

Political Advertising in Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan

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Elections are occasions when the nature of a nation's life is put to the test, and campaigns are inherently interesting, even fascinating, events in and of themselves. Unlike voters in times past, today's voters are increasingly dependent on the media for their political information, and political advertising serves many functions and offers many opportunities for candidates to be competitive. Among the functions of political advertising (particularly of televised political spots), the two most important are helping the candidate define or redefine his or her image and providing a forum in which campaign issues can be explained and developed (Johnston & Kaid, 2002).

Different parameters in different cultures can differentially promote or constrain political communication roles and behaviors within those cultures. Far from overlooking political differences, a comparative approach to the analysis of political communication offers the means of distinguishing unique from more generic phenomena. During the 1990s, political

communication researchers increasingly paid attention to cross-national aspects of political advertising. However, those studies are mostly reflections of Western culture and, accordingly, focus on the context of Western election campaigns. This suggests an emerging need for an alternative way of looking at political advertising by comparing differences and similarities among various political structures, political processes, and media systems. This perspective can provide guidelines for studying political value transferences and adaptations. Further, a careful analysis of the similarities and differences in election campaigns between nations might yield useful insights into the process of political campaigns and provide a competitive edge for the development of more reliable political systems.

The major concern of this chapter is the cultural aspect of political advertising. I present a case for the viewpoint that political advertising mirrors the culture, be it in Western or non-Western countries. Because it is almost impossible

in a single chapter to examine political advertising within all Asian countries, three major East Asian countries have been purposely selected. In terms of countries that can be compared in regard to Americanization, Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan stand out as interesting cases. These countries are selected not because they are the most dominant nations in terms of power but because they are the most observable Eastern democracies that have outstanding democratic traditions of their own, and they share many basic democratic principles. Moreover, because it is almost impossible to introduce and compare political advertising at all levels of elections, this study will explore the general election in Japan and presidential elections in South Korea and Taiwan.

Whatever form it takes, political advertising, as a special type of political communication, now plays an essential role in election campaigns in these three nations. With regard to the nations under study, I am well aware of the difficulty of isolating any one aspect of a country's campaign from its total political culture, therefore making it harder to pinpoint the relationships of political advertising. However, based on the assumption that divergences exist among the nations, I have viewed these divergences as differing in degree or in emphasis rather than as strict divisions.

Unlike most previous comparative political advertising studies, this study's major focus was not on the overall messages and strategies of particular countries but in how political ads were systematically alike and different in accordance with particular cultures. This chapter shows, first of all, indigenous political structures and some background of each country, followed by an examination of each country's media system. Next, I discuss the history and current regulations of political advertising in each country and, finally, suggest possible future discussions and directions for scholarship, with consideration of neglected areas of political advertising research in this part of the world.

POLITICAL STRUCTURES AND BACKGROUNDS

We can assume that different parameters in political and media systems will differently promote or constrain roles and behaviors of political advertising within those systems (Gurevitch & Blumler, 1990). A particular difficulty in the comparison of political advertising lies in the presidential-parliamentary divide, the fundamental contrast among the three countries analyzed here. South Korea and Taiwan have the presidential system, but Japan uses the parliamentary system, in which a prime minister takes charge of the assembly.

Japan

Japan functions as a representative democracy. The head of state is the emperor, and the head executive is the prime minister. The prime minister is chosen by a ballot of the Diet (parliament) and appoints a cabinet, a majority of whose members must also be members of the Diet. The bicameral Diet comprises the House of Representatives (the more powerful lower house), whose 480 members are elected every 4 years, and the House of Councilors (the upper house), whose 247 members are elected for 6-year terms, with half of its number elected every 3 years. There are 300 single-seat constituencies and 180 seats filled by proportional representation in the House of Representatives.

The Diet is the highest organ of the state. It is responsible for designating the prime minister. Although the emperor is the head of state, his function is purely symbolic. The party-political structure is dominated by the conservative Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), which has ruled Japan either alone or in coalition for most of the years since 1955. Japanese politics have been characterized by one-party rule for over four decades, with the sole change being which clique within the party presides over decision making (Richardson & Flanagan, 1984).

Japan's modern political era began in 1868 with the overthrow of the Tokugawa shogun state and the establishment of a unified state under the authority of Emperor Meiji. It was not until the Diet was opened in 1890 that nationwide political activities started in earnest. The first parliamentary election was held in 1890, for an electorate restricted to male property owners—just 1% of the total population. Spurred by Japan's rapid economic development and by the democratizing influence of World War I, the Diet's power grew steadily in the first 25 years or so of the 20th century. The foundations of Japan's young democracy were, however, undermined in the 1920s by growing economic difficulties at home and abroad. As Japan's economic problems grew, so too did the influence of the military in the country's political life. By the end of the 1930s, after the onset of the war with China, the military's grip on Japan's political life was complete, and in 1940 all political parties were disbanded (Economist Intelligence Unit, 2004a).

During Japan's occupation by the United States and its allies from 1945 to 1952, a new constitution was written and a whole range of new political reforms was initiated, including universal suffrage (International Research Center for Japanese Studies, 2003). At the end of 1955, Japan's two main conservative political parties, the ruling Democratic Party and the Liberal Party, merged to form the LDP. The LDP enjoyed nearly 40 consecutive years in power. Inevitably, one consequence of this long period of dominance by the LDP was a high level of corruption, particularly in the party's upper echelons, as its various factions vied with each other for influence (Thies, 2002). Since the LDP's fall from single-party power in 1993, Japan's political scene has become highly fluid. One sign of this has been the large number of prime ministers (10) since 1993.

The Japanese government has seen a gradual trend toward increasing political competition and reform over the past decade.

Although no longer able to govern without the support of other parties, the LDP remains by far Japan's largest political party and continues to dominate the political landscape. Furthermore, the results of the 2003 general elections brought changes to the party system in Japan, from single-party dominance to a two-party system, as the LDP and its coalition partners managed only a slim margin over the opposition party (Rosenbluth & Thies, 2004). The election results have convinced many observers that Japan is finally on its way to a genuine two-party system (Lee, 2004). However, the pattern of Japan's interaction with other countries in Asia is still influenced by the bitter legacy of its colonial past. Many Asian countries believe, not without justification, that Japan has never accepted responsibility for the atrocities committed in the region by its troops in the 1930s and 1940s.

The personalism and localism of Japanese political organization and election campaigning impose an enormous financial burden on Diet candidates and produce problems of political corruption that are well known (Richardson, 1997). Political life in Japan is extraordinarily expensive, especially for LDP politicians. As campaigning is perennial, despite legal stipulations to the contrary, and because a Diet member or aspirant must build his or her own political factions to cultivate voter support, a tremendous amount of time and energy is put toward raising money (Curtis, 1988). No one knows precisely how much money the Japanese electoral process consumes. Although the Political Funds Regulation Law requires politicians, political parties, and other political organizations to submit annual income reports, it is an open secret that income reported is only the tip of an enormous iceberg of political contributions (Curtis, 1999).

South Korea

In Korea, there is a single race, a single language, common cultural assumptions, and no

minority group of significant size. The official name of the country is the Republic of Korea, and the country uses a presidential system. The president and the National Assembly are directly elected, based on a “first past the post” system. The president (elected for a single term of 5 years) appoints the rest of the State Council (cabinet), which is composed of the president, prime minister, and between 15 and 20 ministers. However, the State Council is not entirely composed of members of the National Assembly. In the unicameral National Assembly, which is composed of 299 members, who are elected for 4-year terms, currently 243 seats are filled by direct election, and the remaining 56 seats are distributed between parties in proportion to their share of the vote.

Reflecting the past influence of the armed forces on South Korea’s political life, the constitution stipulates that the armed forces must maintain political neutrality. Between 1961, when Park Chung-Hee seized power, and 1988, when Chun Doo-hwan relinquished it, the government party existed in the National Assembly and in the country to support the president, but the power base of the regime lay elsewhere—in the military. Moreover, opposition parties in the National Assembly, although they might criticize government policies, could not safely challenge the constitutional basis on which the government was established, at least not until the mid-1980s (Lee, 1990).

Since its founding, South Korea’s overriding external preoccupation has always been with North Korea and its threats of renewed aggression. Whether in the form of its alleged nuclear program or its stockpile of chemical weapons, North Korea’s terrorization has never truly ceased. From time to time, this theoretical threat has also been reinforced by acts of terrorism by North Korea against South Korea. However, South Korea, for its part, proclaims the ideal of peaceful unification, and cannot afford to abandon it, as there are

still today millions of Koreans separated from immediate members of their families by the war in 1950-1953. The threat from North Korea has determined that South Korea’s principal external tie should be a military alliance with the United States, which still has troops stationed between Seoul and the Demilitarized Zone as a guarantee of U.S. involvement from the first hours of any renewed inter-Korean conflict.

Upon liberation from Japan in 1948, Korea was divided into two independent republics. The division into North and South Korea along the thirty-eighth parallel was supposed to be a temporary military measure, yet it still remains in force today. The politics of the divided Korea is in many ways the outcome of a contest between the leaders of North and South Korea and of the clash of their political wills. Korean politics is a high-risk system: The stakes of political conflict are very high, as the winner takes all and the loser gets nothing (Kihl, 1984). Although the political form was Western, the way in which politics in Korea actually worked during its first four decades owed more to traditional political culture than to imported ideas (Clough, 1987).

Party politics in South Korea has been largely a tale of power struggles among conservative parties and component factions, devoid of conflicting ideological contentions. Further, the fact of divided nationhood seems to have accentuated these elements in Korean political culture (Kihl, 1984). However, Korea today is facing the monumental task of transforming its centralized political system into a decentralized system. Democratization in Korea since 1987 has led to the gradual establishment of a diverse set of institutional arrangements—competitive electoral systems, local autonomy, freedom of the press, and freedom of association—that facilitate the articulation of political interests (Lim & Tang, 2002).

South Korea’s relations with Japan are prickly, mainly as a result of lingering bitterness over Japan’s harsh 35-year (1910-1945)

rule over the Korean peninsula. Ties between the two countries are, however, growing stronger, notwithstanding continued diplomatic spats, such as the row that ensued in late 2001 when Japan's prime minister paid an official visit to the Yasukuni shrine in Japan, where Japan's war dead are honored. Closer ties reflect both continued security concerns relating to North Korea and an appreciation of the advantages for both countries in enhanced economic cooperation.

Taiwan

The division of China into mainland China and Taiwan along the Taiwanese strait was also meant to be a temporary solution, and yet it too remains in force today. Both governments have been struggling with this matter for more than 50 years. Taiwan had been a declared province in its own right only since 1886, just 9 years before it was ceded to Japan at the end of the Sino-Japanese war. The island remained under Japanese occupation—albeit of a less barbarous variety than that which characterized Japanese rule in Korea and Manchuria—until the end of World War II. In 1945, Taiwan was restored to Chinese sovereignty under the rule of the Kuomintang (the KMT). However, many people in Taiwan viewed the mainland Chinese regime as just another colonial oppressor, feckless and corrupt. Facing defeat with the civil war against the Chinese Communist Party in 1949, the KMT retreated to Taiwan with the remnants of its army and the Republic of China government, which had been established in 1912 following revolution in the previous year.

Taiwan's official name is the Republic of China, and the head of state is the president. It is hard to say whether Taiwan has adopted a presidential or parliamentary system of government, because it has an unusual political system. The system is semipresidential, with the executive power shared by the president and the legislature. In this sense, Taiwan's

system resembles the French Fifth Republic. However, in Taiwan, the relationship between the president, prime minister, and parliament is less defined than it is in France (Rawnsley, 2003). The president, who is directly elected for a term of 4 years, nominates a premier to preside over the Executive Yuan (cabinet). Taiwan's constitution is based on that of the Republic of China, promulgated in 1947. This lays out a government structure consisting of the president, a National Assembly, and five branches (Yuan) of government: the Executive, the Legislative, the Judicial, the Examination, and the Control Yuan. In recent years, the policy-making powers of the Legislative Yuan have increased relative to the National Assembly, as the island moves toward a unicameral parliamentary system. The 225-seat Legislative Yuan, formerly a rubber-stamp parliament, has in the past decade become a more powerful body.

The story of Taiwan between 1949 and the 1980s is one of spectacular economic growth set against a backdrop of authoritarian rule. Political freedoms were suppressed. Martial law, imposed in 1949, was not lifted until 1987. Although supplementary elections were held periodically after 1969, martial law permitted full elections only at the local level. The only legal political parties were the KMT and two small progovernment parties, although independent candidates were allowed to compete in elections. The KMT had overwhelming advantages in terms of patronage and financial resources in the bureaucracy, the military, and the media. Although the KMT did not lose power until 2000, its transformation since 1991 has been so great that it is the equivalent of a change in the ruling party (Fell, 2001). From 1992, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) and dissidents within the KMT began focusing their attacks on the KMT's vote buying, links to gangsters, and public works corruption. As a series of scandals began to tarnish the KMT's public image, the KMT moved toward political liberalization. In 1987, martial

law was lifted and political prisoners were released. Opposition parties were gradually legalized over the next 2 years. The political reforms began with an election of the National Assembly in 1991. This was followed by the election of the Legislative Yuan in 1992, the first full election since 1949. Further, reform of the executive branch led to Taiwan's first direct presidential election in 1996.

The arrival of democratic debate in Taiwan brought the sovereignty issue to the forefront (Chang, 2003). By the end of the 1980s, the majority of the population favored maintenance of the status quo, under which their newfound prosperity and democracy could be preserved without prompting conflict with China. These changes led Taiwan's leaders to embark on a strategy of renouncing the country's long-standing goal of reconquering the mainland. This daring effort was not enough for the KMT's candidate to be reelected in the 2000 presidential election, which was won by a DPP candidate, Chen Shui-bian. The Democratic Progressive Party, officially formed in 1986, made inroads in local government and Taiwan's legislature and took the presidency in 2000. The major political challenge for both parties was dealing with mainland China, which asserts that Taiwan is a renegade province and maintains a standing threat to invade the island. The KMT has traditionally favored unification with China, whereas the DPP advocates independence. The DPP again won the presidential election in 2004.

MEDIA SYSTEMS

Japan

If China draws international power from the sheer size of its population, Japan, the other potent force in Asia, draws power from its economic well-being. Daily newspaper circulation of 580 copies per 1000 people, the highest in the world, means that the average family gets more than one paper. By 2002, the

Yomiuri was the only paper in the world to boast a circulation of over 10 million. Japan has five national dailies, *Yomiuri*, *Asahi*, *Mainichi*, *Nihon Keizai*, and *Sankei Shimbun*. The explanations for the high circulation figures may lie in the broad-based content of the newspapers, which have something for everyone, from comics to fact-laden news stories (Yin & Payne, 2003). Along with newspapers, the Japanese have thousands of monthly and weekly magazines to read. Unlike newspapers, they are sold in stores, not by subscription.

In Japan, the electronic media operate under a dual broadcasting system—one public broadcaster (Nihon Hoso Kyokai, NHK) and several commercial broadcasters. The NHK, unabashedly modeled on the BBC when it was established in 1926, became Japan's sole public broadcaster. It is independent of both government and corporate sponsorship and relies almost entirely on household reception fees. NHK began television service in 1953 after the occupation ended. The autonomy of NHK derives partly from its ability to set and collect its own fees, although the legislature does review fee proposals (Chen & Chaudhary, 1991). Moreover, the NHK has complete freedom in programming. However, the prime minister does appoint NHK's board of 12 governors. Japan has five major commercial channels (Nihon TV, TBS, Fuji TV, TV Asahi, and TV Tokyo) and many other local commercial stations (about 100 stations). Japan's broadcast law reflects both political needs and cultural values. It stipulates that programs should not disturb public security, good morals, or manners; should be politically impartial without distorting facts; and should clarify different points of view on controversial issues (Yin & Payne, 2003).

South Korea

Ever since the military takeover in 1961, press freedom has taken on various shades of

gray. Further, martial law in 1980 brought with it the repressive Basic Press Act and the biggest press purge in the history of the nation: 172 publications were closed and 683 journalists were dismissed. In late 1987, however, a new constitution was put in place and a new press law enacted. Along with changes in the number of periodicals came changes in content. More aggressive reporting has led citizens, rather than the government, to criticize journalists whose stories they disliked (Chen & Chaudhary, 1991). Korea has four major dailies, with a circulation of more than 1 million each. The largest and most prestigious papers are *Chosun-Ilbo* and *Dong-A Ilbo*, both founded in 1920 and with a circulation of more than 2 million each. All these major national dailies target the elite and the conservative class and are mostly probusiness (Yin & Payne, 2003).

The electronic media operate under a dual broadcasting system (public and commercial). The newspaper system is governed on free enterprise principles, but electronic media have traditionally been state owned and operated. Since 1992 there has been some expansion and privatization of broadcasting stations in Korea, but the systems are still highly regulated. There are two public networks (KBS and MBC) and one commercial network (SBS) in South Korea. It also has one government-owned educational broadcasting network, EBS. Korean broadcast programming focused on national and political interests until the 1980s, but since then programs have become more commercial (Yin & Payne, 2003). KBS has 48 affiliated stations, and MBC has 18 stations. In addition, Koreans are being serviced by numerous local commercial stations, cable television stations, and satellite television (Sky TV).

Taiwan

Striking parallels exist between Taiwan and South Korea, although one should not forget important differences, such as the role of

religious media in South Korea (Chen & Chaudhary, 1991). In Taiwan, significant changes occurred in 1987, when martial law was ended and the restrictions on print media were lifted. With the restrictions in force, newspapers had to have licenses to publish and could print only 12 pages. Despite these restrictions, the opposition party launched a newspaper in 1987. Under martial law, the *China Times* and the *Central Daily News* had more than 80% of the nation's daily newspaper circulation and more than 70% of newspaper advertising (Chen & Chaudhary, 1991). The number of pages has increased from 12 to more than 50 over the weekend for big papers. Because press freedom is relatively new in Taiwan, the industry has yet to adjust to the new environment. Today, the *United Daily News* and the *China Times* share about 60% of daily newspaper circulation and more than 75% of advertising (Yin & Payne, 2003).

In Taiwan, although the press is now mostly free, there is still control over the electronic media. The law stipulates that all programs are subject to prior censorship except for news (Yin & Payne, 2003). In the same vein, drama series have proved so popular that government regulations now limit the number of episodes in a series and the number of series in any one evening. With the end of martial law in 1987, restrictions on television eased somewhat. In 1989, the government even agreed to consider a request from the three networks to drop the ban on direct satellite transmissions from mainland China. For a long time, Taiwan had three television stations, owned by the government, the army, and the KMT. In 1997, a new TV station, *Formosa TV*, came into being with financial support from the opposition party. In 1998, Taiwan's public television station went on the air. Although three of the five television stations (CTV, TTV, and CTS) and a large number of the radio stations are owned by the government, the army, and the KMT, many of them are commercial in nature (Yin & Payne, 2003).

Table 17.1 Media Indexes in Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan

<i>Index</i>	<i>Japan</i>	<i>South Korea</i>	<i>Taiwan</i>
Population (in millions)	124.5	44.8	20.9
Daily newspaper	108	60	149
TV sets (per 1000 people)	707	346	258
TV system	Public and commercial	Public and commercial	Public and commercial
Network TV stations	6	4	5
Internet users (in %)	31	35	29
Government control of content	Almost none	Moderate	Moderate

SOURCE: Plasser and Plasser (2002) and Yin and Payne (2003).

For a comparative summary of the various elements in these three countries' media systems, see Table 17.1.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENTS OF POLITICAL ADVERTISING

Japan

Japan had no political advertising through the mass media until the 1928 election. The major form of political advertising during the prewar period existed in the form of print: newspapers and editorials. There have been many constraints in Japanese election law for providing the institutional devices for political advertising. It can be said that this resulted from Japan's political traditions, such as the emphasis of party over candidates. Consequently, although both electronic and print media saturate Japan, the regulations that prevent parties from advertising their candidates and candidates from advertising their party severely constrain the use of the media as a campaign tool. The historical development of Japanese political advertising can be divided into four phases, according to the changes in the election laws and the role of campaign advertising.

The first era can be viewed as "the birth of political advertising" (1928-1951). For the first time, in the election of 1928, primitive types of newspaper political advertising appeared. However, political ads of this phase are characterized by factual descriptions and

lack of advertising concept. Two major parties, the Association of Political Friends and the Constitutional Association, ran small-scale visions of ads; however, this daring effort was discontinued once the military government took political power.

The second phase is the "the revival of political advertising" (1952-1968). During the elections of 1952, there was a flood of various types of political advertising through mass media channels, including television. In addition, this is when advertising agencies first became involved in major parties' election campaigns. In this era, although party and candidate political advertising were permitted, political advertising itself was unrefined in nature, compared to commercial advertising.

The third phase is "the developmental struggle over political advertising" (1969-1995). The elections of 1969 opened a new era of election campaigning in Japan. The LDP tried to imitate the 1968 American presidential election campaigns, using the experiences of political consultants for the first time ever. In this election, Japanese politics witnessed full-page newspaper ads, technicolor TV spots, and an emphasized usage of TV spots. In addition to this, television speeches were first introduced in this campaign. The enthusiasm for media advertising waned, however, once it became evident that party ads were of scant help to voters trying to decide which particular candidate to vote for (Kim & Cho, 2000).

The last era is called “toward the maturity of political advertising” (since 1996). Japanese politics never realized the importance of this new trend in campaigning because of the LDP’s single-party dominance, which lasted until 1996. However, the ruling party began to realize the necessity of political advertising, because its electoral fortunes had steadily declined from the mid-1970s to the early 1990s. In 1996, Japanese politics crossed an important threshold. Because of changes in both law and society, political candidates could no longer rely on personal voter contact, past party loyalty, or group ties to ensure election (Holden, 1996). A new system of representation, coupled with the changing dynamics of Japanese society, meant that media, and especially television, were now the central organizing device in politics. The LDP began to realize the importance of forming a favorable image of party leaders in the minds of the people, and it began to apply more sophisticated campaign strategies and a more Americanized style in its political campaigns. As a result, its utmost concern became the construction of a favorable candidate image, based on the marketing strategies. These efforts were fully developed with the aid of big advertising agencies and political consultants (Holden, 1999). Big advertising firms have been important in creating television commercials for the ruling LDP and, to a lesser extent, for the opposition parties (Thies, 2002). Since then, electronic mediation (in particular, television ads) has played a more prominent role in electoral politics (Holden, 1999). With television predisposed to dramatic and visual imagery, Japanese party leaders have come to rely heavily on constructing favorable images.

South Korea

Korea had no political advertising in the electronic media until the 1992 election campaign. The major form of political advertising through mass media channels was in newspapers.

In general, Korean politics could not fully develop political advertising because of various regulations and the lack of understanding of the importance of political advertising in modern politics. There have been many constraints in the laws governing presidential elections on providing the institutional devices for political advertising. It can be said that this resulted from the deviant political situation in South Korea (consider that under military rule, there were no party politics). The lack of professionals in political advertising led to a stereotyped and monotonous advertising style in which the forms and contents were not creative. The historical development of Korean political advertising can be divided into three phases, in accordance with the special inclusion of mass-mediated political advertising in the presidential election laws and the development of sophisticated advertising strategies (Tak, 1993).

The first era is “the birth of political advertising” (from 1948, the founding of the Republic, to 1962). Primitive types of political advertising had appeared from the beginning of the Republic in 1948. However, political ads in this phase are characterized as mere repetition of candidate names and factual descriptions without advertising concept.

The second phase is “the developmental struggle over political advertising” (1963-1986). The presidential elections of 1963 opened a new era of election campaigns in Korea. The revised presidential election law provided a legal basis for newspaper political advertising for the first time ever. In this election campaign, though they were unrefined in nature, the concept of targeted audiences, cartoon ads, poster-type ads, display ads, and concise headlines appeared. However, this progressive movement was banned in 1972 by the new constitution. Although the 1981 election was an indirect election, newspaper political advertising was partially allowed again in this election.

The third era is called “toward the maturity of political advertising” (from 1987 onward).

Korean politics never realized the importance of this new trend in campaigning until the 1987 election. The December 1987 presidential election in Korea was historic because it took place under a new constitution that was the result of a rare compromise between the ruling and opposition parties. Korea had a peaceful presidential succession in 1987 for the first time ever. Korean politics began to apply more sophisticated campaign strategies and a more Americanized style of political advertising in this presidential election than ever before (Lee, Kaid, & Tak, 1998). As a result, the utmost concern became the construction of a favorable candidate image, based on the marketing strategies. These efforts were fully developed in the 1992 presidential election campaign. There was political advertising in the electronic media (a total of 10 ads) in the election of 1992 for the first time ever.

The degree to which the focus of advertising had shifted to television was shown by the fact that the election law allowed 30 television spots for each candidate in 1997. The landmark 1997 presidential election pinpointed the maturity of Korea's democracy, when the ruling party's 40-year reign finally ended. In addition, it was the first time in Korean politics that the management of election campaigns was handed over to the public. Governments began to subsidize partial campaign expenditures for each candidate in proportion to their obtained votes. As members of a new democracy, the citizens of Korea were introduced to Western-style campaign advertisements slightly reminiscent of American-style ads (Tak, 2000). However, these ads were different from American ads because of the incorporation of unmistakable Korean cultural imagery.

The December 2002 presidential election in Korea was also historic because it took place within a new political phenomenon that was the result of the voluntary involvement of the younger generations (Lee & Benoit, 2004). Until this election, the political party system

was under the absolute influence of the conservatives. Never before had the citizens of Korea enjoyed popular participation in government affairs. There was a peaceful political upheaval that called for a change in Korean politics and the election in 2002 of a liberal candidate over conservative politicians and the old generation. It was triggered by a candlelight parade in the heart of Seoul for the innocent death of a young girl killed by American soldiers and the successful welcome of the 2002 Fédération Internationale de Football Association World Cup. For the first time, in the 2002 presidential election, Korean politics experienced successful campaigning without the help of political parties. Young voters, called the "net generation," showed more political participation than ever before through the use of the Internet.

Taiwan

During the 1950s and 1960s, the KMT ruled the island with an iron fist. Gradually, however, the KMT opened up the political system. Election campaigning in Taiwan has developed in parallel with this political maturation (Rawnsley, 1997). Political advertising in mass media in the election campaigns was not allowed in Taiwan's election until the late 1980s, when Taiwan underwent drastic political reforms. As late as the 1989 election, advertising was banned in Taiwan; since then, the intensity and scope of election advertising has increased. The historical development of Taiwanese political advertising can be divided into three phases, according to the changes in the presidential election laws and the development of television political advertising.

The first era is "the darkness of political advertising" (1949, the retreat of the Republic to Taiwan, to 1986). There was no political advertising, because Taiwan suffered under martial law until 1987. Furthermore, there existed a one-party system under the absolute influence of the KMT, and there were no free elections.

The second phase is the “developmental struggle over political advertising” (1987-1999). In the Legislative Yuan election of 1989, restrictions on the use of mass media as campaign vehicles were loosened. Therefore, candidates began to run political ads in newspapers and magazines but not in the electronic media. These restrictions were again relaxed, and Taiwanese politics experienced the emergence of television party broadcasts in the 1991 National Assembly election. The format was similar to the party political broadcasts used in the United Kingdom: Taiwan’s Central Election Commission allotted parties free time on three government-controlled broadcast stations (TTV, CTV, and CTS) in accordance with the number of candidates nominated. Further, Taiwanese politics experienced cable television political ads for the first time ever in the 1995 Legislative Yuan election. Finally, the presidential elections of 1996 opened a new era of election campaigns in Taiwan. The 1996 presidential election was the first direct presidential election, and the combined opposition forces had a chance to win. The 1996 election was the first presidential campaign in which TV advertising was the main campaign method, and without the CEC-sponsored free TV time, all the ads were aired on cable. Opposition parties pushed to loosen governmental control over broadcast media and searched alternative media for ways to air their messages. It was through this desperate search of outlets for political voices that privately owned cable television became a critical campaigning medium for the opposition party (Chiu & Chan-Olmsted, 1999). As cable television grew, political candidates’ access to this medium became crucial in the design of their campaigns. Although each presidential candidate spent most of his or her media campaign budget (Chang, 2000), the lack of professionals in political advertising led to a stereotyped and monotonous advertising style in which the forms and contents were not creative (Gross et al., 2001). Interestingly enough, cable’s growth as a popular medium for political

campaigns was also the result of a legal loophole created by an election law that prohibited political parties and their candidates from engaging in any campaign activities or airing commercials on broadcast television networks (Chiu & Chan-Olmsted, 1999). Because the election law does not explicitly outlaw political advertising on cable, and the authorities are hesitant to tackle this highly sensitive issue, more and more candidates are appealing to the electorate through cable ads.

The third era is called “toward the maturity of political advertising” (since 2000). Taiwanese politics never realized the importance of this new trend in campaigning until 2000. The 2000 presidential election in Taiwan was historic, because Taiwan had a peaceful presidential succession for the first time in its political history. Further, the revised presidential election law provided a legal basis for television political advertising for the first time ever. Nevertheless, it was not surprising that the KMT’s campaign advertising tended to be old fashioned and was not especially creative (Gross et al., 2001). However, the DPP’s campaign ads were influenced by Western values and experiences, especially those of the United States. In the 2000 presidential election, Taiwanese politics applied more sophisticated campaign strategies and a more Americanized style of political advertising (Gross et al., 2001). Further, Taiwanese election campaigns have become more marketing oriented since the 2000 presidential election (Chen & Chen, 2003). These efforts were fully developed in the 2004 presidential election campaign. In this election, trends from previous elections continued, with increasing amounts of TV ads.

CURRENT REGULATIONS AND POLITICAL ADVERTISING

Japan

Japanese political democracy and many important aspects of its electoral system and campaign practices have their roots in the

political system of the prewar period. These aspects and practices have evolved out of a long and quite distinctive tradition (Curtis, 1988). One significant sign of continuity with the prewar period is the presence in Japan's election law of extensive restrictions on campaign practices. Many present-day regulations, such as limits on the duration of the formal campaign period (12 days for the lower house and 17 days for the upper house) and restrictions on campaign spending were first introduced in the period between the two world wars. These prewar controls on campaign activity were eagerly sought by the conservative parties, in large part because they were expected to disadvantage the fledgling working class parties (Curtis, 1992). Strict regulations on campaign practices also draw broad support from Japan's Diet members, regardless of party affiliation, because these regulations make it difficult for new and relatively unknown politicians to get their names and messages out to voters—thus strengthening the reelection prospects of incumbents (Curtis, 1992).

In 1975, Japan revised its laws regulating campaigning in ways that distinguish sharply between party and candidate campaigns (Flanagan, Kohei, Miyake, Richarson, & Watanuki, 1991). It did so in an effort to weaken the role of individual candidates in obtaining votes and to strengthen the vote-mobilizing role of political parties. In its political reforms, Japan tried to counteract the trend toward increasingly personalized campaigning that has become characteristic of virtually all advanced democratic countries in recent years. However, a consequence of the impact of modern mass media on the Japanese style of party organization and personalized campaigning is that both are considered useless in Japan, and Japanese of all political persuasions tend to be convinced that they reflect the peculiar backwardness of Japan's political culture (Flanagan et al., 1991). In an effort to force politicians' behavior to accord more closely with a model of modern party politics,

the election law has tightened restrictions on candidate campaigns and loosened or even eliminated many limits on the campaign activities of political parties (Curtis, 1999). It should also be noted that the Japanese election laws distinguish between official party candidates and independent candidates. Independent candidates are confronted with far more restrictions regarding their campaign activities than are official party candidates.

A vast array of legal restrictions and prohibitions regulate candidate campaigns in Japan (Central Election Commission, 2002). Since the legal changes made in 1975, however, political parties are free to engage in a great variety of campaign activities prohibited to individual candidates. In addition to a ban on all campaigning outside of the official period, house-to-house canvassing is banned, and both of these restrictions apply to candidate and party alike. The limits on campaign budgets for individual candidates, depending on the size of the district, are strict. Japanese candidates still rely more on traditional campaign tools, such as postcards, handbills, newsletters, posters, and bullhorns than they do on mass-mediated campaign materials. In addition, personal and street speeches from automobiles and boats are important parts of their election campaigning. However, the size and quantity of these traditional materials are also restricted by law. For example, candidates can display the limited number of campaign posters they are allowed only on government-provided poster boards.

Individual candidates are prohibited from purchasing any advertising time on television or radio or space in magazines. Instead, the government provides each candidate with funds to publish a limited number of newspaper ads of specified length (no color ads) and makes possible television and radio appearances for short self-presentation speeches and broadcasting about each candidate's past records. These pieces, however, are broadcast one after another early in the morning and late

in the evening during the short campaign period. They are literally “appearances” in that candidates are prohibited from using film footage, props, or any other paraphernalia. In so doing, the legal restrictions have discouraged variability in the way the candidates present themselves to the electorate (Krauss, 2000). The time and quantity of political speeches for each candidate are based on the conditions of broadcasting stations. However, the government provides 10 radios and one television for the lower house and five radios and one television for the upper house so members can watch the short pieces about each candidate’s past records. It is interesting that the election law also attempts to discourage negative campaigning by imploring candidates to act responsibly in avoiding statements in these media appearances that would damage the reputation of other candidates, parties, or political organizations. Therefore, televised spots lack the hard-hitting approach of political TV spots in the United States (Krauss, 2000).

Nevertheless, political parties have begun to rely heavily on mass-mediated campaign tools over traditional campaign materials in recent times. Although there are no limits on the quantity and time of political party paid advertisements on television or radio or in newspapers (colored ads permitted) or magazines, none of these ads may mention the name of any individual candidate except party leaders. However, the type, the content, and the financing of those ads are still strictly restricted in Japan. Party leaders and other Diet members may appear in these advertisements only in the context of their party roles, as the alleged purpose of the advertisements is to promote the party’s policies, not to publicize its candidates. Mention of the fact that these party leaders will themselves be running in the election, much less a personal appeal for voter support, is a violation of the law. Parties are also provided with free newspaper ads: between eight and 88, depending on the type of election and the party’s number of

candidates. There is no limit on political parties’ campaign budgets, and parties can run television ads any time outside official election periods at their convenience. Further, political parties can contribute to individual candidates as well as to other political organizations without restriction (Sejong Institute, 2001).

South Korea

Korea’s political instability is primarily the result of an imbalance in its economic, social, and political development, compounded by its undemocratic political culture. Thus the very speed of its economic growth and urbanization and educational development was bound to create strains, raising the political expectations of the middle class and younger generation. However, Korean politics is moving toward greater democracy and maturity.

Korean politics and many important aspects of Korea’s electoral system and campaign practices have their roots in its divided nationhood and have evolved out of a long and quite distinctive tradition (Tak, 1993). This can be seen in Korea’s extensive restrictions on campaign practices. Many present-day regulations, such as limits on the duration of the formal campaign period and restrictions on types and quantities of political advertising that are legitimate and commonplace in the United States and elsewhere, were a consequence of the country’s obsession about security matters. These controls on campaign activity were eagerly sought by the conservative ruling parties, in large part because they were expected to disadvantage the opposition parties. Strict regulations on campaign practices also draw broad support from Korean voters, regardless of party affiliation, because most of them are concerned about the serious problem of campaign expenditures.

When Korea reformed its election laws in 1997, it gave a new twist to its long history of extensive campaign restrictions (Park, 2002). It has revised its laws regulating campaigning

and has adopted a system of “public management” of the election campaign. It has done so in an effort to provide an equal chance for election to all candidates, to decrease the total amount of campaign expenditures, and to induce candidates to engage in campaigning through the mass media, especially television (Kang & Jaung, 1999). In its political reforms, Korea has tried to cut off the dark connection between politicians and big private corporations, because unofficial election expenses have reached astronomical figures in every presidential election campaign. In an effort to force politicians’ behavior to accord more closely with this model of public management, election laws have tightened restrictions on candidate campaign spending and provided official campaign financing for eligible candidates (proportional financial support based on their obtained votes) after the election. No candidate is allowed to spend private monies on political expenses anymore.

A vast array of legal restrictions and prohibitions still regulate candidate campaigns in Korea (National Election Commission, 2004). In addition to a ban on all campaigning outside an official period (14 days for the presidential election), house-to-house canvassing and street speech or any kind of outdoor mass rally are prohibited, and these restrictions apply to candidate and party alike. The limits on campaign budgets of individual candidates, depending on the size of the district, are very strict. Korean election campaigns are now relying more on mass-mediated campaign materials than traditional campaign tools such as postcards, handbills, newsletters, and posters. However, the format, content, and quantity of these mass-mediated campaign tools are also restricted under the strict laws. Further, any candidate who wishes to run a political advertisement has to report to the National Election Commission in advance to get a letter of certification.

Although any candidate is now able to buy television time or newspaper space for political

advertisements, within limits, since the reform in 1997, magazine political ads are not allowed, unlike in Japan. Candidates may purchase 70 newspaper ads, 30 television ads (1 minute long), and 30 radio ads (1 minute long) for their campaigns. Eleven television and radio appearances (20 minutes long) for political speeches are allowed for each candidate or supporter. However, these must literally be “appearances” in that candidates or supporters are prohibited from using film footage or any other paraphernalia. In addition, the public broadcasting station (KBS) broadcasts informational segments about each candidate’s past records more than eight times. These broadcasts, however, are aired one after another early in the morning and late in the evening during the short campaign period. Further, KBS airs campaign debates between presidential candidates more than three times. Although since the 1997 reform, online campaigning is an important part of election campaigning, political advertising through the Internet is still totally prohibited in Korea. The election law also attempts to strictly discourage negative campaigning: In all media outlets, statements that would harm the reputation of other candidates and parties must be avoided.

Taiwan

Many important aspects of the Taiwanese electoral system and campaign practices have their roots in the division between mainland China and Taiwan along the Taiwanese strait and have evolved out of a long and quite distinctive tradition. Many present-day regulations, such as the limits on the duration of the formal campaign period (28 days for the presidential election) and the restrictions on campaign spending, were first introduced in 1949. These controls on campaign activity were eagerly sought by the members of the authoritarian party (the KMT), in large part because they were expected to disadvantage the opposing parties (Gross et al., 2001).

Taiwan's election law, which puts moderate restrictions on campaign practices, has developed in parallel with the lifting of martial law in 1987 (Hsieh, 2002). Since that time, Taiwan has reformed its extensive campaign restrictions in favor of the KMT, and candidates are free to engage in a great variety of campaigning activities that formerly were prohibited. It has revised its laws regulating campaigning in ways that strengthen the opportunity for individual candidates to obtain votes. It has done so in an effort to adopt the trend toward increasingly personalized campaigning. In an effort to force politicians' behavior to accord more closely with this model of modern politics, Korea has tightened restrictions on campaign expenditures and loosened or even eliminated many limitations on the campaign activities of individual candidates (Chen & Chen, 2003).

In the current election law, only minor legal restrictions and prohibitions regulate candidate campaigns in Taiwan (Central Election Commission, 2003). In addition to a ban on all campaigning outside an official period, house-to-house canvassing is banned, and these restrictions apply to candidates and parties alike. Taiwanese election campaigns still rely on traditional campaign tools, such as newsletters from the Central Election Commission, posters, banners, and personal and street speeches. However, candidates are not allowed to hang or erect slogans, billboards, banners, or other advertising materials at roads, on bridges or partitions, in schools, or in other public buildings, to ensure public safety and traffic order. In addition, political speeches are regulated on the basis of their content (it is prohibited to incite another to commit offenses against the security of the state or to undermine the social order), and all campaign activities are allowed from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. only. Other regulations and restrictions on campaign practices concern legal limits on the number of vehicles that may be used by the candidate; publication

of public opinion polls, which may not occur 10 days prior to election day; and overall campaign expenditures. As negative attacks on opponents are part of the cultural tradition, there are no rules or legal provisions counteracting the negative tone of campaign advertising (Hsieh, 2002).

The limits on the campaign budgets of individual candidates, which depend on the number of registered voters, are somewhat strict. However, the limits frequently exceed the amount defined by law (Hsieh, 2002). The maximum amount of campaign expenditures is the sum of 70% of all registered households multiplied by the basic amount of NT\$20, plus NT\$100 million. In an effort to force politicians' behavior to accord closely with the public management model for election campaigning, the election law has tightened restrictions on candidates' campaign spending but has provided some official campaign funding for eligible candidates (proportional financial support based on obtained votes) after the election. The election law provides that any candidate shall be subsidized to the amount of NT\$30 for each ballot exceeding one third of the ballots sufficient to win a seat.

Individual candidates began to rely heavily on mass-mediated campaign tools over traditional campaign materials after the 1996 presidential elections. Candidates could freely buy television and radio time or newspaper and magazine space for political advertisements within the limits of campaign expenditures. However, television and radio broadcasting stations offering chargeable political advertising time must allow equal and impartial access to political parties or candidates. For the presidential and vice presidential elections, the CEC provides public funds for political-view presentation meetings, which are aired on national wireless television stations. Candidates are allowed at least 30 minutes of time during each meeting. In addition, if two or more candidates agree, individuals or groups may hold a national wireless television

Table 17.2 Political Advertising Indexes in Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan

<i>Index</i>	<i>Japan</i>	<i>South Korea</i>	<i>Taiwan</i>
Political system	Parliamentary	Presidential	Presidential
Campaign duration	3 weeks	2 weeks	4 weeks
Parliamentary system	Bicameral	Unicameral	Bicameral
First major use of network TV	1969	1992	2000
TV ads	Unlimited (party only)	30 times	Unlimited
Radio ads	Unlimited (party only)	30 times	Unlimited
Print ads	Unlimited magazine and newspaper (party only); free limited newspaper ads (candidate and party)	Newspaper only (70 ads)	Unlimited (newspaper and magazine)
Free TV time	Candidate only	Candidate and party (11 times)	Candidate only
Free radio time	Candidate only	Candidate and party (11 times)	None
TV debates	Major parties only	More than 3 times	No more than 3 times
Campaign restrictions	Somewhat strict	Strict	Moderate
Expenditure limits	Somewhat strict	Strict	Moderate
Dominant campaign media	TV and mass rallies	TV	TV and mass rallies
Public finance	Some	Almost	Some
Opinion polls	Announcement prohibited	Announcement prohibited	Prohibited from 10 days before the ballot
Internet campaigning	Weak	Strong	Moderate
Internet ads	None	None	None

debate with the financial support of the CEC. Although there are three presidential television debates and one vice presidential television debate, each candidate is limited to 30 minutes in each debate.

For a comparative summary of the various elements in these three countries' systems of political advertising, see Table 17.2.

RESEARCH ON THE CONTENT OF POLITICAL ADVERTISING

The observation that personalization and candidate orientation are indications of Americanization in political advertising in Japan, Korea, and

Taiwan has been subjected to little empirical research. Although the actual electoral processes of each country are quite different, the variations in electoral campaigns have been narrowing in recent years because of these trends toward Americanization (Chang, 2000; Holden, 1999; Lee et al., 1998). In particular, the television spot focused on a candidate is typical of the political campaigning in these Asian cultures and, certainly, a sign of Americanization in Asia.

In studying the "videostyle" (Kaid & Johnston, 2001) and content of 1992 Korean presidential campaign advertising on television, researchers (Lee et al., 1998; Tak, Kaid,

& Lee, 1997) have identified patterns of verbal content that suggest Korean political advertising uses less negative advertising than American campaigns, but Korean ads were also less likely to focus on issues. Although they did not provide detailed comparisons with American ads, Lee and Benoit (2004) confirmed the use of fewer issues and less negativity in their functional analysis of the 2002 Korean ads. Tak, Kaid, and Khang (2004) also found that Korean spots relied more on candidate image cues than on issues and less on negative ads in their study of 352 political television spots from campaigns in both the United States and Korea between 1992 and 2002 (1992, 1996, and 2000 for the United States and 1992, 1997, and 2002 for Korea). For instance, American candidates were more likely to talk about issues such as the economy, education, and taxes, and Korean presidential candidates tended to emphasize their personal images and viability as a leader in the spots. The researchers suggest that these differences should be interpreted in terms of cultural norms in the two countries. In a high-context culture such as Korea, most information is encoded in the physical context or internalized in the person, and there is little information in the coded or explicit message (Hall, 1976). In addition, Korea has a high uncertainty avoidance culture—communication is centered on rules, norms, moralities, and proper behaviors (Hofstede, 1983)—so candidates were also more likely to use ethical or source-credibility appeals that gave emphasis to authority figures. As a probable result of cultural patterns, Korean ads mainly aim at affect and emotional elicitation and avoid the expression of conflict or dissatisfaction openly (Hofstede, 1983).

Content analysis of Korean television spots has also found differences in the nonverbal behavior of Korean candidates (formal address, fewer expansive gestures) and television production techniques (more low-angle shots and fewer special effects) that may arise

from the desire for proper behaviors in the Korean culture, along with the greater emphasis on the social aspects of *che-myon*, or face-saving (Tak et al., 2004).

Studies of the content of political advertising in Taiwan (Chang, 2000, 2003) have illustrated the importance of cultural variables, but researchers have also found that content in Taiwan's political ads also shows some transference of principles related to Americanized styles of campaigning. Similar analyses of Japanese political television advertising are not yet available.

DISCUSSIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

This description provides an opportunity to gain better understanding and insight into how political phenomena are related to cultural orientation by comparing and contrasting the televised political advertising in three major Asian democracies. Although Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan represent typical Eastern cultures, these countries also demonstrate critical differences embedded in cultural and political values. However, Plasser and Plasser (2002) observe that “the imperatives of personal politics and candidate-centered styles of campaigns seem to favor approaches toward television personalization observable in most of the areas studied worldwide” (p. 277).

Examination of Japanese election campaigns reveals that political reforms have tried to counteract the trend toward the increasingly personalized campaigning that has become characteristic of virtually all advanced democratic countries in recent years. Even individual candidates are prohibited from purchasing any advertising time on television or radio or space in newspapers and magazines. Korea is the strictest case among the three countries: It allowed no political advertising in the electronic media until the 1992 election, and many restrictions remain on types and quantity of political advertising. These

controls on campaign activity were eagerly sought by Korea's conservative ruling parties, in large part because they were expected to disadvantage the opposition parties. In regard to campaign expenditures, Korea has exercised full public oversight of election campaigns since the 2002 presidential election.

Taiwan boasts Asia's most liberal election laws, and an affluent society has led to media- and money-driven electoral campaigns (Schafferer, 2004). Political ads on network television are still illegal in parliamentary elections, whereas the presidential election law does not restrict political advertising at all on any mass media. Because the election law does not explicitly outlaw political advertising on cable, and the authorities are hesitant to tackle this highly sensitive issue, more and more candidates are appealing to the electorate through cable TV ads. Privately owned cable TV plays an increasingly significant role in Taiwan's election campaigns, which makes Taiwan extremely unusual among nations.

By the end of the 20th century, political marketing appeared to be a global phenomenon, with more and more election campaigns resembling those of the United States. Comparative research has shown the existence of a so-called Americanization of election campaign practices in other democracies (Schafferer, 2004). The reason behind this worldwide proliferation of U.S.-style campaigning may be, in part, transnational diffusion and implementation of American concepts and strategies of electoral campaigning. The liberalization and democratization processes of such countries intensified political competition and the way in which election campaigns were conducted (Schafferer, 2004).

There are a number of environmental constraints on the design of election campaigns that must be considered. At the same time, we should also evaluate the impact of structural factors in building a new approach to election campaigning (Rawnsley, 2003). The information revolution and the growing popularity of

the Internet especially have allowed candidates to explore innovative campaign techniques that have brought to the surface new forms and methods of interaction between candidates and voters (Morris, 2003). However, the use of the Internet is sometimes overshadowed by dependence on more traditional mass-mediated campaign methods, because there is no political advertising through the Internet in those three countries. The evidence shows that political use of the Internet is, despite the hype, still in its infancy but that more extensive use will lead to changes in the style and mode of campaign communications in those countries.

In the case of the Internet, Korea ranks first in use for political campaigns, followed by Taiwan. This new resource began to be used in Korean politics after the 1997 presidential election, and a more systematic use took place in the 2002 election campaign. Young voters, called the net generation, showed more political participation than ever before through the Internet. Consequently, in 2002, Korea became the first country in the world where the Internet played a crucial role in the election of a president to office.

In Taiwan, systematic use of the Internet first took place during the 2000 presidential campaign. All the candidates had Web sites devoted to them and their platforms. Political use of the Internet in Taiwan is still in its infancy, but it certainly offers the possibility that it may become another channel for political advertising, as Web sites are already being consulted for campaign information during presidential campaigns (Hong & Chang, 2002; Wang, 2002). On the other hand, Japan has shown a reluctance to explore this new campaign device. This reluctance to develop Internet campaign practices draws broad support among Japan's old politicians regardless of party affiliation because it makes it more difficult for new and relatively unknown politicians to get their names and messages out to young voters and thus strengthens the reelection prospects of incumbents.

Further insight into the relationship between media representations of candidates and cultural values in these three countries might be provided by comparing campaign news coverage and candidate presentations through other media formats. A great limitation in pursuing research in this area is, of course, the lack of English-language research articles and data concerning political advertising in these countries, especially in Japan. Although political advertising research in Taiwan is relatively well established and covers a wide variety of issues and concerns, it also lacks the research devoted to the analysis of the contents and effectiveness of political advertising (Chang, 2003). Future research needs to provide more exhaustive information about the relationship between political advertising and cultural orientations in those countries.

There seems to be little doubt that culture plays an important role in the perception and use of political advertising. However, political advertising in non-American countries does not reflect the indigenous cultures alone but a mixture of those cultures and some selected American cultural traits (Tak et al., 1997). Certain fundamental differences across cultures call for the use of sensitized political advertising strategies or appeals in non-American countries. Even though evidence is clear of increasing Americanization in our three countries, deep-seated Asian cultural values still remain distinct. Thus considering American political advertising styles alone, without comparisons of the cultural values between countries, might be dangerous.

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