Mixed-Member Electoral Systems in Constitutional Context

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Electoral systems determine how votes cast in an election are translated into seats in the legislature, and thus to a large extent determine who wins and who loses in the political arena. The past two decades has seen a striking increase in the prevalence of mixed-member electoral systems. By combining the advantages of plurality rule and proportional representation, these mixed systems attempt to strike a balance between the two. The intended and unintended consequences of such hybrid efforts have attracted considerable attention from scholars (e.g., Jou 2009; Ferrara 2004; Golder 2005; Huang 2011; Huang and Wang 2014; Huang, Wang, and Kuo 2008; Kostadinova 2002; Kohno 1997; Kuo, Huang, and Wang 2012; Lin 2008; Massicotte and Blais 1999; Moser and Scheiner 2004, 2012; Nishikawa and Herron 2004; Norris 2004; Reed 1999). Since the 1990s, democratic countries all over the world, as diverse as Italy, Scotland, Mexico, Bolivia, Venezuela, Russia, Albania, Hungary, Georgia, Lithuania, and New Zealand, have adopted mixed-member electoral systems. This is also true for many Asian countries, including Japan, Taiwan, Korea, Thailand, and the Philippines.

Despite their considerable differences in forms of government and political culture, congruent patterns in the new electoral systems are evident across the Asian democracies. Japan, Taiwan, Korea, Thailand and the
Philippines all opted for mixed-member majoritarian (MMM) variants and all of them chose to weight the system heavily in favor of the majoritarian element and against the PR list (Reilly 2006, 2007).

This chapter examines legislative elections in two Asian democracies, Taiwan and Japan, in order to answer a basic research question: why these two countries, having switched from single nontransferable vote (SNTV) to similar new MMM systems, displayed such divergent speeds and degrees of reaching theoretically expected political consequences. Specifically, we examine the change in party systems from multiparty to two-party systems. After electoral reform, Japan saw a gradual evolution from a multiparty to a two-party system over several election cycles, while the party system in Taiwan changed immediately and dramatically in the first postreform election (Huang 2011).

Japan and Taiwan may constitute a no less comparable pair of subjects than Giannetti and Grofman’s (2011) choice of Italy and Japan. A comparative study of these two East Asian countries, while “controlling” for similarities, can shed some light on (1) the differential effects resulting from differing constitutional structure, and (2) how seemingly “minor” differences in electoral rules can disproportionately influence political consequences (see table 1.1 for a summary of electoral rules in Japan and Taiwan). We therefore adopt a quasi-experimental design by treating Japan and Taiwan as two nonequivalent but similar countries sharing the same sequence of electoral system change yet at different time periods a decade apart. When Japan experiences the change in 1996 Taiwan serves as a control, and when Taiwan later experiences the change in 2008 Japan serves as the control. This design allows us not only to evaluate the speed and degree of the effects of electoral reform but to isolate potential causes of such effects as well.

The remainder of this chapter is divided into five sections. The first section briefly describes the historical context of the formation of major parties in Japan and Taiwan, explains why the SNTV system helped to sustain the one-party dominant system, and summarizes other negative political consequences under SNTV. The second section traces the goals of electoral reform from SNTV to MMM systems in Japan and Taiwan. We then compare the rules of MMM systems in Japan and Taiwan by focusing on some subtle differences whose political consequences deserve closer examination. The third section presents detailed comparative analyses of these two countries with aggregate-level data, and furthermore we employ a piecewise regression of “interrupted time-series with switching replications” quasi-experimental design to analyze their differences. The fourth
section pinpoints some differences in similar electoral rules that partially solve the puzzle. The final section concludes that a complete solution requires a more general theory of electoral systems imbedded within constitutional structures, that is, the executive-centric theory that takes into account the political payoffs of the executive offices and the degree of elite coordination required to capture the executive offices.

**Party Politics under SNTV in Japan and Taiwan**

The evolutions of party systems in Japan and Taiwan have mirrored each other to a remarkable extent. Over time, these nascent democracies, each operating under dominant party arrangements, had transitioned into quite vibrant, multiparty systems. This was reversed as a consequence of electoral revisions that then led to the emergence of a two-party system under current circumstances. In Taiwan, the Nationalist Party (Kuomintang, KMT) has retained uninterrupted control of the country’s legislature since the transition, although vacillating from single-party majority to majority in coalition and back to single-party majority. Japan’s Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) experienced similar vacillation, albeit with a short interruption after 1993 and again between 2009 and 2012.

The LDP emerged in Japan in 1955 after the merger of two conservative parties (the Liberals and the Democrats) that shared support among business interests and rural areas. The LDP dominated government for

<table>
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<tr>
<th>TABLE 1.1. Electoral Rules in Japan and Taiwan before and after Electoral Reform</th>
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<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>before</td>
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<td>Total seats</td>
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<td>SNTV seats</td>
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<td>Number of districts</td>
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<td>Average seats per district</td>
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<td>SMD seats</td>
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<td>Party list seats</td>
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<td>Number of lists</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average seats per list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal threshold for list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dual candidacy allowed?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best loser provision?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup>In 2000 and subsequent elections, the number of list tier seats and total seats were reduced to 180 and 480, respectively. The average number of seats per list declined to 16.4.

<sup>b</sup>Reserved for aboriginals.
38 years until a stunning loss to a coalition of “clean government” parties in 1993 (Reed and Shimizu 2009, 5). The LDP quickly returned to power in 1996, but not until after the electoral reforms discussed in this chapter were pushed through. Despite the existence of robust opposition parties, such as the Japan Socialist Party, opposition parties were never quite strong enough to challenge the LDP’s dominance. This party arrangement is commonly known as the 1955 System. Given the LDP’s command of approximately two-thirds of the Diet seats from one election to the next, this 1955 System is also referred to as a One-and-a-Half Party System (Flanagan et al. 1991, 5; Scheiner 2006, 37).¹

Founded on the mainland in 1919, the KMT has matured during two distinct periods of time. The KMT was the ruling party of the Republic of China on the mainland for most of the period from 1919 to 1949. Since 1949, the KMT’s jurisdiction has been limited to Taiwan and its surrounding islands. Competitive party politics emerged after 1986, the transition to full democracy was completed in the early 1990s, and the longtime opposition Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) even won the presidency in 2000 and 2004. However, the KMT has retained continuous control of Taiwan’s legislative branch. In the early part of the democratic era, the KMT retained a degree of dominance similar to that of the LDP. After 2001, splinter parties forced the KMT into coalition arrangements, but the party returned to a dominant status in the first postreform election of 2008 (see, for example, Stockton 2010).

Both countries employed a SNTV electoral system for their national legislatures. In SNTV, each district has one or more seats and each voter can cast only one ballot for one specific candidate. There is no provision for preference rankings, so if a voter supports a candidate who does not win, the vote cannot be transferred to a second-favorite candidate. Similarly, if a candidate wins more votes than she needs, her excess votes cannot be transferred to other candidates.

Japan’s SNTV system was fairly straightforward. In 1993, the last election before reform, Japan elected 511 seats from 129 districts, an average of 3.96 seats per district. Each district had between two and six seats, and the great majority had three, four, or five seats.

Taiwan’s prereform system was more complex by comparison. In the 2004 election, there were a total of 225 seats. Of these, 176 seats were elected in 31 SNTV districts, for an average district magnitude of 5.68 seats per district.² Several districts had only 1 seat, while the largest district had 13 seats. The median SNTV legislator was elected from a district with 8 seats.
In addition to the 176 SNTV seats, there were also 49 seats elected by closed list PR on two separate lists. The list designated for national party representatives had 41 seats, while the list designated for overseas representatives had 8 seats. There was no separate party list ballot for the PR seats. Instead, all the votes for the party nominees running in the SNTV districts were summed to obtain each party’s national total. For all parties with at least 5% of the national vote, these totals were used to apportion seats on the two lists using a largest remainders formula. Since there was no second ballot for the party list seats, only 22% of the seats were elected through the party lists, and each vote mattered so much more in the local race than in the national party totals,\(^3\) campaigns focused almost entirely on the SNTV portion of the election.

As for processes of democratic transition, both Japan and Taiwan have experienced similar democratic development paths from a single dominant party system to a period of multiparty politics and then finally to a two-party system. Scholars have attributed one-party dominance as the reason for the implementation of SNTV electoral rules. Under SNTV, political parties must coordinate their supporters’ votes within constituencies in order to more evenly distribute votes across candidates. Without successful coordination, weaker candidates will get too few votes while stronger copartisans will absorb too many votes. If effective, intraparty coordination can result in political parties gaining an overrepresentation bonus. Attempting to benefit from the bonus of seats, a rational political party will nominate a bare number of candidates in each constituency in the SNTV electoral system if they can overcome the problems of coordination of nomination and division of votes. Governing parties have a tremendous advantage because they can use the resources of the state to overcome these coordination problems (Cox 1996, 1997; Cox and Niu 1994; Cox and Rosenbluth 1993, 1996; Patterson and Stockton 2010; Rochon 1981). Many studies have found that a key reason for prolonged periods of LDP dominance was the LDP’s ability to accomplish strategic nomination and vote coordination (Browne and Patterson 1999; Cox 1997; Horiuchi and Kohno 2004).\(^4\) If governing parties are expected to do well under SNTV, so are small parties. Small parties face much milder coordination problems since they often only nominate one candidate in any given district. With only one candidate, vote division is not a challenge (Täagepera and Shugart 1989, 28). Under SNTV, there is electoral space for small parties, and this should lead to a multiparty system.

Several negative political consequences have been ascribed to SNTV. The vote share necessary to win a seat decreases as the number of seats
increases. For example, a candidate won a seat in a 16-seat district in Taiwan in 1992 with only 2.6% of the total vote. Since candidates can win with support from a small minority of voters, they can appeal to nonmedian constituencies. Thus, candidates often took more extreme and sensational positions and appealed to highly personalized and niche voters (Flanagan et al. 1991). Correspondingly, Reed (1994) and Ramseyer and Rosenbluth (1997) also found that Diet members in Japan under the SNTV system were preoccupied with district service and fund-raising at the expense of their work in the legislature. Furthermore, given that party members are competing for both nominations and seats, SNTV accentuates intraparty competition, giving rise to factionalism and hampering interparty competition at the decisive election stage. In electoral campaigns, party platforms are of limited use since there are usually competing candidates running under the same party label. This means that campaigns are usually less focused on debates about national public policies. Instead, candidates have to emphasize personal qualities, such as local interests and social connections, and they typically build extensive and costly personal organizations to mobilize voters. This localized, mobilization-based campaign style is much more expensive than one based on national debates over public policy, and the demand for funds inevitably leads to parties cozying up to corporations and systemic corruption (Cox 1997; Cox and Rosenbluth 1993; Yu Wang 2011).

In summation, both Taiwan and Japan experienced numerous institutional challenges such as fractional politics, extremism, intraparty competition, money politics, the inefficiency of parliament, and absence of power alternation during the development of democracy. Numerous studies traced these disadvantages to SNTV (Cox and Rosenbluth 1993; Cox and Thies 1998; Richardson 1988; Yeh-li Wang 2011). Because of continuous scandals and the inefficiency of parliament, subsequent electoral reform enjoyed widespread public support (Shiratori 1995; Yu Wang 2011).

**Electoral Reform and Differences in the MMM Systems**

Both Japan and Taiwan abandoned SNTV in favor of a new MMM system. In both countries, proponents argued that electoral reform would produce a shift from the existing candidate-oriented campaign mode to policy-driven party politics and would ultimately improve government efficiency by encouraging alternations in government, such as in the adversarial two-party systems prevalent in the United States and the United
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Kingdom (Sakamoto 1999; Yeh-li Wang 2011). In the following section, we briefly describe the electoral reform, introduce the new electoral systems in Japan and Taiwan, and summarize their similarities and differences. In both countries the electoral reforms were initiated by a coalition/minority government trying to push for changes for its own sake, but the governing parties were eventually forced to compromise with the former dominant party maneuvering to stage a comeback.

Although various electoral reform plans had been proposed for decades in Japan, it took defeat of the dominant LDP in the 1993 House of Representatives (HR) election to realize the reform. The outbreak of a series of corruption scandals in campaign finances, especially the Recruit scandal involving the Noburo Takeshita administration and Sagawa Kyubin scandal involving former LDP vice president Shin Kanemaru, paved the way for internal conflicts inside the LDP. Dissatisfied factions splintered off from the LDP and formed new parties such as the New Party Sakigake and the Japan Renewal Party. After the 1993 HR election, Morihiro Hosakawa took office by forming an eight-party anti-LDP coalition. The coalition government’s bill of electoral reform passed the HR and yet was rejected by the House of Councillors in late 1993. Hosakawa chose to negotiate with the LDP and abandoned the coalition plan’s single national PR constituency by establishing eleven regional constituencies, a compromise with the LDP’s prefectural PR constituencies. Finally, in January 1994 the Japanese Diet passed the electoral law reform bills, abolishing the old SNTV system and adopting a new MMM system. This episode is recounted in detail by Curtis (1999) and Reed and Thies (2001).

The 1994 electoral reform in Japan and its first implementation in 1996 sent a shockwave through neighboring Taiwan where the SNTV system had also been blamed for intraparty competition, factionalism, and money politics (see, for example, Cox 1996; Cox and Niou 1994). In the late 1996 National Development Meeting summoned by President Lee Teng-hui of the KMT, a consensus was reached to replace SNTV with a mixed-member system. However, a proposed constitutional amendment about electoral reform attempt failed in 1997 because the then-ruling KMT insisted on a Japanese-style MMM system while the then-opposition DPP and New Party supported a German-style MMP system. Three years later, the DPP won the 2000 presidential election while the Pan-Blue parties maintained control of majority seats in the Legislative Yuan and dragged their feet over the DPP administration. After winning reelection in 2004, President Chen Shui-bian vigorously pushed for electoral reform by championing a proposal to “cut the assembly size in half” in order to “end the chaos in
the Legislative Yuan.” KMT chair Lien Chan, worrying about public support in the upcoming 2004 legislative election, threw his support behind the reform. The reform was unpopular with the rank-and-file legislators in both major parties, since they were not happy about half the seats in the legislature being eliminated. However, both caucuses went along with their party leaders and reluctantly voted in late 2004 to send the constitutional amendment proposal to the National Assembly for ratification. The National Assembly ratified the amendment in June 2005 with support from the two big parties. The smaller parties all opposed the reform, fearing a bleak future under the new MMM system.

Mixed-member systems have two tiers of seats. In the nominal tier, voters cast their votes for specific candidates. Most commonly, the nominal tier is conducted using single-member districts (SMDs) and the plurality rule, though there are other variants. In the list tier, seats are apportioned proportionally by party lists. Most mixed-member systems, including both the Japanese and Taiwanese variants, have a separate ballot for the list tier. In other words, voters cast two votes, one in the nominal tier to elect a representative from their local SMD, and one in the list tier to determine the apportionment of seats to the various party lists (Shugart and Wattenberg 2001, 10–13).

The Japanese system adopted in 1994 had 500 seats. In the nominal tier, 300 seats are elected by the plurality rule in SMDs. In the 1996 election, there were 200 seats in the list tier apportioned by the D’Hondt rule. In 2000 and in subsequent elections, the number of list tier seats was reduced to 180. The new Taiwanese system has a total of 113 seats. The nominal tier includes 73 seats elected by plurality in SMDs and six seats in two national SNTV districts for Mountain and Plains Aborigines. The remaining 34 seats comprise the list tier and are apportioned by a largest remainder rule. Note that in both Japan and Taiwan, the nominal tier seats far outnumber the list tier seats. As such, the incentives created by the nominal tier may also be more powerful than those created by the list tier. In particular, giving such weight to the nominal tier is damaging to smaller parties, since smaller parties often find winning a plurality in an SMD election to be a daunting challenge and rely heavily on seats from the list tier for survival. With fewer list tier seats available, smaller parties find it harder to survive. Furthermore, the drastic reduction in average district magnitude undoubtedly increases the level of disproportionality and, usually, the effective number of parties.

Despite the apparent similarities of the Japanese and Taiwanese MMM systems, there are some subtle differences whose political consequences
deserve closer examination. Here we concentrate on dual candidacy, the best loser provision, the proportion of seats allocated to the list tier, the number of PR constituencies, and the electoral threshold.

The MMM system in Japan allows dual candidacy, in which a candidate is allowed to register simultaneously in both the nominal and list tiers. If the candidate wins the SMD, his name is removed from the party list, and all the other candidates on the list move up one rank. A double-listed candidate who loses the SMD can still win a list seat. In popular Japanese parlance, candidates who are killed in the SMD races but come back to life in the list tier are known as zombies. While double candidacy is common in mixed-member proportional systems around the world, in Japan this has proven to be one of the more controversial aspects of the MMM system. Table 1.2 shows that most parties in Japan other than the Clean Government Party (Komeito, CGP) and the Japan Communist Party take full advantage of this dual candidacy rule. In Taiwan, dual candidacy is not allowed, and seats are awarded by a strict closed-list rule.

Japan further allows lists to be ordered on the basis of which dually nominated candidates prove to be the “best losers” in the nominal tier SMDs. Parties present lists in which multiple nominees are ranked at the same position. These ties are broken by results in the SMDs. Specifically, they are ranked by dividing their own SMD vote by the winning candidate’s vote. Losers who get a higher percentage of the winning total are ranked higher on the list. As with dual candidacy, parties make heavy use of the best loser provision, and this practice is increasing (see Nemoto and Tsai, chapter 6, this volume). Dual candidacy and the best loser provision reduce conflict within the party by avoiding fights over rankings and provide an incentive for SMD candidates to win as many votes as possible even if they are unlikely to win the SMD seat (Reed and Thies 2001, 383).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>LDP</th>
<th>DPJ</th>
<th>JCP</th>
<th>SDP</th>
<th>CGP</th>
<th>Japan Restoration Party (JRP)</th>
<th>Tomorrow Party of Japan (TPJ)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>90.3</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>100.0</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>95.9</td>
<td>98.8</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>38.9</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>92.1</td>
<td>98.9</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>96.6</td>
<td>98.6</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>94.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>93.1</td>
<td>98.9</td>
<td>39.5</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>96.2</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>98.2</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Japan allocates slightly more seats to the list tier than Taiwan. In Japan, 37.5% of seats are in the list tier, while only 30.1% of seats are elected by party lists in Taiwan.

Taiwan has a single national list with 34 seats. To win any of these seats, parties must win at least 5% of the national list tier vote. This 5% legal threshold discriminates against smaller parties, since without a legal threshold parties winning at least 2.9% of the vote would be able to win a seat. In 2008, only the two big parties passed the threshold, and two small parties, the New Party (4.0%) and Taiwan Solidarity Union (TSU) (3.5%), were denied seats because of the threshold. In 2012, the TSU (9.0%) and the People First Party (5.5%) joined the two major parties in passing the threshold, and no other party got as much as 2.9%.

In Japan, the 180 list tier seats are further distributed into 11 regional blocks, ranging from 6 to 29 seats in each PR constituency.

### TABLE 1.3. Japan’s PR Constituencies and Seats in HR Elections: 1996–2012

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hokkaido</td>
<td>Hokkaido</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>Tohoku</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
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<td>Yamagata, Fukushima</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3.57</td>
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<td>Saitama</td>
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<td>Tokyo</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>6.25</td>
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<td>Ishikawa, Fukui</td>
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<td>Tokai</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>3.41</td>
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<td>Kinki</td>
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<td>Chugoku</td>
<td>Tottori, Shimane, Okayama,</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6.25</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Hiroshima, Yamaguchi</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<td>Kochi</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Saga, Ōita, Kumamoto, Nagasaki,</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Okinawa</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>200</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>4.31&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup>According to Lijphart (1997, 74), given the district magnitude m, the effective threshold is .75/(m + 1).

<sup>b</sup>Computed based on the average number of seats: 16.4.

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(see table 1.3). Japan has no legal threshold, so the share of the list tier vote needed to win a seat is determined by the number of seats in each constituency.

After Electoral Reform: Differences in the Political Consequences between Japan and Taiwan

The differences in constitutional structures and electoral rules discussed above appear to have divergent political consequences in Japan and Taiwan, and they deserve careful and detailed comparative analyses. In this section, we detect and compare the consequences using electoral data based on macro-level patterns of party competition. After exploring the patterns of each country’s party system formation, we advance a quasi-experimental research design referred to as a “switching replication” to test for any substantial impact of electoral reform.

Patterns of Party Competition

Researchers often return to Duverger’s classic arguments on electoral systems and their political consequences. According to Duverger (1959, 217), “the simple-majority single ballot system favors the two-party system.” He provides two factors to explain why a third party cannot survive in this electoral system. Duverger (1959, 224) argues that “the mechanical factor consists in the ‘under-representation’ of the third, i.e. the weakest party, its percentage of seats being inferior to its percentage of the poll.” The second factor is a more ambiguous one. Because supporters of a third party do not want to waste their votes, Duverger (1959, 226) argues that it is “their natural tendency to transfer their vote to the less evil of its two adversaries in order to prevent the success of the greater evil.” Duverger (1959, 205) thus asserted that single-member district plurality would tend to generate two-party competition, and he also proposed that PR systems would encourage multiparty competition.

Mixed-member electoral systems are characterized as hybrids of SMD and PR tiers. Since the primary feature of the MMM system adopted by Japan and Taiwan is the independent relationship between SMD and PR tiers, “the typical majoritarian boost received by a large party in the nominal tier is not likely to be wiped away by proportional allocation from the list tier” (Shugart and Wattenberg 2001, 13). Furthermore, the PR portion in Japan accounts for only 37.5% of the 480 total seats since 2000 and in Taiwan accounts for only 30.1% of the 113 total seats. It seems logical to
argue that the gravity force of Duverger’s law will exert pressure on small parties and thus push down the number of parties. Indeed macro-level data in tables 1.4 and 1.5 seem to conform to Duverger’s law and indicate that the impact of electoral reforms on party systems in the two countries is a movement toward two-party competition, albeit at different speeds.8

Tables 1.4 and 1.5 present the Laakso-Taagepera effective number of electoral parties (N_v) and effective number of parliamentary parties (N_s) from an SNTV to a MMM system for these two countries (Laakso and Taagepera 1979; Taagepera and Shugart 1989). According to Duverger’s law, the number of parties in SMDs would shift toward two due to mechanical effects and strategic voting due to psychological effects. But Duverger’s hypothesis predicts that multiple parties remain in the PR tier of the system because voters have stronger incentives to vote sincerely. This is indeed what we see in table 1.4 for Japan’s HR elections over time. The effective number of electoral parties in the SMD tier (N_sMMD) fluctuated between the first two elections after the 1994 reform as Japan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>N_sSNTV</th>
<th>N_sMMD</th>
<th>N_sPR</th>
<th>N_s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>1.98</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>1.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>2.55</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>2.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>2.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>3.35</td>
<td>2.50</td>
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<td>1972</td>
<td>3.41</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>2.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>4.02</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>3.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>3.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>3.44</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>2.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>3.23</td>
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<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>3.35</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>2.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>2.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>5.15</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>4.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
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<td>2000</td>
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<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>3.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>5.79</td>
<td>5.79</td>
<td>5.79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

went through a period of party realignment but then dropped sharply below 3.0 parties for the three elections in 2003, 2005, and 2009.\textsuperscript{9} The effective number of electoral parties in PR tier (N\textsubscript{PR}) has also declined over time, though it has consistently been higher than its SMD counterpart and remained above 3.5 after the 2003 election. With more than 62\% of the HR seats allocated to the SMD tier, it is not surprising that the N\textsubscript{S} dropped below the N\textsubscript{SMD}. In short, throughout the period from 1996 to 2009 in Japan, partisan politics were largely focused on the contest between the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and the second largest party (e.g. the New Frontier Party in 1996 and the Democratic Party of Japan since 2000).

As Jou (2009, 2010) points out, during this decade, party competition in Japan’s SMD tier witnessed two distinct patterns: urban areas converging toward a two-party system while rural constituencies remaining dominated by the LDP (see also Yu Wang 2011). The landslide victory of the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) with 64\% of the seats in the 2009 HR election and the formation of the DPJ-centered coalition government appear to have ushered in a new era of government with the alternation of two major parties (Arase 2010; Krauss and Pekkanen 2011; Maeda 2010). The pendulum swinging back to the LDP with 61.3\% of the total seats in the 2012 HR election is further evidence of this trend. But it also seems that MMM can produce extreme one-party dominance and decimate opposition parties.

The data for Taiwan’s legislative elections are presented in table 1.5. These clearly indicate that there was an immediate and dramatic drop in all three indicators of the effective number of parties. Whereas the N\textsubscript{SNTV}...
in the 2004 SNTV elections had been 3.76, in 2008 $N_{SMD}$ plunged to 2.29, just as Duverger’s Law suggests. Furthermore, the $N_{PR}$ measure was a mere 2.49. It took Japan a decade and a half and five HR elections to evolve into a true two-party system, but this transformation was realized almost immediately in Taiwan. As in Japan, the dominance of the nominal tier led to a lower number of parliamentary parties than electoral parties. In 2008, the $N_S$ was a mere 1.47, which is much closer to one-party dominance than one would expect in a democracy. Even with a much stronger performance by the DPP and after the People First Party split from the Pan-Blue coalition and ran its own candidates in the 2012 legislative election, the $N_S$ rose only slightly to 1.97 and $N_{SMD}$ grew only to 2.32 and $N_{PR}$ 3.03, respectively.

**Evaluating the Impact of Electoral Reform: A Quasi-Experimental Design**

This study applies the logic of “most similar systems” design (MSSD) in the comparative politics tradition (Przeworski and Teune 1970) to the “interrupted time series” (ITS) quasi-experiment frequently used in the fields of policy evaluation (Campbell and Stanley 1963). Most similar systems design involves matching two cases that experience different outcomes while appearing to be very similar in as many respects as possible except on key theoretical points. The goal of this design is to identify the difference that is responsible for contrasting outcomes. Those similarities between two cases can be considered relatively “controlled for” and thus ruled out as possible causes. The remaining differences between the two cases emerge as the candidates causing their divergent outcomes. MSSD thus facilitates causal inference.

Japan and Taiwan are selected following the logic of the most similar systems design. In other words, they are chosen for this study because they are relatively similar in many respects. Both are densely populated island countries along the Asian continent without rich natural resources and yet have built relatively healthy open economies with broadly distributed wealth. Both have Confucian and Buddhist cultural heritages as well. Although Japan is under a parliamentary system and Taiwan is under a semipresidential system, both countries otherwise have similar governing institutions led by a longtime dominant clientelistic political party and disciplined bureaucrats. Indeed, Taiwan was a Japanese colony for 50 years, and many of its institutional structures and behavioral habits can be traced directly to Japanese sources.

The ITS design, on the other hand, involves one experimental group
and repeated observations before and after an intervention (Shadish, Cook, and Campbell 2002, 175). The weakness of this single time series design is the threat of history to the internal validity of causality. That is, there is always the possibility that factors other than the event under investigation come to influence the dependent variable at about the same time the intervention occurs.

If we can find two nonequivalent but relatively similar countries, each of which has the same sequence of electoral system change yet at different times, then a certain degree of control can still be achieved. That is, when one country experiences intervention the other serves as a control, and when the control nation later experiences the event the original treatment case serves as the control (Shadish, Cook, and Campbell 2002, 192). Applying this “ITS with switching replications” design to this study, it can be diagrammed as:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{O O O O O X O O O O O} \\
\text{———————————} \\
\text{O O O O O O O O X O O}
\end{align*}
\]

where each O represents an observation of the dependent variable (i.e., \(N_s\)), and X stands for the occurrence to the event (i.e., shift from SNTV to MMM system).

Figure 1.1 displays the evolution of the effective number of parliamentary parties in Japan and Taiwan, respectively. In general, both countries experience a rising trend during the SNTV period and then witness a decline after adopting the MMM system. However, the decline is more abrupt and immediate in Taiwan than in Japan. In terms of a cross-country comparison, when Japan first implemented the MMM system in 1996 and started to show a slow decline trend in \(N_s\), Taiwan showed no such change. Similarly, when Taiwan first implemented the MMM system and experienced a sharp decline in \(N_s\) in 2008, Japan’s \(N_s\) had already reached a steady state of nearly two. This switching pattern strengthens our confidence in making a causal inference from the impact of electoral system change.

**Impact Analysis**

Box and Tiao’s (1975) ITS analysis is often used to assess the impact of a discrete intervention on a social process (see, for example, Box, Jenkins, and Reinsel 2008; McCleary and Hay 1980). However, this method requires one to identify and estimate a noise model based on the preintervention
series as a benchmark for comparison with the entire series. Given the limitation of the frequency of legislative elections held in the past half century and thus the number of observations available for this study, the five (for Taiwan) to thirteen (for Japan) observations before electoral system changes occurred are obviously too few to apply Box and Tiao’s techniques. We therefore turn to the piecewise linear regression approach of ITS (Greene 2012; Lewis-Beck 1986; Marsh and Cormier 2002), which takes advantage of the entire series and is still able to assess the impact of events. The method is to regress the dependent variable upon independent variables representing a trend and events. Each event, in turn, is represented by a dummy variable (which captures the drop or jump in intercept change) and a postintervention time counter (which captures the slope change).

Based on the piecewise linear regression approach, the equation we use to evaluate the impact of shifting from the SNTV to MMM system in Japan is specified as follows:

\[ Y_t = \beta_0 + \beta_1 T_t + \beta_2 D_{1t} + \beta_3 C_{1t} + \beta_4 D_{2t} + \beta_5 C_{2t} + \epsilon_t \]  

(1.1)

where
\( Y_i = \text{dependent variables, } N_s \)
\( T_i = \text{a counter for time from 1 to the last observation} \)
\( D_{1t} = \text{a dummy variable indicating the implementation of the MMM system in Japan, that is, } D_{1t} = 1 \text{ since year 1996} \)
\( C_{1t} = \text{a postintervention time counter scored 0 before 1996 and 1, 2, 3 \ldots \text{ for observations on and after 1996}} \)
\( D_{2t} = \text{a dummy variable indicating the implementation of the MMM system in Taiwan, that is, } D_{2t} = 1 \text{ since year 2008} \)
\( C_{2t} = \text{a postintervention time counter scored 0 before 2008 and 1, 2, 3 \ldots \text{ for observations on and after 2008}}. \)

The equation for assessing electoral system change in Taiwan is similar to the equation (1.1) for Japan except that its observations start from 1992 when the island held its first free and open Legislative Yuan elections and thus consists of only seven observations up to the 2012 election. Given this extremely short time series and thus small degree of freedom, statistical estimates serve only as a supplement to the visual inspection of figures. If our hypothesis is correct, that is, if electoral system change causes a gradual shift in the party system in Japan while leading to an immediate alignment in Taiwan, then we expect divergent patterns of impact in the two countries. That is, we expect no abrupt change in intercept \( D_{1t} \) but only a slow change in slope \( C_{1t} \) in Japan. On the other hand, we expect at least an abrupt change in intercept \( D_{2t} \) and perhaps also in slope \( C_{2t} \) in the case of Taiwan.

Statistical results for the \( N_s \) of Japan and Taiwan are presented in table 1.6. They generally confirm the visual inspection of figure 1.1. For both countries, the evolution of the \( N_s \) changes only when each country shifts from the SNTV to the new MMM system. Furthermore, the general pattern of change fits our expectation. There is no significant change in slope since 1996 but only a slight decline in slope \( (C_{1t} = -0.120) \) in the case of Japan. In contrast, there is an abrupt drop in level \( (D_{2t} = -2.155) \) in the case of Taiwan in 2008,\(^\text{10}\) albeit no change in slope is detected perhaps due to the fact that only two elections have been held after the electoral reform. The ITS design uses Taiwan’s reform as a control for Japan and Japan’s reform as a control for Taiwan. In the Japan model, the variables for Taiwanese reform are not significantly different from zero, and a parallel result holds in the Taiwan model. This provides an added level of confidence that the changes in the party systems were, in fact, due to the treatment variable, electoral reform. Overall, what both figure 1.1 and table
1.6 show is a gradual shift from a multiparty system to a two-party system taking place over several elections after reform in Japan, but a sudden and abrupt shift in the first postreform election in Taiwan.

**Why Different Speeds toward a Two-Party System?**

The differences between Japan and Taiwan discussed above pose an interesting question. Why did it take Japan almost one and a half decades to gradually consolidate toward a two-party system and strategic voting pattern (see Scheiner and Tronconi 2011, 102) while in Taiwan the impact of the new electoral system was immediate and extreme? To what extent are these different rates of change the result of different electoral rules, such as dual candidacy, the best loser provision, the number of party list constituencies, the threshold for list constituencies, and the proportion of seats allocated to the nominal and list tiers? We speculate that all these elements contribute to the divergent results.

One reason why the number of electoral parties may not have declined as precipitously as expected has to do with contamination effects. A number of studies have noted that in mixed-member systems, in order to lift the PR votes, party elites may field candidates in single-member districts to give the party label a human face, regardless of the chance of winning the

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 1.6. Impact of MMM on $N_s$: Japan and Taiwan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Effective number of parliamentary parties ($N_s$)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Counter $T_t$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adopting MMM System in Japan ($D_{i1} = 1$ since 1996)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trend under MMM in Japan ($C_{i1}$ time counter since 1996)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adopting MMM System in Taiwan ($D_{i2} = 1$ since 2008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trend under MMM in Taiwan ($C_{i2}$ time counter since 2008)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$R^2$ = 0.651*** \quad \text{Japan} \quad \text{Adjusted } R^2 = 0.516 \quad \text{Taiwan}

Number of observations: 19 \quad 7

$^\dagger p < 0.1; ^{*} p < 0.05; ^{**} p < 0.01; ^{***} p < 0.001$.  
$^\ddagger |t| = 3.05$ but is insignificant ($p > 0.1$) due to too few observations and degrees of freedom in Taiwan.
district seat. Electoral incentives in one tier thus “contaminate” those in the other tier, complicating the insights from Duvergerian laws (Cox and Schoppa 2002; Herron and Nishikawa 2001; Moser and Scheiner 2004). This might account for higher than expected $N_V$. However, these extra candidates are assumed to be sure losers, and they should not affect $N_S$. Moreover, contamination effects yield no insight into the differences in the evolution of the party system in Japan and Taiwan.

Taiwan’s list tier has a legal 5% threshold. In Japan, the average regional constituency has an implied threshold of 5.8%. This is marginally higher than in Taiwan, so one might conclude that the Japanese system is more unfriendly to small parties. However, because the number of seats on each regional list varies, so does the threshold. If we look at Lijphart’s (1994, 27; 1997, 74) estimate for effective threshold,11 small parties in Japan have even more opportunities. In Shikoku, with only six seats, the effective threshold is 10.71% and is a very high barrier for small parties. In contrast, Kinki has 29 seats, and small parties might not be intimidated at all by the relatively low 2.5% threshold since a party with 2.5% has a reasonable chance to win a seat. In fact, six out of the 11 regional constituencies have thresholds under 5% (see the last column of table 1.3). In short, there are opportunities for small parties to win list seats in the larger regions, and small parties in Japan can strategically concentrate their efforts on regions in which they have a reasonable chance of exceeding the threshold.

The differences in the thresholds imply that small parties should find more opportunities to win list seats in Japan than in Taiwan. Unlike in Taiwan, they do not have to cross a relatively high 5% national threshold to survive. Instead, they can win one or two seats with a somewhat lower vote and build on this foundation in future elections. They can also concentrate their resources in the most favorable regions and ignore less promising areas. These opportunities are further enhanced by the fact that Japan allocates a slightly higher percentage of seats to the list tier.

We suspect that dual candidacy and the best loser provision also help small parties survive in Japan. Candidates who “die gloriously” in their SMDs can be “revived” in the PR tier as “zombies” and thus have strong incentives to cultivate local connections and campaign hard in their SMDs. This hard work, in turn, can result in higher party votes in the list tier (though see Maeda 2008 for an opposing view). Kuo, Huang, and Wang (2012) analyzed Japanese House elections from 1996 to 2009 and found evidence that smaller parties such as the Social Democratic Party and losing major parties such as the LDP in 2009 relied more on dual candidacy’s lifting effects on PR votes. The Social Democratic Party did use
the dual candidacy strategy to improve their PR votes and furthermore to sustain their seats in parliament. In Taiwan, on the other hand, there is no mechanism for such interactions between SMD and PR ballots since no dual candidacy is allowed. Huang (2010) evaluated the effects of the TSU’s nomination of 13 district candidates on their PR vote shares in the 2008 elections in Taiwan and indeed found no evidence of interaction between the SMD and PR tiers.

Neither Taiwan’s nor Japan’s electoral system is friendly to small parties, but small parties have a better chance of survival in Japan’s system. Yet we suspect that these contrasting electoral rules cannot fully explain why small parties have fared so much better in Japan than in Taiwan. A more complete explanation requires consideration of differences in the constitutional designs of each country, a topic Lin takes up in chapter 2 and others develop in the rest of this volume.

Concluding Remarks

Institutions do matter, and even seemingly “minor” differences may produce significantly different outcomes. This chapter explores the effect on party systems of several such differences between Japan and Taiwan, including dual candidacy, the best loser provision, the proportion of seats allocated to the list tier, the number of PR constituencies, and the electoral threshold. Whether and to what extent these differences produce the divergent consequences discussed above call for further careful comparative studies and rigorous causal analyses.

Japan and Taiwan undertook similar electoral reforms from SNTV to MMM, and they both experienced a similar development from a multi-party system to a two-party system. However, the speeds at which the party systems transformed after electoral reform varied significantly. We argue that the combination of some seemingly “minor” differences in electoral systems contributed to these divergent results by providing more opportunities for smaller parties to survive in Japan than in Taiwan. However, we do not argue that differences in the electoral rules can fully account for the larger numbers of parties in Japan. Electoral systems cannot be delinked from the wider constitutional arrangements in which they occur. As Lin argues in the next chapter, analyses of party system change are best served when we focus not only on changing rules but also on the constitutional context in which they are embedded. Specifically, researchers should
keep both legislative seats and executive offices in view while analyzing the effects of legislative electoral systems.

NOTES

1. In the 1955 System, the main debates on national policies between the ruling LDP and opposition parties were mainly based on the conservative-progressive political ideology spectrum. Their debate was as follows: (1) whether Japan should move toward becoming a capitalist or a socialist state; (2) whether or not the ninth statement of Japan’s constitution should be amended; (3) whether or not the U.S.-Japan Treaty (Ampou) alliance should be maintained; (4) in terms of defense, whether military forces in Japan should be enhanced or remain neutral (Yang 2002, 65).

2. In all, 168 representatives were elected from 29 geographically defined districts. Another eight members were elected from two nationwide districts reserved for Plains Aborigines and Mountain Aborigines.

3. Usually, 40,000 votes were sufficient to elect a district candidate, whereas each seat on the national party representatives list needed about 200,000 votes.

4. Some studies further indicate that in “1955 system,” because the LDP usually took two-thirds of the seats in the Diet, and the opposition parties could not cooperate with each other to challenge the LDP-dominant regime, the power alternation was only between the main factions inside the LDP, not alternation between parties (Reed 2003, 21).

5. The prereform Taiwanese system was technically a MMM system since it had a nominal tier, with voters choosing specific candidates in the SNTV tier, as well as a list tier. However, for the purpose of clarity, this volume will refer to the prereform system as an SNTV system. MMM will refer narrowly to the postreform systems in Japan and Taiwan with nominal tiers composed of SMDs.

6. Mixed-member systems are commonly divided into two categories, mixed-member majoritarian (MMM) and mixed-member proportional (MMP). The critical factor is whether the two tiers are linked. In MMM, the tiers are not linked, so seats are determined independently in each tier. That is, if a party wins 50% of the party list votes, it wins 50% of the list tier seats, regardless of whether it won all, some, or none of the nominal tier seats. The plurality formula used in the nominal tier can lead to significant disproportionality, and the list tier in MMM systems merely mitigates rather than erases this disproportionality. In MMP systems, the two tiers are linked in order to produce a proportional outcome. Each party’s total seat share is determined by the list tier vote, and, depending on the number of seats it wins in the nominal tier, it is awarded the appropriate number of party list seats necessary to obtain a proportional share of seats in the overall chamber (Shugart and Wattenberg 2001, 13–17).

7. The theoretical threshold is \(1/(m + 1)\).

8. By “speeds” we mean the number of elections it takes to reach similar results.

9. The \(N_{SMD}\) remained high (3.77) in Japan’s 2000 House election. This was partly because the coalition partnership of the LDP and CGP did not effectively
coordinate their nominations. Specifically, the LDP and CGP have formed a coalition to nominate candidates to compete against non-LDP candidates in all elections since 2000. In most districts, CGP supporters were supposed to vote for an LDP candidate, and the LDP gave organizational votes to support CGP’s PR list candidates. But in the 2000 election, the coalition did not work very well, as the LDP and CGP simultaneously fielded SMD candidates in four districts. Since the 2003 election, this problem has been overcome. See also Nemoto and Tsai, chapter 6, this volume.

10. With five variables and only seven cases in the Taiwan model, even large $t$-values do not reach conventional levels of significance. In the following pages we adopt a rule of thumb of a $t$-ratio above 2 as a rough guideline for interpreting the case of Taiwan.

11. The effective threshold is estimated as $0.75/(m + 1)$.

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Huang, Chi. 2011. “Political Consequences of the MMM Electoral Systems in Tai-


