WHY ETHNIC PARTIES SUCCEED

WHY ETHNIC PARTIES SUCCEED:

PATRONAGE AND ETHNIC HEADCOUNTS IN INDIA

Kanchan Chandra

Contents

Appendices

Bibliography

Index

Maps, Figures, and Tables

Maps

Figures

Tables

F.4   Performance of the JMM in Jharkhand by district, 2000 legislative assembly

elections

Acronyms

BJP	Bharatiya Janata Party
BJS	Bharatiya Jana Sangh
BKKP	Bharatiya Kisan Kamgar Party
BPP	Bihar People's Party
BSP	Bahujan Samaj Party
CPI	Communist Party of India
CPM	Communist Party of India (Marxist)
CPI(ML)	Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist)
DMK	Dravida Munnetra Kazagham
FPTP	First Past the Post
INC	Indian National Congress
JD	Janata Dal
JD(U)	Janata Dal (United)
JD(G)	Janata Dal (Gujarat)
NDA	National Democratic Alliance
NF/LF	National Front/Left Front
OBC	Other Backward Classes/Other Backward Castes
PR	Proportional Representation
RJD	Rashtriya Janata Dal
RPI	Republican Party of India
RSS	Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh
SAD	Shiromani Akali Dal
SC	Scheduled Caste
SP	Samajwadi Party
SJP	Samajwadi Janata Party
ST	Scheduled Tribe
VHP	Vishwa Hindu Parishad

A Note on Terminology

Throughout, I use the term "Scheduled Caste" to describe the Bahujan Samaj Party's target category rather than alternatives such as "Untouchable," "*Harijan*" or "*Dalit*." I employ this term because it was the most widely employed term of self-identification among my respondents. None of my respondents used the derogatory term "Untouchable" to refer to themselves. The term *Harijan*, meaning "children of God," coined by Gandhi to refer to those treated as untouchable, is now perceived as being patronizing. I do not either use of these terms, therefore, except when quoting verbatim from another source that does. Many of my respondents referred to themselves as "*Dalit,*" (meaning "broken to pieces" or "oppressed"), a term popularized by the Dalit Panthers, a radical movement in the state of Maharashtra. But the more common term of self-identification was the term Scheduled Caste (SC), or the name of the caste category among the Scheduled Castes to which an individual subscribed.

I use the term "Other Backward Classes" (OBC) and "Backward Classes" interchangeably with the term "Other Backward *Castes*" and "Backward *Castes*." The term "Other Backward Classes" comes from a provision in the Indian Constitution which empowers the government to provide preferential treatment for "other socially and educationally backward classes" The Constitution does not lay down the criteria according to which the "backward classes" are to be identified, but the term "classes" in this phrase has come to be interpreted in everyday politics as a euphemism for castes. In 1990, the Indian Government announced a decision to set aside 27 percent of jobs in

central government institutions and 27 of admissions in institutions of higher education funded by the central government for the Other Backward Classes, defined explicitly as a collection of castes. Especially since this policy decision, the terms "Other Backward Classes" and "Other Backward Castes" have come to be used interchangeably.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Why do ethnic parties succeed in obtaining the support of members of their target ethnic group(s)? Ethnic political parties now flourish across the democratic world. Canada, Spain, Northern Ireland, India, the United Kingdom, Israel, Sri Lanka, Macedonia, South Africa, and Russia are only a few examples of the established or emerging democracies in which they have taken root. For social scientists interested in explaining important political phenomena, the question is worth asking for its own sake. At the same time, the answer has broader implications for those with a stake in the survival of democratic regimes. Ethnic parties, and the politicization of ethnic differences more generally, are presumed to constitute a major threat to democratic stability.[i] An exploration of the processes by which such parties succeed or fail, illuminates also the processes that undermine or preserve democracy.

Drawing on a study of variation in the performance of ethnic parties in India, this book proposes a theory of ethnic party performance in one distinct family of democracies, identified here as "patronage-democracies." Voters in patronage-democracies, I argue, choose between parties by conducting ethnic head counts rather than by comparing policy platforms or ideological positions. They formulate *preferences* across parties by counting heads across party personnel, preferring that party that provides greatest representation to their co-ethnic elites. They formulate *expectations*

about the likely electoral outcome by counting the heads of co-ethnics across the electorate. And they *vote* for their preferred party only when their co-ethnics are sufficiently numerous to take it to a winning or influential position.

This process of ethnic head counting is the foundation for the central argument advanced in this book: An ethnic party likely to succeed in a patronage-democracy *when it has competitive rules for intraparty advancement* **and** *when the size of the ethnic group(s) it seeks to mobilize exceeds the threshold of winning or leverage imposed by the electoral system.* Competitive rules for intraparty advancement, other things equal, give a party a comparative advantage in the representation of elites from its target ethnic category. And a positive difference between the size of its target ethnic category and the threshold of winning or influence indicates that the party has a viable shot at victory or influence.

The implications of the argument for the survival of democracy are paradoxical. At first glance, a politics of ethnic head counting appears to subvert democratic competition by producing predetermined results based on ethnic demography.[ii] But a closer look yields a more optimistic prognosis. Ethnic head counts need not produce predetermined results for the reason that the categories that voters employ in their counts are not predetermined. As constructivist approaches to ethnic identity have shown us, these categories are open to manipulation. And in an environment in which the choice of one category for counting over another means the difference between victory and defeat, we should expect competing political entrepreneurs to engage in such manipulation to the

greatest extent possible. The determining role played by ethnic headcounts in patronage-democracies, then, may well prevent the *pre*determination of election results.

I Definitions

Ethnic Group and Ethnic Category

I take the term "ethnic group" to refer to the nominal members of an ascriptive category such as race, language, caste, tribe, or religion. As used here, the term "ethnic group" does not imply active participation in a common group identity. Wherever possible, I use the term ethnic "category" rather than "group" to emphasize this point.

Nominal membership in such ascriptive categories is inherited: I might, for instance, be born as a Sikh from the Mazhabi caste in Punjab, a Yoruba Christian from western Nigeria, or an African-American Muslim from Chicago. As these examples illustrate, however, we are usually born as members of several categories, with a choice about which we consider to be especially salient.

Ethnic Party

An ethnic party is a party that represents itself as a champion of the cause of one particular ethnic category or set of categories to the exclusion of others, and that makes such a representation central to its strategy of mobilizing voters. The key distinguishing principles of this definition are those of *ascription*, *exclusion,* and *centrality*: The categories that such a party mobilizes are defined according to ascriptive characteristics; the mobilization of the "insider" ethnic categories is always accompanied by the

3

exclusion of ethnic "outsiders"; and, while the party may also highlight other issues, the championing of the cause of an ethnic category or categories is central to its mobilizing efforts. A <u>multiethnic</u> party is defined here as a party that also makes an appeal related to ethnicity central to its mobilizing strategy but that assumes a position of neutrality or equidistance toward all relevant categories on the salient dimension(s) of ethnicity. A party that does not include and exclude categories mainly on the basis of ethnic identity, or that addresses ethnic demands but does not make such demands central to its political platform, is <u>nonethnic</u> by this definition.

In order to categorize a party as "ethnic," "nonethnic" or "multiethnic," according to this definition, it is necessary to examine the message that it sends to the electorate (what issues it highlights in its election campaigns and rallies, what policies it proposes or implements, how it promises to distribute resources).[iii] Note that the message that a party sends to the electorate might change across time. The same party that champions the cause of one ethnic category in one election may redefine its target ethnic category, or reinvent itself as a "multiethnic" or "nonethnic" party, in subsequent elections. Precisely for this reason, we should think of the classification of a party as an ethnic party as a time-specific classification that captures the character of the party in some time periods but may not do so in others.

Note that this definition characterizes a party as "ethnic" even if it claims to speak for more than one ethnic group. It would be useful here to underline the essential distinction between ethnic parties and multiethnic parties. The line separating the two

cannot be drawn, as we might initially suppose, by separating parties that speak for one ethnic category from parties that speak for many. A close look at any supposedly "single" ethnic category would reveal that it is simultaneously an amalgam of others. The category "Yoruba" in Nigeria, for example, might be interpreted as a single ethnic category, or as a conglomerate of smaller categories, including "Oyo," "Ijebu," Egba," and "Ekiti," which are themselves conglomerates of still smaller units.[iv] Similarly, the category "Hispanic" in the Unite States might be termed a "single" category, or an aggregate category consisting of the smaller categories of "Mexican," "Puerto Rican," "Cuban," and so on. The same is true of other ethnic categories in the United States, including "Black," "White," "Asian American," and "Native American."[v] In a point to which I return repeatedly throughout this book, any ethnic party that claims to speak on behalf of a single ethnic category is typically trying to unify several previously disparate categories by claiming that such unity has always existed. The so-called subdivisions that nest within any supposedly "single" ethnic category are of critical importance in understanding the phenomenon of ethnic party success or failure.

The main distinction between an ethnic and a multiethnic party, therefore, lies not in the number of categories that each attempts to *include*, but in whether or not there is a category that each attempts to *exclude*. An ethnic party, regardless of how many categories it claims to speak for, always identifies implicitly or explicitly the category that is excluded. A multiethnic party, while also invoking ethnic identities, does not exclude any group on the salient dimension(s) of identity. [vi]

Let me illustrate with some examples. The Action Group (AG) in Nigeria in 1960 sought the support of all the tribal categories grouped together under the aggregate labeof "Yoruba."[vii] Should we classify it as an ethnic or a multiethnic party? According to the criterion just identified, the AG would be classified as an ethnic party to the extent that it excluded non-Yorubas from its appeal. Similarly, the Movimento Revolucionario Tupaj Katari de Liberación (MRTKL) in Bolivia in 1985 sought the support of the several ethnic categories grouped together under the label "indigenous," including the Quechua, the Aymara, the Uru, and the Chipaya.[viii] However, to the extent that it excluded nonindigenous categories from its appeal, it would be defined here as an ethnic party. On the other hand, the National Front in Malaysia, which in 1995 also mobilized several ethnic categories, would be defined here as multiethnic to the extent that it included parties from all salient ethnic categories, including Malays, Indians, and Chinese.[ix] Similarly, the African National Congress in South Africa in 1994 would be defined as a multiethnic party to the extent that it did not exclude any salient ethnic category in its overt message.[x]

Success

I define the degree of success as the degree to which a party is able to capture the votes of members of its target ethnic category. A party is "successful" if it captures the votes of at least a majority of members of its target ethnic category over successive elections, "moderately successful" if it captures the votes of a plurality, and "failed" if it is able to capture only a negligible percentage of votes from members of its target category or categories. Note that the measure of success is contingent upon the way in

which an ethnic party defines its target ethnic category. If the ethnic category targeted by a political party changes, the measure of success should be adjusted accordingly.

One could, by contrast, gauge success by the number of seats won by the party, its overall percentage of the vote, or its degree of influence in government. These definitions are not relevant to the theoretical purpose of this study. If an ethnic category is small or dispersed, a party that captures the entire vote of members of this category may still seem unsuccessful if we use the overall percentage of votes as a measure of success. However, the fact that it has managed to gather all the members of its target ethnic category into a single political mass is no small matter. It is this massing of ethnic groups behind ethnic parties, rather than behind their nonethnic or multiethnic competitors, that is the puzzle of interest to this study.

Patronage-Democracy

I use the term "democracy" in a minimal sense to mean simply a system in which the political leadership is chosen through competitive elections.[xi] By the term "patronage-democracy," I mean a democracy in which the state monopolizes access to jobs and services, <u>and</u> in which elected officials have discretion in the implementation of laws allocating the jobs and services at the disposal of the state. The key aspect of a patronage-democracy is not simply the size of the state but the power of elected officials to distribute the vast resources controlled by the state to voters on an *individualized* basis, by exercising their discretion in the implementation of state policy. This individualized distribution of resources, in conjunction with a dominant state, I will argue, makes

patronage-democracies a distinct family of democracies with distinct types of voter and elite behaviour.   A democracy is not patronage-based if the private sector is larger than the public sector as a source of jobs and a provider of services, or if those who control the distribution of state resources and services cannot exercise discretion in the implementation of policies concerning their distribution.

The term "patronage-democracy" might be applied to a political system as a whole or to subsystems within it comprised of particular administrative areas or particular sections of the population. In the latter case, the relationship between these areas and/or sections of the population and the state would constitute a "pocket" of patronage-democracy within a larger system that is not patronage-based.

Currently available cross-national data do not permit a reliable operationalization of the concept of patronage-democracy within and across countries. The several available measures of government size can be misleading, since they typically underestimate the size of the state.[xii] And there are no reliable measures of the degree of discretion available to state officials. [xiii] In order to construct trustworthy cross-national measures for the concept of patronage-democracy, therefore, it is necessary first to sift through country-specific data. I show here, on the basis of such data, that India is one example of a patronage-democracy. While conducting a similar analysis for other countries is beyond the scope of this work, secondary literature suggests that other examples of patronage-democracies are likely to abound, particularly in Asia and Africa, where colonial rule left behind a legacy of state-dominated economies. Additional examples of patronage-

democracies in these regions, apart from India, might include intermittently Nigeria, Zambia, and Senegal.[xiv] Patronage-democracies may also be found in the postcommunist world, because of the sprawling state apparatuses inherited from communist rule, and in some postindustrial states.[xv] Finally, some large American cities have historically approximated the conditions for patronage-democracy during some periods, even when the United States as a whole might not qualify for such a classification.[xvi]

II Background

Although political parties are among the central disciplinary preoccupations of political scientists, we have not so far identified the *ethnic* political party as a distinct phenomenon, or treated the question of ethnic party performance as a puzzle deserving theoretical attention. Instead, a voluminous literature addresses the rise of ethnic parties as part of the broader puzzle of ethnic "identification," a term used interchangeably with ethnic "participation," ethnic "mobilization," ethnic "collective action," ethnic "conflict," ethnic "competition," and ethnic "group formation."

Theories of ethnic "identification" and its purported synonyms fall into two broad families, distinguished by the assumptions that each makes about individual motivations. Materialist approaches, exemplified by the work of Robert Bates, Michael Hechter, Albert Breton, and Alvin Rabushka and Kenneth Shepsle, assume that individuals are motivated primarily by a desire for the material "benefits of modernity," such as land, jobs, and markets. [xvii] Donald Horowitz's influential study *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* presents an alternative, social-psychological theory of ethnic conflict.[xviii] Drawing upon

social identity theory as developed by Henri Tajfel, Horowitz argues that individuals are motivated instead by a desire for greater self-esteem.[xix] But despite their distinct assumptions about individual motivations and the distinct variables that they privilege in their analyses, both of these theoretical families assume, explicitly or implicitly, that the success of ethnic parties is a natural by-product of the process by which ethnic identities become politically salient.[xx] As Horowitz puts it, political entrepreneurs who float ethnic parties in ethnically divided societies find "a ready-made clientele ... waiting to be led."[xxi]

But ethnic parties often fail to attract the support of their target ethnic categories across space and time, even when the ethnic identities they seek to mobilize are politically salient. Consider the following examples:

- Although the pro-Yoruba Action Group in Nigeria was successful in obtaining majority support among Yorubas in the Western Region in 1960, it failed to win the support of Yorubas in Ibadan, Ilesha, and Oyo. And its vote share was cut in half four years later.[xxii] Yet Nigeria is among the textbook examples of ethnically divided polities, and divisions between the Yorubas, the Hausa-Fulanis, and the Igbos were salient during this period.[xxiii]

- The pro-Buganda Kabaka Yekka (KY) obtained the support of the majority of the Ganda in Uganda in 1962, but lost influence quickly thereafter, despite the salience of Ganda nationalism at the time.[xxiv]

- The ethnoregional Scottish National Party (SNP) obtained the support of only 20 percent of Scots in the 1992 and 1997 general elections in Britain, with the rest voting for the Labour and Conservative Parties.[xxv] Yet in surveys conducted during these elections, over 60 percent of Scots reported their "national identity" as more Scottish than British or Scottish rather than British.[xxvi]

- The Tamil-Sinhala cleavage dominated politics in post-colonial Sri Lanka.[xxvii] Yet close to 50 percent of Tamils did not vote for the two principal Tamil parties, the Federal Party and the Tamil Congress, in the 1960s and 70s.[xxviii]

- In the 1994 and 1999 elections, the pro-Zulu Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) in South Africa obtained the support of a majority of Zulus in the province of Natal, but not in the provinces of Gauteng and Mpumalanga. And even in Natal, a substantial percentage of Zulus did not support the IFP.[xxix] Yet a Zulu political identity has been among the most salient political identities in post-independence South Africa.

To the extent that general theories of ethnic identification cannot explain the *failure* of ethnic parties to obtain the support of their target ethnic categories across space and time, they cannot fully explain their success.

This book starts from the premise that in order to explain ethnic party performance, it is necessary first to detach the process of giving and seeking votes from

the umbrella concept of ethnic "identification" and other interchangeably used terms. Such umbrella concepts group disparate types of ethnically motivated activity--including voting, protest, riots, war and genocide--in the same analytical category. An explanatory strategy that disaggregates these umbrella concepts into their component parts allows us to investigate the specific variables and processes that explain each phenomenon. Separate models of voting, protest, riots, war, and genocide may well illuminate similarities in the processes that lead individuals to participate in them. Such similarities, however, should be demonstrated rather than assumed to exist.

III Theory

Accordingly, this book develops a theory explaining when and why voters and elites in patronage-democracies privilege ethnic identities in their vote-giving and vote-seeking strategies. Synthesizing insights from both the materialist and social-psychological approaches, I assume that individual voters and elites in patronage-democracies are motivated by a desire for either material or psychic goods or some combination of the two. Regardless of the type of good they seek, however, I take them to be instrumental actors who invest in an identity because it offers them the best available means by which to obtain desired benefits, and not because such identification is valuable in itself. In this regard, the argument belongs to the family of "thin" rational choice explanations that abandon the narrow assumption that individuals are economically motivated but retain the assumption that individuals are instrumentally rational actors who pursue their objectives, however defined, by selecting those means that maximize their chance of obtaining them.[xxx]

In a patronage-democracy, the state is the principal means of obtaining both a better livelihood and higher status. For upwardly mobile "elites," by which I mean "modern men"--urbanized, educated and economically better off than the rest of the population--state employment or political office promises the best prospect of material advancement. And because individuals who control the state are in a position of power over the lives of others, it also brings with it higher status. For individuals who do not have the means to launch a bid for political office, proximity to those who seek state office becomes the principal source of both material and psychic benefits. Ties to a political patron increase a voter's chances of obtaining valued state resources and services. At the same time, they allow her the chance to bask in the reflected status of the patron. Patronage-democracies, therefore, produce an overwhelming preoccupation with politics on the part of both elites and voters seeking both material and psychic goods.

How do individual, benefit-seeking voters in patronage-democracies choose between competing elites vying for their vote? And how do individual, office-seeking elites decide whose votes to seek? The voting decision in a patronage-democracy is characterized by severe information constraints. These information constraints, I argue, force voters and politicians to favour co-ethnics in the delivery of benefits andvotes. The result, described in Figure 1.1, is a self-enforcing and reinforcing equilibrium of ethnic favouritism.

[FIGURE 1.1 HERE]

The remainder of the argument connects these individual microfoundations to a hypothesis explaining and predicting ethnic party performance in patronage-democracies. The logic underlying this hypothesis is outlined as follows:

If a benefit-seeking voter expects to obtain the greatest material and psychic satisfaction from individual elites from her "own" ethnic group who occupy elected office, *she should be indifferent to the type of party that puts such elites in office*. As long as a political party installs co-ethnics in positions of power, the voter can expect to obtain access to both types of benefits, regardless of the platform of the party to which these elites belong. The most credible signal of whom a party expects to install in state office if it wins the election is, in turn, not *what it says* but *who it is*. Elites from those ethnic categories who are best represented in positions of power and prestige in the party organization and previous governments are also most likely to capture the plum positions of state if the party comes to power. Elites from those ethnic categories who are in subordinate positions in the party organization and previous governments are least likely to capture state office if the party captures power. Faced with a choice between parties, therefore, an individual voter in a patronage democracy should formulate preferences across parties by counting heads, preferring the party that represents elites from her "own" ethnic category to the greatest degree, regardless of whether it defines itself as an ethnic, multiethnic or nonethnic party.

For an instrumental, benefit-seeking voter, however, preferences should not automatically translate into votes. If a voter seeks benefits from elected officials who

control the state, then she should not vote for their preferred party unless it has a reasonable chance of obtaining control of or influence over the state apparatus. A party that wins control of the government--or at a minimum, obtains influence over the victory or defeat of its opponents--has the resources to distribute to its supporters both material benefits and the status benefits that come from establishing superiority in the political arena. A party without control of government and without influence over someone else's victory or loss, however, has neither the resources to distribute material benefits nor the status benefits that come from the acquisition of political power. The voter, therefore, should vote for her preferred party only if it has a reasonable chance of obtaining control or influence after the election and not otherwise. In other words, we should expect instrumental voters to also be strategic voters.

If voters formulate preferences across parties by counting the heads of co-ethnics across parties, then it follows that they can form a reasonable expectation about the likely electoral outcome by counting the heads of members of their own category and others in the electorate. This head count would allow voters to guess the numerical strength of others with the same preferences. If voters from their ethnic category are numerous enough to take their preferred party past the threshold of winning or influence, they will have a reasonable expectation that they could place the party in control of the state apparatus through coordinated action. However, if voters from their ethnic category are too few to take their preferred party past the threshold of winning or influence, they will have a reasonable expectation that even coordinated action on the part of all co-ethnics

will not catapult their preferred party into state office. As a consequence, they should not vote for this party even if they prefer it to the others.

Based on the propositions just summarized, a preliminary version of the main hypothesis proposed by this book can now be stated: An ethnic party is likely to succeed in a patronage-democracy when it provides elites from across the "subdivisions" included in its target ethnic category or categories with greater opportunities for ascent within its party organization than the competition, and when   voters from its target ethnic category or categories are numerous enough to take the party to a winning or influential position.

The optimal size of an ethnic category necessary to take a party past the threshold of winning and influence varies with the design of the government, party, and electoral systems, taken together. In general, proportional (PR) electoral systems with several parties and a coalition government allow small ethnic groups a greater degree of efficacy than first-past-the-post (FPTP) systems with two parties and a majoritarian form of government, which favour larger groups. As the number of parties in an FPTP system increases, other things being equal, however, the threshold of winning is reduced, increasing the efficacy of small groups. It follows that ethnic parties that seek the support of large ethnic categories, other things equal, are more likely to be successful across institutional contexts, while ethnic parties mobilizing small groups, other things equal, are less likely to succeed in pure FPTP systems with two parties and a majoritarian government, and more likely to succeed in FPTP systems with several parties or in PR systems with several parties and a coalition government.

I describe this hypothesis as "preliminary" because it raises a second, more fundamental question: What determines the ability of any political party to incorporate upwardly mobile elites seeking political office? Does an ethnic party not have a natural advantage in the representation of elites from across the spectrum of subdivisions in its target ethnic category?

The answer, I argue, is no. Just as benefit-seeking voters in a patronage-democracy are indifferent to the type of party that gives them access to benefits, office-seeking elites are indifferent to the type of party that offers them access to office. The incorporation of new elites, however, is a deeply intractable problem for any political party--ethnic, nonethnic, or multiethnic. The allotment of party posts to new elites usually means the displacement of their previous occupants. As a result, political parties seeking to induct new elites are faced with a collective action problem: Those already entrenched within the party apparatus are likely to support the idea of elite incorporation into the party as a whole but to resist the incorporation of such elites into their own party units. The ability of any political party to solve this collective action problem depends, I argue, on a combination of its probability of winning and its organizational structure. Given an equal probability of winning, parties with competitive rules for intraparty advancement are more successful at elite incorporation than parties with centralized rules for intraparty advancement, regardless of whether they are ethnic, nonethnic or multiethnic.

The central hypothesis of this book can now be restated in final form: Ethnic parties are most likely to succeed in patronage-democracies when they have competitive rules for intraparty advancement and the ethnic group they seek to mobilize is larger than the threshold of winning or leverage imposed by the electoral system. The adoption of centralized rules for intraparty advancement, and/or a negative difference between the size of the target ethnic constituency and the threshold of winning, increase the likelihood of failure.

To the extent that it depends upon the conjunction of organizational, demographic, and institutional variables, the success of an ethnic party is far from a foregone conclusion. Given the challenge of creating and maintaining a competitive intraparty organization, a favourable system of ethnic categorization, and a stable competitive configuration, creating and maintaining successful ethnic parties may, in fact, be an unusually difficult task.

IV Method

Although I have just presented the theory in abstract terms, it was not developed in abstract fashion. Rather, it was built by conducting a comparative ethnography of the processes by which a single ethnic party went about building support across Indian states and theorizing about the mechanisms that made it successful in some states and unsuccessful in others. The mechanisms identified through ethnographic analysis were then tested against new sources of data from within the sample of Indian states, generated

using new methods, including survey research, content analysis, and the Ecological

Inference Method developed by Gary King.[xxxi]

The ethnic party that I focus on is the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) during the

years 1984-98. The BSP takes its name from the word *Bahujan*, meaning "majority of

the people." The BSP's long-term goal during this period was the political consolidation

of caste and religious minorities in India, who collectively constitute a majority of the

population, in opposition to the Hindu upper castes. Its immediate target constituency,

however, were India's "Scheduled Castes" (SCs). The Scheduled Castes are over 400

castes that have historically been treated as "untouchable" by Hindu society. The term

"Scheduled" refers to the government schedule in which they were originally listed as

being eligible for affirmative action benefits. I restrict the analysis to 1984-98 since this

is the period when the BSP approximated most closely the definition of an ethnic party

laid out earlier. Since 1998, the party has begun to eliminate the line of exclusion

between the *Bahujan* and the Hindu upper castes, thus transforming itself from an ethnic

to a multi-ethnic party.[xxxii]

This close focus on the within-country variation in the performance of a single

ethnic party is a valuable method for theory construction, which is the principal analytical

burden of this book. Ethnographic analysis, by illuminating the processes by which an

ethnic party courts and obtains voter support, makes it possible to identify the variables

associated with success or failure and to model the mechanisms by which they produce

one outcome rather than another.   At the same time, combining ethnography with

controlled comparison is more likely than an ethnographic study of a single case to produce a generalizable argument. Tracing a process in a single case may reveal several variables and mechanisms to be plausibly linked with the outcome of interest, some only coincidentally. Multiple ethnographies conducted across sites that are otherwise similar, by revealing which variables and mechanisms recur systematically across observations, are more likely to isolate key variables and mechanisms.

Three objections might be raised at the attempt to build a generalizable argument about ethnic parties from a study of the BSP. First, to the extent that the term "Scheduled Caste" originated in a government label, one might argue that it does not describe a "natural" ethnic category. But we know now from an extensive literature on historical institutionalist approaches to ethnic identities that the origin of many ethnic categories that appear to be "natural" lies in the official classifications imposed by the state. In its official origins, then, the Scheduled Caste category is typical rather than exceptional, resembling "Hindus" in India, "the Yoruba" in Nigeria, "the Yao" in Malawi, the "Bemba" in Zambia, and "Hispanics" and "African Americans" in the United States.[xxxiii] Indeed, if we confer the label of an ethnic group only on "natural" categories, we may well be left with no ethnic categories altogether.

According to a second objection, the BSP is better described as a multi-ethnic rather than an ethnic party, on the grounds that it brings together several *individual* castes within the category Scheduled Caste, such as Chamars, Holeyas, or Balimikis. But, as I noted earlier, all ethnic categories have an essentially dual nature, existing

simultaneously as single and composite categories. In this too, the Scheduled Castes are typical rather than exceptional. The individual "subcategories" that make up the category "Scheduled Caste" do not escape this duality. As I will point out in Chapters 7 and 8, they can themselves be subdivided into further component units at the same time that they exist as "single" categories.

According to a third objection, "ranked" social systems such as caste, in which ethnicity and class coincide, are qualitatively different from unranked social systems with different implications for political behaviour.[xxxiv] This may restrict the applicability of an argument developed from the study of a caste-based party to parties mobilizing other ethnic categories. It may well be the case that "ranked" and "unranked" societies are qualitatively different and deserve to be analyzed separately. Nevertheless, they are common. Examples of sets of ethnic categories with ranked relationships to each other might include Hutus and Tutsis in Rwanda and Burundi, earlier and later immigrants in American cities,[xxxv] and Englishmen and others in the Celtic periphery.[xxxvi] An argument applicable only to ranked ethnic groups, therefore, should in principle apply to a significant family of cases.

But the distinction between ranked and unranked social systems may be better seen as one of degree rather than type. Most modern societies, as one study of ethnic politics points out, are characterized by "asymmetrical, nonrandom, self-reproducing correlations between ethnic categories on the one hand and socioeconomic classes and political power on the other hand, that is, by structured inter-ethnic inequalities." [xxxvii]   It

might be more illuminating, then, to think of ranked and unranked systems as endpoints on a scale that orders ethnic groups according to the size of the correlation between class and ethnicity rather than as dichotomous categories. Scheduled Castes in India are likely to lie towards one extreme of this scale. But a study of such extreme cases may be useful in revealing in bold relief patterns that are muted in cases that lie closer to the centre.

Ultimately, the question of whether a hypothesis developed from the study of the BSP is more generally applicable can only be answered empirically. In this book, I apply this hypothesis to explaining the performance of three ethnic parties in India: the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party among Hindus across Indian states in 1991; the Dravida Munnetra Kazagham (DMK), a linguistic party, among Tamil-speakers in Tamil Nadu in 1967; and the pro-Jharkhandi Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM), a regionalist party, among "Jharkhandis" in 2000. These cases were chosen to maximize variation in time and space; the type of category (caste, religion, language, region, and tribe) targeted by the ethnic party; and the relative size of the ethnic category (majority and minority) that each party tries to mobilize. The studies of the BJP, DMK, and JMM indicate that the hypothesis developed from the study of a caste-based party can be useful in illuminating the variation in the performance of types of ethnic parties in India. But a systematic attempt to evaluate and refine the hypothesis using new data from other ethnic parties in India and other patronage-democracies remains to be undertaken.

V Data

The Scheduled Castes constitute 16.5 percent of the Indian population[xxxviii] and

are found in varying proportions in almost all of the twenty-six Indian states, with the

exception of the northeast.[xxxix]   Map 1.1 describes the percentage of the population made

up by Scheduled Castes in each state, based on 1991 census figures.

[MAPS 1.1 AND 1.2 HERE]

In most states, the BSP is the principal party that stands explicitly and primarily

for the cause of the Scheduled Castes against Hindu the upper castes.[xl] The government is

the principal provider of goods and services in each state. The first-past-the-post

electoral system is replicated in every Indian state. The majority of electoral

constituencies in India are ethnically heterogeneous, and Scheduled Castes are found in a

majority of constituencies. The BSP employs the same method to mobilize Scheduled

Castes in each state. Yet, as Map 1.2 shows, the BSP has not obtained uniform support

from the Scheduled Castes across Indian states (See Appendix F for the method of

estimating the data summarized in this map and the data on which the map is based). A

majority of Scheduled Castes massed behind the BSP in one state: Uttar Pradesh, in

which 59 percent of Scheduled Castes, on average, voted for the BSP across five

parliamentary elections.[xli] Based on its support among Scheduled Castes, the party

became a partner in coalition governments in Uttar Pradesh three times between 1984 and

1998. In a second class of states, the BSP has moderate levels of support among Scheduled Castes, ranging from 47 percent in Jammu and Kashmir to 18 percent in the state of Haryana. Finally, in the third and largest class of states, the BSP has repeatedly drawn a blank across five elections.

Why does the same party, employing the same strategy, operating in states with identical institutional contexts, meet with such tremendous variation in outcomes? I examine the particular processes that have led the BSP to succeed or fail in otherwise similar environments in a sample of three Indian states, selected according to the degree of success obtained by the BSP among Scheduled Castes: Uttar Pradesh, in which the BSP obtained majority support among Scheduled Castes; Punjab, in which it obtained moderate levels of support; and Karnataka in which it obtained negligible levels of support. Uttar Pradesh (U. P.), situated in northern India, is the most populous of India's 25 states. With a population of 139 million, it is almost as large in population as the Russian Federation, and, if it were a country by itself, it would be the seventh largest country in the world.[xlii] Punjab, situated in north-western India, shares a border with Pakistan. With a population of twenty million, it is one of India's smaller states but has the same population size as many large countries including Ghana, Uganda and Australia. Karnataka, situated in South India, has a population of almost 45 million. Of medium size among Indian states, it exceeds the population of major countries including Canada and South Africa. The criteria for case selection are discussed further in Chapter 7.

I found that in each state, operating under the constraints of India's patronage-democracy, Scheduled Caste voters and others believed that their "own" man was most likely to favour them in the business of obtaining office or distributing benefits. Given their trust in co-ethnics, therefore, Scheduled Caste voters preferred the BSP only when it gave greater representational opportunities to elites from their subdivision among the Scheduled Castes in its party organization and government than the competition, and not otherwise. And even when they preferred the BSP, Scheduled Caste voters acted strategically, voting for the party only when it was in a winning or influential position, and not otherwise.

The variation in the performance of the BSP across the three states under study can be explained, therefore, either as the consequence of variation in the relative representational opportunities offered by the BSP and its competition to Scheduled Caste elites, or variation in the ability of Scheduled Caste voters to take the BSP past the threshold of winning or leverage through coordinated action, or by a combination of the two conditions.

- In Uttar Pradesh, in which the party obtained a majority, it gave greater representation to Scheduled Caste elites, especially those from the "Chamar" category among the Scheduled Castes, than the competition, and, through a series of electoral alliances in Uttar Pradesh's multiparty system, presented itself as a viable contender for control of or influence in coalition governments. Chamars constitute a majority among the

Scheduled Castes in Uttar Pradesh. Consequently, a majority of Scheduled Castes massed behind the BSP in this state.

- In Punjab, Chamar voters, whose elites were best represented in the BSP organization, constitute a minority of Scheduled Castes in the state. Further, although the numerical strength of Chamar voters gave them leverage in some constituencies, the BSP's failure to negotiate electoral alliances made it difficult for the party to obtain a winning position. The combination of the limited representation given to non-Chamar elites in the BSP and the limited efficacy of Chamar voters resulted in only moderate success for the BSP among Scheduled Caste voters in Punjab.

- In Karnataka, the desire of Scheduled Caste voters to install co-ethnics in power had already been satisfied by the high degree of representation given to Scheduled Caste elites by other political parties. Consequently, Scheduled Caste voters had no incentive to vote for the BSP.

This argument constitutes a more compelling explanation for the variation in the performance of the BSP across Scheduled Castes than other, simpler, arguments that attribute this variation to variation in organizational investment across states; linguistic and regional differences across states; differences in the degree of fragmentation of the Scheduled Caste category across states; differences in the composition of the Scheduled Caste category across states; and differences in the level of grievance of Scheduled Castes. These alternative explanations are discussed in Chapter 7.

What explains, in turn, the differential incorporation of Scheduled Caste elites across different parties and across different states? In each state, the BSP's principal competition was the Congress Party. Why did Congress incorporate Scheduled Caste elites in some states but not others? And why did the BSP, a party that specifically targeted Scheduled Caste voters, not provide representation to the entire spectrum of Scheduled Caste elites? The key variable determining whether or not either political party was able to give Scheduled Castes representation, I found, depended upon the design of the internal party organization combined with its control of government.

The argument is supported by comparative studies of the BJP, the DMK, and the JMM. Although the BJP openly championed the cause of India's Hindu majority in 1991, it obtained the support of only one-fourth of India's Hindu majority in that election. There was, furthermore, significant variation in the degree of support for the BJP among Hindus across Indian states. Maps 1.3 and 1.4 summarize the population of Hindus across Indian states and the variation in the degree of support obtained by the BJP among those Hindus. The DMK openly championed the interests of Tamil speakers in the state of Tamil Nadu in 1967. It obtained the support of a near-majority of Tamils in that election. Significantly, however, a large percentage of Tamil speakers in Tamil Nadu, especially in the southern part of the state, did not vote for the DMK. Maps 1.5 and 1.6 summarize the population of Tamils across Tamil Nadu and the variation in the degree of support obtained by the DMK among Tamils across districts in Tamil Nadu in 1967. The JMM, finally, is a regionalist party that has, since its founding in 1972, called for the carving

out of a separate state of Jharkhand from the districts of the Indian state of Bihar (and adjoining states). Yet even at the peak of its electoral performance, in the 2000 legislative assembly elections in Bihar, the party obtained the support of less than one-fifth of the Jharkhandis, concentrated mostly in the eastern belt of Jharkhand. Map 1.7 summarizes the percentage of support obtained by the JMM in the region of Jharkhand in these elections.

[MAPS 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, AND 1.7 HERE]

In each case, the relative opportunities for representation given to elites from across the spectrum of the target ethnic groups, combined with the expectations of the efficacy of the voters whose elites found representation, prove to be a more plausible explanation for the performance of these parties than the alternatives. Further, these cases show in even sharper relief the importance of the internal rules of intraparty advancement in creating these representational opportunities. The DMK, with a competitive organizational structure, was able to represent a broad spectrum of elites and so capture the vote of the largest percentage of its target ethnic category. The BJP, with a "semi-competitive" structure, made significant but limited progress in the race for elite incorporation. But the JMM, with the weakest and most centralized organizational structure of the three parties, was not able to broaden its ethnic profile beyond its founder elites.

VI Sources

For information on elite motivations, I rely upon over 200 interviews conducted between 1996 and 1998 with leaders and workers of the BSP and with its competition, conducted principally in the three states of Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, and Punjab, and less intensively in the states of Delhi, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, West Bengal, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Rajasthan. . Among these states, my research is informed particularly by election campaigns in twenty constituencies (described in Appendix A). I combine information gleaned from these interviews with an ethnographic study of four election campaigns stretching from 1996 to 1998 in twenty constituencies (described in Appendix B) and a content analysis of party pronouncements as recorded in newspaper sources and in tape recordings of party rallies that I attended (described in Appendix C).

For information on voter motivations and behaviour, I draw upon two principal sources in addition to the ethnographic data. First, I rely upon election surveys conducted between 1996 and 1998 by the National Election Studies Project at the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (described in Appendix D). These surveys represent the first large-scale effort to study the Indian electorate since 1971, and, as such, are a new and invaluable source of information on voting behaviour in India. Second, I undertake a quantitative analysis of a data set combining electoral and demographic variables for the 425 state assembly constituencies in Uttar Pradesh, drawing upon both census data and the election results published by the Election Commission of India. In order to identify patterns of individual voting behaviour from aggregate-level data, I utilize King's

ecological inference method (EI). The EI method opens up significant possibilities for research on ethnic voting, which I discuss in Appendix E.

I also draw on a variety of documentary sources, including (1) miscellaneous official data obtained from various government departments at the state level and from the National Commission for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in New Delhi; (2) official literature of the Bahujan Samaj Party, including back issues of the party magazine, *Oppressed Indian* (English), and its newspaper, *Bahujan Sanghatak* (Hindi); (3) official literature of other political parties; and (4) clippings obtained from the following newspapers: *The Times of India* (Delhi), *Hindustan Times* (Delhi), *Indian Express* (Delhi), *The Hindu* (Delhi), *Pioneer* (Lucknow/Delhi), *Tribune* (Chandigarh), *Ajit* (Jullundur), and *Deccan Herald* (Karnataka).

Finally, in addition to these primary sources, I rely on the well-developed body of secondary literature on Indian politics. Political parties in general, and ethnic parties in particular, have been the subject of sustained attention among scholars of Indian politics. The theoretical and empirical richness of this literature provides a particularly strong foundation on which to construct a theory of ethnic party success.

VII Overview

The book is divided into two parts. Part I, comprised of Chapters 2-5, outlines the theoretical argument. Chapter 2 establishes the link between limited information and the bias toward ethnic categorization. Chapter 3 shows that when a patronage-democracy

approximates the conditions of limited information, it is likely to be characterized by pervasive expectations of ethnic favouritism on the part of both voters and elites. Chapter 4 builds upon the propositions introduced in the preceding chapters to develop the hypothesis that an ethnic party is most likely to succeed in a patronage-democracy when it offers greater representational opportunities to elites from its target ethnic category than the competition, and when the size of its target ethnic category is large enough to take it past the threshold of winning or influence. Chapter 5 proposes a model explaining variation in representational opportunities across parties, arguing that, other things being equal, parties with competitive rules for intraparty advancement are more likely to incorporate new elites than parties with centralized rules.

Part II, comprised of Chapters 6-12, applies the argument to explaining the data. Chapter 6 establishes that the Indian political system is a patronage-democracy. This chapter sets the stage for the subsequent exploration of the performance of the BSP among Scheduled Caste elites and voters. Chapter 7 provides a general introduction to the Bahujan Samaj Party, the electoral context in which it operates, alternative explanations for the pattern of variation in its performance, and the states that I focus on in investigating this variation. Chapter 8 shows that a representational blockage for upwardly mobile Scheduled Caste elites existed in the two states of Uttar Pradesh and Punjab, but not in the state of Karnataka. As a consequence, the BSP has been able to present itself as a viable option on the electoral market in Uttar Pradesh and Punjab, but not in Karnataka. Chapter 9 shows that Scheduled Caste voters and others formulate preferences across parties not by assessing their comparative issue positions, but by

"counting heads" of elites belonging to their "own" ethnic categories across parties. Where the BSP has a monopoly on the representation of Scheduled Caste elites, Scheduled Caste voters are more likely to prefer the BSP than other parties. And even where the BSP has a monopoly on the representation of Scheduled Caste elites, voters from those Scheduled Caste categories whose elites are best represented in the BSP are more likely to prefer the BSP than voters from Scheduled Caste categories whose elites were less well represented. Chapter 10 shows that even when they prefer the BSP, significant numbers of Scheduled Caste voters are strategic voters who vote for the BSP only when it is in a winning or influential position, and not otherwise. Chapter 11 shows that the ability of both the Congress and the BSP to incorporate Scheduled Caste elites depends, other things being equal, upon their internal organizational structure. Chapter 12 applies this hypothesis to explaining the performance of the Hindu nationalist BJP in 1991, the pro-Tamil DMK in the state of Tamil Nadu in 1967, and the regionalist JMM in the state of Bihar in 2000.

Chapter 13, the conclusion, draws out the implications of this argument for democratic stability. This chapter shows, drawing on examples from post-independence Indian politics, that politicians can transform election results by reconstructing the categories with which voters identify. Such heresthetical maneuvers, I argue here, are likely to sustain democracy in patronage-democracies by introducing uncertainty into the final outcome.

PART I: THEORY

Chapter 2

Limited Information and Ethnic Categorization

This chapter proposes a connection between limited information and the use of ethnic cues to identify and distinguish between individuals. I argue here that multiple sources of costless data about an individual's ethnic identities are available in most situations, while costless data on an individual's nonethnic identities (e.g. class identity, profession, income, place of residence, ideological affiliation, educational background) are less frequently available and then typically from fewer sources. Consequently, limited information settings bias observers who are distinguishing between individuals toward schemes of ethnic categorization. Limited information settings, I should emphasize, are *sufficient* to produce a tendency toward ethnic categorization, according to this argument, but not necessary. A similar tendency may also originate from other sources.

The term "limited information" has come to be used loosely to describe the information environment in all situations of political decision making. I use it here in a more precise sense. By a limited information situation, I mean a decision-making situation in which *observers are called upon to identify and distinguish between individuals* under severe information constraints. This chapter develops a logic by which this narrowly defined type of limited information setting should bias observers toward schemes of ethnic categorization. I am not concerned here, however, with settings in which individuals are called upon to make different types of decisions, such as distinguishing between groups, ascertaining the link between policy and outcome,

identifying the main points of a party platform, and so on. These different types of

limited information setting may well require different types of shortcuts.

Section I reviews the literature on the use of ethnic cues as information shortcuts;

section II compares the availability of costless data about an individual's ethnic and non-

ethnic identities; and section III shows how the abundance of costless data on ethnic

identities, combined with the scarcity of costless data on non-ethnic identities, biases

individuals toward schemes of ethnic categorization in limited information settings of the

type just defined.

I. Background

The proposition that many consequential political and economic decisions are

made under conditions of limited information is, by now, a familiar one. It has spawned

entire fields of research in political science and economics on the use of information

shortcuts.[xliii] The observation that ethnic cues are one among many commonly used types

of information shortcut is also now commonplace. However, this literature is concerned

either with establishing that the use of ethnic cues as informational shortcuts is a rational

strategy or with investigating the *impact* of the use of such cues. It does not address the

cost of ethnic cues relative to the cost of other types of information shortcuts. And it does

not identify situations in which one type of cue is more likely to be usedthan another.

Consider first the abundant literature in economics on the use of ethnic cues.

George Akerlof argues, in a classic 1970 article, that employers often use the race of a

job applicant as an information shortcut in assessing that applicant's quality. The article's principal concern is to establish that "this decision may not reflect irrationality or prejudice – but profit maximization. For race may serve as a good statistic for the applicant's social background, quality of schooling and general job capabilities."[xliv] In subsequent work, Akerlof explores the consequences of the use of caste as a predictor of individual economic behaviour. [xlv] But both works treat race and other ethnic cues as elements in a broader set of equivalent information shortcuts, including age, class, profession, criminal record, organizational membership, friends, possessions, and jobs, and so on.

Similarly, Spence's work on market signaling demonstrates that wage differentials can persist between individuals of equivalent productivity when employers attach different subjective probabilities to the productivity of individuals of equivalent education from different racial groups.[xlvi] However, it does not ask why employers choose race as the relevant scheme of categorization rather than the alternatives. The extensive literature on the economics of racial discrimination makes the same omission. It establishes that racial discrimination can persist when employers use race as a relatively "costless" indicator of productivity.[xlvii] But it assumes that cues other than ethnicity, such as school diplomas, are equally costless, and it does not identify situations under which employers are more likely to privilege one over the other. [xlviii]

The literature on information shortcuts in political science is not much better. The early literature in this field overlooks entirely the use of ethnic cues as information

shortcuts. In the pioneering work on the use of information shortcuts in voting behaviour, for instance, Anthony Downs identifies ideology as the voter's principal shortcut: "Ideologies help him focus attention on the differences between parties; therefore they can be used as samples of all the differentiating stands. With this short cut a voter can save himself the cost of being informed upon a wider range of issues."[xlix] There is no discussion by Downs of ethnic cues or of any type of information shortcuts other than ideology. Hinich and Munger develop Downs's argument further, providing a functional theory of ideology in politics according to which ideologies persist because they transmit useful information to voters about how candidates are likely to act on a range of issues. In their words: "The policy issues on which an elected official must decide are very difficult for voters to predict. Consequently, voters must depend on his ideological position, and his apparent commitment to it, as guides for judgment or comparison."[l] They do not, however, explain why voters in a limited information environment "must" depend on the candidate's ideological position rather than on other traits, including education, ethnic identity, character, reputation, and class.

More recent work identifies a wider range of shortcuts used by voters and explicitly names ethnic cues as one of them. Samuel Popkin is perhaps the strongest advocate of the position that "characteristics such as a candidate's race, ethnicity, religion… are important cues."[li] Similarly, Daniel Posner notes that ethnicity in Zambia is useful "because of the information it provides about the expected behaviour of elected officials."[lii] However, this later literature is concerned simply with establishing the first-order proposition that voters use ethnic cues, among other types of cues, as information

shortcuts and that the use of such cues is rational. The only ones to raise the second-order question of when and why voters use one type of cue rather than another are Lupia and McCubbins. In their words: "To understand why people cast the votes they do, we must understand how they choose among the cues available to them."[liii] Ultimately, however, they beg their own question. Voters choose those cues, they argue, that are "better indicators of a candidate's or speaker's knowledge and trust than other available cues."[liv] But they tell us little about which types of cues are more likely to convey information about knowledgeability and trustworthiness than others. The sections that follow identify one type of situation in which individuals should privilege ethnic cues over others.

II There are Typically Multiple Sources of Costless Data About an Individual's Ethnic Identities, While Costless Data About an Individual's Non-Ethnic Identities are Scarce.

The argument here builds upon Frederik Barth's insight that ethnic groups are defined, not by internal homogeneity, but by the possession of a limited set of "cultural differentiae" which separate insiders from outsiders.[lv] These differentiae may be acquired involuntarily at birth (e.g., skin colour) or adopted voluntarily during a lifetime (e.g., language, or a change of name). Regardless of their initial origin, however, these differentiae are passed on to in-group members through descent. While some of these differentiae may be concealed (for instance, many Brahmins wear a sacred thread under their garments), all persons openly display a subset of these differentiae in their names, features, speech and appearance. An individual's nonethnic identities may sometimes also be associated with cultural differentiae. For instance, consumption patterns and

tastes can often tell us a great deal about class or income. However, these cultural

differentiae are typically displayed less often and less conspicuously.

This open display of ethnic markers means that *some* data about an individual's

ethnic identity is costlessly available in any elementary interaction, no matter what the

context of observation. Costless data about nonethnic identities, by contrast, is not

typically available, and even then not in all contexts. Further, there are typically *multiple*

sources of costless data about an individual's ethnic identities, while costless data about

nonethnic identities, even when it exists, is likely to be from a single source. In order to

obtain comparable information about an individual's nonethnic identities, therefore, the

observer must pay the cost of conducting a background check. Such a cost entails

securing the cooperation of the individual, or paying some third party to obtain and

record answers to questions about profession, education, income, family background,

place of residence, assets, tastes, organizational memberships, viewpoints, and other

similar variables.

This argument is summarized in Table 2.1. The first column lists different types

of identities, often overlapping, that are most relevant in political and economic

situations. Data sources such as name, features, speech, and appearance are all

categorized in the table as "costless," since the observer can obtain access to these data

simply by observation, without even enlisting the cooperation of the person being

observed. Data sources such as diplomas, résumés, individual records, interviews,

biographies, and third-party testimonies are collectively categorized as "costly," since an

individual needs to expend some effort in extracting these data. A check indicates that the data source typically provides data about the identity in question; a question mark indicates that the source *sometimes* provides data about the identity in question; and a blank space indicates that the source does not usually provide data about the identity in question.

[TABLE 2.1 HERE]

Name

Consider, first, the name. The name is typically packed with data about an individual's ethnic memberships. Simply by virtue of the language in which it is expressed, it carries encoded data about the linguistic categories to which a person belongs and does not belong. Because language can often be correlated with race, region, and/or religion, the name may also carry data about membership in these additional categories. For instance, Hindi names are likely to describe a nonwhite person, since Hindi speakers are mostly nonwhite; a north Indian rather than a south Indian, because Hindi is one of the languages spoken in northern rather than southern India; and so on. The surname, because it encodes data about membership in a descent group, also carries data about ethnic memberships. Naming conventions surrounding the last name are typically voluntarily adopted at some point. For instance, the last name "Kaur," which distinguishes Sikh women, originated in a religious movement whose purpose was to draw boundary lines between followers of the Sikh faith and others. Once adopted, however, the name is passed on to future generations at birth and becomes an ascriptive marker describing ethnic identities. First names, because they often celebrate some

cultural hero or symbol, carry additional data about ethnic memberships. For instance, the name "Ram" carries the data that its bearer is Hindu, since Ram is a Hindu deity; the name "Gautam" carries the data that its bearer is Buddhist, since Gautama is another name for the Buddha; the name "Ali" carries the data that its bearer is Muslim, since Ali is the name of the grandson of Prophet Muhammed; and the name Peter carries the data that its bearer is Christian, since Peter is the name of one of Christ's disciples.

The name typically does not carry data about nonethnic memberships. Take class as an example. We can infer data on class membership from the name only when class happens to coincide with ascriptive or ethnic categories. In Britain, for instance, family name can often be a predictor of class. However, no independent data on class are systematically encoded in the name. Similarly, the name does not carry data on income. Prominent exceptions such as "Rockefeller" and "Rothschild" prove the rule. In these exceptional cases, income identity is fused with the ascriptive identity of family. In the more typical case in which income and family do not coincide, we obtain no information about income from the name. The same argument applies to other nonethnic identities. The name usually carries no data about professional identity, educational qualifications, rural or urban background, ideological or organizational affiliations.

So far, I have simply stated that the name typically does not carry data about nonethnic identities. Can such data, however, not be acquired? Data on ethnic identities are often encoded in the name as a result of voluntary action initiated by missionaries, political entrepreneurs, or social reformers. Would it not be possible for entrepreneurs

with an interest in organizing a population according to nonethnic identities to encourage

the adoption of naming conventions that carry information about these nonethnic

categories?

Some examples will serve to illustrate why names not only *are* not, but *cannot* be

bearers of data about nonethnic identities, even if some entrepreneur has an interest in

creating such naming conventions. Imagine, for instance, the adoption of a naming

convention encoding class identity, defined by an individual's relationship to the mode of

production.[lvi] Once a set of individuals defined by their relationship to the mode of

production adopts a distinct naming convention, they will retain these names even when

their relationship to the mode of production changes. And their children will take these

names even when their own relationship to the mode of production is different from that

of their parents. As a result, over time the name will be emptied of the data that it initially

carried on class identity.

Consider now the possibility of adopting a naming convention carrying data about

professional identity. Again, once adopted and passed down to future generations, these

names become purely ascriptive markers and cease to carry information about the

professional identity of their bearers.   Take the case of Parsis in India, many of whom

adopted last names during the nineteenth century that carried data on their professions.

These names are now no longer informative about the profession of their bearer.

Although the last name "Vakil" means "lawyer," for instance, its bearer Ardeshir Vakil is

a writer; and even though he sports the last name "contractor," Nari Contractor is really a cricketer.

Next, consider the case of ideological affiliations. A zealous parent might name a child after a revered ideological figure. Such a name, however, tells us more about the affiliation of the bearer's parents and the context in which she was born than about her own identity. For instance, the Indian politician M. K. Stalin is not a communist but a member of the Tamil regional party, the Dravida Munnetra Kazagham (DMK). By a similar logic, naming conventions adopted to carry data on rural-urban differences, educational qualifications, or income background should cease to carry data about these identities over time and across generations.

Features

Let us move now to the a second source of costless data: physical features such as skin colour, type and colour of hair, height, build, shape of eyes and nose, eye colour, shape of face, and so on. Physical features contain a great deal of independent data about ethnic identities but no data about nonethnic identities. In large part, the information about ethnic identities available in physical features has been put there by biological processes. Skin colour, for instance, carries information about race and region of origin. However, data on ethnic identities contained in physical features can also be put there by human processes, as in the case of tribal markings. Physical features typically do not contain independent information, inherited or acquired, about nonethnic identities.

Speech

Consider now speech as a source of data. The language in which a person speaks, and her accent, typically carry data about her ethnic memberships. At a minimum, they convey data about linguistic memberships. And because language is typically correlated with region and race, and sometimes with religion, speech may also carry data about these other ethnic memberships as well.

Speech is also consistently informative about education, which can often produce a distinct accent and vocabulary. However, speech is less consistently informative about other identities. Speech patterns carry data on class to the extent that educational systems or ethnic categories are segregated by class. In the United Kingdom for instance, class-segregated educational systems in public schools and universities have produced distinct upper-class and working-class accents. However, in the United States, where educational systems are not segregated to the same degree, speech tells us less about class. Similarly, the information about income, profession, rural-urban background, ideological and organizational identities contained in speech patterns depends upon the incidental fact of separate educational systems for the members of these categories, or on a coincidence of these categories with ethnic categories.

Dress

Conventions relating to dress (e.g., clothes, jewelry, accessories, hairstyle) are the one costless source that can carry comparable amounts of data about both ethnic and nonethnic memberships, depending upon the context of observation. Clothes and appearance can carry data about ethnic identities (for instance, a *burkha* carries the

information that its wearer is Muslim, and a yarmulke the information that its wearer is Jewish). But appearance can also carry information about class. "There is an elite look in this country," writes Paul Fussell of the United States

> It requires women to be thin, with a hairstyle dating back eighteen or
> twenty years or so….They wear superbly fitting dresses and expensive
> but always understated shoes and handbags, with very little jewelry.
> They wear scarves – these instantly betoken class, because they are
> useless except as a caste mark. Men should be thin. No jewelry at all. No
> cigarette case. Moderate-length hair, never dyed or tinted, which is a
> middle-class or high-prole sign….[lvii]

 Fussell's tongue-in-cheek account underlines the existence of a number of cues that give away class identity. The story of upwardly mobile individuals seeking entry into a higher-class stratum, in fact, is precisely the story of an attempt to drop "giveaways" associated with the lower stratum and acquire those of the upper stratum. Dress can sometimes carry data on profession (for instance, the uniforms of nurses, policemen, and firemen, or the dark suits that are the "uniforms" of lawyers and bankers). Educational qualifications are precisely encoded in academic regalia. Appearance can also be informative about rural-urban identities: In developing economies, for instances,"westernized" clothes such as dresses and suits are commonly associated with the city, and "traditional" attire with the countryside. Similarly, ideological and organizational affiliations can also be signaled by uniforms, badges, and emblems.

Unlike other data sources, which carry the same information about the same identities regardless of the context of observation, however, the type of information carried by dress varies with the context of observation. When on her way to work, a person may dress differently than when on her way to the synagogue. The type of identity signaled by her dress will therefore also be different.

III Limited Information Settings Bias Observers towards Schemes of Ethnic Categorization

The multiple sources of costless data about an individual's ethnic memberships mean that an observer can typically guess an individual's ethnic identity on the basis of a relatively superficial interaction, even though such a guess may turn out to be erroneous. Further, observers can increase the precision of an ethnic categorization by triangulating the evidence contained in these multiple data sources, even though the final categorizaton may well remain inexact.

Let me illustrate with a personal example. My name stores the information that I belong to at least the following categories: Asian/South Asian/Indian/north Indian/Hindu. Observers who come across my name in a newspaper or hear someone mention it might place me in any of these categories, depending upon the context and their own level of background knowledge. It also stores the information that I do not belong to a range of other categories: Sikh/Muslim/Jewish/Malayali/black/white. Even those observers who cannot place me in any of the categories to which I belong might, at a minimum, be able to eliminate ethnic categories to which I do not belong. By looking at my skin colour,

hair, and features, a relatively unsophisticated observer who encounters me on a Boston subway might guess that I am Asian or at any rate of Asian origin, without a word exchanged. A more sophisticated observer, confronted with the information in the same context, might classify me as South Asian, or of South Asian origin.   And the same observer, confronted with the same information in Delhi rather than in Boston, would probably be able to use it to place me in narrower, more precise categories.

Note, first, that the possession of these markers does not yield any single or objectively correct classification. As the examples just mentioned illustrate, different spatial and temporal contexts may lead observers to code me differently. An observer who encounters me on a Boston subway would probably code me as Indian. However, for an observer who encounters me in Delhi, the category "Indian" would be uninformative: she would probably code me on the basis of one of the other categories in which I am eligible for membership, based on religion or caste or language. Second, different observers would code me differently depending upon the information they could bring to bear on the interpretation of the markers. Third, even if all observers used the same information, considerable uncertainty might remain. It is often difficult, for example, for even the most sophisticated observers to distinguish between individuals from India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh simply by looking at physical features or names. Fourth, regardless of, or even because of, her level of sophistication, the observer might simply get it wrong. Many Indians, for example, miscode me as Tamil or Bengali, when I am really north Indian. Fifth, the categories in which the observer places me need have no relationship to the categories with which I identify. I might think of myself primarily

as a scholar, rather than as a Hindu or an Indian or a north Indian, or an Asian, or whatever. However, the categories in which observers place me need have no relation to the categories in which I place myself. The key point here is that, notwithstanding such factors as the considerable heterogeneity within any single category, the differences in contexts in which the observation takes place, the different perspectives of different observers, the considerable room for ambiguity and error, and the individual's degree of identification with any of these categories, the name, features, speech, and appearance convey enough information for most observers to classify the individual as belonging to some ethnic category or another on the basis of a relatively superficial interaction. Just as importantly, observers can also identify ethnic categories to which the individual does not belong.

Such sorting of individuals according to nonethnic identities is typically less likely in superficial interactions, *even when such identities are salient*. Imagine, for instance, a society in which all individuals can be objectively classified as either "rich" or "poor." We could get at this objective reality simply by looking at the income distribution of a population and categorizing those above a given income level as rich and those below it as poor. Such a category may even have a subjective reality for those included in it. Political mobilization, for example, may make people aware of the categories in which they have been placed, so that those who are categorized as "rich" perceive themselves as being members of an imagined community of the rich, while those who are poor experience themselves as being "poor" and part of an imagined community of the poor. But how would observers sort individuals into these categories

on the basis of superficial interactions? As I argued in section II, names do not permit inferences about their bearers' income, unless income and ethnic categories happen to coincide. Physical features, similarly, carry no information about income. Speech patterns and dress may, in particular contexts, convey some data about income, but the intermittent presence of such data is likely to be drowned out by the ubiquitousness and abundance of data on ethnic identities. The principal way to code the "rich" and "poor" would therefore be to procure personalized information on economic background and lifestyle. Other nonethnic categorizations (upper-class vs. working class, urban vs. rural, landed vs. landless, farmer vs. peasant vs. worker) come with a similar lack of differentiating markers and therefore confront the observer with similarly higher costs if she is to obtain a coding based on these categories.

In any decision-making situation in which observers need to identify and distinguish between individuals under severe information constraints therefore, the default scheme of categorization they are likely to use is ethnic. The schemes of categorization that observers are likely to employ in such interactions as constructivist approaches to ethnic identity tell us, may be determined by several mechanisms, not necessarily mutually exclusive. [lviii]   One variant of constructivism identifies macrohistorical processes such as modernization as the key variables determining the interpretation of markers;[lix] another points to the role of a state-dominated economy,[lx] a third to the role of institutions,[lxi] and a fourth to the role of political entrepreneurship.[lxii] Schemes of categorization might also emerge endogenously, by affixing a label to some systematic variation in ascriptive markers. For instance, observers who note a systematic

regularity in skin colour among otherwise dissimilar individuals might systematically

label them according to skin colour--e.g., white and black. Many ethnic categories often

originate as no more than such a labeling, although they might later take on a life of their

own.

I do not attempt here to offer some relative evaluation of the importance of the

various determinants of these schemes of categorization, or to stipulate a priori that all

observers must function within some uniform scheme. The multiple schemes through

which individuals can be coded in principle, and the multiple mechanisms through which

these schemes might be created, present those who would benefit from standardizing

interpretations one way rather than another with a problem and an opportunity. The

precise mechanism that these entrepreneurs employ and the extent to which they succeed

in getting individuals to coordinate in using the scheme of their choice are likely to vary

with the context in which they function.

IV. Conclusion

In the next chapter, I will argue that the voting decision in a patronage-

democracy resembles a limited information setting of the sort described here, in which

observers are called upon to identify and distinguish between individuals. Another

example of political setting to which the argument might also is the case of "founding

elections" in new democracies. In the first competitive elections in new democracies,

candidates often stand on a clean slate. They have not yet established a record of deeds

and actions that voters can use to evaluate them. In such a setting, voters are likely to use

a scheme of "ethnic profiling" to distinguish among candidates, using ethnic identity as a predictor of future actions--not because they are not aware that other predictors might be more accurate, but because they do not have access to data about these other predictors. Competitive environments with unstable party systems are also likely to resemble the limited information setting described in this chapter. In such systems, the cost of keeping track of changing candidate affiliations and platforms is likely to be high. The more fluid a party system, the more costly obtaining and analyzing such information is likely to be. Consequently, we should be more likely to see a propensity toward schemes of ethnic categorization.

At the same time, however, it is important to emphasize that many political decisions are <u>not</u> made under comparably severe information constraints. In competitive elections with stable party systems, for instance, ethnic markers need not be the only freely and ubiquitously available pieces of information about candidates. Rather, the party label sported by a candidate can be as costless an information cue as her name, providing information about the package of policies she is likely to support, just as her name provides costless information about her ethnic identities. Similarly, individuals operating in small settings such as committees and neighbourhood associations, are likely to have accumulated intimate knowledge about each other in the course of previous interactions. This knowledge should eliminate the comparative advantage of ethnic cues, enabling individuals to combine ethnicity with other variables to develop more complex schemes of categorization.

Chapter 3

Patronage Democracy, Limited Information,

and Ethnic Favouritism

This chapter builds upon the link between limited information and ethnic

categorization to develop a theory of individual decisions among benefit-seeking voters

and office-seeking elites in patronage-democracies. Confronted with competing elites,

how does a voter in a patronage-democracy decide who is most likely to channel benefits

to him individually? And confronted with different strategies for the distribution of

benefits, how does an individual elite seeking to build a following decide whom to

target? The voting decision in patronage-democracies, I argue, typically approximates a

situation in which observers (voters) are forced to distinguish between individuals (the

recipients of past patronage transactions). These severe information constraints produce a

self-enforcing equilibrium of ethnic favouritism: voters expect co-ethnic elites to favour

them in the distribution of benefits, and elites expect co-ethnic voters to favour them in

the distribution of votes.

The tendency of patronage politics to go hand in hand with expectations of ethnic

favouritism has been noted in other theoretical and empirical work. According to

Kearney, a student of Sri Lanka: "A common expectation seems to be that a person

holding a public office or other position of power will use his position for the near-

exclusive benefit of his "own" people, defined by kinship, community or personal

loyalty."[lxiii]   According to Haroun Adamu, a student of Nigerian politics: "It is strongly

believed in this country that if you do not have one of your own kin in the local, state and/or national decision-making bodies, nobody would care to take your troubles before the decision makers, much less find solutions to them."[lxiv] Kenneth Post's description of elections in Nigeria emphasizes much the same point: "It was rare for a man to stand for election in a constituency which did not contain the community in which he was born. It did not matter if he had been educated elsewhere and had his business interests outside the community in which he was born, so long as he regarded it as his home. He would still be a better representative for it than someone who came from outside, who could not even speak in the same tongue."[lxv] According to Chabal, speaking of Africa in general: "All politicians, whether elected locally or nationally, are expected to act as the spokespeople and torchbearers of their community."[lxvi] And Posner's investigation of voter expectations in Zambia in the 1990s found that the assumption that politicians in power will favour their own ethnic group was practically "an axiom of politics."[lxvii] The principal variables proposed to account for this tendency include the functional superiority of ethnic networks, institutional legacies that privilege ethnic identities, a presumed cultural similarity that makes patronage transactions between co-ethnics easier than transactions between non-co-ethnics, and the preexisting salience of ethnic identities. I depart from this literature here in proposing that the perceptual biases inherent in the patronage transaction are sufficient to generate self-fulfilling expectations of ethnic favouritism among voters and politicians even in the absence of networks, institutional legacies, cultural similarities between co-ethnics, and the preexisting salience of ethnic identities.

Section I lays out the theory identifying the link between limited information, patronage-democracy, and a politics of ethnic favouritism. Section II identifies factors that can mitigate the information constraints under which the voting decision is made in patronage-democracies and therefore reduce the likelihood of ethnic favouritism. And section III evaluates the argument presented here against the alternatives. Recall that a patronage-democracy was defined in Chapter 1 as a democracy in which the state monopolizes access to jobs and services, and in which elected officials have individualized discretion in the implementation of policy distribution these jobs and services on an individualized basis. Throughout, I use the terms "politician" and "political entrepreneur" to mean any individual seeking to obtain or retain elected office. Among politicians, I distinguish between candidates (those who seek to obtain office) and incumbents (those who seek to retain office). In patronage-democracies, those who have the capital to launch a political career tend to be "elites"--that is, upwardly mobile middle-class individuals, better educated and better-off than the voters whom they seek to mobilize. I use the term "elite" interchangeably, therefore, with the terms "politician," "candidate," "incumbent," and "entrepreneur."

I Theory of Voter and Elite Behaviour in Patronage-Democracies

This section introduces a series of testable propositions to explain why voters and elites in patronage-democracies are likely to organize their struggle along ethnic lines. Propositions 1-8 explain why voters in patronage-democracies should expect elites to favour co-ethnic elites rather than others in the distribution of material benefits. Proposition 9 explains why voters also expect to obtain psychic benefits from elites from

their "own" ethnic group rather than from elites with whom they share other bases of group affiliation. Proposition 10 shows how these expectations result in a self-enforcing and self-reinforcing equilibrium of ethnic favouritism in patronage-democracies.

II.1 Politicians in patronage democracies have an incentive to collect rents on policy implementation.

In any society in which the state has monopolistic or near-monopolistic control over valued benefits, and in which elected officials have discretionary power in the implementation of policy concerning the distribution of benefits, these officials have incentives to market these benefits for private gain.[lxviii] Basic goods and services, to which all citizens should have automatic access, become commodities on which officials can collect rents. Officials who decide whose village gets a road, who gets the houses financed by a government housing scheme, whose areas get priority in providing drinking water, whose son gets a government job, whose wife gets access to a bed in a government hospital, and who gets a government loan are in a position to extract rents from beneficiaries for favouring them over other applicants. I have used here examples of the opportunities for rent seeking by elected officials in their dealings with the poor, who seek basic necessities. However, similar opportunities also exist in dealings with the rich. Industrialists, for example, who need access to land, permits for building, or licenses for marketing their products are similarly subject to the discretionary power of state officials, and so offer them similar opportunities for rent seeking.

In patronage-driven states that are not democratic, the rents that elected officials seek are likely to take the form of private wealth, such as money, assets, and land.   In patronage-democracies, although rents may also be sought in these forms, votes are the most lucrative form of rent, since they provide the opportunity for continued control of the state. Wherever patronage-democracies exist, therefore, we should also see a black market for state resources, where the currency is votes and the clients are voters. Incumbent and aspiring candidates in such democracies should court voter support by sending surreptitious signals about whom they will favour in policy implementation if they win.

This black market, it is important to note, is comprised of *retail* transactions, in which customers are individuals, rather than *wholesale* transactions, in which customers are entire blocs of voters. Wholesale transactions can take place only through policy legislation, which applies simultaneously to large groups of individuals at one stroke. Policy implementation, however, is of necessity a retail enterprise that applies piecemeal to individuals who come forward to claim the resources and services made available to some collective through policy legislation. Throughout the remainder of this book, I will refer to this retail black-marketing of promises to implement policy in return for votes as "patronage politics."

Before going further, let me clarify the relationship between the term "patronage politics" as used here, and other terms that have slightly different meanings but are often

used interchangeably: "rent –seeking," "corruption," "clientelism," and "pork barrel politics."

The terms "rent seeking" and "corruption" typically refer to the sale of public goods for private gain, without specifying whether that private gain takes the form of wealth or political support. I use the term "patronage politics" here to refer to that form of rent seeking and corruption in which the returns to politicians take the form of votes rather than bribes.

The term "clientelism" is typically used to refer to a dyadic transaction between traditional notables and their dependents bound by ties of reciprocity. While "patronage politics," as used here, certainly describes dyadic transactions between voters and politicians, the definition does not require voters and politicians to be connected by traditional status roles or traditional ties of social and economic dependence. In fact, as I will show later, voters and politicians can end up in a relationship of mutual obligation without such preexisting ties.

Finally, the term "pork barrel politics" refers primarily to the practice of courting voter support through policy legislation (especially budgetary allocations). The term "patronage politics," as used here, refers to an attempt to court support not by promising some group of voters favourable *legislation* but by assuring them of favourable *implementation*. For instance, an attempt to obtain the support of farmers by enacting a law providing them with subsidies on inputs would fall into the category of pork barrel

politics. The term "patronage politics," as used here, does not describe the enactment of such legislation. However, let us imagine that in order to procure such a subsidy, farmers first have to obtain a certificate of eligibility from some politician with discretionary power over the distribution of such certificates. If such a politician courts the support of some farmers rather than others by promising to employ his discretionary power selectively in their favour, the transaction would be classified as a "patronage" transaction according to this study. Although the term "patronage politics" is often used interchangeably with "pork barrel" politics,[lxix] the distinction that this study makes between the two terms is important. The collective transfer of goods to citizens through policy legislation produces different political outcomes than the individualized transfer of goods through policy implementation.

One immediate objection needs to be addressed before describing the features of this black market and its implications for the character of politics in patronage-democracies. Does a secret ballot not prevent the operation of such a black market? Under a secret ballot, there is nothing to deter voters from cheating by promising their votes to one candidate while casting them in favour of another. Knowing that they cannot enforce their contract, why should elected officials sell state resources on the electoral market?

Voting procedures in patronage-democracies, however, are unlikely to be secret, or perceived to be secret. Given the strong incentives that candidates in patronage-democracies have to obtain information about how voters vote, we should see regular

attempts to subvert the secrecy of the ballot by exploiting loopholes in the design of the voting procedure. Such subversion is made possible by the difficulty of designing and implement a "fool proof" secret ballot. Consider the following examples.

In municipal elections in the city of New Haven, Connecticut, a voter who voted for the party ticket for all fifteen municipal offices could do so simply by pulling a lever. Those who chose to split their votes between the two parties for individual candidates could do so only through a time-consuming procedure. Even though the ballot was officially "secret," the method of casting the ballot provided a clear signal about how the individual had voted. As Wolfinger points out: "To observers in the polling place, the length of time the voter spent in the booth revealed the strength of his devotion to the party ticket, particularly since a bell would ring when either party lever was pulled. This arrangement …was an important inducement to straight-ticket voting."[lxx]

A second example comes from the procedure through which votes are counted. According to Schaffer's description of the 1993 elections in Senegal, each polling station accommodated an average of about two hundred voters. The ballots were then counted at each station and posted publicly. As Schaffer notes of this procedure: "Where the electoral choice of each individual elector remained secret, the aggregate results for each (larger) village or group of (smaller) villages did not. Consequently, local level political patrons were still able to gauge the effectiveness of their efforts and the overall compliance of relatively small groups of voters."[lxxi] In both of these cases, the secret ballot was implemented to the letter. However, in each case, politicians with an incentive

to know how voters voted were able to subvert the secrecy of the ballot by exploiting loopholes in its implementation.

But even in cases in which the secret ballot is somehow insulated from subversion, voters in patronage-democracies are unlikely to *believe* that their vote is secret. In a democracy in which elected officials enjoy discretion in the implementation of most laws and procedures, why should voters trust that voting procedures are somehow an exception? The *perception* that voting procedures are subject to the same type of discretion as other policies should deter cheating and encourage the sale of goods and services in return for votes just as if the ballot were not secret.

II.2 Voters in patronage democracies have an incentive to use their votes as instruments to extract material benefits.

Ever since the publication of Mancur Olson's *The Logic of Collective Action,*[lxxii] we have presumed that there are few instrumental reasons to vote.[lxxiii] This presumption rests upon two propositions: (1) The benefit from voting is typically in the form of policy legislation, which all individuals benefit from regardless of whether or not they vote. (2) Any single vote is not likely to affect the electoral outcome. Since her vote is not likely to affect the outcome, and since she will benefit if her preferred candidate wins whether or not she votes, it always makes sense for a rational individual to abstain from voting. Consequently, we expect that those who vote do so for expressive reasons: perhaps because they think it is what good citizens should do, perhaps because their parents did, perhaps because they want to stand up and be counted for what they believe in, or

perhaps because of the satisfaction of going to the polling booth with friends and companions. In each of these examples, it is the *act* of voting rather than the *outcome* that gives them satisfaction.

For most voters in patronage-democracies, however, a single motivation overrides the rest: the need to secure some of the vast material benefits at the disposal of those who implement policy. Such material benefits are highly valued, scarce, and, most importantly, private: as the examples given earlier illustrate, they are distributed in retail transactions to individuals (e.g., jobs, medical care, university admissions, housing loans, land grants) and to the micro-communities that they represent (e.g., roads, schools, electricity, water). And the vote is the currency through which individuals secure such goods for themselves or their micro-communities. The "expressive benefits" provided by the act of voting are ephemeral. The pleasure of doing the right thing, or of performing a traditional act, or of registering an opinion, or of participating in shared group activity does not last beyond the brief moment of casting the vote. The ephemeral expressive benefits provided by the act of voting are overshadowed by its utility as an instrument through which to secure the protection, services, and opportunities at the disposal of elected officials. While we might certainly find "expressive voters" in patronage-democracies, they are likely to be composed mainly of that minority of voters who, within these societies, are relatively independent of the state. The more dependent the voter upon the state, the more likely he is to be an instrumental actor who uses his vote as a means through which to extract material benefits from competing candidates.

Voting in patronage-democracies, therefore, should not be viewed as a variant of the collective action problem. The collective action problem applies to voting only in cases in which the payoff from voting accrues to all individuals collectively, or to large groups. In patronage-democracies, however, the act of voting carries with it substantial, individualized benefits, and the act of not voting carries with it substantial, individualized costs. In patronage-democracies, where the value of the vote is so high, the problem is not explaining why individuals vote, but explaining why some do <u>not</u>.[lxxiv]

II.3 Benefit-seeking voters have an incentive to organize collectively in the pursuit of individually distributed goods.

The retail and informal nature of the patronage transaction poses a problem for voters: how to maximize the value of their investment and how to ensure delivery. Any individual voter knows that her capacity to purchase a job, a housing loan, or a university slot with her solitary vote is negligible. An individual vote makes no difference to the overall outcome and so gives the candidate little incentive to provide goods and services in return. The voter, therefore, must find a way to magnify the purchasing power of her vote. Then, she must find a way to ensure that the goods that her vote purchases are delivered. Once the vote is cast, why should the candidate feel compelled to deliver on his promise?

Both problems are solved for the voter by organizing collectively. In throwing in her lot with a group, an individual agrees to vote for some politician even if she does not benefit herself, as long as the politician favours *some* group member over nonmembers.

By joining a group, the voter magnifies the value of her vote. Because a bloc of votes can make a difference to the outcome, a number of individuals organized as a group can bargain more effectively with candidates than the same number of individuals voting individually. The price for this greater bargaining power is the possibility that some other member of the collective might obtain scarce benefits rather than the voter. However, those members who are denied benefits still have some expectation that their turn will come in the future. And to the extent that the politician favours her group over other groups and individuals, the voter is still better off than she would have been had she voted individually. Further, organizing as a group makes it easier for voters to ensure delivery. A candidate who does not deliver on his promise can be punished by the defection of the group as a whole, with a corresponding negative effect on his future electoral prospects.

While voters have an incentive to organize collectively in patronage-democracies, it is worth reiterating that the goods that they seek are individually, not collectively, distributed. Joining a group allows individual members to increase the odds that they or the micro-communities that they represent will receive greater priority in the allocation of benefits than individuals who are outside the group. However, all group members do not receive benefits simultaneously. In this sense, joining a group in order to obtain access to an individual benefit is analogous to buying a lottery ticket.   Just as each individual must pay for her lottery ticket in order to be eligible for the prize, each group member must actually turn out to vote in order to be eligible for a benefit. But just as the prize is individually allotted to only a small number of those who buy lottery tickets, benefits are

individually distributed to only a small number of group members. When an individual

voter chooses to join one group rather than another, therefore, she is choosing one lottery

rather than another. Given a choice, she will choose the group that promises her the best

odds of obtaining benefits. However, joining some group--any group--is always better

than voting on her own.

II.4 Benefit-selling candidates have an incentive to target the distribution of individual

benefits to group members rather than to free-floating individuals.

Just as the voter's problem is how to magnify the value of her vote and ensure

delivery, the candidate's problem is how to magnify the purchasing power of the benefits

at his disposal and how to monitor compliance. No matter how large the supply of jobs,

licenses, loans, roads, and wells at his disposal, each job, license, well, or road can be

given only to a single individual or to a single community represented by the individual.

A procedure whereby each favour buys the vote of only the direct beneficiary would

never produce the broad base of support required to win an election. How can the

candidate multiply the value of his investment, so that each favour brings with it the

support of others in addition to the direct recipient? And even if he were to purchase a

large number of votes with a small number of favours, how might he ensure that voters

pay him as promised?

Both problems are solved for the candidate by targeting favours to group

members rather than to free-floating individuals. In dealing with individuals, a favour

given to one individual would be a favour denied to another. It would cost the candidate

as much as he would gain. In dealings with group members, however, a favour given to one member sends a signal to others that they too can count on him in the future. It also signals to all group members that he will favour individuals in their group over others. As such, it can win him support even from those denied favours in the present. Secondly, dealing with groups makes it easy for the politician to monitor compliance. Obtaining information about individual voting behaviour, which requires personalized knowledge of individual decisions and behaviour, is costly and often impossible. However, groups can be infiltrated more easily, and group voting behaviour can be monitored through collective institutions.

Electoral politics in patronage-democracies, therefore, should take the form of a self-enforcing equilibrium of "group voting," maintained by the incentives voters have to organize in groups and the incentives candidates have to encourage the organization of voters as groups.   In principle, such groups might be organized on any basis: by place of residence, by class, by organizational affiliation, by ideology, and so on. In the propositions that follow, I show why patronage politics privileges ethnic group mobilization in particular.

II.5. Voters in patronage-democracies evaluate the promises of candidates about the distribution of benefits in the present by looking at the record of past patronage transactions by incumbents. Consequently, incumbents seek to develop records of patronage transactions that will help them most in the future.

In any system in which there is a gap between legislation and implementation, voters have little reason to take the promises of candidates on faith. Candidates may openly declare their support for some category of voters. However, voters in patronage-democracies should believe only those promises that they can verify by surveying the record of past transactions. Where discretionary power in the implementation of state policy lies in the hands of elected officials, promises to enact policy legislation favourable to an individual or group are worthless unless accompanied by a verified record of implementation favourable to that individual or group.

Voters in patronage-democracies, therefore, should make their decision about whom to support by looking at the pattern of past patronage transactions. By probing for broad patterns in the history of patronage transactions by incumbents, they can identify the principle on which patronage benefits have been distributed in the past, which is their best guide to how benefits will be distributed in the future.

Incumbents in patronage-democracies, therefore, will distribute patronage with an eye to future support, seeking to build the record that will help them most in obtaining votes in the future. And the credibility of promises that first-time candidates make will depend upon the record established by incumbents in the past. In this sense, previous incumbents have an agenda-setting power, determining which types of promises are more credible in the present and which less credible.

II.6. Voters surveying the record of past patronage transactions are typically forced to distinguish between individuals under severe information constraints.

Patronage transactions cannot be conducted openly in modern democracies. Any attempt by candidates to trade policy implementation for votes in the open market would constitute a serious violation of the norms of modern government and in all likelihood collide with the laws of most modern democracies. As an illustration, take the instance of public health facilities. A bed in a public hospital is a scarce commodity, and politicians in many developing countries are routinely called upon by favour seekers to secure beds for their friends and relatives. However, no politician could openly promise to favour some voters over others in the allocation of hospital beds. Selective allocation of basic services such as public health, to which all citizens should, in principle, have equal access would be indefensible on both normative and legal grounds. The normative and legal constraints of modern democratic government ensure that politicians can send only surreptitious signals about how whom they intend to favour in the implementation of policy, signaling their intent by unofficial action but not by open declaration in the official political sphere.

As a result, voters typically have very little background information about the beneficiaries of patronage transactions. Their main sources of data about the beneficiaries of past transactions are reports in the newspapers or on television or on the radio about new appointments and promotions; rumours about who got rich under which government and who did not, whose sons got jobs and whose did not, whose villages got roads and electricity and whose did not; and actual observation of the personnel staffing a

government office, either on television or in person. Even though politicians have an incentive to provide voters with as much data as possible on their past patronage transactions, the normative and legal constraints on such transactions prevent them from sending open messages; and even though voters have an incentive to acquire as much data as possible, the quality of the data sources available to them limit the information that they receive.

II.7. Consequently, voters are biased toward schemes of ethnic categorization in interpreting how past patronage benefits have been distributed.

For the reasons outlined in Chapter 2, the severe information constraints characteristic of patronage politics mean that voters concerned with assessing who has benefited under which regime will always code beneficiaries on the basis of one of their many ethnic identities, whether or not these identities were actually relevant in securing benefits. Consider the following two examples:

"When in the middle of the nineteenth century," writes Wolfinger of politics in New Haven, "the first Irishman was nominated for public office, this was "recognition by the party of the statesmanlike qualities of the Irish, seen and appreciated by many Irishmen."[lxxv] Apart from being Irish, the nominee was presumably many other things. Imagine, for instance, that he was a worker, or that he possessed particular professional qualifications for the office, or that he was known to be an influential neighbourhood leader. Those who knew him personally might interpret the nomination as an act that recognized his identity as a worker, or his qualifications, or his influence among his

peers, or a variety of other considerations. However, those who did not know him but encountered him in a government office, or read his name in the newspaper, or heard him speak on the radio would have identified him purely on the basis of one of his ethnic identities, helped along by name, accent, manner, and any of the cultural differentiae that he happened to carry. It is not surprising, then, that the nomination was widely "seen and appreciated" as an act recognizing the Irish. Even if it had not been intended as such, it would be impossible for most voters to interpret it in any other way.

Consider another example, from Posner's study of patronage politics in Zambia. A newspaper column concerned with describing the extent of in-group favouritism in Zambia noted: "There are organizations in this country, even foreign-owned for that matter, where almost every name, from the manager down to the office orderly, belongs to one region…. In this country, professionally qualified youngsters never find jobs if they belong to the 'wrong' tribes. When you enter certain …offices, you get the impression they are tribal establishments"[lxxvi] How did the author of this article know that certain tribes were being favoured and others were not? The article identifies two sources of information: names, and superficial observation of the staff in certain offices. Both these cues provide clues to the ethnic identity of the individuals concerned but say little or nothing about nonethnic identities. Even had he or she wanted to, the author of this article could not, based on these sources of information, have coded the beneficiaries on a nonethnic basis. Imagine that those given jobs in any one office, for example, were only coincidentally from the same ethnic group. Perhaps the real tie that got them their jobs was that they all went to the same school. Although the "true" criterion for

distributing benefits in this case would have been membership in an old boy network rather than ethnic affinity, this criterion would be invisible to the outside observer.

In these and other examples, those who are intimately acquainted with the beneficiaries might code them in complex ways. However, most voters would only be able to sort them into ethnic categories. Consequently, watchful voters surveying patronage transactions "see" beneficiaries through an ethnic prism and conclude that politicians allot favours on the basis of ethnic identity, whether or not ethnic favouritism actually entered into the decision.

As I argued earlier, the categories that voters are likely to use to sort beneficiaries might be determined exogenously, by some previous process, or endogenously, by some striking systematic difference in ethnic markers. Further, such sorting need not be standardized. Different observers might assign the same beneficiary to different ethnic categories, or misidentify the individual as belonging to one category when he really belongs to another. Political entrepreneurs should attempt to manipulate this ambiguity, encouraging voters to code beneficiaries in categories that give them a political advantage. However, the key point here is that information about patronage transactions is processed and transmitted through a process that amplifies signals revealing the ethnic identities of the beneficiary and suppresses his nonethnic identities. In an environment in which they receive exclusively ethnic signals, voters can ascertain whether benefits are being distributed randomly across their ethnic categories of choice, or whether they are being systematically directed towards some ethnic categories but not others. But they do

not have the data to discern more complex patterns, employing variables other than or in addition to ethnicity, in the distribution of benefits.

II.8 When voters are biased towards an ethnic categorization of beneficiaries, politicians will favour co-ethnics in their distribution of material benefits, although they may also channel leftover benefits to voters from other ethnic categories.

Consider now what this means for the strategy of politicians in patronage-democracies. In an environment in which voters at time $t + 1$ formulate expectations of benefits based on the history of patronage transactions at time t, and can interpret these past transactions only using schemes of ethnic categorization, incumbents at time t have no choice but to employ ethnic principles in the way in which they choose to distribute benefits. They may want, for whatever reason, to distribute benefits based on other principles, such as loyalty, or ideological affinity, or income. And candidates may also want, for whatever reason, to use these other principles in making their promises. However, these nonethnic principles, for the reasons already mentioned, are *unverifiable* on the ground. Watchful voters who are used to the gap between rhetoric and implementation in patronage-based systems will treat these unverifiable treatments as mere noise.   Consequently, incumbents have no choice but to send ethnic signals in their distribution of benefits.

Incumbents constrained by voter biases to distribute benefits on an ethnic basis have to decide how to distribute favors across ethnic categories. Should they distribute benefits equally across all ethnic categories? Or should they be selective, allotting a

larger proportion of benefits to some categories than to others? And if they are selective, how do they decide which ethnic category or categories to favor? I show here why, paradoxically, incumbents in patronage-democracies should always elect to allot the lion's share of benefits to members of their "own" ethnic category, regardless of its size. They may also send leftover benefits in the direction of other ethnic categories, especially when their "own" is too small to be efficacious. However, the proportion of benefits that they distribute to members of their "own" category should always be larger.

In order to acquire a following, politicians need not only to promise to favor some distinct category of voters, but also to establish greater credibility than other politicians among this category of voters. A strategy of distributing favors equally across individuals from all ethnic categories does not give any candidate a comparative advantage. If an incumbent distributes favors equally to individuals from various ethnic categories at time t, voters will believe that other candidates are also likely to distribute benefits in the future according to egalitarian principles. In that case, since supporting any one candidate produces the same odds of obtaining benefits as supporting another, voters should be indifferent across candidates. Consequently, candidates should always avoid the strategy of equal distribution across ethnic categories in favor of selective targeting.

Consider now the strategy of selective targeting. We might initially suppose that an incumbent should distribute the lion's share of the benefits at her disposal to any ethnic category (or combination of categories) that is sufficiently numerous to take him to a winning position, whether or not the category is his own. But such a strategy is

inadvisable, because it does not allow the incumbent to establish a comparative advantage. If incumbents distribute benefits at time *t* primarily to members of ethnic groups other than their own, voters surveying these past transactions will believe that a politician from one ethnic category can be trusted to deliver benefits to voters from another. In a competitive environment in which elites from one ethnic category can be trusted to deliver benefits to members of another, we should expect politicians of all hues to enter the race for support from the numerically dominant ethnic categories. The result would be a whittling down of the support that any one politician is likely to receive. This is not an optimal outcome from any politician's point of view.

But if incumbents distribute benefits primarily to members of their "own" ethnic category at time *t*, voters at time *t* + 1 will believe that those in power will help their "own" first and and discount promises to distribute support on a cross-ethnic basis. In a field in which the only credible promises are those made by co-ethnics, all politicians from one ethnic category acquire a comparative advantage over others. Politicians from an "outside" category, because they do not have the right markers, will not be viable contenders for support. Playing ethnic favorites, therefore, gives politicians a "core" base of support, insulated from incursions by all but co-ethnic competitors.

The attraction of this core base of support should lead incumbents in patronage-democracies to allot the lion's share of benefits to their "own" category regardless of its size. However, the relative difference between the benefits that they offer to their "own" and the benefits that they offer to "others" might well vary, depending upon the size of

their "own" ethnic category. If their "own" ethnic category is large enough to be independently efficacious, they will have no incentive to distribute any benefits to members of other ethnic categories. However, if their "own" category is relatively small, they should be willing to spare a larger proportion of benefits for members of other ethnic categories in order to attract their support. Voters witnessing such behaviour will conclude that while politicians may help members of other ethnic categories at particular times under unfavourable competitive configurations, they are most consistent in helping their own. Consequently, voters should place the greatest trust in co-ethnics in their struggle for the delivery of patronage benefits.

At the same time that they have an incentive to favour their "own" ethnic category in an attempt to establish a comparative advantage over others, however, all politicians have an incentive to define their "own" category as large enough to take them past the threshold of winning or influence. The multiplicity of interpretations that can be attached to ethnic markers gives them this freedom in defining the boundaries and membership of this category. As I argued in Chapter 2, the correspondence between the "markers" that any individual possesses and the ethnic category that these markers correspond to is not given; it is changeable according to the context, knowledge, and interpretive frameworks of the observer. Consequently, a politician whose "own" category is initially too small to confer an electoral advantage has an incentive to manipulate the correspondence between markers and categories in order to produce a more advantageous definition of who her "own" people are. She may do this by reinterpreting her own markers in such a way that she qualifies for membership in a larger ethnic category than before, so that she can claim

some larger section of the population as her "own"; by redefining the membership criteria for her "own" category in order to encourage more voters to identify with her than before; or by attempting to transform the prevailing system of categorization itself, changing the dimension on which voters attempt to categorize politicians in a way that gives her an advantage.

II. 9. The superior visibility of ethnic identities in limited information environments also drives voters to obtain psychic benefits from co-ethnic elites rather than others.

So far, I have discussed how the severe information constraints in a patronage-democracy should lead voters to expect greater access to <u>material</u> benefits from co-ethnic elites. Here, I discuss why the same mechanism should also lead them to expect psychic benefits from co-ethnics.

I build here upon the insights introduced by the social psychological approach that individual self-esteem is a product of the socially recognized position of the groups of which one is a member, and that in patronage-democracies, the principal source of collective social recognition is the state.[lxxvii] Groups whose elites control the state are likely to confer greater self-esteem upon voters who are their members than groups whose elites are less well represented in state institutions. In a world of multiple group affiliations, however, when and why does ethnic group membership, in particular, become a source of self-esteem?

I propose here that voters seeking self-esteem identify with their ethnic categories when information constraints make it difficult for third parties to detect other types of group affiliation. This proposition rests on the observation that in order to bask in the reflected glory of an elite who has obtained control of the state, a voter must be "seen" by others to be a member of the same group as the elite. In the absence of such third-party acknowledgement, the demonstrated superiority of the elite as an individual will not be interpreted as the demonstrated superiority of the group to which both elite and voter belong.   In a personalized, information-rich setting, third parties possess the background data needed to sort voters and elites according to their nonethnic group affiliations. In the impersonal environment of mass politics, however, the ethnic identity of each becomes the principal means that external observers have of ascertaining group affiliation. Voters should obtain greater self-esteem, therefore, principally from groups in which membership is signaled by widely observable ethnic identities, rather than by concealed nonethnic identities.

To illustrate, recall the effect of the nomination of an Irishman in Wolfinger's study. That nomination conferred status on other Irishmen. However, it did not confer status on members of the non-ethnic groups to which he might have belonged. The reason, I propose here, is that unlike his Irish identity, his non-ethnic identities could not be "seen and appreciated" by those who shared them and by those who did not. Politicians in patronage-democracies, therefore, have an incentive not only to distribute material benefits to co-ethnic voters but also to portray their political successes as successes for their "own" ethnic category.

II.10 Consequently, we should see a self-enforcing equilibrium of ethnic favouritism in patronage-democracies.

Once politicians, constrained by limited information conditions, bid for the support of co-ethnics, voters should follow suit by sorting themselves into ethnic blocs. In patronage-democracies, therefore, we should see a self-enforcing equilibrium of ethnic favouritism, in which voters mainly target co-ethnics politicians for favours, and politicians mainly target co-ethnic voters for votes. New politicians, faced with a playing field in which all others appear to be helping voters from their "own" ethnic category, will be forced to court the support of co-ethnics if they want to remain in the game. At the same time, however, they should attempt to propose as advantageous a definition of their "own" ethnic category as possible. Similarly, new voters, faced with a playing field in which all other voters appear to be best served by politicians from their "own" category, are forced to throw their support behind co-ethnics.

Once this equilibrium of ethnic favouritism is in place, we should also see a feedback loop, with ethnic politics strengthening the conditions of patronage politics that gave it birth. New voters entering the political arena should also mobilize on an ethnic basis and demand state largesse for their ethnic categories. We should expect the pressure from these newly mobilized ethnic categories to motivate politicians not only to guard jealously the discretionary power that they have but to seek an expansion of state services, and of their discretionary power over the allocation of such services, in order to maintain and expand their bases of support. Patronage politics and ethnic politics, therefore, should be locked in a stranglehold, with the one reinforcing the other.

Over time, this equilibrium should also generate additional reinforcing mechanisms that allow it to persist even after the initial information constraints that gave it birth are lifted.[lxxviii] For instance, both voters and politicians have an incentive to create and maintain networks and institutions in order to reduce the transaction costs of communicating demands and delivering benefits. Neither voter nor politician has a similar incentive to create or maintain nonethnic networks and institutions. Further, over repeated elections, voters should acquire a store of fairly precise information about the ethnic identities of political entrepreneurs and those whom they favoured have in the past information that will assist them in predicting the behaviour of these entrepreneurs in the future. Similarly, politicians should acquire a store of information about the relative numerical strength of different ethnic blocs, defined on different dimensions, that will assist them in formulating profitable strategies. Neither voter nor politician has any incentive to collect and store comparable information about nonethnic categories. As a result, ethnic identities should become progressively more "real," and nonethnic identities progressively more invisible, over repeated interactions. Finally, the cycle of expectations built around patronage transactions during elections is likely also to spill over into the broader political arena, turning the notion of ethnic favouritism into a "basic axiom of politics."[lxxix]

This equilibrium, I have argued, is maintained by information constraints, which are in themselves a product of the structural conditions defining a patronage-democracy. It is likely to break down only when the structural conditions that sustain these information constraints are altered. For instance, a downsizing of the state sector would

eliminate the root of the cycle of ethnic favouritism by removing the necessity for voters to use their votes as the means to secure their livelihoods. The reduction of discretionary power over the implementation of state policy, by legislating precise guidelines or introducing procedures for oversight, would have a similar effect. And, as I will argue later, even within the constraints of patronage-democracy, the vesting of control over the distribution of resources in politicians at the micro rather than the macro level of politics should erode the foundations of this equilibrium by replacing a limited information environment with an information-rich one. The effect of such structural changes may be impeded by the continued existence of ethnic networks, institutions, ethnically based statistics, and other reinforcing mechanisms that emerge as by-products of the equilibrium of ethnic favouritism. But over time, changes in the underlying structure should dismantle these reinforcing mechanisms and so gradually erode this equilibrium.

Before proceeding further, let me address the possibility of endogeneity. Might not the politics of ethnic favouritism itself produce patronage-democracy, rather than the other way around?

The argument here predicts that once the politics of ethnic favouritism is activated by the introduction of patronage-democracy, it should generate a feedback loop, strengthening and expanding the conditions that gave rise to it. In this sense, the discovery of reverse causal arrows <u>after</u> the introduction of patronage-democracy would confirm rather than disprove the argument. However, we should be less confident of the argument, in relation to the alternative, if we found that the <u>initial</u> establishment of

patronage-democracy was systematically correlated with a preexisting politics of ethnic

favouritism. A systematic test of this argument awaits the collection of data tracking the

establishment, expansion, and contraction of patronage-democracies over time. Here, let

me note simply that there is no reason to expect that the two defining conditions of a

patronage-democracy – a large state, and discretionary control over the implementation

of state policy – are the systematic product of the politics of ethnic favouritism. The size

of the public sector or the degree of regulation of the private sector might increase for a

variety of reasons: as a consequence of ideology (e.g., communist or socialist regimes),

because of a desire for accelerated economic development (e.g. the "developmentalist"

state in India), or out of a concern for social welfare (e.g., welfare states in Sweden and

Finland). And discretion over the distribution of jobs and services controlled by these

large public sectors or regulated private sectors might be acquired by elected officials

when the procedures for implementation are not well codified; or under conditions of

widespread illiteracy or large-scale immigration, where an inadequate understanding of

the letter of the law among citizens gives state officials discretionary power in practice;

or under conditions of extreme job scarcity, where an excess supply of identically

qualified applicants gives state officials the power to select from among them arbitrarily

in allocating jobs and services.

II Factors Mitigating the Likelihood of Ethnic Favouritism in Patronage-Democracies

I have argued so far that the propensity of patronage-democracies to produce the

politics of ethnic favouritism is a product of the degree to which the voting decision in

patronage-democracies approximates a setting in which observers have to distinguish

between individuals under severe information constraints. When the voting decision does not approximate this type of setting, other things being equal, we should not see patronage-democracy produce the politics of ethnic favouritism. Here, I identify four conditions that, by altering the information environment, can lower the likelihood of ethnic favouritism in patronage-democracies.

Vesting of Control Over the Distribution of Patronage at the Micro Level.

Micro levels of politics (e.g. family, village, ward, neighbourhood, and municipality) are information-rich environments, in which individuals know each other personally and have engaged in repeated interactions over a long period of time. Macro levels of politics (state, province, region, nation, large district) are information-poor environments, in which individuals do not have personal knowledge about each other and do not have a history of repeated interactions. The level at which control over the delivery of benefits is vested varies across political systems. In some systems, it is politicians at the macrolevels of politic (e.g. national legislators, provincial legislators) who pull the strings by which benefits are released at lower levels of politics. In others, control over these benefits is vested directly in elected officials at these lower levels (e.g., with municipal councilors or village headmen).

When control over patronage transactions is vested in politicians at the micro level, voters surveying a politician's record of past patronage transactions are faced with the task of classifying only a small number of individuals about whom they typically have additional sources of information based on previous interactions. This allows them

to supplement the limited data that usually accompanies patronage transactions. Simply by hearing the name of some individual who has been denied a favour, for instance, voters may be able to ascertain, by drawing upon the store of information collected through previous interactions, whether this person was denied a favour because of her personal rivalries with a politician, or her character, or economic circumstances, or family feuds. As a result, they can code beneficiaries of previous patronage transactions in complex ways. When patronage is distributed at the macro level of politics, however, voters are called upon to classify larger numbers of individuals of whom they have no personal knowledge and with whom they do not have any history of prior interactions. Consequently, they are more likely to code them on an ethnic basis. Other things being equal, therefore, we should be more likely to see ethnic favouritism in patronage-democracies in which control over patronage is vested in politicians at the macro rather than the micro level. Further, if institutional reforms in patronage-democracies transfer control over the distribution of patronage from the macro to the micro level of politics, we should see a decline in the likelihood of ethnic favouritism, other things being equal; and if institutional reforms transfer control over patronage from the micro to the macro level, we should see an increase in the likelihood of ethnic favouritism, other things being equal.

Mediated Democracy.

"Mediated democracies," in which only a small number of voters are autonomous, also reduce the likelihood of ethnic favouritism in patronage-democracies by increasing the sources of information available to voters about the beneficiaries of

patronage transactions. When only some voters are autonomous and control the votes of

the rest, politicians can target benefits to a small and select pool of beneficiaries. With a

small number of beneficiaries, the cost of obtaining information about each is also

reduced. As a result, voters can formulate hypotheses that do not rely solely on ethnic

characteristics. Examples of mediated democracies include "traditional" polities in which

landed or other powerful classes are the autonomous voters and control the votes of

subordinate groups through ties of deference and coercion. As these ties of deference and

subordination are eroded, however, and political participation increases, we should see

the likelihood of ethnic favouritism increase in patronage-democracies.

Aggregate Beneficiaries

The likelihood of ethnic favouritism is also reduced when the customers in

patronage transactions are aggregates rather than individuals. As I argued in the previous

chapter, observers are likely to be biased toward ethnic categorization under limited

information constraints only when they are concerned with distinguishing between

individuals. When called upon to distinguish between groups, observers should not be

biased toward ethnic categorization even under severe information constraints, since

groups do not sport ethnic markers, as individuals do. Consequently, regimes in which

voters are required to code aggregate rather than individual beneficiaries should not

necessarily be characterized by expectations of ethnic favouritism.

Examples of cases in which the principal beneficiaries of patronage benefits are

aggregates rather than individuals abound, particularly in Latin America, which exhibits a

distinct pattern of "corporate" or "collective" clientelism.[lxxx] According to Robert Gay's

ethnographic study of patronage politics in two *favelas* in Brazil, for instance, candidates

sought voter support by paying off the entire neighbourhood of Vila Brasil-- providing

collective goods such as paved roads, uniforms for the neighbourhood soccer team, and

public bathrooms in the neighbourhood association building.[lxxxi] With some exceptions,

the candidates did not barter with individuals.[lxxxii] Susan Stokes's study of shantytown

politics in Peru reveals the same pattern: Residents of the shantytown of Independencia

bargained with politicians not as individuals but as communities, and sought from these

politicians not individual goods--such as jobs, university slots and loans--but community

goods--such as water, electricity, and land titles conferred collectively to the shantytown

as a whole.[lxxxiii] Jonathan Fox's study of patronage politics in Mexico, similarly,

identifies collectives rather than individuals as the beneficiaries of patronage transactions:

food was made available to entire villages in the form of food stores, or to collectively

organized region wide community food councils; Regional Solidarity funds were

provided not to individuals but to "project proposals submitted from the organizations of

the region"; and public works programmes were provided to local committees.[lxxxiv]

The designation of aggregates rather than individuals as the beneficiaries of

patronage transactions depends on several factors. First, it depends upon the nature of the

goods over which elected officials have discretionary control. States in which elected

officials have discretionary control over collective goods (e.g., roads, sanitation, drinking

water) but not over individual goods (e.g., licenses, permits, land titles, loans) will

designate aggregates rather than individuals as beneficiaries. Second, it depends upon the

way in which economic activity is organized. In societies with a tradition of individual land ownership and cultivation, for instance, elected officials can distribute land titles or agricultural loans on an individual basis. But in societies with a tradition of collective ownership and cultivation, elected officials are forced to conduct business with collectives rather than with individuals. Third, it depends upon the extent to which the rules which govern distribution of patronage permit or prevent individual targeting. For instance, the distribution of Regional Solidarity funds in Mexico, guided by a rule book written by a crusading president and the World Bank--both of whom had an interest in undermining clientelism, established procedures by which officials were forced to target funds to organizations rather than to individuals. No matter what its origin, however, the distribution of patronage benefits to aggregate rather than individual beneficiaries eliminates the link between patronage politics and the politics of ethnic favouritism.

Perfect Homogeneity and Perfect Heterogeneity

When a population is perfectly homogeneous (i.e., all individuals have identical ethnic markers) or perfectly heterogeneous (i.e., all individuals have unique ethnic markers), voters surveying the beneficiaries of past patronage transactions will be unable to detect any pattern in the distribution of patronage. In such situations, politicians will be hampered in their attempt to use their discretionary control over state jobs and services as a strategy for obtaining votes. Even though they have an incentive to market these jobs and services in return for votes, they will be unable to send meaningful signals to their target voters. We might expect politicians in such situations to transfer control of patronage from the macro to the micro level of politics and so enable themselves to send

nonethnic signals about the distribution of patronage. Alternatively, we might expect

them switch to a different method of courting votes and to divert their discretionary

control of state resources in order to seek rents in forms other than votes. In either case,

we should be less likely to see the politics of ethnic favouritism.

III Alternative Explanations for Ethnic Head Counts

In this section, I evaluate the argument presented here against the alternatives

found in commonsensical understandings of politics or explicitly proposed in the

literature on ethnic mobilization. This literature is not directly concerned with explaining

the emergence of such a cycle. The questions it asks are related but different: When and

why do ethnic groups form? When does one type of cleavage become politically salient

rather than other? When do ethnic groups fight? When does ethnic identity become a

basis for political coalition building? However, directly or indirectly, this literature offers

different hypotheses for the link between patronage politics and ethnic politics, with

different observable implications.

Networks

Perhaps the most compelling of all the hypotheses discussed here lays the primary

explanatory burden for the cycle on the "dense social networks" presumed to bind

together members of ethnic groups. Such dense networks might result from kin

connections, from the spatial concentration of ethnic groups (in urban neighbourhoods, in

village hamlets, in artificially constructed "homelands"), or from shared membership in

ethnic organizations, including churches, mosques, language clubs, and tribal and caste

associations. Such networks might facilitate a patronage transaction by providing

"readymade" channels through which requests can be made and benefits distributed, they

might convince voters that the most efficient way to get their voices heard is to approach

co-ethics, and politicians that the most efficient way to obtain votes is by approaching co-

ethnics. We see this mechanism at work, for example, in machine politics in American

cities, where the "gangs, firehouses, secret societies and saloons" in ethnically

homogeneous wards became the principal places where voters and politicians interacted

and where patronage transactions were conducted.[lxxxv] Alternatively, they might work by

providing both voters and politicians with the means to enforce compliance with

patronage contracts, thus leading both to conclude that co-ethnics are the most suitable

partners in a patronage transaction.

The utility of kinship networks in explaining the politics of ethnic favouritism is

likely to be limited. Kinship networks, constituted by individuals related to each other by

blood, are too small to facilitate patronage transactions in modern democracies. The

argument that the politics of ethnic favouritism might be best explained by ethnic

networks based on patterns of residence or organizational membership, on the other hand,

is a powerful one, and it was among my initial working hypotheses. However, it is also

unsatisfying upon closer analysis, for the reason that it suffers from an endogeneity

problem.   As I will show in the following discussion, the dense social networks that

characterize ethnic groups--whether they are spatial, organizational, or extended kinship

networks--are an <u>outcome</u> of a process by which individuals privilege their ethnic

identifications over others, rather than the cause of that process. Once individuals choose

to invest in them, these networks undoubtedly facilitate patronage transactions. But, we can, in principle, imagine some initial point when individuals might equally well have invested in nonethnic networks but chose not to. If this is the case, then we cannot argue that the cycle of self-fulfilling expectations of ethnic favouritism develops out of these networks – rather, the cause of this cycle must be traced to the variable that leads individuals to form and maintain these intraethnic networks in the first place.

Consider the "fact" of spatial clustering of ethnic categories, which in turn leads to the formation of dense social networks among those who share a common space.   If we look carefully at "ethnically homogeneous clusters," it soon becomes clear that the homogeneity we perceive is an artifact of the boundaries we draw. Take an example from Correa's study of neighbourhoods in northwestern Queens. Correa found that the "natural" boundaries that demarcated ethnic communities were not dictated by geography but were generated and maintained by perceptions of difference. As he points out of Roosevelt Avenue, which divided "white ethnics" from "new immigrants": "Why should Roosevelt Avenue [or Junction Boulevard] be considered natural boundaries? Roosevelt has two lanes of traffic, with the number 7 train built overhead – a major transportation route into Manhattan. The street is lined with shops, restaurants, and travel agencies. It is a vibrant and congested street, and an important space for pedestrians."[lxxxvi] While, objectively speaking, Roosevelt Avenue does not constitute a "natural" dividing line, it has nevertheless become one in the minds of those who live on either side: "Roosevelt has become the main thoroughfare for newer immigrants in the area, but most older white ethnic residents avoid it. For them, it has "a completely different lifestyle. It's South

American, Hispanic…completely different."[lxxxvii] If we, as external observers, treated

Roosevelt Avenue as an objective boundary, we would see two ethnically homogeneous

clusters, composed of whites on the one side and Hispanic immigrants on the other.

However, if we drew a different boundary line, we would see ethnically mixed clusters.

This example illustrates that the appearance of spatial concentration among ethnic groups

and the social networks that rise out of such concentration are themselves a product of

some process that compels individuals and observers to organize their world by

privileging certain ethnic identities over others.

Consider now the following additional examples, each of which describes the

tendency of individuals in initially mixed populations to sort themselves and others into

ethnically homogeneous clusters.

In a "natural experiment" conducted in Zambia (then Northern Rhodesia) from

1951 to 1954, the anthropologist J. C. Mitchell attempted to explore whether single men

who migrated to industrial centres chose to live with co-ethnics or ethnically proximate

individuals or whether they chose to cluster together on the basis of some other criteria.

As he notes:

> When unattached men migrate to industrial centres, they frequently do so
>
> in groups from the same village or district in the rural areas, and therefore
>
> seek accommodation together. If they are allocated accommodation with
>
> others they usually seek the first opportunity they can to move into rooms

where the company is more congenial to them. The administrative

officials do not usually raise objections to this procedure since for them it

involves a transfer within the same type of accommodation. Over time,

therefore, the composition of groups of men occupying single quarters

reflects to a large extent their choices of the companions with whom they

prefer to live. The composition of single quarters therefore provides one

means of examining whether or not behaviour is influenced by ethnic

identity.[lxxxviii]

Mitchell found that, over time, men indeed tended to cluster into living arrangements that

included either co-ethnics or members of ethnically proximate categories.

In a field study of Pakistani immigrants in Great Britain, Badr Dahya describes

the arrival in Birmingham in 1940 of "some thirty-odd Asian merchant seamen (among

whom were Sikhs and Muslims from undivided India and Yemenis)" Upon visiting

visited Birmingham in 1956, Dahya found that

…[t]he immigrants had already "sorted" themselves out on the basis of

national origins and ethnicity (that is, on factors such as language/dialect,

religion/sect, and area of origin). Pakistanis had moved across to

Moseley/Sparkbrook, and to Small Heath and Aston; most of the Jat

Sikhs (landowning castes by origin) had moved to places such as

Smethwick and Wolverhampton and a few had gone to Sparkbrook,

whereas Ramgarhia Sikhs (artisan castes by origin) had settled a little to

the south of the primary area and established themselves in two or three

streets off Edward Road where they are found to this day with their

Gurdwara on the corner of Mary and Hallam Streets.…Similarly most of

the Yemenis moved to the area south of Edward Road and to parts of

Moseley.…[lxxxix]

Robert Ernst's description of the residential choices made by newly arriving, initially mixed immigrant populations in New York City reveals a similar drive among individuals to sort themselves and others using ethnic classifications rather than others:

Whether in shanty towns or in the commercial districts, whether along the

waterfront or in the Five Points, immigrant settlers drew to their area

others having the same nationality, language, religion or race. Once a

nucleus was established toward which later arrivals were attracted, the

cohesive bond resulting from consciousness of similarity tended to

replace the magnetic forces of cheap shelter and ready employment.[xc]

The several examples just cited all point to the same process: Initially heterogeneous populations, placed in an initially mixed space, quickly sort themselves into ethnically homogeneous clusters. Once these clusters are formed, it is not surprising that individuals interact closely with those who reside within the clusters and only intermittently with those who reside outside. And once such dense social networks spring

up within ethnically homogeneous clusters, they no doubt facilitate patronage transactions. However, these networks are endogenous to the explanation. If we are to explain why ethnic identity is favoured in patronage transactions, we must explain why individuals favour co-ethnics in their choice of whom to interact with most closely. The hypothesis that I have advanced in this section offers such an explanation. In all the examples cited here, individuals, motivated by the desire for familiarity in a strange place, sought to associate with others like themselves. Had they possessed extensive information about each others' backgrounds, they might have been able to discover similarities based on occupation, temperament, education, interests, background, or a range of other characteristics. However, in each of these examples, they had limited information about the strangers they found themselves with. In a classificatory enterprise with limited information, as I argued earlier, ethnic identity is all they have to work with in deciding who is "one of them" and who is not. To the extent that the greater "visibility" of ethnic identities explains the decision by individuals to invest in intraethnic networks, it should be viewed as the root cause of the cycle of self-fulfilling expectations described here.

Let me move now from spatial to organizational networks. Although intraethnic organizational networks may certainly favour patronage transactions, we may well find, by looking far enough, that individuals who invest in ethnic organizational networks have available to them the option of investing equally in nonethnic networks as well. However, we typically find nonethnic networks to be less attractive to both voters and

politicians than the ethnic alternatives. Take, for example, Foner's description of trade

unions in New York:

> Quite often, several nationalities united within the same labor
>
> organization, as in the Upholsterers Union in New York, which had
>
> among its membership in 1850 German-American, Irish American,
>
> French-Canadian, English, and native American workers. The Tailors
>
> Union of New York was made up of native American and German-
>
> American workers. At first they were not on the best of terms, but police
>
> brutality, impartial as to a worker's national origin, during a strike made
>
> for greater understanding.[xci]

We have no reason to imagine that the ties that bind together co-members in a trade union

should be any less strong than the ties that bind co-members in a church, in a language

association, or in some other ethnic association. Union members spend long hours

together throughout the work week, experience the same working conditions, and often

have a shared enemy in the management. In fact, those who share membership in a trade

union are more likely to know each other intimately, by dint of working together on a

daily basis, than those who share membership in an ethnic association, which typically

meets intermittently. Surprisingly, however, such trade unions do not provide potent

channels for patronage transactions. As Katznelson points out, parties concerned with

distributing patronage in New York City bypassed the trade union as a channel for

distributing patronage and concentrated instead on ethnic networks.[xcii] The greater

political salience of ethnic organizational networks, despite the nonethnic alternatives, is not simply a New York phenomenon. Varshney's study of agricultural politics in India, to cite another example, revealed that farmers' unions were crippled in their political struggles by the greater appeal that caste, linguistic, and regional identities held for their members.[xciii] Given the choice, why do individuals invest more heavily in intraethnic rather than cross-ethnic networks? I argue here that it is because ethnic identity provides them with an easy way to distinguish who is like them and who is not.

Historical Institutionalist Arguments

A second hypothesis explaining the politics of ethnic favouritism comes from "historical-institutionalist" approaches to ethnic politics.[xciv] The policies followed by the colonial administration, according to this body of literature, imposed a set of categories upon colonized populations that privileged ethnic identities over nonethnic identities. The precise ethnic categories privileged by the colonial state differed across cases: in Yorubaland, it privileged tribal identities; in northern Nigeria, it privileged religious identities;[xcv] in India, it also privileged religious identities at the national level, while caste identities were privileged in some provinces;[xcvi] and in Zambia, it privileged tribal and linguistic identities.[xcvii] Once imposed, however, these administrative categorizations came to dominate the commonsensical framework of both citizens and political entrepreneurs concerning which identities were politically relevant, and which were not, a framework that persisted into the postcolonial period.

This body of work suggests that there is nothing inherent in the nature of the patronage transaction that produces expectations of ethnic favouritism on the part of either politicians or voters. Rather, it tells us that the expectations of ethnic favouritism have their roots in the institutional legacy of colonial rule, which forces citizens and politicians alike to treat only ethnic identities as politically relevant and blinds them to the political potential of nonethnic identities. Had the colonial state privileged nonethnic identities, this reasoning implies, then voters and elites in postcolonial states would have treated nonethnic identities as politically relevant, and they would have formed expectations of in-group favouritism where the reference group was nonethnic in nature. In its most general form, this argument suggests that any political system in which institutional structures play a role in "classifying" the population in the way that colonial states did in Asia and Africa should display patterns of identity salience that reflect these past categorizations.

Historical institutionalist arguments do not, however, provide a compelling explanation for the origin of the politics of ethnic favouritism to the extent that they too are characterized by an endogeneity problem. Although the claim is that the privileging of ethnic over nonethnic identities <u>followed</u> from the structures of classification imposed by the colonial state, the analyses suggest that the structures of classification imposed by the colonial state at least in part <u>reflected</u> perceptions on the part of the state and the colonized populations about which identities were already salient. In Laitin's account of northern Nigeria, for example, the menu from which the British chose included only from two options: tribe and religion. There is no reference to their relying upon individuals or

groups defined by nonethnic categories to perpetuate their rule. Once the policy of the colonial administration was in place, it undoubtedly further strengthened tribal identity in relation to religious identity. However, nonethnic identities do not appear to have even been on the initial menu of options that they initially perceived to be relevant. Similarly, in India, historical institutionalist accounts successfully show that colonial policies classified heterogeneous populations with localized and fragmented identities into religious categories—and to a lesser extent, caste-based categories--at the national level. At the same time, however, these accounts describe the British as operating within a conceptual framework that "saw" ethnic communities as the principal interest groups in India, and that chose religion from a menu of purely ethnic options. If we accept that the colonial state was, even in part, *reacting* to the *perceived* importance of the cleavages it found at some initial point, then the institutional legacy of colonial rule cannot be treated as an exogenous variable explaining the subsequent dominance of ethnic categorizations in postcolonial politics. Rather, this simply takes us a few decades back, to the question of why it is that ethnic cleavages appeared to be more important than nonethnic cleavages at some initial point.

The argument that I have made here offers a different explanation for these initial perceptions. It suggests that the cultural diacritica that uniquely accompany ethnic identities render them more visible than nonethnic identities and so more amenable to classificatory enterprises by external observers. This greater "visibility," may account for the tendency among colonial administrators, operating initially under severe information

constraints about the societies that they encountered, to privilege ethnic identities in their initial classificatory systems.

To argue that colonial classifications may be endogenous to the salience of ethnic identifications is not to deny the enormous historical impact of colonial rule in other respects. Colonial rule, I should point out, has been of critical importance in building many of the sprawling states that later gave way to patronage-democracies. And once theories of ethnic group favouritism have been established, colonial institutions may play an important role in creating incentives for political entrepreneurs to favour some ethnic categories over others.

Culture

A third explanation for the politics of ethnic favouritism runs as follows: Members of an ethnic category share a common culture, or at least have more in common with each other than with members of other ethnic categories. Voters and politicians in patronage democracies may favour co-ethnics, therefore, not because of information constraints but because cultural similarities lower the transaction costs of interacting with co-ethnics, and cultural differences raise the transaction costs of interacting with non-co-ethnics.

This explanation is based on an understanding of ethnic groups as distinct "cultural communities" that does not hold up to closer analysis. If we look closely at the members of a given ethnic category, it quickly becomes clear that they are often

characterized by a high degree of cultural difference rather by than cultural similarity. The category "Serb," for instance, includes individuals who differ from each other in multiple ways: there are urban Serbs and rural Serbs, Bosnian Serbs, Krajina Serbs, and "Serbian Serbs," all with distinct regional identities, political histories, language patterns, social customs.[xcviii] Tamils in Sri Lanka are divided on the basis of religion (Hindu, Muslim, and Christian), caste, class, and region.[xcix] Similarly, Hindus in India are divided on the basis of language, caste, class, religious doctrine and practice, region, and social custom.

At the same time, members of nonethnic categories can often share cultural similarities. E. P. Thompson's study of the English working class shows us, for instance, that class can be "a cultural as much as an economic formation," "embodied in traditions, value-systems, ideas and institutional forms."[c] Luc Boltanski makes a similar point, showing that cadres in French society shared acquired cultural similarities in behaviour, professional training, professional experience, consumption patterns, tastes, behaviour, and manner.[ci] In fact, by choosing to organize on an ethnic basis, individuals often reject fellowship with culturally proximate individuals in order to band together with culturally distant ones. Cultural similarity, therefore, cannot be viewed as an explanation for why voters and politicians favour co-ethnics in patronage transactions.

Pre-existing Patterns of Identity Salience

Finally, a fourth alternative explanation for the politics of ethnic favouritism runs as follows. Voter preferences across rival politicians depend, not on information

constraints, but on preexisting and exogenously determined patterns of identity salience.[cii]

In societies in which ethnic identities have been salient in the past, for whatever reason, voters should formulate preferences across rival politicians by ascertaining their ethnic memberships, whether or not they are in a patronage-democracy. But in societies in which nonethnic identities have been salient in the past, for whatever reason, voters should formulate preferences across rival politicians based on their nonethnic characteristics, whether or not they are in a patronage-democracy.

This explanation may explain ethnic favouritism during some initial period of political competition. However, it leaves unanswered the question of why the politics of ethnic favouritism might persist over time. Any explanation that relies upon the past to explain the present must identify the mechanism that keeps these historical patterns locked in place and the conditions under which these patterns might be transformed. The argument of this chapter is an advance over previous explanations to the extent that it identifies a set of conditions under which the patterns of the past will be retained or transformed. If the distinguishing characteristics of a patronage-democracy are introduced in a political system in which all types of identities are initially equally salient, according to this argument, it should intensify the salience of ethnic identities and depress the salience of others; if it is introduced in an environment in which nonethnic identities are more salient than ethnic identities, it should reverse this pattern; and if it is introduced in an environment in which ethnic identities are already salient, it should have a reinforcing effect, intensifying this salience and maintaining it, even after the conditions that initially led to its rise have lapsed.

IV Conclusion

I have argued here that severe information constraints are an important and neglected variable explaining the politics of ethnic favouritism. Although the argument has been developed specifically with reference to patronage-democracies, it should also be applicable to other settings in which voting decisions are made under comparable information constraints, such as "founding elections" or elections in unstable party systems

Other variables, such as institutional legacies and ethnic networks, may *reinforce* the politics of ethnic favouritism once it emerges. However, I have suggested that these additional variables are endogenous to conditions of limited information and should persist only as long as the underlying information constraints persist. Let me highlight in conclusion some testable implications that result from the argument:

First, to the extent that politicians are able to manipulate the interpretation of ethnic markers, we should expect them to propose interpretations that produce ethnic categories of optimal size, given their electoral objectives. If the politics of ethnic favouritism is produced by information constraints, therefore, we should expect a systematic correlation between the size of an ethnic category and its degree of political salience. On the other hand, if the politics of ethnic favouritism is produced by preexisting networks and institutions, then there should be no systematic correlation between the size of an ethnic category and its political salience. In this case, the ethnic

categories that are salient should be a straightforward reflection of preexisting structural and historical patterns, regardless of size.

Second, if the politics of ethnic favouritism is produced by information constraints, then, given a choice between ethnic categories of equivalent size, politicians should mobilize voters around those ethnic categories that are most *visible*.[ciii] On the other hand, if the politics of ethnic favouritism is produced by networks or institutions independent of information constraints, then there should be no systematic correlation between visibility and the political salience of an ethnic category.

Finally, if the politics of ethnic favouritism is produced by information constraints, then administrative reforms such as decentralization, by shifting the locus of patronage to information-rich environments such as the neighbourhood and village, should result in a deactivation of ethnic identities. Conversely, if the politics of ethnic favouritism is independently produced by networks or institutions, then decentralization should not result in any change in the salience of ethnic identifications unless it also simultaneously transforms the character of networks or institutional legacies.

Notes to Chapter 1

[i]See, for instance, Robert Dahl, *Polyarchy* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1971); Donald Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985); Arend Lijphart, *Democracy in Plural Societies* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1977); Alvin Rabushka and Kenneth Shepsle, *Politics in Plural Societies* (Columbus, OH: Charles E. Merrill, 1972).

[ii] For an argument in this vein, see Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, 84.

[iii] The emphasis on a party's <u>message</u> distinguishes this definition from Donald Horowitz's in *Ethnic Groups in Conflict,* 293.   For Horowitz, "the test of an ethnic party is simply the distribution of support." What the party says and does, according to him, follows directly from its support base: "In practice, a party will serve the interests of the group comprising its overwhelming support or quickly forfeit that support." This definition is not useful for the question driving this study. Incorporating the nature of a party's support base in the definition itself obscures the question of how it acquires such support in the first place. Defining an ethnic party based on its message, by separating the definition of the party from its base of support, makes it possible to investigate why a party obtains its support principally from some ethnic category or categories to the exclusion of others, and when it is able to expand this support to include the majority of its target ethnic category.

[iv] David Laitin, *Hegemony and Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986).

[v] Melissa Nobles, *Shades of Citizenship: Race and the Census in Modern Politics*. (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000).

[vi] For a somewhat similar point, see Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, 299. Horowitz too argues that an ethnic party can serve the interests of more than one ethnic group. A party should be termed multiethnic, according to him, "only if it spans the major groups in conflict."

[vii] John Mackintosh, *Nigerian Government and Politics,* (London: Geroge Allen and Unwin, 1966).

[viii] For a general discussion of the MRTKL, see Xavier Albo, "And From Kataristas to MNRistas?" in Donna Lee Van Cott, ed, *Indigenous Peoples and Democracy in Latin America*. (New York: St. Martins's Press, 1994), 55-82. For the composition of the category "indigenous," see the Minorities at Risk Database (http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/inscr/mar/data/latintbl.htm)

[ix] Based on a reading of campaign statements in 1995 as reported by FBIS (Foreign Broadcast Information Service).

[x] Based on a reading of ANC campaign statements during the 1994 elections as reported by FBIS (Foreign Broadcast Information Service).

[xi] Samuel Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), 7.

[xii] The standard measure for size of government, with the most extensive coverage of countries, is government spending as a percentage of GDP, based on data published by the IMF *Government Finance Statistics Yearbooks*. This measure underestimates the size of the public sector, for the following reasons: (1) it reports data only for central government spending and not for spending by subnational units; (2) it excludes a large sphere of public sector activity by not reporting data on expenditures by state-owned or state-managed enterprises that have even a partially commercial purpose; and (3) it does not capture the *regulatory* presence of the state. Other data on the size of the state are less comprehensive and less systematically collected.

[xiii] The closest proxy might be the Corruption Perception Index compiled by Transparency International, which measures the degree to which corruption is perceived to exist among public officials. However, the CPI is based on surveys that rely principally on the viewpoints of experts and the business community rather than of the general public. (See Transparency International, "Background Information to the CPI," http://www/transparency.de/documents/cpi/2000/qanda.html.)

[xiv] For Nigeria, see Richard A Joseph, *Democracy and Prebendal Politics in Nigeria* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987); for Zambia, see Daniel Posner, "The Institutional Origins of Ethnic Politics in Zambia" (Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1998); for Senegal, see Frederic Schaffer, *Democracy in Translation* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998).

[xv] Simona Piattoni, *Clientelism, Interests and Democratic Representation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

[xvi] See, for instance, William Riordon, *Plunkitt of Tammany Hall* (Boston: Bedford Books, 1994) and Raymond Wolfinger, *The Politics of Progress* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1974)

[xvii] Robert Bates, "Ethnic Competition and Modernization in Contemporary Africa," *Comparative Political Studies*, vol. 6, No. 4 (1974): 457-483; Albert Breton, "The Economics of Nationalism," *Journal of Political Economy*, Vol. 72, No. 4 (1964): 376-386; Michael Hechter, "Group Formation and the Cultural Division of Labour," *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 84, No. 2 (1978): 293-318; Michael Hechter, "The Political Economy of Ethnic Change," *American Journal of Sociology* Vol. 79, No. 5 (1974): 1151-1178; Michael Hechter, *Internal Colonialism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975). Nonmaterial benefits, when acknowledged in this family of work, are treated as derived from material benefits. Russell

Hardin, *One for All: The Logic of Group Conflict* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995) might arguably also be included among materialist approaches to ethnic mobilization. Hardin describes economic malaise, combined with a state that controls the allocation of scarce resources as the single most important reason for ethnic conflict (228, 152, 179). While he also allows for individuals to be motivated by a desire for intangible benefits such as the "epistemological comforts of home," this appears to be a secondary motivation.

xviii Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict.*.

xix Horowitz also identifies "a sense of belonging" as a second desired psychic good. This second good, however, is secondary to his analysis of ethnic group behaviour.

xx See, for instance, the discussion of tribally dominated parties in Bates, "Ethnic Competition,". 474. Hechter makes the same assumption in his *Internal Colonialism* (1975). In his later work, he recognizes the failure of the general theory of internal colonialism to account for variations in the patterns of support for the Scottish Nationalist Party in Scotland and revisits specifically the question of ethnic *party performance* in Margaret Levi and Michael Hechter, "A Rational Choice Approach to the Rise and Decline of Ethnoregional Parties," in Edward A. Tiryakiain and Ronald Rogowski, eds. *New Nationalisms of the Developed West* (Boston: Allen and Unwin, 1985: 128-146).

xxi Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, 308.

xxii John P. Mackintosh, *Nigerian Government and Politics* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1966), 431, 514.

xxiii See, for instance, Laitin, *Hegemony and Culture.*.

xxiv Nelson Kasfir, *The Shrinking Political Arena* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), 124-126; Crawford Young, *The Politics of Cultural Pluralism* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1976), 254.

xxv James L. Newell, "The Scottish National Party: Development and Change," in Lieven de Winter and Huri Tursan eds., *Regionalist Parties in Western Europe* (London: Routledge, 1998): 105-124, p. 108, for the election results from 1945-1997. For 2001, BBC results as published at <news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/static/vote2001>. For a discussion of the performance of the SNP, see Saul

Newman, *Ethnoregional Conflict in Democracies* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1996), 160-162, 166-169.

xxvi Scottish national election studies 1992 and 1997, cited in Bonnie Meguid, "Understanding Policy Failure: The Overlooked Role of Ethnic Credibility in Party Strategic Success," working paper, Harvard University, 2000.

xxvii Stanley Tambiah, *Sri Lanka: Ethnic Fratricide and the Dismantling of Democracy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986.)

xxviii Estimated from the election results for the Federal Party and the Tamil Congress between 1947 and 1977, as reported in A. Jeyaratnam Wilson, *Politics in Srik Lanka 1947-79* (London: Macmillan Press, 1979) 156-160, and the percentage fo Tamils in Sri Lanka as resported in the 1971 census. See also Robert Kearney, *The Politics of Ceylon (Sri Lanka)* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1973), 118-119.

xxix Estimated from election results published by the Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa at <http://www.elections.org.za/> and census data from *South African Statistics 1995* (Pretoria: Central Statistical Service, 1997). For a general discussion of Zulu support for the IFP, see Andrew Reynolds, ed., *Election '94 South Africa* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), and Andrew Reynolds, ed., *Election '99 South Africa* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999).

xxx Jon Elster, ed., *Rational Choice* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986).

xxxi Gary King, *A Solution to the Ecological Inference Problem* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997).

xxxii I discuss this transformation in Kanchan Chandra, "Post-Congress Politics in Uttar Pradesh: The Ethnification of the Party System and its Consequences." in Paul Wallace and Ramashray Roy eds., *Indian Politics and the 1998 Election.* (New Delhi: Sage Publications 1999), 55-104.

xxxiii Bernard Cohn, *An Anthropologist Among the Historians and Other Essays.* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1987); Leroy Vail, ed., *The Creation of Tribalism in Southern Africa.* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989); Melissa Nobles, *Shades of Citizenship*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000); Posner, Daniel, The Institutional Origins of Ethnic Politics in Zambia, Ph. Dissertation, Harvard University, 1998; Richard Fox, *Lions of the Punjab* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985); David

Laitin, *Hegemony and Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986); Gyanendra Pandey, "Which of us are Hindus?" in Gyanendra Pandey, ed., *Hindus and Others*.(New Delhi: Viking, 1993)..

[xxxiv] Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict,* 26.

[xxxv] See for instance Ulf Hannerz, "Ethnicity and Opportunity in Urban America," in Abner Cohen ed., *Urban Ethnicity* (London: Tavistock, 1974), 37-76.

[xxxvi] Michael Hechter, *Internal Colonialism.* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975).

[xxxvii] Joseph Rothschild, *Ethnopolitics: A Conceptual Framework.* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1981), 1-2.

[xxxviii] *Census of India 1991.*

[xxxix] The five states where the population of Scheduled Castes is negligible are Goa (2.1%) in the west, and Arunachal Pradesh (.5%), Manipur (2%), Meghalaya (.5%), Mizoram (.1%) and Nagaland (0%), all in the northeast.

[xl] Two exceptions are Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra, both of which have significant parties that target Scheduled Castes specifically.

[xli] The estimate for Jammu and Kashmir is based on four elections, since the 1991 parliamentary elections were not held in this state.

[xlii] World Bank, *World Development Indicators* 1998, (Washington D.C.: World Bank 1998).

Notes to Chapter 2

[xliii] See, for instance, Anthony Downs, *An Economic Theory of Democracy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1957); George Akerlof, "The Market for Lemons: Quality Uncertainty and the Market Mechanism," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, Vol. 84, No. 3 (1970): 488-500; Anthony Pascal, ed. *Racial Discrimination in Economic Life* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1972); A. Michael Spence, *Market Signaling: Informational Transfer in Hiring and Related Screening Processes* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974); George Akerlof, "The Economics of Caste and of the Rat Race and Other Woeful Tales," *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, Vol. 90, No. 4 (1976): 599-617; John Ferejohn and James H. Kuklinski, eds., *Information and Democratic Processes* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1990); Samuel Popkin, *The Reasoning Voter* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991); Bernard

Grofman, ed., *Information, Participation and Choice* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993); Melvin J. Hinich and Michael C. Munger, *Ideology and the Theory of Political Choice* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994); Arthur Lupia and Matthew D. McCubbins, *The Democratic Dilemma* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Arthur Lupia, Matthew D. McCubbins, and Samuel Popkin, *Elements of Reason: Cognition, Choice and the Bounds of Rationality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

[xliv] Akerlof, "The Market for Lemons," 494.

[xlv] George Akerlof, "The Economics of Caste," 600.

[xlvi] Spence, *Market Signaling*, Chapter 4, 31-37.

[xlvii] Kenneth Arrow, "Some Mathematical Models of Race in the Labor Market." In Pascal, ed., *Racial Discrimination,* 199. Other works on racial discrimination make a similar argument. For instance, McCall notes that racial discrimination may persist because employers "use color as a cheap screening device."John J McCall, "The Simple Mathematics of Information, Job Discrimination and Prejudice," In Anthony Pascal, ed. *Racial Discrimination,* 206.

[xlviii] Kenneth Arrow, "Models of Job Discrimination", in Pascal, ed. *Racial Discrimination*, 83-120, 96.

[xlix] Downs, *Economic Theory,* 98.

[l] Hinich and Munger, *Ideology and the Theory of Political Choice,* 73.

[li] Samuel Popkin, "Information Shortcuts and the Reasoning Voter," in Grofman, ed., *Information, Participation and Choice*, 28.

[lii] Daniel Posner, "The Institutional Origins of Ethnic Politics in Zambia" (Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1998), 125.

[liii] Lupia and McCubbins, *Democratic Dilemma*, 208.

[liv] Ibid.

[lv] Frederik Barth, *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*. (Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press: 1969), 15-16.

[lvi] For an account of a link between last name and property rights in England, see James C. Scott, John Tehranian, and Jeremy Mathias, "The Production of Legal Identities Proper to States: The Case of the Permanent Family Surname," *Society for the Comparative Study of Society and History*, Vol. 44, No. 1 (2002): 4-44.

lvii Paul Fussell, *Class: A Guide through the American Status System* (New York: Summit Books, 1983), 54.

lviii For a review of constructivist approaches, see Kanchan Chandra, ed., "Cumulative Findings in the Study of Ethnic Politics," *APSA-CP*, Vol. 12, No. 1: 7-11.

lix Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 1983); Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1983).

lx Robert Bates, "Ethnic Competition and Modernization in Contemporary Africa," *Comparative Political Studies* Vol. 6, No. 4 (1974): 457-483.

lxi Richard Fox, *Lions of the Punjab* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985); David Laitin, *Hegemony and Culture: Politics and Religious Change among the Yoruba* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986); Gyanendra Pandey, *The Construction of Communalism in Colonial North India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1992).

lxii Nelson Kasfir, "Explaining Ethnic Political Participation," *World Politics* Vol. 31, No.3 (1979): 365-388.

Notes to Chapter 3

lxiii Robert Kearney, *The Politics of Ceylon (Sri Lanka)* (Ithaca, NH: Cornell University Press, 1973), 8.

lxiv Cited in Richard Joseph, *Democracy and Prebendal Politics in Nigeria* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

lxv Kenneth Post, *The Nigerian Federal Election of 1959* (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), 391.

lxvi Patrick Chabal and Jean-Pascal Daloz, *Africa Works* (Oxford: International African Institute, 1999), 99.

lxvii Daniel Posner, "The Institutional Origins of Ethnic Politics in Zambia" (Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1998), 125.

lxviii This section draws on the extensive literature on rent seeking and corruption, including, particularly, Robert Bates, *Markets and States in Tropical Africa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981); Douglass North, *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); and James Scott, *Comparative Political Corruption* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1972).

lxix For instance, see Barry Ames, *Political Survival: Politicians and Public Policy in Latin America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987); Barbara Geddes, *Politician's Dilemma*: *Building State Capacity in Latin America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994); Allyson Lucinda Benton, "Stability of Provincial Party Systems" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California at Los Angeles, 2001).

lxx Raymond Wolfinger, *The Politics of Progress* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1974), 23.

lxxi Frederic Schaffer, *Democracy in Translation* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998), 136.

lxxii Mancur Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971).

lxxiii For attempts to explain the decision to vote within a rational choice framework, see Morris P. Fiorina, "The Voting Decision: Instrumental and Expressive Aspects," *The Journal of Politics* Vol. 38, No. 2 (1976): 390-413; John Aldrich, "Rational Choice and Turnout," *American Journal of Political Science* Vol. 37, No. 1 (1993): 246-278.

lxxiv One hypothesis suggested by the argument here is that there should be a positive relationship between the degree of dependence of voters upon the state and turnout rates. Within patronage-democracies, therefore, we should expect individuals dependent upon the state for their livelihood to turn out at higher rates than individuals who, because of greater education or greater preexisting wealth, are less dependent.

lxxv Wolfinger, *The Politics of Progress*, 36.

lxxvi *The Post*, January 24, 1996, cited in Posner, "Institutional Origins," 116.

lxxvii Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict.*

lxxviii For a distinction between self-enforcing and self-reinforcing institutions, see Avner Greif, *Historical Institutional Analysis* (Cambridge University Press, forthcoming).

lxxix Posner, "Institutional Origins."

lxxx Gerrit Burgwal, *Caciquismo, Paralelismo and Clientelismo: The History of a Quito Squatter Settlement*. (Amsterdam: Institute of Cultural Anthropology/Sociology of Development, Vrije Universiteit, 1993); (Urban Research Working Papers no. 3)2; John D. Martz, *The Politics of Clientelism: Democracy and the State in Colombia* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1997.) For a recent ethnography that traces these forms of collective bargaining, see Javier Auyero, *Poor People's Politics: Peronist Survival Networks and the Legacy of Evita* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000).

lxxxi Robert Gay, *Popular Organization and Democracy in Rio de Janeiro: A Tale of Two Favelas* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1994), Chapters 2 and 4.

lxxxii Ibid., Chapter 2.

lxxxiii Susan Stokes, *Cultures in Conflict: Social Movements and the State in Peru* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 64.

lxxxiv Jonathan Fox, "The Difficult Transition from Clientelism to Citizenship: Lessons from Mexico," *World Politics*, Vol. 46, No.2 (1994): 164, 168, 172.

lxxxv Ira Katznelson, *City Trenches: Urban Politics and the Patterning of Class in the United States*. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1981), 56.

lxxxvi Michael Jones-Correa, *Between Two Nations: The Political Predicament of Latinos in New York City* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1998).

lxxxvii Jones-Correa, *Between Two Nations*, p. 25, citing an interview with a white respondent.

lxxxviii J. C. Mitchell, "Perceptions of Ethnicity and Ethnic Behaviour: An Empirical Exploration," in Abner Cohen, ed., *Urban Ethnicity* (London: Tavistock, 1974) 11.

lxxxix Badr Dahya, "The Nature of Pakistani Ethnicity in Industrial Cities in Britain," in Abner Cohen ed., *Urban Ethnicity*, 96.

xc Robert Ernst, *Immigrant Life in New York City* (New York: King's Crown Press, 1949), 38.

xci Philip Foner, *History of the Labour Movement in the United States, Vol. 1* (New York: International Publishers, 1972), 224.

xcii Katznelson, *City Trenches*, 58.

xciii Ashutosh Varshney, *Democracy, Development and the Countryside* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 187.

xciv David Laitin, *Hegemony and Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986); Posner, "Institutional Origins"; Richard Fox, *Lions of the Punjab* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985); Gyanendra Pandey, *The Construction of Communalism in Colonial North India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1992); Nicholas Dirks, *Castes of Mind* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001).

xcv Laitin, *Hegemony and Culture*.

xcvi Pandey, *Construction of Communalism*.

xcvii Posner, "Institutional Origins."

xcviii Misha, Glenny. *The Fall of Yugoslavia: The Third Balkan War* (New York: Penguin, 1992).

xcix Stanley Tambiah, *Sri Lanka: Ethnic Fratricide and the Dismantling of Democracy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986).

c E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York: Vintage, 1963).

ci Luc Boltanski, *The Making of a Class: Cadres in French Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

cii I owe this point to a discussion with Barry Posen. It has also been developed by Karen Ferree in a dissertation on voting patterns in South Africa. See "A Cognitive Framework for Ethnic Census Elections," paper presented at LICEP (Laboratory in Comparative Ethnic Processes), Dartmouth College, October 2001.

ciii I owe this point to a discussion with Susan Stokes.

Notes to Chapter 4