

**Party Candidate Selection  
before and after the  
Change of Ruling Parties**  
**A Study of the 2005 and 2009 Local Executive Elections in Taiwan**

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**Abstract**

This study examines how Taiwan's parties conducted candidate selection in the 2005 and 2009 local executive elections and the consequences of these processes. It has adopted standard methods for measuring candidate selection and applied them to Taiwanese parties. It shows that, although both major parties employed very similar inclusive nomination methods in 2005, they diverged four years later, with the Democratic Progressive Party using a highly centralized candidate selection mechanism. We challenge the assumption that primaries undermine election campaigns and instead argue that, when the party allows the formal nomination process to take place, its candidates gain legitimacy and perform well. In general, primaries appear to promote local party unity and help to avoid the rise of rebel candidates. Nomination timing appears to have an effect on electoral outcomes in our sample cases, a finding that has not been addressed in the existing literature.

**Keywords:** Candidate selection, political parties, local elections, nomination, Taiwan.

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**D**uring the Lee Teng-hui (李登輝) era, Taiwan's main political parties were poles apart when it came to nomination methods. The Democratic Progressive Party's (民進黨, DPP's) candidate selection primaries enhanced its democratic credentials vis-à-vis the comparatively authoritarian decision-making practices

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of the Kuomintang (國民黨, KMT) and other political parties of Taiwan.<sup>1</sup> The KMT's top-down approach to nomination was exemplified by Lee's single-handed selection of Lien Chan (連戰) as nominee to be his successor as president in 1999. For much of the post-2000 period, Taiwan's two main parties converged on the methods they employed to select their candidates. Mixed primaries, in which public opinion surveys and party member voting accounted for 70 and 30 percent of the decision weight, respectively, became the nomination standard for both the DPP and the KMT.<sup>2</sup> In the decisive elections in 2008, the two parties used this system for both legislative and presidential candidate nominations.<sup>3</sup>

In early 2008, the KMT's landslide presidential and legislative election victories brought it to power in Taiwan's second change of ruling parties. In the aftermath of these setbacks, the DPP conducted the most radical overhaul of its nomination system since it first introduced primaries in the late 1980s. Under its new party chairwoman, Tsai Ing-wen (蔡英文), the DPP abandoned primaries in favor of a centralized nomination committee. The official nominating body became the Election Strategy Small Group (選戰策略小組, ESSG). This reform was justified by the claim that primaries had contributed to the party's severe defeats in 2008 and that a repeat of such nomination disputes could put the party in danger of being completely wiped out in the 2009 local executive elections. By contrast, the victorious KMT saw no reason to adjust its nomination methods following one of its most successful post-martial-law elections.<sup>4</sup> Thus, in 2009, Taiwan's voters observed an unfamiliar scenario of the former authoritarian party, the KMT, operating internally in a far more democratic manner than the Democratic Progressive Party.

Until recently, the vast majority of research on candidate selection has

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<sup>1</sup> Although the DPP changed its candidate selection system on a number of occasions, it never abandoned primaries prior to 2008. It also should be noted that there was some negative press coverage of the DPP's primaries as a result of the practice of recruiting pocket members to manipulate the process. However, the DPP primaries allowed the party to avoid the kind of damaging rebel candidate phenomenon that severely undermined the KMT in the 1990s.

<sup>2</sup> For a discussion of the nomination systems of Taiwan's parties, see Wu Chung-li, *Zhengdang yu Xuanju: Lilun yu shijian* [Parties and elections: Theory and practice] (Taipei: Sanmin, 2008), 77-146, and Wang Yeh-li, *Bijiao xuanju zhidu* [Comparative election systems] (Taipei: Wunan, 2003), 153-196.

<sup>3</sup> The KMT did not hold a competitive primary for the presidential election. However, it would have done so if a serious candidate had challenged Ma Ying-jeou (馬英九) for nomination. In fact, the 2005 KMT party chairman election had served as its presidential primary, as Ma's resounding victory convinced Wang Jin-pyng (王金平) that he would not be able to beat Ma in a competitive election.

<sup>4</sup> In terms of parliamentary seat shares after the lifting of martial law, the KMT's 2008 share has been beaten by only the 78 percent it gained in the 1991 National Assembly election. Moreover, when the allied party and allied independents are factored in, the KMT's 2008 seat share exceeds three-quarters.

focused on either American or Western European parties.<sup>5</sup> However, as many third-wave democracies enter their third decade of multiparty elections, there has been a corresponding increase in studies of their candidate selection procedures.<sup>6</sup> The relatively institutionalized state of Taiwan's parties compared with many other new democracies makes it an ideal environment in which to test and adapt existing frameworks and theories concerning candidate selection. In addition to establishing why candidate selection is important, comparative research on candidate selection has focused primarily on two core areas.<sup>7</sup> First, a major research stream addresses how parties select candidates, practices which analysts frequently attempt to locate on a spectrum from "inclusiveness" or "democratic" to "exclusiveness" or "authoritarian," or alternatively on a spectrum of "localized" versus "centralized" nomination.<sup>8</sup> Second, analysts have addressed why parties adopt certain nomination methods and seek to assess the consequences. In this study, we provide estimates of where Taiwan's parties are located in terms of the regular standard for measuring candidate selection methods, and assess whether the consequences of nomination methods in Taiwan differ from those predicted by theories of Western party behavior. To do so, we examine how Taiwan's parties nominated candidates for local executive elections in 2005 and 2009. Although much of the prior literature on candidate selection focuses on elections to national office, our case selection

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<sup>5</sup> This was apparent, for instance, in Michael Gallagher and Michael Marsh, eds., *Candidate Selection in Comparative Perspective: The Secret Garden of Politics* (London: Sage, 1988), and the special edition on candidate selection in *Party Politics* 7, no. 3 (May 2001).

<sup>6</sup> For example, on Latin America, see Peter Siavelis and Scott Morgenstern, "Candidate Recruitment and Selection in Latin America: A Framework of Analysis," *Latin American Politics and Society* 50, no. 4 (2008): 27-58; on Argentina, see Miguel De Luca et al., "Backroom or Ballot Boxes? Candidate Nomination in Argentina," *Comparative Political Studies* 35 (2002): 413-436; on Mexico, see Steven Wuhs, "Democratization and Dynamics of Candidate Selection Rule Change in Mexico: 1991-2003," *Mexican Studies* 22 (2006): 33-55; on Spain, see Bonnie Field, "Transitions to Democracy and Internal Party Rules: Spain in Comparative Perspective," *Comparative Politics* 39 (2006): 83-102; on Brazil, see David Samuels, "Political Ambition, Candidate Recruitment and Legislative Politics in Brazil," in *Pathways to Power: Political Recruitment and Legislative Politics in Brazil*, ed. Peter Siavelis and Scott Morgenstern (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2008); and on Croatia, see Mirjana Kasapovic, "Nominating Procedures in Democratic Polities," *Politika Misao* 38 (2001): 3-17.

<sup>7</sup> For reviews of the state of the field, see Michael Gallagher, "Introduction," in *Candidate Selection in Comparative Perspective: The Secret Garden of Politics*, ed. Michael Gallagher and Michael Marsh (London: Sage, 1988), 1-19; Reuvan Hazan, "Candidate Selection," in *Comparing Democracies 2: New Challenges in the Study of Elections and Voting*, ed. Lawrence LeDuc, Richard Niemi, and Pippa Norris (London: Sage, 2002), 108-126; and Bonnie Field and Peter Siavelis, "Candidate Selection Procedures in Transitional Polities," *Party Politics* 14, no. 5 (2008): 620-639.

<sup>8</sup> For application of these frameworks in the Taiwan case for centralization, see Wu Chung-li and Dafydd Fell, "Taiwan's Party Primaries in Comparative Perspective," *Japanese Journal of Political Science* 2, no. 1 (2001): 23-45. For democratization, see Dafydd Fell, "Inner Party Democracy in Taiwan," *Journal of Electoral Studies* 13, no. 2 (November 2006): 167-198.

is based on the significant “before and after” timing of these local executive elections. As noted above, in 2005, both parties employed similar nomination procedures, but sharply diverged following the DPP’s disastrous performance in the national elections in 2008. Thus, the selection of nonnational elections in 2005 and 2009 provides the opportunity to compare party behavior under different conditions, both within the parties themselves and in terms of the national political landscape (e.g., the change of party holding the presidency in 2008).

### **Focus on Nomination**

Political scientists generally agree that candidate selection is one of the most important functions that political parties undertake, with strong implications for the health of the democratic system and quality of governance.<sup>9</sup> However, within-party struggles to secure nomination for favored candidates can be as fractious a power struggle as anything else that parties do. Political leaders design their parties’ nomination systems in order to improve their electoral prospects, strengthen their power base within the party, and enhance party unity. Taiwan’s major parties have been highly innovative and adaptable in their nomination methods, developing a number of complex candidate selection procedures that are unique to Taiwan. In the summer of 2008, the first author conducted extensive interviews in Taiwan with party politicians on the topic of candidate selection.<sup>10</sup> Although the DPP’s new regulations had not yet been passed, it was clear that the party center was planning to use centralized appointment instead of primaries. The interviews revealed three prevalent views on how the DPP should nominate in the future.<sup>11</sup> The first was that the party’s experience in 2008 meant that its old primary system was too divisive and instead should be replaced by the centralized negotiated approach that Tsai was promoting. As the Taipei County branch chief, Wu Ping-jui (吳秉叡), argued,

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<sup>9</sup> Gallagher, “Introduction,” in *Candidate Selection in Comparative Perspective*.

<sup>10</sup> In the summer of 2008, Dafydd Fell conducted thirty interviews and one focus group. Those interviewed included party-center cadres, local party branch chiefs, and elected politicians with experience of multiple elections. Interviews took place in Taipei and county/city branches all over Taiwan. He was able to speak to a rough balance of KMT and DPP respondents. Generally, interviews lasted thirty-five to forty minutes and were semistructured. They aimed at eliciting respondents’ experiences and views regarding party nomination systems.

<sup>11</sup> Another very common theme in the DPP interviews was the “remove the blues” surveys (排藍民調). This refers to questions on the survey component of the primary that were designed to remove non-DPP voters from the sample. This was to avoid KMT interference in the DPP’s nomination and also to favor more extreme DPP politicians. Since the DPP dropped the “remove the blues” survey in the spring of 2008 and did not formally include surveys in the nomination process, we have not included this matter in the main text of this study.

The reason for this measure is the experience of defeat in the DPP's legislative primaries, the big conflict, and [the] disunity in the party. So it was agreed that we should not hold such bloody primaries. So in order to avoid primaries, we are seeking a more reasonable mechanism. The more reasonable method is to empower the Central Executive Committee to use appointment to nominate; this way we can avoid primaries.<sup>12</sup>

A variant of this first view was that primaries should be avoided for 2009, but that, in the long-term, the party would need to return to an institutionalized and perhaps democratic nomination system. For instance, then DPP Secretary General Chen Chi-mai (陳其邁) summed up the dilemma the party faced at the time over nomination:

Whether negotiation will create more problems or primaries will create more problems, it's hard to say. So we have to try [the negotiated approach]. So we are learning our lesson from painful experience. Finally, we will reach a result. But it's hard to say. Currently, I see how they are discussing the local executive candidate negotiations; the progress is very slow. Personally, I think it is hard to say whether this is a good method.<sup>13</sup>

A third perspective was that it was wrong to blame primaries for the party's 2008 setbacks, and, although the system might still require some fine tuning, primaries should be maintained for 2009. Tainan County Magistrate Su Huan-chih (蘇煥智) was one respondent who stressed the positive role that the primary system had played over the years. As Su explained, "The most important aspect of the [old] nomination system was how to handle the situations where negotiation had failed. In the past, we had the primary system and it had been in place for the past ten to twenty years. ...My view is that, if you remove the primaries, it will exacerbate the disputes."<sup>14</sup> In fact, Su was one of the few high-level voices that spoke out for the maintenance of primaries during the 2009 local executive nomination process.

In contrast, interviews revealed a high degree of satisfaction with the existing nomination methods within the KMT. There were only a handful of respondents who suggested minor changes, such as including cadre evaluation in the primary weighting. One of the most common views among KMT politicians was that primaries should be avoided as much as possible, with

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<sup>12</sup> Interview with first author, Taipei, August 18, 2008.

<sup>13</sup> Interview with first author, Taipei, August 15, 2008.

<sup>14</sup> Interview with first author, Tainan, August 12, 2008.

negotiation the ideal method of selecting candidates. This perspective is reflected in the comments of then KMT Secretary General Wu Den-yih (吳敦義):

In my view the best way is, if it is clear there is an outstanding person, everyone agrees he's very good, then there does not need to be a primary. After negotiation we can nominate him for the election. This is the best strategy. Regardless of the situation, once you start the primary process, it'll be costly, no matter whether there are two, four or five candidates. Once you start the primary, there will be mutual criticism; it's for competition.<sup>15</sup>

The view that primaries were the best means of actually resolving nomination conflicts and thus avoiding rebel candidates was less common. This positive take on primaries was more prevalent among politicians without local factional affiliation and based in Taipei. In response to a question asking whether primaries are divisive, one former KMT campaign manager commented,

I think it is the opposite. Look at who stood as rebels in 2004 [in Taipei]. In 2006, out of the eight candidates [in the KMT Kaohsiung mayoral primary], who dared rebel? No one. And who dared to not support the winning candidate? On the surface, it was not possible not to support the winner.<sup>16</sup>

### **Nomination in Practice: Executive Races in 2005 and 2009**

Observing elections over a long period of time suggests that there is frequently a disconnect between the formal nomination regulations and the actual operation of the process. For instance, even where primaries are the principle nomination method, frequently negotiation has been employed to prevent more than one candidate from registering or to persuade registered candidates to withdraw so that primaries can be avoided. As is often the case for political parties in Taiwan, DPP nomination for the 2009 races occurred in a series of stages or waves, with the earliest in November 2008 and the final district candidate nominated as late as October 2009, less than two months before the actual vote. Overall, the DPP's nomination was completed much earlier than in previous campaigns such as in 2005, with the majority of districts (nine of thirteen) nominated by the time the KMT began its first wave in April 2009. Another obvious trend

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<sup>15</sup> Interview with first author, Taipei, July 25, 2008.

<sup>16</sup> Interview with first author, London, November 18, 2009.

in DPP nomination was the degree to which the party center dominated the process in 2009. With the exception of the two cases in which incumbents were standing for reelection, in Yunlin and Pingtung counties, the party center was the key decision maker in candidate selection. In cases when there was a degree of competition for nomination, success depended on which side the party center favored. Compared to previous elections, such as in 2005, the local party and party supporters were far less influential in the nomination process in 2009. One way in which we can observe the party center's domination of the process is in the large number of "outsiders" who gained nomination in 2009 rather than local legislators or party cadres. For instance, party-center cadres were nominated in Keelung City and Taoyuan and Miaoli counties, and proportional-representation legislators were nominated in Chiayi City and Changhua County. In Penghu, Nantou, and Hsinchu counties, the party center appointed candidates who had no previous electoral experience in these districts and had developed their political careers elsewhere. For instance, the DPP candidate in Penghu, Tsai Chien-hsing (蔡見興), had served as a Kaohsiung City councilor between 1985 and 2006, including four terms as a KMT councilor. In contrast to local elections in 2005,<sup>17</sup> the level of centralized nomination of local executives was greater than at any point since the DPP had been a legal organization, with no formal role in the selection process for party members, party activists, or even party supporters.

In most districts, the level of competition for nomination was quite low compared to previous years. Part of the reason was due to the low morale within the DPP following its 2008 defeats and also because some of the contested districts in 2009 were viewed as hopeless for the DPP. In some of these districts, rather than arbitrating between competing candidates, the party center struggled to find anyone willing to stand for election. In Hualien, for example, for the first time since the 1980s, the DPP eventually chose not to nominate and instead supported a KMT rebel.<sup>18</sup> In both Miaoli and Taoyuan, the ESSG repeatedly hit a brick wall in its attempts to persuade anyone remotely electable to stand. In Taoyuan, the party nomination was especially troublesome, and when the party finally selected former legislator Cheng Pao-ching (鄭寶清) in September 2009, Cheng turned down the nomination. It was not until October 4, 2009, that Tsai handpicked DPP Propaganda Department chief, Cheng Wen-tsang (鄭文燦), whose only previous electoral experience had been as a Taoyuan County councilor in 1998.

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<sup>17</sup> In 2005, primaries were conducted in six of the seven constituencies where more than one candidate registered, namely Yilan County, Hsinchu City, Chiayi City, and Yunlin, Nantou, and Taichung counties.

<sup>18</sup> It chose to back the Hualien deputy local executive, Chang Chih-ming (張志明). Tsai Ing-wen even went to his campaign headquarters to offer support.

In Yilan, although the KMT's Lu Guo-hua (呂國華) was vying for reelection as county magistrate, the DPP previously had held the position and thus expected that there would be real competition for nomination. Indeed, Yilan became the district in which both parties invested the most resources, with both the DPP and KMT producing TV ads and making more party-chair visits for endorsement than any other district.<sup>19</sup> However, what was surprising was that none of the party's former legislators or local executives from the county openly sought nomination. Instead, nomination was contested among a township mayor, a county councilor, and an academic, none of whom was well-known outside the county. News reports regarding the contest revealed the exclusive and centralized nature of the nomination process. For instance, although the party center had pledged to make the results of opinion surveys one of the major criteria for selection, county councilor Hsieh Chih-deh (謝志得) withdrew his candidacy as a result of the alleged bias of the party center. According to Hsieh, certain factions in the party center spread rumors that it already had determined which candidate it would appoint.<sup>20</sup> When asked to comment on these accusations, the county branch explained that the power to nominate local executives was at the party center and that the party branch was not involved in candidate negotiations.<sup>21</sup> The party center undoubtedly had a favored candidate, and in November 2008, Lotung mayor, Lin Tsung-hsien (林聰賢), was nominated in the first wave of DPP nominations. Under the old DPP nomination system, such a competitive district would have held a primary in the spring before voting day. Thus, centralized nomination enabled the DPP to complete the nomination process far earlier than in the past.

In Changhua County, the contestants were better-known, including a serving national proportional representation legislator and former local executive, Wong Chin-chu (翁金珠), former legislator, Wei Ming-ku (魏明谷), and former legislator and Changhua County party branch chief, Charles Chiang (江昭儀). Chiang was the one candidate who publicly campaigned for nomination in the county itself. He was reported to have issued leaflets and mobilized party activists to support his nomination bid. For instance, he organized a vote among township branch chiefs on their preference for the DPP candidate, in which, not surprisingly, Chiang was most popular.<sup>22</sup> In mid-March, the majority of the branch chiefs issued a statement voicing their opposition to the party's nominating Wong.<sup>23</sup> In late March, he even held a

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<sup>19</sup> Peng Huai-en, Norman Peng, and Annie Hui-ling Chen, "The Coattail Effect and the Permanent Political Party Campaign—Empirical Research from Taiwan," paper presented at the Political Studies Association (UK) Conference, Edinburgh, March 2010, 13.

<sup>20</sup> *United Daily News*, October 16, 2008, C1 Yilan/Hualien.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> *United Daily News*, November 25, 2008, C1 Changhua/Nantou.

<sup>23</sup> *United Daily News*, March 11, 2009, C1 Changhua/Nantou.



public ceremony to mark the establishment of his election support group.<sup>24</sup> In contrast, Wong stated publicly that she was not actively seeking nomination and that the nomination power was at the party center.<sup>25</sup> Chiang's efforts were fruitless, as the party center made the nomination decision without significant local input. It was the potential candidates' relationship with the party center that mattered. Eventually, Chiang complained that there was no longer any point in continuing to seek nomination, as the New Tide faction controlled the party center and it was determined to nominate Wong.<sup>26</sup> Media reports of the final negotiations also seem to suggest that the party center was not taking the process especially seriously. One report claimed that the negotiation was rushed through in less than five minutes and that Chiang even claimed he had been tricked into coming, having been falsely told that Wong was going to withdraw from the race.<sup>27</sup> Although greater competition meant that the Changhua nomination was completed slightly later than in Yilan, coming in the third wave in April 2009, it was as exclusive and centralized as the previous case in the decision-making process.

Ironically, the most bitterly contested nomination was for a district that ultimately did not hold an election. In the summer of 2009, it was decided to postpone the election for Tainan County for one year, as Tainan County and City were to be merged. However, by this time, the DPP already had formally nominated a candidate. Perhaps because Tainan County is one of the DPP's strongest vote bases and the chances of electoral success were the greatest, the competition was especially intense.<sup>28</sup> On this occasion, the five contestants were the former local executive (1993-2001) Chen Tang-shan (陳唐山), legislators Yeh Yi-jin (葉宜津) and Lee Chun-ye (李俊毅), deputy local executive Yen Chun-tzuo (顏純左), and former legislator and the county branch chief Cheng Kuo-chung (鄭國忠). Media reports already had discussed five interested candidates in January 2008, almost two years prior to the election.<sup>29</sup> A small group was established by the ESSG to handle candidate recommendations. This group held discussions with the main candidates in September.<sup>30</sup> Throughout the process, deputy local executive Yen was the most critical of the party center's handling of the nomination, repeatedly calling for a return to the primary system.<sup>31</sup> He argued that the system needed to consider

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<sup>24</sup> *United Daily News*, March 26, 2009, C2 Changhua/Nantou.

<sup>25</sup> *United Daily News*, March 11, 2009, C1 Changhua/Nantou.

<sup>26</sup> *United Daily News*, April 22, 2009, A8.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> In 2004 and 2008, the DPP received its highest presidential vote share in Tainan County, and in 2008, the county was one of the only two cities or counties in which all of its legislative candidates were elected. The other was Tainan City.

<sup>29</sup> *United Daily News*, January 18, 2008, C2 Tainan County.

<sup>30</sup> *United Daily News*, September 8, 2008, C1 Tainan County.

<sup>31</sup> *United Daily News*, July 8, 2008, C2 Tainan County.

party members' opinions or risk losing their support, and also noted the lack of transparency regarding opinion surveys. For instance, Yen observed that it was not clear when the surveys would take place, who would conduct them, what would be asked, and even whether the survey results would determine the nomination or be just a reference source.<sup>32</sup> Cheng and Lee were also critical of the process, Lee arguing that letting the ESSG decide meant that people would suspect that the process had been determined secretly by factions.<sup>33</sup>

The first stage of the nomination process was relatively straightforward, as opinion polls in December showed that Chen, Lee, and Yeh all beat their potential KMT opponents by wide margins. In contrast, Cheng and Yen outpolled one potential KMT candidate but lost to the other in the polls.<sup>34</sup> Next, negotiations were attempted to produce a single candidate, but none of the three leaders was prepared to drop out. Although Su Huan-chih and other party members called for a primary to resolve the difficulties, Tsai Ing-wen rejected this, fearing it would further exacerbate party splits.<sup>35</sup> The problem for the party center was that the leader in the polls was Chen. There were a number of reasons why Chen did not suit the party center. First, at seventy-four years of age, he did not fulfill the new and youthful image that the party was attempting to project. In addition, Chen was closely associated with former president Chen Shui-bian (陳水扁), having served as secretary general of the presidential office and as foreign minister. Moreover, it was believed that he was Chen Shui-bian's preferred candidate. Thus, Chen's nomination would cast doubt on whether the DPP had come out from under the shadow of the Chen Shui-bian political corruption scandals. Lastly, there was considerable opposition to Chen from the existing local executive, as the two had been rivals since the 1990s.

Months of negotiations were fruitless in early 2009, as all three leading candidates refused to withdraw. Yeh and Lee called for a generational replacement,<sup>36</sup> while Chen called on the party to nominate the most popular candidate in the polls.<sup>37</sup> However, by the end of March, it was clear that the party center was considering only Yeh and Lee.<sup>38</sup> Eventually, the party center announced Lee as its official candidate in April as part of the third wave of nominations.<sup>39</sup> While Yeh accepted the party's decision, Chen insisted that he would stand, regardless of the party's decision, and used the unfairness of

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<sup>32</sup> *United Daily News*, October 6, 2008, C1 Tainan County.

<sup>33</sup> *United Daily News*, October 6, 2008, 2009, C1 Tainan County.

<sup>34</sup> *United Daily News*, December 3, 2008, C2 Tainan County.

<sup>35</sup> *United Daily News*, December 25, 2008, C2 Tainan County.

<sup>36</sup> *United Daily News*, January 7, 2009, C2 Tainan.

<sup>37</sup> *United Daily News*, February 2, 2009, C2 Tainan.

<sup>38</sup> *United Daily News*, April 1, 2009, A2.

<sup>39</sup> *United Daily News*, April 2, 2009, A1.

the nomination process as clear justification.<sup>40</sup> Thus, the DPP was faced with the prospect of a challenge by a rebel candidate more popular than its official candidate, with rich election experience, and showing no signs of backing down. Chen even claimed that if he did not stand it would show he had “no balls.”<sup>41</sup> Fortunately for the DPP, it was saved by the decision to postpone the election, owing to the creation of the Tainan special municipality.

In 2005, the KMT and DPP nomination waves occurred almost simultaneously. In contrast, the KMT’s nominations tended to be much later than the DPP’s in 2009. The first wave of KMT nominations took place in April 2009, with half the candidates determined. As the KMT was the ruling party in fourteen of seventeen contested districts, competition for nomination tended to be more intense than it had been for the DPP. Thus, for instance, the KMT did not have to desperately search for candidates to stand for seemingly hopeless seats in the same way as Tsai did. The KMT had a formal primary registration process, with interested candidates registering for primaries before certain deadlines. At this stage, the KMT’s districts could be divided into two categories. In 2005 and 2009, roughly half the districts (nine districts in 2005 and eight in 2009) had only one candidate registering, while in the other half (ten districts in 2005 and nine in 2009) two or more candidates registered.

In the majority of the districts in which only one candidate registered in 2005 and 2009, the registered candidate was the incumbent local executive, thus nomination was generally quite straightforward and uncontroversial. In these districts, although there was not a member primary or formal opinion polls to support the candidate’s selection, there was local party support for these candidates. Thus, the center did not need to intervene, as the nomination decision in essence already had been determined at the local level. We also cannot call these nominations undemocratic, as potential candidates had the opportunity to register for primaries, but chose not to or were persuaded not to. Among the districts with a single registered candidate, there were two exceptions in which KMT politicians chose not to register but still challenged the officially nominated candidate. The two cases were in Hsinchu County and Nantou County.

In Hsinchu, incumbent Cheng Yung-chin (鄭永金) was about to complete his second term, however, the one registered candidate was legislator Chiu Ching-chun (邱鏡淳). The two had been long-term rivals within the county. Back in 1997, Chiu’s rebel candidacy had prevented Cheng’s winning the executive election, allowing the DPP to win with only 36 percent of the vote. In 2001, the two had fought in the KMT primary, with Cheng coming out on top. Cheng thus sought an alternative to Chiu. Two candidates he originally considered backing were the deputy local executive and even his own wife.

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

<sup>41</sup> *United Daily News*, March 18, 2009, A4.

Eventually, Cheng chose to risk party-center discipline and supported the KMT county council speaker, Chang Pi-ching (張碧琴). Chang, however, did not register for the primary, claiming that the system was unfair to new faces and questioned Chiu's credibility for wanting to stand for local executive only a year after having been elected as a legislator in January 2008.<sup>42</sup> The KMT deputy local executive also questioned Chiu's loyalty for having left the KMT three times.<sup>43</sup> The KMT party center had to choose between the county government and county councilors who were supporting the rebel Chang and the officially registered candidate. Moreover, Chiu led the polls for most of the campaign, although his lead over Chang was narrow. After negotiations failed, Chiu was officially nominated in the second wave, in May 2009. Subsequently, the party strove to persuade Chang to quit and for Cheng to cease supporting her; however, both efforts were in vain.

In Nantou, the only registered candidate was incumbent local executive Lee Chao-ching (李朝卿). However, he was challenged openly by two experienced KMT politicians who did not join the primary. The first was director of the Executive Yuan's central region office, Chen Chih-pin (陳志彬), who had lengthy political experience as a legislator, county councilor, provincial assemblyman, and member of the provincial government. Chen Chih-pin had refused to join the primary, complaining of the unfair nature of the polls in the primaries. In fact, he had lost to Lee in the KMT primary in 2005.<sup>44</sup> The second challenger was the director of the county government culture department, Chen Chen-sheng (陳振盛), who previously had stood unsuccessfully for the local executive position for the New Party in 1997 and for the People First Party in 2001. Considering the huge opinion poll lead that Lee had, it is not entirely surprising that the KMT chose to stick with the system and not to conduct negotiations. Both rebels faced pressure from the local party and center to withdraw, and before the candidate registration deadline Chen Chih-pin was persuaded not to stand, but Chen Chen-sheng still ran for office after being expelled from the party.

Of the nine districts with more than one registered candidate, in 2009, the KMT began the primary preparation process in eight of them. The exception was the tiny off-shore island district of Lianchiang County (Mazu), where the party allowed open nomination. In other words, both registered candidates were endorsed by the party. Open nomination is a luxury permitted by the KMT in districts such as Lianchiang, where the DPP has no chance of winning

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<sup>42</sup> *United Daily News*, April 4, 2009, C1 Hsinchu and Miaoli.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.* Fell was able to find evidence of Chiu's having left the party only once, in 1997, as a result of his rebel candidate status; a year later, he once again was nominated by the KMT as a legislative candidate.

<sup>44</sup> *United Daily News*, December 15, 2008, C1 Changhua/Nantou.

and usually does not even nominate candidates.<sup>45</sup> Four years earlier, the KMT ran primaries in eight of ten such districts in which more than one candidate registered. In 2009, two districts, Pingtung and Yunlin, featured two registered candidates, but eventually the primaries were aborted as negotiation was used to persuade one candidate to withdraw. In Yunlin, the official process had formally begun and the first public debates among the primary candidates had been held between former legislators Hsu Shu-bo (許舒博) and Chang Li-shan (張麗善).<sup>46</sup> However, the party center gave in to local factional pressure to convince Hsu to quit the race. Based on Hsu's past record, it is highly likely that he would have won the primary, as he had easily won nomination in previous KMT primaries in 2004 and 2005. Chang is the sister of the former Yunlin County magistrate, Chang Jung-wei (張榮味), who led one of the main local factions and had a reputation for political corruption. This concession to local factions was not particularly successful, as in September Chang herself withdrew from the race, forcing the KMT to hastily find a candidate at the last minute. This time the party center completely dominated the process and, although polls were used to assess the electability of five potential candidates, the results were not released publicly. Finally, the party center appointed an academic, Wu Wei-chih (吳威志), to represent the party in what by this time was a hopeless contest.

The KMT also gave in to local factional pressures in the case of Pingtung, when it abandoned the primary in both 2005 and 2009. In the latter case, the two registered candidates were national proportional-representation legislator Liao Wan-ju (廖婉汝) and Pingtung County council speaker Chou Dian-lun (周典論). As in Yunlin, it was local factional pressure that ensured the primaries were cancelled. Liao was so confident that she would win in a primary that she even offered to withdraw if she did not exceed Chou in the polls by 10 percent.<sup>47</sup> Nevertheless, the local party passed a resolution halting the primary and asking the party center to appoint a candidate through negotiation, which meant that the party center persuaded Liao to give way to Chou.<sup>48</sup> Thus, as was the case in Yunlin, democracy and the nomination system were cast aside in compromises with local factions.

The KMT held eight primaries in 2005, and six in 2009 in Taoyuan, Kinmen, Taitung, Hsinchu City, Changhua, and Hualien. With the exception of Miaoli in 2005 and Hualien in 2009, these primaries were highly successful in avoiding serious party splits, in part because the nomination process followed party regulations. The relatively smooth operation of KMT primaries in these

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<sup>45</sup> In fact, Lianchiang is the one district in which the DPP has never nominated a single candidate.

<sup>46</sup> *United Daily News*, June 6, 2009, B2 Chiayi/Yunnan.

<sup>47</sup> *United Daily News*, May 13, 2009, B2 Pingtung/Taidong.

<sup>48</sup> *United Daily News*, July 23, 2009, B2 Pingtung/Taidong.

cases was remarkable in a number of ways. In both Taitung and Changhua, incumbent local executives were challenged in the 2009 primaries by strong incumbent legislators. In the case of Taitung, the challenger defeated the incumbent executive and the county council speaker. But in both cases, the losers accepted the results and did not stand as rebels. Competition was especially strong in Kinmen and Hsinchu City, where primaries were contested by four and six candidates, respectively. In all these primaries except for the one in Hualien, the formal 30:70 system was employed, so that party members could participate, while the general public's preferences also were considered.

The one district in which the primary was not a clear success in 2009 was Hualien, undoubtedly because the party center's interference was a key factor. From as early as mid-2008, five local Hualien-based politicians were campaigning openly for the KMT's nomination. It had been planned to make Hualien part of the third round of nominations in June 2009, and all five interested candidates registered for the primary in May.<sup>49</sup> However, on May 22, it suddenly was announced that the party center had ordered the primary process stopped.<sup>50</sup> It was reported that this was the decision of KMT chair Ma Ying-jeou, aimed at avoiding the election of a candidate charged in a pending corruption case, and that, instead, centrally appointed nomination would be employed, on a model similar to that used in Pingtung.<sup>51</sup> The move was seen as targeted at legislator Fu Kun-chi (傅昆萁), who, although leading in the polls, was the defendant in a corruption case in which he already had been found guilty during the first trial.<sup>52</sup>

Originally, it appeared that Ma wanted to directly appoint Minister of Health Yeh Chin-chuan (葉金川) to be the KMT candidate, but there was considerable resistance at the local level to this top-down approach. Eventually, a compromise was reached in which sides agreed that only surveys would be used to select the candidate in the primary.<sup>53</sup> This time, however, only Yeh, Hualien mayor Tsai Chi-ta (蔡啟塔), and County Agricultural Development Office director Tu Li-hua (杜麗華) registered. Fu was barred from joining and others among the original participants opted not to participate, as it was quite obvious that the party center was trying to manipulate the process to nominate Yeh, its preferred candidate. Nevertheless, the party center's maneuvers backfired as there was a clear backlash against the imposed candidate. Tu won with almost 55 percent of the survey support, thus obtaining the KMT's official nomination. However, the defeat of Ma's candidate was not the worst of it for

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<sup>49</sup> *United Daily News*, May 18, 2009, B1 Yilan/Hualien.

<sup>50</sup> *United Daily News*, May 23, 2009, A1

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>53</sup> *United Daily News*, August 2, 2009, A2.

the KMT, as two of its politicians were able to use the unfairness of the party's primaries as justification to stand as rebels against the official candidate, Tu.

In short, in the majority of districts in both campaigns, the KMT followed its nomination rules. Where one candidate registered, he or she was nominated, and when multiple candidates registered, primaries were held. When primaries were held, party members and supporters had a chance to participate in a relatively inclusive and localized nomination process. Only in Hualien and Pingtung (2005) and Yunlin and Pingtung (2009) did the party center completely compromise the primary system to please local factions. Overall, the decisive location of nomination decision making tended to be at the local level rather than in the party center. The case of Hualien in 2009 showed how the party center's attempts to impose its preference for nomination at the local level could backfire.

## **Analysis and Discussion**

In the preceding section, we have provided contextual information on the development of party nomination procedures and examined cases from the 2005 and 2009 elections in detail. In this section, we present a broader empirical analysis, focusing on the levels of inclusivity, decentralization, and timing of nominations. Our aim in this analysis is to disentangle the main dynamics in Taiwanese electoral politics affecting the methods of party nominations in each of the nation's districts. To better understand these dynamics, our analysis proceeded in three stages. First, to facilitate our analysis, we created a dataset with information on every local executive race in 2005 and 2009. Following Rahat and Hazan's research on the inclusiveness of the selectorate,<sup>54</sup> we classified the nomination procedure for every KMT- and DPP-nominated candidate in each district in the two electoral campaigns. Drawing on Lundell's method for measuring centralization in candidate selection,<sup>55</sup> we classified the nomination for each contest. We further recorded information on the timing of the nomination of candidates, the main source of influence on these nominations, and the degree of party unity around these nominations. These descriptive data are shown in tables 1a (2005) and 1b (2009) below.

Next we assessed the associations between each of our model predictors and the resulting nomination method. In order to capture each variable's gross influence on this output, we opted for a cross-tabulation of each of these variables with the resulting nomination method. These results, presented in table 2, show that each of the predictors conditioned nomination methods and

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<sup>54</sup> The term selectorate now is commonly used in the candidate selection literature to refer to the electorate that makes the nomination decision.

<sup>55</sup> Krister Lundell, "Determinants of Candidate Selection: The Degree of Centralization in Comparative Perspective," *Party Politics* 10 (2004): 25-47.

Table 1a. Information on Candidate Nominations in Both Parties, 2005

Party	Democratic Progressive Party						Kuomintang					
	Name	Method	Wave	Influence	Unity		Name	Method	Wave	Influence	Unity	
Changhua County	Wong Chin-chu	Register	1	Local	High		Cho Po-yuan	Primary	2	Local	High	
Chiayi City	Chen Li-chen	Primary	2	Local	High		Huang Min-hui	Register	1	Local	High	
Chiayi County	Chen Ming-wen	Register	1	Local	High		Chen Ming-chen	Appointed	3	Central	High	
Hsinchu City	Cheng Kwai-yuan	Primary	2	Local	High		Lin Cheng-tse	Register	2	Local	High	
Hsinchu County	Lin Kuang-hua	Appointed	3	Central	High		Cheng Yung-chin	Register	1	Local	High	
Hualien	Lu Po-chi	Appointed	4	Central	High		Hsieh Shen-shan	Negotiation	1	Central	High	
Kaohsiung County	Yang Chiu-hsing	Register	1	Local	High		Lin Yih-shih	Register	1	Local	High	
Keelung City	Wang Tuoh	Appointed	3	Central	High		Hsu Tsai-li	Register	1	Local	High	
Miaoli	Chiu Bing-kun	Appointed	3	Central	High		Liu Cheng-hung	Primary	2	Local	Med	
Nantou	Tsai Huang-liang	Primary	2	Local	Low		Lee Chao-ching	Primary	1	Local	Med	
Penghu	Chen Kuang-fu	Register	1	Local	High		Wang Chien-fa	Register	1	Local	High	
Pingtung County	Tsao Chi-hung	Negotiation	2	Central	High		Wang Jin-shih	Negotiation	1	Central	High	
Taichung City	Lin Chia-lung	Register	1	Local	High		Jason Hu	Register	1	Local	High	
Taichung County	Chiu Tai-san	Primary	2	Local	High		Huang Chung-sheng	Register	1	Local	High	
Tainan City	Hsu Tian-tsai	Register	1	Local	High		Chen Jung-sheng	Primary	2	Local	High	
Tainan County	Su Huan-chieh	Register	1	Local	Med.		Kuo Tien-tsai	Primary	2	Central	High	
Taipei County	Luo Wen-chia	Register	1	Local	High		Chou Hsi-wei	Primary	2	Local	High	
Taoyuan County	Cheng Pao-ching	Register	1	Local	High		Chu Li-lun	Register	1	Local	High	
Yilan	Chen Ting-nan	Primary	2	Local	High		Lu Guo-hua	Primary	2	Local	High	
Yunlin	Su Chih-fen	Primary	2	Local	High		Hsu Shu-bo	Primary	2	Local	High	



Table 1b. Information on Candidates Nominations in Both Parties, 2009

Party	Democratic Progressive Party						Kuomintang					
	Name	Method	Wave	Influence	Unity	Name	Method	Wave	Influence	Unity		
Changhua County	Wong Chin-chu	Appointed	3	Central	High	Cho Po-yuan	Primary	1	Local	High		
Chiayi City	Twu Shiang-jeh	Appointed	2	Central	High	Huang Min-hui	Register	1	Local	Low		
Chiayi County	Helen Chang	Appointed	4	Mixed	High	Wong Chung-chun	Register	1	Local	High		
Hsinchu City	Liu Chun-hsiu	Appointed	3	Central	High	Hsu Ming-tsai	Primary	1	Local	High		
Hsinchu County	Peng Shao-chin	Appointed	1	Central	Med.	Chiu Chung-chun	Register	2	Mixed	Low		
Hualien	NC					Tu Li-hua	Primary	5	Mixed	Low		
Keelung City	Lin You-chang	Appointed	1	Central	High	Chang Tong-rong	Register	1	Local	High		
Kinmen	NC					Li Wo-shi	Primary	3	Local	Low		
Mazu	NC					Liu Ceng-ying & Yang Sui-sheng	Open	3	Local	High		
Miaoli	Yang Chang-chen	Appointed	3	Central	High	Liu Cheng-hung	Register	1	Local	High		
Nantou	Lee Wen-chung	Appointed	4	Central	Med.	Lee Chao-ching	Register	1	Local	Low		
Penghu	Tsai Chien-hsing	Appointed	2	Central	High	Wang Chien-fa	Register	3	Local	High		
Pingtung County	Tsao Chi-hung	Appointed	1	Local	High	Chou Dian-lun	Negotiation	4	Mixed	High		
Taitung	Liu Chao-hao	Appointed	2	Central	High	Justin Huang	Primary	2	Local	High		
Taoyuan County	Cheng Wen-tsang	Appointed	1	Central	High	John Wu	Primary	4	Local	Low		
Yilan	Lin Tsung-hsien	Appointed	1	Central	High	Lu Guo-hua	Register	1	Mixed	High		
Yunlin	Su Chih-fen	Appointed	1	Local	High	Wu Wei-chih	Negotiation	3	Mixed	High		

Note: The DPP did not have candidates for office in the Hualien, Kinmen, and Mazu districts in 2009.

that the differences in the distribution of nomination methods across these predictors were statistically significant. Looking at the results, we note several interesting findings. First, statistically significant differences between the two election years included in our sample suggest that both parties revised their philosophies toward nomination between the two electoral cycles. In 2005, the most frequent types of nomination were one-register and primary, cumulatively accounting for little under 70 percent of all cases. By contrast, in 2009, over 41 percent of the candidates were appointed. Switching to party identity, we find confirmation of what we intimated earlier, namely, that the parties' nomination methods were significantly different from one another. Across both elections, DPP candidates were eighteen times more likely to be appointed, compared to KMT candidates. Only one in every seven DPP candidates was nominated by means of primaries, compared to twice that ratio in the KMT. The main group of KMT candidates, four of every ten, were nominated by means of one candidate registering. Significant differences also were observed in the level of party unity. In the vast majority (70 percent) of nomination contests characterized by a high level of unity and no rebels, candidates were nominated by appointment or selected where only one candidate registered. In

Table 2. Bivariate Associations between Model Predictors and Nomination Method (percentages)

Variable	Values	Appointed	One register	Primary	Other	Total	Chi-square
Year	2005	10.9	39.1	30.4	19.6	100	10.3*
	2009	41.2	23.5	17.6	17.6	100	
	Total	23.8	32.5	25.0	18.8	100	
Party	DPP	45.0	22.5	15.0	17.5	100	20.9**
	KMT	2.5	42.5	35.0	20.0	100	
	Total	23.8	32.5	25.0	18.8	100	
Unity	Other	12.9	19.4	25.8	41.9	100	19.7**
	Unity	30.6	40.8	24.5	4.1	100	
	Total	23.8	32.5	25.0	18.8	100	
Wave	First	17.6	67.6	8.8	5.9	100	63.2**
	Second	15.0	10.0	70.0	5.0	100	
	Third	38.5	3.8	11.5	46.2	100	
	Total	23.8	32.5	25.0	18.8	100	
Influence	Local	4.4	53.3	40.0	2.2	100	54.6**
	Both	16.7	33.3	16.7	33.3	100	
	Central	69.6	-	4.3	26.1	100	
	Total	25.7	35.1	27.0	12.2	100	

\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.001$ .

the much smaller number of cases characterized by low unity, one-third of the nominations were based on appointment or only one candidate registering, and approaching half were conducted in other ways, such as through negotiation following cancelled primaries. The timing of a nomination also shows significant effects on the nomination method. Some two-thirds of first-wave nominations were conducted by means of one candidate registering, while 70 percent of second-wave nominations were achieved through primaries. In a little under 70 percent of the cases where the central party exerted great influence, candidates were nominated by appointment. Conversely, where the main influence was at the local level, around 90 percent of the nominations were achieved by means of only one candidate registering or through primaries.

These descriptive findings suggest that each of the predictors in our study was associated significantly with the ultimate nomination method. Next, we wanted to establish these associations for each of the predictors, considering all other predictors simultaneously. To achieve this, we conducted a multinomial regression analysis in which we estimated the nomination method based on the joint effects of all our explanatory factors. Table 3 shows that, holding all other variables constant, DPP candidates were significantly more likely to be nominated by appointment than KMT candidates, and that nominations by appointment were more likely to occur under conditions of party unity. The results also stress the importance of timing: the earlier in the process (wave) candidates were chosen, the more likely they were nominated by means of a primary. After controlling for the effects of all variables simultaneously, the only significant difference between the KMT and the DPP was the appointment

Table 3. Multinomial Logit Model Predicting Nomination Method  
(model coefficients and standard errors)

	Appointed		One Register		Primary	
	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
Intercept	-8.55*	4.02	5.33**	1.73	2.45	1.58
Round	-0.30	0.85	-3.48***	0.87	-1.22*	0.62
Party: DPP <sup>b</sup>	5.05**	1.84	-0.51	1.07	-0.67	0.90
Year: 2009 <sup>c</sup>	5.10**	1.62	0.85	1.21	0.59	0.99
Unity: Yes <sup>d</sup>	5.80**	1.78	3.12**	1.18	2.24*	1.00
Chi-sq goodness of fit	214.5***					
Nagelkerke R-sq	0.77					

\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ .

Reference categories:

- a. Other method of nomination
- b. KMT
- c. 2005
- d. No unity

nomination method, with the latter party significantly more likely to nominate by this method than the former. Employing these predictors, our multinomial model correctly predicted 70 percent of the sample cases in total.

One of the main findings in the literature of the consequences of types of candidate selection systems is that more inclusive nomination procedures tend to produce legislators who act independently.<sup>56</sup> The reasoning is that when politicians owe their selection predominantly to party members or even to party supporters, they are less likely to follow the party line. Examining the number of politicians who stand for election without party endorsement or as rebel candidates is one way to assess whether centralized nomination appears to enhance party discipline. Certainly, the DPP fared well with its appointment method in 2009, with only two very minor rebels, compared to eight for the KMT. Using essentially the same inclusive and localized nomination system in 2009, the KMT had far more rebel candidates than in either 2001 or 2005.<sup>57</sup> Of the KMT cases in which primaries were used, losing primary candidates stood as rebels in only one case in 2005 (Miaoli) and one case in 2009 (Kinmen). All other rebel candidates were politicians who chose not to register for the primary. Strong competition in nomination primaries seems to have prevented KMT rebels from emerging in Taitung (2009), Hsinchu City (2009), Taoyuan (2009), Changhua (2005 and 2009), Taipei County (2005), and Nantou (2005). The picture is similar for the DPP in 2005, when there was more intense competition for party endorsement, but only one primary loser stood as a rebel (Nantou). Despite the change in the DPP toward centralized and exclusive nomination, there was no significant increase in rebel candidates compared to previous elections.<sup>58</sup>

Interviews with political figures in Taiwan reveal two different perceptions about party primaries. One view is that competitive primaries produce disunity, which can impair the party's electoral results;<sup>59</sup> the counterargument is that primaries are the best way to resolve intra-party nomination disputes and provide greater legitimacy to the officially nominated candidates. In practice, the KMT generally used inclusive selection methods when there was internal competition for nomination. In 2005, of the eight districts in which the KMT ran primaries, it maintained party unity in almost all cases (and nominated candidates fared well in the elections). There is one counter-example in Miaoli, where the primary loser, Chiu Bing-kun (邱炳坤), switched sides and stood for

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<sup>56</sup> Gideon Rahat and Reuven Hazan, "Candidate Selection Methods: An Analytical Framework," *Party Politics* 7 (2001): 297-322, 314.

<sup>57</sup> There had been only one KMT rebel in 2005 and four in 2001.

<sup>58</sup> The DPP had one rebel in 2005 and four in 2001.

<sup>59</sup> Wu and Fell show that this view was widespread from Taiwan's first experience with member primaries in 1989. See Wu and Fell, "Taiwan's Party Primaries in Comparative Perspective."

the DPP. Nonetheless, even in this case, the primary gave the official KMT candidate greater legitimacy, which he was able to leverage into a comfortable victory in Miaoli for the first time in eight years. In all five districts in which the KMT ran regular primaries in 2009, there was a high level of intra-party unity behind its candidates. But when formal primaries were cancelled (Yunlin, Pingtung, and Hualien), there were open local party divisions, although it is not clear in which way the causality runs here. KMT primaries in Hsinchu City, Taitung, Taoyuan, and Changhua all served to resolve serious nomination disputes and to avoid potentially damaging rebels. Although a rebel emerged after the Kinmen primary, the primary winner gained greater legitimacy in the general election. Similarly, the KMT's resolution to stick with the registered candidates against rebels who had refused to join primaries, served to discredit the rebels at the general election in both Nantou and Hsinchu counties. If the KMT party center had risked factional displeasure and gone ahead with primaries in Yunlin and Pingtung according to the original timetable, it is unlikely that the party divisions or rebels would have caused their official candidates to perform as badly as they eventually did. This was particularly the case in Yunlin, where the DPP candidate achieved the highest vote share of any local executive in 2009: Su Chih-fen (蘇治芬) won 65.4 percent of the vote.

There is a mixed picture when it comes to the effect of nomination on the DPP campaigns. The Yilan and Yunlin primaries in 2005 helped to resolve nomination disputes and preserve party unity. However, in both the Chiayi City and Nantou primaries, incumbent DPP local executives were challenged, which led to party divisions and perhaps contributed to the party's poor election results. In 2009, when the DPP's nomination process was dominated by a small central party selectorate (ESSG), the DPP experienced quite severe intra-party splits for at least part of the campaigns in Chiayi County, Yilan, Nantou, Changhua, and Tainan County. The DPP's first experiment with highly centralized nomination was based partly on the idea that this method could avoid local divisions, but this proved not to be the case, particularly in Tainan County and Changhua. In Changhua, it is likely that the manner of centralized nomination led to grass-roots divisions, resulting in a lack of support for the official candidate and giving the KMT incumbent a relatively easy ride. For the KMT, the picture was quite different, as the vast majority of nomination cases were determined at the local level. However, where the party center tried to interfere in the nomination process in 2009, internal splits were exacerbated. This was particularly evident in Yilan, Pingtung, Yunlin, Hsinchu County, and Hualien. In Hualien, the party center's attempt to impose its own preferred candidate seriously backfired in one of its safest seats. All three candidates in the election had registered for the original KMT primary that was cancelled by the party center. The party center's attempt to dictate candidate selection severely damaged the legitimacy of the official candidate, who ultimately received a mere 25 percent of the vote, less than either of the KMT rebels.

One trend observed in many contemporary democracies is longer election campaigns, even permanent campaigns that begin as soon as the previous one ends.<sup>60</sup> A lesson from the 2008 presidential election was that the KMT's early nomination gave Ma an advantage over his DPP rival.<sup>61</sup> While in 2005 the two parties made most of their nominations during the first wave in April through June, there were substantial differences in the two parties' nomination timing in 2009, with the DPP generally nominating much earlier than the KMT. The main effect of the DPP's centralized nomination method was that it facilitated earlier decision making compared to previous years, in the hope that it would give candidates sufficient time to build campaign momentum. DPP candidates in Keelung, Chiayi City, Yilan, and Penghu did surprisingly well against KMT incumbents, and their lengthy campaign preparations played a part in this performance. The DPP candidates performed especially well, and there were higher levels of party unity in the districts in which nominations were made during the first two waves in November 2008 and January 2009. In contrast, its candidates struggled to build momentum when nominated late in the campaign, such as in Miaoli, Changhua, and Taoyuan. The DPP previously had held the Nantou local executive position, but, in 2009, it struggled to find a candidate due to factional divisions. After much persuasion, it originally nominated former legislator Tang Huo-sheng (湯火聖) in March, but he soon quit the race as a result of a lack of support within the county. The DPP even approached a KMT rebel and a former DPP local executive, Lin Tsung-nan (林宗男), who had left the party after standing as a rebel in 2005. Eventually it chose to appoint former Taipei County legislator, Lee Wen-chung (李文忠), in July. This meant that the nomination was completed too late, and, therefore, Lee did not have sufficient time to mount an effective campaign. The problem of late nomination was also apparent in Taoyuan, where the DPP did not nominate Cheng until October. The fact that Cheng came so close to winning in Taoyuan after campaigning for only a few weeks suggests that, if the DPP had resolved nomination earlier, it would have had a reasonable chance of success. The main parties suffered similar problems in their late nominations in 2005, with poor results for the DPP in Keelung, Hualien, Hsinchu County, and Miaoli, and for the KMT in Chiayi County. However, in some cases, late nomination is a function of a relatively weak field and the absence of an obviously strong candidate, offering an alternative explanation for poor-performing late nominees.

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<sup>60</sup> Pippa Norris, "Campaign Communications," in *Comparing Democracies 2*, ed. Lawrence LeDuc et al. (London: Sage, 2002), 127-147, 135.

<sup>61</sup> Ma's victory in the 2005 KMT party-chair election essentially resolved the party's presidential nomination two and a half years before the election.

## Conclusions and Prospects for Future Nominations

This study has examined how Taiwan's parties conducted candidate selection in the 2005 and 2009 local executive elections and the consequences of these processes. It has adopted standard methods for measuring candidate selection procedures and applied them to Taiwan's political parties. It has shown that, although in 2005 both major parties employed very similar inclusive nomination methods, they diverged four years later, with the DPP using a highly centralized candidate selection mechanism. It would appear, however, that parties have again converged in their methods since 2009. For instance, the KMT chose not to use formal primaries to nominate its legislative by-election candidates in early 2010, while the DPP maintained its top-down nomination of by-election candidates. Since late 2010, the two parties also have converged in using survey-based primaries that offer no scope for the participation of party members. However, our assessment of the nomination process suggests that both parties may have misinterpreted their experiences in 2009. Although the DPP's nomination went relatively smoothly, this had more to do with the lack of competition for nomination than with the abandonment of primaries. Indeed, had the Tainan County election gone ahead and the party suffered an embarrassing defeat, the reverse conclusion might have been reached. The KMT's electoral setbacks in 2009 were not the result of holding primaries; indeed, where the party allowed the formal nomination process to take place, its candidates gained legitimacy and performed well.

The Taiwan case examined in this essay contradicts the observation in other contexts that inclusive nomination methods impair party discipline. In general, primaries appear to promote local party unity and help to avoid rebel candidates. A further difference is that an inclusive selectorate did seem to reduce the representativeness of chosen candidates and actually increased the level of competition facing incumbents in many cases in Taiwan. A finding that has not been addressed in existing literature is that nomination timing appears to have an effect on electoral outcomes in our sample cases. This preliminary assessment of the impact of candidate selection systems in Taiwan demonstrates that this under-researched area is a fruitful one in terms of substance and theory, which will increase in significance with further research over a longer time period and for different types of elections.

