Do Electoral Systems Determine the Success of Ethnoregionalist Parties? : An Examination of the Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians' Electoral Performance 2004-2007.

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<u>**Chapters**</u>

<u>Tables:</u>

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<u>Abstract</u>

Ethnoregionalist parties purport to represent minority groups aligned on ethnic and regionalist cleavages. The manner in which this type of party interacts with a given electoral system can prove pivotal to a state's ability to aggregate and represent the political requirements of minority groups. It is often argued that P.R. based electoral systems will provide a more fractionalized and open political system, thus rendering entry easier for small and niche parties. However recent research has suggested that it is actually the territorial form of the parties voting base that is key. If their electorate is tightly concentrated into one area, the party may win perform equally well in all electoral systems, as they can dominate the voting. This paper will attempt to prove this argument and will show that other variables also play a role in voting preferences, particularly in countries that have not fully institutionalized their party system.

<u>Introduction</u>

Vojvodina is a highly autonomous region in the north of Serbia that borders Hungary, Romania and Croatia. It is noted for decades of peaceful coexistence between numerous ethnic groupings, with the region having the highest rate of inter-ethnic marriages throughout all the lands of the former Yugoslavia (Todosijević 2002: 96). However in recent decades, Vojvodina has undergone considerable changes that have altered the state of ethnic harmony due to two waves of migration. The first occurred immediately after World War II with 200,000 people, predominantly Serbs and Montenegrins, moving to the area (Bieber and Winterhagen 2006: 3). This was followed by another conflict-related migration in the early 1990s with Serbs from Bosnia and Croatia settling in Vojvodina. It is argued that the more recently settled migrants are less socialised into Vojvodina's culture of ethnic and national tolerance, and it is these Serbs that tend to vote for the nationalistic Serbian Radical Party that vows to reduce the region's autonomy (Bochsler 2008: 11). Furthermore the autonomous status of Vojvodina has been a matter of political consternation in recent decades and this has

affected the way politics is conducted by regional parties. The 1974 Yugoslav constitution had invested considerable political powers in both Vojvodina and Kosovo, but these were removed by Slobodan Milošević in the early 1990s as he feared for the unity of the then Yugoslav state. The partial restoration of the region's autonomy following the collapse of Milošević's Yugoslavia remains a project beset with issues regarding the allocation of competencies and the transfer of adequate financial resources (Mijacic 2011: 3). In addition, the political systems in place in Serbia and Vojvodina have been subjected to near continual reforms since 2000. Therefore Serbia has a highly competitive political system that remains in transition, albeit on the path to full establishment. This presents a taxing and nuanced challenge to all parties purporting to represent ethnic minorities.

The Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians (Vajdasági Magyar Szövetség-VMSz) is the largest political party that aims to represent the Hungarian ethnic minority in Vojvodina constituting 3.91% of the national population of Serbia and 14.28% of the regional population (Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia 2002). VMSz was founded in June 1994 after many notable politicians broke away from the Democratic Community of Vojvodina Hungarians (DZVM), a party which they believed to have become too nationalistic to effectively represent the interests of the Hungarian minority in the region (Korhecz 2002: 278). The new VMSz party first gained election to the National Assembly of Serbia in 1997 and has been an ever-present in the parliament since, except between 2003-2007. However in terms of freely democratic elections, VMSz has only run completely independently of coalition partners once, in 2007, when they won 3 seats. The party is also represented in the regional Vojvodina assembly having first obtained independent seats at the elections in 2004.

<u>Map 1: Ethnic map of Vojvodina</u>[1]

Ethnic map of Vojvodina (2002 census):
Etnička mapa Vojvodine (popis iz 2002):

○ - Serb majority / srpska većina

○ - Mixed population with Serb plurality / mešovito stanovništvo sa srpskom relativnom većinom

● - Hungarian majority / mađarska većina

○ - Mixed population with Hungarian plurality / mešovito stanovništvo sa mađarskom relativnom većinom

○ - Slovak majority / slovačka većina

○ - Mixed population with Slovak plurality / mešovito stanovništvo sa slovačkom relativnom većinom

In terms of these assemblies, the Vojvodina Regional Assembly contains 120 seats, 60 of which are allocated on the lines of proportional representation in the form of party lists. Vojvodina is seen as a single electoral district and the 5% vote threshold is waived for parties representing ethnic groups. The other 60 assembly seats are allocated by the

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[1] Map sourced from Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, Census 2002.

majoritarian second ballot system. Meanwhile the Serbian skupština has 250 seats all allocated through the party list electoral system. The country is one electoral unit and the 5% threshold does not apply to ethnically based parties. All the parliaments studied are unicameral.

This research project aims to establish the effects of electoral systems on the likelihood of electoral entry for new ethnoregionalist parties, which by definition are small parties that represent ethnic minority groups or regionally concentrated peoples or else a combination of the two. Electoral systems are seen to determine an ethnoregionalist party's fate as they act as hurdles that new parties must overcome to gain representation (Taagepera and Shugart 1989). Therefore the dependent variable in this research is the success of small ethnoregionalist parties, measured by their ability to secure a vote share sufficient for entry into parliament.

A recently developed theory stating that territorially concentrated ethnic groups can succeed in any form of electoral system, is gaining greater academic attention, yet requires empirical evidence (Bochsler 2011; Moser 2001). Territoriality theory focuses on the notion that it is the territorial structure of societal groups, and their interaction with a given electoral system, that determines the likelihood of new political parties successfully gaining entrance into a parliamentary assembly (Bochsler 2011: 217). In essence, small parties with many voters in a few districts have a much greater chance of success than new parties that have a nationally homogenous share of the vote (Taagepera 1998). This occurs because district magnitude may have a restrictive effect on parties with a dispersed national vote if districts are small and they are unable to pool sufficient votes to win the seat. However political parties with a concentrated voting pool can win seats in small or large electoral districts. The theory also states that nationwide vote thresholds will not have adverse effects on either concentrated or dispersed parties, providing there is sufficient populace.

 A key aim of my research is to reinforce and extend the argument raised by Bochsler, which centres on the idea that territorially concentrated ethnic groups can achieve success in all electoral systems, due to their ability to dominate the voting in their majority districts (Bochsler 2011: 217). This argument addresses the fact that the impact of territoriality on the success of new ethnic parties has been overlooked throughout the literature, which has largely cited district magnitudes as the determinant of ethnoregionalist parties' success (Freidman 2005: 390). However as aforementioned, parties with a territorially concentrated electorate may actually prove to be an exception in that they are impervious to the effects of district magnitude as they are equally successful in electoral systems with both large and small electoral districts. A finding to this effect would require a rethinking of the simplistic notion undergirding the explanations reliant on the district magnitude mechanism.

District magnitude refers to the number of representatives elected from each electoral district within a given assembly. As this number increases, so too does the proportionality of the vote and this is expected to lead to multiparty systems (Rae 1971: 114-115). Meanwhile low district magnitudes are linked to smaller average party system size (Birch 2001: 362). In general, Proportional Representation (P.R.) electoral systems require multi-member districts, whilst majoritarian systems tend to have a district magnitude of 1. The electoral entry of small and niche parties are frequently linked to large district magnitudes and multi-party systems (Kostadinova 2007: 419-424).

Additionally, it is beneficial to scrutinize whether electoral systems interact with other aspects related to ethnoregionalist parties, such as the saliency of ethnic cleavages and the level of party organization. If either territoriality or electoral systems cannot be cited as the sole factor of the VMSz's electoral success, then other variables should be considered. Any examination of alternative variables should consider to what extent they are impacting on the levels of success. This impact may relate to their interaction with either territoriality or the electoral system itself, or alternatively the variables could

have had an exogenous effect. There are many strong arguments that voters' preferences are determined by the confluence of electoral system effects and sociological processes such as identity cleavages (Ordeshook and Shvetsova 1994; Amorim Neto and Cox 1997; Geys 2006). Furthermore the intrinsic nature of a party itself has also been viewed as interacting with electoral systems to create the conditions necessary for new parties to gain electoral support, either rapidly or over a lengthier time period (Bochsler 2010: 30; Janda 1980: 98-117).

Most importantly this research will go beyond a basic examination of electoral systems' core characteristics, and will help to examine recently expounded theories on the effects of specific electoral rules and phenomena such as district magnitude and territoriality. It is necessary to assess these new theories as previous research has been hindered by merely concentrating on the fundamentals of either plurality or proportional electoral systems. An observer with this approach will only notice how incumbent parties convert votes into seats and the proportionality of this conversion, and the simple dichotomy of district magnitude to proportionality cannot be challenged.

The VMSz as a political party represents a geographically concentrated minority, and the multitude of electoral systems under which it competes means it provides a prime example with which to examine the numerous differentials within these electoral system's rules and their interactions with ethnoregionalist parties. The core of my research is examining the preferences expressed by voters, and to what extent electoral systems aggregate these preferences and either promote or diminish the chances of success for ethnoregionalist parties. The interactions between electoral systems and factors such as the saliency of ethnic cleavages and party organization can also provide insight into the successes of this party family.

Additionally, at present most studies only consider ethnic parties in their parliamentary role, failing to consider the prior processes that gained them entry and electoral success

(Bernauer and Bochsler 2010: 3). However it is the electoral entry of new ethnoregionalist parties that allows us to gain insight into the interactions between electoral systems and the ethnoregionalist party family, and not the continued parliamentary representation of a party which could potentially be attributed to access to power resources, greater media profile and other extraneous factors.

Therefore the capacity to measure territoriality in both majoritarian and PR systems in the 2004 Vojvodina parliamentary elections, conveniently with all other factors held constant as they were simultaneous, will allow us to determine whether territoriality is subsumed underneath district magnitude rules, or if it does actually present an exception. If this is proven and the theory is negated by the experience of ethnoregionalist parties, this would necessitate a rethinking of the current assumption regarding district magnitudes in electoral systems and the probability of new party entry. The analysis can be furthered by the examination of the effects of a diluted geographic concentration of the Hungarian minority, as well as greater political competition by considering the 2007 Serbian National elections.

Literature Review

The example of the electoral entry of VMSz in Serbian elections can be linked to a current topic of concerted academic debate that centres on which electoral methods are best used to represent ethnic minorities in democratic systems. As Lijphart explained it is important to achieve broad representation of different societal groups as it has implications for the strength and quality of democracy, especially in countries that have been subjected to authoritarian rule for many decades (Lijphart 2004: 97). Thus, operationalizing ethnic groups as representative organizations (albeit purely in the descriptive sense) can help newly democratizing countries, such as Serbia, overcome authoritarian legacies and issues of resurgent nationalism. Therefore the claim that specific types of electoral systems can be used to bolster ethnic parties needs to be

assessed. As both Bogaards and Juberías argue, electoral systems can be used to either promote or oppose minority participation in politics, largely by determining the scale of the challenge faced in establishing a new party, with majoritarian systems viewed as obstructive to this process (Bogaards 2008: 48-67; Juberías 2000: 33-35). My research seeks to further understanding by assessing the Serbian approach to incorporating minority groups within their political bodies, especially in light of the nationalism evident in both the Milošević era and afterwards that was manifested in electoral malfeasance (Bieber 2007: 245; Bugajski 1995: 136-158). If ethnoregionalist parties with geographically concentrated electorates are proven to be exceptional, then this would negate the need for Serbia to artificially promote these parties by removing the national threshold requirement.

This paper may have some importance for Serbian politics in general as it will contribute to the literature on this topic, particularly regarding the country's political parties. Although this study will limit its focus to a small ethnoregionalist party, the interaction between the Serbian electoral system and other aspects of political party competition may hold applicability to other party families, both in Serbia and the East European region itself. Therefore a systematic appraisal of elections in Serbia and Vojvodina may indicate not only the performance of the Serbian electoral system, but also how parties are acting and reacting to important electoral rules such as varying district magnitudes.

At present there is comparatively very little research on politics in this country, especially which is written in English, and unfortunately much of what has emerged is concentrated on the conflict and violence that was widespread throughout the 1990s. Therefore my research may add to the presently low base of accumulated knowledge with regards to the present situation in Serbian politics, and their attempts to consolidate a fledgling democracy.

In terms of electoral systems, a substantial majority of the current research in the area attempts to resolve issues such as proportionality, the exceptions and rules that differentiate one system from another, and in what manner these differences affect party behaviour. As Bochsler has argued, too many studies investigating the impact of electoral systems on new parties fail to look beyond the primary characteristics. Therefore there is a failure to account for the peripheral electoral rules in each system that facilitate or prevent the electoral entry of newcomers (Bochsler 2011: 221). Bochsler therefore forwards an argument that 'the territorial structure of the voting group makes a crucial difference to new party success' (Bochsler 2011: 232) and overcomes aspects of electoral systems that otherwise negatively affect the performance of political parties. In particular in my research, Bochsler's assertion that small electoral districts do not negatively affect small parties that are territorially concentrated, contrary to much of the conventional theory, will be assessed across both election types and time-periods (Bochsler 2011: 218). This line of argument presents an alternative to the more established arguments which either ignore territoriality, or consider it of secondary importance. These models only hold explanatory power in states with homogenous party support across the country. The effects of district magnitude are however significantly weakened in states with heterogeneous party support, a phenomenon that Bochsler terms as 'low party nationalisation' (Bochsler 2010: 8). This refers to parties that are strong only in certain regions or districts and have concentrated their support into strongholds. They are unable to compete nationwide as they lack the political resources and electoral support to do so, yet they will still receive political representation through gaining seats in their core constituencies. Meanwhile parties with high levels of nationalisation have their support spread across a country and will succeed in national party lists, but will be severely hindered if the district magnitudes are reduced (Bochsler 2010: 140).

Bochsler's explanation seems particularly applicable to Hungarian minority ethnic groups in Slovakia, Romania and Serbia which are geographically concentrated and have secured parliamentary representation on a consistent basis despite facing obstacles that have negatively affected minority groups of a less concentrated nature. However this theory may fail to account for ethnic groups that are less established stakeholders in societies, such as the concentrated Russian minority in Estonia, who often fail to vote collectively and hence have no ethnically-based party to vote for (Tavits 2005: 295).

Bochsler's argument is seeking to disprove the assertion that district magnitudes are the fundamental cause determining the size of the party system, thus indirectly affecting the difficulty of new party entry. This line of thought states that it is district magnitudes which allows territoriality to become effective, and this phenomenon is otherwise redundant. In effect district magnitude is the critical institutional variable influencing the formation of new political parties (Ordeshook and Shvetsova 1994: 105). As Ordeshook and Shvetsova argue 'the importance of magnitude derives in part from its influence on the vote quota a party must secure to ensure representation in parliament. Also magnitude influences a system's proportionality which also influences the incentives to form and maintain parties' (Ordeshook and Shvetsova 1994: 105). In addition Benoit follows Duverger's law in arguing that the higher the district magnitude, the more parties have the potential to win seats. These systems create conducive environments for new parties who would be otherwise unsuccessful in the two-party systems that are created by electoral arrangements with small district magnitudes (Benoit 2001: 212). Juberías is however most succinct in stating that the more perfectly proportional a system is, the more hospitable it will prove for minorities (Juberías 2000: 34). However the successes of ethnoregionalist parties in the United Kingdom serve to expose the flaws in this thinking as Plaid Cymru and the Scottish Nationalist Party continue to succeed in a highly disproportional electoral system due to their effective concentration of the vote.

The distinction between the two threads of research lies in how new and small parties can expect to secure the requisite number of votes to gain representation. District magnitude theories focus on the institutional constraints as well as the incentives created by electoral systems, whereas territoriality-based arguments would contend that parties with geographically concentrated electorates have loyal support that creates a consistency of results (Bochsler 2011: 218). This indicates that there is a debate within academic circles that is as yet unresolved. There is a noticeable lack of empirical evidence gleaned from previous election results in Central and Eastern Europe; hence both sides of the argument remain untested. Indeed, even De Winter and Türsan's work on ethnoregionalist parties in Western Europe is mainly descriptive and simply used to forward some initial theories on the causes of successful parliamentary entry (De Winter and Türsan 1998). Therefore the current lack of solid proof for any theory of an electoral system's influence on a new ethnoregionalist party validates the direction of this research.

Therefore this research will establish and test a core hypothesis in order to understand the effects of electoral systems on the likelihood of ethnoregionalist parties' entry into parliaments:

1) *Variation in electoral system rules (e.g. district magnitudes) will have no impact on the electoral success (in terms of vote share) of territorially concentrated ethnoregionalist parties.*

<div align="center">Methods</div>

The case study approach has been chosen for this research as it stimulates a close-up view of causality that is vital to these types of research questions. It also helps to overcome time and monetary constraints that prevent a more in-depth study. My fieldwork included interviews with journalists, politicians, VMSz party organizers and members of the local Hungarian communities. I restricted my research to Novi Sad,

Cantavír and Subotica, which I believe provides enough depth and variety in terms of interview candidates. This is because the more urban, middle class groups are present in Novi Sad and Subotica, whereas rural opinions and working class attitudes are likely to present themselves during my fieldwork in Cantavír. This research may fall short in terms of representativeness; such is the nature of case studies, but as long as it is clear that the applicability of any generalizations made in this research is limited, then this may excuse some of the failings.

1) In order to test the hypothesis, this research will use electoral data from a range of sources, with the majority being sourced from the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia. These results will be put through the 4-stage process detailed below:

1. Firstly an examination of how conducive the electoral system is to the entrance of an ethnic minority party in electoral districts in which they are the majority will be conducted. This is achieved by first using Taagepera's 'thresholds of inclusion and exclusion'[2] measures which reports the approximate vote share needed to gain a seat in parliament in either the luckiest or unluckiest possible circumstances (Taagepera 1998: 406). These measures will be used for the Vojvodina majoritarian elections in 2004. Meanwhile for the nationwide P.R. elections employed for both the Vojvodina election in 2004 and for Serbia as a whole in 2007, Taagepera's nationwide threshold of representation measure will be used (Taagepera 2002: 383-385). Two separate measurements are needed as majoritarian systems allow entry through single-mandate districts, which have much higher thresholds, whilst the P.R. elections have single nationwide constituencies that allocate seats in a different manner. These measures illustrate the size of the voting threshold that needed to be surpassed for electoral entry to even be a possibility for VMSz

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[2] To calculate: Inclusion threshold= 100%/M+n-1. Exclusion Threshold= 100%/M+1. M=District Magnitude and n=number of parties.

2. In order to measure the territoriality aspect, the percentage of Hungarians in all minority-majority electoral districts will be measured. This will help to indicate the voting resources available to VMSz as they attempt to secure seats with only a small percentage of the total electorate.

3. The next stage is to determine how fractionalized the party system is, thus elucidating how difficult it is to gain entry into parliament. As De Winter argues "the success of an ethnoregionalist party should be evaluated not only in terms of its target electorate but also in relative terms, i.e. in comparison with the strength of the major parties (in the target electorate) (De Winter 1998: 244). Therefore Laakso and Taagepera's 'index of the effective number of parties' will be utilised to quantify the party system in each of the elections studied (Laakso and Taagepera 1979). Following Lijphart's work, the number of elective parties will be operationalized, rather than the number of legislative parties (Lijphart 1990: 483).

4. Finally the VMSz's electoral performance will be measured across the three different types of electoral system by comparing the vote-share received in its target electorate in all elections studied.

This 4-stage examination allows us to determine firstly if the electoral system is receptive to ethnoregionalist party entry. Then from this we establish how competitive the electoral environment is, before concluding with how VMSz is performing across the electoral systems in Hungarian-majority districts. By focusing on minority-majority districts, the effects of territoriality and thresholds may be uncovered. It is not worthwhile to analyse the performance of VMSz in electoral districts where they have not allocated resources in order to compete. Instead by solely considering districts in which they may have a majority of the population's support (based on their ethnic identity), we can establish how the electoral system is affecting their ability to turn votes into seats. The expectation in line with the hypothesis is that irrespective of the receptiveness of the

electoral rules to ethnoregionalist party entry, this type of party will succeed due to the concentrated nature of its support. Of course this null hypothesis will be disproved if VMSz has performed better within one set of electoral rules compared to another, and from this alternative explanations such as district magnitudes or thresholds can be cited as factors. The evidence can be derived from the correlation between the above factors and the VMSz's vote share, as all 4 steps indicate electoral processes at work. How the party's percentage of the vote aligns with these should provide insight into how they interact with different types of electoral system.

Following on from these results, it is necessary to examine the findings with an even closer, more detailed specification, to ensure that causality is not confused and that no processes or interactions have been overlooked. As the first chapter will be using predominantly quantitative data, the second chapter can adopt a more nuanced approach, with interviews, opinions and conjecture coming to the fore. This qualitative data, in conjunction with large databases such as the Minorities at Risk (MAR) Project will allow more fine grained analysis, incorporating more of the social and personal elements that may play a role in the formation of voting preferences. If interactions between electoral systems and other sociological, economic and historic factors are proven, this can lead to the formulation of new, more accurate hypotheses, designed for future testing. If there happens to be no relationship between electoral systems and VMSz's electoral successes, these alternative variables can be examined as causative explanations for the success of ethnoregionalist parties in their own right.

Chapter 1: The effect of electoral systems on ethnoregionalist parties

1.1 Methods of testing:

In order to understand the interactions between a given electoral system and a new ethnoregionalist party's success, the obvious starting point is to consider the electoral results from the elections in which the party first gained entrance to the parliament. It is

pertinent to solely consider the percentage of the vote received in each constituency in order to measure successful outcomes in minority-majority districts, rather than the total number of seats gained which would obscure the processes of electoral entry by including the various methods of vote-seat conversion inherent in all electoral systems. As aforementioned, in the case of VMSz, the point of entry is complicated in terms of the national elections by their participation in the grand anti-Milošević coalition in 2000, and then within the 'Together for Tolerance' coalition (bringing together all ethnic minority parties in Serbia) in 2003. However the party ran as an individual organisation for the first time in 2007 (Bochsler 2008a: 174), so it is this data that will be considered for the electoral entry of the party. In terms of the Vojvodina parliamentary assembly, the 2004 elections represent the first opportunity for the VMSz to compete for seats in a fully democratic, functioning assembly as they were now separated from the broad pro-democracy coalition (Bochsler 2008: 138-140). Until 2002, Vojvodina's historic autonomy had been curtailed by the Milošević administration, so although the assembly continued to operate, it had no political power or significance. Therefore the 2004 elections, which contained genuine democratic competition between numerous parties, represent the best opportunity to study the electoral entry of VMSz as an ethnoregionalist party.

The data from both the regional and national elections will be used to examine the null hypotheses relating to electoral systems and the electoral entry of territorially concentrated ethnoregionalist parties:

1) *Variation in electoral system rules (e.g. district magnitudes) will have no impact on the electoral success (in terms of vote share) of territorially concentrated ethnoregionalist parties.*

In order to decide upon the validity of this hypothesis, tests which establish whether variations in electoral systems rules are having demonstrable effects must be created.

The first (and crucial) comparison will be made between the majoritarian and proportional sections of the electoral system used in the Vojvodina parliamentary elections in 2004. With a total of 120 members elected, split equally between the two sectors, as well the simultaneity of the elections, a systematic comparison of VMSz results between these two electoral structures can be achieved. As Moser argues, mixed electoral systems can be viewed as 'two separate electoral arrangements operating side by side', with the added benefit of being able to hold intervening variables (e.g. culture, socioeconomic development levels and cleavage structures) constant (Moser 1999: 366). It is also pertinent to consider only the districts in which Hungarians represent a plurality of the population, i.e. Ada, Bačka Topola, Bečej, Kanjiža, Mali Iđoš, Senta, Subotica and Čoka, for both the majoritarian and P.R. halves of the election. It is not worthwhile to consider electoral districts where VMSz have not allocated political resources in order to try and win a seat, as in most instances the lack of ethnic Hungarians indicates the absence of a receptive electorate for this type of party. These districts represent 8 of the 60 districts in the majoritarian election in Vojvodina in 2004. Although in the P.R. election, Vojvodina is viewed as one, unitary electoral district with 60 seats available, by considering the results gathered from these districts' polling stations we are still considering the areas in which VMSz concentrated its resources, in order to try and secure the requisite votes for electoral success in the form of seats. In terms of the majoritarian electoral system, only the first round of voting has been considered, as votes cast in the second run-off round may reflect considerations other than a voter's first choice of party.

Thus the mixed Vojvodina electoral system presents an opportunity to examine two electoral systems with different rules and modes of operation and the manner in which they have interacted with a new ethnoregionalist party that has its target electorate geographically concentrated in 8 contiguous electoral districts. Therefore in order to scrutinize the VMSz's performance in depth, the respective electoral results will be

examined by 3 methods: 1) An analysis of whether VMSz managed to surpass the natural minimum thresholds inherent in both electoral systems at the district level 2) How the vote share of VMSz correlates with the number of Hungarians in each district (a proxy for geographic concentration) in both electoral systems, and 3) How the vote share of the VMSz correlates with the effective number of parties, a Laakso and Taagepera construct that measures the fractionalization of parties and determines the size of the party system (Laakso and Taagepera 1979: 3). The fractionalization of a party system can be linked to district magnitudes, as the larger the constituency the greater the levels of proportionality, and increased proportionality leads to the multiplication of parties (Rae 1971: 115). In order to prevent a rejection of the null hypothesis, the results data should show that VMSz is capable of achieving electoral success, irrespective of the fractionalization of the party system.

The hypothesized expectations for each of these tests are as follows: For test 1) VMSz should exceed the national minimum thresholds in all districts in both majoritarian and P.R. sections, as the Hungarian population represents a plurality in all the selected districts. For test 2), a territoriality based argument would see high correlation between the geographic concentration of Hungarians and the percentage of the vote received by VMSz, with results in both majoritarian and P.R. elections being highly congruent. Finally for test 3) as the VMSz is a territorially concentrated ethnoregionalist party, the theory contends that the party supporters will recognise the concentrated nature of their votes and the party's ability to compete in all forms of electoral system, irrespective of district magnitude. Therefore the expectation is that the results should display no significant correlation between the vote share and effective number of parties, as the hypothesis stands on the premise that electoral rules and their subsequent behaviours do not affect the performance of a territorially concentrated party.

1.2 Test 1- Minimum Thresholds:

Table 1: Threshold for Vojvodina Majoritarian Election 2004-VMSz

District	Majoritarian Inclusion Threshold	% of vote in Majoritarian election
Ada	14.285	12.17
Bačka Topola	20	48.62
Bečej	14.825	21.71
Kanjiža	25	27.79
Mali Iđoš	25	58.41
Senta	16.666	29.01
Subotica 1	12.5	
Subotica 2	12.5	
Subotica 3	20	44.38
Subotica 4	20	40.94
Čoka	20	25.32

As the above table illustrates, the VMSz met the majoritarian inclusion threshold in all but one district in which they competed[3]. This is to be expected as in each district there was, as a minimum, a plurality Hungarian population. There is however an anomaly in Ada district, as the party received only 12.17% of the votes, therefore failing to meet the 14.285% inclusion threshold. This can be explained by the presence of a strong local citizens group, which received 45.95% of the vote in the first round. In certain circumstances, local issues can be prioritized over regional or national concerns and localized independents can achieve success (Moser 1998: 400), as may have been the case in Ada.

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[3] The 1st and 2nd districts in Subotica have not been considered, as the VMSz did not enter candidates in these constituencies.

Table 2: Threshold for Vojvodina P.R. Election 2004-VMSz

District	PR Nationwide Threshold	% of vote in P.R. election
Ada	0.096	38.13
Bačka Topola	0.096	32.33
Bečej	0.096	25.21
Kanjiža	0.096	42.97
Mali Iđoš	0.096	36.88
Senta	0.096	30.2
Subotica 1	0.096	22.06
Subotica 2	0.096	20.08
Subotica 3	0.096	35.01
Subotica 4	0.096	37.3
Čoka	0.096	24.41

As the P.R. election section of the Vojvodina electoral system has only 1 electoral district of 60 seats, it is not possible to consider individual thresholds for each of the Hungarian-plurality districts. Therefore the threshold for the region as a whole has been used. As a P.R. system has greater vote proportionality, the difficulty in securing a first seat in parliament is considerably less than in a majoritarian system (Hansen 2006: 8) Evidently the VMSz should be expected to surpass a threshold of 0.096 with ease, particularly in the areas in which its electorate is geographically concentrated, hence why the threshold was exceeded in every district. These results validate the hypothesis in that VMSz were expected to exceed low thresholds in the majority ethnic districts.

1.3 Test 2- Correlation between the percentage of Hungarians and the VMSz's vote share:

Table 3: % of Hungarians and VMSz vote share in Vojvodina Majoritarian Election 2004

District	% of Hungarians in district population	% of vote received by VMSz
Ada	77	12.17
Bačka Topola	59	48.62
Bečej	49	21.71
Kanjiža	87	27.79
Mali Iđoš	56	58.41
Senta	81	29.01
Subotica 3	38	44.38
Subotica 4	38	40.94
Čoka	52	25.32

The above table indicates the relationship between the percentages of Hungarians in each of the Hungarian-plurality districts in Vojvodina and the percentage of the vote received by the VMSz in the majoritarian half of the 2004 Vojvodina parliamentary elections. In all districts except Subotica 3 and 4 and Bečej, Hungarians constitute over 50% of the districts population. According to territoriality theory this would be expected to convert into clear voting majorities in all these districts. However as can be seen, VMSz only scored over 50% once, in Mali Iđoš district where they received 58.41% of the vote.

Graph 4: Scatter graph showing correlation between % of Hungarians in district population and % of VMSz's vote share in Vojvodina Majoritarian election 2004
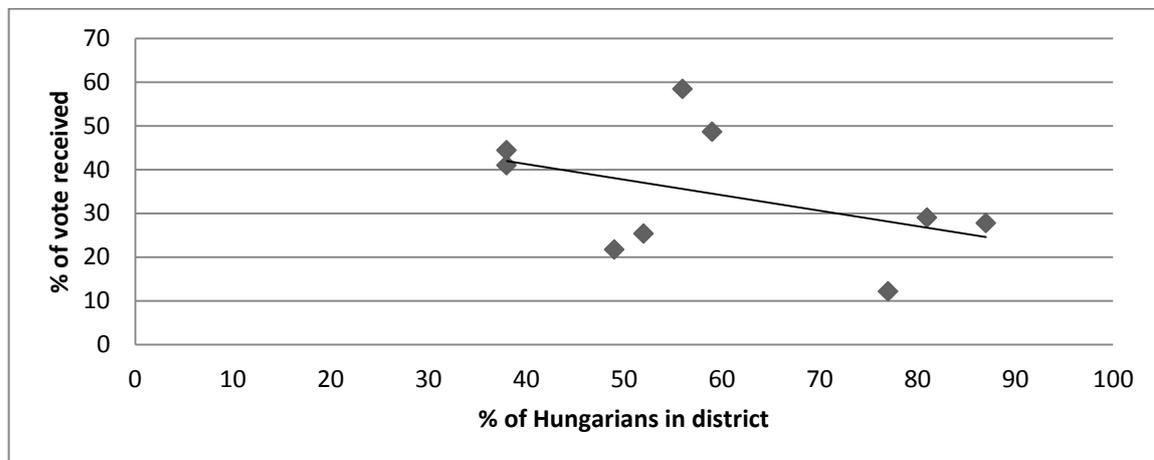
The correlation between the two sets of data is -0.43668. This result goes against the expected finding of the null hypothesis. Although the correlation is strong, it is negative and determines that as the percentage of Hungarians goes up, the vote share of the VMSz will go down. This is reflected in the results, as VMSz received the highest percentages of the vote in Mali Iđoš and Bačka Topola despite the fact that there is a lower percentage of Hungarians in these districts than in most others. In Kanjiža and Senta, districts with over 80% Hungarians in the population, VMSz secured only 27.79% and 29.01% respectively, much lower than the 58.41% and 48.62% share of the votes received in Mali Iđoš and Bačka Topola. This finding seems to undermine the territoriality theory's assertion that parties supported by a geographically concentrated minority will be able to dominate the voting in minority-majority districts. The expected relationship would be a larger percentage of the vote as the percentage of Hungarians increased, yet the inverse is true.

In contrast to this finding, the fact that VMSz secured 5 seats from the 9 districts, following a 2nd ballot round in all but Mali Iđoš would point toward the party actually enjoying a level of success. VMSz gained seats in Mali Iđoš, Bačka Topola, Bečej, Subotica 3rd district and Subotica 4th district. However as aforementioned these are 5 of

the 6 districts with the least number of Hungarian inhabitants. Meanwhile the 3 largest (Ada, Kanjiža and Senta) all failed to elect a VMSz candidate to the Vojvodina parliament.

Table 5: % of Hungarians and VMSz vote share in Vojvodina P.R. Election 2004

District	% of Hungarians in district population	% of vote received by VMSz
Ada	77	38.13
Bačka Topola	59	32.33
Bečej	49	25.21
Kanjiža	87	42.97
Mali Iđoš	56	36.88
Senta	81	30.2
Subotica 1	38	22.06
Subotica 2	38	20.08
Subotica 3	38	35.01
Subotica 4	38	37.3
Čoka	52	24.41

The table above shows the relationship between the percentage of Hungarians in each district and the vote share gained by the VMSz in the P.R. side of the Vojvodina electoral system. In contrast to the majoritarian half of the electoral system, Ada and Kanjiža are now the districts in which VMSz received the highest vote shares, with 38.13% and 42.97% respectively.

Graph 6: Scatter graph showing correlation between % of Hungarians in district population and % of VMSz's vote share in Vojvodina P.R. election 2004
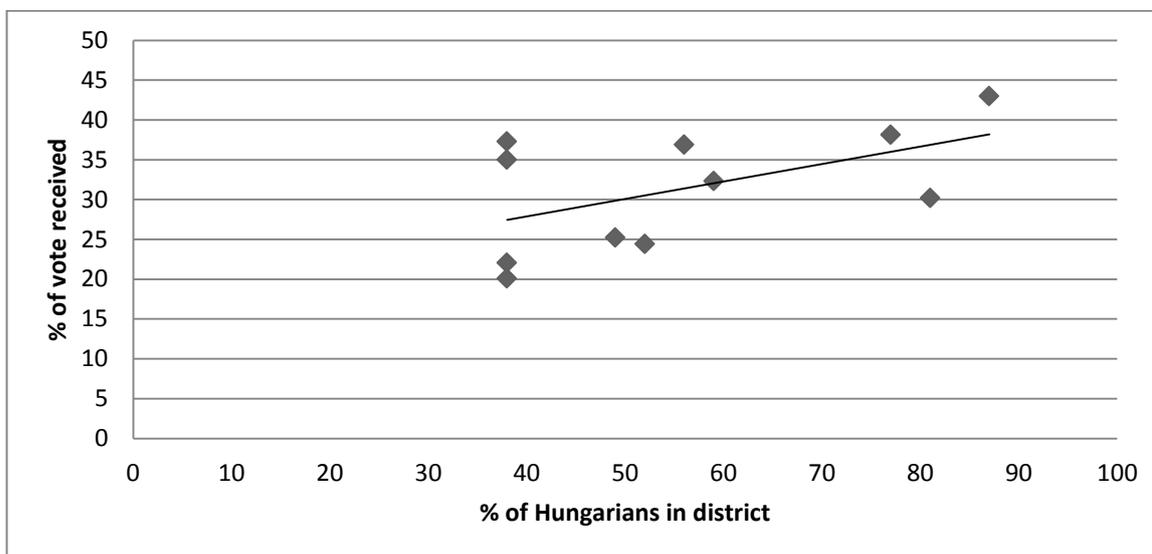
Unlike in the majoritarian elections, the P.R. elections in Vojvodina in 2004 show a positive correlation between the two variables. Furthermore with a correlation score of 0.5390143, there is a strong relationship between the density of Hungarians and the vote share received by the VMSz. This concurs with the expectations formed by the territoriality thesis, as an increased concentration of Hungarians in a district has led to a greater percentage of the vote won by VMSz. The results in Subotica may prove to be outliers. The city is divided into 4 for electoral purposes, but it is highly likely that the Hungarian population is concentrated in the 3rd and 4th electoral districts, as VMSz failed to run candidates in the 1st and 2nd districts[4]. With all 4 Subotica districts removed from the data, the correlation coefficient increases to 0.696913756. This indicates that in the other electoral districts (excluding those in Subotica) there was very strong correlation between the vote share of VMSz and the concentration levels of Hungarians. This is most strongly evidenced by the lower vote percentages received in Bečej and Čoka,

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[4] However the 1st electoral district in Subotica was won by Laszlo Gyula, a politician from the Democratic Party of Vojvodina Hungarians, a smaller rival to VMSz. Therefore it is likely that there is also a significant Hungarian population in this electoral district, otherwise this candidate is unlikely to have been successful. The lack of a VMSz candidate suggests either collusion, or an acceptance by the party that the DZVM candidate was a certainty for the seat.

districts in which Hungarians form only 49% and 52% of the population. Therefore the data from tables 3 and 5 and graphs 4 and 6 fail to meet the hypothesized expectations as higher concentrations of Hungarians should lead to larger vote shares, yet the opposite occurred in the Vojvodina majoritarian elections in 2004. This is as an anomalous result that challenges the null hypothesis.

1.4 Test 3- Correlation between the effective number of parties and the VMSz's vote share:

Table 7: Effective number of parties and VMSz vote share in Vojvodina

Majoritarian Election 2004

District	Effective number of Parties	% of vote received by VMSz
Ada	3.58	12.17
Bačka Topola	3.22	48.62
Bečej	6.14	21.71
Kanjiža	3.73	27.79
Mali Iđoš	2.5	58.41
Senta	5.02	29.01
Subotica 3	3.59	44.38
Subotica 4	3.91	40.94
Čoka	4.69	25.32

The above table illustrates the effective number of parties in each of the electoral districts in the Vojvodina Majoritarian elections in 2004. There is a substantial range, with Mali Iđoš having a small 2 ½ party system with low fractionalization. Meanwhile in Bečej district there are 6.14 effective parties, creating a highly fractionalized multiparty

system, in which the percentage of the vote needed to secure the seat is substantially reduced.

Graph 8: Scatter graph showing correlation between effective number of parties and % of VMSz's vote share in Vojvodina Majoritarian election 2004

The correlation coefficient for the relationship between the effective number of parties and the VMSz's vote share was -0.62464. This shows strong negative correlation in that as the number of effective parties rises, the vote share of VMSz can be expected to fall. Indeed when the outlier Ada is removed, the correlation is even stronger, with a coefficient of -0.876385986. Therefore we can see that without the aforementioned anomalous vote in Ada, there is an extremely strong relationship between the vote share received by the VMSz and the number of effective parties in each of the Hungarian plurality districts. The fact that the correlation is negative seems to question the theories that focusing on district magnitudes, argue that new ethnoregionalist parties aiming for electoral success will perform best in electoral districts with high levels of party fractionalization. It also undermines the null hypothesis, which leads to an expectation that there will be little correlation between VMSz's vote share and the effective number of parties. The correlation within these results implies that the party is substantially more likely to gain a higher vote share in districts with a low number of effective parties.
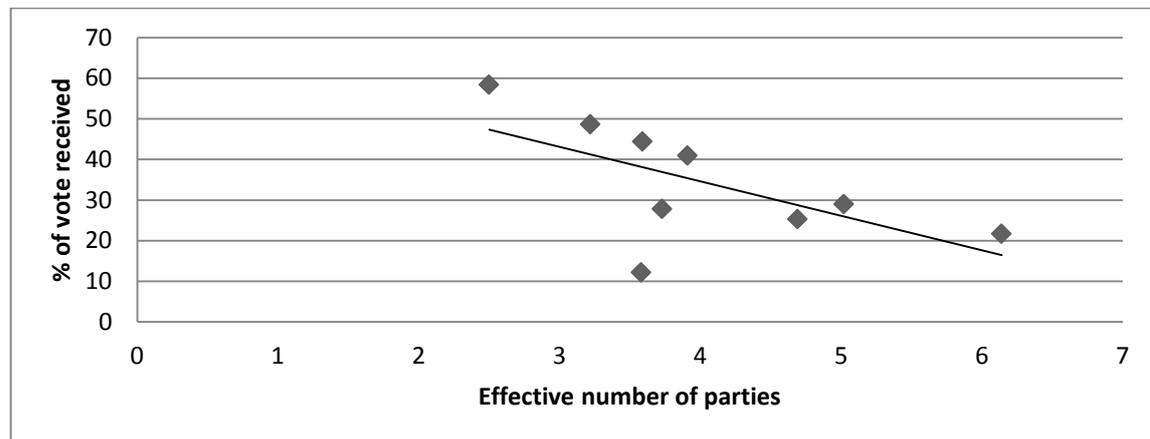
Table 9: Effective number of parties and VMSz vote share in Vojvodina P.R.

Election 2004

District	Effective number of Parties	% of vote received by VMSz
Ada	4.44	38.13
Bačka Topola	5.47	32.33
Bečej	5.94	25.21
Kanjiža	3.86	42.97
Mali Iđoš	5.16	36.88
Senta	5.23	30.2
Subotica 1	5.82	22.06
Subotica 2	5.83	20.08
Subotica 3	4.98	35.01
Subotica 4	4.75	37.3
Čoka	6.49	24.41

Table 9 shows the relationship between the effective number of parties in each Hungarian plurality district in the Vojvodina P.R. section of the electoral system, and the percentage of the vote received by the ethnoregionalist VMSz party. The effective number of parties is on average higher than in the majoritarian section of the electoral system with an average of 4.04 effective parties in the majoritarian section and 5.27 effective parties in the P.R. section. However the average vote share is lower in the P.R. section at only 31.33% compared to the majoritarian average vote score of 34.26%. This indicates that a higher number of effective parties do not necessarily precursor an increased vote share.

Graph 10: Scatter graph showing correlation between effective number of parties and % of VMSz's vote share in Vojvodina P.R. election 2004
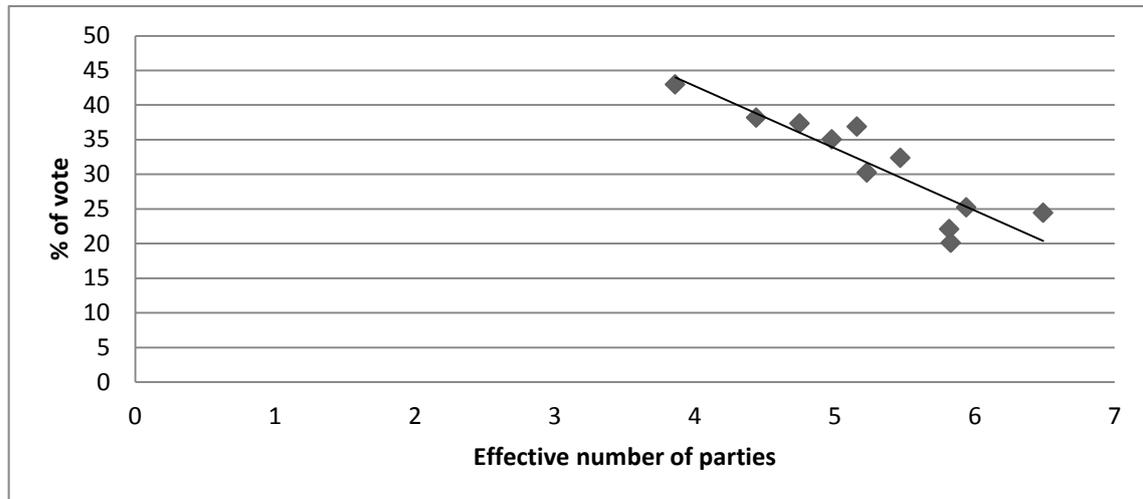

As can be seen from the graph, there is a very strong negative correlation coefficient of -0.897845. This shows that higher numbers of effective parties are actually closely correlated with lower vote shares for VMSz. Kanjiža district is a prime example, as this represents the highest vote share VMSz received in the P.R. section of the electoral system with a 42.97% vote share. However Kanjiža also had the lowest number of effective parties with just 3.86. This increases the saliency of the finding from the majoritarian electoral system that there is a negative relationship between vote shares and the effective number of parties. This serves to further negate the null hypothesis, which assumes that electoral rules have no effect, yet there is an emergent trend of VMSz performing better in small party systems.

1.5 Tests applied to the Serbian national elections of 2007:

Having undertaken an analysis of the two halves of the Vojvodina electoral system utilised for the elections in 2004 in order to understand VMSz's electoral success, it is appropriate to also examine the entrance of the party at the Serbian national elections in 2007. This data allows for a consideration of the party in different electoral circumstances. Of primary concern is the reduced percentage of the Hungarian minority

in the electorate, from 14.3% to 4% (Bochsler 2008: 140-142), which necessitates improved performance from the party in the areas in which their electorate are geographically focused. The territoriality theory argues that parties with geographically concentrated electorates are able to achieve success in electoral conditions that would prevent entry from more dispersed parties, even if these parties' share of the population is equivalent or even greater. Therefore the rules of the national election in 2007, which saw a dispersion of seats across a wider area, would still prove manageable to a party such as VMSz, with its natural territorial advantages, although it would be required to ensure maximum performance in its core electoral districts. In addition, the Serbian Skupština is a larger parliament, with 250 seats, meaning a further dilution of district magnitude. This implies that the entrance of new and small parties should be further aided, provided that they meet the natural threshold of 0.4%, and party fractionalization should be increased. To ensure a fair comparison, the same electoral districts will be used as in the Vojvodina elections of 2004.

Table 11: Threshold for Serbian National Election 2007-VMSz

District	Natural Threshold of Representation	% of vote in national P.R. election
Ada	0.4	21.85
Bačka Topola	0.4	24.15
Bečej	0.4	21.83
Kanjiža	0.4	32.69
Mali Iđoš	0.4	35.31
Senta	0.4	27.83
Subotica	0.4	18.8
Čoka	0.4	20.25

As the table above shows, in each of the Hungarian plurality districts, VMSz proved more than capable of achieving the nationwide natural threshold. Having been specifically exempted from the normal 5% threshold, VMSz within its core electoral districts can easily surpass the reduced percentage figure. This meets the expectation inherent in the null hypothesis that a territorially concentrated party will be able to surpass the minimum thresholds to enter a parliament, particularly in its most concentrated electoral districts.

Table 12: % of Hungarians and VMSz vote share in Serbian National Election 2007

District	% of Hungarians in district population	% of vote received by VMSz
Ada	77	21.85
Bačka Topola	59	24.15
Bečej	49	21.83
Kanjiža	87	32.69
Mali Iđoš	56	35.31
Senta	81	27.83
Subotica	38	18.8
Čoka	52	20.25

In terms of the most Hungarian-concentrated districts, VMSz has the greatest success in Kanjiža with 32.69% of the vote. However Mali Iđoš, with only a 56% Hungarian population, once again emerges as the most favourable electoral district for VMSz, as despite the relative lack of Hungarians, the party managed to secure 35.31% of the vote share, the highest of all the districts that are being considered.

Graph 13: Scatter graph showing correlation between % of Hungarians in district population and % of VMSz's vote share in Serbian National Election 2007
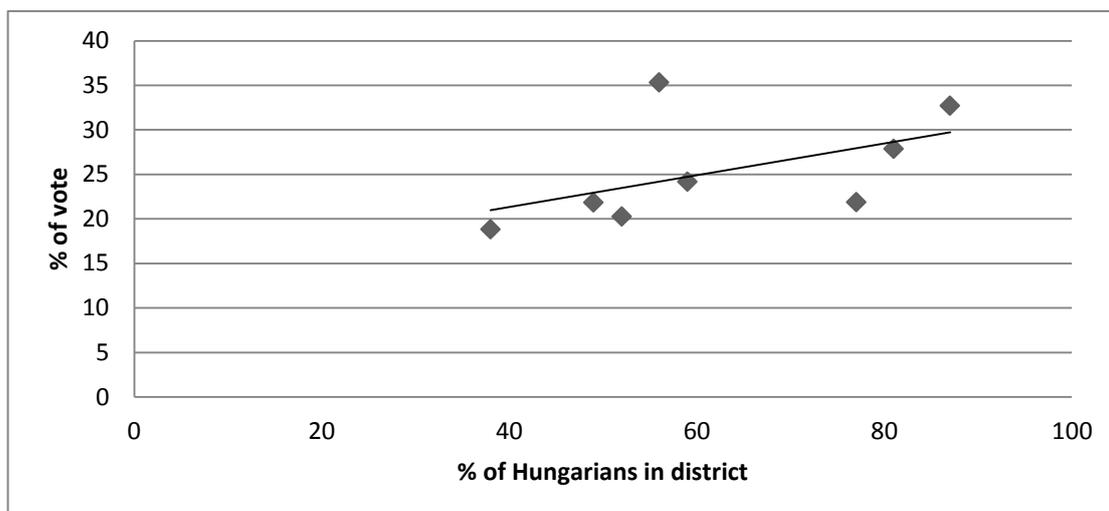
In terms of the percentage of VMSz's vote share's relationship to the percentage of Hungarians in each electoral district, there is a correlation coefficient of 0.514557. This indicates that there is a strong, positive relationship between these two variables, with the VMSz's vote share increasing in line with the concentration of Hungarians in the district. Therefore Mali Iđoš could be seen as an anomalous result to an extent as it clearly does not fit this relationship. This matches closely with the null hypothesis, as greater concentration of Hungarians is increasing the party's percentage share of the vote.

Table 14: Effective number of parties and VMSz vote share in Serbian National Election 2007

District	Effective number of parties	% of vote received by VMSz
Ada	6.12	21.85
Bačka Topola	6.51	24.15
Bečej	6.74	21.83

Kanjiža	4.56	32.69
Mali Iđoš	5.05	35.31
Senta	5.49	27.83
Subotica	5.95	18.8
Čoka	7.11	20.25

In the 8 electoral districts examined in the table above, the average number of effective

parties is 5.94, a figure considerably higher than in the two separate halves of the

Vojvodina elections of 2004. This outcome reveals that the proportionality and party

fractionalization of the national electoral system has indeed increased, due to higher

district magnitudes and an increased number of seats for which to compete. However

the average vote share for the VMSz has fallen from the higher average score of

34.26% recorded in the majoritarian elections of 2004. In the national elections of 2007,

the average vote share of the VMSz in these 8 districts was only 25.34%.

Graph 15: Scatter graph showing correlation between effective number of parties

and % of VMSz's vote share in Serbian National Election 2007
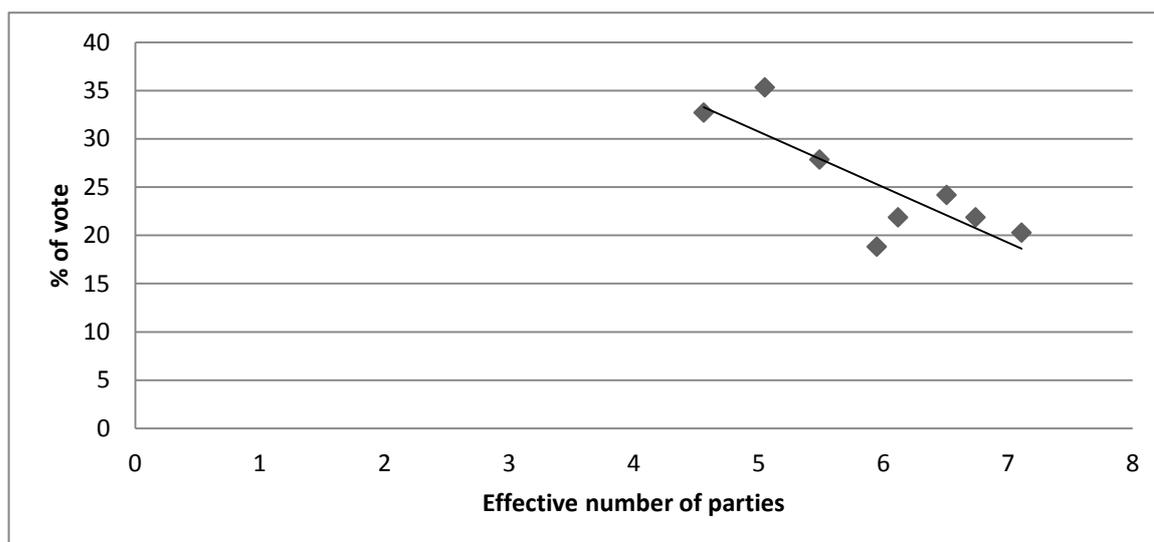
The correlation coefficient for the relationship between the VMSz's percentage of the

vote share and the effective number of parties in each district at the national elections of

2007 is -0.82742. This is very strong negative correlation, indicating that once again, the expected non-interaction between the two variables is not witnessed. Instead the findings from this election point to lower numbers of effective parties leading to greater levels of success in terms of vote share for a new ethnoregionalist party. As the hypothesis argues for no specified relationship, these results provide further evidence with which to refute the initial premise.

Table 16: Averages of VMSz vote shares and effective number of parties across 3 elections

	Vojvodina Majoritarian Election 2004	Vojvodina P.R. Election 2004	Serbian National Election 2007 (P.R.)
VMSz vote share (Average)	34.26%	31.33%	25.39%
Effective Number of Parties (Average)	4.04	5.27	5.94

These averages display clearly that VMSz achieved the highest level of vote share in the districts which had the lowest number of effective parties and hence constituted the most competitive party systems. Therefore the VMSz performances are against the expectations of the hypothesis.

1.6 Summary of results

In considering the results from both the Vojvodina mixed electoral system used in 2004, and the national party list P.R. electoral system employed for the Serbian national elections, it is clear that certain interactions between the electoral systems and VMSz can help us extrapolate further. Indeed the null hypothesis forwarded at the start of the chapter stated that electoral system rules and methods would have no effect on a party

with a geographically concentrated electorate. The voting results from the three separate electoral systems indicate however that there are strongly correlated relationships between the operations of the voting arrangements and the eventual performance of VMSz.

The second test used to examine the results indicates that there is a link between the nature of the electoral system and how a geographic concentration of Hungarians is converted into successful vote shares. In the majoritarian elections, there was a negative relationship between the concentration of Hungarian voters and the percentage of the vote share received by VMSz with a correlation coefficient of -0.43668. Indeed in the 3 districts with the highest percentage of Hungarian voters, the party received its lowest shares of the vote, and consequently failed to secure seats from these districts. Indeed in Bačka Topola and Bečej, VMSz ran joint candidates with the Democratic Party, a major nationwide party. It is possible to infer from this that the vote share may have been lower in both of these, if a coalition candidate had not been chosen. With these two districts removed the correlation strengthens to -0.57001.

Meanwhile the two electoral systems that used P.R. based formulas saw strong positive correlation coefficients of 0.5390143 in Vojvodina 2004 and 0.514557 in the National elections 2007. These results mean a rejection of the null hypothesis as territorially concentrated groups are not performing as well in all forms of electoral system. The results show that in majoritarian elections, a strong geographic concentration of the targeted electorate actually leads to a fall in the vote share, whilst in P.R. elections, increased concentrations of a minority group lead to improved voting results. As the map below shows, there is a clear linkage between the concentration of the Hungarian minority and the eventual electoral performance of VMSz, as the geographic areas are corresponding. It therefore must be concluded from this data that different forms of electoral system will have an effect on new ethnoregionalist parties.

Map 2: The most popular parties in the 2004 Vojvodina elections[5]
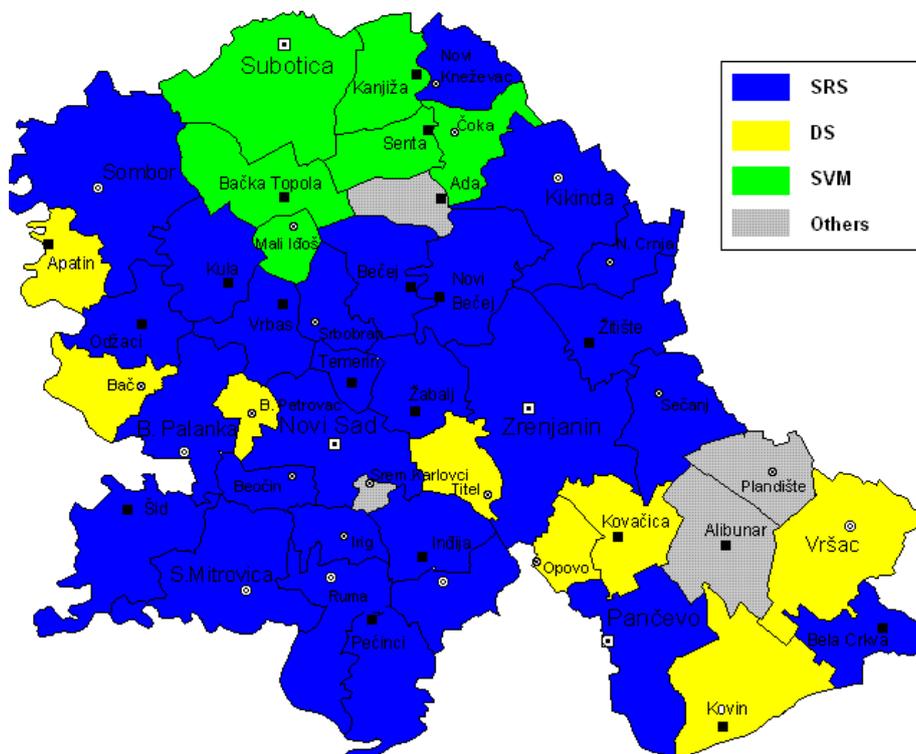
In terms of the correlations between the VMSz's vote share and the effective number of

parties in each district, the voting outcomes provide somewhat confusing findings.

Expectations would dictate that there are small party systems in majoritarian elections,

whilst P.R. elections are more predisposed to multiparty competition. Territoriality theory

would expect a geographically concentrated party to perform equally competently in

either electoral system, with party fractionalization having little effect on the vote share

received by a party with a stable and loyal electorate. This is particularly perplexing for

the P.R. based elections which recorded correlation coefficients of -0.897845 for

Vojvodina 2004 and -0.82742 for National elections 2007. For P.R. elections the

common assumption is that the greater competition leads to wider dispersal of the vote

towards small parties, due to the fact that all votes have comparable worth. Therefore a

vote for a small party seeking entry is validated as its chances of success are

theoretically comparable to all. The higher number of effective parties encourages votes

[5] Map sourced from Bieber and Winterhagen 2006 pp: 31. VMSz is designated by its Serbian initials-SVM. SRS is the Serbian Radical Party and DS is Democratic Party.

for a smaller party, whereas elections held under more restrictive systems can witness a process of voters moving away from their support of smaller parties in order to prevent the wasting of their vote (Benoit 2001: 212). However the fact that VMSz as a new, small, ethnoregionalist party made the greatest impression when it was competing with as fewer parties as possible confounds this expectation to a degree. The link between average vote share and average effective number of parties across all three elections implies that VMSz performs best in districts in which it faces a small number of strong parties, rather than against multiple weaker parties, which in theory is an easier proposition. However there may also be recognition amongst voters that VMSz can secure seats in P.R. elections with smaller percentages of the vote than in Majoritarian elections, thus removing the necessity of a Hungarian ethnic voter voting for an ethnoregionalist party in this form of election.

Therefore with the evidence of these results, the null hypothesis can be rejected. It is clear that electoral systems are capable of affecting the success of a territorially concentrated party, albeit not always in the manner we would expect. In order to prevent a rejection of the hypothesis, VMSz would have had to score similar results, irrespective of the number of effective parties, and also seen improving vote shares as the percentage of Hungarians in each district increased. As neither of these outcomes materialised in full, the hypothesis should be rejected.

In addition to these findings, the significant number of outlying cases, particularly within such a small sample of cases (in the form of districts), illustrates that electoral system effects cannot be held as the sole explanations for the VMSz's successes and failures at the ballot box. In Ada in the Vojvodina majoritarian election of 2004, VMSz recorded only 12.17% of the vote, despite having the advantages of only 3.58 effective parties and a 77% concentration of Hungarians in the district. Additionally, Mali Iđoš district often proved to be one of VMSz's most successful constituencies, with the party's highest percentage of the vote in both the Vojvodina majoritarian election and the

Serbian national election. The way votes are distributed in Subotica also provides results that have proven anomalous. Therefore further knowledge of why Hungarians voted for the party may increase understanding of how electoral systems convert the support of an ethnoregionalist party into successful outcomes in the form of an initial vote share, and eventually seats in parliament.

Chapter 2: Interactions between electoral systems and alternative variables

The results from the first chapter demonstrate that electoral systems are affecting VMSz's chances of success, yet not always in the manner they are expected to. This finding, as well as the substantial academic literature, justifies an examination of other factors that are potentially interacting with the different forms of electoral system to either aid or hinder ethnoregionalist parties. Furthermore the electoral performance of VMSz in the minority-majority districts also exposed a significant number of anomalies within a small dataset. This serves to embolden the assumption that factors beyond the mechanics of a given electoral system are affecting the performance and success of this ethnoregionalist party. As Bochsler himself has argued, unexpected findings from a set of electoral results may suggest that non-institutional variables such as social cleavages and historical events can provide more appropriate explanations for party formation and subsequent success (Bochsler 2010: 30). Therefore to understand the routes to electoral success for an ethnoregionalist party, this chapter will consider some alternative variables that have been forwarded in the literature. As electoral systems have demonstrable effects on the entry of new parties, I will consider only the interactions between alternative variables and electoral systems. It is evident that the alternative factors are not solely causative for new party success, but may prove to be of greater importance than the form of electoral system.

The anomalous cases found in the results serve to justify greater scrutiny of the electoral entry phenomena. They illustrate that there is not a universal theory that can

be designed to explain all the results across Vojvodina and Serbia. It is therefore necessary to adopt a sub-regional approach, considering individual electoral districts, or otherwise groups of similar districts. This is undertaken in order to understand if there are fundamental differences within the minority-majority districts that can explain the wide variation evident within the results. Therefore this chapter will use both the anomalous results, as well as general academic theories to help forward alternative explanations. The results from Mali Iđoš, Ada and Subotica indicate that there may be elements of an urban-rural divide within ethnic Hungarian voters, whilst Ada, Kanjiža and Senta suggest that any ethnic cleavages may be more nuanced than simply considering the density of Hungarians in a given area. Strong results from these alternative variables (either individually or interacting with each other) will require the formulation of new hypotheses for testing.

2.1 Academic theory on the interactions between electoral systems and alternative variables

In terms of the form of interaction between electoral systems and other exogenous variables, most of the academic attention has been focused on the idea that electoral systems are aggregating preferences based on prior voting cleavages. As Ordeshook and Shvetsova have argued, electoral systems should be viewed as intervening structures that 'mediate between individual preferences and outcomes such as political stability and the nature and number of political parties'. Preferences are being sourced from the underlying social structure with cleavages such as ethnicity being predominant (Ordeshook and Shvetsova 1994: 100). In Amorim Neto and Cox's 3 stage model, they argue that institutionalist perspectives (which in this case forward theories focusing on the effects of electoral systems) fail to account for the translation of social cleavages into partisan preferences. The 3rd stage of turning cleavages into parties focuses on the mechanical effects of an electoral system translating votes into seats, but it is the 2nd stage that is of interest. The authors argue that the translation of partisan preferences

into votes is the stage in which institutionalist theories and socio-economic cleavages combine (Amorim Neto and Cox 1997: 152-153). It is at this stage that the chances of electoral entry for new parties are determined. They must not only adopt electorally appealing strategies that will entice sufficient voters to support them, but also manipulate these votes to meet the requirements imposed by the electoral system so that they can obtain a seat.

2.2 Cleavages and electoral systems

The anomalous results from the 3 elections studied seem to indicate that sociological cleavages are important factors in the success of VMSz in the 2004 and 2007 elections. Cleavages have been defined by Lawson as 'long-term structural conflicts that give rise to opposing political positions which may or may not be represented by parties' (Lawson 1999: 22). In attempting to uncover which cleavages hold the greatest significance, it is worthwhile to first consider examples where electoral-based theories have failed to account for the outcome. The most notable anomaly is that of Mali Iđoš district which proved to be fertile ground for the VMSz party in both 2004 and 2007. They received their highest percentage of the vote in both the Vojvodina majoritarian elections and the national P.R. elections in this constituency (58.41% and 35.31% respectively), as well as securing a strong 36.88% in the Vojvodina P.R. elections. These strong voting patterns are however attributable to neither density of Hungarians, nor a multitude of competitor parties.

In considering Mali Iđoš district in greater detail, the most striking aspect of this constituency's Hungarian voters are that they all located in non-urban settlements. When this is then contrasted with the two most urbanized districts, Ada and Senta, it is noticeable that VMSz underperformed in these areas. Therefore the notion of an urban-rural cleavage determining voting preferences is clearly worth examining. In order to test this assumption, the percentage of 'non-urban Hungarian' residents (Statistical Office of

the Republic of Serbia 2002) in each district will be compared to the percentage vote

share received by the VMSz in the 3 elections studied.

Meanwhile the results from Ada, Kanjiža and Senta indicate that there is not the

expected correlation between the concentration of Hungarians and the vote share of

VMSz. Although this result undermined Bochsler's territoriality theory to an extent, there

are possible outcomes that could indicate that the theory does indeed have some value.

Voters in these minority-majority districts must be seen to coalesce on the basis of

ethnic identity, with recognition that their collective voting power can achieve electoral

success. As Bochsler argues, the emergence and success of ethnoregionalist parties is

closely linked to the existence of ethnic cleavages which separate social groups from

one another (Bochsler 2010: 9). It can be implied that those in Ada, Kanjiža and Senta

have a stronger Hungarian identity, in the sense that weight of numbers helps to retain a

Hungarian distinctiveness. However, it can be hypothesized that it is the Hungarians

who feel their identity is under threat that will show the greatest inclination to vote for an

ethnic party, in the hope that they can redress these concerns and act as a guardian of

their rights and heritage. Therefore the saliency of the ethnic cleavage in these minority-

majority districts will also be tested.

2.3 Urban-rural cleavages and electoral systems

Table 17: % of non-urban residents and VMSz vote share in Vojvodina Majoritarian Election 2004, Vojvodina P.R. Election 2004 and Serbian National Election 2007[6]

District	Non-urban % of Hungarian population	% of vote received by VMSz in majoritarian election 2004	% of vote received by VMSz in P.R. election 2004	% of vote received by VMSz in P.R. election 2007
Ada	10.96	12.17	38.13	21.85
Bačka Topola	57.49	48.62	32.33	24.15
Bečej	41.43	21.71	25.21	21.83
Kanjiža	62.92	27.79	42.97	32.69
Mali Iđoš	100	58.41	36.88	35.31
Senta	22.96	29.01	30.2	27.83
Subotica	31.41	42.66	28.61	18.8
Čoka	62.11	25.32	24.41	20.25

The table illustrates that Mali Iđoš district has 100% of its constituents living in non-urban settlements, with Kanjiža and Čoka also having high rural populations. Meanwhile Ada and Senta districts, whilst small, are predominantly constituted of towns. Subotica district meanwhile has the 5th largest city in Serbia, in the form of Subotica municipality, but is also formed of many small villages such as Hajdukovo, Palić and Čantavir.

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[6] The average percentage of vote received scores for Subotica in the Vojvodina majoritarian and P.R. elections are the average scores for all of the Subotica constituencies (in which VMSz entered a candidate) combined.

Districts with high percentage of non-urban residents such as Kanjiža and Mali Iđoš have recorded the highest vote shares for VMSz. Meanwhile districts such as Ada and Subotica, with a majority of urban citizens, have proven to be the constituencies in which VMSz performed most poorly.

Graph 18: Scatter graph showing correlation between the % of non-urban population and VMSz vote share from Vojvodina Majoritarian Election 2004, Vojvodina P.R. Election 2004 and Serbian National Election (P.R.) 2007
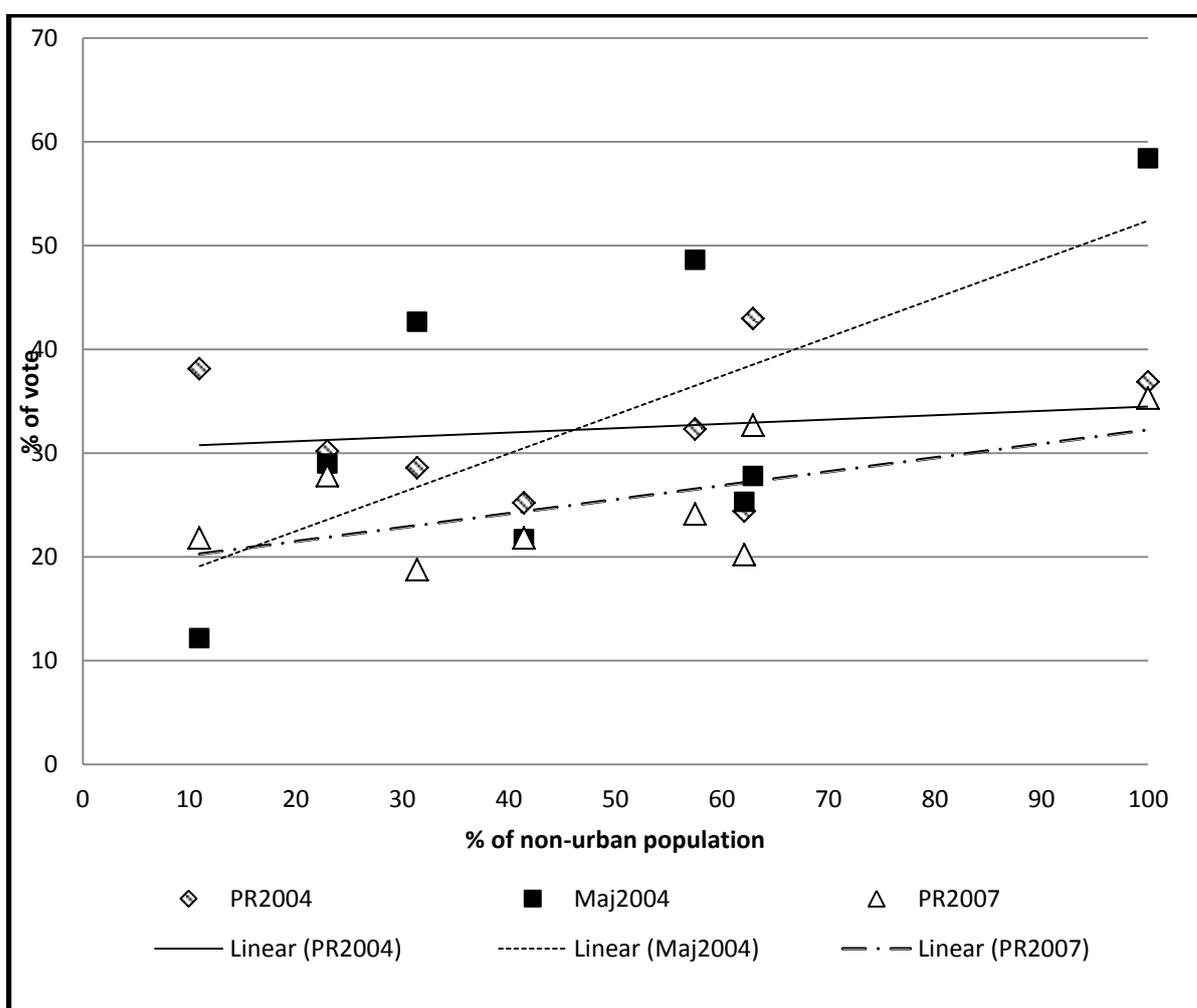

As the above graph shows, there are strong levels of correlation between the percentage of citizens living in non-urban settlements in the 8 minority-majority electoral districts and the VMSz's vote share in the Vojvodina majoritarian and Serbian national elections. For the Vojvodina majoritarian election of 2004, there is a very strong

correlation coefficient of 0.68537 between the two variables, whilst the Serbian national elections of 2007 saw strong correlation of 0.627067. These two results would indicate that there is a clear relationship within these minority-majority districts, with higher percentages of non-urban constituents leading to larger percentages of the vote share for VMSz. However the Vojvodina P.R. elections of 2004 do not indicate that the relationship was so strongly correlated in that election. The correlation coefficient of 0.179179 does show that there is a moderate relationship, but the level of correlation is much closer to weak than to strong. Therefore this election shows that the urban-rural cleavage was of some importance in the electorate's party preferences, but it is unlikely to have been the decisive factor in the casting of their vote. As aforementioned the two elections in Vojvodina took place simultaneously, meaning that saliency of cleavages can be held constant across both elections. This renders the correlation analysis especially perplexing, as two dissimilar results have emerged from elections in which the electorate voted with the exact same issues and outlooks shaping their choice.

2.3.1 Conclusions on interactions between Urban-rural cleavages and electoral systems

Firstly, it is clear that the saliency of the urban-rural cleavage is difficult to quantify as identities become increasingly fluid and citizens become defined by their mobility. Despite this the results do indicate that there is a process apparent in two of the three elections, in which members of the Hungarian minority, who do not live in urban areas, are more inclined to vote for VMSz than their co-ethnics who live in towns and cities. There are a multitude of reasons for this phenomenon, some of which will be examined here.

Seemingly the key reason, certainly the most oft-cited during interviews, was that Hungarians in rural areas do not have Hungarian-language schools as readily available for their children. In the act of defining themselves as Hungarians, there is an indication of the desire of these people to continue the use of their language and the pursuit of

their cultural traditions. A common complaint in the village of Čantavir was that parents wish to send their children to schools that will teach Hungarian language (either with or without concomitant Serbian language classes), and also allow their children to intermingle with other children of the same ethnicity, yet only 70% of Hungarian children in Vojvodina study in their native tongue (Gabrić-Molnar 2008: 236). The issue is that due to a lack of Hungarian teachers and schools, rural parents are forced to send their children on lengthy round-trips to school every day, which costs both time and money. For example, Hungarian teenagers in Čantavir must travel 30 minutes to and from school each day, as although there is a primary school in the village, the nearest Hungarian-language high school is in Subotica. For other students in rural areas, lengthy trips into Senta, Bačka Topola and Novi Sad are a daily occurrence.

Table 19: The rate of people with a secondary school qualification older than 15 years old (%)[7]

	From Towns	From Villages
Total	49.57	36.47
Serb	51.84	39.92
Hungarian	43.61	28.19

As this table shows the percentage of those who have received secondary education is considerably lower amongst rural Hungarians when compared to urban Hungarians. This is due to an unwillingness to attend higher education institutes as well as the lack of Hungarian language secondary schools (Gabrić-Molnar 2008: 237). Therefore the

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[7] Data sourced from Gabrić-Molnar 2008 p.236. The rate is the percentages of people who have achieved the secondary school qualification. Therefore the remainder have only elementary education. Elementary school is from the ages of 7-15 and is compulsory, whilst secondary school is from ages 15-19 and can be taken either at a conventional high school (which results in a diploma) or at a vocational school. Secondary school is not compulsory.

ability to study in one's native tongue is often freely available to urban Hungarians, whilst those who live in rural settlements are deprived.

Table 20: Number of Hungarian Secondary School Pupils in Municipalities[8]

Municipality	Number of Students
Subotica	2309
Senta	874
Bačka Topola	775
Kanjiža	609
Bečej	550
Ada	497
Zrenjanin	299
Novi Sad	244
Čoka	236
Sombor	196
Novi Kneževac	134
Temerin	60

Data from this table shows the number of Hungarian secondary school pupils in some of the municipalities that we have been considering, as well as some in which Hungarians are not a plurality, such as Zrenjanin and Sombor. However noticeable by its absence is Mali Iđoš, which although it has a Hungarian elementary school, does not have a secondary school at all, thus depriving Hungarian teenagers of studying in their native tongue in a locally accessible secondary school. It is likely therefore that the lack of Hungarian secondary school education is a matter of concern for the electorate, thereby

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[8] Data sourced from Gabrić-Molnar 2006 p.365

pushing voters in this district towards choosing VMSz, a party that had recently promised to prioritize this issue[9] (VMSz 2004).

The education issue illustrates most clearly the distinguishing marks between the voting preferences of the urban and rural Hungarian electorates. The voting patterns seen in Mali Iđoš, which has no Hungarian secondary schools, compared to Senta which has 874 Hungarian secondary school pupils may be indicative[10]. Mali Iđoš was the VMSz's most successful electoral district, whereas its performance was noticeably lacklustre in Senta which has an 81% concentration of Hungarians.

The urban-rural divide had clear interactions with the electoral systems in Vojvodina 2004 and Serbia 2007. VMSz and other Hungarian minority parties adopt vote-attracting strategies that explicitly differentiate between the two areas. These distinct approaches were revealed during interviews with VMSz party organizers. In urban settlements, the mixing of ethnic groups prevents an individualistic strategy; therefore large collectives of Hungarians are targeted such as cultural organizations and sports clubs. Meanwhile in villages, local knowledge is used to adopt more personal strategies that include leafleting and door-to-door canvassing. It was also felt that it would be easier to achieve the requisite number of signatures[11] by targeting Hungarian villages where there was a clearer ethnic divide between Hungarians and other ethnicities. In terms of translating preferences formed by the urban-rural divide into votes (the 2nd stage of Amorim Neto and Cox's model), the majoritarian system would be assumed to allow for a greater focus on local issues that may translate into stronger performances in rural districts. However the results seem to disprove this theory as the seats gained in the 2004

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[9] This promise was made in the VMSz programme, published on 19th June 2004, a few months before the Vojvodina elections. They promised to work towards establishing new secondary schools and a Hungarian language university, as well as improving the quality of Hungarian language teacher training (own translation).

[10] Population Figures: Mali Iđoš District 13,476, Senta District 22,961.

[11] 3,000 signatures were required to participate in the Vojvodina elections in 2004 and 10,000 signatures were needed for the Serbian national elections. There was no requirement for geographic dispersal.

majoritarian elections were predominantly in urbanized constituencies[12]. Meanwhile in the P.R. elections in 2004 and 2007, VMSz received 6 and 3 seats respectively. As aforementioned however there was strong correlation in the 2007 elections, but not in the 2004 P.R. elections which makes it difficult to ascertain if there are firm linkages between the urban-rural cleavage and the P.R. form of electoral system.

2.4 Ethnic cleavages and electoral systems

The second variable to consider is the saliency of ethnic cleavages in Serbia at the time of both elections. Clearly an ethnic cleavage can only exist in heterogeneous states. It occurs as there are differing ethnic groups, who within themselves share a characteristic which is not subject to evolution or change. These 'constant descriptive characteristics may translate into particular patterns of political behaviour' and numerous studies have noted the specificity and stability of these patterns of ethnic voting (Kostadinova 2007: 418). These differing characteristics will only be mobilized for political gain if the disparity between the power and resources of the dominant ethnic group is considered to be unfair when compared to minority groups. In addition the potential for compromise must be considered unlikely for a vote for an ethnoregionalist party to be warranted (Evans and Whitefield 1993: 544). However as Bernauer and Bochsler note, not every member of an ethnic minority will place a great deal of saliency on their ethnic cleavage (Bernauer and Bochsler 2010: 13-14). To assess the saliency of the ethnic cleavage in terms of electoral success, it must be measured in coincidence with the elections that saw the initial entry of VMSz. As aforementioned these took place in Vojvodina in September 2004 and nationwide in January 2007.

In terms of the Vojvodina 2004 elections, it is clear that they occurred in an atmosphere of ethnic tension. In the months prior to the vote, ethnic Hungarians had witnessed an

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[12] VMSz received 5 seats in the Vojvodina majoritarian election. They secured Mali Iđoš in the first round, and Subotica 3 and 4 in the second round with large majorities of the vote in both districts. They also won seats in coalition with the Democratic Party of Serbia in Bačka Topola and Bečej.

escalation in the level of ethnic based attacks, against both property and person. This included an increase in inflammatory graffiti, vandalism of Hungarian property and bar fights with a supposed ethnic nature. Although these attacks first reached a noticeable level in April 2004, they did not receive significant Serbian media attention until September 2004 when a European Parliament declaration elevated the issue (Bieber and Winterhagen 2006: 1-2).

Table 21: Number of incidents directed against ethnic Hungarians in Vojvodina[13]

	2003	**2004**	**Jan-Aug 2005**
1. Physical Attacks	0	8	0
2. Fights	2	8	2
3. Damage to objects of the catholic church	1	6	2
4. Damage to catholic graves	11	17	6
5. Graffiti and distribution of pamphlets	3	25	3

The table shows that the level of incidents was significantly higher than in either 2003 or 2005. In addition it can be implied from the relative similarity of the 2003 and 2005 figures that there may be a standard level of ethnic discrimination, centred on low-level incidents of grave damage and graffiti, rather than direct violence. It is therefore likely that the intensification of property damage and the escalation of violence will have increased the saliency of the ethnic cleavage, as the incidents would vindicate Hungarians negatively redefining themselves against the Serbian majority. The exceptionality of 2004 is reinforced by the findings of the Minorities at Risk project, which states that the Hungarian minority experienced a higher level of conflict with Serbs in 2004, than compared to 2005 and 2006. In 2004, the conflicts were described

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[13] Data sourced from Bieber and Winterhagen 2006 pp: 38.

as 'sporadic violent attacks by gangs or other small groups[14]', whereas the level of conflict in subsequent years was defined as 'individual acts of harassment, no fatalities' (Minorities at Risk 2009).

Therefore it is important to note that for the 2004 Vojvodina elections, the VMSz's leader József Kasza incorporated the deterioration in ethnic relations as a key component of the party's election campaign, using the issue as a mobilizing factor for Hungarians to cast their vote (Bieber and Winterhagen 2006: 30). In addition Kasza's desire to involve the Hungarian kin state in his negotiations with their Serbian compatriots made this an explicitly ethnic issue. The fact that they received higher percentages of the vote in the Vojvodina 2004 elections, compared to the 2007 National election, when ethnicity was a directly salient issue indicates that this cleavage may have an effect on ethnoregionalist party performance. In the same 8 districts with no significant demographic changes between 2004 and 2007, they received 34.26% of the vote in the 2004 majoritarian elections, 31.33% of the 2004 P.R. elections and 25.39% in the 2007 P.R. elections. Seeing as the same P.R. electoral system was in operation in both 2004 and 2007, the difference in vote is most likely attributed to differences in the saliency of issues. As the ethnic issue stands out as of particular concern, it is possible to make a tentative conclusion that the increased focus on the ethnic difference may have contributed to the increased vote share for an ethnically based party.

2.4.1 Conclusions on interactions between ethnic cleavages and electoral systems

Ethnicity continues to effect the operation of both the Vojvodina and National electoral systems. Data obtained from the elite interviews indicates that the gerrymandering of electoral districts has, and continues to influence the VMSz's performance in their core constituencies. Milošević aimed to dilute the Hungarian vote by altering the size and shape of electoral districts and in doing so negatively alter the chances of Hungarian-

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[14] Further definition is 'Attacks without weapons, (e.g. brawls) knives, or few small arms (e.g. one or two small handguns) involving fewer than 20 people.

minority parties (Bugajski 1995: 141). These tactics were seen most conclusively with the transferal of Ada, Kanjiža and Senta districts from North Bačka to North Banat, defying the long-standing boundary created by the Tisza River. However this was not rectified by either the 2004 and 2007 elections, meaning that the Serbian ethnic majority had advantages immersed within the electoral system itself and the exploitation of this situation is likely to have led to an inferior electoral performance from VMSz.

However another interaction between the saliency of the ethnic cleavage and the different forms of electoral system present in Serbia has actually been designed to negate the saliency of the ethnic cleavage. As Juberías argues, the adoption of a nationwide district in the P.R. elections will prevent criticism from ethnic groups, who may not be enamoured with mixed electoral districts in which the balance of ethnic dominance can be subject to modification (Juberías 2000: 41). This move may serve to correct some of the discrepancies found in the gerrymandered districts in Northern Vojvodina, but will of course have no effect on the majoritarian half of Vojvodina's electoral system. However a reform implemented in 2003 for both Vojvodina and National elections was specifically intended to improve the representation of all ethnic minorities. They introduced a 'prirodni prag' or natural step that would require ethnically based parties to reach only the amount of votes necessary to secure one seat in the parliament (Zuber 2010: 10). Of course this only benefited VMSz in terms of the P.R. elections, but certainly was a key factor in them being able to gain representation in the Serbian national parliament, where they would otherwise struggle to reach the 5% vote threshold.

Chapter 3: Conclusion

3.1 Summary of results

Findings in this paper indicate that it remains unclear as to what extent electoral systems can be portrayed as the causative source of ethnoregionalist party success.

Results from the 1st chapter were characterized by the significant number of anomalies that served to undermine any tentative conclusions that could be forwarded. In the majoritarian elections in Vojvodina in 2004, VMSz received its highest average vote share of 34.26%, often in individual electoral districts with a low number of effective elective parties, yet there was negative correlation between the percentage of Hungarians and the vote share received in the 8 minority-majority districts. These results would lead to a conclusion that VMSz could prove highly successful in majoritarian electoral systems with low party fractionalization, but would perform better with decreasing number of Hungarians, a finding that is counter-intuitive to Bochsler's territoriality-based theories.

Meanwhile, the 2004 Vojvodina P.R elections led to an observation of VMSz increasing their vote share in highly concentrated Hungarian districts, with an average vote share of 31.33%. There were on average 5.27 parties in each electoral district, yet the correlation analysis showed that higher party fractionalization actually led to decreasing vote shares. This finding directly confounds Benoit's assertion that a higher number of effective parties serves as an incentive for voters to support smaller parties seeking entry, and otherwise they will not waste their vote in more restrictive systems with lower district magnitudes (Benoit 2001: 212). This means that district-magnitude based theories, which have not been considered in this paper, would also be placed into doubt by the findings from the 8 Hungarian majority districts.

The negative correlation in terms of party fractionalization to VMSz vote share was also very strong in the Serbian national elections of 2007 which used a broadly similar form of national list P.R. The average vote share for VMSz in this form of election was 25.39% which is significantly less than the majoritarian 2nd ballot form of election used in Vojvodina in 2004. Despite this they still received 3 seats, only 2 less than in the majoritarian elections in which Hungarians constituted a much larger proportion of the electorate.

Therefore it was clear that electoral systems were exhibiting a degree of effect on the success and entry of VMSz, but the numerous anomalies indicated that other factors were instigating a measure of the electoral success. In considering the nature of the anomalies, it was determined that sociological explanations focussed on cleavage structures within both Serbian and the Hungarian minority societies were shaping the preferences of voters and interacting with the electoral systems to determine the outcomes of VMSz's performances. The fact that Mali Iđoš proved to be the most successful district for VMSz indicated that the inconsistent results stemmed from something beyond electoral system or territorial factors, which were largely unexceptional. It was determined that the high percentage of rural constituents in this district may provide an explanation. Meanwhile the disappointing results in Ada, Kanjiža and Senta showed that ethnic cleavages were more nuanced than simply considering the number of Hungarians per district. The saliency also required measurement, as well as the politicization of the ethnicity issue by politicians and the media.

The results from these measurements revealed that the urban-rural cleavage could be strongly correlated to the VMSz's vote share in both the Vojvodina majoritarian election of 2004 and Serbian National P.R. election in 2007. However there was much weaker correlation with the 2004 Vojvodina P.R. election which has prevented this sociological explanation from being forwarded as the key explanatory variable. In terms of the ethnic cleavage, qualitative data obtained from both interviews and academic works was used to measure the saliency of the ethnic cleavage over the period from March 2004 until the end of 2006. With the national elections being held in January 2007 it was possible to measure the saliency of ethnicity for both elections, but without definitive quantitative data, the conclusion that it had played a role in voting preferences is merely tentative.

3.2 Explanation of results

This paper has examined the theory forwarded by Bochsler that proposes that the territorial structure of social groups, in interaction with the electoral system, makes a crucial difference for the chances of an ethnoregionalist party to achieve successful entry into parliament (Bochsler 2011: 217). The evidence from the results shows that VMSz is only capable of achieving sufficient vote share in order to obtain a seat in its minority-majority districts in North Bačka and North Banat. However the finding that an increased concentration of Hungarians does not always lead to higher vote shares serves to question the legitimacy of Bochsler's assertion. In addition the hypothesized non-effects of party fractionalization on VMSz failed to materialize. Of further interest is that district-magnitude based theories argue that higher party fractionalization is necessary for new ethnoregionalist parties to enter parliaments, yet all three forms of electoral system saw VMSz vote share increase in line with the decreasing size of party systems.

In seeking to account for the appearance of non-hypothesized outcomes, Bochsler himself forwards a defensible reasoning for these occurrences. He suggests that the effects of electoral systems may not manifest themselves in political systems which have not undertaken a process of party institutionalization, due to the absence of many of the required properties. In general parties are expected to be formed by voter preferences, potentially on the basis of societal cleavages, with electoral system effects taking hold once lines of division are drawn (Bochsler 2010: 6). Moser believes that the weak institutionalization of party systems will result in the failure of the electoral system to act in a reductive manner in terms of party competition (Moser 1999: 361). This may explain why the results relating to the effective number of parties proved to be inconclusive and highly abnormal. In this case voters may have voted purely on the basis of either political personalities or opportunities for patronage and clientelism (Moser 1999: 364).

The data indicates that politics in Serbia and Vojvodina between 2004 and 2007 was not yet stabilized. There are elements of political parties channelling public opinion in the form of political parties, with VMSz starting to represent ethnic Hungarians with either ethnic or rural-based grievances. Additionally the electoral system can be seen as an influencing factor on the effective number of parties, especially in the majoritarian election in 2004. However the multitude of parties indicates not only the lack of a party system, but also a high number of unaligned floating voters that can switch en masse between elections, leaving parties vulnerable and unable to advance bold policy choices.

It is apparent that impact of electoral systems on party fractionalization figures continues to have a direct impact on the choices of political actors to form new parties and attempt to gain parliamentary representation (Bochsler 2010: 18; Sikk 2006). Both the Vojvodina and Serbian electoral systems made direct attempts to ensure that ethnic parties would not be disadvantaged in their pursuit of representation, most notably with the 'prirodni prag' stipulation in P.R. elections. Evidently there was recognition amongst ethnoregionalist parties that they needed to only achieve a percentage of the total vote equivalent to that required to gain a single seat in order to gain entry. Therefore VMSz would have noticed the strong likelihood of electoral entry via the P.R. form of electoral system and positively weighed this against the costs of electoral campaigning, thereby justifying the decision to compete. Meanwhile their geographic dominance in minority-majority districts for majoritarian elections was also reasonably expected to lead to electoral entry.

There remains uncertainty however with regards to the shaping of voter preferences by societal cleavages. Amorim Neto and Cox stated that these cleavages were fundamental to the formation of the partisan preferences that were subsequently translated into votes by the electoral system (Amorim Neto and Cox 1997: 152). The results indicate that there is a degree of strong correlation between the urban-rural

cleavage and the VMSz's vote share, and anecdotal evidence for an increase in the saliency of the ethnic cleavage in 2004 is also persuasive. However neither cleavage, whether independent or in interaction with electoral systems, can be solely attributed the credit for causing VMSz's electoral success in either the 2004 or 2007 elections. Instead there are indications that a whole range of factors including economic issues, historical grievances and strategic voting go beyond mere identity concerns in shaping voting predilections.

3.3 Direction of future research

This paper has found a degree of evidence for Bochsler's territoriality theory as the concentration of their vote into one geographic area has given them distinct electoral advantages that are unavailable to dispersed ethnic parties. However the impact of electoral systems upon VMSz (as an ethnoregionalist party) provided confusing results that indicated that both majoritarian and P.R. systems can affect ethnoregionalist party's vote share in a manner that defies conventional theory. Furthermore the saliency of societal cleavages research infers that these issues are important in determining the electorates' preferences and strategies, yet other unexplored issues were mentioned throughout the interviews that would require research beyond the scope of this paper. In particular the notion that urban Hungarians in Novi Sad and Subotica are gradually assimilating and losing the value of their Hungarian identity, instead adopting political positions based on their occupation and economic situation, implies that VMSz is potentially even more reliant on rural voters than this paper has discovered.

My research has proven inconclusive in many respects, but provides a very strong indication that a lack of party institutionalization will mean that general conceptions of politics that are imported wholesale from Western democracies remain inapplicable to post-socialist countries undergoing transition. Serbia is therefore an ideal testing ground for many political theories regarding party development and the impact of electoral

rules, particularly on minority parties, as its stalled progress towards Western democracy leaves it with the same challenges faced by other East European states, yet allows for its progress to be viewed in isolation.

Therefore the study of subsequent elections in Serbia, particularly those held in 2008 and 2012 may provide greater insight into the operations of the unique electoral system and its interactions with societal cleavages. Ethnoregionalist parties continue to provide interesting test cases in this respect, as they are explicitly formed by political entrepreneurs to represent a specific cleavage, but whether this is the primary cause of their success will remain unclear until further research is conducted. The 2008 and 2012 elections offer exceptional opportunities to assess the interactions studied throughout this paper as both saw the coincidence of Vojvodina and National parliamentary elections. This will allow for the study of the operations of three separate electoral systems with all issues and cleavage saliencies held constant due to the temporal synchronization. If party institutionalization has progressed in Serbia by this point, these results should provide a truer picture of the effects of electoral systems on ethnoregionalist parties.

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