Chapter 6

Is There an Asian Style of Electoral Campaigning?

Christian Schafferer

When discussing the issue of standardizing electoral campaign practices, scholars usually refer to the adoption of the American style of political communication. This form of political communication requires the three participating actors (the candidate, the voter, and the journalist) to perform well-defined functions. Usually, political scientists first compare these functions with those existing in other countries. Based on the results, they then judge whether there is an observable standardization of campaign practices or not. A standardization of campaign practices, however, does not necessarily have to be equal to an Americanization of campaign practices. Moreover, there may be regional standards that differ from global standards. In this context, the author tries to discover whether there is a regional standard of electoral campaigning. The previous chapters are part of this attempt. This chapter is supplementary and should assist in the evaluation of the degree of standardization of campaign practices in East and Southeast Asia.

In general, several country specific factors influence the standardization process. These factors include the electoral system, the system of party competition, the legal boundaries of electoral campaign practices, the degree of professionalization of electoral campaigning, the media system, the national political culture, and the degree of modernization in society (Plasser and Plasser, 2002: 79). The most important of these factors are analyzed below before a conclusion is drawn.

Electoral system

Electoral systems have a tremendous impact on electoral campaign strategies. In the following, the current election systems applied in East and Southeast Asian countries are described to gain a better understanding of the similarities and variations between them (see Table 6.1 and Table 6.2).

During the last 15 years, Taiwan's electoral framework has been modified several times. The first important alteration to the composition of parliamentary members and the electoral formula came into effect in 1991.

Table 6.1 Electoral and political systems of selected Asian countries

Country	Parliament	Electoral System[a]	Presidential	Press Freedom[b]	Political Status[c]
Taiwan	Unicameral	113 seats: 79 SSDs (plurality) and 34 PR seats in one nationwide constituency (5% threshold). Two ballots. Term: 4 years	Plurality 4 years	Free (21)	Free (2,1)
South Korea	Unicameral	243 SSDs (plurality) and 56 PR seats in one nationwide constituency (3% threshold). Two ballots. Term: 4 years	Plurality 5 years	Free (29)	Free (1,2)
Mongolia	Unicameral	76 members elected in SSDs (plurality)	Majority 4 years	Partly Free (35)	Free (1,2)
Japan	Bicameral	Lower House (480 seats): 300 SSDs (plurality); 180 PR seats, elected from 11 large districts. Two ballots. Term: 3 years Upper House (252 seats): 126 members are elected every 3 years; 24 SSDs, 52 MMDs (SNTV), and 50 PR seats in a nationwide constituency. Two Ballots. Term: 6 years	n/a	Free (20)	Free (2,2)
Thailand	Bicameral	Lower House (500 seats): 400 SSDs (plurality) and 100 PR seats in one nationwide constituency (5% threshold). Two Ballots. Term: 4 years Upper House (200 seats): 22 SSDs (plurality) and the remaining in MMDs (SNTV). Term: 4 years	n/a	Partly Free (42)	Free (2,3)
Malaysia	Bicameral	Only the lower house is elected. All 219 members are elected in SSDs. Term: 5 years	n/a	Not Free (69)	Partly Free (4,4)
Philippines	Bicameral	Lower House: 212 SSDs (plurality), 24 PR in nationwide constituency. Two ballots. Term: 3 years Upper House (24 seats): half of the members are elected every 3 years in SSDs (plurality). Term: 6 years	Plurality 6 years	Partly Free (35)	Free (2,3)

Sources: Election commissions

a SSD: Single-Seat District; MMD: Multimember District; PR: Proportional Representation

b The degree to which each country permits the free flow of information determines the classification of its media as 'Free,' 'Partly Free,' or 'Not Free.' Countries scoring 0 to 30 are regarded as having 'Free' media, 31 to 60, 'Partly Free' media, and 61 to 100, 'Not Free' media (Freedom House (2005a), *Freedom of the Press 2005: A Global Survey of Media Independence*, Rowman & Littlefield, Lanham).

c Using a catalogue of specific questions, Freedom House rates the existence of political rights and civil liberties (see numbers in brackets) in about two hundred countries and sixty related territories separately on a scale from one to seven, with one representing the existence and seven the non-existence of such rights and liberties. Finally, the observed countries and territories are assigned to one of three categories (free, partly free, not free) by averaging the ratings they received (Freedom House (2005b), *Freedom in the World 2005: The Annual Survey of Political Rights and Civil Liberties*, Freedom House, Washington DC).

Table 6.2 Campaign regulations in selected Asian countries

Country	Paid TV Ads	Free TV Ads	Opinion Polls	Public Funding Campaigns	Spending Limits	Public Funding Political Parties
Taiwan	Unlimited	Number of candidates a party nominates	Silence last 10 days in presidential elections	Yes	Yes (circumvented)	Yes
South Korea	Limited	The state reimburses advertising fees to those candidates obtaining at least 20 percent of popular support at the polls.	Publication prohibited during campaign period; conducting of polls is prohibited for the period of 60 days before the election	Yes	Yes (circumvented)	Yes
Mongolia	Unlimited	Equal time	No regulations	Only for TV ads	No	Yes
Japan	Unlimited for political parties	Number of candidates a party nominates	Popularity polls are prohibited	Yes	Yes (circumvented)	Yes
Thailand	Prohibited	Current representation in the legislature	No regulations	Only for TV ads and rallies	Yes (circumvented))	Yes
Malaysia	Unlimited	Number of candidates a party nominates	No regulations	Only for TV ads	Yes (circumvented)	No
Philippines	Limited	Equal time	Silence last 15 days	Yes	Yes (circumvented)	No

Sources: Election commissions

The 1991 National Assembly, the upper house, consisted of 325 members; 219 members were elected in geographic constituencies, six members were elected to represent Taiwan's aboriginal tribes. These 225 members were elected under SNTV. Another 20 seats were elected to represent the overseas Taiwanese community and 80 in a nationwide constituency. These 100 seats were proportionally allocated to those parties gaining at least 5 percent of the votes cast for political parties, that is, the votes for independents were not included in the calculation of the quota. In the 1996 National Assembly election, the total number of members was increased to 334, with 228 members elected in geographic constituencies and six elected to represent aboriginal tribes. The number of proportional representation seats remained at 100. In the composition of the Legislative Yuan, the lower house, the electoral reforms of 1991 were similar: in total, there were 161 members elected in the 1992 Legislative Yuan election, 119 of whom were elected under SNTV in geographic constituencies and six in two aboriginal constituencies. Another 30 members were elected in a nationwide constituency and the remaining six to represent the overseas Taiwanese community. These 36 members were proportionally allocated to those parties gaining at least 5 percent of the popular votes cast for political parties. In the 1995 Legislative Yuan election, three members were added to be elected in geographic constituencies. The total number of members, thus, increased to 164. Constitutional reforms in 1997 changed the composition of the Legislative Yuan (LY) again. Article 4 of the Additional Articles stipulates that with the 1998 LY election, this chamber of parliament should consist of 225 members; 168 of these members should be elected in geographic constituencies and four to represent aboriginal tribes. The number of members representing the overseas Taiwanese community was increased by two and the proportional seats for the nationwide constituency to 41. Further constitutional amendments were made in April 2000. Article 1 of these amendments turned Taiwan's parliament into a semi-bicameral one. The term of all National Assembly members expired on May 19, 2000. Since that day, members to the assembly can only be elected by proportional representation within three months of the expiration of a six-month period following the public announcement of a proposal by the LY to amend the Constitution or alter the national territory, or within three months of a petition initiated by the LY for the impeachment of the President or the Vice-President. Elected members have to convene of their own accord within ten days after the confirmation of the election result and have to remain in session not longer than one month, with the term of office expiring on the last day of the convention. The first and only election under this new system was held in May 2005. All of the 400 members of the National Assembly were elected by proportional representation in one nationwide constituency.

Constitutional reforms in June 2005 paved the way for a new electoral system and the abolition of the upper house. Under the new system, each voter casts two ballots. Now, there are 79 single-seat constituencies and 34 PR seats. The motives behind the electoral reform were quite similar to those found in the early 1990s in Japan. The new system is expected to curb corruption, to minimize the power of factions, to strengthen the role of political parties in the electoral process, and to

create a more stable party system with the effective number of political parties being close to two (see Chapter 2).

In the past, members of the Legislative Yuan, the lower house, were elected in multi-member constituencies under SNTV and 22 percent of the seats in a nationwide constituency under proportional representation. Voters only had one ballot. SNTV (single non-transferable vote) is said to have cultivated the personal vote, led to the formation and consolidation of factions, and caused corruption in Japan and Taiwan.

Another problem of SNTV in multi-member constituencies is the need for coordination in electoral campaigns, since party candidates probably have to contest against their party colleagues. If one candidate, for instance, is too popular and attracts too many votes the party colleague may lose the election. Political parties and candidates have, therefore, to coordinate campaign activities and assign each of the party candidates to a certain part of the constituency. There were different approaches in Taiwan and Japan to solve that problem.

In Japan, the LDP, for example, encouraged candidates to join one or two committees of the party's Policy Affairs Research Council (PARC). Each committee focuses on a special field, such as construction and rice farming. This process of differentiation helped candidates contesting in the same district to attract different segments of the electorate and by doing so maximize the number of votes and seats of the LDP (Krauss and Pekkanen, 2004: 17). After the introduction of single-seat constituencies, this specialization disappeared for two reasons. First, the candidates no longer needed to differentiate themselves since there was only one candidate of the party anyway. Second, single-seat constituencies are much bigger in size. Candidates now have to attract voters with very different backgrounds. Specialization would be counterproductive.

In Taiwan, the conservative Kuomintang (KMT) was less professional and mainly assigned its candidates to *zerenqu*, responsibility zones. Each candidate had to take care of his district within the constituency. With the 2002 Taipei municipal council election, the KMT changed its strategy to the one originally applied by the Democratic Progressive Party and the New Party. This electoral concept is known in Taiwan as *peipiao*, forced vote allocation. In newspaper ads and campaign literature, parties ask their supporters to vote for a certain candidate of their party regardless of whom they favor. For instance, if a party nominated four candidates in a multi-member constituency, it could instruct those supporters born in January, February and March to vote for candidate 1 and those born in April, May and June to vote for candidate 2, and so forth. In most cases this forced vote distribution worked out (see Pao, 1998).

In Korea, the electoral system had to be changed after the Constitutional Court ruled in June 2001 that it was unfair and restrictive of voters' rights. Under the old system, voters could only cast one vote. (227 members were elected in single-seat constituencies by plurality vote and 46 members by proportional representation based on each party's share of those votes cast for candidates contesting the single-seat constituencies.) The court, thus, was of the opinion that voters could not distinguish

between candidate and party preferences. The system now allows the casting of two ballots. The number of PR seats was increased from 46 to 56 seats and the threshold decreased from 5 percent to 3 percent. The first election under the system was held in 2004. The new two-ballot system was expected to benefit smaller parties. A poll conducted by the Korean Gallup reported that about 32.9 percent of all voters split their tickets (Cho, 2005: 529). Minor parties benefited from this effect, especially the Democratic Labor Party (DLP). Of those who voted for the DLP in the PR tier, almost 80 percent supported candidates of other parties in the single-seat constituencies. The party only captured two seats in single-seat constituencies, but obtained eight out of 56 PR seats. The new system was also expected to minimize the effect of regionalism in Korean elections. Regionalism in South Korea has been evident since historical times. It was suppressed during the Japanese colonial period, the US military government and the subsequent autocratic rule (Steinberg, 2000: 225). It re-emerged during the period of liberalization and democratization, and became a primary determinant of voting behavior in South Korean elections. When Kim Dae Jung was elected President in 1997, over 90 percent of the voters in the southwestern Honam region cast their votes for him. In southeastern Youngnam region, however, only some ten percent of the electorate supported him. More than 50 percent voted for Lee Hoi Chang, instead (Lee, 2001: 374). Korean political parties survive with the support of their regional strongholds. In the 2000 national election, regionalism in the Youngnam region intensified and the Grand National Party captured 64 out of 65 seats at stake. The Millennium Democratic Party could not win a single seat in the region. In the Honam region, however, 86 percent of the seats at stake were taken by the MDP and the remaining 14 percent by independents (Choi, 2002: 97; Kim and Kim, 2000: 53).

After the election reform, regionalism remained, however, a dominant factor in South Korean voting behavior, but some shifts suggest 'attenuating influence.' The conservative Grand National Party prevailed in the eastern peninsula and the Uri Party in the western. Uri, however, made inroads on 25 percent of the vote in traditional Grand National Party territory (Kim and Kim, 2004: 636).

Mongolia's new constitution came into force in February 1992. According to Article 21, the parliament consists of one chamber and has 76 members. Citizens aged 25 or older are eligible to run for office and citizens aged 18 or older may exercise their right to vote. The term of office is four years. In April 1992, a new election law was passed. The law stipulated that the 76 members of parliament be elected by plurality vote in 26 electoral districts with a district magnitude ranging from two to four. The applied Block Vote led to the unexpected landslide victory of the former communist Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP) in the 1992 parliamentary election. The MPRP captured 92.1 percent of the 76 seats at stake with less than 60 percent of the votes cast. This was widely considered to be not only unfair but dangerous to the nation-state's political development (Brick, Gastil and Kimberling, 1992). In January 1996, the parliament finally amended the election law. All of the 76 parliament members are now elected by plurality vote in single-seat constituencies instead. The first election under the new system was held

in June 1996 and was a watershed in Mongolia's short history of democracy: the Democratic Alliance (DA) consisting of the Mongolian National Democratic Party (MNDP) and the Mongolian Social Democratic Party (MSDP) ended the 75-year parliamentary majority of the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP). The alliance captured 65.8 percent of the 76 seats at stake in the Great State Hural, Mongolia's parliament. The MPRP lost 45 of the 70 seats the party had obtained in the previous election. Policy errors of the government and internal strife caused a deep split within the DA. New political parties were formed and in the 2000 national election, the democratic forces were split into twelve parties and three party coalitions that altogether nominated 560 candidates. The MPRP, on the other hand, nominated 76 candidates, that is one in each of the 76 single-seat constituencies, and ran a highly focused campaign targeting younger voters. Unsurprisingly, the MPRP won a landslide, capturing 72 out of the 76 seats at stake. The victory of the MPRP clearly showed that without unity the democratic forces cannot win elections. In 2004, the opposition was more united than four years earlier. Seven political parties took part in the election and together nominated 153 candidates. The Party of Civil Courage, the Democratic Party, and the Motherland-Mongolian Democratic New Socialist Party formed a coalition—the Motherland-Democracy (MLD). The remaining 15 candidates were independents. Apart from the MLD, only the ruling MPRP nominated one candidate in each of the 76 single-seat constituencies. Compared with the previous election, the average number of candidates contesting in each electoral district decreased from nine to three, which significantly increased the chances of the candidates nominated by the opposition camp. The MPRP indeed lost half of the parliamentary seats it had captured in 2000, whereas the opposition gained substantial support (Schafferer, 2005).

In Malaysia, all members of the lower house are elected in single-seat constituencies by plurality vote (for details see Chapter 4).[1] In the 2004 Philippine national election, 212 members were elected in single-seat constituencies by plurality vote and 24 members by proportional representation. The number of seats varies between 208 and 260 depending on the outcome of the election: marginalized smaller parties and sectoral groups securing 2 percent of the vote get one seat, those obtaining at least 4 percent two seats, and those getting 6 percent or more three seats. Not all of these groups may secure enough votes to capture the maximum number of three seats. The total number of seats, thus, varies from election to election (for details see Chapter 5).

In Thailand, the 1997 Constitution replaced the Block Vote (BV) electoral system applied in lower house elections. The BV system allowed voters to cast as many votes as there were seats in a district. They could not cast all their votes for a single

[1] The upper house, Dewan Negara, consists of 70 seats: 44 appointed by the paramount ruler, 26 appointed by the state legislatures. Wong (2005: 312) points out that the Dewan Negara 'is used by the ruling coalition to place fading or second-ranking politicians, as well as a back-door to appoint ministers from amongst unelected technocrats or defeated candidates.'

candidate, but could split their votes between candidates nominated by different parties. This system caused a proliferation of political parties, which in turn led to unstable coalitions. Moreover, the intra-party competition in the multi-member constituencies led to factionalism and incohesive parties. Candidate-oriented campaigning and personal networks practicing vote-buying mushroomed. The new electoral system was expected to improve the electoral culture and create stable majorities in parliament. Now, 400 seats are elected in single-seat constituencies and 100 PR seats in a nationwide constituency with a 5 percent threshold. Statistics suggest that the aim of reducing the number of parties has been achieved by the reforms. The effective number of parties in the legislature fell dramatically from an average of 6.2 before the reforms to 3.1 in 2001. Moreover, it was the first time since 1957 that a single party succeeded in capturing a majority in the legislature. Thai Rak Thai, the party of media tycoon Thaksin, has held a majority of seats in the legislature since shortly after the 2001 election. After the reform, political parties have put significant effort into developing coordinated party-centered electoral strategies. They also began to 'differentiate themselves in terms of their policy platforms and in some cases made those differences an important campaign issue' (Hicken, 2005: 107).

Members of the Thai upper house, the Senate, had been appointed before the 1997 reforms. Now, 22 of the 200 members are elected in single-seat constituencies by plurality vote and the remaining in multi-member districts under SNTV. The aim of the reformers was to guarantee a Senate that would remain 'above the messy partisan fray' (Hicken, 2005: 107). Candidates running in Senate elections are therefore constitutionally barred from belonging to political parties and from engaging in electoral campaigning.

Opinion polls

Poll reporting has increased dramatically and has become a major element of election campaign coverage in advanced democracies. The misuse of opinion polls has often been criticized and in most countries the law regulates its application in electoral campaigning.

In Taiwan, individuals, political parties and organizations are prohibited from releasing opinion polls ten days before election day. Mass media may neither cite newly released nor previously released outcomes of opinion polls during this period. This regulation, however, only applies to presidential elections. In other elections, opinion polls are abundantly used to influence voting behavior. Most opinion polls are either fake or unprofessionally conducted. The media is biased and often misinterprets poll results or uses unreliable data. The majority of newspaper articles and TV news analyses reveal a fundamental misunderstanding of what 'margin of error' means. Taiwanese journalists are not alone here. Research by Larson (2003) showed, for instance, that almost half of all the reports on major US news networks during the 2000 US presidential race were inaccurate and exaggerated poll reports.

Inaccurate poll reporting has become a serious problem in Taiwan and has already led to several disputes after media-declared winners lost elections. The 2004 presidential race is one excellent example here. Incumbent President Chen Shui-bian won the election with a margin of 0.3 percent of the vote. The media, nevertheless, proclaimed rival candidate Lien Chan as the winner, since he had 'led' in opinion polls. His lead was, however, well within the margin of error. In this case, the media's irresponsible behavior caused violent protests in the aftermath of the election.

In Taiwanese elections, candidates frequently use opinion polls conducted by major cable news networks, such as TVBS, to manipulate voting behavior. When opinion polls show that the candidate is right behind the highest vote getters in his or her constituency (multi-member under SNTV), he or she is likely to place a newspaper ad quoting the poll and urging the electorate not to let him down. Such advertisements are usually called 'Save Ads.' Opinion polls may also suggest that the rival candidate lags behind. In such a situation, the candidate is likely to urge the electorate to give up supporting the rival candidate since he or she obviously has no chance whatsoever of winning the election.

In Japan, the LDP has so far not succeeded in amending the election law banning the publication of opinion poll data before elections. Every time the LDP picked up the issue of forbidding opinion polls, serious protests from civic groups, such as the powerful Japan Newspaper and Editor Association (NSK), followed. It is, however, illegal to publish 'the procedures and outcomes of any popularity polls' (Public Election Law). A popularity poll, as stipulated by the law, refers to any voting in writing. In addition, the act of making people click on the names of their favorite candidates on the Internet is interpreted as legally prohibited voting.

In Korean elections, opinion polls are banned during the election campaign period. Article 108(1) of the Korean election law stipulates that during the entire election campaign period (21 days in presidential elections and 15 in parliamentary elections) the details or results of public opinion polls may neither be published nor quoted. This includes mock voting and any type of popularity poll. Moreover, for the period of 60 days before elections, no opinion poll may be conducted. Whenever an opinion poll is conducted for the purposes of disclosure or publication, the inquiring institution/person must inform the respondents of their address or phone number. In addition, those conducting the poll may not adopt practices in which:

- questions are made of biased words or phrases to a particular political party or candidate
- those to be polled are urged to give answers, or where questions are made to lead them to give answers according to the intention of the inquiring person or where the views of those polled are distorted
- inquiries are made in ways that entertainment or great good luck is anticipated
- the names of those polled or the contents implicating it are disclosed.

Any disclosure of opinion polls regarding elections has to include information about the name of those having conducted the polls, the method of selecting the respondents, the size of the samples, the response rates, area of polling, dates and method of polling, the margin of error, the exact wording of the questions and so on. Institutions conducting such polls have to store all information related to the polls, such as polling plans and answer sheets, for a period of six months after the election.

In Southeast Asia, the Philippines has similar restrictions. The Fair Election Act stipulates that during the election period, any person, natural as well as juridical, candidate or organization who publishes a survey must likewise publish:

- the name of the person, candidate, party or organization who commissioned or paid for the survey
- the name of the person, polling firm or survey organization who conducted the survey
- the period during which the survey was conducted, the methodology used, including the number of individual respondents and the areas from which they were selected, and the specific questions asked
- the margin of error of the survey
- for each question for which the margin of error is greater than that reported under paragraph (d), the margin of error for that question
- a mailing address and telephone number, indicating it as an address or telephone number at which the sponsor can be contacted to obtain a written report.

According to the law, the election commission, political parties, and candidates may request a written report from those sponsoring a survey.

Internet campaigning

At the end of the 1990s, many campaign professionals anticipated revolutionary changes in political communication in advanced democracies, especially in the USA. There were indications that the Internet would significantly alter the electoral campaign process. Farnsworth and Owen (2004: 415) concluded in their research on the role of the Internet in the 2000 presidential election that the utilization of the Internet 'did not live up to expectations,' that the 'campaign-related web pages were underutilized in 2000,' and that 'the audience for Internet election news remained relatively small.' In Asian elections, the effectiveness of the Internet as a campaign tool varies from country to country.

In Japanese elections, the Internet is banned during the election campaign period. This ban derives from the Public Official Election Law. Although the law does not mention the use of the Internet as an illegal method of attracting voters, there is the common understanding among law experts and the election commission that any

campaign tool that is not mentioned in the law is illegal. From time to time, there are some discussions in political circles about the inclusion of the Internet as a legal means of political communication during the election period. The conservative LDP, however, always refused such a move, citing concerns about hackers, untraceable cyber-slander and inequities in public access to the Internet.[2]

Despite the legal restrictions, the Internet is widely used for campaign purposes. Candidates, for instance, may have their own website and they do not have to close it during the campaign period as long as they do not alter the content of the website during the election period and refrain from asking visitors to cast their votes in support of the candidate. In 2001, approximately 20 percent of Japan's population frequently used the Internet. All major political parties had their own websites. According to *Asahi* newspaper, 36 percent of LDP lawmakers, 61 percent of the Democratic Party, and half of the Komeito and the Liberal Party had their own homepage.

In the House of Councilors Election of 2001, the LDP and Democratic Party began to put all their political commercials on their servers. Visitors to their websites could watch the commercials and evaluate them, which was very popular among the Internet users. Moreover, all major parties began to offer e-magazines with a circulation between 10,000 and 20,000, and Prime Minister Koizumi's magazine even has a subscription number close to two million.

In 2001, *Asahi Shimbun* sponsored Japan's first political debate on the Internet. Political chatrooms have mushroomed since then. Citizen groups circulating blacklists first appeared during the 2001 electoral campaign. At least five such groups, such as the Osaka-based Alliance to Defeat Unqualified Parliamentarians, existed. Members of the Alliance posted a list of 13 politicians on the web. The politicians were said to be corrupt, criminal, or otherwise unfit to serve. The election commission responded by saying that such blacklists were not illegal, but political action groups are not allowed to engage in campaigning.[3] The impact of such blacklists and political chatrooms on Japan's electoral process is very limited, though.

In Taiwan, the first time the Internet was used in electoral campaigns dates back to the 1996 presidential election. The election was a watershed in Taiwan's political development, since it was the first time that the President of the island-state was directly elected by the people. All four presidential candidates and their running mates had their own websites. Peng Ming-min and his running mate Hsieh Chang-ting of the Democratic Progressive Party, Taiwan's largest opposition party, were the first to set up their campaign websites. The site contained extensive information on the candidates' personal backgrounds and political visions. Independent candidate Chen Lu-an and his running mate Wang Ching-feng had their website designed by volunteers. It was similar to Peng's website but less professional. Independent candidate Lin Hsiang-kang and his running mate first had an English website designed and maintained by an overseas supporter residing in the United States. It was hoped that the website could help promote Lin among the overseas community.

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2 *Los Angeles Times*, August 3, 2001.

3 *Asahi Shimbun*, July 28, 2001; *Los Angeles Times*, August 3, 2001.

Three months before the election, a Chinese website was set up. Lin and his running mate expected the website to counter the pro-government mainstream media. The campaign team of the ruling KMT was the last to set up a website. The site was designed and maintained by students. Unlike the websites of the other candidates, the target group of this website was young people (Peng, 2001: 332). In the 1996 elections, websites of candidates were considered a necessity more than an effective campaign tool. Since then, the involvement of the Internet in electoral campaigning has increased. The impact of websites run by politicians and political parties on campaigning has been limited, though. One of the rare exceptions is incumbent President Chen Shui-bian's campaign website, abian.net, which was extremely popular with the electorate. The website offered a large variety of functions ranging from downloading video clips to online shopping for campaign merchandise. Chen's website was set up in 1998 in the run-up to the Taipei mayoral election and soon developed into the most popular website of a politician. In 1998, Chen's rival candidate was Ma Ying-jeou, who was extremely popular among female voters who found him 'charming and handsome.' Nevertheless, Chen's website outperformed Ma's in terms of visitors. A few days before the election, about 140,000 people had visited Ma's site and almost 400,000 that of Chen Shui-bian (Peng, 2001: 356). Chen's website was permanent rather than temporary. His campaign team wanted to create a stable and long-term relationship with the Internet community. The website constantly improved and became an important campaign tool in the 2000 presidential race.

Apart from the politicians' websites, online mock voting, popularity ratings, and special election websites have become popular. Major media networks, such as TVBS, usually set up special websites containing all sorts of information regarding upcoming elections, such as profiles of candidates and opinion polls.

Moreover, all political parties have their own website, and the two largest parties more than one. The conservative and former ruling KMT for instance has several different websites, each for a different audience. The most popular among young voters is bluemaster.com. The site contains a series of cartoon clips and stories ridiculing the Democratic Progressive Party. Hate websites emerged during the 2004 presidential election and are exclusively run by ultra-conservative and Chinese nationalist supporters of the KMT and its splinter, the New Party. These supporters are part of the large overseas community, trying to influence voting behavior and public opinion in Taiwan by spreading malicious accusations in the US and in Taiwan. Their propaganda targets Chen Shui-bian and his Democratic Progressive Party. Their most important tool is the Internet. Websites, such as blueforblue.com (blue represents the KMT and its splinters), caadt.org (Chinese American Alliance for Democracy in Taiwan), and truthalliance.org (Democracy and Truth Alliance), are part of this network. Although all these groups mainly operate in the USA, they have succeeded in establishing informal channels of communication with the electorate in Taiwan. They also have close ties with intellectuals in Taiwan who usually write short articles attacking President Chen Shui-bian for major newspapers or even set up similar organizations in Taiwan, such as the Democratic Action Alliance (www.

daa-tw.net). Moreover, by placing ads unfavorable to the progressive camp in major US newspapers, the group influences US attitudes towards the Chen administration, which makes it difficult for the progressive camp to make progress on foreign policy issues and to convince the electorate of its expertise.

The situation is fundamentally different in Korea, as the 2002 presidential election proved. In the 2002 election, conservative forces relied on traditional media outlets, especially the print media, whereas the progressive parts of society saw in the Internet a powerful alternative. During the campaign, the conservative media outlets tried (as usual) to influence the election outcome by terrifying the readers with front page stories suggesting a North Korean nuclear attack if the progressive forces won the election. On the Internet, a very different picture could be found. E-newspapers, such as *Oh My News*, *Pressian* and *Daejabo*, had a debunking effect. Soon, the conservative print media noticed the power of the online newspapers and began to attack them, saying that they were undemocratic and vulgar. Such criticism set off serious confrontations between the two sides, which dramatically increased the popularity of the Internet and the e-newspapers (Lee, 2003: 73).

Table 6.3 Homepages of candidates: 2000 National Assembly election

Party affiliation	Candidates	Homepage	%
Hannara (Grand National Party)	225	165	73.3
Millennium Democratic Party	225	151	67.1
United Liberal Party	171	69	40.4
Democratic People's Party	125	36	28.8
New Korea Party of Hope	21	7	33.3
Democratic Labour Party	21	20	95.2
Youth Progress Party	46	46	100
Gonghwa	4	0	--
Non-partisan	202	59	29.2
Total	1040	553	53.2

Source: Table compiled by the author based on data provided by the Korea Press Foundation

Lee, Lancendorfer and Lee (2005) have shown that there is an intermedia relationship between the conservative newspapers and Internet bulletin boards. According to their study, Internet discussions in the 2000 national election were prompted by newspaper coverage. On the other hand, the influence of Internet bulletin boards on newspaper coverage was also found. There is some sort of reciprocal interaction between the traditional news media and Internet bulletin sites, making the Internet a powerful instrument capable of influencing the agenda-setting process of the media and political actors.

Support organizations that used the Internet to boost the popularity of politicians emerged at the end of the 1990s. The most popular of these groups was *nosamo*,

which was founded in April 2000 in an Internet coffee shop in Daejeon after Roh's defeat in the parliamentary election held that year. When Roh tried to obtain the party nomination for the 2002 presidential race, he was short of money and lacked the necessary support of his party fellows. The Internet community, especially *nosamo*, boosted his popularity and secured his party nomination and the presidency (Min, 2003). The website of *nosamo* alone had an average one million visitors a day in 2002 (Lee, 2003: 75).

The number of politicians using the Internet to canvass votes has increased over the years. About half of all the 1,040 candidates contesting the 2000 parliamentary election had their own homepages. Among the largest political parties, hopefuls of the conservative Grand National Party were most likely to have their own website (see Table 6.3). A survey conducted by the Korea Press Foundation (2000) on the Internet usage of candidates nominated by the three major parties showed that most candidates designed and operated their homepages themselves. Only one out of ten candidates hired outside specialists. It is interesting to note that only a quarter of the respondents in 2000 believed that the Internet would play a decisive role in the 2002 presidential election. Almost seven out of ten candidates, however, acknowledged that the Internet had some impact on the result of the 2000 parliamentary election (Korea Press Foundation, 2000). This result is not surprising considering the fact that the 2000 parliamentary election was the first to experience the power of the e-communities. Although civic organizations are not allowed to support political parties or candidates in elections, they have become important factors in Korea's election campaigns. The law stipulates that NGOs may not support politicians but may help to promote clean elections. Thus, in the April 2000 parliamentary election, a nationwide alliance of several NGOs listed 86 candidates who had either been found guilty of corruption or for other reasons appeared 'unfit' for office. The alliance put the names of the candidates on the Internet (www.naksun.co.kr) and indeed 70 percent of the listed candidates were not elected. This blacklist campaign (*nakseon undong*) was strongly supported by the electorate. A survey conducted by the Korean Social Science Data Center revealed that 73.1 percent of the respondents supported the campaign, 13.5 percent were against it, and 13.5 had no opinion on the issue (Lee, 2002: 75).

The campaign generated another positive effect, namely the dissemination of campaign-specific information on candidates to all eligible voters. The National Election Commission later continued the dissemination of such data when it decided to put on its website specific personal data along with the criminal records of all candidates.

The media

Freedom of the press undoubtedly is one of the pillars of a modern democratic state. Economic and political pressures are often cited as the prime obstacles to a free media environment. With democratization, these negative factors are believed to be

minimized to such an extent that media outlets reflect the opinion of the majority of people. However, even in countries that are generally considered democratic there seems to be a discrepancy between the ideal situation and reality. Silvio Berlusconi's media and money driven campaign to wipe out anything that has to do with a free and fair media environment in Italy is a good example here. In 2003, Freedom House (2005a) downgraded the status of Italy's media from 'free' to 'partly free' in its annual report on media independence. It was the first time since 1988 that media in an EU member state had been rated by the survey as 'partly free.' Independent media watchdogs in Italy have criticized Berlusconi's media empire for a long time.

His counterpart Thaksin Shinawatra follows his steps closely in Thailand, one of Southeast Asia's new democracies. Freedom House (2005a: 198–9) notes, 'Press freedom declined further in Thailand in 2004 as editors and publishers faced increased pressure from the government in the form of civil and criminal defamation lawsuits, as well as more subtle forms of editorial interference and economic pressure.' Moreover, the government is said to reward media outlets supportive of its policies through the allocation of advertising by either Thaksin's own telecommunications companies or state enterprises.

In the Philippines, the freedom of the media has been deteriorating for the last few years. Economic pressure forced several media companies to merge into two powerful broadcast networks (ABS-CBN and GMA). Journalists are vulnerable to economic incentives. Critical journalists are harassed and sometimes even killed. In 2004, at least 13 journalists were killed. During the last presidential election, the election commission violated press freedom by shutting down two stations run by the private network Bombo Radyo in Cauayan City. The action was condemned by journalists as politically motivated (Freedom House, 2005a: 164).

The situation in democratizing Malaysia is even worse. Only online magazines and newspapers provide diversity in opinion. In 2003, the government began to crack down on Internet media outlets. Since then several media outlets, such as malaysiakini.com, and online forums, such as *Malaysia Boleh*, have been closed (Freedom House, 2005a: 134; see Chapter 4).

Are things different in East Asia? Japan has the freest media among the countries comprising East Asia, and Mongolia the least free. Legislation in 1998 banned the censorship of public information and required the privatization of Mongolia's media industry. The government, however, has delayed implementation of this provision until recently, and thus retains a dominant position among broadcasters: it runs the only national TV station, and state-owned radio remains the major source of information for those in rural areas. Although the number of independent media outlets has increased significantly over the years—mainly regional TV stations and FM radio broadcasters—these too are indirectly controlled by the government, which reacts to criticism with libel suits and tax audits. Journalists tend therefore to practice self-censorship. Moreover, severe financial difficulties make journalists and media outlets susceptible to financial inducements from politicians. For instance, it is common practice for media outlets to accept financial assistance from politicians in exchange for news coverage. In this context, it is unsurprising that the broadcast

media tended to help the government's cause during election campaigns. In the 2004 parliamentary election, for instance, opposition candidates were reportedly less successful in obtaining media coverage; in particular, there were complaints that state-run television only accepted payments from candidates nominated by the Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP). According to a survey, 74 percent of the observed election television coverage favored MPRP candidates; so did 80 percent of radio broadcasts (Soros Foundation, 2004). Mongolia's print media are more diverse, and voters could choose from a wide variety of newspapers, representing both opposition and government views. Two out of every ten news stories were neutral in the 2004 election, and almost one in three stories was supportive of the Mongolian Democratic Coalition (MDC). Nevertheless, more than half were in favor of the MPRP (Soros Foundation, 2004).

A survey by Globe International (2004) revealed that over 90 percent of the respondents got information on the election from TV stations, 20 percent from radio broadcasts, about 50 percent from newsletters, and 14 percent from other sources, such as advertising flyers, and billboards. About 48 percent said that the information disseminated by the media outlets during the election campaign helped them in casting votes. More than half of the respondents were dissatisfied and requested face-to-face discussions between candidates (63.3 percent), comparative analyses of platforms (41.2 percent), and information related to voter education (17.2 percent). This dissatisfaction and the MPRP's blatant abuse of its advantageous media position during the campaign resulted in the loss of half of the seats the party had obtained in the previous election (Schafferer, 2005). The situation did not change for the better in the 2005 presidential race as Globe International concluded in its final report on the media coverage of the election:

> While the majority of monitored TV channels provided a more balanced coverage of the candidates in the last four weeks of the campaign, this balance was not achieved thanks to improved reporting, but due to the fact that the majority of TV channels were selling their prime time news time to candidates (on an equal basis). This practice was totally unacceptable from the point of view of journalistic ethics. Another disturbing finding of Globe International throughout this project has been the consistent practice on the majority of monitored media outlets of neglecting to air opposing views in the body of particular stories. The monitoring results revealed disturbing problems in news and current affairs programs' coverage of candidates in the majority of the monitored media outlets. This situation has made it very difficult for Mongolians to get accurate and unbiased coverage of political parties, candidates and other issues. In general, the media's biased coverage of the election demonstrated that Mongolia lacks a strong and independent media able to provide objective and balanced information to the electorate to make a well-informed choice at the ballot box (Globe International, 2005: 4).

South Korea and Taiwan emerged as the region's most vibrant democracies. Both countries officially abandoned authoritarianism in 1987. The number of newspapers and magazines increased significantly in the following years. New radio and television stations went into operation and increasingly helped the opposition to

counter government propaganda (Ni, 1995; Yoon, 2001; Lo, Cheng and Lee, 1994; see also Chapter 3). International organizations, such as Freedom House (2005a), consider the media in these countries as free. Nevertheless, civil groups and political leaders would like to see some reforms that would eventually lead to an even freer media environment.

June 1987 was a turning point in South Korea's political development: over a million people took part in the 'grand peace march' of June 26 forcing the Chun regime to accept an eight-point democratization package, which also called for active promotion of press freedom, that is total autonomy of Korea's media from state interference. Meeting the requests of a powerful opposition movement, the government began to refrain from direct political interference and subsequent media policies led to a liberalization and deregulation of Korea's media. Despite these efforts, pro-democracy activists demanded further reforms in response to several harmful changes in Korea's media environment. Seoul National University professor Yang Seung-Mock (2005) says that there have been three major trends in the 1990s leading to a less free media in Korea and causing concerns among progressive intellectuals.

First, political institutions that controlled the media during the period of military dictatorship have been rapidly replaced by capital. Although the media had been freed from government intervention, in many ways it still bore the imprint of the authoritarian era: concentrated ownership, an opaque style of management, and association with vested interests that stood to lose from political reforms urged by progressives. Consequently, the slogan of the press reform movement shifted from 'freedom from the government' to 'freedom from proprietors.'

Second, the global trend of media-centered election campaigning has also reached South Korea. Although the use of mass media by political parties and candidates is severely restricted during the election campaign period, mass media itself has turned out to play a decisive role in determining election outcomes. This political media warfare is entirely controlled by South Korea's largest daily newspapers (*Chosun Ilbo*, *Joong An Ilbo* and the *Dong-a Ilbo*), whose market share stood at over 65 percent in 2000. These three media outlets (known as the Big Three) 'favored conservative candidates in elections and played critical roles in directing national agenda toward conservative bias' (Yang, 2005: 67). Korean media experts and other intellectuals refer to them as the 'unelected power.'

Third, the liberalization of the Korean media led to a sharp decline in quality due to severe market competition. Media experts and civil groups have frequently criticized the Korean media for its sensationalism and commercialism. Various movements, such as the 1993 'Turn off Your TV' initiative, have been the consequence.

When Kim Dae-Jung was elected President in 1997, Korea not only entered a new stage in its democratization process (since it was the first time that an opposition candidate had been elected President) but also entered a new era of media reform. The amendment of the Broadcasting Act at the beginning of 2000 was widely considered a significant step towards a freer media environment. The amendments drastically reduced the government's direct influence on Korea's broadcasting

media. The media reform movement, led by progressive civic groups and journalists' associations, saw in the newspaper monopoly (about 65 percent) of the big three dailies a major threat to a free media environment and asked the government to address this issue. Supporters of the movement argued that the three dailies gained their market position due to unfair business practices, and that a monopolization of the print media is counterproductive to the establishment of a free Korean media environment. Kim Dae-Jung's government noticed that the only meaningful way to reduce the influence of the 'Big Three' was to ask the Fair Trade Commission (FTC) and the National Tax Service (NTS) to look into the financial transactions of Korea's media outlets. In June 2001, these government agencies released the findings of their investigations. The owners and executives of the Big Three were subsequently detained and indicted for tax evasion and embezzlement. The government's tax audit strategy widened the gap between the progressive and conservative camps. The first saw in the tax audit the first step towards a less corrupt and politically controlled media; the latter considered the government's strategy as a politically motivated crackdown.

In Taiwan, liberalization brought about a sharp increase in the number of media outlets and increased competition to such an extent that the quality of the nation's media reporting deteriorated. Although media observers have criticized Taiwan's media for its sensationalism and commercialism, it has so far failed to be self-critical and to set guidelines for its media industry (Su, 2004). The absurdity and primitiveness of Taiwan's media industry can be best illustrated by referring to two cases that made headlines and big profits in Taiwan. The first case happened in 1997, when Pai Hsiao-yen, the only child of popular TV host and actress Pai Ping-ping, was kidnapped. The whole case became a real Taiwan-style soap opera, when police surrounded one of the three kidnappers, and the kidnapper ended up singing the children's song 'Two Tigers' with a TV anchor. A more recent case is a weekly magazine's free VCD featuring a popular politician having sex with her lover. The magazine thought it would be a marvelous idea to secretly install a wireless camera in the politician's apartment and let the public see what politicians do in their free time. Taiwan is a democracy after all. This is press freedom in action.

The quality of the media was one of the prime concerns of the Government Information Office when its director announced plans to set up a media review committee that would evaluate the content of media reports and publish the results periodically. The conservative opposition and the media industry claimed that the government's plans would mean censorship. In fact, the agency's proposal never mentioned any sanctions or other regulatory measures if media outlets failed to comply with certain standards. The proposed committee should have been a watchdog only. Numerous debates followed. The media industry carefully misled the public into believing that the proposed committee would de facto be a media control institution exercising the right of censor. The President finally intervened by saying that Taiwan would need a media watchdog to ensure the quality of media reports, but that such an institution should not be under the control of the government.

Incumbent President Chen Shui-bian of the Democratic Progressive Party has, since his inauguration in May 2000, focused on media reform. But his major concern has always been the media's independence from politics rather than its quality. Maybe he noticed that the former would be easier to achieve than the latter. Several organizations, such as the Democratic Cable Television Alliance, often complained that the reform process was too slow. At the beginning of 2003, the ruling party made public its draft of several amendments to Taiwan's media laws. The new laws should prevent public and party officials from holding positions in TV and radio stations. Moreover, it should also make it illegal for them to own shares in any company related to Taiwan's broadcasting media. According to government statistics, more than sixty leading parliamentarians and chief executives of local governments have senior management positions in either radio or television stations. The new laws would have affected all parties. To show its sincerity, the ruling party demanded that its members either resign from positions held in Taiwan's broadcasting media or quit their job as legislators. Several legislators, such as the chair of Formosa Television, did indeed resign from their positions in the media industry. The media reform was only partially carried out due to the majority of the opposition in parliament and their disagreement with most parts of the reform package.

In 2004, the quality of the media deteriorated further and major media outlets still produced reports favorable to the conservative parties. The situation is quite similar to the Korean Big Three. Whenever there is an election, newspapers and TV cable networks, especially the *United Daily News* and TVBS, frighten the public by exaggerating reports on China-Taiwan relations, speaking of a war once the progressive parties gained the upper hand in parliament. In Taiwan (unlike Korea), the Internet could not compensate the poor quality and bias of the traditional media. Moreover, a group of three *mingzui* (a person who is very popular and talkative) succeeded in dominating the media during the 2004 presidential election. All of these three *mingzui* had something in common: they opposed Chen Shui-bian of the liberal Democratic Progressive Party. These three *mingzui* are former DPP bureaucrat Sisy Chen, writer Li Ao, and Jao Shaw-kong, chair of UFO radio network. They either host their own political talk shows or frequently attend those hosted by other *mingzui*. The problem with *mingzui* is that they tend to make unfounded accusations, causing severe damage to the reputations of politicians of the liberal camp (Zhang, 2004). In some cases, such accusations have aggravated social unrest. In March 2004, for example, Sisy Chen claimed that she had proof that President Chen Shui-bian had staged the entire assassination attempt himself to manipulate the outcome of the presidential election held a day after the incident. Her claims and the fact that Chen won the election on the following day with a margin of 0.2 percent of the vote sparked off violent protests around Taiwan. Misinterpreted opinion polls (see previous section on opinion polls) and intentionally faked tallies further contributed to the dispute.

Taiwan's irresponsible media is mostly to blame for the 2004 post-election violence in Taiwan. Journalists and *mingzui* misled the public into believing that Chen Shui-bian rigged the election and staged his own assassination attempt. The faked media reports on the ballot-counting process certainly were the worst and most unprofessional act commited by Taiwan's media industry: on election day, all major TV networks began to broadcast faked reports on how many votes had been counted in favor of the two presidential candidates. Those TV networks supporting Chen Shui-bian (DPP) reported that Chen was in the lead, and those favorable to Lien Chan (KMT) reported that Lien was leading the race. When the election commission released the final results, declaring Chen Shui-bian the winner, supporters of Lien Chan watching pro-KMT TV networks failed to understand why Lien Chan suddenly lost and subsequently suspected vote rigging (Tang, 2004). TV networks made up balloting figures because every TV station wanted to be the first to report on the 'final results' to increase viewing rates. Commercial interests outweigh morality in Taiwan's media industry.

Political advertising

Taiwan is probably the only country in Asia where political parties and candidates do not face numerous restrictions on political advertising. All parties and candidates usually make use of the liberal election law and abundantly place ads in Taiwan's media (see Chapter 3). The only restriction that exists prohibits paid advertising on television during the ten-day election campaign period in parliamentary elections. During this campaign period, the election commission has to allocate a total of 270 minutes of free airtime on terrestrial TV stations for political ads. Each party fielding more than ten candidates receives free advertising time proportionate to the total number of candidates.

This restriction has limited effects on the overall campaign for two reasons. First, candidates start their advertising campaign weeks ahead of the official campaign period. Second, placement marketing compensates the restrictions imposed on conventional political advertising (see below and Chapter 3).

In Japan, political parties are free to make use of political advertising, whereas party candidates and independents are confronted with some legal restrictions. The number of candidates a party nominates in a constituency determines the size (length) and frequency of political ads.

Table 6.4 gives detailed information on the restrictions on newspaper advertising in parliamentary elections. Party candidates may place commercials on television and radio with the restrictions outlined in Table 6.5. Independent candidates can only use television and radio for campaign purposes in the form of an introduction of his or her curriculum vitae. This introduction is aired once on NHK television and ten times on NHK radio.

Table 6.4 Newspaper advertising: Lower house elections, Japan

	Single-seat Constituency		Nationwide Constituency
	Independent	Party Candidate	Party Candidate
Size	9.6 cm x 2 columns	Number of columns depends on number of candidates per prefecture: 1 to 5 candidates: 4 6 to 10 candidates: 8 11 to 15 candidates: 12 16 and more: 16 The maximum size is thus 38.5 cm x number of columns	Number of columns depends on number of candidates per constituency: 1 to 10 candidates: 8 11 to 20 candidates: 16 21 to 30 candidates: 24 31 and more candidates: 32 The maximum size is thus 38.5 cm x number of columns
Frequency	5	Depends on the number of candidates per prefecture: 1 to 5 candidates: 8 6 to 10 candidates: 16 11 to 15 candidates: 24 16 and more: 32	Depends on the number of candidates per constituency 1 to 10 candidates: 16 11 to 20 candidates: 32 21 to 30 candidates: 48 31 and more candidates: 64
Public funding	Yes	Yes	Yes

Source: Table compiled by the author based on data provided by the Election Commission

Table 6.5 Television advertising: Lower house elections, Japan

	Party Candidates (Single-seat Constituency)
Length	9 minutes each
Frequency	Depends on number of candidates per prefecture: 1 to 2 candidates: once each on NHK radio and television and twice on commercial radio or television 3 to 5 candidates: twice on NHK television, once on NHK radio and three times on commercial radio or television 6 to 8 candidates: four times on NHK television, twice on NHK radio and six times on commercial radio or television 9 to 11 candidates: six times on NHK television, three times on NHK radio and nine times on commercial radio or television 12 or more candidates: eight times on NHK television, four times on NHK radio and twelve times on commercial radio or television
Public funding	Yes

Source: Table compiled by the author based on data provided by the Election Commission

In Korea, political advertising is severely restricted by the election law. Article 69 outlines the use of political ads in daily newspapers. Candidates may run an ad of the platform or policy of the political group to which they belong, and their political views. In the case of presidential elections, candidates may ask for political funds in the ads. The frequency of such newspaper ads is limited to 70 in presidential elections. The law stipulates that the ad ought to be run in black only, contain the grounds for the ad, the name of the advertiser and may not exceed 37cm in width and 17cm in length. Any candidate who wishes to run a newspaper ad has to report it to the election commission. The report must include a draft version of the ad and a copy of the advertisement contract. If the ad proves to be in conformity with the election law, the election commission issues a letter of certification to the candidate. Without this letter, newspapers are not allowed to print the ad. The newspaper may not collect advertisement fees from candidates in excess of the minimum fees for a commercial ad, a cultural ad or any other ad inserted with the same size in the same column during the election period.

Presidential candidates may ask TV and radio broadcasters to run an ad of the platform or policy of the political group to which they belong, and their political views. Such ads may run up to 30 times each on television and radio. Each time the commercial may not last longer than one minute. The broadcaster has to notify the election commission of the date, time and contents of the commercial in advance. The expenses for such TV and newspaper commercials must be borne by the candidate and may be reimbursed by the state if the candidate succeeds in obtaining at least 20 percent of the popular support in his or her constituency.

Table 6.6 Campaign strategies TV ads: Korean elections, 1997 and 2002

	1997 Presidential Election		Avg
	Lee Hoi-chang	Kim Dae-jung	
Positive	4 (44.4%)	2 (40.0%)	42.90%
Contrastive	3 (33.3%)	0 (0%)	21.4%
Issue Attack	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0%
Character Attack	2 (22.2%)	3 (60.0%)	35.7%
Total	9 (100%)	5 (100%)	

	2002 Presidential Election			Avg
	Roh Moo-hyun	Lee Hoi-chang	Kwon Young-ghil	
Positive	6 (100%)	2 (33.3%)	2 (100%)	71.40%
Contrastive	0 (0%)	2 (33.3%)	0 (0%)	14.3%
Issue Attack	0 (0%)	1 (16.7%)	0 (0%)	7.1%
Character Attack	0 (0%)	1 (16.7%)	0 (0%)	7.1%
Total	6 (100%)	6 (100%)	2 (100%)	

Source: Lee, Junhan and Lee Soobum (2004), 'Negative Campaigning in Korea's Presidential Elections,' *Korea Observer*, vol. 35, no. 1, p. 30

The election commission allows negative advertising as long as the conveyed messages are true, that is, claims made can be proved. Any candidate (or person intending to become a candidate) affected by public accusations made within 90 days prior to election day may request the involved broadcasting or publishing company to correct their report for free by using the same media previously used in making the accusation. The broadcasting or publishing company may only refuse the candidate's request on the grounds that the candidate fails to have justifiable reasons for such a request, the content of the candidate's statement proves to be untrue or the candidate's request appears to be for commercial purposes only. If no agreement can be reached between the candidate and the media company involved, the Political Broadcast Deliberation Committee has to solve the problem within 48 hours. This committee has to be set up by 120 days before election day. It consists of nine members from the academic circle, journalist associations, the Korea Bar Association and those recommended by political parties. No member of the committee may join a political party. Any decision of the committee is legally binding.

An analysis of negative advertising in presidential elections in South Korea has revealed that the proportion of negative TV spots dwindled from 35.7 percent in 1997 to 14.2 percent in 2002, and negative ads in newspapers from 70 percent to 52.6 percent (Lee and Lee, 2004: 33). Opposition candidates are more likely to use negative ads in Korean elections than incumbent leaders (see Tables 6.6 and 6.7). Kim Dae-jung was the most frequent user of negative ads in 1997, and Lee Hoi-chang in 2002 (Lee and Lee, 2004: 30–1; Lee and Benoit, 2005).

Table 6.7 Campaign strategies newspaper ads: Korean elections, 1997 and 2002

	1997 Presidential Election			Avg
	Lee Hoi-chang	Kim Dae-jung	Rhee In-je	
Positive	7 (31.8%)	0 (0%)	2 (28.6%)	22.5%
Contrastive	1 (4.5%)	1 (9.1%)	0 (0%)	5.0%
Issue Attack	2 (9.1%)	3 (27.3%)	2 (28.6%)	17.5%
Character Attack	11 (50.0%)	7 (63.3%)	3 (42.9%)	52.5%
n/a	1 (4.5%)			
Total	22 (100%)	11 (100%)	7 (100%)	
	2002 Presidential Election			Avg
	Roh Moo-hyun	Lee Hoi-chang		
Positive	13 (46.4%)	11 (35.5%)		40.7%
Contrastive	2 (7.1%)	0 (0%)		3.4%
Issue Attack	1 (3.6%)	7 (22.6%)		13.6%
Character Attack	10 (35.7%)	13 (41.9%)		39.0%
n/a	2 (7.1%)			3.4%
Total	28 (100%)	31 (100%)		

Source: Lee, Junhan and Lee Soobum (2004), 'Negative Campaigning in Korea's Presidential Elections,' *Korea Observer*, vol. 35, no. 1, p. 31

In Mongolian parliamentary elections, the election commission may arrange for free airtime on public television and radio for political advertisements. In the 2004 parliamentary election, each party received two time frames of 20 minutes per week (the official campaign period in this election lasted for almost two months). Aside from these broadcasts, candidates and parties may place political ads on TV, radio and newspapers at their own expense. Paid advertisements were common in the 2004 national election. Spots sponsored by the ruling Mongolian People's Revolutionary Party (MPRP) accounted for about 80 percent of the total airtime taken up by 105 campaign advertisements on radio and television. The ruling party's dominance of advertisement space also extended to the press: some 70 percent of newspaper advertisements were placed by the party. The advertising campaign cost an estimated US$3.7 million, which is an enormous amount of money considering the country's economic situation and its small population of 2.7 million people (Soros Foundation, 2004).

According to the Fair Election Law, the Philippine election commission has to procure free airtime from at least three national television networks and three national radio networks, which has to be allocated free of charge equally and impartially among all candidates for national office. Such free time has to be made available on three different calendar days: the first day within the first week of the campaign period; the second day within the fifth week of the campaign period; and the third

day within the tenth week of the campaign period. Paid political ads are limited (for details see Chapter 5).

The Thai election law prohibits paid political ads on TV and radio. Paid newspaper ads are legal, though. The election commission offers free airtime on TV and radio to those political parties represented in parliament according to their share of seats. These restrictions mostly affect opposition parties but hardly media tycoon Thaksin's Thai Rak Thai.

In the 2004 national elections in Malaysia, the Barisan Nasional (BN) won a landslide victory. The party coalition captured over 90 percent of the seats at stake, an increase of 35 percent from the previous election. The BN victory was actually a triumph for the advertising industry. Local analysts claim that the 'ad blitz' was part of a professional, well-coordinated, and unprecedented advertising campaign. Singapore's *The Straits Times* reported that the BN 'roped in at least three different advertising agencies. Its television commercials were produced by Leo Burnett, while two other agencies were responsible for print and poster campaigns.'[4] The ad blitz covered TV, radio, print media, billboards, and for the first time, direct mail. Different ads were used for different types of media and audiences. The product advertised was Abdullah Badawi of the BN. Compared with previous campaigns, the 2004 ads were designed to transmit the 'feel good' factor rather than to use threats. In the past, BN ads usually suggested that if the opposition were elected, Malaysia would face riots and political instability. The messages contained in the 2004 ads were easy to understand and advertising slogans resembled those usually used to advertise consumer products. The BN ad slogan 'Excellence, Glory, Distinction,' for instance, is uncannily similar to the slogan for a major international cigarette brand, which used 'Style, Quality, Excellence.'[5] During the entire campaign period, different full-page ads could be found in all major newspapers; and TV channels abundantly aired BN ads. This unprecedented ad campaign made it even more difficult for the opposition to contest the election.

Electoral corruption and vote buying

Electoral laws and regulations are important in understanding electoral campaigns, but the informal campaign environment is at least of equal importance. Electoral campaigning in the Philippines and in Thailand seems to be most affected by this informal environment. Callahan (2000: 172) noted that 'Philippine elections are characterized by the three Gs: Guns, Goons and Gold.' The election commission, COMELEC, was founded in 1940 and became a tool of the Marcos regime. The commission has become one of the least trusted government agencies. Provincial COMELEC committees are frequently engaged in activities known as Operation Add-Subtract, where 'the local numbers are "massaged" in the provincial tallies to favor certain government candidates over others' (Callahan, 2000: 174). In 1983, the

[4] *The Straits Times*, March 22, 2004.

[5] http://www.aliran.com/charter/monitors/archives/2004_03_01_archives.html.

National Movement for Free Elections (NAMFREL) was founded by various civic, religious, professional, business, labor, educational and youth organizations. Its aim was to educate the electorate. The organization placed 500,000 volunteers at polling stations all over the Philippines in the 1986 presidential election. Four volunteers were killed and 160 injured, illustrating the power of local warlords. In 1992, the government banned guns and paid political advertising to guarantee cleaner and less bloody elections, which restored some confidence in the electoral process. Electoral campaigning is still marred with violence and irregularities. Between 1998 and 2004, there have been over 700 violent incidents with almost 1,000 dead and wounded people (Linantud, 2005: 84). Hedman and Sidel (2000: 108) summarized the state of the informal campaign environment in the Philippines with the following sentence: 'Neither the local Government Code of 1991 and subsequent decentralization efforts nor the pattern of sustained economic growth in the Philippines in the 1990s have seriously undermined the institutional and social foundations of boss rule, it appears, even in the most "advanced" and prosperous provinces of the archipelago, such as Caite and Cebu.'

A similar fearful atmosphere exists in Thai elections. The Thai democratization process began in the early 1990s. Murray (1997: 379) wrote of the parliamentary elections in the mid 1990s, 'the main features of both elections were an increase in parties buying politicians and votes.' In the 1970s, national politicians and faction leaders began to establish close ties with local leaders who gained significant influence in provincial areas, largely through illegal business activities (Callahan, 2000: 168). In the 1980s, an increasing number of business people got involved in politics. These two developments brought about a new negative campaign practice: vote buying. In the 1995/6 national elections an estimated 25 billion baht was involved in vote-buying activities (Murray, 1998: 527). In some areas, politicians and *bunkhun*, canvassers, lived a very dangerous life. Many hired bodyguards, and retailers reported a three-fold increase in sales of bullet-proof vests (Murray, 1997: 384). Aside from vote buying, political parties bought candidates. Thai politicians are said to lack ideology. They seem to be free to offer themselves to the highest bidder. In the 1995 national elections, Chart Tai and Nam Thai were alleged to have bought several politicians. In 1995, the price ranged from 10 to 20 million baht (Murray, 1997: 383).

The situation worsened with populist leader Thaksin Shinawatra. His Thai Rak Thai (Thais Love Thais) won a landslide victory in the 2001 national election. Violence and vote buying was widespread: some 43 politicians and canvassers were killed in the months before the elections. Vote buying amounted to an estimated 20 billion baht (US$465 million), more than in any previous election (Croissant and Dosch, 2003: 157).

The informal campaign environment is said to be different in Malaysia, where electoral corruption is not as obvious and rampant as in Thailand and the Philippines. The strategies of the ruling party are more sophisticated and subtle. Co-option, gerrymandering and selective coercion are more likely to appear there (Callahan, 2000; see Chapter 4).

In East Asia, the dimension of political corruption is much more restricted. There are no warlords with their own armies, but machine politics has also influenced the outcome of elections (Wang, 1997; Lin, 1993; Mattlin, 2004; Abe, Shindo and Kawato, 1994; Ahn, 2003; Chan, 1999; Chen, 2004; Huang and Cheng, 1991; Park, 1995). Patron-client relationships have played an important role in elections in South Korea, Taiwan and Japan, but their impact has decreased over the years (Narita, 1999; Park, 2001; Tsai, 2004; Wang, 2004; Ahn, 2003; Hsu and Chen, 2004). In all of these three countries, a dual process of campaigning has emerged. Traditional campaigning techniques (local factions and social networks) now have to share the overall campaign strategy with more advanced forms of campaigning (mass media) (see Chapters 2 and 3).

Degree of professionalism

Political parties in Korea, Japan and Taiwan tend to be more advanced than their counterparts in Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines. Professionalism includes the housing of a special permanent committee dealing with electoral affairs, the involvement of pollsters and other specialists, and the increasing dominance of party campaign managers over party leaders and party staff. Moreover, professional campaigning means the involvement of scientific means (instead of guns, goons and gold) to obtain victory in electoral competitions.

All major parties in Korea, Japan and Taiwan have their own election committees. Some of the parties rely on those committees to carry out opinion polls, design political ads and formulate the final campaign strategy, others hire external advisors. In Japan, the Komeito, the Communist Party, and the Liberal Party mostly rely on their own party committees to work out the party's campaign strategy.[6] As to Korea, all major parties hire external consultants.[7] In the case of Taiwan, the Kuomintang (KMT) and the People First Party cooperate with external advisors. The Democratic Progressive Party and the Solidarity Union occasionally hire advertising experts, whereas the New Party mainly relies on its own experts.[8] Japan's Social Democratic Party and Taiwan's two largest political parties, the DPP and KMT, consider cooperation with external experts as positive, whereas the other political parties in the observed countries describe their cooperation as sometimes problematic. There were six problems mentioned by party officials: (i) lack of identification with the political party, (ii) lack of knowledge about current issues and political trends, (iii) cost of services rendered, (iv) lack of integration into the internal decision-making processes of the political party, (v) lack of understanding of political strategies, and (vi) superficiality of advice offered by the consultants. Japan's LDP has encountered the first problem while cooperating with external advisors, and the Democratic Party have had problems of the second and fourth type. The Korean conservative

6 Interviews with party officials in January 2000 and June 2003.
7 Interviews with party officials in June 2000 and January 2004.
8 Interviews with party officials in March 2000 and March 2004.

Grand National Party (or Hannara) had problems in the other five areas. The other two political parties in Korea that have worked together with external specialists, ULD and MDP, state that they have encountered problems of type i, ii and vi.[9] In Taiwan, only the Taiwan Solidarity Union was dissatisfied with the services offered by external consultants. Party officials complained about the superficiality of advice given by the companies.[10]

There is also a different degree of trust in external consultants. Conservative parties in Japan, Korea and Taiwan tend to see external consultants as advisory only. Their opinion hardly enters the final electoral campaign strategy. For example, the conservative KMT has a very well-defined hierarchical structure, making it rather impossible for external consultants to influence the decision-making process of the senior party leadership. Internal party institutions are treated with the same indifference: the KMT has its own high-tech survey center, but reports handed over to the leadership have hardly had any impact on the final campaign strategy. In the last two presidential races, for instance, the chief campaign managers had no power whatsoever to decide on the campaign. In both cases, it was the party chair and the most senior party figures who formulated the campaign strategy. Even inexperienced relatives of these senior figures had more decision-making power than internal or external advisors.[11] The liberal DPP, on the other hand, usually follows the advice offered by campaign professionals. In the 2000 campaign, the party, for instance, closely cooperated with advertising experts Fan Ke-ching to design the party's advertising war. Moreover, the status of party bureaucrats, such as the chairs of the party's survey center and public relations office, is much higher and so is their decision-making power.[12]

Nevertheless, the majority of political parties in the region rely on the expertise of party leaders. Professional campaign consultants, such as Wu Hsiang-hui (Taiwan), Hiroshi Miura (Japan) and Kim Hak-Ryang (South Korea), who make a living out of campaigns, are therefore virtually non-existent in East Asia, especially if compared with the USA (see Chapter 1).

Plasser and Plasser (2002: 6) distinguish between three models of campaign practices (see Table 6.8). In the premodern model party logic is the dominant campaign paradigm, and the campaign itself is short term and ad hoc. The modern model of campaigning is television-centered. Party campaign managers and external consultants play an important role in the formulation of campaign strategies. Campaigns are long term rather than short term and ad hoc. The most advanced model, the postmodern model, aims at the implementation of a permanent campaign strategy with marketing logic being the dominant campaign paradigm.

It is difficult to categorize East and Southeast Asian polities, since electoral campaigns in most of these countries bear characteristics of more than one model.

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[9] Interviews with party officials in June 2000 and January 2004.

[10] Interviews with party officials in March 2000 and March 2004.

[11] Interview with senior campaign manager in June 2004.

[12] Interview with senior campaign manager in June 2004.

Campaigns in Malaysia and the Philippines are likely to be associated with the premodern model. With Thaksin Shinawatra, electoral campaigns in Thailand resemble more the modern model than the premodern one. Sound bites, image and impression management are his dominant style of political communication. Electoral campaigns are long term, if not even permanent. Thaksin's unlimited control over the media makes permanent television-centered campaigns an easy task to undertake. Thaksin is aware of the power of the media and uses it abundantly to shape the people's idea of Prime Minister Thaksin and his party, Thai Rak Thai. His media strategy affects political as well as non-political activities. In 2004, for instance, the demand for Thai chicken plunged dramatically due to the outbreak of the bird flu disease. Thaksin used the media to manipulate the people and hide the government's inability to cope with the situation. He and his cabinet, for example, went to a fast food restaurant, eating fried chicken in front of TV cameras and journalists. The event made headlines and all newspapers carried pictures of Thaksin enjoying Thai chicken on their front pages. This media spectacle is just one of the many examples of Thaksin's permanent media-centered campaigning. As recent elections have shown, his efforts have paid off.

A far more complicated situation has emerged in East Asia. Mongolia's electoral campaigns are predominantly premodern. Campaign practices in South Korea, Taiwan and Japan are far more difficult to categorize. As to the mode of political communication systems, campaigns are postmodern. The dominant style of political communication is either modern or postmodern depending on the political party. There is, however, a clear trend towards postmodernity in terms of the campaign duration. Permanent campaigns with marketing logic are most in evidence in Taiwan. When the DPP became the ruling party in 2000, placement marketing gradually replaced the strategic importance of traditional political advertising campaigns. This strategy involved the buying of airtime for special news programs or the appearance of cabinet members as guests on non-political TV shows. The TV audience is hardly able to distinguish these hidden ads from conventional news reporting or variety show programs.

Moreover, party primaries and even the elections of party chairs are part of extensive news coverage. In 2005, the new chair of the KMT was elected. The entire process was at the core of every news program. There were even TV debates between the two candidates. In the past, such elections were considered part of a party's internal affairs with the results released at a press conference. In 2005, however, the party leader election became a national issue with all media outlets treating it as if it were the election of the nation's president rather than that of a party chair.

Table 6.8 The three standard models of campaigning

Phase	Premodern	Modern	Postmodern
Mode of Political Communications Systems	Party-dominated	Television-centered	Multiple channels and multi-media
Dominant Style of Political Communication	Messages along party lines	Sound bites, image and impression management	Narrow-casted, targeted micro-messages
Media	Partisan press, posters, newspapers, adverts, radio broadcasts	Television broadcasts through main evening news	Television narrow-casting, targeted direct mail and e-mail campaigns
Dominant Advertising Media	Print advertisements, posters, leaflets, radio speeches and mass rallies	Nationwide television advertisements, colorful posters and magazine adverts, mass direct mailings	Targeted television advertisements, e-mail campaigns and telemarketing techniques, banner ads on the Internet
Campaign Coordination	Party leaders and leading party staff	Party campaign managers and external media, advertising and survey experts	Special party campaign units and more specialized political consultants
Dominant Campaign Paradigm	Party logic	Media logic	Marketing logic
Preparations	Short-term, ad hoc	Long-term campaign	Permanent campaign
Campaign Expenditures	Low budget	Increasing	Spiraling up
Electorate	Cleavage- and group-based stable voting behavior	Erosion of party attachments and rising volatility	Issue-based and highly volatile voting behavior

Source: Plasser, Fritz and Gunda Plasser (2002), *Global Political Campaigning. A Worldwide Analysis of Campaign Professionals and Their Practices*, Praeger, New York, p. 6

In South Korea, election laws promulgated in 1994 prohibit large-scale mass campaign rallies to rein in money politics. As a result, candidates contesting elections had to rely more and more on media-oriented campaigns and took part in televised TV debates (Kang and Jaung, 1999). Lee and Lee (2004: 36) concluded that parties 'accordingly devoted the largest proportion of their campaign budgets to media exposure and the televised debates attracted more people than any other single campaign event during both recent [presidential] elections, on average, one in three Koreans.' According to surveys conducted by the Institute for Korean Election Studies, 'more than 80 percent of the respondents said that television debates had some, if not decisive, influences on their voting decision' (Kang and Jaung, 1999: 606).

Foreign role model

Campaign professionals very often see US campaign methods as the cutting edge of electioneering and as a role model (Plasser and Plasser, 2003). Asked whether foreign election campaigning could be adopted in the respondents' own country, Japan turned out to be the least likely East Asian country to import campaign techniques. A quarter of campaign professionals of Japanese parties interviewed said that foreign campaigning could not serve as a role model because of the various differences in the legal, media and political environment.[13] In Taiwan, almost all respondents saw in US campaigning a role model for the island-state (see Table 6.9).

Table 6.9 Role model for East Asian campaign managers

Country	Germany	USA	UK	No model
Japan	4.0	64.0	8.0	24.0
Taiwan	5.9	94.1	5.9	5.9
Korea	11.1	72.2	11.1	16.7

Source: Interviews with 68 campaign professionals of political parties in Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea in 2000 and 2003

Although the majority believes that certain US campaign techniques could be implemented with some modifications in East Asia, none of the respondents saw a prosperous market for overseas campaign consultants.

Moreover, none of Japan's major parties has worked together with foreign experts in designing their election campaigns. In Korea, only one party, the Grand National Party (or Hannara), acknowledged cooperation with a US consultant in the 1997 presidential election, but was dissatisfied because of the superficiality of the advice offered by the US firm and the consultant's lack of understanding of Korean political culture.[14] Political parties in Taiwan have so far not hired foreign consultants. KMT

[13] Interviews with party officials in January 2000 and June 2003.

[14] Interviews with party officials in June 2000 and January 2004.

party officials acknowledged, however, that a US firm had approached them in the past, but the firm's proposal was not accepted because of its superficiality. Rumors that independent candidate James Soong hired a US consultant in the 2000 Taiwan presidential election were denied by party officials.[15]

Conclusion

Plasser and Plasser (2002: 341), in their breathtaking analysis of campaign professionals and their practices in 43 countries, tried to answer the question whether there is a standardized style of electoral campaigning in the world's democracies. Their study concluded that there is 'no evidence for a standardization of campaign practices worldwide,' and that 'specific combinations of institutional, cultural and regulatory factors seem to shape campaign behavior to a substantial degree.' Are these findings indeed universal? Are they true for East and Southeast Asia, too? Comparing the descriptions and analyses of the previous chapters, some tentative conclusions can be drawn. First, electoral campaigning in each of the observed countries is fundamentally different. Second, these differences root in a country's political and social development. Third, although there is a tendency towards media-oriented campaigning and other practices usually associated with US campaigning, the impact on the overall election climate is different. Fourth, there is no evidence for a possible future standardization of campaign practices in East and Southeast Asia.

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