

Public Abstract

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Title:The Origins and Changes of East Asian Party Systems and Voter Alignments: Social Conditions, Issue Effects, and Party Coalitions

My dissertation explains the formulation of party systems and voting behaviors in East Asia. The previous literature maintained that East Asian party politics was caused by the homogeneous culture and the philosophy. However, I argue that strong issue effects of national security and economic development established East Asian party systems. Both grand issues suppressed social cleavages and other issues in party competition during the post - World War II era. However, social cleavages recently emerged as the effects declined due to the end of the Cold War and economic growth. To examine my arguments, I use content analysis for electoral campaign issues and quantitative methods for electoral surveys of three countries from 1945 to 2014: Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan. My research indicates that East Asian party bases have not been single but multiple groups. Governmental parties effectively made majority coalitions based on their issue advantages. In addition, it extends Lipset and Rokkan (1967)'s social cleavage theory by adding the importance of issues, external threats and national industrialization to their list of "revolutions."