# Does the Alternative Vote Foster Moderation in Ethnically Divided Societies?

## The Case of Fiji

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Using insights from social choice theory, particularly Black's concept of single-peaked preferences and Downs's median-voter model, the authors previously investigated the theoretical impact of the alternative vote system (AV) on the success of moderate parties in an ethnically bipolar society. Focusing on the simplest case, that with one moderate and one extremist ethnic party associated with each of the two ethnic groups, they found that for AV to *necessarily* yield outcomes that favor moderate parties there must be majority support for moderation and voter preferences that are single peaked with respect to the ethnic-conflict-defined dimension. Here, the authors test these assumptions with data from the 1999 and 2001 elections in Fiji, an ethnically bipolar society. They show that Fiji's objective of ameliorating ethnic divisions by the adoption of AV was not successful. In elections in 1999 and 2001, moderate parties would have fared better under a proportional representation system.

***Keywords:*** *electoral engineering; Fiji; ethnically divided societies; party competition; preferential voting systems; alternative vote; Downsian model*

## Electoral Design in Divided Societies

The potential of preferential voting systems to ameliorate conflict in deeply divided societies has attracted increasing concern over recent decades. During the process of redesigning constitutions in South Africa, Bosnia, and Fiji, the usage of the alternative vote (AV) system (known in the United States as the "instant runoff") was strongly urged as a mechanism for foster-

ing greater moderation between rival ethnic groups (Horowitz, 1991a, 1997; International Crisis Group, 1998, 1999; Reeves, Vakatora, & Lal, 1996; Reilly, 1997a, 2001). AV, when used in ethnically heterogeneous districts, has been claimed to facilitate vote pooling across the ethnic divide, encourage the emergence of more conciliatory political parties, and promote the formation of resilient interethnic coalitions (Horowitz, 1991b, 1993; Reilly, 1997b). Arend Lijphart's (1991b, 1991c, 1994, 1999) alternative proposals, which center on the usage of list-system proportional representation, power-sharing mechanisms, and mutual veto provisions, have met the objections that they transform elections into little more than an ethnic census, institutionalize divisions, and enable counterproductive forms of ethnocentric elite control (see the reviews of the debates in Reilly & Reynolds, 1999; Reynolds, 2002; Sisk, 1996).

Empirical investigation into the respective merits of consociational and vote-pooling approaches has been frustrated by several factors. First, tension-mitigating plans have rarely been comprehensively adopted or sustained, particularly where these threaten powerful vested interests. Second, even where major institutional changes do occur, claims regarding institutional effects on political behavior are difficult to judge, because it is rarely clear whether it was institutions that encouraged actors to do as they did. How, for example, might we assess the impact of power-sharing institutions, as distinct from political leadership, during South Africa's transition from apartheid? Third, where institutions fail to achieve their intended purpose, this is all too easily explained away as being due to the intractability of underlying conflict, the failure of actors to respond as expected, or the overly selective implementation of proposed institutional changes.[1]

1. For example, Horowitz (2000a, p. 263) notes that although Sri Lanka and Nigeria adopted moderation-inducing presidential systems, they failed to follow a similar prescription in their legislatures. Malaysia originally had multi-ethnic constituencies that encouraged the emergence of Malay-Chinese coalitions, but ongoing inducements to strike deals or sustain compromise across ethnic lines were, it is suggested, nonexistent (Horowitz, 1989, pp. 18-35; 2000a, pp. 264-265). Northern Ireland's adoption of the single transferable vote system (STV) encouraged transethnic vote pooling, suggests Horowitz, but incentives associated with STV are so much weaker than those of alternative vote (AV) that multi-ethnic coalitions failed to appear in the early 1970s (Horowitz, 1991a, pp. 171-175; 1997, pp. 28-29).

The first part of this article summarizes the argument in favor of the AV system and the conditions set out by Donald Horowitz for it to work effectively to moderate severe ethnic polarization. Using the model of single-peaked ethnically linked preferences developed in Fraenkel and Grofman (2004), we review the theoretical potential under AV for outcomes favoring moderate parties in an ethnically bipolar society.[2] In that simplified model, for AV to *necessarily* yield promoderation results, we must have (a) ethnicity as the dominant social cleavage and (b) majority support for moderation. Turning next to the Fiji data, we review the process that led to the adoption of AV in Fiji, briefly examine the electoral outcomes in 1999 and 2001, and map Fiji's party space to establish the location of each of the major parties along an ethnically defined continuum. This then permits us to identify whether party-specified preference schedules were single peaked and to examine the relationship between coalitional form and preference type.

As regards actual preference transfers, we find that critical vote movements in 1999 followed non-single-peaked schedules determining outcomes in the most marginal constituencies. In 2001, schedules were more severely single peaked, but ballot transfers tended to go from moderate parties to more radical parties, rather than in the opposite direction. In each election, one of the critical conditions identified in Fraenkel and Grofman (2004) was absent. In conclusion, we revisit Horowitz's own conclusions about the fate of Fiji's AV system and the 1999 polls and argue that Fiji would have been better off with a more proportional electoral system.

## The AV in Theoretical Perspective

### The Case for the AV

Under the AV, voters are required to submit an ordinal ballot ranking candidates 1, 2, 3, 4, and so on. Where no candidate secures a majority at the first count, the lowest polling candidate is eliminated. His or her voters' second preferences are then redistributed to the remaining candidates. This process of elimination continues until one candidate emerges with an outright majority (50% + 1). Table 1 shows how this worked in Fiji's Nadroga Open constituency at the 1999 election. After the second-count elimination of the Fijian Association Party (FAP) candidate, the Fiji Labour Party (FLP) candidate

2. Our model relates only to the impact of AV in ethnically bipolar societies, not in hyperfractionalized polities like Papua New Guinea (see Reilly, 2001) or countries such as Australia where ethnically based cleavages do not form the dominant dimension of the political process.

**Table 1**
**Redistribution of 1999 Preference Votes**
**in the Nadroga Open Constituency**

| Candidate | Party | Counts | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Kumar | NFP | 35 | Ex | |
| Volavola | FLP | 6,239 | 6,255 | 7,906 |
| Takolevu | FAP | 1,667 | 1,667 | Ex |
| Makutu | SVT | 6,377 | 6,396 | 6,411 |

Source: Fiji Elections Office (1999).
Note: Ex = excluded; NFP = National Federation Party; FLP = Fiji Labor Party; FAP = Fijian Association Party; SVT = Soqosoqo ni Vakavulewa ni Taukei.

leapfrogs over the Soqosoqo ni Vakavulewa ni Taukei (SVT) candidate at the third count, owing to acquisition of the bulk of FAP second preferences.

AV has been argued to assist moderation in three interrelated ways.[3] First, in deeply divided societies, where "voters will generally not cross ethnic lines," plurality-based electoral systems will generate sharply polarized outcomes. According to Horowitz (1991a, pp. 178, 179), however, a preferential ballot may "flush out" second or third choices that traverse the ethnic divide. If so, these are likely to be votes for moderates from another ethnic group rather than for extremists of that group. In marginal contests where the counting of second or lower preferences proves necessary, moderate candidates may therefore emerge victorious in constituencies that radical parties would have secured under plurality voting.

Second, with a preferential ballot, political parties acquire an incentive to bid for second or lower preferences outside their own ethnic group. To attract such support, parties are, it is argued, likely to adopt more conciliatory stances on ethnically divisive issues.

> Electorally, the way to induce politicians to be moderate is to structure voting arrangements so politicians must rely, in part, on votes delivered by members of a group other than their own. Such incentives are effective because those votes will not be forthcoming unless the candidates receiving them can be portrayed as being moderate on inter-ethnic issues. (Horowitz, 1997, p. 24)

Third, in preferential voting systems, parties acquire incentives to strike deals with each other over the exchange of preferences, particularly where

3. This discussion is taken from Fraenkel and Grofman (2004, pp. 489-490).

they are able to direct the voter preferences of their supporters. Such deals, according to Horowitz (1991a, p. 171; 1997, pp. 26, 33), tend to be easier to make for moderate parties who are able to offer significant policy adjustments on ethnically divisive issues. Instead of simply pitting mutually hostile parties against each other at the polls and then reproducing these cleavages inside parliament, this process of preference swapping under AV, it is anticipated, will pave the way for the formation of resilient preelection alliances and coalitions—"coalitions of conviction" instead of the "coalitions of convenience" associated with proportional representation systems.

There are two critical preconditions identified by Horowitz for AV to work as a tool for encouraging ethnic accommodation. First, constituencies need to be ethnically heterogeneous, in the sense of being "composed of significant numbers of two or more ethnic or racial groups in conflict" (Horowitz 1991a, pp. 167, 182, 194, 195; 1991b, pp. 464-465; 1997, p. 35). They must be sufficiently heterogeneous to ensure that even if one ethnic group has a large majority, it is nevertheless politically rewarding to bid for the second, third, or lower order preferences of the minority group. Horowitz (1989, pp. 23-24; 1997, p. 31) nowhere defines the required extent of heterogeneity. But he does expect the system to function effectively in mitigating tensions in a hypothetical Sri Lankan election where Tamils compose 10%-12% of voters.[4] Hence, we might reasonably take this as defining a lowest threshold for constituency heterogeneity. Second, the Horowitz model requires multiple political parties. Only if the majority community in a constituency has more than one political party is it likely that one or the other of the parties representing the majority community will make a bid for the preferences of the minority community. Only if there exist multiple parties in both ethnic groups does the potential exist for transethnic centrist alliances, leaving outbidder parties isolated on the flanks.

## Formalizing the Horowitz Theory[5]

The likelihood of promoderation outcomes under AV can be explored using social choice theory. A nation's recognized scheme of preference rank-

4. Fiji's Constitutional Review Commission took a similar position:

> We took as the measure of heterogeneity the inclusion within the constituency of a mixed population ranging from more or less equal balance between Fijians and Indo-Fijians, to a proportion as high as 85-90% of one community and 15-10% of the other. This last figure represented the limit of what was reasonably possible in constituencies which included island populations consisting mainly of Fijians. (Reeves, Vakatora, & Lal, 1996, p. 315)

5. This section builds on the model set out in Fraenkel and Grofman (2004). Considerations of space and our focus on Fiji data lead us to omit in this article a discussion of Horowitz's (2004) response to our theoretical model.

ing can be objectively established by working out which array of alternatives is likely to yield single-peaked rankings along a unidimensional continuum. Standard applications of the idea of single-peaked preferences apply them to ideological divisions over a left-right dimension. For example, in postwar Europe, the left-right division was such that that those on the right were likely to rank centrists higher than leftists, and vice versa (cf. Arrow, 1951, pp. 75-76). Most voters could assess where on the continuum a given party was located. Where multiple distinct defining issues govern the political process, there will be no consistent single-peaked ordering of political alternatives.

In a bipolar society marked by deep ethnic divisions, the dominant political continuum might be expected to be shaped by ethnicity, with radical elements of one group occupying one pole and radicals from the other group at the other pole. In Fiji, where elections are usually fought between ethnically defined Indian (I) and ethnic Fijian (F) parties, we can devise a model assuming only four parties; one radical (r) and one moderate (m) party for each of the two groups. We denote these as rI, mI, mF, and rF. Plotting this ethnic continuum along the x-axis, we generate a set of points that represent the eight possible single-peaked rankings of the four parties. Joining these points by straight-line segments along the x-axis establishes a set of single-peaked curves. The connected lines are single-peaked in the sense that they change their slope "at most once," and where they do change their shape it is from "an upward to a downward slope" (Black, 1958, p. 7).[6]

In total, there are 24 possible rankings of these four hypothetical parties (see schedule types A-X in Figure 4). Only the eight single-peaked schedules (A-H) are shown in Figure 1 (adapted from Fraenkel & Grofman, 2004). If preferences are single peaked, several electoral systems that require voters to rank order parties tend to favor candidates located toward the center of the political spectrum (Black, 1958, p. 75). Some, such as Condorcet extension methods, will guarantee selection of the alternative favored by the median voter (see also Grofman & Feld, 2004).[7] How effective is the alternative vote in this respect? With (a) exclusively single-peaked preferences and (b) a four-party contest and (c) with no party securing a first-count majority of first preferences, the party corresponding to the preferences of the median

6. The line, drawn for heuristic purposes in Figure 1, connects the points according to their positions along the x-axis, not in order of preference ranking.

7. The *median voter*, made famous by Anthony Downs (1957), is the voter who has half of the voters having their most preferred alternative to his left and half of the voters having their most preferred alternatives to his right. In other words, the median voter is the voter who, in terms of the defining unidimensional continuum, is in the middle of the space of voter ideal points.

**Figure 1**
**Single-Peaked Preferences Along an Ethnically Defined Four-Party Continuum**
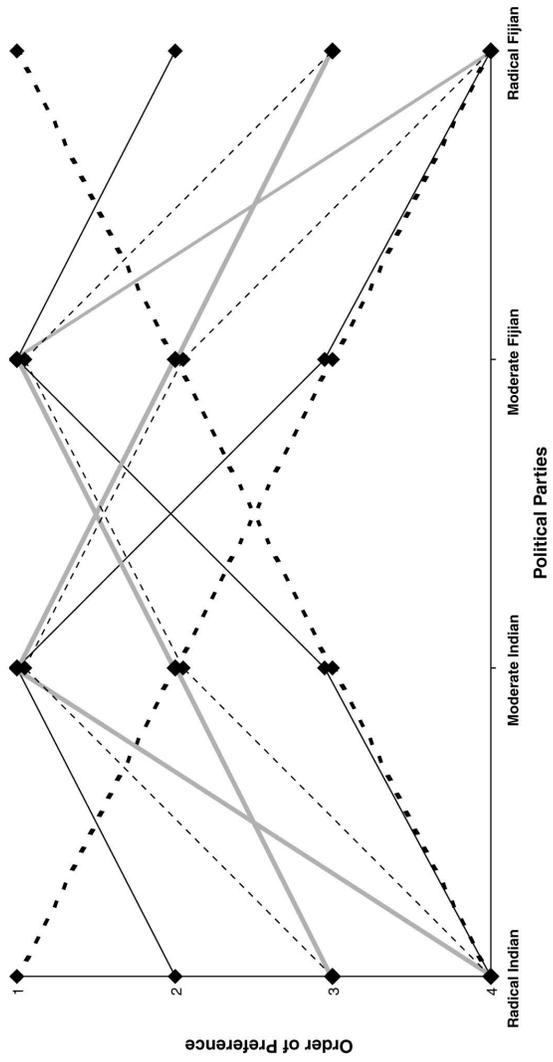


Source: Adapted from Fraenkel & Grofman (2004).

is majority first-preference support in both communities for moderate parties, Fraenkel and Grofman (2004) show that the median party cannot be eliminated.

If, alternatively, there is an antimoderation first-preference majority in one or the other community, outcomes do not necessarily favor the moderate parties. For example, in a predominantly Indian constituency, with 35% of the voters having preferences rI, mI, mF, rF; 25% having preferences mI, rI, mF, rF; 30% mF, mI, rF, rI; and 10% rF, mF, mI, rI, the radical Indian party prevails on the third ballot, as it would have done under a plurality count.[8] Yet a first-count moderate leader can be overturned, even where there is overall majority support for moderate over radical alternatives. Consider a constituency where 30% of voters have preferences rF, mF, mI, rI; 21% indicate mF, rF, mI, rI; 34% mI, rI, mF, rF; and 15% rI, mI, mF, rF. Here, mI is the first-count leader, and 55% of voters prefer moderates, but rF nevertheless prevails at the third count. Only if there is a moderate first-count leader and the *other* moderate party's supporters' schedules are what Fraenkel and Grofman (2004) describe as "mild" rather than "severe" single-peaked schedules (i.e., mF and mI are ranked in top positions) does it become impossible for a radical party to overturn a first-count moderate leader (unless one relaxes the assumptions of single-peaked preferences or only four parties). In both of these senses, then, the Horowitz model presupposes support for the more moderate alternatives.

Outcomes may plausibly, in some cases, favor moderate candidates even without single-peaked preferences, but only erratically. The potential for an overall centrist bias delivered by the voting system rests critically on the single-peaked scenario, as can be seen from two features of such schedules in the context of our four-party model: (a) all eight types of single-peaked preferences locate one or the other of the radical candidates as last preference and (b) those who give first-preference support to radical parties must have second preferences that converge toward the center of the spectrum. They literally have nowhere else to go.

If preferences are single peaked, we would expect coalitions also to be ideologically connected in Axelrod's (1970) sense, meaning that (excluding the grand coalition) they should involve rI + mI, or rI + mI + mF, or mI + mF, or mI + mF + rF, or finally, mF + rF. If, alternatively, issues other than ethnic-

8. As Grofman and Feld (2004) show, for a fixed set of parties and preference orderings, AV is more likely than first-past-the-post (FPP) to pick a Condorcet victor. Lijphart (1991a, pp. 93-94) argues, however, that the two systems have "exactly the same incentives to compromise." Under AV, ideologically sympathetic parties pool preferences, whereas under FPP they pool votes, with smaller parties agreeing to stand aside in favor of larger parties who have a greater chance of winning.

ity are salient, nonconnected coalitions become possible, for example, rI + mF (without mI) or rF + mI (without mF). As Fraenkel and Grofman (2004) show, even alliances of the type rI + rF are strategic possibilities where flank parties are faced with a potentially victorious centrist coalition of the type mI + mF and coalesce around a strategic "outs" versus "ins" dimension.

The purpose of our simplified heuristic four-party, single-peaked model is not to depict *actual* preference-ranking behavior in ethnically bipolar societies but simply to explore the range of possible outcomes and the restrictive assumptions required to generate promoderation outcomes under the AV system. In practice, there may be more (or less) than four parties contesting a constituency and alternative ideological dimensions to the political process that gave rise to non-single-peaked preferences. The presence of multiple parties, particularly if centrists are the more divided, enhances the risk that a potential moderate victor may be eliminated at an early stage of the count. If ethnicity is not the only critical issue but is copresent with political concerns centered on social inequality or localized intra-ethnic sources of discord, preferences will no longer necessarily flow along the continuum to adjacent parties along the ethnicity axis but may skip across intervening options. If, alternatively, ethnic polarization strengthens so that extremists in both communities gain majority support, it is highly unlikely that ballot transfers will assist moderate parties.

We now examine the extent to which the range of alternative possibilities found in our simplified four-party, single-peaked model corresponds to the more complex empirical experience of the operation of AV in Fiji's 1999 and 2001 elections.

## The Use of the AV in Fiji

### Constitutional Engineering in Fiji

The Pacific Island state of Fiji was the first country in the world to adopt the AV system for nationwide legislative elections as a deliberate tool for managing ethnic diversity and mitigating conflict.[9] This former British colony has a history of postindependence frictions between politicians repre-

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9. Australia also uses AV for federal elections, but with an Anglo-American-style, two-party system differentiated along ideological lines. Bosnia adopted the system, but for separate communal presidential elections. Papua New Guinea has recently adopted a limited preferential AV system, and briefly experimented with AV before independence. Yet there the problem is highly fractionalized, clan-based loyalties, and consequent slender electoral support for plurality winners. Fiji's bipolar divisions are, in this respect, much closer to those situations, such as Sri Lanka, South Africa, or Bosnia, where AV has been recommended as a method of transcending divisions between two or three large ethnic groups.

senting the 52% indigenous Fijian and 44% Indian communities.[10] A military coup in 1987 brought to power an ethnic Fijian-dominated regime, which promulgated a new constitution in 1990 that reserved the positions of prime minister and president for ethnic Fijians and gave a majority of parliamentary seats to indigenous Fijians. Yet by the mid-1990s, coup leader Sitiveni Rabuka had embraced the path of reform and commenced cooperation with the major Indian opposition leader, Jai Ram Reddy, in conducting a far-reaching review of the constitution. A constitutional review commission (CRC) was established, which recommended that the AV system be used as the "main stimulus for the emergence of a multi-ethnic political culture in Fiji" (Reeves et al., 1996, p. 309). The 1996 report bore evidence of considerable familiarity with contemporary scholarly literature on electoral systems. Both Professors Lijphart and Horowitz gave evidence to the commission, and, although Lijphart's arguments influenced some parts of the 1997 constitution, it was Horowitz's model that was closely followed in providing the rationale for the introduction of the AV system. Lijphart (1997, p. 10) subsequently called Fiji's adoption of AV a "major practical victory" for Horowitz.

The finer details of the AV system adopted in Fiji were strongly influenced by the practice of preferential voting in neighboring Australia. Voting and registration were to be compulsory. There was to be compulsory ranking of 75% of candidates to cast a valid ballot and a complex Australian senate-style split-format ballot paper allowing voters to follow a party "ticket" option. The voter could either directly number the candidates in some order ("voting below the line") or, more simply, place a tick next to a first-choice party ("voting above the line"). Above-the-line voting delegated decisions about preferences to party officials. Before the election, parties were required to lodge preference lists ranking all candidates in each constituency to the elections office. During the count, above-the-line votes were transferred in accordance with rankings specified in those lists. The rationale for this split-format ballot design was explicitly Horowitzian. It was intended "to encourage parties to exchange preferences and assist them in delivering them in accordance with the agreement" (Reeves et al., 1996, p. 320), and it was backed by the political parties because they believed that voters would otherwise not give preferences across the ethnic divide.[11]

10. The residual 4% of the country's population are either Rotumans or so-called general voters, comprising Chinese, Europeans, part-Europeans, and other Pacific Islanders. With out-migration of Indians, the Fijian proportion of the population is on the rise.

11. According to National Federation Party (NFP) shadow finance minister Wadan Narsey (2002), the politicians deliberately chose to have an "above the line" section because they did not trust their supporters to give preferences across party lines. They feared (perhaps quite correctly) that if voters were given the freedom to decide, then Fijians would only give their preferences to other Fijians and Indo-Fijians would only give their preferences to other Indo-Fijians.

Horowitz (1997) reviewed the Fiji CRC's report and described this as "impeccably correct."

> The Commission was entirely on the right track in pursuing the goal of vote pooling. Alternative Voting . . . is perfectly apt for this purpose in Fiji. It is an electoral system that meets the tests of simplicity of operation, lack of ambiguity in producing electoral results, and conduciveness to the goal of inter-ethnic accommodation. (pp. 30-31)

Although the Joint Parliamentary Select Committee (JPSC) that subsequently deliberated on the report closely followed the CRC's electoral system proposals, they made several important modifications. First, the number of "open" seats was reduced from 45 to 25, whereas the number of communal seats allocated to the different ethnic groups was raised from 25 to 46. Second, Lijphartian-style power-sharing provisions were introduced to govern the formation of cabinets. These entitled all parties with 10% or more of the seats to ministerial portfolios. The JPSC also accepted two changes that Horowitz had recommended: (a) The CRC's proposed multimember open seats (which had been intended to guarantee greater constituency heterogeneity) were rejected in favor of single-member constituencies. (b) The CRC's complex proposed method of tallying preferences was abandoned in favor of the established Australian House of Representatives method of counting preference votes (Horowitz, 1997, p. 30; Reeves et al., 1996, p. 319).

The 25 new open constituencies possessed the characteristics identified by Horowitz as necessary for its successful operation as a tool for conflict reduction. First, all had mixed Fijian-Indian electorates (see Figure 2). Only two were highly ethnically homogeneous, in the sense of having less than 15% of registered voters from the minority ethnic group. Second, there were sufficient political parties to ensure that agreements about preference transfers were pivotal to party strategy. Twenty-one parties contested the polls in 1999 and 18 in 2001. With so many political parties, and considerable uncertainty about the pattern of party support, efforts to attract preferences became a central focus of party strategy.

## Outcomes of the 1999 and 2001 Fijian Elections

The results of the first elections held under the new system in May 1999 were initially greeted as indicative of a tremendous success for the AV system. Two multi-ethnic coalitions emerged to fight the elections, both of which made arrangements for sharing seats and exchanging preference votes. The Indian-led FLP was able to win seats even in constituencies where Indians formed only 20%-30% of registered voters. For the first time ever, a

**Figure 2**
**Ethnic Fijian Share of Open-Constituency Registered Voters, 1999**
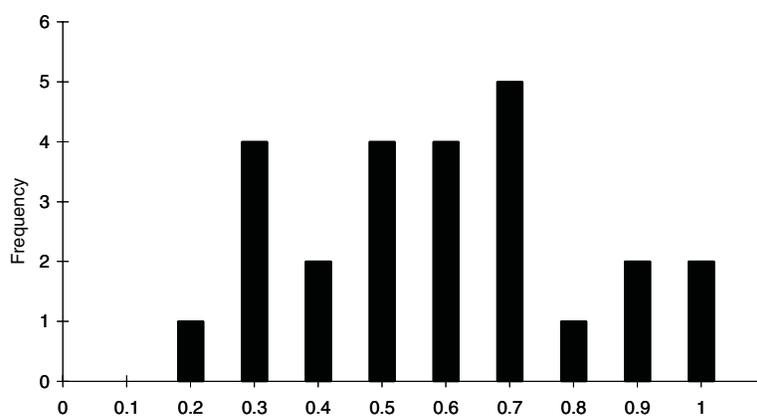


prime minister from the country's minority Indian community, Mahendra Chaudhry, took office, promptly forming a cabinet composed largely of indigenous Fijian ministers. Purpose-built electoral institutions aimed at encouraging multiracialism seemed, at first sight, to have transformed the political landscape. Horowitz reported shortly after the election that

> A recent instance in which a vote-pooling electoral system was used success-fully to induce the formation of a multi-ethnic coalition that won the election was the alternate vote (AV), adopted in the 1997 Fijian constitution. The elec-toral incentives were weak, but they had a powerful effect. A severely divided society, Fiji now has a thoroughly multi-ethnic government, led by its first ever Indian Prime Minister. (Horowitz, 2002, p. 24).

Other views of the 1999 Fijian election results, however, were less san-guine. The centrist multi-ethnic coalition that had initiated the constitutional compromise, guided the legislation through parliament, and set out a cam-paign platform based on interethnic cooperation had been badly defeated.[12] The largely Indian-backed FLP had controversially secured an absolute majority in parliament, despite securing negligible first-preference support

12. The NFP obtained no seats at all, and the Soqosoqo ni Vakavulewa ni Taukei received only eight seats, despite having been ahead at the first count in 18 constituencies.

(1.9%) from the 52% ethnic Fijians. It was transfers of preference votes at the behest of party officials that enabled the FLP's victory in key marginal open constituencies.[13] Vote transfers had not, as hoped, underpinned a process of adoption of conciliatory policies but had instead largely been driven by tactical alliances aimed at unseating the governing party (along with its new coalition partners). The election was the most disproportionate in Fiji's history, and invalid (informal) ballots at 8.7% of the total were among the highest witnessed anywhere in the world (Fraenkel, 2001).

The new coalition government did not prove to be a robust "coalition of conviction." Instead, the Labor-led coalition had begun to unravel within days of the announcement of the May 1999 election results. As soon as Mr. Chaudhry declared his decision to assume the position of prime minister, Labor's Fijian coalition allies immediately rebelled, demanding instead an indigenous Fijian premier. Key leaders of the indigenous Fijian campaign to unseat Chaudhry came, ironically, from members of parliament (MPs) and grass-roots activists belonging to the three small allied Fijian parties whose leaders remained inside the FLP-led cabinet (Fraenkel, 2000a).

Precisely a year after the Labor-led government took office in Fiji, it was overthrown by a group of indigenous Fijian extremists led by George Speight. Fiji's military forces held out against the would-be coup leaders, but, in an effort to assuage the ethnonationalist forces unleashed by the coup, the military abrogated the 1997 constitution, removed the Fijian president Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara, and promised coup leader George Speight an amnesty. An unelected, all-Fijian, "interim administration" was put into office. After a protracted power struggle, the military eventually arrested and imprisoned George Speight, who had, the courts found, lost his amnesty owing to a failure to return weapons stolen from the army's main barracks. In March 2001, a landmark decision by Fiji's court of appeal restored to force the 1997 constitution (along with its associated electoral provisions). Yet instead of requiring the reinstatement of the Labor-led government, the court of appeal ruling left space for the Fijian interim administration to repeat the process of selection of a new head of state and, thereafter, to relegitimize itself by calling fresh elections (Head, 2001).

The August 2001 election inverted the 1999 result and brought to power a hard-line ethnic Fijian-dominated government that had negligible Indian

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13. Ninety-two percent of voters completed their ballot papers by ticking next to a single party "above the line," so delegating decisions about preferences to their first-choice political parties (Elections Office, personal communication). Most of the 0-39 forms detailing the different pattern of transfers of above- and below-the-line votes were misplaced by the Elections Office for 1999 and (rather suspiciously) lost for the crucial Central Division in 2001. We have made this an issue in correspondence with the Fiji Electoral Commission.

support. Even coup leader George Speight, who stood for another new radical Fijian party, the Conservative Alliance-Matanitu Vanua (CAMV), managed to attracted sufficient preference votes to get himself elected from his prison cell.[14] As in 1999, the more moderate politicians were badly defeated. This time, they had clubbed together as part of a "moderates' forum" and explicitly paid homage to the intended compromise-inducing benefits of the AV system. But Fiji's politics had been sharply polarized by the coup, and the first preferences given to the more radical Indian and Fijian parties increased. As in 1999, the critical transfers of above-the-line preference votes, which decided outcomes in the more marginal constituencies, were not underwritten by any accords over policy, and tactical exigencies dominated. The 2001 elections again witnessed a high degree of votes and seats disproportionality, and an even larger number of ballots were declared invalid than in 1999 (12.1%).

## Modeling Fiji Party Space

Before we can establish how far actual preference schedules were single or non–single peaked, and whether coalitions were connected in Axelrod's sense, it is necessary to locate Fiji's political parties along our ethnically defined radical-moderate continuum. We take the stance of political parties with respect to the 1997 constitution as the best available indicator, enabling us to locate the major Fijian and Indian parties as rI, mI, mF, and rF.[15] Part of our argument, however, is that identifying parties along such an ethnic continuum, assuming as it does the single-peaked-type scenario, neglects other dimensions to the political process.[16] Hence, we offer a two-dimensional model of Fiji party space. We focus on the horizontal ethnically based axis, although the left-right dimension shown on the vertical axis serves to demonstrate the potential for non-single-peaked preferences that may disrupt the anticipated Horowitzian accommodative effects of the AV system in Fiji (see Figure 3).

After a decade of communal strife, the 1997 constitution was the outcome of a historic compromise between leaders of the country's indigenous Fijian

14. Speight subsequently lost his seat owing to a provision in Fiji's constitution that debars members of parliament who miss three consecutive sittings of the house. His brother secured the seat in a consequent by-election.

15. A more detailed discussion of our two-dimensional classification scheme for Fiji politics is available online at http://www.socsci.uci.edu/~bgrofman/.

16. An issue of contention in the scholarly literature about Fiji is whether indigenous Fijian-Indian fissions or left-right divisions dominate the political agenda (cf. Scarr, 1988, 1997, and Howard, 1991, pp. 3-13; Lal, 1988, pp. 7, 39, 59; 1999, pp. 39-40; Robertson & Tamanisau 1988, p. 155; and see the review of the debates in Firth 1989, pp. 242-243).

**Figure 3**
**Two-Dimensional Model of Fiji Party Space**
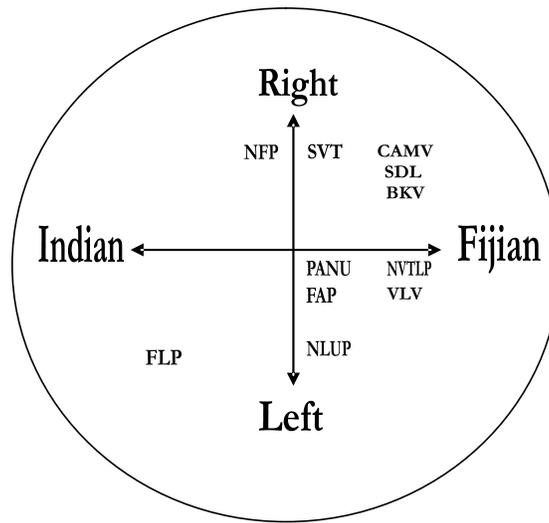


Source: http://www.socsci.uci.edu/~bgrofman/.
Note: CAMV = Conservative Alliance-Matanitu Vanua (rF); FAP = Fijian Association Party (mF); FLP = Fiji Labour Party (rI); NFP = National Federation Party (mI); NLUP = New Labor Unity Party (mF); NVTLP = Nationalist Vanua Lavo Tako Party (rF); PANU = Party of National Unity (mF); SDL = Soqosoqo ni Duavata ni Lewenivanua (rF); BKV = Bai Kai Viti (rF); SVT = Soqosoqo ni Vakavulewa ni Taukei (mF); VLV = Veitokani ni Lewenivanua Vakaristo (rF). Figure disregards independents, parties appealing to the general voters, and those that failed to secure any seats at either the 1999 or 2001 polls.

and Indian communities. As we saw above, its architects were Rabuka's governing SVT (mF) and Jai Ram Reddy's National Federation Party (NFP, mI), the major Indian opposition party. Repudiating the politics of confrontation, these two parties entered into a close, pre-1999 election coalition, along with the smaller United Generals Party (UGP).

Fiji's other major parties, hardly surprisingly, refused to be cast in the role of ethnic outbidders. The other mainly Indian-backed party, the FLP (rI), had made a joint submission to the CRC, and party leader Mahendra Chaudhry signed the final constitutional proposal put before parliament. Nevertheless, the FLP represented the "more militant" wing of Indian politics (Lal, 1998, p. 48; Norton, 2000, p. 95), reliant on strong support from Indian farmers in the sugarcane districts. During the constitutional review process, Chaudhry

demanded more reserved seats in parliament for Indian MPs. On the campaign trail prior to the 1999 elections, the FLP played down the significance of the constitutional debate and stressed rather left-right divisions and alliances founded on social class rather than ethnicity. The Rabuka-Reddy accord was described as a "sell out," and emphasis was shifted instead to "bread and butter" issues: "The constitution won't put food in your mouth" (Lal, personal communication, 2001; Singh, personal communication, 2001). The FLP proved able to forge a loose coalition with two moderate ethnic Fijian parties—the FAP (mF) and Party of National Unity (PANU, mF). The FAP espoused the more moderate socioeconomic philosophy and was ideologically closest to the FLP. PANU at first courted a coalition with Rabuka's SVT before turning to what Lal (1999, p. 29) calls a "coalition of convenience" with Labor. The FLP, FAP, and PANU formed a pre-election coalition centered on agreements to exchange preference votes but without any explicit agreements on ethnically controversial issues.

The final two major ethnic Fijian parties, the Nationalist Vanua Lavo Tako Party (NVTLP, rF) and Veitokani ni Lewenivanua Vakaristo (VLV, rF) did not enter any pre-election coalitions. Both were opposed to the 1997 constitution and critical of Rabuka's "betrayal" of the indigenous Fijian cause.

At the 2001 election, categorizing parties along the ethnic continuum was rendered more straightforward due to the postcoup polarization of Fiji's politics. As previously discussed, a self-styled moderates' forum also emerged in 2001, bringing together those centrist parties that had contested in 1999 (NFP, SVT, FAP, UGP), who were joined by a new breakaway faction from the FLP, the New Labor Unity Party (NLUP, mF).[17] On the Fijian side, three new parties emerged, all of which were opposed to the 1997 constitution. The interim prime minister formed the Soqosoqo ni Duavata ni Lewenivanua (SDL) and, in western Viti Levu, the Bai Kai Viti (BKV) was aimed at undermining the regional influence of the FLP's Fijian ally, PANU. Third, the CAMV appealed to coup-supporting villages in George Speight's home district of northern Tailevu and on the neighboring island of Vanua Levu. All three parties can thus be coded rF.

17. The New Labor Unity Party (NLUP) aimed at achieving a multi-ethnic social base, and stood a mixture of Indian and Fijian candidates. However, the party was led by former deputy prime minister Dr. Tupeni Baba, an ethnic Fijian, and although it succeeded in attracting several ethnic Fijian Fiji Labor Party (FLP) members, it failed to break away key moderate Indian FLP parliamentarians. In addition, the NLUP secured more electoral support from Fijians (4.2%) than Indians (2.8%). It is therefore better classified as moderate Fijian (mF) than moderate Indian (mI).

**Figure 4**
**Party-Preferred Ballot Transfer Schedules**
**in Fiji's 1999 and 2001 Open Constituencies**

| | | Single-Peaked Preferences | | | | | | | | Non-Single-Peaked Preferences | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | = | SP |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Type: | | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X | = | SP |
| | | rf | mF | rl | ml | mF | mF | ml | ml | | rF | mF | ml | rl | rF | rF | rF | rF | mF | mF | ml | ml | rl | rl | rl | rl | | % |
| | | mf | rF | ml | rl | ml | ml | ml | mF | | ml | rl | rF | mF | mF | rl | ml | rl | rF | rl | rF | rl | ml | mF | rF | rF | | |
| | To: | mi | ml | mF | mF | rF | rl | rF | rl | | mF | ml | mF | ml | rl | mF | rl | ml | rl | rF | rl | rF | rF | rF | mF | ml | | |
| From: | | rl | rl | rF | rF | rl | rF | rl | rF | | rl | rF | rl | rF | ml | ml | mF | mF | ml | ml | mF | mF | ml | ml | ml | mF | | |
| **1999** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Ideologically-connected coalition: | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| SVT | (mF) | | | | | 2 | 4 | 1 | 7 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 14 | 100 |
| NFP | (ml) | | | | | | 5 | | 8 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 13 | 100 |
| Ideologically-non-connected coalition: | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| FLP | (rl) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 12 | 1 | | | 13 | 0 |
| FAP | (mF) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 9 | | | 4 | 1 | | | 14 | 0 |
| PANU | (mF) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 6 | | | | | | | 6 | 0 |
| Outliers: | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| NVTLP | (rF) | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 3 | 3 | | | | | | | | | | | 8 | 25 |
| VLV | (rF) | 4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 4 | 3 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | 13 | 31 |
| **2001** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Outliers: | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| SDL | (rF) | 10 | | | | | | | | | 7 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 17 | 59 |
| CAMV | (rF) | 6 | | | | | | | | | 10 | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 17 | 35 |
| BKV | (rF) | 5 | | | | | | | | | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 7 | 71 |
| NVTLP | (rF) | 9 | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | 11 | 82 |
| Ideologically-connected coalition: | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| SVT | (mF) | 1 | 4 | | | 2 | 4 | | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | 14 | 93 |
| NLUP | (mF) | | | | 17 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 17 | 100 |
| FAP | (mF) | | | | | | 13 | 2 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 16 | 100 |
| NFP | (ml) | | | | | | 16 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 16 | 100 |
| Ideologically-non-connected coalition: | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| PANU | (mF) | | | 1 | | | | | | | | 4 | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | 7 | 14 |
| FLP | (rl) | | | 5 | | | | | | | | | | 11 | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | 17 | 29 |

Source: 1999 unpublished party preference lists; Fiji Elections Office (2001a).
Note: SP = Single peaked; r = radical; m = moderate; F = Fijian; I = Indian; SVT = Soqosoqo ni Vakavulewa ni Taukei; NFP = National Federation Party; FLP = Fiji Labor Party; FAP = Fijian Association Party; PANU = Party of National Unity; NVTLP = Nationalist Vanua Lavo Tako Party; VLV = Veitokani ni Lewenivanua Vakaristo; SDL = Soqosoqo ni Duavata ni Lewenivanua; CAMV = Conservative Alliance-Matanitu Vanua; BKV = Bai Kai Viti; NLUP = New Labor Unity Party. Results are shown only for those constituencies and those donor parties where party above-the-line rankings listed at least one party in each of the four ethnic categories (henceforth "complete" rankings). In constituencies where more than one party of each type stood, we take the highest on the party preference list. Empty boxes signify zero entries. In some constituencies, parties submitted preference lists with another party listed first. They were legally allowed to do this even in constituencies where they did not field candidates.

## Preference Schedules and Transfers in 1999 and 2001

At Fiji's 1999 and 2001 elections, could above-the-line ballot rankings be characterized as single peaked? The columns in Figure 4 set out all 24 poten-

tial rankings of the 4 parties rI, mI, mF, and rF. In the rows, we show the parties grouped according to whether they were connected or nonconnected, in Axelrod's sense, and then match the number of complete orderings of each type submitted by each of the 7 major parties in 1999 and 10 major parties in 2001.[18]

At the 1999 election, Parties that were part of the ideologically connected centrist pre-election coalition submitted preference schedules that were 100% single-peaked. In contrast, the rankings offered by members of the ideologically-non-connected coalition were entirely non-single-peaked, reflecting the 'outs' versus "ins" campaign strategy. Cross ethnic exchanges of preferences between the FLP (rI) and FAP/PANU (mF) did not center around policy commitments on key ethnically sensitive issues, such as legislation covering leasing of native-owned lands or ethnicity of the Prime Minister. Defeat of the incumbent SVT government (mI) and its new coalition ally, the NFP (mI), proved a sufficient unifying objective. Only outlier parties submitted mixtures of single- and non-single-peaked schedules.

The 2001 elections were considerably more polarized than those in 1999, both as regards prevalent types of party-specified preference schedules and the distribution of first preference voter support. As in 1999, the centrist multi-ethnic coalition parties all had close to 100% single-peaked rankings. Outliers and the nonconnected coalition had mixtures of single- and non-single-peaked schedules, suggesting again that consistency in above the line offering of single-peaked orderings was a primarily a function of coalition partnerships, rather than ethnic political orientation. Otherwise, results in the many of the 2001 open constituencies conformed to the centrifugal potential of the AV system identified above. The radical Fijian parties in fact all endorsed preference schedules that were close to the straight-line downhill rF, mF, mI, rI type, although with some indifference about the respective positions of mF and mI.[19] The critical feature was that the FLP (rI) was placed last.

So far, we have considered the proposed above the line rankings of each of the political parties, without showing how those schedules influenced actual results in specific constituencies. In practice, however, some of those rank-orderings exerted a negligible influence over results, others were exceptionally significant. A critical part of the case for AV is that moderation-inclined preferential ballots will exert particular significance in the more marginal constituencies, thus providing a boost to the political center in overall electoral outcomes. Let us therefore examine the composition of victories at the

18. We disregard incomplete rankings, where one of our four party types, radical Indian (rI), mI, mF, or radical Fijian (rF) did not field candidates.

19. This resulted in some Fijian parties schedules being type I.

1999 and 2001 elections, paying particular attention to outcomes in the most ethnically heterogeneous open constituencies.

At the 1999 polls, as anticipated in the Horowitz model, first preference voting was strongly along ethnic lines. Five main Fijian parties secured together 94% of the Fijian vote, but only 0.7% of the Indian vote. Two major Indian-backed parties secured 98% of the Indian vote, but only 1.9% of the vote in Fijian communal constituencies. In the 25 open constituencies, the first preference vote was also largely along ethnic lines, but in only seven of the 25 did any party receive a majority of first preferences. The overall election outcome therefore depended critically on outcomes in the 18 other open constituencies where transfers of preference votes determined results. Figure 5 shows the composition of victors' majorities in the 25 open constituencies in 1999. Constituencies are arranged from left to right in accordance with the ratio of Fijians to Indians in electorates (hence, predictably, those towards the center were the most competitive constituencies, where outcomes were most preference dependent). The initial block at the base of each column shows the first preference vote for the victorious party. Any additional segments above these show transferred preference votes required to enable parties to reach the 50% threshold (shown by the dashed horizontal line). Reading the chart from right to left therefore makes it possible to discern how the FLP, despite having less than 2% of Fijian first preferences, was able to win seats even in constituencies with ever more substantial ethnic Fijian electorates.

The FLP's absolute majority of 37 seats in the 71-member parliament arose due to first-count victories in all 19 of the Indian communal constituencies and in 5 of the open constituencies, and preference transfer-dependent victories in another 13 open constituencies. In 8 of those preference-dependent open-seat victories, Labor's victory occurred due to vote transfers from its Fijian coalition allies, the FAP and PANU. In the remaining 5, the margin of victory was provided by transfers of preferences following the non-single-peaked schedules of the Fijian extremist party, the VLV. Most remarkable were the two FLP victories in overwhelmingly ethnic Fijian constituencies—Tailevu South-Lomaiviti (31% Indian electorate) and Lami (20% Indian electorate). In Tailevu South/Lomaiviti, VLV fifth preferences gave the FLP victory at the sixth count. In Lami, VLV seventh preferences gave the FLP victory at the ninth count. In both cases, it was penultimate preferences that gave the FLP victory only because the incumbent SVT, and in one case also its coalition ally the NFP, were placed in last position. In two-party contests at the final count, the FLP was thus able to secure these two most marginal

## Figure 5
### Composition of Victors' Majorities in the 25 Open Constituencies in 1999
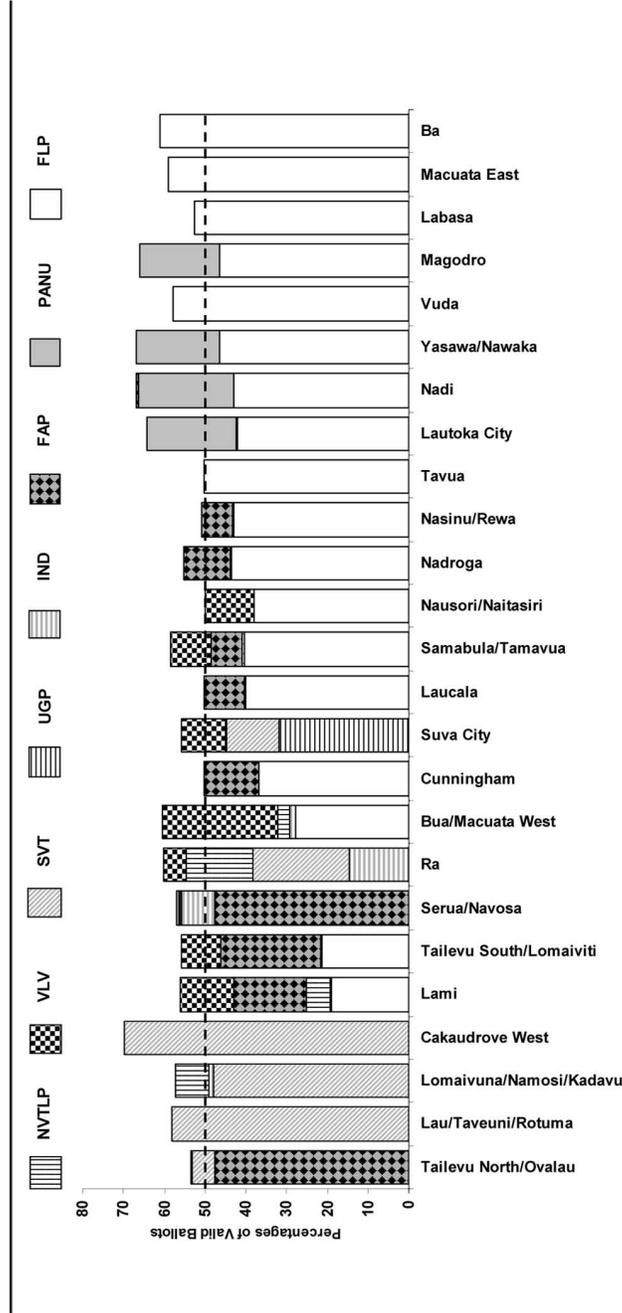


Source: Fiji Elections Office (1999).

Note: Constituencies ranked from left to right in accordance with the ratio of ethnic Fijians to Indians in electorates. The block at the base of each column shows the first preference vote for the eventually victorious party. Above these, additional segments show transfer of preference votes as other parties are eliminated (i.e., it shows the proximate source of transfers, not necessarily [from the third count onwards], their ultimate origin, which can only be estimated using the more sophisticated, but so far unavailable 0-39 forms, see Note 12). The dashed horizontal line shows the 50% threshold required for victory.

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constituencies. These two victories carried the FLP over the 36-seat absolute majority threshold.[20]

The August 2001 elections resulted instead in victory for the radical indigenous Fijian parties. As in 1999, first-preference voting was largely along ethnic lines, except now polarization was sharper. In the Indian communal constituencies, the FLP share of the vote rose from 66% to 75%, whereas the NFP's vote slumped from 32% to 22%. In the indigenous Fijian communal constituencies, the newly formed Soqosoqo ni Duavata ni Lewenivanua (SDL) took 50% of the vote, whereas the CAMV obtained a further 20%. The former governing SVT was left without a single seat. All 19 Indian constituencies again fell to the Fiji Labour Party, and all 23 Fijian reserved constituencies fell to either the SDL (18) or CAMV (5), including coup leader George Speight's Tailevu North constituency. In the communal seats, none of these parties made much headway in the opposite ethnic community. Labor obtained 2.3% of the Fijian vote, whereas the SDL gained only 0.1% of Indian votes. The majority in both communities voted for the most strident political representatives of their perceived ethnic interests.

As in 1999, the final outcome therefore became critically dependent on results in the 25 open constituencies. Now it was a Fijian party (the SDL) that made sweeping gains by securing transferred preference votes, whereas the FLP was confined to its sugarcane-belt heartlands. The SDL received easily the largest share of preference transfers (45.4%) in the open constituencies, often because the Moderates Forum parties had placed the SDL in penultimate position and the FLP in last position on their schedules. The SDL emerged after the election with 32 MPs, having won 14 open seats.[21] Most of the vote transfers allowing SDL victory followed single-peaked-type schedules, and came either from the radical Fijian parties, CAMV (11.3% of total transfers) and Bai Kai Viti (BKV; 2.9% of total transfers), or from the centrist Moderates Forum parties (23.4% of total transfers). Figure 6 uses the same methodology as Figure 5. In 8 of the 12 preference-dependent open constituencies won by the SDL, the margin of victory was provided by votes transferred from the one or other of the Moderates Forum parties. In its three most marginal victories, the SDL relied on preferences from the Indian-backed NFP (mI).

The SDL's 32 seats left it short of the absolute majority threshold. SDL leader Laisenia Qarase therefore formed a coalition with CAMV and several independents. In 1999, leaders of the three small Fijian parties whose preference votes gave the FLP its absolute majority had joined the People's Coali-

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20. For further discussion of the 1999 results, see Fraenkel (2000b; 2001).

21. Including Ra Open, where the election was delayed owing to the death of one of the candidates.

**Figure 6**

**Composition of Victors' Majorities in the 25 Open Constituencies in 2001**
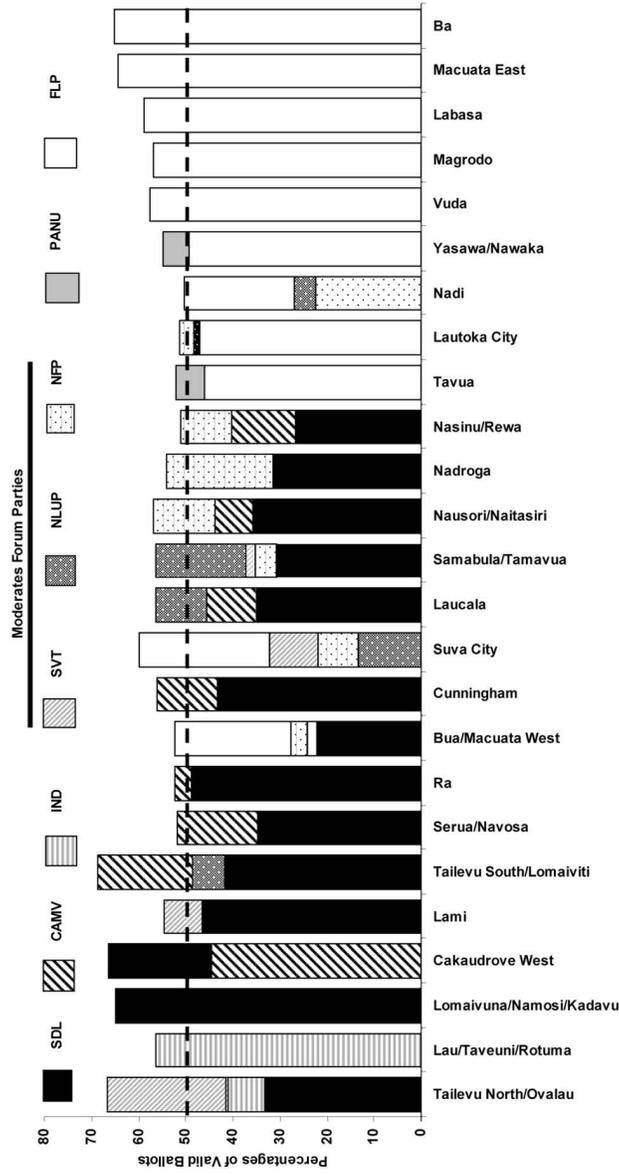


Source: Fiji Elections Office (2001b).

Note: as for Figure 5. Nadi open constituency was subsequently recounted, giving victory to the Fiji Labor Party (FLP). Lau/Taveuni/Rotuma was won by an independent, Savenaca Draunidalo, who was close to the Soqosoqo ni Duavata ni Lewenivanua (SDL).

tion government. In 2001, the moderate parties felt unable to join the new SDL/CAMV coalition government,[22] and the new government refused to work with Labour. Yet now the Lijphartian multiparty cabinet constitutional provisions came into play, with the FLP insisting on its right to inclusion in cabinet. The result was a protracted legal battle, with Fiji's High Court, Court of Appeal, and Supreme Court backing Labour's claims and the SDL government grudgingly offering a series of token ministries to the FLP, but seeking simultaneously to so expand the cabinet as to retain its coalition with the CAMV. In November 2004, the FLP eventually rejected the offer of participation in cabinet, and party leader Mahendra Chaudhry took up the position of leader of the opposition.

## Discussion

Horowitz's initial verdict on the design of the AV system in the 1997 constitution was mixed. Writing before the 1999 election, he had found Fiji's constitution to be "inadequate" and to offer "no clear path to conciliation." "Unreserved seats are too scarce, the unreserved seats are insufficiently heterogeneous in composition, and, because post-electoral coalitions are not based on compromise necessary to lure voters across group boundaries, they are inadequate to foster conciliation" (Horowitz, 2000a, p. 268).[23] Writing after the 1999 election, the multi-ethnic coalitions that were forged by the SVT-UGP-NFP and FLP-FAP-PANU were depicted as a "success for the "vote pooling electoral system." The People's Coalition government, and the inauguration of the country's first Indian prime minister, were deemed indicative of the "powerful effect" of "electoral incentives" (Horowitz, 1999/2002, p. 24). But the emphasis remained on the "murky compromises" in Fiji, involving the construction of a "hybrid constitution" meshing together vote-pooling mechanisms with Lijphartian power-sharing devices (Horowitz, 2000b, pp. 14-15).

Although we share Horowitz's conclusion that the AV system used in Fiji was flawed, we suggest that the reasons lay deeper than the excessive number of communal seats or the insufficient heterogeneity of the open seats. Fiji's CRC had been well aware of the difficulty of achieving open constituency heterogeneity (Reeves et al., 1996, p. 315). Like Horowitz (1991a, p. 195) in his earlier proposals for South Africa, the CRC recommended multimember

22. With one exception, NLUP parliamentarian Kenneth Zinck, who crossed the floor to join the government.

23. Horowitz's (2000a) paper "Constitutional Design: An Oxymoron?" was written before the 1999 election, although it was published thereafter and contained no assessment of the actual results in 1999.

constituencies. Yet research on the usage of AV in multimember constituencies in interwar elections to the Australian senate was not favorable (Lijphart, 1997). In his review of the CRC report, Horowitz (1997, pp. 30-31) counseled against multimember constituencies and in favor of single-member districts, a view that was also endorsed by the JPSC. Given the dense demographic concentration of Fiji's rural Indian population in the two provinces of Ba and Macuata and ethnic Fijian majorities in all the other provinces, it was highly likely that single-member constituency design would yield a series of imbalanced, majority-minority, open constituencies (Fraenkel, 2005).

Second, did the inversion of the CRC's recommended 25/45 division between reserved and open seats undermine the accommodative logic of the AV system? According to Horowitz (2000a),

> what it did at the outset was to dilute the conciliatory effects of the alternative vote system and to permit members elected from reserved seats to constitute a built-in drag on compromise, for the electoral dynamics of their homogenous constituencies will *propel them* to take extreme positions. (p. 266, italics added)

Why should the preponderance of reserved constituencies prevent moderating outcomes from materializing in contests for the 25 open constituencies? Of course, it could be that party strategies devised at the national level might hinder open-constituency candidates from negotiating across the ethnic divide, but there is little evidence of this. In fact, as Table 2 shows, interethnic transfers formed 70% and 50% of total open constituency vote transfers respectively in 1999 and 2001.

Third, we cannot blame post-1999 and post-2001 difficulties on the hybrid character of the 1997 constitution or the inclusion of Lijphartian power-sharing provisions as regards processes of government formation, because the 1999-2000 People's Coalition government did not include the SVT (with 38% of Fijian votes and 8 seats) but did include two unentitled parties (PANU and VLV). The post-2001 SDL government did not include the FLP, despite its 28 seats.

We believe, as Horowitz himself did initially, that the Fiji experience provides a significant test for claims regarding the potential of the AV system to mitigate tensions in ethnically divided societies. In our view, Horowitz's theory failed to work as expected in Fiji owing to several inherent flaws. One reason was that the implicit assumption that preferences are single peaked was violated. At both the 1999 and 2001 elections, it was primarily the more moderate parties' preferences that were consistently single peaked, whereas

**Table 2**
**Percentage Distribution of Total Open-Constituency Preference**
**Transfers, 1999 and 2001**

|  | 1999 (%) | 2001 (%) |
|---|---|---|
| Moderate to moderate | 7.2 | 20.2 |
| Moderate to radical | 50.1 | 39.8 |
| Radical to moderate | 14.6 | 12.4 |
| Radical to radical | 28.0 | 27.5 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Interethnic (preference transfers only) |  |  |
|   Moderate to moderate | 4.4 | 11.7 |
|   Moderate to radical | 44.7 | 17.4 |
|   Radical to moderate | 0.3 | 11.0 |
|   Radical to radical | 21.0 | 6.6 |
|   Interethnic as % total | 70.5 | 46.7 |

Source: Calculated from Fiji Elections Office (1999, 2001b).
Note: The table shows only the distribution of preference transfers among the seven parties in 1999 (Fiji Labor Party [FLP], National Federation Party [NFP], Fijian Association Party [FAP], Soqosoqo ni Vakavulewa ni Taukei [SVT], Party of National Unity [PANU], Veitokani ni Lewenivanua Vakaristo, Nationalist Vanua Lavo Tako Party [NVLTP]) and 10 parties in 2001 (Soqosoqo ni Duavata ni Lewenivanua, Conservative Alliance-Matanitu Vanua, Bai Kai Viti, NVTLP, SVT, FAP, PANU, New Labor Unity Party, NFP, FLP). Others are excluded from the denominator. Interethnic transfers excludes transfers to parties identified with the same ethnic group.

outlier and ideologically nonconnected parties submitted mixtures of single- and non-single-peaked schedules. In 1999, an interethnic coalition of outs was formed successfully to overturn an interethnic coalition of ins, and to do so, each of the three parties in the coalition of outs backed preference-ranking schemas that were exclusively non-single-peaked.

A second reason is that even where preferences are predominantly single peaked, the alternative vote does not necessarily imply victories for moderate parties. Granted, the promoderation effect is one possibility,[24] but this only becomes *likely* if there is already a first-preference promoderation electoral majority. At both elections, there was considerable interethnic movement of preference votes. Yet far more preference votes were transferred *from* moderate parties *to* the more radical parties than vice versa (see Table 2).

24. Examining Figures 5 and 6, there were only two open constituencies where interethnic transfers resulted in victory for a moderate party representing the other ethnic group, Nadi and Suva City, both in 2001. In the case of Nadi, however, the result was overturned by a court decision requiring a recount of invalid ballots.

Moderate centrist parties were badly defeated in both cases. At the 1999 election, moderate parties obtained 23 seats (32.3%) with 48.7% of the first-preference vote. At the 2001 polls, they secured only 3 seats (4.2%) with 21.3% of that vote.[25] Owing to the fall in first-preference support for moderate parties in 2001, that election conforms more closely to the previously identified centrifugal potential of the AV system, even in the presence of predominantly single-peaked preferences.

At both elections, a proportional representation system would have given the moderate parties greater representation as well as rendering much more likely their inclusion in, and/or enhanced their influence over, postelection governments.

To discern whether AV serves to consolidate votes toward the moderate center or disperse them toward the extremes, it is therefore insufficient to examine merely the technical characteristics of this voting regime.[26] To yield a predictable centripetal impact, it is necessary to presuppose a society (a) where there exists majority support for ethnic moderation and b) where voter preferences are single peaked with respect to the ethnic conflict-defined dimension. Although our results are specific to bipolar societies, and to Fiji in particular, we believe that they do have wider implications for institutional design intended to moderate ethnic conflict. At minimum, they suggest a need for caution about claims regarding uniform and predictable effects of particular constitutional mechanisms, and that electoral systems, although they may enable cross-ethnic voting, do not necessarily favor moderate parties simply because they employ preferential ballots.

25. This calculation includes only our 7 classified political parties in 1999 and 10 in 2001. We make no attempt to classify independents.

26. It is important to distinguish hypothetical properties of electoral systems from what actually happens when they are used in different settings. For an elaboration of this point, see Bowler and Grofman (2000, pp. 9-11).

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