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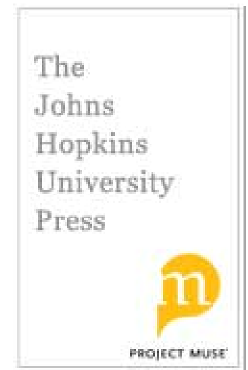

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Electoral Systems Today

THE POLITICS OF REFORM IN JAPAN AND TAIWAN

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Among the significant parallels in the political development of Japan and Taiwan is their longtime use of the unusual single nontransferable vote (SNTV) system for electing representatives to the legislature. Moreover, in the past dozen years both countries have undergone significant electoral reform, resulting in a switch to more majoritarian mixed systems. In each case reform had been long in the making before finally being implemented—in Japan in 1994 and in Taiwan in 2005. This should lead us to ask: What lies behind these fairly recent changes?

Japan and Taiwan were once the paragons of late-developer countries. Japan, leveled by World War II, maintained one of the world's highest economic-growth rates from the 1960s until the 1990 stock-market crash put a brake on its progress. Taiwan, also torn by war, kept up remarkable economic growth despite its diplomatic isolation. Many developmental theorists attribute these countries' phenomenal performance to the guidance of developmentalism; yet Japan and Taiwan differ from the stereotypical developmental state in that they have long held competitive elections, a critical condition of democracy.[1]

Elections have been an indispensable component of Japan's modern state-building, and in Taiwan, partial electoral competition existed even during the heyday of authoritarian rule. How did developmentalism coexist with electoral competition in these two countries? In other words, what kept economic planners from being disturbed by office-seeking politicians? The answer might be useful to countries struggling to pursue both economic development and political reform.

An important clue lies in how the elections were conducted. To

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achieve their economic goals, the helmsmen of a developmental state often seek to shape the role of the elected politicians so that this group serves to approve plans rather than debate policy. To this end, elections focus less on policy issues than on personal interests, and a stable ruling coalition keeps government turnover from upsetting the developmentalists' freedom to manage the economy. These needs are met by SNTV, the peculiar electoral system used for decades in Japan and Taiwan. This system is extremely rare; today only Jordan, Afghanistan, Vanuatu, and the Pitcairn Islands use it to elect their national legislators. In Japan and Taiwan, SNTV was used from the introduction of electoral competition until recent electoral reforms—in 1994 and 2005, respectively—introduced mixed systems. In light of the South Korean experience with the same system, SNTV is a defining feature of the East Asian model of democracy.[2]

Under SNTV, each voter casts one vote for a specific candidate in what are typically multimember districts; votes received by a candidate cannot be transferred to others; and seats are allocated by the plurality rule to the top vote-getters. The system is unique in that the threshold for victory decreases as the number of candidates to be elected from the district increases. This makes the system more proportional—as the distribution of seats among parties comes to match more closely their relative shares of the vote—but the vote goes to individual candidates rather than to parties. By contrast, in an open-list proportional representation (PR) system, votes for any of a party's candidates are a "public good" for that party, inasmuch as votes for a candidate in excess of the threshold for election are transferred to other party candidates. In this way, seats are allocated in accord with the party's overall vote share. Under SNTV, the vote won by a candidate is nontransferable, and whether one gets elected depends only on the rank of his or her own vote share. Their vote being restricted to one candidate, voters tend to select a candidate who serves their special interests.

Several results follow. First, SNTV gives those elected an incentive to cultivate patron-client networks, as this is the best way to secure the support of particular interest groups. Second, it generates factionalism and divisions within political parties, whose candidates must compete with each other over the ballots cast by the party faithful. Third, the system favors well-organized parties which can coordinate their nominations and distribute their supporters' votes in a way that maximizes the number of their candidates elected in each district. Fourth, under SNTV those whose election depends on patronage and other particularistic connections need the support of a stable coalition that can effectively manage the tasks of resource distribution and nomination coordination.

These features of SNTV explain why the leaders of Japan's and Taiwan's developmental states favored it. It allows for a strong govern-

ing coalition made up of state-builders, who plan economic development, and elected representatives, who legitimate the process. Moreover, SNTV tends to cause internal disputes and fragmentation among opposition parties.[3] But these benefits come at a price for the ruling coalition. Financing the particularistic politics created by an SNTV electoral system requires tremendous expenditure, which becomes a serious burden when the economy no longer sustains rapid growth. Moreover, citizens without access to patronage networks may launch calls for reform that the government cannot always contain. In Japan and Taiwan, such social grievances were a major force behind electoral reform.

Intriguingly, in both countries the initiative for electoral change came in large measure from within the dominant party. How could this happen when the structure of party dominance was based largely on the SNTV system? To answer this question, we must examine the strategic choices that some major ruling-party politicians made in the face of social protest. As the SNTV system came under fire, these politicians sought to ensure their political survival by calling for reform. Indeed, the cases of Japan and Taiwan show that the success of electoral reform often hinges on power struggles among incumbents.

Public resentment of the status quo is often a driving force behind electoral reform. In Japan, the reform debate gained momentum when incessant scandals made the Japanese aware of the old system's entrenched corruption.[4] In Taiwan, the debate was triggered by public discontent with an inefficient and chaotic national legislature.[5] But the citizenry's disgruntlement, while indispensable, does not fully explain the success of electoral reform in Japan in the 1990s and in Taiwan in the past half-decade. Another crucial factor was the belief among a few leading incumbent legislators that a new system would improve their odds of reelection.[6] But because reform would make it harder for weaker members of parliament to win reelection, it was difficult for these reformers to assemble the majority needed to adopt changes to the electoral system. How did they pull together majority coalitions in Japan and Taiwan?

As argued above, maintaining the dominant-party system is very costly, and economic downturns can trigger public protest against the government. In both Japan and Taiwan, public disappointment eroded the governing party's electoral strength and finally deprived the party of its dominant status. In the face of this challenge, ruling-party politicians owing their electoral success to personal image rather than particularistic connections began considering strategies for political survival. They came up with similar solutions in both countries: By pushing to replace SNTV with a first-past-the-post (FPTP) electoral system—in which the winner in each single-seat district is the candidate who wins the most votes—they stood to lead a party based more on its policy platform than on factions. But how could these politicians engineer the reform process, given their minority status?

Successful electoral reform in countries using SNTV depends on three conditions. First, the reformers themselves must benefit from the proposed new electoral system. With FPTP as the alternative to SNTV, politicians relying on personal popularity to win are most likely to promote reform. With only one candidate to select from a party, voters casting their ballot under FPTP are more susceptible to candidate image and partisan identification, while under SNTV they are encouraged to choose the providers of special interests. Second, electoral reform is much more viable when no single party controls a parliamentary majority. When there is a majority party, those of its members who are electorally insecure will resist electoral reform.[7] There is also little incentive for the center of a majority party to promote electoral reform as long as the party maintains its dominant position. This also implies that, when social pressure is so strong that some members of the governing party decide to form a reformist group, the party runs the risk of splitting up.

Third, in order to bring about a change away from SNTV there must be some incentives for a *majority* of legislators to pass the electoral-reform proposal. Small parties (or independents) who find their survival at risk under a system that includes an FPTP component might trade their endorsement of such a proposal for such benefits as cabinet posts, budgetary items, or policy concessions. Another reason for them to join a reform coalition could be the fear of losing votes in the next election precisely because of their opposition to electoral reform.

The legal requirements for electoral reform differ by country: In some countries the system may be changed by executive decree, while in others it requires a parliamentary majority or even a supermajority. If a country is already democratic, some form of legislative approval will be necessary, but the threshold varies. The higher the threshold, the greater the cost involved in bringing together a proreform majority. As we are about to see, Japan and Taiwan both met the above three conditions, and the relative speed with which each enacted reform can be explained by various institutional requirements.

Japan: Old Blueprint for a New Nation

The SNTV system had its longest run in Japan. Chosen by the state-builders of modern Japan,[8] it was used in most elections held from the onset of electoral competition in the late nineteenth century until 1994. The current form of SNTV was adopted in 1947 and coexisted with the perennial dominance of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) between 1955 and 1993.[9] Political scandals erupted from time to time under LDP governance, and each time the party responded to popular protest by finding fault with the electoral system. In 1956, Prime Minister Ichiro Hatoyama attempted unsuccessfully to replace SNTV with FPTP, hoping to boost the LDP's seat share in the bicameral Diet (Japan's

parliament) so that the party could carry out a constitutional revision. After the 1960 lower-house election, the Diet established the Electoral Reform Advisory Council, which played the role of narrowing down the reform proposals to several alternatives—most of them combining SNTV and FPTP. Yet none of the Council's proposals were approved by the Diet until early 1994, when all three of the above conditions for electoral reform finally came into alignment.

During decades of LDP-majority rule, a succession of prime ministers advocated the use of FPTP, figuring that the ruling party's seat share would be amplified by the relatively low proportionality of the proposed systems. The reformist parties, comprising in large part LDP defectors, were led to push for electoral reform by the very logic of their claim to be reformists. But there were other reasons for them to support the FPTP-leaning proposals. For example, the LDP's support base, as an effect of its reliance on particularistic networks, was mainly rural; thus, the reformist parties saw prospects for electoral gain in urban districts.

In the 1993 parliamentary election, the two major reformist parties—the Japan New Party (JNP) and the Japan Renewal Party (JRP)—performed extraordinarily well, depriving the LDP of its majority status. This further motivated these parties to introduce a new electoral system that would make it harder for the LDP to regain its strength by utilizing its traditional patronage-intensive tactics.[10] Moreover, while 42.9 and 44.4 percent of the winning JNP and JRP candidates were the top vote-getters in their districts, among *all* successful candidates, only 25.3 percent ranked first in their districts. This suggested that the successful opposition candidates would have a good chance of being elected even under the FPTP system.

The splitting of the LDP, as well as other changes to the party system, supplied additional reasons why electoral reform finally succeeded in the early 1990s. In fact, one of the major causes of the LDP's 1993 electoral fiasco was the internal dispute over electoral reform—the LDP was seriously weakened when reformers within its ranks deserted to join or form opposition parties. It is also noteworthy that all reform proposals—in 1956, 1976, and in the late 1980s—were rejected as long as the LDP remained in power.[11] The result of the 1993 election clearly indicated the willingness of Japanese voters to punish antireformists. Particularly discredited were the Socialists and the Communists, as indicated by their poor electoral performances. This alarmed those members of the coalition government who supported political reform at large but were not confident of their fortunes under FPTP—it appeared that, were they to disapprove of the reform bill, voters would likely punish them.

After the 1993 reshuffle in the lower house, the electoral-reform debate gained momentum. The JRP and the Clean Government Party (CGP) favored a mixed system with an FPTP component, while the JNP and the New Party Harbinger (NPH) were insistent on a two-ballot system, under

which voters cast one ballot for a party and another one for a candidate. The final version of the new election law proposed by the coalition government was a compromise, as indicated by the two-ballot format, yet the high percentage of FPTP seats still reflected the influence of politicians who were confident of their vote-getting abilities. The bill came out as it did because small-party leaders were sharing some of the cabinet portfolios—an opportunity that had been beyond their imagination when the LDP controlled the government. These parties also received additional benefits from other reform bills grouped together with the new election law, such as the restrictions on party and campaign financing.

While the reformist coalition controlled the majority in the lower house, it did not in the upper house. Japan's bicameral system gives the upper house the right to veto lower-house actions not related to the budget, the treasury, or prime-ministerial appointments. Only a two-thirds majority of the lower house can override such a veto. The coalition government did not have the support of a majority in the upper house, nor did it control two-thirds of the lower house. As expected, the upper house vetoed the reform bills passed by the lower house on 18 November 1993, forcing Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa to hold an emergency meeting with the LDP president. When these bills were eventually adopted by the upper house in January 1994, their content had been revised to satisfy the LDP's demands. In particular, the portion of FPTP seats was increased from 250 to 300, the same formula that had been proposed in two earlier LDP reform bills. For the minor parties, the only hope was the 200 closed-list PR seats (later reduced to 180) elected in 11 PR districts.

Taiwan: A Party Larger Than a Nation

The history of SNTV in Taiwan is also long. Although the authoritarian rule of the Kuomintang (KMT, the Nationalist Party) from 1949 until 1992 meant that not *all* members of the Legislative Yuan (LY) were elected, SNTV has been widely used in both legislative and local elections for almost seventy years. The system was introduced in 1935, under Japanese colonial rule, for the purpose of electing members of the local assembly. The Taiwanese electorate was thus quite familiar with SNTV, and the system had become an integral feature of Taiwan's electoral politics.

Retreating to Taiwan after losing the Chinese civil war in 1949, the KMT government maintained its authoritarian rule by insisting that delegates elected in mainland China before 1949 would not have to run for reelection until the government based in Taiwan recovered the mainland. As the KMT was an "immigrant" regime, facing constant local challenges to its claim rightfully to rule over Taiwan, the use of SNTV served the party's interest in many ways. First, local elections, held soon after the KMT arrived in Taiwan, helped to justify the party's rule

by making Taiwanese politics partially competitive. While the KMT sometimes had problems winning local executive offices, SNTV helped the party to dominate the local assemblies. Moreover, by incorporating some members of the indigenous Taiwanese elite into its electoral machine, the KMT managed to blur its image as a rootless immigrant regime.

Second, as in the Japanese case, the electoral system played a very important role in nurturing clientelist relationships between Taiwanese elites and the KMT. Having inherited the state-controlled economic resources left by the Japanese colonial government, the KMT had the political and economic power to coordinate the party's contestants for political office at various levels. This enabled it to avoid one of the greatest dangers for a large party under SNTV: Nominating too many candidates in a district and fragmenting its total vote to a degree that would cost it seats. In exchange for benefiting from the party's strategic resources, local elites pledged their loyalty to the party-state.

Lastly, SNTV put a constraint on the growth of the non-KMT forces (originally known as *dangwai* or "outside the party"). In contrast to the KMT's one-China doctrine, the *dangwai* movement progressed by calling for Taiwanese sovereignty, making national identity and independence Taiwan's foremost political issue. But the movement did not enjoy the KMT's economic and political leverage, organizational discipline, or strategic resources. Thus, as it expanded and as its members began to run against one another in the elections, the movement suffered internal divisions.

Although only part of the LY was elected prior to the transition to democracy during the early 1990s, SNTV in Taiwan played a role similar to the one it had played in Japan. KMT premier Lien Chan first introduced the issue of electoral reform after the party almost lost its majority in the 1994 LY election. Despite this humiliating electoral setback, the ruling party had won all the single-seat districts, motivating Lien to propose a system in which the majority of seats would be filled through FPTP. The KMT soon began to promote a Japanese-style mixed system, even though many of its members opposed reform. The positions of other parties varied with their respective electoral fortunes: For instance, the opposition Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) insisted on a German-style mixed but fully proportional system[12] in late 1996, but after its presidential victories in 2000 and 2004, it shifted its position, favoring a Japanese-style partially proportional mixed system. The minor parties in Taiwan generally opposed the FPTP component of any formula, favoring instead a fully proportional system.

Nonetheless, it took a decade for Lien's vision of electoral reform to turn into reality. In August 2004, the LY voted to propose constitutional amendments that halved its size (from 225 to 113 seats) and implemented a mixed electoral system with each voter casting two ballots (one each for candidate and party). Under the new system, 73 seats

were to be elected by FPTP; another 34 (half of them set aside for women) were to be allocated by closed-list PR in a nationwide district; and 6 were to be filled from the aboriginal districts. The National Assembly—a 334-seat marginally important legislative body scheduled for elimination by 2008—approved these amendments on 7 June 2005. Though the reform package was adopted only after the KMT had lost its majority in the LY—indeed at a time when there was no majority party—the changes to the electoral system are very similar to what Lien had proposed in 1994.

As in Japan, there are numerous reasons why the reform efforts succeeded when they did in Taiwan. Some politicians—mainly from the KMT and the DPP—calculated that they would benefit from the new electoral system. While these two major parties take opposite stands on the issue of Taiwanese independence, they shared a tacit interest in lowering the electoral system's proportionality so as to enhance their seat shares in competition with splinter parties. Under SNTV, if a party nominates too many candidates in a district, it fragments its votes and may lose seats, because votes for poorly performing candidates cannot be transferred to other party candidates. But if the party nominates too few candidates, it may also squander potential seats. The KMT in 2001, and the DPP in 2004, optimistic about their electoral fortunes, nominated too many candidates, reducing the average vote shares of their nominees and hence their party's seat share. Based on their respective miscalculations, the KMT and the DPP realized that under FPTP their chances of winning a majority would greatly improve and there would be no need for elaborate nomination strategies.

As in Japan, raising the support necessary for electoral reform required some persuasion. The smaller parties—in particular the People First Party (PFP) and the Taiwan Solidarity Union (TSU), a proindependence party flanking the DPP—were threatened by the proposed move to a majoritarian electoral system. Yet their opposition was mollified by the inclusion in the reform package of some other constitutional amendments that they favored. The TSU achieved its longstanding goal of halving the size of the Legislative Yuan. The PFP, by contrast, was compensated by the addition of an amendment requiring that future constitutional amendments win the approval of an absolute majority of the population in a referendum. This provision assured opponents of Taiwanese independence—the PFP in particular—that any future constitutional shift toward independence would be extremely difficult.

The Effects of Reform in Japan

If Japan's adoption of a new electoral system reflected the intention of some politicians to produce a more favorable political environment, we should expect elections held under the new rules to differ somehow

from prereform ones. According to the reformers, electoral campaigns under the new system would focus more on policy debates than on resource redistribution, and bipartisan competition would replace factionalized one-party dominance. The minor parties would pay attention to their party images to win the PR seats rather than try to cultivate district-level connections that would turn out to be futile. Whether the new system produced these expected results can be seen from the outcomes of the lower-house elections held under the new electoral system in 1996, 2000, 2003, and 2005.

Japan has been traveling a path of party realignment since the LDP lost its majority in the 1993 election. The short-lived New Frontier Party (NFP) was founded in 1994 to unite the non-LDP politicians. Before the 1996 lower-house election, some politicians formed the Democratic Party, which changed into the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) in 1998 by incorporating some minor parties. The DPJ performed well in the 2000 election and merged with Ichiro Ozawa's Liberal Party in 2003, making it Japan's major opposition party. Since then, Japanese politics has been dominated by the competition between the LDP and the DPJ, with other parties playing subsidiary roles. The vicissitudes of Japan's postreform party system do not falsify the bipartism hypothesis; rather, they reflect the struggle among the opposition parties to fight for the anti-LDP leadership. If so, the long-term trend should be toward a two-party system.

A good indicator of the postreform evolution of Japan's party system is the number of legislative parties. The smaller this number, the more likely it is for two randomly chosen Diet members to be from the same party.[13] Table 1, showing the effective number of parties in Japan's lower house, exhibits an interesting twist in the past two decades. Until 1993, the party system was indeed becoming more fragmented, which was crucial to the success of electoral reform. The impact of the new electoral system is indicated by the decrease in the number of legislative parties since 1993, which now is indeed approaching two. Table 1 also displays the total seat shares of the two largest parties in the lower house, which are not only increasing, but are now higher than during the period of one-party dominance. A two-party system is clearly taking shape in Japan.

Another remarkable pattern is the shifting seat share of the LDP, which has always been Japan's largest party. Although the 1993 lower-house election deprived the party of its majority status, subsequent elections gradually saw the revival of its power. This confirms the hypothesis that Japan's electoral reform was engineered by some conservative politicians who wanted to extend their own political lives. Most of these elites started their careers in the LDP, though some left the party to attract voters alienated by the old regime. The LDP's resurgence is strongly related to the low proportionality of the new, more

TABLE 1—THE EVOLUTION OF JAPAN'S PARTY SYSTEM

ELECTION YEAR	EFFECTIVE NUMBER OF LEGISLATIVE PARTIES	SEAT SHARE OF THE LARGEST PARTY*	TOTAL SEAT SHARES OF TWO LARGEST PARTIES
1980	2.66	0.57	0.78
1983	3.23	0.49	0.71
1986	2.57	0.59	0.75
1990	2.71	0.53	0.80
1993	4.26	0.43	0.56
1996	2.94	0.48	0.79
2000	3.18	0.49	0.75
2003	2.56	0.49	0.86
2005	2.23	0.62	0.85

*Always the LDP

majoritarian electoral system. In the last four lower-house elections, the LDP's vote shares in the constituency-based seats were 38.6, 41.0, 43.9, and 48.0 percent. Its PR vote shares went down over the same period (there are two separate ballots). The new system has boosted the LDP's seat shares significantly—indeed, to a stunning 62 percent in 2005. Without the new electoral system, the LDP would have had a hard time sustaining its dominance.

Regarding the style of electoral campaigning, the reformers expected the new electoral system to increase the importance of party-oriented policy debate and bipartisan competition. But the legacy of the old system still affects electoral campaigning under the new rules. In the 1996 election, for example, the raising of the consumption tax was a salient issue that clearly divided the political lineup, yet most candidates relied heavily on personal support groups *(kōenkai)* to gather votes. The competition for the 180 seats filled by PR also took on personalistic overtones, as the new system allows for dual candidacy, whereby candidates can run for an FPTP seat while also being included on the party's PR list.[14] In the long term, however, as the two-party system takes shape, the mode of campaigning will likely come to focus more on policy issues and debate.

Will Taiwan Follow Japan's Lead?

Taiwan has experienced significant changes to its party system since its transition to democracy in the early 1990s. Unlike in Japan, however, the underlying fundamental partisan division remains unchanged: Most of the parties that have formed since 1992 are splinters of either the KMT (against independence) or the DPP (for independence). In August 1993, a group of urban-based politicians left the KMT and established the New Party (NP). In 2000, after losing the presidential polling, former KMT secretary-general James Soong broke with the party

Table 2—The Evolution of Taiwan's Party System

Election Year	Effective Number of Legislative Parties	Seat Share of the Largest Party*
1992	2.55	0.59
1995	2.65	0.52
1998	3.24	0.55
2001	3.48	0.39
2004	3.26	0.40

*1992–98: KMT; 2001–2005: DPP

and established the PFP. On the proindependence side, some affiliates of former president Lee Teng-hui created the TSU in late 2000 to attract proindependence loyalists. Despite this fragmentation, the vote shares of the two sides are actually quite stable, with the anti-independence ("pan-Blue") camp slightly outnumbering the proindependence ("pan-Green") one.

Table 2 illustrates the evolution of Taiwan's party system over the past ten years. Comparing it with prereform Japan, we find a striking similarity: The party system has become more fragmented, and the largest party no longer dominates the national legislature. If these conditions explain why Taiwan followed the Japanese model of electoral reform, Japan's postreform consequences should shed light on Taiwan's future. But there are two features of Taiwanese politics that must be kept in mind when making such a comparison: first, the rigidity of Taiwan's national-identity cleavage, and second, the system of presidential elections. When held under SNTV, Taiwan's legislative elections were relatively unaffected by these factors, as this system encouraged particularistic representation rather than policy debate, and as legislative and presidential elections took place nonconcurrently using different electoral formulas. With the 2004 electoral reforms, however, these factors are likely to begin influencing Taiwanese politics.

The revised constitution has extended the term of the LY members from three to four years, producing a very unusual electoral cycle, where the president and legislators serve the same four-year terms. Moreover, since the constitution requires the LY to convene in February and the president to serve a four-year term beginning on May 20 of the election year, legislative and presidential elections are likely to take place in December and March, respectively. Barring the unlikely event that the LY is dissolved after a vote of no confidence, the presidential and legislative elections will take place within a few months of each other, cycle after cycle. Due to this short interval, Taiwan will likely see an effect commonly experienced by systems that hold concurrent elections—namely, a higher probability that one and the same party will control both the executive and the legislative branches.

Moreover, the dynamics of the presidential election will likely have

a strong impact on legislative campaigning. The short interval between the two elections means that parties will have to have already nominated their presidential candidates by the time the LY election takes place. Since Taiwan elects its president by FPTP, voters will tend to gravitate to the two leading presidential candidates. Such a two-person presidential race is likely to overshadow the legislative election and to make it hard for smaller parties to make their voices heard during the campaign. With little hope to win the presidency or the FPTP legislative seats, these parties will bet everything on winning the PR seats. Even so, unless the leading parties both stumble and fail to gain a legislative majority, Taiwan's minor parties will quickly lose their pivotal position as potential coalition partners. Thus, Taiwan may well be moving toward a two-party system at a quicker pace than Japan.

Although it is rarely used, SNTV satisfies the culture and demands of emerging democracies more easily than do its alternatives. As party systems in these countries often are either nonexistent or highly unstable, SNTV makes the election process simpler by requiring voters to choose a candidate rather than a party. It also makes vote counting simpler and cheaper than it would be under PR or any form of preferential voting. The system is also relatively proportional, so it serves well to ensure minority representation.

Moreover, SNTV tends to factionalize local interests, giving statebuilders convenient leverage to enforce their commands from the center by offering their local agents particularistic benefits. From the experiences of Japan and Taiwan, these factors do seem to contribute to the growth of the developmental state. But the argument is not reversible: SNTV does not inherently nurture a dominant party, let alone a strong state. Young democracies should find other ways to develop their economies.

Once a dominant-party system evolves in tandem with SNTV, however, some citizens will be systematically disfavored. This state of affairs will eventually prompt some politicians to propose an electoral reform that increases their odds for survival. This dynamic explains not only the abandonment of SNTV, but also the subsequent outcomes. As can be seen from the premiership of Junichiro Koizumi (2001–present), the LDP revived under his reign by choosing a new winning strategy.[15] With Taiwan having adopted the same new electoral system, the KMT has a similar chance to rise again—if it can learn to play the electoral game in a different way.

NOTES

1. For a review of how the developmental-state theory explains East Asian development, see Meredith Woo-Cumings, ed., *The Developmental State* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1999).

2. South Korea used SNTV in two-member districts between 1980 and 1987. SNTV has also seen some use in other places, such as Puerto Rico, Vanuatu, Thailand, and most recently in Afghanistan. Yet its effects are most visible in Japan and Taiwan, as only in these countries has SNTV been the exclusive electoral system over an extended period.

3. As a result, Japan and Taiwan both experienced a long period of one-party dominance. For the case of Japan, see J. Mark Ramseyer and Frances M. Rosenbluth, *Japan's Political Marketplace* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993) and T. J. Pempel, ed., *Uncommon Democracies: The One-Party Dominant Regimes* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1990). For Taiwan, see Yun-han Chu, "SNTV and the Evolving Party System in Taiwan," *Chinese Political Science Review* 22 (June 1994): 33–51.

4. Raymond Christensen, "Electoral Reform in Japan: How It Was Enacted and Changes It May Bring," *Asian Survey* 34 (July 1994): 589–605; Rei Shiratori, "The Politics of Electoral Reform in Japan," *International Political Science Review* 16 (January 1995): 79–94.

5. "Amendment raises hope for a new constitution," *Taipei Times,* 24 August 2004.

6. Steven R. Reed and Michael F. Thies, "The Causes of Electoral Reform in Japan," in Matthew Soberg Shugart and Martin P. Wattenberg, eds., *Mixed-Member Electoral Systems* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 153.

7. Under SNTV, a party usually maximizes its seat share by strategically allocating its vote equally among its candidates, which makes most members of a dominant party electorally insecure. See Gary W. Cox, *Making Votes Count: Strategic Coordination in the World's Electoral Systems* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 242.

8. SNTV was drafted by the state-builders of the Meiji Restoration. See J. Mark Ramseyer and Frances M. Rosenbluth, *The Politics of Oligarchy: Institutional Choice in Imperial Japan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 37.

9. Brian Woodall, "The Politics of Reform in Japan's Lower House Electoral System," in Bernard Grofman, Sung-Chull Lee, Edwin A. Winckler, and Brian Woodall, eds., *Elections in Japan, Korea, and Taiwan Under the Single Non-Transferable Vote* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999), 26–7.

10. Some saw NFP leader Ichiro Ozawa as the chief orchestrator of Japan's political reform. The new electoral system, he hoped, would unshackle Japan from the LDP's dominance and generate a dynamic bipartisan system. See Ichiro Ozawa, *Blueprint for a New Japan: The Rethinking of a Nation* (New York: Kodansha International, 1994), 62–75.

11. Other reform bills were proposed in 1967 and 1968 by Prime Minister Ezaku Sato, but the content was not directly related to electoral reform. See Brian Woodall, "The Politics of Reform in Japan's Lower House Electoral System," 36.

12. The German system is mixed in that half the seats are filled by FPTP and half from PR lists, but many observers do not realize that it is in essence a system of proportional representation, in that it draws from the party lists to achieve *overall* proportionality in the allocation of parliamentary seats (after imposing a five percent threshold for party representation). By contrast, the Japanese system achieves proportionality only in the distribution of the share of seats (about 40 percent of them) assigned to the PR rule. Therefore, the German system better represents smaller opposition parties if they clear the threshold.

13. The effective number of legislative parties is 1/SS*i*2, where S*i* stands for the seat share of party *i*. See Rein Taagepera and Matthew Soberg Shugart, *Seats and Votes: The Effects and Determinants of Electoral Systems* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 77–81.

14. With dual candidacy, candidates can run for an FPTP constituency while also appearing on the party PR list, where they can be ranked individually or equally. In the latter case, the candidate whose FPTP vote ratio is closest to the FPTP winner receives the PR seat. This system, a safety net for senior politicians, reinforced the personalistic tendency of Japan's elections under the new rule. On the 1996 elections, see Albert L. Seligmann, "Japan's New Electoral System," *Asian Survey* 37 (May 1997): 409–28; and Margaret McKean and Ethan Scheiner, "Japan's New Electoral System: La Plus Ça Change," *Electoral Studies* 19 (December 2000): 447–77.

15. According to a survey conducted by the *Asahi Shimbun* newspaper, the proportion of Japanese citizens agreeing that the LDP has changed under Koizumi's leadership increased significantly in recent months. See *Asahi Shimbun* (Tokyo), 2 November 2005.