

# **POLITICAL PARTIES, PARTY PROGRAMMATICITY AND PARTY SYSTEM IN POST 1991 ETHIOPIA**

***Solomon Gebreyohans Gebru***

Lecturer at the Department of Political Science and Strategic Studies,  
Mekelle University, Ethiopia

---

## **Abstract**

Ethiopia introduced multi-party system following the 1991 regime change. Consequently, dozens of political parties have been established. However, little has been done with regard to the degree of programmaticity of Ethiopian Political Parties (EPPs); the nature and the type of the party system they are operating. Hence, this research was intended to analyse the level of programmaticity and typology of EPPs, and the nature and type of the party system that are operating. The study was designed to answer whether EPPs and the party system they are operating are programmatic. Both descriptive and analytical methods were employed and data were analyzed through qualitative approach. The study found that although with a varying degree, major EPPs have programmatic platform. Nevertheless, since all EPPs have been using ethnicity as the main means of political support, and non-of them emerged out of pre-existing civil society organizations, Ethiopia's party system is not yet programmatic. In terms of the number of parties operating, Ethiopia's party system is best characterized by dominant party system but also with certain features of one-party system. The study argues that Ethiopia should give special attention to depoliticizing ethnicity sooner than later, including by reopening its constitution for discussion and revisiting its electoral and political parties' laws.

---

**Keywords:** Civic programmatic party, Ethiopian political parties, Ethiopian party system, ethnic programmatic party, party programmaticity, party system

## **Introduction**

Following the introduction of multi-party system, after the end of WW-II, in the Western world, political parties (PPs) have been one of the major areas of preoccupation for political scientists and other scholars (Elischer,2010). Since PPs in the West were established, mainly, around

clear ideology and political programs, the focus of researchers has been on how to classify PPs on the Right-Left spectrum. Following the end of the Cold War, many developing countries also introduced multi-party system. However, in many of the developing countries, which are pluralistic and agrarian; PPs have been established around divisive lines (ethnicity, religion, race, etc) as opposed to programmatic ideas. Consequently, researchers' inquiry has been focused on whether the PPs in the developing world and the party system (PS) they are operating are programmatic (see IDEA, 2012).

As one of the developing countries, Ethiopia introduced multi-party system following the 1991 regime change. Subsequently, dozens of political parties have been established. However, little has been done with regard to the degree of programmaticity of Ethiopian political parties (EPPs) and the nature and the type of the party system they are operating. Hence, this research was intended to analyse the level of programmaticity and the typology of EPPs and the nature and type of the PS they are operating, by taking four parties as a case study. In other words, the study was designed to answer whether EPPs and the PS they are operating are programmatic. To this end, four EPPs were purposefully selected. Three factors were taken in to consideration while selecting the PPs: the relative organizational capacity, the nature of the parties (coalition and non-coalition) and the availability of written political program. Websites, literature, the current Ethiopian Constitution and the Political Parties' Law, the basic<sup>94</sup> political program of the PPs under study, and to some extent the personal observation of the researcher were used as sources of data. Both descriptive and analytical methods were employed and data were analyzed through qualitative approach. In analysing the degree of programmability and typology of EPPs, the model developed by the IDEA (2012) was used.

The paper has three sections. The first one deals with conceptual frameworks (definition, function and typology of political parties' as well as types of party systems). The second section addresses the typology of EPPs, their level of programmaticity and the type of the PS they are operating. The last one deals with concluding remark.

## **Conceptual framework**

### **Definition of Political Party**

There is no single definition regarding what constitutes the term political party (PP). In general, however, a PP has been defined, mainly, based on its functions, characteristics and purposes. According to the *ACE*

---

<sup>94</sup> A basic political program is different from other party documents such as election manifestos, which are regularly updated and re/designed for specific elections (see Hofmeister and Grabow, 2011).

*encyclopedia* (2013:8), a PP is defined as “an organized group of people who exercise their legal rights to identify with similar political aims and opinions, and one that seeks to influence public policy by getting its candidates elected to public office.” Similarly, Heywood (2002:248), defined PP as “---a group of people that is organized for the purpose of winning government power, by electoral or other means.” Unlike Heywood, Downs (1957:25) associates PP to group of people who controls or wishes to control power only through election. He wrote that “[a] political party is a team of men seeking to control the governing apparatus by ginning office in a duly constituted election.” Others defined PP as “any political group identified by an official label that presents at elections, and is capable of placing through election, candidates for public office” (Sartori, 1976). Finally, Hofmeister and Grabow, (2011:12) defined political parties in a more comprehensive and in a manner that distinguishes them from other associations or groups. According to them, political parties can be understood as “permanent associations of citizens that are based on free membership and program, and which are anxious to occupy through the path of elections, the politically decisive positions of the country with their team of leaders, in order to materialize suggestions for resolving outstanding problems.” In all the definition given above, one can see two common defining elements of what constitutes political parties: *participation in election and the demand to control public office.*

### **Function of Political Parties**

PP plays several functions in a society. To mention but a few, it provide alternative policy platforms, ideological directions and re-defining government agendas. PP serves as a “vital link between the state and the civil society, between the institution of government and the groups and interests that operate within the society” (Heywood, 2002:247). In general, PPs have the following major functions: representation; elite formation and recruitment; goal formation; interest articulation and aggregation; channelling of public opinion from citizens to government; socialization and mobilization of citizens; legitimization of political system and formation of government (see Heywood, 2002; Hofmeister and Grabow, 2011 and Huntington, 1968). To sum up, political parties are vital political institutions for the functioning of a modern democracy or organization of the modern democratic polity as well as political pluralism. Historically, they also played a key role in fighting and defeating colonialism and undemocratic or unpopular governments.

## Typology of Political Parties

Scholars have been classifying political parties (PPs) based on certain parameters. For example, political parties have been classified according to their level of organization, their socio-political targets, the social class they want to represent, their main role, and their stance towards the existing political system, etc. Taking such parameters in to account, political parties have been classified as cadre or mass parties, parties of integration or representation, popular parties or parties of special interest and as left or right wing parties. Opposition parties have also been classified as parties opposing or conforming to the existing system (see Heywood, 2002 and Hofmeister and Grabow, 2011). It is worth noting, however, that these classifications are by no means exclusive. For example, ‘cadre’ or ‘mass’ PPs can at the same time be ‘constitutional’ or ‘parties opposed’ to the PS. Finally, a recent study undertaken by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) (2012) on the PPs of developing countries came up with another classification. According to this study, PPs can be classified as ‘programmatic’ or ‘non-programmatic’ and as ‘civic-programmatic’ or ‘ethnic-programmatic’.

### Classification of Parties by their Degree of Programmability

According to the IDEA (2012) PPs can be classified into two major blocks: ‘programmatic’ and ‘non-programmatic’. An *ideal type programmatic PP* is one in which well structured and stable ideological commitments constitute the basis for: (a) the link between the party and its constituents, (b) the internal organization of the party, and (c) the policy making process and the platform that results (Luna 2012:4 cited in *ibid*). On the other hand, a *non-programmatic PP* is one that has no programmatic linkage with its constituents, and that lacks programmatic organization and programmatic policy platform. There are other types of parties between the ideal type of programmatic parties and the non-programmatic parties as depicted in the table below.

Table-1: Types of political parties based on the degree of programmability

Programmatic linkage	Programmatic organization	Programmatic policy	Programmatic party type
✓	✓	✓	Ideal type programmatic party
✓	X	✓	Weak programmatic party
X	✓	✓	Elite programmatic party
X	X	✓	Cadre programmatic party
X	✓	x	Unstable programmatic party
X	X	x	Un-programmatic party

Source: IDEA (2011:4)

‘Programmatic linkage’ refers to a situation where PPs mobilize support along programmatic lines and not through patron-client linkages. ‘Programmatic organization’ refers to a situation where decisions within the party are carried out based on democratic principles and its policy platform are developed with the participation of its members and the group of people it believes to represent. In such party, the fate of the PP is not dependent on its individual leader’s personality. Finally ‘programmatic policy’ refers to a political program that is not explicitly designed to advance the interest of just one group of a society (IDEA, 2012).

The IDEA (2012) also revealed that programmatic PPs can have either ‘civic’ or ‘ethnic’ organizational base. ‘Civic-programmatic parties’ are those in which their political programs do not disproportionately favour certain specific groups (ethnic, religious or regional) and do not receive disproportionate support from certain specific groups (although not impossible). In contrast, ‘ethnic-programmatic parties’ are those whose political programs include measures that although framed in a national way, will inevitably benefit certain specific groups and in return they receive disproportionate support from the same group.

Table-2: Distinction between ethnic and civic-programmatic parties

<b>Programmatic party type</b>	<b>Has a programmatic organization and linkages</b>	<b>Receive disproportionate support from certain ethnic group</b>	<b>Policy program benefits certain ethnic groups disproportionately</b>	<b>Employ discourses that privilege certain ethnic group</b>
Ethnic	Yes	Yes	Yes	Possibly, but not exclusively
Civic	Yes	Possibly, but usually not	No	No

Source: IDEA (2012:6)

### **Political Party System**

The entire group of PPs in a country form the political party system shortly called the *Party System* (PS). Thus, PS refers to the network of relationships or interactions between and among PPs within and/or outside of Parliament. The composition of PS is mainly the result of the structure of social conflicts and interests (see Heywood, 2002, Hofmeister and Grabow, 2011 and Matlosa and Shale, 2008). On the other hand, PS is highly affected by *electoral systems*. For instance, electoral systems of a given country may encourage party formation by favouring candidates nominated by PPs or discourage party formation by recognizing only individual candidates. Mover, electoral systems may: encourage or retard the forging of alliance between political parties, provide incentives for PPs to be broadly based and accommodating or to base themselves on narrow appeals to ethnicity,

religion, kinship ties or any other specific groups which in return determines the broader political climate (see, ACE encyclopaedia, 2013). Generally, the type of PS which develops in a given state is largely influenced by the number and the degree of programmaticity of the PPs operating.

### **Classification of Political System Based on the Number of Political Parties Operating**

PS are differentiated based on the number of PPs operating in a given state or the number of parties that form it (IDEA, 2007). Within this perspective, Heywood (2002) identified the following four types of party systems and their distinctive characteristics.

#### **One-Party System**

In one-PS, only ‘single party’ dominates and there is practically no real political competition between parties. In one PS, a single party enjoys a monopoly of power through the exclusion of all other parties by political (de facto) or constitution (de jure) means. In situations of de facto one-PS, the ruling party dominates the political landscape and exercise hegemony over all the organs of the state without necessarily legally banning other PPs. In situations of de jure one-PS, however, the ruling party have similar power as that of the de facto one but it also bans all other parties by constitutional means. One-PS, in general, is characterized by the following. Firstly, the party effectively functions as permanent government, with no peaceful mechanism of removing it from power, short of a coup or revolution. Secondly, the party effectively develops an entrenched relationship with the state machine where “party-state” relationship became fused. Thirdly, the party is usually built around the dominant role of a charismatic leader and draws whatever ideological identity it has possessed from the view of the leader. Fourthly, checks and balances among the key organs of the state and accountability are compromised. Finally, the ruling party faces no or limited parliamentary opposition.

#### **Two-Party System (Duopoly)**

As the name it indicates, in such PS, two PPs dominate the PS as ‘major’ parties and both have more or less equal prospects of winning state power. The UK and the US are classical examples of such PS wherein two parties dominate the PS with alternate positions as ruling and opposition from time to time. Conventionally, a duopolistic PS can be identified by the following three criteria:

- a) Although a number of ‘minor’ parties may exist, only two parties dominate the PS with prospect of winning government power;

- b) The larger party is able to rule alone; the other provides the opposition; and
- c) Power alternates between the two dominant parties

### **Dominant –Party system**

Unlike one-PS, a dominant PS is competitive in the sense that a number of parties compete for power in regular and popular elections. However, such PS is dominated by one ‘major’ party that enjoys prolonged periods in power under the conditions of fragmented, disjointed and enfeeble oppositions. In this PS, the dominant party enjoys a prolonged state power, monopoly of policy making and faces a weak opposition with slim prospects for capturing state power in the foreseeable future (Matlosa and Shale, 2008; Heywood, 2002 and IDEA, 2007). In 2007, the IDEA classified 16 African countries under dominant-PS, which includes Angola, Botswana, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Uganda, etc.

### **Multiparty-system**

Unlike other PS, a multiparty system is marked by competition among more than two political parties. In such system, many parties exist with equitable prospect to become governing parties, either individually or in the form of coalition. In multiparty system, the probability of emerging one-party or dominant PS is bleak. This system is particularly known for party coalition within and outside government and coalition governments. Traditionally, a multiparty system emerges in countries that follow proportional representation and mixed election systems. Germany, Italy, Sweden, Algeria, Burkinafaso, Nigeria and Mauritius are cited as examples of countries under multiparty-system (Matlosa and Shale, 2008 and IDEA, 2007).

In conclusion, a PS is said to be institutionalized, if it displays stable inter-party competition and features parties with roots in society. Otherwise, the mere presence of parties does not guarantee the existence of PS (Heywood, 2002). Depending on the political culture, the political ideology of PPs and political history of a given state, party systems can be marked either by one of cooperation and consensus, which usually leads to political stability or by one of conflict, fragmentation and polarization that more often than not leads to political instability.

### **Classification of Political Systems Based on the Degree of Programmaticity**

*Based on the degree of progrmmaticity of the PPs operating, PS is classified as ‘programmatic’ or ‘clientelistic’ (IDEA, 2012). A PS is said to be programmatic when PPs predominantly generate policy, mobilize*

*support, and govern on the basis of consistent and coherent ideological positions. In other words, PS is said to be programmatic if most or all PPs of a given country have well structured and stable ideological commitments that constitute the basis for: a) the link between the party and its constituents, b) the electoral competition between parties, and c) the policy making process (Luna, 2012 cited in IDEA, 2012). However, when most or all parties seek to mobilize support through ethnic and patron-client networks, the PS is known as clientilistic. The critical question that distinguishes clientelistic from programmatic linkage is how recipients become eligible to access publicly provided benefits. In the former case, activist networks screen deserving from undeserving voters and mediate access to excludable goods ( such us handouts, public sector job or public works). In the latter case, the group of beneficiaries is defined by policy and access is independent from partisan distribution networks (Calvo and Murillo, 2013).*

According to the IDEA (2012), the development of institutionalized programmatic or clientelistic PS depends on two major factors: (a) the composition of the initial support base of the party (b) the extent to which the party emerges out of pre-existing civil society organizations (relations of the party with civil society actors). Considering the interaction of these two factors, the IDEA developed the following four main variant programmatic parties that shape the institutionalization of programmaticity of PS in a given state:

- A) *Institutionalized civic programmatic parties*: are types of programmatic parties that do not have links to specific ethnic communities but do form strong ties to civil society groups. Since such parties face few internal barriers in pursuing programmatic agendas, they are most likely to maintain programmatic approach in mobilizing support.
- B) *Institutionalized ethnic programmatic parties*: such parties integrate the support of specific ethnic group but also emerge with strong ties to civil society. Such parties are likely to maintain programmatic approach, but their diverse seat of linkages may impede them to maintain policy cohesion.
- C) *Non-institutionalized civic programmatic parties*: such parties do not integrate the support of particular ethnic group but also fail to form strong ties to civil society groups. Such parties face few incentives to abandon a policy based approach, but are also less likely to come under pressure to deepen their programmatic commitments.
- D) *Non-institutionalized ethnic programmatic parties*: such parties do build strong linkages to an ethnic group but they also develop a limited relationship with civil society organizations. Due to their



limited linkage to civil societies and being trapped by demands from particular groups, such parties are less likely to consolidate a programmatic organization and policy based approach.

### **Political Parties, Party Programmaticity and Party System in Ethiopia**

#### **The genesis of political party in Ethiopia**

Since the Second World War, PPs emerged as vital players in State politics, particularly in the Western world. Later on, many of the ‘decolonized’ States in Latin America, Asia and Africa followed suit in introducing multi-party system. However, Ethiopia, which was not colonized but was under the rule of absolute feudal monarchies, since its modern statehood, had no the culture of party politics until the Workers’ Party of Ethiopia (WPE), the only party in town at that time, was legally established in 1989, by the socialist military regime of the *Derg*.

Nevertheless, organized opposition political groups emerged during the regime of Emperor Haileselesie-I (1931-1974). Since any form of opposition to the monarch was illegal, however, these political forces had either to wage armed struggle or carry out their struggle in the form of clandestine activities or both (Wondwosen, 2008; 2009, Merera, 2006 and Alem, 2003). Similarly, banning, criminalizing and persecuting of all types of opposition political forces continued during the *Derue* regime (1974-1991). Thus, it was only after the removal of the *Derg* regime that Ethiopia legally introduced multiparty politics.

#### **Typology of Ethiopian Political Parties**

Considering their historical evolution, their ultimate goals and the means they use to realize their goals, EOPPs) have been classified in to several categories (see for example, Wondwosen, 2009). For the sack of this paper, however, the following four parameters are used to classify EPPs.

#### **EPPs on the Constitutional and un-Constitutional divide**

Currently, EPPs can be broadly grouped into two blocks: those who seek regime change through *extra-constitutional* means and those who want regime change *within the constitutional order*. Political groups that belong to the extra-constitutional block are those which have been using armed struggle and clandestine activities to remove the incumbent government. Most of these political organizations have armed and civilian wings and have been mainly operating from outside of the country. Historically, while some of these political groups were established before 1991 regime change, others were established after 1991. They have been legally banned from operating their political activities within Ethiopia. Examples of such

political forces include: the EPRP (Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Party; the EPPF (Ethiopian people’s Patriotic Front); G-7 (Ginbet-7).); the OLF (Oromo Liberation Front) and the ONLF (Ogden National Liberation Front). Unlike the others, the last two political forces have been aiming at not only regime change but also breaking away of their respective ethnic groups.

The second block can be grouped as ‘*legal*’ opposition PPs which seek regime change through constitutional means or to get a seat in the national, regional and local level legislative bodies. All political groups of this category are established after 1991. They have been legally registered by the National Electoral Board of Ethiopia (NEBE), to peacefully contest in election and to control political power at regional or national level or both. PPs under this category are registered as ‘country-wide’ or ‘regional’ political parties<sup>95</sup> based on “The Revised Political Parties Registration Proclamation” (Proc. No.573/2008) of Ethiopia. Finally, Ethiopia’s legal opposition parties can be broadly subdivided into what I call the “deny and oppose” and “recognize and oppose” blocks.

The “deny and oppose” type oppositions are those whose leaders are dominantly dawn from servants of former regimes (who served as ministers, members of parliament, military generals or below). Parties under this block have been reluctant to collaborate with and to recognize any achievements made by the ruling party. Thus, they have been using the “deny and oppose strategy”. The ruling party on its part have been allegedly accusing them of being sympathizers of former political order, or being chauvinist or parochialist and for using or tempting to use unconstitutional means to change government, including by establishing ties with outlawed political forces and using popular strikes. PPs under this block and the ruling party have been treating each other as enemies rather than as alternative political forces (ICG, 2009). Examples of PPs under this category include: the former CUD (Coalition for Unity and Democracy), the former UEDF (United Ethiopian Democratic Forces) the AAPO (All Amara People’s Organization, which is now renamed as All Ethiopian Unity Part (AEUP), the UDJ (Unity for Democracy and Justice); the EFDUF (Ethiopia Federal Democratic Unity Forum) and the OFDM (Oromo Federalist Democratic Movement).

The second block that falls under the category of legal opposition PPs involves those which have been willing to collaborate with and to recognize certain achievements made by the ruling party. In some cases, PPs of this

---

<sup>95</sup> For the list of country-wide and regional political parties see NEBE (2012), online: <http://www.electionethiopia.org/en/political-parties/active-political-parties.html> (accessed on 20/11/2013)

block have been supporting government's newly introduced laws (for example, the Anti-Terrorism Law), decisions (for example, the classification of OLF, ONLF, *Al-shabbab* and Gunbet-7 as terrorist groups) and actions (for example, the 2006 intervention against radical Islamist in Somalia and the construction of the Grand Ethiopia Renaissance Dam). Although with reservations, they have also been acknowledging achievement they believe are attributed to the ruling party. In this regard, they have been using the "recognize and oppose" strategy. Example of PPs under this category include: the EDP (Ethiopian Democratic Party) after 2005 and several other PPs. Here, it is worth mentioning that in the Ethiopian political culture, oppositions are known for opposing everything that emanates from and magnifying faults committed by the incumbent government as well as denying any successes achieved by and not collaborating with the ruling party (see, Adal, 2010). Thus, the fact that the second block of the legal oppositions have been collaborating with the ruling party on certain aspects have been judged as "Phony oppositions" (see Wondwosen, 2009).

For the sake of this paper, I will only focus on EPPs that are grouped as legal. According to the revised political parties' registration proclamation (Proc. No.573/2008), EPPs have the right to be registered as '*regional*' or '*country-wide*' political party. Currently there are 80 registered PPs in Ethiopia, of which about 70% (56) are regional while the remaining 30% (24) are country-wide. However, only few PPs have been relatively vibrant at national level. Thus, in an attempt of evaluating the degree of programmaticity of EPP and the PS they are operating, four PPs have been purposefully selected. Four of them have been relatively vibrant in terms of mobilizing supporters, recruiting members, and in getting media and public attention, notwithstanding the difference that exist among them in terms of organizational capacity, leadership experience and lifespan. All of them have written political programs and they all are registered as 'country-wide'/national political parties. Below are the PPs and the reasons why they have been selected.

*A) Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF):* EPRDF is a coalition of four ethnic/region based PPs. These are: TPLF (Tigray People's Liberation Front); EPDM (Ethiopian People's Democratic Movement later renamed as APDM (Amara People's Democratic Movement); OPDO (Oromo People's Democratic Organization); and the SEPDM (Southern Ethiopia People's Democratic Movement, which itself is a coalition of more than a dozen ethnic based political parties). TPLF, APDM, OPDO and SEPDM have their basis in Tigray, Amara, Oromaya and the South Nation, Nationalities and Peoples Regional States respectively. The EPRDF was established in 1989 (on how the EPRDF was formed and evolved, see Wondewosen, 2009 and Solomon, 2009).

At least two major reasons were taken in selecting EPRDF as a case study. The first major reason is that the EPRDF has been in power since the politics of multiparty was introduced in 1991 in Ethiopia, both at federal level and in the respective Regional governments of its constitute parties. Secondly, although EPRDF has its base in the four Regional states, it has its “satellite political parties”<sup>96</sup> in the remaining five Regional states of Ethiopia (Afar, Somali, Gambela, Benishangul-Gumuz and Hareri). These satellite parties have been ruling their respective Regions by adopting the ideological orientation and the political programmes of the EPRDF. Thus, by taking EPRDF as a proxy, it is assumed that we are studying some other five political parties.

*B) EFDUF (Ethiopia Federal Democratic Unity Forum (in short called Forum or Medrek in Amharic).* It was established mainly from splinters of the former UEDF (Hibret in Amharic) and CUD97 (Knjit in Amharic). Medrek is a coalition of seven opposition political parties<sup>98</sup>, established in 2009. Three reasons were taken in selecting this party. First, EFDUF is one of the largest coalitions and has been relatively a vibrant opposition. Secondly, many of Medek’s member parties have been participating in the last three or at least last two consecutive elections before they joined the coalition and Medrek itself participated in the 2010 national election. Thirdly, before 2009, two of the member parties of Medrek were members of a relatively strong coalition called UEDF. The UEDF (which was a coalition of 14 PPs) won about 10% (52 seats) in the national parliamentary seat in the 2005 election (NEBE, 2005). Thus, similar to the EPRDF, by studying EFDUF it is assumed that it will help to examine the nature of other EPPs that EFDUF has in common.

*C) Ethiopian Democratic Party (EDP):* is a non-coalition party. It was established in 1999. Four factors were taken in selecting this party as case study. First, this party stayed relatively for a long period of time (14

---

<sup>96</sup> They have been called satellite political parties because they have no their own independent political program. The only thing what makes them different from the constituting members of the EPRDF is that they have not been legally registered as members of the EPRDF. They are: ANDP (Afar National Democratic Party, in Afar Region), BGPDP (Benishangul Gumuz People's Democratic Party, in Benishangul-Gumuz Region) HNL(Harari National League, in Harari Region), GPUDM(Gambela People's Unity Democratic Movement, in Gambela Region) and SPDP (Somali People's Democratic Party, in Somali Region)

<sup>97</sup> The UDJ (Unity for Democracy and Justice) was established by some former CUD leaders and members, and was a founding member of the EFDUF. However, since 2012 it has been operating independently.

<sup>98</sup> For the list of members of the EFDUF, see NEBE, (2012), <http://www.electionethiopia.org/en/political-parties/active-political-parties.html> (accessed on 20/11/2013).

years) in the opposition camp and has been participating in elections. Secondly, this party claims as ‘civic’ political party. Thirdly, with the objective of winning election, it has desperately been merging with many other political parties, including with the Ethiopia Democratic Union (EDU) a political party that was established by reactionary ex-members of the feudal monarchy of Emperor Hilesselassie-I and with the Ethiopian Medhin Democratic Party (EMDP), a party founded by ex-foreign minister of the Derg regime, in 1993. Fourthly and most importantly, EDP was a member of the CUD, which posed a formidable challenge to the ruling party in the 2005 election. CUD was a coalition of four parties which won 20% of the national parliamentary seat in the 2005. Thus, the fact that EDP has been merging with many other Ethiopian political parties indicates that EDP had something in common with them. Moreover, EDP did not split due to differences in ideology or political programs from CUD and hence it can serve as a proxy in studying former member parties of the coalition which have been operating individually after the coalition was dissolved in 2008.

*D) Blue (Semayawi in Amharic) party:* this is a non-coalition party established early 2011. Two things were important in considering this party. First, the fact that it was established recently can help us to see if there is any change on the ideological orientation and programmatic ideas of EPPs. Secondly, since its establishment, it has been relatively active in organizing demonstrations and it has been receiving media and public attention both domestically and by the Ethiopian Diaspora.

### **Classifying Ethiopian Political Parties by the degree of programmaticity**

Either because of their ethnic nature or other reasons, Ethiopian opposition political parties (EOPPs) have been severely criticized for lack of developing credible alternative political programs and clear ideological orientation (Fissha, 2013; Kasahun, 2009; ICG, 2009 and Alemayehu, 2012). It is a public knowledge that for majority of EOPPs, let alone their political programs even their name is not well known to the wider Ethiopian public. In principle, all EPPs, including the parties under study, are expected to have their own written political programs. As per Pro.No.573/2008 (art. 8 (2), to be registered by the NEBE, a political party must submit a political program among other things.

There was a televised debate between the major opposition parties and the ruling party, at least, in the last three consecutive elections (2000, 2005 and 2010). During these elections, the ruling party and the major oppositions announced their policy platforms using the air time allocated to them in the public Radio and Television. However, it is difficult to conclude that EPPs have been outreaching the predominantly rural (80% or more) community of Ethiopia by simply broadcasting their political program

through Radio and Television. Moreover, neither the opposition nor the ruling party were free from sectional appeals (ICG, 2009) and thus, it is hard to say that EPPs relay primarily on programmatic ideas in terms of their linkage to the electoral constituencies. Most importantly, EOPPs are characterized by lack of internal democracy, credible and stable political programs, strong links with Civil Society Organization (CSOs) and personalization of party leadership (Alefe, 2013 and Kassahun, 2009), which all together negatively affects the degree of their programmaticity. According to Harego, (nd:2), instead of focussing on the development of credible policy alternatives, EOPPs have been engaged “towards destructive campaigns and hatred politics and the main focus have been restricted to fault finding, exaggerating trivial matters and in many occasions in fabrication and distortion of truth for their own narrow advantages.”

Taking the three factors developed by the IDEA (2012) to differentiate the degree of programmaticity of PPs, the EPPs understudy can be classified as follows, notwithstanding the fact that none of the oppositions understudy was practically tested on how they would have implemented their policy had they been given the chance to run public office.

Table-3: EPPs According to Their Level of Programmaticity

Party name	Programmatic linkage	Programmatic organization	Programmatic policy	Party type
EPRDF	✓	partially <sup>99</sup>	✓	Programmatic
EFDUF	x	x	✓	Cadre programmatic
EDP	x	partially <sup>100</sup>	✓	Elite programmatic
Blue	x	x	✓	Cadre programmatic

The EPRDF has a relatively strong programmatic linkage with its constituents, particularly with the rural peasantry and the urban poor. Its core political program, ADLI (Agricultural Development that leads to Industrialization), has been targeting the rural society. Overtime, however, it has been introducing several pro-poor policies and programs to the urban sector, that include motivating and supporting small and medium scale enterprises established by the urban poor and urban housing (see EPRDF Congress report, 2013). Its political programs are not designed to advance

<sup>99</sup> Although EPRDF has a strong organizational cohesion and a party that highly relays around its program rather than its leaders (EPRDF proven its survival after the dismissal of its several leaders and even after the death of its long serving leader Meles Zenawi), but it has been exercising democratic centralism, in which policy decisions and election of the EPRDF's chairman are simple carried out by its senior members (the 'Central Committee' )

<sup>100</sup> EDP has relatively strong organizational cohesion and internal democracy (that includes change of top leadership)

the interest of particular group (s) (see EPRDF's basic political program, 2006). In addition to its basic political programs, EPRDF produced dozens of sector specific and cross-cutting programs.

What all the opposition under study have in common in terms of programmability is that they lack strong programmatic linkage with the wider electoral constituency of Ethiopia: the rural community. Their movement has been very much limited to the urban community. Moreover, even with the urban community, their linkage is not programmatic as such because they do not have similar support across the urban community of Ethiopia. For example, the Blue party and EDP do not receive the same support in other cities of Ethiopia as they receive in Addis Ababa and some other cities in the Amara Regional state. Furthermore, although all the oppositions under study have political programs they are mainly elite driven in sense that they are prepared by few elite who control their respective parties. As mentioned above, they also lack internal democracy and dependency around political programs; the parties are rather highly dependent around the personality of their leaders. Finally, except EDP which places itself as centre right, EFDUP and Blue party lack clear ideological orientation.

### **Classifying Ethiopian Political Parties on the Ethnic-Civic divide**

Generally, one thing is crystal clear with regard to *EPPs*: quantitatively, an absolute majority of *EPPs* are ethnic based political parties<sup>101</sup>. Ethnic based party is defined as one which 'drives its support overwhelmingly from an identifiable ethnic group (or a cluster of groups) and serves the interest of that group' (Cheeseman and Ford, 2007). Despite the fact that the revised Party Registration Proclamation (Proc.No.573/2008) recognizes only political parties established at nation or regional level, about 70% of the registered *EPPs* have ethnic names, indicating that they are parties affiliated to specific ethno-linguistic group residing in one of the Regional states of Ethiopia<sup>102</sup>. Moreover, many of the *EPPs* registered as country wide are not free from integrating ethnicity in to their political organization because they have been using ethnicity as a means of mobilizing support and there were cases where national *PPs* received disproportionate support from specific ethnic group. For example, in the 2005 election, the CUD and the EPRDF received disproportionate support in

---

<sup>101</sup> For the list of ethnic based *EPPs*, see NEBE (2012), <http://www.electionethiopia.org/en/political-parties/active-political-parties.html> (accessed on 20/11/2013).

<sup>102</sup> The current federating units (Regional states) of Ethiopia have at least more than one linguistic group. Thus under this context, a party that carries the name of a specific linguistic group cannot be a regional party.

the Amara and Tigray Regional states, which are dominated by Amharic and Tigrigna speaking people respectively (see Wondweson, 2009; Ishiyama,2009). Furthermore, EPPs have not been free from employing the ethnic card in mobilizing supporters and recruiting members.

To sum up, so far, whether EPPs are registered as national or regional parties, it is hard to find an ideal type civic party free of the ethnic nerve. This is particularly true as EPPs are mainly identified by their top leaders (Fisseha, 2013), rather than by their political program, which makes them to be easily associated with the ethnic background of the top leader(s). There are three major possible arguments as to why EPPs emerged predominantly as ethnic parties. The first one is associated with the history of the country. The second one has to do with the existing legal environment. The third one is associated with the policies and practices of the ruling party, EPRDF, towards diversity.

As mentioned above, EPRDF is a coalition of four ethnic based parties. However, its political programs are not in any way designed to favour its constituencies. Rather, EPRDF's government has been consistently and strongly working to narrow the gap between its constituencies and the constituent of its satellite parties (see supra) using budgetary and other affirmative action. Medrek like EPRDF is coalition of, mainly, ethnic based parties. As their name indicates, the two other parties, EDP and Blue party, are individual parties. So far, it is fair to say that EDP's main constituency is in the Amara Regional state and Addis Ababa. Similarly, Blue party's movement has been limited to Addis Ababa. According to ICG (2009), Addis Ababa itself is dominated by ethnic Amara descendants and this in turn may indicate that both parties have special affiliation with ethnic Amara. In general, EPRDF and EFDUF are best classified as semi-ethnic programmatic because ethnicity is at the centre of their organizational base. EDP and Blue part can qualify semi-civic programmatic because although they are established as civic PPs, as mentioned above, they still have special association with the Amara ethnic group.



Table-4: EPPs According to the Ethnic-Civic Divide

Party name	Have programmatic organization and linkages	Receive disproportionate support from certain ethnic group	Policy program benefits certain ethnic groups disproportionately	Employ discourses that privilege certain ethnic group	Programmatic party type
EPRDF	Yes	Partially <sup>103</sup>	No	No	Semi-ethnic programmatic
EFDUF	No	Partially	No	No	Semi-ethnic programmatic
EDP	Partially	Partially	No	No	Semi-civic programmatic
Blue	No	Not known <sup>104</sup>	No	No	Semi-civic programmatic

### Classification of EOPPs by their stand to the current political system

Opposition political parties (OPPs) are classified as *conforming* or *opposing* based on their stance to the existing constitutional order. If OPPs accept the constitutional order in which they are active and wishes to stabilize or improve it gradually with reforms, acknowledge the rights and entitlements of other parties, acknowledge and respect the existing rules of electoral competition, they are called constitutional or *parties conforming to the system*. On the other hand, if OPPs have a policy platform that reject the basic principles of the existing political order and pursue for changing of the existing constitutional structure, mostly with aggressive programmatic proposals that include tactics ranging from outright insurrection and popular revolution to the quasi-legalism, they are classified as *revolutionary or parties opposed to the system* (Heywood, 2002); Hofmeister and Grabow, 2011).

Looking at the political programs of the EOPPs understudy, one can simply conclude that they are fundamentally '*parties opposed to the system*'. They all have in common that they want to eradicate some of the *peculiar* characteristics of the current constitutional structure. Moreover, the major oppositions have been trying their best to remove the ruling party through every means possible including by popular strikes. The ruling party has been accusing some opposition parties of tacitly collaborating with armed opposition or being sympathizer of former regimes (Wondwosen, 2009; ICG, 2009). The table below shows what the oppositions understudy have in common in opposing the status quo. In the table below the stand of the

<sup>103</sup> EPRDF, party members of the EFDUF and EDP were getting some disproportionate support from certain ethnic groups. For example, in the 2005 election, EPRDF got a disproportionate support in Tigray and Ormoya Regional states; while EDP (which was a member of CUD) got a disproportionate support in the Amara Region and some party members of the EFDUF in Oromya Region state and SNNPRS.

<sup>104</sup> Since Blue party have never participated in elections so far, it is not known whether it will get a disproportionate support from any specific ethnic group.

EOPPs under study towards certain constitutional issues are put as yes (if they are in favour of the issue), no (if they are against the issue) and dash (if they are neutral about the issue).

Table-5: EOPPs according to their stance to the current Constitutional order

Constitutional issues	Party name		
	EFDUF	EDP	Blue
Vesting sovereignty on the nation, nationality and people of Ethiopia (Art.8)	No	No	No
No national Language and all languages are equally recognized <sup>105</sup> (Art.5)	-	No	No
The right of nations to self determination including secession (Art.39 (1))	No	No	No
State and public ownership of land and no land users have the right to sale or change it (Art.40(3))	Yes	No	No
Parliamentary form of government (Art.45)	Yes	Yes	No
Language <sup>106</sup> based federal arrangement (Art. 47)	-	No	No
Minority representation at the lower house (House of Peoples Representatives (HPR) (Art. 54(3))	Yes	-	-
Vesting the power of interpreting the constitution on the upper house (House of Federation <sup>107</sup> (HoF) (Art. 83))	No	No	No
First past the post electoral system/simple majority vote	-	No	-
Prime Minister with unlimited terms (Art.73)	No	No	No
HoF shall represent each ethnic group as per its size; is elected by State Council and shall have no legislative power as such (HoF) (Art. 61&62)	No	No	No
National Electoral Board leaders shall appointed by the PM (Art.102(2))	-	No	No

Source: organized by the author based on the FDRE constitution (1995), and the political programs of the parties understudy (Medrek, 2009; Blue party, 2011 and EDP, 2009).

Each party has developed its own alternative proposal to the various constitutional principles it is opposing. Here, however, the effort is to show to what extent the EOPPs under study oppose the existing constitutional order. All the parties under study have in common that they want the upper house (HoF) to have a role in law making and its current power of constitutional interpretation be given to a Constitutional court (to be established). EDP and Blue parties also proposed that the HoF should be composed of representatives from federating states unlike its present composition. Presently, the HoF is composed of representatives from each ethnic group of Ethiopia, mainly, as per their size. Finally, it is worth noting that an absolute majority of the Ethnic based EOPPs are not necessarily against the existing fundamental constitutional structures and principles.

<sup>105</sup> According to Art. 5 of the FDRE Constitution, there is no National language but Amharic serves as working language of the federal government

<sup>106</sup> Although majority of the exiting federating units of Ethiopia are demarcated mainly on the basis of language, as per the constitution, settlement patterns, language, identity and consent of the people concerned are to be taken as basis of delimiting federating states.

<sup>107</sup> In principle this house is the upper house of Ethiopia's bicameral legislative. However, its legislative power is limited to politically sensitive issue, including the power to interpret the constitution.

Their focus is rather on resource and power sharing or properly implementing the Constitution itself.

### **Party System in Ethiopia**

In this section we shall discuss Ethiopia's PS in terms of the number of parties operating and the degree of programmaticity/institutionalization of party system.

#### **Based on the number of parties operating**

Based on the number of PPs operating in the country as well as the relative strength of the oppositions and the ruling party, IDEA (2007) classified Ethiopia under the *dominant-party system*. More than a dozen EPPs participated in the last four consecutive elections organized since 1991. However, due to the presence of fragmented, disjointed and enfeeble oppositions (Fissha, 2013; Kassahun, 2009; ICG, 2009 and Alemayehu, 2012), the ruling party has been enjoying a prolonged state power and a monopoly of policy making, which are all typical characteristics of dominant system (see Matlosa and Shale, 2008 and Heywood 2002).

Since 2005, the ruling party introduced some moderate transformations that, under normal circumstance, will help it to continue as a dominant party. Firstly, before the 2005 Election, the EPRDF was a 'cadre' type political party, in which party members were secretly recruited based on strict political and ideological grounds. After, the 2005 election, however, EPRDF transformed itself in to 'mass party' in which membership has become open to everyone, notwithstanding that the commitment of the newly recruited members has been questioned. As of 2013, EPRDF had 6.16 million members (see EPRDF-Congress Report, 2013). Secondly, since 2009, EPRDF introduced EPRDF women and youth league, which are instrumental in mobilizing support. Currently, there are 1,600,000 EPRDF-Women League and 1,250,445 EPRDF-Youth League members<sup>108</sup>. Thirdly, the ruling party has been providing trainings to top and middle level leaders on policy matters. For example, as of 2013, 28,823 mid-level and 2,118 high rank leaders were trained on matters of development and good governance (Ibid). Finally, EPRDF has been organizing discussions on policy issues and their performance with concerned bodies in the presence of the Prime Minister and other Ministers<sup>109</sup> from different sectors. For example, since the 2005 election, the Prime Minister's Office and other Ministerial Offices have been organizing several meeting to discuss policy and performance

---

<sup>108</sup> Online: <http://www.eprdf.org.et> (accessed on 25/05/2014).

<sup>109</sup> I consider the ministers' activity as part of EPRDF's activity because all Ministers are senior members of the EPRDF.

related issue, particularly with urban dwellers, traders, artists, university communities (particularly from Addis Ababa University), and representatives of different religious and other association.

Evaluating Ethiopia's PS from the number of PPs operating, it is worth noting that the ruling party has been effectively exercising some of the typical characteristics of "*de facto one party system*". Firstly, the ruling party has been effectively functioning as permanent government for the last 23 years and developed an entrenched relationship with the state machinery, in which 'party-state' relationship has been 'fused'. Secondly, as it can be seen from its statute (EPRDF, 2006), the ruling party follows *democratic centralism* and *vanguardism*<sup>110</sup> as its organizational guiding principles. Thirdly, checks and balances among the key organs of the state and accountability have not been strong enough and the ruling party has not been facing limited parliamentary opposition. Finally, EPRDF had been identified with its long serving chairman Meles Zenawi (until his in 2012), and all ideological shifts (from socialism to market economy, to developmental state and finally to democratic developmental state today) were mainly emanating from his personal capacity. Due to his ideological passion and conviction and extraordinary intellectual, political and articulating capacity, as well as his active involvement in the various national strategic policies formulated during his time<sup>111</sup>, the late PM. Meles was prized as strong and visionary leader locally and internationally (see BBC report, August 21, 2012). All of the above, according to Heywood (2002), are particular feature of one-party system.

### **Based on the degree of programmaticity**

Based on the degree of programmaticity of the PPs operating in the system, PS is classified as "programmatic" or "clientelistic" (IDEA, 2012). A PS is said to be programmatic when PPs predominantly generate policy, mobilize support, and govern on the basis of consistent and coherent ideological positions. However, when most or all parties seek to mobilize support through ethnic and patron-client networks and seek power to control over state resources, the PS is known as clientilistic. Generally, a PS cannot be programmatic if most PPs mobilize support on the basis of ethnic or clientelistic ties, because in this context elections will not be decided by debates over policy issues, but by which of the range of mobilization

---

<sup>110</sup> EPRDF claims itself as the vanguard of the peasantry and the urban poor (see EPRDF's political program, 2006).

<sup>111</sup> The late PM. Meles was behind all major policy crafts, including Ethiopia's policy of food security, the ongoing development policy called 'Growth and Transformation Plan' (GTP) and Foreign policy of Ethiopia (an Interview with research and development Officer, in the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, 21/04/2010).

strategies on show proves to be the most effective (Luna, 2012 cited in IDEA, 2012).

*Against the above backdrop, it is hard to say that Ethiopia's PS has been programmatic because, as mentioned elsewhere above, all EPPs, whether they carry civic or ethnic name, have been using the ethnic card as their primary tool of mobilization (ICG, 2009). The development of institutionalized programmatic or clientelistic PS depends on: the composition of the initial support base of the party and the extent to which the party emerges out of pre-existing civil society organizations. PPs that have strong ties with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) are most likely to develop programmatic PS. In Ethiopia, however, non-of the PPs (including those understudies) did emerge out of pre-existing CSO. After all, the presence of independent CSOs in the history of Ethiopia is very weak. According to the IDEA (2011), the presence of large rural constituencies; weak and depoliticized civil society groups and low media penetration retards the development of programmatic PS. This holds true in Ethiopia.*

## **Conclusion**

Up-to-date, Ethiopia has armed opposition forces some of which were established decades ago. After 1991, Ethiopia introduced multi-party system. Since then, dozens of PPs have been legally established, of which an absolute majority are ethnic based. Although with a varying degree, all the PPs under study are found to be programmatic. Nevertheless, since all the PPs understudy have been using ethnicity as the main means of political support, and since none of them was established out of existing CSOs, Ethiopia's PS has not been programmatic. In terms of the number of parties operating, Ethiopia's PS is best characterized by dominant PS but also with certain characteristics of one-party system.

As the study shows, while majority of the ethnic based EPPs do not necessarily oppose the current constitutional order, the relatively vibrant EOPPs under study (and the armed forces) are opposing to the exiting political order. Consequently, Ethiopia's PS has been characterised by acrimonious game; parties relate to each other as enemies and thus inter-party relations tend to be marked by mutual suspicions and animosity between the oppositions and the ruling party as well as among the oppositions (Lidetu, 2009). This has been leading to more politicization of ethnicity, political fragmentation and polarization. It is therefore high time for Ethiopia to begin a protracted struggle against politicizing ethnicity and political polarization. In this regard, the following four points could be helpful.

Firstly, since the major EOPP (both the armed and legal) are opposing the existing constitutional order, the supreme law of the land

should be reopened for discussion. In this regard, Ethiopia's supporters such as the United States, China, European Union, African Union, and others should do their best to bring together all Ethiopian political forces (both the armed and legal oppositions and the ruling party) to discuss and determine their country's fate. Secondly, Ethiopia's Political party law should be redesigned in a way to promote the formation of cross-ethnic, cross-region and cross-rural-urban areas PPs. Thirdly, in multi-national/cultural countries like Ethiopia, the majority vote electoral system seems inappropriate since "winner", EPRDF has been taking almost all parliamentary seats to the total dismay of all other rivals, it usually has been leading to post-election tensions. Thus, Ethiopia needs to change its electoral system to proportional representation so as to more inclusive. Finally, the so-called independent CSOs and the private media have been hostile to any sort of collaboration or smooth relationship between the ruling and opposition parties. This needs to be changed in that media and CSOs should promote collaboration among EPPs and should push them towards strong programmaticity.

#### **References:**

- Alefe Abeje. "Party System Institutionalization and the Prospect of Democratic Consolidation in Ethiopia", *European Scientific Journal*, Vol.9, No.23 2013.
- Alem, Haftu. "Ethnic Federalism in Ethiopia: Background, Present Conditions and Future Prospects". Paper Submitted to the Second EAF International Symposium on *Contemporary Development Issues in Ethiopia*, July 11-12, 2003, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.
- Blue Prty. "Blue Party Program." Unpublished, December, 20112 (Amharic).
- Calvo, Ernesto and Murillo, V. Maria. When Parties Meet Voters: Assessing Political Linkages through Partisan Networks and Distributive Expectations in Argentina and Chile. *Journal of Comparative Political Studies*, vol.46, No.7, 2013.
- Cheeseman, Nic and Robert, Ford. "Ethnicity as a Political Cleavage." Paper presented at the conference "The Micro-Foundations of Mass Politics in Africa," Michigan State University, East Lansing, May 12-13, and published as Afrobarometer Working Paper No. 83.2007.
- EDP (Ethiopian Democratic Party). "EDP Political Program." Addis Ababa:Unpublished, January, 2010 (Amharic).
- Elischer, Sebastian. Measuring and Comparing Party Ideology in Non-industrialized Societies: Taking Party Manifesto Research to Africa. Working paper No. 139, GIGA working papers. Online: [www.giga-hamburg.de/working\\_papers/](http://www.giga-hamburg.de/working_papers/), (Last consulted: 20/04/2013), 2010.

- EFDUF (Ethiopia Federal Democratic Unity Forum). “Forum Mini-Program.” Addis Ababa: Unpublished, 2010 (Amharic).
- EPRDF. Report of the the 9<sup>th</sup> EPRDF Congress. Bahrdar: Unpublished, March, 2013.
- “EPRF Program”. Addis Ababa: Mega Printing Enterprise, 2006
- The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. The Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa: Berhanena Selam Printing Press, 1995
- The Revised Political Parties Registration Proclamation. *Negarit Gazetta*, Proc. No.573/2008: Addis Ababa: Berhanena Selam Printing Press, 2008.
- Heywood, Andrew. Politics. Hound miles: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002.
- Hofmeister, Wilhelm and Grabow, Karsten. Political Parties: Functions and Organizations in Democratic Societies. Singapore: Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, 2011.
- Huntington, Samuel. Political Order in Changing Societies. Yale University Press, 1968.
- ICG (International Crisis Group). Ethiopia: Ethnic Federalism and its Discontent: Africa Report No. 153. Nairobi/Brussels: ICG, 2009.
- Ishiyama, John. Examining the 2005 Ethiopian Parliamentary Election Results under Alternative Electoral Rules. A Paper presented at the 4<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Ethiopian Development Studies (4<sup>th</sup> ICEDS). “*The Challenges of Peace and Development in Ethiopia & The Horn Of Africa*”. Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan, USA, August 3-5, 2007,
- Kassahun Berhanu. Ethiopia: Beleaguered Opposition under a Dominant Party System. Addis Ababa, Addis Ababa University, Unpublished, 2009.
- Lidetu Ayalew. Medlot: the Role of the Third Alternative in the Ethiopian Politics (Amharic version). Addis Ababa: Progress Printing Press, 2010.
- Matlosa, Khabele and Shale, Victor. Political Parties Programme Hand Book, No. 18. EISA. Online :[www.eisa.org.za](http://www.eisa.org.za) (last consulted: 20/11/2013), 2008.
- Sartori, Giovanni. Parties and Party System: A framework for Analysis. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976.
- Solomon Gebreyohans, Gebru Recognizing Diversity as a Tool for Unity in Ethiopia: Challenges & Opportunities. Germany: VDM Verlag Dr. Müller, 2010.
- Wondwosen, Teshome. Ethiopian Opposition Political Parties and Rebel Fronts: Past and Present. World Academy of Science, Engineering and Technology, Vol: 3, 2009.
- Ethnicity and Political Parties in Africa: The Case of Ethnic-based Parties in Ethiopia. The Journal of International Social Research, Volume 1/5, 2008.

## Website

- The ACE Encyclopaedia: Parties and Candidates. Online: <http://aceproject.org/ace-en/pdf/pc/view> (last consulted: 20/11/2013), 2013.
- Adal Isaw. Revolutionary Democracy: A Fitting Worldview for Economic & Political Development of Ethiopia. Online: [http://aigaforum.com/articles/revolutionary\\_demo\\_view.htm](http://aigaforum.com/articles/revolutionary_demo_view.htm) (last consulted: 20/04/2014), 2010.
- Alemayehu, G.Meriam (2012), "Ethiopia's Opposition at the Dawn of Democracy?"* <http://open.salon.com/blog/almariam>, (last consulted:11/12/2013).
- EPRDF. EPRDF-Youth League. Online: <http://www.eprdf.org.et/web/youth/about-youth-league> (last consulted: 23/03/2014).
- EPRDF-Women League. Online: <http://www.eprdf.org.et/web/women/about-women-league> (last consulted: 23/03/2014).
- Fisseha. The Endless Cycle of Infighting and Disintegration of Ethiopia's Opposition Parties, <http://www.tigraionline.com/articles/ethio-opposition-quarrel.html>,(lastconsulted: 11/12/2013), 2013.
- Harego Bensa. Are our Political Parties Compatible To our Democratic Process? Online: [http://aigaforum.com/articles/are\\_our\\_political.htm](http://aigaforum.com/articles/are_our_political.htm)(lastconsulted:24/05/2014), nd.
- IDEA (International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance). Programmatic Parties, [www.idea.int/parties](http://www.idea.int/parties) (last consulted: 20/11/2013), 2012.
- Political Parties in Africa: Challenges for Sustained Multiparty Democracy, [www.idea.int/parties](http://www.idea.int/parties) (last consulted: 20/11/2013), 2007.
- NEBE (National Electoral Board of Ethiopia). List of Active Political Parties. Online: <http://www.electionethiopia.org/en/political-parties/active-political-parties.html> (last consulted: 20/11/2013)