Mixed-Member Electoral Systems in Constitutional Context

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INTRODUCTION

Legislature-Centric and Executive-Centric Theories of Party Systems and Faction Systems

Nathan F. Batto and Gary W. Cox

Two central tenets of the New Institutional paradigm are that institutions shape incentives and that how they do so depends on the specific context in which they are embedded. Building on these tenets, this book argues that electoral systems are embedded within constitutional systems and that whether the head of government is directly or indirectly elected affects how the legislative electoral system shapes politicians’ incentives. Parties everywhere care about winning both legislative seats and executive offices. This book keeps both kinds of payoff in view and analyzes how constitutional strictures have mediated politicians’ reactions to new mixed-member electoral rules in several countries.

Mixed-Member Electoral Systems

Mixed-member electoral systems have been touted as having the potential to be “the electoral reform of the twenty-first century” (Shugart and Wattenberg 2001, 1). The basic idea behind such systems is simple. Some legislators are elected in single-member districts (SMDs) under plurality rule, while others are elected in multimember districts under some version of proportional representation (PR). Ideally, this offers citizens
the “best of both worlds,” combining the direct ties between representatives and voters that characterize SMD systems with the proportionality that defines PR systems, and thereby promoting moderate and stable politics (Shugart and Wattenberg 2001, chap. 25). Politicians all over the world have found these promises enticing, and, in recent years, countries opting for new electoral systems have more often than not chosen from the mixed-member family. Currently 32 countries use some version of a mixed-member system, including such diverse cases as Mexico, Ukraine, Andorra, South Korea, Venezuela, Romania, Jordan, Hungary, Mongolia, Lithuania, and Germany.

In this book, we focus most heavily on two prominent East Asian examples of mixed-member reform: Taiwan and Japan. However, many of the arguments we make are general; and empirically the book considers several other relevant cases—including Thailand, the Philippines, New Zealand, Bolivia, and Russia. The angle from which we examine mixed-member reforms hinges on the distinction between legislature-centric and executive-centric theories of electoral systems, to which we turn next.

**Legislature-Centric and Executive-Centric Theories**

Standard theories of electoral systems often start by assuming that actors mainly want to win seats in the national legislature. Such theories then analyze how different electoral systems push seat-maximizing parties toward different strategies in vote coordination, internal party organization, nominations, collaboration with other parties, and so on. We call such theories *legislature-centric* because they focus on how the electoral rules governing pursuit of legislative seats affect strategies. In these theories, the key factor driving politicians is their recognition that groups smaller than a certain threshold, determined by the legislative electoral rules, will be unable to efficiently translate their popular support into seats. In other words, failure to coordinate invites punishment in the form of lost legislative seats.

But of course politicians have other incentives to coordinate. In particular, larger parties may sometimes be essential vehicles for the pursuit of executive office—both ministerial portfolios and the chief executive position (whether prime minister or president). Thus, another way to think about coordination, which one might call *executive-centric*, focuses on how efficiently groups of different sizes can convert their ambitions for executive office into reality. In this line of theories, attention centers on the executive electoral rules. While early contributions to executive-centric theory (e.g., Shugart 1995; Cox 1997, chaps. 10–11) focused on presidential elec-
tions, Hicken (2009) articulated a broader theory relevant to both nonpresidential and presidential regimes. In the executive-centric line of theories, failure to coordinate invites punishment in the form of lost executive posts.

In reality, politicians care about both legislative seats and executive offices. Their decisions to form larger parties or split into smaller ones should thus reflect their calculations about how such maneuvers will affect their payoff in both seats and offices, weighted by their concern for each. Because executive posts are generally viewed as more powerful and desirable than legislative seats, one might even argue that theories of political coordination should be primarily executive-centric. This is consistent with work on party linkage or aggregation, such as Cox (1997, chaps. 10–11), Chhibber and Kollman (2004) and Hicken (2009), which stresses the extent to which cross-district linkage of legislative candidates is influenced by the extent of executive power.

How to Analyze the Electoral Reforms in Taiwan and Japan

To illustrate how constitutional systems adjust the incentives set up by electoral systems, this book starts with a narrow substantive focus. In particular, it looks at one of the classic topics in the electoral systems literature—the number of competitors—in the context of Taiwan and Japan. It then gradually expands outward, both in the range of political phenomena covered and in geographical scope. This introduction focuses on the evolution of party systems and faction systems after electoral reform in Taiwan and Japan.

Précis

Taiwan and Japan used similar single nontransferable vote (SNTV) electoral systems prior to reform and moved to similar mixed-member majoritarian (MMM) systems after it. If one considers the electoral system in isolation, the different outcomes in the two countries may seem puzzling. In each case, standard theories would predict that moving from SNTV to MMM should have induced greater coordination among competitors, reducing both the effective number of parties and the internal factionalization of the major parties. Yet, these very similar reforms have had noticeably different effects. In Japan, the hoped-for reduction in the effective number of parties has been rather slow in coming, and the number of factions has, if anything, actually increased. In Taiwan, in contrast, the party
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system almost immediately fell into a two-party mold after the reform of 2005, while the reform has seemed to have very little impact on the number of factions.

Bringing the constitutional systems into the analysis provides a much richer and more satisfying explanation. The different ways in which executive posts were allotted in the two countries—parliamentary Japan and semipresidential Taiwan—provided a much stronger impetus for party consolidation in the latter. Factions have also been affected in both countries, though the most important changes have been in areas other than the number of factions.

In the next several sections, we flesh out the argument just sketched. We begin by providing a slightly more detailed account of what the electoral reforms in Japan and Taiwan entailed.

The Substance of the Electoral Reforms in Japan and Taiwan

This section provides a quick sketch of the electoral rules before and after reform. The rules are reviewed in full detail in chapter 1.

Japan and Taiwan both used SNTV systems to conduct their elections prior to reform, and they now both use MMM systems. Japan held its first MMM election in 1996 and Taiwan followed suit in 2008.

There were some modest differences in the countries’ prereform systems. All seats in Japan were elected by SNTV, and most districts had three to five seats with an average of 3.96. Taiwan’s districts were slightly larger on average with an average of 5.68 seats per district. More significantly, Taiwan also had a party list tier, which elected 22% of the total seats. However, voters did not vote directly for the list tier; instead, party lists were elected on the basis of votes from the SNTV tier.

In Japan’s first MMM election, 300 seats were elected in SMDs while 200 were elected in the list tier. In subsequent elections, the list tier was reduced to 180 seats. Taiwan’s MMM system featured 73 SMDs, 34 party list seats, and six seats reserved for indigenous peoples in two SNTV districts. Note that in both countries, SMD seats outnumber list seats by a considerable margin. Among the more important differences, Taiwan has a single national list where Japan has eleven regional lists, and Taiwan does not allow dual candidacies while Japan does.

In sum, while there are some notable differences in the electoral rules, readers should not lose sight of the overriding similarities. In both coun-
tries, politicians and voters who had become accustomed to competing under SNTV rules had to adjust to a new set of incentives presented by new MMM rules.

A Legislature-Centric View of Electoral Reform

As noted above, a legislature-centric perspective draws attention to the incentives created by the electoral system used to elect the national legislature. Since both Taiwan and Japan changed their electoral systems from SNTV to MMM, new incentives should have reshaped party and faction systems in predictable ways.

Parties

The literature on electoral systems suggests that the change from SNTV to MMM in Japan and Taiwan should have reduced the number of political parties. Since SNTV has multisize districts and voters can only support one candidate, a plurality is not necessary for victory. The more seats there are, the lower the threshold for victory is. Moreover, because parties do not need to win a plurality, there is no need to compete over the median voter. Small parties can build their support bases around nonmedian platforms (Cox 1990). SNTV should thus be able to sustain a multiparty system.

In contrast, MMM combines the logic of single-member-plurality (SMP) and list PR. Duvergerian incentives toward bipolar competition under SMP rules are well known (see Duverger 1954; Rae 1967; Cox 1997). Since a plurality is necessary for victory, smaller competitors tend to be weeded out, either because voters choose not to waste their votes on small parties or because, after suffering a string of defeats, small parties simply die off. If the two competitors are the same in all districts across the country, SMP should lead to a two-party system.

In MMM systems, this Duvergerian logic is mitigated by the existence of the list tier. Small parties may not be able to win nominal seats, but they can win list seats. However, small parties do not get full proportional value for their votes. Because the two tiers are not linked, small parties win a proportional number of list tier seats, but this still leaves them underrepresented in the SMDs and thus in the full chamber. Moreover, because the nominal tier is so much bigger than the list tier in East Asian systems, the proportionality of the list tier is overwhelmed by the majoritarian out-
comes of the nominal tier. The MMM systems in Japan and Taiwan thus put severe pressure on small parties, creating incentives for a shift toward a two-party system.

As Chi Huang, Ming-Feng Kuo, and Hans Stockton document (chapter 1), these expectations have been met much more closely in Taiwan than in Japan. In Taiwan, the first MMM election saw the effective number of parties in the legislature plunge from 3.26 in 2004 to a mere 1.75 in 2008; this is exactly what conventional theories would predict. In Japan, however, the trend has not been so clear. In fact, compared to the 1986 and 1990 SNTV elections, the first two MMM elections had a higher effective number of parliamentary parties. There has been a slow reduction of parties over the past decade, but this decrease in the number of parties has taken five elections under the new system. Japan’s change has been slow and gradual; Taiwan’s has been quick and dramatic.

**Factions**

A legislature-centric view suggests that electoral reform also should have affected the internal factions of the major parties in Japan and Taiwan. It is no simple task to define precisely what a faction is. One set of scholars has tried to conceptualize factions by looking at various critical dimensions, such as a group’s organization, stability over time, ideological orientation, or its propensity toward rent-seeking. The problem is that factions often evolve and shift across these various lines. A second set of scholars worries less about the specific manifestation of the groups and more about the fact that a subgroup exists and contests power. Boucek, building on Zariski (1960) and Belloni and Beller (1978), defines factionalism as “the partitioning of a political party ... into sub-units which are more or less institutionalized and who engage in collective action to achieve their members’ particular objectives” (2009, 14). One particular advantage of this definition for our project is that the locus of the competition determines the nature of the faction. For example, competition over control of local governments implies locally oriented factions (Belloni and Beller 1978). However, while Boucek’s conceptualization is intentionally broad and inclusive, in this book we are only interested in the subset of factions that try to win power by nominating legislative candidates and securing executive posts.

Factionalization of parties has been prominent in both Japan and Taiwan, and several authors have argued that the SNTV electoral system promoted factionalism. Most accounts are based on the experience of the Japanese Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and can be summarized as fol-
lows. A party wishing to win a majority of seats must nominate multiple candidates in most districts, and the competition within the party for nominations is intense. Factions arise as nominating coalitions, and they help their members run credible campaigns by centrally collecting financial resources. Factions generally avoid supporting more than one person in each district, and the ideal situation for a faction would be to nominate exactly one candidate in each district (Thayer 1969, chap. 2; Fukui 1970, chap. 5; Curtis 1971, chap. 1; Baerwald 1986, 22; Curtis 1988, 82–86; Cox and Rosenbluth 1993). 5

Perhaps the clearest exposition of a legislature-centric theory of factions comes from Kohno (1992), who argues that there were five major factions during the SNTV era because the largest electoral districts had five seats. Supporting his view, Kohno shows that, while the four bigger factions nominated candidates in most districts, the smaller Komoto faction nominated most of its candidates in five-seat districts. 6

In Taiwan, Rigger (1999) tells a similar story about the Democratic Progressive Party’s (DPP) factions in the 1990s. One of the factions’ major roles is to help members win nominations. For much of the democratic era, DPP nominations were decided, at least in part, by allowing party members to vote. Factions recruit both candidates and party members, and they mobilize their members to vote on behalf of their candidates. District magnitude varies much more widely in Taiwan than in Japan, so factions do not always try to nominate their own candidate in each district. Instead, they often trade support across district lines. Money does not play as important a role in DPP as in LDP factional politics, but the DPP factions do provide electoral resources in the form of association with a national figure. Both in the nomination contest and in the general election, a DPP candidate can brand himself as “the Chen Shui-bian candidate,” for example (Rigger 2001, chap. 5).

If the SNTV electoral system was, in fact, the critical factor in sustaining multiple intraparty factions, we might see changes after electoral reform. In MMM, each district has only one seat, so a party should only nominate one candidate. The literature suggests that competition for nominations is much like competition for seats, in that the decision rule is critical in determining how much consolidation to expect. If nominations are determined by a plurality rule, standard Duvergerian logic suggests that two big factions should form to contest each nomination. However, a different rule, such as requiring an absolute majority, may allow smaller factions some bargaining space in which to maneuver (Key 1984 [1949]; Duverger 1954; Canon 1978; Shugart and Carey 1992).
What is the decision rule for nominations in Taiwan and Japan? In Taiwan, contested nominations are now decided by telephone polls. The procedures are less transparent in Japan, where back-room negotiations determine most contentious questions (see chapter 5 for more on nominations in Japan and Taiwan). Telephone polls use a plurality rule, and the single-shot contest does not allow runners-up any opportunity to use their demonstrated strength as bargaining chips. Japanese back-room negotiations allow smaller factions much more opportunity to trade their support in return for other concessions. Thus Taiwan’s nominations can be considered as using the plurality rule, while Japanese nominations can be seen as employing a majority rule. This implies that the pressures toward two factions should be stronger in Taiwan than in Japan.

However, the pressure to consolidate the faction system in Japan should not be underestimated. The literature suggests that majoritarian systems will not support an unlimited number of actors. For example, a runoff system will theoretically only support three candidates (Cox 1997). Empirically, majoritarian systems have, in fact, discriminated against small parties (Farrell 2011). In sum, there should be reductive pressure in both countries, though it should be stronger in Taiwan than in Japan.7

To recap, both the LDP and DPP had four big factions and several smaller ones in the SNTV era. If the factions were, in fact, products of the electoral systems, the new MMM systems should have brought about some consolidation. In Taiwan, the new system should have pushed toward two big factions and perhaps a few smaller ones. In Japan, the pressures would have been weaker but still clearly reductive.

This, however, is not a good description of the actual empirical record. To show this, we shall consider the LDP, DPP and Kuomintang (KMT) factions in turn.

The five major LDP factions have continued to exist in the postreform era. They have become less influential in the area of nominations (Cox, Rosenbluth, and Thies 1999, 42–47), but the continued presence of so many factions suggests that contesting nominations was not the only, or perhaps even the major, reason for their existence. In fact, the LDP faction system has actually expanded. In addition to the five old factions, four newer factions have emerged. Rather than consolidating into fewer factions, the LDP system has trended in the opposite direction.

The DPP faction system has also undergone significant changes, but the current system is arguably just as complex as the prereform system. In the 1990s, the DPP had four big factions and several smaller ones. These factions were formally organized and physically headquartered in legisla-
tive offices. Today, factions are all informally organized, and only one of the old factions survives. Two other major factions are led by former premiers and presidential aspirants. A fourth faction centered on former President Chen Shui-bian is waning in strength, while a fifth faction led by the 2012 presidential candidate is growing and may soon rival the big three factions. Several smaller factions also continue to operate. This reshuffling of the faction system is not compatible with legislature-centric expectations. There were major changes in the early 2000s, long before electoral reform, when the factions aligned in the direction of two big coalitions. In 2006, after the electoral reform had been passed and one might expect a two-faction system to emerge, the system was reorganized into multiple informal factions.

KMT internal factions have never fit the SNTV electoral model very well. At the national level, the KMT has had three periods of clear factional divisions during the democratic era. In the early 1990s, the party was often divided into the mainstream and nonmainstream camps, led by President Lee Teng-hui and Premier Hau Pei-tsun, respectively (Tien 1996; Lin and Teddards 2003). In the late 1990s, the KMT was again split into two factions, with one led by Lee and his protégé, Vice President Lien Chan, and the other led by Governor James Soong (Diamond 2001). Finally, in the period before the 2008 election, the party was split into supporters of Speaker Wang Jin-pyng and former Taipei City mayor Ma Ying-jeou. All three of these splits can be understood as struggles between the KMT’s nativist and orthodox Chinese wings. Two of the splits occurred during the SNTV era, while the third happened as the new electoral system was being drawn up, yet all three featured two big factions. District magnitude in the legislative electoral system seems to have made no difference.

This impression is strengthened by looking at the KMT’s local factions. The KMT’s local factions are based in a specific county. Since legislative districts in the SNTV era were counties, an electoral-systems theory of factionalism would predict that the number of local factions should depend on the number of seats available in each county. In fact, there were almost always two local factions. This was true in both small counties and big counties. For instance, in Taichung County, which had between six and 11 seats, the two KMT factions generally each nominated two or three legislative candidates. Moreover, local factions commonly nominated multiple candidates in each district for the County Assembly elections, which were also conducted under SNTV rules. The KMT’s local factions have not seen any dramatic changes since electoral reform.
Adding an Executive-Centric Perspective

We have reviewed legislature-centric arguments that the electoral reforms in Japan and Taiwan should have reduced the number of parties and factions; and pointed out that the empirical record does not fit well with the theoretical predictions. In this section, we begin the process of explaining this discrepancy between theory and evidence by adding an executive-centric perspective. In this perspective, the pursuit of executive posts drives politicians, so the ways in which these posts are allotted is crucial.

Parties

From an executive-centric standpoint, the opening of executive positions to competition from opposition parties was an important milestone in the development of both countries’ party systems. Both Japan and Taiwan experienced a long period of one-party dominance. In Taiwan, one-party dominance was legally mandated until 1986. Thereafter, it continued for some time because of the KMT’s enormous resource advantages. In Japan, one-party dominance was not legally mandated. However, U.S. disapproval of the Japan Socialist Party (JSP) strongly militated against their participation in government, as did the LDP’s resource advantages as the party of government.

During the period of one-party dominance in Taiwan, the opposition’s incentive to coalesce was lessened by the common belief that they could not win, even were they better coordinated. Prior to 1986, the opposition had no chance of peacefully assuming power. From 1986 until 1991, the KMT’s grip on the Legislative Yuan was assured by the presence of mainland representatives; and the opposition might have doubted the KMT’s willingness to hold fair presidential elections or to relinquish power should they lose. Similarly, during the period of one-party dominance in Japan, the opposition faced a significant disincentive to coordination. U.S. opposition to JSP participation in government both reduced the chance that an opposition alliance could win and reduced the value of winning. The structural barriers to opposition governance in both countries meant that poor coordination was not the only, or main, reason the opposition believed executive power was unobtainable. Thus, the opposition could fragment without paying a penalty in lost executive offices, as those offices were already beyond its grasp for other reasons.

The period of one-party dominance ended in the early 1990s in Japan and in the early 2000s in Taiwan. Once the prime ministership in Japan...
and the presidency in Taiwan became realistic goals, opposition parties had greater incentives to settle their differences and present a unified front in the competition for the top spot and to make compromises necessary to bring new segments of voters into their coalition. From an executive-centric perspective, the key reforms in both Japan and Taiwan were those removing structural barriers impeding opposition competition for executive office. In Taiwan, this meant lifting martial law and legalizing new political parties (1987), mandating the retirement of the mainland representatives (1991), and directly electing the entire legislature (1992) and the president (1996). In Japan, structural barriers lessened as U.S. opposition to JSP involvement in government relaxed, especially after the Cold War's end. In both cases, the period of one-party dominance—with its associated and widespread belief that the opposition could never win power—was dramatically shattered by a somewhat unexpected rotation of power. Both of these rotations came about because of splits in the old dominant party, not because the opposition first cobbled together a majority in the electorate. However, the triumph of the seven-party coalition in Japan in 1993 and the DPP's victory with a 39% plurality in the 2000 presidential election both made it clear that the executive was now in play.

The Japanese and Taiwanese responded to the onset of competitive politics for control of the executive quite differently. In Taiwan, the top prize, the presidency, could be won only by winning a plurality in the presidential election. Competition for the presidency thus drove the system toward two main candidates who, in turn, had strong incentives to organize legislators behind their candidacies.

Theoretically, politicians may take some time to adapt to the coordinating incentives of plurality elections. Indeed, the recognition that the first two parties to establish themselves as viable routes to the presidency will likely be permanent features of the electoral landscape can raise the initial stakes and prevent coordination in the short run, as suggested by Fillipov, Ordeshook, and Shvetsova (1999). The best example of this on the Taiwanese scene is the formation of the People First Party after the 2000 election. After running a rebel campaign in 2000, thereby throwing the presidency to the DPP, James Soong found it easier to form a new party and contest the leadership of the Blue camp from outside, than to try to return to the KMT fold and secure its nomination. In the event, Soong was not able to establish himself as the consensus candidate and ended up accepting the second spot on a joint ticket in 2004. A merger of the two parties has been a continual possibility, especially after it became clear the People First Party would not displace the KMT as leader of the Blue camp.
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(Fell 2008). A somewhat different hiccup on the way toward bipartism was the Taiwan Solidarity Union, formed by former president Lee Teng-hui for the explicit purpose of leading his followers from the Blue camp into the Green camp (Wu 2002).

All told, then, the emergence of plurality competition for the presidency was the main engine driving a bipolarization of politics into a Blue camp/Green camp format with echoes of the French quadrille bipolaire. The SNTV system for legislative elections provided space for multiple parties to survive within each camp. After the change to MMM, this space for small parties shrunk dramatically, and the party system quickly reduced to the two presidential contestants.

In Japan, things were different. Because the prime minister was elected indirectly, by the Diet, there were two viable routes to winning the prime ministership and other ministerial positions. One was to organize a large enough party (or coalition) to win a parliamentary majority at the legislative elections and then divide the ministerial portfolios among the victors. Call this the electoral strategy. A second option was to win as many seats as possible and then, if no other party won a majority, bargain one’s way into office after the election. Call this the postelectoral strategy.

At this point, one can see why the emergence of close competition for the top executive position in Japan might not lead to bipartism in the Diet. Indirect election of a cabinet can be like electing a plural executive (M seats) using a two-stage electoral process. To the extent this analogy holds, one expects up to M+1 viable competitors. To put the point another way, if enough competitors for the prime ministership (and other executive offices) pursue a postelectoral strategy, then multiple parties can compete in the legislative elections, leaving the final selection to legislative bargaining. It is only if enough competitors for executive office opt for an electoral strategy that one expects a reduction in the number of parties (or the emergence of preelection alliances, on which see Carroll and Cox 2007).

By this account, the emergence of real competition for the top executive post(s), rather than electoral reforms, drove the evolution of the party system in both Japan and Taiwan. The responses differed because direct election of a powerful president demanded an electoral strategy, whereas indirect election of a relatively less powerful prime minister allowed a mixture of electoral and postelectoral strategies.

**Factions**

What accounts for the various changes or lack of changes in the parties’ faction systems? An executive-centric explanation stresses the number of
important posts at stake. With a directly elected, nondivisible prize such as the presidency, competitors tended to divide into two factions. Where the prize was divisible, as with cabinet posts, it was not so important to aggregate into just two big factions. Multiple factions could survive by bargaining for a share of cabinet positions.

An executive-centric perspective makes the persistence of multiple LDP factions more understandable. Most accounts of Japanese factions cite the electoral system as one reason for the factions’ existence, but also stress the importance of bargaining over cabinet positions. Indeed, since the 1950s, the LDP’s seniority system has ensured that cabinet positions are distributed more or less proportionally among the different factions. The factions have also fought for their fair share of other senior posts. While the electoral system changed, the parliamentary system and the number of important cabinet posts available did not. Since the number of cabinet posts is quite high, Japan’s system could theoretically support even more factions. In fact, Yoshiaki Kobayashi and Hiroki Tsukiyama (chapter 3) suggest that the emergence of the four newer LDP factions is due, at least in part, to the prime minister’s preference to give important posts to smaller rival factions.

KMT factionalism also makes much more sense from an executive-centric perspective. All three periods of heightened factionalism at the national level were struggles over the presidency. In the latter two, the question was which faction would represent the KMT in the presidential elections of 2000 and 2008. In the first case, the question was whether the president or the premier would dominate politics in the new democratic system. Likewise, local factionalism was based on competition over executive power. County executives have been directly elected since the 1950s, and many local factions can trace their history back to those first elections. Almost all accounts of KMT local factions stress winning the county government and controlling its resources as the most important goal. Winning legislative or county assembly seats in SNTV elections is decidedly less important.

The shifts in the number of DPP factions require a more complex explanation. Before 2000, DPP politicians focused on winning seats in the legislature, and a legislature-centric explanation is quite useful. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, with only a small number of seats open to elections and not much support in the electorate, the DPP often could only nominate one candidates and it had two main factions, a more radical New Tide faction and a more moderate Formosa faction. As the number of seats up for election increased and the party’s popularity grew in the 1990s, the DPP nominated more candidates per district. At the same time,
two new factions, the Welfare Alliance and the Justice Alliance, arose. In 2000, Chen Shui-bian won the presidency and the faction system changed dramatically. The Formosa faction disintegrated, Chen’s Justice Alliance grew dramatically, and the Justice Alliance and New Tide faction forged a coalition, creating a clear distinction between those in power and those out of power. As Chen’s two terms in office neared an end, the faction system changed once again, moving away from the nascent bifactional system. The DPP formally dissolved its factions in 2006, allowing the main presidential contenders an opportunity to build new coalitions around themselves. However, the DPP has not seen the emergence of a pure bifactional system; in addition to the factions built to support President Chen and three presidential aspirants, one old faction survived and several smaller ones formed. The other factions seem to be operating on the legislature-centric model rather than focusing on winning the presidential nomination. They organize primarily to win posts in SNTV elections, such as those for the legislative party list, city councils, or the DPP’s Central Executive Committee, and they trade support across district lines to win nominations in single-seat elections, such as those for local mayors or seats in the legislative nominal tier. Thus, DPP factions are currently organized around a mixture of executive-centric and legislature-centric logics.

Combining the legislature-centric and executive-centric perspectives also provides insight toward another interesting question, why factions vary so much in their institutionalization. When factions are mainly vehicles to place their paramount leader in high executive office, they can be rather kaleidoscopic, rising and falling rapidly with their leaders’ fortunes. In contrast, when factions become organizations to provide nomination and election assistance to all their legislative members, as well as helping them move up a lengthy hierarchy of internal posts, then they will be much more stable and institutionalized.

Japanese and Taiwanese factions fit this argument quite well. LDP factions help a legislator advance through every step of his or her career, and LDP factions are famously highly institutionalized. The main purpose of KMT factions has been to fill the top executive office, and KMT factions have been more loosely organized. The national factions faded away as soon as the contest over the presidency was resolved. Some local factions, such as the Taichung factions examined in chapter 4, have had long life spans, yet even they are informally organized. Other local factions are much more ephemeral and seemingly reorganize whenever a new person is elected into the top local office. Indeed, the in-power faction in many townships is referred to simply as the “town hall faction,” and it is often opposed by
“the farmers’ association faction.” The DPP has experienced both sides of the spectrum. In the 1990s, when factions were primarily focused on winning seats in the legislature and controlling party posts, DPP factions were formally organized and quite stable. When the presidency came into play, the factions were formally abolished, factional affiliations became far more ambiguous, and factional activities become far less rigidly organized.

**Dual Candidacy**

An executive-centric perspective may also help us understand why Japan allowed dual candidacy while Taiwan did not.

The LDP’s factions had famously resisted electoral reform for decades. When they could no longer block reform, they still perceived multiple executive prizes for which they might compete. The current occupants of these plum posts faced a choice between adopting intraparty rules allowing dual nomination or not.

Allowing dual candidacy (and operating them in the way the LDP did) improved the liquidity of the market in which the factional chiefs bargained for LDP nominations for their followers. Without dual candidacy, the nominations that the factions could trade came in four basic denominations, ordered from most to least valuable: safe slots on the party list; safe districts; marginal slots on the party list; and marginal districts. Allowing dual candidacy created a fifth denomination, less valuable than any of the others: a marginal zombie slot. This allowed finer trades among the factions, helping them avoid bargaining failures (which would take the form of multiple conservative candidates in the SMDs). It is not surprising that the LDP chose to implement party rules that allowed zombies, given that the Japanese factions had long experience in bargaining over the LDP nomination under the SNTV system; that the array of executive offices for which they competed had not changed; and that the cost of bargaining failure was higher under the new electoral system.

In contrast to Japan, Taiwan had a much simpler bargaining context and did not adopt dual candidacy. When there was one preeminent prize, the presidency, that was reasonably attainable, Taiwanese parties tended to have two main factions or coalitions vying for that position. These factions had less need to create a small-denomination coin (zombie slots) in order to ensure that their bargaining over legislative nominations did not break down, simply because the bargain between two was simpler than the bargain between many. Moreover, the consequence of bargaining failure was less severe. Because the presidency was directly elected, losing a seat in the
legislature due to a nomination squabble would not immediately translate into a lower probability of winning the chief executive position, as it would in parliamentary Japan.

Structure of the Volume

The remainder of this volume will explore and develop the themes laid out in this introduction, starting from a narrow focus and moving outward. Part I compares the experiences of Japan and Taiwan. The first four chapters expand directly on the sketches of the party and faction systems laid out in the introduction. The next three chapters move to other aspects of the political systems in the two countries to show that many other aspects of politics can also be fruitfully explored by considering both a legislature-centric and executive-centric perspective. Part II moves beyond Japan and Taiwan to other countries that have mixed-member electoral systems. In countries as diverse as Thailand, the Philippines, New Zealand, Bolivia, and Russia, the way the executive is elected has reverberations throughout the political system, causing the mixed-member systems to operate quite differently in different countries.

Chapter 1 lays out a concrete foundation for all the subsequent chapters. After describing the electoral rules in Taiwan and Japan in detail, Chi Huang, Ming-Feng Kuo, and Hans Stockton present the initial puzzle—that following electoral reform, the number of parties decreased gradually in Japan but very quickly in Taiwan. The authors then explore the degree to which this difference can be explained by the small variations in the electoral rules in the two countries, arguing that electoral rules can only account for part of the difference. Methodologically, Huang, Kuo, and Stockton present their argument in the framework of a most similar systems design and an interrupted time series with electoral reform as the interrupting event. This approach is adopted throughout part I of this volume, though it is implicit rather than explicit in the other chapters.

Chapter 2 takes up the unresolved puzzle from chapter 1. Since electoral rules cannot fully explain the numbers of parties, Jih-wen Lin examines the impact of the constitutional rules. Lin argues that Japan’s parliamentary system provides opportunities for smaller parties to exercise influence over cabinet portfolios. In contrast, since cabinet positions in Taiwan’s semi-presidential system are determined by the president, there is little incentive for politicians to split from the two big parties. Taken together, the first
two chapters provide a fuller explanation for the different party systems in Taiwan and Japan after electoral reform.

Chapters 3 and 4 investigate changes in the faction systems in Japan and Taiwan. Following electoral reform in Japan, many analysts expected the LDP’s factions to wither away and viewed their persistence as a bit of a puzzle. The most common explanation is that factions have retained an important role in allotting cabinet and party posts. Koshiaki Kobayashi and Hiroki Tsukiyama build on this notion by examining how the LDP party president has leveraged his institutional power to expand the influence of his own faction. Especially when the LDP president is personally popular, he has given his own faction a disproportionate share of nominations and posts. However, other factions remain viable because the prime minister still needs their support in parliamentary confidence votes. In Chapter 4, Nathan F. Batto and Hsin-ta Huang discuss the limited impact electoral reform has had on the KMT’s and DPP’s internal factions. For both parties, competition over executive posts and the continuing use of SNTV in other elections has been more important to the faction systems than the adoption of MMM in legislative elections.

Chapters 5, 6, and 7 move beyond a narrow focus on the numbers of competitors to look more broadly at how parties, candidates, and voters have adapted to the new electoral systems. In chapter 5, Eric Chen-hua Yu, Kaori Shoji, and Nathan F. Batto examine candidate selection. In both Taiwan and Japan, parties have responded to the new electoral system by adapting new methods for identifying and nominating candidates. In Taiwan, polling primaries have become the default system for both major parties, while Japanese parties have increasingly turned to the kobo (public recruitment) system. Both of these institutions can be seen as attempts to select a candidate capable of appealing to pluralities or even majorities of voters in the district. Chapter 6 investigates trends in campaign strategies under the new electoral regimes. Kuniaki Nemoto and Chia-hung Tsai argue that the new electoral system has led to increasingly party-centered campaign strategies. Parties have increasingly used list nominations and cabinet positions strategically to try to enhance party popularity and further broad party goals. They have also reacted to the new system by forming preelectoral coalitions. However, the different institutional rules have affected the extent to which parties in Japan and Taiwan have adopted these new strategies. Chapter 7 looks at split-ticket voting. T. Y. Wang, Chang-chih Lin, and Yi-ching Hsiao argue that split-ticket voting takes place mostly within, rather than across, the two big camps. Supporters of
larger and smaller parties face quite different strategic contexts. In particular, smaller parties have a strong incentive to educate their supporters on the different ways in which votes are counted in the two tiers, and this is reflected in patterns of split-ticket voting.

Part II turns outward. While the theoretical logic presented in this introduction is grounded in the concrete realities of Japan and Taiwan, much of it can easily be transplanted to other contexts. In chapter 8, Hicken examines how the number of parties evolved in two Southeast Asian countries that have adopted MMM, Thailand and the Philippines. At first glance, these might appear to be counter-examples, since the presidential Philippines retains a fragmented party system while parliamentary Thailand has moved to a two-party system. However, Allen Hicken argues that these developments are, in fact, quite compatible with the logic of executive competition. In Thailand, reforms have produced highly nationalized politics and a dominant prime minister who has little need to compromise with other parties or minority factions within his party. In effect, what we have termed the postelectoral strategy was simply not viable in Thailand, and the result was, predictably, a two-party system. In the Philippines, Hicken argues that there are systemic disincentives for presidential hopefuls to engage in party-building. This results in a fragmented field in presidential elections, which, in turn, inflates the number of parties in the legislature. In chapter 9, Matthew S. Shugart and Alexander C. Tan move farther afield, looking at the mushrooming number of parties in New Zealand. Once considered the quintessential example of Westminster-style parliamentary democracy, New Zealand now has a quite fragmented party system, with as many as eight parties winning seats in parliament. Shugart and Tan argue that this fragmentation is due to both the permissive MMP electoral rules and the profitability of postelection strategies. The fragmentation has precluded majority party governments, and small parties have consistently been able to gain access to the cabinet. The result is a party system with two big parties and many small parties. In chapter 10, Nathan A. Batto, Henry F. Kim, and Natalia Matukhno look at how presidential candidates affect voting in legislative elections in Bolivia and Russia, two countries very dissimilar to each other as well as to Taiwan and Japan. Voters in Bolivia and Russia have the option to vote “blank” or “against all,” an option that is exercised far more often in the nominal tier than in the list tier. Many parties in these two countries are personal vehicles for presidential candidates and have difficulty fielding a full roster of credible district candidates. While voters might vote for the party list to support the presidential candidate, they are less likely to see connections between the larger party and the nominal
tier candidate, especially in inchoate parties. That is, they may not vote for the nominal tier candidate from their favorite presidential candidate’s party, even if they are not attracted to any other district candidate. In fact, blank voting in the nominal tier is more common where inchoate parties are more popular.

Finally, Chi Huang’s conclusion brings the focus squarely back to the interactions between the constitutional system and the electoral system. In light of the theoretical and empirical lessons of this volume, Huang reminds us that similar institutions embedded within different concrete contexts can produce very different outcomes.

NOTES


2. As is the standard practice, we use Laakso and Taagepera’s (1979) index to operationalize our conceptual variable, coordination. We acknowledge that this index does not always accurately measure the degree of coordination in the system. For example, a value of roughly two can be obtained with two parties of .51 and .49 but also with three parties of size .66, .17, and .17. Several authors, such as Dunleavy and Boucek (2003) and Gaines and Taagepera (2013), have proposed new measures to address this deficiency. Nonetheless, the Laakso and Taagepera index has the advantages of simplicity and familiarity to most readers, so we continue to employ it while waiting for a consensus to emerge on a new standard.

3. For example, Duverger considers factions to simply be the product of how much internal diversity a party allowed its members (1954). Rose suggests that factions must be organized and stable over time (1964). Sartori proposes that factions be classified on four dimensions, including organization, motivation, ideology, and their position on the Left–Right spectrum (1976). The International Comparative Political Parties project, led by Kenneth Janda, operationalized factions by measuring legislative cohesion, ideology, issues, leadership, strategy and tactics, and party purges (Janda 1993). For a review of different conceptualizations of factions, see Boucek (2009).

4. In privileging this subset, we follow in the tradition of V.O. Key, who considers a faction to be any combination of actors who support a particular candidate (1984 [1949]).

5. Factions can also play a role in dividing the vote equally among a party’s several candidates in multimember districts (see McCubbins and Rosenbluth 1995).

6. The Japanese literature pays less attention to the JSP factions but tends to view them also as products of the electoral incentives inherent in SNTV.

7. These pressures might be tempered somewhat by the list tier. Smaller factions might survive by contesting list seats, though the relatively small list tiers in Japan and Taiwan limit the attractiveness of this survival strategy.

8. On the KMT’s local factions, see Jacobs 2008; Rigger 1999, chap. 4; Chen 1996; Bosco 1992; and chapter 4, this volume.
9. The Blue camp is a loose coalition of pro-unification parties, including the KMT, the PFP, and the New Party. The Green camp is a coalition of pro-independence parties, including the DPP and the TSU.

10. The Japanese media labeled dual candidates who lose in the district race but win a list seat as “zombies,” since they have been killed in one tier but brought back to life in the other.

REFERENCES


