One Party Dominance Survival: The Case of Singapore and Taiwan

DISSERTATION

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Abstract

Can a one-party-dominant authoritarian regime survive in a modernized society? Why is it that some survive while others fail? Singapore and Taiwan provide comparable cases to partially explain this puzzle. Both countries share many similar cultural and developmental backgrounds. One-party dominance in Taiwan failed in the 1980s when Taiwan became modern. But in Singapore, the one-party regime survived the opposition’s challenges in the 1960s and has remained stable since then. There are few comparative studies of these two countries. Through empirical studies of the two cases, I conclude that regime structure, i.e., clientelistic versus professional structure, affects the chances of authoritarian survival after the society becomes modern. This conclusion is derived from a two-country comparative study. Further research is necessary to test if the same conclusion can be applied to other cases. This research contributes to the understanding of one-party-dominant regimes in modernizing societies.
Dedicated to the Lord, Jesus Christ.

“Counsel and sound judgment are mine;
I have insight, I have power.

By Me kings reign
and rulers issue decrees that are just;
by Me princes govern,
and nobles—all who rule on earth.”

Proverbs 8:14-16
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Chapter 1  Research Question, Theory, and Methodology

Introduction

Can authoritarian regimes survive in modern society? Why do some succeed and others fail? Many current studies (Huntington 1968; Geddes 1999, 2008; Magaloni 2008; Cox 2008; Kricheli 2008; Keefer 2008) have found an institutional explanation for the longevity of current autocracy. It is argued by those scholars that the single party institution provides many mechanisms to sustain an authoritarian leader’s rule. The single party can help him or her to mobilize social support, prevent elite splits, provide better economic performance, resist military coups, and thus sustain his or her rule. It has also been established empirically that single party regimes stay in power longer than military regimes or personal regimes (Geddes 1999; Smith 2005).

Nonetheless, among the totality of single party or one-party dominant autocracies, some fail and some succeed. What causes these different outcomes? Specifically, what role is played by modernization? Will any one-party dominant regimes\textsuperscript{1} survive after their societies move into modernity?

Taiwan and Singapore provide a comparative case to test all existing theories about one-party dominant regime survival. After their societies move into modernity, Taiwan’s dominant one party

\textsuperscript{1} There are academic classifications (Magaloni and Kircheli 2010) of a single party regime, and one-party dominant regime under democracy and one-party dominance under non-democracy or quasi-democracy. In this dissertation, for the sake of convenience, “one-party dominant” regime refers to any situation of one-party rule that is not under a full democracy. So the “one-party dominant” regime includes single party rule achieved without election and one party dominance achieved through non competitive or restrictive elections. One-party dominance that is achieved under fully competitive and free democratic elections is not included in the scope of this study.
failed but Singapore’s survives. The similarities that Singapore and Taiwan share can put many exogenous factors under control. So the two cases provide good comparisons to address this puzzle in our field. But so far, there are few comparative political studies of Singapore and Taiwan.

Whether authoritarianism can survive in a modernized society is an important theoretical question for our understanding of future world politics. But our present study of authoritarian survival and democratization has the following gaps. First, there is a lack of development of structural theories. As our study about democratization and authoritarian regimes has developed to the current stage of quantitative analysis, we are more tempted to unravel the complexity of each case rather than the deeper structural causes. So, the middle range variables are more thoroughly argued and tested than the structural variables.

With the development of game theoretical models and mathematical methods, the trend on this topic has been toward an agency approach. Scholars now focus on the elite pacts, elites splits, and strategic interactions between the incumbent, the opposition and the voters. The structural tradition from modernization theory and Moore (1966)’s social structural theory has become less popular. Mechanisms, contingent events, and individual behaviors attract most of our research focus. We are more caught by the present and ad hoc events, complexity of strategic interactions, and individual behaviors but fail to continually test and search for reliable structural theories. As a result, we explain and understand a lot about the current situations but can not give more profound theoretical predictions about the development of authoritarianism in the future.

Second, there is a lack of theory building based on in-depth case studies. Among the studies about one-party dominance, game theoretical modeling is largely used as a tool to understand interactions between elites and voters. Since this game-based theory building deductive method became popular, few theories have been derived from or tested by inductive studies of in-depth and
thorough case observations. Scholars are more drawn to use single-case study, or cross-regional statistical data, or simple comparison of selected cases to test their model-based theories. There is a lack of theory building using the traditional comparative case study methods on this subject.

Third, there is a lack of case studies of this topic in Asia and modernized countries. Most studies about one-party dominance are on countries in Latin America, the Middle East, and Africa. There is very limited study of Asia. Asian cases such as Singapore, Malaysia, and Taiwan are considered by Geddes (1999) as exceptional cases. Lack of studies on this region is very detrimental to our understanding of authoritarian development.

Most of the cases in Latin America, the Middle East and Africa are in societies that have not moved into modernity. Many of the authoritarian leaders in these existing studies face a traditional society with a large percentage of the population in the village, living under a traditional kinship structure. Most of the cases have not satisfied many prerequisites for democracy, e.g., a certain level of economic development and equality, certain social structures (considerable size middle class, civil society), a certain level of urbanization, etc. We cannot derive and test theories about survivability of authoritarianism under modernity by studying cases that are still unmodernized. East Asia and Southeast Asia provide a reservoir of cases of different levels of modernized societies. Studying cases in Asia is important to increase our understanding about authoritarian development in modernized society.

As a result of the above gaps in our field, currently we lack theoretical guidance about future authoritarian development. Can authoritarianism survive in a fully modernized society? Because that puzzle is unaddressed by enough empirical evidence, theoretical arguments about the compatibility of capitalism and authoritarianism remain unresolved. Some scholars argue that we might expect to see the rise of an authoritarian capitalist country such as China or Russia in the near future while liberal
scholars reject such arguments (Gat 2007; Deutney and Ikenberry 2009; Carothers 2002; Delors 1996). Due to a lack of studies of modernized authoritarian states, comparative scholars fail to offer empirical evidence to answer this important question that could affect US foreign policy: can we see stable authoritarian modernized regimes in China and Russia in the near future?

This research intends to avoid the loopholes discussed above in current studies about the survival of one-party dominant regimes. My theory is derived inductively through case observations and also deductively through theoretical modeling. My theory borrows social structural arguments and the modeling of incentives and choices. I also use some concepts, notations, and graphs similar to a game setting to explain the theory. But the theory is not based on a game-theoretic model, nor are my arguments derived solely deductively from a simple economic model. I use a comparative study of Singapore and Taiwan to test the causal mechanism discussed in my theory and in all existing theories. I use detailed institutional comparison and in-depth historical study of the critical events to test the implications and causal arguments of existing theories, including modernization theory. As a result, this research contributes to our understanding of authoritarian survival in modernized societies, as well as providing empirical knowledge about Singapore and Taiwan.

**Literature Review**

**General Review of Modernization and Democratization Theories**

economic development and political change by adding the mechanism of social structure. Moore’s social structural argument is more complicated than the modernization argument and he allows exceptional paths to which modernization theorists would not agree, such as the totalitarian revolutionary regime. But generally speaking, Moore’s argument is consistent with modernization theory. Economic modernization will bring social structural change in the society. Those social structural changes will cause various types of political coalitions which determine the political regime outcome.

Both Moore and modernization theorists agree that a society with a large base in the commercialized bourgeoisie, the middle class, and a few members of the landed elite would smoothly move into democracy as in the case of Great Britain. However, outliers in Asia, such as Singapore, challenge Moore’s conclusion. Singapore, a country with zero percent farmers and a large percentage of merchants and service-based work forces still remains a very strong one-party authoritarian regime. So, due to the survival of authoritarian regimes in the world and many democratic breakdowns, reliability of the grand structural theory is severely challenged.

Some studies support modernization & Moore’s theories. Boix (2003) uses rational choice models and finds level of equality an important determinant for democracy. This is consistent with modernization theory. But there are more challengers to modernization theory. Attacks come from scholars, such as O’Donnell (1973) and Huntington (1968). Scholars began to challenge the validity of the modernization argument. Statistical studies are formulated to test the causal mechanisms between the correlation we observe between democracy and economic development.

By using game-theory modeling, Robinson (2006) argues that the correlation is spurious. It is the underlying economic institution that determines both economic growth and democratization. Przeworski & Limongi (1997) present another alternative explanation for the correlation: democracy
that has occurred by whatever reason can survive more easily in a modernized country than a non-modernized country (Geddes 1999:117). This revision undermines the modernization theorists’ claim about the emergence of democracy in a modernized society. Modernization theorists have since avoided discussion of the emergence of democracy or democratization.


To summarize, modernization and Moore’s structural theory became unpopular in the study of democratization because they could not explain transitions. The democratization studies focused on contingent factors to seek causal mechanisms about transition. The elite split theory has been used to explain Taiwan’s transition to democracy (Wu 1995). But those studies of transition narrow our scope to a limited time range. They only look at the few years before democratization. We cannot derive long-term predictions about future politics based on studies of contingent events and individual behaviors. Besides, because so many contingent factors determine the outcome of elite interactions, it is hard to reproduce those theories or arguments in other countries.

So, I would not adopt this transition-study approach and would not look at the contingent factors that lead to the emergence of democracy. Rather I would look at the same issue from the other side that is less contingent, i.e. the survivability of authoritarian institutions. Rather than focusing on
factors that contribute to the emergence of democracy, I look at the factors that contribute to the failure or success of authoritarian survival. This approach can avoid the study of contingent factors and can produce theories usable to predict authoritarianism in the future.

**Review of the One Party-Dominance Literature**

Authoritarian regimes can be classified into various types. Geddes (1999) recommends studying each authoritarian type separately, since each regime structure has a distinct impact on its survivability. Since empirical studies of Geddes (1999) and Huntington (1968) show that a single-party regime is the most viable form among all authoritarian regimes, I will limit my scope of study to one party-dominant regimes only.

Among the studies of one-party dominance, the majority are game theoretical scholars. The single party institution is highly praised by these scholars as critical for political mobilization and for keeping the authoritarian leader in office. Huntington (1970) argues that the single party can satisfy enough participation demands and organize support for the regime (Hinnebusch 2006: 381). Party building is important for the regime to penetrate into society and to incorporate constituencies (Hinnebusch 2006: 381). Also, based on game-theoretical models, it is argued that the party institution can help avoid elite splits and thus the one-party dominant regimes suffer fewer coups (Cox 2008, Geddes 2008, Kricheli 2008, cited by Magaloni and Kricheli 2010: 124). Because of its high popularity and control over the society, it has higher counterinsurgency capacities (Keefer 2008), and enjoys higher economic growth (Keefer 2007, Gandhi 2008, Gehlbach & Keefer 2008, Wright 2008, cited by Magaloni and Kricheli 2010: 124).

Magaloni (2006, 2010) praises the hegemonic party institution for its ability to monopolize mass support by controlling the state resources to punish defection. The punishment system forces the poor whose livelihood depends on the state transfers to continue to support the regime because of
fear of being excluded from the party’s patronage (Zhong & Chen 2002, Blaydes 2006, Magaloni 2006, Tezcur 2008, cited by Magaloni and Kricheli 2010:128). The rich voters may also support the system because of their distrust of the opposition’s capacity to handle the economy (Magaloni 2006). Magaloni also observes that the resulting support of the masses can further be used to counter threats from the military and thus reduce chances of military coup (Magaloni and Kricheli 2010). Magaloni and Kricheli portray the control mechanism of the repressive clientelsitic party machine as follows.

One-party regimes therefore virtually create a market for privileges that are allocated based on degrees of loyalty (Wintrobe 1998; Lust-Okar 2005, 2006). When they are well institutionalized, ruling parties should thus be understood as giant patronage systems that give the citizens a vested interest in the perpetuation of the regime (Magaloni 2006; Geddes 2006, 2008; Pepinsky 2007). The ability of a single party to monopolize mass support by controlling the state’s resources and using patronage networks has been called a “tragic brilliance” (Diaz-Cayeros et al. 2001). (Magaloni and Kricheli 2010: 128)

But most of the studies are based on game-theoretical models and tested against statistical data. But these studies have weaknesses. First, they lack differentiation of institutions among the one-party dominant regimes. They simply assume all one-party dominant regimes have the same institutions and operate through the same mechanisms, i.e. a gigantic party patronage system founded on monopoly over state resources and severe repression of opposition. Not all one-party dominant regimes have survived. What caused their failures? Second, because their theories are derived from game theory models rather than through case observation, they also lack in-depth empirical tests of the causal mechanisms of their arguments. Most arguments are tested only by a single country study or cross-national statistical studies (Magaloni 2006; Greene 2002, Gandhi 2008).

This institutionalism argument is used by some African scholars to explain the existence of neopatrimonial regimes in Africa and the Middle East (Whitehead 2009; Brownlee 2002; Hinnebusch 2006). They argue that severe repression and party patronage-based social distribution explains the persistence of autocracies in these regions.
But if we test the theory against the cases of Singapore and Taiwan, these two cases contradict the prediction of those game-theoretical institutionalist theories. In Magaloni’s model, the one-party dominant regime must have the following features necessary for survival: (1) monopoly of state resources by the party elite, usually the state, meaning a high level of control over the national economy; (2) high level of repression over opposition; (3) a large party mobilization network based on resource redistribution and patronage (Magaloni and Kricheli 2010). Taiwan’s economic structure, party institutions, and mobilization structure resemble these characteristics attributed by the above scholars to a one-party dominant regime.

But as I discuss in Chapter 2, Singapore on the other hand, does not have any of the above features in its one-party dominant regime. Singapore’s party organization and mobilization abilities are very weak. The People’s Action Party (PAP) government’s control over the economy is much less than that of the Taiwan Kuomintang (KMT) government. The mobilization by the PAP is not clientelistic or based on patronage. Yet, when the society moved into modernization, Singapore’s one-party dominance survived and Taiwan’s one-party dominance failed. The above game-theoretical based theories cannot explain the puzzle presented by cases of Singapore and Taiwan.

The above game theory models fail in Singapore and Taiwan probably because their theory is based on different social structural settings than those of Singapore and Taiwan. Most of the cases are based on countries in Latin America and tested by studies in the Middle East and Africa. The economy of countries in these regions is still either underdeveloped or uneven. The social capital of countries in those regions is highly undeveloped. A high inequality rate, high illiteracy, a large percentage of rural areas and rural population, and uneven regional development mark those societies as in the transition to modernity. But the societies of Singapore and Taiwan have already reached full modernity with
much higher GDP per capita, a comparatively low rate of inequality, high urbanization rate, high literacy, large size of middle class, and even regional development.

Research (Gandhi 2009) shows that rural residents are more likely to be loyal to the authoritarian regime. But urban residents and middle class voters are more likely to vote for the opponents.

Kinship ties also are stronger in rural areas, making voters confident that their candidates, if elected, would channel selective benefits to them. The poor are more likely to turn out to vote and to be loyal to the regime since their votes are more easily bought and their reliance on state patronage is higher. In contrast, urban, middle-class voters who exhibit less demand for patronage, are less likely to go to the polls, ...more likely to cast their ballots for regime opponents. (Gandhi 2009: 489)

Therefore, the viability of those clientelistic one-party regimes we observe in Latin America, Africa and the Middle East might not be able to survive if their societies move into modernity in the near future. I suggest that we shift our focus from retrospective explanation of current events and regimes to adopt a more prospective approach. What would happen to those regimes after they move into modernity? What kind of one-party dominant structure could sustain the authoritarian leader in a modernized society? Only by studying cases under modernized society can we find the answer.

Reviews of Structural and Institutionalism Literatures

With the attacks on modernization theory, the discussion about economic growth, capitalism and democratization became highly unpopular. Some scholars still try to address this question from social structural studies. With both cross-national data and comparative study, Stephens (1993) shows that class structure is still an important factor in democracy. He finds the organized working class to be a key actor in the development of full democracy (436). The presence of a large size landlord class is shown to be antidemocratic. But Stephens finds the role of bourgeoisie to be ambiguous. They might support democracy or authoritarian government. “The key source of variability across countries at a
given level of development was the posture of the middle classes” (437). Stephens also finds systematic variation in the role of the state and its impact on democracy. Stephens also notes that the role of the state and the class factor is interrelated. Therefore, he suggests that the relationship between capitalist development and democracy can be better explained in a political economy analysis.

I agree with this structural and institutional approach and Stephens’ suggestion to analyze this question from a political economy perspective. Since the majority of the people in a society are the lower-middle class², in order to stabilize his or her rule, an authoritarian leader has to provide some social redistribution systems to attract the support of the majority of the lower-middle class.


All PA (populist authoritarian) regimes learned that cohesive elite cores could be built only through the dominance of a personalist leader over the rest of the ruling elite and exploitation of indigenous “political cement”—the trust deriving from likenesses based on kin, tribe, sect, region or graduating class --- to link leaders to the “trusted men” put in command of the structural instruments of power. Second, the distribution of patronage was used to coopt and ensure the loyalty of key groups; and it was the flow of oil revenues and foreign aid that allowed the servicing of clientelist networks inside and outside regime structures. Thus traditional bureaucratic and party structures were interwoven with patrimonial practices. .. Fourth, PA regimes enjoyed reliable instruments of repression. (Hinnebusch 2006:382)

Institutionally, this populist authoritarian structure praised by both Hinnebusch and Heydemann from their study of Middle East cases is quite similar to the clientelistic one-party dominant regime in Latin American discussed by the game-theorists. But Hinnebusch and Heydemann’s model adds a structure of strong state and adoption of socialist policies. In Hinnebusch and

² This statement only applies to an undivided society. In a society that is divided by other social cleavages such as ethnicity and religion, this class-based analysis might not apply. But class cleavage is the most dominant cleavage in most societies.
Heydemann’s observation, those populist authoritarian elites have provided large amounts of social programs.

Ayubi study (1995) of 20 Arab states shows a steady increase in social expenditure and public expenditure as percentage of GDP from 1975 to 1982 (131). According to Ayubi, the Arabic populist authoritarian states adopt some features of socialism and thus secured its longevity. But from Ayubi’s research, it is not clear to me if those social expenditures are only accessible to people within the elites’ party patronage networks or if those expenditures are also accessible to lower-middle class voters. If the redistribution is inclusive, it is clientelism, which is similar to the Latin American one-party dominant regimes. If the social distribution is not inclusive, then the Middle East authoritarian leaders have added some features of socialism. But would those socialist policies sustain the authoritarian leader? The current insurgences of social movements and protests in several Arabic populist authoritarian regimes in North Africa and the Middle East suggest that the socialist policies offered by the elites might have failed to attract popular support.

I agree with the social structural theory and the institutionalist approach to examine political economy and political institutions. I also agree with their research method, which is based on empirical study of cases rather than abstract theoretical modeling. But I don’t agree with the conclusion of their study, that is, that a populist authoritarian regime is able to sustain the autocrats. This conclusion is based on studies from non-modernized societies in the Middle East region.

Modernization theory predicts that authoritarian regimes cannot successfully handle the complexity of a modernized society. Would the strong and repressive patrimonial party state with limited welfare policies survive the challenge from a highly complicated and modernized society? What kind of institution might help authoritarianism to survive in a modern society? Again, in order to
answer this question, I propose the answer is to study modernized countries, such as Singapore and Taiwan.

**Review of Studies on Singapore and Taiwan**

There are few comparative studies of Singapore and Taiwan. Chen-Shen Yen (1990) compares the cases of Singapore, Taiwan and Korea. Starting with a statist approach, after examining state capacity, state and economy relations, state and society relations, Yen finds that the three countries’ state structures are similar. So he concludes that their different political paths are caused by the level of regime legitimacy. Both the Taiwan KMT regime and the Korean military regime have low legitimacy. But the Singapore PAP regime has high legitimacy. Though starting with a statist approach, Yen concludes with a quite vague concept, legitimacy.

Legitimacy can be easily influenced by many factors. It makes measuring legitimacy independently difficult. How to measure legitimacy? Yen measures it by voting outcomes, voters’ turnout rate and social reactions to the government. But we can only observe changes in these phenomena when the regime is very close to being toppled. The PAP regime is considered legitimate in some sense because this regime still remains in power and no opposition movement has succeeded so far. If Korea’s and Taiwan’s authoritarian regimes were not removed, we might now still consider them legitimate.

It is difficult to measure legitimacy ex-ante. How can we know that the authoritarian regime will continue to have legitimacy even when they still look stable? Because legitimacy is so closely linked to authoritarian collapse, loss of legitimacy becomes an instant cause or even a phenomenon of authoritarian collapse. The legitimacy problem is at most an intervening variable rather than the actual causal variable of authoritarian collapse.
Yen’s study of the state follows the traditional statist and state society sociologists’ approach. So he concludes that there are few differences in the three countries’ state structures. However, after studying Taiwan’s and Singapore’s state structures based on a Weberian definition of modern bureaucracy, I find there are big differences in their state structures, which could explain Taiwan’s and Singapore’s diverging political outcomes.

Single case studies of Singapore attribute the PAP survival to institutional innovation that provides democratic participation (Shee 1971; Chan 1976; Mauzy 2001), good governance (Quah 2010; Rodan 2004), and also to their political repression (Tan 2010; Chee 2006). Chua (2001) argues that most members of the middle class are employees of Singapore’s government-linked companies and thus this economic connection hindered the development of an autonomous middle class in Singapore. In Taiwan’s case, Taiwan’s democratization is considered a result of social-economic change and a growing middle class, an international crisis that caused the KMT loss of legitimacy and growing nationalism (Chu 1992; Gold 1993; Lin Tsong Jyi 1999), elite interaction (Wu 1995), electoral practices (Cheng 1989; Huang 1995), social mobilization and social movement (Peng 1991; Zhang 1990).

However, if we put the two cases together, we find that most of the explanations fall short. Taiwan also has grassroots participation institutions, good economic performance and more severe political repression than Singapore, yet Taiwan’s authoritarianism could not endure when society become empowered after modernization. Singapore also experienced a wave of opposition mobilization and social movement, international identity crisis, and socio-economic change. Yet the Singapore PAP successfully contained opposition and consolidated its authoritarianism. Chapter 2 will provide more detailed analysis of the above existing explanations of Singapore’s and Taiwan’s political outcomes. By comparing Singapore and Taiwan in various aspects in Chapter 2, I find that all the above explanations cannot fully explain the puzzle.
Greene’s study (Green 2007) about why a dominant party fails is more interesting. Based on a resource theory derived from a rational choice model, Greene assumes that a clientele authoritarian state will use its national resources to recruit clients for political support. Once the incumbent runs out of national resources, the opposition obtains the chance to convince the voters to defect. So Greene concludes that Taiwan’s one party dominance failure is caused by the shortage of national resources. He is partially correct.

The Taiwan KMT government has greatly increased its government expenditures since Taiwan opened up for competitive elections in 1987. But that increase of political expenditure had not depleted the state resources of the KMT regime before they were removed by the opposition in 2000. Through a case study of the Taiwan 2000 election, I find that the KMT election loss is totally unrelated to the KMT shortage of resources to bribe its clients. They lost the 2000 election because the KMT bribed too much rather than too little.

Problems related to electoral clientelism, such as corruption, bribery, and weak local governance, caused strong public discontent with the KMT and gave a chance to the DPP to rise in 2000. Greene’s rational choice model applies well to one party dominant regime in a non-modernized society. In a modernized society, however, voters’ considerations are different. Greene fails to see another important related factor, that is, state capacity and governance. His model also cannot explain a one party dominant regime that is not supported by clientele structures.

**Contribution of this Research**

To summarize, all current studies about the survival of one-party dominant regimes are based on the study of cases in non-modernized societies. Their theories say very little about authoritarianism in a modernized society. The structural theories about modernization and regime structure have encountered so many attacks that they have shifted away from the study of economic development
related to the emergence of democracy. The democratization studies, however, focus on contingent factors and study of transition. They can not provide an answer to the question about authoritarianism in a modernized society either. Empirical studies about cases in Asia and comparative studies of Singapore and Taiwan are lacking and unsatisfactory.

This research intends to bridge the gap in the above literatures and address this important question about authoritarianism and modernization. Are we able to see stable authoritarian capitalist regimes in modernized societies? What kind of regime structure prolongs authoritarianism in a modernized society? I utilize comparative study to answer this question. Since there is a lack of study of modernized Asian countries, I compare two countries in Asia, Singapore and Taiwan, to test all existing theories as well as my own theories.

Most attacks on modernization theory focus on weak logic and lack of evidence for the causal mechanisms. This research examines the causal mechanism of modernization theory. Rather than formulating complicated statistical analysis or mathematical models to test the modernization theory, I use in-depth case studies to test the implications and causal mechanisms of modernization theory. Do we observe the rise of citizens’ political awareness, increase of educational level, growth of rationality in voting behavior in modernized societies in Singapore and Taiwan? Why did those changes bring democratization to Taiwan but not to Singapore? What is lacking in modernization theory? This in-depth comparative historical study can directly test the modernization theoretical argument.

A shortage of this research is a limited number of cases. So far, we only have one successful modernized authoritarian country in the world, that is, Singapore. Singapore is unique: having a very small geographic size, high urbanization level, natural resource poor, Chinese-culture society surrounded by a hostile international environment. Fortunately the many similarities between Singapore and Taiwan can keep these unique features under control and treated as exogenous. In this
way, I can single out the variable that explains their different political outcomes. But my approach also creates a limitation in terms of generalization, because the two cases are unique in many ways. At the same time, the model of my theory is not regionally specific. The theory should be applicable to any region. But further research about other regions is recommended to test the general applicability of the research finding.

Theory

I set up a simple regime choice model based on economic incentives of the authoritarian leader. It is a model of the authoritarian leader’s strategic choices and the economic consequences of those choices. I use concepts and notations like game settings to explain the possibility of survival of one-party dominant regimes under challenge from the opposition. But this model is not a game theoretical model about strategic interactions between various actors. I only model the authoritarian leader’s strategic choices, but not those of other players.

Basic Regime Structure Model

All existing studies about one-party dominance agree that obtaining the support of a popular majority is vital for their longevity. So, I model that a one-party dominant leader needs to set up two sets of institutions in order to maintain stable rule, i.e. a mobilization system and a state system. I assume that the authoritarian leader’s goal is to stay in office. Based on such an incentive, the authoritarian leader sets up his regime institutions. The voters and the agents all want to receive economic benefits from the authoritarian leader.

The authoritarian leader (L) uses the state system to extract resources ($T$) from the state. Then he uses part of state resources ($t, t<T$) to redistribute back to the society ($S$) to obtain support from the majority of the society. This regime system is graphed as follows.
L can choose to use a clientelistic mobilization structure or non-clientelistic mobilization structure, and set the state structure as professional or non-professional. I argue that his choice of mobilization and state structure might be related to L’s knowledge about the social structural situation.

There are two scenarios L faces when he chooses his regime structures.

**First Scenario and Choice: Professional Statist Regime**

When there is no information block between the authoritarian leader (L) and the majority of members of the society (S), L knows what S wants to exchange for S’s support for his or her political leadership. L can obtain S’s support by directly offering \( t_1 \) to S. In this case, L does not need to hire a special partisan-based or clientele-based mobilization team to mobilize support from S. For example, in the society with a dominant class cleavage, L can gain the majority of the lower-middle class’s support by offering it social benefits through some wealth redistribution programs.

In this situation, authoritarian leader L does not need to set up a special mobilization agency, such as a pervasive party network or patronage system to conduct partisan mobilization. L can simply provide welfare programs to the middle-to-lower classes in exchange for their support for L. Because there is no information asymmetry problem between L and the professional bureaucracy (B), L can monitor the redistribution offer \( t_2 \) and minimize the transaction costs in the redistribution process. In
In order to minimize the transaction costs, L will set up a professional bureaucracy to conduct redistribution programs. The mobilization structure is graphed as follows.

L will also use the same bureaucracy to collect revenues from the society. So the agency that L uses to redistribute $t_1$ to S in exchange for S’s support is also the state agency L uses to extract revenue for state functions. In order to reduce the transaction costs in state functions, L will set up a professional state to effectively perform tax extraction and resource redistribution programs. The regime structure that L sets up to maintain political stability is graphed as follows.

In this scenario, authoritarian leader L’s interest to remain in power converges with the state’s interest to maximize the payoff of $(T_i - t_i)$. Because there is no information blockage, L and the state agency (B) know the location of the bottom line to keep S from defecting to support the regime. L and B then can offer a $(T_i - t_i)$ to S simply to keep S stay supporting L. L and B can maximize the state’s revenues and resources.
In this case, the authoritarian leader’s interest in political survival is consistent with the state’s interest to maximize its resources while also keeping the majority members of society from defecting to support other regimes. This structure is a stable mechanism to keep L in power and also maximize the government’s fiscal resources. The political interest of the authoritarian leader converges with the state’s interest for strong state capacity and autonomy. This regime structure can contribute to a strong authoritarian predatory state. I call this structure professional statist regime.

**Second Scenario and Choice: Clientelistic Regime**

When authoritarian leader L has no local information about how to obtain political support from the society, L has to hire special agents to mobilize support for L. L will contract the mobilization job to non-governmental agents, either a party system or a network of clientele groups. This mobilization structure is graphed as follows.

In this mobilization structure, there are transaction costs in the process. Since L has no local information about what the majority of members of the society want to support his or her leadership, the principal-agency hazard produces the transaction costs. So in this model, a portion of the state resources is lost in the redistribution process through the mobilization agents. The society (S) only
receives a portion of the benefits \((t'_2)\) from the total distribution resources \((t_2)\). The regime structures are graphed as follows.

The mobilization agency (C), either a party apparatus or patron-client network, is not the same as the state agency. A professional party cadre or a client agency (C) has very different interests from a professional bureaucrat (B). A professional bureaucrat wants to have good performance in public administration in order to advance his or her career. But C is not a professional bureaucrat. C’s goal is to maximize his or her own personal benefit in the transaction while performing his or her mobilization job. So, C wants to maximize \((t_2-t'_2)\), and also keep S satisfied with \((t'_2-T_2)\). In this situation, C wants to capture the state to reduce \(T_2\) in order to keep his or her clients satisfied with \((t'_2-T_2)\) while C can maintain the maximum payoff of \((t_2-t'_2)\). But a professional state’s interest is to maximize \((t_2-T_2)\) so as to retain as many resources in the state as possible.

There is interest divergence between the two agencies. Since L needs both sets of organizations to maintain stable rule, L, the ultimate political leader, is motivated to maintain a balance between the diverging interests of the two agencies. L needs to keep his or her mobilization agency from being fully captured by the state. So the state will have some autonomy to maintain a sufficient level of state resources \((t_2-T_2)\) and keep the state functioning. On the other hand, L will not set up a fully autonomous and professional state that allows no room for its clientelistic agents to lobby for
special payoffs to its clients. This regime structure produces a semi-professional state and a clientelistic mobilization structure. I call this model a clientelistic regime.

**Comparison of both Regime Structures Under Challenge from Opposition**

To summarize, in the professional statist regime, the authoritarian leader uses a professional bureaucracy to extract revenues from the society and also to distribute part of the state resources back to S in exchange for S’s support. L will pay the professional bureaucrats a transaction fee ($e_1$) for their service. The economic payoffs of L and S in this situation are listed as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Players:</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>S</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Payoffs:</td>
<td>$T_1 - t_1 - e_1 &gt; 0$</td>
<td>$t_1 - T_1 &lt; 0$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the clientelistic regime structure, the authoritarian leader hires a separate agent (C) to conduct mobilization and deliver benefits to the majority of members of the society for supporting L. L also sets up a semi-professional bureaucracy (B) to extract taxes and operate state functions. The economic payoffs of L and S under this regime structure are listed as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Players:</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>S</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Payoffs:</td>
<td>$T_2 - t_2 - e_2 &gt; 0$</td>
<td>$t_2' - T_2 &lt; 0$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In both mobilization structures, there are differences in state capacity and the transaction costs in the mobilization process. The professional statist regime has higher state capacity and lower transaction costs in mobilization than does the clientelistic regime. The society also receives more economic payoffs back from L in the professional statist structure than in the clientelistic regime. So, L in the professional statist regime might have more state resources available for distribution to increase his or her social support.
Both regimes would survive if no challenger appears at the ballot box. But if a strong challenger appears and gives the voter a counter offer of distribution benefits, the possibilities for L to survive in both situations are different.

In a professional statist regime, L can offer as much as a $t_1$ to S, as long as $t_1 < T_1 - e_1$, because L’s goal is to stay in office. Losing the office will produce a zero payoff for L. The challenger (O) has to offer $a > t_1$ to S, in order to persuade S to defect. Because L sets up a professional bureaucracy that can most efficiently operate all state functions including extracting state revenue and delivering social distribution services, the transaction cost ($e_1$) for state operation can be controlled at the minimum level. Also because the state has strong state capacity, $T_1$ is extracted at the maximum value. Therefore, L has most possible high values of $T_1 - e_1$. So L can offer a $t_1$ to S at the largest possible value as long as $t_1 < T_1 - e_1$. Then, it would be very hard for the challenger O to persuade S that his counter offer $a_1$ would be higher than $t_1$.

But in a clientelistic regime, S receives $t'_2 - T_2$ from L’s mobilization agents. Since $t'_2 < t_2 < T_2 - e_2$, the offer ($t'_2$) that the society receives under this regime is not prohibitively high and beyond challenge. So it is possible that the challenger O can offer a counter benefit $a_2 > t'_2$ to S and thus persuade them to defect from supporting L.

**Economic Modeling of L’s Choice and the Economic Consequence**

The above argument can be illustrated by an economic model of L’s optimum choices in the two scenarios discussed above.
Suppose L’s ultimate goal is to stay in office. His preferences are ranked by the possibility of staying in office. The choices of regime institution would affect L’s possibility of staying in office. L’s optimal choice is to choose the institutional arrangements that can achieve his highest possibility to stay in office at a given level of budget constraint.

I assume that the level of clientelism in the mobilization system negatively affects level of professionalism in the state system, because the mobilization agents will want to capture the state and thus affect professionalism of the government. So, in this model, the higher the level of clientelism in the mobilization system, the lower the level of professionalism in the state system.

Under the above-discussed two scenarios, L’s preferences about choices of the two sets of systems vary. The convex curve $k$ is L’s indifference curve in the first scenario. In the first scenario, L is much better off to embrace more professionalism in the state structure at the expense of sacrificing clientelism in the mobilization structure. I also think the indifference curve is convex because L is worse off at the center of the line than at each end. In the first scenario, L’s optimum point to set up his
regime structure is point A. At point A, he can achieve the highest possible payoff with the least budget costs. Point A represents a professional statist structure with high professionalism in the state system and low level of clientelism in the mobilization system.

The concave curve $l$ at the top is L’s indifference curve in the second scenario. In the second scenario, L is much better off to embrace a more clientelistic mobilization structure at the expense of sacrificing professionalism in the state structure. I also think the indifference curve is concave because L is better off at the center of the line than at each end. In the second scenario, to produce the same level of satisfaction for L as he does in scenario one, L’s optimum point to set up his regime structure is point B. Point B represents a clientelistic regime with middle level professionalism in the state system and a high level of clientelism in the mobilization system.

Then I draw the budget constraint lines of the two optimal regime structure points. Budget constraint line 1 is L’s budget line under a professional statist regime at the optimum point A. Budget constraint line 2 is the budget line of L under a clientelistic regime at the optimum point B. Budget line 2 is much higher than Budget 1. So, this economic model suggests L pays much less in the first scenario than he does in the second scenario for achieving the same satisfactory outcome. So, L’s optimal choice at the first scenario, a professional statist regime, is less costly than L’s optimal choice at the second scenario, a clientelistic regime.

To explain it in another way, under the Budget Constraint Line 1, the indifference curve of L under scenario 2 marked as $l’$ is much lower than the other indifference curve under scenario 2 marked as $l$ whose utility level is the same as L’s utility shown by the indifference curve in the first scenario. So, under the same budget constraint, the utility L can obtain in the first scenario is higher than the utility he can obtain in the second scenario. In other words, under the same state resource constraints, L in the first scenario has a higher possibility of remaining in office than L in the second scenario.
The economic model suggests that in order to achieve the same possibility to stay in office, a clientelistic regime costs L more resources than a professional regime. With the same budget constraint, a clientelistic regime cannot achieve the same possibility for L’s survival as a professional regime. Therefore, when a challenger appears to persuade voters to defect by giving counter offers, it is more possible for L to lose the competition with the challenger under a clientelistic regime than under a professional statist regime because of higher transaction costs.

**Argument Derived from the Model**

The theory strictly derived from the model is structural deterministic and path dependent. The strategically optimum choice made by the authoritarian leader under certain social conditions produces an institutional path. That institutional path determines his or her chance of survival when the opposition appears after the society moves into modernity. This argument is strictly derived from the model. But the assumption of the model that the authoritarian leader is economically strategic and only makes the optimal choice is questionable. In reality other factors such as the leader’s personal traits and other contingent factors might also affect his or her institutional choices. So I would like to relax some assumptions of the model and makes a less structural deterministic argument.

I argue that the social structural situation that the authoritarian leader faces during his or her early regime building period to a certain degree affects choice of regime structure. The regime structure that a leader sets up affects the chances of authoritarian survival after the society moves into modernity. Modernization empowers the society and gives the opposition a chance to challenge the authoritarian dictator in elections. In that situation when the challenger appears, if the authoritarian leader sets up a professional statist regime, it is difficult for the challenger to convince the voters to defect because the authoritarian leader will have enough resources to distribute to voters and
persuade the voters to continue supporting him or her. So, the authoritarian elite can survive the pressure from the challenger after modernization.

But if the dictator set up a clientelistic semi-professional regime system, L incurs more transaction costs to maintain his rule. As a result, it is possible that a challenger can provide a better counter offer to the voters and convince the voters to defect from supporting the incumbent leader.

Since this argument is derived from a simple model, I will test the causal mechanisms of the arguments further through empirical observations.

**Hypothesis for Singapore and Taiwan**

This is my hypothesis about my cases. Singapore and Taiwan had very different social cleavage structures in the beginning of their regime-building period. Different social cleavage structures led the KMT and PAP elites to set up regime structures. Facing a very strong class-based social cleavage and a highly active trade union force, the PAP elite knew what the society was asking for. Because there is no information block, the PAP chose to set up a professional statist structure. The PAP avoided clientelism in the regime structure and reduced the role of the party.

The PAP also set up a highly professional government. The professional government then delivered various social programs to the majority of the lower-middle classes to gain their support for the PAP government. As a result, even when the opposition was actively mobilizing voters to vote against the PAP in the early 1960s, the PAP was able to win the elections. Then, as the PAP offered sufficient social programs to the lower-middle classes, the PAP’s dominant position becomes consolidated beyond challenge in the ballot.

The KMT in the late 1940s faced a fragmented society. After the February 28, 1947 Incident, communal cleavages and class cleavages crosscut the society. There were no strong trade unions or other organized forces. So, the KMT lacked local information to know how to obtain majority support
from Taiwanese society. Then, the KMT set up a clientelistic patronage network to mobilize support.

The KMT did not set up a highly professional state because the KMT had to concede to share state resources with the clients. So the state capacity and governance capacity of the KMT government is lower than that of the Singapore PAP government. Consequently, the KMT cannot effectively manage public services to the public.

Some people received favors through the patron-client network. But the majority of the public received less benefit from the KMT government than the public of Singapore did from their government. The KMT government could not provide satisfactory public programs due to its weak state capacity. Public policy failures and lack of social redistribution to the majority of the disadvantaged groups then produced grievances toward the KMT.

After Taiwan become modernized, these social grievances were mobilized and translated into various social protests. Under pressure from the empowered society as well as the political mobilization by the opposition, the KMT then had to concede to the opposition demand for open elections for national offices. Then, the opposition, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), won elections by offering the public better social welfare policies and more beneficial social programs. The DPP won local elections first and finally won the national election in 2000.

In order to test my hypothesis, I conduct in-depth comparison of Singapore and Taiwan in many aspects: their mobilization structures, state structures, fiscal structures, opposition movements and electoral outcomes.

**Methodology**

Besides a theoretical framework based on a regime choice model, this research is heavily based on in-depth case studies of the two countries of interest, Singapore and Taiwan. In order to test my hypothesis and find answers to the puzzle, I chose Singapore and Taiwan as my case studies. I compare
the two countries’ mobilization structures and state structures as well as their fiscal capacity. Then, I select two critical historical periods as case studies of the authoritarian leaders’ situation under strong opposition. One is Singapore from 1960 to 1963 when the dominant PAP regime faced challenges from a strong opposition party. The other is Taiwan from 1980 to 2000, when the authoritarian KMT regime faced challenges from the opposition. In my in-depth case studies of two countries, I employ both qualitative investigations and quantitative analysis of data to test my hypothesis.

**Case Selection**

The case selection of Singapore and Taiwan is based on the principle of looking for cases with diverging political outcomes while controlling alternative variables as much as possible, in order to discover the true explanatory variable. Singapore and Taiwan provide good cases for that purpose. Singapore and Taiwan have divergent political outcomes. Singapore’s one party dominant situation survived while Taiwan’s authoritarianism failed.

The case selection of Singapore and Taiwan can also control many alternative variables. Both countries are Chinese-dominated societies and share similar Chinese cultural characteristics. Most of the PAP and KMT elites were raised in Chinese culture and some had overseas Western education as well. Both countries have external security threats and low levels of natural resources. Both states developed their economies within 20 to 30 years after WWII and brought both countries into modernity in the 1980s. Both countries’ regime building and state building occurred at the same time. Both countries had set up single-party structures and tolerated some level of local elections. Before the 1980s, both regimes were able to obtain overwhelming electoral victories in all elections and had enjoyed a high level of legitimacy and stability. Both regimes also used various governmental powers to repress opposition.
Moreover, both states had adopted developmental policies and achieved impressive economic growth. So both governments had gained some legitimacy through good performance. Both countries set up state corporatism structures to manage state and society relationships and set up grassroots organizations to connect with the masses. Both countries had multi-ethnic societies and both countries had national identity struggles. Singapore struggled with its relationship with Federation of Malaysia and had the Chinese versus Malay identity crisis. Taiwan struggled with its relationship with China and had the Chinese versus Taiwanese identity crisis.

This case selection can control many aspects discussed by statist theories and democratization theories. Since many alternative variables are kept under control by this case selection, we can identify the only explanatory variable by comparing the two cases. The purpose of the case study is to discover the nuances between Singapore and Taiwan and find out how these differences affect their diverging political outcomes.

But there are also several important aspects that this case selection cannot examine. First is the size of the country. Singapore is a city state while Taiwan is composed of 25 cities and counties. The size of the country can affect the costs of government management, the level of difficulty of political mobilization by the opposition, and the level of difficulty of repression. For a city state, it is easier to supervise and manage the bureaucrats. Since a city state does not have the division between central and local governments, the authoritarian leader can directly supervise local politics and local governance. Thus it is less costly to set up a strong state in a city-state. It is also easier for a city-state authoritarian leader to repress the opposition, since the costs to control opposition activities are less than the costs of supervision in a bigger country.

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3 Before 1963, Federation of Malaysia was called Federation of Malaya. In this dissertation, sometimes the word “Malaya” is used to refer to Malaysia.
But a city state also has its drawbacks. Due to its small size and high urbanization level, it is much easier for the opposition to mobilize support as well as to topple the regime. Since an urban population has a high density, it is easy for the opposition to quickly rally a large amount of support. If large-scale riots and social movements happen in the city state, the authoritarian leader’s legitimacy can be immediately challenged. A short period of large-scale strikes and social demonstrations could easily paralyze the city-state’s operation and thus coerce the authoritarian leader into making political concessions or even force him or her to step down. But in a big country, regional riots and demonstrations will not seriously challenge the leader’s legitimacy. Due to the country’s large size, the opposition has to mobilize support in more regions in order to topple the authoritarian leader. If the opposition’s support is only regional, the authoritarian leader could contain and block information about regional riots and demonstrations. Then the authoritarian leader could quickly repress the opposition movements within the region without affecting his or her leadership of the whole country. So, the size of the country can both help and undermine authoritarian survival.

Though this case study cannot control this variable, my in-depth analysis of the two cases actually shows that this variable is only slightly relevant to their political outcomes. Low supervision costs indeed help the PAP to quickly set up a professional state structure. But size would not have be a critical reason for that regime structure choice since larger size countries can set up a professional state as well, though it might take a longer time than Singapore. Also, size is not the reason to explain the survival of Singapore’s authoritarianism.

Contrary to the predictions of size theory, Taiwan is more repressive of the opposition than Singapore. Taiwan’s KMT government was more able to discover and to repress opposition activities than was the Singapore PAP regime. Taiwan’s authoritarianism was more iron-fisted than Singapore. Also contrary to the predictions of size theory, the opposition in Singapore finds it harder to mobilize
support than does the opposition in Taiwan. We do not see many large-scale riots and social demonstrations in Singapore after the mid-1960s. But in Taiwan, where opposition mobilization is supposed to be more difficult due to its larger size, we see frequent riots and social demonstrations happening in the 1980s. So size only plays a marginal role in determining political outcomes. Also, in order to control the size problem, I select a case study of one city mayoral election in Taiwan as a comparable study with Singapore’s general election.

Second is the leadership variable. Singapore’s Lee Kwan Yew⁴ has long been regarded as indispensable for bringing Singapore to its current situation. Lee Kwan Yew’s excellent political skills and his persistent ideas to create and maintain clean and professional government in Singapore are important factors. In Taiwan, it is also thought that Chiang Ching-kuo⁵ was indispensable for Taiwan’s move toward democracy. If it is not because of Chiang’s reformist attitude, Taiwan would not lift martial law in 1986 and then gradually move to democracy. Lee’s British education and British legacy and Chiang Ching-kuo’s Soviet Union education and the communist legacy might help to explain their different governmental choices.

Leaders and their political perceptions and ideas are important factors in determining critical choices for the regimes. I cannot control this variable nor do I intend to challenge the leadership theory. I want to treat the special traits of the leaders, including their political attitudes, political ideas, educational background, their political skills and even physical and mental situations as exogenous

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⁴ The Chinese put their family names before their given names. So, Mr. Lee Kwan Yew’s family name is Lee and given name is Kwan Yew. In this dissertation except in the bibliography, all Chinese names are spelled according to this order.

⁵ Singapore, Taiwan, and the PRC China, adopt different spellings of Chinese names in Roman alphabet. The same Chinese name might have different spellings at different regions. For example, Chiang Ching-kuo is the spelling used in Taiwan. But Chaing Ching-kuo is also spelled as Chiang Ching Kuo or Jiang Jingguo. In this dissertation, three styles of spelling for Chinese names are used according to their place of origion.
variables. I only examine the leader’s choices under given sociopolitical situations. Through analysis of the leader’s choices, I find that choices made by the leaders in Singapore and Taiwan are strategically rational. Their political decisions in given situations are consistent with the prediction of my regime choice model. I agree that other elements from specific leaders might also affect their political choices. But from a structural point of view, those elements are not the focus of this study. I welcome leadership theorists to add more insights to this study.

**Multi-method Case Study**

I employed multiple methods to conduct in-depth case study of two countries. I conduct in-depth studies to examine various aspects of society and polity in both Singapore and Taiwan, such as their economies, national identity struggles, grassroots organizational situation, regime mobilization structure, state structure, and fiscal structure. I also study critical historical junctures in both countries to seek the causes of their different outcomes. Altogether, I employed the following four methods in my in-depth case study.

- **Historical Archive Studies**

  My cases focus largely on historical events. So I collected data through historical archive studies. I collected various reports and studies about historical events of interest, including research reports from historians and sociologists, records of interviews with witnesses and key politicians, memoirs, newspapers, propaganda materials, etc. I read reports by authors from both pro-and-anti-incumbent-leaders views, in order to obtain a more neutral position about the historical events. Rather than only looking at subjective narrations and political opinions, I also look for hard data in my historical studies, such as event analysis data, data about actual events and facts, economic indicators, government fiscal situation data, survey results, electoral results etc.
In my historical studies, I rely more on the analysis of those hard data than on the subjective narrations. Most of the key conclusions are made by analyzing the hard data. But where it is impossible to collect hard data, I employ soft data to observe the situation, such as using witnesses’ narrations of events, scholars’ opinions and analyses of the historical events, politician’s opinions and perceptions etc. By collecting both hard and soft data, I am able to find detailed descriptions of my cases’ situations and discover various possible explanations for the cases of interest.

- **Individual Interviews**

Besides relying on archival data and narrations, I also conducted dozens of interviews with individuals. My interviewees include ordinary citizens, scholars, social group leaders, bureaucrats, politicians, opposition leaders, activists in social movements. I chose those interviews according to the specific focus of my research. I interviewed public servants to collect information about the state structures. I interviewed citizens and students to collect information about their governments and also with some specific questions of interest. I interviewed opposition elites and social movement activists to seek information about the transitional time. The interviews were constructed to seek information to test the implications and causal mechanisms of my theories.

Due to respect to IRB regulations, I cannot disclose the names and identities of my interviewees. But I report my interviewees’ words and their unspecific identities in this research. Through the one-on-one interviews, I was able to discover answers specific to my research interest and thus test if the archive study results are consistent with my interview studies. All my interviewees were very cooperative and I am almost certain did not give false answers to me. But I was aware that at least two interviewees were cautious about the interview and did not behave like themselves. I also noticed that they avoided making strong arguments and chose more mild words and descriptions about the governments and politicians. Therefore, I conclude that their answers might be slightly different if
they were allowed to fully express their views without any concern. So, I treat those interview data with more caution. I also constantly examine if I am receiving the true information in the interviews and if that interview bias is serious enough to challenge my research conclusion based on archival studies of hard and soft data.

- **Anthropological observations**

  In order to address the bias problem in formal interviews as I describe above, I decided to also employ an anthropological approach to discover deeper truths below the surface. I found that people were more able to freely express their opinions and observation of some critical issues to me during informal chatting. I employed this research method a lot in Singapore where people were quite cautious about accepting formal interviews from a political science PhD candidate. I observed Singaporeans’ daily facial expressions, their attitudes of life, their chats with each other and their political comments about policy issues. Sometimes, I provoke them with political questions and observe their response. I spent a quite large amount of time associating with the students in the National University of Singapore and observed the youths’ attitudes. It is during those informal chats and observation that I heard talks of scandals about the government, complaints, even facts that are quite different from the report of the existing data. Also, I treated all this information with caution and balanced it with my observations of the general public, interviews, archive studies, etc. In the end, I tried to evaluate critically all of the data employed in this study.

- **Quantitative data analysis**

  Besides using qualitative methods, the research also employs quantitative data analysis. Quantitative data analysis provides a good test of relations between key variables. So if there are quantitative data available, and there is a way to use those quantitative data to test my hypothesis, I
will employ the quantitative data and test if statistical analysis shows consistent results with my prediction. Most of the quantitative data I use are event analysis data and election outcome data.

Most of my statistical data has fewer than 50 observations. Because of this small n problem, I can only employ one variable simple regression significance test and correlation test in my statistical analysis. I cannot design more complicated statistical models and add any control variables. That’s the shortcoming of the quantitative research. But since quantitative analysis is also supported with qualitative research results, the small n problem is not serious enough to affect the conclusion of the arguments.

- **Spatial analysis**

In voting outcome studies, I also used spatial analysis to discover regional distribution differences and their possible explanations. So maps and drawings of the spatial distribution of variables are also employed by me in the case study of Singapore from 1960 to 1963. Based on an old city map of Singapore, I drew a map of spatial distribution of Singapore government’s public programs in 1960-1963, in order to test the spatial correlation between location of public programs and the electoral outcomes in 1963. Because the map is created by my subjective estimation of the location of each public project, it might produce some errors and bias. But a certain degree of error, in my view does not seriously affect the validity of the conclusions. So I treat those errors as reasonable.

**Chapter Outline**

This research is designed to address an important but generally untouched question: how a one party dominant regime can consolidate its power even after the society becomes modernized. For that purpose, I conducted case studies of Singapore and Taiwan. Existing studies of these two countries have not provided a sufficient answer to the puzzle: why Singapore’s PAP regime consolidates its power but Taiwan’s KMT regime lost its one party dominance after both countries moved into modernity.
Based on a regime choice model, I suggest that the social structural condition at the beginning of the authoritarian leader’s regime building period creates an institutional path. Under each social structural condition, the authoritarian leader chooses his or her optimum structures for a mobilization system and a state system, i.e. a professional statist regime or a clientelist regime. Such a regime choice later would affect the chances for the authoritarian regime to survive when strong opposition appears. Modernization provides more fertile ground for opposition to emerge and develop. But regime structures affect the possibility of one-party dominance survival when they face strong opposition.

Chapter 2 compares Singapore and Taiwan with the purpose of addressing the existing explanations for their political outcomes. Several explanatory variables that are offered through a single country study become questionable when I test them with comparison of two countries. Existing theories fail to provide a sufficient explanation for either the survival of authoritarianism in Singapore or Taiwan’s democratization. Some variable is missing. Therefore, it is important that we examine two countries in detail to discover more differences and examine political consequences of those different aspects.

Chapter 3 compares Singapore and Taiwan’s regime structures with a focus on their mobilization structure, state structure and finally their fiscal capacity. Through the comparison, I find that Singapore and Taiwan differ in their mobilization structure and state structure. These differences affect their state capacity, fiscal structures, economic policies, and social policies. In the end, I examine the social cleavage situation in their original regime and state building period to trace the ultimate cause of elites’ choices of different regime structures. This is to test if the structural deterministic argument suggested by my optimal choice model is consistent with the cases.
Chapter 4 is an in-depth case study of Singapore from 1960 to 1963. I chose this period because this is the only time that the PAP experienced the challenge of a strong opposition. The reason that the strong opposition could develop in the 1960s is historical. Prior to the PAP taking office in 1959, the left-wing trade unionists already had established their mobilization networks and social basis among the masses. In the 1960s, the left-wing trade unionists broke from the PAP and formed an opposition party. So this study cannot discover why the authoritarian leader failed to contain the opposition while they were weak because in Singapore the opposition became strong before the authoritarian leader consolidated his power. But Singapore from 1960 to 1963 provides a perfect case to discover how an authoritarian leader can survive a situation of strong opposition. Through this case study, we can discover the reason for the PAP’s success in defeating the challenges of opposition and thus test the causal mechanisms of my argument.

Chapter 5 is an in-depth case study of Taiwan from the 1980s to 2000. During this period, the opposition started to emerge, gradually grew strong and challenged the KMT at the ballot box. Partly because Taiwan has a larger geographic size than Singapore, it takes the opposition fourteen years to gradually win electoral support from various local regions. Finally in 2000, the opposition won the national election and achieved the first government turnover, which established Taiwan as a two-party competitive democracy. This period provides a perfect case to study why the authoritarian leader failed to repress and contain the opposition and why the authoritarian leader failed to win elections when the opposition challenged him at the ballot box.

Chapter 6 offers a conclusion and an application. I summarize the findings of the research and the conclusions that I can draw through both a regime choice economic model as well as in-depth comparative studies. I discuss the generalizability of the conclusion. Also, I make some speculations about the possibility for China to develop into stable capitalist authoritarian regimes in the future.
Chapter 2  Singapore and Taiwan in Comparison

Singapore and Taiwan are two very interesting cases. These two countries have a lot of similarities in their economic, social, and political structures. Both are nations dominated by a Chinese population and thus inherited Chinese Confucian culture. Both were at similar development levels after WWII. Both are resource poor countries. Both were under international threat of war during their initial state building period. Both went through a rapid modernization process in the 1960s and 70s and reached modernity in the 1980s. Both had multi-ethnic societies. Both went through ethnic and national identity struggles during their democratization processes. Both set up one party dominant states after the regime came to power. Both governments were under the control of the dominating party. Both adopted state corporatism structures to control social groups. Both embraced elections in their political ideologies and adopted elections as the format to select leaders. Both used suppression and state machinery to undermine opposition forces. Both set up strong controls over media and over society. Both set up grassroots institutions to conduct mass mobilization. Both traditionally had meritocratic bureaucracy recruitment practices and had adopted merit-based recruitment procedures. The ruling parties in both countries were able to maintain their authoritarian control before the 1980s.

But after Taiwan became modern in the 1980s, the KMT regime was not able to contain the expansion of opposition forces. Gradually, Taiwan moved toward democracy in the 1990s. Singapore’s PAP government, however, even though it suffered a four seat loss in the 1980s elections, were able to quickly win back two of the lost seats and continue its one-party dominance in the parliament. There is no foreseeable challenge to the People’s Action Party (PAP) authoritarian rule in the near future.
In this chapter, I will first briefly introduce Singapore and Taiwan’s political paths. Since many theories have attempted to explain Taiwan’s democratization and Singapore’s authoritarian survival, I would like to specifically examine several factors in a comparative perspective. The second half of this chapter will be devoted to comparing Singapore and Taiwan in the following terms: levels of political liberalism, levels of modernization, the ruling parties’ grassroots structures and activities, grassroots democracy, levels of suppression of opposition movements, communal and national identity struggles, and opposition movements.

The Singapore Nation, Regime, and State Building Path

Singapore’s nation, regime and state building almost all came together at the same time. The People’s Action Party (PAP) at that time faced a multiracial society and strong opposition with mass mobilization organizational power. This process also happened in the setting of a competitive electoral system and full adult suffrage. In this difficult situation, Singapore’s PAP consolidated a professional authoritarian state and built a multiracial nation. The Singapore experience challenges several existing political science theories.

Mass Movement and Democratization 1953-1959

Singapore was under British colonial rule except for the years when it was under Japanese occupation. After WWII, the British returned to Singapore. By then, Singapore had already become a hot bed for communism and anti-colonial mobilization. Strikes, student riots, anti-British demonstrations, and other military actions mobilized by the communists were rampant. Ethnic riots were also seen from time to time. While combating the communists and maintaining social order during this restless period, the British colonial government was also pushing for Singapore’s independence and opening up the political process to election and democratization. On March 20,
1948, the first election was held for six seats in the Legislative Council. After that, the British colonial government gradually increased the electorate size until 1959.

In 1953, the Rendel Commission was appointed to make recommendations for Singapore’s self-government. Singapore was forced to move toward independence. In 1955, the first general election for 25 seats in the Legislative Assembly was held. The British appointed the remaining seven seats in the Legislative Assembly. Through election, the Labour Front won the most seats and David Marshall became the first Chief Minister of Singapore. Soon, due to his inability to calm down rioting at home and win support for Singapore’s independence internationally, David Marshall resigned in 1956.

In 1956, a rightist, Lim Yew Hock, took over as the Chief Minister. He adopted a more hardliner strategy towards the communists and was able to suppress the strikes and riots mobilized by the communists. Lim’s talks with the British finally led to Singapore’s full self-governance in March 1959. However, Lim’s success with the British did not win him the election. In the 1959 General Election in May, the first election with a full electorate, Lim’s rightist party lost due to the sudden influx of workers and farmers in the electorate. The size of the 1959 electorate was 596,098. The 1959 electorate almost doubled the size of the electorate in 1955 which was 300,199. The turnout rate in 1955 was only 52.7%, but the turnout rate in 1959 was 92.9%. So, in 1959, the combination of a sudden increase of electorate size and high voter turnout created 369,844 new voters, most of whom were working class people. In 1959, the overwhelming electoral victory of the pro-left party, the PAP, was a result of the increase of the electorate and also due to the communists’ grassroots mobilization.

**State Building**

Several theorists have (James Scott 1972; Geddes 1991; Ertman 1995; Ganev 2001; O’Dwyer 2004) predicted that if state building occurs at the same time as an increase in the electorate, the government will set up a clientele-based weak state rather than a strong autonomous state. They argue
that in this situation, the politicians give out positions in the government to their clients as side-payments for their electoral support. However, the PAP set up a highly autonomous and professional state even though state building and the increase of electorate happened at the same time.

On his first day as Prime Minister, Lee Kwan Yew promised to set up a clean and professional government in sharp contrast to the past British colonial and Labour Front administrations. On that day, all PAP ministers wore white shirts as a symbol of this new government. More than just making promises of a clean and incorruptible government, Lee also implemented a comprehensive administrative reform to set up the professional state (Quah 2003). The Prevention of Corruption Act was enacted in 1960 to replace the old Prevention of Corruption Ordinance.

The new act gave more power to the Corrupt Practices Investigation Bureau (CPIB) to conduct investigations and thus effectively discover and punish corruption. All civil servants were required to attend classes at a political study center to improve their work ethic. A Central Complaint Bureau was set up in 1961 to “enable the public to complain about petty acts of tyranny or impertinence by civil servants” (Chee1971: 86). Lee Kwan Yew also reformed the recruitment office, the Public Service Commission (PSC), in 1961. The PSC was given additional responsibility for disciplinary control of all civil servants. In order to increase their capacities, the staffing of CPIB and PSC was largely increased after the PAP took power.

From 1972 to 1982, the PAP also raised salaries of public servants to reduce the gap between earnings in the public and private sectors and thus retain the most talented people in public office (Quah 2010). The PAP also set up many independent statutory boards to perform various public services. The corporate governance of the statutory boards follows stricter recruitment and management rules than those in private companies. Through the years, the PAP has made other changes to improve administrative efficiency, accountability, and responsiveness to the public. All
these arrangements helped the PAP to set up a strong, effective and incorruptible state. State building was mostly completed during the time when the PAP faced strong oppositions and competitive elections in the early 1960s.

**Nation Building**

Singapore has a multinational society, with the population made up of 70% Chinese, 20% Malay and 10% Indians and other races. Singapore’s nation building was undertaken at the same time as their first democracy experience. It is argued by Rustow (Rustow 1970) that consolidation of national identity was the first requisite for democracy. Otherwise, electoral competition would only exacerbate communal conflict (Hinnebusch 2006:378). Incentives for ethnic voting might have produced segregation of communal groups and damaged Singapore’s nation building. The ethnic voting tendency was strong in the early 1960s. The PAP faced a very strong Chinese-based left wing opposition equipped with mass mobilization networks. The left wing used Chinese communal grievances to mobilize support. Yet amazingly, the PAP successfully formed a nation in a few years after they stepped into office. Ethnic disunity or a Chinese majority dictatorship, both possible, did not happen in Singapore.

Lee Kwan Yew’s nation building policy was clearly biased against the Chinese. In the public school system, English and Malay education were favored. Chinese language schools did not receive the same funding and attention as the English schools. **Chinese identity was also diluted through the language policy (Wilson 1978).** Of the four government languages - English, Chinese, Malay, and Tamil - Malay and English were the national languages, not Chinese. Singaporeans in the early 1960s were required to take Malay language classes. The public servants had to pass a Malay language exam. Voices from the Chinese social elite to make Chinese one of the national languages were harshly rebuked by the government. Lee and other PAP ministers publically mocked this proposal and
denounced those Chinese nationalists as Chinese chauvinists (*Straits Time* Dec 11 1963, Wilson 1978:313). The Chinese speaking population was also disadvantaged. Chinese school students could not find higher level jobs, especially jobs in the government.

Nation building in a multinational society during a time of strong opposition and competitive elections was not without pain. The opposition mobilized the disadvantaged Chinese school students and teachers, and Chinese society in general, to challenge the PAP’s educational policies as well as the PAP’s leadership. Ethnic riots happened from time to time in the 1960s. But despite criticism from the opposition on ethnic policies and ethnic conflicts and riots, the PAP was able to maintain order and firmly implement its nation building policies and get the majority of the people on its side. In 1962, soon after the PAP took office, Singapore held a referendum for merger and 71% of the voters agreed to merge with Malaysia. The PAP successfully persuaded the Chinese majority to consent to the new Malaysian identity.

In 1965, Singapore was expelled from the Federal Government of Malaysia and forced to become independent. The Singaporeans, especially the disadvantaged Singapore Chinese, had not taken the opportunity to question Lee Kwan Yew’s nation building policy due to this international crisis. Instead they were moved by the Prime Minister’s sorrow when Lee cried on Singapore’s Independence Day. Two or three Singaporean Chinese I talked with in my field research told me that the people shared the prime minister’s grief. They believed President Lee’s merger decision was in the best interest of Singapore and shared his sorrow when this plan did not work out.

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6 During the time when Singapore was negotiating with Malaya for a joint independence from British colonial rule under a common Federation of Malaya, the term “Malaya” or “Malayan” was used to describe the federation. The name Federation of Malaysia was used after Singapore and two other former British colonies joined the Federation in 1963.
The Singapore nation was already formed when the three ethnic communities rallied around the prime minister. The new national identity created at this time has been well maintained among all ethnic groups throughout the years. Almost every Chinese, Malay, Indian I talked with in my field research considered themselves to be Singaporean. An old Indian lady in her sixties was even offended when I called her Indian and talked to her about India. She raised her voice and corrected me, “No I am Singaporean. My parents came from India. But I am a Singaporean”.

**Authoritarian Regime Building**

In the 1960s, besides building the state and nation in a multinational, highly mobilized society, the PAP also managed to combat strong opposition and build up an authoritarian one party regime in an originally democratic environment. Lee Kwan Yew’s ambition, like that of most politicians, is to remain in power once he has assumed power. But Lee preferred to do it in an authoritarian way rather than allowing fair competition. Before 1961, the PAP was part of the Malayan Communist Party’s (MCP) united front. The PAP won the 1959 election largely by depending on the MCP’s social mobilization networks. Most of the PAP’s grassroots mobilization networks were controlled by the left-wing pro-communist activists. So, if they wanted to break with the communists and still maintain power in an open electoral system, the right wing in the PAP would have to find other ways to win votes rather than relying on the communists’ grassroots organizations.

Lee successfully won the battle against the left wing. First, he deliberately chose to break with the left-wing faction in August 1961 using the merger issue as his reason. The left wing soon formed an opposition party, the Barisan Sosialis (BS), and decided to challenge the PAP electorally. After that, Lee used the state to suppress opposition forces. Government offices, media, and statutory boards set up by the government all adopted the PAP’s positions and denounced BS’s policies as anti-government. The PAP also set up various statutory boards and government offices to promote economic
development as well as providing public housing to win the support of the urban poor. BS, through its vast grassroots networks of various trade unions, hawker’s associations, women’s associations, student associations, teachers’ associations, rural residents’ associations, etc., was successful in mobilizing large demonstrations, strikes, riots, and campaign rallies. Some demonstrations and campaign rallies had more than 20,000 attendees.

Despite BS’s apparently strong mobilization power at the grassroots, the PAP was able to win the 1962 merger referendum and the 1963 general election. After losing two elections and facing three waves of repression and arrest from 1963–1964, the BS was not strong enough to pose a serious threat to the PAP by 1964. A year later, a split in the BS further weakened its strength. Losing its power to win at the ballot box, the BS then decided to withdraw from the electoral system and to mobilize against the election in 1968. That gave the PAP an overwhelming victory in the 1968 election. In many districts, the PAP candidates won the seats uncontested. After the 1968 failure, the BS did not participate in elections in the 1970s and 1980s. Though never banned by the PAP government, the BS was left to dissolve and merge with the Worker’s Party in 1988.

**Consolidation of Authoritarianism**

The PAP’s authoritarian party state structure was set up and consolidated after 1968. From the 1960s to the 1980s, Singapore achieved rapid modernization with an 8% average annual GDP real growth rate from 1971 to 1989 (calculated based on United Nations Statistics Division data). During the period from 1968 to 1980, the PAP was able to win all seats in the parliament. In 1980, an opposition started to emerge. In 1984 and 1988, the PAP lost one to two seats to the opposition. In 1991, the PAP lost four seats to the opposition. The PAP then became very aware of the growth of the opposition and implemented reforms to improve administrative responsiveness to the voters. An example was the Public Service for the 21st Century (PS21) project in May 1995 to increase administrative efficiency and
responsiveness to the public. PS21 set up telephone hotlines and websites to respond to public complaints or requests. Lim (1996) reported that the rationale for setting up PS21 is that the “Singapore Civil Service had to be responsive to a public that is increasingly demanding higher standards of service and an increasingly outward-oriented economy”. In the following 1997 election, the PAP won back two seats. The PAP maintained the two-seats-loss situation up until the present day.

In my view, the PAP’s authoritarian rule is still very stable. I have not heard much anti-system or anti-PAP conversation by citizens from any ethnic group either in public places or in private settings. Complaints are heard here and there. But the PAP, through newspapers and various other channels, is able to discover the public’s complaints.

They respond very quickly to address those complaints through government policies. A journalism major graduate student told me how the government in the last election quickly responded to the public’s complaints about public housing, immigration and transportation issues. The current prime minister, Lee Hsien Loong, son of Lee Kwan Yew, addressed the three issues specifically in a public talk and also quickly made some policy adjustments in those areas. Finally, this journalism major said, “the PAP is very smart to address the public complaints. Take me for an example. I was against the PAP because of its public housing policy. But since they changed the housing policy, I think it is ok to vote for them.”

Besides increasing administrative responsiveness, the PAP also set up other institutions and channels to control the society and receive policy feedback from the grassroots. The PAP controls social groups through a state corporatism structure. Statutory boards are set up to supervise social groups. In an interview with a church pastor, I found out that all religious groups are given equal opportunities to conduct religious activities in public. The government even invited churches to join the government-organized public religious activities. But all activities are conducted under government supervision. For
example, during Christmas time, the government will designate a space in the neighborhood and invite all churches to take part in Christmas programs. In the same way, on Malay and Indian holidays, public spaces are reserved and special programs are organized for religious celebrations. The pastor also told me that she and her church were invited by the government to join various social programs, such as hosting incoming international students, helping to combat juvenile delinquency, etc. (Interview SIN82311). Besides encouraging religious activities and religious groups’ participation in social works, the government also closely monitors religious groups’ activities. The government condemns religious leaders if their talks are not consistent with the government’s religious policy. This year, the government is targeting and investigating the finances of two mega churches in Singapore each of whom have more than 20,000 service attendees each Sunday.

The PAP also set up grassroots organizations to provide various services to the neighborhood and also to respond to voters’ individual complaints and needs. These institutions, such as Citizens Consultative Committees, Residents’ Associations, Residents’ Committees, People’s Associations, and the PAP Community Foundation, provide community activities and services, such as kindergarten services, games, and tours to the neighborhoods. They are also grassroots mobilization institutions. Residents receive propaganda publications from those PAP-controlled neighborhood organizations every month. “Meet the People” sessions provide individual help to the voters, and occur on a weekly basis.

In the neighborhood where I stayed, around 10-20 people attend the session every Monday. A person I chatted with told me her experience in a Meet the People Session several years ago. She first talked with the lower level officials and then was led to the MP of her district. She asked the MP to write a letter on her behalf to appeal for permission to hire a housemaid. As a single lady, she was not allowed to hire a housemaid as hiring a housemaid is restricted to couples. She explained that she was

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taking care of her elderly paralyzed mother and also worked full time and therefore needed a maid to help her. The MP quickly responded positively to her request and wrote the letter on her behalf. She got the permission to hire the housemaid within two months. She is pretty happy with the result.

Besides providing grassroots services and improving administrative responsiveness, the PAP also actively works to suppress opposition. Dr. Chee Soon Juan (2006), the leader of the Singapore Democratic Party, describes the hard journey as an opposition party leader in his book, *Singapore Myth*. Dr. Chee reports the hardship of recruiting people to run for elections as opposition candidates. The threat of arrest or job loss makes few people willing to run. After Dr. Chee finally found one person who would consider running as an opposition candidate, that candidate and his family were intimidated and finally gave up (Chee 2006: 25-26).

The PAP also allegedly threatened the voters that if the opposition won that district, the Housing and Development Board (HDB) would not renovate the housing in the district (Chee 2006: 26). A resident told me that HDB obviously neglected renovating public housing in the two opposition constituencies. The opposition MP was not allowed to use Community Centers for Meet the People sessions. Dr. Chee personally suffered arrest because of public speeches about democracy and human rights. He was intimidated, expelled from his university, sued in the courts, and penalized with huge fines. He also reported how other dissidents were arrested, tortured in prison, forced to plead guilty to criminal charges, etc. Even foreign journalists who criticized Lee Kwan Yew or reported government scandals were sued in court and punished with huge fines as well as having restrictions imposed on their circulation in Singapore (Chee 2006). Suppression of dissidents makes the emergence and survival of opposition movements very difficult.

Generally speaking, the PAP government has successfully contained all possible threats to their regime. The majority of the society is silenced about the authoritarian aspects of the regime. Youth is
the only group from whom I heard resisting voices. Through living and interacting with college students and young people, I clearly saw the distrust and anti-system sentiments among the younger generation, especially university students. They are not happy with the parental and authoritarian nature of the regime. They use political jokes to mock the authoritarian nature and Father-Son (Lee Kwan Yew and Lee Hsieh Loong) position in politics.

Students also criticize the government’s lack of transparency and are pretty suspicious of possible scandals. They actively post comments on a free thoughts website blog, the Temasek Review (http://www.temasekreview.com/). But I observed that this anti-system sentiment is limited to the youth and college students. Even the youth are mostly joking and complaining verbally and have not contemplated taking any action. This might be partly because of the PAP’s strong supervision over student activities. A student leader of an unapproved group told me that very strict rules are set up for student gatherings on campus.

All student groups have to be registered and approved by the school. Any unapproved student groups cannot hold more than a gathering of a dozen people on campus. So this student leader has to organize his group activities on venues outside of campus. Under restrictions like this, it is pretty hard for an anti-system movement to rise on a campus. Even if those anti-system voices are able to be organized into a student movement, the student dissidents still lack a social base to pose a real threat to the PAP.

**Conclusions**

In conclusion, while having faced strong opposition movements mobilized by the left wing and ethnic forces in the early 1960s, the PAP was able to build up a multiracial Singapore nation, a strong professional state, and also consolidate its authoritarian rule. From the 1960s up until now,
Singapore’s PAP has consolidated this authoritarian nation state system without any foreseeable threat, despite the modernization of the economy and development of the civil society.

Singapore’s political path is a challenge to the modernization theory. Modernization has not brought with it democratization in Singapore. One causal mechanism presented in modernization theory is confirmed by the Singapore case. Modernization has brought a more informed and active society to Singapore. Frequent discussions and questioning of government policies among the Singaporeans, the high TV viewing rate of Lee Hsieh Long’s public address, and the widespread acceptance of liberal democratic ideas among the college students show that Singapore has a politically informed society. Singapore also has an active society. President Lee Hsieh Long’s remark that the “two-party system is not suitable for Singapore” was widely cited and criticized on the internet. During the Singapore 2011 election, criticisms of the PAP, its candidates and policies, were all over the internet. Even the PAP officials realize that current voters are more active and demanding. Mr. Sim Kee Boon, head of the civil service from 1979-1984, remarks:

Today, the civil service is very different. ...It has to cater to a more demanding electorate, who are more aware of their rights, and Ministers who are more conscious of the need to respond to the people. (Fernandez 2001:37)

So, the Singapore case proves modernization theory’s argument about the social changes under economic modernization. However, the increase of social demands and citizen awareness of rights has not brought democratization to Singapore. Why do informed, educated, and active voters still vote for the authoritarian PAP? The modernization theory fails to explain this puzzle.

To summarize, Singapore in the early 1960s was able to successfully undertake nation building, state building, and authoritarian regime building, despite a large electorate, an opposition force with strong mobilization power and an ethnically fragmented society. They have also continued to consolidate the authoritarian state system up until now. This Singapore experience challenges several
existing theories: state building, nation building and democratization, and modernization theory. I argue that the Singapore authoritarian success is caused by the regime structure set up by the PAP elites. I also propose that a class-dominated social cleavage situation contributes to the PAP elites’ choice of such regime structure.

**Taiwan Nation, Regime, and State Building Path**

Taiwan’s nation, regime and state building did not happen at the same time as in the case of Singapore. Consequently, according to the state building theory mentioned earlier, it would be more likely for Taiwan to build a strong state than Singapore, whose nation, regime and state building all happened at the same time. But Singapore’s and Taiwan’s cases diverged from that prediction. Instead of setting up a strong autonomous state as predicted by state building theory, Taiwan’s authoritarian elite set up a clientele state. After 40 years of ruling, the authoritarian regime started to suffer crises of national identity, state inefficiency and corruption, as well as a regime legitimacy crisis in the 1980s. Finally, these crises led the authoritarian Taiwan regime to collapse, followed by a gradual democratization. But they are still struggling with clientelism, corruption and national identity problems.

**State Building**

The state building of Taiwan started while the Republic of China (ROC) government was still located in mainland China. Having been in China for more than 40 years, the KMT regime had already consolidated a military-based party state structure. When Chiang Kai-shek moved to Taiwan in 1949, he took his mainland bureaucrats with him. He retained the same government structure in Taiwan. Taiwan’s state structure was a clientele-based party state structure. The KMT central committee was the actual decision maker rather than the state institutions. The party penetrated all government
offices. At the central government level, the offices were dominated by mainlander party cadres before the reforms in the 1980s.

According to Chen (1995), party cadres in the central government formed various factions around certain political leaders. The factional powers dominated the central government. At the local level, the KMT controlled local politics through patron-client relationships with local factional groups. The KMT encouraged the formation of local factional groups with clientele networks to mobilize individual voters. The KMT recruited local factional groups’ leaders into the KMT’s local power structure. In exchange for the KMT’s patronage, the local faction elites used their clientele networks to mobilize votes for the KMT at local elections. Wu (1987) calls this structure bureaucratic clientelism and electoral clientelism, while Chen (1995) calls it central factionalism and local factionalism, and Wang (2004) calls it party clientelism and electoral clientelism. No matter how the scholars classify it, they describe the same clientele-based government structure.

As a result, the state is not autonomous. Though the ROC set up a public servants examination system, other channels are also open to recruit KMT clients into the bureaucracy. Besides, there has not been an effective anti-corruption or bureaucracy supervision system to control corruption and prevent capturing of the state by the local elites. Corruption and nepotism are norms in local politics (Chu 1992; Lin 1989). The Taiwan KMT’s reluctance to set up a fully autonomous and professional state presents a challenge to the state building theory discussed earlier. Though the state building happened when the ROC was under a dictatorship and no election was allowed, they did not set up a fully autonomous professional state.

**Nation Building**

Though the KMT spent more than 20 years and made various political and cultural efforts to cultivate Chinese identity, they failed to build a nation under the banner of the Republic of China.
Instead, Taiwanese nationalists rose up and joined democratic forces to combat the KMT’s authoritarian rule in the late 1970s. Since Taiwan had always been under external powers, the nation building was a long process full of political struggles. Up until now, Taiwan is still struggling with an unclear future for its national identity.

Since the time of the Ming Dynasty in the 16th Century, Taiwan had been a settlement of China and was subject to the Chinese empire. In 1898, Taiwan was ceded to Japan by China’s Qing Dynasty as a colony. During the Japanese occupation, Taiwan’s local political and military forces fought the Japanese. They resisted Japanese identity and expected to be united with the greater Chinese nation. However, after Taiwan came back to the motherland in 1945, the KMT mainlander regime’s corrupt behavior, lack of efficiency, mistreatment of local issues, and its intention to use Taiwan’s economic resources to feed the civil war in mainland China disappointed the Taiwanese (Lai 1991).

The Taiwanese started to voice demands for autonomy. The anti-mainlander sentiment was fanned into political and ethnic rioting, the “228” Incident in February 1947. Taiwanese identity emerged and was voiced in this crisis. The Taiwanese people fought fiercely for their autonomy. But the KMT quickly suppressed the insurrection with increased military force, mass arrests, and killings. The suppression silenced the Taiwanese voice for autonomy.

Chiang Kai-shek moved to Taiwan in 1949 together with 1.5 million mainlanders. Chiang imposed ROC identity on all Taiwan residents. Mandarin became the only official language and was used in schools rather than the local Taiwanese dialect. From 1950 to the 1970s, Chinese identity was imposed on the Taiwanese. Though some intellectuals tried to raise the Taiwanese identity issue, the KMT quickly suppressed those voices (Lin 1999).

This ROC identity was the foundation of the KMT’s nominal legitimacy. It validated the imposing of martial law and banning of elections at the central government level. Since the rest of the
ROC territories were on the mainland and Taiwan is only one province of the ROC, the Taiwanese people could not vote for the rest of the Chinese people. All central government offices were therefore not open to election.

This identity started to shatter when the ROC faced an international crisis in the 1970s when it was kicked out of the United Nations in 1971. President Nixon visited China in 1972 and the United States formed a relationship with the PRC in 1979. The PRC became the representative of China instead of the ROC.

This international crisis challenged the KMT’s Chinese identity. The voice of the long silenced Taiwanese identity that had been raised by many Taiwanese elites earlier started to reemerge together with the growth of the opposition. Hand in hand with democratization forces, the Taiwanese started to struggle for their identity. The Taiwanese self-awareness movement grew together with the democratization movement (Chu and Lin 2001). The development of Taiwanese nationalism grew more rapidly after the pro-independence party DPP won the election in 2000.

The Taiwan identity has now become such a salient political issue that it divides the parties and the society. The “pan-blue camp” including the KMT and other parties that had earlier defected from the KMT, stands for a Chinese identity and prefers a status quo position with China rather than actively pursuing Taiwan’s independence. The “pan-green” DPP camp represents a Taiwanese identity and is for Taiwan’s independence. The nationhood loyalty creates a gap between the two camps. In chatting with people from both sides, I find that the pan-green camp nationalists, who strongly hold to a

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7 Pan-blue camp refers to the alliances of political parties and their supporters in Taiwan who favor a Chinese nationalist identity over a separate Taiwanese identity. The leading party of Pan-Blue Camp is the KMT (Nationalist) Party.

8 The Pan-Green Camp refers to the alliance of political parties and their supporters in Taiwan who favor an independent Taiwanese identity. The leading party of the Pan-Green Camp is the Democratic Progressive Party.
Taiwanese identity, favor the Japanese inheritance rather than the Chinese. They do not trust that the KMT really represents Taiwanese interests because of the KMT’s ambiguous position toward independence and the KMT’s growing economic and political ties with the PRC. Most of the pan-blue camp loyalists on the other hand have a strong pro-China complex. They regard the pan-green DPP’s policies as promoting ethnic disunity and Taiwanese chauvinism.

Because of this strong division and the PRC’s interventions against Taiwan’s independence claim, Taiwan currently is still struggling with its nation building. Though everyone from Taiwan, whether mainlander or Taiwanese, refer to themselves as Taiwanese, their definition of Taiwanese is not quite the same. Some mainlanders I talked with strongly agree that they are also Chinese and promote unification with China. Most second or third generation mainlanders are not so keen on unification. They think they have a Chinese heritage but their identification with China varies from person to person. But most Taiwanese I met clearly identified themselves as unique Taiwanese who were under Japanese and Chinese colonization. They regard themselves as having both Japanese and Chinese tradition, but they are not Japanese or Chinese. Sadly, Taiwan residents under a long history of control by non-native powers are still facing the struggle of looking for a national identity.

**Authoritarian Regime Building and its Collapse**

Taiwan was governed by authoritarian regimes: first colonial Japanese occupation, then the KMT authoritarian government. Before the 1980s, Taiwan had never experienced democracy. The KMT’s authoritarian rule was stable until the early 1980s. Elections for central government offices were not allowed based on the ROC identity ideology. Local elections were allowed up to the county level. The KMT set up patron-client networks to help the KMT candidates win local elections. In exchange for their loyalty, the local clientele groups were given economic rents and privileges. ROC identity is the KMT regime’s nominal legitimacy. The real legitimacy was set up by winning local elections and also by
the performance of the KMT technocrats in promoting economic growth (Tung 2006). The KMT also set up a pervasive intelligence network to spy on the population and suppress any anti-KMT forces.

The authoritarian rule based on ROC identity ideology, a patron-client network, a Leninist party state, strong repression, and also good economic performance was able to keep the KMT in power until the late 1970s. But this structure was not stable in itself.

First, socially there were conflicts between the mainlanders and the Taiwanese. Mainlanders were given a lot of privileges in government related jobs, including the military, civilian bureaucracy, the educational system, state owned enterprises, etc. Mainlanders also received more favor in social welfare and educational subsidies than the Taiwanese. As a result, mainlanders in general received better education than the Taiwanese (Tung 2006: 136). Culturally, the Taiwanese culture and language were despised as second class while mainland Chinese culture was regarded as superior (Minns 2003).

A suppressed Taiwanese identity and disadvantaged political, cultural, social and economical positions stimulated the Taiwanese to form opposition forces. The Taiwanese opposition was suppressed or contained in the past. It was not able to win elections or mobilize social movements due to the KMT’s effective suppression and the local electoral clientelism.

But the international crisis in the 1970s shattered the ROC identity ideology. The nominal legitimacy of the KMT started to crumble. The Taiwanese identity issue began to emerge. Under the common banner of Taiwanese autonomy and democracy, opposition groups began to form a united front. All opposition candidates unanimously called themselves Dangwai (党外, Mandarin, meaning “Outside of the Party”)⁹. In 1977, the Dangwai forces were able to take advantage of the split between the KMT and the local factional elites and won election. In the 1977 county/city mayor elections and

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⁹ Dangwai is also translated as Tangwai in other literatures.
provincial assembly elections, Dangwai won one quarter of the local magistrate positions and 30% of the seats in Taiwan’s provincial assembly.

Besides winning elections, Dangwai was able to gather momentum to push for democracy on the streets through social mobilization. There were riots in a polling station in Taoyuan county in 1977 protesting against the KMT’s vote rigging, and a human rights riot in Kaoshiung in 1979. Aside from the political demonstrations, social protests also began to mushroom in the 1980s. In 1983, there were 175 collective protests, followed by 335 in 1986 and 1172 in 1988 (Zhang 1991:125). Dangwai was able to make use of the social upheaval situation for its benefit. In 1986, Dangwai formed the Democratic Progressive Party, a party based on Taiwanese identity, pushing for democracy and Taiwanese independence. By then, the Taiwanese-based opposition movement already posed a serious threat to the KMT’s one party dominance. The KMT’s failure to solve the Taiwanese-mainlander difference had left room for the opposition to mobilize when the right opportunity hit.

Second, politically, there were also conflicts between the central KMT government and its local clients. The central technocrats’ goal for economic development conflicted with the local clients’ desire for economic privileges. Also, the central government was formed by the minority mainlanders. The mainlanders would not give too much trust and power to the local Taiwanese clients, since the local factional elites had a stronger social base than the central government officials. While the KMT used the local factional elites, the KMT also tried to contain their influence and power at the county level. Many measures were taken by the KMT to contain local elites such as setting up two or three local factional groups to create a power balance, restricting any cross-county coalition by the local factional groups, and reducing the proportion of local faction candidates in local elections. Local factional elites were unhappy about the central government’s attempt to undermine their influence. They sometimes defected from their loyalty to the KMT and chose to support the opposition leaders.
The conflicts between the KMT and local factions became the most severe in the late 1970s. By 1977, many local factional groups had been very unhappy with the KMT’s strategy to gradually remove local factional candidates from local elections over the past ten years (Wang 2004:62-63). The opposition leaders took advantage of these conflicts. In the 1977 local elections, the Dangwai candidates obtained the local factional groups’ support and surprisingly won 4 (25%) of the county/city mayor positions and 21 (30%) of the total 77 seats in Taiwan’s Provincial Assembly (Cheng 1989:486). The local factions’ defection from supporting the KMT candidates is the major reason of the opposition’s success in the 1977 election (Lin 1998a:226, Wang 2004:68, Chen 1995:185). Driven by the electoral success in 1977, the Dangwai forces started to gather momentum after 1977. They become organized and systematically mobilized the democratic movement in the 1980s. So the inevitable conflict between the KMT central mainland party elites and the local factional groups is one of the major reasons for the success of democratization in Taiwan. Problems in the KMT’s authoritarian government structure had created conditions for its collapse in the future.

**Democratization and the 2000 Government Turnover**

With the loss of legitimacy because of the international and domestic crisis, Chiang Ching-kuo, through strategic calculations, decided to adopt political reform to address the two issues that had discredited the KMT. One is no open elections for central government offices. The other is mainland dominance in the central government (Wang 2004:184). In order to make the KMT a catchall party rather than a minority mainlanders’ party, Chiang Ching-kuo started recruiting Taiwanese people into the KMT central committee in the 1980s. He even appointed Lee Teng-hui, a Taiwanese, to be his successor. He also lifted martial law in 1987 and gradually opened up more national offices for electoral competition. Chiang died in 1988. Lee Teng-hui continued to move toward democracy. By 1992, all democratic goals demanded by the opposition DPP had been granted. The KMT was willing to open up
for elections and allow democratic transition because they were sure of winning votes through local patron-client networks’ vote buying and mobilization. Through the local faction network’s support, from the 1980s to 1997, DPP had been contained to winning no more than 30% of the votes.

But two things were unexpected by the KMT when they first planned democratic reform under a patron-client structure. These were 1) a factional split in the KMT due to the influx of Taiwanese into the KMT party and 2) the expansion of corruption, called Black Gold Politics, caused by the increased electoral clientelism. These problems cost the KMT its dominant party position in 2000. Chiang Ching-kuo recruited Taiwanese into the central government with the purpose of appealing to the social demands for Taiwanese autonomy. But this influx of Taiwanese in the KMT central committee caused factional conflicts between the KMT Taiwanese members and the original mainlander members.

After Lee Teng-hui assumed power, being a Taiwanese, he further empowered the Taiwanese faction’s expansion in the KMT central committee. The factional struggles between mainlanders and Taiwanese within the KMT finally caused the KMT to split. Many mainlander politicians left the KMT and formed new parties or ran as independent candidates, such as the New Party and James Soong (also known as Soong Chu-yu). Mainlander parties or independent candidates split the votes of the KMT’s faithful partisan voters. James Soong’s decision to run as an independent candidate in 2000 election caused the KMT a loss of 37.46% of the votes. If Soong had not run independently, the KMT could have won 60.56% votes, instead of only 23.1% in the 2000 election. The KMT split vote is the major reason why the DPP won the 2000 election.

Another issue that caused the KMT’s loss of the 2000 election was the public’s anger about Black Gold Politics and vote buying. Because of its reliance on the local factional groups to win elections, the KMT has to pay a lot of economic rents to those local elites. The corruption caused by

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10 The Chinese name of James Soong is Soong Chu-yu. I will use James Soong as his name in this dissertation.
this electoral clientelism is called Black Gold Politics. In the past, Black Gold Politics was contained at the local level since only local elections were held. When central offices become open for election, Black Gold Politics quickly invaded central level government. As a result, the local factional groups were empowered to capture all levels of public positions to accumulate wealth for themselves. Corruption, vote-buying and economic scandals became very rampant in Taiwan in the 1990s. Through vote buying, leaders of the underground Mafia groups and drug dealers were even elected as national legislators.

By 2000, the public had already grown very distasteful of Black Gold Politics. According to a survey conducted by Academia Sinica in 1993, 60.7% of the participants thought that government public policy is controlled by those money tycoons; 52.4% thought that the legislative Yuan is corrupted by Black Gold Politics; 59.9% thought that the legislators are only pursuing their own interest; and only 7% thought that the KMT is less corruptible than the DPP (Chen 1995:249). In a survey conducted right before the 2000 election, only 4.05% of interviewees thought that the KMT candidates could resolve Black Gold Politics, while 37.5% believed that the DPP could do so, and 69.5% did not believe that the KMT candidates could decrease Black Gold Politics (Wang 2004:182).

DPP’s campaign against corruption and Black Gold Politics was its most successful appeal to voters in the 2000 election (Wang 2004). James Soong’s sudden loss of popularity is also due to a financial scandal during the 2000 electoral campaign. Corruption and Black Gold Politics are another major reason for the DPP to win the 2000 election aside from the KMT split factor (Diamond 2001:63-64). As a result, in 2000, the DPP won a national election for the first time and ended the KMT’s one party dominance. Taiwan achieved turnover of office and experienced the real fruit of democracy.

**Conclusion**

Taiwan’s political path exhibits a lot of interesting contrasts with Singapore. Taiwan’s nation building, state building and regime building did not happen at the same time. Their original period of
nation building and regime building did not see a highly mobilized mass and strong opposition with mobilization powers. Yet Taiwan failed to construct a stable authoritarian regime structure or build up ROC national identity. Though state building happened while the ROC was under an authoritarian regime, Taiwan did not embrace the idea of building a professional state like Singapore. Though the KMT conducted nation building under an authoritarian structure for more than 30 years, the ROC identity was not well accepted by the Taiwanese. Once opportunities arose, the demand for democracy and struggles for a Taiwanese identity soon joined forces and pushed Taiwan to a regime and national identity crisis.

Taiwan’s successful transition to democracy is indeed contingent upon certain exogenous factors such as changes in the international environment in the 1970s, Chiang Ching-kuo’s personal decision for political reform, Lee Teng-hui’s personal conflict with James Soong, DPP’s several correct strategic decisions, etc. But putting those exogenous factors aside and only examining the KMT’s authoritarian structure, I argue that this structure could not help the KMT party to stay in power after the society became modern. Taiwan had sub-ethnic group based cleavage. Under this social situation, the KMT set up a clientele based government structure. This regime structure alienated the majority of the Taiwanese, who were not under the KMT’s patronage networks. Inefficiency in government also caused other social grievances. After the society became modern, the communal and other social grievances left room for the opposition to mobilize social support in the future.

Though the KMT was able to achieve an economic miracle and brought prosperity to Taiwan, economic performance had not granted the KMT the same legitimacy among Taiwanese as the PAP government had among Singaporeans. Soon, when a crisis came, the anti-system voices combined with the Taiwanese voices for national identity were able to gradually grow stronger and shatter all the mechanisms that had sustained the KMT’s authoritarian rule in the past 30 years. The KMT’s
authoritarian system, being problematic itself, was not able to resist strong opposition forces and survive the exogenous shocks.

**Comparison of Singapore and Taiwan**

Several explanations have been given by the existing literature to explain Taiwan’s democratization and Singapore’s authoritarian survival. These studies of Singapore and Taiwan look at each country independently. It is important to test those theories from a comparative perspective. So in this section, I will compare Taiwan’s and Singapore’s cases along the following dimensions: level of political liberalism, level of modernization, grassroots mobilization, grassroots democracy, suppression of opposition movements, ethnic and national identity struggles and opposition movements.

**Level of Political Liberalism**

Although we all know by casual observation that Singapore is still an authoritarian regime and Taiwan has become a democracy, we should still quantitatively compare Singapore and Taiwan’s actual level of political liberalism to see the differences between the two countries. I would like to examine them in terms of the inclusiveness and competitiveness of elections and various aspects of human rights conditions.

- **Electoral Openness**

  Bueno de Mesquita, Smith, Siverson & Morrow (2003) measured the Winning Coalition size relative to the Selectorate size as a measure of electoral openness. I listed their 1949-1999 time series data for Singapore and Taiwan as follows.
### Table 2.1 Singapore and Taiwan Winning Coalition Size Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>W/S</th>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>W/S</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>1949-1975</td>
<td>0.250356</td>
<td>Singapore</td>
<td>1965-1999</td>
<td>0.751068</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>1976-1991</td>
<td>0.500712</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>1992-1999</td>
<td>1.001425</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Bueno de Mesquita, Smith, Siverson & Morrow (2003), available at [http://www.nyu.edu/gsas/dept/politics/data/bdm2s2/Logic.htm](http://www.nyu.edu/gsas/dept/politics/data/bdm2s2/Logic.htm)

Based on Bueno de Mesquita et al.’s measure, Singapore’s electoral openness is consistent from 1965 to 1999. Singapore has a legislature, but that legislature is not fully open. Taiwan’s electoral openness however increased over time. From 1949-1975, Taiwan’s W/S ratio was only 0.25. This means that its legislature was almost not open to elections. From 1976-1991, Taiwan’s electoral openness improved a little bit. But, from 1992 on, Taiwan’s legislature has achieved full electoral openness.

Coppedge, Alvarez & Maldonado (2008) also measured countries’ electoral openness through level of contestation and inclusiveness. They measured from 1950 to 2000. Based on their data, I drew Taiwan and Singapore’s contestation and inclusiveness scores as shown in Figure 2.1.
Results from Coppedge, Alvarez and Maldonado’s contestation scores were similar to Bueno de Mesquita et al.’s W/S score results. Taiwan’s electoral contestation and inclusiveness scores were pretty low before 1992. Since 1992, both scores grew rapidly marking Taiwan’s opening elections to inclusive competition. Singapore’s inclusiveness score in Coppedge et al.’s study is similar to Bueno de Mesquita et al.’s W/S score. The inclusiveness score is consistent from 1965 to 1993. It has not reached high inclusiveness, but it is not zero either. But Coppedge et al.’s data also measures Singapore’s electoral contestation level which cannot be seen from Bueno de Mesquita et al.’s data. Singapore’s electoral contestation score is much lower than its inclusiveness score. It remains in the negative except for the years between 1959 and 1967 and in some years in the 1980s.
These results are consistent with my historical description of Singapore earlier in this chapter. In the early 1960s, the opposition was able to actively participate in politics. But after that, the opposition forces were well suppressed. The rise of oppositions was seen again in the 1980s when the oppositions started to win seats in the general assembly. But the opposition’s insurgence was well contained again after the 1991 election.

From both Bueno de Mesquita et al. and Coppedge et al.’s measurement of electoral openness, we can see that Taiwan has successfully reached full electoral openness as measured by their level of electoral competitiveness and level of inclusiveness. But Singapore’s elections are still not quite open. It has reached an incomplete but high level of inclusiveness. Nevertheless, Singapore’s electoral competitiveness is pretty low.

- **Civil Liberty**

Besides openness for elections, civil liberty is another important aspect of democracy. Therefore I will compare Singapore and Taiwan’s civil liberty scores as well. Freedom House calculated the civil liberty and political rights scores. Countries are graded between 1 (most free) and 7 (least free). Their scores for Taiwan and Singapore are shown in Figure 2.2.
Singapore’s civil liberty scores from 1972 to 2004 range between 4 and 5. In the 1980s and early 2000s, the score drops a little bit to 4. In all other years, the score was 5. This shows that Singapore’s civil liberty was not so free. The political rights of Singapore are in the same situation. It ranges between 4 and 5 generally. It drops to 4 from 1981 to 1992 when Singapore had slightly more political liberty. But then the political rights score rose again to 5 in 1992. Singapore’s current civil liberty and political rights remain in the not-so-free range.

Taiwan’s civil liberty scores dropped over the years. From 1972 to 1986, the civil liberty score was high, ranging around 5 and 6, except for 1977 and 78 when the rise of the opposition movement made the score drop to 4. From 1987 to 1995, the score dropped to 3-4. From 1996 to 2003, the civil
liberty score dropped to 2. From 2004 and on, the score has remained at 1. Taiwan’s political rights scores show a very similar pattern. Clearly Taiwan did not have full civil liberty and political rights before the 1980s. Then from the 1980s on, gradually, more civil and political rights were granted. By the early 2000s, Taiwan had already reached a high level of freedom for civil and political rights.

In summary, we can conclude the following by examining Singapore and Taiwan in both electoral openness and civil liberties. Since the late 1960s, Singapore has remained consistent with not-quite-open elections. Singapore’s civil liberty freedom level has consistently been pretty low. Taiwan was not electorally open and its civil liberty score was low before the 1980s. But since the 1980s, Taiwan’s electoral openness and civil liberty levels gradually increased. Now, Taiwan has reached full electoral openness and a high level of civil liberty.

**Level of Modernization**

Traditional modernization theory argues that as a country moves into modernity, economic structural change will trigger social structural change and finally result in political change. Economic modernization produces the growth of middle class and civil societies. Education brings changes in ideas and values. This enlightens and empowers the society. Social change brings about the social rejection of the authoritarian system and consequent political change.

Taiwan’s democratization process is thought to be a result of change in economic and social structures. Almost all studies about Taiwan’s democratization attribute its democratization to economic development and the consequent social change (Chu and Lin 2001; Chu, Yin-wah 1996; Lin Jin-wen 1999; Lin 1998a; Chou and Nathan 1987; Wang 1994; Wang 2004; Kim 2001; Tung 2006; Wu 1995). Indeed, in the 1980s, Taiwan saw a very active and empowered society. Through self-help social demonstrations, the social organizations’ call for democracy had been responsible for the KMT’s decision to move to political reform (Kim 2001; Chen 2001; Chu, Yin-wah 1996; Tung 2006; He 2003; Xie
2003; Chan 1991). So I would like to compare the modernization levels of Singapore and Taiwan and
test to see if there is a difference in their economic development.

Various economic and social time-series data about Singapore and Taiwan are presented here. I
will compare their levels of economic modernization and economic structure.

- **Economic Modernization**

  The Penn World Table gives out the real GDP per capita and growth rate of real GDP per capita.

Figures 2.3 and 2.4 list Singapore and Taiwan’s Real GDP Per capita Growth Rate and Singapore and
Taiwan’s Real GDP Per capita.

Source: Penn World Table (Heston 2002), available at
http://pwt.econ.upenn.edu/php_site/pwt_index.php

![Figure 2.3 Singapore and Taiwan GDP Per capita Growth Rate 1951-2004](image-url)
Singapore and Taiwan had a similar GDP growth rate from 1960 to 2002. The mean of Singapore’s growth rate is slightly lower than Taiwan’s. But this does not mean that Singapore is less developed than Taiwan. Figure 2.4 shows the real GDP per capita. Singapore’s real GDP per capita is above Taiwan from 1960 to 2003. Clearly, Singapore started with a higher level of development than Taiwan in 1960. From Figure 2.4, it is clear that Singapore and Taiwan have undergone an almost parallel trend of economic development from 1960 to 2003.


**Figure 2.4 Singapore and Taiwan GDP Per capita 1951-2004**

Vanhanen (2003) data also show a higher level of urbanization, occupational diversification and industrialization in Singapore’s economy than in Taiwan. In terms of level of industrialization,
Singapore’s industrialization level is higher than Taiwan’s. Singapore had only 1% agricultural population by 1998, while Taiwan still has 13% agricultural population in that year. In terms of urbanization, Singapore is more urbanized. Taiwan by 1999 had a 49% non urban population while Singapore had a 0% non urban population. In terms of occupational diversification, Singapore had already scored 99 in 1980, while Taiwan only scored 69 in 1999.

To summarize, in terms of economic development, Singapore and Taiwan have undergone similar growth patterns. Singapore’s economy is more industrialized, diversified, urbanized and also had a higher GDP per capita rate than Taiwan. It seems Singapore has a higher modernization level than Taiwan.

- **Economic liberalism**

  The Penn World Table gives the contribution of the GDP in various sectors. We can compare Taiwan and Singapore’s economic structure. Figure 2.5 graphs Singapore and Taiwan’s various contributions to GDP.
From the Penn World Table data, Singapore’s economy is much less driven by government expenditure and more by investment and consumption. The government expenditure share of GDP is under 10% of the total GDP contribution in Singapore. The Investment and consumption share, respectively, of GDP ranged from 35% to 52% from 1960 to 1999. Taiwan has a higher level of government expenditure as share of GDP than has Singapore. Taiwan’s government presence in the economy was above 30% before the 1960s. It decreased to around 20% before the 1990s. Then after the 1990s, it gradually decreased to 11% in 2002. But by 2004, Taiwan’s government expenditure share is still slightly higher than Singapore’s. Clearly, by the 1990s, Singapore’s economy was more market driven and less managed by the government than Taiwan’s.
Some scholars argue that Singapore’s government presence in the economy has hindered the development of the middle class. Since most members of the middle class are employees of government-linked companies, the middle class would not rise up against the government (Chua 2001). But from the Penn World Table data, we see that Singapore’s government’s share in the economy is much lower than that of Taiwan. Before the 1990s, Taiwan’s state owned companies had a larger share of the market than Singapore’s state owned companies. Therefore, the percentage of state employees in the middle class population is lower in Singapore than in Taiwan. The argument that state enterprises hindered Singapore’s middle class movement overestimates the size of Singapore state enterprises in comparison to Taiwan.

Taiwan’s consumption share of GDP is much higher than Singapore’s. But Singapore’s investment share of GDP is much higher than Taiwan’s. Clearly, Taiwan’s economy relies more on the consumption of the domestic market than Singapore, because of the size of the country. Singapore’s economy depends more on foreign investment and export. This means that Singapore’s economy is more open than Taiwan’s. The openness to trade data also confirms this conclusion. Figure 2.6 shows the market openness as measured by the total amount of imports and exports. Clearly, Singapore’s trade volume is much higher than Taiwan’s though Singapore’s size and population are much smaller than Taiwan. Singapore’s economy is more open than Taiwan’s. Because Singapore’s economy is more open to international investors and traders, the government is not as able to control the economic resources for its political purposes. This further defeats the argument that Singapore’s lack of democratization is a result of the government’s dominance in the economy.
Source: Penn World Table (Heston 2002), available at http://pwt.econ.upenn.edu/php_site/pwt_index.php

Figure 2.6 Singapore and Taiwan Trade Openness Scores 1951-1997

The Heritage Foundation’s data measures freedom from government, which is calculated based on government expenditure as a percentage of GDP, revenues generated by state owned enterprises (SOEs), and property as a percentage of total government revenue. The results of their data about Singapore and Taiwan are listed below. The score is between 0 and 100, with 100 representing the maximum degree of freedom from government.
From the Heritage data, it is clear that Singapore’s government has less of a presence in the market than Taiwan’s in terms of both government expenditure and state owned companies’ market share. Singapore’s score is almost 90 representing a very low government presence in the capital market. Taiwan’s government’s presence in the economy is much higher than Singapore’s before 2000. This indicates that during the KMT’s authoritarian period in Taiwan, the government had a much higher degree of control over the economy than did the Singapore government.

It is argued by Magaloni (2006, 2010) that the ability of a single party to monopolize mass support requires its control over market resources for patronage distribution. Greene’s (2007) research is based on the same argument. The higher the government’s control over state resources, the more

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11 I don’t know how Heritage classified state owned government. In Singapore, there are many government linked enterprises. I don’t know if Heritage includes those government linked enterprises in the category of state owned enterprise or not. If not, then the outcome could be different. But based on the Heritage Data, Singapore’s government has much less presence in the market than Taiwan before the year 1999.
stable is the one-party regime. But the above observation in Singapore and Taiwan challenges this argument. Apparently, the KMT government has higher control over the market resources than the PAP government. But the PAP government has proved more stable in a modernized society than the KMT government.

In conclusion, Singapore’s economic structure depends more on foreign investment and foreign trade, while Taiwan’s economy is more closed and relies more on domestic consumption. Before the 1990s, Taiwan’s government had a strong presence in the economy. But Singapore’s government presence in the economy has not been strong. It thus refutes the argument that Singapore’s state owned enterprises have a large share in the economy and have thereby hindered the growth of the middle class because they are government wage earners. So, from the above data, Singapore seems to have a higher level of economic liberalism and economic development than Taiwan. I cannot see any economic explanation for Taiwan’s transition to democracy and Singapore’s authoritarian consolidation.

**Grassroots mobilization**

It is argued by many institutional theorists (Huntington 1970; Hinnebusch 2006; Magaloni 2010) that a single mass party is critical for the survival of one-party dominance. A vigorous party structure that can monopolize mass support is one important reason that most single-party regime survive longer than sultanistic or military regimes. Magaloni (2010) argues that monopolizing mass support through clientelistic distribution of resources is important for their survival. So grassroots mobilization, especially clientelistic mobilization, is viewed as critical for one-party survival.

Sharing the same view, Chan (1976), Mauzy (2001), Bellows (1968), Shee (1971), and Chong (1995) all attribute Singapore’s consolidation of one-party dominance to the PAP’s institutional innovation at the grassroots. The PAP has set up some institutions at the grassroots such as Citizen
Consultation Committees, Urban-Rural Services Councils, Community Centers, Residential Associations, and the PAP’s local branches to provide neighborhood services, increase grassroots democracy, and also use these organizations as channels for grassroots mobilization. Huang 1991 also argues that the KMT was able to maintain power before the 1990s as a result of its patron-client mobilization at the grassroots level. Magaloni (2006) lists both Singapore’s PAP regime and Taiwan’s KMT regime under the same category as “self-reinforcing authoritarian equilibrium” with “good economic performance and distribution of spoils” through clientelistic vote mobilization systems (Magaloni 2006: 21). Since scholars attribute grassroots mobilization as critical for both regimes’ survival, it is important to compare the KMT and the PAP at the grassroots level and see if we can find any explanations for their political outcomes.

From the studies of Chan (1976), Seah (1973), and Chong (1995), Singapore’s grassroots’ activities include the following three parts: 1) to provide help to individual voters through Meet the People sessions, 2) to provide community services and neighborhood activities through the PAP local branches and other government organizations such as Community Centers, Residential Associations, etc. 3) to provide channels for political participation through Citizen’s Consultative Committee and non-elected assemblymen.

Wu (1987), Chen (1995), Wang (2004), Wang (1996), and Wang (1994) show that the KMT has performed similar services at the grassroots. 1) The KMT party branch has provided help to individual voters through its service stations at the local level. 2) The KMT service station also arranged neighborhood activities and community services to make the voters feel grateful to the party. 3) The KMT also allowed grassroots political participation through local elections.

Since the PAP and the KMT had grassroots institutions for similar functions, it is useful to examine them in more detail. In this section I examine the grassroots mobilizations by the PAP and the
KMT. I first examine their grassroots structures and degree of clientelism. Then, I compare the activities provided by the PAP and the KMT at the grassroots level for mass mobilization purposes.

Through the comparison, I discovered that the KMT has set up highly clientele-based party networks for grassroots mobilization. The PAP however, does not have a mass mobilization network. In this case, Taiwan’s and Singapore’s cases challenge the argument that party penetration to the neighborhood for grassroots mobilization is a stable factor for sustaining one-party dominance.

- **Grassroots structures and Degree of Clientelism**

  The KMT’s grassroots mobilization is unified under the KMT’s party control while Singapore’s grassroots mobilization is not conducted by the PAP party alone. Therefore, the KMT exhibits more party clientelism to penetrate neighborhoods for social mobilization. The KMT’s grassroots mobilization is more organized, unified and thus more vigorous and active than the PAP. This is demonstrated in three areas. First, the KMT’s grassroots services were conducted only by local branches of the KMT. But the PAP allows more diversified service providers at the local level.

  Second, the KMT hires and controls the personnel in the grassroots. They recruit the KMT specialists and train them for grassroots mobilization purposes. Singapore’s grassroots organizations are not funded by the government. Their personnel are recruited from local people. The employees are not recruited nor trained for social mobilization purposes. Lastly, at the grassroots level, the KMT set up a clientele structure to conduct mass mobilization. But the PAP government rejected clientelism and shrank the presence of the PAP party at the local level. Overall the KMT has a penetrating party machine to conduct clientele-base mass mobilization, but the PAP does not have a strong party machine for social penetration. The PAP relies on government institutions to provide non-partisan grassroots services to gain mass support for the government. I will analyze these aspects in more detail below.
Unified vs. Diversified Grassroots Service Provider

The KMT grassroots services are only provided by the KMT party apparatus. Since 1951, the KMT had set up service stations in the KMT’s city and county branches. Within one year, 234 Service stations were founded. Service teams were also organized to offer help for travelers. Every county government had a Social Service Bureau. At the town level, there were also Police-People Service Stations sponsored by the Police-People Friendship Association. But these various service provisions were unified by the KMT in 1954. “According to ‘Regulations on the Unification of Service Organs in Taiwan Province’, the Social Service Bureau, which belonged to the city and county government, were changed into the People Service Bureau and put under the direction of the city and county party offices. The Police-People Service Station on the town and township level either was abolished, where there was already a party service station, or was transformed into a service station. As a result the party owned 479 service stations. (KMT Central Committee, Report of Party Affairs to the Fourth Meeting of the Seventh Session of the KMT Central Committee (Taipei, 1954), p 88)” (Wu 1987:55).

The reason that the KMT unified the service providers under the KMT is for political mobilization purposes. They wanted to make the party the sole service provider. Therefore, the services provided to the neighborhood at the grassroots can be directly channeled into support for the KMT in elections. Service stations can become a direct party grassroots recruitment and mobilization station. Wu observes, “the party’s monopolization over service activities was to expect to perform the function of mobilizing support and organizing the masses. If the favors were from the local government, the gratitude certainly would not go to the party. If the party could control all the government organs and resources, why not let the party perform the job?” (55).

Singapore’s grassroots services and mobilization activities are provided by various party and government organizations, the PAP’s local branches, Community Centers, Residents’ Committees,
Residential Associations, etc. The PAP’s local branch is only one service provider. Quite different from the KMT, the PAP typically adopts a policy to reduce the party’s presence in local grassroots organizations. Seah observes that the PAP set up People’s Management Committees in the Community Centers in order to reduce the party’s connection in those local grassroots organizations and increase the grassroots trust in the government.

The People’s Management Committee was one of the major structural innovations. The first few were formed in late 1964. It was formed to avoid the close identification between Community Center and government and the party. Community Centers in order to be successful could not afford to dispense with voluntary local leadership. Centralized management hinders that. Community Centers were looked upon as adjuncts of the ruling party. This image hampered the functions of the Community Centers and a sizeable population refused to accept government influence. Involvement of grassroots local informal leaders in the Community Centers would help to change its government identity as one of the people’s institutions…the desire to curb communism by promoting grassroots democracy and provide structured channels for upward mobility. The keen desire of the government to use it to set up two way communications is the 3rd reason. In order to counter Barisan, consolidate their political base, they had to ensure that the people would continue to endorse its policies (Seah 1969:64).

Clearly, the PAP wanted to reduce the partisanship image of the grassroots organizations. The grassroots services are provided more by the neutral public organizations than by the PAP local branches, in order to increase the popular base for the government rather than for the PAP as a party. As a result, the PAP would be less effective to conduct neighborhood mobilization for partisan support or to recruit PAP clients through the provision of grassroots services and favors. In contrast, the KMT as the only service provider was more effective in recruiting partisan supporters and clients at the grassroots and directly translating grassroots service into mobilization for votes.

Partisan vs. Nonpartisan Recruitment and Training

KMT’s grassroots service stations were fully funded and operated by the KMT. All members serving in the service stations were KMT members who had received party training for loyalty and were devoted to partisan mobilization. Based on Wu’s research, each service station had at least one
director (主任), two specialists (专员), one women’s affairs manager (妇女干事), and one clerk (服务员). The personnel of the service station were under the direction of the local KMT branch. The venue of the service station is also the district party office. The director of the service station also serves as the secretary of the district party branch (Wu 1987: 60).

But most of Singapore’s grassroots organizations are not controlled by the PAP’s local branches. Many organizations operate with a self-funded and self-managed structure. Seah (1969) describes the situation in the Community Centers. The Community Centers are operated by the management committee, whose members are selected from all citizens. Though political screening is also required, the degree of party control is much less. There is no the PAP membership requirement for the recruitment.

The management committee member is open to all citizens, through recommendation of the MP and co-option by existing management committee members. They are screened by the Central Complaints Bureau for their political reliability and social integrity (Seah 1969:65).

Seah and Yap (1972) further describe the fact that the Community Centers were not fully funded by the PAP government. Their funds also come from management committee members and local residents’ donations.

In terms of personnel recruitment, the KMT recruits its service station staff members based on their abilities to relate to local clients. The KMT recruited a large number of people into service stations in order to conduct partisan mobilization at the grassroots. In 1969, the KMT party already recruited more than 2 service workers to serve every 1000 potential clients.

Total number of service stations was 401 in 1969, employing 28,731 full-time employees to perform the work of clientelist service activities. The population of the whole country in that year was 1,2045,827, the density of full time workers to the population was 0.24%. The party hired more than 2 persons to serve every 1000 people (Wu 1987:60).
In terms of staff quality, the KMT has a special requirement for grassroots cadres. Wu conducted a case study of a service station in Dragon Town. His first finding was that all service station members were required to speak the Taiwanese dialect. Second, all new recruits in the service station were required to have a university degree. Wu observed that the KMT wants to use its high quality working cadres to impress the local people at the grassroots in order to change the "stereotyped unfavorable image" that the local people had towards the party cadres. In 1985, Wu observed that 85.34% of the KMT cadres at the grassroots held college degrees (Wu 1987: 61).

Wu further found that women were targeted for clientele recruitment, because women were the most easily mobilized group. The KMT trained special personnel to provide craft lessons and solicit votes from women as well as recruit women activists to build up more clients.

Women were a major target for the KMT’s clientelism. The party required that every service station hire more than 4 employees and hire one women’s affairs manager. Various organs targeted at women were built in the party on every level. Women were both clients and also given tasks to perform clientelist works. Every service station sponsored some programs for housewives, classes in tailoring, flower-arranging, embroidery etc. (Wu 1987:73)

Singapore’s grassroots institutions’ recruitment is much less based on clientelism and partisanship. The PAP’s local branch recruitment according to Chan (1976) “seemed to have slackened” (127). Most of the local branches have not been very concerned or active about increasing membership (Chan 1976: 127). The increase in the PAP membership slowed after the 1960s.

Chan (1976) listed the PAP membership in the five constituencies, Chua Chu Kang, Bukit Panjang, Telok Ayer, Crawford, and Kampong Kembangan from 1955-1971. Figure 2.8 shows the PAP membership trends based on Chan’s data. Clearly, most of the local branches had a large decrease in membership after 1964/1965. Crawford had 204 PAP members in 1955-1962. By 1971, it only had eight members. This is a decrease rate of 96%. By 1971, all the five branches had fewer than 40 PAP members. Clearly, the PAP local branches had not been actively recruiting members since after 1965.
In terms of member quality, Chan’s case study of five PAP local branches reveals that their leaders did not have impressive educational backgrounds (Chan 1976:119-123). The PAP’s local branch was not interested in recruiting the best talent into the local office. They were not even interested in recruiting branch members.

In other government grassroots organizations, the recruitment is not based on partisanship or mobilization abilities. For example, according to Seah, the recruitment of Community Center staff is based on merit rather than partisanship. Yap (1971) notes that the efficiency of the staff’s work is measured by the amount of funds the Community Center raises and its rank in overall all Community Center performance ratings. Seah thinks that their recruitment decisions are made to improve Community Center functions. “The decision by leadership to recruit staff on an achievement basis from
1964 onwards was based on the belief that the new recruitment policy would increase administrative efficiency and accountability” (Yap 1971: 152). This recruitment requirement has nothing to do with the PAP’s ability to mobilize for partisan support at the grassroots level.

**Mass Mobilization: Party vs. Government**

The KMT has relied heavily on the party machine to penetrate into the government and society. The KMT has taken an active role to control the government in every aspect as well as penetrate into the society for social mobilization. As a result, party clientelism is a very important aspect for the KMT to manage government as well as mobilizing social support. In the central government, patron-client networks around certain leaders were formed (Chen 1995). At the local level, the KMT branches use service stations to give favors to recruit individual clients. The KMT also recruits local faction based patron-client networks to conduct vote buying and campaign mobilization for the KMT candidates at the local elections. According to Chen (1995), Wang (2004) and Wu (1987), the KMT’s structure is backed up by these patron-client networks. Wu (1987) remarks:

Clientelism is not a new or peculiar phenomenon in developing countries...What is new to us and what is peculiar concerning the problem of control-cum-mobilization in an authoritarian regime is that there *(in Taiwan)* we witness clientelist organizations which are highly bureaucratized, societal in scale, and are sponsored by the ruling party, or the regime. In other developing countries clientelism is mostly or seen mostly as, a residual from traditional culture. In some Western democracies clientelism is marginal. It exists only in the local level politics. Clientelism in Taiwan, however, is a rather modern phenomenon. It was created deliberately on an extensive scale, to an intensive degree and operating bureaucratically in a relatively modern society by a rather sophisticated ruling group for a very clear political purpose. In short, it is a phenomenon in which clientelism is organized into a bureaucratic form as an apparatus of control and mobilization, or to put in Perlmutter’s terms, as an auxiliary structure in support of the authoritarian regime (Wu 1987:12-13, *italics added by author*).

Singapore’s PAP however, abandoned a party controlled patron-client structure. Chan (1976) observes that before 1959, as a party in opposition, the PAP was a “highly active, well-articulated machine” (131) to conduct grassroots mobilization. “PAP’s tactics and activities were more vigorous,
aggressive and proselytizing in nature and more geared towards its role in mass agitation” (Chan 1976:101). But once they became the party in power, the PAP leaders started to de-emphasize party identity and party institutions for mass mobilization.

The Party no longer stresses the importance of socializing the new recruit into party life nor organizing activities to mobilize its members... It is striking that practically no political education exists at branch level; and party building by the PAP, in terms of recruiting members and inducting them into party thinking and party life so that they may perpetuate the party commitment is not a priority (Chan 1976:131-132)

Chan thinks that the PAP’s local branch’s activities were basically reduced to two things 1) the MP’s Meet-the-People sessions providing free legal and governmental aid and (2) the running of kindergarten classes (Chan 1976: 132). I visited a party branch in Pasir Ris in my field research and confirmed Chan’s findings. I found the party office is basically transformed into a kindergarten. Except for the kindergarten teachers, I don’t see any other PAP staff in the venue. There is no sign of a PAP branch office either. A resident told me that the MP comes every Monday night and I might be able to find some party staff members on Monday. Clearly, the PAP’s local branch is no longer a mass mobilization machine to recruit party clients. The party becomes a service provider and a connecting link rather than a mobilization machine. The shrinking of the party has made the PAP leaders give out a remark like the following on the 15th Anniversary of the PAP:

There has been a feeling during the past five years or so that the party no longer plays the key role it once did in the political life of Singapore. It no longer gives political direction, simply because this function has passed into the hands of a PAP government, which has been in power continuously for over a decade. Because it Is the government rather than the Party which has been directing the course of politics and providing leadership in all spheres of social, political and economic life, there is a feeling that the party has had very little to do (S. Rajaratnam Problems of the Party in Power, in 15th Anniversary Celebration Issue: 32-33, cited by Chan 1976:102-103).

How can they conduct mass mobilization if the party is not active? Chan observes that mobilization is achieved mainly through official administrative organs of the government. The PAP local
branches become one of several institutions to link the masses to the government (Chan 1976: 101).

Chan remarks that the government institutions have replaced the dormant party machine and provided the grassroots linkage between the people and the leaders.

It is the government institutions that replace the party role to link people at the local level. Where party activity levels off, newly created governmental institutions such as Citizen’s Consultative Committees and Community Centers replace the party organization’s role and functions. The ubiquitous presence of the party is felt through these three institutions in combination--- one party and two non-party. They contribute to the predominant position of the PAP and result in a reduction of political space where contending groups can easily and effectively mobilized and compete for power (Chan 1976:133).

This observation is also shared by Shee (1971). The party organization was purposefully de-emphasized while other governmental institutions grew to replace party provided grassroots mobilization. “Unlike other political leaders of single party states who regard parties as effective institutions for political socialization, the PAP leaders stressed greater use of nonparty organizations to achieve their political objectives”(Shee 1971:68). Shee argues that this de-emphasis on party organization “prevented the opportunity for career-seeking party functionaries to use party bureaucracy as a base for power struggle and as an institution for personal and social advancement” (Shee 1971:68).

To summarize, in Taiwan, the party is larger than the government. The KMT controlled the government as well as conducted local mobilization through party clientele networks. The KMT has a highly active party machinery to penetrate government and societies as well as to conduct grassroots mobilization. But in Singapore, the PAP government took over the party apparatus. Grassroots activities are no longer exclusively conducted by the party, nor were the grassroots services directly used to create local clients for partisan mobilization.
**Grassroots Activities**

PAP and the KMT’s grassroots institutions provide similar services to the local people. However, the KMT’s special favors and social services were used directly by the KMT party branch to recruit clients for partisanship mobilization. The PAP government’s local branches were more concerned about providing services and linking government to the masses. Favors to individuals were not directly translated into partisan support in Singapore. Clearly, the KMT at the grassroots focus on mass mobilization for support. But the PAP’s local branches are not aiming at mobilizing the masses.

According to Chan (1976), the PAP’s local branch souvenirs, Yap (1972), Kwok (1979), Seah (1973), and Yeo (1994), all the PAP government’s grassroots institutions, including the PAP party branches, Community Centers, Residents’ Committees, Residential Associations etc, provide the following four types of services to the neighborhood: 1) individual based requests, such as legal services and help to deal with the government; 2) education and propaganda related activities such as kindergartens, television viewing and newspaper reading; 3) vocational and leisure activities, such as trips, games, classes; 4) campaign mobilization.

Wu (1987) reports that the services provided by the KMT service stations were: help in legal services, dealing with the local government, medical care, employment, mediation of disputes, leisure activity programs, tours, lectures, provision of conference, special activities such as motorcycle license tests, mobilizing support in campaigns and organizing the masses. These are very similar to the PAP government’s grassroots activities.

Grassroots institutions in Singapore and Taiwan provide both individual and collective services to the grassroots neighborhoods. But comparatively, a larger percentage of the population in Taiwan

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12 Each of PAP’s local branches publishes souvenirs periodically, usually every 5 to 10 years. These souvenirs are a general summary of the party local branch’s work in the neighborhood including statistics of their activities, works and budgets etc.
received the KMT’s individual services than people in Singapore. Most of Singapore’s grassroots institutions such as Community Centers, Residential Committees etc. only provide collective activities such as kindergartens, vocational and cultural activities, games, and sports. The People’s Association Report 1976/77 shows that all Community Center participants were receiving vocational and cultural activities, sports, games, and kindergarten services which are provided for a large number of people. Individual services were provided only through Meet the People sessions. In Queenstown, from 1964-1966, the Meet the People sessions received 4,410 individual requests in two years, which is about 3% of the total population of Queenstown.

In Taiwan’s situation, a larger percentage of the population received individual requests from the KMT. Wu indicates that the individual services were the biggest portion of all the services combined. “The various services provided can be divided into two categories: those provided individually and those in groups. Most of the services are in the former category” (Wu 1987:76). Wu’s case study of Dragon Town gives statistics about the number of people using service stations in 1985. Wu reports that in Dragon Town in 1985, 0.15% of the population came for individual requests, 6.38% of the population came for tours and leisure activities, 1.74% for motorcyclist license training and 0.63% for classes and 0.08% for medical service. In Dragon station, 8.97% of the population was reached by the service station (Wu 1987:79). Wu’s study shows only 0.15% of the population come to Dragon town service station for individual services.

A survey conducted by Tunghai University’s Poll Survey Group, What Kinds of Service, in 1985, however, shows a greater percentage of participants for individual services. In the survey, 14.5% of the participants reported having used service stations for individual requests, while 14% reported having joined in vocational and leisure activities (Wu 1987:78). The difference between Wu’s Dragon Town data and the survey data can be explained by the time range. Wu’s data is only 1 year’s worth of
statistics. But the survey data compiled cases from multiple years. So in this case, the survey data is cumulative data and more accurately describes the percentage of the population reached by individual services. According to this survey, the KMT has provided individual favors to 14.5% of the participants and 14% of the population received the KMT’s collective services. Clearly the percentage of the population using the KMT’s individual services is larger than that of Singapore.

Based on the survey, 28.5% of the population was reached by the KMT’s service stations. Wu reports that almost 20% of the population had been reached through the service stations. Singapore’s People’s Association data show that a total of 234,111 people were reached by the Community Centers from 1959 to 1972 through the collective leisure activities, which is 11% of the total 1,978,000 population. The KMT’s local branches reach out to a larger percentage of the country’s population than Singapore’s grassroots organizations.

Seven days a week, from nine to nine, over four hundred stations around the country are open to their clients. The services they sponsor show that the station try to provide everything the people needs from scholarships, emergency aids, medical care, legal assistance, employment to various kinds of leisure activity. …when asked if they ever received services from service stations, 395 persons, i.e. 19.9% of the total respondents, answered positively. That is almost one fifth of the whole population in Taiwan has contacted with the service stations of the party. They have recruited 20% of people using their services for 20 years (Wu 1987 p 76-77).

Let’s compare the actual individual requests to the PAP and the KMT. Chan (1976) lists the type of people’s requests to the Meet the People session in three districts of Singapore: Bukit Panjang, Telok Ayer and Crawford. Wu (1987) also lists categories of the KMT service stations activities. I have included both data sets here as tables 2.2 and 2.3, respectively.
### Table 2.2 People’s Request to the PAP Branch Offices in 1968

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Bukit Panjang Branch</th>
<th>Telok Ayer Branch</th>
<th>Crawford Branch</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Licenses</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>120*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>89*</td>
<td>391*</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Permit</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Citizenship</td>
<td>60*</td>
<td>78*</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration/ID/Birth Certification</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Welfare</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenancy/Demolition/Eviction</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>91*</td>
<td>281*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public assistance</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police cases</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Service</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misc</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>732</td>
<td>512</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*items having more than 50 requests.
Source: Chan 1976:54, 63, 70

### Table 2.3 The KMT Service Stations Enrollment for Individual Services 1987
*(Percentage of all participants)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Often%</th>
<th>Once or Twice%</th>
<th>Total%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legal Aid</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mediation of Dispute</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petition to Government</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Aid</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scholarship</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Service</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultation</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Wu 1987:78
Though they have similarities, there are also some differences in the types of services provided. Clearly the KMT’s favors to the individuals covered more areas than the PAP government’s services. The KMT even provides specific help for personal needs, such as meditation of disputes, emergency aid, scholarship, and medical services. But the PAP’s services are mostly restricted to matters relating to licenses, ID certification, work permits, citizenship, housing, social welfare, employment etc. The PAP does not offer personal monetary help such as providing emergency aid and scholarships that the KMT gives to its clients. In terms of distribution of cases, requests to the KMT were pretty evenly divided among each category. But requests for the PAP’s help were more concentrated. In the three districts, the requests to the PAP government were mostly concentrated in four areas: licenses, employment, citizenship and housing. So, it seems the KMT’s individual services are more tailored towards pleasing the individuals and giving out special favors. The PAP’s service only serves as a channel to connect people with the government.

Besides some differences in the services provided, the PAP and the KMT also differ in what they do towards the people who have received those services. The PAP’s party grassroots activities are service-based rather than politically oriented. There are no party activities to mobilize those people who have received services to repay the PAP with partisan loyalty. I interviewed a woman who received help from the PAP Member of Parliament (MP) to obtain a permit for hiring a foreign maid. After that specific request was satisfied, the lady has not received any phone calls or contacts from the PAP or the government. There is no post-service request to her to vote for the PAP. The services, favors and help provided to grassroots mass were not directly linked to votes.

But the KMT’s service station also had another task and that is to penetrate into the neighborhood for social mobilization. Provision of social services is only a tool for mass mobilization. The KMT actively uses the cell group in every neighborhood to conduct mass mobilization through
provision of social services. The KMT’s grassroots institutions are actively engaged in neighborhood penetration for partisan support. The special favors that were offered to the residents through the service station were then asked to be paid back during elections. Wu shows how the KMT cell groups are utilizing the social services for partisan mobilization.

The cell (小组) built in every neighborhood (邻居) is the party organ at the lowest level. They are responsible to take some service work. Like in Taipei city, each cell takes care of at least 3 poor households as its clients to serve. If no more than 3 could be found, the party office would assign the poor families in the area for the cell to serve. The service activities which the cells were expected to perform were in 2 categories. The individual category includes: helping those eligible to apply for social security aid, helping the poor to apply for scholarships from the city government for their children, encouraging them to attend skill-training programs and finding jobs for them, applying or providing free or discounted medical care for them, helping them with funerals. The other category was community case program, adopt the dirtiest houses in their neighborhoods and help cleaning up, to find the dirtiest corner in the neighborhood and mobilize residents to clean it. The only thing that the party can rely on to motivate party-members to perform the service work is moral persuasion, which cannot be expected to last very long. Therefore, the service activities performed by the cells cannot be done on a regular basis. Nor can it be expected to have too many achievements. There have been some complaints that many cells just passed the cases they encountered to the service stations even though they could solve them on their own. Even with strict regulation, many cells do not perform service activity as required by the party. Although not all the cells perform the service activity as the party has expected, they do constitute a very good channel for the mobilization of votes. The cells with their ubiquitous presence and the cell members with their social connections is powerful machine to solicit votes if they can be mobilized by the party. Before every election, they also set up special cell to assign all households to into list for potential mobilization (动员能量名册), and household visit list (家庭访问名册), let the voters to repay the party for the favors they have received (Wu 1987: 100-101).

The KMT’s party mobilization was pretty successful. According to his research on Taipei in 1981, Wu found that the mobilization was very effective. The KMT’s mobilization success rate was 73% among Mainlanders and 35% among Taiwanese (Wu 1987:111).

How much is the party’s mobilizing power? Use Taipei city as a case study. Taipei is the only city without a local faction. The voting turnouts thus show the mobilizing power of the party. The votes in 1981 show the distribution of votes each party candidate gained. Compared with the opposition candidates and independents, the KMT candidate had high figures of standard deviation. This reflects the fact that the KMT candidate did well only in areas assigned to them. But votes to the opposition are more evenly distributed. (Wu 1987:109)
Besides using party services for mobilization, the KMT also relies on using local faction groups for grassroots mobilization. The mobilization through local factions is much more successful than the KMT party branch mobilization, because the local faction leaders personally received favors while the KMT party cadres didn’t receive much personal gain through conducting grassroots mobilization. Local faction leaders are more motivated to conduct grassroots work than the party cadres. Through the mobilization of both the KMT local branches and the local factional groups, the KMT achieved party penetration into the neighborhoods for electoral mobilization. Compared with Singapore, the KMT’s social mobilization is more penetrating and thus more successful.

To summarize, the KMT provided more individual favors to local people. In addition, the KMT developed a very organized network to directly translate those personal favors into votes for elections. The PAP’s grassroots activities serve a large number of people rather than being tailored to individual requests. The PAP has not developed arrangements to directly translate social service into votes. In this case, the KMT’s grassroots structures should be more effective in conducting mass mobilization for election support than the PAP. But the KMT with such a strong clientele based grassroots mobilization network still was not able to sustain its one party dominance. The PAP, which does not have a penetrating and clientele-based mass party machine, is still able to sustain its authoritarianism. It seems that the ruling party’s grassroots mobilization power and clientelism is not the major reason for authoritarian survival.

**Grassroots democracy**

Both authoritarian regimes, Taiwan and Singapore, realized that they have to allow certain forms of social participation in order to appease and control the society. Both regimes adopted state corporatist structures to manage social groups. Limited participation in politics was allowed through participation by those social groups. But state corporatism is not generally the major channel for
grassroots mobilization since social groups do not really represent most masses in authoritarian regimes. So, authoritarian rulers also know that they must set up some channels for participation of the grassroots citizens.

The Singapore PAP government adopts grassroots institutions such as Citizen’s Consultative Committees and People’s Management Committees of Community Centers to allow citizens to participate in government policy. The KMT in Taiwan, however, opened up local direct elections for city/county mayors and city/county councils in order to increase local democracy. Singapore’s grassroots democracy is praised as the reason for its authoritarian survival. I would like to compare the two country’s grassroots democracy institutions.

Chan (1976) praised the PAP governmental grassroots democracy institutions, such as the Citizen’s Consultative Committees and People’s Management Committees, for providing a link between the individual citizens and the government leaders. These democratic institutional arrangements are partially responsible for sustaining the PAP’s dominance in her view. Because of these democratic arrangements, she argues that the space for political competition becomes unnecessary (Chan 1976; Yang 1997). “They[these grassroots democratic institutions] contribute to the predominant position of the PAP and result in a reduction of political space where contending groups can be easily and effectively mobilized and compete for power” (Chan 1976:133).

Even though Chan (1976) tried to present the Citizen’s Consultative Committees (CCC) as representing people of all social statuses, ethnic groups, various associations and clans, I find the level of grassroots democracy in Singapore to still be low. First, the Citizen’s Consultative Committee is only a committee under the People’s Association. The People’s Association, being a statutory board, only had limited power to influence policy. It is an institution under the PAP’s state corporatist structure to manage the society as well as a channel to provide policy feedback to the government. The Citizen’s
Consultative Committee is the People’s Associations’ grassroots organization in each constituency. Its major role is to provide an informational link between the People’s Association and the grassroots constituencies. According to *The Citizens’ Consultative Committee Rules* (Singapore, Government Printers, 1974), quoted in Singh 2007: 68), the roles of the Citizen’s Consultative Committee are: i) to transmit information and make recommendations on the needs of the people to the government, and to keep people informed of government action and policy in these matters; ii) to promote good citizenship amongst the people of Singapore.

Other grassroots institutions also assume similar roles. Yeo (1994) tells of one role of the Residential Committees as that of representing a resident’s views to authorities (29). Kwok (1979) mentioned that Community Centers were also a channel to bring local situations to the PAP leaders for their policy consideration:

> The rural folk were called on to contact center staff to bring important problems before the government for consideration. These included opening of roads, installation of electricity and water mains and drainage” (*People’s Association Bulletin 1*, 18 Mar, 1963: 3 cited by Kwok 1979: 20).

But clearly, none of these organizations were more than an information channel. These grassroots democracy institutions serve only as a small link in the state corporatist structure for the PAP’s management of society. There is no mechanism to guarantee a change of policy upon majority requests or even to guarantee a response to the grassroots’ requests. In this way, the Citizen’s Consultative Committee and other PAP grassroots arrangements are not able to provide a mechanism for real grassroots democracy. Local residents’ desires for political participation cannot be satisfied through these grassroots institutions.

Second, the Citizen’s Consultative Committee members are elite based rather than directly elected by the mass. Members of the Committee are selected and appointed by the chairman rather
than elected. Members are social or political elites from various social and political groups. Chan describes the selection process:

Selection to membership on these committees is through the MP of the constituency who initiates the process, for it is he who draws up a list of names, usually from persons who are active in the guilds and associations of the local constituency, or are generally acknowledged to hold leadership status and some influence in the area. After the first CCC is established subsequent new members may be drawn from suggestions made by the CCC members themselves. The lists then move to the next stage, to the Prime Minister’s office, where a selection committee consisting of the Minister of State for Defense, the Director of the Corrupt Practices Investigation Bureau, and the Secretary of the Prime Minister thoroughly investigate the names particularly to avoid picking up individuals with secret society connections” (Chan 1976:134).

In the selection process, all are initiated and monitored by the elites. The PAP’s political elites, MPs, the Prime Minister and the other ministers are all selected and approved people. Only social elites are able to be considered for selection. After the first batch of CCC members is selected, the selection is fully under the control of those selected social elites as well as the PAP elites. No common people are given any chance to select or be selected into the CCC. So, this is not an organization in which the masses can expect their voices to be represented, rather it is an organization for the PAP government to recruit social elites for support. It further confirms that all these grassroots democracy institutions are no more than a modified state corporatist branch institution. It serves as a channel to incorporate the neighborhood elites and social groups. Clearly, the Citizen’s Consultative Committee is not an organization for grassroots participation and citizens’ management of local politics, but rather another link in the PAP’s state corporatist structure.

Taiwan’s KMT, however, realized grassroots democracy at the local level. Since 1946, local residents were allowed to directly elect village or borough wardens and township councilors. The elected township councilors then select the township head, county/city councilor and Taiwan provincial assemblyman. But after 1950, local residents were allowed to directly elect the township head,
county/city councilor, and county magistrate/city mayor. After 1954, all Taiwan Provincial Assembly positions are also open for direct election. Since 1946, in local elections, all citizens have been eligible to vote (Lin 1998a:141). In his instruction to local cadres in November 1960, Chiang Kai-shek provided a guide for local elections:

> The opening of county/city councilor elections was a step toward county/city local self-governing and now the opening of county magistrate/city mayor elections marks the completion of the local self-governing reform... Party members should not freely run in elections, but respect the party’s nomination. In certain areas, we should even encourage or support non-KMT local elites to participate in elections in order to carry through the party’s policies, adapt to the environment and look after local interests (Lin 1998a: 141).

Clearly those local elections were strictly monitored and controlled by the KMT. According to this instruction, the inclusion of non-KMT candidates in elections was subject to the KMT’s approval. In cases that a popular non-KMT candidate won the election, the KMT’s strategy was to recruit this person into the KMT.

> In areas where a local non-KMT person has the general trust of the local people to whom our party candidate cannot reach, if such person can identify with our party’s ideology and policies, then we should support this person and ask him to join the party (Lin 1998a: 142).

Although the KMT tries to control local elections, according to the election statistics, still a large portion of seats was not obtained by the KMT candidates, especially in the township councils. Table 2.4 gives an average of the KMT’s share of seats in Taiwan’s local elections from 1950-1986.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elections</th>
<th>Voter Turnout</th>
<th>KMT’s share of Seats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Township Council</td>
<td>66.5%</td>
<td>50.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Township Head</td>
<td>70.7%</td>
<td>87.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County/City Council</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>71.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County Magistrate/City Mayor</td>
<td>74.3%</td>
<td>69.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taiwan Provincial Assembly</td>
<td>73.7%</td>
<td>68.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In all these local elections, from 1950 to 1986, on average, more than 70% of the voters participated in local elections and about 30% of the non-KMT candidates won the elections. Clearly, the KMT cannot fully control the local elections. The openness of local elections is comparatively high. Lin (1998) reports that the local elections were not a risk free investment for the KMT, because most of the elections were quite competitive. The local election turnover rate, on average, was higher than 50% during the entire authoritarian period (Lin 1998a:143-144). Taiwan’s local election is not a non-competitive authoritarian monopoly show. Rather, competition and political participation were allowed at the local level.

Also, according to the election statistics listed in Table 2.4, for township council, the KMT had a lot fewer seats than in other positions. The average share of seats that the KMT had for township council is only 50.7%. It is far less than the KMT’s share of seats in other positions. In 1950, the KMT’s seats in the township councils were only 10%. Before 1968, the KMT’s seats in township councils never surpassed 50%. It is only after 1973 that there has been a dramatic increase of the KMT’s share of seats in township councils. In most of their authoritarian years (1950-1973), it seems that the KMT permitted less party presence in the township councils and some autonomy for local politics.

Besides the above, since there are so many different types of elections in Taiwan, in the past 40 years, Taiwan voters were given chances to cast votes every one or two years for local politics. In contrast, Singapore’s citizens are only given one chance to vote every 5 years or so. The KMT’s local election arrangements provide more chances for individual citizens to participate in politics through voting.

In conclusion, clearly, Taiwan allowed more grassroots electoral competition than Singapore. At least, there has been direct election for various local administrative positions in Taiwan since 1950.
But Singapore’s grassroots organizations such as the Citizen’s Consultative Committee cannot produce mass participation in politics. Rather it is only a link of the PAP’s state corporatist structure for social control. The KMT, which has provided channels for grassroots democracy, failed to maintain its authoritarian rule at the national level. But Singapore, whose leaders do not allow grassroots participation, on the other hand, has sustained its authoritarian rule. Therefore, Taiwan’s and Singapore’s cases challenge the common knowledge that allowing grassroots level democracy would help an authoritarian state to gain legitimacy, relieving the grassroots grievances and thus prolonging its rule. There must be variables other than grassroots mass participation arrangements that explains Singapore’s authoritarian survival.

**Repression of Opposition Movements**

Another argument for Singapore’s authoritarian survival is its strong repression of opposition forces. The decline of the left-wing opposition movement was partially attributed to political repression in the 1960s (Tan 2010). The Singapore government’s severe suppression of political oppositions was also reported by Dr. Chee (2006). In Taiwan’s case, it is thought that Chiang Ching-kuo’s soft attitude towards the opposition and his surprising reform rather than repression allowed for Taiwan to peacefully transition into democracy. So repression looks like a feasible explanation for the case of Singapore and Taiwan.

No doubt, repression is an indispensable tool that authoritarian governments have to use for survival. But how much repression can help sustain authoritarianism? Can authoritarian government maintain its rule by strong repression alone? Indeed, Chiang’s reformist rather than repressive attitude helped Taiwan’s peaceful and smooth transition to democracy. But in the early 1980s, did repression save the KMT from falling? I compare the Taiwan KMT and the Singapore PAP patterns of repression at the time of opposition movements to find the answers.
First, I compare Taiwan’s and Singapore’s repressive methods and institutions. According to Dr. Chee and other dissidents, the Singapore government has used media control, social group registration control, courts, the Internal Security Council (ISC), and police forces to conduct repression. Opposition groups cannot publically express their views in the media. The police do not permit political dissidents to give public talks. There are restrictions on public speeches and demonstrations (Chee 2006:34). Registration for social groups has to go through a restrictive approval process (Chee 2006: 30-31). Opposition candidates have been threatened with losing their jobs and personal attacks. Opposition leaders and foreign newspapers who had criticisms against the PAP government or the PAP leaders were sued in court and assessed huge fines. Some were arrested by the police or by the Internal Security Council\(^{13}\) and banned from running in elections. There are also asserted but unconfirmed tortures in prison.

The Taiwan KMT’s repressive apparatus was much more pervasive than Singapore’s, because beside the state and party machines, the KMT has a highly penetrating intelligence apparatus to assist coercion. The intelligence machine puts all of Taiwan’s citizens under a powerful police state.

Intelligence apparatus supports all above coercive institutions. It is the most effective tool to maintain regime stability. Through threat of punishment for disobedience, the personal dictator can effectively use the intelligence institutions to supervise and coerce his followers to faithfully perform their duties. The intelligence apparatus can do what the state and party machine cannot do: to help the dictator to consolidate his regime and also to be fully prepared to defeat his oppositions at any time at any place. As a result, the KMT’s ruling position has not been shaken even after the quick changes in social and economic structures (Chu Yun-han 1992:144, originally in Chinese, translated by author).

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\(^{13}\) Internal Security Council was set up in 1959 during the negotiations about Singapore’s self-government. The British government was reluctant to give up control over Singapore’s internal security. So the Internal Security Council which comprised representatives from the British Colonial, Malaysian Federal and Singapore governments was established to solve the internal security question in Singapore’s negotiation for independence. Internal Security Council authorized several anti-communist operations including the Operation Coldstore and Operation Pecah in 1963.
So, through help of the “fully penetrating intelligence apparatus” (Wang 2004:145), the KMT is able to coerce the whole state machine and the society to obey its commands. “The Party (KMT) control over the military as well as the security forces is undeniably a basic reason for its survival” (Dickson 1997:56 cited by Wang 2004: 144). Through party networks and other channels, the intelligence apparatus penetrated into all governmental offices and all social units. They are able to conduct intensive social investigation on their target. Many arrests and assassinations were also conducted by the intelligence agency.

Also, since Taiwan was under Martial Law from May 19, 1949 to July 15, 1987, the intelligence agency and the military officers were given tremendous power to arrest anyone without going through the judicial system. The methods of repression are reported by Taipei News:

The reason for arrest was usually on suspicion of being "subversive." Many of the victims underwent brutal torture, beatings and violations of their human rights. In many cases the victims were executed on fabricated or groundless charges of espionage or treason without a fair trial, and would simply vanish after being taken away by government intelligence agents (Taipei News, May 20, 2005).

Because of its severe repression, the martial law period is also called the White Terror period. It is reported that during the most severe White Terror period between 1949 and 1960, approximately 2,000 people were executed and 8,000 were sentenced to severe punishment (Taipei News, May 20, 2005). Based on a government report Lifting Martial Law Twenty Years Anniversary Special Case (解嚴二十周年專案報告), around 140,000-200,000 people in Taiwan were reported to be imprisoned or executed (China Times 中國時報 July 12, 2007). Though the actual number of victims is still in dispute, clearly a large percentage of the Taiwan population was affected by repression.

The KMT had constructed a police state to conduct repression. The intelligence agency allowed the KMT to discover and arrest anyone suspected of opposition. Martial law also gave the KMT a valid reason to conduct high pressure repression. Singapore’s institutions to discover and arrest the
oppositions are less direct and less effective. The methods that the KMT used such as assassinations, social investigations, and suspect arrests were also more repressive than the methods used by the Singapore PAP government.

Second, I want to compare both governments’ repression under periods of rising opposition movements. In Singapore, from 1961 to 1965, the opposition was very strong to challenge the PAP government. It was able to conduct mass mobilization through various communist united front groups, such as trade unions, hawkers’ associations, women’s associations, student unions, etc.

Taiwan from 1977 to 1985 also saw the rise of opposition movements. Non-KMT candidates started to unite under the banner of democracy. They labeled themselves Dangwai (Outside of the Party). Dangwai was able to achieve a surprising large percentage of votes in the 1977 elections. They also mobilized mass political demonstrations and riots in 1977 and 1979, the Chunglin Incident and Kaohsiung Incident. So I would like to compare the respective governments’ repression strategies and the consequences of repression.

The Singapore PAP mainly adopted the following oppressive methods to counter opposition movements in the early 1960s. 1) Authorities did not allow many opposition petitions for mass rallies. 2) The Internal Security Council (ISC) launched several military actions after February 1963 and arrested leaders from opposition parties. Some of the arrested were put on trial. Some were acquitted. Some were imprisoned for 7 weeks. Many others were detained without trial (Lim 2010, Van der Kroef 1967, Tan 2010). Some media, either by self-censorship or under government pressure, refused to report news favoring the opposition. 4) The opposition was only given four and a half days to conduct its election campaign in 1963 and was thus disadvantaged. 5) Trade unions associated with opposition forces were banned and their bank accounts were frozen.
The PAP’s containment of opposition forces was very successful. Opposition forces mobilized mass strikes, riots and democratic demonstrations from 1961 to 1963. They mobilized large numbers of strikes in 1963 after each ISC operation arresting opposition leaders. But the arrest of opposition leaders and the consequent mass demonstrations and strikes did not turn the PAP out of office. The PAP was able to win two elections from 1961 to 1963: the 1962 merger referendum and the 1963 general election. The arrests of opposition leaders in February 1963 had not caused the population, especially the urban residents, to loath the PAP government’s injustice and undemocratic methods. Instead, the urban voters voted for the PAP in 1963 soon after the PAP’s Coldstore Operation to arrest opposition leaders. After winning the 1963 election, the PAP launched two more waves of arrests and banning of trade unions. Facing severe repression and being unable to obtain popular support, the opposition gradually lost its momentum. The social unrest and strikes mobilized by the opposition were significantly reduced by early 1964. The opposition by 1965 already could not pose a real threat to the PAP government any more.

The KMT adopted the following methods to counter opposition movements in the late 1970s and early 1980s. 1) Under martial law, opposition parties were not allowed to be registered and to conduct public activities. 2) The media was under firm control. The opposition magazine Formosa was banned after the Kaohsiung Incident. 3) After the Kaohsiung Incident, the KMT arrested almost all known opposition leaders, participants in the Kaohsiung Incident, Dangwai participants, writers and intellectuals associated with Formosa magazine. Even several people who hid an opposition leader were arrested and sentenced to jail. It is also reported that some of the opposition leaders’ families were assassinated and strangely injured by “accidents”. All arrested opposition members were tried. The opposition leaders were sentenced from 12 years to life imprisonment. The other participants were sentenced to terms ranging from 2 to 6 years in prison.
The consequences of the arrests were damaging to the KMT. The Dangwai movement was set back by the repression for a while. They had not mobilized or organized political actions for a few years. But the families of the arrested opposition leaders soon started to enter into political elections. Some of them were able to be elected with large majorities. Mass demonstrations and self-help social movements also started to emerge beginning in the 1980s. Some of the demonstrations were mobilized by opposition forces, but some of them were not (Chang 1992; Xie 2003).

Encouraged by the election results and the social support for democracy, Dangwai came back to action again in 1983. They formed organizations to coordinate elections. In 1986, Dangwai formed the Democratic Progress Party (DPP) in public defiance of the KMT’s restriction on political parties. By then, the opposition forces had grown into a full-fledged entity challenging the KMT’s authoritarian position. Soon after the formation of the DDP, Chiang Ching-kuo lifted the martial law restrictions and allowed the formation of political parties.

Comparing Singapore and Taiwan’s opposition movement and use of repression, we can conclude that 1) the KMT’s repression level was at least as much if not higher than the PAP’s. 2) The social unrest following political repression was mobilized by the opposition in Singapore in the 1960s. So after the PAP dismantled opposition organizations, the social movements and unrest were silenced. But in Taiwan in the 1980s, the social movements were not all organized by the opposition.

After the KMT’s destruction of Dangwai’s existing organizations, the social unrest and movements instead increased. 3) Singapore’s oppressive methods had not aroused social distrust of the government. Opposition parties were not able to win more votes after the repression. The KMT’s repression aroused large scale social protest and voices for democracy and justice. The opposition was able to gather the public’s anti-authoritarian sentiment to increase its vote in elections.
Through the above comparison, it is clear that repression alone cannot explain the authoritarian survival seen in Singapore. Singapore’s opposition did not have strong social support. That’s why the PAP was able to suppress them successfully without arousing much social protest. But the KMT’s opposition had gained a lot of social support and sympathy. In this situation, repression alone was not able to contain the opposition movements. Instead, repression can work as a spark to further trigger public distrust of the authoritarian nature of the government and fuel democratic movement.

I argue that Chiang Ching-kuo’s decision to lift martial law is a strategic decision conditioned by the growing strength of the opposition movement. If the KMT were able to contain the opposition movement at the dissident level as in the case of Singapore, Chiang would not lift martial law and take the risk to reform. But because the KMT’s opposition started to have an extensive popular base and became powerful, Chiang’s calculated repression strategy would not have been able to help the KMT’s authoritarian survival anymore. So he adopted reform as a better strategy for the KMT.

In conclusion, the repression variable is not able to sustain authoritarian survival. It would be successful if the opposition did not have strong social support. But once the opposition grew strong enough to have social support, repression might even foster the democratic momentum.

**Nation Building and Communal Cleavages**

Many scholars have argued that Taiwan’s democratic movement is in conjunction with the nation building movement. Therefore democratization is also driven by Taiwan’s seeking of its national identity (Chu 1992; Gold 1993; Lin Tsong-Jyi 1999). Taiwan’s loss of United Nations membership status in 1971 indeed triggered the KMT’s legitimacy crisis. After 1971, more Taiwanese sentiment was raised, that is reflected in the rise of hsiangtu (鄉土, Mandarin, meaning hometown soil) literature (Lin Tsong-Jyi 1999). Before the 1970s, the mainstream literature was about mainland China thousands of miles
away, which is not related to the Taiwanese. Lin Tsong-Jyi describes the emergence of hsiangtu literatures.

Hsiangtu literature emerged in the 1970s among the mainstream nostalgia and anti-communism literatures of mainlanders. Different from the mainstream, they reflect social reality and the lives as well as wishes of the people rooted in Taiwan’s soil. The stories described did not happen in China but told stories about figures familiar to the island’s people. Soon the hsiangtu literature writers found impressive echoes from Taiwan’s society... Facing ROC’s legitimacy outside, some cultural elites, who mostly were Taiwanese, turned their attention to the common people of the island (Lin Tsong-Jyi 1999: 74).

Even though the KMT soon suppressed the hsiangtu literature movement, the Taiwanese identity was already aroused. During the late 1970s, Taiwanese-dominated opposition forces started to voice political requests for self-autonomy and democracy. Most of the opposition members were Taiwanese nationalists and their democratic pursuit was also combined with the pursuit of Taiwanese independence. Most of Dangwai/DPP’s supporters were indigenous Taiwanese. Therefore, many scholars argue that the international crisis that the KMT faced after the 1970s and the Taiwanese pursuit of national identity at the same time as the democratization movement complicated the issue and finally marginalized the KMT.

Interestingly, I found that Singapore also encountered a national identity crisis and pursued national identity issues while the PAP faced the strongest opposition movement in the early 1960s. Similar to the case in Taiwan, the PAP’s opposition also identified itself with the majority Chinese population. The opposition movement also joined the local Chinese elites’ pursuit of Chinese identity. But the PAP successfully defeated this rise of Chinese nationalism and built up Singapore as a multinational nation. Due to the entanglement of national identity issue with the opposition movement in the 1960s, some scholars even argue that the PAP was able to defeat the opposition because the opposition’s position on Singapore’s nation building was unpopular.
If the above national identity arguments are correct, why does the Singapore population, especially the disadvantaged Chinese, support Lee Kwan Yew’s proposal for a Malaysian identity after only a 3 year long nation building process? Why did the KMT fail to persuade the majority Taiwanese to accept a Chinese identity through a 30 year long nation building effort and despite the actual cultural ties between the Taiwanese and Chinese? I would like to compare the nation building and international crises that both countries faced during their opposition movement period.

- Communal Cleavages and Nation building

In terms of history and tradition, nation building for Singapore was harder than for Taiwan. Singapore was a colony under British colonial rule. Originally it had an indigenous Malay population. Then with the British came the Chinese immigrants, Indian immigrants, Caucasians and other races. These races do not have a common language or cultural heritage. Instead, they were put together through colonialism. In terms of cultural differences, Chinese and Malay and Indian culture are not compatible.

Even now, I seldom see interactions among these three groups. Malay and Indian people still keep their own unique customs, languages and many communal life styles and habits. People mostly still interact within their own groups, though the Malay, Chinese and Indians were required to live in the same buildings by the government’s cultural policy. Vocabularies from Malay, Tamil, and Chinese dialects have been adopted into English and formed a unique “Singlish” language. But the cultural and communal amalgamation would take a much longer time to be formed.

So nation building in Singapore was more driven by politicians instead of emerging naturally. After 1954, the British started to push for Singapore’s independence due to anti-colonialism in Singapore. Then the Singapore elites started to speculate that merger with Malaysia would be the most
economically and militarily viable solution for Singapore. Lee Kwan Yew firmly held that view and actively sought merger with Malaysia once the PAP took power.

But the merger plan and the Malaysian identity were not cultivated by cultural integration and evolution and would not be naturally accepted by the Singaporeans. Singaporeans, especially the majority Chinese, had to bear large sacrifices in order to accept Malaysian identity. Lee Kwan Yew made the Chinese pay the price. Malays were only 20% of the population. The Malay language was appointed to be the national language like English. All citizens had to learn Malay at school. All public servants had to pass a Malay test.

The Chinese language was discriminated against. Chinese schools did not receive the same funds as English schools. Chinese school graduates found it hard to find jobs because they could not speak English. Chinese school teachers as a result were badly paid and not respected. Chinese language was never named a national language even though 70% of the population are Chinese. I observed that many Chinese, especially in the middle-aged population, who were educated during the 1970s or 80s in Singapore, cannot speak or write Mandarin.

The nation building period was pretty short, from Singapore’s self-autonomy in 1959 to the merger referendum in 1962. Within these three years, Singaporeans, especially the Chinese population, accepted their Malaysian identity. Despite the lagging of actual communal and cultural integration, a merger with Malaysia was accepted by the majority of the Singapore residents in 1962. Later, when Singapore faced an identity crisis in 1965 and was kicked out of Malaysia, the international crisis did not cause any negative response from the Chinese population or prompt any anti-Malay ethnic conflicts. Singaporeans accepted their multinational Singapore identity, which was not be set back by international crisis.
In Taiwan, in terms of culture and tradition, nation building should have been much easier than in Singapore. Taiwan was part of mainland China’s territory during China’s Ming and Qing dynasties. All the Taiwanese population, except the 1% who are aborigines, were from mainland China. One group was from Fujian Province. They are called Fujianese\textsuperscript{14}. Fujianese comprise 73% of the total Taiwan population.

Another big portion of the Taiwanese were from southern provinces of China such as Guangtong. They are called Hakka. Hakka comprise 12% of the population (Minns 2003). Fukkien, Hakka and aborigines were called Taiwanese because they were the Taiwan native residents before 1945. Under the Japanese occupation, many Taiwanese were educated in Japanese and learned Japanese culture. This Japanese and Taiwanese heritage later becomes the Taiwanese cultural identity. But both Japanese and Taiwanese cultures are quite similar to the mainland Chinese culture. Many Taiwanese can understand and speak Mandarin. The communal integration between the mainlanders and the Taiwanese should be much easier than among Chinese, Malays and Indians.

Besides, the KMT, after moving to Taiwan in 1949, had spent considerable effort in cultural policies to cultivate the Chinese identity. Mandarin was taught in schools. All public officials were required to be Mandarin speaking. Students were required to learn Chinese history instead of Taiwan history, China’s geography instead of Taiwan geography. Ideologically, fighting communism and taking back China was the main theme (Chu 1992). The Pan-China sentiment was implemented through arts, education, literature, media and all other cultural instruments.

Despite the traditional links and cultural heritage from China and the KMT’s strong efforts to build up the Chinese identity from 1949 to the 1970s, the KMT’s nation building was not successful. The

\textsuperscript{14} Fujianese is also spelled as Fukkien, Minnan or Hokkien. Most of Singapore’s Chinese population is also Fujianese. Singaporeans call them Hokkien. They are referred to as Fukkien, Fujianese or Minnan in literatures about Taiwan. But in literatures about Singapore, they are called as Hokkien. I will keep the traditions of their literatures and call them differently in each country.
Taiwanese identity was not eliminated but rather only suppressed. So when international crisis came and Taiwan faced an identity crisis after the 1970s, the long suppressed Taiwanese identity quickly broke out and voiced Taiwan Independence.

To summarize, comparatively, Taiwan’s cultural and communal integration between mainlanders and the Taiwanese should be easier than among the Malays, Chinese and Indians in Singapore because of closer traditional and language similarities. Taiwan’s KMT also spent more than 20 years building up the Chinese identity in Taiwan. Singapore’s nation building process only lasted for 3 years. Nevertheless, the PAP successfully led the Singaporeans to accept a Malaysian identity in 1962, but the KMT failed to persuade the public with a pan-China identity.

When the government-imposed Malaysian national identity faced a crisis in 1965, the crisis did not cause any anti-PAP, Chinese nationalism and pro-democracy sentiment from the culturally disadvantaged Chinese population. In Taiwan, while the government-imposed identity faced a crisis in the 1970s, the Taiwanese soon exerted their claims for Taiwanese identity, anti-KMT and democracy. Though Taiwan and Singapore’s ruling parties faced similar nation building challenges, the dramatically different outcomes suggest that there are also deeper causes of Taiwan’s nation building failure and the PAP’s nation building success. National identity crisis is an intervening variable rather than the actual causal variable to explain Taiwan and Singapore’s different opposition movement outcomes.

- **Nationalist and Opposition Movements**

  I would now like to examine Singapore’s and Taiwan’s nationalist and opposition movements. In both countries, the opposition forces were composed of and supported by the majority communal group’s nationalists. The oppositions in both countries carried the majority groups’ nationalistic aspirations.
Both Singapore’s and Taiwan’s oppositions were mainly from people of the major communal groups. Taiwan’s opposition, the Dangwai, and later DPP, was mainly a Taiwanese party. All of the DPP’s candidates have been Taiwanese (Lin 1989). Most of their supporters were Taiwanese as well. Lin (1989) reports that in the 1986 elections, 96.5% of the DPP’s supporters were Taiwanese. The opposition movement is strongly identified with Taiwanese communal identity and Taiwanese’s pursuit for self-autonomy. The DPP, aside from seeking democracy, also included Taiwan’s independence in their party ideology and agenda.

Singapore’s strongest opposition parties in the early 1960s, the Barisan Sosialis (BS) and the United People’s Party (UPP) were also Chinese communal based parties. All of the BS and the UPP’s candidates for the 1963 general elections were Chinese. In Starner’s study of the candidates’ educational backgrounds, she finds that three out of four of the BS and the UPP’s candidates received Chinese school education and could not speak English (Starner 1967:327). The BS’s campaigns also mainly targeted the PAP’s communal policy and national identity policy including the Chinese school education policy and merger with Malaysia policy. Van der Kroef (1967) describes the left-wing opposition using communal grievances for mobilization and social penetration. He called it “communist indoctrination efforts which at the same time played on Chinese chauvinism and accentuated real or fancied Chinese communal grievances” (p.36).

In Singapore and Taiwan, both opposition movements rose up at the same time as the nationalist struggles for communal identity. In 1961, Singapore’s Lee Kwan Yew chose to break with the left wing on the merger issue. The left wing was not so keen on the merger with Malaysia. Due to differences in national identity policy, the left wing defected from the PAP and formed the opposition BS party. Then later when the BS was more supported by the Chinese community, the left-wing
opposition became more and more identified with the Chinese communal struggle against the PAP’s nation building policy.

In 1963, the left-wing opposition forces and the Chinese communal interests united together to fight against the PAP in the election. Most of BS’s candidates were graduates from the only Chinese university, Nanyang University. The BS received funds from Chinese nationalists and their campaign support. Chinese school students and teachers were BS’s main campaign activists. Taiwan had a similar unification. In Taiwan, Taiwanese nationalists and the anti-KMT opposition were almost the same group. Ever since they were formed, the DPP or the Dangwai forces were closely linked with Taiwanese nationalists. Many Dangwai activists were hsiangtu literature writers or nationalist intellectuals.

Both Singapore’s and Taiwan’s oppositions emerged during a time when nation building was in process and there were communal grievances within the majority communal groups, the Chinese in Singapore and the Taiwanese in Taiwan. Oppositions in both countries identified themselves with the disadvantaged majority communal groups. The oppositions also put the majority groups’ communal goals on their political agenda. But the responses from the public were very different. Most of the Singapore Chinese voters did not vote for the Chinese-interest-based BS but the multiracial-interest-based PAP. The opposition movement combined with Chinese nationalism was defeated in the 1963 election. The PAP successfully contained both the Chinese nationalists and the left-wing opposition forces.

Taiwan’s majority Taiwanese however, joined the Taiwanese nationalist momentum and the opposition’s call for democracy. They voiced their support for Taiwanese autonomy and democracy. The KMT was not able to maintain its authoritarianism under dual attacks from both democratic and nationalist movements. Both the KMT and the PAP suffered combined threats from both majority groups’ communal nationalism and opposition movements. The PAP was able to contain both but the
KMT failed. There must be some other reasons behind the KMT’s failure to contain opposition nationalist voices.

**Conclusion**

Several explanations have been provided by the existing literature for Singapore’s authoritarian survival as well as Taiwan’s movement into democracy. This chapter has extracted those explanations from their single case analytical format and put them in a comparative context in order to test their validity. A close comparison of Singapore’s and Taiwan’s levels of modernization, grassroots mobilization and grassroots democracy, use of repression, and rise of nationalism reveals that none of the above factors can explain the PAP’s survival and the KMT’s failure. There must be other variables which are not yet articulated by the present literature to explain Taiwan’s and Singapore’s outcomes. I argue that the pattern of dominating social cleavages and government structure is the reason. This will be explained in detail in chapter 3.

The results from the comparison also challenged several existing theories, including: that a dominating government presence in the economy would sustain authoritarianism; that limited grassroots democracy would sustain an authoritarian regime; that grassroots mobilization and a party’s clientelist penetration into society would sustain one-party dominance; that use of repression alone would sustain an authoritarian regime; and that nation building and state building cannot be done successfully at the same time as democratization.
Chapter 3  Regime Structures and Their Origin

Singapore and Taiwan had quite different regime structures. The KMT regime relied on clientele structure to conduct political mobilization. The KMT set up a party–state structure where the party apparatus penetrated the state as well as society. Through the party apparatus, the KMT recruited party cadres and local factional groups to conduct electoral mobilization. The presence of patronage networks in the KMT regime rendered the state vulnerable to clientele interests. As a result, the power structures of the KMT regime encouraged factionalism and destroyed the KMT unity. The public administration structure under the KMT regime had some non-rational features that encouraged mediocrity and lack of innovation in the bureaucracy. Clientelism weakened the KMT government’s state capacity. The fiscal structure of the KMT shows the allocation of funds to clientele groups rather than going to the majority of voters. In comparison with Singapore, this structure shows that the KMT regime had lower fiscal efficiency and lower capacity to extract revenues.

Though also a party state, the PAP regime did not exhibit the same level of party clientelism as did the KMT regime. The PAP regime stressed the state structure more than the party structure. As they consolidated their power in the mid-1960s, the PAP elites de-emphasized the party apparatus. The PAP size and function became very minimal. The government overtook the role of the party. Instead of using the party apparatus to conduct electoral mobilization, the PAP has relied on professional bureaucrats’ performance to achieve public support. At the grassroots, the PAP set up various governmental statutory boards to mobilize support for the government. The PAP grassroots

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15 Non-rational here is used to describe deviation from Max Weber’s definition of “rational bureaucracy.”
mobilization is not based on clientelism, nor do they conduct partisanship-based mobilization. The grassroots organizations are mainly propagating the government’s views to the public and advocating the government’s various achievements. There are no visible signs of clientelism in the PAP government or in its grassroots apparatus. The PAP governs a highly professional bureaucracy. Singapore’s public administration systems encourage meritocracy and high-effort performance. Its fiscal structure shows a higher state capacity to extract revenues and to produce a large fiscal surplus each year. The fiscal resources are geared toward a majority of Singapore citizens rather than certain clientele groups.

In one word, the PAP regime hires a group of professional bureaucrats to run the government and relies on their performance to win electoral support. But the KMT hired groups of clients to mobilize partisanship-based support for the KMT. This chapter examines Singapore’s and Taiwan’s regime structures, compares their differences and also provides some possible explanations for the origin of the different structures.

Taiwan the KMT: Party Clientele Regime

The KMT regime set up highly pervasive patronage networks through the party bureaucracies and local factional groups. They kept a very large party apparatus. The KMT party controlled all government offices and penetrated into social organizations and grassroots neighborhoods. Besides using party networks, at the local level, the KMT party recruited local factional groups to conduct grassroots mobilization. As a result, the state was controlled by the party. Party interests, as well as clientele interests, penetrated into the state functions. The party-owned and client-owned enterprises were given economic privileges. Party-owned enterprises had large market shares and local clients’ interests significantly influenced the local policies. Clientelism became a fundamental feature in the KMT regime’s structure. The KMT regime’s function and political survival relied on clientelism.
Clientelism in Taiwan was not initiated by social interest to capture the state. Rather, patron–client networks were set up by the KMT elites to maintain their authoritarian rule. Wu Nai-Teh describes the KMT regime’s elite-led clientelism structure as follows:

Clientelism is not a new or peculiar phenomenon in developing countries... What is new to us and what is peculiar concerning the problem of control-cum-mobilization in an authoritarian regime is that there [Taiwan] we witness clientelist organizations which are highly bureaucratized, societal in scale, and are sponsored by the ruling party, or the regime. In other developing countries clientelism is mostly or seen mostly as, a residual from traditional culture. In some Western democracies clientelism is marginal. It exists only in the local level politics. Clientelism in Taiwan, however, is a rather modern phenomenon. It was created deliberately on an extensive scale, to an intensive degree and operating bureaucratically in a relatively modern society by a rather sophisticated ruling group for a very clear political purpose. In short, it is a phenomenon in which clientelism is organized into a bureaucratic form as an apparatus of control and mobilization, or to put in Perlmutter’s terms, as an auxiliary structure in support of the authoritarian regime (Wu 1987: 12–13, italics added by author).

Patron–client networks were mainly established through the KMT party apparatus. But at the local level where the Party found it hard to penetrate, besides using local party branches, the KMT party also recruited local factional groups to conduct electoral mobilization. Wu describes the KMT regime structure as bureaucratic clientelism and electoral clientelism. Due to the dominant presence of clientelism in central and local politics, the state under the KMT is seriously captured by the clientele interests. I first examine the KMT mobilization networks including both the party apparatus and local factional groups. Then I examine the impact of clientelism on state structure and point out some features of non-rationality in the KMT public administration structures. I will also examine clientelism’s impact on economy and welfare. As a result of clientelism, the state’s resources were channeled to satisfy the clients’ interests rather than being redistributed to benefit the Taiwanese majority population. Taiwan’s weaker state capacity and the discriminatory resource distribution policies are further confirmed by study of Taiwan’s and Singapore’s fiscal structures.
Political Mobilization Structure: Clientelism

The KMT regime has heavily relied on patron–client networks to conduct electoral mobilization. The KMT conducted grassroots mobilization through two different clientele structures.

First, the KMT conducted electoral mobilization through the party apparatus. The KMT had set up a very large party bureaucracy to penetrate into both state and society. Party organizations such as party local branches and service stations were important institutions that the KMT used to conduct electoral mobilization at the grassroots. The KMT service station grassroots mobilization was discussed in Chapter Two. The KMT party set up the local service stations (民众服务站) to provide benefits to local voters in exchange for their electoral support. Besides the formal party apparatus, the KMT also used the KMT Chinese Youth Corps of Anti-Communists and Saving the Nation (CYC) to mobilize college students and youth. The CYC penetrated through school administrations.

The CYC was a branch of the school administration in every school and no students could avoid participating in the CYC (Wu 1987: 133). In the mid-1950s, the membership of CYC amounted to about 70,000 (Wu 1987: 133). The CYC also set up branches in every village and township. Outside schools, the function of the CYC was similar to the KMT service stations at the grassroots. The CYC attracted members through providing services and leisure activities. Through the CYC, party branches, and party service stations at the grassroots, the KMT party could penetrate into neighborhoods for political mobilization.

The mobilization conducted by the above-mentioned KMT party apparatus was highly clientelistic. As explained in Chapter Two, the clientele nature of the KMT party’s grassroots mobilization is demonstrated in the following aspects: the partisan monopoly over service provision at the grassroots, individualistic services to the locals, and service-for-votes mobilization during elections. The political mobilization through the party clientele apparatus was successful. As Wu notes, the KMT
party mobilization success rate was 73% among mainlanders and 35% among Taiwanese (Wu 1987: 111).

The second clientele structure the KMT relied on heavily was a patron–client relationship with the local factional groups to conduct political mobilization. Since the 1950s, the KMT had allied itself with the local factional groups to win local elections (Wang 2004: 30). Though recruiting those factional groups under the partisanship flag, the KMT relationship with those local factional groups was mainly interest-based rather than ideology-based (Lin Chia-long 1999; Wang 1994; Wu 1987; Wang 2004; Chu 1989). “Through clientelism, the KMT rewarded local factions with some political and economic privileges; in return, local factions helped the KMT rule the areas that the KMT found difficult to penetrate.” (Wang 2004: 30).

Local factional groups were set up through the help of the KMT at every local level: village, township, county and city. Before late 1987, the highest level of local factions was only at the county- and city-level. The KMT did not allow any above county-level local factions or alliance of cross-county factions (Wang 2004: 30). The county- and city-level local factional groups had networks to control the lower level factional groups in their region. Local factional groups conducted electoral mobilization mainly through family ties, locality ties, or vote buying (Lin Chia-long 1989: 136).

Since the 1950s, county/city mayor and county/city assembly positions, as well as village/township heads, in Taiwan have been open for direct elections from voters. The KMT relied on the local factional groups to win the local elections at each local level. The KMT recruited the local factional leaders to join the KMT. Then during elections, the local factional group elite competed as the KMT candidate and thus received the KMT patronage. The KMT also adopted the “divide-and-rule” and “check-and-balances” strategies to control local elites. The KMT usually set up two or more local factional groups within one village or township to create competition among them. In this way, the
KMT could be the main patron that each factional group could depend on. The KMT used this strategy to punish the rebellious local elites and thus secure the loyalty of factional groups. According to Lin, from 1954–1994, 61.9% of the KMT nominees for Taiwan Provincial Assembly seats had a local faction background, and 92.6% of those candidates were elected (Lin 1998a: 164 cited by Wang 2004: 30). Based on the Chen (1994) study, 75% of the KMT elected candidates depended on local faction mobilization to win the election (p.186). Clearly, the patron–client relationship with the local factional elites was indispensable for the KMT electoral success at the local level.

**Impact of Clientelism on State Structure**

Due to the dominant presence of party bureaucracies in the state, the KMT state structure resembled a quasi-Leninist party state (Cheng 1989). The party apparatus penetrated into all of the state apparatus. “No branch of the state apparatus, not even the judiciary, was completely immune from the penetration of party organization and the influence of party bureaucrats” (Chu 1992: 20). The KMT party set up party offices parallel to the state offices in order to control and direct state functions (Chu 2001).

In the central government, the party apparatus had unchallenged power over the state. The national political elites were placed into positions by the party apparatus. Chu observes that, “[KMT] exercised partisan control over the appointment and promotion of middle to high ranking government officials and military officers” (Chu 1992: 20). Positions in the central government were appointed by the party and the officials were responsible to the party. Most of the national elites appointed by the party in various positions were mainlanders. They had never faced the challenge of elections. At the local level, the KMT shared power with the local factional elites. The local factional elites grabbed the local magistrate positions through winning local elections. Through vote buying or clientelistic mobilization, the local factional elites became town/village mayors, city/county mayors, or
assemblymen. Thus, the elected local faction elites and the KMT elites presided over local politics. Clearly, in both central government and local government, the leadership selections were seriously affected by clientelism through the party apparatus and local factional groups.

This quasi-Leninist party–state structure then produced a clientelistic party state. Clientelism became institutionalized in the state structures through the party penetration. Because of the party’s dominance over the state, the KMT mobilization agents and clients with their vast patron–client networks, including both party cadres and local factional groups, then commanded all state positions. This state power was then shared by the party cadres and the KMT clients under their patron–client mobilization networks. Thus, besides affecting power structure, clientelism also penetrated into the bureaucracy.

As a result of institutionalized penetration of clientelism in the state, there are several non-rational features in the KMT regime’s power structure as well as pubic administration structure, which could hinder bureaucratic professionalism, state capacity, and state autonomy.

- **Personalized and Factionalized Power Structures**

  Because the leadership positions are obtained through party clientelism and local factional clientelism, the power structure of the KMT government exhibits the personalized and factionalized structures that are common in a Leninist state. Chu describes the KMT regime’s power structure as follows:

  At the zenith of authoritarian rule, the cohesion of the ruling bloc was founded on a centralization of power in the hand of the paramount leader, who almost became an institution by himself. The paramount leader served four formal functions at the same time—head of the state, leader of the Party, executive head of the government, and the active commander-in-chief of the military security apparatus.

  The authority of the paramount leader was further buttressed by a complex web of clientelist networks which infiltrate the hierarchy of the party, state bureaucracy, military and other state-sanctioned auxiliary organizations. Chiang Ching-Kuo, following his father’s
footsteps, exercised the power of appointment judiciously and meticulously. Chiang developed personal ties with hundreds of top and not-so-top party, state and military officials through hereditary family ties, cadre training programs and apprenticeship. This pattern of recruitment enabled the paramount leader to exercise intimate control and command personal allegiance. All high-ranking state and party officials and military generals had to secure a personal trust from and rapport with Chiang and members of the inner circle to keep their political careers alive. No top aides could develop a personal power based within the party and state apparatus without the endorsement of Chiang himself. Parallel arms of the security apparatus monitored the entire state bureaucracy, spied on all high-ranking officials on behalf of the paramount leader, and checked on each other (Chu 1992: 25).

The power, therefore, was highly centralized under one paramount leader. The leader formed his personal factions through the party apparatus. Chen (1994) describes the power struggles between factional groups within the KMT. The factional feature of the KMT regime had already been present since the KMT formed the Republic of China in mainland China. Chiang Kai-Shek had allowed existence of many factions within the KMT and ruled over them through the “check and balance” strategy. Chiang Ching-kuo had established his own faction after the KMT moved to Taiwan. Chiang Ching-kuo’s faction was established through his personal relationship with the young KMT cadres. In the 1970s, Chiang Ching-kuo, with Chiang Kai-Shek’s help, weakened other factions and finally obtained a dominant position in the KMT (Chen 1994). At the local level, the KMT also used the “check and balance” strategy to encourage local factional struggles in order to maintain its patron position. As a result, the local factional struggles and factional politics were also very rampant.

Because of existence of factionalism, the KMT government was not only subject to a partisan but also to a personalized and factionalized leadership. Selection and promotion of officials, therefore, were not only based on merit and partisan loyalty, but also on personal and factional loyalties. Under this structure, the paramount leader would want to appoint his factional members in the government to replace officials from other factions, in order to consolidate his power. This power structure feature and its devastating consequences are clearly observed in the KMT government. Before the 1980s, the
government was highly populated by mainlanders. In 1946, 87.5% of the Taiwan Administration Office positions were replaced by mainlanders (Wu 1987: 209). In the city and county government, 61.8% of the government positions were replaced by mainlanders (Wu 1987: 213). By 1981, mainlanders had taken more than 90% of the KMT central committee seats.

This mainlander-dominated situation however changed after their main patron, Chiang Ching-kuo, died in 1988. After Lee Teng-hui, a Taiwanese native, took office in 1988, Lee largely appointed Taiwanese into government offices and the KMT central committee to consolidate his faction’s power. Lee’s Taiwanese-based faction soon expanded in the KMT central committee and controlled the central government. As a result, from the early 1990s, many members from Chiang Ching-kuo’s mainlander faction started to split from the KMT and formed new parties or ran for elections as independent candidates. In 2000, due to the factional struggle with Lee Teng-hui, James Soong also defected from the KMT and decided to run for the 2000 presidential election as an independent candidate. James Soong’s defection directly caused the KMT’s defeat in the 2000 election. Factional struggles within the KMT destroyed the KMT’s unity and directly caused the KMT’s loss of its power in 2000.

- **Non-rational Features in Public Administration**

  More than affecting elite power structure, clientelism also penetrates into the KMT bureaucracy. Due to reliance on clientelism for survival, the KMT cannot set up a highly rational bureaucracy\(^\text{16}\) by Max Weber’s standard. Since the 1950s, the KMT has established some features of Weberian rational bureaucracy, such as exam-based recruitment, lifetime employment, and performance-based promotion etc (Chu 2001). However, there are some non-rational features in the KMT’s public servant recruitment, salary, promotion, and supervision regulations.

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\(^{16}\) In this dissertation, when the term “rational” is used to describe bureaucracy, it refers to rational in the Weberian sense, based on Weber’s definition of “Rational Bureaucracy”.
Recruitment

All public servants are recruited through merit-based exams in Taiwan. However, there are some non-rational features in their recruitment system which allows the KMT clients to enter into the bureaucracy more easily than the indigenous Taiwanese. First, the KMT sets up different criteria of selection among different types of exams. There are three types of exams to recruit public officers: the common level exam (普考), higher level exam (高考), and the special exam (特考). Common level and higher level exams are open to all citizens, but only specific sections of the population are eligible for the special exams. Various special exams are given to certain groups. Most special exams were used to recruit discharged military officers and party loyalists into public office (Xiao 1994: 6). Most of the people that are qualified for the special exams are mainlanders (Lin 2006: 49).

There are significant selection criteria differences between the special exam and the other two exams. The common level and higher level exams set up a very high standard and the passing rates are quite low. The special exams are comparatively much easier. Based on Xiao’s research, the passing rate for common level exam and higher level exam has never reached 10%, but for special exams, the lowest passing rate is 33.8%. For certain special exams, the passing rates are as high as 97.6% and 81.9%. According to Xiao’s statistics, for special exams for discharged officers ranking as colonel or higher, the passing rate has always been 100% except for the year 1989 (Xiao 1994: 7).

Interviews with two public officials in Taiwan confirmed this pattern. One official was recruited through the higher level exam and the other through the special exam. The interviewee who took the higher level exam spoke of the difficulty and comprehensiveness of the exam. He was tested in many subjects: English, Chinese, economics, international relations, international laws, constitutional law, politics, the KMT ideology, etc. After the exam, he also went through an interview process. He said only about 5% of the examinees were ultimately recruited. According to him, the passing rate for the
common level exam is even lower, probably around 1%. Most examinees for the higher level exams are college graduates. They have spent a long time preparing for the exam (Interview: TW31211).

The other interviewee, however, was a military defector from mainland China. He said he was asked to take a special exam on the second day after he landed in Taiwan. He was not even given the materials related to the exam ahead of time. The exam was mainly about politics and the KMT ideology. Unable to prepare for the exam, he simply answered them based on his limited knowledge of the KMT from his education in mainland China. He easily passed the exam and the government gave him an official position in a local harbor bureau (Interview: TW32011).

Based on the second interviewee’s description, it seems that special exams are sometimes given in an ad-hoc manner and are specifically tailored toward certain participants. The groups taking the special exams are probably the KMT clients whom they want to recruit into the office for political reasons. About 77% of the high-rank public servants recruited through special exams are discharged military officials (Xiao 1994: 7). Since most special exams are targeting the discharged military officers, it is obvious that the KMT used the special exam to bring their military clients into public offices as a reward for their loyalty to the KMT. Xiao (1994) remarks that many public offices were packed with the discharged military officers at a time during the authoritarian period (Xiao 1994: 7).

The special exams are held quite frequently, becoming an important source to recruit public officials. Lin reports that according to Luo’s (2003) research, “Special Exams are more important channels to recruit public servants than the common and higher level exams. From 1950 to 1991, the public servants that were recruited through the special exams are 4.4 times more than the public servants recruited through the common level and higher level exams.” (Lin 2006: 49). Considering the difficulties of passing the common level and higher level exams and the ease with which the special exams are passed, it is not a surprise that more public officials were recruited through the special
exams than through common and higher level exams. In this way, the KMT can penetrate into the bureaucracy by putting their clients into public office.

A second non-rational feature in recruitment is that, even for the more inclusive common level exams and higher level exams, a quota system was in place to limit the Taiwanese’s admission in public office. In the common level exams and higher level exams, the KMT set up a provincial quota system. This quota system was not abolished until 1992 (Li Zhenzhou 2008).

Based on this system, only a given numbers of officials from each Chinese province were allowed to be recruited each year. Since the ROC ideologically was composed of all territories of China, the provincial quota system was thus legitimized by the ROC ideology. So, the Taiwanese majority were competing for one province’s quota. But the minority mainlanders were competing for the other 38 provinces’ quotas. According to Lin (2006), the quota for Taiwan province was 22 per year in 1991. But the quotas for other provinces were much higher than Taiwan, such as 44 for Jiangsu province, 24 for Hubei province, 34 for Hebei province, 50 for Sichuan province, 42 for Shandong province, 32 for Henan provinces, 28 for Hainan province, etc. (Li 1991: 7 cited by Lin 2006: 34). If the number of qualified examinees from certain provinces was too few to meet the quota, the passing grade could be reduced to be 10 points lower than the normal passing grade.

The provincial quota system gave less chance for Taiwanese to be recruited into the bureaucracy. Based on the statistics reported by Lin, among all public officials recruited through the common level exams and the high level exams from 1950–1991, about 24% of them are mainlanders and 76% are Taiwanese. Since the mainlander population is only 12% of the total population, this figure shows that a higher percentage of mainlanders was recruited through the common and higher level exams than the Taiwanese. Not to mention there are also special exams which brought large proportions of mainlanders into public office.
As a result, a large percentage of the mainlanders serve in public office. Tung reports that even in 2006, among the 600,000 public servants in Taiwan, 40% of them were mainlanders while the proportion of mainlander population in Taiwan is only 12% (Tung 2006: 137). According to Su (2004)’s study, for generations born in the 1930s, only 10% of the Taiwanese population served in public office, while 40% of the mainlanders were recruited into the government. Clearly, the KMT purposefully puts more mainlanders in its bureaucracy. Public office became a place where the mainlanders can find their patronage from the KMT.

To summarize, there are some non-rational features in the KMT regime’s bureaucracy recruitment system. The special exam system as well as the provincial quota system created unequal treatment of examinees. It violates fairness in selection of public servants. Why did the KMT set up this non-rational feature in the bureaucracy? I think the above flaws in the recruitment system gave room for the KMT clients to be recruited into the government. The KMT clients are mainly discharged military officers, party loyalists, mainlanders and some local social, economic, and intellectual elites.

It is quite obvious that the recruitment system was purposefully set to favor the military officers and mainlanders but disadvantage the ordinary Taiwanese (Xiao 1994, Jiang 1997). This system recruits the smartest Taiwanese, the Taiwanese intellectual elites, into the KMT coalition but leaves the ordinary Taiwanese outside of the KMT patronage. Besides the Taiwanese intellectual elites, other KMT clients, not-so-smart military officers, and mainlanders can also enter into office through the relaxation of the meritocracy recruitment criteria. The KMT clients and loyalists entered into the bureaucracy. The KMT elites and party cadres then could keep the central government under the party’s control. However, the flaws in the recruitment system reduced the level of meritocracy of the government and thus affected its state capacity and administrative efficiency.
Paying the public servants well is another important feature in Weber’s rational bureaucracy. If the public officials are not paid salaries comparable to the private sector, either the top brains will flow to the private sector, or the remaining officials will not work with high effort. The officials also have more incentives to take bribes or seek other sources of incomes through public offices to compensate for their opportunity costs.

Xu has a study on the KMT public salaries. Based on research in 1988 about public and private sector salaries, Xu (1990) found, on average, private sector payment was 8.15% higher than the public servant payment. In the lower rank level (level 1–5) public positions, the public salary is 13.41% higher than the private sector income. However, for higher level positions (level 6–14), the private sector pays much higher than the government. For rank 6–9 position, the private sector payment is 15.70% higher than public sector. For rank 10–14 position, the private sector payment is 22.15% higher than the public sector (p.149).

In an interview (Interview: TW31211) with a public official, the reason for this discrepancy emerged. He said that the initial salary paid to a university graduate who just enters into the bureaucracy is equivalent to the salary he will receive in the private sector. That explains why salaries at the lower level positions show a higher rate than the private sector in Xu’s study. The government, then, can attract young talented university graduates to apply for public positions since the initial public salary is quite comparable to the private sector payment for a beginner’s level position. However, as the university graduate’s career develops in the bureaucracy, the rate of salary increase cannot match that in the private sector.

In the private sector, if the university graduate performs well, there is more room for his salary increase. If he opens his own business, the room for income increase would be even bigger. But in
public office, the salary is linked to the rank. The salary increase rate is steady but slow. The interviewee said “I am lucky enough to have an annual salary of TWD 2,000,000 (about USD 67,000) after serving 30 years in office, because of my special job. I am a trade negotiator. But many people at my rank cannot expect such a high salary.” (His rank is 10. The highest rank is 14, which is the vice minister.) But, the public official also says the university graduate would still want to stay in office because of its stability and other benefits such as pension, subsidies for children’s education, etc. (Interview: TW31211).

The KMT set up a very well-paid pension system for its retired officials. The pension is available for all who served in the government or military for more than 25 years. The amount is calculated based on your seniority in office: The longer you stay in public office, the more pension you will receive after retirement. Due to long service in the office, many retired officials receive a monthly allowance that is higher than their monthly salary before retirement. One public administration expert stated that if the pension funds are counted as public salary, the Taiwanese government offers the highest public salary in the world. Therefore, many officials were just waiting for their time to receive such generous retirement pension. The KMT uses the generous pension fund to keep those talented university graduates remaining in office.

To summarize, the KMT uses a generous starting salary to attract the talented university graduates. They then use the generous pension funds and other benefits to keep public servants in office and loyal to the KMT government. If they leave office before finishing 25 years’ service, the public servants are not eligible for the pension fund. So, by using this system, the KMT can attract talented young college graduates to join the KMT government and keep them in office. But this system rewards their loyalty rather than their performance and creativity. Based on the incentive structure of this system, it seems that the KMT does not need the public officials to have extraordinary
performance. They only want to recruit the talented elites into the office and then keep them loyal to the KMT government.

This incentive structure makes a lot of sense if we consider the KMT political mobilization structure. Because electoral support is mainly obtained through clientele mobilization, the KMT does not need super excellent public sector performance to impress the voters for electoral victory. Instead, the bureaucracy becomes another channel that the KMT can use to recruit intellectual elites into the KMT client base. Through bureaucratic recruitment, the KMT can attract the most talented intellectuals especially the young college graduates, to join the KMT coalition rather than losing them to the opposition side. This public administration structure is consistent with the KMT clientele regime structure. But this system does not encourage high-effort performance and innovation from public officials. It encourages mediocrity instead. As a result, this system hindered the state capacity and limited the KMT’s public performance.

As an example, the gap of quality of public performances between Singapore and Taiwan can be observed from their urban management. In my field investigation, I find the differences in quality of urban management between Taipei city and Singapore are quite obvious. Take trash management for example, Singapore’s trash management is much better than Taipei’s. In Taipei, there is no public site to collect household trash. The trash bins along the roads are limited for pedestrians to use only. All household trashes are not allowed to be thrown at the public trash bins. Trash-collection trucks drive into each neighborhood everyday to collect household trash. The Taipei residents have to throw their trash to the trash-collection truck at designated time everyday. In my residential area, I have to stay home everyday at 6:00pm in order to throw out the trash. This management cause inconvenience for the residents since it is difficult to stay at home at the trash collecting time. So, I constantly saw
residents secretly throw their household trash to the public trash bins at night or leave the trashed at other public areas. I sometimes saw small piles of trashes on the road for days.

In Singapore, every apartment building has a build-in trash tunnel. The residents simply throw their trash to the tunnel from their apartment. The build-in trash tunnel in my apartment is well managed. I have not seen any trash pile outside of the building, nor have I ever encountered any bad smells from the build-in trash tunnel.

In many areas in Taipei, I still observe bad-paved allies and shabby shack-like housings along the roads. The quality of road varies from place to place. In some areas, the main traffic roads are small and curve around the buildings. The residential areas are not separate from the commercial areas. Shops, business offices and restaurants are scattered among the residential buildings without any organization.

In Singapore, I have not seen areas with bad-paved small allies, shack-like houses and curvy main traffic streets along the neighborhoods. Generally speaking, Singapore’s streets are larger and have better qualities. Residential and commercial areas are separated. In each residential area, certain blocks of buildings are designated for food courts, groceries, and other commercial activities. All peddlers open their shops or restaurants in the designated areas. Therefore, from appearances, the Singapore city is much better organized than the Taipei city. This shows that the Singapore government’s public performance has higher quality than the Taiwan government’s.

Promotion

The KMT promotion system also encourages loyalty and mediocrity rather than innovation and high performance. Though they have a performance evaluation system on a yearly basis, the KMT promotion system is mostly seniority-based. Every year, each official goes through an evaluation process. They are rated by their direct supervisor. The evaluation form then will be confirmed by the
head of the department. The ratings are A, B, C, and D. If the official receives a D, he will be fired. If he
receives a C, he will be put under two years’ probation. If he receives a B, he will not receive any
punishment or promotion. If he receives As continually for two years or three years separately, he will
be raised to one rank higher. In the interviewee’s department, about 2/3 of the officials will receive an
A each year.

The public offices are divided into three categories of ranks: ranks 1–5 are the low level; ranks
6–9 are the middle range; and ranks 10–14 are the high level. Promotion within each rank category is
considerably easier. You will be guaranteed a raise if you receive an A for two years continually or three
years separately. But promotion to the higher category is difficult. According to the interviewee, an
official has to wait for a vacancy and compete with others if he wants a raise beyond his category.

This promotion system has the following characteristics. First, promotion within each category
is not competitive. It is a guaranteed raise if you are rated A for two years. Since about 2/3 of the
officials can receive A, it seems the raise is certain for most officials. According to the evaluation form,
the officials are rated on several areas, such as performance, ethics, attitude, abilities, and knowledge.
Under the performance category, the official is asked if he completed his work according to the
requirements, handled cases accurately, completed work on time, came to office on time, carried
through the work consistently, etc.

The ethics and attitudes questions evaluate loyalty to the government, humility, sincerity,
sense of responsibility, motivation, etc. In terms of ability, they measure the official’s physical health,
endurance, and expressiveness. Based on this form, it is easy to receive an A unless the official has poor
performance or a bad attitude, such as not coming to work or delaying doing his job. Because
promotion within the category is not competitive and a majority of people will receive promotion, the
promotion within each category becomes seniority- rather than performance-based. There is no special
promotion for extraordinary performance, so this promotion system encourages mediocre performance.

Second, promotion above one’s category is difficult. Officials might wait a long time for promotion to the higher category. Promotion above the category depends on the vacancy and competition with other officials who also wait a long time for that position. Officials can stay at the highest rank within their category for a long time without much expectation of a raise. The official’s own performance may not contribute to that promotion. (Interview: TW31211). Therefore, it further discourages officials from pursuing better performance or innovation.

The Taiwanese public official expressed great admiration for the Singapore public administration system based on his impression of the Singapore officials whom he encountered. He said Singapore has the best public officials, whom Taiwan cannot match, because the Singapore government is willing to promote young and gifted officials to important positions. As a trade negotiator, he, in his 50s, has the same rank with some 30-year-old Singapore officials. He adds, those young Singapore officials demonstrated strong ability and are very knowledgeable. He admires the Singapore government’s decision to put young officials in key positions. He showed some frustration with the KMT seniority-based promotion system. Taiwan’s system, he said, promotes mediocrity rather than innovation and high performance. Lack of innovation and stalemate are the most common complaints about Taiwanese public administration from local experts and public officials.

*Supervision and Anti-Corruption*

Supervision against bureaucratic misconduct is also an important element to produce an effective bureaucracy. But because of clientele penetration in the system, the KMT authoritarian regime cannot set up a clean, incorruptible and autonomous government. Therefore, during the KMT
authoritarian years, the Taiwan bureaucracy did not have effective institutional arrangements to fight corruption and avoid social capture of the public office.

First, during the KMT authoritarian years in Taiwan, there was no arrangement to avoid conflicts of interest. The public servants were not asked to declare their private property nor their private positions. Practices designed to eliminate conflicts of interest were implemented after 1993. They were added to the Public Official Property Report Regulation (1993) and the Public Servant Service Act Amendment (1996). Before that, there were no relevant regulations on avoiding conflict of interests.

Second, during the authoritarian years of the KMT regime, there was also a lack of anti-corruption mechanisms. Taiwan has not set up a single independent anti-corruption agency so far. Corruption cases are investigated by the Investigation Bureau under the Executive Yuan like other criminal cases. After 1989, due to pressures from the opposition, the KMT set up an Anti-corruption Department under the Investigation Bureau.

There were some measures taken before 1989, when corruption had become a common practice in the government. In 1967, a document was issued to the Investigation Bureau to investigate about corruption, bribery, solicitation, and inefficiency (Lin 1995). In the document, it was suggested that the Investigation Bureau use the security personnel in each government office to conduct secret investigations on corruption (Lin 1995). But the security personnel were employees of the same government office that he was asked to investigate (Lin 1995). In other words, those designated corruption investigators were not independent agents.

Moreover, security personnel were not given the authority to conduct investigations. Instead, they were asked to discover evidence in a secretive manner (Lin 1995). It extremely difficult to actually discover corrupt behavior if the investigators are not given enough authority to search for evidence.
Besides, security personnel did not have the special training and expertise to discover corruption in complicated economic transactions such as money laundering, public purchases, project bidding, and contracts (Lin 1995). So the anti-corruption investigation was quite limited.

Despite that, it was reported that the security personnel were still able to discover some corrupt cases. In 1979, a Corruption and Economic Crime Prevention Center was set up under Investigation Bureau (Lin 1995). They were to investigate major corruption cases and other economic crimes. The petty corruption and disciplinary cases were asked to be taken care of by each department instead (Lin 1995). These are all the measures that the KMT authoritarian regime took to control corruption. It was quite limited and ineffective.

Why did the KMT authoritarian regime fail to implement rules to control corruption and produce a clean and effective government? Lack of political will, according to Quah, is the main reason (Interview: SIN90510). The KMT has a lot of interest in industry, owning many enterprises and properties. The KMT government also has set up many state-owned enterprises and put their clients in charge of those public enterprises. The KMT local clients were mostly economic elites and social elites.

Big industrial interests also joined the KMT political coalition. They were awarded party positions and affiliated with the KMT elites. In this case, there might be some interest linkage between the KMT officials and their clients in the industries. Setting up regulations for public officials to declare their assets, investments, and any private interests would expose the KMT’s connection with the industries’ clients. Strictly implementing anti-corruption measures would disrupt the informal connection between the local industrial interests and the government. Since the KMT needed the local industrial elites’ support to win elections, they had to give up some state autonomy in exchange for their electoral success. The clientelistic political mobilization structure crippled the KMT’s ability to take measures to strengthen state autonomy.
Conclusion

Based on the above observations, the KMT has allowed certain non-rational features in its bureaucracy, which hinders efficiency, government performance, and state autonomy. Through the exam-based recruitment system, the KMT gathered the most talented people into the bureaucracy and provided them a generous pension bonus to keep them in the bureaucracy, yet encouraged only mediocre performance. This produces fiscal waste and harms state capacity.

Why does the KMT keep those non-rational features rather than setting up an arrangement for an efficient and productive bureaucracy? The KMT clientelistic mobilization structure induced this choice for public administration structure. First, under a clientelistic political mobilization structure, the KMT did not need to rely too much on performance to gain legitimacy. If the KMT can win votes through clientele-based mobilization, the need to have impressive social and economic achievements in order to win social support is reduced. So setting up a highly performing government is not necessary for the KMT’s survival. That explains why the KMT public administration structure focused more on recruiting the intellectual elites into the bureaucracy and keeping them loyal to the office rather than encouraging innovation and good performance from the bureaucrats. The bureaucracy becomes a channel to recruit clients rather than building a service team to achieve better government performance.

Second, setting up a highly professional bureaucracy is very costly. Since most of their fiscal resources are channeled to develop its interest-based clientele networks, the KMT might not even have additional resources to set up an expensive hyper-professional bureaucracy. A later comparative study of the fiscal structure of Singapore and Taiwan shows that the KMT regime can barely meet its fiscal needs every year from 1972 to 1999. The KMT spent much less on government administration than Singapore, and yet they still could not make ends meet. So, the KMT regime simply did not have the
resources to set up a hyper-professional bureaucracy. Clientelism took away much of its fiscal resources.

Third, clientele interests clashed with the state interests. The KMT party clients, mainlanders, military officers, and local industrial and social clients all wanted to capture the state for their own interests. Because the KMT largely relied on party clientelism as well as local patron–client networks for political mobilization, the KMT political survival relies on those clientele groups. Though the KMT central state elites might want to have higher state capacity and autonomy for better performance to gain legitimacy, the KMT elites also have to concede to the clientele interests. Under the two conflicting considerations, a midrange level bureaucratic performance plus satisfaction of clientele interests is the KMT’s best strategy to achieve the most preferred outcome. That explains why there are some Weberian rational bureaucracy features, but also several non-rational features in the KMT public administration. Because of their clientele-based mobilization structure, the KMT set up this semi-professional government for their best payoff.

**Impact of Clientelism in the Economy**

As explained above, the KMT set up a professional bureaucracy yet still reserved some non-rational features in the government structure to accommodate the clientele interests. The KMT also adopted a similar strategy in its economic policies. The KMT hired technocrats to formulate economic policies to promote industrialization and economic growth. The KMT gave those technocrats a great deal of freedom to formulate policies based on their professional decisions. But the KMT also carved out some areas in the economic policies for capture by their clientele interests in order to maintain their ruling coalition (Chu 1989: 149).

At the national level, the KMT party clients receive oligopolistic domains in many economic sectors. At the local level, the local factional elites are also given a lot of economic privileges (Wang
1994: 185). Due to the KMT elite’s strict control over the technocrats, the KMT can make sure that only their clients can access those economic privileges (Chu 1989). In this way, the Taiwanese small businesses have to ferociously compete against one another for a meager profit, but the KMT clients can engage in profitable business and easily extract large profits (Lin Zhongzheng 1989). As a result, clientelism infiltrates into the socioeconomic structure and produces a socioeconomic gap between the KMT clients and non-clients, which, Xiao thinks, contributes to the uprising of social movements in Taiwan in the 1980s (Xiao XH 1989).

- **Economic Privileges to the KMT Party Clients**

Gold describes the KMT strong intervention in the economy in this way, “Taiwan’s economy is dominated by the KMT government. The government then selected their cronies to become industrialists and made certain they depended on the state for capital, foreign exchange, equipment, raw materials, energy, and docile labor” (Gold 1986: 72). These are the economic ties between the KMT and the party clients.

The KMT took over all assets under the Japanese colonial government as well as bringing a lot of capital to Taiwan from mainland China. The KMT elites gave some of these assets to the KMT party and Veterans Affairs Commission (退輔會, VAC) to manage. As a result, the KMT party and the VAC have controlled many businesses in Taiwan. The government also granted the KMT party and the VAC many economic privileges. Party-owned and VAC-owned businesses were given permission to monopolize certain sectors (Chu 1992). In research by Lin (1989), in 1982, among the 304 major industrial products, 36 of them were manufactured under a monopoly of public enterprises, many of which were controlled by the KMT party or party elites, and seven of them under a monopoly of public welfare commissions, such as the VAC (Lin Zhongzheng 1989: 166).
For another example, a group of local aboriginals from Hua-lien county who were interviewed said the VAC had many monopoly businesses in their hometown, such as water management. Aboriginals were not allowed to engage in the water manufacturing business even though they live beside the spring. The aboriginals also complained that the VAC forced them to leave their land so the VAC could develop their land for commercial use. Since the VAC had the support of the KMT government, the aboriginals had to obey them, give up their land, and move to the city instead. “The VAC are very powerful. They gave orders for us to leave. They have a lot of money,” one remarked ((Interview: TW31611).

By being granted monopoly power and various privileges for doing business, the KMT party and the VAC could easily extract large profits and were shielded from economic competition. The party-controlled funds then could flow to develop the KMT party clientele networks for electoral mobilization at the grassroots. The KMT needed monetary resources to recruit electoral support. As observed in Chapter Two, the KMT mobilizations at the grassroots are highly interest-based. Some are merely vote-buying. In this situation, the KMT needs the party-controlled business to provide monetary support.

The VAC is another important organization for the KMT to recruit clients. The KMT offered a generous pension fund to some veterans in exchange for their loyalty to the KMT. However, in order to pay off this amount of pension, the VAC had to generate the funds through business transactions. Since veterans are one of the KMT’s strong clients, the VAC’s ability to generate profits became important for the KMT’s survival as well. Giving party businesses and the VAC businesses the economic privileges and the monopoly power became important for the KMT’s political survival. This view is shared by Wang. He describes how clientelism is reflected in Taiwan’s economy:

The high degree of government and party control of productive enterprise, combined with extensive economic regulation, helps the regime control important resources and draws power holders into its clientelist networks.... Thus, considerable economic rents and privileges, crucial
for rewarding clients of the regime, were created. According to Chu’s research (Chu 1989), nationwide oligopolistic domains were granted to the KMT-owned enterprises, and veteran-owned sectors, whereas, regional oligopolistic activities are granted to local factions. (Wang 1994: 184–185)

But the negative side is that it creates unfairness in economic competition. The non-KMT client groups—such as the aboriginals mentioned above—suffered economic disadvantages because of privileges given to the VAC and party businesses. These disadvantaged groups then harbored grievances against the KMT regime. In the 1980s, under mobilization by the aboriginal elites, those grievances developed into social protests. From the late 1980s to early 1990s, the aboriginal elites organized three waves of “Give Back My Land” (還我土地運動) demonstrations on the streets. Demonstrations like this shattered the KMT’s legitimacy and pushed the KMT into gradual political reform.

- **Economic Privileges to Local Factional Elites**

  Because the KMT’s relationship with the local factional groups was interest-based, the KMT had to give some economic privileges to the local factional groups in exchange for their loyalty. Chu (1989) describes four kinds of economic privileges given to local factional elites in return for their electoral support in mobilizing voters. These privileges include: “1) regionally chartered economic activities, such as banking, credit and transportation; 2) privilege in obtaining government loans; 3) provincial and county procurement and contracting; and 4) economic interests obtained at the expense of the government’s public authority, from zoning manipulation to the protection of underground and illegal business” (Chen and Chu 1992; Chu 1989: 148–52, cited and translated by Wang 2004: 30).

  The local factional elites received at least one of the above privileges. Based on Wang’s (1994) calculation from Chu’s (1989) research, among the 89 county-level factional groups, 67.4% of them received chartered business on banking; 58.4% in credit cooperative associations; 47.2% over other
financial institutions; 63% with the farmers and fisherman’s association; 20.2% in the transportation business; and 91% of them have received at least one of the above chartered local businesses (Wang 1994: 185).

Because 75% of the KMT’s electoral success was produced by the local factional groups’ mobilization (Chen 1994), it became very important for the KMT to offer these economic privileges to those local factional groups. It explains why local economies were largely dominated by the local factional groups. The local governor position was usually hotly pursued by the factional groups because the local governor could grant all economic rents to local businesses. The KMT usually allowed the local factional groups to place their representatives in that position. So the factional groups controlled the local governments and obtained all economic privileges and rents. They accumulated wealth through those rents. The local faction groups would use that wealth to expand their network of clients, which would benefit the KMT as well for their electoral mobilization. So the KMT and the local factional groups formed this sustainable and mutually beneficial system at the local level. But the DPP’s success in winning local governor positions since 1989 cut off the economic ties between local government and the factional groups, which seriously damaged local factional groups’ mobilization power and finally led to the KMT defeat in the 2000 national elections.

The economic rents that the KMT granted to the local elites seriously damaged the KMT state capacity at the local level. Not only were the local elites given privileges to engage in chartered business, local elites were awarded with government contracts and procurements such as public construction. It created inefficient economic decisions and resulted in investment wastes in public procurement and public projects. The qualities of many public projects were not impressive since the choices of contractors were not based on quality or price, but on the KMT’s desire to give out goodies to its clients. There are a lot of complaints from the local residents on the bad quality of public
buildings, bridges, or other public projects. Therefore, the economic efficiency of the public programs was harmed by the KMT patron–client relationship with the local factional groups. The local elites also influenced the urban development plan in order to increase the land values of their real estate.

Tung gives an example about the damage to urban planning and local governance by clientelism. Tung reports that many Taiwanese scholars have already observed that local factions used urban-planning review boards as “money-making” instruments with which local elites could acquire economic rent (Chang 1991; Chen 1995; Wang 1996; cited by Tung 2006: 144). Tung finds Local factions fought against each other in local elections in order to control urban planning mechanism and the resulting financial perks (Tung 2006: 144). “Two former deputy governors of non-KMT governing counties told me that before 1986, at the local-government level, whoever controlled urban planning would be the one to distribute the greatest material interests to local society. Thus urban-planning was transformed into a tool for self-aggrandizement. The failure affected the urban development of many counties in Taiwan before mid-1980s” (Tung 2006: 144).

As a result, many urban management plans were not formulated on the basis of scholarly analysis, but rather captured by local factional interests. That can partially explain why the KMT government’s local public performance was not impressive. Taipei city’s urban management cannot match Singapore’s urban management though both cities developed approximately at the same time.

Besides harming the quality of public projects and urban management, clientelism also damaged rule of law at the local level. Local elites received protection from the government agencies to engage in illegal businesses such as organizing prostitution, gambling, illegal trading, illegal banking, etc. Since the government would not punish those illegal activities, the reputation for rule of law was damaged. The state capacity to implement law at the local level was then seriously challenged. Later, other groups also rose up to violate the law in other areas and caused state failure at the local level.
This led to various social problems, such as environmental and public security problems. Failure to implement rule of law at the local level and the consequential damage to the public good produced many social protests in the 1980s.

- **Outcomes**

Under the authoritarian regime, economic privileges were given to two groups: the KMT party clients and the local elites. The interests in the KMT coalition could easily extract profits and they became economically powerful. Wang describes their economic condition as follows:

KMT has at least 12 monopolistic businesses and 16 oligopolistic ones. Mainlander-owned enterprises became the major beneficiaries of the KMT clientelism because of their personal relationship with the KMT leaders. Some Taiwanese companies were incorporated into the clientelism through their own efforts and the KMT cooptation strategies. These enterprises have an important role in providing financial and other support especially during elections. They receive privileges such as opportunities to obtain loans, tax avoidance by supporters of the KMT is often tolerated, supporters of opposition candidates are likely to be punished. The case of Hi-Pa-Wang Enterprise provides a good example (*Journalist* 1989, 126:44–47). Military has vast resources, including over 30 veteran-owned enterprises including many oligopolistic ones, business units and enormous budgets. (*Wang* 1994: 186–187)

On the other hand, the businesses not in the KMT coalition—mostly small businesses—faced large competition. Because of the KMT’s firm control over the technocrats, the non-KMT elites find it hard to penetrate into the state and receive the same privileges as the KMT’s clients. So most industrial elites, including Taiwanese industrial elites, chose to form alliances with the KMT elites to have a share in the economic structure as well. Lin (1989) cites Ichiro Numazaki’s research that in 1972 all representatives of the 53 Taiwanese families who controlled the 37 biggest enterprises were awarded positions in the party or the government (*Lin Zhongzheng* 1989: 169).

But the majority of ordinary Taiwanese received little from this economic structure. Instead they faced a very competitive market with almost no government support or subsidies. The local Taiwanese enterprises could not get loans from the banks. They had to compete among themselves in
order to survive. Still, many small Taiwanese businesses thrived under stiff competition. But they have to work extraordinarily hard to gain limited profits. Also, they have to exploit their workers to reduce their expenses. As such, it was the workers who suffered the most under this competition. Lin observes that under this economic system, the small business owners and the workers are both disadvantaged and they have to compete and exploit each other for their economic survival (Lin Zhongzheng 1989: 170). That contributed to the labor movement in the 1980s.

As a result, the system produced a socioeconomic cleavage between the KMT’s clients and the non-clients. Most of the KMT clients were mainlanders, military, public servants, school teachers, and local elites. Non-clients of the KMT are Taiwanese, medium to small business owners, and private sector workers. The penetration of clientelism in the economy produces social grievances of the economically disadvantaged Taiwanese from the small business sectors against the mainlanders who are mostly working in the public and big business sectors.

Besides the above social impact, clientelism also damages state capacity, economic efficiency, and public performance at the local level. In order to protect the client-owned businesses, the KMT used government authorities and regulations to cover them up. But when the financial scandals of two of the KMT’s credit companies (Guotai Credit Co. and Tenth Credit Co.) were discovered in 1986, it damaged the KMT government’s reputation. Economic scandals, corruption, weak state capacity, and low quality public management all brought distrust of the KMT government. These contributed to the waves of social protest that came in the 1980s, which finally pushed the KMT to consider political reform.

**Impact of Clientelism in the Welfare System**

The KMT recruited the social and economic elites into its coalition through granting them economic privileges and allowing them to capture the state. Besides that, through the welfare system,
the KMT recruited their clients from economically underpowered middle and lower classes. The KMT spent a large percentage of fiscal resources on public welfare. However, the welfare funds were not equally distributed among all groups. Large portions of the welfare funds went to the veterans and military personnel, public servants, and public school teachers, most of whom are mainlanders. So, welfare funds became another channel that the KMT used to recruit its clients. This can be observed through the welfare expenditure distribution. Zhan lists the Taiwan’s social welfare fund statistics of 1982 and 1988 as follows.

### Table 3.1  Statistics of Taiwan Central and Local Welfare Expenditure 1982 and 1988

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beneficiary</th>
<th>1982</th>
<th>1988</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General public</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>35.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low income households</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterans and military</td>
<td>40.2%</td>
<td>37.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public servants</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
<td>15.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workers</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmers</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honored Citizens (veterans)</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainlanders</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elders</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children (including students)</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>handicapped</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


According to the above statistics, in 1982, 40.2% of the welfare fund went to the pension funds and insurance for veterans and military personnel, 12.2% went to the public servants, 4.9% went to the so-called “Honored Citizens” (榮民), (veterans who had fought the civil war in China), and 1.8% went to the mainlanders. Thus, the major recipients of this welfare fund were military personnel, public servants, and mainlanders. Funds to these three groups accounted for more than 59% of the KMT welfare funds. Social insurance for workers and subsidies to low income households, farmers, women, children,
handicapped, elders was only 3.7% of the welfare expenditure. The remaining 38% of the welfare fund were used in public programs, such as environmental protection or public hygiene.

Besides the welfare and educational funds, the KMT spent little money on other social benefits. The public housing program developed very slowly. In 1955, the KMT implemented a program. The original reason was to provide housing for the public servants. But from 1955 to 1966, due to low state capacity, the construction progressed slowly. There were also reported complaints of construction quality and mismanagement by contractors. As a result, it is reported that citizens did not want to purchase the government housing because of its bad quality (Mao 1989: 85). Due to its inability to supervise the construction, in 1958, the Public Housing Construction Commission was dissolved and public housing programs were delegated to each department. But the outcome is that “because of their low authority, the quality of the public housing was damaged, it finally led to the shrinking of public housing” (Mao 1989: 85).

The KMT investment in public housing was very limited. Table 3.2 shows that the KMT’s total public housing construction in 24 years was only 125,485 units. (The Singapore government built 22,336 units of public houses in three years from 1960–1963. Compared with Singapore, Taiwan’s public housing construction in 24 years is much slower.) Due to urbanization, large numbers of citizens cannot afford to purchase housing in big cities like Taipei City and Taipei County (Present Xinbei City). The KMT regime was not able to accelerate its public housing program to solve the urban housing shortage problem. The real estate developers pushed the housing prices in Taipei City to a superficially high value. Due to its connection with those real estate developers, the KMT also did not take many policy measures to control inflation in housing prices. As a result, many urban dwellers in big cities like Taipei City and Taipei County could not afford to purchase housing. Protests from this group of
houseless dwellers emerged in the 1980s. Because of their grievance against the KMT housing policy, they became faithful voters for the opposition.

Table 3.2 Taiwan Housing Expenditure Statistics 1952–1975

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No of public housing units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>3280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>3501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>1943</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>18579</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>9795</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>7839</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>842</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>13955</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>12352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>14379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>10406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>1514</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>4225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>4548</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>1340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>5070</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974</td>
<td>6130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>5221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>125845</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Shu 1978: 296–297

The KMT’s low level of investment in public housing is caused by many reasons. First, by a limited state capacity. That local contractors were awarded public projects through their connections with the KMT produced investment waste in public projects. Due to the social capture of the state, the costs for public housing construction would be higher than under a more autonomous and efficient government. The fiscal costs of the public housing program therefore are higher in Taiwan than in Singapore.
Second, investment in public housing would not be a high-return investment for the KMT in terms of electoral support. Since the benefit from public housing is equally shared by all voters, the KMT cannot use housing programs to benefit certain groups and secure their partisan loyalty. So, fiscal resources spent on public housing might not necessarily be turned into increased votes in elections. Due to the high costs in housing construction and little rewards in attracting votes, the KMT would not have much incentive to invest in large-scale public housing programs.

Third, if the government vigorously provided public housing for most low income citizens, many real estate developers would lose the market and could not extract a large profit. Since many real estate companies are owned by the KMT clients, those real estate developers would lobby the KMT against the public housing program. So because of clientelism in politics, the KMT would not want to adopt a nation-wide, large-scale public housing program as in Singapore.

To summarize, among the lower-middle-class people, the KMT selects the veterans, military personnel, public servants, public school teachers, and the mainlanders as their clients. These groups of people received a large percentage of welfare support from the KMT and became dependent on the KMT patronage for their living. Political loyalty would then be secured through this patron–client relationship.

Military, public servants, and mainlanders were usually the KMT’s most loyal partisan voters. Since the KMT needed to recruit the above social interests through the welfare system, the KMT elites would not want to equally share the welfare funds among all mid-lower class citizens. Doing so would be very costly and would not produce a group of loyal KMT partisan supporters. So reliance on clientelism for political mobilization produced unequal redistribution in the welfare system. The majority of the Taiwanese who were not in the KMT political coalition benefited very little from the KMT welfare system. As a result, a majority of the lower-middle class Taiwanese do not have much
gratitude toward the government even though the KMT has brought high economic development to
the Taiwanese society at large.

**Conclusion**

KMT uses a clientele structure to conduct political mobilization as well as political control. This
structure, however, affected the KMT regime’s state structures, economic policies, and welfare
policies. The KMT offers goodies in the form of government positions, economic privileges, and welfare
policies to recruit local factional, intellectual, economic, and military elites as well as most mainlanders
into its broad political coalition. Those with the most salient social interest in Taiwan were recruited
into the KMT patronage system and joined their ruling coalition.

However, the system disadvantaged most ordinary mid to lower income Taiwanese, most of
whom were small enterprise owners, private sector laborers, farmers, etc. When Taiwan achieved
modernity in the 1980s, the society was empowered due to the intellectual and ideological awakening
from social, economical, and educational change under modernization. The former voiceless and
disadvantaged groups started to gather together and demand more social, economic, and political
power. Because of new players entering into the system, the clientelistic structure that was able to
sustain the KMT for more than 30 years could not resist the pressure of modernization. This party
clientele authoritarian system became shaky when opposition started to emerge and challenge the
KMT in the 1980s. Tung agrees that influences of clientelism in the bureaucracy as well as the welfare
system produced the seeds for Taiwan’s democratization in the 1980s.

This dual bureaucratic structure and the favoritism-based welfare system became one of the
major causes for the increasingly serious urban crises that beset Taiwan in the 1980s. In order
to resolve the crises, many local residents began to support the opposition-party leaders. They
wished for party-rotation which might help resolve the terrible urban conditions. (Tung 2006: 148)
Because of various governance problems and social problems originating from the clientele structure, many grievances were harbored by the society against the government. In the 1980s, the Taiwan society became highly active to demand policy change and even constitutional change. This became the social force that pushed Taiwan to democracy.

**The Singapore PAP: Professional Statist Regime**

Though both regimes were one-party states, the Singapore PAP regime and the Taiwan KMT regime have very different party state structures. The PAP has a very weak presence in Singapore. The PAP government de-emphasized party structure soon after it came into power. Rather than using party branches to conduct electoral mobilization, the PAP government set up various government statutory boards to manage social groups and social participation. As a result, the PAP size and function became quite small. Mauzy and Milne describe the PAP structure as follows.

In contrast to most ruling parties in dominant and one-party systems, and Western political parties, the PAP does not have a large party bureaucracy. In fact it has a distinctly small bureaucracy.... This is partly because the PAP promotes participation and support more through government para-political grassroots organizations than through the party branches.... Despite this seemingly elaborate networking, the functions of the branch and district organizations are minimal.... The PAP bypasses most of the functions normally associated with party branches in favor of governmental para-political organizations. The branches have no say in the choice of candidates, virtually no policy input, nor can a party worker expect to be rewarded with a candidacy. Indeed, the party’s 45th Anniversary booklet notes that there is a feeling that the party has little to do except keep itself going until the next election. (Mauzy and Milne, 2002: 43)

In Singapore, the state apparatus replaced the party apparatus. Singapore’s state became very powerful, while the party became a minimal institution. The all-encompassing state took over the role of the party. Due to the weakening of the party apparatus and limited party penetration, the PAP political mobilization is not clientelistic. Because the PAP is not relying on partisan mobilization for electoral success, the influence of clientelism in the government and policy is minimal. The Singapore state is highly autonomous and professional. The leaders use this highly professional state to provide
public housing available to all eligible voters and thus gain electoral support through the performance of the professional bureaucracy.

**Political Mobilization**

The PAP does not have a large party network to conduct partisan mobilization. Since it assumed power, the PAP has identified itself as the government. So, the political mobilization became mobilizing support for the government rather than the party. The PAP leaders have long advocated a “good government” ideology. Labeling themselves as the “team A government” (Lee HL 2011), they claimed that no other government can perform as well as the PAP government. The PAP mobilized electoral support by convincing voters with their extraordinary performance. The PAP political mobilization was quite different from the Taiwan KMT regime.

In Taiwan the KMT mobilization was achieved through partisan networks and local factional groups. Both groups’ mobilization was mostly based on interest exchange. Service for votes and money for votes were the KMT’s common mobilization strategies. Even though the KMT was the only dominant party in the government and they faced no opposition parties, the KMT still used patron–client network to mobilize partisan support. The PAP however adopted a rather different approach. After winning office, the PAP shifted its role from an opposition party to the ruling party. They thought that partisan mobilization was no longer necessary and had started to weaken the party network since the mid-1960s. Party grassroots workers and party loyalists were not rewarded. Instead, the PAP recruited candidates from the ranks of the civil service and professions rather than from the party workers and activists (Mauzy 2001: 48). Based on Figure 2.8 in Chapter Two, the size of the PAP membership in the grassroots has been largely reduced since 1964.

The PAP set up statutory boards to replace the role of the party, such as the People’s Association, Community Centers, the Citizen’s Consultative Committees, Residents’ Associations. Shee
noted that “[u]nlike other political leaders of single party states who regard parties as effective institutions for political socialization, the PAP leaders stressed greater use of nonparty organizations to achieve their political objectives” (Shee 1971: 68). The purposeful reduction of the party apparatus helped prevent clientelism. Shee remarked: “De-emphasis on party organization prevented the opportunity for career-seeking party functionaries to use party bureaucracy as a base for power struggle and as an institution for personal and social advancement” (Shee 1971: 67).

Besides downsizing party networks at the grassroots, the PAP did not set up any interest-based networks to conduct mobilization. The statutory boards such as the Community Centers and Residents’ Associations set up by the government to connect with voters are not interest-based mobilization networks. Community Centers do not have their fixed clientele groups that they seek during elections. Groups or individuals who have used the facilities in the Community Centers or participated in their activities are not required to vote for the PAP. The voters are not mobilized through relationship-based persuasion or mere interest exchange, but rather through a well organized reasonable persuasion assisted by all public media.

There are few, if any, signs of clientele or partisan based political mobilization. No service- or money-for-votes type activities are observed. The study of Community Center activities in Chapter Two shows that there is no direct linkage between the Community Center services and electoral mobilization. After receiving services from the Community Centers or the PAP local branches, the service recipients were not required to vote for the PAP during elections. A monthly publication that the Resident’s Association delivered to each household praised the success of certain PAP social and economic policies; portrayed the hardworking, caring, and humane aspects of the PAP MPs; and presented to the ordinary citizens the picture of a prosperous and unified Singapore under the governance of the PAP. The PAP government uses these grassroots organizations to make known to the
citizens the government’s hard work and achievements as well as the benefit for the public. Generally speaking, the PAP government’s grassroots organizations are propaganda and information channels rather than networks to conduct interest-based partisan mobilization.

In the most hotly contested two elections, the 1962 referendum and the 1963 general election, the PAP political mobilization focused on broadcasting the PAP point of view rather than using clientele networks to win votes. Lee (1976) reports that the 1963 PAP electoral mobilization relied on the Prime Minister’s constituency tour, setting up Community Centers and television sets in the Community Centers. Disseminating the PAP government’s point of view through television, radios, and newspapers was the main mobilization work conducted by the Community Centers in the 1963 election. Through all these, the PAP “kept the public informed of the work of the PAP government” (Lee 1976: 13) and thus won the electoral victory in both elections.

Clientelistic mobilization activities are not tolerated by the Singaporean public. In the 2011 election, the PAP candidates in the New Soon District conducted a drawing for a free iPod to attract voters to visit the PAP’s campaign website. Even though the motivation of this offer was “for residents to know what is happening in their ward and the candidates better,” this attempt was soon aborted due to strong criticism from the public for “resorting to cheapskate tactics to buy their votes” (New Temasek Review, April 20, 2011). Clearly, any clientele-based mobilization is not practiced nor tolerated in Singapore. This is quite different from the Taiwan KMT electoral mobilization strategy where vote buying has become a very common practice.

Professional State Structure

Because the PAP did not rely on interest-based clientele networks to conduct political mobilization, the PAP was able to set up a highly autonomous state operated by the professional bureaucrats. The PAP set up a public administration system to recruit and retain the top talents in
public office and encourage their high effort performance. In the KMT public administration system, there were some non-rational features as a result of their clientele based mobilization structure. However, the PAP public administration system is a highly rational bureaucracy.

- **Recruitment System**

Since 1951, Singapore’s recruitment of public officials has been solely conducted by the Public Service Commission (“PSC”). In 1983, the Public Service Division (“PSD”) under the Ministry of Finance was established to assist the PSC in some public personnel management functions. Now, the PSD recruits lower rank officers while the PSC is in charge of recruitment of superscale D and above rank officials and PSC scholarships recipients. Besides the PSC and the PSD, the statutory boards also recruit their own employees. Their methods of recruitment are mostly through interviews by recruiting officials. The PSC’s recruitment is a fitting example.

Though the PSC was set up by the British colonial government in 1951, its size and function were quite limited until 1959. In 1957, the total number of members in PSC was only 5. After the PAP took office in 1959, the PAP greatly increased the PSC’s size and function. A PSC scholarship program was set up in the 1960s. The PSC scholarship aimed at recruiting talented high school graduates and awarding them with scholarships to study in prestigious universities in the United States, Great Britain or other parts of the world. After they graduated from those universities, the scholarship recipients would start their professional careers in the Singapore bureaucracy. Most of the PSC’s recruitment of public officials was achieved through the scholarship programs.

For example, two married public officials were each selected by the PSC scholarship programs. The wife received her undergraduate education at the University of Michigan and the husband at Stanford University. Both obtained their master’s level education at Stanford University before they came back to Singapore to serve in the government. The wife studied geography and now works in the
Ministry of Environment. The husband studied finance and had worked in the Ministry of Finance before he left public office.

The recruitment process is composed of two parts. The PSC will first look at the academic files of the candidates. Then, PSC members will conduct an interview with the candidate. For high school graduates applying for PSC scholarships, their academic files for the PSC’s screening process usually include the candidate’s transcripts, assessments by the teachers and principals on the student’s leadership ability and personality, co-curricular activities reports, a psychological report including three cognitive ability tests, national service reports, and the student’s GCE test score (Fernandez 2001: 71).

The interview is the most critical stage in the recruitment. PSC interviewers ask all kinds of questions of the candidates before making a decision. Fernandez (2001) reports his interviews with several former PSC members. Based on their talk, it seems that the PSC evaluates candidates from a wide range of aspects including their thinking ability, character, breadth of knowledge, leadership ability, and communication skills. Here are some of their comments about how they consider the candidates in the interview:

Former PSC member Professor Gloria Lim says: “We are looking for people who will be Administrative Officers,... so you want people who are able to think for themselves, respond to information presented to them. But we do not expect them to know everything. You can’t. We want to see how they think issues through.” (p. 64)

Rex Shelley, PSC member since 1976 adds: “The hardest part is telling the character of a person, whether he has integrity or not. How smart he is, is not so difficult to figure out. But is he upright? Is he honest? That is not so easy to tell. But because we have worked with people in our private sector careers, we have seen some of the mistakes we have made in our judgment, and this helps hone your instincts to tell the honest from the not so honest.” (p. 67)

PSC commission members look for candidates who are well-read, show strong leadership qualities and possess a keen intellect.” Tan Yam Pin, PSC member since 1990. (p.68)

“Candidates who possess a keen intellect, a breadth of knowledge and interests, integrity and a good sense of humor.” Dr. Charles Toh, PSC member since 1992. (p.68)
“While there are many with excellent academic results, it is surprising how often it is complemented by strong leadership abilities and communication skills.” Kwa Chong Seng, PSC member since 1997. (p.68)

“How often did you go to London? Catch a play or concert? Enjoy it? Did you ever go to a pub?” These were among the questions that stumped many candidates who came before the PSC. Former PSC member Sat Pal Khattar explained: “Our intention was to see whether they had been able to get a rounded education, getting to know the people, the culture and the society, travelling. Too often they focused too much on their studies, mixed only among themselves, and spent a lot of time searching out Chinese restaurants. But we wanted to know if they had made the most of their time and opportunity abroad.” (p.69)

“In some cases, a candidate is outstanding and...when he leaves the room, there is agreement readily. But there are also times when it is not so clear-cut, and we have to think hard and probe hard during the interviews to distinguish one candidate from the next, to tell who really stands out” Darke Sani, 2000–01. (p. 70).

The selection criteria from both examination of documents and interviews are quite comprehensive. Compared with Taiwan, Singapore’s recruitment of officials is more selective and strict. Public officials are not simply evaluated by one exam but on many aspects. They are assessed not only by their knowledge, but by their ability, character, and psychological test results as well. The scholarship programs allow their public officials to receive the best education and training in the world. The Singapore PAP wants to select qualified leaders for the bureaucracy while the KMT selected the best exam takers. In terms of meritocracy, the Singapore government selects more qualified officials than the Taiwanese one.

• Public Payment

The PAP government pays its public servants very generously. The PAP government has gradually raised the public salary to a level comparable to equivalent positions in the private sector. Historically, from 1959 to the early 1960s, there was a reduction of public salary. In 1959, the allowances of the public servants, which were 35% of their basic salaries, were cut off because of a large government fiscal deficit left by the former administration. But as the fiscal situation improved,
the PAP government gradually increased its rewards to public servants. By September 1961, the PAP had restored the allowances that had been cut off to the public servants.

The PAP government has substantially raised its public salary five times from 1972 to 1994 to make sure that the public payment does not fall below the private sector payment. In 1994, the PAP government institutionalized a public salary system to make it comparable with private sector salaries (Quah 2010). Since 1994, public salaries have been benchmarked with salaries of equivalent positions in the private sector. This public salary system can guarantee that the top talents would remain in office. The comparable public salary system also reduces the incentives for the public officials to take bribes or use public office for private gains.

- **Promotion**

Singapore’s promotion of public servants is not based on seniority. Soon after taking office in 1959, the PAP implemented several public administration reforms. One of the reforms in the early 1960s was removing seniority as a criterion for promotion (Chee 1971: 80). Seniority is no longer a consideration. “Promotions are based on performance, potential, knowledge and experience and the existence of the vacancies” (Commonwealth Secretariat 1998: 43). Most promotions are managed by the PSD except promotion to ranks superscale D and above.

The PSD publishes the job vacancies and requirements every year. Officials who have an excellent work record and potential for higher level jobs can apply for the vacancy. Candidates take some tests and also go through the interviews (Chen 1995). In each ministry, there is also a system to rank officers on the basis of their performance and their potential for promotional purposes. Each ministry forms recommendation panels to evaluate officials and make recommendations for promotions. Department managers and supervisors are included in the evaluation process. The officers
unsatisfied with the promotion outcome can appeal to the Appeals Board and even to the PSC (Commonwealth Secretariat 1998: 43).

Every half a year, the public servants will go through evaluations with their director supervisors. One public official explained their evaluation process:

The supervisor will write out a form about my performance. He grades every area from A to E and goes through every item with me and tells me which area I need improvement. Then he will report this form to his supervisor. His supervisor will decide the result for my next year’s position. If someone is not doing well, they have a three-year performance improvement training program. They are given three years to catch up. If they are not able to do well after three years, they might be fired. But it is very rare. The government seldom fires people (Interview: SIN92510).

There are also performance bonus schemes to encourage high-effort performance. Up to three months’ additional salary is awarded to officials with good performance. Besides awarding the additional monthly allowances, outstanding performers are rewarded with quarterly bonuses (Commonwealth Secretariat 1998: 49–50).

Clearly, Singapore’s promotion and evaluation systems are set up to encourage good performance and high efforts from their public officials. This performance-based incentive structure is lacking in Taiwan’s public administration.

- **Supervision and Anti-Corruption**

Soon after the PAP took office in 1959, the PAP made efforts to strengthen the anti-corruption and public servant’s supervision system. The PAP empowered an anti-corruption agency as well as set up rules and agencies to discipline public servants.

Singapore had enacted the Prevention of Corruption Act during the British colonial period. The anti-corruption agency, the Corrupt Practice Investigation Bureau (“CPIB”), was formed in 1951. However, the anti-corruption efforts were not very successful under the British colonial government
and the Labour Front government. Given very limited funds as well as powers to conduct investigation, the CPIB lacked the resources and authority to effectively counter corruption.

Corruption was a very common practice under these regimes. From the Queenstown residents’ narrative, it was a common practice in the 1950s that public officials came to shops to collect “Stamp Lui” (Hokkien, meaning bribe for the officials to stamp his seal on documents) of $10 or $20 each time, which, they remark, was quite a lot of money at that time (Low 2007: 28–29). The resident said, during the old days, it was very hard to receive benefits like public housing without connections and bribes (Low 2007: 28–29). According to Yap, the Lim Yew Hock administration was described as “being corrupt from head to toe” by a retired architect, Lee Kip Lin (Yap 2009: 555). As a result, the anti-corruption agenda received much popular support. Quah mentioned that one of the reasons that the PAP was able to win the 1959 general election is because of the PAP promises to fight corruption (Quah 2010).

Soon after taking office in 1959, the PAP amended the Prevention of Corruption Act. The new Act authorized the CPIB with extensive power to investigate, arrest, and search for arrested persons; to investigate any bank account, share account or purchase account of any suspect or his wife, child, or agent; and to search for and seize any documents (POCA, section15, 17–18, 20 cited by Quah 2010). Later, the PAP government introduced stricter arrangements in the POCA amendments and new legislation to fight and prevent corruption (Quah 2010, Bellows 1985). The CPIB was given a wide coverage of investigation. It could investigate allegations of corruption against any political leaders and civil servants. It could also investigate the private sector for giving out bribes (Bellows 1985, Quah 2010). Political leaders and senior civil servants and top business elites were investigated by the CPIB over the years.

The PAP further strengthened its anti-corruption effort by giving the CPIB the personnel and budget resources it needed. The CPIB’s number of personnel and budget are listed in Table 3.3.
Table 3.3 the CPIB Statistics 1952–2002

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>CPIB No. of Personnel</th>
<th>Government Budget to the CPIB in SD(^{17})</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>61</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,024,370</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>69</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td></td>
<td>2,256,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td></td>
<td>4,147,230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td></td>
<td>5,094,613</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td></td>
<td>6,525,834</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td></td>
<td>8,087,308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td></td>
<td>10,225,463</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>79</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>84</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td></td>
<td>15,357,665</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Quah 2010

Clearly, after 1959 there is a large increase in the number of CPIB investigators which demonstrated the PAP determination to deal with corruption. Later on, the government budget to the CPIB had not become stabilized but increased quite dramatically from 1978 to 2002. Clearly, anti-corruption is not a political slogan laid out by the PAP in the early unstable authoritarian years to attract votes. Instead, after their authoritarian leadership became established at the end of the 1970s, the PAP still seriously pursued fighting corruption. Anti-corruption is not a temporary political strategy under popular pressure, but an important policy pursued by the PAP throughout its years in power.

Besides setting up anti-corruption systems, the PAP also implemented several disciplinary measures in the bureaucracy to prevent any possibility for misuse of public power for private interests. In 1960, the PSC was authorized to investigate and punish any bureaucratic misbehavior other than

\(^{17}\) SD refers to Singapore Dollars. In this dissertation, when I am writing about Singapore, the currency is in Singapore Dollars. When I am writing about Taiwan, the currency is in New Taiwan Dollar (NTD).
corruption, such as dishonesty, insubordination, failure to follow instructions, sexual offenses, and violations of law etc. Once they received complaints or reports, the PSC would form an investigation committee to review the case and conduct hearings. The PSC punished the convicted official with warnings, fines, demotions, and even dismissal. The PSC reported its disciplinary cases annually to the public (Fernandez, 2001: 55).

An interviewed official spoke of one misconduct case in her department. One official did not perform an on-site environmental inspection on a project and just made up the report by his estimation. After he was found guilty, he was demoted to another department and his case was publicized as a warning to other officials. Because of measures like this, she said, the whole department knew his behavior was bad and would not want to neglect their work in the future. (Interview: SIN92510).

Besides strong discipline, some preventative measures are also taken to prevent any possibilities for corruption. Measures to avoid conflict of interests and any other possibilities to take bribes are adopted. On the CPIB’s website, the following preventive measures are reported to be taken.

Review of Work Methods
Cumbersome work methods and procedures are improved upon to avoid delays in the granting of permits and licences and to prevent corrupt public officers from obtaining bribes from members of the public to expedite their approval.

Declaration of Non-Indebtedness
Every public officer is required to declare once a year that he is free from pecuniary embarrassment. An indebted public officer could easily place himself under obligation and be exploited. He is also more likely to succumb to corruption.

Declaration of Assets and Investment
Every public officer is required to declare, when he is first appointed and subsequently annually, his properties and investment in companies, including those of his spouse and dependent children. If the officer owns more than one property that is not in keeping with his salary earnings, he could be queried on how he could have the means to purchase them. If he
owns some shares in private companies, he could be asked to divest ownership to prevent a conflict of interest.

Non-Acceptance of Gifts
Public officers are not permitted to receive any present in money or in kind from people having official dealings with them. They are also not permitted to accept any entertainment that will place them under any real or apparent obligation. If a person with whom he has official dealings presents him with any gift, he has to reject it. Where it is not practical to do so (such as a souvenir from a visiting dignitary), the officer can accept the gift and surrender it to his head of department. The officer, however, can retain the gift if he pays for it at the value assessed by the Accountant-General.

Other measures are also reported by the Commonwealth Secretariat, such as surprise checks on revenue collecting officers (e.g. Customs Officers), special contract clauses warning contractors not to be involved in any form of bribery or corruption, rotating officers, investigations on officers whose lifestyles are not commensurate with their incomes, and transparency in civil servants selection process (Commonwealth Secretariat 1998: 56–57).

The above preventative measures can avoid conflicts of interest and any other possibilities for the official to be tempted to take bribes. The PAP government sets up an incentive structure that makes taking bribes or committing corruption very undesirable for the public officials. All the above-mentioned provisions of power, staff, and budget resources to the CPIB; strong discipline by the PSD; and preventative measures to deter bureaucratic misconduct demonstrate the PAP government’s determination to eradicate corruption and bureaucratic misconduct from public office. These supervision methods produce a highly effective professional bureaucracy. Because the PAP does not rely on any social or economic elites’ clientele support for their political survival, the PAP government can implement effective anti-corruption measures to protect the state from being captured by any social interest. Since the PAP relies on the good performance of its bureaucrats to win public support, setting up a professional, incorrupt, and effective bureaucracy in Singapore’s case directly assists its
political survival. So, anti-corruption and building a professional government is consistent with the PAP’s political goal.

But in Taiwan’s case, setting up an incorrupt and autonomous state would harm its political survival because of the government’s reliance on the social and economic elites’ support for political mobilization. So, Taiwan’s KMT regime cannot seriously implement an anti-corruption system and produce an autonomous state. They have to partially sacrifice state autonomy and efficiency in order to cater to the clientele interests.

- Conclusion

The public administration systems implemented by the PAP government aim at setting up a highly professional government with good performance. Within its recruitment, public payment, promotion, supervision, and anti-corruption methods, there does not seem to be any non-rational features that contradict the goal for a professional bureaucracy. Clearly, the PAP government intended to recruit the best talent into office, encourage high-effort performance, discourage corrupt behavior, and retain the officials to continue those high effort services.

The core mission of the PSC, Singapore’s major public administration agency, is to “keep political and personal interests out of crucial decisions on the appointment, promotion and discipline of civil servants” (Fernandez, 2010: 17). It is based on this principle that the PSC forms the highly autonomous and professional bureaucracy team. This differs from the public administration system of Taiwan. Taiwan’s system encouraged mediocre performance and loyalty to the government. Taiwan’s public office became another channel for the KMT to recruit more clients into its political coalition. But Singapore’s public servants are selected and regulated to perform as a professional team.
**Outcome of Statist Regime Structure**

By setting up a public administration structure that encourages professionalism, Singaporeans saw a highly efficient, incorrupt, and autonomous government free from capture by social interest. This professional bureaucracy team then can then be used by the PAP elites to effectively perform all kinds of public programs to gain public support for the PAP. Performance of the bureaucrats became the critical reason for the PAP popularity among the voters. As a result, the bureaucrats as a professional team perform their government jobs diligently to help the PAP government win popular support. The PAP used this professional team to secure its survival rather than relying on partisan mobilization through a party apparatus or building coalitions based on clientelism.

The following example shows how the professional bureaucrats became the PAP’s savior. Sim Kee Boon, head of the PSC from 1979–1984, vividly describes the effort of the bureaucrats to cope with challenges at different times in order to keep the PAP government in power:

> In the early days, the 1960s, the civil service was quite different from what it is today. We were concerned with the basics—how to get more jobs, build more schools, how to keep the economy going, attract foreign investment. We felt that we had to move and quickly. I recall my colleague, Woon Wah Siang, was sent to set up Community Centers, to counter the communist groups which had captured many non-government organizations. He built hundreds of Community Centers within a year. This way, the Community Centers had basketball courts, television, newspapers and other free services for the people. … Similarly, Howe Yoon Chong at the housing and development Board pushed the housing programme along rapidly, after we introduced compulsory land acquisition. People needed homes. At one stage, we were building one new flat every 45 minutes, or 15,000 flats a year, compared to the 2,000 a year put up by the Singapore Improvement Trust under the British. … Today, the civil service is very different. … It has to cater to a more demanding electorate, who are more aware of their rights, and Ministers who are more conscious of the need to respond to the people (Fernandez, 2001: 36).

Mr. Sim’s narration illustrates the sense of urgency on the part of the bureaucrats to save the PAP government from any possible challenges. Opposition became counter to the bureaucracy rather than simply counter to the PAP. A removal of the PAP from office is not simply a change of leadership,
but a total removal of this professional statist regime. The bureaucrats therefore worked diligently to answer the call of the PAP elites for super performance.

In the 1960s, the bureaucrats were sent to build all kinds of public facilities, Community Centers, public housing, etc. to gain votes for the PAP. The professional bureaucrats, being the wage earners under the PAP, performed their job with diligence and saved the PAP from being voted out of office. But now, as voters’ demands have changed, the bureaucrats are also given new responsibilities. The professional bureaucracy then adapts itself in order to cater to the “demanding electorare” and save this professional statist regime. Mr. Sim’s mentality is widely shared by the public officials. The bureaucrats have identified their own interests with the survival of the PAP regime. By the bureaucrats’ good performance, the PAP’s one-party dominance becomes secured. Further, the PAP government promotes the “good government” ideology to justify the legitimacy of this professional statist regime.

Because the PAP and the professional bureaucracy became inseparable, the political interest of the PAP for political survival then became aligned with the professional state’s interests for autonomy and state capacity. So, bureaucrats are given full authority by the PAP elites to resist any social capture attempts. Rodan remarks, “the bureaucrats have internalized the idea that they are custodians of the ruling party’s interests. … [T]he bureaucrats and politicians are not accustomed to pressures from interest groups to reveal details about government activities” (Rodan 2004: 55–56).

Singapore is a highly autonomous authoritarian state. The more autonomous and strong the state, the more resources that the state can extract for social redistribution. Being such an autonomous and strong state, the PAP has a lot of fiscal surplus to distribute to the majority of voters in exchange for their support. As a result, quite different from other one-party regimes, the PAP statist regime can perform effectively to provide benefits to the majority voters even in defiance of the interests of the
social and economic elites. So the majority citizens can receive some benefits from the government and feel content with the regime.

Taking public housing projects as an example, the PAP statist regime can successfully implement an extensive public housing program, which many other authoritarian regimes, such as Taiwan’s KMT regime and Singapore’s British colonial government cannot achieve. In setting up the public housing program, the PAP professional bureaucrats had to resist a lot of social interests, which the KMT elites would not have been able to do. The Housing Development Board of Singapore (“HDB”), is an institution quite vulnerable to social capture. HDB’s monopoly over public housing gave the bureaucrats opportunities to distribute the rents for personal benefits, as well as for political support. But the PAP statist regime structure made it possible for the bureaucrats to resist corruption as well as the politicians’ requests for special favors for their clients. Lim Kim San, director of HDB in the early 1960s, lists fighting corruption as one important factor for HDB’s success:

He [Lim Kim San] was once asked how he managed the incredible feat of solving Singapore’s housing problem in just a few years. He put it simply “by eliminating corruption, eradicating cartels, and by forbidding anyone to fool around with specifications.” He dealt with corruption and cartels in his characteristically gruff, no-nonsense way. (Low 2007: 65).

Lim, a typical professional bureaucrat, was firm in his attitudes toward corruption and any social interest lobbying. Low reports that Lim Kim San has “famously told his staff, ‘if you perform your duties without any vested interest, and though your decision is wrong, I will stand by you... but if I find that in making that decision, you had a vested interest, then I go for you.”’ (Low 2007: 65).

Lim would not be able to implement and pursue his job as a professional bureaucrat if the PAP elite’s interests did not coincide with the bureaucrats’ interests for autonomy. Low (2007) reports several incidences of some ministers’ and MPs’ attempts to use the HDB for special favors to their
political supporters. But under the PAP statist regime structure, Lim, a bureaucrat, was able to resist the political pressures from the PAP elites.

And so when Parliamentary Secretary for Home Affairs, Dr. Lee Siew Choh demanded preferential treatment for his Queenstown constituents, he only got Lim’s rebuff. Lee then accusingly said, “Then what are you here for, if not to give priority to party supporters?” to which Lim reported, “I am here exactly to prevent misuse of position.” Lim fired incompetent and sloppy staff, even though they were the PAP members or cronies of the Minister. Likewise, he broke up cartels and cheating schemes in the corruption-ridden construction industry to ensure HDB would be able to deliver on its tall order.

In a 1985 oral history interview with the Oral History Center, National Archives of Singapore, Lim described how, once, soon after assuming offices as HDB chairman, he was invited to lunch with a group of people by a cabinet minister. It soon dawned on him at lunch that the occasion was more than a friendly gathering. “They were up to no good,” Lim said. The minister was trying to get him to agree to one of his friends coming in as a tender and to give special concession to him. Lim ticked off the minister with an unequivocal “No,” adding that if the Minister did not like it, he could pull rank and override him. The same Minister was later investigated for attempting to help his friend seal a deal to sell Boeing aircraft to Malaysian Airways and was stripped of all his public posts. [Interview with Mr. Lim Kim San. Accession No 526, transcript p. 149, 526, 136–137, 177 Oral History Center, National Archives of Singapore. Yap Sonny “The Man Who Helped to House a Generation,” the Straits Times, 21 July 2007.] (Low 2007: 64–65)

Low also reports that Lim was able to resist the pressure from the PAP MP, Ong Eng Guan, who was then the Minister for National Development supervising HDB. Lim showed his bold defiance of Mr. Ong in the interview. “Although I was Chairman of the Housing Board, I was just a volunteer. I didn’t get paid a cent, largely because Ong Eng Guan was the Minister…. If I am on voluntary service, he can’t kick me out! If I don’t like it, I could just dump it.” [Interview with Mr. Lim Kim San. Accession No 526, transcript p. 149, 526, 136–137, 177 Oral History Center, National Archives of Singapore. Yap Sonny “The Man Who Helped to House a Generation,” the Straits Times, 21 July 2007.] (Low 2007: 64–65)

Later, Lim moved his office from the National Development Ministry to Princess House in Queenstown to avoid the pressure from Ong (Low 2007: 64–65). By that courage, Low praises Lim as uniquely able
to ensure that the HDB allocation policy was based on the principle of “first come, first served” with consideration of family size. This principle was upheld without partisan pressure (Low 2007: 64–65).

Without the support of the PAP elites, Lim, the HDB director, would not have been able to resist capture by party clients and social elites. But since the PAP set up a statist structure and eliminates clientelism in political mobilization, the PAP elites can empower the professional bureaucrats to resist any social capture. As a result, the PAP can effectively use this professional bureaucracy to implement the housing programs that increased its popularity among the voters.

Because there is little social capture in the bureaucracy and the bureaucrats are highly efficient in the policy implementation process, the PAP government is able to most cost-effectively deliver social programs to the majority of voters. As a result, the majority of voters can receive more social redistribution benefits from a statist regime than from a clientele-based regime. Those public redistribution programs then can be translated into support for the PAP government from the majority of the middle and lower classes.

Without adopting full democracy, therefore, the PAP authoritarian regime can still obtain support from the majority of the middle and lower classes. The professional statist structure helps the PAP to resist challenges from strong opposition. The PAP professional statist government successfully won the majority of votes in the 1963 election when the opposition used intensive grassroots mobilization to challenge its power. The KMT, however, due to its reliance on clientele mobilization, cannot establish such an autonomous state. As a result, the KMT cannot effectively provide social redistribution to the majority of voters. So, faced with the mobilization of an opposition, the KMT found itself unable to resist such challenges.
Singapore and Taiwan: Fiscal Structure in Comparison

In order to compare Taiwan’s and Singapore’s state capacity as well as their social redistribution situation, the fiscal structures of both states should be compared.

The following observations were made through an examination of both regimes’ political mobilization and public administrative structures. The PAP elites set up a statist regime while Taiwan had a client-based party regime. Taiwan’s KMT regime uses clientele structures to build a grand political coalition with military elites, mainlanders, and Taiwanese social, intellectual and economic elites, thus consolidating its power.

In Singapore, however, rather than relying on clientele structures to build a political coalition, the PAP elites rely on good performance to gain popular votes. The PAP set up a professional government to efficiently deliver social programs to the majority of voters for their support. The PAP political supporters are the intellectuals, middle class, and lower class who benefit most from the PAP policies. As a result, it seems that Singapore’s state is more autonomous and efficient than the KMT government. Therefore, Singapore’s government expenditures should be more cost-efficient and can provide more benefits to the majority of voters than that of the KMT government. This thesis should be tested to determine whether the observed differences in state capacity and government expenditures occur as predicted.

Based on calculations from data obtained from IMF Government Finance Statistics and National Statistics, Republic of China website, Table 3.4 shows the resulting average government revenue and expenditures in Singapore and Taiwan from 1972 to 1998.
Table 3.4 Taiwan and Singapore’s Fiscal Structure 1972–1998 Average Score

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Taiwan</th>
<th>Singapore</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government total revenue % of GDP</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
<td>29.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government tax revenue % of GDP</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government total expenditures % of GDP</td>
<td>22.8%</td>
<td>20.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government administrative expenditures % of GDP (% of total expenditure)</td>
<td>2.6% (11.7%)</td>
<td>5.8% (28.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government welfare expenditures % of GDP (% of total expenditure)</td>
<td>3.3% (16.8%)</td>
<td>1.7% (8.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government community building expenditures % of GDP (% of total expenditure)</td>
<td>0.5% (3%)</td>
<td>1.6% (7.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government educational expenditures % of GDP (% of total expenditure)</td>
<td>4.3% (18.9%)</td>
<td>3.8% (18.5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

National Statistics Republic of China, available at http://stat.ncl.edu.tw/hypage.cgi?HYPAGE=search/jnameBrowse_hpg&brow=v&jid=00239770&jn=%E8%87%BA%E5%8C%97%E5%B8%82%E7%B5%B1%E8%A8%88%E5%B9%B4%E5%A0%B1

**State Revenue vs. State Expenditure**

The Singapore government shows a much higher state capacity to extract revenues than the Taiwan government. In terms of government income, the PAP regime was able to collect more taxes and revenues than the KMT government. On average, the PAP government received revenue amounting to 29.5% of its GDP per year. Their tax revenue was 16% of GDP. The KMT government’s annual revenue was only 21.6% of GDP. The KMT regime’s revenue was 8% of GDP less than the PAP government’s revenue. The KMT government’s tax income was also 1.2% lower than that of the PAP government. Because Singapore has a more autonomous government than Taiwan, it is not surprising that the PAP government’s capacities to extract taxes and revenues were higher than that of the KMT government.

Besides having lower state capacities to extract revenues, the KMT government also had higher expenditures than the PAP government. On average, the KMT annual expenditure was 22.8% of GDP. But the Singapore PAP only made an annual expenditure of 20.3% of GDP. As a result, the PAP was able
to have more fiscal surplus than the KMT regime. Based on Table 3.4, the PAP government on average had a fiscal surplus of 10% of GDP each year from 1972–1998, while the KMT had a 0.8% deficit each year from 1972–1998.

Figure 3.1 shows the trends of the two regimes in terms of revenues and expenditures. From 1972 to 1998, almost every year, the PAP government was able to achieve a large fiscal surplus, with the exception of 1986. Singapore’s revenue and expenditure trends also show that the PAP made an effort to increase its fiscal surplus through the years. So, Singapore’s revenue shows a quite distinctive increasing trend. The PAP government is increasing its state capacity to generate more revenues. Additionally, the government expenditure metric shows a decreasing trend after 1986. The Singapore government therefore made progress to increase its fiscal surplus since 1987. This increasing fiscal surplus might be produced by Singapore’s continued measures to improve efficiency in public
administration, which minimizes loopholes, makes revenue collecting more effective, and reduces
waste in public administration. Singapore, being a statist regime, relies on the strength and function of
the state for political survival. A resourceful state gives the PAP statist elites more resources to
redistribute to the voters and thus obtain support for the PAP government.

The KMT government however ran a deficit in most of the years from 1972 to 1998. The KMT
state’s deficit grew much higher after 1987. Clearly, the KMT regime did not intend to leave large
amounts of surplus in the government. They were willing to run an annual deficit and had not taken
many measures to cut off expenses or increase revenue. From 1972 to 1998, the KMT state
expenditure did not decrease much; instead, it largely increased after 1987. The KMT also did not taken
measures to generate more revenue. The KMT revenue did not increased over the years. It seems the
Taiwan KMT was not willing to strengthen the state at the expense of the society. The KMT, being a
party clientele regime, relied on the support of its clients in the society to stay in power. So, the KMT
would give room for the society, especially the social elites to capture the state in various aspects. That
explains why the KMT has not taken serious measures to increase its fiscal strength.

The Taiwanese opposition offers an explanation for the KMT’s unwillingness to set up a strong
state. It said that the KMT regime has not regarded Taiwan as its permanent country and had no long-
term plans for Taiwan. Since the KMT elites are in a position to leave Taiwan at any time, the KMT
would not want to make the Taiwan state rich and strong.

This explanation is flawed. First, the KMT elites have nowhere else to go except back to China.
If the prospect of going back to China by military conquest is in their plan, the KMT elites would have
more incentives to strengthen the state power and fiscal strength in order to build a strong army rather
than weaken the state fiscal capacity. Second, even if the KMT elites want to give up Taiwan and move
to another country in the future, they can still take the state revenues with them, since the
government is under the absolute control of the KMT elite. If they leave the resources in the hands of the social elites, the KMT elites could not bring any of that with them when they leave Taiwan. Therefore, this argument cannot explain Taiwan’s low financial strength.

Instead, it is the regime’s mobilization structure that determines the KMT’s inability to strengthen the state. Due to the KMT coalition with the economic elites, the government is captured by those big economic interests. So the KMT government cannot extract much revenue from the society. Also, the KMT had to give out a lot of resources to build its grand political coalition. Neither can they reduce their expenditures.

To summarize, based on analysis of its fiscal situation, the KMT regime has a financially poor state and the PAP regime has a very rich and powerful state. The PAP government accumulated more fiscal resources to redistribute at their disposal than Taiwan’s KMT government. The fiscal result is consistent with their different regime-structure outcomes.

**State Expenditure General Trends**

![Figure 3.2 Taiwan & Singapore Total Government Expenditures (% of GDP) 1972–1998](image)
Figure 3.2 gives the trend of Singapore and Taiwan’s expenditures from 1972–1998. In most of the years from 1971–1998, the Singapore PAP government’s expenditures were lower than those of the Taiwan KMT government. We can also see very clearly a changing pattern of expenditure over the years. Taiwan’s government expenditures show a lower degree of variation than do those of the Singapore government.

The KMT government expenditure trend from 1972 to 1998 is quite steady. There is a larger increase in expenditure after 1987, but the general expenditure variation is small. The standard deviation of the KMT government expenditure (% of GDP) is 0.34. From 1972–1987, there was no significant variation of expenditures every year. From 1987 to 1998, the expenditures increased more rapidly. From 1972 to 1998, there was no large decrease in Taiwan’s government expenditures.

Overall, the KMT government’s expenditures were on a steadily increasing trend. This trend shows an interesting correlation with Taiwan’s political situation. Taiwan used state resources to recruit its clients into its political coalition. Due to the existence of this large client base, it was difficult for the KMT to significantly reduce its expenditures. That explains why the KMT has steadily increasing expenditures. The KMT expenditures increased dramatically after 1987 when martial law was lifted and the opposition was included in the political competition. The opening for competitive elections increased the need for the KMT to recruit more clients. So, there was a rapid increase in the KMT government’s expenditures.

The Singapore government’s expenditures, however, show a very large variation. The standard deviation of Singapore’s government expenditures (% of GDP) is 0.45. Clearly, the trend was not steadily increasing as in the case of Taiwan. The expenditure variation also seems unrelated to the PAP political struggle. From 1972 to 1986, Singapore’s expenditure shows quite a steep increase. The PAP
government increased its expenditure most rapidly from 1980 to 1985. From 1986 to 1994, the expenditures drop dramatically. They slightly rise again after 1994.

This is not strongly related to the political struggle in Singapore. Opposition in Singapore started to rise in the 1980s and gathered more support in the 1990s. The opposition parties won four seats in the general elections in 1991. But this political struggle seems not clearly reflected in the public expenditures. In the 1990s when political struggles became severe, the PAP expenditures actually decreased instead of increasing. This demonstrates that the PAP government was not relying on spending fiscal resources to directly recruit clients for their political survival, as Greene (2007) observed in many one-party dominant countries.

The PAP government does not have a large client base that it has to spend money on every year. So, the PAP government can reduce its expenditures by either increasing state efficiency or cutting the state budget without worrying about offending some political clients. As a result, the PAP elites have more freedom to increase or decrease expenditures based on their own judgment of the sociopolitical situation.

Breaking down the expenditures into administrative expenditures and various social expenditures allows examining the governments’ social policies and the relationships of the social policies with their political struggles.

**General Administration Expenditures**

Based on Table 3.4, the PAP government put a large percentage (28%) of state expenditures into paying public salaries and administrative costs. The KMT salary and general administrative expenditures are only 11.7% of its total expenditure. This is a 16% difference in expenditures on public salaries and administrative costs. Apparently, Singapore spent a lot more on public administration than did the Taiwan government. Since the PAP pays a higher salary to its public servants than the KMT, it is
reasonable that the PAP general administrative expenditure is higher. Being a statist regime, the PAP elites spent a larger portion of its budget on state building. However, the Taiwan government did not give its bureaucracy as much importance.

Figure 3.3 Taiwan & Singapore Government General Administration Expenditures (% of GDP) 1972–1998

Figure 3.3 shows the annual general administration expenditures of Singapore and Taiwan from 1972 to 1998. Both countries’ general expenditure trends are quite stable and have small variations. Singapore’s general administration expenditures decreased after 1984, which is consistent with the trend of Singapore’s total expenditures as shown in Figure 3.2. It might have been produced by increasing state efficiency and reducing administrative costs through technology improvement when computer technology was introduced in the 1980s. Even though the PAP largely increased its public servants’ salaries in 1994, the total public administrative expenditures did not increase as a result. Taiwan’s administrative expenditures, however, show a steady, slightly increasing trend. Probably due to the existence of certain non-rational features in Taiwan’s public administration as discussed earlier,
it is hard for the KMT government to cut off expenses and make the bureaucracy more efficient. After
1987, the KMT administrative costs also rose up higher. The political competition after 1987 might also
have caused administrative costs to increase.

**Welfare Expenditures**

Table 3.4 also shows that the KMT paid more for welfare than Singapore’s welfare
expenditures. Of the KMT’s total expenditures, 16.8%, went to the social welfare fund. But the
Singapore government only spent 8.5% of its total expenditures on welfare. The KMT government’s
large expenditures on welfare are related to their need to build a political coalition. As discussed
earlier, Zhan’s (1991) research on Taiwan’s social welfare statistics shows that more than 59% of the
social welfare funds have gone to the KMT clients, mainlanders, military, veterans, and public servants,
while most Taiwanese labors, farmers, women, children, handicapped, and elders only receive 3.7% of
the welfare expenditure (Zhan 1991: 161).

Clearly, these funds were channeled only to benefit certain groups of people. The majority of
the people who are not in the KMT’s client base have benefited very little from these welfare funds.
This explains why the KMT spent a larger percentage of its expenditures on welfare than Singapore; the
KMT specifically channels social welfare funds to its clients to retain their loyalty to the government.
Singapore’s PAP does not rely on specific groups for social support. The PAP government does not need
to spend much money on giving out welfare favors for the political survival like the KMT government.
So, Singapore’s welfare funds therefore are not significantly higher than other categories of public
spending.
Figure 3.4 shows Singapore’s and Taiwan’s welfare expenditure trend. Singapore’s welfare spending is quite consistent from 1972 to 1998. The annual welfare expenditures are quite similar, except for in 1995 and 1996. Apparently, the welfare funds spent were not increased or decreased for any political reason since Singapore was not relying on welfare funds to retain political support.

Taiwan’s welfare funds, however, show an interesting correlation with its political situation. The welfare funds trend has a continually increasing rate. Before 1987, the growth rate was quite small. But after 1987, the KMT largely increased its welfare fund expenditures. This trend is very similar to Taiwan’s total expenditure growth trend as shown in Figure 3.2. Clearly, Taiwan’s welfare expenditures and total expenditures are influenced by the KMT’s political struggles. After Taiwan opened up for competitive elections in 1987, the KMT increased its welfare funds in order to recruit more clients for partisan support to win electoral competitions. The distinctive, large increase of welfare funds in Taiwan after 1987 is influenced by political factors.
Housing and Community Development Expenditures

Based on Table 3.4, the KMT spent much less money on housing and community development than Singapore. Singapore allocated 7.7% of its expenditures on housing and community development, but the KMT only spent 3% of its expenditures on that. Based on the KMT clientele structure, housing and community development cannot directly turn into support for the KMT. Due to the lower level of professionalism in the KMT bureaucracy, the KMT cannot build public housing as efficiently as the Singapore government. So, distributing goodies to clients through other easier-to-operate social redistribution policies such as welfare funds was a better option for the KMT to attract social support. Also, a public housing benefit is equally distributed to all voters. Since the KMT mobilizing structure is client-based, the KMT would not want to waste much of its resources on non-client groups. So, it is reasonable that the KMT spent little money on public housing despite the public’s large demands for cheap public housing and their criticism of the KMT’s housing policy.

Singapore is able to provide cost-efficient public housing because of its professional structure. Also, since its mobilization style is not client-based but rather a direct redistribution of wealth to the general public through public programs, Singapore’s PAP would not hesitate to provide public housing programs in order to win support from the houseless urban poor majority. Thus, Singapore spent more of its budget in housing programs than the KMT did.
Figure 3.5 shows the housing expenditure trends. Taiwan’s housing expenditure trend was quite flat from 1983–1998. Before 1982, the housing expenditures were not reported, probably due to lack of data. After 1983, Taiwan’s housing expenditures were stable and have little variation. There were some slight increases after 1991, but the increase rate was quite small. The housing expenditures largely did not increase after 1987, as was observed in the total expenditure and welfare expenditure trends. Clearly, Taiwan’s housing expenditures are not closely correlated to its political situation. The KMT elites did not use public housing development as a major means to attract political support.

Singapore’s housing expenditure trend shows a larger variation than that of Taiwan. The variation has a similar pattern as Singapore’s total expenditure variation shown in Figure 3.2. From 1972–1984, the housing expenditure stably increased. Housing expenditures rose sharply in 1984, but the PAP gradually decreased its housing expenditures after 1986. After 1994, the housing expenditures rose again. Clearly, the PAP government was able to control housing expenditures based on its judgment of the sociopolitical situation.
The public housing program has been a major demonstration of the PAP welfare state policy and the government’s care for the poor people. In the 1960s, the PAP has used public housing programs and various other construction projects to obtain support from the urban poor. The public housing programs are still one of the means of leverage that the PAP uses to convince the voters to give electoral support. This explains the larger variation of housing expenditures after the 1980s, when opposition started to challenge the PAP dominance in elections.

**Education Expenditures**

Singapore and Taiwan have a similar level of expenditures on education: 18.9% of Taiwan’s total expenditures and 18.5% of Singapore’s expenditures were on education. Both countries are part of the Confucian tradition that values education. Both the KMT elites and the PAP elites wanted to use government funds to recruit intellectual elites into the ruling coalition. Singapore, being a professional statist regime, uses educational scholarships to recruit talented high school graduates into the bureaucracy.

There are also all kinds of government scholarships available to support Singaporeans’ overseas educations. One interviewee received government funding for her education in the United States for physical therapy. Then she went back and arranged to work in a government-run hospital in Singapore. The salary is quite satisfactory to her. She supports the PAP government and was quite worried about the rise of the opposition in the 2011 election (Interview: SIN71510). Education funds have been an important channel for the PAP to recruit the intellectual elites to serve in the PAP government.

The KMT government also gave out substantial educational funds, but distribution of funding was discriminatory. Only the children of veterans, military officers, public servants, and public school teachers could receive subsidies from the government for their education. Tung (2006) reported that
the KMT government subsidized the tuition fees of its members, beginning with elementary school and extending all the way to college education (p.135).

A veteran family in Taiwan received education subsidies for all of their children’s education. Three of their sons received overseas education in the United States because of the government’s subsidies. Before the 1980s, most households’ personal income was low and many families’ funds could not cover their childrens’ tuition. Therefore, the government educational subsidies could seriously affect students’ chances for education. Because of the KMT education subsidy for children of veterans, military officers, public servants, and public school teachers—most of whom are mainlanders—a big educational gap formed between the mainlanders and Taiwanese.

Lin (2006) reports on the educational gap between mainlanders and Taiwanese. Based on 1992 statistics, for the population above twenty-five years old, 23.3% of male mainlanders and 12.4% of female mainlanders had college degrees, but only 7.6% of male Taiwanese and 3.8% of female Taiwanese had college degrees (p.91). Tung reports that many research projects on Taiwan’s higher-education resource distribution have discovered a strong correlation between a person’s educational achievement and his communal identity (Tsai 2001; Gates and Chou 1994; Lin and Lin 1993; Ni-Tech Wu 1997; H.M. Luo 2000, 2002, reported by Tung p.136).

Besides offering educational subsidies to its existing mainlander client base, the KMT also used educational funds to recruit the Taiwanese intellectuals. They offered various scholarships to assist the education of talented students. Many opposition leaders originally received KMT scholarships for their education in their early years. These scholarships then further increase the KMT’s client base with regard to the Taiwanese intellectual elite.

As a result, a voting behavior study after the 1980 election shows a significant correlation between level of education and partisan support. The KMT received support from 86.54% of university
graduates, 94.95% of the college graduates, 84.37% of high school graduates, 84.15% of middle school graduates, and 77.53% of primary school graduates (Hu 1998 p91). Clearly, educational funds are an effective method to increase the number of KMT partisan supporters.

Figure 3.6 Taiwan & Singapore Education Expenditures (% of GDP) 1971–1998

Figure 3.6 shows the trends of educational fund expenditures. In both countries, the educational expenditures show trends similar to the total expenditure trends. In Taiwan, the educational funds spent increased steadily from 1972 to 1986. After 1987, when Taiwan opened up for competitive elections, the educational expenditures increased dramatically until 1993. In Singapore, educational expenditures increased substantially after 1980. They dropped in 1985. After 1994, educational expenditures slightly rose again.

The Singapore government educational expenditures were only slightly correlated with its political situation. The PAP had more freedom to increase or decrease the expenditure because of its rich fiscal reservoir. So the political situation did not immediately affect the PAP government expenditures. But Taiwan’s KMT educational funds increased rapidly after the opposition became
strong in 1987. Both countries’ educational expenditure trends are somewhat related to their political situation. Clearly the educational funds are an important channel of political investment for both regimes.

**Conclusion**

To summarize, different political mobilization structures and state structures led to different outcomes in Taiwan’s and Singapore’s fiscal situation. First, the Singapore PAP government is able to extract much more fiscal surplus each year. But Taiwan’s KMT government can barely make ends meet.

Second, their expenditure breakdowns show that the Taiwan KMT distributes large amounts of social funds to certain clientele groups for partisan loyalty and support. So due to the existence of their clientele interests in social policy, the KMT government’s expenditures are always increasing. The Singapore PAP government spent more on building the professional state and providing public housing programs. It does not have clientele interests to cater to in its social expenditures. Therefore, the PAP can increase or decrease government expenditures more easily.

Third, when opposition arose in 1987 and Taiwan became open for competitive elections, the KMT government had to largely increase its fiscal expenditures to retain clients for its political survival. So, there was a rapid increase of fiscal expenditures after 1987. The Singapore PAP elites, however, due to their strong state capacity still have plenty of room to reduce fiscal expenditures even when the opposition started to challenge them in the 1980s. Thus, there was only a slight correlation between the rise of political opposition and the increase of the PAP government’s fiscal expenditures. Since Singapore’s political survival is not client-based, the PAP elites do not need to give out more resources to obtain votes when opposition started to arise in the 1980s. Besides, the PAP government is fiscally resourceful. The PAP has more freedom to increase or decrease state expenditure regardless of the political situation.
The fiscal situations of both governments are consistent with the analysis of their regime structures. The KMT fiscal situation shows the KMT elites gave out large fiscal resources to its clients for its political survival. A large portion of Taiwan’s social expenditures were channeled to its clients. The majority of citizens received little benefit from Taiwan’s social policy. However, Singapore’s fiscal situation demonstrates the outcome of a professional statist regime. The PAP government is more financially resourceful than the KMT government and its fiscal expenditures are not strongly correlated with the political situation. The PAP government’s survival is not dependent on giving out fiscal resources to retain certain clientele groups. As a result, ordinary citizens in Singapore are able to receive more wealth redistribution than citizens of Taiwan.

**Origin of the Regime Structures**

Why did the Singapore PAP elites and the Taiwan KMT elites choose to set up different regime structures? Two historical explanations are given. The first is from the KMT’s experiences with the communists. It is widely accepted that the KMT had learned the communist party’s mobilization strategy during the KMT’s United Front years with the Chinese Communist Party from 1927 to 1929. The Soviet communist experts had trained the KMT elites in the communist political mobilization strategy and the party state structure.

This theory could explain where the KMT learned the party state structure, but it cannot explain why the KMT would implement it in Taiwan. Singapore’s PAP also had joined a United Front with the Malayan Communist Party (“MCP”) in the 1950s. Lee Kwan Yew and the PAP elites were quite well acquainted with the communist political mobilization structures as well. Lee had relied on the communists’ grassroots mobilization to win the 1959 election. Lee and the PAP elites could, if they wanted to, set up the same clientele mobilization structure since the PAP elites already knew the
power of grassroots mobilization and also knew of the communists’ skills during its United Front years with the MCP in the 1950s. But Lee and the PAP elites chose a rather different structure.

Another explanation is from the PAP’s history. It is said that the PAP-Barisan split in 1961 warned the PAP elites of the danger of relying on party structures for political mobilization (Mauzy and Milne 2002). Empowering party structures would produce factional struggle and allow certain party cadres to “use party bureaucracy as a base for power struggle and as an institution for personal and social advancement” (Shee 1971: 68). So, because of the lesson learned in 1961, the PAP decided to de-emphasize the party bureaucracy after 1964 and set up governmental agencies to conduct grassroots mobilization instead.

This seems a reasonable explanation, but becomes questionable when looking at the KMT regime’s history. The KMT regime also experienced a lot of factional struggles while they were in mainland China because of the party state structure. The factional struggles finally weakened the KMT state capacity and led to its defeat in mainland China. But the KMT seemed unwilling to abandon the party state structure despite its failure in mainland China. The event in Singapore triggered the leaders’ change of choices. But why did similar events not trigger the same change in the KMT elites’ decisions? It might be a result of leadership differences or some other missing variables.

The above explanations all look for answers from the elites’ educational, training, and ideological aspects. There is no examination of Singapore and Taiwan’s social structures. The social structures of Singapore and Taiwan in their early state-building stage were quite different. Social structural differences might provide another explanation for their different choices. Singapore, since the 1950s, had developed a strong class-based social cleavage which crosscut its ethnic cleavages. Taiwan, however, in the late 1940s, had a very strong communal-based cleavage that prevailed over the class-based social cleavage. The society that the Singapore PAP elites faced in the late 1950s was
quite different from the society that the KMT elites faced in 1949. The following suggests that it was the PAP and the KMT elites’ strategic choice to adopt different regime structures under the various social cleavage situations.

Social Cleavage Differences

Singapore society is composed of Chinese, Malays, and Indians. Traditionally within each ethnic group, there existed strong class-based cleavages. This traditional structure made it possible for class cleavages to become the dominant social cleavage. After WWII, the penetration of communists in Singapore society unified the society under class-based mobilization. So, in the 1950s, Singapore’s society exhibited a dominant class-based cleavage, especially among the Chinese population. Ethnic cleavage was also distinctive, but it became secondary.

Class-based cleavages had long been developed within the three major ethnic communities in Singapore. From the early- to mid-nineteenth century, with economic development in Singapore as well as differentiation between the English-educated and non-English-educated, economic classes emerged (Wilson 1978, Chan 1976). In the Chinese community, the society was originally organized along regional/dialect lines—surname clans from the 1890s. Later on, the regional associations and surname clans became less significant. Class-based associations became more powerful.

After 1900, when the Straits Chinese British Association (“SCBA”) was founded, the Chinese community became divided by language, education, and economic class (Chan 1976: 82–83). The English-speaking Chinese, the so-called Straits Chinese, mostly upper- and middle-class individuals, became distinctive from the non-English-speaking Chinese, mostly working class. Straits Chinese and Chinese-speaking businessmen formed various employers’ unions. Many of these employers’ unions belonged to the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce (“SCCC”).

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Most non-English-speaking Chinese were workers. They formed employees’ associations. After WWII, the employees’ associations were changed to trade unions and most of them became affiliated with the MCP. Both employers’ associations and the trade unions prospered after WWII, especially due to the communists’ mobilization. In 1946, there were only eight registered trade unions. In 1947, registered trade unions increased to 127. Employers’ associations also increased dramatically after WWII. The SCCC increased by 40 member associations after 1945 (Wu 1975).

Among the Indians, the traditional caste system had already divided the society according to occupational classes. The traditional caste system and the later differentiated education “resulted in class differentiation along economic lines” (Wilson 1975: 14).

Malay society also echoed the same division along economic and educational status lines due to the emergence of English-educated upper and middle classes (Chan 1975). As a result, Wilson remarks, it “made possible the recognition of interests held in common with others of the same economic class but of different ethnolinguistic origins. The superimposition of these horizontal economic divisions tended to blur the vertical divisions between the communities” (Wilson 1975: 14).

The MCP, based on a socialist ideology, further mobilized along class lines in order to form the pan-working-class union. A speech in 1962 by Lim Ching Siong, the famous unionist, calling on the working class to overcome communal differences and to pursue a common interest against the employers, is one example of this effort:

The working class interest is something that transcends all communal interests for it is the interest of all workers irrespective of which ever community they belong. The workers in Singapore and the federation have gone through very difficult phases in their struggle for a better livelihood. In this common experience of struggling for a better working condition the workers of all races have come to realize that their class interests transcends all communal barriers. We find Chinese, Malay, and Indian workers manning picket lines, shoulder to shoulder, against employers of whatever race—be they Chinese, Malay, Indian or European. The Chinese workers find more in common with his fellow Malay workers than with the Chinese employer. This common experience of struggling for better working conditions is itself
the most valuable political lesson for our workers to enable us to understand that the cause of poverty and suffering amongst our people is not due to communal exploitation but to our present economic setup which permits exploitation of man by his fellow man. The Chinese worker only too well realizes that the presence of Chinese Capitalists does not necessarily mean wealth and prosperity for the majority of the Chinese community. Similarly the Malay and Indian worker will soon realize that creating Malay and Indian Capitalists will not alleviate the sufferings of the vast majority of Malay and Indian people in our country. The necessity to unite in a common cause to improve their living conditions is perhaps the highest common factor that can form a firm basis for the unity of our people of all communities in this country. (Lim 1962)

The MCP’s mobilization was instrumental in further shaping the class-based cleavages in Singapore after WWII. Due to the MCP’s mobilization of working class awareness, trade unions mushroomed after WWII. In 1957, there were 277 trade unions such that 140,710 workers in Singapore (or approximately 10% of the total Singapore population) were unionized. There were 56 employers’ unions and the membership was 6,422. Strikes and class-based demonstrations became popular. In 1955, there were 275 strikes causing 946,354 man-day loss (one person’s one-day strike is counted as one man-day loss).

So, due to historical reasons and the MCP’s mobilization, by the late 1950s, Singapore society had a dominant class cleavage which prevailed over the ethnic cleavage. The class cleavage was especially distinct among the Chinese since the MCP was most active among the Chinese. As a result, the interests of the poor were able to be unified rather than divided by the ethnic cleavages. The poor found their voices expressed through various class-based associations, such as trade unions, hawkers’ associations, rural residents’ associations, etc. In the late 1950s when the PAP formed a government, Singapore saw a highly mobilized working class. Various demonstrations and strikes clearly voiced the poor majority’s desire for social redistribution through the government. The PAP government therefore received a clear signal from the society about its demands.
Taiwan’s social situation in the late 1940s was quite different. Under Japanese occupation from 1898 to 1945, Taiwanese society had naturally evolved class cleavages between the landlords and the peasants. The traditional cleavages between the social elites and the poor also existed (Chen SX, 1979). Since Taiwan was still an agrarian society and the majority of the land was occupied by the Japanese, the class cleavages had not become salient in the 1940s.

The class consciousness was only slightly awakened by the communists’ activities in Taiwan. But those communists were soon eradicated by the KMT government after 1945. Due to lack of mobilization, there were no class-based associations, not to mention trade unions in Taiwan in the 1940s. Class cleavage was not a salient cleavage in Taiwan in the 1940s. Instead, communal cleavages became more salient after WWII. Mainlanders following the KMT government started to immigrate to Taiwan after 1945 which caused many social problems. The KMT government’s policy to use Taiwan’s resources to support the civil war in China also disappointed the Taiwanese elites. Finally, frustration with the KMT government and grievances over the influx of mainlanders caused a Taiwanese insurgency for self-autonomy on February 28, 1947. The insurgency was soon silenced by bloody repression. The so-called “228 Incident” and the consequent repression deepened the Taiwanese hatred toward the KMT regime as well as the mainlanders who flooded to Taiwan after 1945.

When Chiang’s central government moved to Taiwan in 1949, the KMT elites faced a quite hostile Taiwanese society. The entire Taiwanese society stood for self-autonomy because of the “228 Incident,” which caused problems for the KMT knowing with whom and how to form political coalitions in the Taiwanese society. Unlike Singapore, Taiwan society in 1949 lacked active social groups to voice the Taiwanese majority’s desire for social and economic policies other than the desire for self-autonomy. The KMT faced a quite unknown society. As a result, the KMT did not know how to form political coalitions with the Taiwanese majority. There were no expressed interests and clear social
cleavage as the basis for political coalition. Except for the salient communal cleavage, the KMT elite did not know much about Taiwan’s society.

**Institutional Choices Under Social Cleavage Situations**

Because of different social cleavage situations, the institutional choices of both elites were different. The Singapore PAP elites faced a dominant class based social cleavage. The KMT elites faced a society with salient communal cleavages between Taiwanese and mainlanders. There was no salient class cleavage within the Taiwanese society. In order to form a political coalition with the society, the PAP and KMT elites strategically chose different mobilization options.

Facing a salient class-based society and a highly mobilized working class, the PAP needed to win the support of the working class in order to remain in power. Since the class-based interest was quite salient, the PAP elites clearly knew what the working class, especially the urban poor wanted in the late 1950s. After a long period of economic stagnation, the urban poor faced unemployment problems as well as bad living conditions. In the late 1950s, a large percentage of urban residents lived in slum areas and faced extreme poverty. The demand for economic redistribution had been expressed by the numerous strikes and various demonstrations.

Since the PAP clearly saw the poor’s demands for social and economic redistribution, if the PAP wanted to unite the working class in its political coalition, the strategic choice of the PAP was to set up a professional bureaucracy to efficiently deliver those social and economic services to the poor in order to gain their political support. Setting up a clientele-based structure, such as a strong party bureaucracy, would produce inefficiency in public programs and conflicts of interest. This would have hindered the capacity of the government to deliver services to the poor to satisfy their demands. Since the poor majority’s demand was clear, the PAP elites did not need a penetrating party structure to
mobilize mass support. Public programs that would satisfy the poor’s demands alone could produce the poor’s support for the PAP.

The PAP needed a professional bureaucracy rather than a party bureaucracy to conduct those public programs. Therefore, the PAP chose a professional statist structure over a clientele-based party mobilization structure. The case study in Chapter 4 further shows that a professional state structure secured the PAP’s popular support in the highly competitive 1963 election. The PAP opposition party, the Barisan Sosialis (BS), adopted the party-based mass mobilization structure. But mass mobilization failed to bring the BS the popular votes under the competition of the PAP’s professional structure. A professional government has proved to be a successful structure for political survival under a salient class cleavage situation. It was a strategic choice for the PAP to adopt the statist structure under this situation.

The KMT elite faced an unclear society. Communal cleavages had divided the society into mainlander and Taiwanese groups. The Taiwanese group wanted self-autonomy which was against the KMT’s fundamental interest to stay in power. Therefore, the KMT elites had to form a political coalition with the mainlander minority. Naturally, the KMT social policies would benefit the majority of mainlanders who were in their political coalition. Among the Taiwanese majority community, the class cleavage was not quite salient in the 1940s. Traditional class cleavages had divided the Taiwanese society into the poor and the rich, the masses and the elites. But, since the Taiwanese poor’s interests had not been organized and collectively expressed, class consciousness was weak and class cleavage was not salient.

Therefore, the KMT elites could not know how to obtain support from the Taiwanese poor majority directly. Taiwanese elites become the only salient Taiwanese interests that the KMT could cater to. Therefore, the KMT elites chose to form a clientele mobilization structure to recruit the
Taiwanese elites into its political coalition and penetrate into the Taiwanese society through specific interest exchange with the Taiwanese clients. Otherwise, due to lack of local information, the KMT elites could not find other ways to effectively mobilize social support.

If the KMT, like the PAP elites, had set up a professional state and effectively delivered social services to the majority lower class in the 1940s, the KMT might have lost the Taiwanese social elites from their political coalition. The big investment in state building and social programs might not have produced consequent political support from the Taiwanese poor, since the poor were not organized and the KMT elites did not have much information about what the Taiwanese poor wanted. So setting up a professional strong state within that social situation might have caused the KMT downfall. Forming a political coalition with the mainlanders and the Taiwanese elites through a clientele structure becomes a strategic choice for the KMT elites under that situation. This is not a social structural deterministic argument about the PAP’s and the KMT’s different choices for their regime structure. Their different choices might also have been caused by the difference between Lee Kwan Yew and Chiang Kai-shek’s leadership styles, for example. The size of the country might also have had an impact on their choices. Governing a city-state, the PAP elites could easily obtain local information and supervise policy implementation. Taiwan’s larger size made it harder for the KMT elites to obtain local information as well as supervise the local bureaucracy.

The costs to implement a professional bureaucracy might be much higher in Taiwan than in Singapore due to higher supervision costs. So, a party-based clientele structure might be a more feasible way for the KMT to solve the principal–agent problem between the central government and the local bureaucrats. Nevertheless, the social structures during the initial stage of state building created different strategic choices for the KMT and the PAP elites for their political survival.
Once a society becomes empowered after modernization, the professional statist structure becomes a more sustainable structure than the clientele mobilization structure for one-party political survival. The case studies of Singapore and Taiwan under strong opposition movement in Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 test the sustainability of each regime structure after modernization. The professional state helped the PAP resist strong opposition in the 1960s, but the KMT, with the clientele structure, failed to maintain its dominance when opposition started to mobilize support in the 1980s.
Chapter 4  Case Study of Singapore 1961-1963

How can authoritarian governments resist challenges despite strong opposition? I offer the 1963 election in Singapore as a case study of how a professional bureaucracy can help an authoritarian government resist strong opposition movements.

Singapore’s government in the 1960s saw the development of opposition. First, the People’s Action Party (PAP) lost Hong Lim and Anson by-elections to opposition parties in 1960 and 1961, respectively. Then, eleven PAP members of parliament (MPs) and the other PAP left-wing members defected from the PAP and formed an opposition party, the Barisan Sosialis (BS), in November 1961. As a result, the PAP was left with twenty-six seats in parliament against twenty-five opposition seats. Then, from August 1962 to September 1963, the PAP seats were reduced to twenty five over all. Also, the PAP defectors took over most trade unions and the PAP grassroots branches in 1961.

Thus the PAP became a party without grassroots connections. Yet, despite the opposition’s growth and the BS grassroots strategy, the PAP was still able to retain its popular position and to win the 1963 election. Political repression, the use of propaganda, and the international situation assisted the PAP in undermining opposition forces. However, the major reason for the PAP victory over strong opposition in 1963 was the impressive social achievements from 1961-1963 performed by their professional government.

This chapter first gives a historical account of Singapore from 1961-1963. Then I will analyze the 1963 election, with the purpose of singling out explanations for the PAP ability to stay in power when
opposition was strong. To that purpose, the major focus will be used to analyze the rural and urban division of 1963 voting outcomes.

**Growth of Opposition**

In the 1959 General Election, the PAP won 43 out of 51 seats. But after 1960, opposition started to emerge. After the left-wing unionists, Lim Ching Siong and Fong Swee Suan et al., were released from prison in 1959, they went back to develop unions. The PAP pro-communist left wing thus continued to expand its grassroots power through trade unions and other grassroots organizations. Divisions in the PAP between Lee Kwan Yew’s moderate faction and the left wing had already been in place since 1957. After the 1959 election, the conflict between two sides increased when Lee did not release the rest of the communist detainees held under the Internal Security Council (ISC). Lee also refused to put the abolition of the ISC under the constitutional talk with the British government. Instead, he promoted an independence-through-merger-with-Malaysia proposal. This provoked the left wing.

Ong Eng Guan, a PAP MP, sensed the tension between the left wing and Lee’s moderate wing. He first launched attacks at Lee’s faction in 1960, intending to take advantage of the tension between Lee’s faction and the left wing. The left wing did not join Ong at this time. Ong was then expelled from the PAP by Lee Kwan Yew. Soon afterwards, Ong formed the United People’s Party (the UPP). He resigned from Hong Lim and called a by-election at the Hong Lim district on July 27, 1960. During the Hong Lim by-election, though the left wing-controlled trade unions supported the PAP candidate, they also voiced tougher demands on releasing trade union detainees and more relaxed trade union policies (Poh 2010: 178). Ong won the Hong Lim by-election.

In 1961, the conflict between the left wing and the moderate faction came to a breaking point. After Lee Kwan Yew refused Lim Ching Siong’s call for full abolition of the ISC in July, Lim called for the
left wing unions’ full support for the opposition candidate, David Marshall, in an Anson by-election on July 15 1961 (Straits Times July 10, 11 July, 14 July, 1961). As a result, the PAP lost the Anson by-election. One week later, on July 20 1962, Lee responded to the left wing’s threat by introducing a motion of confidence in the Assembly about Independence-through-merger with Malaysia. Twenty seven MPs voted for the motion and thirteen abstained. The next day, Lee expelled those thirteen abstained MPs from the PAP. The defected eleven MPs then joined the BS on July 26, 1961. Thus the PAP seat in parliament was left at 26.

So, the PAP majority in parliament was seriously challenged. On July 21, 1961, the PAP had twenty six seats against 25 opposition members. On July 3, 1962, Ho Puay Choo resigned from the PAP and later joined the BS leaving the PAP with twenty five seats against twenty six opposition members. On Aug 16, 1962, S.V. Lingam was persuaded to rejoin the PAP, thus saving it from losing the majority. But on August 21 1962, the death of a PAP MP from Sembawang District, Ahmad Ibrahim, put the PAP into a twenty-five-over-all situation. Lee decided against holding a by-election in Sembawang district after Ahmad Ibrahim’s death, fearing the loss of his majority position in parliament.

Besides endangering the PAP majority in the parliament, the 1961 split also cost the PAP almost all of its grassroots machine. After the split, eighty percent of the PAP members left the PAP and joined the BS. The PAP lost thirty seven of its fifty-one branches to the BS (Pang 1969: 151). The BS also controlled most trade unions. “Two thirds of unions under the Trade Union Council (TUC) and almost the entire network of grassroots organizations that had aided the PAP since the Party’s foundation” were lost to the BS (Lee 1996: 205). The PAP government dissolved the TUC in August 1961.

On August 16, the BS-controlled left-wing unionists set up the Singapore Association of Trade Unions (SATU). The PAP-supported unionists then established the National Trades Union Congress (NTUC) on August 17th. In 1961, eighty two unions joined SATU. The NTUC at this time only had forty
two unions (How 1973). In 1962, the number of unions under the NTUC dropped to thirty seven (How 1973). Compared with the BS massive grassroots network through trade unions, student organizations, woman’s associations, rural associations, cultural groups and party branches, the PAP grassroots mobilization power was very weak in late 1961.

Besides politically challenging the PAP, the opposition also started to give the PAP social trouble. From August 1961, the BS-related left wing unions started to mobilize large-scale strikes and labor movements to create instability and discredit the PAP government (How 1973). Following is the strike data from 1955-1963.

Table 4.1 Number of Strikes in Singapore From 1955-1963.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>NO. OF STRIKES</th>
<th>NO. OF WORKMEN INVOLVED</th>
<th>MAN-DAY LOST*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>57,433</td>
<td>946,354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>12,373</td>
<td>454,455</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>8,233</td>
<td>109,349</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2,679</td>
<td>78,166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959(Jan-May)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>614</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959(May-Dec)</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>1,683</td>
<td>26,587</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>5,939</td>
<td>152,005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961(Jan-July)</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>2,431</td>
<td>41,125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961(Aug-Dec)</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>41,153</td>
<td>369,763</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>6,647</td>
<td>165,124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>33,004</td>
<td>388,219</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Man-day lost: one workman one day lost is one Man-day lost

From Table 4.1, it is obvious that the number of strikes increased dramatically after the PAP split in August 1961. In 1961, from January to July, there were only 39 strikes with 2,431 workers involved. The total man-days lost was 41,125. From August to December, there were 77 strikes, with
41,153 workers involved. The total man-days lost also increased to 369,763. 1962 and 1963 were not easy for the PAP government either. From 1961-1963, the average man-days lost per year was 192,004 compared to 76,230 per year from 1959 to 1961.

Figure 4.1 shows the trend of man-days lost from strikes from Jan 1954-Dec 1966 on a monthly basis. From August 1961, Singapore saw a surge of strikes in terms of numbers of workers involved and the duration of the strikes. Such a high level of insurgence persisted until 1964. The magnitude of the strikes was comparable to the insurgent period from 1955-1957 when communists vigorously mobilized strikes and seriously disturbed social order.

The timing of the rise of strikes with the PAP split, the concentration of the strikes’ occurrences in certain months, and the known control of most trade unions by the BS-related SATU made it very possible that the strikes from 1961 to 1963 were mobilized by the opposition for political purposes. Large numbers of strikes during these periods demonstrated the opposition’s mobilization power. The PAP ability to maintain social and economic order and their legitimacy as a governing party was challenged by this social unrest.
It was under these strong challenges in both the political and social arenas that the PAP was fighting to maintain power. Despite serious challenges from a growing opposition, the PAP won two victories in the ballots. One was the merger referendum in 1962. Another was the general election in 1963. In the 1962 referendum, Alternative A proposed by the PAP won 71.1% of votes. Although 25.8% of voters cast blank votes due to mobilization by the opposition, the 71.1% electoral victory was
enough to keep the PAP’s legitimacy. Such legitimacy was further consolidated in the 1963 election when the PAP won a majority of the seats. The voting results are listed below.

Table 4.2 1963 Singapore General Election Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PARTY</th>
<th>SEATS HELD BEFORE ELECTION</th>
<th>SEATS CONTESTED</th>
<th>SEATS WON</th>
<th>TOTAL VOTES RECEIVED</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE OF VOTES RECEIVED (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PAP</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>272924</td>
<td>46.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>193301</td>
<td>32.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UPP</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>48785</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA (SPA+UMNO+MCA)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>48907</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PR (BS alliance)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>8259</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
<td>7288</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMIP</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1545</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UDP</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>760</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>286</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total valid votes: 582055  Total electorate: 617650  Turnout rate: 95.1%


In the 1963 general election, the PAP won 46.5% of the votes and the BS, the biggest opposition party, won 32.9%. Because Singapore uses a single member district electoral system, the PAP was able to obtain 37 of the total 51 seats in the parliament and thus won a clear majority to form the government. The opposition, though also demonstrating strength in the election, were not able to win majority support to replace the PAP.

After the election, the PAP successfully dismantled the opposition movement. Starting from early October, just one week after winning the election, the PAP launched another wave of arrests,
targeting 195 opposition leaders including a BS assemblyman who had just won the election. This repression further diminished the mobilization and organizational power of the BS. By 1965, the opposition movement could not pose a serious threat to PAP rule anymore. In the following elections, the PAP increased its seats in the parliament and has maintained that dominant position until the present. Since then, the PAP has not encountered any comparable challenges; 1962 and 1963 were critical points for the PAP.

**Explanations for the PAP Survival under Strong Opposition**

What kept the PAP in power when opposition was so strong in the early 1960s? Winning the 1962 and 1963 elections gave the PAP the legitimacy to remain in power. Then, the PAP skillfully took advantage of those electoral victories and eradicated opposition forces by repression. But why would the public support the PAP in the above two elections when opposition was strong?

Existing research lists several strategies that were adopted by the PAP to win the 1962 referendum and the 1963 election. (1) The PAP professional government attained impressive achievements in economic and social programs which helped the PAP to gain popular support. (2) The PAP had used its state machinery to repress the BS and to disadvantage the opposition in both the 1962 referendum and 1963 general election. (3) The PAP started to set up grassroots organizations, such as Community Centers, in 1960, to attract local support. (4) The PAP political and economic ties with Malaysia made voting for the BS’s anti-merger position unfavorable to most middle class citizens and business people. I will discuss each of the above four explanations in detail below. Then I will analyze which strategy is the dominant reason for the PAP success in the above two critical elections when opposition were strong.
Strategy 1: Professional Government and Social Programs

As explained in earlier chapters, the PAP set up a merit-based professional government when it took office in 1959. Equipped with merit-based recruitment and a strong performance supervision and evaluation system, the civil servants had accomplished incredible social and economic achievements for the PAP government. Starting in 1959 with an annual deficit of SD14 million (Straits Times June 22 1959), after four years of governing, the PAP government had a budgetary surplus of SD400 million (Lee 1996) besides many social achievements. One of their proudest achievements was the building of 22,336 cheap and affordable public housing units in just three years, compared to the 23,019 units built by the previous administrations in the past thirty-two years (Singapore 1963). Table 4.3 selects some of the social achievements of the PAP government in three years from 1959-1963.
## TABLE 4.3 Examples of PAP Social Achievements 1961-1963

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HDB Public housing Units</td>
<td>n.a</td>
<td>21,968</td>
<td>26,168</td>
<td>37,374</td>
<td>43,889</td>
<td>99.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total employment</td>
<td>166,747</td>
<td>161,627</td>
<td>166,725</td>
<td>168,111</td>
<td>178,787</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education expenses in SD millions</td>
<td>n.a</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>68.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. Of schools built</td>
<td>n.a</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>18 as of April</td>
<td>350%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. Of students in school</td>
<td>320,977</td>
<td>349,890</td>
<td>382,859</td>
<td>399,317</td>
<td>430,045 as of April</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Center</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>321.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. Of public stand pipes</td>
<td>1791</td>
<td>2224</td>
<td>2300</td>
<td>2375</td>
<td>2426 as of April</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. Of public street lights</td>
<td>93,108</td>
<td>98,121</td>
<td>106,530</td>
<td>118,541</td>
<td>128,520 as of April</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miles of road built</td>
<td>374.7</td>
<td>380.4</td>
<td>394.26</td>
<td>399.37</td>
<td>402.77 as of April</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miles of agricultural road built</td>
<td>37.6</td>
<td>38.03</td>
<td>40.5</td>
<td>42.02</td>
<td>49.05 as of April</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. Of gas appliances for public usage</td>
<td>19258</td>
<td>20249</td>
<td>31139</td>
<td>45000</td>
<td>50466 as of April</td>
<td>149.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. Of gas consumers</td>
<td>15667</td>
<td>16495</td>
<td>23013</td>
<td>31500</td>
<td>34973 as of April</td>
<td>112%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. Of electricity consumers</td>
<td>93,108</td>
<td>98,121</td>
<td>106,530</td>
<td>118,541</td>
<td>128,520 as of April</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: compiled by author from data collected from Ministry of Culture (1963), HDB (1961-1963), People’s Association (1970)
In three years, the government built public housing for peddlers living in slums. The increase in public housing was almost two-fold from 1959 to 1963. In order to increase employment, they also built four Industrial sites to attract industrial investment. A budgeted SD165 million plan was also carried out to improve Singapore’s roads, the deep water harbor, power, water, gas, land development and reclamation, sea, air and wireless communications, bridges, drainage, etc.

As a result, a 10.6% increase in employment was achieved. “Two main social problems which had plagued Lim Yew Hock’s administration, namely unemployment and inadequate housing, were on the way to being solved” (Lee 1996: 262). Besides providing public facilities for industrialization and economic development, the government also provided expansion of social services like health, education, housing, welfare and cultural services to accommodate public needs. A sizable number of schools, clinics, and Community Centers were built to accommodate public needs for education, medical care and cultural entertainment. Besides all the above social expenses, the government was able to accumulate a SD400 million budget surplus after three years of governing, starting from a SD14 million deficit.

All of these goals could not have been achieved without a highly efficient public service team. Almost all of the relevant literature largely attributes the PAP electoral success to the impressive achievements of public servants (Lee 1995; Yap, Lim, and Leung 2010; Low 2007; Yang and Tang 1997; Van der Kroef 1967; Bellows 1968; Bellows 2000; Bradley 1965; Lee 1976; Osborne 1964; Starner 1967; Yang 1997; Bloodworth 1986, Leifer; Drysdale 1984; Mauzy 2002).

After winning the 1963 election, Lee Kwan Yew summed it up in his election victory speech: “The 26,000 homes, the Jurong industrial site, water, Community Centers, clinic together with the open argument clinched the issue”. Lee thanked the civil servants for helping the PAP to accomplish the social objectives and win the combat against the opposition. He said: “Without their (public servants’)
cooperation, the other half of the open argument would not have been carried through.” (Lee’s
election victory speech, cited by Yap, Lim and Leong 2010: 260)

**Strategy 2 Political Repression Of the Opposition**

In both the 1962 referendum and the 1963 general election, the PAP used its advantages as
incumbent to manipulate election agendas and used police and media forces to repress and
disadvantage political opposition. Several sources (Bradley 1965; Anonymous 1972; Lee 1976; Starner
1967; Yang 1997; Tan 2010; Poh 2010; Ang 1973; Kwok 1979; Chan 1966; Van der Kroef 1967) discuss
political repression as another factor explaining the PAP victory in the 1963 election.

In the 1962 referendum, the PAP used agenda control power to make the referendum more
favorable to the PAP proposal. Voters were only given three options in terms of their opinions toward
the merger.

1. Alternative A, which was supported by the PAP: "I support merger giving Singapore
   autonomy in labour, education and other agreed matters as set out in the Command
   Paper No. 33 of 1961, with Singapore citizens automatically becoming citizens of
   Malaysia."
2. Alternative B, which was supported by the BS and UPP: "I support complete and
   unconditional merger for Singapore as a state on an equal basis with the other eleven
   states in accordance with the Constitutional documents of the Federation of Malaysia."
3. Alternative C: "I support Singapore entering Malaysia on terms no less favourable than
   those given to the Borneo territories."

In this referendum, voters were not given an option to reject the merger proposal, which might
be preferred by a pretty large group of people over any of the three alternatives. Among the only three
options, Alternative A apparently presented the most favorable conditions to Singaporeans. The
opposition, however, denounced the referendum as a “phony merger”. Even Philip Moore, the deputy
British Commissioner in Singapore remarked it was a “phony referendum” (Moore, CO 1030/998: 51,
cited by Poh 2010).
When the opposition started mobilizing voters to cast blank votes as a rejection of the phony merger plan, the PAP government amended the referendum bill to dictate that blank votes must be counted as votes for Alternative A (Tang 2010). Later, the PAP government also used the media to warn voters that blank votes might be counted for Alternative B which would render half of Singapore’s citizens disenfranchised because of the stricter Malaysian immigration law (*Straits Times* Aug 21, 1962, cited by Quek 1975: 39). Though the opposition called it a bluff, this message might have discouraged some voters from casting blank votes.

In the 1963 election, the PAP also used its agenda control power to disadvantage the opposition. On September 3, 1963, the PAP government suddenly announced September 12 to be the nomination date. On September 12, the government announced that the election was to be held on September 21. Within these 9 days, September 14th to 17th were public holidays. As a result, candidates were left with only four and half days to campaign. One opposition party leader, David Marshall, challenged the legality of the election schedules. But Marshall could not obtain support from other opposition parties. His claim was dismissed on September 19th. The opposition barely had time to print out campaign materials and prepare for campaigning.

The government further pressured printing firms not to print campaign materials for the BS. The BS requests for using public spaces for campaign rallies were also repeatedly rejected by the police for various reasons. Further devastating the BS campaign, on September 9th, the funds of the three largest unions in SATU were frozen.

Besides the soft containment and restriction, direct forces were also used to attack the opposition. On February 2, 1963, the Internal Security Council (ISC) launched Coldstore Operation under the Preservation of Public Security Ordinances. They took into custody 111 political, labor, and student leaders in Singapore and Malaysia. More arrests took place in the following months. By the end
of April, about 120 people had been arrested. Most of those arrested were BS leaders in the trade unions, student organizations, rural associations and other mass organizations; and three members from another opposition party, the United People’s Party (UPP).

The trial of the twelve BS leaders ended on 29 August with four acquittals and eight of the accused found guilty on the charge of rioting. As a result of the Coldstore Operation, several BS vote winners, including Lim Chin Siong, Fong Swee Suan, Sidney Woodhull and Dominic Puthucheary were under detention and therefore would not be able to stand for election. To further defeat the BS’s desire to nominate leaders under investigation, on the nomination day, a special branch of the police suddenly picked up seventeen persons from the BS for questioning and held them until after the nomination centers closed at 12 P.M. So, those BS candidates-to-be could not present their nomination papers in person during the single hour that nomination centers were open.

Apparently, the PAP was not playing a fair game with the opposition. The manipulation of media, police force, ISC, agenda control power of the parliament to the advantage of the PAP contributed to the victories in 1962 and 1963.

**Strategy 3 Grassroots Mobilization**

According to several literature sources (Starner 1967; Lee 1976; Seah 1973; Kwok 1979; van der Kroef 1967; Mauzy; Shee 1971), the PAP grassroots mobilization — mainly through the Community Centers set up by the People’s Association — was also responsible for their 1962 and 1963 electoral victories. There are also several works discussing the PAP grassroots organizations and their role in consolidating the PAP one-party-dominance (Chan 1976; Shee 1971).

As was previously mentioned, the PAP lost most of its grassroots connections after the PAP split in 1961. First, it lost the trade unions. According to Yang, in 1961 the number of PAP members who belonged to the trade unions was 677 (about 29.1% of the total PAP membership in 1961) (Yang
1997: 67). After the split, 552 of 677 PAP trade union members left the PAP. Of the 124 trade unions consisting of 164,462 members (Singapore 1961), 82 were left-wing unions and joined the BS-related Singapore Association of Trade Unions (SATU) in August 1961 (Yang 1997: 14).

Ang (1973) estimated that the SATU membership was about 100,000 (20). After August 1961, left-wing trade unions immediately plunged into the battle between the BS and the PAP, which led to the large increase in strikes afterwards (Ang 1973: 26). The left-wing unions grew rapidly. Within a year after the split, the BS led left-wing unions added 25,000 new members (Kwok 1979: 8).

Second, the PAP lost its grassroots party branches. Large numbers of the PAP members, headquarter-paid staff, and grassroots branch executives left the PAP after the 1961 split. According to Yang (1997: 14), 80.4% of the members left the party. In the PAP headquarters, 30 of the paid staff left and only 3 to 4 remained with the PAP (Bellows, 1968: 152). Out of 51 grassroots branches, 35 branch executives resigned (Pang 1969: 152). Of the 23 paid secretaries responsible for initiating and organizing party activities at the branches, 19 joined the BS including the top organizing secretaries (Pang 1969: 152; Yang 1997: 6).

Thirteen assemblymen and 26 branch officers left the party (Yang 1997: 6). The PAP lost 37 of its 51 branches to the BS (Seah 1969: 48). The majority of those who left were active party members. Because of such a large exodus, the PAP was left without effective grassroots organizations by 1961. Lee Ting Hui thinks that “almost the entire network of grassroots organizations that had aided the PAP since the Party’s foundation” was lost to the BS (Lee 1996: 205).

It is under this situation that the PAP started the building of Community Centers in neighborhoods to increase its connection with the masses and for political education and campaign mobilization purposes (Seah 1973; Seah 1969; Yap 1972; Kwok 1979). In 1959, before the PAP took office, there were only 24 Community Centers (Ministry of Culture 1963). By April 1963, the PAP built
over 112 new Community Centers. Among them, 53 were in rural areas. Table 4.4 gives out an overview of the PAP Community Center building statistics from 1960-1967.

Table 4.4 Community Centers Set Up By the PAP Government 1960-1967

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Standard Community Centers</th>
<th>Rural Community Centers</th>
<th>Total Community Centers (annual increase rate)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>42 (50%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>54 (28.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>62 (14.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963 by April</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963 by December</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>177 (185.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>180 (1.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>181 (0.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>181 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>183 (1%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: collected by author from People’s Association Yearbook of Statistics 1976/77, Singapore n.d.: 5-9, cited by People’s Association 5th Anniversary Souvenir.

From Table 4.4, it is clear that the number of Community Centers increased dramatically in 1963. The increase is 185.5% over the previous year. After 1963, the building of Community Centers slowed to a 1.7% annual increase rate. Clearly, building 105 new Community Centers in 1963 was a strategic policy for the PAP to win the political battle against the BS at the grassroots level.

The dramatic increase of Community Centers in rural areas from 1962 was also stimulated by the results of the 1962 referendum. Lee Kwan Yew and the PAP found that the blank votes cast in the 1962 referendum were mostly from the rural areas. It was reported that “in some of these rural areas, the BS was able to capture as high as 40% of blank votes” (Prime Minister’s speech in Straits Times 15, July 1963). Kwok reported the lessons that the PAP learned from the Referendum and their strategies to use Community Centers to win the rural masses for the PAP.

BS strength was apparently entrenched in rural areas. Government had not been able to reach these rural areas. By the time of the Referendum, there was not a single Community Center in the rural area. The first rural Community Center was opened only on 19 November 1962 by the Prime Minister in Kampong Hock Choon, in Sungei Kadut (Straits Times 20 Nov 1962). After the
Referendum, the government decided to use People’s Association to diminish the BS appeal in rural areas. Community Centers in these districts were to provide welfare services to the residents therein, include inoculation of poultry, sale of fertilizers and treatment of sick animals. Besides, the rural folk were called on to contact center staff to bring important problems before the government for consideration. These included opening of roads, installation of electricity and water mains and drainage (People’s Association Bulletin 1 (18 Mar 1963): 3) (Kwok 1979: 20).

It is obvious that the Community Centers and their supervising statutory board – the People’s Association – were under the control of the PAP as the PAP grassroots organizations. Seah (1969) and Kwok (1979) both describe the penetration of the PAP government into the People’s Association. In the 1960s, the People’s Association’s management board consisted of the Prime Minister as the chairman, and 14 members. Nine of the 14 members were appointed by the Prime Minister, four of whom were elected by 45 organizations.

The four elected representatives were to be appointed by the chairman after consultation with their organizations. The chairman, who was the Prime Minister, could revoke any appointment without having to give reasons. In this way, the People’s Association management board was secured under the control of the Prime Minister. Seah reported that “since 1960, the control of the Community Center has been in the hand of the People’s Association; the main intention of this move was to ensure more effective coordination and control over Community Center.” (Seah 1969: 21).

The partisan penetration of the Community Centers was best demonstrated during the 1961 PAP crisis time. In 1961, after the left-wing split, Lee Kwan Yew held a meeting with People’s Association staff on July 25, 1961. In the meeting, he warned that the People’s Association and the Community Centers should refrain from joining any propaganda and anti-government activities instigated by the defected thirteen assemblymen.

Three days later on July 18, six staff members were dismissed from the People’s Association for ignoring Lee’s word. The six expelled staff members immediately protested against the dismissal. Other
serving members also stood in open defiance of Lee Kwan Yew. Consequently, on August 11, the other eleven staff members were dismissed. Four elected members in the management board of People’s Association protested against such dismissals since they were not informed of the meetings when the dismissal decisions were made.

Soon the People’s Association and the Community Centers staff called a strike on September 25, 1961 protesting against the dismissal of 17 staff members. Of the total 230 employees of the People’s Association and the Community Centers, 177 joined the strike. Seah (1969) reported that all the functions of the fifty-one Community Centers stopped operation. The management board then dismissed all strikers. They recruited volunteers to help keep the Community Centers open. The recruited new staff or volunteers were alleged to be faithful to the PAP (Seah 1969, p33). Finally the strikers ended the strife by joining forces with the BS on Nov 18, 1961 (Kowk 1979: 15) thus leaving the PAP to control all Community Centers. In the 1961 conflict, the Community Center clearly was a battle ground fought over by the PAP and the BS. But the PAP won the battle to control the Community Centers.

The Community Centers mostly were used to serve the community with education, entertainment and sometimes practical services. Most Community Centers were provided with newspapers, radio and TV sets, telephones, and facilities for indoor and outdoor games. They additionally opened other community activities such as literacy classes, film showings and children’s club activities. During campaign times, the Community Center staff and facilities were used to broadcast PAP propaganda. Starner (1967), Lee (1976), and Van der Kroef (1967) all think that the grassroots mobilization by the Community Centers contributed to the PAP success in 1963.
Strategy 4 Merger Issue and Singapore’s Nation Building

Much existing literature (Yang 1997; Bradley 1965; Lee 1976; Osborne 1964; Starner 1967; Lee 1995; Tan 2010; Shee 1971, Pang 1969) suggests that the international situation also helped the PAP combat the strong opposition in 1963. The PAP had been very active in pursuing independence-through-merger since 1959. Such a proposal was in the PAP 1959 campaign platform. Lee Kwan Yew requested that the trade union detainees sign the declaration supporting independence through merger as the common vision for the left-wing and the PAP.

Despite the eagerness from Lee’s side, Tunku Abdul Rahman, the Prime Minister of Malaysia, had not been willing to consider a merger proposal until the Hong-Lim by-election in 1960. The PAP loss in the Hong-Lim election alarmed the Tunku to reconsider the merger talk in order to contain communist expansion in Singapore. Lee Kwan Yew used the merger issue as a reason to break with the left-wing. He forced the independence-through-merger motion in parliament which triggered the defection of 13 assemblymen and the formation of the BS.

Gradually, agreement between Lee and the Tunku was reached. By 1961, it was agreed that Singapore would retain control over education and labor, but internal security as well as foreign affairs would be handled by the Malaysian federal government. In 1962, Lee Kwan Yew was not able to obtain equal citizenship status for Singaporeans to merge with Malaysia. Singaporeans were referred to as nationals rather than citizens and their votes were not counted equally as Malaysia citizens. But a few days before the 1962 merger referendum, the Tunku gave the concession for citizenship of Singaporeans in the Malaysian Federation. On this platform, Lee Kwan Yew was able to obtain 70%

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18 Tunku is an aristocratic title in Malaysia. The first prime minister of Malaysia was Tunku Abdul Rahman, in office from 1958 to 1970. At the time he was often referred to simply as the Tunku, and is so called in this dissertation.
support from Singaporeans in the 1962 Referendum. In 1963, more negotiation success was achieved by the PAP, including a reasonable financial agreement with the federal government.

The BS, on the other hand, failed to provide a viable plan for Singapore’s identity in the international environment. The BS denounced the PAP merger proposal as the extension of British colonial rule and fake independence. A complete independence with full control over internal security was first proposed by the left-wing unionists. Later, when it seemed unobtainable, the BS proposed a complete merger plan requesting equal citizenship and voting rights for Singaporeans, and proportional representation in the federal government, which definitely was not acceptable to the Tunku.

Many historians (Yang 1997; Bradley 1965; Lee 1976; Osborne 1964; Starner 1967; Lee 1995; Tan 2010; Shee 1971, Quek 1975) think that the BS failure was because they could not find international allies for its policy. The BS’s unfavorable and unrealistic merger proposal was responsible for its lack of appeal to the voters who regarded merger with Malaysia as the only viable solution for Singapore at that point (Quek 1975: 24). The left-wing activists think that the BS’s failure was caused by the internationally united effort of oppression by Britain, Malaysia and the PAP (Tan 2010). Clearly, Singapore’s struggle to find a national identity in the international world complicated the issue and helped the PAP to contain the pro-communist opposition party, the BS.

**Wrap Up**

Since four reasonable explanations for the PAP success are provided by the existing literature, I want to single out what is in my view the major reason(s) for PAP survival under strong opposition. In order to achieve that, I want to zoom more closely into the 1963 election in order to analyze the impact of each proposed factor on the PAP’s successful containment of the opposition.
1963 Election Analysis

Campaign Issues

First I want to examine the campaign issues of the 1963 election. Through campaign issues, we can analyze the strategies and mobilizing points of the PAP and the opposition.

The PAP and Lee chose three issues as their campaign platform: (1) the PAP’s social achievements in the past three years; (2) the PAP’s success in defending Singapore’s national interest in the merger talks with Malaysia; and (3) ideologically, the appeal to anti-communism (Lee 1976, Van der Kroef 1967).

The BS campaign was centered around criticism of the PAP’s Chinese education policy. Ideologically, the BS promoted anti-British-Malaysian-colonialism and attacked the merger plan. Clearly, the BS did not challenge the first issue presented by the PAP. The BS strongly attacked the PAP on the second issue: merger and national identity. They centered their campaign on issues related to Chinese identity. The BS campaign issues, candidates and supporters all exhibited a Chinese ethnicity orientation. During the campaign, they criticized the PAP education policy which favored English schools, disadvantaged Chinese schools and thus diminished Chinese identity. The BS Chinese identification is also exhibited by their candidates. All the BS candidates in the 1963 elections were ethnic Chinese.

By positioning around the Chinese identity issue, they attracted support from Chinese of diverse social layers. Chinese merchants like Tan Lark Sye donated large amounts of money to support the BS (Van der Kroef 1967: 57). Tan Lark Sye, the president of the only Chinese university, Nanyang University, also called on the public to support Nanyang University graduates in the election. All Nanyang University graduates were BS candidates. Clearly, Tan Lark Sye was calling on the ethnic Chinese people to support the BS because of the BS identification with the Chinese.
Tan’s talk gave the BS a lot of popularity and made the Chinese education policy issue a prominent issue in the campaign (Lee 1976: 45). Besides gaining support from rich Chinese businessmen, the BS also used a lot of Chinese school students and teachers to conduct street-to-street mobilizations in 1963 (Van der Kroef 1967: 59-60). All the BS publications were in the Chinese language. Even though the BS was not ideologically a Chinese party, the BS campaign clearly appealed to issues related to Chinese identity and Chinese society.

Another left-wing opposition party, the UPP, campaigned around the personal charisma of its Chairman Ong Eng Guan. They did not center the campaign on policy issues. The right-wing pro-Malaysia coalition, the Singapore Alliance (which was the alliance of three right wing parties, Singapore People’s Alliance, United Malays National Organization and Malaysian Chinese Association) campaigned largely around their relationship with Malaysia. Because of their close ties with the Malaysian federal government, the SA represented itself as being able to achieve a much more congenial relationship with the federal government than the current PAP government (Lee 1976: 47). In terms of policy, the SA criticized the PAP’s low pay to public officials and promised a salary raise for civil servants. (Lee 1976; Yap 2010; Starner 1967)

From studying the campaign issues, it is clear that the PAP’s ability as a governing party was not seriously criticized or disputed in the campaign. Related issues such as corruption, government inefficiency, economic and social policies were not raised. Instead, the opposition strongly attacked the PAP on the second issue, Singapore’s national identity and merger issue. The left-wing BS was arousing Chinese identity and Chinese sentiment. The SA, on the other hand, appealed to the new idea of Malaysian identity and presented itself as a representative of the federal government in Singapore to attract Malay voters. From the campaign debate, it seems that Singaporeans were still facing identity struggles. The fact that the BS Chinese school debate was able to attract a lot of public support shows
that the Singaporean Chinese were still trying to fight for their Chinese identity. From the campaign issues, it is questionable whether the Singaporean Chinese had willingly accepted to that point the imposed Malaysian identity.

**Voting Patterns: Rural and Urban Division**

In addition to describing the campaign issues, I want to examine the voting outcomes and find out who actually voted for the BS and the PAP in order to further analyze why the PAP won the election. Even though no post-election surveys or any voting behavior studies were conducted for the 1963 election, the winning districts can speak a lot about who voted for the PAP and the BS. In 1963, Singapore was divided into 51 electoral districts. Since Singapore had adopted a single majority electoral system, each district only selected one winner. Table 4.5 lists votes that the BS and the PAP received in the 51 districts.
Table 4.5 1963 Singapore Election Results: the PAP and the BS Votes By Districts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constituencies</th>
<th>Rural/urban</th>
<th>PAP votes</th>
<th>BS votes</th>
<th>total votes</th>
<th>PAP%</th>
<th>BS%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aljunied</td>
<td>rural</td>
<td>7745</td>
<td>4624</td>
<td>15215</td>
<td>0.509</td>
<td>0.3039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anson</td>
<td>urban</td>
<td>3957</td>
<td>3123</td>
<td>8436</td>
<td>0.4691</td>
<td>0.3702</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bras Basah</td>
<td>urban</td>
<td>4926</td>
<td>3831</td>
<td>9510</td>
<td>0.518</td>
<td>0.4028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bukit Merah</td>
<td>rural</td>
<td>4520</td>
<td>4963</td>
<td>11584</td>
<td>0.3902</td>
<td>0.4284</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bukit Panjang</td>
<td>rural</td>
<td>4940</td>
<td>5679</td>
<td>12225</td>
<td>0.4041</td>
<td>0.4645</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bukit Timah</td>
<td>rural</td>
<td>4982</td>
<td>6173</td>
<td>11783</td>
<td>0.4228</td>
<td>0.5239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cairnhill</td>
<td>urban</td>
<td>7749</td>
<td>2443</td>
<td>11659</td>
<td>0.6646</td>
<td>0.2095</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changi</td>
<td>rural</td>
<td>4808</td>
<td>3425</td>
<td>11238</td>
<td>0.4278</td>
<td>0.3048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chua Chu Kang</td>
<td>rural</td>
<td>2429</td>
<td>3753</td>
<td>7723</td>
<td>0.3145</td>
<td>0.486</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crawford</td>
<td>urban</td>
<td>4207</td>
<td>4400</td>
<td>10291</td>
<td>0.4088</td>
<td>0.4276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delta</td>
<td>urban</td>
<td>5417</td>
<td>5354</td>
<td>13363</td>
<td>0.4054</td>
<td>0.4007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farrer Park</td>
<td>urban</td>
<td>5365</td>
<td>2619</td>
<td>9630</td>
<td>0.5571</td>
<td>0.272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geylang East</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>7165</td>
<td>5389</td>
<td>15155</td>
<td>0.4728</td>
<td>0.3556</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geylang Serai</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>6722</td>
<td>5019</td>
<td>11401</td>
<td>0.4801</td>
<td>0.3585</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geylang West</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>6288</td>
<td>5670</td>
<td>14413</td>
<td>0.4363</td>
<td>0.3934</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Havelock</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>4157</td>
<td>6304</td>
<td>10451</td>
<td>0.4317</td>
<td>0.4403</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Lim</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>3789</td>
<td>2344</td>
<td>11399</td>
<td>0.3324</td>
<td>0.2056</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jalan Besar</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>6686</td>
<td>5172</td>
<td>12891</td>
<td>0.5187</td>
<td>0.4012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jalan Kayu</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>2676</td>
<td>3312</td>
<td>8202</td>
<td>0.3263</td>
<td>0.4038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joo Chiat</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>9300</td>
<td>3737</td>
<td>14115</td>
<td>0.6589</td>
<td>0.2648</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jurong</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>2268</td>
<td>3973</td>
<td>7113</td>
<td>0.3189</td>
<td>0.5586</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kallang</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>8479</td>
<td>5215</td>
<td>13694</td>
<td>0.5221</td>
<td>0.3211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kampong Glam</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>4313</td>
<td>4093</td>
<td>9606</td>
<td>0.4479</td>
<td>0.425</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kampong Kapor</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>4554</td>
<td>4155</td>
<td>10709</td>
<td>0.4194</td>
<td>0.3827</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kampong Kembangan</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>7127</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14751</td>
<td>0.4832</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kreta Ayer</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>8059</td>
<td>3646</td>
<td>12305</td>
<td>0.6547</td>
<td>0.2962</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moulmein</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>5856</td>
<td>3051</td>
<td>10907</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>0.3022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountbatten</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>7751</td>
<td>5158</td>
<td>15827</td>
<td>0.4897</td>
<td>0.3259</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nee Soon</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>3329</td>
<td>4914</td>
<td>9243</td>
<td>0.3477</td>
<td>0.5133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pasir Panjang</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>2879</td>
<td>1887</td>
<td>6765</td>
<td>0.453</td>
<td>0.2969</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paya Lebar</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>5402</td>
<td>6152</td>
<td>12887</td>
<td>0.4211</td>
<td>0.4796</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punggol</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>4721</td>
<td>2860</td>
<td>9581</td>
<td>0.4776</td>
<td>0.2893</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queenstown</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>1865</td>
<td>5889</td>
<td>15574</td>
<td>0.5281</td>
<td>0.3809</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River Valley</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>5597</td>
<td>2668</td>
<td>9045</td>
<td>0.5667</td>
<td>0.2701</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rochore</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>5015</td>
<td>4926</td>
<td>9941</td>
<td>0.5456</td>
<td>0.4475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sembawang</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>3745</td>
<td>3591</td>
<td>8836</td>
<td>0.4217</td>
<td>0.4043</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sepoy Lines</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>4907</td>
<td>3147</td>
<td>8054</td>
<td>0.4961</td>
<td>0.3181</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

217 Continue
Table 4.5 Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constituencies</th>
<th>Rural/urban</th>
<th>PAP votes</th>
<th>BS votes</th>
<th>total votes</th>
<th>PAP%</th>
<th>BS%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Serangoon Gardens</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>4456</td>
<td>2698</td>
<td>8345</td>
<td>0.534</td>
<td>0.3233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siglap</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>9342</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15038</td>
<td>0.6212</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Islands</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>2764</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4988</td>
<td>0.5541</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stamford</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>5781</td>
<td>3719</td>
<td>10853</td>
<td>0.5327</td>
<td>0.3427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tampines</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>3601</td>
<td>5976</td>
<td>12363</td>
<td>0.2912</td>
<td>0.4834</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanglin</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>4424</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>8661</td>
<td>0.5108</td>
<td>0.2306</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanjong Pagar</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>6317</td>
<td>3537</td>
<td>10720</td>
<td>0.5893</td>
<td>0.3299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telok Ayer</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>5390</td>
<td>4987</td>
<td>12246</td>
<td>0.4401</td>
<td>0.4072</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telok Blangah</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>4949</td>
<td>4327</td>
<td>12428</td>
<td>0.3982</td>
<td>0.3482</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomson</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>4248</td>
<td>5292</td>
<td>10763</td>
<td>0.3947</td>
<td>0.4917</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiong Bahru</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>5731</td>
<td>3798</td>
<td>11902</td>
<td>0.4815</td>
<td>0.3191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toa Payoh</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>4276</td>
<td>6083</td>
<td>12620</td>
<td>0.3388</td>
<td>0.482</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ulu Pandan</td>
<td>rural</td>
<td>5000</td>
<td>2967</td>
<td>11167</td>
<td>0.4486</td>
<td>0.2662</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper Serangoon</td>
<td>urban</td>
<td>6650</td>
<td>3547</td>
<td>11758</td>
<td>0.5656</td>
<td>0.3017</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: compiled by author based on data in Osborne 1964: 95-112

Among the 51 districts, 30 are urban districts and 21 are rural districts. Interestingly, most of the BS winning districts were rural districts, while the PAP won in most urban areas. Table 4.6 lists the urban/rural division of 1963 voting outcomes.

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19 The division of urban/rural is based on Osborne's 1964 research which is also cited by Lee 1969. Osborne made his urban/rural district classification based on the 1957 Singapore Census. References and comments made by Singapore politicians and information were supplied by Mr. Edwin Lee (Osborne p.36). Since I cannot obtain statistical data about urban/rural administrations prior to 1963, I can only rely on this not quite satisfactory classification.
In urban areas, the BS electoral performance was quite poor. Among the 29 seats they contested, they won only 2 (6.9%). But their electoral achievement in the rural districts was dramatically higher. The BS won 11 seats (64.7%) from the 17 rural districts they contested. The PAP did very well in urban areas, winning 27 (90%) of the total 30 seats. But in rural areas, the PAP only won 10 seats, which was 47.6% of the total 21 seats. Clearly, the voting outcomes presented unequivocal information: the urban voters strongly supported the PAP while the opposition was more successful in rural areas.

Both Lee 1976 and Osborne 1964 notice this distinctive voting outcome. Yet neither of them gave a good explanation for it. Why did urban voters vote for the PAP despite strong opposition mobilization? Why did rural voters support the opposition more than urban residents? What makes the PAP appeal to urban voters more than rural voters?

This provides a perfect case to test the explanations presented earlier by the existing literature. Which among the above-mentioned four factors contributing to the PAP electoral success can explain this puzzling voting outcome? By testing all explanations against the voting outcome, I find that the PAP social performance factor is the most satisfactory explanation for this unique voting pattern in 1963. I
will test and analyze each factor first. Then, based on this case study of authoritarian survival despite strong opposition in 1963, I shall further draw a generalizable theory about authoritarian survival.

**Explanation 1: The Professional Government’s Social Achievement**

One argument for the PAP survival in 1963 is that the PAP won the public’s support by its incredible social performance. As I explained earlier, the PAP government, in three years, solved housing and unemployment problems, spent money on education, built public facilities, clinics, entertainment etc. These were conducted efficiently leaving a SD400 million financial surplus rather than debt behind. All of these achievements, of course, were produced by a merit-based effective professional civil servants’ team that had been set up in 1959.

Does this social performance factor explain the urban/rural voting difference? By further examining geographic distribution and government development planning, I found distinct urban/rural differences. Consequently, there seems to be a strong correlation between the government’s social development planning distribution and the voting outcomes.

First, I examine their geographic distributions. Based on the 1957 Singapore Census\(^{20}\), there were clear differences between rural districts and urban districts in population density, occupational and ethnic distribution. The 1957 Census divided Singapore into six districts, City, Jurong, Bukit Panjang, Katong, Serangoon, and Southern Island. According to the census, only the city was an urban area. All the other five areas were rural areas. Figure 4.2 is a map of the Singapore Administrative District in 1957. Figure 4.3 contains maps of the 1963 electoral districts and the winning zones of each party.

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\(^{20}\) I chose the 1957 Census because I want a Census conducted before or around 1963. The only other census available is the 1970 Census when the modernization had already taken place. So the 1957 Census became the closest and most suitable data for analysis of geographic situation in the early 1960s.
Figure 4.2 Map of Singapore Administrative Districts in 1957 Census

Source: Osborne 1964
Figure 4.3 Map of Singapore 1963 Electoral Districts and the Election Outcomes

Source: Lee 1976.
From Figure 4.2 and 4.3, the area boundaries of the six districts in the 1957 census were slightly different from the 1963 electoral district boundaries. But we can still find some voting patterns in the six districts in the 1957 census. The BS had won most electoral districts located in the Jurong and Bukit Panjang areas in the 1957 census, while City and Southern Island regions in the 1957 census were mostly won by the PAP in the 1963 election. So, it is interesting to explore in more detail the geographic distributions of those areas. The following three tables list the geographic and socioeconomic statistics of the six districts.

Table 4.7 Population Distribution of Six Districts of Singapore in 1957

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>Jurong</th>
<th>Bukit Panjang</th>
<th>Katong</th>
<th>Serangoon</th>
<th>Southern Island</th>
<th>Singapore</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% of population</td>
<td>63.1%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>13.7%</td>
<td>14.4%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Density of persons per square mile</td>
<td>24,264</td>
<td>849</td>
<td>1728</td>
<td>4918</td>
<td>4398</td>
<td>4085</td>
<td>6,441</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The BS’s two winning areas, Jurong and Bukit Panjang had the lowest population density. But the PAP area of success, the city area, had the highest population density. The ratio of city population density to the Jurong population density was 28.58. The population density ratio of City area to Bukit Panjang is 14.04. This means that in the City area, there are 28.58 times more people than Jurong and 14 times more people than Bukit Panjang competing for housing, water, roads, food, job opportunities, schools, etc. The need for provision of public facilities in the City area is much more desperate than in the rural areas, like Jurong and Bukit Panjang.

So, the PAP government’s provision of housing, employment opportunities, and public facilities could benefit city residents more than rural residents. Consequently, the city residents would be more dependent on and more grateful to the government for those provisions than the rural residents. The
residents in Jurong or Bukit Panjang, on the other hand, were not as dependent on the government’s public facilities for daily living. So, it would be reasonable to infer that they might not personally benefit as much from the public programs provided by the PAP as well as be as appreciative of those public programs.

Table 4.8 Occupational Distribution of Six Districts of Singapore in 1957

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>Jurong</th>
<th>Bukit Panjang</th>
<th>Katong</th>
<th>Serangoon</th>
<th>Southern Island</th>
<th>Singapore total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% of agricultural population</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>59.7%</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of clerical population</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of commercial population</td>
<td>20.3%</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of production population</td>
<td>33.2%</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>22.3%</td>
<td>31.4%</td>
<td>36.5%</td>
<td>31.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of services population</td>
<td>24.9%</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
<td>16.4%</td>
<td>23.6%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>29.8%</td>
<td>23.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of transportation population</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Among the six areas, Jurong and Bukit Panjang had the highest agricultural population. In Jurong, around 60% of the residents were self-sufficient farmers. In Bukit Panjang 20.5% of the residents were farmers. In Bukit Panjang, 40% of its population was engaged in production activities. Since Bukit Panjang was a rural area, that 40% was likely engaged in forestry and wood-cutting related production. Most of them might also have been self-employed.
Among the six districts, Jurong and Bukit Panjang also have the lowest percentage of population engaging in service and other-employed jobs, such as clerical, service and transportation jobs. We can infer that residents in the Jurong and Bukit Panjang population were not vulnerable to employment problems since most of their residents were self-sufficient. Their commercial population rate was also pretty low, 7.7% for Jurong and 12% for Bukit Panjang. Both rates were much lower than Singapore’s average commercial population rate, which was 18.3%. Clearly, residents in both areas did not engage in commercial activities. Because of the low commercial population and limited commercial activities, residents in Jurong and Bukit Panjang did not have a high demand for public transportation and construction of public roads.

As a sharp contrast, the City population was mostly other-employed production workers, clerical and service workers (68.8%), commercial population (20.3%) and transportation workers (8.8%). Since most of the population was engaged in commercial, manufacturing, service and transportation related trade, they had much more need for factory and commercial buildings, roads, gas, water and other public facilities for business operations than the residents in Jurong and Bukit Panjang. City residents were also more vulnerable to unemployment problems.

Again, as a result of differences in rural and urban areas, the PAP government’s effort to build industrial estates, commercial shops, roads, gas facilities, and to increase employment opportunities might have been more beneficial to urban residents than to the rural residents in Jurong and Bukit Panjang. The livelihood of the urban residents was more dependent on the public facilities than their rural counterparts. So the urban residents would have been more grateful to and supportive of a government that has exhibited its ability to meet these needs.
Table 4.9 Ethnicity Distribution Of Six Districts Of Singapore In 1957

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>Jurong</th>
<th>Bukit Panjang</th>
<th>Katong</th>
<th>Serangoon</th>
<th>Southern Island</th>
<th>Singapore</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% of Chinese</td>
<td>77.9%</td>
<td>82.7%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>62.1%</td>
<td>79.3%</td>
<td>25.4%</td>
<td>75.37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Malay</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
<td>27.5%</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
<td>69.2%</td>
<td>13.62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Indian</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>10.1%</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>8.58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of other</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>2.44%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The ethnicity distributions among the three areas, City, Jurong and Bukit Panjang were similar, though Jurong has a slightly higher Chinese and Malay population and lower Indian population. Since ethnic distributions in these areas were roughly equal, ethnicity cannot provide an answer for the voting differences among the Jurong, Bukit Panjang and City areas. Ethnicity might explain Southern Island’s voting behavior. 69.2% of the Southern Island residents were Malay. So the Malays might have wanted to vote for the PAP’s pro-Malaysia rather than the BS’s anti-merger position. But Southern Island people could also vote for the pro-Malay coalition, the SA, which was more favored by the Malaysian government than the PAP. The fact that the pro-Malay coalition SA won zero seats in the 1963 election indicates that other considerations must have been behind the Malay voters rather than simply ethnic voting.

In conclusion, based on the geographical distribution analysis above, the rural people in Jurong and Bukit Panjang did not need public services as much as the urban population living in the City area. As a result, rural voters especially in Jurong and Bukit Panjang might not have benefited from the government’s public services as much as the urban voters, nor would they appreciate an efficient and professional government.
Second, from the government side, I also found a distinctive difference between urban and rural areas in terms of public services.

According to the Singapore Sample Household Survey 1966, in three rural areas, the Housing Development Board (HDB) only built 533 flats compared to 5,362 flats in the central area and 78,488 flats in town areas. In rural area 2 and rural area 3 which was Bukit Panjang and Chan Chu Kou according to the 1963 electoral districts, HDB had not built a single flat by 1966. HDB housing percentages were: 8% in the central area; 31% in town areas; and 1.4% in rural areas (calculated by the author based on data from the Singapore Household Survey 1966). In three rural areas, on average, half of the houses (48%) were self-owned housing. That figure dropped to 3.5% for central areas and 22% for town areas. Clearly, the rural people did not benefit much from the government housing program as of 1966, not to mention in 1963.

The master plan of Singapore also listed roads and construction under the government’s master plan. I found them mostly centered within the central city area. I listed below the areas in which major construction was performed by 1963. All of the following data were collected from the following resources: Democratic Socialism in Action June 1959-April 1963, Annual Reports of the Planning Department for 1960-1962, Housing and Development Board Annual Report 1960-1963.

Drainage:

Geylang Canal, Bedok flood alleviation scheme, Ulu Pandan canal and triple R.C culvert, west of Nelson road, North side Orchard road, Kallang river widening, Montgomery bridge; Stamford canal cuscaden road-paterson road; sungei api-api, Bartley to MacPherson Road, Pepys Road to Pasir Panjang Road; east of Nelson Road; S. Simpang Kana, Kampong Chai Chee, Jalan Besar Circus-construction, Chong Pang village, mandai woodlands, sungei pandan, geylang river concrete lining, bukit timah bridges, Jembatan Merah, Beach road bridge, Braddel Road Bridge, Dhoby Ghaut Bridge, Lim Ah Woo Bridge, Jalan Besa Circus, Sungei Whampoa Footbridge, Lowland Road, Ulu Pandon Scheme $40,000,000²¹ and extention scheme at Kim Chuan Road $2,300,000.

²¹ It is Singapore Dollars, SD. All the currencies mentioned in this chapter are in Singapore Dollars.
1961 proposed Sungei Poyan, Sungei Kallang, Sugnei Bedok/Ketapang, Sungei Pang Sua

Housing:

Queenstown (7074), Bukit Ho Swee (5445), Macpherson (1782), St. Michaels (2296), Alexandra Hill (2222), Kallang (2256), Kim Keat Road (194), Kampong Koo Chye (220), Jalan Eunos (100), Lorong Tai Seng (21), Jurong New Town (221), Selegie Road (505). (Ministry of Culture 1963)

Road Construction/Improvement:

Junction of Serangoon Garden Way/Link Road, junction of Braddel Road/Link Road, Choa Chua Kang Road from Bukit Panjang to Lim Chu Kang Road, junction of Mountbatten Road/Old Airport Road, New West Coast Road from Ayer Rajah Road to Jurong River, Junction of Bukit Timah/Dunearn/Adam/Farrer Roads, junction of Changi Road/Bedok Road, junction of Choa Chu Kang/Woodlands/Bukit Timah Roads, Farrer Road from Holland Road to Bukit Timah Road, New Costal Road from Bedok Road to Tanah Merah Besar, Changi Road from 71/2 m.s to Bedok Road, Jalan Teck Kee/Boundary Road By-pass, Jalan Delta from Tiong Bahru Road to Kampong Bahru Road and projection of Jalan Bukit Merah from Henderson Road to Jalan Delta, junction of Paya Lebar/Boundary/Serangoon Roads, Paya Lebar Road from Serangoon Road to Bartley Road, Paya Lebar/Bartley Roads, Paya Lebar Road from Bartley Road to MacPherson Road, junction of Paya Lebar/MacPherson Road, Paya Lebar Road from MacPherson Road to proposed Middle Ring Road, Paya Lebar/proposed Middle Ring Roads, Paya Lebar Road from proposed Middle Ring Road to Geylang Road, Lornie Road from Kheam Hock Road to Bulatan MacRitchie, Braddell Road from Bulatan MacRitchie to Main Access to Toa Payoh, Braddel Road/Main Access to Toa Payoh, Braddell Road from Main Access to Toa Payoh to Serangoon Road, highway across Tiong Bahru Cemetery Site, New West Coast Road from Clementi Road to Chua Keh Hai Road, Delta Circus, Woodsville Circus, Ayer Rajah Road from North Buona Vista Road to Clementi Road, Sembawang Road from Mandai Road to West Hill Village, Pulau Saigon Circus, Commonwealth Avenue to the Bukit Timah by pass, Adam Road, Yio Chu Kang Road from Jalan Teck Kee to Jalan Kayu, Changi Road from Jalan Alsagoff to Jalan Ubi, New West Coast Road from Day Road to Sungei Jurong, Upper Serangoon Road from Upper Aljunied Road to Braddell Road, Clementi Road from West Coast Road to Gimson School, Upper Serangoon Road from Woodsville Circus to Upper Aljunied Road, Upper Serangoon Road from Braddel Road to Boundary Road, Upper Serangoon Road from Boundary Road to Tampines Road, East Coast Road from Frankel Avenue to Bedok Road, New Road from Thomson Road to Woodsville Circus (Jalan Toa Payoh), U-turns on Commonwealth Avenue from Queen’s Circus to North Buona Vista Road, Telok Paku Road, Maxwell Road/Telok Ayer Street/Robinson Road/Shenton Way/Anson Road, junction of Upper Serangoon Road/Braddell Road/Bartley Road, Upper Serangoon Road/Upper Aljunied Road, Upper East Coast Road/Bedok Road. (Ministry of Culture 1963)

Industrial sites: Redhill, Tanglin Halt, Bendemer Road and Kampong Empat, Jurong New Town

Trade fair: Geylang Serai (Changi Road/Joo Chiat Road) proposed in 1961

228
Land and slum reclamation: Sungei Poyan

Pond: Sembawang

Vegetable plot: Potong Pasir Trials

Fishering training school: Paris Panjang

Malay Settlement: Jalan Eunos, Sembawang, Jalan Kaki Bukit

Veterinary service centers: Changyi, Yio Chu Kang, Tampines

I compiled a map of the Singapore 1963 election outcome and public infrastructure spatial location in Figure 4.4. All of the areas mentioned above are marked with dots. Different colors are used to identify different types of public projects. From Figure 4.4, we can observe a clear spatial correlation between the locations of government projects and the 1963 election outcomes. Most dots are scattered around the central city and suburban regions. It is in those regions that the PAP won the 1963 election. In regions where the public projects are scarce, the BS won in the 1963 election.

Figure 4.4  Map of Singapore 1963 Election Outcomes and Public Infrastructure Spatial Location
In rural areas, the PAP implemented the most public works projects in Southern Island. In the PAP campaign propaganda book *Democratic Socialism in Action*, there is a chapter “Better Life for Rural People”. But most of the work described in this chapter was conducted in Southern Island. I cited some of their work in Southern Island as follows.

In 1959, $100,000 was spent on the most urgent schemes for the islanders, such as water services, jetties and health services. A further $500,000 was provided in 1960 to carry out the recommendations of a survey team. Among the new facilities provided were the following:

- **Water for the islands:** a $10,000 jetty was constructed and a pipe line laid to pump water from P.W.D water-boats into a 25,000 gallon tank to provide water for Pulau Sudong and Pawai. Tank cost $12500. People of Pulau Bukom Kechil, Semakau and Seking had water available from stand pipes at Bukom Besar.
- **Jetties for islanders:** a new jetty at Pulau Sudong, another at Lazaroo Island, a new landing facility at Lazaroo Island, one landing facility at Tuas Village, lighted beacon at East Lagoon, Master Attendants’ Pier at Fullerton Road, a new promenade along Nicoll Highway.
- **Clinics:** new clinic-cum-Community Centers were built at Pulau Bukom Kechil, Pulau Seking, Pulau Seraya and Pulau Semulon. Separate clinic and Community Center were built at Pulau Sekijang Pelepah. Other clinics were built for Pulau Sudong, Pulau Semakau, Pulau Ayer Merlimau, Pulau Damar Laut and Chong Pang Village.
- **Sepak Raga:** a sepak raga court was built on each of the islands for sport loving youngsters.
- **Sanitations:** outlet drains, protected wells, oversea latrines, and other kampong sanitation facilities were installed. A sanitation squad and sweepers were provided in 7 of the most populated islands.

In southern island, 8250 feet of permanent drains were constructed, 25 protected wells, four water storage tanks, 725 feet of sub-soil drainage pipes were built.

Clearly, Southern Island became the PAP show case in the rural areas. The Southern Islanders paid the PAP back in the 1963 election. Southern Island had a 69.2% Malay population. It was the Malay-based UMNO’s constituency from 1959-1963. But in 1963, the PAP won 55.4% of the votes in this heavily Malay populated region defeating the Malay-based UMNO with a majority of the votes. The government programs in Southern Island can explain the support they obtained in this Malay district.

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22 UMNO stands for United Malays National Organization. UMNO is the largest and the dominant political party in Malaysia since Malaysia's independence. UMNO was also the dominant partner in the governing Alliance, which included political parties representing the ethnic Chinese and Indian communities.
Other than Southern Island, the government’s work in the rural areas was quite limited. Compared with public construction done by the government in urban areas, the rural area was clearly left out of the government’s development as well as social policy plan. The city master plan map of 1961 shows the government’s general development plans. Figure 4.5 gives the master plan map of 1961. The map of the Singapore 1963 election results is also presented here for comparison.
Figure 4.5 Comparison of Summary of Master Plan 1961 and 1963 Election Outcome

Source: *Annual Reports of the Planning Department for 1960 -1962.*
Figure 4.5 Comparison of Summary of Master Plan 1961 and 1963 Election Outcome
The maps show a very interesting correlation. The 1961 Master Plan map amazingly “prophesied” the 1963 election results. Areas marked by the planning department as residential areas, shopping and business centers, industries, dock areas, universities and major educational institutes in the 1961 Master Plan were the PAP winning districts in the 1963 election. But areas designated as rural centers and settlements, agricultural areas, green belt and public open spaces, water catchment areas, airfields, and other uses were BP’s winning districts in the 1963 election.

Residential areas, shopping and business centers, industries, dock areas, universities and major educational institutes are more important to urban development and therefore received more government attention and public facilities. Rural centers and settlements, agricultural areas, green belt and public open space, water catchment areas, airfields, and other uses were less important to city development and therefore received fewer public provisions and facilities.

The seemingly prophetic 1961 Master Plan map exhibits a very strong correlation. The places that received government planning attention in terms of public services and facilities supported the PAP. But the places that were ignored by the PAP government’s city development plan became vulnerable to opposition mobilization. It confirms one explanation of the PAP’s survival. The PAP’s efficient and satisfactory provision of public services though its professional bureaucracy was one factor that motivated voters to support the PAP, even when opposition mobilization was strong. In areas where this factor is missing, the opposition successfully sabotaged the PAP’s mass support and won the election.

**Explanation 2: Repression explanation**

Another explanation for the PAP success is their use of force and repression. The 1963 Coldstore Operation that arrested around 120 opposition leaders and froze the left-wing union fund
both crippled the opposition. The left-wing accusations were that the PAP survival depended on mere repression.

Was repression a dominant factor that sustained the PAP when the opposition was strong in 1963? If the answer is yes, then we can conclude that the Singapore case supports the argument that authoritarian dictators can use force alone to obtain their survival even when oppositions have strong mobilization power. In order to answer this question, we need to examine the 1963 election and answer the following two questions. Was the BS mobilization and organizational power seriously damaged by the Coldstore Operation in February and also the later freezing of union funds? How much did the damage from the Coldstore Operation affect the 1963 voting and the BS failure?

In order to answer the first question, let’s examine the trade union’s power of mobilization before and after the Coldstore Operation. The best way to measure their mobilization power is to look at the strike data. As I explained earlier, the pattern of occurrence of strikes in 1961-1964 exhibits political manipulation by the left-wing to create an atmosphere of crisis to discredit the government. Van der Kroef (1967) argues that the communists’ strategy to sabotage the government was to mobilize strikes.

The constant strikes, threats of strikes, forming and closing of unions, punctuated by inflammatory manifestos and pronouncements of union leaders, tended to keep the Singapore labor movement highly volatile, adding to the general atmosphere of political instability and polarization of extremes which the communists were seeking (Van der Kroef 1967:37).

Therefore, frequencies of strike occurrences and the magnitude of those strikes would demonstrate the left-wing’s mobilization strength. Table 4.10 lists all monthly strike data from 1959 to 1965.
## Table 4.10 Singapore Strikes 1959-1965 on Monthly Basis

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I highlighted months when more than a 10,000 man-days loss occurred in that month and the months when more than a 50,000 man-day loss occurred. From this, we can see a very clear pattern of the left-wing’s mobilization power and their strategy. There were two waves of strikes from 1959-1965. The first wave came in May of 1960 when the rift between the PAP and the left-wing began to be widened. Lee did not seek the release of the union detainees and the trade union bill favorable to the left wing movement was blocked in parliament. Ong took advantage of this conflict in the PAP and started to initiate the attack in July 1960 which marks the beginning of the opposition movement. Increasing numbers of strikes followed the rise of the opposition in 1960 and lasted 7 months until December 1960.

In October 1961, the trade unionists struck again. This time the magnitude was much higher than in the first wave, starting in October 1961 with 28,847 man-days lost and 18,324 workers involved. The official split of the left-wing from the PAP in August 1961 explains well the rising of this wave of union movements. This time, the movement started from September 1961 and carried all the way until November 1963 with an occasional two or three months break in between. Even during the break months, the most peaceful month still had more than 5,000 man-days lost. Except for two months, the man-days lost in each month during this period were all above 7,000. In this period, the average

### Table 4.10 continued

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<th>Man-day lost</th>
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239
monthly man-day loss was 37,699, compared to 16,532 in the earlier wave from May 1960 to December 1960.

But soon after that, in December of 1963, the monthly man-day loss quickly dropped to 4,312. From December 1963 to December 1965, the monthly man-day loss in these two years seldom reached 5,000 except for four months. The average monthly man-day loss from December 1963 to December 1965 was 3,440. See Figure 4.6.

Figure 4.6 Singapore Man-Days Lost From Strikes 1959-1965
From the period of October 1961 to November 1963, for more than two years, the strike occurrences were consistently high. I don’t see any sign of strikes diminishing after the Coldstore Operation in February 1963. Instead, large scale strikes occurred much more frequently after February 1963 until November 1963. Three out of the four months with the highest number of man-days lost fall under the period from February 1963 to November 1963. Between the time of the Coldstore Operation in Feb 1963 and the time of the General Election in September 1963, there is not a reduction of strikes but rather an increase of strikes. This means that the left-wing trade union’s mobilization power was not damaged by the arrest of its leaders. The arrests of opposition leaders did not diminish their mobilization power. Instead, the mass arrest became a cause for the left wing to mobilize more strikes. Therefore, from the strike data, we can see that the left-wing BS organizational and mobilization power had not been seriously damaged by the Coldstore Operation. Actually, it is after December 1963 that the BS mobilization and organization power was seriously damaged by the PAP’s repression. So after December 1963, we seldom see large scale strikes. But December 1963 is already after the 1963 General Election which was held in September 1963. Therefore, the repression variable does not seem to have affected the BS organizational power to mobilize for the 1963 election.

Secondly, let’s examine if the repression factor has affected the 1963 election and to what degree. Existing literature argues that the arrest of the BS leaders caused loss of leadership, and the freezing of their union fund cut their financial resources. So I examine how much man power loss and financial damage crippled the BS. Van der Kroef (1967) writes that the communists through years of struggling under repression had developed many strategies to counter repressive measures adopted by the ruling government. One was to create political martyrdom. Van der Kroef remarks that “The quelling of riots and arrests provided a measure of repression essential to popular political martyrdom” (Van der Kroef 1967:39).
Instead of abhorring or detesting repression, the communists actually welcomed the arrest of its members since it could create a sense of martyrdom if union members were arrested\(^{23}\). Then public sympathy and grievance of the public against the repressive government could be translated into ballot power for the communist united front parties during elections. They can also use the arrests to mobilize popular unrest and thus create more social disorder and a sense of social injustice to discredit the government.

As an example, Van der Kroef then describes how communists used repression and arrests in 1956 by the Labour Front Lim Yew Hock Government to win sympathy for the 1959 election.

It is clear that despite the arrests the Malayan Communist Party (MCP) front complex was far from destroyed. To the contrary: the broad sweep of the government detentions raised questions even in non-Communist quarters whether the government’s concern for security was not in effect gravely harming the democratic and constitutional process. As for the BS, the arrest provided new martyrs and the party almost at once opened its campaign to win sympathy for the detainees. Every agitation opportunity was seized, eg., when Barisan vainly attempted to manipulate a mass gathering called by various Singapore organizations to consider an offer of “atonement” by the Japanese government for the suffering of Singapore residents in WWII….When their steady denunciation of the London agreement failed to have significant effect, the MCP front, began to concentrate on the election (Van der Kroef 1967:63).

The strike data shows evidence consistent with this strategy. Whenever union members were arrested, there was a huge increase of strikes and union movement. Three of the four months with the highest man-day loss from 1959 to 1965 were April 1963 which was right after the Coldstore Operation and mass arrest of left-wing unionists; and October and November 1963 which was around the time of the PAP second wave of arrest of left-wing leaders. So, the arrests of certain charismatic leaders can actually help the left-wing to win the sympathy and mobilize mass movement against the repressors.

\(^{23}\) Very interestingly, Lim Ching Siong refused to flee to Indonesia when Lee Kwan Yew gave him an option in 1963. I guess that Lim could use this as a strategy to enhance his martyrdom image. He was probably confident that his party would be able to use this to win the 1963 ballot and then release him from prison. However, in 1969 when the BS opposition movement was largely diminished, Lim Ching Siong pleaded to be allowed to leave. He went into exile in London. I guess Lim’s martyrdom disappeared when he realized the BS’ strategy to mobilize failed in Singapore.
Lim Yew Hock in 1956 intended to create personnel loss of the left wing. He arrested the union leaders including the charismatic unionist Lim Ching Siong and thus created a vacuum of Singapore Trade Union Congress (Thum 2007). That strategy was not successful (Thum 2007). In fact, his arrest probably damaged the left-wing’s mobilization power and silenced the union movement. Figure 4.7 shows that the magnitude of strikes was largely reduced after Oct 1956. However, the public turned it on Lim Yew Hock in the 1959 general election. The PAP used unjust arrests and repression as an issue to mobilize support in 1959. Releasing trade union detainees and removing restrictions on trade unions was one big appeal in the PAP 1959 campaign. Lim Yew Hock lost the 1959 election very badly. So, in the same way, the BS might have already been well trained for repressive situations. They had learned how to turn the arrests and repression to their advantage by using this repression to mobilize anti-PAP sentiment in the 1963 election.
Van der Kroef (1967) further details the strategies that communists used to prepare for manpower loss as well as financial loss. When the first echelon leaders were arrested, the communists had already prepared the second echelon leaders to replace their positions. If the government banned one organization, they would soon open another organization and transfer all the fund to that organization. By using this strategy, the communists were able to maintain their organizational power under British Colonial Government and Labour Front Government where repression was the most
severe. Van der Kroef described how this strategy helped them to survive the most repressive age in 1957.

On Oct 27, 1956, Lim Chin Siong was arrested. ... On February 11 1957, SFSWU was closed down by the government. These measures failed to halt the MCP (Malayan Communist Party)'s campaign to spread its influence through the Singapore labour movement. ... Already in December 1956, lower echelon leaders of the SFSWU were preparing a new MCP labor front by capturing the control of Singapore General Employees Union and National Union of General Workers both with combined membership of 45000. Hence SFSWU dissolution hardly affected MCP. This indeed was typical of the MCP patterns of operations in subsequent years. As far as the government closed down a union, for security reasons, just as far the MCP would establish its influence and eventual control over another. They seemed to develop a knack in forecasting the time the one of their labor fronts would be banned and prudently they would shift their interests and operations and fund to another organization in advance. (Van der Kroef 1967: 37)

Compared with the repression in 1957, the Coldstore arrest of the BS leaders was much less severe. Left-wing forces might have already been prepared for this based on their past experience and have developed strategies to counter-act the personnel loss and freezing of funds while still maintaining their mobilization power to win the ballot. The actual fight was during the election.

To summarize, for the well-trained grassroots-based BS, repression and arrests of their leaders had both negative and positive effects. They lost some manpower and finance by the repression. But on the other hand, they also gained from the repression by creating political martyrdom to mobilize more popular support in the ballot. It is hard to give a general rule to tell which side is greater since it all depends on the actual situation. After the Coldstore Operation, the BS quickly started to use the situation to mobilize social demonstrations and protests together with strikes to discredit the PAP government.

Late in March, the BS organized a protest rally of nearly 10,000 which mourned the death of democracy in Singapore. Early in the following April, another protest was held during which, as the Plebian Express put it, nearly 100 families of detainees stormed into the PM’s office to

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24 SFSWU stands for Singapore Factory and Shop Workers Unions. It was an alliance of the left-wing trade unions. Before it was closed down by the government in 1957, SFSWU was the largest alliance of trade unions in Singapore. Lim Chin Siong was its leader.
protest against the cruel and inhuman treatment of detainees (*Plebian Express*, April 5, 1963). … Five BS leaders including party chairman, Lee Siew Choh, were arrested on April 22, 1963 on charges of having attempted to overawe the government by show of criminal force in connection with yet another demonstration on that day. … The ensuing trial, which included 7 additional defendants arrested later, bringing the total to twelve, gave the party a public forum from which, at length, it was able to command wide attention for its views and above all for its grievances. (Van der Kroef 1975: 55-56)

But very clearly, this time, in 1963, the political martyrdom strategy of the communists failed. Though they succeeded in mobilizing more demonstrations, protests, strikes and created more social upheaval, voters did not turn toward them. Why did the BS fail to mobilize its voters against the government in the general election only seven months after the arrests? It seems that the public’s attitude toward the PAP repression was dramatically different from their attitude toward Lim Yew Hock’s administration. The PAP was able to resist the opposition’s anti-repression movement much better than the Lim Yew Hock government. Why?

In order to answer the above question, it is better to examine who voted for the PAP in 1963 and why. As I explained earlier, the 1963 voting outcome exhibits a clear urban/rural division. The urban residents voted for the PAP. But rural people voted for the BS. First, we should examine if repression was more severe in urban areas than in rural areas, so that the BS mobilization was not damaged in the city. Were the arrests and repression mainly in city areas? Van der Kroef listed the people jailed in February 1963 as follows.

Lim Chin Siong, S. Woodhull, James and Dominic Puthucheary, and other top Barisan and SATU leaders, three executives of the small Party Rakyat (BS’s self proclaimed fraternal party in Singapore, with a predominantly Malay following, and elements of the communist infiltrated Socialist Front in Malaya), and of the Singapore “Rural Residents Association”. Included also were two vice-presidents of the Nanyang University Students Union and several others connected with the University, three members of the United People’s Party and various journalists, teachers of private Chinese schools, students, and so on. (Van der Kroef 1967: 62)

From the list above, both rural and urban union leaders were arrested. If the arrest had damaged urban grassroots networks, it could have damaged the rural grassroots networks in the same
way as well. So from the list of arrests, we cannot see a clear urban/rural division. Instead, the BS organized many riots and demonstrations in city areas to protest against the arrests. Since the repression variable is consistent in both rural and urban areas, there must be other reasons explaining the failure of the BS to mobilize the urban population.

From the voting patterns of rural/urban divisions, we can see that urban people chose to support the PAP despite the BS mobilization through trade unions and other urban grassroots organizations such as Chinese schools, woman’s organizations, hawker’s association etc. The urban people’s resistance to the BS mobilization was already demonstrated in the 1962 referendum results. In the 1962 referendum, the clear pattern of rural/urban division already existed. Large numbers of rural people cast blank votes as mobilized by the BS, while the majority of urban people voted for Alternative A which was campaigned for by the PAP.

In 1962, the PAP had not yet launched any suppression against the BS, out of fear that the BS might use repression as a means to mobilize more support in the election. I guess Lee did not take any action until he knew the BS actual mobilization power through the 1962 referendum. After the referendum, it was clear that the BS mobilization was not very effective in attracting votes among the urban population, despite a seemingly strong mobilization power demonstrated by the large number of strikes and campaign rallies. Then, Lee felt safe to launch the Coldstore Operation to further damage the BS grassroots organizations.

If the BS had not already lost its power to mobilize votes among the urban population, repression itself could not have contained the opposition movement especially against an opposition that had a strong mass base. It might even have backfired on the PAP as was the case during Lim Yew Hock’s government. So the repression factor alone cannot be the dominant factor explaining the PAP
success to contain the opposition in 1963. In his narration of the events in September 1963, Yang makes the same comments.

In the 1963 election, the BS was shown to be not as strong or as well supported as previously believed even among the Chinese speaking population. The political risks of a crackdown would thus be minimal. The first bomb came in 24 September 1963... The crackdown of Operation Pecah was considerably bolder than Operation Coldstore... On the same day of the announcement of election results, the PAP revoked the citizenship of Tan Lark Sye. ... On 26 September 12 student were arrested in Nantah campus. ... Next came the BS grassroots organizations.... On 30 September 1963, SCPA [Singapore Country People’s Association], SRRA [Singapore Rural Resident’s Association], SHU [Singapore Hawker’s Union] and two other hawker associations were dissolved.... Finally came the pro-BS trade unions SATU [Singapore Association of Trade Unions].... SATU had responded to the arrest by a protest on 3 October. This was followed by the 7 October order for a general strike. ... The Straits Times warned of an 100,000 worker strike that would cripple the Singapore economy (4 October, 1963). But it was a few years too late. SATU had long since passed the peak of its strength in 1961. Its time was up.... On 8 October a number of SATU leaders-cum-assemblymen, including ST Bani (Crawford), Lee Tee Tong (Bukit Timah) and Loh Maiw Gong (Havelok) were arrested.... The Annual Report of the Labour Department reports the strike was maintained “owing to a lack of support from its followers, ... was abandoned after two days.” (Annual Report of the Labour Department, 1963, p. 168) ... By 11 October, all workers returned to work (Sin Chew Jit Poh, 11 Oct 1963). (Yang 1997: 35)

The PAP was able to successfully crush the opposition by force in the 1960s because the opposition had proved to have lost its popularity. Repression cannot explain the BS failure in the 1963 election. Coldstore Operation and other acts of repression might have hurt the BS to a certain degree, but it is definitely not the dominant reason for the BS loss. The BS might not have been able to win the 1963 election even if Coldstore did not happen.

**Explanation 3: grassroots mobilization**

The third explanation for the PAP success to contain opposition and maintain their one party dominance is that the PAP set up grassroots organizations and conducted successful mass mobilizations. In order to test the grassroots mobilization explanation, let us first examine the mobilization power of the Community Centers. Second, let us examine if there is a correlation of the
PAP local party branch strength and the 1963 voting outcome. Third, I examine if the BS mobilization factor can explain the urban/rural division puzzle.

First, concerning the PAP grassroots organizations, we will only examine Community Centers. Other grassroots organizations set up by the PAP to build up support in the neighborhoods, such as Citizens’ Consultative Committees, Meet the People sessions, Resident Associations, etc. were set up later than 1963 and are irrelevant to this research. According to Seah (1969), Kwok (1979), and Lee (1976), by 1963 Community Centers were the only grassroots organization besides local party branches for the mass mobilization. Seah described the Community Centers’ mission to campaign for the government during both elections.

Therefore in August, the Community Center staff played an important role in promoting the government’s merger proposal. In fact the Community Centers (through the People’s Association) accepted ‘the responsibility for carrying out a publicity campaign to explain the issues at stake in the referendum’. The whole strategy of the publicity campaign was directed to ‘that part of the Chinese population who did not or seldom read the newspapers, attend political rallies or listen to the radio or rediffusion’ and ‘the objective was to seek out the undecided or confused voters, and to urge them to vote intelligently’. (Quotes from “the Period of Redeployment” in People’s Association 5th anniversary Souvenir, op. cit., p. 12, cited by Seah 1969: 49,)

Community Centers by the end of 1963 were already actively involved in the various dimensions of political development. By being used as an instrument to counter Communist (and Barisan) anti-political system views, the Community Centers were involved in propagating authoritatively-sanctioned values which included the fostering of a national identity based on the common denominator of loyalty to the country (Seah 1969: 53-54).

Clearly, Community Centers were used by the PAP to do campaign mobilization and propaganda for the PAP in both the 1962 and 1963 elections. The PAP Government spent an average SD1.67 million per year budget on Community Centers from 1961 to 1963 (calculated based on People’s Association’s yearbook 1976/77). The eighty Community Centers newly set up by the PAP
from 1961-1963, mostly in rural areas, were established with a clear purpose to expand the PAP grassroots influence especially in the rural areas.

In the next 18 months, the People’s Association undertook an expansion programme. Cheap pre-fabricated rural-type Community Centers with costs ranging from $6,000 to $8,000 literally proliferated over-night. The rationale behind the move was not hard to find. To quote from Lee Kwan Yew, at the opening of the Coronation Road Community Center on October 7, 1962, ‘these (the rural constituencies) are the areas where the government did not succeed as well as in the towns in convincing the people that merger is in their best interests’. Consequently, the government decided to build 100 Community Centers in the rural area. (quoted from Sunday Times, October 7, 1962, Seah 1969: 50-51).

But how many people were actually reached by the Community Centers? Did those grassroots mobilizations play an important role in the PAP 1963 electoral success? Let us find out the percentage of the population who were using Community Centers.

The University of Singapore’s Department of Sociology conducted a survey in 1968 about Community Centers. They surveyed people from the populated areas like Tanjong Pagar, Anson, Kreta Ayer, Telok Ayer, Hong Lim, Bras Basah, Kampong Glam and Crawford most of which were won by the PAP in the 1963 elections. In the survey, 77.5% of the people reported that there was a Community Center near their place of residence. But among the 1,389 respondents, only 314 (22.60%) reported frequent visits to the Community Centers. Fifty-eight percent or 806 reported never visiting a Community Center. Among them, only 13.4% of farmers reported frequent visits to the Community Centers and 49.8% of them reported never visiting a Community Center (Seah 1969: 208).

Even among the populous urban constituencies that voted for the PAP in 1963, the percentage of people using Community Centers was not that high. The survey was done in 1968 which is 8 years after the Community Centers had been established. How about in 1963, in the newly established Community Centers, and in rural areas that were not so PAP-friendly? The percentage of rural residents that Community Centers could reach out to might have been even less.
The People’s Association reported the number of people using Community Centers for various types of activities. It is listed in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11 Number of Participants in Community Centers 1961-1967

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. Of kindergarten Children enrolled</th>
<th>No. Of participants in sports and games</th>
<th>No. Of participants in vocational activities</th>
<th>No. Of participants in cultural activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td></td>
<td>3606</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td></td>
<td>4880</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td></td>
<td>5251</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td></td>
<td>5388</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td></td>
<td>3178</td>
<td>5355</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>11647</td>
<td>4745</td>
<td>7449</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>11491</td>
<td>5647</td>
<td>9744</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>379</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: People’s Association Yearbook of Statistics 1976/77, Singapore n.d.: 5-9

From 1961-1963, most people participated in Community Centers for vocational activities. According to these statistics, if there was no overlap of the population using Community Center services each year, three years’ operation only attracted 13,737 people by 1963. That’s a very small portion (about 0.9%) of the overall 1.6 million Singapore population. Seah also reported that according to the National Youth Leadership Training Institute’s survey conducted in 1968, only 1% of the population was involved in the activities of the Community Centers (Seah 1969: 207). Seah explained people’s reluctance to join Community Center activities.

This strong identification by the People’s Association with a political party, albeit the ruling party, certainly placed limitations on the Community Center’s capacity to involve the people in the various facets of nation-building. It had been admitted that a sizeable segment of the population alienated themselves from the activities of these centers because these people would not like to be identified with a political party. Instead of Community Centers being viewed as public organizations, the centers were regarded by these people as another adjunct of the PAP, a skepticism which was subsequently proved to be correct when the 1961 dispute burst into the open (Seah 1969: 43).

Clearly, by 1963, the Community Centers were not able to reach out to a large segment of the population by their activities, not to mention persuade them to vote for the PAP. Though the PAP spent
a lot of money in Community Centers to attract grassroots support, it is very clear that the Community Centers at least by 1963 were not able to reach out to a large population and penetrate into communities for grassroots mobilization purposes. In 1963, the Community Centers were not yet a well developed PAP grassroots organization.

Since they are not based on any ideology, class, occupation or ethnicity, Community Centers can only attract people by providing entertainment activities, facilities and services. The Community Centers’ ability to mobilize people in political campaigns would be less than well-organized grassroots organizations such as parties, trade unions, students’ associations, etc. The grassroots organizations set up by the BS on the other hand mobilize by ideologies based on class and communal identities, which will be more effective in producing grassroots networks. The Community Centers’ affiliation with the PAP also discredited their neutrality that further weakened people’s trust for them. All of this weakened the power of Community Centers in conducting political mobilization.

In the 1963 election, the PAP inability to mobilize was largely revealed in the size of its campaign rallies. According to Starner (1967), in the 1963 Hong Lim campaign rally, the PAP had 2,000-3,000 people in attendance; UPP had 5,000-8,000 attending; but the BS rally had 30,000 supporters (Starner 1967: 335). Due to such small attendance, the PAP finally decided to change tactics from rally to street meetings. So, it is safe to conclude that the mobilization of Community Centers played a very limited role for the PAP electoral success in 1963.

Second, in order to test the mobilization variable, I want to examine if the PAP local party branch strength had any correlation with the electoral outcome. I want to use quantitative data for this test. In August of 1961, many of the PAP local branches and party members defected to the BS. So, the defection rate in 1961 can measure the PAP local party strength in each district very well. Table 4.12
gives statistics about the 1961 defection in each district. I want to test if the PAP grassroots party strength can explain the 1963 voting outcomes.
Table 4.12 The PAP Membership Change in Each District in 1961

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constituencies</th>
<th>PAP members 1961</th>
<th>Members left the PAP in 1961</th>
<th>Rate of defection</th>
<th>1963 Election results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aljunied</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>75.86</td>
<td>PAP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anson</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>69.7</td>
<td>PAP</td>
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<td>43</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>79.07</td>
<td>PAP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>31</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>90.32</td>
<td>BS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bukit Panjang</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>74.76</td>
<td>BS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bukit Timah</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>87.72</td>
<td>BS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cairnhill</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>73.08</td>
<td>PAP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changi</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>82.76</td>
<td>PAP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chua Chu Kang</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>69.05</td>
<td>BS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crawford</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>83.33</td>
<td>BS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delta</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>80.49</td>
<td>PAP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farrer Park</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>70.59</td>
<td>PAP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geylang East</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>75.51</td>
<td>PAP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geylang Serai</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>90.90</td>
<td>PAP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geylang West</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>77.27</td>
<td>PAP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Havelock</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>85.51</td>
<td>BS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Lim</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>UPP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jalan Besar</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>80.85</td>
<td>PAP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jalan Kayu</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>88.1</td>
<td>BS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joo Chiat</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>76.6</td>
<td>PAP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jurong</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>74.36</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kallang</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>81.82</td>
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<tr>
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<td>32</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>78.13</td>
<td>PAP</td>
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<td>Kampong Kapor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kampong Kembangan</td>
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<td>81.03</td>
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<td>32</td>
<td>19</td>
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<td>37</td>
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<td>64.86</td>
<td>PAP</td>
</tr>
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<td>Mountbatten</td>
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<td>81.81</td>
<td>PAP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nee Soon</td>
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<td>91.67</td>
<td>BS</td>
</tr>
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<td>PAP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paya Lebar</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>BS</td>
</tr>
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<td>23</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>95.65</td>
<td>PAP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queenstown</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>88.89</td>
<td>PAP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River Valley</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>87.5</td>
<td>PAP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rochore</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>77.53</td>
<td>PAP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sembawang</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>80.65</td>
<td>PAP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Continue
If party grassroots mobilization was influential in the 1963 election, we should be able to see the districts with higher defection rates, meaning that the BS captured more of the party branches, reducing the chance for the PAP to win the election. The scatter plot of the two variables is in Figure 4.8. The scatter plot of the rate of defection and constituencies won by the PAP shows no correlation between the two. The distribution of the PAP winning districts seems unrelated to the rate of defection. In constituencies where the PAP won, the defection rate ranges from 95% to 60%, while in constituencies that the PAP lost, the defection rate ranges from 95% to 68%. This fairly equal distribution does not show much significance in the correlation.
Figure 4.8 Scatter Plot of the PAP 1963 Election Result and the PAP Member Defection Rate in 1961

A linear regression shows a slight negative relationship (-0.11) between rate of defection and possibility for the PAP to win the election. The result is not significant (P<0.162) as shown in Table 4.13.
Table 4.13 Linear Regression Result of the PAP 1963 Election Result and the PAP Member Defection Rate in 1961

Coefficients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td>Beta</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>1.589</td>
<td>.622</td>
<td>2.555</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>rateofdefection</td>
<td>-.011</td>
<td>.008</td>
<td>-.197</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Dependent Variable: the PAP

The correlation test also shows no correlation between these two variables. In the 2-tailed test, the significance value is 0.281. This is not a significant correlation.

Table 4.14. Correlation Test Results of the PAP 1963 Election Result and the PAP Member Defection Rate in 1961

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlations</th>
<th>Rate of defection</th>
<th>Pap</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rate of defection</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAP</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>-.168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The scatter plot of rate of defection and the percentage of votes won by the BS in the respective districts is listed in figure 4.9. Again, there does not seem a clear correlation pattern between the rate of defection and the votes that the BS received in that district in the 1963 election.

The linear regression (Table 4.15) and correlation test (Table 4.16) both show similar results. There is a 0.04 positive coefficient. But such a relationship is not significant. The correlation test also shows that there is no significant correlation between the two.
Figure 4.9 Scatter Plot of the BS Votes in the 1963 Election And the PAP Member Defection Rate in 1961

Table 4.15 Linear Regression Results of the BS Votes in the 1963 Election And the PAP Member Defection Rate in 1961

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td>Beta</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>.344</td>
<td>.168</td>
<td>2.047</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>rateofdefection</td>
<td>5.178E-5</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.025</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Dependent Variable: the BSpercent
Table 4.16 Correlation Test of the BS Votes in the 1963 Election
And the PAP Member Defection Rate in 1961

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlations</th>
<th>rateofdefection</th>
<th>bspercent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>rateofdefection Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
<td>.980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bspercent Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.004</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.980</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Even though the BS captured most of the PAP grassroots party branches and the BS assemblymen controlled 11 districts, people in the districts with the BS assemblymen and weak PAP branches did not turn out to vote for the BS, and vice versa. The four rural areas where the BS attracted the most votes, Bukit Panjang, Bukit Timah, Jurong, and Chua Chu Kang in the 1963 election were all under the PAP assemblymen. The rates of defection in those districts respectively were: Bukit Panjang 75%, Jurong 74%, Chua Chu Kang 69 %, Bukit Timah 88%. In three of the four districts, the rates of the PAP member defection were lower than the average defection rate, 80.49%. The PAP maintained its assemblymen and party branches in these rural areas, but they still lost the seat. So the strength of the PAP party branch at the grassroots level cannot explain the 1963 voting outcome. The 1963 voting outcome looks quite unrelated to the PAP grassroots strength.

Lastly, I examine if grassroots mobilization is a factor explaining the 1963 election outcome. Since the PAP grassroots mobilization power cannot explain the 1963 voting outcome, I examine if the BS mobilization power can explain the voting outcome. In order to further test the impact of grassroots mobilization on voting outcomes, I want to find out if the BS grassroots mobilization was weaker in the city than in rural areas.
I examine BS mobilization power in the urban area. Their mobilization power was first demonstrated in mobilizing strikes. The total number of workers involved in the strikes from October 1961 to November 1963 was 76,535. One strike in October 1963, right after the 1963 General Election, involved 27,775 workers. In 1963, the total working population was only 178,787 (Singapore 1963). The workers attending the strikes were the BS activists. How many more people were these activities able to mobilize through their families, co-workers, and friends?

BS mobilization power in the city was also clearly demonstrated during electoral campaigns. Yang 1997 described the BS mobilization power in the 1962 Referendum campaign.

BS held two mass rallies and 20 street meetings in 13 constituencies (Sin Chew Jit Poh 22 August, 24 August 1962). For some rallies, attendance would often be more than 20,000. As the PAP party machinery “remained weak and shaky” and had to rely on 25 half-organized Community Centers, (Bloodworth: 261), the mass media were extensively used to promote its own position. The BS did not need this to present its case to the people. It was fully capable of doing it using its own resources. (Yang 1997: 18)

The BS’s mobilization power in urban areas was also clearly demonstrated in two opinion surveys conducted by the BS related student organizations in Nanyang University and the University of Singapore, from July 12-15, 1962 and August 10-12, 1962 respectively. In order to demonstrate their mobilization power and discredit the PAP merger proposal, the BS particularly chose Tanjong Pagar which was Lee Kwan Yew’s constituency and Kreta Ayer which was the PAP Chairman Goh Keng Swee’s constituency (Lee 1996: 248). In Tanjong Pagar, a district with 11,939 voters, the BS was able to persuade 7,869 people to participate in the poll.

Among the 7,869 responses they received, 89.51% voted “no” to the question “are you for or against the Command Paper 33/61 (which was the PAP merger proposal)”; while only 6.41% voted

25 In all Singapore’s history records about this event, the two opinion surveys conducted by the BS related student organizations are referred to as the “Gallup-Poll.” Clearly, these surveys were not conducted by the American company, Gallup.
“yes”. In the second poll conducted in Kreta Ayer with 14,173 voters, they persuaded 8,424 citizens to participate. Among the 8,424, 97.13% cast a blank ballot; 1.26% voted for Alternative A; 1.10% voted for Alternative B and 0.19 voted for Alternative C.

In their newspaper Plebian, the BS celebrated the poll results as the citizens’ protest against the dishonest referendum. They also denounced the police’s intervention in the opinion poll and the Chinese newspaper’s refusal to publish the poll results.

The Gallup Poll (see footnote No. 15) conducted by the undergrads of Nanyang Univ in Dr. Goh Keng Swee’s constituency of Kreta Ayer was not altogether uneventful. The police turned up in full force to stalk the undergrads and to take their photographs. Four students were arrested for their part in the Gallup polls. Banners were removed by the police from houses. The students on their part after the poll was over, protested in their buses in front of the Chinese newspapers (Xin Chew Jit Pao) for their refusal to publish the results of the present polls and the result of the previous poll in Tanjong Pagar. They even refused to sell advertisement space for the purpose of publishing the results. ...Over 97% of adult citizens of KA returned blank votes as a protest against the dishonest referendum. (Plebian Vol. 1 No. 6 8th Aug 1962)

The project was orchestrated and conducted by left-wing students under the BS. We don’t know how true the opinion poll is, since the poll results were dramatically different from the actual results from the referendum held fewer than 20 days later on September 1, 1962. But this opinion survey clearly demonstrated the BS’s mobilization power even in Lee Kwan Yew and Goh Keng Swee’s urban constituencies. They were able to attract more than half of the electorate in the above two districts to participate and pursued the majority to vote in favor of them. The BS urban mobilization power was pretty extensive.

Quek (1975) analyzed the results of the 1963 Referendum and described the urban mobilization by the BS as very significant. Quek cannot explain the urban/rural voting division despite the BS’s strong urban mobilization. He can only attribute it to political repression. But then, he also acknowledges that the repression did not damage the BS’s mobilization power since its trade unions were still active and had mobilized strong strike activities despite repression.
It is highly probable that much of the success of the BS in its blank vote campaign was due to the influence which it exerted on certain mass organizations such as trade unions. Here it should be noted that the PAP claimed that the majority of the blanks came from “rural” areas (Straits Time, 14 July 1963). If this claim is true, it is possible that this might have been partly due to action of the PAP in limiting the ability of the largely urban-based pro-BS trade unions to organize anti-PAP activities. Such rural organizations such as the Country People’s Association and the Rural Resident’s Association, which petitioned against certain provisions of the Referendum Bill in Select Committee (Select Committee Report, 19 Apr, 1962 Cols 127-128) appeared to have adopted a pro-BS line in the referendum. (Quek 1975: 48)

In spite of the limitations placed on the unions, the contribution to the BS blank vote campaign has not been that insignificant. Although the BS dominated TUC was dissolved by the PAP (Straits Times 26 July 1961) even before the referendum campaign started; the PAP repeated warnings to the unions to abstain from politics. But there were 20 strikes in Nov, an extremely high number (Straits Times 25 Dec 1961). (Quek 1975: 48)

We can conclude that the BS mobilization was extensive and penetrated far into the urban areas. But such well-established grassroots networks through student organizations, hawker’s associations, teacher’s associations, woman’s associations, and various trade unions still failed in urban areas to attract votes in both the 1962 referendum and the 1963 election. Though they can mobilize demonstrations, strikes, rallies, street-to-street mobilizations, and produce propaganda, the urban voters did not favor them in either election. The BS mobilization power cannot explain the 1963 voting outcome.

In conclusion, through the above studies and quantitative tests, we can conclude, first, that the PAP grassroots organization, the Community Centers, played only a limited mobilization role in the 1963 elections. Second, that the PAP’s limited grassroots party strength did not affect the 1963 election outcome. Lastly, that the BS’s grassroots mobilization was strong both in rural and urban areas. But the BS mobilization in 1962 and 1963 was successful in rural areas but not in urban areas. Therefore, the mobilization variable from both the PAP side and the BS side cannot fully explain the 1963 election outcomes. From the 1963s case, we can infer that when opposition is strong, propaganda and
grasses mobilization alone cannot save the authoritarian party from being toppled by the growing opposition.

**Explanation 4: Merger and International Environment**

The last explanation provided by the existing literature is that the international situation and Singapore’s international identity struggles also helped the PAP to win both the 1962 merger and the 1963 election. They argue that most Singaporeans held the view that Singapore could not survive economically without Malaysia. The PAP also spread a communism conspiracy rumor that the BS was interested in merging with Indonesia instead of Malaysia (Starner 1967: 346).

Lee Kwan Yew also warned the voters of the possibility of the Malaysian federal government’s intervention if the BS won the election. *The Straits Times* reported Lee’s warning but purposefully avoided mentioning the Tunku’s statement two days before the election that he would not suspend the constitution even if an “extremist” government came into power in Singapore (Starner 1967: 329). All these rumors and media coverage created an intense international atmosphere that allegedly gave Singapore voters little choice.

Indeed, the BS was in an unfavorable international condition. But again, how much did the issue of merger determine votes? Would the BS have won if the international condition were not so unfavorable? Were Singaporeans --- especially the Singapore Chinese --- fully supportive of the merger plan?

First, I will look at whether Singapore Chinese, who constituted 70% of the population, were fully supportive of the merger plan and Singapore’s Malaysian identity. Was acceptance of merger and Malaysian identity a political manipulation or a popular idea embraced by the public?

From 1948-1954, merger was not of interest to the Singapore elite. When the Rendel Commission and Britain pushed Singapore for independence, the political parties in Singapore began to
consider merger with Malaysia as the best choice for Singapore economically and internationally (Quek 1975: 1). Lee Kwan Yew saw the merger issue as a long-awaited opportunity to oust the left wing from the PAP. Before the 1959 election, Lee visited Lim Ching Siong, Fang Swan Swee and other detained unionists in prison and persuaded them to sign a declaration supporting independence through merger with Malaysia. Lee wanted the left wing to accept his merger structure. Lee hoped it would discredit the left wing if they attempted to break this structure in the future (Lee 1998). In 1961, knowing the left wing would not support his proposal, Lee leveraged the breakup with the left wing and forced them out of the PAP through the motion he put to the assembly (Lee 1998).

But the Malaysian side was not as interested in merging with Singapore as Lee was. As a result, Lee Kwan Yew did not have much bargaining power to obtain conditions favorable to Singaporeans. On August 24, 1961, the PAP and the federal government of Malaysia reached an agreement, in principle, to merger. Singapore would have autonomy in education and labor, while the federal government would be responsible for defense, external affairs and internal security. In the initial agreement, Singaporeans were not given citizenship status; they were only granted national status. The national status did not grant Singaporeans the same voting rights as Malaysian citizens. But later, a few days before the 1962 referendum, the federal government gave a major concession granting Singaporeans full citizenship rights. Also, by this plan, Singapore would lose its fiscal independence and hand over 40% of its national revenue to the federal government.

The merger plan clearly was initiated by the elite and by Lee especially. What was the attitude of Singapore citizens? Quek (1975) reports that the left-wing Chinese would accept merger only for the sake of pan-Malayan socialism. The right-wing Chinese, mostly represented by the Singapore Chinese Chambers of Commerce (SCCC), supported merger only for economic reasons (Sopiee 1974: 93-94,
cited by Quek 1975: 1). The other non-Malay communities, the Indians and the other minorities, were pretty indifferent toward the merger (Yeo 1973: 19, cited by Quek 1975: 1).

How satisfactory was the Lee-Tunku merger agreement to the Singaporeans? Among the political parties, the Singapore People’s Alliance, the pro-Malaysia coalition, accepted the merger agreement. But among the left-wing parties, the United People’s Party took a non-committal stand and the BS condemned it as a “phony merger.” Clearly, this merger plan was not acceptable to the left-wing Chinese. Even the right-wing Chinese community, the SCCC, was not wholeheartedly in favor of the merger plan. The PAP did not give their support until August 1962 (Visscher 2007; Quek 1975: 42-43). The SCCC were concerned about the citizenship situation after merger. Visscher discussed the SCCC and the Chinese hesitation about Lee’s merger plan:

British reports indicated that he (Lee Kwan Yew) thought he would carry the English-speaking Chinese, Indians and Malay (37 percent of the population) but still need 22 percent of the Chinese educated...The stakes of the merger debate were so somewhat similar to those the Chamber (the SCCC) and the Chinese community of Singapore had faced in the late 1940s and early 1950s. They lived and worked in a territory that would become part of a political entity of which they did not yet know the rules. Citizenship was again the key. ...It (the PAP) looked to the Chamber because it still wielded great influence in the Chinese community through its domination of the pyramid of Chinese organization. But if Lee Kwan Yew wanted to gain the Chamber’s support, he would need to remove the lingering doubts of the Chinese community on its future status and political rights after merger. (Visscher 2007: 148-149, italics mine.)

Clearly, Lee by 1962 had not obtained majority support for the merger plan. So the PAP launched an extensive campaign to sell the merger plan. Lee gave twelve radio talks from September 13 to October 9, 1962. By emphasizing economic and international factors, Lee portrayed merger as inevitable. Quek (1975: 21-24) reported the three themes in Lee’s radio talks. First, Lee emphasized the economic difficulties of unemployment and stagnation. Without merger, he said Singapore, with limited land area and economic dependence on Malaya, would suffer more economic difficulties.
Maintaining that Singapore cannot survive politically and economically, Lee appealed that “we cannot put unacceptable terms to the Federal Government of Malaya.”

Second, Lee stated that merger was inevitable since an independent Chinese chauvinistic state in a hostile Malay world cannot survive. Third, Lee said that the BS wanted to frustrate merger because the BS, a communist united front organization was afraid of suppression from the right-wing anti-communist federal government. The PAP used wide-spread media coverage to propagate the merger plan. The PAP launched a series of explanatory radio talks in June 1962 in three languages and the major Chinese dialects. The PAP held press conferences on the change of citizenship status. The speech of Dr. Goh in the UN also helped to propagate the PAP view (Quek 1975: 30).

Besides the radio and press coverage and mass meetings, Lee also made an effort to persuade the leaders of the SCCC to support the merger plan. Lee, over a few months, frequently visited the SCCC’s Huiguan (會館, Mandarin, stands for meeting hall) hoping to use their network and support to win the merger referendum (Visscher 2007). He finally persuaded the SCCC leaders to support the plan in August 1962. Then the SCCC used their Huiguan network to help the PAP merger campaign.

Lee (1969) reported that many Chinese-speaking voters gave their support for the merger plan “because of influential support given by the Chinese Chambers of Commerce and other Chinese civic organization.” (Straits Times, 4 Sep, 1962, cited by Lee 1976: 7). It was not easy for the PAP to persuade the voters to accept this merger plan. Otherwise, Lee Kwan Yew would not have needed to design questionable choices in the referendum which could undermine the legitimacy of the referendum. Even the British Commissioner in Singapore thought such a flawed referendum was not a good idea.

He (Lee Kwan Yew) has always said that he must do so [hold a referendum] to avoid being labeled as the man who sold the Singapore Chinese to the Malays, but a phony referendum will do much more damage to his political standing (Moore, CO 1030/998:51 cited by Poh 2010: 158).
Lee Kwan Yew’s choice to hold such a problematic referendum showed that even he was not fully sure that the merger plan under the PAP agenda would be fully embraced by the voters.

Clearly, the merger plan was initiated by the elite especially by Lee Kwan Yew. It was not fully accepted by the majority of Singaporeans, especially by the Chinese-speaking population, at least before August 1962. That the BS got more than 80% support in polls against merger in the opinion surveys is further evidence of the Chinese-speaking people’s objection to the merger. Even voting for Alternative A in the 1962 referendum might have been a result of the PAP propaganda, and the mobilization of the SCCC network rather than the voters’ whole-hearted acceptance of the merger plan. Having Malaysian national identity was still not fully convincing to the Chinese. So a Chinese identity related issue such as the Chinese school education policy still played a big part and aroused a lot of support for the BS in the 1963 election.

A second question: would the BS have won the 1963 election if it had not been in such a hostile international situation? Singapore joined the Federation of Malaysia in early September 1963. Since merger with Malaysia already had become a reality in 1963, the possibility of intervention by the federal government disadvantaged the BS. The BS also failed to give a reasonable proposal for dealing with the federal government in the 1963 campaign (Tan 2010). But if those international factors were removed, would voters have chosen the BS instead?

This question is best tested in the 1962 referendum. In 1962, merger was only a proposal and Singapore was not put under the federal government. The 1962 merger campaign happened in a much more BS-friendly environment than did the 1963 campaign. The BS had launched a very extensive campaign for blank votes. Yet the voters still rejected the BS proposal, even when the international environment was not so hostile to it. So, the argument that voters did not vote for the BS because of the international situation is not valid.
The elections of 1962 and 1963 exhibited a consistent rural/urban division pattern. The rural people supported the BS proposal and the BS in both 1962 and 1963 while the urban people continued to support the PAP in both 1962 and 1963. The voters’ partisan choices were not affected by the changing international environment in 1963. The international environment in 1963 does not seem to be a factor contributing to the urban voters’ rejection of the BS. They had already rejected the BS plan in 1962.

Again, why were urban voters not mobilized to support the BS? Was it because the urban people were more pro-merger than the rural residents? Indeed, the rural constituencies that supported the BS were largely Chinese. The Chinese might have been more anti-merger than the Malays. But other than this ethnicity factor, would merger itself divide the rural and urban populations? Were the rural people more anti-merger than urban residents? If yes, why did the rural residents have more reason to dislike merger than urban people, especially the urban poor? Or was it because BS’s anti-colonialism ideology was better accepted among rural residents than urban residents? If so, rural opposition to merger only indicated that BS mobilization was better received in rural areas than in urban ones. So merger becomes a spurious variable. The real explanatory factor is still the opposition’s success in mobilization.

To summarize, the merger issue cannot explain why the BS was able or not able to mobilize support. Rather, the attitude toward merger is an outcome of the success or failure of the opposition mobilization. Both the merger issue and the international factors cannot explain why the opposition could mobilize support in urban areas but not in rural areas.

**Case Studies of Queenstown and Bukit Panjang**

In the conclusion of the above analysis, I stated that rural people were more receptive to the BS mobilization and to vote for the BS. But the BS mobilization in urban areas failed despite their
extensive campaign mobilization through trade unions and various grassroots networks, rallies and door-to-door mobilizations. I analyzed four factors and found that the other three could not explain why the BS failed to mobilize urban people to vote against the PAP. The BS mobilization power was pretty consistent in rural and urban areas as well as the PAP’s repression in both urban and rural areas. The merger issue is only a spurious variable. Only the PAP’s impressive social achievement in the city, not in the countryside, can explain this interesting division that we see in the 1963 election.

To test this theory more, I conducted case studies of two districts, Queenstown and Bukit Panjang. I compared a rural district with strong PAP networks and an urban district with strong BS mobilization power. In this way, I could control alternative variables and also look at life conditions for an explanation of the 1963 electoral urban/rural voting division puzzle.
### Table 4.17 Queenstown and Bukit Panjang In Comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Queenstown</th>
<th>Bukit Panjang</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% of Chinese Population</td>
<td>86.6%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban/rural</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of agricultural, fishing and forestry related production</td>
<td>8.19%*</td>
<td>60.5%**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of trade related population</td>
<td>17.4%*</td>
<td>12%**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of professional and technical related population</td>
<td>31.5%*</td>
<td>0**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of transportation and traffic related population</td>
<td>9.23%*</td>
<td>5.6%**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of clerical, service and other unclassified job population</td>
<td>33.7%*</td>
<td>21.3%**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population density</td>
<td>166,400 per sq mile*</td>
<td>1728 per sq mile**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assemblyman</td>
<td>BS</td>
<td>PAP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAP branch member defection rate in 1961</td>
<td>88.89%</td>
<td>74.76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS mobilization</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963 election results</td>
<td>PAP: 52.81% BS: 38.09% SA: 5.16% UPP: 5.88%</td>
<td>PAP: 40.41% BS: 46.45% SA: 8.17% UPP: 4.96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turnout rate</td>
<td>96.6%</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: compiled by author from Singapore Household Survey 1977, the PAP Bukit Panjang and Queenstown Souvenirs, Fong 1968, Nanyang University Geography Association 1969

*dated 1969

** dated 1957, figure might be modified if I find later data

Both districts had large percentages of ethnic Chinese residents. Queenstown was a typical urban region with only 8.19% of its population engaged in agricultural sector jobs.-Bukit Panjang,
however, was a rural region. More than 60% of its population was in the agricultural sector at this time. Population density was much higher in Queenstown than in Bukit Panjang. The population density ratio was 95.74:1, meaning that there were 95 times more people in Queenstown than in Bukit Panjang.

In terms of PAP and BS mobilization power, the PAP branches were more active in Bukit Panjang than in Queenstown. The PAP set up its Bukit Panjang branch in 1955, only one year after the formation of the PAP in 1954. In 1961, the party membership in Bukit Panjang was already 103. The PAP had built up a party network in Bukit Panjang. Lee Choing Cai, the PAP Bukit Panjang branch chair, won the MP position in the 1959 election.

Because of Lee Choing Cai’s close connection with Lee Kwan Yew, in the 1961 split, the PAP member defection rate in Bukit Panjang was in the low range, only 74.8%, much lower than the average defection rate, 80.5%. Lee Choing Cai continued to lead the PAP Bukit Panjang branch as well as serving as MP for this constituency. Under him, the PAP branch developed quickly. The PAP set up four sub-branches in Bukit Panjang and also more than twenty village committees to conduct local grassroots mobilization (PAP 1965: 26). Figure 4.10 graphs locations of the PAP branches grassroots locations in Bukit Panjang. The PAP sub-branches and village committees were well dispersed in most areas of Bukit Panjang.
Figure 4.10 Locations of the PAP Sub-Branches in Bukit Panjang

Source: PAP 1965
The PAP Bukit Panjang 10th Year Souvenir reported a very closely knit party network to conduct various activities by 1963:

The party activity in this [Bukit Panjang] branch was actively conducted. The Branch office is the connecting center. All sub-branches set up their own activities according to their local situation. Four sub-branches had executive committees, dealing with party issues in the sub-branch. Some sub-branch executive directors are also the branch executive directors. So there is a close connection between the village committee and the branch. The information connection from above to grassroots and from grassroots to the above is very efficient (PAP 1965: 26, originally in Chinese, translated by author).

In 1965, that branch had already developed into nine divisions: management, politics, culture and education, welfare, press, women, ethnic Malay, and ethnic Indian divisions. Each branch conducted all kinds of social activities such as kindergarten, Chinese class, chess club, dancing class, Malay chess club, basketball and Ping-Pong, women’s sewing classes and various other activities, Meet the People sessions, visiting villagers etc. Besides the party branch, the PAP also set up sixteen Community Centers (PAP 1965: 36). But the PAP lost this district to the BS despite the presence of an active party network in Bukit Panjang.

The PAP Queenstown branch was established much later in 1960. The MP of Queenstown, Lee Siew Choh, became the BS chairman in 1961. In 1961, the PAP only had forty-five members in Queenstown, among whom forty followed Lee Siew Choh and defected to the BS in the 1961 split. The defection rate was 88.9%. Essentially, the BS took over the PAP branch office in Queenstown in 1961. As a result, it was much harder to reorganize the PAP branch in Queenstown and to restart the party grassroots work. Liao in the PAP’s 7th Anniversary Souvenir Branch Report records that the PAP Queenstown branch faced a difficult situation because of the BS’s sabotage of the PAP branch and the BS grassroots mobilization of the public (Liao 1965: 5).

The opposition forces were very strong in Queenstown. They came up with all kinds of rumors to deceive the public and attacked the government with all lies. They also destroyed or
menaced to sabotage the party [Queenstown] branch’s welfare services to the people as well as the local construction work. But the executive directors of this [Queenstown] branch resisted their sabotages, organized and educate the public with the party’s government direction, democratic socialist policies. We worked hard and fought them with a lot of effort. Finally after three years’ organization and education, the public in Queenstown became aware of the party’s position and understood the issues about state and policies. So the party won this district with overwhelming majority in both 1962 merger referendum and 1963 general election. So the opposition forces were shattered and the BS foundation in Queenstown was shaken. (Liao 1967:5, originally in Chinese, translated by the author).

But in the 1963 election, the PAP won the majority vote with a 15% margin over the BS in this very disadvantaged district.

Why was the PAP in Queenstown, with limited mobilization power and unfavorable conditions, able to win, while losing in Bukit Panjang, where their party branches were much more active and connected to the grassroots? From various data, I found that Queenstown received much more public planning attention than Bukit Panjang. There is a large difference between public facilities of the two districts provided by the PAP government. I list all public construction in Bukit Panjang and Queenstown constructed between the years 1959-1964 as follows.

Bukit Panjang:

Twenty six public water faucets, two bridges, two drainages, one bus, street lamps along one street, one road, one Community Center, one clinic. (PAP 1965: 84-85)

Queenstown:

358.68 acres of community areas, 190 acres of residential areas, 6040 units of housing, 64 shops in housing sites, 184 shops in shopping centers, 4 markets with booths, 4 neighborhood centers, 2 primary schools with 4 buildings, 3 secondary schools, 5 school playing fields, 3 public playing fields and parks, 2 health centers, 2 Community Centers, 5 sites for religious purposes, 1 post offices, 1 police station, 3 filling-service stations, 2 cinemas, 1 office block/department store, 7 electrical sub-stations, 1 industrial area (Nanyang University Geography Association 1969).

Clearly, compared with Queenstown, the public construction in Bukit Panjang was much less.

Over a period of three years, the residents in Bukit Panjang received the benefits of only one road, two
bridges, two dozen water faucets, one clinic, and one Community Center. The government provisions to the Bukit Panjang residents were not impressive, but in Queenstown, in only three years, they received a complete change in their living environment. More than 6,000 units of housing, more than 250 shops, 4 markets, neighborhood centers, 5 schools, 5 religious sites, 2 cinemas, etc. all suddenly flourished. The provision of housing and various public facilities would produce a good impression of the government to the Queenstown residents.

The data from the 1977 Singapore Household Survey also speaks more about the public facilities in both districts. According to the Survey, in the Queenstown area, 90.4% of all housing consisted of HDB flats. In Bukit Panjang, 0% of all housing was made up of HDB flats. In Queenstown only 9.5% of the houses were privately owned. But in Bukit Panjang, 98.8% of the houses were privately owned (The figures are calculated by the author based on the 1977 Singapore Household Survey data). More than 90% of the Queenstown residents relied on the government’s provision of housing. But residents in Bukit Panjang had no such connection with the government at all. They were self-reliant for housing. The government’s other public provisions in Bukit Panjang were not so valuable as to create reliance on government to make a living.

A Queenstown story-telling book (Low 2007) records many interviews with Queenstown residents who moved into Queenstown in the late 1950s to 1960s. The interviews describe the Queenstown people’s stories, their life before and after moving into Queenstown etc.

An interview with Mr. Lim Kim San, then HDB director, talks about his visit to the slums and shows the horrible living conditions of the urban residents in the early 1960s.

Though I was 40 over years old at that time, I must say it was an eye-opener for me... It was an eye-opener for me to see the bad conditions under which people lived. ...It was very dark and it takes time for your eyes to get accustomed, adjusted. I came across one and I told him, “are you sick? You are covered with blanket.” He said, “No. I have got no pants on.” I said, “Why?”
“My brother has just taken my pants out. I am wearing briefs”. No I don’t think he was in briefs. There was no such thing as briefs at that time. You see how poor they were. After having gone around, Lim told his officers, “you see how urgent it is?” The smell and the conditions were terrible. Really terrible. (Interview with Mr. Lim Kim San. Accession No 526, transcript p. 134, Oral History Center, National Archives of Singapore. Cited by Low 2007: 28).

In 1959, it is reported that “250,000 people still lived in squatter areas and 200,000 to 250,000 in slums” among the 1.6 million Singapore population (Low 2007: 41). It is this population who suffered tremendously in slums and who moved into Queenstown. One can imagine the contrast for them before and after receiving these benefits from the government. For example, Mr. Phoon Hon Sun was a hawker living in a slum in Chinatown. He moved into Queenstown in 1958. In the interview with Low, Mr. Phoon described the slum situation in Chinatown. Low narrated the interview as follows.

Compared to the hovels they called home in Chinatown, what heavenly deliverance it must have been for those who found new homes in Queenstown. Mr. Phoon Hon Sun, 61, a hawker at Commonwealth Food Center, was one such Queenstown pioneer. In 1958, when he was 21, his family moved to a Singapore Improvement Trust (SIT) flat in Block 88, Strathmore Avenue, Queenstown’s first neighborhood. It was a momentous occasion for the Phoons, for it had taken them eight years to get their flat.

The Phoons were tenants in a two-storey, pre-war shophouse at Chin Chew Street. Six of them lived in one cubicle above a charcoal shop. That was better than the eight people sharing the cubicle next door. And an attic had been added to house eight more people in two cubicles, plus bunks in the corridor for Samsui women. “The surroundings were terrible,” Phoon recalled, “worse than terrible! When it rained, it’d leak! When you tell the owner, they’d say “Hai yah, use a gong (Hokkein: tin); after a while no more!” It was like that all the time.

They drew water from rusty oil drums. Sanitation was worse. “We used a bucket to collect the waste. At night it was very dark and there were so many cockroaches. But we had to reliever ourselves like that. Then once in three days the ye lai xiang (Mandarin: 夜来香, night soil carriers) in their trucks with thirty-six doors would come to clear it,” said Phoon (Lou 2007: 28).

Low further heard from Mr. Phoon that it was very hard to apply for public housing in the colonial and Lim Yew Sook administrations because of corruption. Corruption during those administrations was very pervasive. Mr. Phoon described his family’s frustration over the corruption and the inefficiency of the government.
To improve their lot, Phoon’s father, an itinerant hawker selling barbecued pork at Eu Tong Sen Street near today’s People’s Park Complex, applied for a SIT flat. “At that time, it was very hard to apply to SIT. You had to write letters in. You had to have “guanxi” (Mandarin: connections) with people inside SIT to get the flat more quickly. At that time, we didn’t know any English, so we had to depend on such people to type letters in English to apply for the flat. Must say how much salary per month, how many children, whether they were schooling, like that,” Phoon explained.

Corruption then, was not unknown. “I was still small then but I knew when that person came. My father had to treat him to food and drink and give “stamp lui” (Hokkien: bribe for the official to stamp his seal on documents). Each time he comes must give $10 or $20. At that time this money was very big. After eight years then we got our flat. After they drink a lot of “ka fei qian” (Mandarin: coffee money, or bribe). Actually, we are very lucky already. Because you must have a lot of connections.” (Low 2007: 28-29).

The Queenstown residents who had once suffered under the inefficient and corrupt colonial and Labour Front governments who were not able to build enough housing for the half million people living in slums and squatter areas. What a contrast when the PAP, in less than three years, provided them with houses for which many had waited for more than eight years. Additionally, they did not need to bribe anyone or to have connections in the government in order to have the houses. Several interviews from Queenstown residents recorded their happiness over the new flats and their willingness to pay rent and to bear up new challenges.

“We were very happy. We got our own flat, our own place to live. No need to see other people’s faces. Even though it is just one room and one hall, it is very big for us. Quite big, the room was quite big. Rental was around $40.” Said Phoon. It was an occasion worth celebrating, so they threw a house warming party for friends.

Assoc Prof Koo Tsai Kee, 53, Minister of State for Defense, moved to Princess Estate in 1959, when he was five, leaving behind the Killiney Road worker’s quarters where he was born. “We were on the third floor and it transformed their [Koo’s parents] life. They told me because they used to have to queue for long period to use the toilet and then also to use the kitchen. So there was a schedule like a military schedule. So when they moved to Queenstown in their own SIT flat, to them it was heaven they had arrived. So they had their own bedroom; one bedroom, own kitchen, own toilet, they separated the toilet and the urinal. So they were very happy.”

Goh Chok Tong, 66, Singapore’s Senior Minister was also a resident of Queenstown, moving into a three-room flat in Commonwealth Drive in 1962. “I lived in Pasir Panjang, at the 5th milestone, which was actually rent controlled landed property. But the property had no
electricity, no modern sanitation. We used the bucket system. Well, when I first moved in [to Queenstown], the thing that...amazed me most was the modern sanitation. I was starting to live for all my life without this modern sanitation, to move into a flat where you could just pull the flush and everything disappeared. That was the most, to me, amazing thing because I never experienced it,” said Goh.

Rohana Saat 52, stayed in Kampong (Malay, means village) at Tanjong Pagar before moving with her family to a one-room flat in a seven-storey block at Queen’s Crescent in 1968. “In the kampong, when parents or older people didn’t want you to go out at night, they will scare you with ghost stories,” said Rohana’s sister Suryati, 45. “That was because, at night, the kampong was always very dark. But then when we moved to Queenstown everything is bright with lights! It was so different. So no more ghost stories.” (Low 2007: 30-33)

It is not hard to imagine how grateful the Queenstown residents were when they were allowed to move out of the terribly smelly and crowded slum. They were frustrated with the former government’s inefficiency that kept them waiting in a long line to become one of the privileged few as well as the invasive corruption that cost additional money for bribery. The big difference in living standards and the benefits from the government naturally made them more aware and appreciative of the new incorrupt and efficient government which was able to satisfy their need for a room. Once they had benefited greatly from this incorrupt and efficient government, it would not be easy to persuade them to support the opposition parties based on ideology or even ethnic appeals. Their biggest needs for poverty relief were met by the professional government. Therefore the PAP was able to obtain overwhelming electoral success in 1962 and 1963 despite the strong BS party presence in Queenstown.

Conclusions

The majority of urban poor were like the Queenstown residents, who had benefited greatly from the PAP social programs and had experienced a transformation of living standards in three years after the PAP took office. Though the BS used extensive mobilization networks to conduct house-to-house mobilization, the opposition’s ideological persuasiveness would not discredit the government’s actual social performance.
Singapore in the 1960s had a fifteen percent unemployment rate. Twenty-five percent of its population was living under a minimum standard (Bellows 1968:26). It was these urban poor, together with the urban middle class that became the PAP supporters in 1962 and 1963. Most urban poor, who were class-based and cared more about their actual living condition than about communist or ethnic ideology, had little desire to support another government that might not be able to do the same effective job of providing for their needs.

The PAP was able to produce this impressive social achievement by creating and maintaining the merit-based professional government structure that was able to secure the most efficient provision of public social and economic programs. This bureaucratic system allowed them to attract the most talented individuals, secure their full devotion to the job, and leave them little opportunity to take bribes and be inefficient. As I explained above, the government structure finally produced benefits for the PAP to be able to maintain their authoritarian rule even with strong opposition in 1963.

In an authoritarian government, the leaders are not selected through fair elections. It is harder for an authoritarian leader to obtain legitimacy. How can authoritarian leaders remain in power if they are challenged by strong opposition? Due to lack of legitimacy, authoritarian governments would be more afraid of social mobilization by opposition forces than would democratic regimes. So, they exert all their efforts to contain social mobilization by oppositions.

The study of Singapore 1961-1963 shows that setting up a professional government can be a very important means for authoritarian survival besides using repression, media propaganda, and grassroots social mobilization. Without a professional government’s efficient performance to meet the needs of the majority of the poor for social redistribution and welfare, the PAP would have been much less likely to contain the opposition’s social mobilization in 1961-1963.
At the same time, perhaps it is the case that this argument only applies to a class-based society. If class becomes a less salient social cleavage, in comparison to ethnic, religious, or other differences, professional government and its social performance might not play as important a role in maintaining authoritarian stability as in the case of Singapore.

**Post 1960s Opposition Development**

After the PAP successfully contained the opposition movement in the 1960s, the PAP government encountered no serious challenge to its dominance. From 1968 to the early 1980s, the PAP won all parliamentary seats in every election. After the 1980s, opposition started to emerge. In 1984, the Worker’s Party and the Singapore Democratic Party (SDP) each won one seat in parliament. In 1991, the SDP won three seats in the parliament.

From 1997 on, however, the opposition was only able to obtain two seats in parliament. The Worker’s Party and the Singapore People’s Party (a split from the Singapore Democratic Party) have each had one seat. The PAP held on to seventy-nine seats. In the most recent 2011 general election, the voter turnout rate was 93.2%. The Worker’s Party won 6 seats. The PAP won the other 81 seats. It was hailed by the PAP’s opponents as a breakthrough. But so far, the PAP still controls 93% of the seats in the parliament.

I interviewed the Worker’s Party secretary to learn about the current opposition situation. Contrary to common knowledge, the secretary listed people’s mindset as the opposition’s biggest challenge rather than repression from the government. According to the secretary, the problem is that the masses are quite confident in the PAP and do not want to have a change.

The opposition finds it hard to attract capable people to join their parties and also to get the voters’ support. “The people are so used to the PAP,” he said. Another problem is that the opposition party is unable to convince the voters that they are able to provide them with more benefits than the
PAP. “The Worker’s Party looks at the long term, the system, rather than the short term gain. We need to balance between the immediate gain and the long term. But people are not interested in the long term. They only look at short-term gains. What can you do for my family? What can you do for my constituency? Do you have a 5 year (housing) renewal plan and an HDB urban renewal fund? We are only a small party. We cannot afford to do that. We don’t have the funds. Sorry. People are short-sighted. Everyone agrees that we need a balance of power to make the government healthy. But they don’t vote for the opposition. They are not willing to sacrifice short-term gains. The PAP is very smart. They offer all these favors to them. We need a balance of the short term and the long term. Power corrupts. But the people don’t see it” (Interview: SIN032311).

Clearly, the opposition is facing a challenge convincing the voters to defect from voting for the PAP. They cannot give the voters a package of benefits better than the PAP. The PAP, on the other hand, can use its budgetary resources to give benefit packages to voters. According to a Singaporean citizen, the PAP government will always give out some benefits to the people during election years. Since 2011 was an election year, in the government’s 2011 budget the PAP offered a total SD6.6 billion benefit package to the voters. It also includes a SD3.2 billion, one-time benefit package and SD3.4 long term social investment benefit. People covered in the one-time benefits are as follows:

Four hundred thousand workers will receive the Workfare Special Bonus. Tax payers with less than $120,000 income will receive a personal income tax rebate. The 220,000 families with children will receive the Child Development Credit Scheme. Some needy Singaporean students will receive the School Fund and scholarships. 1.3 million Singaporeans aged 45 and above will receive the Credit in their CPF Medisave Account. Voluntary Welfare Organizations and Self-Help Groups will receive total SD30 million fund. Two and half million Singaporeans will receive the Growth Dividends. Eight hundred thousand households will receive Utilities-Save and Conservancy Charges Rebates. (Singapore 2011)

The majority of Singaporean citizens are able to receive some benefit from the PAP government packages. It would be very hard for the opposition to offer a better proposal to attract
voters’ support. That easily explains why, for more than 10 years, the opposition parties have not been able to win more than two seats in the parliament. I understand the Worker’s Party’s dilemma at this point. They are seeking great ideas, but the idea alone cannot sell if they cannot convince the voters of its realistic benefit to them.
Chapter 5 Case Study of Taiwan 1980-2000

Clientelism secured the KMT dominance under a non-modernized society. But due to clientelism, some of the KMT government’s state resources, especially the local government, were captured by clientele interests. As a result, the KMT local governments were not able to effectively provide public programs. Once the society of Taiwan became empowered after modernization, the society became restless and gradually voiced its discontentment with KMT local governance. Local governance problems became a weak point for the KMT regime.

In this chapter, I examine Taiwan’s democratization process from 1980 to 2000. I divided this period into two stages: 1980-1986 and 1986-2000. Before the KMT lifted martial law in 1986, Taiwan was under repressive authoritarian rule. During this time, the social and opposition movements in the early 1980’s undermined the KMT legitimacy and forced the KMT elites to consider political reform for political survival. In this period, I examine both opposition and social movements to discover who organized and what caused the social movements.

After the KMT lifted martial law in 1986, Taiwan gradually moved from an iron-fisted authoritarianism to a one party dominance situation. Open competitive elections for local and national leadership positions were allowed in Taiwan during this period. In this second period, from 1986-2000, 1989 is the first year that democratic elections were held in Taiwan. From 1989 to 2000, the DPP adopted a “From Local to National” strategy. This strategy helped the DPP to gradually win the voters’ confidence in their governing ability through winning local magistrate positions and finally winning the
national election in 2000. So I will study the DPP’s path to win local and national elections from 1989 to 2000. Why was the DPP able to win the local elections and later the national election?

**Taiwan’s Social Structural Change after Modernization**

The KMT successfully maintained its authoritarian control with a clientele-based party structure. Under the one-China ideology, the KMT justified a mainlander-dominated central government free from any electoral competition. Using severe repression through a network of party, military, secret police, gangsters, and information apparatus, the KMT could identify and silence any potential political dissent before the political opposition ever had a chance to organize support.

The KMT also utilized local factional groups and the party apparatus to win every election at the local level, which further justified its legitimacy. The technocrats in the central bureaucracy designed developmental policies and promoted Taiwan’s economic development, which also gained the KMT government the credit of good performance. This party clientele plus developmental state structure seemed quite successful in consolidating the KMT one party dominance for 30 years. No opposition voices were able to be heard before the mid 1970’s.

Taiwan underwent modernization from the 1960’s through the 1970’s. Modernization brought social structural change to Taiwan’s society. Modernization first complicated Taiwanese society and created new social interests that were not salient under an agricultural society. After industrialization, Taiwan’s society became more complicated. More social interests emerged and were empowered. Many newly emergent social interests were left out of the KMT ruling coalition.

Due to this empowerment of the society, the KMT suddenly saw that the old clientele structure was unable to satisfy so many interests. Since they were not recruited in the KMT ruling coalition, many of the newly emergent social interests sided with the opposition. For example, labor is one of the social interests that was not recruited into the KMT political coalition. As Taiwan became modern, labor
interests began to organize themselves. Independent trade unions mushroomed in the 1980’s. Most of the trade unions affiliated with the opposition party (Chen 1997).

Second, modernization empowered the society through education and the enlightenment of liberal democracy ideas. Under modern education, Taiwanese became more aware of the authoritarian nature of the regime. The concept of checks-and-balances and government chosen by the people became more widely accepted. Liberal ideology also awakened the public to be more aware of their rights. The public became more willing to take a stand for individual rights. The earliest social movements in Taiwan were consumers’ movements and environmental movements in the early 1980’s. When citizens saw that their rights were eroded with little protection from the government, they organized themselves for self-protection. As a result of this awakening, many social interests began to gather on the streets demonstrating against the government’s public policies.

Third, modernization and urbanization also presented more challenges to the KMT for urban management. Rather than controlling a traditional agricultural society, after modernization, the KMT had to manage a more complicated urban society. The KMT had to provide various public programs as well as deal with urban management issues: urban planning, trash and waste treatment, channel and river treatment, environmental issues, urban immigration issues, population expansion, and housing shortages.

The KMT government, and especially local governments, was not fully professional and autonomous. The KMT found it hard to effectively solve these urban management problems and provide sufficient public programs at the local level. The KMT public policy failures in the 1980’s became salient issues. Social groups started to demonstrate against certain public policies. The opposition also used local governance and corruption issues to challenge the KMT in elections and parliamentary debates.
To summarize, the social changes after modernization presented many challenges to the KMT. Their party clientele state structure found it difficult to accommodate to the changes.

Explanations for Taiwan’s Democratization

Because the KMT authoritarian regime structure failed to address the newly emergent social changes, voices for political change started to emerge soon after Taiwan began to modernize. Angry societal demonstrations and the opposition elites’ political rhetoric challenged the legitimacy of the KMT regime. Finally, the KMT elites gradually opened up for competitive elections. By 1992, Taiwan had opened all national leadership positions for competitive elections. In 2000, Taiwan achieved the first government turnover.

What shattered the KMT’s stable authoritarianism and led to democratization? Several explanations are provided by the existing literature. First, modernization theory argues that social structural change from modernization results in political change. The empowered and enlightened society wants to replace the authoritarian regime with a democratic checks-and-balances system.

Second, it is argued that Taiwanese nationalism also helped Taiwan’s democratization. Because of the rise of Taiwanese nationalism and the awakening of the Taiwanese majority’s demand for autonomy, the nationalist aspiration mobilized the Taiwan voters to replace the mainlander-dominated KMT regime with an indigenous democratic government.

Third, the opposition’s successful mobilization aroused Taiwanese awareness and increased Taiwanese intolerance of a mainlander regime. The opposition Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) mobilized political rallies, demonstrations and movements that damaged KMT legitimacy. Due to a high level of social support for the opposition, the KMT could not repress the DPP and had to gradually give in to their demands for political reform.
The above theories only partially explain the puzzle, when we recall that Singapore has all of the above factors as well. I will argue instead that the KMT clientele party regime structure was unable by its very nature to consolidate the KMT authoritarianism in a modernized society.

**Existing Explanations for Taiwan’s Democratization**

- **Modernization Theory**

  Modernization theory looks at political change from a social structural perspective. Modernization empowers the society. The 1980’s is called by Xiao Xinhuang, a Taiwanese sociologist, “the age demonstrating the power of the society” (Xiao 1989a). It is in the 1980’s that we saw various social movements in Taiwan. After modernization empowered society, all kinds of social grievances coupled with the opposition’s political demands were brought to the streets. So, facing an angry society and political opposition with a significant amount of social support that could not be repressed by force, the KMT regime lost its legitimacy and finally had to consider political reform to regain legitimacy.

  Certainly, in my view, modernization aggravated Taiwan’s sociopolitical problems and also empowered social groups to pursue their own solutions to the problems. But democratization was not necessarily the object of their pursuit. Most of Taiwan’s social protests from the 1980’s to the 1990’s were targeting certain public policies rather than demanding democracy.

  The empowered social groups wanted their interests to be reflected in public policies. In most of those demonstrations, the citizens showed their grievances toward KMT public policies in various state management areas: environmental and ecological protection, market management, consumer protection, religious freedom, protection for handicapped and disadvantaged groups, labor protection, protection of women’s rights, forced prostitution, land property protection, etc.
Those protests targeted the KMT for its state management failures rather than its authoritarian nature. If the authoritarian elite had implemented effective public policies to address the above concerns, the society might not have risen up to challenge the authoritarian leadership. Even in a modernized and active society, the authoritarian leaders still have plenty of space to move around and appease the active society instead of taking democracy as a form of government. In the case of the Singapore government, the PAP elites have been able to find a solution to survive the pressure of modernization.

So modernization itself alone won’t bring about the authoritarian downfall. It is the authoritarian leaders’ failure to satisfy the demands of the society that is potentially capable of causing their downfall. Many of the above management problems were caused by clientelism. The KMT favoring clientele interests at the expense of the larger society produced inefficient governance and weak state capacity. Due to the KMT clientele regime structure, the KMT government could not solve the conflict of interest between the society and its clients.

Indeed, modernization brought social structural change which is instrumental to Taiwan’s political change. Modernization does change and empower a society. However, modernization does not necessarily cause democratization. In Taiwan’s democratization process, modernization resulted in many emerging sociopolitical problems and an empowered society. But the KMT failure to solve the emerging problems and appease the active society due to its structural limitation is also responsible for Taiwan’s democratization.

- **Communal Cleavage and Taiwanese Nationalism**

Many Taiwanese scholars attribute Taiwan’s democratization mainly to the Taiwanese nationalist movement and the communal cleavage between mainlanders and the Taiwanese (Cheon 1997; Hu and Chu 1992; Lin Tsong-Jyi 1995; Chu and Lin 2001; Wu 1991; Lin 1999; Rigger 2001; Lin
Chia-long 1989). The KMT was a mainlander party. The majority of Taiwanese, therefore, were ruled by the mainlander elites. The KMT implemented a Republic of China (ROC) ideology to legitimize a mainlander-dominated non-democratic government. But in 1971 when the ROC was not recognized as the legitimate representative government of China by the United Nations, the ROC ideology shattered.

Soon, the Taiwanese started to voice demands for Taiwanese autonomy based on their own identity. The Taiwanese nationalists joined the opposition movement and demanded protection of human rights, Taiwanese autonomy and democracy. Those Taiwanese nationalists were the major activists in Dangwai (the precursor of the DPP). Dangwai and the DPP used Taiwanese nationalism to mobilize social support and attracted supporters from the Taiwanese society.

Taiwanese communal grievance toward the KMT mainlander regime therefore drew the Taiwanese to support the opposition. After the mid-1990’s, Taiwan independence became a more salient issue in electoral debates. Scholars argue that Taiwan’s democratization is achieved by the growing awareness of Taiwanese identity and the communal cleavage in the society. Various voting behavioral studies also show a strong support for this theory. Communal identity is one of the most significant determinants of voters’ partisan preferences.

But were communal cleavage and Taiwanese nationalism salient issues in the early 1980’s? The communal cleavage was mostly salient in the late 1940’s as a result of the “February 28 Incident” in 1947. Would ordinary Taiwanese people, most of whom were born after 1947, still remember that incident and also strongly echo the older generation’s communal grievance?

Indeed, a large proportion of mainlanders were favored by KMT social and economic policies. But were the ordinary Taiwanese actually aware of those differentiated policies and did they perceive themselves as discriminated against by the government’s policies? Studies show that there was not a strong awareness of communal grievances by ordinary Taiwanese in the 1980’s. Wang Fuchang argues
that if after the “February 28 Incident” in 1947, there still remained strong communal grievance against the mainlander regime, the Taiwanese could have voted against the KMT candidates in local elections in the 1950’s (Wang 2008). But most voters voted for the KMT candidates through the local factional groups’ mobilization.

This history shows that the local voters agreed to give legitimacy to the mainlander regime, because the KMT allowed popularly elected local elites to manage the local government. Therefore, the local communal grievances against the mainlander regime in the late 1940’s were reduced by the opening for local elections and grants of local autonomy in the 1950’s. If the communal grievances were reduced in the 1950’s, we would not expect to see them still persisting in the 1970’s.

Survey studies about Taiwanese awareness of communal discrimination also show that most Taiwanese didn’t feel that the Taiwanese were a disadvantaged community in the 1980’s. A survey conducted by the Institute of Ethnology of Academia Sinica, “Taiwan Social Change Investigation” in 1984 gives the following result for the question “Do you think mainlanders have more influence than the Taiwanese?”
Table 5.1 Survey Comparing Social Influence of the Mainlander and Taiwanese (1984)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communal identity of the examinee</th>
<th>Mainlander has less influence than Taiwanese (% of total answers)</th>
<th>The same influence(% of total answers)</th>
<th>Mainlander has more influence than Taiwanese (% of total answers)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taiwanese-Minnan</td>
<td>26.2%</td>
<td>53.6%</td>
<td>20.2%</td>
<td>74.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taiwanese-Hakka</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
<td>55.8%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taiwanese-Aboriginal</td>
<td>37.3%</td>
<td>45.1%</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainlander</td>
<td>37.3%</td>
<td>50.9%</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>53.2%</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total excluding mainlander</td>
<td>29.9%</td>
<td>51.5%</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The survey shows that a majority (51.5%) of the Taiwanese population including Minnan, Hakka, and Aboriginals thought that mainlanders and Taiwanese had the same social influence. Shockingly, 29.9% of the Taiwanese thought that mainlanders were less influential than the Taiwanese. Only 18.6% of the Taiwanese thought that mainlanders were more influential than the Taiwanese. So, 81.4% of the Taiwanese population in 1984 thought that they were not discriminated against by the KMT government. What the general voters perceived was quite different from what the Taiwanese nationalist elites advocated. In the 1980’s, it was the Taiwanese elites’ perception that the Taiwanese were disadvantaged by the KMT government. This idea was not shared by the general public. Only 18.6% of the Taiwanese agreed with them.

In my field research in Taiwan, some Taiwanese I talked with were not even aware of the KMT government’s welfare policies that favored mainlanders over Taiwanese. In their perception, they didn’t see much difference between mainlander and Taiwanese. Such classification of population is regarded by many people I talked with as outdated. The KMT brought economic development and
prosperity to the general Taiwanese society. Development of small businesses brought more prosperity to the Taiwanese. Modernization lessened the educational gap and economic gap between the mainlander and Taiwanese. The KMT inclusive subsidies and welfare did not devastate the Taiwanese because the Taiwanese could also become rich from private businesses. Because of little income difference between the two groups, communal grievances were not strongly perceived among the Taiwanese in the 1980’s.

Not only was communal grievance not a common perception by the general Taiwanese in the 1980’s, but other survey research also showed that the Chinese identity was still accepted by a majority of Taiwanese by the early 1990s. In a survey conducted by Wu Nai Teh (1993) about the national identity in 1992, 65.4% of Taiwanese and 78.3% of mainlanders supported unification with China, while only 39.5% of Taiwanese and 18.5% of mainlanders supported Taiwanese independence (Wu 1993). From 1950-1990, national identity was not a prominent issue and the majority of Taiwan residents accepted their Chinese identity.

If the Taiwanese identity and the communal grievance were not well accepted by the majority of Taiwanese even by the early 1990s, what brought the change? Through a historical analysis of the Taiwanese issue in public debates, Wang argues that Lee Teng-hui’s Taiwanization policy is most responsible for the growth of Taiwanese awareness of the communal grievance after the mid-1990s (Wang 2008). After assuming power in 1988, Lee Teng-hui wanted to consolidate his power base in the KMT to resist the mainlander faction. As a Taiwanese, Lee skillfully utilized communal identity and communal grievance to mobilize popular support in order to remove the mainlander elites from the central power positions. As a result of Lee’s policy, by 1994, communal cleavages became a more salient issue. Another survey conducted in 1994 shows a dramatically different outcome from the survey conducted in 1984.
### Table 5.2 Survey Comparing Social Influences of the Mainlander and Taiwanese (1994)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communal identity of the examinee</th>
<th>Mainlander has less influence than Taiwanese (% of total answers)</th>
<th>The same influence (% of total answers)</th>
<th>Mainlander has more influence than Taiwanese (% of total answers)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taiwanese-Minnan</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
<td>66.1%</td>
<td>39.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taiwanese-Hakka</td>
<td>24.8%</td>
<td>22.4%</td>
<td>52.9%</td>
<td>29.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taiwanese-Aboriginal</td>
<td>32.4%</td>
<td>40.5%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainlander</td>
<td>38.5%</td>
<td>27.2%</td>
<td>34.3%</td>
<td>27.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>24.4%</strong></td>
<td><strong>23.6%</strong></td>
<td><strong>52.1%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total excluding mainlander</strong></td>
<td><strong>23.5%</strong></td>
<td><strong>27.8%</strong></td>
<td><strong>48.7%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In 1994, 48.7% of the Taiwanese thought that mainlanders had more influence than the Taiwanese. Only 18.6% of the Taiwanese had that thought in 1984. Also the 1994 survey has sample biases. The Minnan population, who are the most supportive of Taiwanese identity, is underrepresented in the survey. The actual percentage of the population who would feel the communal cleavage might be larger than 48.7%. Communal cleavage became stronger in 1994 even though the actual socioeconomic differences between Taiwanese and the mainlanders were reduced. It is a result of the elite mobilization, largely assisted by Lee Teng-hui’s Taiwanization policy. After the mid-1990’s, the Taiwanese identity issues gradually won more popular support.

Therefore, the Taiwanese identity issues did not become salient until the mid-1990’s. The communal cleavage between the mainlander and Taiwanese was not perceived until the mid-1990’s. The Taiwan independence issue became a salient issue only in the late 1990’s. When the DPP wanted to use Taiwan independence as their campaign issue in the 1991 legislative election, they were defeated soundly by the KMT in election (Wang 2004: 183).
Before 1992, therefore, Taiwan independence and the Taiwanese identity issue were not popularly accepted. The year 1992 is regarded as an endmark for Taiwan’s democratization. During Taiwan’s period of struggle for democratization from 1980 to 1992, Taiwanese nationalism and communal cleavage did not play a significant part. No social movements in the 1980’s were based on Taiwanese communal grievance. No communal riots ever occurred in Taiwan after 1947. So, it is after Taiwan’s democratization that Taiwanese independence and communal cleavage gradually gained more popular support.

Therefore, the Taiwanese nationalist movement gradually rose up and gained political significance as a result of Taiwan’s democratization. Democracy gave opportunities to the Taiwanese elites, such as Lee Teng-hui and later Chen Shui-bian, to utilize communal cleavage and Taiwanese nationalism to rally their political support from the majority of Taiwanese. The rise of Taiwanese nationalism and communal cleavage are a consequence rather than a cause of Taiwan’s democratization.

- **Opposition Mobilization**

Several scholars attribute Taiwan’s democratization to the opposition’s successful mobilization (Huang 1991; Lin Jin-wen 1999; Cheng 1989). Because the KMT allowed local elections, the opposition then was given an opportunity to mobilize support through the electoral platform. Starting with local elections, they successfully mobilized electoral support as well as street demonstrations in the late 1970’s and won a surprising electoral success in 1977. The opposition’s mobilization power started to grow in the 1980’s. They used magazines, later TV broadcasts, street demonstrations, and parliamentary debates to bring awakening to the voters in favor of a democratic checks and balances system.
The opposition’s mobilization is considered quite important for the KMT’s downfall. The opposition’s ability to survive the KMT repression, to organize itself, and to mobilize electoral support are considered critical for Taiwan’s democratization. Without the thriving opposition elites’ political endeavors and successful strategies to mobilize the mass, the KMT would not easily have given up their dominance.

The opposition’s political mobilization was indeed indispensable for Taiwan’s democratization. But under the KMT’s strong repression system, how could the opposition gain the ability to organize and conduct street mobilization? The opposition’s manpower was greatly damaged from 1979 to 1983 under political repression since most opposition elites were arrested and put into prison. Before 1983, the opposition did not even have a unified organization, not to mention organized political activities. In the 1983 election, the opposition also lost its popularity among voters and suffered a significant defeat in the election (Chen 1985: 106). Some famous Dangwai legislators lost their seats to the KMT candidates in the 1983 election. The early 1980’s were dark years for the opposition.

After 1983, the opposition started to form a loose organization to discuss electoral campaigns. But the actual organizational and mobilization power of the opposition were not established until 1986 when the DPP was formed. From 1979 to 1986, the opposition was weak. If the KMT had continued to repress and contain the opposition as before, the opposition would not have been able to organize itself in 1986.

In the 1980’s, however, Taiwan saw various society-initiated social protests and demonstrations. The social movements seriously damaged KMT legitimacy and reputation. So, the KMT could not continue the highly repressive and authoritarian rule as before. That gave room for the opposition to regain strength, after the repression, and re-organize itself and push for more political
reforms. Without assistance from the self-help social movements, the opposition could not have regained its power under severe repression.

Repression does successfully hinder opposition developments in authoritarian regimes. If it was not for the society-initiated movement that occurred in the 1980’s, the opposition would not have been able to grow into a full fledged movement under a highly repressive authoritarian government like the KMT. The opposition’s tactics and mobilizations can explain political developments after 1986. But before 1986, opposition played little part in organizing demonstrations. Those social movements played a more important role to push Taiwan toward democratization.

- **Conclusion**

All the above hypotheses provide some explanation for Taiwan’s democratization. But they are not exhaustive. Most important, all of those explanations cannot explain a critical factor in Taiwan’s democratization, that is the emergence of the society initiated self-help movements in the 1980’s.

Modernization provides a structural explanation for the emergence of social demands. But why did Taiwan’s society express its demands in such extreme ways? Why have we not observed such society-initiated demonstrations in Singapore? Modernization was perhaps a necessary but not sufficient condition for the rise of Taiwan’s social movements and democratization. Some other variables are missing.

I argue that Taiwan’s regime structure resulted in conflict between the majority of the members of the public and the ruling coalition’s interests. Thus, under a clientele structure, the KMT regime failed to satisfy the needs and demands of a majority of members of society. In the 1980’s, when society became empowered, various social grievances rose up to challenge the dominant regime.
Regime Structure Argument

I argue that the nature of the KMT party clientele regime structure could not sustain KMT dominance in an urbanized modern society. Several scholars have researched Taiwan’s clientele regime structure and discussed the damage caused by clientelism to Taiwan’s governance, economy, and society (Wu 1987; Chen 1995; Wang F. 1994; Wang 1996; Wang 2004; Bosco 1992). But none of the above scholars has made the bold suggestion linking the KMT’s downfall with this clientele structure. By the 1990’s, many scholars still thought that a clientele structure would keep the KMT one-party dominance stable. However, if we study Taiwan’s democratization process, it is not hard to discover that the damage that clientelism brought to Taiwan’s policy, economy, and society was a critical factor for the KMT to lose its dominance.

As I observed in Chapter 3, due to the clientele structure, the KMT ruling coalition’s interest diverges from the interests of the general public. As a result, the KMT economic and social policy provided little benefit to the members of the general public who were not in their ruling coalition. Also, as I observed in Chapter 3, as a result of the clientele structure, the KMT state interests conflicted with the ruling coalition’s interests. So the KMT had to sacrifice state autonomy in order to satisfy its ruling coalition’s interests.

Compared with Singapore, the KMT government is weaker, less efficient, and less effective. The KMT government, and especially the local governments, are not able to provide various public programs and manage urbanization as well as the Singapore PAP government. As a result, social grievances against the KMT regime from the general public accumulated.

When the political situation became more relaxed, social protest soon rose to challenge KMT public policies in various areas because the society had long accumulated grievances over the KMT local governance. The self-help demonstrations and protests then snowballed into waves of social
movements. The social movements seriously undermined the KMT’s legitimacy. Those social movements, together with concurrent opposition movements, pressured the KMT to consider a political opening.

Moreover, the KMT’s weak local governance produced by clientelism provided openings for the opposition to win electoral support in local elections. Local governance problems gave opportunities to the DPP to persuade voters, especially voters in major urban regions, to defect from supporting the KMT. The DPP utilized a “from local to national” strategy to break the KMT patron-client mobilization structure.

By winning local magistrate positions in big cities and counties, the DPP could cut off the economic ties between local factional groups and the KMT. In cities or counties under a DPP mayor, the DPP vigorously implemented many public programs to solve the urban management problems not tackled by the KMT government. As a result, the DPP’s good performance at the local level gradually convinced voters to defect from supporting the KMT in national elections. Finally, the DPP won the 2000 presidential election.

Weakness in KMT governance, therefore, is an important reason that the KMT failed to contain the opposition movement and to persuade the voters to continue supporting their rule. If the KMT had set up a professional state, like Singapore, which benefits the majority of voters at large with various public programs and better governance, the social movements would not have happened in the 1980’s. Besides, the DPP would not have been able to gain the majority of voters’ support by promising them better governance.

In other words, the KMT one party rule could have been sustained if the KMT had set up a professional state. I will analyze in detail how state capacity and the governance factor contributed to
the KMT’s downfall using the study of social movements and opposition movements in the 1980’s. I will also show how the DPP broke the KMT’s one party dominance through the local governance issue.

1980-1986: Opposition and Social Movements

From the late 1970’s to 1986, the KMT public policy failures were major reasons that various social protests were mobilized by opposition as well as societal forces. Waves of street protests against government malpractices and various financial scandals shattered the KMT legitimacy and forced Chiang Ching-kuo to consider political reform.

During the years that the opposition forces’ power was largely weakened by repression, purely self-initiated social protest still occurred. Those social protests had a critical impact on the KMT, pushing it to adopt competitive elections for political survival. I examine both opposition movements and social movements from the late 1970’s to the 1980’s to test how governance problems led to social unrest and gave voice to the opposition.

Opposition Movement

- Dangwai Movement 1970-1986

The opposition started to emerge beginning in the 1970’s. In the 1972 local elections, 15 non-KMT candidates were elected to the Provincial Council and 4 non-KMT candidates were elected as legislators. Later, the opposition candidates started to label themselves “Dangwai” (Outside of the KMT Party) candidates to run for local elections.

In 1973, four Dangwai candidates ran for Taipei City Council and lost. In 1975, the opposition published the first magazine “Taiwan Zhenglun” (Political Review of Taiwan). In the 1977 election, five Dangwai candidates won county mayor positions and 21 Dangwai candidates were elected to the Provincial Council and six to the Taipei City Council. Also in 1977, a Dangwai candidate mobilized the first political mass demonstration in Zhongli protesting against vote rigging.
Due to the impressive victory by Dangwai candidates, opposition started to coordinate more political actions. In 1978, Dangwai formed an Election Assistance Committee to help Dangwai candidates’ campaigns. Soon, the opposition published various political magazines, Formosa (Beautiful Island, the Portuguese name for Taiwan), Xiachao (Summer Tide), Bashi Niandai (Age of the Eighties), Chunfeng (Spring Gale), and Nuanliu (Warm Trend) etc. In November, opposition through Formosa Magazine organized a human rights demonstration in Kaohsiung City. But that demonstration was suppressed. The incident is called the “Kaohsiung Incident” or the “Formosa Incident”.

Soon, the KMT responded harshly against the opposition. Formosa and several other opposition magazines were banned. In December many oppositionists including Dangwai candidates, Formosa editors, opposition writers, and even citizens who helped to hide the opposition were arrested. In 1980, forty-six oppositionists were sentenced to prison. During the trial period of the opposition, on February 28 of 1980, three household members of an opposition prisoner, Lin Yixiong, were assassinated in their residence. The KMT used firm repressive actions to send out a warning to every political opposition.

As a result of the severe repression, Dangwai stopped any organized political actions (Chen 1985). But in the 1980 and 1981 elections, Dangwai candidates used the public’s sympathy toward the Formosa Incident to mobilize electoral support. Direct relatives of the “Kaohsiung Incident Case” prisoners, and their defense lawyers ran for election. Many were elected. Besides running for election, from 1980-1983 Dangwai members had few other political activities.

After 1983, Dangwai candidates found that public sympathy toward the Formosa victims had largely diminished. Even popular Dangwai incumbents lost the elections in 1983. Then in 1984, Dangwai decided to organize a “Dangwai Public Policy Research Committee” (公共政策研究會, GZH) to discuss
political actions among all elected Dangwai public officials. In 1985, the KMT refused to register the Dangwai Public Policy Research Committee (GZH) and declared it illegal. Activities of GZH were limited.

From 1984 to 1986, the KMT continued to repress Dangwai forces. In 1984, several opposition magazines, Chunfen, Bashiniandai, Qianjing (Forward), and Xinchaoliu (New Trend), were banned and their editors were arrested and sued in court. Dangwai’s publishing houses and printing factories were also banned by the KMT. From 1985 to 1986, several Dangwai elected officials were sued in court and sentenced to prison. To counter this repression, Dangwai intended to mobilize a protest against the KMT in 1984. But it failed due to its weak organizational power (Chen 1985: 151). As late as 1986, Dangwai’s organizations and actions were still being repressed by the KMT government.

To summarize, except for the peak time of 1977-1979, the Dangwai movement suffered severe repression from 1977-1986. As a result, Dangwai was not able to establish strong organizations. Also, when the public’s sympathy toward the Kaohsiung Incident victims gradually disappeared in 1983, Dangwai’s popularity started to decline. From 1983 to 1986, Dangwai was struggling to establish some organizations to coordinate the Dangwai campaign in order to achieve more electoral success. But before 1986, the KMT was effective in restricting Dangwai’s effort to organize itself.

- **Opposition’s Organizational Power**

As a result of severe repression from 1979-1986, Dangwai had very weak organizational and mobilization power. Dangwai’s activities in the early 1980’s were quite limited. Dangwai’s major activities were centered on elections. Dangwai in the beginning was only a loose association of individual opposition candidates. They started to coordinate electoral activities together in 1979. But then after the repression of the Kaohsiung Incident, Dangwai stopped all political activities until 1984 when they formed the Dangwai Public Policy Research Committee (GZH) to coordinate campaign activities again. But after 1984, GZH’s main activities were limited to campaigns.
Dangwai elites in the early 1980’s adopted a parliamentary approach. They chose to contest the KMT in elections and bring the KMT policy problems into public debate. Dangwai leaders therefore avoided street mobilization. As a result, Dangwai did not mobilize many political demonstrations from 1980-1985. The following figure shows that from 1983-1985, there were few political protests in Taiwan. It is only after 1986 that the number of political protests started to rise dramatically.

![Political Protests 1983-1988](chart.png)

Source: Zhang Maogui 1992; Wu Jieming 1990

Figure 5.1 Taiwan Political Protest Occurrences 1983-1988 Quarterly Data

After 1985, some street demonstrations were mobilized by Dangwai. But those street demonstrations were initiated by individuals rather than the Dangwai organization. After 1985, some Dangwai elected officials started to bring policy issues to the public and stimulate public protests. Demonstrators joined them because of their agreement on the specific issue rather than because of partisanship mobilized by Dangwai networks.

For example, in 1985, fourteen Dangwai elected assemblymen in the Taiwan Provincial Assembly protested against the KMT attempt to pass an illegal budget plan. Dangwai assemblymen
discovered some unjustified expenses during the budget review and rejected the budget. But the KMT intended to override their objections and pass the budget anyway. Fourteen Dangwai councilors then resigned their public positions and issued public letters condemning the KMT attempt to pass the budget.

The fourteen Dangwai councilors organized public speeches on the streets. Their speeches received considerable popular support. In 1985, another Dangwai assemblyman, Lin Zhengjie, publicized an extra large amount of bank credit offered to a KMT assemblyman. After that, Lin was sued and sentenced to prison. Before his arrest, Lin organized a thirteen day public protest. Thousands of people joined him protesting against the judge’s unjust decision. These demonstrations were not mobilized by Dangwai’s organizational network. The public was mobilized by each individual issue rather than by any organized mobilization activities.

Generally speaking, the opposition activities from 1980 to 1986 were quite limited. They did not have a party institution to organize and unify political activities. Many of Dangwai’s political activities were initiated by individual Dangwai candidates rather than by a Dangwai organization. In those years, Dangwai was a quite loose political organization, focusing on helping Dangwai candidates to run for elections. The Dangwai did not form an organization until 1984 when GZH came into being. But GZH was limited to discussing campaign strategies and coordinating elections rather than establishing organizational networks for mass mobilization.

From 1980 to 1986, the opposition was active mostly in electoral and parliamentary politics. There were only a few political demonstrations initiated by individual Dangwai members. Though the public was restless and Taiwan saw a lot of street demonstrations from 1980-1985, most street demonstrations were not mobilized by the opposition. The opposition had limited mobilization and organizational power during this time.
Opposition Campaign Issues and Parliamentary Debate

During this period, the issues that Dangwai used to appeal to the public were democratic reform, public policy, and social welfare issues. Ethnic issues were raised by some Dangwai members, but were not brought to public attention in campaigns or parliamentary debates. Huang’s (1980) has a study of the campaign materials used by seven Dangwai candidates (Lin 1999: 69). He found, first, that appeals for democratic reforms occupied 61.2% of the total campaign comments; and criticisms of the KMT public policies were 25.35%. Dangwai candidates linked the KMT public policy problems with the authoritarian structure. They intended to channel the grievances against KMT public policy into the pursuit of democracy. It was argued that the public policy quality could be improved if the KMT allowed more political participation (Lin 1999: 69). Huang also found the Dangwai candidates did not advance its appeal to urge self-determination or Taiwan’s independence (Lin 1999: 69). Taiwanese identity and self-autonomy were not salient issues in the campaign (Lin 1999: 69).

Lin also mentioned that in a Dangwai National Affairs Conference in 1979, Dangwai candidates announced a ten-point joint declaration. In the statement, democratic reforms and social welfare were Dangwai’s major pursuits. Ethnic issues were not mentioned in the statement. Like the individual campaigns by the seven Dangwai candidates, the joint platform of the Dangwai also hardly mentioned national identity issues.

The Tangwai (also spelled as Dangwai) in 1979 held a National Affairs Conference and announced a ten-point declaration after the meeting. Like the platform of the previous years, this statement asked for democratic reforms and social welfare. The rejection of ethnic discrimination did not even appear in this document. (Lin 1999: 69)

So, in the early years of the Dangwai movement, democratic reforms, public policy and social welfare issues were their major points of mobilization. In later years, the three issues were still important campaign platforms and issues that Dangwai officials raised in parliamentary debates.
Targeting the KMT public policy problems was an important strategy that Dangwai used to question KMT’s governance integrity. Through Dangwai officials’ positions in the parliament and other public offices, Dangwai officials were able to discover the KMT policy scandals and brought them to public attention through parliamentary debates.

Through this strategy, the Dangwai undermined public trust toward the government. For example, in 1981, Chen Shui-bian, then an elected legislator, investigated quality and delay problems in some Taipei public construction projects; he found some connections between some legislators and contractors (Chen 1985: 148). Another Dangwai official, Shi Xingzhong, the Xinzhu City mayor, ordered the illegal buildings of a KMT legislator’s father demolished. In 1985, fourteen Dangwai assemblymen found problems in the government budget. They brought this issue to public attention through speeches and mobilized considerable support.

Also, Lin Zhengjie’s exposure of the KMT assemblyman’s financial scandal caused the thirteen day large-scale street demonstrations in 1986. In response to Dangwai’s attack on their public policies, the KMT responded with repression. Many Dangwai officials were sued in court because of their political statements about the scandals. They were arrested and put into prison.

The KMT repressive strategy however stimulated more public rage and even brought large scale public demonstrations. Several political demonstrations resulted from the KMT’s unjust imprisonment of Dangwai officials who exposed the KMT scandals. Dangwai’s parliamentary strategy to expose the KMT scandals and policy problems was very successful.

In similar situations in Singapore, that strategy did not achieve a similar result. In Singapore, when political dissidents and foreign media exposed possible scandals of the PAP leaders in Singapore, the Singapore court also levied heavy fines on the accusers (Chee 2006). But Singapore’s public was not stimulated to demonstrate on the streets protesting against the court’s unjust verdict. Clearly,
Singapore’s public had more trust in the government than Taiwan’s public. As a result, Singapore’s public did not pay much attention to the scandal stories and the opposition’s critical voices.

Taiwan’s public was more responsive to the opposition’s criticism of the KMT. So the opposition could successfully use a few opposition seats in the parliament to stimulate public reaction by questioning the KMT government’s public policies. In Singapore, the opposition does not have this opportunity. In my interview with the Worker’s Party official, he told me the difficulties of challenging the PAP in parliament debates. “If you have one voice, eight different voices will come out from the PAP MPs to challenge you” (Interview: SIN032311). It seems the opposition can not win a parliamentary debate. He also told me of the difficulties in arousing the public’s attention. The Taiwan public’s strong responses to criticism of policies and government scandals gave power to the Dangwai opposition to successfully use public policy issues to challenge the KMT.

- **Conclusion**

To summarize, the opposition movement from 1980-1986 was under severe repression from the KMT. As a result, the opposition did not have strong organizational power to mobilize street demonstrations. By 1985, Dangwai’s activities were still limited to coordinating campaign activities and they had mobilized few public demonstrations. In political campaigns, the opposition mostly used issues such as democratic reform, public policy and social welfare to attract votes.

The opposition also used parliamentary debate to bring some public policy problems to public attention. The public responded quite strongly to the opposition’s criticism of KMT governance and integrity. Several street mobilizations occurred as a result of Dangwai’s exposure of the KMT scandals. However, generally speaking, despite stimulating a few public demonstrations, before 1986 opposition power was still weak. Most of the street demonstrations in the 1980’s were not organized by the opposition. They were initiated by groups of angry individuals.
Social Movements

By 1980, some self-initiated social movements had started to emerge. Most demonstrations were begun by rural villagers or urban dwellers who suffered under certain public policies. Some started to protest by themselves and were soon joined by others. The individuals’ protests soon snowballed into large-scale social protest. Encouraged by their action, other social interests also started to voice their concerns through demonstrations. Soon various grievances found their outlet on the streets. According to the sociologist, Xiao Xinhuang, there were 14 categories of social protest in the 1980’s. I listed the categories of protests and their starting year as follows.

**Table 5.3 Types of Taiwan Social Movements and Starting Years**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Social protest</th>
<th>Starting Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consumers’ Rights Movement</td>
<td>1980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local anti-pollution demonstrations</td>
<td>1980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecological protection movement</td>
<td>1982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women’s rights movement: anti forced prostitution, etc.</td>
<td>1982</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginals’ rights movement</td>
<td>1983</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students’ movement: campus democracy</td>
<td>1986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New testament church protest for religious freedom</td>
<td>1986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterans’ requests for permits to visit China</td>
<td>1987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterans’ self-help movement for welfare</td>
<td>1987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers’ rights movement</td>
<td>1987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmers’ protests</td>
<td>1987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human rights movement against political oppression</td>
<td>1987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handicapped and disadvantaged groups’ demonstration for welfare</td>
<td>1987</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor movement</td>
<td>1987</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Xiao Xinhuang 1989: 16

In the 1980’s, the KMT faced a very angry society. Various social interests went on the street to express their grievances. Zhang Maogui observes that in the 1980’s “you almost could not find any quiet and conservative social group in Taiwan except for the military, police, and public servants. Almost every social layer was voicing grievances, protests, petitions, and objections to the government;
and also new social interests were emerging.” (Zhang 1989: 11, originally in Chinese, translated by the author).

According to Zhang, there were about 2,890 self-help demonstrations in Taiwan from 1983 to 1988 (Zhang 1989: 11). The consumers’ rights and environmental protection movements were the earliest social protest. More social protest occurred in 1986 and 1987 after the KMT lifted martial law and relaxed political oppression. In the years 1986 and 1987 alone, respectively 1,210 and 1,835 incidents of social unrest were reported by the police (Zhang 1989: 12).

One of the Taiwanese residents in Keelung remembered those restless days in the 1980’s. “We saw demonstrations on the streets frequently. In those days, if people heard anything, they went on the street and demonstrated” (Interview: TW30211). The emergence of social movements in the 1980’s played a critical role in shaping the KMT decision to relax authoritarian control and gradually open up for competitive elections. I want to analyze the characteristics of social movements in the 1980’s and then trace the cause of the strong rage burning against the KMT in the 1980’s.

- **Characteristics of Social Movements in 1980**

As I observed in Chapter 4, Singapore’s social unrest in the 1960’s was largely mobilized by the opposition, the BS party and the BS-based labor unions. So in Singapore’s strike data, we find a very strong correlation between the political events and labor strikes. Because the labor movements were mobilized by the opposition, the social movements were largely quieted after the PAP destroyed the BS and the BS-related labor unions organizational power. After 1963, Singapore did not see waves of social protest anymore. Clearly Singapore’s social movements were not originated in the society out of grievance toward the government. Demonstrations and strikes in Singapore in the 1960’s did not shatter PAP legitimacy.
In the case of Taiwan, however, I found that the social movements were quite different from Singapore in the 1960’s. Taiwan’s social movements basically originated in the society itself (originally by angry individuals) out of various social grievances against the KMT government. The social movements in Taiwan in the 1980’s largely undermined KMT legitimacy. Several sociologists, Xiao Xinhuang, Zhang Maogui, and Wu Jiemin have conducted a data analysis of Taiwan’s social movements in the 1980’s. Their findings are consistent with each other. My findings are largely drawn from their data results.

1. **Low level of political involvement**

   Taiwan’s social demonstrations had little political involvement, especially from 1980 to 1985. The demonstrations were not mobilized by any political groups or due to the pursuit of any political agenda. So Taiwan’s social movement data show a very different pattern from Singapore. Taiwan’s social protests are listed in Figure 5.2.

![Total Protests](chart.png)

Source: Zhang Maogui 1992; Wu Jieming 1990

**Figure 5.2 Taiwan Total Social Protest Occurrences 1983-1988 Quarterly Data**
Clearly, the incidents of protests steadily increased. There are no dramatic ups and downs as in the Singapore strikes data. Also, there is no clear connection between the major political events and the social protests. In 1984, the KMT launched several attacks on the Dangwai magazines and arrested Dangwai editors and writers. In 1985, the KMT arrested several Dangwai elected public officials for political reasons. All these political events did not cause any surge of social movements. It shows that the opposition was not the main organizers of the social protests.

As I explained earlier, under the KMT, after the Kaoshiung Incident, Dangwai’s organizational power in the early 1980’s was very weak. The opposition was not able to mobilize social protest. Also during the early 1980’s, the mainstream of Dangwai elites represented by Kang Ningxiang avoided the street mobilization approach and adopted the parliamentary approach. That also explains why Dangwai was quite inactive in mobilizing street demonstrations.

Source: Zhang Maogui 1992; Wu Jieming 1990

Figure 5.3 Taiwan Classified Social protest 1983-1988 Quarterly Data
Zhang Maogui and Wu Jieming classified all social demonstrations from 1983 to 1988 into five categories: labor demonstrations, environmental demonstrations, demonstrations for special interests, political demonstrations and demonstrations related to livelihood. Figure 5.3 shows the trends of each type of protests. According to this data, political demonstrations were a small portion of all social demonstrations. Before 1986, the political protests mobilized by the opposition were quite few. The occurrences of political demonstration were lower than livelihood related protests, environmental protests, and labor protests. After 1986 when Dangwai gained more organizational power and formed the DPP, political protests started to rise dramatically. From 1986-1988, political protests became the second biggest type of demonstrations.

Even among the political protests, only a small number were organized by political organizations such as Dangwai. Zhang shows the number of political protests with a political party or social organization involvement. Among the 490 political protests, only 228 were organized by Dangwai or the DPP. One hundred twenty-eight political protests were initiated by social organizations and 17 were organized by other political opposition parties. One hundred seventeen of the political protests were not affiliated with any social or political organizations (Zhang 1992: 28).

Dangwai and the DPP were only involved with 46.5% of the total political protests that occurred from 1983 to 1988. If we include the other opposition political mobilization as well, only 50% of the political protests were mobilized by the opposition. Social organizations mobilized 26.1% of the political protests. The rest, 23.9% of political protests, were merely self-initiated protests without any organizational involvement.
The political opposition was therefore not the major organizer of social protests. Especially in the years from 1980 to 1985, when the opposition’s organizational power was weak, the non-political social movements were the major forces on the streets that weakened the KMT legitimacy.

2. Low organizational involvement

Not only were the demonstrations not mobilized by political organizations, but most demonstrations were not organized by any existing social organizations. The Taiwan KMT regime, like the Singapore PAP regime, adopted a corporatist structure to control social organizations. As a result, in the early 1980’s all existing social organizations were under the strict control of the KMT regime. These organizations were not willing to or capable of mobilizing any social protest. Even though the KMT regime controlled the social organizations, and the social elites, the society still broke out in demonstrations. The social protests in the 1980’s were not initiated by any of the KMT controlled social organizations. Table 5.4 shows data about the social protest involvement with social organizations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Social protest</th>
<th>Organization involved Protests</th>
<th>% of Protests with organizational involvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>335</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>733</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>18.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>1172</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>24.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Zhang 1992: 137

Only a small portion of the protests had organizational involvement. In 1988, only 24.8% of the social protests involved some organization. In the early stages of social movements from 1983 to 1986, only 5.72% of all the social protests had group support. Zhang’s research shows that in the early years, the protests were initiated by groups of individuals, the so-called self-organized groups (Zhang 1990: 29).
The social movements in Taiwan in the 1980’s were also called the “self-help movement” by sociologists in Taiwan. The protests were organized by the victims of KMT public policies who wanted to protect their own rights through extralegal “self-help” demonstrations. As the protests developed, some organizations were formed such as the Aboriginal’s Rights Protection Association, trade unions, Consumer’s Rights Association, etc. These self-organized social groups facilitated social protests in later stages.

Therefore, after 1987, we saw greater involvement by organizations. But generally speaking, group involvement in social movements was low. Zhang observes that most of the social protesters, especially livelihood-related protesters, never formed any organizations (Zhang MG, 1992: 137). Most protests were self-initiated by a group of angry victims without elite mobilization. Later, after the grievances were removed, the movements also disappeared.

Because there was low organizational involvement in those demonstrations, the KMT could not repress the social movements by destroying the organizations behind the demonstrations, as Singapore’s PAP did in 1963. Even though the social movements lacked organizational power, the demonstrations from the angry mass alone were significant enough to undermine KMT legitimacy and pressured them to consider political liberalization.

3. **Most protests were caused by local governance problems.**

The majority of the social protests were against specific public policies. Figure 5.3 shows that demonstrations related to livelihood were the most common types of demonstrations in the 1980’s. There were a total of 1,052 social protests related to livelihood, which is 36.3% of the total. Zhang defined “demonstrations related to livelihood” as follows: “it refers to protests from people whose livelihood is threatened or damaged due to the action or inaction of governmental or nongovernmental organizations.
The most common demonstrations in this category are peddlers’ demonstrations against government’s revoking their license; dweller’s demonstrations against the government’s demolishing of their illegal constructions for housing or herding; residents’ protests for serious losses due to the government’s public construction plan.” Zhang observes that most of the livelihood protests were caused by grievances against governmental actions, especially grievances over local governance. According to Zhang, most of the protests were caused by the following governance problems:

1) The government’s failure to protect public and private properties or problems in rule of law. The government failed to prevent trespassing of certain public properties which damaged private interests. The government failed to regulate housing construction for many years. Then suddenly, the government required demolishment of all illegal construction for many households. About 22% of the livelihood related protests were caused by this problem.

2) Problems and disputes about public programs, such as prolonged construction that damaged urban living, disputes about compensation plans, and urban planning disputes, etc. 30% of the protests were caused by these grievances.

3) Problems in the government economic and administrative regulations, such as licensing and market regulation. About 25% of the protests were caused by this problem. 

(Zhang 1992: 71-73, originally in Chinese, translation mine)

More than 75% of the livelihood protests were related to the above three grievances. The society was angry with the KMT’s inability to implement rule of law, the unfairness of public policies and the problems in public programs. All the above problems were caused by the KMT weak state capacity at the local level.

The second largest category of social protests was environmental protests. The KMT government failed to implement environmental protection policies. Industries produced pollution that damaged the living environment of the residents. The residents who suffered from environmental damages protested against the government’s industrial policies.

From the 148 environmental protests from 1982 to 1985, 35.1% were caused by the government’s failure to handle environmental problems (Lin 1988: 106). When environmental damage started to occur, the government agencies failed to take appropriate measures to limit the damage.
When the damage was reported, governmental offices procrastinated or shifted the burdens to other agencies and thus allowed the problem to deteriorate.

The reasons for the KMT’s ineffective environmental governance were institutional. Lin attributed the problems to weaknesses in the KMT bureaucracy, such as unclear responsibility lines, limited budgets, limited equipment, inefficient staff, low levels of technology, lack of information, and lack of coordination among government offices (Lin 1988: 107). Clearly the KMT bureaucracy suffered from a low state capacity due to the shortage of funds and a low level of professionalism. Besides the bureaucracy’s institutional problems, the second major reason for environmental problems was lack of laws and regulations (Lin 1988: 111). There were no clear laws, regulations, or policies to address the environmental issues. Lack of regulations was the cause of 8.1% of the social protests.

Zhang further provides deep political reasons for the emergence of environmental problems. Because public property was allowed by the KMT government to be appropriated by its clients in local factional groups, the KMT state capacity to administer the rule of law and justice at the local level was weakened. Since illegal embezzlement was not punished by the government based on the rule of law, other people began to follow suit and override laws and embezzle public property. As a result, at the local level, the KMT government could not implement the rule of law, maintain economic and social order, or protect public properties.

When the embezzlement of public properties accumulated to a point that endangered the public living environment, the residents bore the costs of the damage to public goods. Finally, some residents who suffered most from the damage started to protest on the street in order to arouse the attention of the government (Zhang 1992: 74). Therefore, in Zhang’s analysis, in the end, the weak state capacity at the local level is the ultimate reason that caused environmental problems and consequently stimulated the environmental protests.
Among all the protests from 1983-1988, more than 58% were livelihood-related protests and environmental protests. All the livelihood-related and environmental protests targeted KMT governance problems rather than the KMT’s authoritarian nature. Only 17% of the total protests from 1983-1988 were political protests. In the early stages from 1983 to 1985, the governance related grievances were an even bigger share of the total protests. From 1983-1985, the livelihood-related and environmental protests amounted to 65% of the total protests. The political protests were only 7% of the total protests from 1983-1985.

Even among the political protests, not all of them were protesting against authoritarianism and political structure. A large portion of the political protests targeted policy, local public programs, and governance problems as well. Zhang’s category of political protests includes “election result disputes, requests for constitutional change, law and regulations protests, political behavior, Taiwanese autonomy, local construction, social organization, human rights, disputes with police, Taiwan’s future” (Zhang 1992: 18). Not all political demonstrations were for political rights and democratization. Some political protests were caused by grievances against police actions, or disputes about local construction plans. So, among all social protests in the 1980s, only a very small percentage of demonstrations were inspired by liberal democracy and Taiwanese nationalism.

To summarize, the majority of the protests were caused by grievances against KMT governance problems rather than KMT authoritarianism. Fifty-eight percent of the demonstrations from 1983 to 1988 and 65% of the demonstrations from 1983 to 1985 were environmental protests and livelihood related protests. The pure anti-system democratic or Taiwanese autonomy demonstrations were very few, especially from 1983 to 1985. The KMT legitimacy was challenged not by its authoritarian structure but by its local governance problems.
4. **The target was the KMT government, especially local government**

According to Zhang (1990)'s research, most of the protests targeted the government, especially the local government.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5.5 Social protest Classified by Place of Demonstration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of protests in the following venues:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livelihood related protest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taiwan Provincial government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KMT Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Enterprise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Enterprise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sum of protests by category</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of total protest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Zhang 1992: 140

Most of the protests happened at government venues, especially the local government venue. From 1983-1988, 68.72% of the protests happened at government venues. Another 2.5% happened at the KMT party venue and 6.6% happened at state owned enterprises venues. If we add these up, 77.5% of the social protests happened at venues relating to the KMT. The KMT government and related parties and enterprises became the major target of the angry protestors.

More than a third (35.3%) of the protests demonstrated at local government venues and only 19.9% demonstrated at central government venues. So, local governments were one focal point of the public’s grievances. The public was angrier with the local government than with the provincial and central governments. If we remove political demonstrations and only count the other four non political protests, the percentage of protests happening at central government venues drops further to 15.47%.
The demonstrations at local government venues rise to 36.02%. Still, 74.62% of the non-political demonstrations happen at places related to the KMT.

This further confirms that society had grievances against the KMT government more because of KMT local governance problems, than because the KMT had a mainlander-dominated central government. If society protested against the authoritarian regime structure that allowed unelected mainlanders to dominate all leadership positions in the central government, the protestors should have demonstrated in a central government venue rather than at the local government site. Local governments were mostly controlled by elected Taiwanese officials.

If the grievances were against the undemocratic system, the protestors would not choose the publically elected local governments as their target of demonstration. Clearly, the protestors were angrier with the governance problem that directly harmed their interests and livelihood rather than questioning the legitimacy of the mainlander dominated central government.

If we break the data down on a yearly basis, the grievances toward the local government in the early 1980s are clearer. Zhang (1992) shows the yearly data of social protest by place of demonstrations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 5.6 Social protest Classified by Place of Demonstration Yearly Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of protests in the following venues:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taiwan Provincial government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KMT Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Enterprise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Enterprise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Zhang 1992: 141
Based on my calculations, in the early years from 1983 to 1985, only 8% of the total social protests occurred at a central government venue. Almost one-sixth (13.45%) occurred at a provincial government venue, and 46.29% happened at local government venues. Almost three-fourths (73%) of all total protests happened at venues related to the KMT government.

By 1985 almost half of the social protests and demonstrations were targeting the KMT local governments. So, before 1986, the KMT regime was less threatened by anti-system demonstrations than by these anti-local-governance demonstrations. These governance-related social protests were not targeting the central government nor questioning the mainlander dominance structure. Instead, they challenged KMT legitimacy based on good performance.

As a result, Chiang Ching-kuo was pressured to consider and adopt political reform by lifting martial law in 1986. If there was no wide social discontent with government policy, we might not see the waves of demonstrations in Taiwan from 1983 to 1985. As a result, the KMT elites might still have continued its policy of severe repression and continued to defeat the opposition in elections. If those large-scale social protests had not happened, Chiang Ching-kuo would not have needed to consider political liberalization in order to gain legitimacy.

To summarize, most of the social protests that happened in Taiwan were not mobilized by any organizations. Instead, they were self-initiated social demonstrations aroused by social grievances against certain public policies. Most of the demonstrations were not anti-system. They were not stimulated by liberal democratic ideology, nor were they motivated by Taiwanese nationalist aspirations.

- **Cause of Social protest**

  Why did a mob of people unmobilized by any organizations decide to demonstrate against the KMT government when the government in Taiwan was still repressive and authoritarian? Sociologists
have conducted various investigations into those social movements. I also have interviewed two demonstrators in Taiwan. One interviewee protested publically for a livelihood-related issue in 1982. Another interviewee initiated the aboriginals’ “Give Back My Land” social movement in the mid to late 1980s. From all my studies, I summarize some causes for the uprising of large scale self-initiated demonstrations in the 1980s.

First, modernization brought education and awakening to the society, so that many individuals became willing to risk their lives for justice and greater community good.

Modernization brought modern education and ideology to the public and awakened the society to stand up and defend its rights. Through my interview with one of the leaders who initiated the aboriginals’ “Give Back My Land” movement, I discovered the impact of modernization on empowering the public. Aboriginals were the oldest indigenous residents of Taiwan. When the Chinese immigrants conquered northern Taiwan in the 17th Century, aboriginals fled south to the inner mountains and plains and settled there for centuries. But after that, they were not given peace by the government. Their lives were threatened and their lands taken away by the Japanese government and the KMT government. Originally, the aboriginals were hunters or farmers. Few received modern education.

After the 1970s, the aboriginals started to move to the cities. They received modern education and some of them entered universities. Then a group of aboriginal intellectuals became more aware of the mistreatment that aboriginals had received from both Taiwanese local gangsters and the KMT government, such as forced prostitution of aboriginal women, unjust takeover of their lands, lack of protection of aboriginal languages and cultures, biased narration of aboriginal history, distorted reports about aboriginal groups, and more. In 1984, the aboriginal intellectuals formed the Aboriginals’ Rights Promotion Association (ARPA 原住民族權利促進會) to promote awareness of aboriginals’ rights. Later
ARPA, the Aboriginal University Students Association, and the Taiwan Presbyterian Church launched the “Give Back My Land” social movement.

It is those intellectual elites who brought awareness to the aboriginals. Such awareness empowered them to sacrifice their personal interests and protest on the streets without fear of persecution. My interviewee was one of the main leaders of the movement. He regarded bringing enlightenment to the aboriginals in order to collectively promote aboriginals’ rights as one of his life’s pursuits.

For this purpose, he demonstrated on the streets, resisted government threats and repression, and suffered imprisonment for a few years. But he never regretted or complained about his personal sacrifice (Interview: TW31811). Modern education is indispensible for the awakening and emerging of originally silent social interests and empowered the intellectuals to pursue their interests through extralegal channels.

*Second, KMT governmental actions had negatively affected many people’s livelihoods.*

In some situations, the government’s forced actions and regulations negatively affected citizens’ livelihoods and the government failed to provide reasonable solution. Chen Chu-kai and Lai Chien-huan’s research about the Chou-hou villagers’ social protest in 1982, which is one of the earliest social protests in the 1980s. According to their research, the government failed to implement a reasonable policy to resettle the residents of Chou-hou Village who were required to relocate for the floodway construction project. In the beginning, the government promised to construct new housing before demolishing the old housing. However, the government failed to fulfill that promise and later even denied having made it.

The compensation price that the government offered to the villagers, according to Chen and Lai, was based on the land price 17 years prior which was far lower than the current land price. So, the
villagers would not be able to purchase new housing with the government’s compensation money. Many villagers felt they would become homeless after the government demolished their housing. The government’s resettlement plan seriously affected their livelihood.

In 1982 and 1983, hundreds of villagers gathered in front of various government venues and construction sites to protest against the government’s resettlement plan and the unfair compensation price (Chen and Lai 2008). This demonstration finally came about because the villagers were not given a reasonable solution to their soon-to-be homelessness. The villagers had no other choice but to stand in the streets and voice their grievances through an extralegal outlet.

Many livelihood protests happened because the government’s urban management policies damaged people’s livelihoods. For example, the government banned peddlers’ street selling and prohibited any non-authorized construction of housing in urban areas. But these policies seriously threatened these people’s livelihoods. The KMT banned the peddlers’ street selling but did not provide them any alternative business sites. The peddlers’ ways to make a living were taken away. The demolishing of dwellers’ illegal construction without providing affordable housing to the dwellers made them homeless. So the urban dwellers and peddlers protested because the government’s policies seriously harmed their livelihoods.

The veteran I interviewed is one of those protestors. The government ordered demolished the illegal housing that he had lived in for many years in Keelong. Unable to afford new housing, he had no other choice but to protest in front of the Presidential Hall (the official residence of the ROC president) in 1983. In those years, protesting in front of the Presidential Hall was still quite a risky thing. Even the taxi driver was afraid to drive him there after knowing his intention. When I asked my interviewee why he was not afraid of imprisonment, he answered: “I was not afraid. I had lost all things. I only had this house left. If Chiang Ching-kuo wanted to kill me, let him kill me” (Interview: TW22611). It is this feeling
of being cornered by the KMT government that pushed many protestors to risk their lives by demonstrating.

Some other demonstrations were caused by the government’s failure to protect public goods. Damage of public goods finally threatened private interests as well. Environmental protests were caused by the government’s weak capacity to manage public goods, such as trash treatment, water contamination, air pollution and even poisoning of hundreds of residents (Lin LJ 1995: 82). Finally, many people lost confidence in the KMT’s ability to manage public goods. Again, because the people felt that their livelihood was being or would be seriously damaged by the KMT’s policies, they were willing to protest on the streets to defend their interests.

Third, the public lost confidence in the government.

If the public still had trust in gaining redress through legal channels, they would not have adopted extreme forms of expression. Zhang observed that the public had no confidence in the government or the rule of law (Zhang 1992: 116). The KMT government was still not a full Weberian rational bureaucracy. The KMT bureaucracy had many features of non-rationality which impacted its efficiency and effectiveness. Governmental or para-governmental agencies could not quickly address public concerns and provide satisfactory solutions. So the demonstrators were not only frustrated with the problems caused by the public policies, they were also frustrated with the government agencies as well. Through a study of complaints of protestors, I discovered that many public policy victims found their frustration exacerbated by the government agencies’ mismanagement or disregard of their concern. If they lost confidence in the government, they would seek redress by extralegal methods.

For example, Zhang Mao Gui et al. conducted a survey on anti-nuclear demonstrations. They found that the anti-nuclear demonstrations were mostly caused by the public’s distrust of the Taiwan Power Corporation (TPC), a public enterprise providing all the power supply for Taiwan. Protestors
went on the street to demonstrate against the TPC’s proposal to build nuclear power plants, largely because the protestors had long been frustrated with the TPC’s mismanagement of their concerns.

“In the survey, we find the public’s complaints are not about nuclear power plant, but against TPC’s bad management and some public policy. For example, there are criticisms about their failure to give nuclear education and adopt appropriate nuclear protection; concerning their requests for compensations, they complained that TPC concealed information about leaking accidents and there was no communication channels; they complain about the local’s economic loss and TPC’s failure to bring economic benefit to the local residents. Most of the complaints have nothing to do with technical problems of nuclear power plant, but rather complaints about administrative and management problems of TPC” (Zhang 1989: 206 translated by author).

The anti-nuclear demonstrations were not only triggered by the nuclear plant issue. The public’s distrust of the KMT government and government agency, TPC, also played an important part here. The public had accumulated grievances toward the government and its agencies because of their past mismanagement. So when the government wanted to launch some controversial public projects such as the nuclear plant, the public had no confidence in the government’s goodwill or their ability to care for the public interests. So they chose to use extralegal ways to resist the government policy.

Another study on veterans’ demonstrations shows that the eruption of veterans’ self-help demonstrations can be largely attributed to their grievances toward the Veteran’s Affair Commission (VAC). It was common knowledge that the VAC received large amounts of government budget every year and had many profitable businesses. So the veterans thought that the VAC’s refusal of their request for benefits was caused by the VAC’s unwillingness to help them.

The veterans felt that the VAC particularly mistreated the self-supportive veterans (the veterans who left the military before serving twenty five years) (Hu 1989, p. 168). They complained that the VAC did not pay respect to the self-supportive veterans and treated their requests for assistance with harsh words, condescending attitudes and various strict requirements. The veterans felt their dignity was hurt by the VAC’s reaction to their requests (Hu 1989, p168). They also heard that
some people got jobs through bribing the VAC or through personal connections with VAC members. So they felt that the VAC treated them very unfairly. Finally, they lost confidence in the VAC’s sincerity to solve their problems. Thus the self-supportive veterans demonstrated on the streets and brought their grievances to public attention.

The loss of confidence in the government could be largely attributed to the KMT’s long time disregard of the public’s interests. The KMT connection with the industrial elites made them unwilling to redress the complaints of the disadvantaged groups. Many scholars (Wu 1990; Xiao 1989; Zhang 1992) think that the KMT’s close connection with the industrial elites weakened the state’s autonomy to defend public goods. Because of a monopoly of power and wealth under the KMT and its clients, the interests of the lower class majority could not be represented in policies (Xiao 1989: 9). As a result, the KMT public policies have little concern for the general public.

If the interests of the public conflict with the industrial elites, even if the public wanted to seek government support through legal channels, the KMT elites generally would stand with the industrial interests to repress the voice of the disadvantaged groups (Xiao 1989: 9). So the social voices would not be accepted by the KMT elites unless the society expressed its grievances in a forceful and threatening way. Because the public did not trust government and the legal channels to solve the disputes, the public then chose extreme ways to seek redress for their damages.

**Fourth, the protestors had a victim mentality accumulated under the KMT rule.**

Most of Taiwan’s public outside of the KMT clientele-style coalition had not received much benefit from the government’s social policies. Certain disadvantaged groups felt strongly that they were wronged and mistreated by government policies. The long felt “victim mentality” made it easier for them to rise up when certain grievances became prominent and the government became less able to control them.
Xiao Xinghuang describes this victim mentality as follows: “There was a strong victim mentality among most of the protestors. They felt both politically and economically victimized. All major participants in the social protest have this victim mentality. They thought they had not received reasonable and fair treatment under the past political, economic and social orders under the KMT”. (Xiao 1989, p29). I saw that victim mentality in my interviewees as well. The veteran who protested against the demolishing of his illegal construction expressed his grievances toward the KMT government.

What has the KMT given me? I fought the civil war for them. I suffered so much. I only received 1,000 dollars from them. They said they have no obligation to take care of the self-supportive veterans (veterans who left the military before serving 25 years). They said it is out of their kindness that they still gave us 1,000 dollars. Those who never fought the civil war (he refers to veterans who left the military after 25 years service) can eat well and drink well. Their children have subsidies for education. We fought the communists for them. Now they only gave us 2,000 dollars per month. For the revolution, I lost my son, I lost my wife, now they are even going to take the house away from me (Interview: TW022611).

Clearly, his grievance is not simply against the KMT decision to demolish his house. That grievance is combined with a deeper grievance against the unfair treatment he received historically. As I observed in Chapter 3, the KMT had adopted a discriminative wealth redistribution structure in order to build its client base. For people who were the KMT clients, the KMT offered economic privileges and welfare benefits. But for the majority of Taiwan’s public who were not KMT clients, they received little benefits from the KMT social redistribution structure.

My interviewee unfortunately falls into the non-KMT client category because he left the military after serving only 16 years. In order to discourage and punish their disloyalty to the KMT party, the KMT government did not offer patronage to those who left the military earlier than 25 years. Then, my interviewee found he missed all kinds of government benefits, including the generous pension fund,
the subsidies for housing and children’s education. He regretted his unwise decision to leave the military earlier. But he also felt mistreated by the KMT government because of that unfair structure.

   Even though he later managed to make some good income through a small business, he never attributed his later prosperity to the KMT economic policy and never felt gratitude toward the government. Even now, he still feels wronged by the KMT government because of the unfair pension system. Many members of the public who received few benefits from the KMT government directly might feel the same way as my interviewee. Even though the society as a whole became rich because of the KMT developmental policy, most non-KMT clients received little government benefit. So they concluded that the KMT system benefited the rich, the social elites, and the public sectors more than the ordinary people outside of the KMT political coalition.

   Since most members of the public don’t feel that they are totally excluded from climbing the social ladder under the system (Xiao 1989: 29), their grievances were not strong enough to voice anti-system attitudes. But the grievances over the KMT’s unfair social and economic order were strong enough to make them adopt self-help measures to resist the government and the industrialists’ further exploitation. As a result, society members rallied by themselves around certain common grievances.

   The grievances rose from various social interests, such as consumer protests against malpractices in the market, residents’ protests against government environmental policies, farmers’ complaints against tax and agricultural policies, labor protests, veterans’ protests against government policies, houseless people’s protests, etc. The people who joined protests were mostly from the disadvantaged groups under the KMT social redistribution structure: houseless urban residents, workers, farmers, women, aboriginals, Hakka, handicapped, students and the Taiwanese Presbyterian churches, consumers, and residents in environmentally damaged areas. The KMT’s uneven social redistribution under the clientele structure is responsible for the accumulation of this victim mentality
among the general public. Therefore, in the end, except for those who were included in the KMT political coalition, individuals across almost the whole spectrum of social interests felt they were wronged by the KMT policies and expressed their grievances in the streets.

To summarize, due to the KMT governance problems and the unfair social redistribution structure, Taiwan society had long harbored feelings of distrust and a victim mentality toward the government. When modernization awakened and empowered society and the government became less able to control it, certain livelihood-threatening issues then became the spark that triggered the demonstrations. The angry public then rallied around those grievances to challenge KMT public policies.

• Conclusion

In the early 1980s, when the political opposition’s organizational powers were undeveloped due to severe political repression, the society rallied by itself around certain common grievances. Many society-initiated social groups were formed during the social demonstration movement (Wu 1996). Clearly in Taiwan, it is those social grievances that unified citizens to rise up in the streets.

Most of the protests were not organized. They were self-initiated expressions of social grievances. Most of the criticisms were toward the KMT’s poor local governance. Most of the social protests were not anti-system or originated by political and ideological issues. They were triggered mainly because their livelihoods were threatened by government public policies through various forms.

The KMT’s inability to provide better local governance has deeper structural reasons. Zhang Maogui describes both the weak state capacity at the local level as well as the structural reason behind the weakness. The KMT clientele structure made it hard for the government to resolve the problem.

Due to government administrative structure, the local government lacks sufficient capacity to plan, promote and protect public property. Especially in the area of construction, the local government lacks sufficient tax revenues to promote local public construction. They lack
human resources as well as finances to construct, manage and maintain rivers, banks, underground water, firewalls and roads, parks, walkways etc. The local government’s ability to plan, promote and protect public property is also hindered by the infiltration of local factional interests. The local government, due to its administrative inability and low personnel quality, cannot form the Weberian rational bureaucracy to protect administrative independence and resist the penetration of the illegal interests and economic privileges of the local factional groups. (Zhang 1992: 73 original in Chinese, translated by author)

Because of its fundamental structural weakness, the KMT could not improve local governance and provide more public goods and benefits to the general public. As a result, the public lost confidence in the government. Many people who were not under KMT patronage had long felt wronged by the government social policy that favors KMT clients. Given this distrustful attitude toward the government combined with the victim mentality, once certain livelihood-threatening issues emerged, the long-felt-wronged public then could be stimulated to go on the street to protect itself.

Modernization was the catalyst that empowered the public to act on its long felt grievances. But it was the KMT clientele structure that made the public angry in the first place.

1986: the KMT’s Strategic Choice and Consequences

In the early 1980s, when the opposition’s organizational power was weakened by the KMT’s severe repression and political containment, it was the self-initiated social movements that challenged the KMT on the streets. Both movements worked together to break the KMT’s authoritarian control. The opposition movement challenged the undemocratic nature of the KMT regime and challenged the KMT’s procedural legitimacy. Echoing in that direction, the social movements brought the KMT governance problem to the streets and shattered the KMT legitimacy based on good performance. So both movements worked together to seriously challenge the KMT legitimacy.

When its legitimacy was seriously challenged by both movements, the KMT then decided to consider political liberalization as the best choice for the KMT. Because of the success of the party networks and local factional groups in electoral mobilization, the KMT elites expected that their
clientele mobilization structure would sustain KMT one-party dominance even if they allowed the opposition to compete in elections.

In 1986, Chiang Ching-kuo announced the ending of martial law and allowed opposition parties to be registered and compete in political elections. The first year that opposition parties were allowed to compete with the KMT in elections was 1989. By 1992, the KMT elites had gradually allowed all national leadership positions to be contested.

Opening for contestation only opened a door for the opposition to challenge the authoritarian elite. But it did not necessarily mean that the KMT would lose the elections. Even though the opposition was given a chance to compete, it was a difficult task to win election, especially given the KMT’s clientele mobilization structure. Though the public had complaints about KMT governance, it was a further challenge to convince the public that a new party could offer better governance. The KMT elites, for their part, had assumed that their clientelistic mobilization structure would secure their success. But in only 13 years after the lifting of martial law, KMT one-party dominance ended. What caused this defeat?

Many scholarly studies have talked about the problems in the clientelistic structure that contributed to the KMT’s downfall (Wang 1994; Wang 2004; Wang 1996; Chen 1994). Clientelism within the KMT had caused factional struggles between Lee Teng-hui’s Taiwanese faction and the mainlander factions, ending in an elite split. The mainlander elites then formed new parties or ran as independent candidates, which split the votes of the KMT party clients, the mainlanders and military. The reliance on local factional mobilization also empowered the local groups. They had more leverage to demand economic and political power. As a strategy, the local factional groups sometimes defected to support the opposition. Local factional groups’ strategic behavior gave opportunities for the opposition to win elections on occasion.
Besides the problems in clientelistic structure, the opposition’s strategy also contributed to the KMT’s sudden failure. In 1989, the DPP decided to adopt a “from local to national strategy”. The DPP started with expansion in winning local magistrate positions. It could then break the KMT clientele mobilization structure by winning local governor positions. The DPP also won public confidence through their good governance at the local level. Through this strategy, the DPP finally rose to challenge the KMT in national elections. The DPP’s success at the national election in 2000 can be attributed to success of the DPP’s strategy, as well as to the existing problems in the KMT clientele structure that produced factional struggles within the KMT and the defection of the local factional groups.

The clientele mobilization structure that the KMT had long relied on for electoral success was therefore unable to sustain KMT one-party dominance when a strong opposition emerged in the electoral arena. Since many studies have been conducted about existing problems in the KMT clientele structure, such as the factional struggles that attributed to the KMT downfall, I would like to study the KMT’s loss of its dominant one-party position from the perspective of DPP strategy.

By adopting the “from local to national” strategy, the DPP defeated the KMT in elections in only eleven years. Compared with many other dominant one-party regimes such as Mexico and Japan, it took Taiwan’s opposition a much shorter time to defeat the incumbent’s clientelistic mobilization power and win national leadership. Why was the DPP able to win local elections and later the national elections? Again, I find that the KMT’s weak local governance produced by clientelism was the major reason for the KMT to lose local elections, though the KMT had strong clientelistic mobilization power. The side effects of a clientele structure gave room for the opposition to win the elections.

To summarize, in 1986, the KMT made a strategic choice to liberalize the political system as a response to challenges from both the opposition and social unrest. Under challenge from both society
and the political opposition, political liberalization produced the best chance for the KMT to remain in power. So the KMT gradually opened up local and national leadership positions for competitive elections. But the clientele mobilization structure that the KMT relied on during authoritarian years could not sustain the KMT one party dominance when strong opposition appeared in the ballot. I examine how the opposition could break the KMT clientele mobilization power and win local and national elections.

1989: the DPP Wins Local Elections

In 1989, the DPP began to adopt a “from local to national” strategy. They chose local magistrate positions, such as county/city mayor positions as the breakthrough point. This strategy was very successful. By 1997, the DPP already controlled more than 2/3 of the total cities and counties of Taiwan. Victories in local magistrate positions paved the way for the DPP to win the national presidential election in 2000. Winning local elections was the critical point for the DPP’s later success in national elections.

I examine the 1989 Taipei county mayoralty election as a case study to find out why the DPP was able to break the KMT clientelistic mobilization power and win local elections. From a detailed examination of the electoral mobilization and the voting outcomes, I find that the KMT received most of its votes from clientelistic mobilization. But the KMT clientelistic electoral mobilization strategy failed because the DPP candidate was able to mobilize support from a large number of independent issue voters. Even though the opposition was restrained and disadvantaged by various incumbent powers and the DPP lacked the financial and organizational power, the DPP still won the election. The DPP targeted local governance problems in Taipei county as their focus of mobilization. A better governance promise and an innovative candidate image had won the DPP support from the majority of non-factional voters who had long been aggravated by KMT local governance problems.
Case Selection: Taipei County

Taipei county, now known as Xinbei city, is the satellite city of Taipei city. It has an area of 240 square kilometers and a population in 1989 of 2,970,000. After modernization, large numbers of immigrants flooded to Taipei county looking for job opportunities. In 1989, 32.5% of them were local residents. All the rest, 67.4%, were immigrants. In terms of sub-ethnicity, 17.3% of the population in 1989 were mainlanders and 82.7% were Taiwanese. The ethnic distribution in Taipei county was close to the general ethnic situation of Taiwan. Taipei county was not a mainlander or Taiwanese dominated city.

Taipei county was a very strategic city for both parties because of its closeness to Taipei city as well as its demographics. Taipei county was the city with the largest population. In 1989, 15% of Taiwan’s total population lived in Taipei county. So the KMT had made large investments there to secure the KMT mayorship. In the past, the KMT had successfully won all county mayorlty elections in Taipei county by relying on party networks and local factional groups for electoral mobilization. The opposition had never won the Taipei county mayorlty election before. But in 1989, the Taipei county mayorlty election attracted a large effort from both the KMT and the DPP.

I chose Taipei county for a case study since it is a typical case in terms of my interest. Taipei county was a newly emergent city that needed urban planning attention. Urbanization and population growth rate had posed challenges to local governance. Among all cities, Taipei county had the highest immigration growth rate. Many of Taipei county’s new immigrants were middle-class wage earners. But due to the presence of local factional groups’ influences, Taipei county’s city management had not been very successful.

As a result of local governance failures, Taipei county saw active social protest on the street in the 1980s. According to Zhang’s statistics, 170 social demonstrations occurred in Taipei county from
1983 to 1988. 6% of Taiwan’s total demonstrations happened in Taipei county. Among all of Taiwan’s cities and counties, Taipei county ranked fifth in number of social demonstrations in the 1980s (Zhang 1992: 144). So, in 1989, Taipei county had an active and also discontented society which became a potential for opposition mobilization.

Taipei county was also the city in which the KMT had set up a vigorous party clientele network and local faction networks for political mobilization. In the past the KMT had won all elections through their clientelistic networks. This was a place that both the KMT and the DPP had some resources for electoral mobilization. So it is a perfect case to test the opposition’s power of mobilization under the KMT clientele structure. Besides, Taipei county did not have a large concentration of mainlander population like Taipei city. So this case selection is not biased by the ethnicity factor.

**KMT Local Governance in Taipei County**

Many local governments under the KMT regime were captured by local factional interests. As a result, their local governance capabilities were seriously weakened. Taipei county showed similar weakness. Taipei county suffered administrative inefficiency and high expenditure levels. In a study of Taipei county’s fiscal expenditures from 1982 to 1986, Wang Huijuan (1988) uncovered budgetary difficulties in Taipei county.

Annually, Taipei county’s largest expenditures were diverted to education and cultural costs. From NTD5.8 billion\(^\text{26}\) annual local revenue, NTD4.2 billion were used for education and cultural expenditures. Only NTD1.6 billion could be used for other purposes such as local public construction (Wang 1988: 102). As a result, many public facilities were underdeveloped in Taipei county. For example, Wang mentioned that the limited budget for public hygiene programs caused many

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\(^{26}\)NTD stands for New Taiwan Dollar. It is Taiwan’s currency. In this dissertation, when I am referring to Taiwan’s currency, it is always in the New Taiwan Dollar (NTD).
problems, such as untreated trash piles, lack of drug regulations, lack of environmental protection and protection of various public goods (Wang 1988: 102).

According to Wang, the fiscal stringency was mainly caused by three factors. First, political influences in local expenditure. “The biggest reason for Taipei County’s fiscal stringency is the expenditure wastes from local political influences. In local governments, usually there are three forces that can influence local expenditure: first, local governor; second, local assembly; third, local administrative officials. If the three forces are connected with the local factional groups, it produced huge obstacles for local development. In Taipei County, the fiscal wastes are produced by the three forces.” (Wang 1988: 102)

A second reason is lack of administrative efficiency. Unwise public policies and implementation problems have caused large amount of wastes. Administrative inefficiency is mainly caused by “problems in public administration system.” (Wang 1988: 103).

Third, it is caused by low tax collection capacity. Taipei county’s tax revenue was less than 50% of its total revenue (Wang 1988: 103). The rest of the revenue mainly came from the central government’s subsidies and loans (Wei 1991: 55). Tax evasion by the business communities had become well accepted knowledge (Wang 1988: 103). According to Wang, in the fiscal year 1986, Taipei county was only able to collect 87.4% of the estimated tax revenue (Wang 1988: 103). Due to Taipei county’s weak capacity, public property was illegally embezzled by private interests (Wang 1988: 103).

Due to these local fiscal problems, the Taipei county government was not able to manage the high demands from urbanization and large numbers of immigrants. In the new era, the governance of Taipei county was seriously challenged. Tung observes that the governance of Taipei county was severely damaged by the influence of local-faction groups and also by a weak city management
capacity. Weak governance rendered the Taipei county government unable to solve many urban problems caused by urbanization and new immigrants.

Tung reports that the rural people migrating to Taipei and Kaohsiung caused urban housing crises in the overcrowded urban space of Taipei county. The demand for housing, new space for some small businesses, new space for the further division of labor in small-scale industries, and public facilities for new migrants children all directly challenged the capability of Taipei county government (Tung 2006: 154). Nevertheless, “the faction-controlled Taipei County government and its resourceless and powerless city machine could not find any proper means for the resolution of the problems.” (Tung 2006: 154)

As a result, KMT achievement in Taipei county was quite unimpressive. Tung mentions that “there were very few major construction projects and almost no non-urban renewal projects for the rest of the Taipei County” (Tung 2006: 154). The Taipei county government was slow in local construction. Tung gives an example of the Taipei county government’s procrastination on public projects.

From 1971 to 1980, Taipei County’s major investments in public infrastructure were in projects that supported Taipei City’s urban system. For example, the major urban renewal projects for San Chong City and Zhong He City, including flood-control works, were commissioned by the Taiwan Province government in 1971. Completion of the works’ first stage was reached in 1976, but the Taiwan Province government waited until 1979 to undertake the works’ second stage. Meanwhile, there were very few major construction projects and almost no non-urban renewal projects for the rest of the Taipei County. (Tung 2006: 154-155)

Another study by Lin summarizes all the community development achievements of the KMT in Taipei county from 1970-1980 as follows:

Engaged in 197 communities’ development, 77 of them are equipped with library, broadcast station, basketball and table tennis, 206 kindergarten classes, 1,477,809 square feet road, 571,554 feet drainage pipes, renovating 1622 households, 9731 toilets, 55349 units household hygiene (Lin 1983: 217-218).
I have discussed the Singapore PAP government’s impressive achievement in Chapter 4. The PAP achievement in public construction helped the party to win the 1963 election. Compared with Singapore, Taipei county’s city construction is much less. I compare Taipei County and Singapore’s public construction as follows:

Table 5.7 Comparison of Singapore and Taipei County: Some Public Construction Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public housing units</td>
<td>21,921</td>
<td>1,622</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of school built</td>
<td>14 schools</td>
<td>206 kindergarten classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Center</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Road built (in miles)</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>0.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Clearly, compared with Singapore’s public construction achievement in 3 years, the KMT public construction in Taipei county for 10 years was much less. In 3 years, the PAP built 21,921 units of public housing, while the KMT in 10 years only built 1,622 units. The PAP built 14 schools in 3 years, not to mention the numerous kindergartens that accommodated 12% of the young children (Shee 1979). In 10 years, the KMT only opened 206 kindergarten classes. The PAP built 149 Community Centers in 3 years while the KMT only built 77 in 10 years. The roads that the KMT constructed in Taipei county in 10 years are many fewer than the PAP road construction in 3 years. Clearly, the KMT government did not have a good governance record to boast about during the electoral campaign as the PAP government in Singapore did. The KMT’s weak governance in Taipei county is argued by scholars to be the major reason for the opposition’s success in winning 1989 the Taipei county mayoralty election.

The failure of local governments to function as urban regulators and urban developers made many migrants vulnerable. And such failures made many people begin to consider the benefits of change. The democratization and social movements during the 1980s opened the door for many previously self-constrained Taiwanese. In particular, many residents of Taipei County worked at Taipei City; hence, they witnessed all the major protests in Taipei City’s streets.
Therefore, Dr. You’s victory in the 1989 Taipei County gubernatorial election was the result of mass migration since the 1970s, new resident’s dissatisfaction with the disabled local government and widespread support for democratization. (Tung 2006: 155)

**Level of Political Repression**

The three elections in 1989 were the first elections that the KMT regime held after lifting martial law in 1986. Hence the 1989 Taipei county mayoral election was one of the first elections that allowed competition from the opposition parties. In 1989, though opening up for opposition competition, the KMT regime still used governmental powers to disadvantage the opposition in various ways. There were legal restrictions on electoral campaigning which were purposefully set up to restrict the opposition’s electoral mobilization. Police and military forces were used to repress any “illegal” mobilization activities. Most media under governmental influence gave unequal news coverage of the KMT candidates and the DPP candidates. The KMT regime used public servants, public school teachers and even employees in banks to solicit votes for the KMT candidates. The KMT officials also used the government budget as leverage to solicit votes for the KMT candidates.

As discussed in Chapter 4, the Singapore government had adopted a similar effort to repress the opposition in 1963 election. While the Singapore government successfully contained the opposition’s mobilization, most of the KMT regime’s efforts to disadvantage the opposition were not effective. The opposition through various forms broke the regulations and challenged the KMT vote buying effort. Because the public was mobilized against the KMT’s discriminatory effort, the KMT found it difficult to contain the opposition during elections.

- **Political Repression by Legal Restrictions and Police Forces**

  The KMT regime first set up legal restrictions for the electoral campaign. The new election bill of 1988 placed many restrictions on political campaigns. Since the KMT party held the advantages of an incumbent party, it did not need a vigorous campaign effort for advertisement and promotion. These
legal campaign restrictions were purposefully set up to disadvantage the new opposition candidates who were quite unfamiliar to the general public. According to the 1988 Election Law, the campaign period was limited to only 10 days. No campaign activities were allowed before the campaign period, including disseminating campaign materials, hanging campaign posters or giving public speeches etc.

During the campaign period, candidates were not allowed to make public speeches outside the designated time and space for “political opinion presentation.” Street rallies were prohibited. All campaign materials were restricted to an area no further than 30 meters from the campaign office. The party-sponsored political opinion presentations were allowed to occur only a few days before the government organized presentations. Only candidates, campaign assistants and parties were allowed to conduct campaign related activities. Other citizens were not allowed to make public speeches supporting candidates (Wu Huixia 1993: 191).

The effect of these restrictions was to allow only limited time for the opposition to publicize its political views. Since the incumbent party controlled most of the public media and had established clientelistic mobilization networks, the KMT candidates did not need vigorous campaign advertisements for electoral mobilization. It is clear that the intent of all these restrictions was to disadvantage the opposition in favor of the KMT candidates.

Besides the above restrictions, many issues that could have been used by the opposition to mobilize support were not allowed in the campaign. They were considered politically sensitive and were banned from all electoral campaign activities (Capital Morning Post, 1989 November 3, cited by Fang 1991: 51). Such issues included Taiwan independence, criticism of the president, criticism of some non-democratic features of the then-current regime structure, communal grievances of the Taiwanese, and the Taiwanese self-autonomy appeal among others.
In short, two issues were banned from the electoral campaign: democratization and Taiwanese identity. These two issues were the DPP’s major party ideologies. The DPP identified itself with the local Taiwanese interests and they also regarded the pursuit of a democratic regime in Taiwan as their political goal. So, the above restrictions prevented the DPP from publicizing its party ideology in the electoral campaign. In this way, the DPP was not able to publically use its party ideology to mobilize partisan support in the election.

Not only were restrictions set up by law, police forces and military forces were also used by the KMT regime to punish “illegal” activities. In one, the DPP’s political opinion presentation on November 22, 1989, hundreds of police were used to arrest one of the guest speakers, Guo Beihong27, who was a political dissident. Fang also reports that one fifth of the military force in Jinmen Island was sent to Taiwan during the election period (Fang 1991: 59). It was reported that 100,000 military personnel were used to maintain order during elections. In Taipei county, 26,247 military personnel were involved (Zili Morning Post, November 21, 1989). On December 2, 1989, when more than 200,000 members of the public surrounded Taipei county government and other places, large numbers of police were stationed to control riots.

However, despite the KMT’s use of force and legal restrictions to disadvantage the opposition, the DPP was able to resist the legal regulations and constantly violate the KMT rules. Because the public was quite sympathetic to the opposition, the KMT could not successfully repress and punish all the DPP’s illegal activities. The DPP candidates constantly violated the regulations and mobilized mass riots to resist repression (Fang 1991).

27 Since I don’t know the official translation of Mr. Guo’s name in Roman alphabet. I translate Mr. Guo’s name according to pingyin. Mr. Guo’s name might have another translation.
The 1989 Taipei county election saw a large number of illegal activities and riots. During the campaign period, in Taiwan as a whole, there were a reported 52 occurrences of riots, 221 occurrences of illegal speeches, 57 occurrences of threatening, and 52 occurrences of vote buying. In Taipei county alone, there were a reported total of 221 illegal activities (Fang 1991: 58). Under these conditions, the KMT lost its ability to implement the rule of law. Several police and military actions failed due to popular wrath, which only stimulated more public grievance. So the DPP and other opposition candidates were able to constantly violate the campaign restrictions without being punished.

For example, in one of the DPP candidates’ political opinion presentations, their guest speaker, Guo Beihong, the chairman of the Taiwan Independence Association, talked about Taiwan’s grievances against mainlander-dominated government and demanded Taiwanese self-autonomy. Hundreds of police were placed to arrest Guo Beihong during the meeting. However, all public attendees were mobilized to help Guo escape after he made the speech. Guo then successfully left Taiwan. In the presentation, both of the DPP candidates talked about Taiwanese self-autonomy. When two police personnel tried to stop one of the candidates from speaking, the public threatened to surround the police and forced them to abort their action (Fang 1991: 57).

As a result of the public’s strong reaction, the KMT could not stop the candidates’ supposedly illegal campaign activities. In Taiwan, there were 221 occurrences of illegal speeches during the campaign period. In Taipei county, when the DPP’s Taipei county mayoral candidate You Qing held an illegal political opinion presentation for an hour on November 26, 1989, no election supervision officer stopped him or even issued a warning. On November 19, 1989, during another illegal public opinion presentation, You Qing made a 40 minute long public speech. The election supervision officer gave him only two oral warnings without further actions (Fang 1991: 57).
Most ironically, when the KMT state power became so weak under the people’s wrath, the KMT was not even able to protect its own candidate. During legal public presentations in 7 different locations, the KMT Taipei county mayoral candidate Lee Xi-kun’s talks were constantly interrupted by You Qing’s supporters. The interruptions were so severe that many times Lee was not able to say anything during those meetings. Surprisingly, no police or election supervision officers took any action against the interrupters during those meetings (Fang 1991: 57).

Consequently, though the KMT had set up legal restrictions and used police and military forces to restrict opposition campaign activities, most of the KMT’s repressive efforts were not successful because of the opposition and public’s strong actions against government restrictions.

- **Media Discrimination**

The KMT controlled most media channels in Taiwan. All three existing TV stations were heavily influenced by the KMT government. The DPP’s candidates could seldom get TV exposure (Fang 1991: 60). The DPP protested against media discrimination (Lin 1991: 100-106). Finally on November 30, 1989, two days before the polling date, the DPP successfully launched a TV Channel 4 and broke the KMT monopoly over TV media. But during the majority of the campaign in the 1989 elections, TV broadcasting was dominated by news about the KMT candidates.

In the press, discrimination was also clearly observed. Collecting data from four major newspapers, Zhong conducted a content analysis of coverage of the 1989 Taipei county mayoral election (Zhong 1989). The four major national newspapers were *United Newspaper* (聯閤報), *China Times* (中國時報), *Liberty Times* (自由時報) and *Central Daily* (中央日報). His research shows that the KMT Taipei county mayoral election candidate Lee Xi-kun received more media exposure and positive comments than the DPP’s candidate You Qing. I list Zhong’s research results as follows.
Table 5.8 News Coverage of the KMT and The DPP’s Candidates in the 1989 Taipei County Mayoral Election

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% of news about the KMT candidate Lee Xi-kun</th>
<th>% of news about the DPP candidate You Qing</th>
<th>% of news about both candidates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of news items</td>
<td>44.3%</td>
<td>24.4%</td>
<td>34.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper coverage</td>
<td>36.4%</td>
<td>18.9%</td>
<td>44.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National news</td>
<td>28.7%</td>
<td>19.8%</td>
<td>51.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cover news</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>54.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Apparently, there were more news reports about the KMT candidates than the DPP’s candidates both in number of news items and in terms of the newspaper coverage. Of all the news about the 1989 Taipei county mayoral election, 44.3% of the news was about the KMT candidates and only 24.4% was about the DPP candidates. News about the KMT candidates took up 36.4% of the space in newspapers while the news about DPP candidates only took up 18.9%. In the national news section, Lee Xi-kun had more national news than You Qing. In terms of cover stories, reports about Lee comprised 33.3% of all cover stories while reports about You Qing only had a 12% chance to become a cover story.

Zhong also reports the positions in the news reports. The KMT candidate Lee Xi-kun received more positive comments than the DPP’s candidate You.

Table 5.9 News Reports Attitudes toward the KMT and The DPP’s Candidates in the 1989 Taipei County Mayoral Election

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% of news neutral about both candidates</th>
<th>% of news favoring the KMT candidate Lee Xi-kun</th>
<th>% of news favoring the DPP’s candidate You Qing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of news items</td>
<td>56.3%</td>
<td>24.9%</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper coverage</td>
<td>54.1%</td>
<td>28.2%</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National news</td>
<td>61.7%</td>
<td>24.6%</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cover news</td>
<td>54.7%</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Zhong 1989: 89
Although more than half of the news reports about the candidates took a neutral position, the KMT candidates received more favorable comments from the newspapers than the DPP candidates. Among all the news reports about the 1989 Taipei county mayoral election, 24.9% of the news favored the KMT candidates while only 13.8% of the news favored the DPP candidates. In terms of coverage, 28.2% of the space in the newspapers reported positive comments about Lee Xi-kun. But only 13.9% of the newspaper coverage gave positive comments about You Qing. In the national news, 24.6% of the news favors Lee Xi-kun. Only 10.2% of the news favored You Qing. In the cover stories, 26.7% of the cover stories were favorable towards candidate Lee, whereas only 13.3% of the cover stories favored You Qing.

Apparently, the KMT candidate Lee Xi-kun received more media attention than the DPP’s candidate You Qing. The KMT candidate also received more positive comments than the DPP’s candidate. In the four major national newspapers, the KMT candidate clearly was endorsed more than the DPP’s candidate. The KMT candidates therefore received a lot more media support than the opposition. The TV channels and major newspapers were all under the KMT influence and produced biased reports.

However, the media control backfired and aroused the public’s negative response. One hundred sixty-two professors and scholars at Taiwan University and Academia Sinica (中研院) signed a joint letter to support the DPP’s candidate You Qing, “in defiance of the KMT manipulation of media and a clear distortion of the public will” (Fang 1991: 162).

Some independent local newspapers outside the KMT’s influence also voiced support for the opposition. In Zhong’s research on five independent newspapers, the DPP’s candidate, Mr. You Qing, received comparable if not more media attention than the KMT candidate (Zhong 1991: 82). The DPP’s
candidates found support with these independent local newspapers, such as *Capital Morning Post* (首都早報) and *Zili Morning Post* (自立早報).

To summarize, there existed media discrimination against the opposition in the 1989 Taipei county mayoral election. However, the KMT media control was not quite successful in containing the opposition. First, the KMT media control had aroused underlying negative feelings and public defiance on the part of intellectuals. The joint letter by 162 professors and scholars supporting You Qing was an expression of the intellectuals’ disagreement with media control. Second, there existed some independent local newspapers that expressed a more pro-opposition position and disfavored the KMT. The DPP was thus able to receive some media support from those local newspapers.

- **Use of Incumbent Power to Solicit Votes**

  The KMT used its incumbent power to solicit votes for its candidates. First, the KMT governments used budget power to solicit votes. On November 2, 1989, it was reported that the Taipei county incumbent Mayor Lin Feng-zheng promised that any village casting more than 63% votes for the KMT candidate Lee Xi-kun could receive NTD500,000 in special construction funds (*Liberty Times*, November 2, 1989).

  It was also reported that in 1989 the Taiwan government increased the small projects special construction fund to 6 times higher than the previous year. A total NTD3 billion was budgeted for that fund. From the special construction fund, Taipei county received NTD0.18 billion (Central Times, November 6, 1989). On August 15, the Department of Economic Development Director visited two villages in Taipei county and issued an order allowing villagers to reclaim some reserved public space along the river banks. This move was reported that it would benefit more than 10,000 households.

  On November 5th, The Executive Yuan Minister Lee Huan visited Taipei county and promised to solve the water pipe problem. In early November, the Education Department announced plans to
establish Taipei University in Shanxia Town in Taipei county. On November 6th, the planning office announced a total budget of NTD 4.6 billion for the science park construction project in Taipei county.

On November 20, the Traffic and Communication Department Director promised a highway project within Taipei county at the KMT service station in Taipei county (Fang 1991: 78). All these government projects and favors promised to Taipei county voters happened just a few months before the election. This would in theory create gratitude from voters who would benefit from those government projects and thus attract them to vote for the KMT candidates in the upcoming elections.

Second, besides using budgetary power and promises of various government projects to solicit favors from certain constituencies, the KMT also required public employees to solicit votes for the KMT candidates. It was reported on November 18 that the Executive Yuan required all public servants to join the KMT campaign activities (China Times, November 18, 1989). The public school teachers were asked to solicit votes for the KMT candidates.

It was reported that in a public primary school, the teachers asked students to tell their parents to vote for the KMT candidate Lee Xi-kun and told them that voting for the DPP candidate You Qing would cause public disorder and riots (Zili Morning Post, November 22, 1989). It was reported that even bank employees were given orders to solicit votes. Each bank was required to give the KMT a list of names and addresses of 500 customers, and each bank employee was required to solicit 7 votes for the KMT candidate (Zili Evening Post, November 22). Judiciary officers received vote soliciting cards. Police were asked to assist the campaign (Zili Morning Post, November 2, 1989). As a result, in Taipei county, it was reported that a team of 178,000 was organized to support Lee Xi-kun (Zili Morning Post, December 1). Through the government’s power over public employees, the KMT used its human resources to conduct electoral mobilization.
Conclusion

The KMT used regulatory power, police and military power, media power, budgetary power, and even manpower to disadvantage the opposition’s electoral campaign. In Chapter 4, I discussed the Singapore PAP elites who also used similar methods to disadvantage the opposition in the 1963 general election. The PAP shortened the campaign period to only 5 days. Some of the opposition’s requests to hold rallies were rejected by the police. The PAP also arrested some of the BS leaders in February 1963. The media in Singapore were not controlled by the government at that time. Yet most media, especially English media, showed favor toward the PAP government. Even though both regimes have used incumbent power to disadvantage the rising opposition, Taiwan and Singapore exhibited quite different outcomes.

First, the public’s response to the regime’s obvious repressive and unfair treatment of the opposition was different. In Singapore, the public majority was quite unsympathetic toward the opposition though the opposition party, the BS, had strong mobilization power. The BS was only able to mobilize its loyalists (such as the union members, left-wing students and the Chinese public school teachers and students) to demonstrate on the streets. The public majority did not show a negative response to the government’s repression.

In Taiwan, on the other hand, the public was quite sympathetic to the opposition. Though the mobilization power of the DPP in the 1980s in Taiwan was not as strong as the BS in 1963 Singapore, large crowds were mobilized by the DPP to support their political actions. When police intended to regulate illegal action or speeches of the DPP’s candidates, the crowds responded violently. The public’s strong reaction hindered the KMT from repressing the DPP’s campaign activities. The intellectuals also responded negatively toward the KMT’s control over the media. The joint letter
signed by 162 prestigious scholars to support You Qing in the Taipei county mayoral election
represented the intellectuals’ rebellion against the KMT authoritarianism.

Second, the independent media in Taiwan were also more sympathetic toward the opposition
than the independent media in Singapore. The media in Singapore apparently sided with the PAP even
though they were independent. The English-language newspaper, The Straits Times, purposefully
avoided reporting news unfavorable to the PAP. The Chinese press also adopted an anti-opposition
attitude. When the left-wing students wanted to publish a public survey result, they could not obtain
the Chinese media’s help. So, the students published the results in the BS party newspaper. The press
and the public both seemed to be in agreement with the PAP government’s discriminatory attitudes
toward the BS. But in Taiwan, based on Lin’s comparative study of five newspapers’ reports of the 1989
Taipei county mayoral election (Lin 1991), some independent media apparently adopted quite a pro-
opposition attitude. So the DPP was able to find some media support in the 1989 campaign.

Third, the KMT and the PAP differed in their use of fiscal resources to attract votes. It was
during the election time that the KMT government started to use government budgetary power to
solicit votes. In 1989, especially around November, the KMT suddenly announced several policies
favoring Taipei county to attract votes. But as I discussed in Chapter 4, from the time they took office
the Singapore PAP government had implemented many public programs to attract votes from the
urban poor. Public programs and government budgets were not just temporary benefits given out only
during election time to solicit votes. It was the fundamental PAP policy to use public programs in
exchange for public support. Though both governments used public programs and budgetary power to
attract votes, the Singapore government had a much longer term investment in public programs than
the KMT government. Apparently the Singapore government’s policy was more successful.
In both cases, the incumbent parties had many advantages over the opposition. The PAP government was more able to use its incumbent advantage and state power to defeat the opposition than was the KMT government. As I explained in Chapter 4, the Singapore PAP government satisfied the majority urban poor’s need for housing and a better living environment. Those urban poor did not echo the criticism from the ideology-based opposition. The public was not even sympathetic toward the opposition and silently agreed with the government’s repression of the opposition. But the general public in Taiwan had grievances against the KMT government which had provided little benefit to the majority of the public.

The grievances from every social spectrum were already expressed by all kinds of social protests and demonstrations in the 1980s. The public was then more receptive of the opposition criticism of the government and less tolerant of the government’s repression. Hence, the public in Taiwan responded more negatively toward the government’s apparent use of state power to disadvantage the opposition. Additionally, because the KMT and the PAP governments differed in their benefits to the general public, the public in each country showed a different level of tolerance to the incumbent’s political repression and the authoritarian nature.

**1989 Taipei County Mayoral Election Mobilization**

Wu Huixia (1993) made a thorough study of the 1989 Taipei county mayoral election campaign strategies of both the KMT and the DPP. Based on her study, the KMT electoral mobilization was largely based on the party and local factional networks. The KMT targets were the 30% clientelistic votes. However, the DPP’s candidate, You Qing, targeted the independent voters. You Qing based his campaign on local public policy issues and attracted a majority of the non-partisan votes through a vigorous campaign.
By targeting the KMT’s local governance problems, the DPP successfully mobilized around the public grievances against the KMT local government. The DPP won the election. The KMT had a strong clientelistic mobilization network and the DPP had weak organizational and financial power. But when the DPP campaigned around an issue that had wide public support, that issue alone attracted a majority of independent voters. Then the clientelistic mobilization could not win. The KMT lost the election because they lost the issue in local governance.

- **KMT Clientelistic Electoral Mobilization**

  Based on Wu Huixia (1993)’s study, the KMT electoral mobilization mainly focused on managing the party mobilization networks in order to secure the clientele votes. In her interview with the KMT Taipei county mayoral election candidate, Lee Xi-kun, Wu Huixia was told that the KMT party and local factional networks could mobilize 540,000 votes in Taipei county. This was close to 30% of Taipei County’s total 1,820,000 electorate size (Wu Huixia 1993: 126). If the turnout rate was 70%, the total votes would have been around 1,274,000.

  Relying on these secure 540,000 votes, the KMT only needed to add 7.5% of the votes from independent voters to win the election. If the KMT could secure the 540,000 clientele votes and use some campaign effort to attract a small portion of independent voters, it was thought that the KMT would definitely win (Wu Huixia 1993: 272). The KMT then decided to focus on securing loyalty from the clientelistic voters rather than attracting independent voters through a vigorous political campaign. As a result, the KMT campaign activity was quite limited. The KMT campaign only focused on the regions where it had not set up strong clientele networks. From the following we can see that the KMT electoral mobilization was highly clientelistic rather than campaign oriented.

  First, the KMT centered its campaign around partisanship, rather than presenting issues and/or the candidate. Wu comments that two important attractions in a campaign, the image of the candidate
and issues, were purposefully ignored by the KMT party-trained campaign team. The KMT campaign director, Mr. Lin Rongbing\(^{28}\), was skilled at traditional clientelist mobilization rather than campaign management in a democratic system. “He (Mr. Lin Rongbing) was quite ignorant about democratic politics and had no understanding about voting behavior” (Wu Huixia 1993: 270, originally in Chinese, translation mine). The KMT campaign appealed to partisan identity. “Order and prosperity” was their campaign slogan. The KMT intended to present an argument to the voters that choosing the KMT candidate would maintain social and economic security as the KMT has effectively maintained order and brought prosperity to Taiwan. They typically ignored the candidate and political issues. (Wu Huixia 1993: 270).

However, by 1989, the public image of the KMT had been largely undermined by the social protests that had occurred in the 1980s. The KMT traditional political propaganda about order and prosperity were not well received by the public (Wu Huixia 1993: 270). Many voting behavior studies have shown that candidates and issues are important considerations for independent voters in Taiwan (Zili Morning Post Jan 4 1989, Youth Daily July 10 1989, cited by Wu Huixia 1993: 271). The KMT campaign completely ignored both things.

The KMT candidate for the Taipei county mayoral election, Lee Xi-kun, was largely ignored in the campaign. Under control by the party machine, Lee even had little influence in managing the campaign. Being a PhD from the United States, not affiliated with any local factional groups, Lee personally had great credibility and attractiveness to the voters.

Within the partisan-focused campaign, Lee’s personal attractiveness was largely ignored. It is reported by Wu that Mr. Lin Rongbing once commented “it is the KMT that is great, not Lee Xi-kun.

\(^{28}\) Since I don’t know the official translation of Mr. Lin’s name according to the Raman spelling system in Taiwan. I translate Mr. Lin’s name according to pingyin. Mr. Lin’s name might be spelled differently by other literatures.
Who is Lee Xi-kun? At Lee Xi-kun’s campaign booth, a large KMT party symbol was hanging next to his name in the front, instead of his picture. Lee’s picture was not seen anywhere in the booth (Wu Huixia 1993: 273). During Wu’s interview with Lee Xi-kun, Lee expressed his frustration with the campaign (Wu Huixia 1993: 273). Though Mr. Lee was upset with the campaign strategy, because of the KMT party structure, Mr. Lee himself had little influence.

The KMT initially nominated Lee because of his educational background and lack of any political connections. The KMT hoped that using Lee’s fresh and scholarly image would add credibility to the KMT and attract some independent voters. Due to Lee’s clean background, he was able to effectively refute some of the DPP’s criticism of him such as corruption and connection with local factional groups (Wu Huixia 1993: 314). But because the KMT campaign focused on partisanship rather than candidate, the KMT failed to use Lee’s image to attract enough independent voters as they originally planned (Wu Huixia 1993: 275).

The KMT also failed to present credible policy promises to the voters. Since the campaign was based on partisanship, policies and issues were not paid much attention to. KMT candidate Lee Xi-kun promised improvement of governance during the campaign. But Lee failed to make this issue the center of his campaign and also failed to convince the voters of his ability to bring change to local governance.

First, Lee failed to admit that the KMT suffered from existing governance problems, probably because he did not want to offend the current KMT incumbent mayor (Wu Huixia 1993: 327). If he could not identify current problems, Lee could hardly present plans for the public policy changes that he wanted to bring.

Second, even though Lee was not a member of the local factional elite, he was still a KMT party member and had to cater to the local factional groups’ interests due to the KMT patron-client
relationships with the factional groups. So, because of that, Lee could not convince the independent voters that a new mayor alone would be able to solve the KMT’s own governance problems caused by clientelism (Wu Huixia 1993: 327). Lee’s handling of the local governance issue and his promise, therefore, were quite ineffective and unconvincing.

Another factor in Lee’s failure was that under the KMT campaign strategy that focused on partisanship and clientelistic mobilization, Lee’s public speeches were not given much attention by the campaign organizers. When Lee’s speeches were constantly interrupted by You Qing’s supporters during Lee’s political opinion presentations, the KMT did nothing to change the situation and allowed the crowd to continue interrupting.

The interruptions were so serious that Lee was not able to complete his public speeches in three out of seven presentations. Clearly, the KMT response showed that Lee’s issue-related speeches were not their campaign focus and Lee’s failure to present his opinion was not considered a critical problem. But Wu observes that Lee’s failure to present his opinion in districts with a large percentage of independent voters, such as Banqiao, contributed to the KMT loss in those districts (Wu Huixia 1993: 319).

The KMT’s major attack on the DPP’s candidate, You Qing, was his opinion on Taiwan independence. The KMT argued that if the DPP’s candidates won, they would promote Taiwan independence and thus bring social instability and economic insecurity to Taiwan. However, this KMT criticism was regarded by Wu as ineffective, because Wu thought that the KMT local governance problem was the main public concern in 1989. The KMT did not directly respond to the local governance issue but instead made the unpopular issue of Taiwan independence the center of debate.

The KMT position was far from the majority of voters’ main concern (Wu Huixia 1993: 316). Also, You Qing’s main campaign issue was public policy rather than Taiwan independence. Just three
days before polling, the KMT information agency discovered that You Qing had made a comment about Taiwan Independence in an interview with PBS television in the United States (Wu Huixia 1993: 317). Since Taiwan independence was not an issue in You Qing’s political campaign, bringing up the Taiwan independence issue could not discredit You Qing but only show the KMT’s desperation.

Second, the KMT campaign activities included visiting the local factional elites and party branches, and offering dinners to thank the local elites and their clients. Lee seldom used public media, campaign materials, or public speeches to reach out to the independent voters. As a result, Wu observes that the KMT campaign activities were mainly intended to influence the existing 540,000 clientele voters. The KMT campaign activities were attended only by people who were mobilized by party network and local factional networks (Wu Huixia 1993: 312). Only those who attended the KMT campaign activities received the KMT campaign materials.

As a result, most independent voters did not have opportunities to receive the KMT campaign materials (Wu Huixia 1993: 316). Lee said he saw tons of campaign materials piled up on the floor of the campaign office and the campaign team did not make any effort to distribute those materials to independent voters. At that time, the campaign office still told Lee to relax and promised him that the KMT would win (Wu Huixia 1993: 313). Also, since vote buying was strictly conducted through the party network and local factional groups, ordinary voters outside the networks would not have access to payment for their vote either (Wu Huixia 1993: 325). Clearly, the KMT put its major effort and trust in the 540,000 clientele voters rather than the independent voters.

Third, Lee’s campaign activities were focused on districts with a large percentage of independent voters. In regions where the KMT had strong party and local factional networks, the KMT spent little effort on the campaign. In those KMT dominated regions, they used party and local factional groups to conduct mobilization. Taipei county had six city districts and 23 rural towns and villages.


Among the six city districts, the KMT had established its networks in three of them, Xindian, Yonghe and Pinghe (Wu Huixia 1993: 318). The remaining three city districts, Banqiao, Sanchong and Xinzhuang had the largest percentage of independent voters. So Lee was assigned to focus on Banqiao, Sanchong, and Xinzhuang with frequent visits (Wu Huixia 1993: 349). Some effort was made by Lee in the other three city districts where the KMT had establishments. The rural towns and villages were all assigned to party networks and factional groups to conduct clientelistic mobilization (Wu Huixia 1993: 346). Lee did not make any personal visits to those rural regions.

I calculated the votes that Lee received from regions where the KMT utilized clientelistic mobilization with little campaign effort and from the regions where the KMT had concentrated campaign effort without much clientelistic mobilization. The regions where the KMT had established networks and utilized clientelistic mobilization were the three city districts of Xindian, Yonghe, and Pinghe, and the 23 rural towns and villages. The regions where the KMT had weak clientelistic mobilization power were the three city districts Banqiao, Sanchong and Xinzhuang.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regions</th>
<th>% of votes for the KMT candidate Lee Xi-kun</th>
<th>% of votes for the DPP candidate You Qing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Xindian, Yonghe, Pinghe and 23 towns and villages</td>
<td>51.8%</td>
<td>42.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xindian, Yonghe, Pinghe</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banqiao, Sanchong and Xinzhuang</td>
<td>39.6%</td>
<td>54.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: compiled by author from Zhang 2006: 223-225

The differences are quite obvious. In regions with weak partisan mobilization networks, even though Lee made a lot of personal visits and organized many campaign activities, Lee only obtained 39.6% of the votes. But in regions where the KMT had established mobilization networks, Xindian, Yonghe, Pinghe and 23 towns and villages, Lee was able to win 51.8% of the vote, even though Lee
spent little campaign effort in these regions. From the three city districts where the KMT had strong party networks, Xindian, Yonghe and Pinghe, Lee was able to obtain 60% of the votes. The power of the KMT clientelistic mobilization is demonstrated by the voting outcomes.

In conclusion, the KMT electoral mobilization in the 1989 Taipei county mayoral election largely relied on clientelistic mobilization rather than on a campaign directed at the non-KMT-connected voter. As a result, policy issues, candidate’s image and public speeches were not given much campaign attention. The campaign mostly targeted the KMT clientelistic voters and seldom reached out to the independent voters. The electoral outcome was quite consistent with the KMT effort. The KMT received most of its votes from regions with established clientelistic networks. It was estimated by the KMT that the 540,000 votes were clientelistic votes. So about 86% of the total 622,248 votes that Lee Xi-kun obtained in the election were the votes mobilized by the clientele networks.

- **DPP’s Electoral Mobilization: Targeting Local Governance**

  Different from the KMT, the DPP had no established mobilization network in Taipei county. The DPP had never won an election in Taipei county. Their hope of success rested on attracting the 70% of independent constituents. Probably only 70% of those voters would actually vote. Therefore, the target was the independent voters numbering about 896,000 in total (Wu Huixia 1993: 322). So the DPP focused on vigorous campaign activities to attract the issue voters, rather than relying on party networks to conduct clientelistic mobilization. The DPP’s campaign helped them win 626,333 votes, which was 70% of the 896,000 independent votes. The DPP adopted a successful campaign strategy. This was quite different from the KMT clientelistic mobilization.

  First, different from the KMT, the DPP’s campaign focused on policy issues and the candidate’s image. Observing the public’s grievances against the KMT urban management problems, the DPP’s candidate, You Qing, chose to use these public policy problems as his campaign issues. Their issue-
focused campaign was very successful. Though the DPP did not have a clientele-based or party network to conduct electoral mobilization, the DPP won the majority support of the independent voters simply through targeted campaign activities (Wu Huixia 1993: 127).

Based on Wu’s interview with Mr. You Qing before the campaign, You Qing had already collected a lot of information about the local problems. He accomplished this by communicating with local residents for four years and reading scholarly studies about Taipei county’s urban management, district management, and voting behavior (Wu Huixia 1993: 275). You Qing found that Taipei county had the following unsolved governance problems:

1) The population expansion in Taipei county had almost reached the city’s full capacity.
2) The population explosion produced many social problems, such as education, crime rates, housing shortages, etc.
3) Taipei county’s public construction was quite limited and also of poor quality. So the quality of life for Taipei county residents was damaged by the low quality public facilities. The residents had complaints about environmental hazards, traffic problems and trash treatment problems. (Wu Huixia 1993: 276, originally in Chinese, translation mine).

Based on the above assessment, You Qing concluded that public policy problems were the most salient issues in Taipei county. Due to the KMT low governance capacity at the local level, residents of Taipei county had limited provision of public goods. Problems like pollution, traffic problems and trash problem were generally known to the residents (Wu Huixia 1993: 275-276).

So You Qing chose “innovation” and “public policy” as his campaign themes. You Qing’s campaign focused on solving corruption and local governance problems. He promoted an “innovation” image. Campaign advertisements like “You Qing as the Mayor, Trash Will Be Cleaned” were well acknowledged (Wu Huixia 1993: 326). The promise to solve the local governance problems addressed the majority of the peoples’ common concerns. “You Qing picked the general public’s grievance against the KMT public policy in Taipei County as their campaign issue. This reflected the public will.” (Wu Huixia 1993: 278).
Though the KMT candidate Lee Xi-kun also promised improvement of governance, Lee’s promise was not credible because he could not convince the voters that the KMT would be able to solve its own governance problem. Since You Qing was from the opposition party and he had no connection with the local factional groups or any incumbent local political elites, You Qin made a more persuasive argument that only the DPP could solve Taipei’s local governance problem. This campaign promise motivated most independent voters of Taipei County to support You Qing (Wu Huixia 1993: 279). You Qing promoted an image of himself as the spokesman of all independent voters (Wu Huixia 1993: 331).

Besides attracting independent voters, You Qing’s appeal for public policy innovation also attracted support from most existing social groups. Genuine social groups were formed in the late 1980s during the peak of Taiwan’s social movements. Many of those social groups actively participated in the 1989 Taipei mayoral county election, such as the China Human Rights Association, Houseless People’s Association, Teachers’ Human Rights Promotion Committee, University Education Reform Promotion Committee, Clean Election Association, Taiwan Anti-Corruption Promotion Association, Association of the Handicapped, Taiwan Presbyterian Church North Region Association, Chenshe, Taiwan University Students’ Association, Taiwan Environmental Protection Association, etc (Fang 1991: 102).

All the above groups either publically announced their endorsement of DPP candidates, supported the DPP’s campaign issues and opinions, or publically gave the highest credit to the DPP’s candidates in their assessments of all candidates. You Qing’s speaking on the issues of common concern won him support from individual voters as well as the social groups.

The second difference from the KMT was that You Qing’s campaign activities adopted a mass approach, while the KMT campaign focused on the elite (Wu Huixia 1993: 346). Lee paid visits only to

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the social groups, party leaders and local factional elites in certain regions. Lee had little personal contact with individual voters. The KMT seldom used media or campaign materials to reach out to the ordinary independent voters. However, You Qing used all opportunities to reach out to the masses. His campaign team vigorously passed out campaign materials to ordinary voters. You Qing used any opportunity to give public talks and present his policy opinions to the individual voters. Even though the media were not active in broadcasting news about him, You Qing actively created opportunities to attract media attention (Wu Huixia 1993: 314). For example, in order to create news, You Qing, together with his mother, paid a courtesy visit to President Lee Teng-hui’s father who lived in Taipei county (Wu Huixia 1993: 314). Through this mass approach, You Qing successfully made himself a public figure. By the end of the campaign period, according to Wu, about 94% of the Taipei county population knew You Qing (Wu Huixia 1993: 327). But a majority of the Taipei county residents were quite unfamiliar with the KMT candidate Lee Xi-kun.

Third, the DPP’s campaign activities were spread out through all regions. Because the KMT had established networks in certain regions, the KMT only needed to concentrate its campaign effort on the regions where they had little mobilization power: Xinzhuang, Banqiao and Sanchong. The DPP had no established organizations in any region, so they spread out their campaign effort equally in every district. In regions where the KMT had established clientelistic networks, You Qing still put in a lot of effort to reach out to the grassroots voters.

You Qing’s campaign, however, was most successful in regions where the KMT had few mobilization networks. In regions with established clientele networks, You was much less successful. According to Table 5.10, You Qing received 54.8% of the votes in regions where the KMT did not have large mobilization networks. In regions where the KMT had networks, You Qing received only 42.8% of the votes. In the three city districts where the KMT had the strongest organizational power, Xindian,
Yonghe, and Pinghe, You Qing received only 35.7% of the vote even though You Qing had put in strong campaign efforts in those regions.

In the rural villages and towns that the KMT used to win elections by mobilization of local factional networks, You Qing also won a large number of votes. It was reported that some opportunistic factional groups chose to defect to support You Qing, because of You Qing’s growing popularity. During his interview with Wu, You Qing said “at that time, many factional leaders observed that most probably I would win, they secretly supported me” (Wu Huixia 1993: 279). That could explain why, in the rural regions where the KMT relied on mobilization of local factional networks, You Qing still won a comparatively large number of votes. You Qing’s regional strategy and mass strategy helped the DPP to attract votes even from regions were dominated by those local factional groups.

Generally speaking, through focusing on issues and mass based electoral campaigns, the DPP was able to break the KMT’s clientelistic mobilization power. Though the DPP had quite limited financial resources and organizational power, it was able to win because of You Qing’s appeal to the masses and because his campaign focused on the local governance issue (Wu Huixia 1993: 281)

- Conclusion

In the 1989 Taipei county mayoral election, the KMT and the DPP adopted very different mobilization approaches. The KMT target was the 540,000 clientelistic votes. But the DPP’s target was the 896,000 independent votes. The KMT had already established a party network and local factional networks to obtain the clientelistic votes, and paid little attention to attracting the independent voters. Their campaign issues were not appealing to the public. Their campaign activities were not organized to reach the independent voters. The voting results show that the KMT probably attracted only 9% of the independent votes.
The DPP’s candidate You Qing, however, conducted vigorous campaign activities in order to attract the independent voters. Because the DPP did not have established mobilization networks, convincing the independent voters with appealing issues became critical for their success. The choice of local governance as a campaign theme was a popular issue with voters and helped the DPP to present an innovative image. These factors allowed You Qing to win support from independent voters, most social groups and even some local factional groups.

With little organizational power or financial resources, You Qing was able to successfully defeat the strong KMT clientelistic mobilization power and win the election. The public grievance over the KMT’s bad local governance was the key factor in You Qing’s success. Since most of the KMT mayors were either local factional elites or supported by local factional groups, the local government was highly captured by these groups. The local government then had little incentive to provide public goods that would damage the local factional groups’ special interests.

Moreover, because the KMT regime heavily relied on clientele networks for electoral survival, a large percentage of budgetary resources were spent to cater to the clientele’s specific interests. The KMT local government lacked the financial capacity and the political will to tackle the governance problem. When You Qing promised to solve this local governance problem, without much mobilization effort, the DPP persuaded a majority of voters to defect from supporting the KMT for a hope of change.

**Voting Outcome Analysis**

The voting outcomes are consistent with the above-mentioned KMT and DPP mobilization strategies. Communal identity and profession were the most significant determinants of voting behavior. The voting outcome does not exhibit the clear urban and rural division which was observed in the Singapore 1963 general election. Clearly the KMT did not attract the votes of urban residents by public programs. The voting outcome cut through the line separating KMT clients and non-clients.
• **Voting Behavior Differences: KMT Clients vs. KMT non-Clients**

First, the voting behavior shows that communal identity and profession were the most significant determinants of the voting outcomes. Zhong conducted a pre-election voting behavior survey before the 1989 Taipei county mayoral election. In this survey-based study, Zhong examines the impact on voting behavior of gender, age, communal identity, profession, educational level, income level, partisanship, class, local/immigrants(Zhong 1989: 146).

Among all the above variables, only communal identity and profession were the significant determinants of voting behavior. Among the mainlanders, support for Lee Xi-kun was significantly higher than for You Qing. Mainlanders supported Lee Xi-kun by 63.8% and only 13.3% of mainlanders supported You Qing. Mainlanders who benefited from the KMT policies showed their loyalty to the KMT candidates. Among the Taiwanese, the votes were equally split between the two candidates. Of the Taiwanese, 35.9% supported You Qing and 35.3% supported Lee Xi-kun. Clearly, there was no strong partisan preference among the Taiwanese population. As of 1989, communal cleavage and Taiwanese grievances were not yet salient issues for most Taiwanese. Therefore, in 1989, the Taiwanese population did not exhibit clear communal based partisan voting behavior.
Table 5.11 Communal Identity and Voting Behavior in the 1989 Taipei County Mayoral Election

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mainlander</th>
<th>Taiwanese</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vote for Lee Xi-kun</td>
<td>63.8%</td>
<td>35.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vote for You Qing</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>35.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: compiled by author from Zhong 1989: 146

Table 5.12 Professions and Voting Behavior in the 1989 Taipei County Mayoral Election

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Profession</th>
<th>military</th>
<th>Public servants</th>
<th>Public school</th>
<th>workers</th>
<th>business</th>
<th>farmers</th>
<th>students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vote for Lee Xi-kun</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>63.4%</td>
<td>68.8%</td>
<td>29.7%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>36.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vote for You Qing</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>37.4%</td>
<td>36.7%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>46.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: compiled by author from Zhong 1989: 146

Profession was another significant factor in voting behavior. Among military personnel, 66.7% supported Lee Xi-kun while none supported You Qing. Among public servants, 63.4% supported Lee Xi-kun and 22% supported You Qing. Among public school employees, 68.8% supported Lee Xi-kun and 12.5% supported You Qing. There was clear pro-KMT voting behavior within the above three professions. As we observed in Chapter 3, the KMT welfare policies largely benefited military, public servants and public school employees. People in these three professions were the KMT clients who had received some exclusive benefits from the KMT. Not surprisingly, they showed strong partisan support for the KMT.

In other professions, the differences were not significant. Among the workers, 37.4% supported Yong Qing and 29.7% supported Lee Xi-kun. Among business professions, 36.7% supported You Qing and 41% supported Lee Xi-kun. Among farmers, 33.3% supported You Qing and 33.3% supported Lee Xi-kun. Among students 46.2% supported You Qing and 38.5% supported Lee Xi-kun. So among all the other professions who were not included in the KMT political coalition, there was no clear partisan preference in 1989. Most of them were independent issue voters.
To summarize, from the above pre-election voting behavior study, we can see that by 1989, there was only one clear voting behavior pattern. Voters who were included in the KMT coalition and benefited from the KMT favorable policies strongly supported the KMT candidate. They were mainlanders, military, public servants, and public school employees. The rest of the voters who were not included in the KMT coalition and who had received little benefit from the KMT policies exhibited no clear voting behavior pattern. These non-KMT-partisan voters were the target of the DPP’s electoral mobilization. Since they had no strong partisan interests, they could be easily won over to the opposition. In the 1989 election, by simply promising to take care of the public trash, You Qing swayed those independent voters to his side and won the election.

- **Regional Differences: Clientele region vs. Non Clientele Region**

  The voting outcome of the 1989 Taipei county mayoral election showed no significant difference between the rural and urban regions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regions</th>
<th>% Votes for Lee Xi-kun</th>
<th>% Votes for You Qing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Six city districts</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>46.98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 rural towns and villages</td>
<td>45.29%</td>
<td>48.29%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

  Source: Complied by author from Zhang 2006: 223-225.

  The voting differences between urban and rural regions were less than 3%. So there were no significant differences in votes between rural and urban regions. As I discussed in Chapter 4, the Singapore 1963 election outcome showed a very distinct urban and rural division. The incumbent PAP received the most votes in the urban region. The opposition BS received the most votes from the rural region. Chapter 4 also explains that it was the PAP public programs in urban regions that attracted the urban residents’ support for the PAP. In rural regions, not only was there less need for public programs, there were fewer public programs. So many rural voters were vulnerable to the opposition mobilization.
and supported the BS in the 1963 election. In Taipei county, since the KMT did not have good public programs in the city region to attract urban votes, the 1989 Taipei county mayoral election did not exhibit an urban versus rural division.

The clear division was not urban and rural but rather by KMT clientele or non-clientele region. As shown in Table 5.10, in regions where the KMT had strong clientelistic mobilization network, Lee Xi-kun was able to obtain 60% of the votes. But in regions where the KMT clientele mobilization power was weak, Lee Xi-kun only received 39.6% of the votes. Clearly, voters supported the KMT not because of its public programs as in the case of Singapore, but a majority of voters supported the KMT in exchange for the party’s serving their specific interests.

● Conclusion

From the voting behavior and voting outcome alone, we can see that most voters who supported the KMT were KMT clients who had received certain favors from the KMT. They include the partisan clients such as mainlanders, military, public servants, and public school employees. They received benefits from the KMT in favorable social policies and thus strongly supported the KMT. This group also includes the clients mobilized by the KMT clientele networks. They received certain benefits during the mobilization process. But the majority of voters who had not received individualistic favors from the KMT had no strong voting preference. They were independent issue and candidate voters. The DPP’s supporters were the majority of independent voters who benefited little from the KMT’s public policies. The DPP won the majority of those votes by simply promising better local governance.

In conclusion, it was by targeting the majority of non-KMT clients that the DPP was able to break KMT dominance at the local level. It was also by choosing the local governance issue as their campaign focus that the DPP won support from these non-KMT clients. The DPP targeted the weakest point of the KMT clientelism.
The local governance problem was the side-effect of the KMT clientelism regime structure. This side effect had aroused social protest and demonstrations that seriously undermined KMT legitimacy in the 1980s and pushed the KMT to consider political reform. The same side effect also assisted the opposition in winning the local elections. In Taipei county, clientelism could secure about 30% of the local votes for the KMT. However, when the majority of 70% of the independent voters were awakened to vote for the opposition, clientelism could no longer secure a KMT electoral victory. By attacking the local governance problem, the DPP successfully mobilized local independent voters and won the 1989 election.

**1989-2000: the DPP From Local To National**

By starting with winning local magistrate positions, on the one hand the DPP cut off the financial resources of clientelistic networks. On the other hand, through providing better local governance, the DPP demonstrated to the voters its ability to govern and its resolution to remove corruption. This strategy successfully paved the way for the DPP to win the national leadership position only 16 years after forming the party.

In 1989, the DPP won the city/county mayor positions in six cities/counties. From the late 1980s to the early 1990s, the DPP gradually won elections of local magistrate positions in major cities such as Taipei city, Taipei county (Now Xinbei city), Kaohsiung city, and Tainan city. In the 1993 city/county mayoral elections, the DPP won 40% of the votes and 8 local magistrate positions. For the first time, in the 1997 city/county mayoral elections, the DPP won more votes than the KMT. The DPP won 15 local magistrate positions. The KMT only won 6 magistrate positions.

By 1997, the DPP controlled more than half of the local magistrate leadership positions. Soon after the DPP won the local leadership positions in 1997, the general public was already primed for a change of national leadership. In the 2000 presidential election, the DPP won. The KMT clientelism and
the governance problem were key issues that allowed the DPP to win local elections and gradually challenge the KMT in national elections.

**1989-1993 Local Consolidation: Cutting Off Financial Roots of Clientelism**

By winning local magistrate positions, the DPP could cut off the KMT clientelistic ties with the local factional groups. As I discussed in Chapter 3, the relationship between the KMT elites and local factional groups was merely interest based. The KMT gave out local economic privileges to factional groups in exchange for their support for KMT candidates in local elections.

After winning local executive positions, the DPP then controlled the local government as well as the authority to distribute economic rents. By controlling economic rents, the DPP could cut off the economic ties between the KMT and the local factional groups. Many skillful DPP local governors thus used political and economic resources at the local level to build their personal clientelistic network (Wang 2004: 77). Some the DPP local governors learned to balance the relationship with the local factional groups and even obtained the local factional groups’ support for later elections (Wang 2004: 78). Some local factional elites, out of personal interest, even joined the DPP and became the DPP’s candidates in local elections. All the above situations helped the DPP to consolidate its political base at the local level.

Having won the local magistrate positions, the DPP consolidated its power in the regions. It became hard for the KMT to remove the DPP leaders and win back the regions. The DPP won 6 local magistrate positions in the 1989 election. In the 1993 election, the DPP consolidated its local electoral success and won 8 local magistrate positions. In the 1993 election, the DPP maintained 4 of their 6 incumbent magistrate positions.

Of the 2 counties that were lost to the KMT, one county was lost with a less than 3% marginal difference. A scatter plot of the DPP’s votes in 89 city/county mayoral election and the DPP’s votes in
the 1993 city/county mayoral elections shows a very strong positive correlation. The DPP continued to
win a large percentage of votes in cities/counties that the DPP had won in the 1989 election.
Therefore, it is clear that once the DPP controlled the local magistrate positions in a given region, the
KMT clientelistic mobilization networks in that region were seriously damaged. It became much harder
for the KMT to win elections again in that region.

Figure 5.4 Scatter Plot of the DPP Votes in the 1989 and the 1993 City/County Mayoral Elections

1993-1997 Local Expansion: Starting with Local Governance

Not only did the DPP consolidate its power by breaking the KMT local clientelistic network, it
also used its success in local governance to prove its governing ability to the general public. Through
setting a good example in one county, the DPP persuaded voters from other cities/counties to consider a DPP mayor over a KMT mayor. Therefore, after a few years’ management in local government, the DPP could expand its winning districts in the 1997 elections.

Taking Taipei county as an example, after he became mayor, You Qing fulfilled his campaign promises and devoted significant effort and resources to public construction. In eight years as mayor, You Qing built 55 primary schools with 5,167 new classrooms, 9 middle schools, and 1 technology school. In order to fight water contamination of the Danshui River, You Qing opened a trash recycling site and thus cleaned the trash piles along the Danshui River and the Dahan River.

You Qing also solved the budget constraints and low tax revenue problems. He requested open public bidding for public projects and thus reduced government expenditures. During his mayorship, You Qing constructed 537 new roads, and started 13 major traffic construction projects. You Qing also expanded public housing programs to provide housing for the disadvantaged groups (Zhang 2007: 249).

During You Qing’s mayorship, Taipei county saw a dramatic change in urban management, traffic, cultural and financial prosperity. In his interview with Taipei county bureaucrats, Tung found You Qing’s contribution to Taipei county local governance as follows.

When Dr. You became the new governor; he adopted some new policies to begin to deal with the critical urban condition of Taipei County. First of all, he began to limit the development project that was expanding into non-developed areas. He and his team hoped that this policy would preserve some open space for the residents of Taipei County. Second, he invited planning scholars, in particular those who often were considered radical to help him. During You’s time served as Taipei County governor, he produced a comprehensive plan for Taipei County. In his plan, for the first time in the history of Taipei County, a county governor drew an overall and understandable picture for the citizens regarding the future of Taipei County. It also gave the planning bureaucrats and, in general, the local bureaucrats, a sense of direction regarding the government’s related responsibilities. (Tung 2006: 158-159)

As a result of his impressive work, in the 1992 Taipei county mayoral election, You won 46% of the votes while the KMT won only 35% of the votes.
Other DPP local governors, such as Taipei city mayor Chen Shui-bian also adopted similar vigorous efforts to establish the DPP’s reputation in local governance. During my investigation in Taiwan, I still heard Taipei City residents praise Chen Shui-bian for many public construction projects that Chen implemented during his Taipei city mayorship. Chen’s good mayoral image prepared him to win the 2000 presidential election.

A Taipei county resident told me that generally speaking the DPP’s local governance is better than the KMT’s. He cited this from a Tianxia Magazine. In this magazine’s annual evaluation of local governance, counties or cities under the DPP’s mayorship always scored the highest rank. He said: “The DPP did a better job than the KMT in terms of public policy, public construction and caring for the disadvantaged groups.” (Interview: TW30211).

Through good local governance, the DPP therefore gradually set up a new image for itself and won the majority of voters’ confidence about their ability to govern. The DPP gradually changed its image from a radical pro-Taiwan independence opposition party to a clean and fresh new party which had demonstrated its ability to implement good governance.

As a result, the DPP continued to win more local magistrate positions after 1993. Through good governance, the DPP started to win mayorships of big cities and counties. Huang Teh-fu observes that in magistrate/mayoral elections, the opposition’s share was significantly higher in Taiwan’s five cities and four counties than elsewhere (Huang 1991: 54). But in other elections, such as elections for assemblyman/municipal councilor election, there is no significant difference (Huang 1991: 54-68).

By the mid-1990s, the DPP controlled the magistrate positions of Taiwan’s four biggest cities and counties, Taipei city, Taipei county, Kaohsiung county, Tainan county. In 1997, the DPP’s local territory greatly expanded from the original 8 cities/counties to 15 cities/counties. The scatter plot of the 1993 and 1997 city/county mayoral elections results show DPP’s expansion in the 1997 election.
From the above scatter plot, there is a clear positive correlation between the two elections. In the cities/counties where the DPP won more than 40% of the votes in the 1993 city/county mayoral elections, the DPP continues to win their support in 1997. Among the 14 cities where the DPP had more than 40% of the votes in 1993, only 3 cities dropped to less than 40% of the vote in 1997.

But the DPP did much better in regions where they lost in the 1993 elections. There were five cities in which the DPP won fewer than 40% of the votes in 1993. But the DPP’s votes in those five cities rose to more than 40% in the 1997 election. So, in cities/counties where the DPP won fewer than 40% of the votes in the 1993 election, the DPP gained more votes in 1997. There were about 10
cities/counties in which the DPP won fewer than 40% of the votes in the 1993 election. But in the 1997 election, that number dropped to 7. Generally speaking, the DPP gained more votes in 1997 than 1993.

**1997-2000: From Local To National**

In 1997, the DPP won leadership positions in 12 counties while the KMT only won in 8 counties. The DPP’s success in winning more than half of the local magistrate positions in 1997 demonstrated the voters’ growing confidence in this new party’s governing ability. Winning local elections paved the way for them to win the national election in 2000. The DPP had successfully persuaded the majority of local voters to defect in local elections. Those local cities/counties that had supported the DPP in the 1997 elections continued to support the DPP in the 2000 elections. The scatter plot of the DPP’s votes in 1997 election and 2000 election shows a strong positive correlation.
Figure 5.6 Scatter Plot of the DPP Votes in the 1997 City/County Mayoral Elections and the 2000 Presidential Election

Since the 2000 election had three strong candidates due to a split within the KMT, all candidates seldom received more than 50% of the votes in any given city/county. As a result, the DPP received smaller percentages of votes in the 2000 election than in the earlier 1997 elections. Still, we can see a clear positive correlation between the DPP’s votes in the 1997 county/city mayoral elections and the 2000 presidential election.

In the 15 counties/cities where the DPP won more than 40% of the votes in 1997, the DPP received more than 30% of the votes from 14 of them in 2000. So, in the cities/counties where the DPP
won a large percentage of votes in the 1997 elections, the DPP continued to win strong support. Among the ten cities/counties where the DPP received fewer than 40% of the votes in the 1997 election, the DPP received more than 30% of the votes from four of them. So, in cities where the DPP won few votes in the 1997 elections, the DPP won more support from these regions in 2000.

In the 2000 election, the counties/cities where the DPP won fewer than 30% of the votes were reduced to 4. Only 2 regions gave the DPP fewer than 20% of the votes. These two regions are two military bases, Jingmen county and Lianjiang county, where the votes always go to the KMT candidates. So, except for these two military counties, by 2000, in a majority of counties/cities, a considerable number of voters had given their endorsement to the DPP to assume national leadership.

Regression analysis show a significant correlation between the 1997 and 2000 DPP votes. The correlation test shows a similar result. Clearly the DPP’s 2000 national success is highly related to the DPP’s success in the 1997 local elections. The DPP was able to win the national elections because of their good local performance.

Table 5.14 Linear Regression Result of DPP Votes in the 1997 City/County Mayoral Election and the 2000 Presidential Election

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td>Beta</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>19.316</td>
<td>4.608</td>
<td>4.192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>97DPPvotes%</td>
<td>.433</td>
<td>.110</td>
<td>.634</td>
<td>3.931</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Dependent Variable: 2000DPPvotes%
Table 5.15 Correlations Test Result of the DPP Votes in the 1997 City/County Mayoral Election and the 2000 Presidential Election

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>97DPP votes%</th>
<th>2000DPP votes%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>97DPP votes%</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000DPP votes%</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.634**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

### 2000: Winning the Presidential Election

By 2000, the DPP had already obtained a high degree of voters’ confidence that the DPP would be a capable ruling party. The voters had given the DPP that endorsement at the level of city and county governments in 1997. The DPP’s strategy to start with local performance and gradually persuade the voters to trust their ruling ability was successful. The DPP’s local achievements paved the way for them to challenge the KMT at the national level in the 2000 presidential election.

The 2000 presidential election was complicated. Many factors contributed to the DPP’s success (Diamond 2001). First, conflict between Lee Teng-hui and James Soong forced James Soong to run as an independent candidate. James Soong’s defection caused the split of the KMT partisan and local factional votes. James Soong had skillfully established his personal patron-client relationships with the local factional groups during his term as governor of Taiwan province. As a result, many local factional groups defected to vote for James Soong in the 2000 election.
Second, besides James Soong’s defection, the DPP’s campaign strategy was also responsible for its success. The DPP chose anti-corruption and anti-Black-Gold-Politics\(^\text{29}\) as their campaign issues. By the time of the DPP’s campaign, corruption became a central issue in the political debate. Both the KMT candidate, Lien Chan, and independent Candidate, James Soong failed to address the corruption issue well. In the beginning, Soong was not connected with the KMT corrupt image and Soong enjoyed more popularity than the other two candidates. Unfortunately, during the last stage of the campaign, the KMT alleged that “James Soong’s son, Soong Cheng-yuan, had overseas bank accounts with large cash balances” (Diamond 2001: 62). This scandal damaged James Soong. After that, Soong’s popularity quickly dropped and the KMT corruption issue garnered even more public attention.

Third, the DPP had international help. At the last stage, China gave a “belligerent warning to the people not to vote for Chen”. But China’s actions backfired (Diamond 2001: 80). China’s threat aroused the public’s strong feelings of nationalism. The KMT candidate Lien failed to respond strongly to China’s threat. Lien’s weak position toward the Chinese government swayed perhaps 2-3% votes away from Lien to either Chen or Soong (Diamond 2001: 80).

The DPP’s success indeed was produced by several contingent factors, such as Soong’s decision to run as an independent, the KMT exposure of Soong’s scandal, China’s threat, etc. But under all the above contingent factors, the DPP’s success in presenting a clean and capable image is largely responsible for the 39.3% of the votes that the party received. The voters who voted for the DPP in 2000 did so because of their frustration with the KMT’s corrupt leadership and because of confidence in the DPP’s ability to make a change in the government. Corruption in the KMT government after

\(^{29}\) Black Gold Politics is the terms used to describe corruptions in Taiwan government that is related to elections. Please refer to chapter 2 for discussion about Black Gold Politics.
being brought to the stage by the DPP to the stage became the major reason that helped the DPP win 39.3% votes.

Corruption became a more salient issue starting in the 1990s. After Taiwan began to hold competitive elections in the late 1980s, the KMT had to mainly rely on local factional groups to win elections. As a result, the local factional groups quickly increased their power in politics. Famous gangsters became governors or assemblymen or legislators through vote buying. The local clientelist elites’ capture of the state resources then was more vigorous than before. Wang remarks, “the negative externalities of patronage had been expanded because the clientelist elites could exploit the state resources” (Wang 2004: 182).

As a result, Black Gold Politics became rampant in the mid-1990s in Taiwan. By the late 1990s, the public had become very aware of and hostile toward Black Gold Politics. In a survey (Lin 1995:55) in the 1993 election, only 15.5% of the voters regarded corruption as the most important problem in Taiwanese society. But several months before the 2000 presidential election, Black Gold Politics had become the most important issue (Wang 2004: 182).

The DPP, however, through its ten years of local governance experience had gained the reputation for being capable of resisting the local factional elites and fighting corruption. In a survey conducted right before the 2000 election, 4.05% of interviewees thought that the KMT candidate could resolve Black Gold Politics; 37.5% believed the DPP could do it; 69.5% did not believe Lien could decrease Black Gold Politics and 11.8% believed that Lien could not do it (Wang 2004: 182). Even James Soong, because of his own scandal, could not compete with Chen’s clean corruption-fighter image. Diamond remarks as follows:

If the leading issues were cleaning up crime and corruption and effecting a true rotation of power at the center, neither Lien or Soong could compete with Chen. ... For the sizable body of Taiwanese voters who were fed up with Black Gold Politics and hungered for reform, Chen had
demonstrated that he was a more credible and committed reformer than Soong, who had spent his whole political life building up the KMT machine. ... The Chen campaign had tried hard to remind the voters that Soong helped to foster Black Gold Politics and that many of his current supporters were still implicated in it. ... Persuading voters to dump Soong for Chen was seemingly a formidable challenge, however, until the KMT did Chen the enormous favor of muddying Soong’s reformist image with the revelation of financial scandal. ... “Those who are standing beside Lien Chan and James Soong are gangsters and corrupt officials, like Lo Fu-chu, Yen Ching-piao, Wu Tze-yuan, and Kuo Ting-tsai,” Chen declared in the campaign’s closing days. (Diamond 2001: 69)

Knowing the public’s grievance in this area, the DPP used a very successful campaign strategy. “DPP played a decisive role in pushing Black Gold Politics to become the most salient political issue” in 2000 election (Wang 2004: 183). The DPP had, in the past, tried to make Taiwan independence the salient issue in electoral campaigns but failed badly in the 1991 election.

After 1991, the DPP started to use corruption as one of its campaign appeals. As it saw that Black Gold Politics had become rampant in the 1990s, the DPP started to make it a more salient issue. In the 1997 county/city mayoral elections, Black Gold Politics was the DPP’s dominant campaign issue (Wang 2004: 183). It won the DPP a decisive victory in the 1997 elections. So, in the 2000 presidential election, the DPP gave more campaign attention to Black Gold Politics and made a more complete political argument about it. “Change Party and Clean up Black Gold Politics” became the DPP’s primary campaign slogan (Wang 2004: 183).

Because of the DPP’s successful campaign effort and because the KMT helped to expose James Soong’s financial scandal, the public in 2000 became quite disappointed with the KMT and James Soong’s connection with the local gangsters and the consequent corruption and weak governance. The DPP, on the other hand, provided a fresh and clean image to the voters. Also, the DPP demonstrated their governing ability through good performance at the local level. For most issue voters, choosing the DPP would not be a bad choice. By 2000, many voters were confident to entrust the national government to the DPP in hope of a change to better governance. So the DPP by its successful
campaign strategy, as well as its governing ability demonstrated in local governance, won 39.3% of votes in the 2000 election. The DPP became the ruling party in Taiwan.

Conclusion

Some ideological factors, such as the emergence of Taiwanese nationalism and the introduction of liberal democratic ideology, might have played some part in Taiwan’s transition to democracy. But from the above analysis of Taiwan’s democratization process, it is clear that most voters were strategically calculating their payoffs in their voting decisions. The Taiwan public’s actions to push for democratization and finally embrace a new party were made by very materialistic considerations rather than being merely driven by ideology or nationalist mentality.

In the same way, not all authoritarian regimes will fail just because the society becomes modernized and is exposed to liberal democratic ideology. The strategic voters will support the opposition elite’s actions for democratization only if they believe that they will receive better payoffs after calculating those payoffs, the possibilities of a government turnover, and the opportunity costs of a change.

Many contingent factors were also in place in Taiwan to make the transition more desirable and possible for strategic voters. One key reason that KMT authoritarianism failed while Singapore’s authoritarianism has been sustained is that clientelism gives a chance for the opposition to persuade the informed public to defect from supporting authoritarianism. A professional government, as in Singapore, leaves strategic voters little incentive to defect.

As we have observed in Chapter 3, the clientelism regime structure produced discriminatory wealth redistribution and a weak local government in Taiwan. Since a large portion of the KMT’s state resources were distributed to the party’s clients, the majority of the public benefited very little from KMT social policy. Weak local government caused insufficient protection of public goods and resulted
in bad public policy at the local level. The KMT social and public policy, therefore, not only failed to give social benefit to the public; the KMT also could not protect the public goods for the public’s livelihood.

As a result, when the opposition movement and international situation started to break the KMT’s iron-fisted rule, the public started to rally on the streets protesting against certain public policies. The protestors were not ideologically driven, nor did they make any demands for democratization. In the 1980s, considering the payoffs, costs and possibilities, ordinary citizens chose to demonstrate simply for better payoffs. They simply wanted to protect their interests that had been damaged by KMT social and public policies. But these social movements in the 1980s seriously challenged KMT legitimacy and largely assisted the opposition movement. Ironically, the KMT clientele regime structure made it possible for those social movements to emerge. The social movements were well used by the opposition to push Taiwan to become a competitive democracy.

Nor could the KMT clientele regime structure sustain KMT one party dominance under semi-open competitive democracy. By adopting a “from local to national” strategy, the DPP successfully weakened the KMT clientele mobilization network power. The DPP chose to attack the weakest point in the KMT regime, the local governance problem, and persuaded rational voters to support the DPP for better local governance. By gradually winning local governments, the DPP finally persuaded the general public of their ability to govern. So, strategic voters in 2000 chose the DPP’s leadership after 14 years of observation and increasing conviction that the DPP was capable to lead the country.

To summarize, indeed many factors contributed to Taiwan’s democratization and change of national leadership. But compared with Singapore, one critical reason for the failure of KMT authoritarianism is that the KMT clientele regime structure itself could not sustain authoritarianism in a modernized society. The majority of the public received little benefit from the KMT government’s local public policy or social policy. So, this system left some room for the strategic voters to defect under
certain situations and given incentives. Under this regime structure, if the opposition successfully persuades the rational voters to defect for a better payoff, the opposition is able to change the dominant party’s leadership.
Chapter 6 Conclusion and Theoretical Implications

The findings from a comparative case study of Singapore’s and Taiwan’s political paths provide important implications for our understanding of authoritarian governments. This chapter summarizes the findings of the research, discusses its generalizability for other authoritarian states, lists several theoretical implications, and also speculates about the future China.

Main Findings of this Research

This research seeks to address an important theoretical question: could one-party rule survive in a modernized society; why do some survive and others fail? I address this puzzle through a two country comparative study of Singapore and Taiwan. The many similarities of Singapore and Taiwan make it possible for me to control for several existing explanatory variables. So by comparing these two countries, I can test existing theories and seek new answers to this puzzle.

Many hypotheses have been deployed to explain the political development outcomes of Singapore and Taiwan respectively. However, no in-depth comparative study of Singapore and Taiwan has been done to test these explanations. The major contribution of this research is an in-depth comparative study of the political path of two countries which discovers and tests a new theoretical explanation.

In Chapter 1, I present a theory of authoritarian survival: regime structure affects the chances of the survival of the authoritarian leader. A dual structure containing separate mobilization institutions and state institutions is labeled a clientelistic regime. Clientelistic regimes produce more transaction costs in government functions than a regime with a single state structure, the statist regime.
In a clientelistic regime, the authoritarian leader has fewer resources to redistribute to the majority of the population than the authoritarian leader in a statist regime. When a strong opposition appears on the ballot to challenge the authoritarian leader, it is easier for the opposition in a clientelistic regime to convince the majority of the voters to defect from supporting the incumbent leader than it is for the opposition in a statist regime. Based on this theory, I hypothesize that Singapore and Taiwan differ in their regime structures and state capacities as well as the possibilities for the opposition to win at the ballot box. Chapters 2 to 5 are the four empirical chapters that test this hypothesis systematically against other existing explanations.

In Chapter 2, I first narrate the political development paths of Singapore and Taiwan. Many existing theories have been provided to explain their political development. I then compare the explanatory variables discussed by the existing literature on the two countries. I compare both countries’ current politics in terms of level of political liberty, level of economic development and presence of liberal ideology, the incumbent parties’ grassroots institutions, the level of political participation in local politics, level of political repression, and the international factors in their nation building processes.

This comparative study demonstrates that except for their divergence in level of political liberty, Singapore and Taiwan have similar characteristics in all other variables. Some of these characteristics even contradict the predictions of current theories and traditional wisdom. In sum, Chapter 2 challenges the existing theories and suggests that additional variables are needed to explain the political divergence we see in Singapore and Taiwan.

Chapter 3 seeks to find differences in Taiwan and Singapore in areas neglected by the existing literature. Potentially significant differences are found in the structures that conduct electoral mobilization. After World War II, the new nationalist Chinese government on Taiwan set up a large
network of non-governmental institutions to perform the function of electoral mobilization, i.e., KMT party networks and patron-client networks with local factional groups. The KMT’s electoral mobilization was clientelistic. It obtained votes by distributing various favors and benefits to their clients.

Singapore’s PAP, on the other hand, soon after assuming power in the early 1960s, purposefully minimized non-governmental mobilization institutions, such as the party bureaucracy. Until today, Singapore’s grassroots mobilization has been largely conducted by various para-governmental organizations such as the Community Centers, rather than the PAP local branches. I also find that the PAP government’s electoral mobilization is not clientelistic. Most mobilization activities are advertising the government’s good image and various social and economic achievements.

In Chapter 3, I describe the differences in their mobilization structures. Taiwan has a clientelistic mobilization structure, but Singapore has a statist mobilization structure. Further, the differences in mobilization structure affect their respective state structures, fiscal structures, and social and economic policies. After comparing their public administration systems, I conclude that Singapore has set up a hyper-professional bureaucracy according to the Weberian definition of “rational bureaucracy”, but the Taiwan KMT has a semi-professional bureaucracy.

This conclusion is based on a comparison of their recruitment, public payment, promotion, supervision and anti-corruption systems. Singapore’s bureaucracy encourages meritocracy and high performance. But Taiwan’s bureaucracy encourages mediocrity and loyalty to the government. Additionally, Singapore’s bureaucracy is utilized to attract public support for the PAP government by its high standards of performance, whereas the KMT bureaucracy becomes an additional channel that the KMT government can use to recruit clients into its broad political coalition and secure their loyal support to the regime.
This difference between clientelistic regime and professional statist regime is also reflected in their fiscal situation and policies. After comparing revenues and expenditures from 1972 to 1998, I find that the two countries had different degrees of fiscal strength. The Taiwan KMT government could hardly make its fiscal ends meet each year while the Singapore PAP government annually had large amounts of fiscal surplus.

The fiscal data also reveal differences in spending. The Taiwan KMT government spent an uncommonly large amount on welfare funds which I discovered were channeled only towards the KMT’s social clients. The PAP government spent much more on public housing and community infrastructure. So the Singapore government’s social spending was less inclusive. The KMT’s social and economic policies were geared more toward benefiting its clients. But Singapore’s social policies benefited most the majority of lower-middle income voters. The general public in Singapore, that is, mostly lower-middle income people, received more social benefit than did their counterparts in Taiwan.

The fiscal data also hint at the presence of clientelism in Taiwan, but not in Singapore. Taiwan’s budgetary expenditure increased sharply starting in 1987, the year martial law was lifted. Very possibly, the KMT government increased its expenditure to solicit more support after 1987. Singapore’s expenditures did not show a strong correlation with its political situation. While the political opposition has strengthened its challenge to the PAP after the 1980s, Singapore has not increased its expenditure in response. This further suggests that the KMT’s electoral mobilization was clientlistic but the PAP’s electoral mobilization was not.

Chapters 4 and 5 are empirical studies of two cases when the incumbent parties faced strong challengers. The Singapore PAP survived the challenge from a left-wing opponent, the Barisan Sosialis (BS), a united front organization connected to the Malayan Communist Party (MCP). Since the 1940s,
the MCP had established its various grassroots networks and had recruited many followers among workers and peasants in Singapore. Through analysis of strike data, I find that most of the strikes from 1961 to 1963 were probably mobilized by the BS-affiliated leftwing unions for political purposes.

Compared with the PAP, the KMT in the 1980s faced weaker opposition, the Dangwai (later known as Democratic Progressive Party, the DPP). Before 1986, the organizational power of the Dangwai was minimal. But the KMT government failed to contain the expansion of the opposition in the 1980s. By 2000, after twenty years of growth as an opposition movement, the opposition took power at the national level in a democratic election.

How did the PAP successfully resist such a strong opposition? In Chapter 4, I list four existing hypotheses: the PAP’s social and economic achievements gained it credibility as a ruling party; political repression of the opposition helped the PAP to win elections on unfair grounds; the mobilization conducted by the PAP grassroots organizations, the Community Centers, helped PAP to win votes; and the international situation, merger with the Federation of Malaysia, helped PAP to discredit the opposition.

Since the 1963 election was the turning point for the PAP, I study the 1963 election results to test the four hypotheses listed above. Through analyzing the voting data, I find a correlation between urban/rural division of the electorate and partisan support. In the 1963 election, the PAP won 90% of all urban constituencies. But the overwhelming majority (11 out of 13) of the BS’s winning districts were rural constituencies. This distinctive pattern helped me to test the above four explanations.

After examining the data, I conclude that only the first hypothesis explains the outcome. None of the remaining three theories satisfactorily explain the divergence of voting behavior between urban and rural voters. The PAP had more public projects and programs in urban areas than in rural areas, including public housing, commercial buildings, industrial sites, community facilities, roads, and
communication infrastructures. The urban voters were for this reason more grateful to the PAP government and less susceptible to the opposition’s mobilization. The rural voters received much less benefit from the PAP government. Hence, they were more subject to be mobilized to support the opposition in the 1963 election. This finding is further strengthened by an in-depth comparative study of one urban and one rural district, Queenstown and Bukit Panjang. In Queenstown, the PAP was able to resist strong opposition because it obtained the support of the majority of the urban lower-middle class by offering them various social benefits. In rural Bukit Panjang, the level of service was much less and so was the support for the PAP.

In Taiwan, why did the KMT fail to resist a weak opposition? Chapter 5 analyzes the democratization process in Taiwan. First, I discuss three existing explanations for Taiwan’s democratization: level of modernization; the struggle for Taiwanese independence; and political mobilization by the opposition. When compared with similar characteristics of the Singaporean experience, it is clear that none the above explanations can fully explain Taiwan’s democratization.

Unlike Singapore, I observe in Taiwan in the 1980s the presence of strong waves of self-initiated protests and social movements, the so-called “self-help movements.” These waves of self-initiated protests were not present in Singapore, either in the early 1960s or later. This difference between the two cases led me to propose my regime structure argument.

In the case of the KMT regime, being a clientelistic regime, state resources were, to some degree, captured by the clientele served by the party and state. I therefore hypothesized that the KMT was not able to provide satisfactory social benefits to the majority of the population, especially to the Taiwanese population and to the lower-middle class. In the 1980s, after the society was empowered through modernization, the majority of the Taiwanese society became discontented with the KMT
leadership. This gave the opposition an opportunity to mobilize social support and finally win a national election.

I test the above argument through an in-depth study of Taiwan’s democratization process from 1980 to 2000. The findings are consistent with my argument. Before 1986, the opposition force was very weak. The KMT might well have defeated the opposition movement by 1985 if the social movements had not happened. Before 1986, it is those self-initiated social protests that seriously challenged the KMT’s legitimacy and forced the KMT elite to consider political reform. The social protests happened mostly because of social grievances over local governance, urban management failures, market management problems, and various public and social policies. It is reported by Taiwan scholars that groups across the social spectrum went into the streets to demonstrate in the 1980s.

To my surprise, I find that the society’s grievances against the KMT government were so strong that the society protested on the streets without any political mobilization. The social protest data show a low degree of political involvement in those demonstrations. The largest portion of the social protests was the livelihood-related protests which had little organizational support. Those demonstrations were initiated by groups of victims standing on the streets protesting against certain public policies. The rise of the “self-help movement” shows the degree of social discontent with the KMT government. Scholarly works show that the deep structural reason behind such high levels of social discontent is the KMT clientelistic structure.

In Chapter 5, I also discover why the opposition breaks the KMT’s clientelistic mobilization networks and finally wins the national election in 2000. Since 1989, the opposition DPP had adopted a “from local to national” strategy. The DPP started with winning local magistrate positions at township/city level. I conduct a case study of the 1989 Taipei county mayoralty election to find why the
DPP can win the local elections. Again, I examine the existing explanations but find them not satisfactory.

Through a study of the campaign activities and voting outcomes of the 1989 Taipei county mayoralty election, I find that the DPP was able to win the 1989 Taipei county mayoralty election because it focused on attacking the KMT’s local governance problems. The KMT had established mobilization networks and had obtained the majority of their votes through clientelistic mobilization. But the DPP candidate was able to obtain support of the majority of the independent voters by promising better public policies. The votes that the DPP received from the independent voters outnumbered the KMT’s clientelistic votes.

After 1989, the DPP also started to improve local governance and gradually won public confidence in their governing ability. By controlling local magistrate positions, the DPP broke the KMT’s monopoly over local governmental power and resources. Thereafter, the KMT’s clientelistic relationships with their local clients were weakened. A scatter plot of voting outcomes from the 1989, 1993 and 1997 township/city mayoralty election shows a very strong correlation between the results of prior elections and the later elections. It shows that the DPP was able to consolidate its leadership in its existing local constituencies and in 1997 to expand and win many formerly KMT constituencies.

By 2000, the DPP had won a large portion of the Taiwan voters’ confidence in their ability to govern after eleven years’ good performance at the local level. On the other hand, the KMT’s performance had disappointed many voters. The 2000 election study shows that the KMT’s connections with their local factional clients and related corruption scandals were largely responsible for the public’s disappointment with the KMT. As a result, the DPP successfully convinced the voters to defect from supporting the KMT and the DPP won the 2000 presidential election.
Based on the above discoveries, I conclude that KMT clientelism is the structural reason behind the success of the DPP’s strategy to achieve a government turnover in 2000. The KMT’s clientelistic structure crippled the capacity of the local government and produced weak local governance. Its public programs and local performance were not satisfactory to the majority of the public. The DPP could make use of that public discontent and win the local elections. Because the DPP does not have the baggage of the clientelistic interest, the DPP local government can have higher capacity to provide better public services to the local voters. Through more vigorous public programs and meritorious performance, the DPP then was able to convince the voters with their ability. Finally, the DPP won the election through the defection of the voters who were disappointed by the KMT.

To summarize, through an in-depth comparative study of both countries’ political mobilization structures, state structure, bureaucracy, fiscal structure, and political development path, I find that Singapore and Taiwan differ in their regime structures and this divergence can explain their different political outcomes.

Taiwan, by adopting a clientelistic mobilization structure to gain political support for survival, had to set up a semi-professional state. These regime structures allow for a higher degree of social capture of state resources by KMT clients than was the case in Singapore. As a result, fewer resources were available for state functions, urban management, and social programs. The limited resources were channeled to people within the KMT coalition to gain their support. As a result, the majority of the Taiwanese population who were excluded from the KMT’s coalition benefited little from the KMT government. When modernization empowered the society and the opposition, the opposition could sway a large percentage of the Taiwanese population to support them.

The Singapore PAP regime does not have a separate partisan mobilization structure. Political mobilization is performed by the government agencies. Various public programs such as the public
housing program, and the urban community infrastructure, benefit the majority of the lower-middle class and gain the PAP its support. So the PAP government is able to resist the challenge of a strong opposition in both a non-modernized society and a modernized society.

In this dissertation, I also attempt to provide an explanation for the different choices of regime structures, clientelist versus professional state. By comparing the two cases, I find the existing explanations unsatisfactory. I observe differences in social cleavage characteristics in each country’s initial regime building period. Singapore in the late 1950s had a very strong class-dominated social cleavage, but Taiwan in the late 1940s had a very strong communally dominated social cleavage. I argue that the social cleavage situation limits the elite’s choices of regime structure.

Facing a clear class-dominated social cleavage situation, the PAP government could easily obtain the support of the lower-middle class majority by providing them wealth redistribution through public programs. Therefore, the PAP elite did not need to set up an additional institution to conduct grassroots mobilization. The PAP elite could use the public programs to attract lower-middle class support, rather than a structure specifically designed for political mobilization.

The KMT elites, on the other hand, after they moved to Taiwan, faced a traditional Taiwanese community. In this society, the class cleavage and awareness was undeveloped. Instead, communal cleavage was salient. The KMT’s strategic choice was to set up a specialized mobilization institution to penetrate into the Taiwanese community in order to obtain political support. In this social cleavage situation, the KMT was constrained to choose a clientelistic regime structure by the nature of the society in which it was operating. To be sure, this explanation is just a possible argument based on my observation of the two cases. More studies are necessary to test this theory.
Generalizability of the Theoretical Conclusion

Through both construction of a theoretical argument and empirical testing, I find that regime structure, i.e. clientelistic party state structure or professional statist structure, affects the chances of authoritarian survival in a modernized society. This conclusion has been affirmed by the case study of Singapore and Taiwan. Besides empirical observations, with the help of regime models, I also make a theoretical argument about why it is easier for a professional state regime to survive under strong opposition than a clientelistic regime. The finding of the research is a product of both inductive observation and theoretical construction.

The empirical study is only based on limited observation of two countries. The two cases are very similar in many areas. Moreover, many of their traits are unique, including common Chinese culture, modernization path, geographic size, geopolitical situation, etc. The limitation to this research finding is therefore its scope of application. If the finding is merely derived from observation of the two cases without a theoretical framework, it becomes very hard to imply that this finding may be applicable to other countries that are under a non-Chinese culture, or have a bigger geographic size, or have a different modernization path, or are richer in natural resources.

But I also have set up a theoretical framework to argue why it is easier for a professional statist regime to survive under strong opposition. The empirical observations in the two country case studies confirm the predictions of my theoretical assumption. Therefore, based on the reasoning of the theoretical argument, I can also suggest with some confidence that this theory might be found true in other cases. Since I have only tested my theory in two cases, further empirical studies are obviously necessary. I do not claim general applicability of the findings to other countries, nor that the finding of this research is limited to these two countries only. I simply leave it open to further research.
Since these two cases are unique in some ways, there are obstacles that hinder generalizability. Two big obstacles are the two major unique conditions in Singapore and Taiwan: first, the Chinese Confucian culture; second, the small geographic size. Therefore, these features might create a bias that needs to be corrected.

Studies by Gandhi and Lust-Okar (2009), Lust-Okar (2006), and Hinnebusch (2006) of Middle Eastern cases show political behavior that I also observe in Singapore and Taiwan. Gandhi and Lust-Okar find that rural voters living under kinship structures are vulnerable to partisan-based clientelistic mobilization, while urban issue voters are less vulnerable to clientelistic mobilization. Singapore’s rural voters were more susceptible to partisan mobilization than were urban voters. I also find the independent issue voters in Taipei county were not bought off by the clientelistic mobilization of the KMT and their local agents.

Lust-Okar’s finding of patronage vote-buying in elections under authoritarian governments and a pro-incumbent bias among voters is observed in Taiwan from 1987 to 2000. Hinnebusch’s study of Middle Eastern countries finds that social programs can help increase support for the authoritarian leader. This is confirmed by my observations in Singapore. These similarities imply that the findings for Singapore and Taiwan might also apply to other regions.

**Theoretical Implications**

If this theory is applicable to a broader setting of cases, the findings of the research then provide some insights that are important for our understanding of the development of future nation-state politics.
First, it is possible for a stable authoritarian government in a market economy to exist even if that country has achieved full modernity.

If the authoritarian leader sets up a highly rational government, he or she can stabilize his or her leadership while restricting political participation and competition. We have observed the consolidation of the PAP government in Singapore. This research further gives theoretical explanation for the possible existence of a consolidated authoritarian state in a market economy. Again, this conclusion, so far, is based on a study of a Chinese-culture city-state. Further study is necessary to test its generalizability.

From the case of Singapore and Taiwan, I observe that modernization does not necessarily bring democratization. Thus, the liberal or modernization theory prediction that economic development will undermine an authoritarian government from within is challenged by my research finding. Modernization brings reasoning to the citizens. Citizens become more educated and informed than before and thus they are more able to make strategic decisions. Enlightened members of the public will choose democracy as their form of government, if the authoritarian leader cannot provide an alternative structure that can also meet the majority’s demand for greater benefits.

Under a modernized society, therefore, it becomes harder for the authoritarian leader to repress the opposition and the society. As modernity provides fertile soil for opposition to develop, the public then has more choices. The opposition can persuade the majority of the public to strategically defect from supporting the authoritarian leader by offering them the option of liberal democracy. If the authoritarian leader fails to provide enough benefits to the majority of the public, it is quite possible that the authoritarian leader will lose his or her one-party dominance.

But democracy is not necessarily the only option for the authoritarian leader and the public. The authoritarian leader can also set up a regime structure that can give sufficient benefit to the
majority of the public to keep them from supporting the alternative option offered by liberal democracy. Both Taiwan’s and Singapore’s voters are quite strategic. Their political actions are not merely motivated by ideological factors, such as a desire for liberal democracy, nationalism or socialism. To the majority of voters in Taiwan and Singapore, material benefits still speak more to them than a political idea. Motivated by this strategic consideration, the majority of voters will support the system that provides them with the maximum benefit.

If the authoritarian leader sets up a rational government that gives the majority of the public satisfactory material benefits, voters who care most about those benefits will still support that regime and tolerate its authoritarianism. So, based on this observation, modernization and mass enlightenment might produce a more rational government, but not necessarily a liberal democratic government. The authoritarian leader can sustain his or her rule by adopting a rational, material benefit-based, government rather than liberal democracy.

Second, before other democratic infrastructures (such as political parties, a vigorous civil society, a large-sized middle class) are in place, pressuring the authoritarian leader to adopt some form of election might produce a clientelistic authoritarian government with some electoral rules, rather than a real democracy.

If the authoritarian leader is pressured to adopt some form of elections under either international or domestic pressure before other democratic institutions are set up, the authoritarian leader might be tempted to set up a clientelistic mobilization structure in order to win the elections. If clientelistic mobilization networks are set up by the authoritarian leaders, a social evil is produced that

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30 The leader might also choose to set up a rational government, in the material-benefits sense, if his country has a dominant class cleavage. But setting up a rational government is more costly than simply forming clientelistic relations with social groups in order to win elections. According to the state building theory, setting up a rational government could be very unlikely if the country is opening for electoral participation at the same time. The Singapore government is able to negate this prediction partly because Singapore is small. It is hard to say if this could happen in a bigger country.
can corrupt their governance. Studies of several scholars on countries that had held democratic elections before substantial social capital or democratic institutions were established report various problems with their electoral politics. Even if such a country becomes democratized in the future, its quality of democracy can be seriously affected by clientelism.

Patronage distribution of resources in exchange for votes is observed by studies of elections in authoritarian states (Ghandi and Lust-Okar 2009; Lust-Okar 2006). Gandhi and Lust-Okar also find that under the clientelistic electoral structure, the voters would be trapped to support the incumbent elites. Lack of social capital also harms the quality of democracy. Webber (2006) reports the emergence of patrimonial democracy in Indonesia after its democratization before Indonesia was able to achieve full modernity. Grill (2006) also finds that the current turn to authoritarianism in Russia can be attributed to the lack of civil society and its participation in the democratization movement.

The solution to avoid the above political outcomes is building up other democratic institutions before pressuring the authoritarian leader to adopt elections. But modernization is a necessary condition for building democratic institutions and cultures, including civil society, a large middle class, political parties, etc. Therefore, in my opinion, in order to avoid the development of clientelism in a country, it is important to promote economic modernization and democratic social institutions before pressuring the authoritarian leader to adopt some electoral systems.

Third, repression of the opposition will be less successful if the general public has a high level of discontent with the government, and vice versa.

The public is less tolerant of political repression if the government fails to give some benefits to the majority society or fails to perform state functions justly. But if the majority public benefited from the government’s social and economic policies and the state is capable of managing a fair and high quality public administration, the public will show less interest in the opposition and their mobilizations.
As a result, repression of the opposition in this situation causes the least negative impact on the regime’s legitimacy.

*Fourth, in a Confucian-culture nation, mobilization based on certain ideologies, such as nationalism, Western liberalism, human rights and freedom etc., will not be successful if those ideologies are not attached to certain policy issues and some social interests.*

The comparison of opposition movements in Singapore and Taiwan shows that opposition movements based on ideology alone can be easily repressed. Taiwan’s opposition movement was successful, because the opposition attached public policy issues to their platform besides using ideologies for mobilization.

Mobilization based on ideology alone is not as successful. For example, Singapore’s opposition, the BS, mobilized support from anti-colonialism, Chinese nationalism, and socialism in the 1960s. They failed, though the BS had very extensive communist mobilization networks.

For another example, it is difficult for the current liberal democrats in Singapore to obtain enough electoral support because their criticisms of the PAP are mostly about ideological issues, such as political freedom, political repression, human rights, authoritarianism, and liberal democracy. These ideas are derived from Western liberal ideology but do not speak directly to citizens from the Confucian culture. If the opposition can directly attack certain policy problems, it can attract more public attention and support than will happen as a result of a mere ideological debate. The opposition in Singapore is able to obtain more votes in the 2011 election, because of its successful attacks on various government policies, such as immigration policy and public housing policy.
Speculations about China

Based on my research findings, I would also like to speculate about the political future of China. Since I have not conducted research to test the applicability of my findings, this speculation is based on the assumption that my theory can apply to China. My theory suggests that if an authoritarian government can set up a professional state structure, that structure will consolidate its chance of survival even under modernization. Based on this assumption, China can become a stable authoritarian state with a market economy if it can set up professional statist structures. So it is important to speculate if China can set up professional statist structures in the future.

The Chinese government has intentionally made efforts to model itself after the Singapore government. The Chinese government has sent officials from every level to be trained in Singapore. Since 2000, it has also adopted merit-based exams for recruitment of bureaucrats. The professionalization of the government has made some progress. I see improvement of efficiency and change in the attitudes of public servants in some cities. In a middle sized city, Shenzhen, the long waiting line that I used to see in front of the passport application offices is no longer visible. I saw public officials standing at the entrance of a public office to assist passport application. The public officials have become kinder and are adopting a friendlier attitude towards the citizens.

Despite China’s effort, there are however several obstacles to adopting the Singapore model. First is the geographic size of China. Because China has adopted the form of a centralized rather than federal government, it is even harder for the central government to supervise the local bureaucrats. The costs to set up a professional bureaucracy in China might be too high to be feasible. The conflicts between the central and local governments make it harder to implement professionalism in the bureaucracy.
Second, an even greater obstacle is the institutional legacy from the communist regime. The communist government has long established a Leninist party state structure. The party institutions of the Communist Party of China (CCP) have penetrated into all levels of the government and any government-related organizations, such as state-owned enterprises, public organizations, educational systems, social organizations, and even grassroots neighborhood organizations. The CCP has recruited a large number of members and activists in the past sixty years.

In order to set up a rational government, the Chinese government has to minimize the party bureaucracy. Unlike Singapore, it is extremely difficult for the CCP to minimize its party institutions after sixty years of governing. The CCP cadres now all have vested interests through positions in the government and various social and economic organizations. Removing these party interests from their offices would be very costly for the current communist elites. Besides, the current Chinese leadership is obviously increasing the strength of the party rather than minimizing it. Their vigorous nation-wide activities to celebrate the 90th birthday of the CCP in 2011 are a clear signal that the current leadership intends to emphasize, rather than to deemphasize the CCP’s identity.

Because of the above two obstacles, it will be difficult for the Chinese government to set up a Singapore style professional statist regime. Would China then develop into a democracy like Taiwan if they cannot set up a Singapore style professional statist regime? Since this research is not study of democratization and possibilities for emergence of democracy, I cannot make prediction about whether China may or may not move into democracy based on the conclusion of my findings.

But my research suggests several implications about China’s development. First, if the CCP fails to rationalize its government, it will be much more difficult for the current Chinese Communist Party (CCP) regime to maintain authoritarian rule once the society becomes modern. So the current stability under the CCP regime might be challenged as a result of modernization.
Second, once China becomes modern, we will expect to see the rise of the society in pressuring the government into further reforms, as we observe in Singapore and Taiwan. The Singapore government has been able to react to that social pressure by changing public policies promptly and thus avoid system change. The Taiwan government could not adapt its policies as promptly as the Singapore government. So the KMT government had to finally accede to system reform. What will be the political outcome of the tensions between the growing social demands and the CCP government’s inability to meet those demands? I cannot predict China’s future because those political outcomes depend on various contingent factors that are outside of the scope of this study.

Third, a mass-party structure might stabilize the CCP regime currently when China is not modernized. But once the society becomes modern, the party structure might damage the CCP’s survival.

Fourth, even if social movements from the society do rise to push China toward democracy, the path to democracy will be a long and gradual process. In the case of Taiwan, it still took 20 years for the opposition to finally win the election. China is much bigger in size. China is less vulnerable to international pressure. The CCP regime is a stronger Leninist regime than the KMT regime. The degree of the CCP’s penetration into and control of the society are much higher than the KMT regime. Based on all the above factors, it would be much more difficult for democratic forces in China to change the system. It would also take a much longer time for the opposition to rise and finally achieve government turnover.

In my opinion, there are several additional obstacles (not based on the findings of this research) that hinder China’s future political development. First is the current income gap between rich and poor, between party cadres and their clients, and the non-cadre clients. If the inequality problem is
not addressed in the near future, China’s social structural situation in the future will resemble a repressive structure in Moore (1966)’s theory. That might create political instability.

Second is the political position of the CCP elites. In the CCP elites’ current political formation, they do not have clear party identity. Starting as a leftist party, the CCP’s original coalition is with the urban working class. But later, after economic reform, the CCP elites shifted to form a coalition with capitalists. They have not adopted a center party identity either.

Instead, the CCP elites want to achieve a balance between the two classes. So, they shift their policies from extreme leftist to extreme rightist. Last year, in one provincial capital, they suddenly launched criminal charges against several rich capitalists to gain a good reputation among the poor. But soon, they also criticized this policy and promised to continue market reform. The CCP might want to play the “balance of power” game between the two classes in order to become the main patron that both have to rely on for economic favors and patronage. But the CCP’s constant political interference in the economic market will hinder China’s market development and its move into modernity.

Third is the lack of civil society. The CCP regime closely controls the society. Its current policies still aim to hinder the development of civil society. This control makes it very difficult for Chinese society to become modern. The outcome of the tension between the society and the government is unpredictable. Due to the lack of civil society, social and political instability is possible for China in the future.

Again all the above speculations are based on a lot of assumptions. Future empirical research about China is necessary to test if China can move into a stable authoritarian capitalist state, or be continuously unstable, or gradually move into democracy.
Conclusion

This dissertation has aimed to contribute to our understanding of the political development of two authoritarian regimes, Singapore and Taiwan. The findings drawn from this two country comparative study contribute to our general knowledge of the political development of authoritarian governments. This is a comparative study of two small cases. Further research is necessary to test the generalizability of the finding for other authoritarian governments. But these two cases provide important theoretical implications for our understanding of authoritarianism in modernized society. Therefore, the contribution of this research is still significant for our understanding of future world politics.

Almost all existing research on one-party dominant regimes argues that the existence of a large party apparatus for mass mobilization, and the party elite’s control over state resources for patronage distribution, is critical for authoritarian survival in those states. However, this research finds that after the society moves into modernity, a large party apparatus and clientelistic mobilization harms the survival of authoritarianism.

The empirical findings of this research support the causal mechanisms discussed in modernization theory: economic development has produced demanding and complicated societies in both Singapore and Taiwan. The authoritarian leaders in both countries find it more difficult to manage a modern than a non-modern society. But the modernization scholars’ argument that the power of economic liberalism can transform the authoritarian politics into democracy is not supported by this research.

This research finds that it is possible for the authoritarian government to consolidate its one-party dominance under a highly modernized market economy. The political development paths of
Singapore and Taiwan suggest that a Weberian rational government structure can sustain one-party dominance despite the challenge of liberal democracy.
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31 If the reference is in Chinese, I will translate the author’s name, the book or article title and the publisher’s name into English. Sometimes, the author and the publisher have official translations of their names. But sometimes, I cannot find the official translation of their names. In cases that there is no known official translation, I will translate the Chinese names of the author and publisher according to Pingyin spelling.


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