Nominations and Party Development in Ethiopia:
The Opposition and the 2005 Parliamentary Election

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Abstract
To what extent do parties in Africa behave in ways similar to parties in new democracies elsewhere in the world? Although a complete answer to this question is far beyond the intended scope of this piece, this article seeks to examine one important aspect of party behavior in one sub-Saharan country – the candidate nomination behavior of the two major opposition party formations in Ethiopia. I examine the nomination behavior of the main opposition parties using a binary logistic regression technique. This paper finds that the primary Ethiopian opposition parties, the CUD (the Coalition for Unity and Democracy) and UEDF (the United Ethiopian Democratic Forces) were quite different in their nomination behavior, and that the CUD (more than the UEDF), exhibited nomination patterns similar to party nomination behavior in other new democracies.

Keywords
Ethiopia, African Political Parties, Democratization, African Elections, Candidate Recruitment

Introduction: General issues and Objectives
To what extent do parties in Africa behave in ways similar to parties in new democracies elsewhere in the world? Although a complete answer to this question is far beyond the intended scope of this piece, this article seeks to examine one important aspect of party behavior in one sub-Saharan country – the district candidate nomination behavior of the major opposition party formations in Ethiopia. More specifically I examine where (meaning in which electoral districts) the major opposition parties in Ethiopia nominated candidates for the parliamentary election of 2005. Examining the behavior of the opposition party organizations in Ethiopia as to where they nominate candidates may provide an indication as to whether these “parties” are evolving in ways suggested by existing theories of party development.
In this paper I examine only the behavior of the opposition parties and not the dominant governing party the Ethiopian Peoples’ Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF). This is because with its massive resources, and dense network of allied “quisling” parties, the EPRDF is not faced with the same resource constraints facing the opposition parties. They can afford to nominate candidates to every district, regardless of other factors. Further, a focus on legislative as opposed to executive elections is justified in that one of the most important factors affecting party development historically has been the development of a party’s legislative component, and the features of the party’s legislative component acts as a key indicator as to the development of the party as a whole. Also given that Ethiopia is one of Africa’s only formally parliamentary systems (where the all powerful prime minister receives his mandate from the legislature), it is apropos to examine the legislative election (as opposed to executive election) given the relative centrality of the legislature in such a system.

In this paper I employ a binary logistic regression technique to analyze a party’s candidate nomination behavior. This technique is appropriate where the dependent variable is measured nominally (in this case whether or not the party nominated a candidate in a particular electoral district). By candidate nomination behavior I mean the candidates nominated by the major opposition parties in the publicly announced lists of candidates for the single member district elections that appeared in May 2005. In this paper I treat the two major opposition Ethiopian “electoral coalitions” (the United Ethiopian Democratic Forces or UEDF and the Coalition for Unity and Democracy or CUD) as “parties” in that they are consistent with the Downsian definition of parties as “teams… seeking to control the governing apparatus by gaining office in a duly constituted election.” It is also consistent with other definitions of the political party offered by such scholars as Leon Epstein, Giovanni Sartori, and Kenneth Janda. Although these parties may vary to the extent to

2 Although the Prime Minister’s office is all powerful, making it different from other parliamentary systems where the PM is ‘first among equals’ the Ethiopian PM Meles Zenawi’s mandate stems from parliament, and not directly from the electorate. Thus in form, and unlike most all other African systems, the Ethiopian system is a parliamentary system.
4 Leon Epstein defines the political party as “any group of individuals, however loosely organized, whose avowed purpose is winning elections.” L. Epstein Epstein, *Political Parties in Western Democracies*. (New York: Praeger, 1960), 1; Sartori defined a party as “any political group identified by an official label that presents at elections, and is capable of placing through elections (free or nonfree), candidates for public office.” G. Sartori, *Parties and Party Systems: A