghana Statistical Service 2002a, 1).

<sup>2</sup> "The Castle" is what most Ghanaians call Christiansborg Castle in Osu. The stone fort was originally constructed by the Danes in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century but today serves as the office space for the President.

<sup>3</sup> Interview conducted at NPP party headquarters in Kokomlemle, Accra on 12 July 2005. Similar responses were given by other members of the NPP and NDC party establishments when queried.

Barring a dramatic electoral realignment, scholars, politicians, and pundits alike anticipate similar voting patterns, though not necessarily similar electoral outcomes, to carry on for the foreseeable future. But why, after four elections and a turnover in power, do these predictable voting blocs persist and what causal variables explain them? Answers to these questions tend to fall into one of two categories. One answer points to ideological (*Gesellschaft*) cleavages as the driving force behind Ghanaian electoral alignments. Rhetorically at least the NPP positions itself as a center-right party and the NDC has claimed the center-left as its ideological territory. In a recent study of core and swing voters Lindberg and Morrison (2005, 19) present evidence that Ghanaian parties are separated by socio-economic factors regularly tied to ideological cleavages including the aforementioned urban-rural divide, level of education, occupation status and sector, and income levels. The alternative answer points to sectional (*Gemeinschaft*) cleavages, most often conceptualized ethnically in the Ghanaian case, as the driving force behind electoral alignments. Though Lentz and Nugent (2000) prudently caution against assuming ethnicities in Ghana are fixed social realities, voting patterns indicate at least some schism along perceived ethnic lines. In his analysis of Ghana's 2000 elections, Gyimah-Boadi (2001, 115) summarizes the popular sentiment that has followed each of the Fourth Republic's national elections when he notes that "the country is polarized along ethnic and regional lines" and suggests "sustained efforts at national reconciliation and unity."

This chapter begins with a two-tiered examination of politically mobilized cleavages in Ghana's Fourth Republic. First all four national elections in the Fourth Republic are placed under the analytical microscope. Using electoral maps, census data, and election results the social bases of the NDC and NPP are illuminated graphically on a macro-level. In some ways this depiction of electoral cleavages is just another point for triangulating the anecdotal and

survey evidence which has already been reported both in the popular Ghanaian press and in academic journals. That some Ghanaian political parties are more popular amongst some members of one ethnic group or another will not seem earth shattering to even a casual observer of Ghanaian politics. Neither will the revelation that some parties do better in areas with specific class indicators. In other ways, however, this method offers a systematic approach to evaluating Ghanaian social cleavages that can be applied comparatively both across time and borders. This flexibility is unprecedented. The second level of analysis deals with the sociopsychological textures of Ghanaian parties (Heberle 1955). In other words, what “cognitive shortcuts” do Ghanaian voters take with them into the ballot box? With the help of survey results collected in the wake of the 2004 elections this section presents a new kind of analysis that goes directly at answering this question. Instead of asking registered voters to distinguish between political parties in an open-ended abstract way, this “cognitive shortcut” mapping approach asks respondents to differentiate on a number of specific variables. The chapter concludes with a brief discussion of what the election and “cognitive shortcut” analysis mean, and conversely do not mean, for the future of Ghana’s Fourth Republic.

## **Elections in the Fourth Republic**

### **Mapping the Votes**

As soon as it became clear that Kufuor and the NPP had won the December 2004 polls hawkers took to the streets of Accra selling commemorative electoral maps. Cartoon elephants were positioned over constituencies won by the NPP, cartoon umbrellas over those won by the NDC, and cartoon cocks and palm trees over those few constituencies won by the CPP and PNC respectively. These decorative souvenirs were an attempt to duplicate on a popular level what Nugent (1999, 2001b) has done on the pages of academic journals. Maps of this variety give their readers a rough understanding of where one party is strong and another is weak. The areas

of the map with a lot of elephants, for instance, are chalked up as NPP territory whereas the areas heavily shaded by umbrellas are where the NDC reigns. The parsimonious presentation points to a number of straightforward hypotheses: the NPP is an Asante party and the NDC is an Ewe party; the NPP is a Southern party and the NDC is a Northern party; the NPP is an urban party and the NDC is a rural party.

While these electoral depictions are useful when it comes to hypothesis generation, they present partisan social cleavages as unrealistically sharp lines when in actuality they are much more nuanced. NDC support does not stop at the Jaman North constituency border only to be replaced by NPP support on the Jaman South side of the boundary. Though the NDC claimed the parliamentary seat for Jaman North and the NPP claimed the seat for Jaman South in 2004, in both constituencies opposition candidates took in more than 40% of the vote. Figures 4-1 (NDC) and 4-2 (NPP) illustrate some of this gradation using presidential results for the 1992, 1996, 2000, and 2004 elections.<sup>4</sup> When a particular constituency's support for a given party is nearing 100%, that constituency is shaded nearly black. When a particular constituency's support for a given party is nearing 0%, that constituency is left virtually white. Most constituencies, however, appear as shades of gray, sometimes darker and sometimes lighter depending on the level of support a given party's presidential candidate received in the area.

It is clear from the maps that the epicenter of NPP support is Kumasi and the epicenter of NDC support is the Southern portion of the Volta Region. These two areas are nearly black in the

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<sup>4</sup> Presidential elections are used because they yield one more data point than parliamentary elections, as a result of the 1992 parliamentary election boycott, and since split-ticket voting is a relatively rare phenomenon presidential results and parliamentary results roughly mimic each other. Since 1996, the average difference between a major parties' (i.e., NPP and NDC) presidential and parliamentary totals across constituencies has never been greater than 6.4% (NPP in 1996) or lower than 2.8% (NPP in 2000) of the total vote. For the 2000 elections, where there was a run-off, only first round results are reported.

NPP and NDC maps respectively for each of the Fourth Republic's four presidential elections.<sup>5</sup> This gives at least tentative support to a rather modest version of the ethnicity hypothesis. Even if one assumes that Asantes form the core of NPP support because their traditional capital is in Kumasi and Ewes form the core of NDC support because their traditional area is in the Southern portion of Volta Region, however, one must still account for the more than 70% of Ghanaians who did not self-identify themselves with either ethnic group in the last census (Ghana Statistical Service 2002b, 22). The more ambitious ethnic hypothesis, that pitting the linguistic group Akans<sup>6</sup> versus non-Akans, does not fare nearly so well. Whereas winner-take-all maps depict the entire Volta Region and the three Northern regions (Northern, Upper East, Upper West) as a relatively solid and stable NDC bloc, the proportional maps show increasing parity between the two major parties in the three Northern regions and what are perhaps the signs of a growing parity in Northern parts of the Volta Region as well. Similarly, the so-called Akan regions (Ashanti, Brong-Ahafo, Central, Eastern, and Western), with Kumasi and its environs being the notable exception, are a mixed bag of grays in elections won by both the NDC and NPP. One can witness the sea-change in the Akan-speaking regions that led to the turnover of power from the NDC to the NPP in 2000, but neither before nor after can the area be characterized as an absolute runaway for either party. Additionally this sea-change cannot be differentiated from the growing popularity of NPP presidential candidates in predominately non-Akan areas of the country.

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<sup>5</sup> The fact that these two sets of maps are near negative images of each other is the result of poor showings by Nkrumahists and other minor party candidates. A similar set of maps could have been made for the Nkrumahists and minor parties but the maps would have looked very close to blank because of their candidates' relatively poor showings.

<sup>6</sup> Robert Price (1973, 472) noted the category "Akan" is becoming more and more widely recognized and may begin to be considered a product of what Jean Rouch (1956, 163-4) has called "super-tribalization." Evidence presented here does not support this supposition.

Ideology-via-socio-economic indicators' hypotheses run into similarly vast areas of gray. This result is not completely unexpected as class and privilege indicators are not as apt as ethno-linguistic cleavages to be geographically centered. It is not uncommon, for instance, to witness destitute panhandlers in a city like Accra walking alongside the Mercedes of wealthy entrepreneurs on their way to work or to see *burger* mansions in various states of construction all across the countryside.<sup>7</sup> Most Ghanaians can, nonetheless, point easily to regions of the country which are more or less economically marginalized and undeveloped. Despite the deleterious effects of economic reform programs on urban workers in the late 1980s and early 1990s (Herbst 1993, 61-64), Ghanaian cities continue to lure rural dwellers with their relatively easier access to the fruits of development and prosperity. Cities in Ghana continue to grow in relation to rural areas because countless rural dwellers act on the belief that their earning potential, even with the risks of high unemployment, is greater in the cities than in the countryside (Harris and Todaro 1970).

In addition to the urban and rural distinction, there is a perceived and actual gap between the country's "North" and "South" dating back to the colonial period when the British purposively kept the Northern population uneducated so that they would remain a cheap source of labor in the South (Bening 1999, 232-237). Today the percentage of individuals achieving a level of education above primary school hovers in the low teens in the three regions that once constituted the Gold Coast's Northern Territories (Northern, Upper East, and Upper West). In none of the other seven regions does this percentage drop below thirty. A cursory glance at the maps depicting election results, however, does not provide clear evidence that either of these

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<sup>7</sup> "Burger" is a term used to describe wealthy Ghanaians living abroad who commission large and often ostentatious mansions that are commonly left unfinished for years. The assumption is that these individuals will have completed their houses by the time they return to Ghana and wanted to get some structure in the works so that claims to the land would be solidified.

ideologically tinged socio-economic cleavages are politicized. Though Sekondi-Takoradi and Cape Coast do look in the maps to be more inclined to vote NPP than the surrounding areas, Accra and Kumasi do not appear noticeably different than surrounding constituencies and Tamale appears to be working against the grain of the Northern Region by becoming more and more an NDC base of support with each election. As far as a North/South difference, no distinction readily presents itself especially in the most recent election.

### **Analyzing the Votes with the Help of Census Data**

The nuanced election maps reveal the NDC's dominance in Southern Volta Region and the NPP's dominance around Kumasi. Though this finding is far from unexpected, the magnitude of support, or lack thereof, in these areas when juxtaposed against the remainder of the country is striking. For the remaining political cleavage hypotheses the maps are more equivocal. What the naked eye cannot pick-up, however, may be detected with the help of regression analysis that teases out the effects of demographic characteristics on each party's vote totals. Published data from the 2000 national census was released publicly at the regional level (N=10) which offers relatively few cases to test a hypothesis. Given the limitations of this presentation of the data, for this project several potentially interesting demographic variables were obtained at the district level (N=110) from the Ghana Statistical Services. Since this census data is presented at the district-level, in order to perform the following regressions constituency-level election results were first merged into district-level election results. In both the 200 and 230 constituency configurations this is a fairly simple operation as no constituency falls into more than a single district.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> The 2000 Census recorded data using the 110 district configuration. These districts range in size from Kadjebi in the Volta Region with a recorded population just shy of 50,000 to Accra Metropolitan District with a recorded population of over 1.6 million. The median district population is approximately 130,000.

Table 4-1 represents a regression model using the NPP's percentage of the presidential vote in 2004 in a given district as the dependent variable. Independent variables in the model include percentage of Akan-speakers<sup>9</sup> (to test the ethnicity cleavage hypothesis); Christians (to test an alternative *Gemeinschaft* cleavage hypothesis); and percentage of residents in a given district who live in urban areas, have obtained at least a middle school (JSS) education, and have ready access to a water closet, pit latrine, and/or a Kumasi Ventilated Improved Pit Latrine (KVIP) (all class indicators to test the ideology cleavage hypothesis). Only the percentage of Akan-speakers in a district is statistically significant at the 99% confidence level. Holding the three aforementioned socio-economic indicators constant and controlling for a district's percentage of Christians, for every 1% increase in Akan-speakers in a district the NPP's presidential candidate gained on average more than half a percent of the vote in 2004. When the percentage of Akan-speakers in a district is held constant none of the socio-economic indicators in the model are significant at even the 90% confidence level and the percentage of Christians in a district is unexpectedly inversely related to NPP success.

Because of the potential for interaction between the three socio-economic indicators, six more regressions were run: three with each of the socio-economic indicators predicting the NPP presidential candidate's share of the vote and three regressions predicting the NPP vote with Akan-speakers included and one of the socio-economic indicators each. Alone each of the socio-economic indicators was highly significant (99% confidence level) in predicting the NPP presidential candidate's percentage of the vote. The regressions also yield positive coefficients as

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<sup>9</sup> Ideally two regressions could have been run, one with Akan-speakers and one with ethnic Asantes as potential explanatory variables. Unfortunately, at the district level the available data only reports language families and not individual languages. Given the previously described electoral maps, one could reasonably expect that the effect of Asante-speakers in a district (who are concentrated in the Ashanti Region) is greater than that of Akan-speakers (who predominate in Brong-Ahafo Region, Western Region, Central Region, and western portions of Eastern Region as well).

the ideological hypothesis would predict. When paired with the percentage of Akan-speakers in a district, however, only developed toilet facilities appears significant and that with a very small negative coefficient (-.092) and a confidence level of only 90%. In all three of these latter cases the effect of Akan-speakers hovered around .5 with a 99% confidence level. Adding Akan to a bivariate regression with a district's percentage of Christians as the independent variable and NPP percentage of the vote the dependent variable turns a significant positive correlation into a significant negative correlation. These findings suggest strongly that it is the presence of members of an ethno-linguistic group, namely Akans, that is driving NPP vote totals upwards and not the existence of the aforementioned ideological proxies or competing sectional affiliations.

Table 4-2 depicts a regression using the NDC's percentage of the presidential vote in 2004 in a given district as the dependent variable and hypothesized NDC-leaning ethnic identities and socio-economic indicators as the independent variables. Since it has been hypothesized that the NDC is an Ewe and/or a Northern party two ethno-linguistic identifiers are included in the model instead of one. While Ewe-speakers is a census category like Akan-speakers, Northerners is not an officially recognized language category but rather a shorthand identity category used widely in Ghana to convey "Northern-ness" with its associated denotation (belonging to one of many ethno-linguistic groups "originating" from one of Ghana's three Northern regions) and connotations (backwardness and a residual culture difference from "the South") (Dickson 1968).<sup>10</sup> As there is a common perception that the NDC is more popular amongst Muslims, this

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<sup>10</sup> Census categories merged to create the variable "Speakers of Northern Languages" include Gurma, Mole-Dagbon, Grusi, and Mande-Busanga. The regression was run once with the Guan language category included and once with it excluded because the language family is divided nearly in half with Gonja spoken mainly in the North but also a diverse array of languages spoken across the South (Awutu and Efutu near Winneba; Abiriw, Okere, Larteh in the Eastern Region; and Siwu, Sele, Avatime, Nyangbo, and Likpe in the Volta Region to name a few) (Guan Congress 1991). The results of these two regressions were similar in all areas save "Speakers of Northern Languages." The regression appearing in Table 4-2 depicts the results with Guan-speakers included in the "Speakers of Northern

alternative *Gemeinschaft* cleavage is integrated into the model. Since the perceptions are that the NDC is most popular amongst the lower classes, the socio-economic indicators included in this model are the mirror image of those included in the NPP model: percentage of residents in a given district who live in rural areas; have not obtained at least a middle school education; and have no regular access to a water closet, pit latrine, and/or a KVIP. In this model, only the percentage of Ewe-speakers in a district appears significant at the 99% confidence level.

The model suggests that for every percentage increase in Ewe-speakers, the NDC presidential candidate gains approximately two-thirds a percentage of the vote. Additional regression analysis reveals that, as with the NPP regression, the two insignificant socio-economic variables, percentage of rural dwellers and those without access to developed toilet facilities, become significant with coefficients in the expected direction when ethnic variables are left uncontrolled. Speakers of Northern languages and Muslims are not reliable predictors of NDC success at the 99% confidence interval even when other variables are left uncontrolled. The percentage of those with less than a middle school education is only significant at the 90% confidence interval but its coefficient is positive as the ideological hypotheses predict. This result for the speakers of Northern languages variable is somewhat problematic due to the category's inherent definitional difficulties and relatively small coefficient. The results for lesser education cannot be so easily dismissed and deserves closer inspection. Are we looking at the fruits of the NDC's relatively recent efforts to define itself strongly with the international movement for social democracy (National Democratic Congress n.d., 1)? Or is this effect the result of the

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Languages" group. Results for the regression with Guan-speakers withheld from this group are as follows: Constant .047(.121); Ewe-Speakers .674\*\*\*(.058); Speakers of Northern Languages .095(.075); Muslims -.005(.083); Rural Dwellers -.064(.084); Less Educated .484\*(.254); and Undeveloped Toilet Facilities .058(.084). The adjusted R<sup>2</sup> for this model is .620. When compared with the Table 4-2, these results suggest that districts with large percentages of Guan-speakers lean heavily towards the NDC. The results also suggest a lot of Northern (non-Gonja) language speakers in a district yields an NDC surplus of less than 10 percent, when all the other mentioned variables are controlled.

uneducated masses hanging on to the political party with direct ties to the previous authoritarian regime as Lipset (1959, 79-80) would predict? Answers to these questions are not forthcoming without access to longer time-series data.

Since there have been four presidential elections in the Fourth Republic and there is no reason to suspect the 2000 census data is grossly off target with regard to the years 1992, 1996, and especially 2000, comparisons of this sort are possible.<sup>11</sup> The models represented in Tables 4-1 and 4-2 were run for each of the elections in the Fourth Republic. Across elections there were few dissimilarities. For the NPP, the percentage of Akan-speakers in a district remains highly significant across time. Like in 2004, for every 1% increase in Akan-speakers in a district the NPP's presidential candidate gained on average slightly more than half a percent of the vote in 1996 and 2000. In the 1992 election a 1% increase in Akan-speakers gave the NPP on average closer to a third of a percentage point increase. The percentage of Ewe-speakers was a similarly consistent predictor of NDC success. In 1992, 1996, and 2000, when all other variables in the model were held constant, a 1% increase in Ewe-speakers led on average to between two-thirds and half a percent increase in the NDC vote tally. For every other variable in the NPP and NDC models, there was at least one year of statistical insignificance and most were insignificant over the course of all four elections. Low education continued to show promise as a potential predictor of NDC support for the 1992 and 2000 elections but was statistically insignificant in 1996 giving no indications as to whether the correlation is the result of authoritarian leanings of the uneducated, demonstrative of the appeal of the NDC's social democratic message, or simply spurious. The variable for speakers of Northern languages varied widely from election to election as a predictor of NDC support suggesting that the ethno-linguistic groups that make up this

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<sup>11</sup> There was a census conducted in 1984 but the census did not collect data on indigenous languages or ethnicity.

category are often at cross-purposes and very much politically “in play.” An interesting result not anticipated with the 2004 regressions is the impact of a district’s percentage of urban dwellers on NPP support. In 2004 the relationship between the NPP and percentage of urban dwellers was not significant when controlling for Akan-speakers. In 1992, 1996, and 2000 the relationship is significant to the tune of between one-fifth and one-fourth a percentage point rise in NPP support for every 1% increase in the percentage of urban dwellers in a district.

Though this analysis does not foreclose on the possibility of ideological class-based cleavages forming in Ghana, it certainly does not advance the ideological hypothesis in any clear and consistent sense. The ethnic hypothesis, on the other hand, finds a great deal of support in the regression analysis and cannot be rejected.<sup>12</sup> Election maps illustrate high levels of support for the NPP in traditional Asante areas and high levels of support for the NDC in traditional Ewe areas. The regression analysis suggests that a district’s “Akan-ness” or “Ewe-ness” matters a whole lot even when the socio-economic characteristics of a district are controlled for. Knowing absolutely nothing about which party’s presidential candidate receives the most votes nationally or the socio-economic characteristics of particular districts, one can reasonably predict based on the evidence presented here that the NPP presidential candidate would win a hypothetical district populated only by Akan-speakers and the NDC presidential candidate would win a hypothetical district populated only by Ewe-speakers. Given the fact that the NDC ran candidates of different ethno-linguistic backgrounds in 1992 and 1996 (Jerry Rawlings is half Ewe and half Scottish) and in 2000 and 2004 (John E.A. Mills is a Fante-speaker), one can conclude that the party’s

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<sup>12</sup> There was sufficient data to test another sectional hypothesis that has received some attention in the public discourse but not nearly so much as the ethnicity hypothesis. There is some talk that the NPP is the Christian party and the NDC is the Muslim party. At an aggregate district-level this hypothesis is not born out. Christianity is significantly and positively correlated with NPP success until a districts’ percentage of Akan-speakers is controlled for. Then it remains significantly associated but with a negative correlation. The number of Muslims in a district has no significant impact on NDC success at the polls.

appeal amongst Ewe-speakers is not dependent on its flag bearer's ethnic-identity. The NPP will have to run a non-Akan flag bearer before there will be evidence either for or against a similar conclusion. It is interesting, however, that the election where the percentage of Akan-speakers in a district mattered the least for the NPP was in the only election in which their flag bearer was Akan but not a self-identified Asante.<sup>13</sup>

### **The Meaning of Electoral Choice in Ghana: Cognitive Shortcuts**

Maps and census data allow one to determine the constituencies that Ghana's two dominant parties draw upon to form their respective bases. The above analysis suggests that despite politicians' ideological appeals to the masses in widely-covered public speeches and glossy manifestos, it is ethnic identities that better predict the popularity of one party over another. Though these findings will be interesting for those seeking to better describe the politically-mobilized cleavages in Ghanaian society, there is an approach that allows one to get at the way citizens understand their election-day choices more directly by studying the "cognitive shortcuts" Ghanaians use to differentiate between their party options (Popkin 1991). Whereas the preceding picture of political cleavages is presented as static manifestations of electoral choice, with each map and regression capturing a single election, these "cognitive shortcut" maps can be used to better understand the weight given to "thoughts that precede a choice" and drive fluctuations in the 1992, 1996, 2000 and 2004 election results (Lupia et al. 2000, 1). Greater knowledge about the "cognitive shortcut" maps of Ghanaian voters can also be used by politicians, pundits, and media commentators in Ghana who have a vested interest in altering or preserving the status quo in favor of one party or another in future elections. Such a

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<sup>13</sup> Professor A. Adu Boahen, who ran for president under the NPP flag in 1992, would be classified ethnolinguistically as an Akyem.

map demonstrates not necessarily the empirical social bases of political parties but rather the perceptions that must be maintained or manipulated to effect electoral outcomes.

### **“Cognitive Shortcut” Survey**

The survey administered between January and May 2005 in three of Ghana’s 230 constituencies was designed to capture the character of Ghanaian political parties as understood by the voters. It does so not by asking respondents to stake out a mutually exclusive position on whether Ghanaian parties are separated along ideological or ethnic lines, but rather by allowing respondents to map out their understanding of political cleavages in their country in a formal and specific manner. In each of the three selected constituencies 200 surveys were randomly administered to registered voters.<sup>14</sup> Respondents were asked several batteries of questions that followed the same general formula. “Do you think NPP support is stronger in some regions than in others?” reads a prototypical question. If the respondent answered this question yes they were asked “Which region of the country do you think supports the NPP the most?” Following this question set, the same two questions were asked again with NDC substituting for NPP. A similar format was used to query registered voters on other potential cleavage lines including ethnicity, religion, population density, class, and education.

So that this relatively small-N survey would have some validity on a national scale, a most different system design was selected (Przeworski and Teune 1970, 31-46). The selection of these three constituencies (Odododiodio, Bantama, and Nabdam) was intended to give the sample as diverse a population as possible.<sup>15</sup> Odododiodio encompasses the Jamestown and Usshertown sections of Accra also known as “Old Accra.” Traditionally the area is Ga though Accra’s

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<sup>14</sup> For a detailed description of the survey methodology see Appendic C.

<sup>15</sup> Chapter Six provides a more thorough summary of the three constituencies’ histories and demographics. The descriptions that follow are just intended to provide a brief overview.

booming population has diversified the area ethnically to the point that non-Ga-speakers now make up about a third of the constituency's population. Fishing and petty trade are the dominant industries in the economically marginalized urban constituency (Bremer 2002). Elections are usually very close in Ododiodio and both the NPP and NDC have won the area's parliamentary seat in contested races. Bantama is located in the Ashanti Region's capital, Kumasi. The constituency is home to the Asante royal mausoleum and includes the spot where Īkōmfo Anōkye summoned the golden stool from the heavens (Rattray 1923, 288-289). Economically the constituency can best be described as a middle-class mixed use urban area. Bantama, in both its pre- and post-redistricting forms has voted massively for the NPP in each of the Fourth Republic's contested elections winning it a reputation as the NPP's "World Bank" of votes. On the road connecting Bolgatanga to Bawku in Ghana's far Northeast one finds Nabdam constituency. The constituency has been described as "ethnically homogenous, extremely impoverished and entirely rural" (Smith 2001, 181). Nabit is the dialect spoken by virtually every one of the constituency's voters who occupy themselves economically primarily with millet farming during the short rainy season and illicit game hunting and gold mining during the long dry season. Nabdam constituency has regularly voted NDC though both the NPP and third party candidates, most notably those representing the PNC, have made respectable showings in past elections. If responses to the survey questions are similar in these three disparate constituencies, it is a fairly safe assumption that one can say something about Ghanaian voters-writ-large.

### **Cognitive Mapping**

Some of the results of this three constituency survey are displayed in Tables 4-3 – 4-8. These cross-tabulations map respondent's ability to differentiate between the NPP and NDC when it comes to several socio-economic and sectional indicators. If voters see the significant

differences between the two parties as primarily socioeconomic, one would expect ideological cleavages to predominate and a purposive-rational *Gesellschaft* understanding of the connections between parties and society in Ghana to have taken hold. Conversely, if voters see the significant differences between the two parties as primarily sectional, one would expect ethnic cleavages to predominate and *Gemeinschaft* communities to be the best explanation for partisan identification. To determine where individual respondents are positioned on this scale, they were asked whether the NPP and NDC were more popular amongst certain class groups, rural or urban voters, well-educated or uneducated, certain ethnic and religious groups, and regions of the country. When respondents identified a difference in support on a variable, that difference was recorded. When they did not identify a difference, their response was marked “no difference.” Since the point of the survey is to draw distinctions responses that identified the same categorical variable for both the NPP and NDC, for instance labeling both parties most popular amongst low income voters, were reclassified as “no difference” for purposes of analysis. Surveys that ask respondents more directly to identify the differences between the parties in Ghana have been inundated with “no difference” or the perhaps less illuminating “my party stands for development and honesty” responses.<sup>16</sup> The abstract and multi-faceted nature of these types of questions provides researchers with observations most notable for their dearth of content. By challenging respondents to label a single party on a single variable, this survey elicits more thoughtful answers which provide the basis for a rough picture of the bundle of information voters take into polling stations and draw upon when deciding where to place their thumbprint.

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<sup>16</sup> The exact format and wording of this type of question varies. In the 2000 University of Ghana pre-election survey (Ayee 2001) respondents were asked if it mattered to them what party is in power (2.18) and then asked why they like their preferred party (2.38-2.41). Afrobarometer (2006) addresses the question more tangentially by asking respondents to evaluate their president and parliamentarian on a number of specific criteria.

If one isolates the modal categories in these cross-tabulation tables, the results are as predicted by the competing hypotheses. Across three disparate constituencies the NPP appears to be pegged the party of upper class well-educated urban Christian Akan-speakers from the Ashanti Region and the NDC appears to be the party of lower class uneducated rural Muslim Ewe-speakers from the Volta Region. Though few Ghanaians fit either of these stereotypes exactly, they provide a point of reference for voters. If one identifies more closely with the NPP stereotype, for instance, one would more likely be identified as an individual who supports the NPP than the NDC. “Ideology is important by every party,” a post-survey focus group participant in Nabdam constituency complained, “but most of the electorate are illiterates and even those who are literate, they are not literate enough to know the differences between these ideologies.” In a context where the ideological constructs of political discourse have not worked their way down to the masses (fewer than 3% of survey respondents could accurately identify the NPP as the market-oriented party and the NDC as the social democratic party), it is these party stereotypes that serve as alternative delimiters separating Party A from Party B. These are the “cognitive shortcuts” of Ghanaian politics.

Stopping at this point of the analysis, however, does not allow one to rank “cognitive shortcuts.” In order to accomplish this task one has to look at the magnitude of these modal categories in relation to each other. Analysis of this sort reveals a real divergence between the *Gesellschaft* hypotheses and the *Gemeinschaft* hypotheses of voting behavior. Whereas “no difference” responses proliferate in Tables 4-3, 4-4, 4-5, and 4-8 they are relatively rare in Tables 4-6 and 4-7. The average “no difference” response rate across constituencies for these first three tables was just shy of two-thirds while the average for the last two tables was around one-fourth. Additionally the second most popular category choices in Tables 4-3, 4-4, 4-5, and 4-8 are much

closer to the most popular category choices than those represented in Tables 4-6 and 4-7. On average the second most popular categorical response for Tables 4-3 - 4-5 is less than 20 percentage points less popular than the modal category. This number increases to more than 50% for Tables 4-6 and 4-7. Table 4-8, which depicts religious perceptions, is the most inconsistent across constituencies with Bantama being an outlier perhaps because of its relative religious homogeneity. As tools for distinguishing between the two dominant parties, ethnicity and region appear to be both much more widespread and much more universally understood than any of the tested socio-economic demographic indicators or religion. More than three-fourths of respondents identified the NPP as most popular amongst Akan-speakers and nearly two-thirds identified the NDC as most popular amongst Ewe-speakers. Across the three constituencies surveyed far more voters are taking this ethnocentric information about the parties behind the polling station security screens than anything resembling ideological distinctions.

Before concluding a note on the differences between constituencies is in order because there are a few and some of these differences could significantly affect one's analysis of the data. As one moves literally away from Accra, the percentage of "no difference" responses goes up. Though the data does not yield a ready explanation for this discrepancy the results are not completely unexpected. Moving from Ododiodio to Bantama to Nabdam one is not only moving from Accra northwards. One is also moving from a relatively well-educated area to a relatively uneducated area and from an area where political information is easily accessible to a region where the flow of mass media is more restricted. Just because there are so many "no difference" responses in Nabdam does not mean that the differences between parties do not play a role at election time.

Of the 160 respondents from Nabdam who listed their education level as “none,” 94 claimed not to know whether or not one ethnic group supported the NPP more than others. Of the 28 respondents who had at least made it to middle school, only 3 claimed not to know and the remaining 25 identified the NPP as a party most popular amongst Akan-speakers. Whether or not these well-educated respondents will spread their “cognitive shortcuts” to their relatively less educated neighbors over time is uncertain. What does seem to be evident in these findings, however, is that the cues for the presented “cognitive shortcuts” are contained in the national political discourse and those with greater access to this discourse are likely to be more in tune to the modal perceptions of political parties. Though Ghanaian politicians have for the most part stayed away from blatant ethnic appeals and hammered home instead illustrious ideologies, or more frequently positions on local development, somehow they are subtly, and perhaps deftly, conveying a different message to voters.

### **Conclusions**

During a focus group in Bantama participants were asked if they think “tribalism” is a problem in Ghanaian politics. The immediate answer was a resounding “No.” An older gentleman explained that he had lived in Nigeria for seven years and tribalism was a problem there. He told a story about the markets there where sellers from the country’s North would give lower prices to buyers from the North than those from the South. This, he explained, was not a problem in Ghana. Then he paused for a moment and said he did not really want to mention it but felt it was important to the discussion. Ewes, he argued, do tend to vote as a bloc and when they are in positions of power they like to promote fellow Ewes. From the gentleman’s preface and the crowd’s tacit approval it was apparent that this opinion was widely held but a little embarrassing, at least when presented to an outsider. Akans, he continued, are so dispersed around Ghana that they do not act like that. About half an hour later the focus group participants

were asked why residents of Bantama vote for the NPP in such high numbers even in comparison to other constituencies in Kumasi and the Ashanti Region. “The pure Asantes,” the same older gentleman responded without hesitation this time, “that is Bantama.”

So what is one to make of Ghana with its apparently thriving democratic institutions and its apparently equally thriving ethnic divisions? The aforementioned gentleman from Bantama is far from an outlier. Conversation after conversation on the topic of ethnicity and politics in Ghana reveal that not only are ethno-linguistic divisions an important factor in Ghanaian politics but almost everyone understands this social fact as a dirty little secret to be suppressed. The electoral maps, regression analysis, and survey data presented above are really only confirmations of what most participants and observers of Ghanaian elections have long believed anecdotally. And Ghanaians do not need to read Horowitz’s (1993) warnings about “democracy in divided societies” to know the existent social cleavages are potentially dangerous to democracy. Ghana is book-ended by Côte d’Ivoire, a country embroiled in an on again off again sectarian civil war, and Togo, a country whose most recent elections were marred by violence perpetrated along regional lines. Rarely a week goes by that the *Daily Graphic* does not run a story about a priest, politician, businessman, footballer, movie star, or traditional authority urging the public to steer clear of tribalism. Sometimes the implication of these statements is that some opponent has been misusing ethnic sentiments for personal gain but often times the speeches appear to be rolling off a conveyer belt of speeches influential Ghanaians must make in their lifetime.<sup>17</sup>

But just as the data presented here can be read as a tentatively cautionary tale, so too can it be read as a real success story. Ethnicity matters a lot at election time in Ghana. The maps and

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<sup>17</sup> Kufuor’s post-2004 victory speech to this effect is reported on by Boadu (2005) in the *Daily Graphic*.

regression analysis presented above suggest that ethnicity is an extremely significant, though not ultimately deciding factor in Ghanaian elections. Unless dramatic political events cause a complete realignment, it is hard to imagine a scenario where the NPP will capture the majority of votes in Ewe-dominant constituencies of the Southern Volta Region or the NDC will capture the majority of votes in Asante-dominant constituencies around Kumasi. Even acknowledging this ethno-political status quo, however, there is room for alteration in power. Combined ethnic Ewes and ethnic Asantes make up less than 30% of the Ghanaian electorate. Evidence presented here suggests that much of the remaining 70% of the electorate are more varied and flexible in their support. Both the maps and regression analysis demonstrate that the majority of constituencies and districts move in relative unison slightly towards the NDC in the elections they won and slightly towards the NPP in elections they won. Much has been made of Akan voters moving towards the NPP in 2000 and remaining there in 2004. Yet there are several constituencies not in the Brong-Ahafo, Western, Central, or Eastern Regions in these elections that are shown in the constituency maps to have lurched towards the NPP just as much. And the fact that the variable Akan-speaking did not show more explanatory power in 2000 than it did in 1996 triangulates with the maps. The NPP won in 2000 because the vast majority of constituencies moved in their direction and not because they successfully pulled more non-Asante Akan-speakers into a broader ethnic coalition.

So why has not Ghana been engulfed in a sectional dispute along the lines of its neighbors in Côte d'Ivoire? Such a fate was certainly on the minds of all the churches who held prayer vigils on the eve of Election Day 2004 and all the local celebrities who took to the airwaves in the weeks before the election to urge their countrymen to abide peacefully by the election results no matter what the outcome. Nugent offers as a potential explanation the fact that “at a time

when ethnicity was being used as a cudgel across the border in Côte d'Ivoire, it is to the credit of Ghanaian politicians that they did not resort to ethnic smears although they sometimes accused their opponents of playing dirty" (2001a, 4). When taken together the election analysis and "cognitive shortcuts" survey point to a more structurally-oriented solution. In a country where the vast majority of the voting population does not ethnically self-define themselves in a way similar to the two dominant political parties, going "tribalistic" could very well stir up the base while simultaneously costing one an election. Though the majority of voters view the NPP as an Asante party and the NDC as an Ewe party it is in both of these parties' interests to run as far away from these labels as possible. Then when it comes time to vote the non-Asante and non-Ewe who will ultimately decide an election will not be able to vote against "those Asante" or "those Ewe" tribalists. If, as is suggested here, most Ghanaian voters will go to the polls in 2008 and decide whether or not they like the job the Asante party did over the past eight years, this is a far cry from understanding the elections as a zero-sum ethnic census. In the vast gray areas of the Ghanaian election maps voters see Ghana's two dominant parties as ethnically-tinged but they vote, not necessarily out of a sense of *Gemeinschaft*, but perhaps based on personal evaluations that very closely resemble those traditionally reserved for societies cleaved along *Gesellschaft* lines.

Table 4-1. NPP districts (linear regression)

	Coefficient (Std. Error)
Constant	.336*** (.033)
Akan-Speakers	.575*** (.046)
Christians	-.308** (.124)
Urban Dwellers	.029 (.082)
Highly Educated	.400 (.269)
Developed Toilet Facilities	-.033 (.080)

Table 4-2. NDC districts (linear regression)

	Coefficient (Std. Error)
Constant	.055 (.118)
Ewe-Speakers	.675*** (.056)
Speakers of Northern Languages	.132* (.075)
Muslims	-.021 (.084)
Rural Dwellers	-.063 (.083)
Less Educated	.462* (.249)
Undeveloped Toilet Facilities	.032 (.085)

Significance: \*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01

Note: The model presented in Table 4-1 has an adjusted R<sup>2</sup> of .704 and Table 4-2 has an adjusted R<sup>2</sup> of .625. Election results are taken from Electoral Commission of Ghana (2004) and district-level demographic characteristics (N=110) were obtained from Ghana Statistical Services.

Table 4-3. Cognitive perceptions of class for NPP and NDC supporters (survey results)

	Bantama	Nabdam	Ododiodio
NPP	Low Income	8.0%	6.0%
	Middle Income	10.5%	10.0%
	High Income	7.5%	48.5%
	no difference	74.0%	35.5%
NDC	Low Income	12.0%	35.0%
	Middle Income	6.5%	15.5%
	High Income	9.5%	7.5%
	no difference	72.0%	42.0%

Significance: NPP – Chi<sup>2</sup> 162.4 (df 6), p =.000; NDC - Chi<sup>2</sup> 108.2 (df 6), p =.000

Table 4-4. Cognitive perceptions of population density where NPP and NDC supporters live (survey results)

	Bantama	Nabdam	Ododiodio
NPP	Urban	20.5%	27.0%
	Rural	5.5%	25.0%
	no difference	74.0%	48.0%
NDC	Urban	3.5%	22.5%
	Rural	13.5%	28.5%
	no difference	83.0%	49.0%

Significance: NPP – Chi<sup>2</sup> 69.1 (df 4), p =.000; NDC - Chi<sup>2</sup> 92.2 (df 4), p =.000

Table 4-5. Cognitive perceptions of education-level for NPP and NDC supporters (survey results)

		Bantama	Nabdam	Ododiodio
NPP	Well-educated	36.5%	16.5%	48.5%
	Uneducated	9.5%	1.5%	12.0%
	no difference	54.0%	82.0%	39.5%
NDC	Well-educated	5.5%	1.5%	10.5%
	Uneducated	27.0%	20.0%	46.0%
	no difference	67.5%	78.5%	43.5%

Significance: NPP – Chi<sup>2</sup> 78.5 (df 4), p =.000; NDC - Chi<sup>2</sup> 57.6 (df 4), p =.000

Table 4-6. Cognitive perceptions of ethnic identity for NPP and NDC supporters (survey results)

		Bantama	Nabdam	Ododiodio
NPP	Akan	89.0%	45.5%	95.0%
	Ewe	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Ga	0.5%	0.0%	1.5%
	Northern	0.0%	0.5%	0.5%
	no difference	10.5%	54.0%	3.0%
NDC	Akan	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Ewe	70.0%	33.0%	71.5%
	Ga	0.5%	0.5%	22.0%
	Northern	19.0%	11.0%	1.0%
	no difference	9.5%	55.5%	5.5%

Significance: NPP – Chi<sup>2</sup> 177.5 (df 6), p =.000; NDC - Chi<sup>2</sup> 310.3 (df 10), p =.000

Table 4-7. Cognitive perceptions of region for NPP and NDC supporters (survey results)

		Bantama	Nabdam	Ododiodio
NPP	Ashanti	89.5%	30.5%	77.0%
	Brong-Ahafo	1.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Central	2.5%	0.0%	2.0%
	Eastern	0.0%	0.0%	1.5%
	Greater Accra	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%
	Northern	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Upper East	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Upper West	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Volta	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Western	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%
	'The South'	0.0%	6.5%	7.0%
	'The North'	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	no difference	7.0%	63.0%	11.5%
NDC	Ashanti	1.5%	0.0%	0.0%
	Brong-Ahafo	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
	Central	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%
	Eastern	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%
	Greater Accra	1.5%	1.0%	17.5%
	Northern	4.5%	2.0%	1.5%
	Upper East	0.5%	2.0%	0.0%
	Upper West	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%
	Volta	62.5%	15.0%	61.0%
	Western	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%
	'The South'	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%
	'The North'	18.0%	19.0%	9.5%
	no difference	10.0%	61.0%	9.0%

Significance: NPP – Chi<sup>2</sup> 233.6 (df 14), p =.000; NDC - Chi<sup>2</sup> 282.8 (df 22), p =.000

Table 4-8. Cognitive perceptions of religion for NPP and NDC supporters (survey results)

		Bantama	Nabdam	Ododiodio
NPP	Christian	57.5%	5.0%	21.0%
	Muslim	1.0%	1.0%	2.0%
	Traditionalist	0.5%	1.0%	1.0%
	no difference	41.0%	93.0%	76.0%
NDC	Christian	1.0%	3.0%	6.0%
	Muslim	65.5%	4.0%	20.0%
	Traditionalist	2.5%	1.0%	1.5%
	no difference	31.0%	92.0%	72.5%

Significance: NPP – Chi<sup>2</sup> 145.6 (df 6), p =.000; NDC - Chi<sup>2</sup> 205.1 (df 6), p =.000

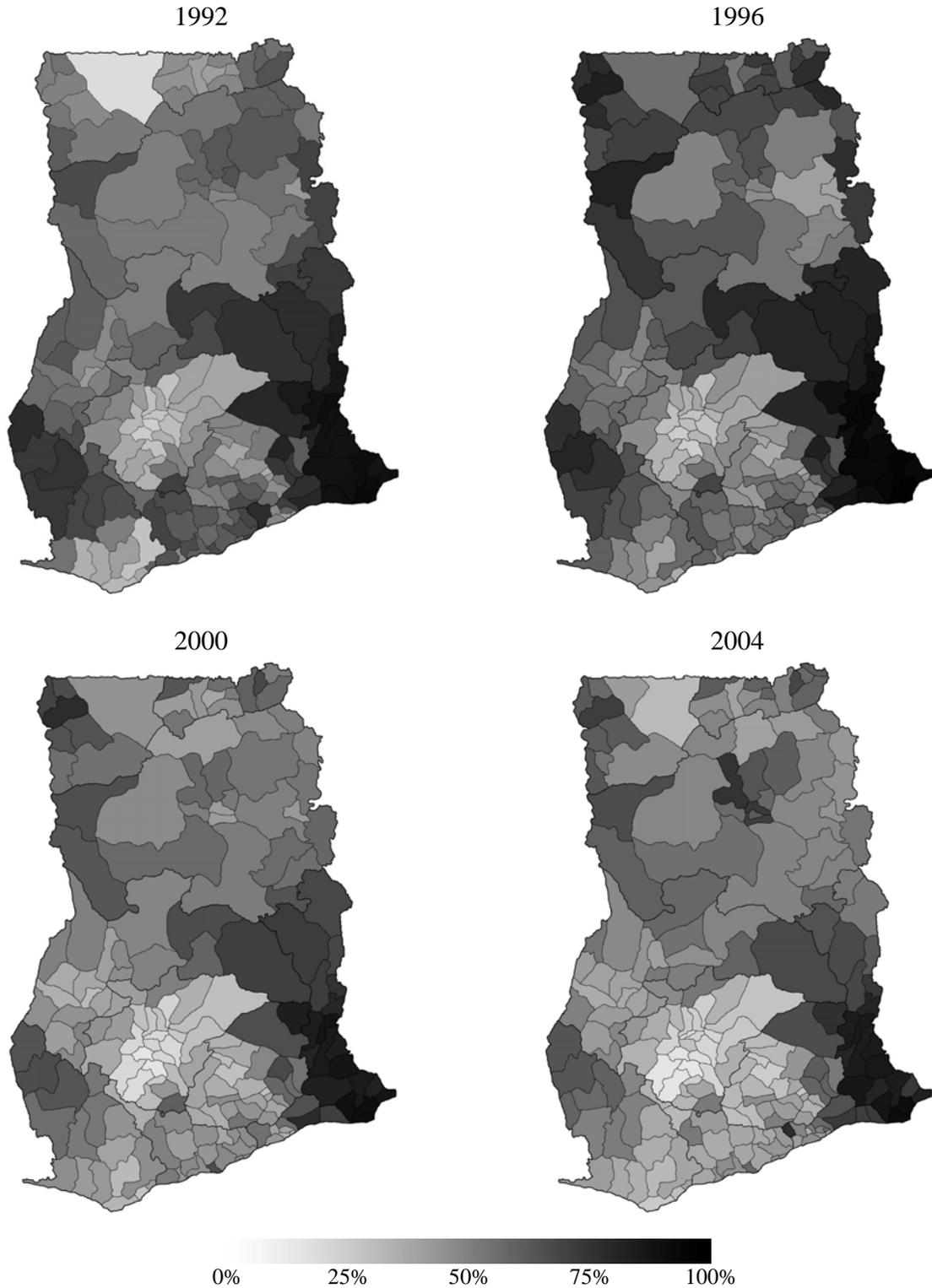


Figure 4-1. NDC percentage of presidential votes mapped [Source: Author created maps using constituency maps from the Electoral Commission of Ghana as outlines and inputting election results data from Electoral Commission of Ghana (1992), Ephson (2003), and Electoral Commission of Ghana (2004).]

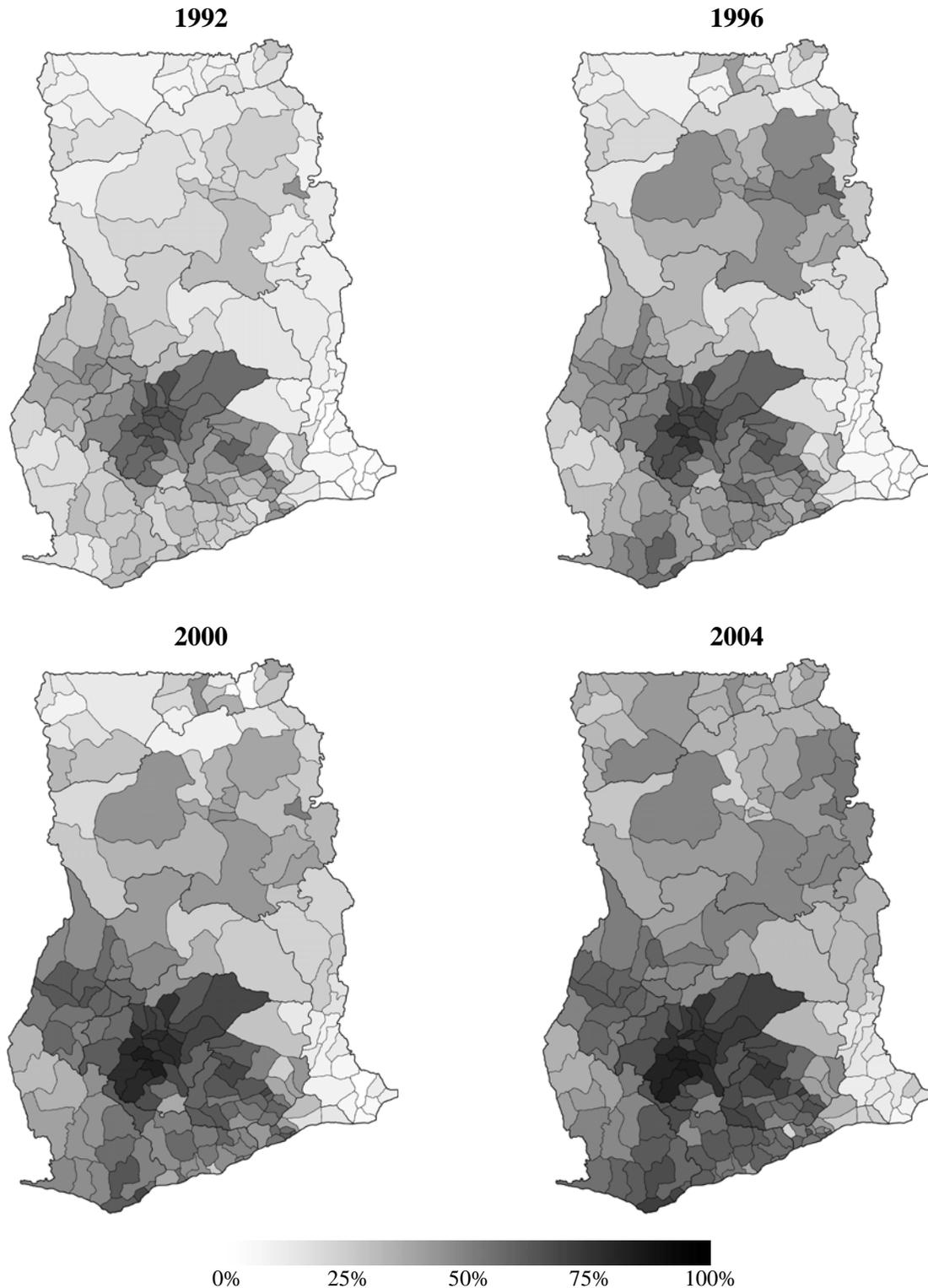


Figure 4-2. NPP percentage of presidential votes mapped [Source: Author created maps using constituency maps from the Electoral Commission of Ghana as outlines and inputting election results data from Electoral Commission of Ghana (1992), Ephson (2003), and Electoral Commission of Ghana (2004).]

CHAPTER 5  
THE SOCIAL FOUNDATIONS OF CONTEMPORARY GHANAIAIAN PARTIES: AN  
EXAMINATION OF SOCIAL CLEAVAGES AND PARTISANSHIP PRIOR TO THE  
FOURTH REPUBLIC

The relationship between social cleavages and political parties is not immutable. Lipset and Rokkan (1967), though they have often been criticized as reifiers of the *status quo*, must implicitly recognize that time and events can cause the associations between social groups and party systems to be reestablished and reconfigured. “[I]f the freezing hypothesis is to carry any weight, either now or in the past, then it must refer to something other than, or, at least, to something more than, the immediate linkage between social strata and party preference,” explains Mair (2001, 30) in his interpretation of Lipset and Rokkan’s work, because “[b]oth ends of this equation – the social structure, on the one hand, and the party organizational and electoral identity, on the other – are simply too vulnerable and too contingent to sustain such a potentially powerful hypothesis on their own.”

Neither, it should be noted, are the “*constellations of conflict*” in any given state at any given time natural or inherent (Lipset and Rokkan 1967, 14). In their application of Lipset and Rokkan, Leff and Mikula (2002, 293) observe that the freezing hypothesis is “not a deterministic argument that anticipated the translation of all available cleavages into parties, but rather one that recognized that specific historical experiences mediated the expression of social cleavages.” While the nature of Lipset and Rokkan’s work and its broadly comparative perspective make a focus on the entire universe of potential cleavages in a given country, not just those having gained ascendancy in the mainstream contemporary political discourse, difficult, a study with a single country focus can, and in fact should, spend some time looking at the various nuanced formulations of this paramount politicized social divide and also at those social cleavages which have been left immobilized by the party system. The histories social cleavage analyses rely upon,

Lustick (1996, 47) warns, “cannot be legitimately treated as an unproblematic background narrative from which theoretically neutral data can be elicited for the framing of problems and the testing of theories.” Though one can never completely eliminate the problems associated with the “selection bias” highlighted by Lustick, exploring multiple cleavage structures in a single state, both those that have come to govern the contemporary discourse on party politics and those that have for the time being fallen by the wayside, is a sincere step in the right direction.

This chapter looks at the social and political processes that brought about the cleavage structures thus far dominating party politics in Ghana’s Fourth Republic. In elections held in 1992, 1996, 2000, and 2004 the “social democratic” NDC won overwhelmingly in constituencies in the Southern half of the Volta Region. The focal point of support for the center-right NPP converges on Kumasi and its environs in the Ashanti Region. The rest of Ghana has proven itself far more competitive. When holding a number of ideologically-tinged socio-economic and ethno-linguistic variables constant in Chapter Four, it is only ethno-linguistic variables, Akan in the case of the NPP and Ewe in the case of the NDC, that are highly significant with large positive coefficients. Combined with a three constituency survey of voters’ “cognitive shortcuts,” these results are refined further to reveal the Asante/Ewe ethnic split to be the dominant cleavage in contemporary Ghanaian national politics with the roughly 70% of voters who do not self-identify as a member of one of these ethno-linguistic categories interpreting national politics through their changing relationship with these two politicized ethnic groups.

In focusing on the history of this particular Asante/Ewe politically-mobilized social cleavage, the chapter seeks an answer to two foundational research questions. When were the “freezing moments” in Ghanaian party history and what political processes and social structures precipitated and shaped the characteristics of this particular “frozen” party system instead of one

built upon the countless other potentially politicized social cleavages existing in Ghana? By way of a conclusion the lessons learned in answering these two questions are redirected at the literature that guides this study with an eye for informing theories of party systems developed largely in reference to non-African contexts, most often in Western Europe, with a novel case.

### **Methodological Options for Historical Analysis**

The nature of these questions and the available historical data foreclose on a number of powerful methodological options. Surveys administered across time asking questions about partisanship would be a good place to start. One could forthrightly track the changing attitudes of voters towards parties and social groups to isolate freezing moments. On a national scale the Afrobarometer<sup>1</sup> and University of Ghana<sup>2</sup> have recently administered large-N surveys asking respondents to provide both partisan identification and demographic characteristics. While even such a basic approach would be useful in an exploration of politically mobilized cleavages, the tools of the behaviorist revolution were relatively late to arrive on African soil and even then were often applied in suboptimal conditions. Many authoritarian governments have allowed the citizenry's voice to be measured only when safeguards were firmly in place to prevent critical responses. Those few single country researchers finding a political climate amenable to mass surveys were confronted with serious randomization problems. In countries where most people do not possess a telephone, roads are bad and at times impenetrable, and even the government does not know who or where all of its citizens are, scholars were often forced to turn pragmatically to elite populations for a clue to mass opinion (Bratton et al. 2004, 50-53).

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<sup>1</sup> Afrobarometer conducted national surveys in Ghana in 1997, 1999, 2002, and 2005.

<sup>2</sup> University of Ghana Department of Political Science conducted national surveys coinciding with the 1996, 2000, and 2004 elections (Ayee 1998, 2001). The volume reporting the results of the University's 2004 survey is forthcoming.

Regular and systematic interviews could serve a different but related purpose. Once freezing moments are isolated, well-administered interviews could shed light on the processes behind this freezing. Like a time machine, these interviews would allow one to query voters' motives for reconfirming the *status quo* or conversely sparking alterations without the illusory effect of time and politics of the day. Though over the years several scholars have produced interesting descriptive texts well-informed by interviews, these works have tended to address the social foundations of party politics in Ghana only tangentially. Austin (1964) and Apter's (1963) works cover the immediate period prior to independence through most of Nkrumah's tenure with rich detail but are very broad in its focus. Chazan (1983) fills in the periods of the Second and Third Republics with a similar mastery of Ghanaian political history, but she too discusses political parties and their social strongholds only as part of a grander narrative and not with an eye focused on their interactions. In between these isolated examples, driven both by events on the ground and trends in continental literature, scholarship of Ghanaian politics has veered away from political parties all together choosing instead to focus on the pragmatic politics of personal rule and patronage (LeVine 1975; Nugent 1995) or the effects of the country's multiple military regimes (Pinkney 1972; Rothchild 1980; Gyimah-Boadi 1993).

In lieu of these precluded paths of inquiry, this chapter turns to existing data to approximate answers to its foundational research questions. To isolate the "freezing moment" in the Asante/Ewe cleavage and reveal alternative social cleavages that have in the past been politically mobilized, pre-Fourth Republic election results are mined in two complementary formats.<sup>3</sup> Utilizing constituency maps shaded with electoral data, areas of strong, moderate, and

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<sup>3</sup> Partisan elections were held in the Gold Coast in 1951, 1954, and 1956. Though these latter two elections were based on the idea of universal suffrage, the 1951 election was multi-tiered. In Colony and Ashanti Protectorate municipalities this election took the form of a direct popular vote. In rural constituencies an electoral college was added to the process. Northern Territory's representatives were selected on a non-partisan basis from a council of

weak support for the pre-Fourth Republican parties are depicted. This presentation of the data allows one to visually highlight social blocs that strongly support the various historical parties dotting the Ghanaian political landscape in a relatively concise arrangement. The second display of election results presents regional results along with some elemental regression analysis utilizing census data to predict voting behavior.<sup>4</sup> Though this approach lacks the ability of a multivariate regression analysis to hold a number of cross-cutting cleavages constant, like a survey the election maps and limited census data provide an efficient mechanism for pinpointing periods of stasis and change in the relationship between political parties and geographically-based social cleavages.

With these periods of “freezing” identified, the burden of reading history remains heavy. Having an idea about what cleavages are important and when they revealed themselves as politically viable is only the start of a project meant to identify the social and political ingredients that generated a party system’s “freezing moment.” Once one has a good idea of the relevant

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traditional leaders. Prior to the Fourth Republic’s inauguration in 1992 there were only two partisan national elections deemed generally free and fair. These were held in 1969 and 1979. There was a partisan election held in 1960 for the presidency but by this time Nkrumah and his CPP had managed to lock out competition. The result was Nkrumah receiving nearly 90 percent of the national vote. Source material for the election results is as follows: 1951 (“General Election Results: C.P.P. Scrubs the Polls in Ghana’s First General Election” 1951; Government of the Gold Coast 1951); 1954 (Government of the Gold Coast 1954; Jon Kraus Ghana Election Archive 1954); 1956 (Jon Kraus Ghana Election Archive 1956; “Victory for the C.P.P.” 1956); 1969 (Jon Kraus Ghana Election Archive 1969; Government of Ghana 1969); and 1979 (Addae-Mensah 1979). Results depicted in the maps are only for legislative elections.

<sup>4</sup> Censuses during this period present some significant methodological issues for the researcher. Prior to the Fourth Republic national censuses were conducted in 1948, 1960, 1970, and 1984. While it would be convenient to merge this information into a dataset alongside election results, unfortunately the census data is sparse and inconsistent. The question of ethnicity, for instance, was broached in some detail in 1960’s “Special Report ‘E’ – Tribes in Ghana” (Gil et al. 1964) but disappeared from future censuses until 2000 because of the controversy the report stirred and though 1948, 1960, and 1970 all ask questions about school attendance, a useful abstraction for social class, reports from 1984 are little more than a head count. Additionally these censuses use different units of analysis, many of whose boundaries are inconsistent with electoral constituencies or have been lost to time. Since 1960 was the most complete census and was accompanied with a thorough unit of analysis map, all of the census data presented in this chapter comes from that census. In order to make these census units of analysis compatible with electoral constituencies some of each had to be merged. The end result was 50 units varying significantly in size from 32,680 residents to 491,820 residents. Results are reported in these units, a map of which appears in Figure 5-2.

periods, the task turns to a search through the historical record for changes in social demographics and/or party systems that could somehow change the quality of their relationship and lead to the patterns apparent in the electoral maps. Combing through the available scholarship on Ghanaian politics one finds a number of anecdotal hypotheses regarding the genesis of the Asante/Ewe politically-mobilized cleavage. Though fewer, there are also a number of anecdotal hypotheses regarding social cleavages that contemporary Ghanaian politics have left fallow. Given the time sequence and characteristics highlighted through the use of constituency maps, election results, and census data, the most credible explanations are culled from the pack.

### **Isolating “Freezing Moments”: Elections in the Gold Coast and Ghana**

#### **Pre-Independence Elections (1951, 1954, and 1956)**

Nkrumah took his case to the masses through the Ghana College, CYO, and especially *Accra Evening News*. “We had succeeded,” Nkrumah (1957, 109) recollects in his autobiography, “because we had talked with the people and by so doing knew their feelings and grievances.” Danquah and the old-guard within the UGCC were more cautious. While they too made claims to speak for “the people,” the UGCC Working Committee was of the mind that “Britain would never give power to any group of irresponsible people anywhere in the Colonial Empire,” with “irresponsible” meant to convey Nkrumah’s known tendency to rabble-rouse (Austin 1961, 292). In the end the CPP’s message, or perhaps more accurately its populist tactics, helped the party capture the “Self Government Now” position and ride this position to massive victories in each of the Gold Coast’s elected Legislative Assemblies. Nkrumah and the CPP averaged 71%, 56%, and 64% of the vote across constituencies in the pre-independence parliamentary elections (1951, 1954, and 1956 respectively) taking a plurality of seats in the 1951 Legislative Assembly due to the large proportion of “nonpartisan” appointed members and

an easy majority in the Gold Coast's popularly elected Legislative Assemblies of 1954 and 1956.<sup>5</sup>

If one looks geographically at the CPP's electoral strongholds across these three pre-independence elections (see Figure 5-2 and Tables 5-1 and 5-2), one finds, not surprisingly given electoral outcomes, a party that did well across the colony's varied territories and regions. Despite this widespread success, there are disparities both within and across elections. With few exceptions, CPP parliamentary candidates sailed to their easiest victories along the coast. Given the party vanguard's reputation as "tramps in N.T. [Northern Territory] Smocks" and its supporters' reputation as "Standard VII leavers" these results seem on the surface a bit counterintuitive (Austin 1964, 212). As a rule of thumb, both before independence and after, the closer one gets to the coast in Ghana the more developed the area.<sup>6</sup> According to Ghana's 1960 census, the regions that made up Gold Coast Colony, where the CPP consistently gained its best results, had 27% of their adult populations who could claim some formal schooling. In Trans-Volta Togoland, Ashanti Protectorate, and Northern Territories, where the CPP did relatively worse, this number was 26%, 20%, and 3% respectively (Ghana Census Office 1962, xvi-xvii).<sup>7</sup>

The maps depicted in Figure 5-2 treat Danquah-Busiaist parties as a residual category. This representation is not accidental. Danquah-Busiaist parties and their allies did not do well

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<sup>5</sup> Two caveats must be attached to these results. In 1951 the Northern Territories were not allowed a partisan vote ("Was Secrecy a Mistake..." 1951) and in 1954 there were 64 "rebels" expelled from the CPP in the run-up to elections, many of whom ran as independents and averaged on their own 12 percent of the vote per seat (Addo 1954).

<sup>6</sup> Using the Wroclow Taxonomic Technique, Ewusi (1976), ranks each of the regions that made up the Gold Coast Colony (Western, Central, Eastern, and Greater Accra) as more developed than any of the country's other regions.

<sup>7</sup> A bivariate regression using the CPP's percentage of the vote as the dependent variable and the percentage of people in the territorial units depicted in Figure 5-2 who are over the age of 6 and have attended at least some school as the independent variable substantiates this reading of the maps. In 1954 this regression yields a coefficient (standard error) of .701 (.218) with a significance of .002. In 1956 the results are .459 (.252) with a significance of .074.

nationally at the pre-independence polls scoring no greater than a third of the parliamentary seats in any of these elections. A more important reason for this depiction, however, is the difficulty associated with identifying the “Danquah-Busiaists” during this period of time. Danquah himself ran for office under the flags of the UGCC, GCP, and NLM. These parties, especially the NLM in 1956, found their strongest support in the area presently known as Ashanti Region. Having averaged barely 5% of the vote across constituencies in 1951 and scoring victories in only two seats, the UGCC settled into an anti-CPP coalition of regional partners for the 1954 and 1956 elections. To the parties of Danquah were joined most notably a party focusing its campaign on the North, the NOPP, a party purportedly speaking for Ghana’s Muslim population, MAP, and a party focusing its campaign on the Togoland region, the TC. These diverse groups rallied around a proposed federal constitution and were universally decried by Nkrumahists as factions with an eye to “destroy national unity” (Select Committee of the Legislative Council 1955, 378).

Blunt observations of this variety, though they are technically accurate and have come to be a mainstay in the historical discourse, do violence to the actual results of these sectional parties. Tables 5-1 and 5-2 depict election results for 1954 and 1956 by region. In addition to the raw percentages, these results are color-coded based on the major ethno-cultural groups that yield a significant positive coefficient when asked to predict the outcome of party votes in a bivariate regression. While the regional parties, save for the GCP in 1954, show an expected relationship with the ethnic and/or cultural groups they are understood to represent, a look at the percentages of these parties’ support in regions populated largely by these same ethnic and/or cultural groups forces a reinterpretation of the results. The NLM, NOPP and TC’s supremacy amongst specified sectional groups should not be overstated. In the Ashanti Protectorate the NLM captured just over 50% of the vote while the CPP managed more than 40%. Even

acknowledging the region's ethnic diversity (the 1960 census reports that a third of Ashanti's inhabitants are non-Asante), one can not credibly interpret these results as representative of a politically homogeneous ethnic bloc. The NLM's percentage of the vote's positive correlation with Asante-speakers is just as much an effect of the party's lack of support outside of Ashanti as it is an effect of their popularity amongst Asante-speakers.

A similar declaration is easily applied to the NOPP and TC. In areas comprising the Northern Territories (Northern, Upper West, and Upper East Regions at present) the NOPP averaged fewer votes than the CPP in both 1954 and 1956. The TC earned its best results in Ewe-speaking areas of Trans-Volta Togoland (Volta Region today), but did not run candidates in the Ewe-predominant areas along the coast, ceding these constituencies to the Anlo Youth Organization (AYO) and its successor the Federation of Youth Organizations (FYO), and won only two of the four seats in Kpandu and Ho in both 1954 and 1956 (the CPP and an independent candidate picked up the remaining two seats).

### **Post-Independence Elections before the Fourth Republic (1969 and 1979)**

After independence Nkrumah and the CPP quickly took steps to consolidate power and turned Ghana first into a *de facto* one-party state and eventually into a *de jure* one-party state. The military overthrew the First Republic in February 1966 and held elections for the Second Republic in August 1969. Twenty-eight months later the Second Republic was overthrown and after a period of seven years of military rule the Third Republic was inaugurated in September 1979, itself to be overthrown after only twenty-eight months. For each of these elections the Nkrumahist/Danquah-Busiaist split was revived.

Taking up the standard of Danquah-Busiaism in 1969 was eventual Prime Minister Kofi Busia and his PP. Busia was an obvious successor to Danquah, who had died in prison during Nkrumah's reign, possessing all the credentials one would expect of a Danquah-Busiaist flag

bearer. He held a doctorate in Social Anthropology from Oxford and had risen through the political ranks thanks in no small part to the favor he carried with traditional authorities in the Asanteman Council (Danso-Boafo 1996, 27). For the 1979 elections the Danquah-Busiaist camp was split with Victor Owusu's PFP and William Ofori-Atta's UNC both laying claim to the Danquah-Busiaist mantle, Ofori-Atta through his family ties with Danquah and involvement in the UGCC and Owusu through Busia's PP (1979).

Nkrumahist parties include the NAL which took up the post of Busia's principle opposition after the 1969 elections and Dr. Hilla Limann's PNP which won both the presidency and legislature in 1979. Limann, an unknown civil servant before his well-established uncle and old guard Nkrumahist Imoru Egala advanced his name as a presidential candidate, and his party ran openly as the "Nkrumahist" candidates (Addae-Mensah 1981; Kraus 1988, 479). The NAL had to don the label more delicately. With the NLC government outwardly hostile to remnants of the old regime, one of Nkrumah's dismissed ministers in exile, Komla Gbedemah, returned to Ghana to lead the party but avoided plastering campaign adverts and manifestos with Nkrumah's name and image as the CPP and later Nkrumahist parties were prone.<sup>8</sup>

In both the 1969 and 1979 elections Danquah-Busiaist parties maintained their relative dominance in the Ashanti Region at levels greater, in the case of the PP, or equal, in the case of the PFP, to that of the NLM. The PP swept the region's 22 parliamentary seats in 1969 and the PFP took 19 of these 22 seats in 1979.<sup>9</sup> Apart from this similarity, the Danquah-Busiaist party

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<sup>8</sup> For more on the dispute between Gbedemah and Nkrumah see ("The Truth about Komla Gbedemah" n.d.) for Nkrumah's case and (Gbedemah 1962) for Gbedemah's side of the story. Both documents are available in Ivor-Wilks collected material on Ghana.

<sup>9</sup> Today Ghana has 10 regions. In 1954 Ghana had four. The only two contemporary regions that can not be drawn out of the 1954 data are Ashanti and Brong-Ahafo Regions. Unlike the other 8 contemporary regions, the lines dividing Ashanti and Brong-Ahafo did not run along existing constituency lines. Therefore, in this chapter Ashanti refers to the Ashanti/Brong-Ahafo conglomerate when speaking of pre-independence elections and Ashanti Region only when speaking of post-independence elections.

maps and election results for 1969 and 1979 diverge in a number of significant ways. The 1969 map, which depicts a Danquah-Busiaist victory, shows strong support across Ghana and in Akan-speaking regions in particular. Brong-Ahafo, Busia's birth region, rivals Ashanti Region with its strength of support and the Central Region and western portion of Eastern Region demonstrate high levels of support as well. The 1979 map, which depicts a Danquah-Busiaist loss, contrasts with the 1969 map in diminished support across almost every region of the country.

What this map does not show, however, is the discrepancy between the bases of support for 1979's two Danquah-Busiaist parties. The UNC scored its best results in the Volta, Greater Accra, and non-Akan portions of the Eastern Region.<sup>10</sup> The PFP had a better showing in general across the country but demonstrated true mastery in Ashanti and Brong-Ahafo. When a run-off election proved necessary pitting the Nkrumahist candidate for president against Victor Owusu a very telling result was produced. Despite the UNC's pre-election flirtation with a Danquah-Busiaist merger between themselves and the PFP (Sutton-Jones 1979, 15), election results suggest that the vast majority of UNC voters preferred the Nkrumahist party candidate to the candidate of a Danquah-Busiaist party associated principally with the Ashanti Region.

The maps of Nkrumahist support in 1969 and 1979 are more inconsistent still. In neither of these two elections did the Nkrumahists do remarkably well in Ashanti as a result of a Danquah-Busiaist stranglehold on the region. Additionally there appears to be two trends amidst the sea of ambiguously gray areas on these Nkrumahist maps. First, Nzima-speaking constituencies in

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<sup>10</sup> With the exception of the area around Aflao where the UNC had its best results, this support manifested itself as a second place finish to the CPP in these areas with around a third of the vote.

Ghana's Southwest corner remain loyal to Nkrumah, a son of their soil.<sup>11</sup> This relationship is not obvious in 1969 when an NLC anti-CPP bias resulted in no self-identified "Nkrumahist" parties. Because of Gbedemah and the NAL's successes nationally most scholars have unequivocally pinned the label on them, but the People's Action Party (PAP), which made its only significant showing in Nzima-speaking constituencies, stood in opposition to the Danquah-Busiaist PP as well. The second noticeable trend is the Nkrumahists' success in their flag bearer's home region. Gbedemah was able to shake the Volta Region's relationship with the Danquah-allied TC and move past a lingering resentment towards Nkrumah for his role in the 1956 Ghanaian Togoland referendum to achieve overwhelming success in the area. Limann, who hailed from Sisaalaland in Ghana's far North, united the Upper Regions in an unprecedented way leading his party to 15 of the area's available 16 seats.

Looking at these post-independence elections with the help of regression analysis reveals the lack of politically mobilized cleavages along socio-economic lines. Unlike Nkrumah's CPP, none of the major parties registers a significant correlation between the percentage of individuals with some formal education in a unit of analysis and the percentage of the votes garnered in same unit of analysis. Looking at these elections with an eye for the perceived ethnic identities of the major parties is more revealing (see Tables 5-3 and 5-4). The perceived Asante parties (PP in 1969 and PFP in 1979), Ewe parties (NAL in 1969 and UNC in 1979), and Northern party (PNP in 1979) all show better than expected nil results in units of analysis with large numbers of their supposed ethnic, and in the case of "Northerners" cultural, cores.

In both 1969 and 1979 the "Asante party" seems to have settled into a fairly regular pattern following the NLM's focused success in Asante-dominant constituencies. To win, the PP

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<sup>11</sup> This loyalty has been carried into the Fourth Republic with the CPP scoring its greatest victories, modest as they may be, in Nzima-speaking constituencies in the Western Region.

managed to add to this base of voters a significant percentage of non-Asante Akan voters. This feat is unique in pre-Fourth Republic Ghanaian history. The “Ewe” party and its relationship with its perceived base was far less consistent. In the elections of 1969 the NAL managed to add to its fairly solid Ewe base a relatively large percentage of the vote in Ga-speaking areas. In the parliamentary and first round of presidential votes in 1979 it is impossible to label the UNC’s success in Ewe areas a landslide but the second round reinvigorated the notion of a coherent voting bloc. The one perceived “Northern party” to run in these elections was the PNP who did significantly better in the North than it did in the South in 1979 but was certainly not a single region party having done well enough in the South, where the vast majority of the parliament’s seats were situated, to take a majority in the Third Republic’s legislature.

### **The Freezing Process: Cleavages Politicized and Cleavages Left Fallow**

In Lipset and Rokkan’s typology of party systems, the notion of revolution is of the utmost consequence. The case studies Lipset and Rokkan use to illustrate the process of “freezing” are separated into categories based on the type of revolution that cleaved the given society in a politically meaningful way. If the relationship between parties and society was forged through the Reformation and Counter-Reformation the party system would reflect a center-periphery dispute, national revolutions along the lines of the French Revolution would solicit clashes between supporters of the state and supporters of the church, the industrial revolution begets a row between land owners and industrialists, and the Russian Revolution produced a conflict between owners and workers (Lipset and Rokkan 1967, 47). To fit West Africa into the Lipset and Rokkan mold, Wallerstein (1967) argues that the region’s party systems were generated out of nationalist movements seeking independence. On one side of the resultant cleavage were the dominant nationalist parties and on the other were the colonial metropolises. Independence shed these cleavage structures of one of their poles and one-party states were the natural outcome.

Wallerstein is uncertain as to what dichotomous cleavage structure would eventually replace this monopoly. He hopes that better developed class interests would eventually rise to the fore but fears that “tribal differences” will beat classes to the punch (p. 511).

What happened to the Ghanaian party system across republics is not so dramatic as the revolutions covered by Lipset and Rokkan, and as the above described maps suggest, Wallerstein’s characterization of fledgling party systems in West Africa as monolithic forces uniformly opposing colonial rule misses some significant areas of opposition evident in Gold Coast elections. His prediction that class (*Gesellschaft*) and ethnic (*Gemeinschaft*) cleavages would compete for pre-eminence once the independence honeymoon was over is very much in line with the contemporary understanding of the competing poles of potentiality in African politics in general and Ghanaian politics in particular. As discussed below, each of these cleavage types has, at one time or another and to varying degrees, defined the opposing forces in Ghanaian politics.

In the following section the Asante/Ewe cleavage which has come to largely define politics in Ghana’s Fourth Republic is explored historically. The events which together produce this cleavage dialogue, reveal themselves not as a revelatory moment where what was one day fluid is another day frozen. Rather, the politicization of this cleavage reveals itself as a series of significant events in relation to the colonial and national governments in both Ashanti and Eweland that construct and reconstruct, frequently completely independent of each other, these, at least in recent years, oppositional political identities. After exploring this particular ethno-political cleavage in some detail, two alternatives are briefly considered. These include the North/South cleavage that can best be understood as a division along class and cultural lines as well as the ethno-linguistic cleavage understood as pitting Akans versus everyone else.

## **Creating the Asante v. Ewe Dichotomy**

The Asante/Ewe ethnic dispute that has come to define the oppositions in contemporary Ghanaian politics is far from primordial. Pre-independence elections saw areas inhabited primarily by members of these two ethnic groups often allied. President Kufuor, who is held up as the epitome of the Danquah-Busiaist/Asante admixture, has gone so far as to incorporate leaders of the early Togoland unification movement into his list of good Ghanaian nationalists of the Danquah-Busiaist mold (Nugent 2002, 230).<sup>12</sup> This understanding of the nascent period of Gold Coast politics stands in stark contrast to politics of Ghana's Fourth Republic where journalists sympathetic to either side of the aisle are keen to point out the "tribalistic" tendencies of their opponents, with the NDC ostensibly serving Ewe interests and the NPP serving Asante or Akan interests.<sup>13</sup> The maps and census data mined above help to describe the nature of this transformation and highlight elections of significance but they do so in such a way that avoids identifying the actors, structures, and/or events that drove the process. Without a spectacular revolution on which to pin the blame, three questions are asked of the historical record to supplement the preceding election analysis. What precipitated the formation of the "unified" political identities known today as Ewe and Asante? How did these identities become oppositional forces? And what actors, structures, and/or events have helped sustain, redefine, and reinterpret this competition?

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<sup>12</sup> Being a leader of the Togoland Congress, as Nugent (2002, 189) points out, is not synonymous with being Ewe. Even if one focuses only on the Southern section of the Volta Region one finds a number of small ethnic groups known collectively as the Central Togo minorities. Though these groups have tended to insist on their cultural uniqueness, in matters of national politics they have consistently adopted the approach of "ethnicity by approximation" aligning themselves with their more numerous and more powerful Ewe neighbors (Nugent 2000, 163).

<sup>13</sup> The debate between Bebli (2005) and Adjei (2005) is a good example of this tendency though it is far from unique.

## **Becoming politically salient “groups”**

Paying attention to the contemporary political discourse in Ghana gives one the impression that Danquah-Busiaism has, from its very inception, been intimately entangled with the Asante ethnic identity. This misreading of Ghanaian history ignores election results from 1951 and 1954 where Danquah’s parties, the UGCC and GCP, were beaten rather soundly on their supposed home turf by the CPP. In 1951 the UGCC managed less than 1% of the vote in the Ashanti Protectorate while collecting nearly 6% of the vote in the rest of the Gold Coast. The GCP in 1954 did a little better in the Ashanti Protectorate capturing nearly 9% of the vote there compared to just over 3% elsewhere. It was the NLM in 1956 that altered this *status quo* of lackluster results by both galvanizing Asante-speaking voters as they had not been galvanized before and tying them to the Danquah-Busiaist ideology in the minds of the politicians and pundits who would comment on future elections.

Austin (1964, 253-4) identifies the spark of this realignment very specifically as Gbedemah’s introduction of the Cocoa Duty and Development Funds Bill to the Legislative Assembly on 10 August 1954 in the immediate wake of the Gold Coast’s first fully national elections. The bill proposed to fix the price given to cocoa farmers for a period of four years in the midst of a worldwide boom in the price of cocoa.<sup>14</sup> “Like an innocent match flame,” reads an editorial on the bill published in the *Ashanti Pioneer* on 4 September 1954, “the strange attitude of the all African CPP Government to the simple demand of farmers for a higher local price of cocoa has gone a long way to threaten to set ablaze the petrol dump of Ashanti nationalism” (quoted in Allman 1990, 266). It was in this contentious environment that a number of young

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<sup>14</sup> The CPP government argued that this policy would curb inflationary pressures and aid development. In practice much of the funds gained through the Cocoa Marketing Board were funneled into loans and other favors for loyal party members (Omari 1970, 59-60).

men who had once been members of the CPP or its affiliate Asante Youth Association broke away from the governing party to launch the NLM. Though the movement-*cum*-party would eventually come to be associated with the “Asante nation” writ-large, Rathbone (1973) and Allman (1990) argue compellingly that these early organizers were those young men well-versed in CPP populism who felt their potential for private wealth accumulation had been adversely affected by the CPP’s cocoa policy and saw themselves as too distant from the nodes of government power in Accra to hope for ready access to the public coffers.<sup>15</sup>

Once inaugurated this movement quickly became too big for its founders to control and they were soon joined by farmers affected directly by cocoa prices, the Asantehene and Asanteman Council whose traditional power was being challenged by Nkrumah’s centralizing tendencies, and leaders of the political opposition in search of some traction that would increase their narrow base of support and allow them an entrée into real power (Austin 1964, 265). Though there was a great disparity in these varied interests’ ultimate goals, there were two areas of general agreement: the CPP government was not providing the instant economic gratification its manifestos had promised and some version of Ashanti nationalism was the most promising counterweight to the CPP government’s national appeal on the grounds of “Self Government Now.” The young men who sparked the movement were adept at marshalling symbols of Asante power from a bygone empire using the well recognized “Asante Kotoko” as their rallying cry from the day of the NLM’s inception.<sup>16</sup> Emboldened by this sense of rebellion a number of groups, many only loosely affiliated with the NLM, embarked on a serious campaign of

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<sup>15</sup> On other points relating to the NLM Rathbone and Allman are not of the same mind. For a fleshing out of their disputes see Rathbone (1991).

<sup>16</sup> *Kotoko* is the Asante Twi word for porcupine. Like the quills from a porcupine, the Asante proverb goes, if you kill a thousand, a thousand more will come (Allman 1990, 264).

harassment and sporadic violence aimed at CPP members and sympathizers within the Ashanti Protectorate.<sup>17</sup>

It was not even a year before this outburst of large-scale anti-CPP Asante nationalism would be wrangled by traditional authorities in the Asanteman Council who well-placed to serve as symbols of opposition via their predecessors' leadership of the Asante Empire's lengthy and bloody campaign against the British barely a half century prior (Edgerton 1995). Working with these traditional authorities, members of the opposition in legislature made a formal demand of both the British and the CPP for a change in the constitution that would diminish CPP power outside of the Colony proper where their support was the greatest. The recommended mechanisms for adjusting the colony's distribution of power were twofold: a weak federal system giving the Gold Coast Colony, Ashanti Protectorate, Northern Territories, and Trans-Volta Togoland a great deal of autonomy in handling their local affairs and a bicameral legislature adding to the present unicameral Legislative Assembly an upper house composed of "all Chiefs...not subordinate to any other Chief" ("Proposals for a Federal Constitution..." 1955). In defense of these demands Busia (1956) writes that:

The strength of national feeling in Ashanti is well known. It was given historic expression during the last century in seven battles against the British. National sentiment in Ashanti is based on a history of which the Ashantis are proud, and on loyalty to the Golden Stool, the symbol of the nation's identity. Any constitution which fails to recognize the identity of the Ashanti nation will arouse violent feelings against it.

Despite the Asante-centric essence of this rationale, and its oft-argued crasser version,<sup>18</sup> the logic reverberated positively with the rest of the Gold Coast's regional opposition parties.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> A British colonial officer reported during this period "that there might be organized in Ashanti a strong-arm group using firearms who would be prepared, if the need arose, to take to the forest." He adds that "[t]he country is such that it would not be difficult for 200/300 young men suitably armed to stage a Mau Mau of their own" (quoted by Allman 1990, 274).

In Ewe-speaking areas of Southeastern Ghana, the party that championed this cause to the greatest success was the TC. Though their aversion to CPP rule and desire for greater regional autonomy is shared with the NLM, the TC had to rely on a very different set of historical and cultural ingredients. The concept of “Togoland,” unlike Ashanti, does not rely on a perceived historical ethnic identity. Rather “Togoland” is understood explicitly as a residual of the colonial experiment in West Africa. Carved out by Germany during Europe’s scramble for Africa, Togo’s first colonization was brief and relatively shallow. Though the colony would receive some attention for attaining economic self-sufficiency, in stark contrast to Germany’s other African possessions and much of British and French West Africa, in 1890 there were only twelve German officials in Togo and by World War I there were still no more than 400 Europeans in the entire colony (Amenumey 1969). With Germany’s defeat in World War I, the League of Nations set about the task of divvying up the responsibilities for administering the conquered’s territories. In Togoland the French were given responsibility for 60% of the territory inhabited by 80% of the Togolese population. The British accepted the remainder of German Togo’s western flank (Louis 1966, 886).<sup>20</sup>

Like political parties in the Gold Coast Colony, the forces that would come to define the colonial period in Togoland came to the fore in the late 1940s with designs of leading the area towards independence. These proto-parties can be placed into two categories based on the form

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<sup>18</sup> This version of the argument for greater Asante power resembles Owusu’s (1975, 259) quote taken from an Asante kente weaver during the campaign for the Second Republic. “If the British had not come,” the weaver complains, “the Ashanti would have taken over the whole country.”

<sup>19</sup> The NLM’s constitutional demands were co-signed by representatives of the Asanteman Council but also representatives of the NOPP, TC, AYO, MAP, GCP, and GNP.

<sup>20</sup> The British were willing to accept bit portions of Togo and Cameroon in West Africa in exchange for the lion share of what they viewed as more valuable property in East Africa.

of Togoland they desired.<sup>21</sup> The first type of party wanted to unite traditional Ewe-speaking territories. Prior to colonization, the notion of a unified Ewe ethnic political identity had been unimagined. Ewe was a linguistic and cultural identity that described a number of semi-autonomous localities along the coast and Togo hills but there was never an Ewe state (Austin 1963, 141). Despite these historical facts, a number of well-educated and wealthy merchants from Anlo in the Gold Coast Colony and Lomé in French Togoland pitched the idea of a pan-Ewe independent country stretching from areas constituting the Gold Coast Colony's southeastern corner through Fon-speaking areas in Dahomey and north all the way to the border shared with Buem District in Togoland (Nugent 2002, 168-169).

The second type of party sought the reunification of the territory once constituting German Togo. This definition of the project excluded Peki, Anlo, Some, Tongu, and Klikor Ewes in the Gold Coast Colony and Fon-speakers in Dahomey, but added to the remaining Ewe-speakers, their non-Ewe neighbors who had established residence in Southern Togoland and Central Togo minorities, a host of ethnic groups residing from Buem northward. By jettisoning Gold Coast Colony Ewes, and to a lesser extent Dahomian Fons, this conceptualization of Togoland cleared two significant hurdles. It assuaged the fears of many inland Ewes of being dominated by the wealthier and better educated Ewes from the Gold Coast Colony and brought the regions demands into the purview of the United Nations who bore responsibility for overseeing the British and French administration of the mandate territories ("The Ewe Question (2)" 1951, 103; "The Ewe Question (3)" 1951, 127). The desire for a reunification of German Togoland brought with it a major stumbling block as well, namely areas in Togoland's North. The Dagomba and

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<sup>21</sup> Some have argued that there were in fact three understandings of Togoland. In addition to the two categories described here, there were a few people early on in the imagining process that desired a Togoland merging both British and French Togoland as well as Ewe-speaking areas of the Gold Coast Colony ("The Ewe Question (1)" 1951, 80).

Mamprusi ethnic communities that predominated in these areas of Northern Togoland would be separated from numerically larger Dagomba and Mamprusi ethnic communities in the Gold Coast's Northern Territories by any partition (Amenumey 1989, 172-3).

This latter course, with all its associated strengths and weaknesses, was the course championed by TC in their opposition to Nkrumah and the CPP.<sup>22</sup> Election results from 1951 and 1954 go some way in explaining why the TC, which was after all not explicitly an Ewe unification party, would come by many to be as closely associated with the Ewe as the NLM was with Asante. The region known presently as Volta Region contains the majority of Ghana's Ewe-speakers and Ewe-speakers make up a majority of the Volta Region's population. The TC ran its only candidates in this region though it steered clear of the former Gold Coast Colony Ewe areas leaving them to the AYO in 1954 and FYO in 1956.<sup>23</sup> When a plebiscite was put to the residents of British Togoland this by now familiar pattern was replicated. When asked if they favored integration with the Gold Coast Colony or separation, Ho and Kpandu, the only two districts with a majority of Ewe-speakers (87% and 85% respectively according to the 1960 census), voted 62% in favor of separation whereas Buem-Krachi, Gonja, Dagomba, and Mamprusi Districts each had a majority voting for integration with only 29% of voters on average favoring separation (figures cited in Nugent 2002, 190).

Though the limits of the Asante's rapid awakening and the Ewe's gradual realization of a common political identity are touched upon in the preceding section on "Freezing Moments," the topic warrants further discussion with an eye for how these limitations fit into the process of

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<sup>22</sup> The All Ewe Conference had made the case for Ewe unification but never submitted candidates for the Legislative Assembly. The movement was undercut both by the United Nation's reluctance to consider tampering with international boundaries and the CPP's merging of Southern British Togoland and the Ewe-speaking areas in the Gold Coast Colony into a single region, Trans-Volta Togoland, in 1952 (Amenumey 1989, 136).

<sup>23</sup> These Ewe areas that were never in German Togoland were opposed to a unification of the two Togos as it would leave them an isolated group (Asante and Gyimah-Boadi 2004, 24)

developing an Asante/Ewe political dichotomy. In thinking nationalizing parties were the key to avoiding a reliance on “tribal” cleavages in Africa’s independence era, Wallerstein is not alone. As mentioned in Chapter Two, early literature on African political parties is rife with such conclusions (Apter 1965; Coleman and Rosberg 1964; Hodgkin 1961; Morgenthau 1964; Zolberg 1966). Given this intellectual environment, Nkrumah’s castigation of the NLM and TC for being forces of outdated primordial sentiments standing in opposition to his modernizing and nationalizing democratic forces was well within the mainstream discourse on political parties.

Yet the real threat these regional parties posed to Nkrumah and his CPP based on election results was localized and modest at best. When one speaks of the NLM’s use of Asante’s unique historical relationship with the British or the TC’s use of Togoland’s unique legal position in relation to the Gold Coast Colony and Ewe-speaking communities’ geographic relationship to the resultant uncertain boundary, one is not speaking of a process resulting in the successful creation of uncontested ethnic blocs of voters; the CPP either came close to, or in some cases bested, the vote totals of these regional parties amongst Asante and Ewe voters. Rather, one is speaking of a process resulting in the successful creation of parties that became identifiable to the electorate based on the ethnic groups that dared challenge CPP authority to a greater degree than average in an environment where political parties were understood by most as either nationalizing or sectionalist.

### **Becoming political opposites and fostering this relationship**

These circumstances changed drastically in the independence era when Nkrumah’s specter no longer loomed large over Ghanaian politics. Much as the early Africanist scholars of political parties had predicted, ethnicity would take a different and more focal role in the political discourse once the most notable pro-independence party was no longer around to serve as a centralizing force. Ghanaians would not have to wait until campaigning season for the Second

Republic heated up for charges of “tribalism” to be leveled. The combined military and police forces that would overthrow Nkrumah were led by three Ewe officers (Kotoka, Harley, and Deku) and two Akans (Afrifa an Asante and Okran a Fante). Within a month of the NLC’s formation, to these coup-makers would be added two Gas (Ankrah and Nunoo) and a Northerner (Yakubu) with Ankrah taking up the post as Head of the Council (Kraus 1966).

Before long, however, the ethnic make-up of the NLC would be altered significantly. Kotoka was killed in April 1967 when an Army Reconnaissance Squadron from Ho drove to Accra with the goal of overthrowing the military government. Talking to press after Kotoka’s death, Lt.-Gen. Ankrah felt compelled to clear the record. “[R]umours that the attempted coup was an insurrection planned by Ashantis and Fantis against Ewes and Gas,” the NLC chairman warned the assembled press, “were wicked and absolutely untrue” (cited in Bossman 1967, 20-21). This public appeal stemmed from well-worn, albeit largely unsubstantiated, claims that the NLC was a tool for filling the public sector with Ga and Ewe-speakers (Austin 1976, 125). Then in April 1969 Ankrah was asked to step down as Chairman of the NLC by his colleagues who accused him of prepping a campaign for himself and fellow Ga politicians in the run-up to anticipated national elections.<sup>24</sup> Nunoo vehemently denied these allegations against Ankrah and was himself removed from the NLC shortly thereafter (Dowse 1975, 31). With Afrifa now at the helm of state, and civilians the likes of Busia and Owusu serving as high profile advisors to the military regime, what was once characterized as an Ewe and Ga coup looked remarkably like an Akan dominant regime (Brown 1982, 56).

This reconstituted ethnic arithmetic did not go unnoticed by would-be politicians or the voting public and figured into the 1969 campaign in some very explicit ways. “Ethnic rivalry

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<sup>24</sup> Ankrah and the politicians he was accused of accepting money for would eventually join Joe Appiah’s United Nationalist Party (UNP).

was never openly proclaimed as a ‘good thing’,” notes Brown (p. 57), “but condemnations of tribalism gave way to benign neglect and there was widespread public knowledge of Afrifa’s campaign against the Ewe, Gbedemah, and his support for his fellow Ashanti, Busia; of Harley’s support for Gbedemah; and of Ankrah’s support, until his dismissal, of Alex Hutton-Mills and other Ga politicians.” The election results reflect these divisions with Busia and the Danquah-Busiaist PP establishing what Chazan (1982, 476) has called the “grand Akan alliance of 1969” and Gbedemah and the NAL cobbling together a coalition of Ewe and Ga voters, many of whom saw the power shift within the NLC as a thinly veiled ethnic power grab. Minor players too had their strongholds with the United National Party (UNP), PAP, and All People’s Republican Party (APRP) polling best in Ga, Nzima, and Fante-speaking areas respectively. Of all Ghana’s disparate regions it is only in the North where the electorate can be characterized as relatively evenly divided between the Danquah-Busiaists and Nkrumahists.

To the victors went the spoils and Busia made little effort to reach out to the areas of Ghana that had shunned him. Though Busia made certain to condemn “tribalism” in the wake of his victory and promised a “fair deal for all regions” (Quarcoo 1969), his cabinet selections showed disgruntled voters just how far his generosity reached. In a cabinet of nineteen, Busia tapped fourteen Akans (5 Asante, 2 Brong, 3 Akim, 1 Fanti, and 3 other Akan), one Ga, three Northerners, and one Guan (Danso-Boafo 1996, 100).<sup>25</sup> This cabinet stood in the way of Ewe appointments and promotions in the higher echelons of the police, armed forces, and civil service; removed Gbedemah from Parliament under dubious circumstances; implemented the 1969 Aliens Compliance Order which was directed largely at Ewe communities along the

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<sup>25</sup> According to the 1960 census Akans made up approximately 45 percent of the Ghanaian population. In 2000 this number was approaching 50 percent. Either way, by making his cabinet 74 percent Akan Busia was throwing the idea of an ethnic balance out the door.

border; dismissed Ewes disproportionately from the civil service in operation “Apollo 568;” and treated the Volta Region as “Region number nine” when it came to development projects (Brown 1982, 59).

So instead of a nationalizing party dominating several parochial parties, this first post-independence multi-party election was defined by a competition between ethnic blocs. “[O]f all the highly significant cleavages of modern Ghana (sub-region, age, class, income, education, and so forth),” Rothchild (1978, 1) writes in reference to this period of Ghanaian history, “none is more salient than that of ethnicity” (cited in Chazan 1982, 461). Into this volatile context of ethnic distrust stepped the National Redemption Council (NRC) military regime. Though the flagging economy was the problem with the Busia regime most oft-cited by the NRC as the reason for their interjection, Acheampong justified his military coup in part as a response to Busia’s handling of Ghana’s pluralistic society. “[W]ith the blood of the millions of our Nigerian brothers to warn us,” Acheampong remarked, “I acted to nip the threat in the bud” (cited by Smock and Smock 1975, 249). Political parties of both the Nkrumahist and Danquah-Busiaist molds were banned under the NRC and the word tribe was expunged from official documents “as a step to eliminate divisive and tribal forces which militate against national unity and progress” (cited in Chazan 1982, 464).

The NRC, and its centralizing military replacement the Supreme Military Council (SMC), complemented these policies with an ethno-regional balance roughly representative of the Ghanaian population.<sup>26</sup> There was a brief and largely unpopular flirtation with the idea of reinvigorating the cause of the TC during the NRC/SMC rule that allowed the government, led by Acheampong who is an Asante, to spread concern about Ewe secessionists as a reason to

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<sup>26</sup> The NRC was comprised of seven Akans, four Ewes, two Northerners, and one Ga. The SMC was comprised of four Akans, three Ewes, and one Ga with a notable absence of Northerners (Asante and Gyimah-Boadi 2004, 74).

maintain military rule (Brown 1980), but when it came to Acheampong's pet project, a government arrangement comprised of both military and civilian components (UNIGOV), it was in allied Asante and Ewe-speaking areas that the regime received its staunchest opposition (Chazan and Le Vine 1979, 189).

After this brief and imperfect respite from the post-independence political conflict understood as pitting Asantes versus Ewes, the election campaign of 1979 reinvigorated the animosity fostered in the run-up to the Second Republic and fomented under the Busia regime. The magazine *Africa* characterized the 1979 elections as pitting "Yesterday's Men" against "the Day Before Yesterday's Men" (Sutton-Jones 1979). When one focuses on social cleavages instead of ideological monikers this description is only half right. Owusu and the PFP certainly have the *bona fides* to trace their social lineage through the Danquah-Busiaist PP and NLM. Owusu is an Asante who had been a cabinet member in Busia's PP government and J.H. Mensah, Owusu's primary challenger for the presidential candidacy, held similar credentials while hailing from Brong-Ahafo (p. 13). The PFPers were keen on reminding the electorate of the same ills Busia had railed against ten years prior. For them Nkrumah's reign meant shortages of goods in the market and political detentions without trial. "It's no good saying it will never happen again," reads an add run for the party criticizing these purported Nkrumahist tendencies, adding that "some of it did under Acheampong, and that it even might happen again should be sufficient cause for us not to risk it at all" ("Before You Vote..." 1979).

Limann and the PNP had the personalities to lay claim to the Nkrumahist mantle, the party's founders - Imoru Egala and Kojo Botsio - were members of CPP cabinets, and talked the talk when it came to Nkrumahist rhetoric - "The Party believes that the ideas and ideals for which the late President Kwame Nkrumah stood, provide the best guidelines, the pursuit of

which will enable it to achieve its aims and objectives for the good of all Ghanaians” (People’s National Party 1979, 3). Unlike either the CPP government or the NAL opposition, however, the PNP had a distinctively Northern character. Though the party’s ranks were filled with an ethnically heterogeneous group comprised mostly of individuals from groups outside of the Asante/Ewe constellation, Egala, a Northerner from Tumu, was known to be the money-man behind the PNP, and his selected candidate for president had run for public office only once before and that was as a candidate not for the CPP but for the NOPP.<sup>27</sup> The UNC, which would align with the PNP in government and for the purposes of the presidential run-off, has been pigeon-holed ideologically as the second Danquah-Busiaist party due in large part to William Ofori-Atta’s past political involvement with the UGCC as representative alongside Danquah for Akim Abuakwa and with the Busia regime as a cabinet minister. Yet its social base in terms of ethnicity resembles that of a watered down NAL, which contributed Obed Asamoah and Sam Okudzeto to the UNC’s leadership (Chazan 1983, 287).

When the confusion of having three major parties had settled into a two horse race pitting Owusu against Limann, the Danquah-Busiaist candidate was similar to both the PP and NLM in relying on Asante-speaking areas for the bulk of his support. The PNP had deftly beat Owusu to the punch in the Western and Central Regions with its selection early on of high-profile representatives from the areas precluding an Akan coalition the likes of which propelled the PP into government.<sup>28</sup> In calling Ewes “inward looking” when an NAL Member of Parliament from the Volta Region called Busia a “tribal Prime Minister” and his government a “tribal government,” Owusu sealed his fate in areas that would have been difficult going anyway

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<sup>27</sup> Limann, who is Egala’s nephew, ran against his uncle in 1954 for the Tumu seat. Egala won the seat for the CPP.

<sup>28</sup> Limann continued this inclusion in his cabinet selecting eight Akan-speakers for 14 seats (Asante and Gyimah-Boadi 2004, 73).

(Asante and Gyimah-Boadi 2004, 73). This comment which reverberates even today in Ewe-speaking areas of the country made it easy for the PNP to pin the label “Popular Fronts for Plunder and Tribalism” on Owusu and make it stick in areas where UNC-via-NAL voters found the ideological barrier separating Danquah-Busiaists from Nkrumahists very permeable (Kane 1979).

When Jerry Rawlings and the PNDC stepped into politics to again remove political power from civilians and place it into the hands of military men, the action was described by those looking favorably on the PNDC as a redress for the men in uniform harassed by the PNP government or as a corrective measure for the corruption (*kalabule*) that was rampant in Ghanaian society and if not encouraged, at least accepted by Limann (Yankah 1986).<sup>29</sup> Those looking at the PNDC regime with distaste saw the extra-parliamentary actions as an unjustified power grab spawned by soldiers who had not gotten their fill of state resources under previous military regimes (Boahen 1989). Neither the Third Republic’s friends nor its foes characterized the coup d’état as ethnically motivated. Limann had assembled a fairly representative cabinet and had an economic record not marked by regional favoritism, but by a general countrywide malaise. The early PNDC regime too was quite representative of the Ghanaian populace.<sup>30</sup>

Over time the volume and frequency of allegations of ethnic favoritism increased. In his critique of the PNDC regime, Boahen (1989, 53) accuses Rawlings of “wittingly or unwittingly,

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<sup>29</sup> Acheampong was overthrown by his own men in July 1978. They accused Acheampong of running a “one man show” and quickly implemented plans to turn over power to a civilian government by the summer of 1979 under a new constitution. Rawlings and a group of junior officers calling themselves the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) overthrew the SMC II government on 4 June 1979 to conduct what they called a “house cleaning” exercise. Before they would hand over power to a civilian government in September, all living former military Heads of State (Afrifa, Acheampong, and Akuffo) were executed along with a number of the military’s top brass at the firing range in Teshie in full public view (Shillington 1992).

<sup>30</sup> Nugent notes that although Ewe speakers were over-represented in the various PNDC cabinets given Ewe’s percentage of Ghana’s total population, at no time was Rawlings’ PNDC cabinet comprised of more than 28.6 percent Ewes (cited in Asante and Gyimah-Boadi 2004, 77).

consciously or unconsciously...fanning ethnicity, or as it is more popularly though wrongly termed, tribalism” for giving a few high profile positions to individuals from the Volta Region. K. Ansa Asamoah, a PNDC ideologue from the University of Cape Coast, fired back at these accusations with a complaint that previous regimes, both military and civilian, had been dominated by Akan-speakers (cited in Asante and Gyimah-Boadi 2004, 76). This familiar dialogue gave way to the by now familiar “ideological” divisions in the Fourth Republic’s inaugural elections. The “Danquah-Busia Club” existed prior to the legalization of political parties, its top ranks filled with Danquah-Busiaists from past regimes or in some cases their children, eventually to be transformed into the NPP (Jonah 1998, 92). Rawlings, who has often been characterized as blazing a third path because of his populist rhetoric and embrace of neo-liberal structural adjustment programs, has not shied away from comparisons with Nkrumah (Oelbaum 2004, 262-264). The NDC’s tremendous strength in the Volta Region does not harken back to Nkrumah, however, but rather to the NAL and UNC.

### **Alternative Cleavage Structures and their Fates**

Cleavage structures that could conceivably have risen to the political fore instead of, or as a replacement for, the Asante/Ewe cleavage are innumerable. Not having undergone a similar modernization experience as the European states Lipset and Rokkan examine, cleavages along the lines of those explored in Europe are not likely to gain political parties much traction. The existence of classes in African society and their form has been the subject of much scholarly debate (Ekeh 1975; Markovitz 1977; Sklar 1979) but there is something of a consensus within this debate over the ill-fit of Euro-centric labels the likes of aristocrat, bourgeoisie, proletariat and peasant. It does not take much creativity, however, to come up with potential alternatives that could describe a dichotomous cleavage structure in Ghanaian society. Any number of these cleavages could be conceptualized in such a way as to divide Ghanaian society down the middle

and provide two dominant political parties with poles from which to pick off the median voter.<sup>31</sup> There are two potential cleavages, however, that both fit this bill and have shown signs in the past of political mobilization. One of these cleavages, that pitting the North versus the South, involves a number of cross-cutting identities including income, ethnicity, and religion. The other, that pitting Akans versus non-Akans, relies on a particular ethno-linguistic identity and its residual category. Following is a brief exploration of these two cleavages with an eye for when they were mobilized and when they were not.

The North/South cleavage is one that is quite palpable in West African countries bordering the Gulf of Guinea. Though both social and environmental borders are permeable and nuanced, in general the North in these countries is comprised of dry savannah whereas the South is comprised predominately of coastal plains and tropical forests. Because of a much longer and deeper involvement with colonial authorities, the South tends as well to have much greater levels of western education, a larger percentage of Christians, and better infrastructure than areas in the North. Ethnic make-ups vary by country but tend to be categorized by their broader geographical context as Northern and Southern (Brown 1983, 433-6). The civil war in Côte d'Ivoire, pre-election violence in Togo in 2005, and Nigeria's ongoing Sharia debates have all in recent years been characterized as conflicts occurring along North/South lines. While these tensions are most often included by mainstream press in the category of zero-sum ethno-regional or religious disputes, Ladouceur's (1979, 254) description of Ghana's North as burdened by economic (lack of development and industrialization), educational (relative lack of schools and graduates),

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<sup>31</sup> Each of Ghana's elections has been decided with Single Member District elections save for a handful of the well-populated areas in pre-independence elections which were awarded two seats. With the exception of the presidential races, both in the Third and Fourth Republics, these races do not involve run-off elections. Under these circumstances one would expect a party system to develop concentrating on Downs' (1957) "median voter."

natural resources (poor agricultural conditions), and historical (colonial neglect and policy isolation) deficits holds true across the region.

In Ghana the NOPP tried explicitly to functionalize this cleavage and was to some extent counterbalanced by the CPP. After arguing that the party was not anti-Southern, the NOPP manifesto of 1954 makes a case for its focus. “We consider that the Northern Territories deserves [*sic*] a special treatment,” reads the manifesto, “because it has been the most neglected areas in the Gold Coast” (Northern Peoples Party 1954, 3). The CPP, though it did quite well in the North and bested the NOPP in several constituencies, was unlike major parties in the Second and Third Republics in its ability to disproportionately draw voters from the relatively well-educated areas primarily in the South. Post-Nkrumah this cleavage, which was always tempered by the CPP’s ability to compete with the NOPP on its home turf, became largely irrelevant. In 1969 neither of the two major parties was able to turn the regions comprising the North uncompetitive in their favor; the real inconsistency in results was intra-South. In 1979 the PNP managed significantly better results amongst Northern ethnic groups, but when the presidential election was focused in a second round to a two-party race this correlation was erased thanks not to a diminished cohesion in the North but rather to an exacerbated split within the South. “The primary effect of ‘national politics’ coming into the north,” notes Austin (1976, 142), “from outside is to sharpen ambition, and to breed [local intra-north] faction.”

The potential Akan/non-Akan cleavage is different from the North/South division both in terms of being unique to Ghana and in terms of being sectional without clear socio-economic overtones. Historically the various ethnic groups that fit within the Akan category have been at odds politically at least as often as they have been allies. Brong areas that contributed Busia to the Danquah-Busiaist camp not to mention votes to the NLM, PP, and PFP parties along similar

lines to Asante areas, have a tumultuous history with the Asante Confederacy. Not only did they fight initial conquests in the early eighteenth century but have over the course of the ensuing decades several times fought both militarily and politically to be detached from Kumasi (Maier 1981). The relationship between the Asante Empire and its Akan neighbors to the south is even more contentious. Among the Fante, Aowin, Wasa, Denkyira, and Akyem the British were deemed preferable allies to the Asante who were on the march in search of tributary states throughout much of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Sanders 1979). Despite the historical absence of a coherent “Akan” state incorporating the varied ethnic groups that speak an Akan language (Kiyaga-Mulindwa 1980), there has been a recurring desire by many pundits, politicians, and much of the general public to designate one party or another the “Akan party” since 1969 (Adjei 1969; Goka 1969).

If one looks at the results from the 1969 elections, this concept of an Akan party makes some intuitive sense. The PP not only did well in Ashanti Region but won the majority of the votes in Western, Central, Eastern, and Brong-Ahafo Regions. In areas without a majority of Akan-speakers (the North, Volta Region, and Accra), the PP was unable to secure a majority of the vote. Interpreting the 1969 elections with such a blunt ethno-linguistic tool is not without its problems. Principle amongst these problems is the PP’s ability to collect nearly 40% of the vote across the aforementioned non-Akan areas. While it is likely that some of these votes came from Akan-speakers living outside of their “traditional” areas, especially in the relatively cosmopolitan cities, such an explanation in no way accounts for such a large percentage of the vote. An even bigger problem with the Akan versus non-Akan dichotomy is its utter inability to shed light on elections other than that held in 1969. In pre-independence elections it was the CPP

that dominated non-Asante Akan areas of the country. In 1979 the “Northern” PNP outperformed the “Asante” PFP in Western, Central, and Eastern Regions by a factor of nearly two to one.

### **Conclusions**

Answers to the two guiding questions of this research chapter have not been parsimonious. The Ghanaian party system’s “freezing moment” could better be described as a series of fits and starts, many which only became significant and related in hindsight. Asante, as a modern political identity, was first mobilized through the NLM but this mobilization was far from total. It was the PP that solidified this ethnic bloc in 1969. The Ewe modern political identity arose as a “common knowledge” stereotype before it became a reality. Ewes living outside of the area known as Togoland, who make up more than half of what would become Ghanaian Ewes, were in general antithetical to the TC’s aims of secession.<sup>32</sup> With the highly “tribalized” atmosphere that followed Nkrumah’s overthrow, however, goals of the TC were used to “scapegoat”<sup>33</sup> Ghanaian Ewes and Ghanaian Ewes returned the favor by heavily backing an “Ewe party” against an “Akan party” in the 1969 election. The 1979 elections would again demonstrate the Asante ethnic group’s relationship with Danquah-Busiaist parties but showed Ewe voters not to be particularly enamored with Nkrumahism, as they were not during pre-independence elections, but antithetical to the cause of Asante politicians who many felt would not treat the region fairly. This reading of Ghanaian socio-political history stands in stark contrast to a recurring assumption in the contemporary political discourse that Asante voters and Ewe voters have been at odds since time immemorial.

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<sup>32</sup> The actual numbers of Ewes residing in the former Gold Coast Colony, British Togoland, and French Togoland is contested. For various estimates see Hodder (1968).

<sup>33</sup> This line of reasoning is suggested by Brown (1982; 1983).

Those “free agents” in Ghanaian politics who fit outside of this convenient dichotomy are much harder to compartmentalize into an electoral pattern. Northern regions are consistently heterogeneous both ethnically and politically throughout the pre-Fourth Republican period. Though regions populated by large numbers of Ga voters and non-Asante Akan voters have toyed with the idea of voting as a bloc in some elections, there has been no apparent carryover effects and in the election maps depicted in Figures 5-2 and 5-3 these areas are just as likely to appear as shades of gray as they are to be shaded either white or black. For observers of elections in the Fourth Republic, these traits are well known even if they are not understood as historical legacies of past elections. Notions of a socio-economic cleavage dividing Ghana’s North from its South or an all-encompassing ethno-linguistic cleavage dividing Akans and non-Akans depend on these “free agents” lining up in one political bloc or another. While Nkrumah’s CPP and Busia’s PP were able to more or less unite one side of these potentially grand cleavages, well-educated South in the case of the former and Akans in the case of the latter, the other side never congealed thanks in large part to non-Asante and non-Ewe voters inability and/or unwillingness to conform to the politics behind these cleavages.

So what does this nuanced story mean for the literature on the relationship between social cleavages and political parties in general? In many ways the story is uniquely Ghanaian. Though Asantes and Ewes inhabit areas outside of Ghana, in no other country do they both exist in great enough quantities to constitute the poles of a national political cleavage structure. The fact that Asantes are Ghana’s largest recognized ethnic group (with around 15% of the population) and Ewe’s are the second largest (with approximately 13% of the population) is not unimportant and could provide fodder for comparisons with other countries similarly divided, Asante’s antagonistic relationship with the British and the Ewe’s division by the German/British then

French/British then Ghana/Togo border are important factors unlikely to be replicated elsewhere. How the Ghanaian case can inform the greater body of scholarship on the relationship between social cleavages and political parties is in the way it addresses the formation of a historically and socially understood party system without a bifurcating revolution. Wallerstein predicted that ethnicity would likely follow independence, save some divine intervention by national leaders and a relatively rapid project of modernization, and rued the day. Yet in Ghana there has been no Biafra. Unique historical circumstances and social structures contributed to two politicized ethnic identities but the rest of Ghana, which serves as home to the vast majority of electors, has worked within this dichotomy instead of ratcheting it up to the levels Akan/non-Akan and North/South cleavages denote.

Table 5-1. 1954 Legislative Assembly election results by region and ethno-cultural group

	CPP	CPPreb	GCP	TC	AYO	NOPP	MAP	GNP
Western	74.4%	17.5%	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	0.0%
Central	68.3%	21.5%	5.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%
Greater Accra	78.7%	2.2%	2.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	5.7%	6.2%
Volta	49.8%	8.6%	0.0%	22.8%	7.8%	0.0%	0.7%	0.0%
Eastern	56.6%	12.4%	14.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%
Ashanti	58.8%	23.0%	8.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.3%	0.0%
Brong-Ahafo	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Northern	45.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	18.5%	15.1%	0.0%
Upper East	36.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	35.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Upper West	23.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	39.9%	0.0%	0.0%

Note: Only parties gaining at least 5 percent of the vote in at least one region are displayed.

Wassaw Central in the Western Region, Denkyira in the Central Region, and South Tongu in the Volta Region were won by the CPP candidate uncontested. Uncontested races were scored as a victory of 1-0 for the uncontested candidate. As it is impossible to separate Ashanti Region from Brong-Ahafo Region along constituency lines in 1954, the results for these two regions are reported as a single Ashanti Region. Election results are taken from Jon Kraus Ghana Election Archive (1954), "Election Results" (1954), and Addo (1954).

Table 5-2. 1956 Legislative Assembly election results by region and ethno-cultural group

	CPP	NLM	TC	FYO	NOPP	MAP	WAY
Western	84.0%	1.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	9.3%
Central	88.5%	8.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Greater Accra	85.3%	7.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.5%	0.0%
Volta	54.6%	0.0%	20.0%	5.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Eastern	68.6%	22.8%	0.0%	1.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Ashanti	43.2%	53.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	3.4%	0.0%
Brong-Ahafo	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Northern	44.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	40.5%	3.6%	0.0%
Upper East	52.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	42.5%	0.0%	0.0%
Upper West	32.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	68.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Note: Only parties gaining at least 5 percent of the vote in at least one region are displayed.

Amenfi-Aowin in the Western Region, North Birim and Kwahu South both in the Eastern Region, and Gonja West and Dagomba North both in the Northern Region were won by the CPP candidate uncontested. Uncontested races were scored as a victory of 1-0 for the uncontested candidate. As it is impossible to separate Ashanti Region from Brong-Ahafo Region along constituency lines in 1956, the results for these two regions are reported as a single Ashanti Region. Election results are taken from Jon Kraus Ghana Election Archive (1956) and "Victory for the C.P.P." (1956).

Table 5-3. 1969 Parliamentary election results by region and ethno-cultural group

	NAL	PP	UNP	PAP	APRP
Western	16.0%	52.7%	1.0%	20.7%	7.3%
Central	18.5%	71.0%	2.6%	2.0%	5.8%
Greater Accra	35.1%	34.8%	22.0%	3.3%	0.0%
Volta	77.1%	18.1%	3.2%	1.0%	0.1%
Eastern	32.4%	62.3%	1.9%	0.7%	0.6%
Ashanti	17.3%	77.8%	1.8%	1.0%	0.2%
Brong-Ahafo	14.4%	84.7%	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%
Northern	42.4%	47.8%	2.4%	2.5%	2.6%
Upper East	41.5%	37.9%	4.2%	7.6%	3.3%
Upper West	20.2%	78.7%	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%

Note: Only parties gaining at least 5 percent of the vote in at least one region are displayed.

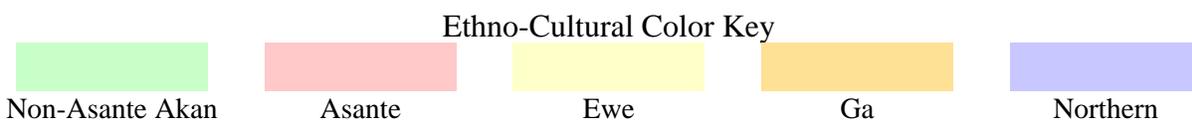
Agona Kwabre in Ashanti Region was won uncontested by the PP candidate and South Tongu in the Volta Region was won uncontested by the NAL candidate. Uncontested races were scored as a victory of 1-0 for the uncontested candidate. Election results are taken from Jon Kraus Ghana Election Archive (1969) and Government of Ghana (1969).

Table 5-4. 1979 Parliamentary and presidential (2<sup>nd</sup> round) election results by region and ethno-cultural group

	PFP	PNP	UNC	ACP	SDF	Owusu	Limann
Western	19.5%	49.7%	8.9%	18.8%	1.0%	23.2%	76.8%
Central	17.8%	30.9%	7.8%	37.6%	1.6%	29.0%	71.0%
Greater Accra	21.7%	36.0%	29.2%	10.7%	1.7%	27.4%	72.6%
Volta	13.3%	41.9%	32.3%	4.8%	5.9%	14.4%	85.6%
Eastern	31.0%	38.5%	24.3%	4.2%	0.8%	44.2%	55.8%
Ashanti	47.1%	30.4%	17.7%	2.5%	0.9%	57.6%	42.4%
Brong-Ahafo	50.8%	29.8%	8.8%	1.3%	0.5%	61.7%	38.3%
Northern	31.6%	27.8%	8.1%	2.5%	27.3%	33.8%	66.2%
Upper East	18.2%	54.8%	17.0%	2.2%	4.6%	23.3%	76.7%
Upper West	30.2%	44.8%	11.5%	2.1%	8.3%	28.6%	71.4%

Note: Only parties gaining at least 5 percent of the vote in at least one region are displayed.

Election results are taken from Addae-Mensah (1979).



Note: “Northern” is a constructed cultural category comprised of Grusi, Mole-Dagbon, Mande, Bimoba, Kokomba, Gonja, and Chokosi speakers. Non-Asante Akan is a variable derived by separating the total number of Asante-speakers from the total number of non-Asante Akan-speakers. Asante, Ewe, and Ga are categories used in the 1960 census (Gil et al. 1964). To determine which parties received significantly more support amongst these ethno-cultural groups than others a bivariate regression was constructed using the aforementioned ethnic and cultural variables as the independent variable and party percentage of the vote in the geographic units depicted in Figure 5-1 as the dependent variable. The shaded results denote a significant ( $p < 0.1$ ) positive correlation for the indicated party and ethno-cultural group.

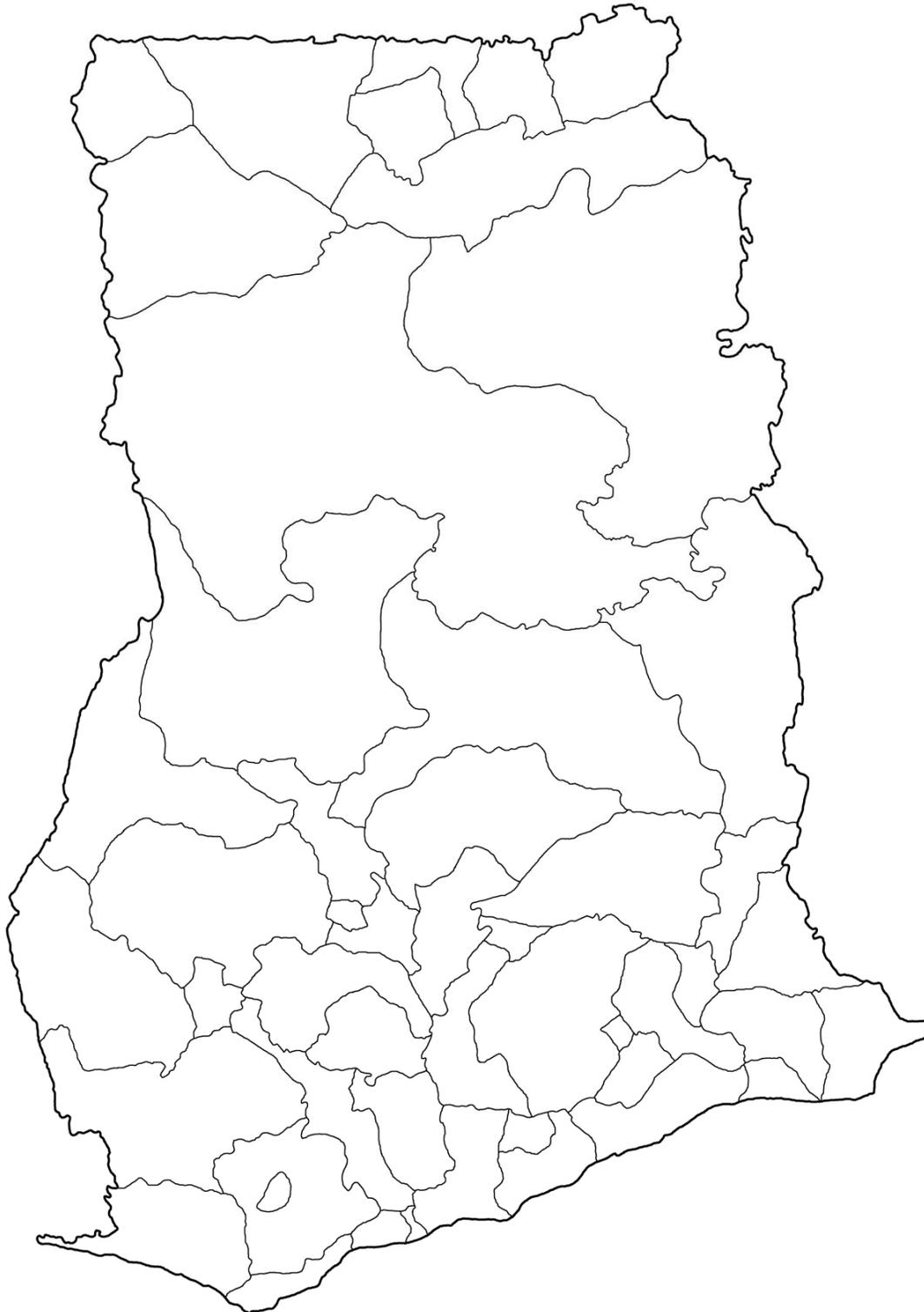


Figure 5-1. Constant geographical units for elections (1954-1979) and census (1960) [Source: Author created map using the 1960 local authorities census map (Gil et al. 1964, IIa) and the constituency maps presented below to find the smallest like units.]

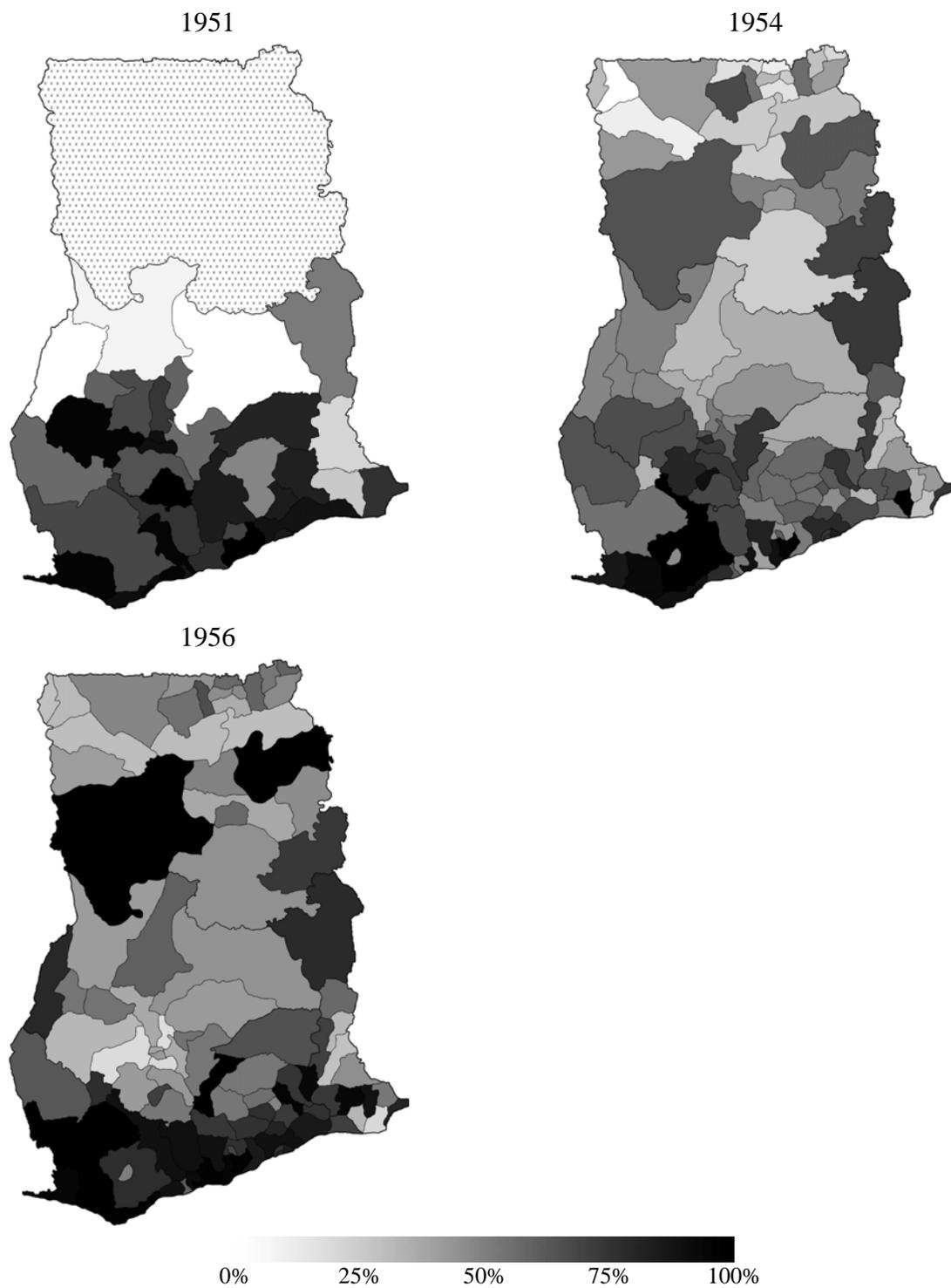


Figure 5-2. CPP percentage of the vote mapped for pre-independence elections [Source: Author created maps using constituency maps from the Electoral Commission of Ghana as outlines and inputting election results data from “General Election Results...” (1951), Government of the Gold Coast (1951), Government of the Gold Coast (1954), Jon Kraus Ghana Election Archive (1954), Jon Kraus Ghana Election Archive (1956), and “Victory for the C.P.P.” (1956).]

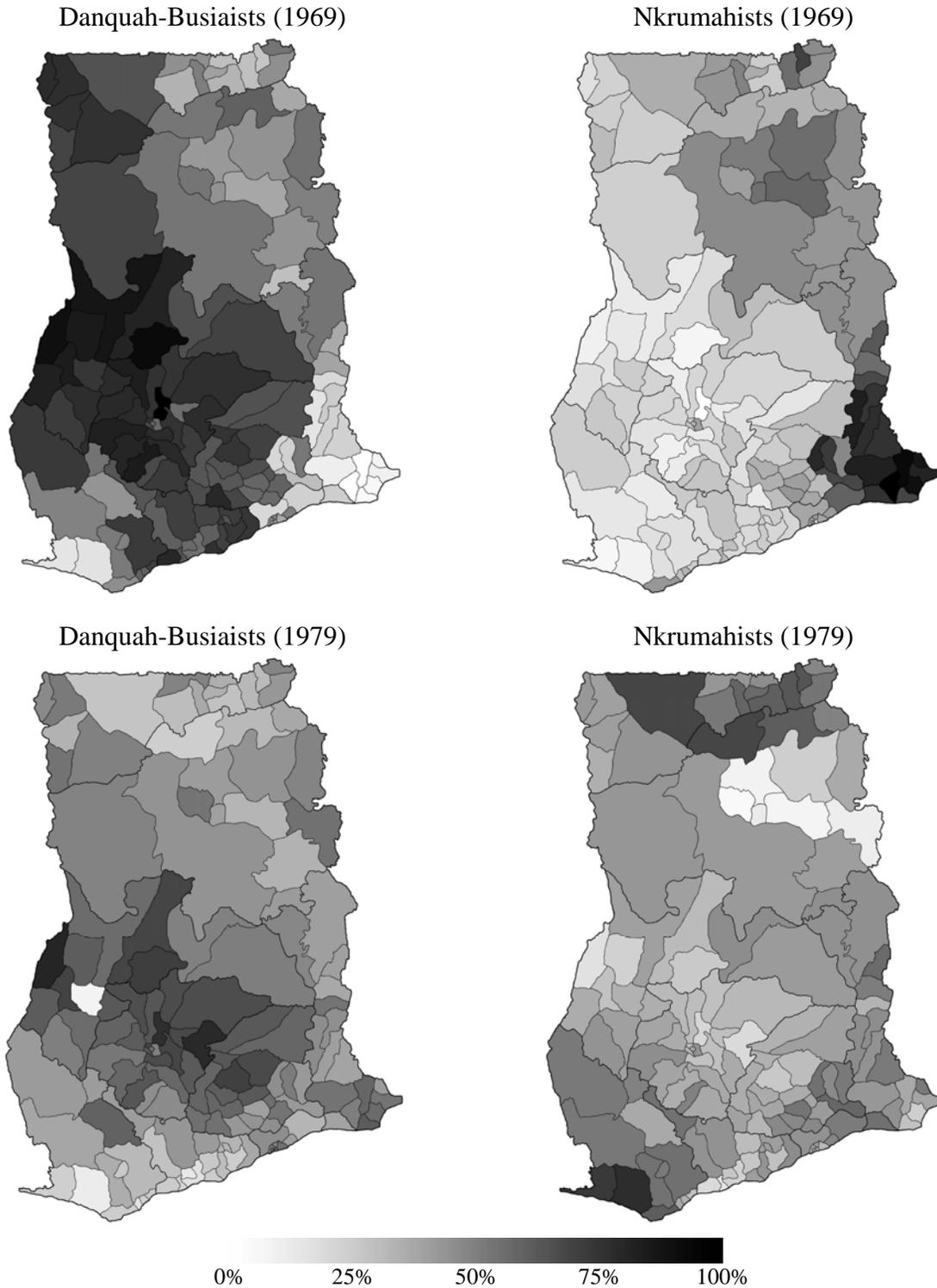


Figure 5-3. Danquah-Busiaists and Nkrumahists percentage of the vote mapped for pre-Fourth Republic elections [Source: Author created maps using constituency maps from the Electoral Commission of Ghana as outlines and inputting election results data from Jon Kraus Ghana Election Archive (1969), Government of Ghana (1969), and Addae-Mensah (1979).]

CHAPTER 6  
MICRO-LEVEL ANALYSIS OF GHANAIAN SOCIAL CLEAVAGES: A STUDY IN THREE  
CONSTITUENCIES (ODODODIODIO, NABDAM, BANTAMA)

The preceding chapters on party politics in Ghana deal predominantly with macro-level voting patterns. This chapter alters course by focusing on partisanship in Ghana at the micro-level. A redirection of this sort is not a careless application of Tip O’Neill’s well-trodden maxim suggesting that “all politics is local.” If all politics occurred in a localized vacuum immune from the national discourses, one would not expect to see the distinctive national voting patterns marked by areas of consistent and extreme lack of competition described in previous chapters. On Election Day in 2004 when NPP candidate Cecilia Dapaah made several visits to the polling station I was monitoring for the Coalition of Domestic Election Observers at Bantamahene’s Palace to see how the vote was proceeding, I joked with the NPP and NDC representatives assigned to the station. “What is she so worried about,” I quipped, “the NPP could run a dead goat in Bantama and still win by a landslide?” After polite smiles both gentlemen shook their heads in agreement. As has been fleshed out in preceding pages, in this regard Bantama is not a unique case. The voting public often fits into, or cases respond to, the roles assigned by the play of national politics.

Kufuor won the majority of the vote in every constituency save three – Ejura Sekyedumase and Asawase (two Zongo communities), and New Edubiase (an Ayigbe area) - in the Ashanti Region in 2004.<sup>1</sup> The Ashanti Region’s remaining 36 constituencies saw Kufuor collect slightly more than 77% of the vote and NPP parliamentarians pick up every seat. In the Volta Region in 2004 the tables were reversed. Mills took a majority of the vote in each of the region’s 22

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<sup>1</sup> Zongos are urban communities in the South (coastal and forest regions extending in West Africa from the Gulf of Guinea inland) populated predominately by “strangers” from the North (who are often understood as Muslim and Hausa though in reality they are far more diverse). Ayigbe towns are similar to Zongos in that they are strangers’ quarters but unlike Zongos they are populated principally by Ewe-speakers.

constituencies and averaged nearly 83% of the vote across the region. NDC parliamentarians took each of these seats by comfortable margins save for the seat in Nkwanta North which was picked up by an NPP candidate with barely 30% of the vote thanks in no small part to several popular independent candidates splitting the electorate. For results from the 1996 and 2000 elections one barely has to tamper with these numbers as these two regions in particular have demonstrated themselves durable bastions of electoral support for their respective parties. Results of the “cognitive shortcut” survey presented in Chapter Four strongly suggest that voters in the rest of Ghana, the much more politically heterogeneous realms of the country, evaluate the parties through the same group heuristics as voters in the Ashanti and Volta Regions though their position in relation to the opposing sides is less well-defined.

The variables explaining these results and their persistence from election to election are discussed in great length elsewhere in this dissertation. Ghana’s two dominant parties draw their greatest magnitude of support from specific ethnic areas – Asante-dominant areas in the case of the NPP and Ewe-dominant areas in the case of the NDC – and are understood even by voters self-identifying outside of these specific ethnic areas as politically representative of a particular ethnic group; hence survey respondents proclivity for viewing the NPP as an “Asante” party and the NDC as the “Ewe” party. What is left out of these analyses is a compelling explanation for what is driving divisions in local areas with less pronounced party preferences. These vast stretches of relatively competitive elections tend to ebb and flow slightly toward whichever party does best nationally but in the Fourth Republic have failed to form into stable partisan blocs for one party or another to reliably draw upon. With macro-level analysis of national politics unable to adequately address these immense anomalies the dissertation turns to local politics.

This change of focus is not without its methodological difficulties. Between 1996 and 2004 in the 1260 regular constituency-level elections (both presidential and parliamentary) less than a third of the “winning” candidates were able to capture more than two-thirds of the vote. While this two-thirds cutoff is somewhat arbitrary, the point is illustrative of a widespread pluralism in Ghanaian politics at the constituency-level. These “competitive” areas are a mixed bag of demographic characteristics with little more in common than tending not to be overwhelmingly inhabited by Asantes or Ewes. They are urban and rural; ethnically heterogeneous and ethnically homogeneous; relatively poor and relatively rich; and located in Ghana’s North, South, East, and West. To get at the roots of the politicized social divisions in these disparate and dispersed communities a massive national survey reporting detailed demographic and voting characteristics of electors and the constituencies or districts in which they reside would be useful.<sup>2</sup>

Afrobarometer (2006) does not provide much service in this regard as it aims for breadth instead of depth. While a few urban districts contribute more than a hundred surveys to Afrobarometer’s sample, most contribute less than twenty. The University of Ghana’s pre-election surveys (Ayee 1998, 2001), with their coverage of forty constituencies and collection of a hundred surveys per, comes closer to fitting this bill. In addition to not being publicly available, however, these surveys record information in blunt national terms (e.g., Akan is a category under “mother tongue” but Asante, Fante, and Akuapem are not) that may be useful in politically dissecting cosmopolitan cities but are unlikely to prove illuminating in rural constituencies which would likely appear homogeneous when forced into such imprecise categories.

With this best course foreclosed, this chapter steps back a level in the process of theory formulation. Since the data does not exist to test a number of far-reaching hypotheses with

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<sup>2</sup> The survey need not be quantitative but a detailed qualitative survey of 230 localized cleavage structures is quite cost prohibitive.

regards to localized political cleavages in competitive areas, this chapter turns to three constituencies and treats each as a unique but potentially hypothesis-generating case study. Tentative conclusions drawn from these three cases are not immediately generalizable. It is possible that each of the citizenries in each of these three cases is fundamentally different in the way it divides itself at the polls in some significant way from every other constituency in Ghana. What a thick analysis of these three cases can do, however, is point to plausible interactions between social cleavages and political parties on the local-level that are potentially more widespread than can be claimed with any confidence in the work at hand. With a little effort, these insights can inform future survey questions and point to a collection of partisanship predictors that deserve further attention in the many constituencies ignored by this study.

Cases selected for this close examination include Odododiodio, Nabdam, and Bantama. These cases were selected purposively for their ability to serve two distinct functions (Table 6-1 offers a brief synopsis of many of these constituencies' important characteristics and Figure 6-1 shows where the constituencies are situated geographically within Ghana). First they had to be reasonably different on a number of socio-economic, sectional, and partisan characteristics so that similarities in responses to the administered "cognitive shortcut" survey could best be explained by the constituencies' most glaring similarity, namely being situated within Ghana. The results of parts of this survey depend on the most different system design and are summarized in Chapter Four. Second, and more important to the task of this chapter, the selected constituencies had to be suitable for an exploration of localized cleavage structures and their interaction with party politics, particularly in competitive areas.

One's reading of this rather vague second criterion hinges upon the meaning of "suitability." Since the reason for this chapter is hypothesis-generation and not theory testing, as

wide a net as resources would allow was cast. Two of the three cases - Ododiodio and Nabdam - under investigation can be classified as generally competitive (i.e., the winning candidate typically garners less than two-thirds of the vote). Of these two cases, Ododiodio is completely urban whereas Nabdam is completely rural; Ododiodio rests on Ghana's southern border whereas Nabdam rests on the northern border; and Ododiodio is ethnically heterogeneous whereas Nabdam is ethnically homogenous. The third case - Bantama - which is decidedly uncompetitive lies somewhere between Ododiodio and Nabdam both geographically and in terms of ethnic homogeneity. As a case study Bantama offers a peek into the ideational/sectional forces strong enough to pull a very small percentage of voters away from the centripetal force of a very dominant party.

A month was spent in each of these three constituencies during which time 200 surveys were administered to randomly-selected registered voters; interviews were conducted; and a focus group was held.<sup>3</sup> Each of these methodological approaches was applied with the purpose of finding out which identities tend to push people in a given constituency towards one party or another and which identities are inconsequential when it comes to predicting an individual's partisan identification. The survey approaches this task by asking randomly-selected voters in each constituency for their partisan leanings (the dependent variable) and their demographic characteristics (the independent variables). The interviews and focus groups are meant to flesh out the processes behind correlations uncovered in the survey and to extract hypotheses, both those that are supported by the survey data and those that are not, that comprise the "common knowledge" assumptions people make about the "us" who they agree with politically and the "them" who are viewed as the opposition. Complementing these formal methods is a fair bit of

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<sup>3</sup> Appendix B outlines the methodologies for these surveys and focus groups.

what Fenno (1978) dubbed “soaking and poking.” A continuous month spent in a single constituency gives one the opportunity not only to see the nooks and crannies of the area with one’s own eyes, but it also gives one the opportunity to talk with a lot of people from all walks of life and to not only hear what they say but see how they interact with one another. Insights gained from these experiences influence, albeit often in implicit ways, the analysis offered below.

### **Ododiodio**

#### **Socio-Political Background of a Highly Competitive Constituency in “Old Accra”**

When people refer to “Old Accra” they are speaking of Ododiodio constituency. The area is today populated predominately by Ga-speakers and has been since the sixteenth century when Ga-speaking migrants from the east settled alongside Korle Lagoon and absorbed the Guan-speaking Kpeshi whom they found in residence (Acquah 1958, 16; Field 1940). Much like Accra today, this early settlement, understood by some historians as a solitary unit (Ga Mantse) and others as two distinct communities (Ngleshie and Kinka), served as a cultural crossroads.<sup>4</sup> After a failed attempt to establish a presence in the area by the Portuguese in the late sixteenth century, the Dutch successfully negotiated rights to establish Fort Crèvecoeur (later dubbed Ussher Fort) in Kinka in 1649 and the British, under the auspices of the Royal African Company, erected James Fort in 1673 less than a half mile away in Ngleshie (Parker 2000, 9-10).

In hopes of profiting from overseas trade with the Europeans many non-Ga Africans sought footholds in the area and were granted settler quarters within Ga Mantse. Ga-speakers predominated in Asere, Gbese, Sempe, and Akumadze quarters and outsiders were given access

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<sup>4</sup> If Ngleshie and Kinka were ever a unified political unit during pre-colonial times they were divided by colonial rule between the British and Dutch and later by internal conflicts marking the return of Takie Tawiah from his exile in Elmina in 1883 (Parker 2000, 62-63, 130).

to Otublohum (Akwamu), Abola (Fanti), and Alata (Nigerians) quarters where, like the Kpeshi before them, they were often subsumed into an accommodating Ga cultural and linguistic identity (Kilson 1974, 6-7; Dakubu 1997, 100-117). Korle Wonkon (formerly Riponsville) is the name given to areas of Odododiodio to the north of Asafoatse Nettey Road (formerly Horse Road). The area is newer than Ngleshie or Kinka and was at least partially financed by the colonial government as a response to British West Africa's first outbreak of the plague in Accra in 1908. There was a stated desire to cut down on population densities in Ngleshie and Kinka to avoid future outbreaks and Korle Wonkon represented space to grow the community in what was deemed a healthier manner (Parker 2000, 198).

For many of the residents of the expanded (both in square kilometers and population) twenty-first century version of Accra,<sup>5</sup> the appellation "Old Accra" has less complementary connotations. Though most acknowledge the Ga as Accra's "traditional" inhabitants and know a primary school version of James and Ussher Forts' histories, Odododiodio constituency is at least as well known for its reputation as something of an unsavory neighborhood. The designation "Odododiodio" comes from the area's rough and tumble past. Still the Mecca of Ghanaian boxing, Jamestown, Ussher Town, and their environs have for the better part of a century been known for their legendary brawls. When in the 1930s neighborhood *asafo atwele* associations would take first to the beaches and then to Bukom square to engage in hand to hand combat, challenges were posed by a clenched fist raised skywards and yelling of the phrase "odododiodio" (Akyeampong 2002, 51).

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<sup>5</sup> Accra is an anglicized version of the Akan word (*nkran*) for the Ga language. As presently constituted the Accra Metropolitan area stretches just past Nungua to the west and up to Awoshie in the east. Its southern border remains the Gulf of Guinea but it now stretches northward all the way past Achimote and Legon. The 2000 census lists this expanded area's population at more than 1.6 million.

Descendants of these fishermen-turned-pugilists and those who have migrated to their neighborhoods over the ensuing years live in what the Accra Metropolitan Assembly has euphemistically labeled a “Fourth Class Residential” area (Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development 2006). “Old Accra” is often understood by the residents of “newer Accra” as not only one of the most economically marginalized areas in Ghana’s capital city but also as a “backward” place “where life is lived outdoors, where most homes are scarcely more than shacks, where most people resort to public toilets, [and] where children bathe on the streets” (Akyeampong 2002, 58-59). No where is this perception on fuller display than in the NPP government and national media’s public characterization of, and hostility towards, the unplanned, and according to the government illegal, settlement along the banks of Korle Lagoon known to most residents of Accra simply as “Sodom and Gomorrah” (Ogbamey 2002).<sup>6</sup>

As arenas for partisan competition the areas presently constituting Ododiodio constituency are difficult to discuss with any certainty during the colonial period. Sub-constituency election results for Gold Coast elections, and most of the independence era elections for that matter, have been lost to history. For the 1951, 1954, and 1956 Legislative Assembly elections the areas of Ngleshie, Kinka, and Korle Wonkon were part of larger Accra-based constituencies that voted fairly overwhelmingly for the CPP. Inquiries into the area’s colonial era voting record submitted to a non-random sampling of Ododiodio’s elderly population revealed a general proclivity for the CPP but these results are far from overwhelming. What is known for certain of the area’s pre-independence politics is that it was instrumental in

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<sup>6</sup> As I was driving through the area one morning with a friend from a more affluent section of Accra he commented matter of factly, “this is where the ‘real’ Africans live.” When I asked him what that meant he mentioned the elaborate funeral and naming ceremonies of Ododiodio. People in Ododiodio, he complained, will borrow money they do not have to throw these parties while they live in a house without a working toilet. Informally I relayed this anecdote to a half dozen other residents of Accra, some from Ododiodio and others not, and it did not strike any as odd and played into well-known, though only anecdotally substantiated, stereotypes of the area in particular and Gas in general (see for instance Adjei 1994, 263).

Nii Kwabena Bonne's boycott campaign against imported goods in early 1948 and the related Accra riots that followed when ex-servicemen marched upon Christiansborg Castle to protest the colonial government's economic policies and were fired upon. These events led to the imprisonment of Ghana's "Big Six" and their interpretation of these events proved a significant wedge between Nkrumah and the rest of the UGCC's working committee (Austin 1964, 78). Nkrumah's championing of the masses' cause at the expense of unpopular traditional authorities who condemned the riots made him particularly popular in the downtrodden areas of central Accra.

Austin (p. 142) contends that this popularity diminished with time, however, as resentment over an increasingly cosmopolitan Accra and a lack of legislative representation pushed many non-elite Ga residents towards the Ga Shifimo Kpee (Ga Standfast Association), which had been fundamentally an elite organization up to that point, following the 1956 elections. For similar reasons it is reasonable to assume the areas presently constituting Odododiodio supported Ga Shifimo Kpee's 1969 resurrection, Joe Appiah's UNP, and the party observers dubbed a Ga-Ewe alliance, the UNC, in 1979 (Austin 1976, 118; Chazan 1982, 476). Election results, however, tell another story. Though the UNP candidate for Ashiedu Keteke constituency, a constituency whose boundaries are identical to contemporary Odododiodio's, picked up the seat in 1969 he did so with less than 40% of the vote. The UNC candidate in Ashiedu Keteke did only slightly worse percentage-wise in 1979 but lost to a candidate for the PFP, who himself could not score a simple majority of the vote.

### **Exploring Contemporary Politicized Cleavages in Odododiodio**

The electoral heterogeneity of Ashiedu Keteke carried over to Odododiodio in the Fourth Republic. No presidential candidate has carried more than 53.2% of the vote and Rawlings (NDC), Kufuor (NPP), and Mills (NDC) have each received a majority of the constituency's

votes in one election or another. In regularly scheduled parliamentary elections, excluding the boycotted 1992 elections, no candidate has registered more than 52.4% of the vote and both an NDC candidate (1996 and 2004) and NPP candidate (2000) have won the seat. The by-election of 2005 with the NDC parliamentary candidate picking up nearly 58% of the vote is an outlier but it occurred under unique circumstances less than six months after a regular election and pitted the deceased parliamentarian's son, an NPP candidate, against the deceased parliamentarian's party, the NDC. The son's decision to contest on behalf of the ruling party is said to have angered the sensibilities of many voters.

Using answers to ideological tests focusing on the desirability of government involvement in various sectors of the economy to identify NPP or NDC supporters is fruitless in Ododiodio. As was anticipated by earlier Afrobarometer findings which draw upon similar questions, partisans of all stripes prefer the government to take an active role in the economy (everything from providing schools and clinics to creating jobs) but simultaneously do not want to deal with negative effects that often accompany planned economic experiments in the past (e.g., shortages at the markets or cheap but low quality education and health care). Socio-economic explanations for the bisecting political divisions within Ododiodiobii society are similarly unsatisfying.<sup>7</sup> Cross-tabulations performed on the collected survey data for Ododiodio using party preference as the dependent variable and occupation as the independent variable yield no significance with a Chi<sup>2</sup> test. This lack of statistically significant difference between supporters of the NPP and supporters of the NDC holds true when occupations are divided along blue/white collar,

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<sup>7</sup> There is no established convention on what to call people residing in, or hailing from, the three constituencies under consideration. The rules of the major local language (Ga in Ododiodio, Nabit in Nabdham, and Asante Twi in Bantama) for turning a proper noun describing a locality into a proper noun describing said locality's people are used here. This means that people from Ododiodio are referred to as Ododiodiobii, people from Nabdham as Namnam, and people from Bantama as Bantamafoɔ.

public/private, and employed/unemployed cleavage lines. Some significant differences ( $\text{Chi}^2$  Sig. = .053) between the NPP and NDC do reveal themselves when respondents' level of formal education is considered. Respondents who identified their education-level as primary school or less (N=49) identified with the NDC over the NPP at a rate of more than two to one. Respondents who identified their education-level as at least middle school (N=151) identified with the NDC more often than the NPP but the difference is relatively minor with 66 respondents identifying with the NDC and 61 respondents identifying with the NPP.

When presented with these educational differences between party supporters, several Ododiodiobii focus group participants suggest that the NDC does better with the lesser-educated in the constituency because the NDC government gave out small gifts to “average people” on a regular basis whereas the NPP showers only its most well-connected supporters with largesse. Survey results suggest this assumption is faulty on two accounts. First, the relatively uneducated (primary education or less) and the relatively educated (middle school or more) are nearly identical in that one in four respondents from each group admits to accepting “gifts” from a political party or candidate. Second, in Ododiodio there is no statistically significant difference between the NPP and NDC when it comes to the percentage of supporters who have accepted “gifts” from a political party or candidate.

The sectional cleavages discussed at length in Chapters Four and Five are more promising predictors of partisan identification. As is the case on the national level, religion is a poor predictor of partisanship in Ododiodio. Ethno-linguistic identities, on the other hand, are prescient. In Ododiodio it is not the Asante/Ewe cleavage which is most pronounced, however, but rather the Ga/non-Ga cleavage. Table 6-2 displays a cross-tabulation comparing respondents who identify themselves as Ga versus those who do not identify themselves as Ga. There is a

marked and statistically significant difference between the two groups with Ga respondents tending towards the NDC and non-Ga respondents tending towards the NPP. There seems to be a general consensus in Ga-speaking areas of Accra that their support for the NDC is a response to the NPP's assumed Asante nature. In line with the complaints of the Ga Shifimo Kpee, there are regular demonstrations against the national government whenever it makes a decision concerning "Ga lands," even those lands which have been leased to the government, without what is deemed to be proper consultation. Protests and a grumbling discontent over the naming of Accra Sports Stadium after Ohene Djan, a non-Ga who was Ghana's first director of Sports, is a well reported, though far from isolated, example of this phenomenon (Ghanaian Chronicle 2005b).

Just as often, however, this Ga/non-Ga political dichotomy is understood in Odododiodio not as an ethnic conflict but as the residual of a neighborhood conflict. For the purpose of district-level representation Odododiodio is divided into three electoral areas: Kinka, Ngleshie, and Korle Wonkon. A common perception in Odododiodio politics is that Kinka is NDC territory and Korle Wonkon is NPP territory with Ngleshie falling somewhere in between. Election results obtained at the sub-constituency level confirm these suppositions.<sup>8</sup> In the parliamentary race of 1996 and the presidential and parliamentary races of 2004, Kinka gave the majority of its vote to NDC candidates (on average 62%) and Korle Wonkon gave the majority of its vote to NPP candidates (on average 52%). Ngleshie fell somewhere between the two sub-constituency electoral areas siding with the NPP in 1996 and the NDC in 2004. Though these sub-constituency areas are far from electorally homogenous, as Table 6-3 highlights, their partisan breakdown is relatively consistent. Even in the outlier by-election of 2005, the pattern of

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<sup>8</sup> Unfortunately for scholars much of the sub-constituency data for the Fourth Republic has been destroyed. According to a representative of the Electoral Commission there was an attempt to preserve this data in 1996 but it did not always match exactly constituency-level results and much of it never made it to Accra from the regions. The experience of 1996 led the Electoral Commission to not even try to collect and maintain this data in 2000. Data for the 2004 elections was available in hard copy at the regional Electoral Commission headquarters as of Spring 2005.

Kinka supporting the NDC the most strongly and Korle Wonkon supporting the NPP most strongly holds. To see how the effects of these neighborhoods interact with ethnicity three cross-tabulations were run (Tables 6-4 – 6-6): the first depicting partisan identification by neighborhood, the second partisan identification by neighborhood for self-identified Ga-speakers only, and the third partisan identification by neighborhood for self-identified non-Ga only. That the partisan relationships known to exist based on election results hold in the “all respondents” table but are disrupted when Gas are separated from non-Gas suggests that the noted neighborhood effects are largely a residual of the aforementioned Ododiodiobii ethnic voting patterns.

Interesting in the collected data is the partisan proclivities of Asante and Ewe voters. Though their numbers are small in Ododiodio, both ethno-linguistic groups identify politically as predicted by national patterns. Of the thirteen self-identified Ewe respondents, seven expressed a preference for the NDC. Only two identified themselves as supporters of the NPP. The relationship is reversed for self-identified Asantes with fourteen of the nineteen respondents identifying themselves as NPP partisans and only one acknowledging support for the NDC. Though the numbers are too few to make sweeping conclusions, the Ododiodio constituency survey allows for some disaggregation of the Akan linguistic identity as well. Joining the Asante respondents in supporting the NPP were self-identified Akan (four out of four), Akuapem (two out of two), Akyem (two out of three), and Kwawu (three out of three). Fante-speakers stood out from this group with eight respondents preferring the NPP and seven the NDC.

### **Nabdam**

#### **Socio-Political Background of a Poor Rural Constituency in Ghana’s Far North**

Nabdam constituency is both extremely poor and extremely rural. When compared to the rest of Ghana, the Upper East Region in which Nabdam is situated fares quite poorly with regard

to the percentage of residents having access to potable water, health facilities, food markets, public transport, and schooling (Ghana Statistical Service 2001, 79). These regional numbers, however, fail to adequately capture life in Nabdam. Within a poverty-stricken region, Nabdam is a poverty-stricken constituency. The one paved road in the constituency owes its existence to the two metropolitan areas outside of Nabdam which it connects. Though public transportation does travel on this road on its way either to or from Bawku (the region's economic capital) or Bolgatanga (the region's political capital), it rarely stops in Nabdam constituency.<sup>9</sup> Most people cannot afford the fare and those who can are faced with a long wait for a vacant seat. There are no automobiles in the entire constituency which is convenient given the fact that the closest filling station is nearly half an hour journey away in Bolgatanga.

Along the paved road there is electricity in Nangodi and Kongo but away from the paved road, where most Namnam live, there are only occasional electric poles and a promise that wires will be run to them in the future. Though home to nine primary schools, five junior secondary schools, and one senior secondary school these educational facilities are largely underutilized. Many parents are reluctant to send their children to school because they lack even basic instructional resources. For those who manage to excel in these difficult circumstances there are paltry few jobs in the area for educated individuals and most move on to the greener pastures of Bolgatanga or farther a field. Given this stark reality it is not surprising therefore that of the 200 survey respondents in Nabdam, 80% report never having attended school at all.

The vast majority of Namnam are farmers with sorghum and millet being the area's most important crops and livestock serving as source of manure, supplemental income, and occasional nutrition (Veihe 2000, 394-395). During the long dry season in between crops, which stretches

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<sup>9</sup> This road is a major supply line in the often illicit trade of goods across borders with Bawku being a border town and Bolgatanga being an outlet into Ghana's more lucrative southern markets (Chalfin 2001).

from October through May, many Namnam use their off time to engage in illicit small-scale gold mining, the collection of firewood for charcoal production, and bush meat hunting for consumption and sale. Most of these supplemental activities occur in the supposedly protected Red Volta Forest Reserve where river blindness has been a persistent problem (Hunter 1966). Only 20% of survey respondents listed their primary occupation as something other than farmer or housewife and only 1% of respondents identified themselves with occupations that can, even with an extremely liberal interpretation of the category, be labeled “white collar.” A well documented trend of out migration combined with anecdotal evidence suggests that these income generating activities rarely allow Namnam to achieve a standard of living above subsistence (Hunter 1968b).

The abject poverty that pervades Nabdam is very much a historical legacy. In his anthropological history of the area, Rattray (1932, 366-373) describes the origins of Namnam as part of the larger Mamprusi group. Nabit is a distinct language spoken by Namnam but it is more or less mutually intelligible with Kusasi, Gurunsi, and Talensi which are spoken in neighboring areas. According to a traditional authority interviewed by Rattray, chiefs in Nabdam trace their genealogy through the Mamprusi royal family. After a quarrel over the chieftainship of Nalerigu, ancestors of Namnam chiefs migrated and settled amongst a preexisting community of Nabit-speakers who had owners of the land (*Ten'danam*) but no owners of the people. Descendants of these early Mamprusi migrants, the story goes, accepted the position of chief of the Nabit-speaking people and formed two Nabdam states, Nangodi and Sekoti, each of which owes allegiance and tribute to Nalerigu.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> For a thorough discussion of this chiefly lineage see Hunter (1968a).

When British authorities entered the region, probably first in the late nineteenth century, they embraced the “people owners” as the true authorities in the area and diminished the prestige of the owners of the land. In exchange for this formal state recognition colonial bureaucrats expected these newly inflated chiefs to go along with British Northern Territories’ policies. This meant, as Kimble (1963, 554) concisely notes, enduring a “deliberate attempt to isolate the Northern Territories from the twentieth century.” Only basic educational institutions that would extol the “dignity of manual labour” were permitted in the region and the built infrastructure was kept to that which would allow colonial authorities to occasionally visit their “traditional” representatives for the purpose of collecting cheap labor for projects in the South (Ladouceur 1979, 49-53; Dickson 1968, 693).

In contrast to Odododiodio, partisan politics in Nabdam has been both more temperamental and less heterogeneous. Despite the fact that Nabdam is the second smallest constituency in contemporary Ghana and has less than a third of the average constituencies’ registered voters, Nabdam has long been a coherent and independent unit in national politics. Its existence is due in no small part to the British constitution-makers’ sensitivity toward “the grouping together of contiguous states, not antipathetic towards each other, and where possible, speaking the same or a similar language and having common interests” (Legislative Council of the Gold Coast 1950, 6). Though the Nangodi and Sekoti chieftaincies were merged with Talensi to form a slightly larger constituency in the Second and Third Republics, traditional authorities have deftly challenged all attempts to absorb the area, designated “Frafra East” for the 1954 legislative elections, into a larger territorial unit for purposes of representation.<sup>11</sup> This fact makes it relatively easy to discuss the area’s electoral history with some precision.

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<sup>11</sup> When Nabdam was connected to Talensi for District Assembly purposes in 2005, after both areas were broken off from the Bolgatanga District Assembly, opinion leaders in Nabdam fought for the district’s headquarters to be

In the 1951 Legislative Assembly elections there was no vote in the Northern Territories, Nabdam included. Among the nineteen Northerners selected to serve as the region's representatives by an electoral college comprised primarily of traditional elites and educated teachers and bureaucrats agreeable to the traditional elites, none hailed from areas presently comprising Nabdam ("The Results" 1951; "Was Secrecy a Mistake..." 1951). When allowed a popular vote for the first time in 1954 Nabdam voted solidly for the NOPP. Over ensuing elections the constituency's proclivity for parties in the Danquah-Busiaist tradition diminished as its aggregate preference for Nkrumahist parties, and the NDC in the Fourth Republic, tended to increase. In search of a cause for this partisan realignment a number of current Nabdam residents were queried. Most were too young to have firsthand knowledge of pre-independence elections and did not have an explanation at the ready. Two members of the focus group held in Nangodi Area Council Hall in the spring of 2005, however, ventured a guess based on discussions they had heard from elders. In early elections, their theory goes, traditional authorities had a lot more clout than they did in later elections when citizens had learned Accra was becoming more powerful than Nangodi or Sekoti in its ability to impact everyday lives. This realization caused a gradual transition from a party arguing for federal institutions with lots of local power, something the chiefs coveted, to a populist party promising all the goods and services that Namnam found woefully lacking, an appeal which struck a cord with ambitious youth of little economic or social status (Austin 1976, 142).

### **Exploring Contemporary Politicized Cleavages in Nabdam**

Nabdam constituency has supported the NDC in terms of both presidential and parliamentary contests in each of the Fourth Republic's elections. The magnitude of this support

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placed in Nangodi and when they lost this battle fought for the appointed District Chief Executive to be a Namnam. When Kufuor tapped a Talensi for the position Nabdam threatened to secede (Ghanaian Chronicle 2005a).

in unboycotted elections has ranged from a high in 1996, when the NDC's presidential candidates picked up 77% and 75% of the vote respectively, to a low in 2000, when they picked up 51% and 54% of the vote. When asked to explain this constituency-wide proclivity for the NDC an informal poll of Namnam, both pro-NDC and con-, point to an unpaved road connecting Sekoti to Pelungu, two villages situated off the main Bolgatanga-Bawku road, as an awe-inspiring accomplishment of "J.J. [the former NDC president] and Asaga [the current NDC Member of Parliament]." Even with this "grand" offering, the modesty of which demonstrates how desperate Namnam are for infrastructural development as much as it does the NDC's accountability, with the exception of 1996, parties other than the NDC scored a sizable percentage (40% plus) of the vote in Nabdam. Initially this oppositional admixture's primary component was the PNC, Ghana's "Northern" Nkrumahist party. Running as candidates for the PNC Limann received 42% of Nabdam's votes in 1992 and Edward Mahama earned 18% and 29% of the vote in 1996 and 2000 respectively making him, like Limann, the constituency's second most popular presidential candidate. Nicholas Nayembil, a popular retired educator who would later serve as Presiding Member of the Bolgatanga Municipal Assembly, was the PNC runner-up to Asaga in 1996 and 2000 with 19% and 32% of the vote respectively.

The Election of 2004 saw the fortunes of the NPP, a party that had never before been anything but the third most popular party in Nabdam, change dramatically. Boniface Adagbila, the NPP candidate for Nabdam's parliamentary seat, and John Kufuor each picked up just shy of a third of the vote. Given the fact that both Adagbila and Kufuor were retreads from a 2000 campaign in which Namnam rather overwhelmingly rejected the NPP, this about face was surprising to most observers. Explanations on the ground suggest the NPP's 2004 success had something to do with the spoils of incumbency. Years after the election Adagbila campaign

shirts are a regular sight in the constituency and the foreign parachutist the NPP hired to fly over neighboring Bolgatanga constituency with a red, white, and blue canopy dropping NPP campaign literature is an event even those who did not witness it with their own eyes will not soon forget. An explanation for who the NPP candidates took votes from is not so easily coaxed out of respondents. Aggregate numbers would suggest that NPP successes were a direct result of PNC failures but nearly all of the PNC supporters spoken to in the process of collecting data on Nabdam listed the NDC as their second choice. Run-off results from the 2000 Mills/Kufuor election seem on the surface, however, to belie this point as Kufuor picked up every percentage of non-NDC participants' votes and then some in Nabdam's second round.

Given this state of partisan flux, the survey administered in Nabdam is likely to be more time-bound than the surveys administered in Odododiodio or Bantama whose proclivities have been fairly consistent both in the Fourth Republic and in its predecessors. Having offered this caveat, the most remarkable quality of Nabdam partisanship in the spring of 2005 was its lack of a readily categorized pattern. Compared to between a third and a quarter of Odododiodio and Bantama respondents who believe there is a member of their immediate family who votes for another party, more than 40% of Nabdam respondents identified a member of their immediate family that votes differently from themselves. This relative lack of familial homogeneity is born out in actual election results. If one considers aggregate votes in eleven sub-constituency units (Nangodi's ten chiefdoms and Sekoti) for the 2004 elections, every sub-constituency unit gave at least a plurality of the vote to the NDC candidates for president and parliamentarian (see Table 6-7). Going a level further to the individual polling station, NDC candidates gained a plurality in twenty-seven out of thirty-three. Nabdam's lack of variability with regards to education and occupation make those variables ill-suited for describing partisanship in a society as politically

pluralistic as Nabdam. Neither responses to ideological questions nor religious identities yield statistically significant or even discernable differences between supporters of the various parties.

A cross-tabulation of gender and party preference offers some substantively interesting, though not statistically significant, results. In a formal interview a leading member of the NDC in the Upper East Region suggested that women supported the NPP in Nabdam more than men because they “are easily lured with material goods.” This view was quite prevalent amongst Namnam men and surprisingly so given the fact that men in my survey were nearly 50% more likely than women to identify themselves as NPP supporters, a finding similar to that uncovered by Smith (2001, 186) just prior to the 2000 elections. The logic behind these faulty assumptions is not completely unsound. As Table 6-8 suggests, NPP supporters were more likely than NDC supporters to acknowledge receiving gifts from political parties or candidates. As Table 6-9 indicates, however, it is mostly men who are accepting these gifts and not women. Whether or not these gifts influenced voting is not established in the available data as none of the 86 Namnam who acknowledge receiving gifts admitted being influenced by these gifts. By now enough candidates have urged their supporters to accept whatever gifts come their way that many wear t-shirts of a candidate they did not vote for as a badge of honor having received not only a valuable item of clothing but having deprived an opponent the opportunity to pass along gifts to someone else who might have been swayed.

Beyond these statistically insignificant differences the administered survey was unsuccessful in picking up a social difference between NDC and NPP supporters in Nabdam. It did, however, yield a partial explanation for the NPP’s newfound success. Part of this explanation rests on the demise of the PNC as a viable force in Nabdam. Though 17% of survey respondents identify with the “North’s Nkrumahist party,” 6.5% of respondents now identify

with the NPP that once labeled themselves PNC supporters. A few ex-PNC sympathizers have switched loyalties to the NDC but they have been matched by an equal number of respondents who went in the opposite direction. The other part of this explanation is past supporters of the NDC. A full 14% of respondents who currently identify with the NPP at some time supported the NDC. This finding is in stark contrast to the zero respondents claiming to have made a movement to the NDC from the NPP.

Before one takes these results as sacrosanct, however, a note is in order about the disparity between Nabdam's election results and the survey respondents' self-identified partisan identification. This disparity is unique amongst the three constituencies considered in-depth here and though its causes cannot be teased out of the survey data, anecdotal evidence offers some modest clarification. As mentioned previously Nabdam has a track record of partisan flexibility. Add to this general tendency the fact that the survey was administered in the wake of Kufuor's appointment of a native son (Boniface Gambila)<sup>12</sup> to the post of Minister of the Upper East Region and during the NPP government's selection process for District Chief Executive of the newly formed Talensi-Nabdam district, a post many Namnam coveted. This context may very well have pushed NPP support upwards only ephemerally.

## **Bantama**

### **Socio-Political Background of the NPP's "World Bank" of Votes**

Though the exact date on the Gregorian calendar is not known, some time in the late seventeenth century a fetish priest known as Īkõmfo Anõkye united a loose association of Akan-speaking peoples under Osei Tutu. This event sparked the campaign that would ultimately lead to the overthrow of their overlords in Denkyira and ignited an imperialistic Asante

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<sup>12</sup> Boniface Gambila and Boniface Adagbila are the same person. As a Minister he goes by the former and as a parliamentary candidate he went by the latter.

expansion that would last throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The story behind this unification is legendary. Anõkye invited heads of the related, but independent, Asante families to a single location. Once assembled he summoned the golden stool from the heavens that landed in Osei Tutu's lap and has henceforward been recognized as the soul of the Asante nation. This spectacular episode took place on what are presently the grounds of Komfo Anokye Teaching Hospital in a neighborhood of Kumasi known as Bantama (Rattray 1923, 287-293). Though the Asantehene's palace in Manhyia just a few miles away is the focal point of contemporary Asante politics, Bantama, as site of the golden stool's initial appearance and resting place of every deceased Asantehene since Osei Tutu, is the nation's most revered and sacred ground (Busia 1968, 96).

Beyond Bantama's sacred sites – the royal mausoleum, the shrine marking the spot where Anõkye summoned of the famous golden stool, and Bantamahene's palace<sup>13</sup> – the neighborhood of Bantama is a typical colonial-era high density and mixed use quarter with storied buildings containing shops on lower floors and residential quarters on upper levels (Sinai 2001). Bantama is situated about a mile to the northwest of Kumasi's sprawling Kejetia Market up a gentle incline and in comparison to Kejetia and its environs in downtown Kumasi is both quiet and uncongested. During the day one can expect activities typical to urban areas throughout Ghana: street hawkers and sidewalk vendors sell their wares alongside more established shops selling everything from foodstuffs to mobile phone equipment (Clark 1994, 53-54). After dark the area is known throughout Kumasi for its lively drinking establishments though the nightlife is quite tame in comparison to Accra's "hotspots." Strolling along Bantama High Street on an average

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<sup>13</sup> The position of Bantamahene, which also serves as Krontihene of Kumasi, finds its roots in Osei Tutu's reign and specifically in the Asante campaign against Doma. Amankwatia, a servant and stool carrier for Osei Tutu, was the first Bantamahene and earned the title through his military service and not his birthright (Kallinen 2004, 140-146).

night one finds loud speakers blasting Ghanaian rap tunes known locally as “hip life” and plenty of plastic chairs that serve as suitable drinking spots but the revelry rarely carries into the early hours of the morning.

In addition to Bantama proper, Bantama constituency contains North Suntreso (a neighborhood that abuts Bantama) and Ampabame and Bohyen (two settlements along the road to Ohwim) as well as a few isolated houses around Owabi Waterworks. As one moves northward and westward in the constituency one moves from a solidly middle class urban area, by Ghanaian standards at least, to areas with many more peri-urban characteristics (Browder et al. 1995; Mbiba and Huchzermeyer 2002). North Suntreso, though still relatively densely populated, lacks much of Bantama’s built colonial-era infrastructure. Many streets are unpaved and without gutters and one can find small crops of vegetables growing outside structures and in vacant lots. The area represents a natural outlet for population pressures in Bantama. It is a place where those in search of a piece of empty land to call their own can find one for a price. Further out in villages like Ampabame, Bohyen, and other smaller settlements along the road to the bead-making village of Ohwim one finds a slightly more rural admixture of rural and urban life. These areas are still within the borders of Kumasi Municipality and several city dwellers call these places home so that they can afford a large concrete mansion with a strong fence. Alongside these suburban symbols of wealth inhabited primarily by “strangers” from other parts of Kumasi exist many families of more modest means, some members of which commute to the city center every day and others whose daily chores may include such rural tasks as fetching water and tending to small crops and livestock.

The version of Bantama constituency described above was carved out of a much larger Bantama constituency in anticipation of the 2004 national elections. Prior to these elections the

constituency had been a Goliath. Its roughly 110,000 votes in 2000 was most in all of Ghana with the second most populous constituency having slightly more than 80,000 votes and the average being around 30,000. With a wink and nod residents of the pre-2004 Bantama constituency dubbed themselves the “Florida” of Ghana in the weeks preceding the 2000 run-off election pitting the NDC’s Mills against the NPP’s Kufuor. They had seen the disputed nature of the Bush versus Gore presidential contest in the United States and knew the importance the state of Florida played in this drama. At its most benign this moniker was a statement of the constituency’s importance in deciding Ghana’s next president; in a country comprised of 200 constituencies, Bantama constituency had contributed nearly 2% of the votes in the first round of voting. A less forgiving interpretation of the self-imposed label suggests something untoward. Though there has yet been no demonstrable proof of any wrongdoing in Bantama, perceptions that votes in the area bearing thumbprints in the box designated for NPP candidates miraculously appear late in the ballot counting process are not uncommon (Ghana Center for Democratic Development 2001). Lopping off Nhyiaeso and Kwadaso constituencies cut the vote total in Bantama to just shy of 50,000 in 2004 and gave old Bantama three seats in the Fourth Republic’s Fourth Parliament.

Electorally-speaking Bantama has been a gauge, albeit in an exaggerated form, of trends in Kumasi in particular and Asante-speaking regions in general. As part of larger Kumasi-based constituencies Bantama served as what Osei-Kwame and Taylor (1984, 588) identify as “the nerve center of the anti-centralist forces in Ghana.” Though this blunt summation deserves some qualification (see Chapter Five), it describes quite well the watershed election of 1956. Prior to this date Bantama, and the rest of Ghana for that matter, had more or less fallen in line with the centralizing ambitions of Nkrumah and the CPP. In the elections of 1956 Bantama, as part of

Kumasi South constituency, sent an NLM partisan to the Legislative Assembly. In neighboring Kumasi North constituency, despite a relative dearth of Muslims, the MAP candidate was selected. MAP was a member in the anti-CPP coalition, along with the NLM which generally took responsibility for the Ashanti Region, that agreed to run candidates as separate parties with specific sectional interests but not compete with each other for individual seats. After 1956 the constituencies which have contained modern-day Bantama have lined up rather solidly behind the party deemed by popular perception the “Asante” party. These parties – PP (1969), PFP (1979), NPP (1992/1996/2000/2004) – so thoroughly captured the Bantamafoɔ partisan proclivities that with the exception of the PFP, each party outpaced its opponents by a ratio of better than two to one.<sup>14</sup>

### **Exploring Contemporary Politicized Cleavages in Bantama**

At Bantama’s 59 polling stations, Kufuor scored no less than 55% of the vote (at the Catholic Primary School of Bantama) and no more than 96% (at a temporary polling booth in Ampabame) in 2004. Across polling stations Kufuor’s mean percentage of the vote was 86% and his median 88%. NPP parliamentary candidate Cecilia Abena Dapaah performed similarly though she performed a couple of percentage points worse than Kufuor and the NDC and CPP candidates, Alhassan Napoh and Yaw Owusu Boafo respectively, performed marginally better than their parties’ flag bearers.<sup>15</sup> These figures paint a mental picture anyone scarcely familiar with Ghanaian politics already has regarding Bantama. That the constituency is solidly in the NPP camp is a widely known fact and has been for quite some time. Amongst survey

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<sup>14</sup> Owusu and the PFP managed very close to a two to one margin of victory in the election’s first round but this margin narrowed in the two candidate run-off pitting Owusu against Limann. For every five votes Owusu picked up in Bantama Limann picked up nearly four.

<sup>15</sup> Results at the polling station level were provided by Samuel Yorke Aidoo, Ashanti Regional Director for the Electoral Commission.

respondents in Bantama, 70.5% identify themselves as members or regular supporters of the NPP. This majority is compared to 8.5% of respondents who identify themselves as members or regular supporters of the NDC and 1.5% who identify with a minor party. The remaining 19.5% of respondents were either unable or unwilling to provide their partisan identification.

Attaching demographic data to known partisan leanings one can construct a description of the archetypal NPP supporter in Bantama and compare this description with a description of the archetypal supporter of other, non-NPP political parties. Given Bantama's known electoral proclivities, this comparison is very much a comparison between those who buy into the constituency's hegemonic political culture and those who do not. According to the administered survey, the average NPP supporter in Bantama is a female Asante. She is in her thirties and is a Christian. Her schooling ended at the JSS/Middle school level and she works a blue collar job in the private sector. Policies she prefers rely heavily on government involvement in the economy. The average supporter of a non-NPP party, a category with only an N=17 in the survey population, is a male whose ethnicity is not self-identified as Asante. He is in his thirties and is a Christian. His schooling ended at the JSS/Middle school level and he works a blue collar job in the private sector. Policies he prefers rely heavily on government involvement in the economy.

These descriptions point to many similarities and a few notable dissimilarities. When partisan identification is cross-tabulated with age, occupation, education, and policy positions the relationship ( $\text{Chi}^2$ ) between the dependent and independent variables is statistically insignificant. What demonstrate significance are the relationships between partisan identification and gender (Table 6-10) and partisan identification and ethnicity (Table 6-11). In Bantama male respondents were slightly less likely to identify with the NPP than their female counterparts. An even greater difference is found when comparing self-identified Asante with respondents who self-identify

with an ethnic label other than Asante. Switching a respondent's ethnic identity from Asante to non-Asante makes them approximately 25% less likely to support the NPP and 25% more likely to support another party. Delving further into these numbers, however, one finds the former relationship is predominately a function of the latter.

Kumasi, despite Bantama's relative lack of ethnic diversity, is a cosmopolitan commercial center. For centuries Northerners have traveled to Kumasi to sell their goods (e.g., livestock and tobacco) and buy items originating in the South (e.g., kola, palm oil, and timber) for their return trip (Shildkroun 1978, 57). Colonial authorities and their voracious desire for cocoa provided even further incentives for this pattern of migration. Southerners from less economically advantaged areas joined this in-migration later when the formation of a Gold Coast Colony, and later Ghanaian state, amplified regional disparities (*Migration Research Study in Ghana* 1995, 128-129). Some of this internal migration involved entire family units but much of it involved only young single males. If one isolates "strangers" and Asantes from one another in the Bantama sample the relationship between gender and party preference disappears for both groups. It seems likely that the dissimilar gender blends of the Asante and non-Asante groups and the dissimilar partisan proclivities of these two groups are driving a spurious relationship between gender and party identification.

Examining the ethnic variable in Bantama further, two interesting findings rise to the fore. The first concerns the culmination of beliefs, events, and identities required to break a self-identified Asante in Bantama away from the political party that seems so fundamentally connected to the Asante ethnic identity. Out of the 146 Asantes interviewed in Bantama, only 6 members of this population identify themselves with a party other than the NPP. All 6 of these respondents identify themselves presently as supporters of the NDC. Half have always supported

the NDC and half supported one of the Nkrumahist parties at some earlier point in their lives. In this group there is an electrician, tailor, and two traders with two identifying themselves as unemployed. Five of the six have completed schooling at the JSS level. The sixth has had no schooling. They all identify as Christians and vary in age from 29 to 50 years. Two are women and four are men. Given their small number there is no way to compare the NDC Asante group of respondents with the NPP Asante group of respondents on these demographic characteristics in a statistically meaningful way. On the surface, however, there appear no glaring dissimilarities outside of partisan identification, past and present. Examining their beliefs the situation becomes no clearer. Both groups are ideologically similar in wanting the government to provide a large social safety net. Both groups also use similar “cognitive shortcuts” to differentiate between Ghana’s political parties. The rogue Asante voters who side with the NDC in Bantama know they are siding against the Asante party as well as NPP supporters know they are siding with the Asante party.

The second interesting finding that comes from exploring Asantes in Bantama is the utter vitriol they hold for the NDC. Survey respondents were asked whether or not they felt the parties wanted peace and free and fair elections in 2004. If they answered in the negative they were asked which parties did not want peace or free and fair elections. Across the three constituencies polled most respondents gave all parties the benefit of the doubt and responded that none of the parties was against peace or free and fair elections. Self described NPP supporting Asantes in Bantama, however, are an anomaly. Amongst this group 47% said the NDC did not want peace and 30% said the NDC did not want free and fair elections. These significant minorities assigning ill-will to the chief opposition party are far larger percentage-wise than any other group surveyed. If one removes this group from the three constituency sample, less than 10% of

respondents said the NDC wanted violence and/or unfair elections and more than 80% of respondents said all parties wanted peace and free and fair elections.

### **Conclusions**

For those interested in understanding the local political dynamics in Odododiodio, Nabdam, and Bantama the political histories and survey results will be informative in that the political histories are unique compilations of disparate writings and the survey results provide new data. This modest survey of partisan cleavages in three constituencies is not, however, comprehensive. In the North in particular overtly politicized local cleavages have resulted in violent conflict. In Dagomba-speaking areas the Abudu and Andani gates have clashed numerous times over issues of succession. The climax of this dispute was the beheading of the sitting chief of Dogamba, Ya-Na Yakubu Andani II, and 40 of his attendants in March of 2002.<sup>16</sup> A widely held assumption which finds a great deal of support in election results is that the deceased Ya-Na's gate, the Andanis, have long had an association with Nkrumahist parties and then the NDC in the Fourth Republic. The Abudu gate, some of whose members were responsible for murdering the Ya-Na, has been associated with the Danquah-Busiaist tradition and its modern-day manifestation, the NPP (MacGaffey 2006). In Bawku 68 people were killed and more than 200 homes burned as ballots were counted for the 2000 elections. Members of the Kusasi and Mamprusi ethnic groups had disagreed over the rightful heir to the Bawkunaba chieftaincy since Ghana gained its independence from Britain and power dynamics in the region were rewritten. Since 1957 the Kusasi have tended to support, and in return be supported by, Nkrumahist parties and later the NDC. Mamprusi's have found Danquah-Busiaist parties more amenable to their cause. The parliamentary election of 2000 pitting Hawa Yakubu (NPP) against

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<sup>16</sup> The word "gate" refers to a line of succession to the Ya-Na. The two gates developed out of a succession crisis following Ya-Na Yakubu I's death in 1839.

Hajia Seidu (NDC) was hotly contested, very close, and proved a sufficient spark for the existent ethno-political animosities (Lund 2003).

These high profile instances of localized political conflict could not have been anticipated directly by the cases under intense investigation here. Though a few Dagomba (N=4) and Kusasi (N=2) were picked up in the cosmopolitan constituencies of Odododiodio and Bantama their numbers are too small to draw serious conclusions from and they are situated in contexts distinctly different from those where the aforementioned politicized conflicts have occurred in the past. If one interprets ethnicity in general terms, however, as a broader spectrum of sectional divisions the two ethnically homogenous constituencies under consideration can shed some light on these conflicts. Despite the fact that the political parties tout their ideological positions to mass media outlets, socio-economic categories often associated with neo-liberal and social democratic parties are not helpful in distinguishing NPP supporters from NDC supporters in Odododiodio and Bantama. Yet in both of these constituencies sectional identities matter a lot. In Odododiodio the cleavage that has the greatest impact on partisanship occurs outside of the Asante/Ewe national rivalry much like the aforementioned Abudu/Andani and Kusasi/Mamprusi conflicts. In Bantama the partisan cleavage contributes to the story of the Asante/Ewe national rivalry. Though more work would have to be done in the Volta Region to confirm the hypothesis, it is interesting to note that ethnic Asante's in the heart of NPP electoral territory understand their political opposition in the most negative of terms.

That conventional socio-economic variables were poor predictors of partisanship across all three constituencies under close consideration confirms some of the suspicions raised by the preceding chapter on cleavage structures in Ghana's Fourth Republic. There are two directions one can take with these results. One can simply chalk this lack of a statistical relationship up to a

lack of an empirical relationship. Perhaps the modernization scholars who were so critical of African societies' faculties to sustain durable multi-partisan competition were right about there being no class distinctions of note on much of the continent. Another possibility is that we just have not been successful at constructing categories of *Gesellschaft* cleavages that capture what is going on in countries like Ghana. In both Ododiodio and Bantama there are voters for whom ethnic variables fail to accurately forecast partisanship. In Nabdam, where there is nearly complete ethnic homogeneity and no well-established social cleavages revolving around chieftaincy disputes, there is a diversity of partisan leanings that can not be explained with the data collected by conventional demographic surveys. Explaining better these gray areas of Ghanaian politics and the forces, ideational or identity, that compel voters toward one party as opposed to another is something that should be strived for.

Table 6-1. Three constituencies (Odododiodio, Nabdam, and Bantama) at a glance

	Odododiodio	Nabdam	Bantama
Registered Voters (2004)	81643	13521	56551
Party Breakdown (2004 Actual Vote – Pres.)	(51.9%) NDC (46.8%) NPP ( 1.3%) Other	(59.5%) NDC (29.2%) NPP (11.3%) Other	(13.6%) NDC (85.5%) NPP ( 1.0%) Other
Party Breakdown (2004 Actual Vote – Parl.)	(52.4%) NDC (46.4%) NPP ( 1.2%) Other	(59.8%) NDC (29.9%) NPP (10.3%) Other	(14.8%) NDC (83.5%) NPP ( 1.7%) Other
Party ID (Survey)	(47.5%) NDC (37.0%) NPP ( 1.5%) Other ( 7.5%) Indep. ( 6.5%) n/a	(43.5%) NDC (37.0%) NPP (17.5%) Other ( 1.5%) Indep. ( 0.5%) n/a	( 8.5%) NDC (70.5%) NPP ( 1.5%) Other ( 7.0%) Indep. (12.5%) n/a
Age (Survey – Median)	34 years	38 years	34 years
Education (Survey)	(18.0%) None ( 6.5%) Primary (31.5%) Middle (30.0%) Secondary (10.0%) Vocational ( 4.0%) Tertiary	(80.0%) None ( 6.0%) Primary ( 8.0%) Middle ( 5.0%) Secondary ( 0.5%) Vocational ( 0.5%) Tertiary	(13.5%) None ( 0.5%) Primary (52.5%) Middle (23.0%) Secondary ( 4.0%) Vocational ( 5.5%) Tertiary
Ethnicity (Survey – More than 5%)	(63.0%) Ga ( 9.5%) Asante ( 9.0%) Fante ( 6.5%) Ewe	(98.0%) Nabit	(73.0%) Asante ( 6.5%) Fante
Occupation (Survey – Mode)	(32.0%) Petty Trade	(54.0%) Farming	(34.0%) Petty Trade
Religion (Survey – More than 5%)	(88.5%) Christian ( 8.0%) Muslim	(66.0%) Traditional (30.5%) Christian	(91.5%) Christian ( 7.5%) Muslim
Gender (Survey)	(49.5%) Male (50.5%) Female	(54.0%) Male (46.0%) Female	(43.5%) Male (56.5%) Female
Urban/Rural (Survey)	(100%) Urban	(100%) Rural	(100%) Urban
Historical Voting Record	1951 Accra CPP (90.0%) 1954 Accra Central CPP (79.6%) 1956 Accra Central CPP (85.6%) 1969 Ash. Keteke UNP (38.1%)	1951 Northern Terr. no vote 1954 Frafra East NOPP (79.8%) 1956 Frafra East NOPP (54.2%) 1969 Talensi-Nab. PP (29.4%)	1951 Kumasi CPP (93.6%) 1954 Kumasi South CPP (83.2%) 1956 Kumasi South NLM (60.6%) 1969 Bantama PP (72.0%)

Table 6-1. Continued			
	Odododiodio	Nabdam	Bantama
	1979 Ash. Keteke PFP (35.5%)	1979 Talensi-Nab. PNP (62.6%)	1979 Bantama PFP (52.3%)
	1992 Odododiodio NDC (49.5%)	1992 Nabdam NDC (42.0%)	1992 Bantama NPP (70.1%)
	1996 Odododiodio NDC (53.2%)	1996 Nabdam NDC (76.5%)	1996 Bantama NPP (80.7%)
	2000 Odododiodio NPP (50.6%)	2000 Nabdam NDC (51.3%)	2000 Bantama NPP (87.5%)
	2004 Odododiodio NDC (51.9%)	2004 Nabdam NDC (59.5%)	2004 Bantama NPP (85.5%)

Note: The “Historical Voting Record” row of data reports the election year, name of constituency, winning party, and percentage of the vote earned by the winning party. Election results reported from 1951-1979 are for parliamentary elections and from 1992-2004 for presidential elections. The constituencies reported included the constituencies presently known as Odododiodio, Nabdam, and Bantama but are not necessarily synonymous with contemporary constituencies. Prior to 1969 Odododiodio/Ashiedu Keteke was part of geographically larger constituencies in Accra. Nabdam of today is identical to the Frafra East constituency from the 1954-1956 period but it was merged with Talensi constituency in 1969 and 1979. Bantama, prior to 1992, was part of geographically larger constituencies in Kumasi. In 2004 the constituency known as Bantama for the purposes of this chapter was dissected from a constituency formerly known as Bantama along with Nhyiaeso and Kwadaso constituencies. Election results were obtained from Government of the Gold Coast (1951, 1954, 1969), Jon Kraus Ghana Election Archive (1956), Addae-Mensah (1979), Electoral Commission of Ghana (1992, 2004), and Ephson (2003).

Table 6-2. Gas’ voting compared to non-Gas in Odododiodio (survey results)

	Ga	non-Ga	Total
no answer	5.5% ( 7)	8.7% ( 6)	6.5% ( 15)
NPP	29.7% ( 38)	52.2% (36)	37.0% ( 74)
NDC	57.8% ( 74)	29.0% (20)	47.5% ( 95)
other party	1.6% ( 2)	1.4% ( 1)	1.5% ( 3)
independent	5.5% ( 7)	8.7% ( 6)	6.5% ( 13)
Total	100.0% (128)	100.0% (69)	100.0% (200)

Significance: Chi<sup>2</sup> 15.261 (df 4), p =.004

Note: Respondents self-identifying as either Ga or Dangme are included in the “Ga” group. Respondents self-identifying as an ethnic group other than Ga or Dangme are included in the “non-Ga” group. Respondents who provided no response, or an ambiguous response, to the ethnicity question are excluded from this latter group.

Table 6-3. Odododiodio election results (1996 Parliament) broken down by polling station

	Kinka (40 stations)	Ngleshie (26 stations)	Korle Wonkon (49 stations)
NDC (65% and up)	18	0	0
NDC (55% - 65%)	9	5	7
NDC (50% - 55%)	3	2	8
no party had majority	2	7	8
NPP (50% - 55%)	3	2	9
NPP (55% - 65%)	3	7	13
NPP (65% and up)	2	3	4

Note: Election results were obtained from Nat Quaye, the Electoral Commission's district-level electoral officer for Odododiodio. They are unpublished.

Table 6-4. Party preference by Odododiodio sub-constituency electoral area (survey results)

	Kinka	Ngleshie	Korle Wonkon	Total
no answer	5.0% ( 4)	14.0% ( 7)	5.7% ( 4)	7.5% ( 15)
NPP	26.3% (21)	36.0% (18)	50.0% (35)	37.0% ( 74)
NDC	63.8% (51)	36.0% (18)	37.1% (26)	47.5% ( 95)
other party	2.5% ( 2)	0.0% ( 0)	1.4% ( 1)	1.5% ( 3)
independent	2.5% ( 2)	14.0% ( 7)	5.7% ( 4)	6.5% ( 13)
Total	100.0% (80)	100.0% (50)	100.0% (70)	100.0% (200)

Significance:  $\chi^2$  24.559 (df 8),  $p = .002$

Table 6-5. Ga party preference by Odododiodio sub-constituency electoral area (survey results)

	Kinka	Ngleshie	Korle Wonkon	Total
no answer	4.6% ( 3)	10.7% ( 3)	2.9% ( 1)	5.5% ( 7)
NPP	21.5% (14)	35.7% (10)	40.0% (14)	29.7% ( 38)
NDC	70.8% (46)	39.3% (11)	48.6% (17)	57.8% ( 74)
other party	1.5% ( 1)	0.0% ( 0)	2.9% ( 1)	1.6% ( 2)
independent	1.5% ( 1)	14.3% ( 4)	5.7% ( 2)	5.5% ( 7)
Total	100.0% (65)	100.0% (28)	100.0% (35)	100.0% (128)

Significance:  $\chi^2$  15.682 (df 8),  $p = .047$

Table 6-6. Non-Ga party preference by Odododiodio sub-constituency electoral area (survey results)

	Kinka	Ngleshie	Korle Wonkon	Total
no answer	6.7% ( 1)	14.3% ( 3)	6.1% ( 2)	8.7% ( 6)
NPP	46.7% ( 7)	38.1% ( 8)	63.6% (21)	52.2% (36)
NDC	33.3% ( 5)	33.3% ( 7)	24.2% ( 8)	29.0% (20)
other party	6.7% ( 1)	0.0% ( 0)	0.0% ( 0)	1.4% ( 1)
independent	6.7% ( 1)	14.3% ( 3)	6.1% ( 2)	8.7% ( 6)
Total	100.0% (15)	100.0% (21)	100.0% (33)	100.0% (69)

Significance:  $\chi^2$  7.985 (df 8),  $p = .435$

Table 6-7. Votes in Nabdam by chieftaincy area (2004 election results)

	President				Member of Parliament			
	PNC	NPP	NDC	CPP	PNC	NPP	NDC	CPP
Dagliga	12%	38%	48%	1%	10%	42%	47%	1%
Damologo	7%	26%	67%	1%	5%	26%	68%	1%
Dusobilogo	6%	12%	80%	1%	7%	12%	81%	0%
Kongo	10%	27%	62%	2%	10%	29%	60%	1%
Logri	7%	31%	60%	1%	2%	36%	61%	0%
Nangodi	13%	18%	68%	1%	13%	16%	70%	1%
Pelungu	7%	24%	69%	1%	5%	25%	69%	1%
Tindongo	7%	40%	51%	1%	4%	44%	50%	1%
Zanlerigu	7%	33%	57%	3%	4%	38%	56%	2%
Zoa	12%	14%	72%	2%	11%	13%	75%	1%
Sekoti	13%	40%	46%	1%	12%	41%	46%	1%

Note: These numbers were provided by Idrissu Mahama of the Bolgatanga Electoral Commission office. They are unpublished.

Table 6-8. Namnam party preference by acceptance of campaign gifts (survey results)

	no answer	“Yes” Gifts	“No” Gifts	Total
no answer	0.0% (0)	1.2% ( 1)	0.0% ( 0)	0.5% ( 1)
NPP	100.0% (1)	45.3% (39)	30.1% ( 34)	37.0% ( 74)
NDC	0.0% (0)	36.0% (31)	49.6% ( 56)	43.5% ( 87)
other party	0.0% (0)	17.4% (15)	17.7% ( 20)	17.5% ( 35)
independent	0.0% (0)	0.0% ( 0)	2.7% ( 3)	1.5% ( 3)
Total	100.0% (1)	100.0% (86)	100.0% (113)	100.0% (200)

Significance:  $\chi^2$  10.451 (df 8),  $p = .235$

Table 6-9. Namnam gender by acceptance of campaign gifts (survey results)

	no answer	“Yes” Gifts	“No” Gifts	Total
Male	100.0% (1)	58.1% (50)	50.4% ( 57)	54.0% (108)
Female	0.0% (0)	41.9% (36)	49.6% ( 56)	46.0% ( 92)
Total	100.0% (1)	100.0% (86)	100.0% (113)	100.0% (200)

Significance:  $\chi^2$  2.021 (df 2),  $p = .364$

Table 6-10. Bantama party preference by gender (survey results)

	Male	Female	Total
no answer	8.0% ( 7)	15.9% ( 18)	12.5% ( 25)
NPP	66.7% (58)	73.5% ( 83)	70.5% (141)
other party (NDC inclusive)	18.4% (16)	3.5% ( 4)	10.0% ( 20)
independent	6.9% ( 6)	7.1% ( 8)	7.0% ( 14)
Total	100.0% (87)	100.0% (113)	100.0% (200)

Significance:  $\chi^2$  13.608 (df 3),  $p = .003$

Table 6-11. Bantama party preference by ethnic identity (survey results)

	Asante	Non-Asante	Total
no answer	13.7% ( 20)	10.6% ( 5)	12.5% ( 25)
NPP	77.4% (113)	51.1% (24)	70.5% (141)
other party (NDC inclusive)	4.1% ( 6)	27.7% (13)	10.0% ( 20)
independent	4.8% ( 7)	10.6% ( 5)	7.0% ( 14)
Total	100.0% (146)	100.0% (47)	100.0% (200)

Significance: Chi<sup>2</sup> 25.713 (df 3), p =.000

Note: The category “Asante” includes all respondents identifying themselves explicitly as “Asante.” The category “Non-Asante” includes all respondents who self-identify with an ethnic group other than Asante. It excludes ambiguous answers (such as mixed and Akan) as well as non-answers.



Figure 6-1. Odododiodio, Nabdam, and Bantama located on Ghanaian map (Source: Map created by author.)

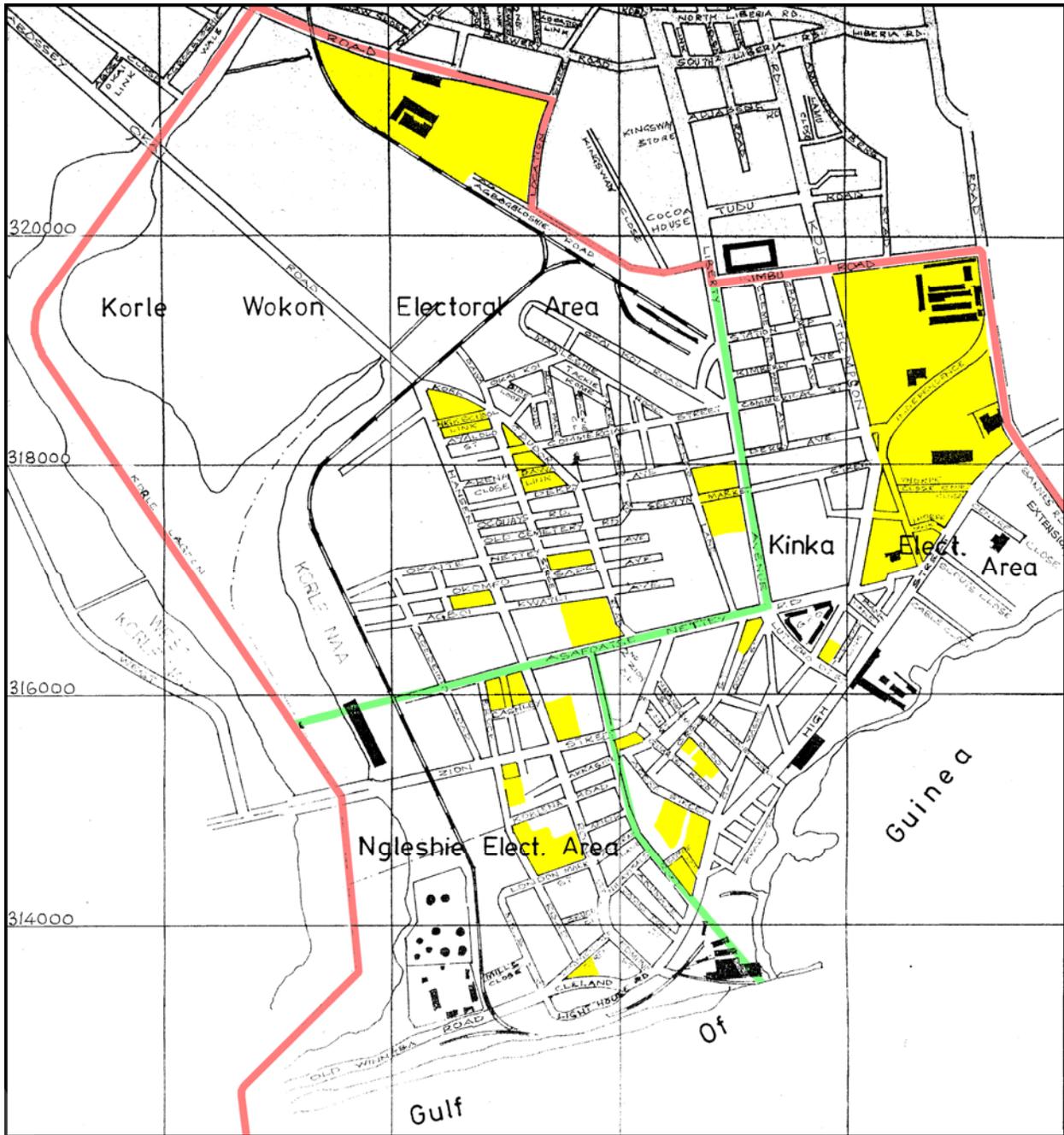


Figure 6-2. Odododiodio map with survey areas highlighted (Source: The uncopied source map was supplied to the author by Edward K. Dorgbor of the Electoral Commission of Ghana. Colored enhancements were made by the author.)



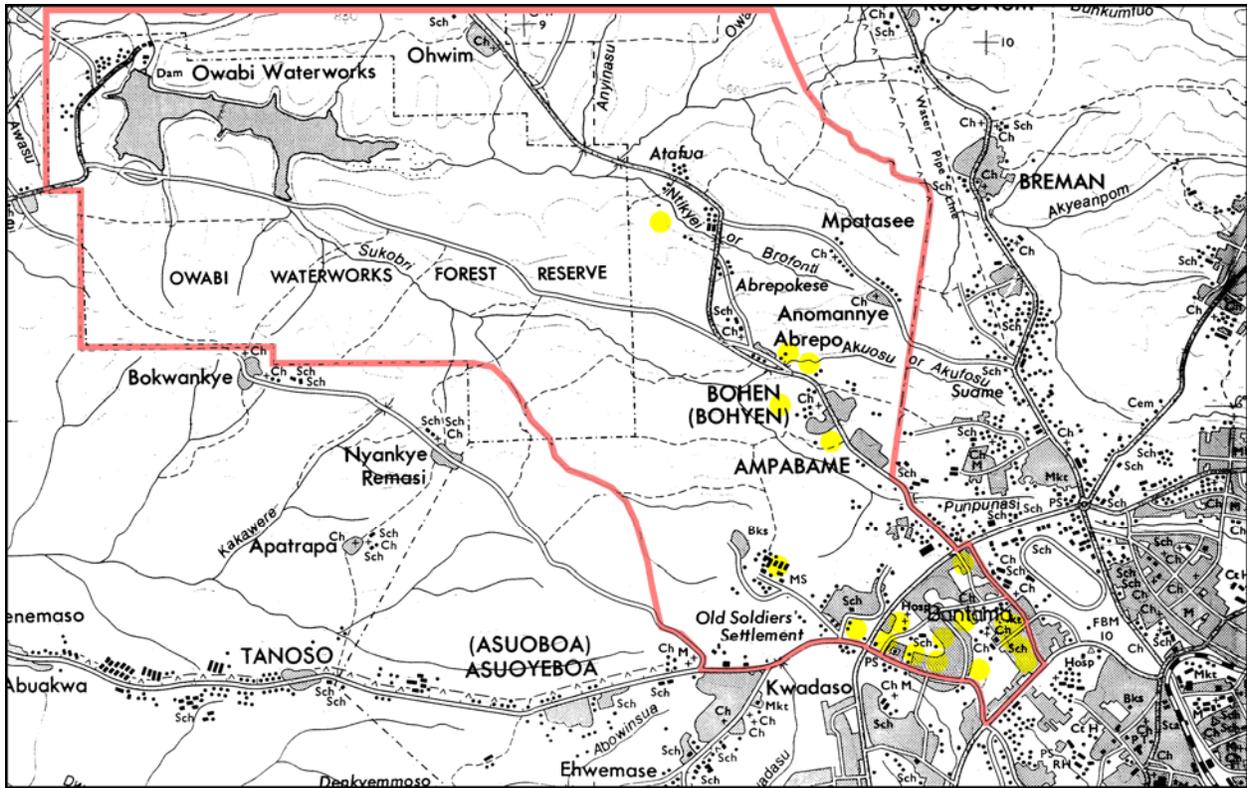


Figure 6-4. Bantama map with survey areas highlighted (Source: The uncopied source map was supplied to the author by Edward K. Dorgbor of the Electoral Commission of Ghana. Colored enhancements were made by the author.)

## CHAPTER 7 CONCLUSIONS

This dissertation takes one of the most fundamental questions in the field of comparative politics – Why do citizens in a democracy vote the way they do? – and asks it specifically of voters in Ghana’s Fourth Republic. To answer this question, preceding chapters adopt as their focus the nexus between social groups and political parties. A focus of this nature brings into the purview of analysis not only the formal organizations E.E. Schattschneider (1942, 1) credits with creating democracy but the aggregated masses who are both definitionally necessary for democracy and the subject of much consternation for democratic constitution-makers.<sup>1</sup> This admixture allows a scholar to utilize multi-party elections not as a barometer of democratic success, which has been criticized by some as committing the “electoral fallacy” (Karl 1986), but as a snapshot of society’s macro-contestations and more accurately the socio-political lines along which these fundamental contestations take place.

Some of the answers provided to this broad research question in preceding chapters are recapitulated in this conclusion. Along with a summary of already presented data and results, an attempt is made as well to tentatively push forward an agenda for future research. Combing through the contemporary and historical political record in search of the lines of conflict along which Ghanaian politics occur, a number of tentative hypotheses rise to the fore. These generated hypotheses cannot be demonstrated with the data presented but the data presented indicates smoke where future studies may, or may not, discover fire. There are three distinct realms into which these hypotheses are categorized below: those that point to a potential fuller understanding of Ghanaian politics, those that point to a potential fuller understanding of politics in countries

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<sup>1</sup> Dahl’s (1971) “participation” is most commonly understood as “universal adult suffrage.” The problems associated with bringing the masses on board are well documented in the early writings of US constitution-makers, see for instance Federalist Paper No. 10, and the tendencies to isolate government from the “unwashed masses” does not always die with time (see Crenson and Ginsberg 2002).

outside of Ghana, and those that point to a potential fuller understanding of the theoretical foundations of political party studies.<sup>2</sup>

### **Ghanaian Perspectives**

Ethnicity matters a lot in Ghanaian politics. The National Commission for Civic Education's pre-election "Be Tolerant" campaign is but one explicit recognition of this attribute. In anticipation of the 2004 elections, posters with slogans like "Tolerance leads to National Unity," "Tolerance Strengthens our Democracy," and "Everybody has an Opinion...Be Tolerant" were plastered on nearly every public building in Ghana and on the outer walls of many private compounds, electric polls, trees, busses, bicycles, and boats (see Figure 7-1). Politicians, preachers, musicians, television personalities, and even regular callers to radio talk shows took many an opportunity in the weeks preceding election 2004 to join the pro-tolerance chorus. Each set of national elections of the Fourth Republic has been met with some electoral violence. Most of this violence has taken the form of small scale and localized thuggery, though in 2000 an ethno-partisan conflict cost dozens of lives in the Upper East's Bawku constituency.

These localized outbursts of politicized violence are of great concern to citizens in affected areas and national leaders mindful of the country's reputation. They are often, however, fluffed off by those outside of affected areas as the expression of primordial animosities of backwards people. A reporter from Accra typified this tendency when he explained away the conflict in Bawku by writing that "Bawku is a place where a mere argument or fight between two people can result in an uncontrollable inferno" (cited in Smith 2001, 179). Not so easy to dismiss is the civil war next door in Côte d'Ivoire where a politicized conflict with ethnic, regional, and religious undertones has engulfed the nation. "On the West Coast of Africa," writes one author

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<sup>2</sup> This categorization is suggested in Chazan (1983).

comparing Ghana with its westerly neighbor, “nestled in the Gulf of Guinea, are two states as alike as one might hope to find on this vast and variegated continent” (Woronoff 1972, 1). From the moment of independence Nkrumah and Houphouët-Boigny pitted their respective models of development, and by association countries, against each other and for quite some time Ghanaians looked enviously at the relative successes achieved in Côte d’Ivoire.

The sectional conflict that has caught the national attention in Ghana pits Asantes versus Ewes. Though there are exceptions, on aggregate voters self-identifying with one of these ethnic identity categories are politically captured by the NPP and NDC respectively. Looking historically at the periods prior to the Fourth Republic, this status quo has more or less been maintained since the two ethnic groups came out of the First Republic as the recognizable bastions of government opposition that would ultimately fill the political void left by Nkrumah’s overthrow. Evidence presented in preceding chapters suggests that not only do Asante-voters and Ewe-voters exhibit strong oppositional tendencies at the ballot box, but that voters who do not identify with either of these two ethnic groups view and evaluate the political parties based largely on the ethnic groups the party choices are associated with.

Given that the vast majority of Ghanaian constituencies are neither Asante- nor Ewe-dominated and relatively competitive electorally, more work needs to be done in these areas that ultimately decide who governs Ghana. A larger-N and more refined “cognitive shortcut” survey could begin to get at the quality of the identity “glue” that binds these “more ambiguous” voters to particular parties. A quick comparison of the ethnic map presented as Figure 3-1 (Chapter Three) and the electoral maps presented in Figures 4-1 and 4-2 (Chapter Four) underscores traditional ethnic areas that are more or less prone to identify with the “Asante” or the “Ewe” party. Akyem areas, for instance, have been pretty solid bases of NPP support whereas Ga-

Dangme areas, especially those that have remained relatively undisturbed by Accra's massive immigration, have been reliable bases of NDC support. Other areas, principally those located in the regions formerly known as the Northern Territories, are not at all easy to categorize. With a few exceptions, most notably the Tamale and Yendi areas, they are relatively competitive and fluid from election to election. With a more refined survey instrument it may be possible to fill in the details of what is thus far a rather blunt characterization. It may in fact be possible with more research to create "cognitive shortcut" maps that draw linkages between different identity categories to expose not only the relationship between identity categories and partisan identification but between different identity categories on their way to influencing partisan identification.

Another interesting area for future research focuses on the mechanism of distribution for political cues. Voters in Ghana are not making up ethnic identities for their political parties out of whole cloth and political parties are not merely responding to innate social cleavages. There is a process of learning going on that takes place both within society, within political parties, and between the two. The work at hand highlights the results of this learning with the regression analysis and a "cognitive shortcut" survey presented in Chapter Four and with historical election data explores the residual voting patterns created by this learning to surmise likely events that led to the prevailing status quo in Chapter Five. It does not, however, delve into the process of learning itself.

To explicate this process, two different strands of political science research show potential for promise. Network analysis seems well-equipped to build on the explanations of partisan cleavages detailed here with its ability to trace information from its terminus towards its root, but a rigorous test of social and political networks in Ghana would require non-existent survey data

and better yet non-existent paneled survey data that would highlight not only respondents' answers to a question on how they learn about political parties but how they learn in their social context from those they deal with every day and not just once every four years around election time (Zuckerman et al. 1994). To get more directly at the political party's role in this process an accompanying campaign content analysis would be insightful. Given the complex nature of campaigns in a political setting where the electronic media is not king, this is no easy task. A focus group considering the impact of campaign content would not only have to be subjected to television, radio, and print advertisements, but also to mass rallies and visits by politicians and their emissaries to neighborhoods and villages. A daunting task, no doubt, but one that might shed more light on something as basic as how the grand narrative of politics is transmitted.

### **Comparative Perspectives**

In the West African region Ghana is, for the moment at least, a success story. The average Ghanaian earns nearly twice as much a year in terms of GDP per capita (\$2928) as the average West African (\$1506).<sup>3</sup> Only the small island nation of Cape Verde can boast a higher GDP per capita in the region. In a region where experiences with democracy have been few and far between, Ghana receives a Freedom House rating of "Free" scoring a perfect score (1) in terms of political rights and a near perfect score (2) in terms of civil liberties (Freedom House 2007). The average combined political rights and civil liberties' score for West African countries is a shoddy 7 out of a possible 14 with lower numbers indicating greater levels of democracy. Only Cape Verde again, scores better as a country on this scale than Ghana.

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<sup>3</sup> This information is taken from the World Economic Outlook (April 2006) estimation for 2007 (International Monetary Fund 2006). West Africa is defined here by membership in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Members include Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo.

This relative exceptionality makes Ghana an interesting case to compare with its neighbors. What are the characteristics, the question begs, that allow Ghana to do relatively well in the present context and prevent countries like Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire, and Burkina Faso from achieving similar accomplishments? An answer cannot be found in the all too convenient explanation of ethnic pluralism (Chandra 2005, 235; Mill 1991; Rustow 1970; Dahl 1971; Geertz 1973; Rabushka and Shepsle 1972; Lijphart 1977; Horowitz 1985; Ake 1993; Sisk 1995; Reilly 2001). "Ethnically divided societies," notes Horowitz (1993, 19), "have a special version of the usual democratic problem of assuring decent treatment of the opposition." As a continent Africa's ethnic heterogeneity is well documented, yet as the preceding analysis suggests, "ethnic politics" plays a major role in one of West Africa's healthiest democracies.

The presence of ethnic pluralism in Ghana suggests that scholars need to, if not completely reevaluate their assumptions about multi-ethnic societies, at least reevaluate the varied nature of the democratic experiences within the category of ethnically pluralistic states. Though not definitive, the depiction of Ghanaian ethnic cleavages in comparison to its immediate neighbors points to some ways in which the Ghanaian ethnicized party system might be significantly different from those party systems which are not doing as well. When visually comparing the electoral maps in Figure 7-2, one difference is striking. In Ghana the ethnic poles of partisan competition are located in Asante-speaking areas, in the center of the country, and Ewe-speaking areas, in the country's far Southeastern corner. In Nigeria, Togo, and Benin the ethno-partisan divisions run along North/South lines. In Côte d'Ivoire, which has not held a recent election, a civil war runs in fits and starts along the familiar North/South division with Yamoussoukro as a rough delimiter of the frontlines.

These limited cases are too few to build anything more than tentative hypotheses upon. To begin with Benin's democratic experiment is slightly older than Ghana's and only doing marginally worse by Freedom House estimations with a political rights score of 2 and a civil liberties score of 2. Additionally Ghanaians, with similar ethno-partisan alignments, have endured several ephemeral democratic experiments in the pre-Fourth Republican past. Nevertheless there might be something to the inconvenient nature of Ghana's ethno-partisan cleavages for those wishing to drum up extra-parliamentary discontent in a post-Cold War era known in Africa for its democratic fertility (Bratton and van de Walle 1997).

Along the West African coast from Nigeria to Côte d'Ivoire the division between North and South runs along not only regional cleavage lines, but also religious (with the South being more Christian and the North being more Muslim), socio-economic (with the South being relatively richer and the North being relatively poorer), and climatic (with the South being in the forest belt and the North being savannah). In the Ghanaian case, the dominant ethno-political cleavage is not nearly so tightly packed with other potentially salient political cleavages. This cultural reality makes it difficult for those Ghanaians who do not identify as Asante or Ewe to be pulled towards one pole or the other in some stable zero-sum way. If Ghana's democracy continues to outshine its neighbors this particular variant of ethno-partisanship might very well be the country's saving grace. If so, some comparative explanation for its exceptionality is in order.

### **Theoretical Perspectives**

Most of the scholarly work on party systems and social cleavages has been conducted in areas of the world relatively long in the democratic tooth (Lipset and Rokkan 1967; Dahl 1966; Eckstein 1966; Rae and Taylor 1970). Influenced by the aforementioned works, Sklar (1963, 479) describes with a note of optimism the "[r]ising classes" in Nigerian society that "herald the

decline of old orders.” Though he does not come out explicitly and suggest these old (i.e., ethnic, regional, or religious) orders are hindering early Nigerian attempts at democracy, the implication is there and puts Sklar very much in the mainstream. As a democratic experiment not yet fifteen years old, the Ghanaian case cannot speak to this earlier literature about what makes a democracy thrive. Though the fact that a “third wave” democracy is doing quite well without the support of obvious *Gesellschaft* partisan cleavages is interesting in and of itself, this one case is no where near disconfirming earlier theories of party/social cleavage interaction.

The Ghanaian case does, however, point to an area where Lipset and Rokkan (1967) and their intellectual followers left a lacunae. For them, the process of “freezing” the relationship between social cleavages and political parties requires some cataclysmic event. In Ghana the closest thing to a revolution along the lines of Reformation/Counter-Reformation, French Revolution, Industrial Revolution, or Russian Revolution was the push for, and attainment of, independence. Events that led to the lowering of the Union Jack and its replacement with the Black Star of Africa on 6 March 1957 did not, however, divide Ghanaian society into social factions that could be mobilized by political parties operating within a democratic party system. Rather the movement towards independence created a mass party in the CPP with tiny isolated blocs of resentment towards Nkrumah’s centralizing tendencies having little more in common than displeasure over who was residing in the State House.

When the specter of Nkrumah and his CPP were removed by coup d’état, the two segments of this ragtag opposition with the greatest ability to organize became the poles that would define Ghanaian multi-party politics ever since. In Asante-speaking areas political entrepreneurs took advantage of the Asante traditional authorities’ historical struggle for independence from the colonial authorities to drum up an oppositional movement. In Ewe-speaking areas the precarious

demarcation dispute that resulted in Britain's seizure of Togoland from Germany in the wake of World War I provided an opportunity to mobilize a following and Nkrumah's vilification of this mobilization for political gain further solidified a voting bloc. Given the fact that Africa's age of democratic openings has come at a time in world affairs when "revolutions" are largely frowned upon, it is quite possible that events which seemed insignificant at the time will form the foundation on which these "third wave" democracies will be built. Perhaps these country specific events will defy pattern, but only more research in more newly democratic areas will tell.

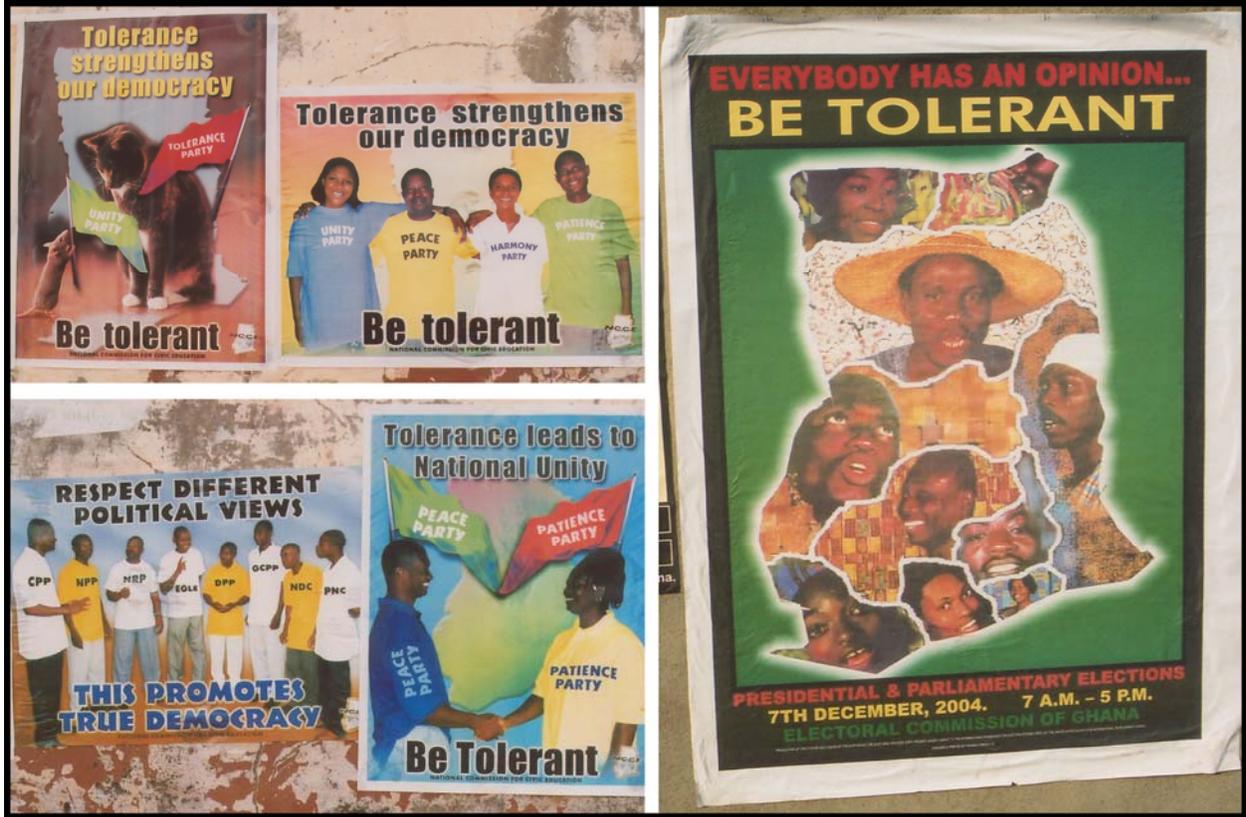


Figure 7-1. Pre-election “Tolerance” posters (Source: Photographs taken by author in November/December 2004.)

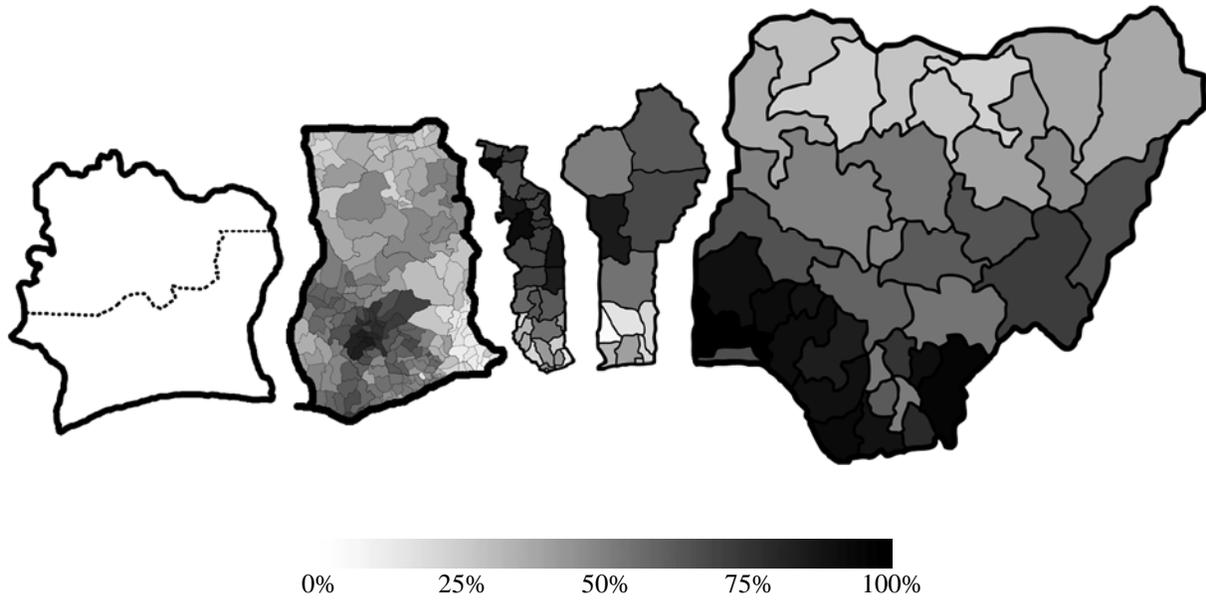


Figure 7-2. Mapping selected West African political cleavages [Depicted from left to right are Côte d'Ivoire's frontlines (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs - OCHA 2006), Kufuor's 2004 election results in Ghana, Faure's 2005 election results in Togo, Yayi's first round election results in 2006 in Benin, and Obasanjo's 2003 election results in Nigeria. The election results depicted were obtained from the respective countries' electoral commissions and like the maps depicted in Chapter Four and Five the darker the electoral area the better the identified candidate did and the lighter the area the worse.]

**Survey: Political Parties in Ghana and their Contributions to the Process of Democratic Consolidation**

Research conducted for Kevin S. Fridy

**Introduction**

I am a researcher working with Kevin S. Fridy, a graduate student from the University of Florida in the United States. I am conducting research on Ghanaian political parties. This questionnaire is a major part of this study.

The research is not intended to probe into people's private lives, nor is it intended to collect personal information for the US or Ghanaian governments or any of Ghana's political parties.

It is an independent academic research project. It is my hope that you will co-operate and answer any questions feeling assured that your anonymity will be protected.

Thank you for your co-operation.

**Background Data**

Survey ID \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name of Constituency \_\_\_\_\_  
 Time of survey \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date of survey \_\_\_\_\_

**Demographic Information**

Respondent's Gender 1. Male 2. Female \_\_\_\_\_  
 Respondent's Age \_\_\_\_\_  
 Respondent's Occupation \_\_\_\_\_  
 Respondent's Mother Tongue (Ethnicity) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Respondent's Religion \_\_\_\_\_  
 Respondent's Educational Background \_\_\_\_\_  
 Best Description of Respondent's Area 1. Rural 2. Urban \_\_\_\_\_

Respondent's Voting Record – In which national elections did you vote?

1. 1957 2. 1969 3. 1979 4. 1992 5. 1996 6. 2000 7. 2004

**General Party Questions**

- 1.1 Have you ever changed your political party preference?  
 1. Yes  
 2. No (if no, skip to question 1.3)
- 1.2 Which parties did you identify with prior to your current identification, both in this republic and in previous republics? (Circle all that apply)  
 1. PNC 5. EGLE 9. Nkrumahist Parties (i.e. CPP, NAL, PNP)  
 2. NPP 6. GCPP 10. Danquah-Busia Parties (i.e. UP, PP, PFP)  
 3. NDC 7. DPP 11. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
 4. CPP 8. NRP
- 1.3 Are you currently a registered member of a political party?  
 1. Yes (if yes answer 1.4 then skip to 2.1)  
 2. No (if no skip to 1.5)
- 1.4 Which party are you a registered member of?  
 1. PNC 4. CPP 7. DPP  
 2. NPP 5. EGLE 8. NRP  
 3. NDC 6. GCPP
- 1.5 Why aren't you a registered member of a political party? (**Possible Answers Include** ↘)  
 1. Party politics are divisive and we need unity.  
 2. None of the existing parties represents my interests.  
 3. Political parties in Ghana do not concern themselves with policies; they are based on personalities.  
 4. Party politics in Ghana has lost its meaning and purpose and turned into a money game.  
 5. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- 1.6 Since you are not a registered member of any political party, which one of the following parties do you presently have an inclination towards? (**Read Answers** ↘)  
 1. PNC 4. CPP 7. DPP  
 2. NPP 5. EGLE 8. NRP  
 3. NDC 6. GCPP 9. None, I am an Independent

**Social Cleavage Questions**

- 2.1 When deciding on who to vote for in your 2004 parliamentary race, which factor was **most** important to you? The candidate's... (**Read Answers** ↘)  
 1. religion 5. resume  
 2. ethnicity 6. policy stances  
 3. party affiliation 7. campaign strategy  
 4. personality 8. ability to secure goods and services for the constituency
- 2.2 Would you have considered voting for your candidate's opponent if he or she had a "better" {answer to 2.1}?  
 1. Yes 2. No 3. Don't Know

- 2.3 When deciding on who to vote for in your 2004 presidential race, which factor was **most** important? The candidate's... (Read *Answers*)
1. religion
  2. ethnicity
  3. party affiliation
  4. personality
  5. resume
  6. policy stances
  7. campaign strategy
  8. ability to secure goods and services for the constituency
- 2.4 Would you have considered voting for your candidate's opponent if he had a "better" (answer to 2.3)?
1. Yes
  2. No
  3. Don't Know
- 2.5 In your mind, what are the principle differences between Ghana's main political parties? (*Possible Answers Include*)
1. Economic policy
  2. Social policy
  3. Commitment to local development
  4. Honesty
  5. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2.6 Which party do you think is **most** "market-oriented" in its policy prescriptions?
1. PNC
  2. NPP
  3. NDC
  4. CPP
  5. EGLE
  6. GCPP
  7. DPP
  8. NRP
  9. I don't know what "market-oriented" means
- 2.7 Which party do you think is **most** "social democratic" in its policy prescriptions?
1. PNC
  2. NPP
  3. NDC
  4. CPP
  5. EGLE
  6. GCPP
  7. DPP
  8. NRP
  9. I don't know what "social democratic" means
- 2.8 Which party do you think is **most** "socialistic" in its policy prescriptions? (Circle all that apply)
1. PNC
  2. NPP
  3. NDC
  4. CPP
  5. EGLE
  6. GCPP
  7. DPP
  8. NRP
  9. I don't know what "socialistic" means
- 2.9 Do you think NPP support is stronger in some regions than in others?
1. Yes
  2. No (if no move to question 2.11)
  3. Don't Know (move to question 2.11)
- 2.10 Which region of the country do you think supports the NPP the **most**?
1. Ashanti
  2. Brong-Ahafo
  3. Central
  4. Eastern
  5. Greater Accra
  6. Northern
  7. Upper East
  8. Upper West
  9. Volta
  10. Western
  11. "The South"
  12. "The North"
- 2.11 Do you think NDC support is stronger in some regions than in others?
1. Yes
  2. No (if no move to question 2.13)
  3. Don't Know (move to question 2.13)
- 2.12 Which region of the country do you think supports the NDC the **most**?
1. Ashanti
  2. Brong-Ahafo
  3. Central
  4. Eastern
  5. Greater Accra
  6. Northern
  7. Upper East
  8. Upper West
  9. Volta
  10. Western
  11. "The South"
  12. "The North"

- 2.13 Do you think Nkrumahist parties' (i.e. CPP, PNC, GCPP, or NRP) support is stronger in some regions than in others?
1. Yes
  2. No (if no move to question 2.15)
  3. Don't Know (move to question 2.15)
- 2.14 Which region of the country do you think supports Nkrumahist parties (i.e. CPP, PNC, GCPP, or NRP) the **most**?
1. Ashanti
  2. Brong-Ahafo
  3. Central
  4. Eastern
  5. Greater Accra
  6. Northern
  7. Upper East
  8. Upper West
  9. Volta
  10. Western
  11. "The South"
  12. "The North"
- 2.15 Do you think NPP support is stronger in some religious groups than in others?
1. Yes
  2. No (if no move to question 2.17)
  3. Don't Know (move to question 2.17)
- 2.16 Which religious group do you think supports the NPP the **most**?
1. Christians
  2. Muslims
  3. Practitioners of Traditional Religions
  4. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2.17 Do you think NDC support is stronger in some religious groups than in others?
1. Yes
  2. No (if no move to question 2.19)
  3. Don't Know (move to question 2.19)
- 2.18 Which religious group do you think supports the NDC the **most**?
1. Christians
  2. Muslims
  3. Practitioners of Traditional Religions
  4. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2.19 Do you think Nkrumahist parties' (i.e. CPP, PNC, GCPP, or NRP) support is stronger in some religious groups than in others?
1. Yes
  2. No (if no move to question 2.21)
  3. Don't Know (move to question 2.21)
- 2.20 Which religious group do you think supports Nkrumahist parties (i.e. CPP, PNC, GCPP, or NRP) the **most**?
1. Christians
  2. Muslims
  3. Practitioners of Traditional Religions
  4. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2.21 Do you think NPP support is stronger in some income groups than in others?
1. Yes
  2. No (if no move to question 2.23)
  3. Don't Know (move to question 2.23)
- 2.22 Which income group do you think supports the NPP the **most**?
1. Low Income Group
  2. Middle Income Group
  3. High Income Group

- 2.23 Do you think NDC support is stronger in some income groups than in others?  
 1. Yes 2. No (if no move to question 2.25) 3. Don't Know (move to question 2.25)
- 2.24 Which income group do you think supports the NDC the **most**?  
 1. Low Income Group  
 2. Middle Income Group  
 3. High Income Group
- 2.25 Do you think Nkrumahist parties' (i.e. CPP, PNC, GCPP, or NRP) support is stronger in some income groups than in others?  
 1. Yes 2. No (if no move to question 2.27) 3. Don't Know (move to question 2.27)
- 2.26 Which income group do you think supports Nkrumahist parties (i.e. CPP, PNC, GCPP, or NRP) the **most**?  
 1. Low Income Group  
 2. Middle Income Group  
 3. High Income Group
- 2.27 Do you think NPP support is stronger in some ethnic groups than in others?  
 1. Yes 2. No (if no move to question 2.29) 3. Don't Know (move to question 2.29)
- 2.28 Which ethnic group do you think supports the NPP the **most**?  
 1. Akan  
 2. Dagbani  
 3. Ewe  
 4. Ga  
 5. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2.29 Do you think NDC support is stronger in some ethnic groups than in others?  
 1. Yes 2. No (if no move to question 2.31) 3. Don't Know (move to question 2.31)
- 2.30 Which ethnic group do you think supports the NDC the **most**?  
 1. Akan  
 2. Dagbani  
 3. Ewe  
 4. Ga  
 5. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2.31 Do you think Nkrumahist parties' (i.e. CPP, PNC, GCPP, or NRP) support is stronger in some ethnic groups than in others?  
 1. Yes 2. No (if no move to question 2.33) 3. Don't Know (move to question 2.33)
- 2.32 Which ethnic group do you think supports Nkrumahist parties (i.e. CPP, PNC, GCPP, or NRP) the **most**?  
 1. Akan  
 2. Dagbani  
 3. Ewe  
 4. Ga  
 5. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

- 2.33 Which party do you think is **most** popular with women voters?  
 1. NPP  
 2. NDC  
 3. Nkrumahist parties (i.e. CPP, PNC, GCPP, or NRP)  
 4. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
 5. They are all about the same
- 2.34 Which party do you think is **most** popular with rural voters?  
 1. NPP  
 2. NDC  
 3. Nkrumahist parties (i.e. CPP, PNC, GCPP, or NRP)  
 4. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
 5. They are all about the same
- 2.35 Which party do you think is **most** popular with urban voters?  
 1. NPP  
 2. NDC  
 3. Nkrumahist parties (i.e. CPP, PNC, GCPP, or NRP)  
 4. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
 5. They are all about the same
- 2.36 Which party do you think is **most** popular with well-educated voters?  
 1. NPP  
 2. NDC  
 3. Nkrumahist parties (i.e. CPP, PNC, GCPP, or NRP)  
 4. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
 5. They are all about the same
- 2.37 Which party do you think is **most** popular with uneducated voters?  
 1. NPP  
 2. NDC  
 3. Nkrumahist parties (i.e. CPP, PNC, GCPP, or NRP)  
 4. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
 5. They are all about the same
- 2.38 Which party do you think is **most** popular with young voters?  
 1. NPP  
 2. NDC  
 3. Nkrumahist parties (i.e. CPP, PNC, GCPP, or NRP)  
 4. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
 5. They are all about the same
- 2.39 Which party do you think is **most** popular with elderly voters?  
 1. NPP  
 2. NDC  
 3. Nkrumahist parties (i.e. CPP, PNC, GCPP, or NRP)  
 4. Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
 5. They are all about the same

2.40 Here is a list of things that are important for the development of Ghana. In your opinion, who should take the main responsibility for these things? Is it government (G), private business (B), individuals (I), or some combination of these?

	G	B	I	G & B	G & I	B & I	All three	Don't know
a) Providing schools and clinics	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
b) Creating jobs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
c) Building houses	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
d) Reducing crime	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
e) Buying and selling agricultural and mineral commodities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
f) Helping citizens obtain credit	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

For the following five questions you will be read two statements. You will then be asked whether you agree most with Statement A or B.

2.41 Statement A: It is better to have goods available in the market, even if the prices are high.

Statement B: It is better to have low prices, even if there are shortages of goods.

1. Agree most with Statement A
2. Agree most with Statement B
3. Don't agree with either
4. Don't know

2.42 Statement A: It is better to have free schooling for our children, even if the quality of education is low.

Statement B: It is better to raise educational standards, even if we have to pay school fees.

1. Agree most with Statement A
2. Agree most with Statement B
3. Don't agree with either
4. Don't know

2.43 Statement A: It is better to have free health care, even if the quality of medical care is low.

Statement B: It is better to raise health care standards, even if we have to pay medical fees.

1. Agree most with Statement A
2. Agree most with Statement B
3. Don't agree with either
4. Don't know

2.44 Statement A: The government should retain ownership of its factories, businesses, and farms.

Statement B: It is better for the government to sell its businesses to private companies and individuals.

1. Agree most with Statement A
2. Agree most with Statement B
3. Don't agree with either
4. Don't know

2.45 Statement A: In order to create jobs, the government should encourage foreign companies to invest in our country.

Statement B: The government should be wary of foreign investors because they may gain control of our national wealth.

1. Agree most with Statement A
2. Agree most with Statement B
3. Don't agree with either
4. Don't know

### Party Institutions

3.1 For the recent election all political parties came out publicly to urge their supporters to conduct themselves peacefully. Do you think all political parties really wanted peace?

1. Yes (if yes move to question 3.3)
2. No
3. Don't Know (move to question 3.3)

3.2 Which parties do you think did NOT want peace? (Circle all that apply)

1. PNC
2. NPP
3. NDC
4. CPP
5. EGLE
6. GCPP
7. DPP
8. NRP

3.3 Another major theme of the campaigns was "free and fair" elections. Do you think all political parties really wanted "free and fair" elections?

1. Yes (if yes move to question 3.5)
2. No
3. Don't Know (move to question 3.5)

3.4 Which parties do you think did NOT want "free and fair" elections? (Circle all that apply)

1. PNC
2. NPP
3. NDC
4. CPP
5. EGLE
6. GCPP
7. DPP
8. NRP

3.5 Have you followed political parties in the news media during the recent election cycle?

1. Yes
2. No

3.6 Have you attended political rallies in connection with local or national elections?

1. Yes
2. No

3.7 Have you ever contacted local party officials for the purpose of addressing a political concern?

1. Yes
2. No

3.8 Do the members of your immediate family support the same political party as yourself?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't Know

3.9 Do the members of your extended family support the same political party as yourself?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't Know

3.10 Do you feel that Ghanaian parties should be publicly financed?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't Know

3.11 Do you feel like your preferred political party has adequate facilities in your local area?

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't Know

3.12 How do you feel about your preferred political party's selection of candidates? (Read Answers)

1. I think the process is fair
2. I think the process is unfair
3. I don't know

3.13 In the 2004 parliamentary election did you vote for the party, the candidate, or both?

1. The party
2. The candidate
3. Both
4. Don't know
5. I did not vote in 2004

- 3.14 In the 2004 presidential election did you vote for the political party, the candidate, or both?  
 1. The party                      3. Both                      5. I did not vote in 2004  
 2. The candidate                4. Don't know
- 3.15 Have you ever accepted gifts (e.g. foodstuffs, clothing, transportation, or money) from a political party or candidate?  
 1. Yes                              2. No (if no move to question 3.17)
- 3.16 Did these gifts influence you to vote one way or another?  
 1. Yes                              2. No                              3. Don't Know
- 3.17 Have you ever voted for the Presidential candidate of one party and the Parliamentary candidate of another party on the same ballot, also known as Skirt and Blouse voting?  
 1. Yes                              2. No
- 3.18 Do you think voting for one party's candidate for President and another party's candidate for MP is good or bad for democracy in Ghana?  
 1. Good                            2. Bad                            3. Doesn't Matter
- 3.19 Do you think a third party will ever seriously challenge the NPP and NDC?  
 1. Yes (if yes answer question 3.20 then skip to 3.22)  
 2. No (if no move to question 3.21)  
 3. Don't Know (move to question 3.22)
- 3.20 In your opinion, will it be a Nkrumahist party that challenges NPP and NDC dominance?  
 1. Yes                              2. No                              3. Don't Know
- 3.21 Why do you think a third party will never seriously challenge the NPP and NDC? *(Possible Answers Include* ↙  
 1. The NPP and NDC know what is best for Ghana  
 2. The NPP and NDC have too many resources  
 3. Third parties are too unorganized  
 4. Other(please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3.22 Would you prefer Ghanaian democracy without political parties?  
 1. Yes                              2. No (if no move to question 3.24)                      3. Don't Know (move to question 3.24)
- 3.23 Why do you prefer Ghanaian democracy without political parties? *(Possible Answers Include* ↘  
 1. Political parties are too divisive  
 2. There is too much corruption in political parties  
 3. I like a party other than the NPP or NDC and want more representation  
 4. Other(please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3.24 Do you follow Ghanaian football, and if so which team do you support?  
 1. No, I do not follow Ghanaian football.  
 2. Hearts of Oak (Phobia)  
 3. Ashanti Kotoko (Fabulous)  
 4. I follow another team.

## APPENDIX B SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUP METHODOLOGY

### **Survey Methodology**

To choose the 200 survey respondents in each selected constituency (Ododiodio, Bantama, and Nabdam) a multi-tiered randomization approach was followed. First, Ghana Statistical Services provided 20 randomly generated enumeration area maps situated in each constituency. These maps were used to conduct the 2000 national census and include between 100 and 500 households each. Both a sketch of the block or village enumerated and a written description of its boundaries were provided.

When a survey team, comprised of two interviewers conversant in local languages and myself, arrived at a particular enumeration area ten households were selected for survey. To choose these households the survey team first walked through the entire enumeration area and estimated the total number of households; a household was defined loosely as a group of individuals who share a cooking pot which allowed for large structures and compounds to accommodate more than one household. We would then divide the number of estimated households by 10 and round to the nearest whole number (n). One interviewer would start at the enumeration area's northernmost border and the other at the southernmost border. These interviewers would select every n<sup>th</sup> household for interview in a zigzag pattern working towards the enumeration area's center dividing line until they had each identified five households for interview.

Once at a selected household an adult was asked for the first names of all the registered voters in the household. Each of these individuals was assigned a number. Then someone in the household would select a number out of a bag to determine the interviewee. If that person was available immediately and agreed to be interviewed the interview would follow. If the selected

person was unavailable one return trip would be made to the household at a more convenient time, as suggested by a household member. If either the potential interviewee refused to be interviewed or was absent on the follow-up visit, the household immediately to the east of his/her house would be substituted and the household-level randomization procedures would be revisited.

Before an individual consented to be interviewed, the interviewer would inform him/her of his/her rights as an interviewee, give him/her a copy of the Internal Review Board (IRB) consent form, and collect a signed copy of the IRB consent form. Surveys were available in English, Asante Twi, Ga, and Nabit. Translations from English were obtained from the Language Center at the University of Ghana, Legon (Asante Twi and Ga) and Pastor Isaac Yen (Nabit). After the initial translation all of the survey instruments were subjected to a reverse translation by a native speaker of the language with no association to, or knowledge of, the original translator. With the preferred language chosen, the interviewer would read each question to the interviewee and record the answers. The survey experience typically lasted between 20 and 25 minutes.

To diminish the instances requiring a return visit, we took into account each enumeration area's typical weekly schedule. Times when interviewees were most likely to be away from home (e.g., market day) or too busy to talk (e.g., dinner time) were avoided. When return visits and household substitutions were necessary, the fact that interviewers lived in the constituencies where interviews took place made these return visits and household substitutions only a modest extra effort. My role in the interviewing process was as a quality control check. Unannounced I would attend interview sessions to offer constructive feedback afterwards and would regularly return to households where interviews took place to inquire as to whether or not protocol had been followed.

### **Focus Group Methodology**

After the survey data for the selected constituencies (Ododiodio, Bantama, and Nabdam) was collected and input into SPSS, a focus group was held. Ten registered voters were invited to each constituency-level focus group. The ability to converse fluently in English was required. Beyond this prerequisite, invitees were selected based on the location of their residence within the constituency, gender, age, ethnicity, and partisan proclivities. An attempt was made to have an equal number of males and females participate; representatives from different age and ethnic groups living in different parts of the constituency; and representatives of the NPP, NDC, and Nkrumahist parties in roughly the same ratio as the voting public.

Focus group meetings lasted for 90 minutes and were audio taped. Before the discussion began all attendees were given a promise that their identities would be kept secret by me, the focus group conductor, and asked to sign a document guaranteeing each other that the proceedings would be kept private. Discussants were then informed of selected aggregate results from their constituency's survey. They were asked to help interpret those results to provide contemporary and historical context to the raw data. For their assistance, discussants were provided with refreshments and a small monetary token of appreciation.

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